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With origins in the Hawaiian-guitar boom of the early 20th century, Magnatone has a storied history. Here, we examine the stereo version

of the amp made famous by Buddy Holly. | By Dave Hunter

50 INTERSTELLAR SIGNALS Elliot Easton Gets Spacey

Invited to contribute guitar parts to the soundtrack for a film featuring video from the Mars Rover, Elliot Easton conjured a sound decades removed from kitschy sci-fi bleeps and bleeps.

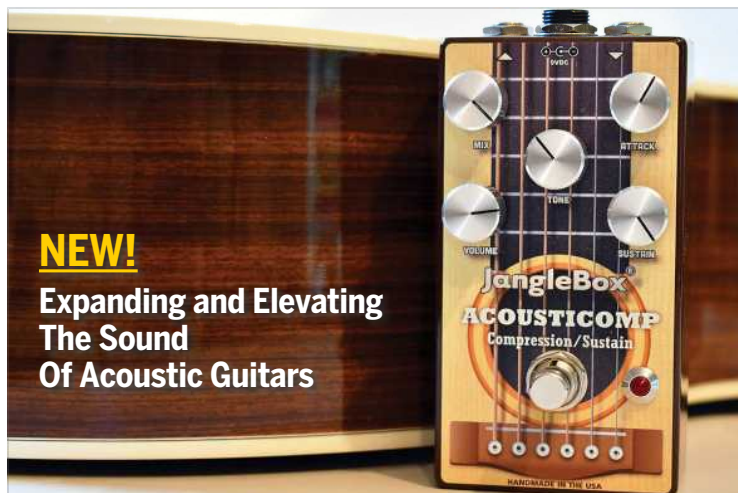
| By Rich Maloof

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COVER: 1965 Framus 5-119-54 Golden Television: Michael Wright/VG Archive. Guild BHM: VG Archive. Jimmy James: Cedric Pilard. THIS PAGE: Jimmy James: Cedric Pilard.



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The album cover for Dudley Taft's 'The Speed of Life'. It features a man with a beard and a cowboy hat, wearing a striped shirt and jeans, holding a white electric guitar. He is standing in a desert landscape with mountains in the background. The title 'DUDLEY TAFT' is at the top in large, white, distressed letters. Below it, the text reads: 'A pure treasure of blues rock offered by an artist being a true rock genius. — Fred Delforge, Zocazic.com'. At the bottom, it says 'GET THE NEW ALBUM' and 'WWW.DUDLEYTAFT.COM'. There is a small inset image of the album art showing a man in a car.

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'71 Black/4Bolt Rose neck. Only changed Nut & 5Way-SW in VG condition.
'71 Sunburst "Lefty" 1/4-Bolt One Piece Maple neck. Refret & Changed nut.
'71 Black/3Bolt Rose neck. Early 3-Bolt neck Strat, 1Strings Tree Steel Tremolo Assy

'72 Sonic Blue/3-Bolt Maple neck 1Strings Tree Steel Tremolo Assy
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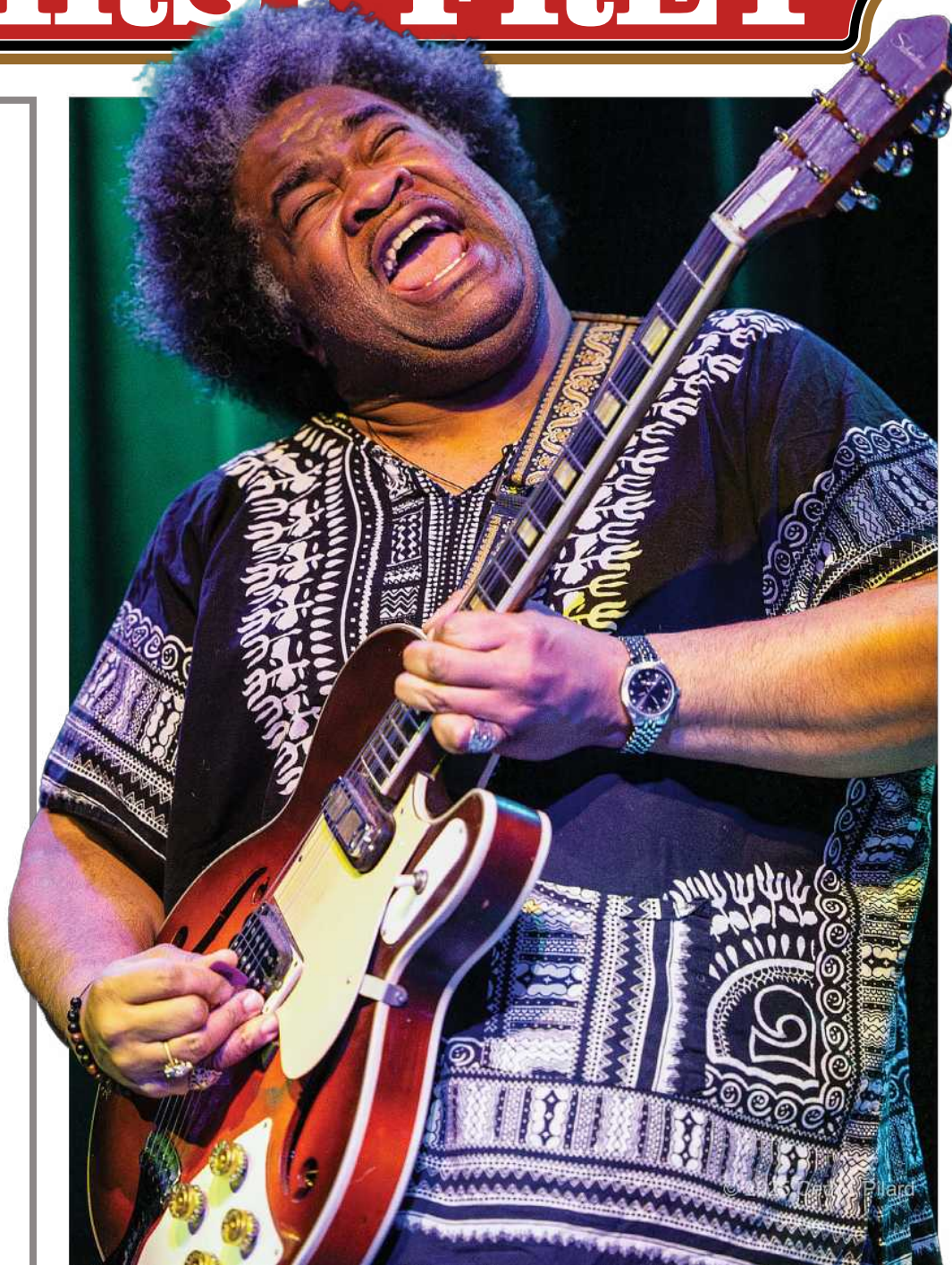
Paul McCartney's Firebird III at the new Rock & Roll Hall of Fame exhibit.

MCCARTNEY & WINGS EXHIBIT OPENS AT ROCK HALL

"Paul McCartney and Wings," the first major museum exhibition focusing on the former Beatle's first solo albums and his '70s band, opened at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame on May 15. Included are items from McCartney's personal archives, band members, and others.

"We got 10 instruments directly from Paul," said Andy Leach, Senior Director of Museum & Archival Collections. "His team and he have been so generous in terms of what they were able to lend us. He still uses a lot of his gear from back in the day, so we weren't able to get every single thing that you may know from footage and photos. We have his non-reverse Firebird III – a late-'60s guitar he played throughout the early '70s, including on sessions for *Ram*.

"We also have two of his main Ovation acoustic/electric guitars he used on the Wings Over the World tour (yielding 1976's *Wings Over America*; both the 12- and six-string are here. There's a Zemaitis acoustic bass and a Yamaha bass [that served as a backup to] the one he used throughout that period onstage and in recordings. There's a great Gibson Everly Brothers that you see him playing in photos. He used it on a lot of Wings recordings." – **Bret Adams**



JIMMY JAMES

Servin' Greens

Slivertone axe slinger Jabrille "Jimmy James" Williams of the band Parlor Greens just released *Emeralds*, a retro organ trio funk fest with pure guitar tones and groove for days. James stays busy with sessions and his other gig with the soul

horn ensemble the True Loves. But it's his influences that keep him rock steady.

What was the thought process for *Emeralds*?

We kinda did what we did last time, just

being ourselves. We'd get up in the morning and go with the flow. I get out of bed and start playing the first thing that comes to mind.

"Eat Your Greens" and "Francisco Smack" are super groovy.

I don't know if I can tell the story behind "Francisco Smack." It's kind of dirty. I guess I'll just leave it at that (laughs).

You cover "Jolene" by Dolly Parton.

I grew up listening to country and western music, but I never got to venture into that. So I thought, "Why not venture into it with a groove."

Is that your mother speaking on "Queen Of My Heart?"

That song is for my mom. That was the last recorded audio I have of her. She passed away in April of 2022. My friend Eva Walker from The Black Tones came up with the idea to put her voice on there. We were on the phone, and she said, "You should do that!" And I said, "You're a genius!" So I talked to Terry Cole at Colemine Records, and he said, "Yeah, sure!" It's a hard track to listen to because the music was coupled with her voice. The whole band pulled the song together.

You blend Catfish Collins and Steve Cropper. Are there any other guitarists that inspire you?

I was on the Jam Cruise, hanging out with the band Lettuce. George Porter, Jr. and Leo Nocentelli were on stage earlier. I went backstage, but I was too shy to say anything. I finally walked up to George and said, "Hi, Mr. Porter. I really dig your stuff." Nigel Hall from Lettuce walks up and says, "This is Jimmy James!" Porter was like, "Oh! I know who you are!" I was like, "What?" I was even more nervous (laughs)! Then I met Mr. Nocentelli and we ended up talking and taking a picture together.

People always talk about The Meters, but I brought up all the other stuff from his discography. He was really shocked that I knew his music. He said, "Nobody ever knows about that stuff!" I told him, "I'm a big fan. I dig into the discography of people I really like." He said, "Gimme your phone number! Let's stay in touch!" I'm like, "Leo Nocentelli has my phone number (laughs)!" I was freaking out.

I've been listening to him since I was a teenager. He was always a big hero to me because he really influenced how I play. I hear the stuff he did, not just with the Meters, but the sessions he did with Aaron Neville, Betty Harris, Lee Dorsey, and people like that. I quote stuff from him all the time, just like I do Steve Cropper.

There's always a whiff of James Brown to your sound, as well.

James Brown had a bunch of different guitar players, but Jimmy Nolen was his main guy. There's also Catfish, and those who don't get accounted for. I like his early stuff with The Famous Flames, like "Night Train," and the rhythm-and-blues stuff before he went to the funk side, but I love the funk. A lot of those guitar parts, like on "I Got The Feelin'," are two guitars with subtle parts. When you hear the isolated guitars, there's more to it than what most people think. The guitars answer each other.

What's next for Parlor Greens?

We're touring the West Coast, then we're supposed to play the New Orleans Jazz Festival. There's also the Colemine Review coming up with Kendra Morris and Taylor Williams. Then we're doing a short stint in the U.K. - Manchester, London, France, and the Netherlands. I played a song on Kendra Morris' record, and I'm supposed to do something for Taylor Williams, too. He's a great soul singer.

What are the True Loves up to?

The True Loves just got back from doing the Lancaster Roots and Blues Festival in Pennsylvania. We have new tracks that we're working on. Nigel Hall from Lettuce played organ on some of that stuff. We're going to Norway! Doing a package tour with the True Loves and Parlor Greens would be great. The only thing is I'd be onstage the whole time (laughs). - **Oscar Jordan**

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DAVE MASON

1946-2026

Dave Mason, co-founding guitarist/vocalist/songwriter of Traffic with Steve Winwood, Chris Wood, and drummer/vocalist Jim Capaldi, died April 19 at his home in Nevada. He was 79 and recently retired from touring due to complications from a heart condition.

Born in Worcester, England, he and Traffic started performing psychedelic rock in the mid '60s; Mason briefly left the band after its debut album, *Mr. Fantasy*, but returned for the follow-up, *Traffic*, which leaned on blues, folk, and jazz. Mason wrote and sang nearly half the songs, most notably "Feelin' Alright?." Mason

exited again, but returned for a 1971 tour and the subsequent live album, *Welcome to the Canteen*.

Away from Traffic, Mason made notable contributions as a session musician on some of the era's defining records; he played 12-string on The Jimi Hendrix Experience's 1968 cover of Bob Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower," then played shehnai – a South Asian double-reed instrument – on The Rolling Stones' "Street Fighting Man." He played guitar on George Harrison's 1970 *All Things Must Pass* and Wings' 1975 #1 hit "Listen to What the Man Said."

Mason joined Delaney & Bonnie and Friends for tours and released his first solo album, *Alone Together*, in 1970. That year, he joined Eric Clapton in Derek and The Dominos, and a few recordings were eventually released. *Dave Mason & Cass Elliot*, a duets album with the singer, was issued in '71. More solo albums and heavy touring followed.

His biggest hit single was 1977's "We Just Disagree," which hit #12 and propelled the album *Let it Flow* to #37 and platinum sales. Written for Mason by backing guitarist Jim Krueger, it was composed as Mason was going through a contract dispute.

Mason's last solo album on a major label was 1987's *Two Hearts*. He joined Fleetwood Mac in '93 and performed on *Time*. In '08, he released *26 Letters ~ 12 Notes*, his first new solo album in 21 years, and his final album was 2023's *A Shade of Blues*.

An autobiography co-written with Chris Epting, *Only You Know & I Know*, was published in 2024, and just prior to his death, Mason released a children's book, *Hole in My Shoe*, inspired by the 1967 song he wrote for Traffic.

"Dave Mason was my friend and a wonderful man," Joe Bonamassa told VG. "I was privileged to know him for many years and enjoyed his company greatly. My last visit with Dave was during the recording of *A Shade of Blues* in Nashville. He asked me to guest on a track or two, and it was my pleasure to do so. Steve Cropper was also on the session and we had a wonderful afternoon of music and guitar fun.

"Much has been said about Dave's musical accomplishments, and I'll remember him as a wonderful musician who wrote and recorded classics which will continue to be enjoyed by all in the years to come. Most important to me was his friendship and good nature, which I will miss greatly."

"I loved Dave," said his friend and contemporary, Mark Farner, who was featured in VG's January '25 "Pop 'N Hiss" examination of Grand Funk's *We're An American Band*. "Dave's indelible spirit came through in every aspect of his being. He was a stylist in every respect. His heart stood out in his guitar playing, his songwriting, and his vocal performances. A one-of-a-kind brother for sure. His time here on Earth has expired but his music *never will!*"

Though relations between Mason and the rest of Traffic remained strained, Winwood did offer a tribute after Mason's passing. Wood died in '83, Capaldi in '05. The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2004. – **Bret Adams**

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HARRY VALENTINO

Busking to Big Time

If busking is the art of urban street performance, then the band High Fade are masters of the form. Hailing from Edinburgh, Scotland, the trio delivers a brand of caffeinated funk rock that's made them social-media phenomenons. Their latest, *Twice as Nice*, is laced with the burp-gun rhythm chops and leads of guitarist Harry Valentino, who also serves as lead vocalist. VG talked with the great Scot.

High Fade is famous for its street busking performances.

I think busking is the gateway to growing thick skin to deal with the music industry. It's a tough business, but also you have to accept things won't happen overnight. Our busking videos help take us from being a band on the streets of Edinburgh to touring the world, selling out shows in major cities, and getting our music in the ears of people who have never heard funk rock before! Busking also was a lifeline in Edinburgh when we couldn't

get enough gigs to survive. I'll always be grateful to the people that supported us before our social media took off.

Is setting up for a street gig harder than a club gig?

Setup for a street show is the easiest ever. We mix it ourselves on a small PA speaker for bass and vocals, backed by a guitar amp and acoustic drums. There is also an art to getting people to stop; they might be on their way work, meeting a friend, or catching the train. People in Scotland can be very self-deprecating, but it keeps you humble and your feet on the ground. If you ever think yer "too big for your boots," the Scots will remind you where ye come from (laughs)!

How did High Fade come together? Seems like the musical chemistry has to be perfect to make your music work, as in "The Fly."

I started High Fade at 18, after playing in bands around Edinburgh. I got bored of the musical styles being played at the time and wanted to

push not only myself, but also my bandmates. It started with the song "Scorpion" and now we have a fully developed sound you hear in "The Fly," which is a sonic assault on the senses. The chemistry now feels the strongest its ever been.

You have a tremendously

a gile picking hand – most players can't play funk vamps that quick.

The rhythm side of things always fascinated me. It started with listening to Al Di Meola, John McLaughlin, and Paco de Lucía on the *Friday Night Live in San Francisco* album; that really was my introduction to guitar. Then I was a huge fan of Avenged Sevenfold and Synyster Gates was my favorite guitarist when I was younger. Later, I found the music of George Benson, Earth Wind & Fire, James Brown, and Al Green.

You turned down major-label deals to record *Twice as Nice* the way the band wanted.

Coming from a busking background, it really would feel like a kick in the teeth if we sold out now. We still control the music and do a lot of the work ourselves. We have a small team with one manager, two agents, and the help of a few wonderful people. Business-wise, I like to keep the High Fade machine small and agile, but also quick at making decisions, which is by far the most important element of a band – a lot of groups ponder for too long and don't take action. Some say we're crazy for turning down major labels, but I have seen them lock my friends into contracts that have left them feeling used, burnt out, and broke. We chose freedom.

What is that Tele-style solidbody you play?

It's a Suhr Modern T that started as a prototype loaner, but at the end of our first U.S. tour, the guys at Suhr kindly told me to keep it. I'm glad they did because it's become my main guitar and it really covers all of the bases. It's the only guitar I used on *Twice as Nice*.

You have a full pedalboard.

My pedalboard consists a PolyTune tuner, MXR Phase 90, CAE wah, Wampler Ego compressor, MXR Zakk Wylde OD that I've had this since I was 15, a TC Electronic Sub 'N' Up octaver, and TC Electronic Hall of Fame reverb. It's all plugged into a Marshall JMP 100-watt plexi with matching 4x12 cab with greenbacks.

Your guitar chops are magnificent, but so is bassist Oliver Sentance's mustache. Which is more important to the success of High Fade?

His 'stache is 100 percent our secret sauce – anyone can play fast on guitar. But without Oliver's mustache, the band loses its aura! – **Pete Prown**



BIRÉLI LAGRÈNE

Euro-Jazz Icon

More than 45 years ago, a French teenager named Biréli Lagrène achieved the impossible by reviving the sound, style, and technique of jazz icon Django Reinhardt. Today, Lagrène is an icon in his own right, with a huge body of albums, tours, and performances in styles from gypsy jazz to blazing electric fusion. On his latest solo album, *Elegant People*, Biréli reminds us that he can do it all, with characteristic humility and brilliance.

On “Kings Cross” and “Elegant People,” you blend straight jazz with overdriven fusion. You like tearing down barriers between styles of music.

Absolutely! You could say I’ve always been like that, mixing different guitar styles into the music I play. The album brings together some spices from the music I love to listen to, like John Coltrane, Weather Report, and others. I felt completely free during this recording and wanted to bring those influences together selectively, in just the right spots. I like to blend because it’s surprising to the listener and, often, to me too, but it has to be done well; otherwise, it falls flat. I’m lucky enough to have an instinct for what blends together and then make it work – I hope!

In “A Time for Love,” your guitar is blazing away on 16th notes, yet you never lose the melody.

Like every musician, I always try to stick as close as possible to the harmony, even when

soloing. What’s interesting is that those 16th notes just came to me while we were recording; it wasn’t pre-designed. I’m an improvisation player at heart, and that’s what came out. It just comes to me in the moment while we’re playing.

“Flair - Around Giant Steps” has some jazz, blues bends, and heavy power chords. How does the blues resonate in your playing?

Blues has always been an important part of my musical life. I really like Stevie Ray Vaughan, B.B. King, and others. The biggest takeaway for me is the way blues is played with so much heart. The soul speaks first, rather than technique.

Which guitars are you using on the record?

I endorse Fibonacci Guitars. They’re my favorite right now and I have a new signature model.

How about outboard gear?

For this record, I went direct into the board with a recording output. Pedal-wise, I used a Zendrive for distortion, some delay and reverb, and an Electro-Harmonix Freeze.

When you’re in the studio, dialing in various sounds, what makes a good guitar tone for you?

The most important thing is a great engineer who knows my sound and how to capture it. We spend time dialing it in together. But for me, the key is liking my tone in the original output with no effects added, like extra reverb. What I hear while recording is exactly what you’ll hear on the album.

When starting out, you were positioned as the new Django Reinhardt, which was exciting at the time, but boxed you in, creatively. How did you break out from that?

I was about 16 when I decided to break loose from Django and find my own thing. I didn’t know exactly what it would be, but I knew I had to discover my own voice. I was very lucky at that time to play with Stanley Clarke, Al Di Meola, Jaco Pastorius, Lenny White, Billy Cobham, and others. Those experiences really helped me find my musical path and, through them, their audiences discovered me.

Does Django’s playing still resonate with you?

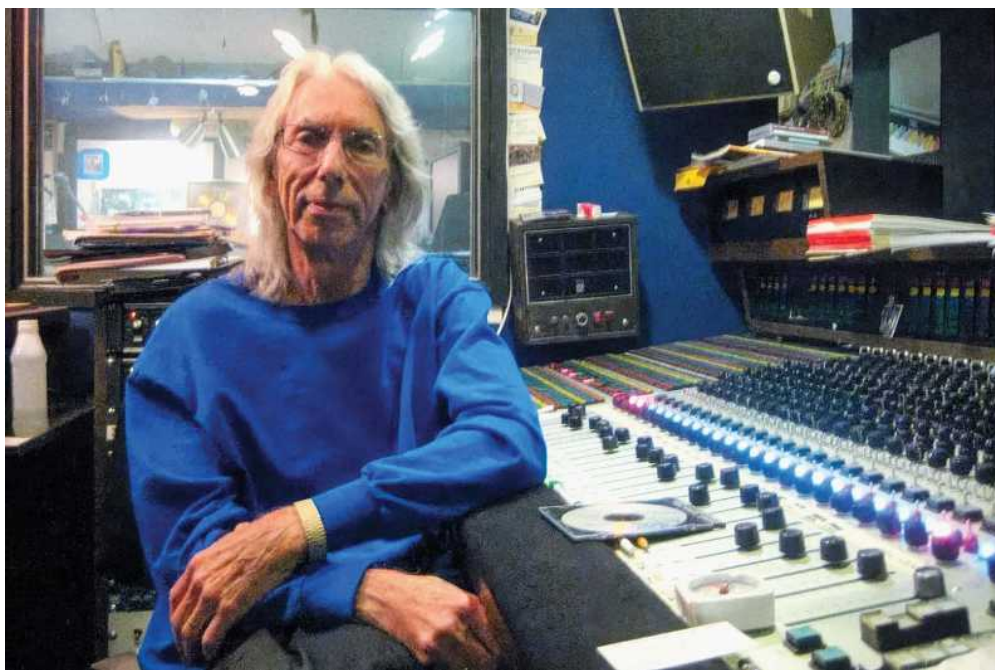
Absolutely! Django will always resonate with me because I learned so much from him. He’s almost like a spiritual father. Younger players should listen to him because so many important older musicians – Jeff Beck, John McLaughlin, Jimmy Page, B.B. King – loved Django, even though they didn’t play his style of jazz. They were drawn to his music and playing. Musically, Django is timeless.

In 1983 or ’84, you played the Berklee Performance Center for “Guitar Night,” with Charlie Byrd, Stanley Jordan, John Fahey, and others.

Wow – that was a very long time ago! I remember it being refreshing and energizing, but most of all, it was exciting. A real joy to play with those great musicians.

You’ve been a recording artist for more than 45 years. Does the guitar still have any mysteries for you?

Oh yes, the guitar still has mysteries for me and surprises me every day. I get most of those moments from just noodling around at home, but these days, I’m more focused on the sound than on technical improvements. Even after all this time, playing guitar, performing, and recording is my life. I wouldn’t know what else to do and I wouldn’t trade it for anything on Earth. It’s my greatest passion. – **Pete Prown**



WAYNE MOSS

1938-2026

Wayne Moss, Nashville A-Team guitarist, bassist, songwriter, producer, and studio owner, died on April 20. He was 88 and suffered from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Moss played pivotal roles in landmark country and rock recordings in the '60s and '70s. In '61, he founded Nashville's venerable Cinderella Sound recording studio.

A native of South Charleston, West Virginia, Bradley Wayne Moss began playing guitar at age eight, inspired by Chet Atkins. In 1953, Moss' mother took him to Nashville to meet Atkins, who discouraged him from pursuing music. That rejection only strengthened Moss' determination.

Moss played country on Charleston radio and TV, and rock with the Versitones. Later, he briefly worked in Bill Browning's band on the Grand Ole Opry-inspired WWVA Wheeling Jamboree before moving to Nashville in '59.

After playing in Brenda Lee's backup band, the Casuals, Moss and drummer Kenny Buttrey formed the Nashville-based rock band the Escorts. When he met fellow West Virginian, guitarist and harmonica player Charlie McCoy, Moss suggested he play electric bass, which McCoy mastered. The band, renamed Charlie McCoy and the Escorts, was active locally into the mid '60s.

After Moss and McCoy closed their short-lived Nashville nightclub in 1961, they opened

Cinderella Sound in Moss' garage. Expanded and modernized over the years, today it's one of Nashville's most-revered studios.

His primary electric guitar was a '54 Strat he bought new and personally refinished in red sunburst. As the neck and fretboard developed heavy wear, in 1960, he requested a replacement from Fender, which mistakenly sent him a rosewood Tele neck that Moss found satisfactory. The Strat remained his primary guitar well into the '70s.

Playing their way into steady Nashville session work, Moss and McCoy became part of the second generation of the famed A-Team. Moss' versatility and ability to create perfect accompaniment for any song enabled him to work well with country and rock singers. The two played the driving guitars on Tommy Roe's 1962 hit "Sheila," and Moss, Jerry Kennedy, Billy Sanford, and Roy Orbison played the riff (created by Orbison and Sanford) that opened and drove Orbison's 1964 hit "Oh! Pretty Woman."

Moss, McCoy, and Buttrey were among the players on the 1966 Nashville sessions for Bob Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde*. McCoy recalled Moss playing electric bass on "Rainy Day Women #12 and 35" while McCoy played trumpet. Moss' Strat was prominent on "I Want You" as he spun a memorable, melodic motif behind Dylan's vocal.

Ironically, Atkins, who'd counseled Moss against a musical career, began using him regularly on late-'60s RCA sessions, particularly with Waylon Jennings, Charley Pride, Porter Wagoner, and Dolly Parton. His snarling, twanging break on one Waylon hit garnered particular acclaim; Gordon Kennedy, son of the late producer/A-Team guitarist Jerry Kennedy, recalled "...when somebody asked my dad in an interview what his favorite guitar solo of all time was, his answer was 'Wayne Moss on... 'Only Daddy That'll Walk the Line.'"

Also a favorite solo of Vince Gill's, it proved so integral that Jennings' onstage Tele breaks referenced Moss'. "Waylon never could quite get it as Wayne played it," said Billy Sanford. "He and Waylon would joke about it."

Moss sometimes played bass, as on R&B singer Joe Simon's 1969 hit single "The Chokin' Kind."

In '69, Moss, McCoy, Buttrey, guitarist Mac Gayden, pedal steel guitarist Weldon Myrick, fiddler Buddy Spicher, and other Nashville sessioners recorded two albums of country-rock under the name Area Code 615, but never toured.

"In 1971, he decided he didn't want to be a studio player anymore," McCoy recalled. "He wanted to have a band and chase stardom." Barefoot Jerry, with Moss, Gayden, Buttrey, and bassist John Harris, became a pioneering Southern-rock band that toured and recorded a half dozen albums before disbanding in 1977.

"That was a real loss for Nashville when he dropped out," McCoy said. "He brought something new and fresh to the scene."

Moss still did occasional sessions; he and Chip Young created the complex steel-string/nylon string acoustic guitar figures on Parton's 1973 hit "Jolene." Moss also played in the "Hee-Haw" house band while running Cinderella and in '09 the Country Music Hall of Fame honored him as one of the "Nashville Cats." Four years later, he was inducted to the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame. He later sold his famous Strat (with both necks) and in later years, played a white Jazzmaster.

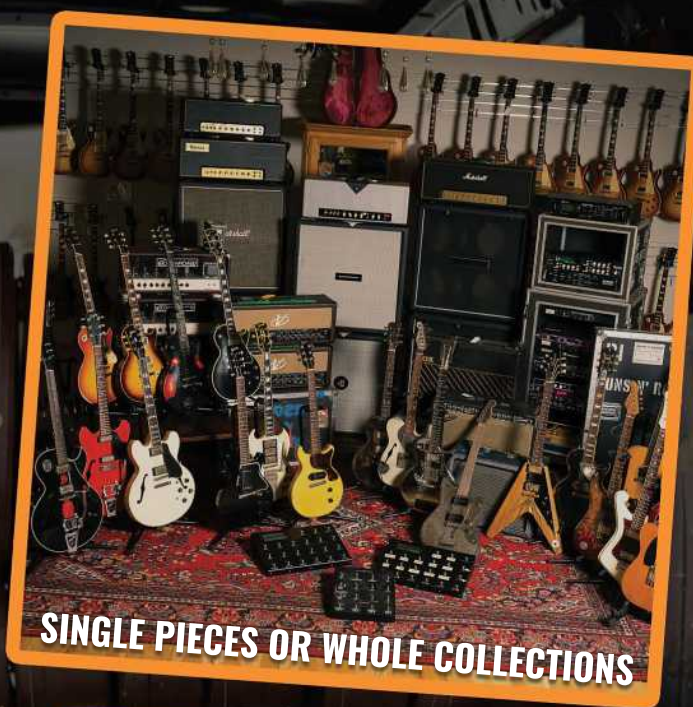
Sanford, who worked many sessions with Moss over the years, summarized his talent.

"He was just a natural guitar player. He listened. That's a lot of (it with) a studio musician. Listen to the song and to what everybody else is doing and try to jump in there and try to do your part. Wayne was one of those."

"Wayne's contributions to the Nashville music scene are too many to list," McCoy concludes. "Besides all of that, we were best friends and business partners. We will all miss him a lot." — **Rich Kienzie**



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NICK MYCIO

Jazz in the Ruins

Nick Mycio is a Berklee-trained jazz and fusion player who improvises in a manner that will entrance and bewitch the listener. Hailing from the war-torn countries of Ukraine and Russia, Mycio channels his thoughts and ideas into the music, as heard on *Please Plant Flowers*. Within its grooves, you can hear formidable phrases that bring to mind names like Pat Metheny, John Abercrombie, Julian Lage, and Kurt Rosenwinkel.

VG checked in with the blossoming fretboard ace, who's now based in Los Angeles.

How has war shaped this album?

I have lived in both Kyiv and Moscow, and the war became a major shaping force behind the record. You're watching places you've visited, gigged, and where you used to get khachapuri just get obliterated; at the same time you know you can never go back. I just want the conflict

to stop, so I wrote music based on that desire. Like the title of the album, when I die, I hope my loved ones will plant flowers for me.

Is guitarist John Abercrombie an influence? Your tone and approach are highly reminiscent.

I recently listened to Abercrombie's *Characters* for the first time. While not a direct influence, I do think that all musicians exist in a lineage and are influenced downstream. For example, every jazz musician, whether they admit it or not, has been influenced by Charlie Parker and Bud Powell; in that way, Mr. Abercrombie is an influence of mine. Listening to him now, I can hear how much of his sonic palette is imprinted on modern jazz guitar and, by extension, myself – especially his beautiful tone. My other influences would be 100 percent Kurt Rosenwinkel, Gilad Hekselman, and Julian Lage. My father, Wasil Mycio, is another big influence. He taught me how to play music

for most of my life, and I'm very lucky to have an educated musician as a father.

Your Zaletelj guitars are probably unfamiliar to our readers.

Zaletelj is an amazing shop in Slovenia. The owner, Luka Zaletelj, makes incredible instruments. I play an Amelia model, which is a headless hollowbody. I love the warm, deep tone his instruments provide, and am not exaggerating when I say his instruments are some of the best I've ever played.

I also have an original Klein. I think about 700 were made and they are the precursors to all modern ergonomic guitars – headless with a strange body, floating bridge, and dual output jack. It's such a cool-but-wacky thing.

What are your amps and outboard gear?

I use a Quilter Tone Block 202 and run it into 4x12 cab. For recording, I like to blend the live room sound from the cab and the DI signal from the back of the amp. Pedal-wise, my setup isn't super complicated and I use reverb and delay heavily – one pedal handles both for me, the Earthquaker Avalanche Run. I like it a lot because, aside from its beautiful, crystalline reverb, it has a reverse delay, which I love and is hard to find. The only other pedal I always have on is a Moollon parametric EQ. I use it to really bring out the beautiful midrange of the guitar.

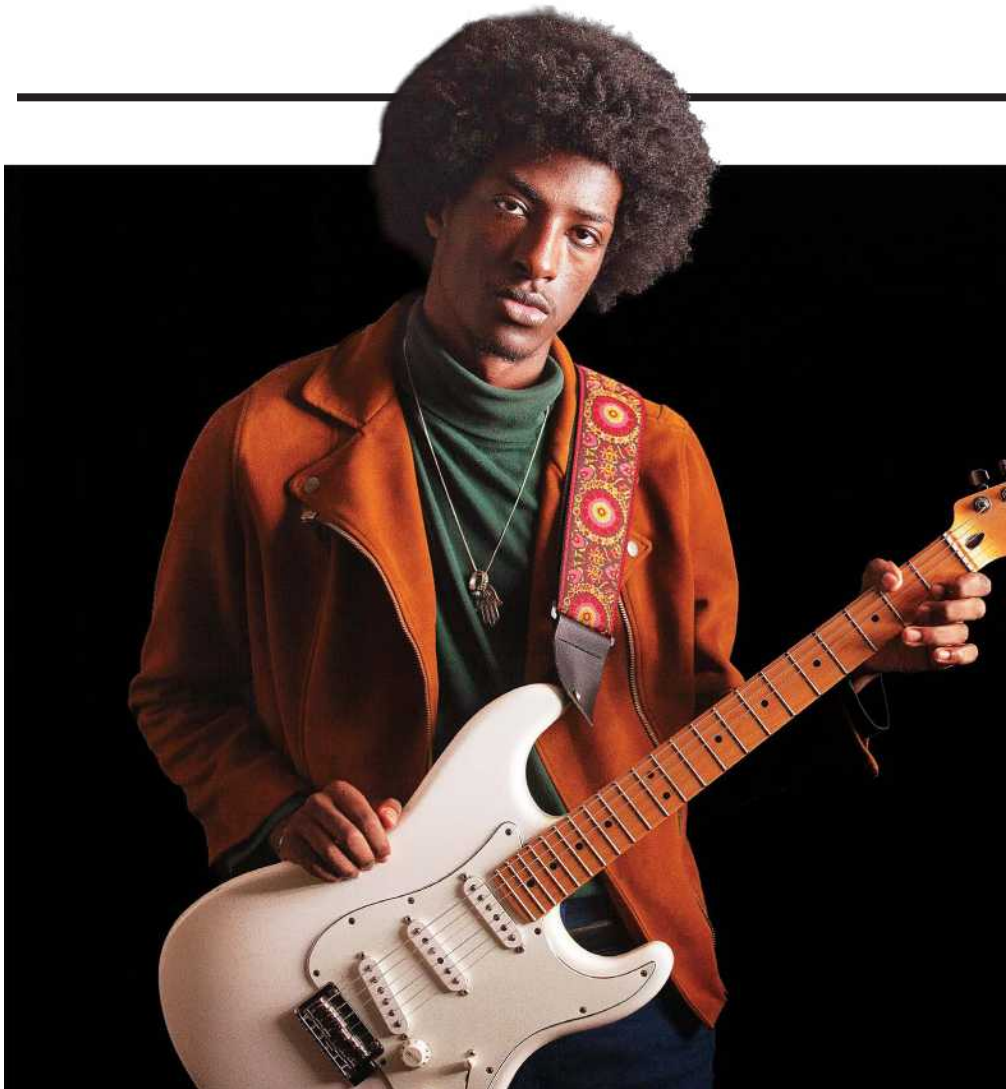
How does a jazz guitarist make a living these days?

Most professional musicians these days wear a few different hats. For me, it's a four-way split; about 30 percent of my income is from gigs and tours, and another 30 percent comes from session work either for other artists or film projects. Lastly, there's 25 percent from private students and another 15 percent from royalties, merch sales, at shows, and streams.

In the solo on "Elegy for Norman," are you thinking in terms of scales or chords? And do we hear a quick quote from Miles Davis' bop classic "Four"?

When I'm improvising, I don't really play licks or pre-learned material. I'm thinking mostly of harmonic function and trying to play with that. I ask myself, "Am I moving away, arriving somewhere, or have I arrived?" For solos to have strong statements and melodies, the music needs to be going somewhere. A lot of improvising can become very noodley, and I try to avoid that.

As far as quoting that phrase from Miles Davis, I went back and listened, and I *do* hear the line. It sounds very close to "Four," which is funny because that wasn't intentional, yet it illustrates a certain truth that the more music you learn, the more of it lives in your head. And sometimes, that music just comes out on its own. – **Pete Prown**



AMANI BURNHAM

Psychedelic Flashback

Like Robin Trower, Frank Marino, and Stevie Ray Vaughan, newcomer Amani Burnham doesn't hide his admiration for Jimi Hendrix. More importantly, the Connecticut guitarist, who was born in Ethiopia, delivers many of the nuances that are missed by so many Hendrix devotees. Since he started posting videos on social media in 2023, Amani has amassed more than 240,000 followers and nearly 30 million views. With his debut album, *Roots & Wings*, Burnham goes on the attack, burning up the neck of his Stratocasters with psychedelic leads steeped in wah, uni-vibe, and fuzz, yet also R&B chording and double-stops that give it a solid, soulful foundation.

Another tweak: Burnham picks with his thumb, adding a blues-based attack that's hard to replicate with a pick.

"Blues, like nature, has to keep evolving," the 20-year-old says. "You can trace heavy metal, prog rock, grunge, everything, back to it. I want to be a part of that evolution."

You don't hide your Hendrix influence. When did you discover Jimi and begin developing your own approach?

I first picked up a guitar at age 10 or 11, but didn't dive into Jimi's music 'til I was 15. My dad played his version of "Johnny B. Goode" for me because I loved Chuck Berry so much. My approach was to learn the basic format of his song, then come up with whatever I want for a solo or rhythm. I never picked apart his solos note for note. Instead, I tried to spin his licks, and ideas from other guitarists, in my own way.

Hendrix loved John Lee Hooker, Lightnin' Hopkins, and Muddy Waters. Do you listen to the original blues players?

I used to listen to a lot of the pure blues guys, like Elmore James and Buddy Guy, to learn how to play blues. Now that I've gotten more into songwriting and other styles, I find myself listening to a lot of the Beatles, Thin Lizzy, and Bob Dylan. They all give me

something new to learn. Frank Zappa is a big guitar influence – his music is so different from everyone else. Also, Jeff Beck because he uses his thumb and fingers, along with Tommy Emmanuel, Stevie Ray Vaughan, and of course, Chuck Berry.

You have an unusual picking style, primarily using your thumb. How did that develop?

I've used my thumb since I started, just because it was comfortable and natural. I started playing every day at age 15, but never tried to switch to a pick. I use the skin of my thumb, not the nail, and I really like the tone it gives.

You're a fine rhythm guitarist, as heard on "Bluejay." Did you specifically work on that side of your playing?

I admit, I mostly worked on soloing in my early years of guitar, but a few years ago I told myself that rhythm guitar is just as important and vital to what makes a song good. I also started off playing drums, which helped me develop a feel for rhythm and time.

Which guitars did you use on the album?

I used a Strat and my Epiphone Les Paul.

Do you have a wood preference with your Strats?

I don't; I just play what sounds the best to me. After the album was recorded, PRS sent me a Fiore that I really like.

How about pedals?

I mainly use a Dunlop Fuzz Face and a Vox wah; in the studio, I also used an Ibanez Tube Screamer and Dawner Prince Viberator uni-vibe on one song. I'm sure I'll get more pedals as time goes on.

More than 55 years after his death, players are still fascinated by Hendrix and his playing. Why?

I think people love his playing because it sounds very free. Jimi played what he felt in that moment, so his music comes out honest to the ears.

You were born in Ethiopia. Is there anything about Ethiopian culture still present in your playing?

I wouldn't say in my actual playing, but definitely in my songwriting. Since I never got to meet my birth parents, I have songs and lyrics asking questions about what they might've been like. Also, on the cover of *Roots & Wings*, I'm wearing an Ethiopian shirt.

Have you met any of the living artists originally associated with Hendrix, like bassist Billy Cox or engineer Eddie Kramer?

No, I've never had the fortune to meet those gentlemen and maybe never will, but I'm okay with that. I'm on my own path at the end of the day, and that's what matters most. Still, it would be an honor to meet Billy or Eddie – they're legends. – **Pete Prown**



ROY BOOK BINDER

1943-2026

“The worst thing someone could do is have a poster that says, ‘Come see Roy Book Binder, blues guitarist,’” the man known as “The Book” told Lancaster Online. “It’s the kiss of death. Who wants to see one of them? I consider myself an entertainer and a storyteller who plays some guitars.”

The “master player, singer, and raconteur,” as Jorma Kaukonen termed him, died March 3 at age 82.

Book Binder sometimes performed and taught at Fur Peace Ranch, the music camp Kaukonen founded in Ohio. “He was sometimes self-deprecating about his guitar skills, which was complete nonsense,” Kaukonen wrote online. “He was deceptively low-key but in reality immense of personality and spirit. He would fill any room with his joyous tales from life as well as his music.”

Born in Queens, New York, Bookbinder (his birth name) joined the Navy after high school and bought his first guitar while stationed in Italy. Upon returning to New York, he befriended Dave Van Ronk and took \$5 lessons from Rev. Gary Davis. When Roy saved up \$50, the blind street singer, 47 years his senior, agreed to take him on the road.

His first album, *Travelin’ Man*, was named for a song by obscure country bluesman Pink Anderson. As he explained on NPR’s “Fresh Air” in 1987, “Pink Anderson was from Spartanburg, South Carolina. He made two records in 1929, and that was that. He disappeared from the recording industry. And he spent his entire career working medicine shows, little carnival deals, throughout the South. But me and my friend Paul Geremia started to visit him, and we took him out on tour once before he died.”

Book’s 1971 debut was produced and engineered by Adelphi Records’ Gene Rosenthal, who previously recorded John Fahey and the early-’60s “rediscovery” sessions of Mississippi John Hurt and Skip James. Of the acclaimed album, Rosenthal proudly states, “It was perfect.”

Beginning in ’76, Book Binder lived on the road, driving his motor home to clubs and folk festivals. In the late ’80s, he made nearly 30 appearances on the Nashville Network’s “Nashville Now.”

In a workshop with fingerpicker/instructor Kyle Orla, he said, “I know eight chords and four ways to make them.”

“He almost always played alternating-thumb

[style], even on the more-Delta blues kinds of things,” says singer/songwriter/picker David Hamburger. “The most distinctive thing wasn’t the particular playing; it was the total presentation – the songs he chose, the stories behind them, his interactions with the people who created them, his vocal delivery as a singer and a storyteller, and the effortless and musical way he could talk, play, and sing simultaneously. The best example is ‘Candy Man’ from *Live Book...Don’t Start Me Talking*.”

Two Book Binder quotes stuck with Hamburger: “If you’re enjoying yourself, the audience will sense that, and they’ll enjoy themselves, too,” and “You’re not playing for the five guitar players in the front row. You’re playing for their friends, their wives, the people they dragged down to the folk club to hear you.”

“The main thing about Roy is that he made everything his own and really thought in terms of putting on a show,” Hamburger stresses. “He made you feel, from the stage, like you were getting to personally hang out with the hippest cat in the room. Even the true stories felt like tall tales, improbable meetings with unlikely musical legends, told with unerring timing and dry, off-kilter delivery. Often as not, he would recount these yarns while reeling off the most aptly-timed, off-handedly perfect array of licks, chords, and accompaniment figures on one of his vintage flat-tops. He did a lot of syncopated things, both in the bass and using three- and four-note chord shapes up the neck. He thought mostly in terms of chord moves, albeit ones that did a lot of melodic lifting.”

After Adelphi, Book recorded for Blue Goose, Flying Fish, and Rounder, and released eight albums on his own PEGleg Records, whose motto was “We walk our own way.”

He also made instructional videos for Homespun and Vestapol.

“I knew Roy for more than 65 years,” says Vestapol president and fellow guitarist Stefan Grossman. “What a character! A lovely guitar player but a great storyteller. We were both children of Rev. Gary Davis, whose music and personality greatly influenced Roy’s playing. Roy carried on the Piedmont blues tradition. His playing was clean and precise, and against this he would sing and talk in a slow drawl that could either tell a story or have his audience in laughter. He was a man of the road, traveling in his van that served as his home. As Roy would say, ‘Another good man done gone.’”

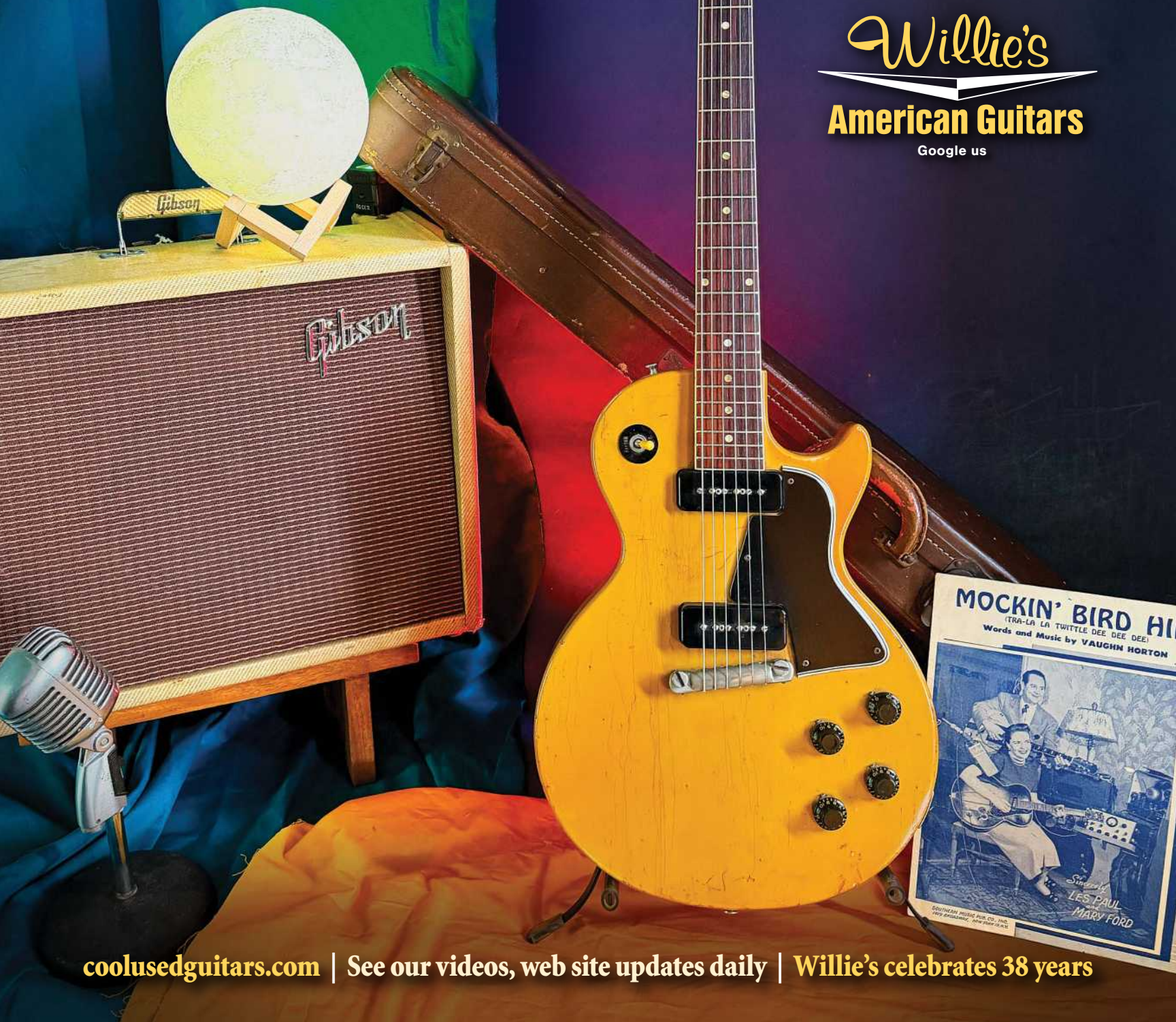
A tune Book Binder wrote about Davis could easily describe the man himself. “His fingers picked the guitar, they danced up and down the board,” it goes. “Passed his days just singing and waitin’ on the Lord.” – **Dan Forte VG**

We ask, undervalued pre '65 electric?

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FROM GYPSY JAZZ TO QUEEN

A Zero Fret Tale

BY MICHAEL WRIGHT
THE DIFFERENT STRUMMER

Until a half-century ago, it was common to see guitars with a “zero fret.” Then they disappeared almost overnight. Today, there’s a revival of these oddities on guitars that invoke classics from the ’50s and ’60s or sustain the spirit of Django Reinhardt.

A “zero fret” on a guitar, banjo, mandolin, or other stringed instrument is an extra fret placed just in front of the nut and is usually intended to improve open string intonation and allow for lower string action in the first position. It can also facilitate construction because the positioning and slotting of the nut do not have to be quite as precise when a zero fret marks the beginning of the active string length.

Zero frets have a long pedigree. Just when they began to be used is unknown, but they may have appeared beginning with the use of wire strings in the mid 1880s. Zero frets were definitely around by the early 20th Century in Europe and continue to be employed to this day.

ITALIAN ORIGINS?

One of the first luthiers to use zero frets was

the Italian composer and concert guitarist Luigi Mozzani, in Cento, Italy, who began making guitars in the late 1890s; a Mozzani dated to 1904 has a zero fret. By 1908, he was building zero-fretted guitars with a single cutaway. Whether he developed the concept or learned it from someone else remains to be discovered.

In 1911, an 11-year-old boy named Mario Maccaferri was apprenticed to Mozzani and went on to become both a renowned luthier and classical guitarist. He opened a shop in ’23, making guitars with zero frets and cutaways, like his master. In ’32, Maccaferri designed guitars with zero frets and cutaways for builder Henri Selmer in Paris, and they became legendary after Django Reinhardt began playing one while creating “Gypsy jazz guitar.” Maccaferri stayed less than a year, but Selmer continued to produce guitars based on his design until ’52, all with zero frets and cutaways.

Maccaferri moved his family to the United States in 1939 (one step ahead of the Nazis), where in ’49 he developed the all-plastic Islander ukulele for radio-TV personality Arthur Godfrey. In ’53, he launched the all-plastic Mastro guitar. Both had zero frets.

GERMAN CZECHS AND THE BEATLES

Zero frets remained endemic in Italy and

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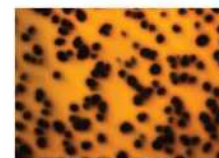
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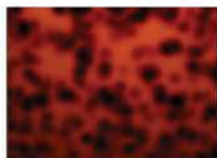
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1953 Maccaferri G-40,
made of Dow Styron
plastic, a small version of
Mario Maccaferri's Selmer.

**1965 Framus Golden
Television 5/119-54**
hollowbody electric
distributed by Philadelphia
Music Company (left).

1967 Höfner 459TZ,
companion to the
famous 500/1 Beatle
Bass, with built-in fuzz
and treble boost.

**1958 Carmelo Catania
Chitarra Tip 25P,** similar
to what Oliviero Pignini's
Eko guitars began to
distribute in '59.

certain other parts of Europe, especially in Schönbach (now called Luby, in the Czech Republic). During the early Reformation at the turn of the 15th century, the Protestant followers of Jan Hus settled there. The Austro-Hungarian Emperor sent the army to eliminate them, then relocated a large community of German Roman Catholic luthiers to the area in order to secure it for the Church. Stringed-instrument making has been conducted there ever since.

One of the descendants of those Schönbach luthiers was Fred Wilfer. After World War II, Wilfer decided that living free in Germany would be better than being under Soviet rule, so he and a group of fellow luthiers relocated to Erlangen in Bavaria, West Germany. There, he founded Franconian Musical Instruments, turning its Framus brand into one of the largest in Europe; Framus guitars had zero frets.

In the late 1950s, fueled in part by the exploding post-war baby boom, American folk music became all the rage, and with it came a surge in demand for guitars. The American guitar industry was making lots of high-end and mass-market guitars, but could not build enough to meet the need. In '58, the Philadelphia Music Company became the exclusive importers and distributors of Framus guitars, and players in the United States were introduced to zero frets.

Another guitar maker from Schönbach who relocated to Bavaria after WWII was the shop founded by Karl Höfner in 1887. In the early '60s, Höfner's star rose along with the Beatles, thanks largely to Paul McCartney's use of a Höfner bass. Höfner guitars and basses also featured zero frets.

One of the earliest German luthiers in Schönbach was Caspar Hopf, whose family

business continued following the war; Willy Hopf and his sons joined the emigration to Wiesbaden, near Frankfurt. Some Hopf guitars were subcontracted to other German or Italian makers, but most had zero frets.

Other German makers to use zero frets included Klira in the '60s, Rockinger in the '70s, and Huttli into the early '80s.

FOLK AND SURF

Zero frets remained in use in Italy, as well. In '59, the accordion maker Oliviero Pignini, aware of the growing desire for guitars, established the EKO company in Castelfidardo to distribute acoustic guitars made in Sicily by Carmelo Catania, one of Italy's largest guitar makers. His guitars had zero frets.

As the '60s dawned, the folk revival was shifting into high gear, and pop-rock bands such as The Beach Boys and Ventures were



1965 Wandré Modelé Karak built by Wandre Pioli in Cavriago, Italy, with a plastic-backed aluminum neck!

1968 Welson Jazz Vedette (left), a kind of psychedelic Italian take on a Fender Jazzmaster.

1964 Watkins Rapier 33, sold by amp-maker Watkins Electronic Music (WEM); whether they built all, some, or none of these is unknown.

1972 Gretsch 7660 Gretsch Chet Atkins Nashville, follow-up to the 6120.

bringing increased attention to electric guitars. In '61, EKO began making acoustic and electric guitars in Castelfidardo – also with zero frets – and contracted with the LoDuca Brothers of Milwaukee to import and distribute EKO guitars. EKO quickly joined inexpensive American guitars by Kay, Harmony, and Valco as one of the more popular beginner guitar brands.

While not all Italian makers relied on zero frets, several others outfitted guitars with them including Wandré, Welson, Frima, Zero Sette (Juliett), and Benito & Umberto Cingolani (Gemelli, Marinucci, D'Scala). Other European guitar companies to use zero frets included Egmond (Holland), Muzicka Naklade (Yugoslavia), Futurama (Czechoslovakia), Musima (East Germany), Defil (Poland), and Aelita (Russia). Burns, Watson, Shergold, Wilson, Fenton-Weill,

and Vox guitars made in England, as well as “Ned Callan,” and (in the '70s) Hayman. New Zealander Ray Simpson made zero-fret guitars in the '60s.

There were also international hybrids; some Baldwin hollowbody electrics with zero frets had bodies made in Italy and necks made by Burns of London, then were assembled in Arkansas!

AMERICAN ZEROES

Framus guitars may have been the first sold in America with zero frets, but Chet Atkins probably deserves the thanks for their widespread adoption in the U.S. Atkins was, famously, a Gretsch guitar endorser, having received the signature Chet Atkins Hollow Body (later Nashville), in 1954, followed by the Chet Atkins Solid Body ('55), Country Gentleman, and Tennessean (both '58). For

'59, Atkins requested that a zero fret be added, which Gretsch dubbed the new “action-flow fret nut.”

In '62/'63, Gretsch added the zero fret to some deluxe models, including the White Falcon, Country Club, Jet Firebird, and Duo Jet, and throughout the '60s and '70s, many were outfitted, from the Astro-Jet all the way up to the Beast models in '79.

In addition to manufacturing, Gretsch was also a distributor, and one of the lines it handled (for the eastern half of the U.S.) was guitars made by Valco (known as National Dobro Company until 1942). In '62, Valco launched a line of guitars with “Res-O-Glas” fiberglass bodies; its Coronado II and Martini-que were outfitted with zero frets perhaps inspired by their distributor's guitars, but Valco was also competing with imports such as Framus and EKO, which had zero frets.



1979 Gretsch Beast BST-1000, one of the last original zero frets.

1965 Magnatone Zephyr Model X-5 (left), produced as part of their last line after Estey moved them to Pennsylvania.

1966 Standel Model 101 Custom Deluxe designed by Sam Koontz and probably built at the Harptone case factory in Newark.

1975 Carvin CM95 with neck made for it by Höfner.

By '64, Valco's fiberglass line had expanded to six other zero-fret electrics as well as the resophonic Folk Star acoustic, which were part of the line until the company's demise in '68.

ZERO-FRET-O-MANIA

At the height of the guitar boom, some amplifier companies began making guitars, many with zero frets. Magnatone was purchased by Estey Organs in '66, moved to Western Pennsylvania and produced solidbodies with zero frets. That same year, Standel briefly contracted with luthier Sam Koontz to make zero-fret guitars at the Harptone case factory in Newark, New Jersey, and Ampeg began building guitars, though they didn't acquire zero frets until they became imported from Japan in '72. In '68, Kustom began producing zero-fret guitars in Chanute, Kansas.

A few other small guitar makers used zero frets, including music store owner Koob Veneman of Hyattsville, Maryland, who began making Kapa guitars in '62; his Continental models introduced in '66 sported zero frets. Semie Moseley's Mosrite guitars put a zero fret on its Ventures models in '63. Murph guitars, produced by Pat Murphy in San Fernando had them. Mosrite customer Joe Hall founded Hallmark guitars in '66, and in '67 unveiled the Swept-Wing, fiddle-cut Stradette, and Mosrite-ish Sterling, all with zero frets. Some of Carvin's guitars made in the early/mid '70s in Covina, California, had necks made by Höfner with zero frets.

Zero frets were not limited to electric guitars or smaller brands. In the mid '60s, Gibson put them on its budget classical guitars with its own brand as well as Epiph-

one. In '68, National's steel-string acoustic dreadnoughts had them.

JAPANESE ZEROES

Zero frets appeared rarely, if ever, on Japanese guitars made before '66, right around the time they were proliferating the landscape. Partly, this was to be more competitive with less-expensive American and European guitars, but it occurred around the time Semie Moseley contracted with Firstman to make Ventures models after the band became wildly popular in Japan.

Japanese exporters such as Kawai, Teisco, Guyatone, Aria, Yamaha, Tokai, and others started installing them on their new models, while companies such as Firstman and Honey that focused on their domestic market, also began using zero frets. When the first "copy guitars" based on popular American designs



1968 Gibson C-0 with zero fret rarely seen on classicals, also used on Epiphones at the time.

1969 Yamaha SG-3C, the most -progressive design from a line introduced in '66.

1978 Kramer 650G, one of Kramer's early fancy aluminum-necked guitars with a ebonol fretboard.

2005 Eastwood Hopf Saturn 63 – a solid, Korean-made replica of a classic German design.

2025 Hallmark by Shade Bass, a modern take on the rare vintage classic.

appeared at the end of the '60s and early '70s, most still featured zero frets. By the mid '70s, when Japanese copying got serious, their zero frets went away.

HIGH-END ZEROES

Zero frets showed up occasionally on mainstream American electrics, including Kramer aluminum-necked guitars when they debuted in '76. Founded by Gary Kramer and Dennis Berardi, they used zero frets until the early '80s, when they switched to wooden necks.

From '84 until '87, Guild built a version of Queen guitarist Brian May's Red Special that included a zero fret and yielded the Brian May BHM-1. A revised edition was brought back in '93, again with a zero fret. Three production versions were introduced in '94, of which only the Pro model had the

zero fret. In the early 2000s, the Burns guitar company released more factory copies with zero frets.

MODERN VINTAGE ZEROES

If the Copy Era curtailed the '60s rage for zero frets, the arrival of double-locking vibratos at the end of the '70s was a death knell. Adjustable locking nuts made zero frets irrelevant, but they are still with us on modern guitars that take inspiration from vintage models.

Circa 2000, Bob Shade began making reproductions of the Hallmark Swept-Wing, and started Hallmark by Shade, which offers custom and production versions of Hallmark and other Mosrite-inspired models. While some newer '60s-themed guitars don't have them, most sport zero frets.

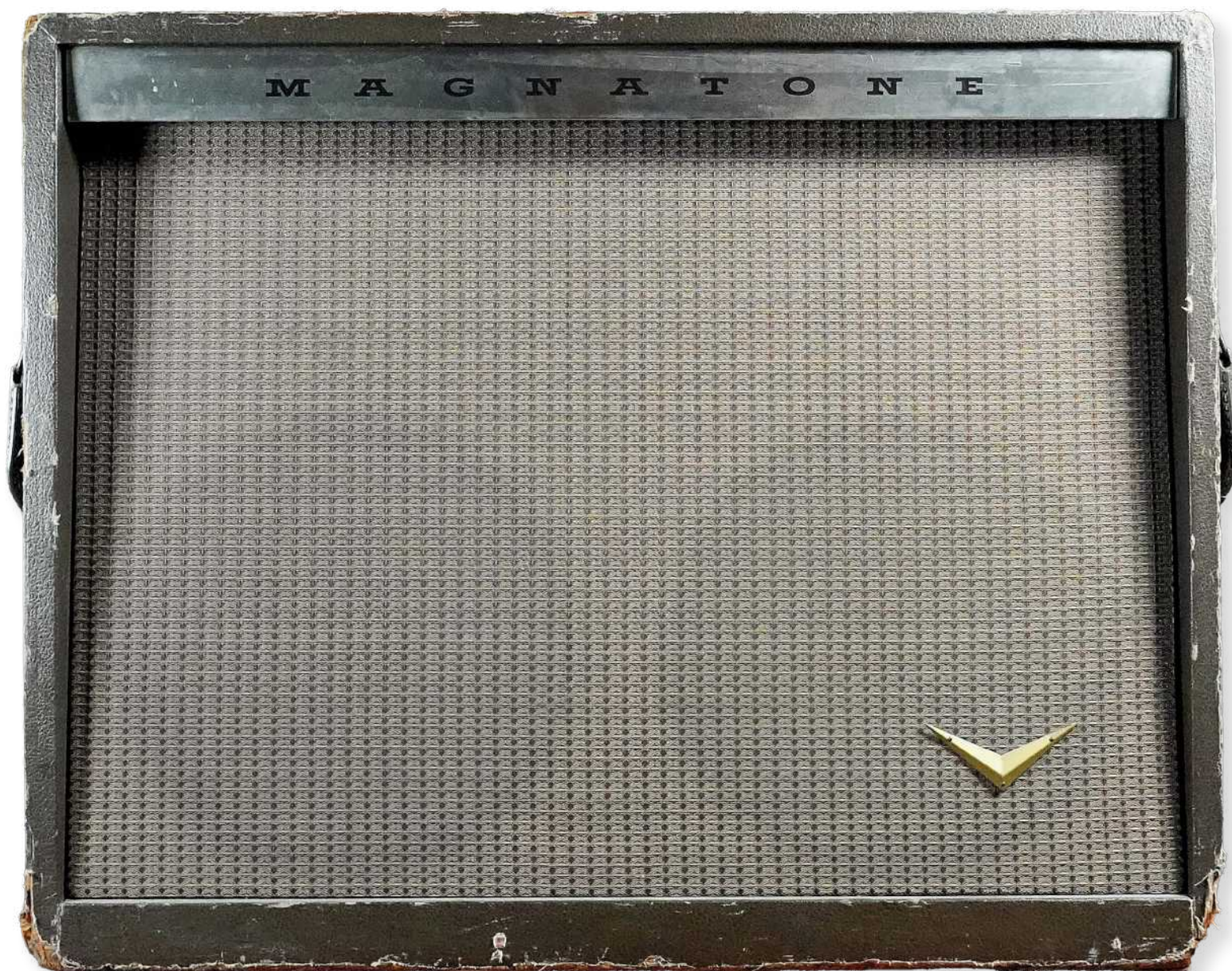
In 2001, Mike Robinson began commis-

sioning Eastwood versions of classic vintage solidbody guitars made at high-end shops in Korea and China, many of which have zero frets.

In 2015, Murph guitars were revived by a company in Burbank that produces near-replicas including the zero fret. Gretsch offers the Chet Atkins Nashville G6120T-59 with a zero fret.

Finally, almost all Gypsy-jazz guitars use them, including popular versions by Gitane, Eastman, Altamira, as do virtually all independent luthiers. Even Selmer recently announced a hand-made revival of its legendary Jazz Guitar, ensuring the zero-fret tradition started by Mozzani and Maccaferri more than a century ago lives on into modern times!

Special thanks to Michael Newton.



PITCH PERFECT

The Magnatone 260A

— BY DAVE HUNTER —

As a pioneer of the stereo guitar-amp craze, Magnatone is best known for amps like the 280 combo played by Buddy Holly. For many players, however, monophonic reproduction is a better option, and this '59 260A combo perfectly fits that bill.

Magnatone has a storied history, with origins in the Hawaiian-guitar boom of the early 20th century. Long before

the arrival of the tech-loaded combos of the late '50s and early '60s (upon which the revitalized modern lineup is largely

1959 MAGNATONE 260A

- Preamp tubes: four 12AX7, two 6CG7
- Output tubes: two 5881 (or 6L6GC)
- Rectifier: 5U4GB
- Controls: Ch1 Loudness, Treble, Bass, Mellow/Normal; Ch2 Loudness, Treble, Bass, Normal/Bright; tremolo Intensity and Speed
- Speakers: Originally two Alnico 12" Oxford 12K5R-1
- Output: approximately 30 watts RMS

based), its roots lay in the California-based Dickerson Musical Instrument Company of the '30s, which supplied steel guitars to the student market until it was bought out by Art Duhamell in 1946. With the market shifting toward amplified instruments, Duhamell started building small guitar amps under the Magna Electronics name,

Amp and photos courtesy of David Beason.

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which spurred the “Magnatone” brand on the Hawaiian-themed, mother-of-toilet-seat (a.k.a. MOTS) combos the company manufactured in its early years.

In ’59, Magna Electronics merged with the Estey Organ Company, which had shifted from pipe to electric organs in ’54, and even as it began making keyboards, Magnatone continued moving into the guitar market; the amps it made from ’58 to late ’62/early ’63 ranked with some of the best on the market. They were priced to reflect it, too; the top-of-the-line stereo Magnatone 280 of 1958 cost about 15 percent more than Fender’s Bassman and high-powered Twin amps of the same year. And though they strode only briefly across the top of the heap, Magnatone amps acquired notable players; Buddy Holly was joined by Flying V-wielding bluesman Lonnie Mack, beat-

There’s a lot going on in the chassis and on the control panel. Note the replacement Jensen.

coining Bo Diddley, Neil Young, Jimmy Bryant, and others.

In the mid ’60s, Magnatone’s amp designs mutated in less-fashionable directions as the parent company focused more and more on the organ business. By the time it moved manufacturing to Pennsylvania in ’66, the guitar-centric amps of the brand’s golden age were gone – though the company still blew its horn now and then, like with the Monster model (VG, February ’18).

With all of that as our back story, this ’59 260A clearly comes from the company’s

heyday. Owned by VG reader David Beason, it’s in very good (and mostly original) condition other than some scuffed corners. And while “just” a mono amp, its spacious 2x12” cab converts the dual-5881 output stage’s 30 watts into a room-filling sonic experience, especially with the signature vibrato pumping.

“Far and away my favorite thing about the sound of this amp is the all-tube vibrato,” says Beason. “It’s really lush and sounds great both with clean sounds as well as with gain.”

Unlike the “tremolo” on most amplifiers, the effect built into the 260A and other larger models from Magnatone was true pitch-shifting *vibrato*. A complex circuit, it required five tube stages from two 6CG7 dual-triodes and half a 12AX7 along with related capacitors and resistors. The effort

The circuit is something of a rat's nest, but the amp is well put together.

was rewarded with a liquid, three-dimensional sonic wobble like nothing else available at the time (though the more-complex vibrato in Fender's larger Professional Series blond and brown amps of 1960-'63 came close).

Each of the 260A's channels has two inputs, a Loudness control (volume), individual Treble and Bass controls, and a tone switch that offers Mellow/Normal on Channel 1 and Normal/Bright on Channel 2. The vibrato section has knobs for Intensity and Speed, an input for the single-button footswitch, and an output for Remote Speaker.

The preamp circuits behind each channel had their tone stages placed after the first 12AX7-driven gain stage but before the Loudness potentiometer, which fed into a second gain make-up stage comprised of another 12AX7 triode for each. The topology was not unlike what Fender moved to in the brown- and black-panel amps of the '60s, but it was executed quite differently.

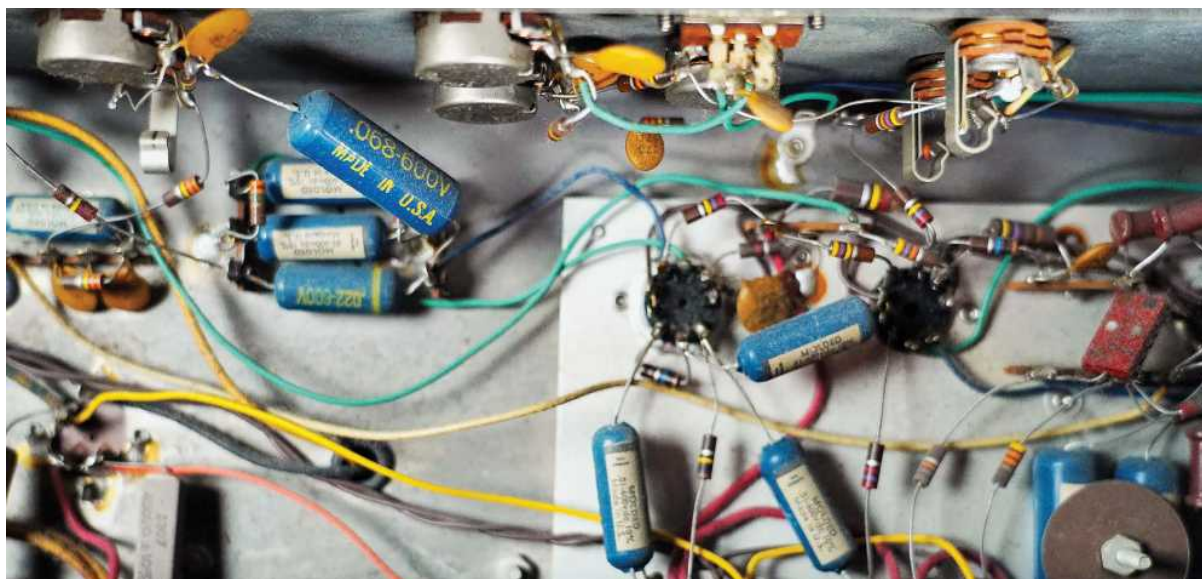
The 260A's output stage opened with a split-load (a.k.a. cathodyne) phase inverter afforded by a remaining 12AX7 triode, which fed into the push/pull 5881s in cathode-bias, with no cathode-bypass cap. The arrangement helped to maintain headroom and clarity at this stage, as did the negative feedback loop around the output stage. Add it all together and it's indicative of an amp designed to remain clean, clear, and punchy as high on the Loudness dial as possible, though it will break up when pushed hard enough, and Beason's experience bears that out.

"The 260A is pretty versatile for most styles of music," Beason says. "I might go a different direction if I was wanting a great deal of gain, but for most clean sounds and moderate gain, it's a great-sounding amp. It handles pedals very well, but can also create its own overdrive if you get it loud enough."

A peek inside the chassis reveals rat's-nest point-to-point wiring with a few short tag strips to help hold things together. It uses several high-quality components and is put together quite well. This example is impressively original, too; one of the 12" Oxford 12K5R-1 Alnico speakers was replaced with a ceramic Jensen from a few years later, but otherwise not much has been changed. Considering the skyrocketing prices of top-tier amps of the era, the 260A or another Magnatone like it is worth checking out if you're a fan of juicy al-

The vibrato includes Intensity and Speed controls, while its panel loans real estate to the Remote Speaker output.

ternative vintage tones – even if it's just to plug into for a time and wallow in that incomparable harmonic vibrato. VG



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Price Guide

By Alan Greenwood & Ram W. Tuli

1980 Renaissance
T-200G and 1972
Kustom K50-2



YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
1960s	Airline Electric Res-O-Glas	JB Hutto style	\$2,000	\$3,000
1969	Ampeg Dan Armstrong Lucite	Clear	\$3,500	\$5,000
1991	Ampeg VH-70	70 watts, 1x12, channel-switching	\$275	\$350
1976	B.C. Rich Eagle		\$4,000	\$6,000
1978	BC Rich Bich Supreme 8-String	Painted wood	\$8,000	\$9,500
1990	Boss Distortion DS-1		\$60	\$80
1962	Burns Bison	White, 3 pickups, scroll hs	\$3,000	\$4,000
1986	Charvel Model 3/3A/3DR/3L		\$850	\$1,250
2003	Collings OM3	Figured maple	\$4,500	\$6,000
1960s	Crown Electric Archtop		\$600	\$900
1967	Danelectro Hawk 2V	Vibrato, 2 pickups	\$1,500	\$2,300
1982	Dean Baby V	U.S.-made	\$1,000	\$1,500
1992	DigiTech Guitar Effect Processor RP 1		\$100	\$150
1998	DOD Envelope Filter FX25B		\$95	\$125
2007	EarthQuaker Devices Hummingbird		\$110	\$150
1976	Electra X220 Omega		\$550	\$800
1980s	Elektronika Flanger FL-01		\$200	\$300
1968	Epiphone Crestwood Deluxe	Cherry or white	\$3,000	\$4,000
1989	Epiphone Flying V/'67 Flying V	67 specs	\$600	\$900
1937	Epiphone Olympic Tenor (Acoustic Archtop)		\$1,500	\$2,500
2002	Epiphone Zakk Wylde Les Paul Custom		\$900	\$1,500
2005	Fender Bassman 150 Combo	120 watts, 1x12, ss, piezo horn	\$200	\$250
1968	Fender Dual Showman	Blackface, large vertical cab	\$1,000	\$1,250
2018	Fender FA-345CE		\$300	\$500
2005	Fender Jaguar HH/ Special Edition Jaguar HH		\$800	\$1,200
1998	Fender 64 Jazz (Custom Shop)	Relic (Cunetto)	\$3,000	\$4,000
2011	Fender Mustang III amp	100 watts, 1x12	\$200	\$275
1980	Fender Precision Special (USA)	Standard color	\$1,500	\$2,500
1985	Fender Standard/ Player Precision (Import)	Japan	\$950	\$1,250
1970	Fender Scorpio	56 watts, 2x12, solidstate	\$550	\$700
1975	Fender Stratocaster	Late-'75, sunburst (black parts)	\$3,500	\$4,500
2014	Fender 60th Anniversary '54 Stratocaster (Custom Shop)	Relic, COA, 60th guitar case	\$3,000	\$4,500
2015	Fender American Standard Stratocaster Limited Edition	Mystic Aztec Gold	\$1,400	\$2,100
2010	Fender John Mayer Limited Edition Black1 Stratocaster	NOS	\$2,200	\$3,300
1964	Fender Telecaster	Common Color	\$25,000	\$35,000
1971	Fender Telecaster Thinline	Natural mahogany, 3-bolt	\$5,000	\$7,000
2007	Fender Vintage Hot Rod Telecaster	All models	\$1,500	\$2,200
2010	Fender '61 Telecaster Custom	NOS	\$3,000	\$4,500



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YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
2007	Fender Classic Player			
	Baja Telecaster		\$600	\$900
1994	Fulltone Soul Bender		\$200	\$550
1998	G&L Legacy Special	4-bolt neck	\$800	\$1,000
1963	Gibson Barney Kessel Regular		\$4,800	\$6,500
1990	Gibson Dove	Various colors	\$2,500	\$3,500
1941	Gibson ES-125	Blade pickup	\$2,400	\$3,200
2006	Gibson ES-335 Alvin Lee	With certificate	\$4,500	\$7,000
1997	Gibson ES-346 Paul Jackson Jr.	Custom Shop	\$4,000	\$6,500
1967	Gibson Falcon			
	Medalist (Hybrid)		\$400	\$500
1989	Gibson Flying V '90 Double		\$2,500	\$4,000
1956	Gibson GA-6	8-12 watts, 1x12	\$1,000	\$1,250
1986	Gibson J-180		\$3,000	\$4,500
1936	Gibson Jumbo 35/J-35	Sunburst, 3 tone bars	\$20,000	\$25,000
1980	Gibson L-5 CES/L-5 CESN	Kalamazoo made	\$6,500	\$9,000
1954	Gibson Les Paul Custom	Single coils	\$35,000	\$50,000
2021	Gibson 1957 Les Paul			
	Goldtop Darkback Light Aged	Murphy Lab	\$6,500	\$9,000
1982	Gibson Les Paul			
	Heritage 80 Award	Highly figured	\$6,000	\$9,500
1955	Gibson Les Paul Special	TV Yellow	\$15,500	\$20,000
2012	Gibson Les Paul Studio Shred		\$1,800	\$2,800
2012	Gibson NR-336F		\$2,500	\$3,500
2013	Gibson SG Original		\$1,600	\$2,200
2000	Gibson SJ 1942 Reissue			
	(Southern Jumbo)		\$3,000	\$4,000
2009	Gibson Super Dove		\$3,000	\$4,800
1994	Godin Jeff Cook Signature		\$700	\$900
2007	Gretsch Chet Atkins			
	Nashville (6120DC)	Double-cut	\$1,750	\$3,000
1965	Gretsch Folk/Folk Singing			
	(6003/7505/7506)		\$750	\$975
1989	Gretsch Silver Jet 1957			
	Reissue (6129-1957)		\$1,500	\$2,250
1967	Guild Bluesbird M-75			
	(Hollow Body)		\$2,500	\$4,000
1984	Guild F-46	Rosewood	\$2,500	\$3,800
1957	Guild Nararre F-50/F-50	Pearl block markers	\$5,500	\$8,000
1968	Guild Studio 301/ST301	1 Single-coil	\$1,200	\$1,800
1987	Hamer Californian Elite	USA, various features	\$2,200	\$3,000
1960	Harmony H-39 Hollywood	1 pickup, sunburst	\$400	\$650
1965	Hilgen Basso B-2501	25 watts, 1x15 combo	\$350	\$450
1968	Hofner Model 500/1 Beatle	LH	\$2,250	\$2,875
1995	Ibanez Classic Phase PH99		\$125	\$150
1974	Ibanez Model 2342 Les			
	Moonlight/Sunlight Special	LP Special copy	\$850	\$1,200

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Dave Hinson
Killer Vintage

Timm Kummer
Kummer's Vintage Instruments

Buzzy Levine
Lark Street Music

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YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
1979	Ibanez RG/RS Roadstar/Roadster Series	Mid-range	\$400	\$600
1986	Jackson Soloist			
	Student J1 (U.S.A.)	Ontario-built	\$2,200	\$3,500
1970s	Kay Effects Pedals		\$55	\$75
1960s	Kingston Cat Series P-8T	20 watts	\$90	\$125
1981	Kramer Pacer Special		\$950	\$1,250
1972	Kustom K50-2	Black	\$300	\$375
1969	Lafayette Radio Electronics Deluxe AC Super Fuzz		\$400	\$500
1982	Loco Box Compressor CM-01		\$100	\$250
1964	Magnatone Model M10/10A	38 watts, 1x15, hyb	\$650	\$825
1995	Marshall JTM 30 Series	Combo 3x10	\$475	\$625
1966	Marshall Model 1973 Combo	18 watts, 2x12	\$10,500	\$15,000
1899	Martin 1-18	Brazilian	\$4,500	\$6,800
1948	Martin 000-18		\$8,500	\$11,000
1980	Martin 000-45		\$6,000	\$7,500
1960	Martin 00-21		\$8,500	\$11,000
1950	Martin 0-18		\$4,500	\$6,000
2020	Martin Custom Shop 28 Style OM		\$3,500	\$5,000
1960	Martin D-21	Brazilian	\$10,000	\$13,000
2001	Martin D-41DF Dan Fogelberg	E.Indian	\$4,500	\$6,500
2003	Martin DSR Sugar Ray	Limited to 57	\$4,000	\$6,000
2006	Martin HD-35 Nancy Wilson		\$4,000	\$6,000
2012	Martin OM-18 Special		\$2,500	\$4,000
1996	Martin SPD-16TR		\$2,000	\$3,500
1995	Mesa-Boogie 20/20	20 watts per channel	\$850	\$1,125
2010	Mesa-Boogie TA-15 Head	5-15-25 watt head	\$700	\$1,000
1967	Mosrite Gospel	Sunburst	\$2,500	\$3,800
1971	Mu-Tron Bi-Phase	Optical pedal option	\$2,000	\$3,000
1959	National Model 1122			
	Val-Trol Junior	1 pickup, 1 piezo, ivory	\$1,000	\$1,250
1992	National Reso-Phonic O Deluxe		\$2,750	\$3,500
1971	Ovation Country Artist			
	Electric 1624		\$700	\$1,500
1975	Peavey Artist 240	1x12	\$200	\$275
1981	Peavey T-15		\$400	\$550
2003	PRS CE 22 Maple Top	Brazilian 'board	\$2,500	\$3,500
2005	PRS Singlecut Tremolo			
	20th Anniversary	Artist package	\$4,000	\$5,500
1980	Renaissance T-200G	Plexiglas, 2 pickups	\$1,200	\$1,800
2013	Rickenbacker Model 4003W		\$1,500	\$2,000
1994	Rickenbacker Model 350/12V63 Liverpool	12-string	\$2,750	\$3,750
1998	Rickenbacker Model 660/12		\$2,500	\$3,500
1978	Roland Cube 60B	1x12	\$200	\$275
1960s	Sekova Fuzz		\$300	\$450
1959	Silvertone Model 1430	1x6	\$325	\$450
1989	Stinger CO-20 Compressor		\$60	\$75
2020	Supro Blues King 8		\$225	\$300
1995	Tacoma P-1 Papoose		\$300	\$500
2004	Taylor 654ce		\$2,000	\$2,500
2007	Taylor GS5	Cedar/mahogany	\$1,500	\$1,875
2000s	Tokai SC-1		\$300	\$700
1970s	Vamp Bass Master Head	100 watts	\$1,250	\$1,625
2004	Vox AC30C2X Custom	30 watts, 2x12, China	\$550	\$800
2015	Vox VT40+	1x10	\$150	\$225
1989	Yamaha PAC Pacifica Series	Various models	\$200	\$2,500

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Brad Whitford (left), Tom Hamilton, and Steven Tyler on "The Midnight Special" in 1974.

DREAM COME TRUE

Aerosmith

By Bret Adams

Playing gritty guitar rock influenced by the Stones, Yardbirds, Zeppelin, and others, Aerosmith emerged from a group of Boston bar grinders known as Jam Band.

After guitarist Joe Perry and bassist Tom Hamilton bailed in 1970, they formed Aerosmith with vocalist Steven Tyler, drummer Joey Kramer, and guitarist Ray Tabano. Brad Whitford replaced Tabano in '71, and while New England doesn't come to mind as a hard-rock hot bed, the new group conquered the region through relentless touring.

When they entered Intermedia Studio in the fall of '72 to begin work on an album, they greeted producer Adrian Barber (d. 2020) with a short set of songs polished by months of gigs.

"Nobody told us who was going to produce the album," Hamilton told *Vintage Guitar*. "It was our decision, but with advice from the record company. We definitely wanted somebody English, but nobody made us do anything we didn't agree with. Adrian came along after we had the songs sorted, so he wasn't really involved in pre-production."

The set included the swaggering "Mama Kin," with extra energy provided by house saxophonist David Woodford (d. 2022), a cover of Rufus Thomas' "Walkin' the Dog," and a prototype power ballad called "Dream On" that was released as a single and became one of the year's most-popular songs on Boston radio but peaked at #59 on *Billboard*'s Hot 100.

"We thought 'Dream On' would be huge right off the bat," Hamilton recalled. "We knew it was something special, but none of the promo people throughout the country could get any radio stations to play it. We couldn't believe it! As the months went by, we accepted that it wasn't a hit."

Released in January of '73, the band was at once thrilled at the album's creation, but also unhappy with its sound. Being young, nervous, and inexperienced in a recording studio, they should've been able to rely more on Barber's expertise. But his involvement proved minimal, and Tyler and Perry were unimpressed with the vocals and guitar sounds. Hamilton was less critical.

"I remember wishing there was more low-end," he said. "The album was made right before studio techniques and technology made really ballsy bass tone possible. As time went on, it was easier to be okay with the production."

"I'm trying to remember which bass I used – either a Jazz or Precision and I'm thinking



more it was my Jazz through an Ampeg B-15 or B-18. Most of the bass sound is through a DI except for 'Mama Kin,' which is amp-heavy. I used to hate the sound of my bass on that song because all I could hear was my fingernails. When a friend told me he really liked my sound on that song, I was surprised, and it changed the way I heard it. Time has definitely improved it in my ears."

The sessions also generated two interesting pieces of Aerosmith history.

"(Tiny Bradshaw's) 'Train Kept a Rollin' was originally there because it's one of the first songs we learned," Hamilton noted. "Joe and I had been playing it in the Jam Band."

Ultimately, the track was shelved until the follow-up, *Get Your Wings*. Also chopped was a ballad called "Major Barbara." And when Aerosmith was about to release its third album, 1975's *Toys in the Attic*, a DJ at a radio station in Vermont decided to put "Dream On" in heavy rotation, which pushed it to #6 in April of '76. The tune has since become a certified rock classic; in 2018, it was inducted to the Grammy Hall of Fame.

Aerosmith reached #21 on the *Billboard* 200 and has sold more than two million copies. Hamilton is still fond of it.

"The album is important to me because of how tight we played on it. It's really a picture of how hard we worked to get good. 'One Way Street' just kicks ass and has a lot of feel. When I hear a song from that album I think, 'Wow! Those little s***s could play!'"

Earlier this year, a "Legendary Edition" was released with a remastered original, a new remix, and previously unreleased live and studio tracks from the era.

"When I first heard the new remix, I couldn't believe it!" Hamilton says. "It sounds like how we wish it always sounded. This isn't just a remaster like bands do from time to time. It was taken down to the roots and mixed like it was a new record, all without changing or adding anything. Steven and Joe were directly involved. It's the authentic first album, but way better."

The new release also includes their Paul's Mall show in Boston on March 20, 1973.

"That is definitely our best live recording from that era," Hamilton notes. "We were getting popular in Boston, and the leading rock station, WBCN, wanted to do a live broadcast with us at Paul's Mall, which was a prestigious jazz club. It was miked and mixed

by people who knew what they were doing. It came out better than anything else we did around then except for the album. It was exciting because live broadcasts weren't all that common back then." **VG**

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DANNY GATTON

The Humbler's Jazz Adventure

By Wolf Marshall

Danny Gatton – the “best guitarist you’ve never heard of” – emerged from Washington, D.C. and captivated audiences with his feel, technical prowess, and imagination. His status grew after Amos Garrett

called him “The Humbler” – a metaphor for his titanic musical persona.

John Sebastian and Zal Yanovsky became early acolytes after seeing him at a hotel bar, and memorialized him in “Nashville Cats.”

Bill Kirchen said, “Nobody played or plays like him. He’s a whole different ballgame.” Joe Bonamassa studied with Gatton and later insisted he was, “...the best overall guitarist this country ever produced.” Les Paul said, “He could do anything the other guy could – and do it better.” Also among his admirers are Steve Vai, James Burton, Vince Gill, Albert Lee, Slash, and Trey Anastasio.

Gatton’s Elektra albums, *Cruisin’ Deuces* and *88 Elmira St.*, were eclectic efforts aimed at instrumental-rock audiences, while various indie projects showcased his formidable chops and musical depth; many lamented that his diversity hobbled him in the pop market. In any event, he was particularly commanding on dates where his innovations shine, especially live performances. The recently unearthed *Live at the Holiday Inn 1987* indisputably argues the case.

In the ’80s, Gatton assembled Funhouse (his “little jazz group”) to perform locally, and devoted fan Sia Shad (food/beverage manager for the Holiday Inn), hired the band for Sunday brunches. A performance recorded informally by guitarist Kinloch Nelson at the hotel in Virginia on September 27, 1987, using cheap microphones plugged into a cassette recorder. Its output fed an Onkyo video machine running at the highest speed, which recorded songs to VHS tape. The 38-year-old recording was discovered among Gatton’s memorabilia and acquired decades later by NRG producer Glenn Holley.

The performances transcended homespun recording procedures and technical limitations. Holley realized Gatton’s vision when he submitted the tape to mastering engineer Greg Lukens, who transformed the lo-fi production. It finds Gatton in a trio-plus-horn ensemble with Chris Battistone (trumpet), Barry Hart (drums) and John Previti (bass). A straight-ahead outing without guardrails, the date documents Gatton’s artistry woven into several standards. “Redneck Jazz,” his domain reconciling rockabilly, Western swing, blues, jazz, and country, stretches the traditional repertoire to assume dimensions beyond idols Wes Montgomery, Les Paul, Charlie Christian, Jimmy Bryant, George Barnes, Roy Clark, Lenny Breau, and Hank Garland – all of whom figure in Gatton’s mosaic. In ’88, he told *Guitar Player* his Funhouse period was rewarding and productive, saying, “I learned more about playing jazz in the past two years than I ever knew before.” Eleven tracks comprise this program, but more music was recorded; the unreleased “Days of Wine and Roses” is posted online.

Gatton, a known Telecaster adherent, chose

A Moderately
Gm

B Moderate Jazz-Waltz Swing
Cm

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Gatton transformed the standard jazz repertoire. These two excerpts from “Besame Mucho” illustrate his innovations. A is his reinvention of Wes Montgomery’s opening vamp, played as the chord riff with blues and jazz connotations in a Latin feel. Note the mix of Gm and Am triads over G pedal, tight connective lines, muted

string scrapes and quick back-raked embellishment. B is an intricate virtuosic phrase from his solo (2:45). He plays a fast ascending diatonic sequence with quasi-classical implications over Cm and answers with a mix of blues licks and modal melody. The final quick flurries are exciting elements frequently found in his improvisations.

of age in his jazz journey. Latin oldie “Besame Mucho” has also been covered by the Beatles, Nat Cole, Plácido Domingo, and Diana Krall. Danny forgoes its slow-bolero $\frac{4}{4}$ rhythm and emulates Wes’ take with a grooving $\frac{3}{4}$ jazz-waltz, but moves the key from B $\flat$ m to Gm. He reinterprets Montgomery’s i-IV change as a Gm-Am riff, switches to swing feel in the bridge (1:20), incorporates stop-time sections (0:40), and decorates the melody with chord and octave punches, single-note fills, quick flurries, and legato ornaments. His solo (2:04) combines textures – alternating chords, octaves, single-note lines, virtuosic passage work (2:45), blues licks, and double-stops. Gatton’s ability to maintain interest with a fluid mixture of divergent phrases is uncanny, and a stylistic identifier.

Wes Montgomery’s altered blues, “Fried Pies” imbues the traditional 12-bar form with rhythmic twists and modal elements, and proves ideal for Gatton’s inclinations. His solo (1:29) begins with blues licks over the droning F5 section before he moves to modal lines and introduces octaves upon entering the 12-bar structure (1:49). Like Pat Martino, Howard Roberts, and Kenny Burrell, he attacks octaves with a flat pick rather than thumb strumming. The lengthy solo exemplifies his swing/blues improvisation, blending modal, blues, bebop, post-bop, country, groove riffing, and even rockabilly double-stop (3:23) sounds. Noteworthy are bluesy double-stops (4:10) progressing to chromatic jazz sonorities

a ’54 Gibson ES-295 that day. The gold hollowbody archtop with two white P-90 pickups sported a floral-decorated white pickguard. Danny replaced the bridge/tailpiece with a Tune-O-Matic, wood base and Bigsby vibrato. The 295 was heard on more than 15 Gatton albums, often paired with a modified ’60s

Fender Vibrolux Reverb with two JBL D-120 10" speakers, reputedly boosted to 75 watts by Jay Monterose.

Gatton revealed his admiration for Wes Montgomery in “Besame Mucho” and “Fried Pies.” Both were on *Boss Guitar*, which had a powerful impact on Gatton as he came

(4:24) and Berry-like episodes (5:08). Only Gatton could balance these incongruities artistically and with the consistency heard in this performance.

“On Green Dolphin Street” is a jazz staple favored by Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, and Joe Pass. Gatton’s rendition deliv-

ers a Latin feel in a brisk tempo (A sections) alternating with fast swing (B and C sections) during the theme. Battistone takes the melody and first solo while Gatton comps effectively with pianistic hybrid-picking. The solos are uptempo swing befitting jazz traditions. Danny responds to Battistone with swinging bop melodies that progress to low-register double-stops (2:20), surprising pedal-steel references (2:26) and hybrid-picked chord phrases (2:31). This mini-climax launches improvisations containing long hard-bop runs, country cross-picked licks exploiting open strings, interspersed chord passages, Les Paul pull-offs, intervallic outlines, and elegant Barnes-style swing lines. Hart's solo and Previti's bass riffing epitomize jazz interaction while reinstating the Latin groove.

"A Smooth One," Benny Goodman's swing classic, channels Charlie Christian. Gatton and Battistone state the theme with Danny taking liberties, juggling registers and adding chord punctuation. His rhythm-guitar work is noteworthy; he supplies Freddie Green-style strumming, developing an authentic four-beat feel behind Battistone's solo, gradually moving into hybrid-picked comping and stride-inspired sections as the arrangement unfolds. Danny plays rock, hillbilly, and blues sounds juxtaposed with classic swing lines and chord phrases, making the most of the trio format during improvisations. A segue to double-time (3:57) marks his virtuoso passage work before he returns to the original tempo, restates the melody (sans trumpet) with percussive muted timbres, double-stops and string bends, and adds rockabilly allusions in the bridge.

"Blues Jam in F Minor," finds Gatton at his soulful apex, relating his blues story while moving through blues tradition seamlessly in the slow 12-bar form. He starts sparsely and gently then builds to complexity, tempo changes, and increased dynamics; at times evoking gospel and rural rootsiness, elsewhere conjuring urban blues, jazz chord-melody, post-bop, and rock. His permutations

Very Fast Swing

The musical notation for "Very Fast Swing" is presented in three systems. Each system includes a guitar staff (treble clef) and a bass staff (bass clef). Chord changes are indicated above the guitar staff: C, D7, Dm7, G7, C, Dm7, G7, C, and D7. The guitar staff shows a melody with various intervals and accidentals. The bass staff shows a rhythmic accompaniment with fret numbers (0-7) and fingerings (1-5) for both hands (T and B). The notation includes many slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like accents and slurs.

Gatton subjected Duke Ellington's "Take the 'A' Train" to a fiery treatment at a blistering cut-time tempo. This example depicts his reinterpretation of the tune's swing harmony in his solo (1:16). He plays a barrage of quick sequential patterns that recast the familiar changes –

bluesier C7 sounds on C major, and in-out substitutions Am-A^bm-Db on D7. By contrast, his melodies over Dm7-G7-C have an inside quality like a paraphrased fiddle tune, and his final lines on C and D7 incorporate open strings and blues sounds. Such is the magic of Gatton's mercurial style.

include hybrid-picked arpeggiations (2:50), tremolo-strumming (3:11), and feel changes to a measured slow shuffle (4:08) where Danny emulates organ comping followed by double-timed swing (4:45) propelled by hybrid-picked chording and mutated rockabilly tangents (6:22) before reinstating the slow-blues mood for the finale.

"Killer Joe" emerges from the finale. Gatton sets the tempo with a contrapuntal stride-style riff, posing bluesy double-stops against the trumpet melody. He imitates Battistone's closing notes in his first phrase before launching ear-catching improvisations. He mixes blues, Western swing, and jazz melodies, and handles the challenging bridge changes with ease. Notable are Gatton's sustaining arpeggiations (1:57) leading to thicker chordal sounds in the bridge (2:03), a straight-four feel change where he paraphrases the bluegrass theme "Cajun" (2:27, a.k.a. "Tennessee Stud") amidst blues/rock licks and hybrid-picked sonorities (2:35) that suggest steel-guitar mannerisms. The band recalls the theme

with variations and intuitively develops a vamped coda. There, Danny plays intricate blues melodies and incorporates a humorous Irish-jig reference (4:00), before dissolving into a rubato ending that underscores the group's chemistry.

Gatton takes the lead in "Secret Love" with characteristic jazz-trio chord/single-note textural combinations conveying the spirit of Pass, Kessel, and Hall. His fast-swing reading progresses organically to effective comping behind Battistone's solo. He asserts his bona fides with an eclectic solo merging swing, bop, country, blues, and rockabilly tangents. A particularly exciting chord-melody episode (4:04) provides satisfying sonic contrast amidst his intricate single-note improvising. Battistone and Gatton trade energetic solo phrases instead of restating the head concluding with a very traditional vamped turnaround.

"Witch Doctor," an infrequently covered Lee Morgan/Jazz Messengers modern-jazz piece with bluesy overtones and intriguing

A Fast Shuffle (Dixieland Feel)

Chord progression: C A7

B

Chord progression: C A7 Dm Dm(maj7) Dm7 Dm6 Dm(b6) Dm

Gatton's hybrid-picking finesse colors the opening phrase of "When You're Smiling" and develops the powerful momentum of his arrangement. His technique involves using the flat pick (held between thumb and index) and allows fingers to play additional single notes or chord partials. A presents his hustling contrapuntal chordal patterns (an emulation of stride-piano style) that propel the tune. B is his entrance

phrase for improvisations (1:21). Note his reference to earlier jazz traditions in the fleet single-note lines that suggest George Barnes or Hank Garland in the first eight bars. He plays a contrasting response in the next four bars, harnessing his hybrid-picking style in the solo context. Here, he outlines the D minor chordal voice leading (Dm-Dm(maj7)-Dm7-Dm6-Dm) with a rhythmically displaced intervallic pattern.

harmony, spurs a swinging groove-conscious interpretation. Danny delivers a stellar performance; comping like a keyboardist behind Battistone and offering his approach to modern-jazz melodicism in his solo. His improvisations feature modal/blues lines, virtuosic double-timing, modernistic intervallic phrases, sideslipping in-out melodies, hybrid-picked octave passages (2:49), and unique rhythmically-charged

chordal episodes that reveal his command of post-bop idioms.

"When You're Smiling" transforms an unlikely novelty tune into high art. The song was covered by Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Frank Sinatra, and Texas Wanderers, but Gatton's take mirrors Louis Prima's campy version. His rendition is enlivened by a shuffling Dixieland feel, stride-piano emulations in the accompaniment, and a blazing solo.

Gatton references Chet Atkins, Django Reinhardt, Phil Baugh, Chuck Berry, Western swing, banjo rolls (2:17), Les Paul flurries (2:20), "Rock Around the Clock" (2:25), rockabilly dyad bends (2:36), and even a quote of the "circus theme" (3:19).

Gatton's ode to Lenny Breau, "One for Lenny," is a respite from the pyrotechnics of the date. Inspired by his idol's musicianship, Danny composed a melodious guitar-centric instrumental enhanced by unusual rhythmic twists, unpredictable breaks, modernized folk undertones, and varied timbres. The rhythmically asymmetric groove gives way to a swing feel for his solo (0:49). Gatton begins with chordal phrases, elaborating on the theme melody and a progression with hybrid-picked sonorities that expand the challenging harmony. He breaks into single-note playing (1:23) with cross-picked lines, blues licks, and intricate arpeggiations (1:35), and continues his patented mix of textures and melodic ideas to set up bass and trumpet solos. The recap is enlarged with a coda and final intuitive decrescendo cadence.

Duke Ellington's "Take the 'A' Train," receives a breakneck tempo, and provides a grand finale to the set. One of Danny's most impressive flights, it combines high-velocity technique with sheer aggression, bearing testimony to his improvisation skills and instrumental prowess. He trades fours with Hart for a half-chorus before reigniting the theme with Battistone and playing a repeated turnaround line for closure.

Wolf Marshall is the founder and original Editor-In-Chief of *GuitarOne* magazine. A respected author and columnist, he has been influential in contemporary music education since the early 1980s. His latest book is *Jazz Guitar Course: Mastering the Jazz Language*. Others include *101 Must-Know Rock Licks*, *B.B. King: the Definitive Collection*, and *Best of Jazz Guitar*. A list credits can be found at wolfmarshall.com.

FANCY COLORS ON ENTRY-LEVEL FENDERS

And How Case Candy Increases Value

In *The Official Vintage Guitar Price Guide 2026*, I noticed the listing for the Fender Musiclander/Swinger/Arrow lists colors of red, white, and blue. While shopping for one, I found references to them in Lake Placid Blue, Candy Apple Red, and Dakota Red. Did Fender, in fact, apply those traditional custom colors, or did it use other shades? – **Dennis Russo**

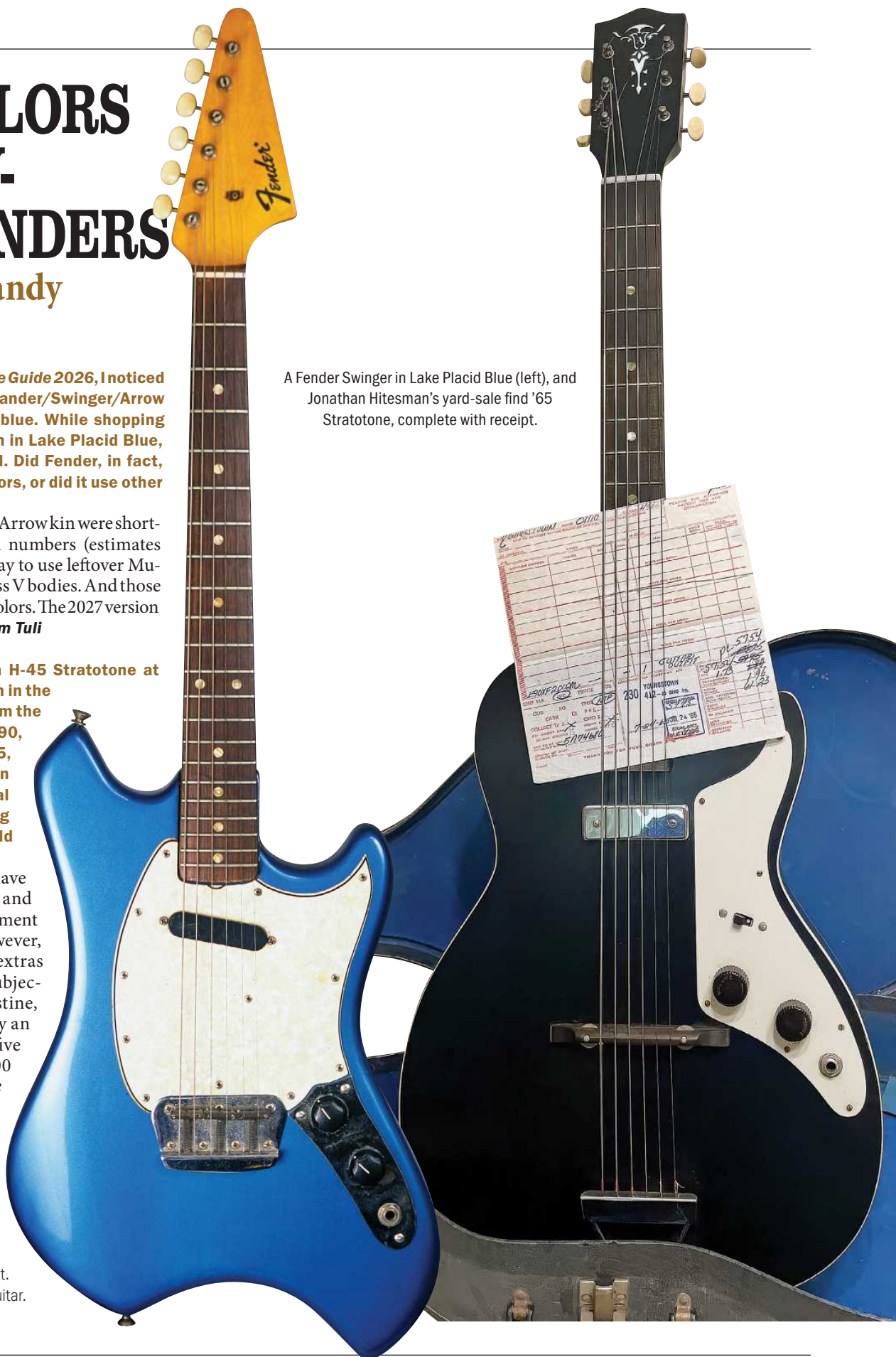
The Musiclander and its Swinger/Arrowkin were short-lived models produced in limited numbers (estimates range from 250 to 600 total) as a way to use leftover Musicmaster/Duo-Sonic necks and Bass V bodies. And those are indeed the well-known custom colors. The 2027 version of *The Guide* will reflect that. – **Ram Tuli**

I was pleased to see the Alden H-45 Stratotone at the top of the “Price Guide” column in the May issue. I bought one for \$20 from the original owner at a yard sale in 1990, and in the case was the July, 1965, receipt and dealer warranty. It’s in new condition and has the original strings. I’m curious: Does having the original receipt and case add value? – Jonathan Hitesman

Any guitar buyer would rather have an instrument with original case and sale receipt over an identical instrument without a case and receipt. However, exactly how much those original extras enhance the market value is subjective. A collector looking for a pristine, documented example may well pay an extra 10 percent for the case and five percent for the receipt. On an \$800 guitar (per *The Official Vintage Guitar Price Guide 2026*) like your Stratotone, that’s a nice \$120 bonus. – **Walter Carter**

This column addresses questions about guitar-related subjects, ranging from songs, albums, and musicians to the minutiae of instrument builds, manufacturers, and the collectible market. Questions can be sent to ward@vintageguitar.com with “VG Q&A” in the subject line. **VG**

A Fender Swinger in Lake Placid Blue (left), and Jonathan Hitesman’s yard-sale find ‘65 Stratotone, complete with receipt.



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Lonnie Mack Flying V, 1993, Cherry, Bigsby, nm, ohsc..\$5500

Gibson, Epiphone & Other Electric Archtops

Byrdland, 1968, faded sb, Bigsby, 2 hb, vgc+, ohsc.....\$8500
 L-4CES, 2020, Burgundy, 2 HB, Gold hwr, exc-, ohsc.....\$4250
 ES-5N Switchmaster 1998, Blonde, 3 P-90s, vgc, ohsc.....\$3900
ES-345, 1974, Walnut, Schallers, Pat# hb, vgc+, ohsc...\$4950
ES-336, c. 2005, Amber, smaller 335 but w/ carved Curly Maple top & carved back, 2 hb, exc, ohsc.....\$3450
 ES-335 Dot, 1983, Blonde, replaced tuners, exc, ohsc.....\$3500
ES-330TD Special, 1965, sb, 2 P-90, original long Vibrola, one owner, looks new, Tags, near mint, hsc.....\$7500
 ES-135, 2001, trans blue, 2 hb, trap tp, exc+, ohsc.....\$1795
 Buscarino Virtuoso, c 2000 18" cut-away, 1 hb,exc-,ohsc..\$9,500
 Epiphone Zephyr Cutaway, 1951, sb, 17 3/8", N'Yer pu.....\$2500
 GUILD Starfire VI, 1967, blonde, curly, exc, ohsc.....\$5900
GUILD Starfire IV, 1996, Black, 2 Guild hb, exc, ohsc...\$1250
 Guild Manhattan X-175, 1961, soft Cutaway, sb, 2 white single coil pickups, dlx tuner buttons, exc-, hsc.....\$3750
 Koontz Guitorgan, '70s, archtop, organ need work.....\$2900
National Debonaire, mod.1107, 1959, sb, 1 pu, exc, ossc.\$850

Gretsch & Rickenbacker

Gretsch 6125 Single Anniv, 1960, 2-tone Green, n. mint.....\$1950
 Gretsch Roundup G6130, 2019 Custom Shop by Steve Stern, full cowboy w/ western engravings, buckle tp, nm.....\$7500

Rickenbacker 660-12, recent, Fireglo, solid body, checkered binding, wider nut, near mint, ohsc.....\$2450
 Rick Bantar 6000, '64, fireglo, 5-str elect Banjo, ohsc.....\$12,500

Acoustic Archtops

D'angelico Excel, 1960, sb, 16 3/4" wide, cutaway, curly Maple back & sides, 1 11/16" at nut, vgc+, ohsc.....\$39,500
 Ribbecke 17" cutaway, 1992, almond burst top, 1 3/4" nut, 25.4" scale, natural top, curly Maple b&s, exc, ohsc.....\$8500
 Stromberg Master 400, Blonde, 1946, loudest!, ohsc ..\$35,000

Other Electrics

Carvin Double Neck 11, c 1968, sb, Mando & Gtr ohsc.....\$3500
 G&L Legacy, USA, ca 2015, Fiesta Red, Maple neck.....\$1695
 Kay Vanguard, ca '70, sb, 2 pu, light ! exc, ossc.....\$595
Klein clone, blk Limba body, 2 hb, trans trem, exc, ...\$3500
 Ibanez Artist 2617, nat, 1976, fancy inlays, exc, hsc.....\$1950
 Koontz High Strung 12 String electric, 17.5" scale, exc.....\$3500
 Mondell Flying V, c 2010, KORINA, Braz brd, exc, hsc...\$3500
 National Glenwood 95, '63, White, Map guitar, exc, hsc\$4500
OVATION Breadwinner, c 1974, Black, 2 pu, exc, ohsc..\$1395
 PRS Custom 24, 2016, sb, 2 hb, 10-top, trem, exc+, ..\$2400
 SPALT guitars, 4 in stock, from.....\$3250-\$4500
 SUPRO Ozark, ca 1964, Red, 1 hb, vgc+, gigbag.....\$795
 WANDRE Spazial, c 1963, reddish/grey, beautiful.....\$6500
 Woody Phifer, Signature, ca 2005, exquisite, near mint....\$6900

Basses

Jazz Bass, 1962, sb, slab brd, vgc, ohsc..... in transit
 Jazz Bass, 1966, LPB, matching pghd, vgc+ ohsc.....\$18,900
Jazz Bass, Fretless Kubicki neck, unknown bod exc...\$1000
 Fender Jazz Pro II, 2021, Miami Bue, Rwd brd, exc, ..\$1450
 Fender Precision Bass, 1958, refin natural, hsc.....\$11,500
 P-Bass, 1966, SB, all original 9.3 lbs, exc+, hsc.....\$8500
Fender Aerodyne Bass, LEFTY, Red with bound top ..\$695
 Precision Bass, 1971, black, Maple neck, exc+, hsc.....\$5200
 P- Bass, ca 1975, SB Tortoise guard, 8.6 lbs, exc.....\$3450
EPI Jack Cassidy Bass, LEFTY, Gold, exc, ohsc.....\$750
 G&L L2500 5-String,redburst, 2 G&L hb pu, exc, ohc.....\$1250
 Gibson Thunderbird 4, 1966, sb, 2 pu, no breaks!.....\$9,900
Gibson Grabber, '78, Natural Maple, 1 sliding pu, exc...\$1900
 Hagstrom Bass I, ca '69, Black, 2 pu, vgc, gigbag.....\$675

Martins

F-9, 1936, flat top "42 style"Monteleone convert exc\$29,500
D-41, 1974, had a Lashbrook treatment, exc, ohsc.....\$5500
D-28, 1969, Brazilian RW, Lashbrook treatment, vgc+,\$5900
 D-28 Billy Strings, New, a shorter 25" scale and 1 distinguishes this from the usual Herringbone D-28.....\$3999
 000-28 '37 Authentic, 2021, Custom, looks new, ohsc.....\$4500
000-21, 1951, Brazilian b&s, new os bridge vgc, hsc\$6900
00-21, 1940, time capsule, best we've seen, exc+...\$25,000
 00-21NY, 1963, Brazilian b&s, exc, hsc.....\$5900
 0-21, 1931, 1 small rep'd top crack, Brazilian, exc.....\$10,500
D-18S, 1974, sunburst finish, 12 frets, vgc, ohsc.....\$4900
 00-18K, recent, Spruce top,Koa back & sides, exc, ohsc..\$2500
 M-36, 2022, discontinued model, exc, ohsc.....\$2500

Gibson & Epiphone Flat Tops

SJ-200, 1952, SB perfect re-fret !, all original, fine action, nice curly Maple back, no cracks, exc-.....\$19,500
 Southern Jumbo 1965, 1 11/16" nut, vgc+, hsc.....\$2895
 Hummingbird, c 1973, pro refin black vgc+, ohsc.....\$2000
 "1934 Gibson Jumbo", 1994, Centennial, sb, vgc+.....\$3500
 J-180 Everly Bros, 2025, Black, near mint, ohsc.....\$3250
 Epi Eldorado, 1965, Spruce top, Mahogany b&s, exc.....\$4900

Other Flat Tops & Classics

Bozo, Jumbo, ca 1969, Spruce top, Brazilian b&s, exc.....\$5900
 Froggy Bottom K, '24, 16" Jumbo, Adi top, RWexc.....\$7900
Larson Brothers Euphonon Jumbo, ca 1930, 16" across, refinished sb, Abalone trimmed, vgc+, hsc.....\$13,500
 Euphonon Grand Concert, 1933, Spruce top, X braced, Brazilian Rosewood b&s, 14 1/4" wide, Pearl rosette,hs..\$7900
 Guild F-512N, 1977, great 12 string, exc+, ohsc.....\$4750
 Recording King Ray Whitley Jumbo, 1939, by Gibson, owned & recorded with by JOHN FAHEY.....Inquiries
 Manuel Dela Chica Flamenco 1964, signed exc, hsc.....\$6000
 John Price Classical, 2000, Cedar top with lattice bracing, arched back, Brazilian b&s, Ebony board,exc.....\$5500
 Jeronimo Pena Fernandes Classical, '72, Spain, Braz.....\$4900

Resonator, Steel & Slide Guitars

National Style #4 Tricone, 1929, Square neck, exc.....\$7500
 National Tricone #2, '30, Wild Rose, Sq neck,exc,ohsc.....\$4500
 National Tricone Style 1, 2000, nickel/silver, nm ohsc.....\$3500
Estralita Deluxe 2024, SB, wood body, n. mint, ohsc.....\$2900
 Deneve Square Nk Dobro, birdseye top, fancy and loud.....\$1900
 Dobrato metal parlor Bigsby & B-Bender, exc, gigbag.....\$2100
Fender Double 6 Steel, c 1958, 2x6s, Legs, tweed case\$1350
 Rick Lap Steel, B6, 1948, Bakelite, ohsc.....\$1650

Mandolins & Banjos

F-4, '13, Black top, double Flowerpot, Handels, ohsc.....\$6900
 Gibson F-12, 1949, sunburst, Braz board, exc, ohsc.....\$3500
 Gibson H-1 Mandola, 1914, pumpkin top, vgc+, hsc.....\$2350
Gibson H-1 Mandola, 1918,Black, exc+, hsc.....\$3950
 Gibson A-4,1917, reddish sb, Handel tuners, vgc+, hsc.....\$2500
 EASTMAN Mandolins...a dozen in stock
 Lyon & Healy Style A Prof Mandolin, ca 1920, ohsc vgc.....\$3500
 National Triolian '29, brown/yellow sb, metal bod ossc.....\$2100
 Gibson TB-3 Mastertone, 1933, 5-String neck by Frank Neat, 40 hole archtop, exc, hsc.....\$5900
 Bacon Professional Style 3, 5-string c. 1925, exc.....\$2500
Stelling Bellflower, 1980, bound pghd, exc, ohsc.....\$3900

Amps

Bogner Goldfinger 45 Watt head & 2-12 Bottom, exc.....\$1795
Champ Amp, 1959, Narrow panel, 8" orig spkr vgc+...\$2795
 Fender Deluxe Reverb, 1965, black Panel, exc.....\$3950
Fender Harvard, 1956, narrow panel, vgc+...\$7500
 Fender Pro, 1952, 5B5 circuit, Wide panel Tweed.....\$3950
 Fender Vibrolux 1961, Tweed, Jensen P-10R, vgc.....\$5900
Fender Vibrolux Reverb, 1965, black Panel, exc.....\$4500
 Fender Reverb Unit, c 1964, White, vgc+.....\$1650
KELLY F.A.C.S. Combo, '80s, w/attenuator, exc..... call
 Magnatone 410 Combo, 1962, 1-12", Vibrato, vgc.....\$1500
 Marshall 4x10 Bluesbreaker, 1969, Plexi, orig speakers & transformers, signed by Jim Marshall, exc-.....\$9,900
 Marshall JCM-800,'85, 50 Watts, 1 channel, case.....\$2250
 MESA BOOGIE MK III, 1985, 60w, 1-12 spkr, exc.....\$1550
 SWART Space Tone Amp, Tweed, 2007, 8" spkr exc.....\$1050

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INTERSTELLAR SIGNALS

ELLIOT EASTON GETS SPACEY

Elliot Easton in
Studio 606.

BY RICH
MALOOF



Outer space doesn't sound like it used to. Just ask Elliot Easton, legendary lefty of The Cars. Invited to contribute guitars to the soundtrack for *A Night On Mars*, a forthcoming film featuring video from the Mars Rover, Easton wanted to conjure a sound decades removed from the kitschy bleeps and bloops that characterize early sci-fi movies and TV shows.

"We're quite a bit beyond the Theramin now," Easton laughs. "I wanted to hold on to the fun and the spirit of adventure in those old soundtracks, but this project called for something much grander. I heard heavenly

choirs of reverb and alien soundscapes. I wanted my guitar to sound like it was landing on Mars."

Knowing he wasn't going to make it to the Red Planet on some random OD and a chorus

Easton's Bigsby-equipped ES-335 (left) is a '63 reissue from the Gibson Custom Shop, in Pelham Blue. Easton used this Danelectro six-string bass tuned as a baritone with the lowest string at A. This Rickenbacker Roger McGuinn limited edition is one of only three left-handed Mapleglo models in existence. Easton's Custom Shop Strat has a push/push Tone pot that engages the neck and bridge together or puts them in series/parallel when used with the middle.

pedal, Easton put in a call to a top engineer at ground control.

"I've had a wonderful relationship with

Robert Keeley,” says Easton. “Anything I’ve needed, he’s taken care of me.” Keeley not only provided the pedals but, with colleague Sean Spears, assembled a complete board – cabled, powered, and ready to plug in – to serve the guitarist’s vision. Despite Keeley being held in high regard for his mods, every pedal was stock save some limited-edition colors.

“We don’t build pedalboards around here – we build pedals!” Keeley says good-naturedly. “So this was very alien to me. But Elliot is such a great guy that I wanted to do it for him. Once we had it together, I asked our resident guitar hero, Aaron Pierce, to take the first trial flight. It came out so ridiculously cool-sounding.”

Dubbed “The Interstellar,” the 13-pedal purple-and-white wonder is just the launchpad Easton needed. One of its more striking features is that every pedal in the second row offers delay or reverb.

“It’s kind of fun, and I think it allowed Elliot to create some sounds he hadn’t expected, since he could stack layers of ambience,” says Keeley. “Stacking one spring reverb into another isn’t the worst thing that could happen, and some of these reverbs aren’t based on natural spaces or physical objects like a spring or a plate, so you can get some really otherworldly sounds. Then you put something like the Synth-1, which is a great noisemaker, into a pitch-shifting delay and the next thing you know you’re in outer space.”

Space is the place for this board and the setting for the imaginative *A Night On Mars* – a “cinema experience” designed for giant screens, immersive domes, and next-generation venues. The project is being developed with production company Cosmic Picture and Grammy-nominated mixer/composer Richard Tozzoli (VG, May ’24), a longtime guitarist and producer. Work on the soundtrack began before film production.

“This isn’t a tradi-



tional science film,” Tozzoli explains. “It’s an experiential piece driven by sound, tone, and atmosphere, where the music and textures carry the emotional weight of the journey. It just happens to take place on a planet nearly 140 million miles from Earth.

“I knew Elliot could orchestrate great guitar parts for this project,” he adds. “I’ve been a longtime fan of his playing, his production experience, and the way he builds texture and space with the instrument. I was excited to hear about his plans for the pedalboard early on – he had a lot of good ideas right out of the gate. We share the same obsession with guitars and tone, and his approach was incredibly thoughtful.”

At Easton’s suggestion, the pair recorded at Dave Grohl’s Studio 606, home to a drool-worthy collection of amps and the renowned Neve 8078 console Grohl rescued from Studio A at Sound City Studios.

“We ran Elliot’s

Easton and producer Rich Tozzoli with the famed Neve 8078 console rescued from Sound City Studios.

board into a pair of SansAmp Bass Driver DIs then into the console, while also sending signal to the live room through a pair of Fender Tone Master heads,” Tozzoli notes. “We used Soldano and Marshall heads as well, along with a classic Roland JC-120 for Elliot’s 12-string Rickenbacker. We turned everything up – moving air is how you get big sounds in a big room.”

The track “Keep Looking Up” featured Omar Hakim, Tony Levin, and Jerry Marotta, with the rhythm-section tracks already in place before Elliot added guitar textures, explains Tozzoli.

While all of this is the stuff of daydreams for a musician, it’s also relatable that everyone’s work on the project stems from a love of playing guitar. Easton and Tozzoli agreed that no matter how spacey things became, there should be no mistaking the core quality of a person playing music, of fingers on strings.

“That’s something that’s critical to me, too,” adds Robert Keeley. “I don’t mention it a lot, as a guy who became known for making compressors, which kind of remove dynamics. But I really think that when my effects are at their best, it’s when they’re very dynamic. That’s why I was excited to put some of our newest pedals on Elliot’s board; the dynamic range and responsiveness is just tops, the best we’ve done to date.”

With international collaborators including Alex Lifeson, Earl Slick, cellist Tina Guo, the Budapest Choir and Orchestra, and Vienna Synchron Strings, *A Night On Mars* is as ambitious sonically as it is visually, and it arrives in 2027 at venues right here on our big blue marble.





KEELEY KREATION

CUSTOM BOARD FOR *A NIGHT ON MARS* SOUNDS

Elliott Easton's *A Night on Mars* pedalboard is dominated by Robert Keeley builds. Signal enters at the TC Electronic Sentry noise gate (bottom right) then goes to a Keeley Synth-1 Easton "...used to get an octave or two below standard tuning, then the Fuzz Bender and Tony Levin's bass absolutely shook the rafters." The Keeley Oaxa (pronounced wash-ah) stereo phaser allows two signals at once; it's followed by overdrive

and square-wave clipping from the Super Rodent, then goes to the TC Electronic Sentry noise gate, the Mesmer pitch-shifting delay, Caverns V2 delay-reverb, Realizer reverb (inspired by three reverbs popular in the '80s and '90s), the Halo Core dual delay developed with Andy Timmons, and the Zoma tremolo reverb Easton says, "... has a beautiful, deep twang that sounds like the heavens - which is what we were going for." **VG**



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Joe Dillon's dad, Tom, doesn't play guitar, but he was happy to help in Joe's Black Sheep Music Gear booth at the Frantic Mid-Atlantic Guitar Show in March. "Dad flew all the way from the West Coast," said Joe. "Even living 3,000 miles away, he always has my back!"



Ed Berry bought this Teisco/St. George for his 10-year-old son, Ed, Jr., in 1968. "We were at the Great Eastern Mills store – a cheap version of Sears, but it had a music department!" said Berry. "Pop changed my life with that \$25 purchase, and I think of him every time I see it on my wall." And here's Jr. in '68, all smiles in his basement band, The Vibrations.



Here are VG contributor John Heidt and son, Dylan, with a few of their favorites – Dylan with a custom bass from Mystic Guitars, Dad with a Limited Edition Epiphone Johnny A Custom and a Fender Eric Johnson thinline Strat. Also shown are a PRS SE Custom 24, Fender American Pro II Telecaster (in Shell Pink), an Eastman FV680CE-SB Frank Vignola archtop, and an Epiphone Emperor.

DAD'S DAY 2026

VG'S ANNUAL SALUTE TO FATHERS WHO INSPIRE



Allan Ladd had no qualms letting grandson, Micah, strum on his Les Paul Standard back in 2015.



Dave Accardo instilled his kids with a love of music that he inherited from his drummer father. In this 2002 photo from the family album are Lauren (left) with a Squire Bullet, Britny with her grandfather's snare drum, Noelle on mic, Vince with a '93 Ernie Ball EVH, and Kyle with a Japan-made bass.



Here are Mike, Henry, Alexander, and Abby Duncan ready to play on a '93 SRV Stratocaster, '69 Yamaha FG-180, Squier Mini Strat, and a '95 Custom Shop Dick Dale Strat.



John Eggers and his granddaughter, Jolie, trace their musical lineage to Johannes Brahms. Here, John is holding the "family Strat," which Jolie's grandmother bought new in '84 and now resides with Jolie's dad, Nick. Jolie is slinging an early Loog that was also a gift from Grandma. John plays and rescues guitars while supporting the local scene in Huger, South Carolina.



Frank Zucco and his son, Tim, paid homage to Frank's father, Big Frank, by posing with his guitars. The Gibson L-4S in Tim's hands recently returned to the family, while the '39 O-18 Frank holds never left. Big Frank was a member of the musicians union in Springfield, Massachusetts, and accompanied artists who came through, including the Count Basie Orchestra.



John Andrews and his son, Jake, are both well-known Texas guitar slingers. Here they are playing a private party with the Antone's rhythm section in 1992. John's Tele is running through a blond Bandmaster he bought in '71, while Jake has his dad's '56 Duo Sonic in Dakota Red. Above, Jake has the '54 Tele that John played as a member of Mother Earth from 1968 through '76, and John has his '59 Esquire Custom.



Steve Preactor bought his '87 PRS Custom 24 from its original owner in 1992. Among his fans are daughter, Jessica, who was three years old when this photo was taken. "She's now 30 and is an actress and singer who has a tattoo on her leg based on the photo."



Heather Bergsten and her dad, Andy, enjoy jamming together on their Jazzmasters. Hers is a '65, his a '61.



Here are Kevin McLaren and his son, Matt, with their '52 goldtop (signed by Les Paul), '69 ES-175, and '63 SG Les Paul. "We have played together with my other son, Adam, on drums for many years. I'm a lucky dad!" Kevin says.



John and Charlotte Heidrick, along with their kids, Erin and Matthew, used this photo as their Christmas card in 1997. Erin is holding a '52 Supro Ozark, Charlotte a '67 Rick 375, Matthew a '50s Guild X-50, and Dad his '73 Strat.



Gary McLain, his daughter, Holley, and grandson, Riley, had a laugh while re-creating a 2006 photo with grandpa's Gibson J-45.



Greg George's Gibson-loving family includes Isaac (left), who's holding a '51 ES-175, Katie with a '58 ES-350T, Luke with a '52 CF-100E, and Dad with his '48 Southern Jumbo.



From Taiwan, we welcome Li Chien-Lang and his kids, Yenzili and Ming. Dad has his 1990 Gibson L-4 CES, Yenzili an Epiphone Zakk Wylde, and Ming is holding a 2011 Jose Ramirez.



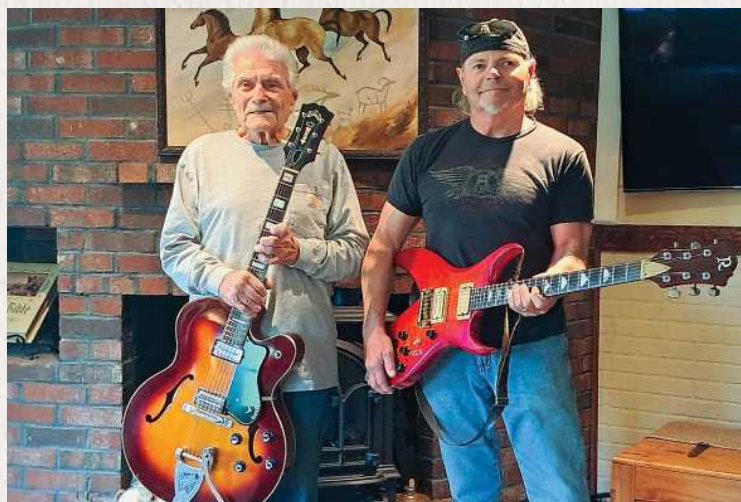
Here are Gordon Hammond and his son, Straten, playing a Washburn flat-top and an '02 Gibson Advanced Jumbo.



Thom Wenger gathered his grandsons Morgan (left) and Logan, daughter, Sarrah, and great-grand son Dustin in the yard for this pic. Morgan and Logan are playing flat-tops, Thom has his favorite Jazz Bass, Sarrah an Ibanez Iceman bass, and Dustin has an unbranded slot-head classical.



For 45 years, Steve Evans operated Jacksonville Guitar Center after launching with a lot of help from his father, Leslie. A B-24 pilot in WWII, after the war, Les and his new wife moved from Tennessee to Arkansas, where in the late '50s she gifted him with a Harmony Stella so he could take up playing again. In 1973, Les bought a used '68 Les Paul Custom for his 16-year-old son, Steve, and two years later they teamed up to open the store. As signage for the roof, Les made a giant copy of the guitar. Here's Les at the time with the new sign, and Steve with the '68.



Bob Monahan and his son, Bob Jr., are both successful players in the Boston area. Here they are now and back in the day with their '63 Guild Manhattan X175 and '83 B.C. Rich Bich, both bought new and gigged for many years. "Dad is my hero, and we hang out every day," Bob Jr. tells us.



Johnny Cola has always made sure his kids had guitars in hand. From the family photo album, here he is with son, Thomas, at Christmas in 2001 with a six-stringed gift. Thomas is now 37 and has a newborn son.



Here are Keith Tasker and his father, Brian, at his surprise 80th birthday party. "It was a night filled with music, friends, family, and vintage Fender tones from a Deluxe Fat Strat and a Baja '60s Telecaster," said Keith.



Steve Vuich is always happy when his grandsons, Chippy and Juju show up at his gigs. Here he is with Chippy and a Yamaha flat-top during a playground dedication at his pre-school.



Joe Simpson grabbed his a '59 Guild T-100 and the fam for this photo. Gabrielle (left) has the partcaster Dad built for her in 2011, Sean his custom Fender Jazz Bass, and Karina is holding a '60s Danelectro Baritone.



Stan Webb is the proud patriarch to two generations of players. Here he is with granddaughter Kate and son, Dennis. Stan has his '70s Ovation 1111-1, Kate a Fender FA 135CE, and Dennis a Martin D-35.



Plenty of people are huge fans of the Beatles, but few take it the extreme of Thom George, who named his son John Paul George. Here they are, Dad with his '65 Gretsch Country Gent, John with a '68 Höfner 500/1. **VG**

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00-18 '54, Adi top, reset, refret by D Berck, \$7500

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Collings CL Dlx '09, Braz FB, IT Burst, exc \$5250
Suhr Modern Set-neck LTD '10, #27 Superb! \$4500
Jackson Soloist J-1 '88, vgd+ cond, black, \$1950
Retrograde Lexington '21, Series 1 #2, exc+, \$2750
National Resoelectric late '90's, exc, \$2450
Gibson EB-2 '67, Sbst, exc cond, \$2750
Jerry Jones LH B 6, late '90's, exc, coralbst \$2500

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Gibson J-45 '63, exc cond, 1 11/16" nut, \$6500
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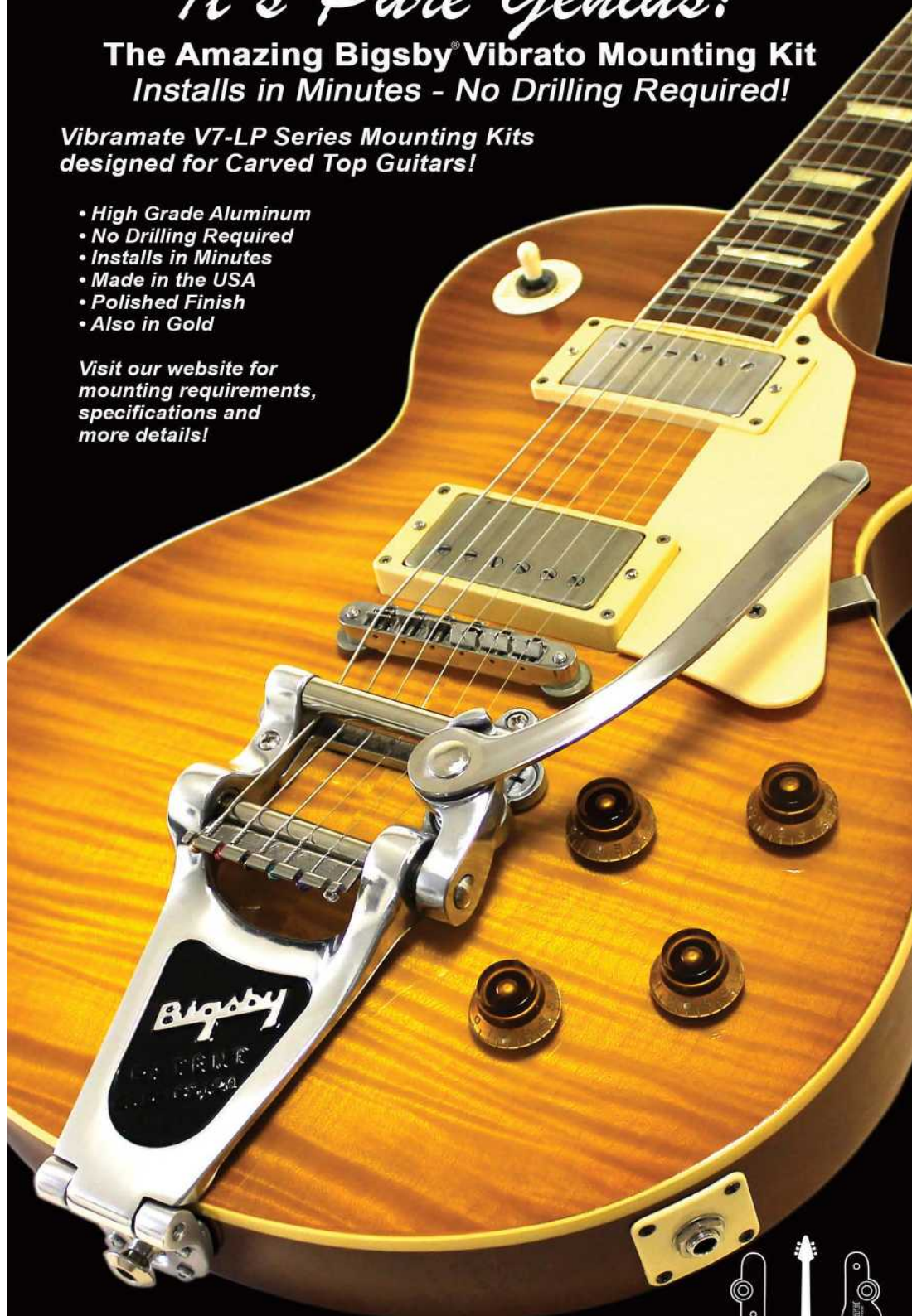
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Upcoming Events

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Denotes a new or updated listing.

JUNE

The Ohio Guitar Show, June 11, 11 am - 5 pm, at the The Aladdin Shrine Center, Grove City, Ohio 43123. For more info contact www.ohioguitarshow.com

Amigo SoCal, June 13-14, at the OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr, Costa Mesa, CA 92626. For more info contact Larry Briggs (714) 708-1500 show@stringswest.com www.amigoguitarshows.com/socal

AUGUST

LVGS Summer Showcase Guitar Show, August 1, at the Leesport Exhibition & Banquet Hall, 312 Gernants Church Road, Leesport, PA 19533. For more info contact Lehigh Valley Guitar Show 484-877-7065 www.lvvguitarshow.com lvgs@lvvguitarshow.com

Kona Guitar & Ukulele Swap Meet, August 8th, 10 am - 3 pm, at the Keauhou Shopping Center, 78-6831 Alii Dr #232, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740. For more info contact Ed Barry www.guitarsandukes.com

Atlanta Vintage Guitar Show, August 22-23, at the Acworth Community Center, 4361 Cherokee St,

Acworth, GA 30101. For more info contact Greg (770) 433-1891 or Eddie (317) 430-2222 www.theatlantavintageguitarshow.com theatlantavintageguitarshow@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER

The Indiana Guitar Show, September 26, 10 am - 5 pm, September 27, 10 am - 3 pm, at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds, 1900 E. Main St. Danville, IN 46122 (Directly Behind the Danville Walmart on Old US 36.) For more info contact <https://theindianaguitarshow.com/>

Seattle-Tacoma Guitar Show, September 27, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm, at the Kent Commons Building, 525 Fourth Avenue North, Kent, WA 98302. For more info contact bruceadolph@mac.com

Northeast Guitar Expo, September 27, 11 am - 6 pm, at 1360 Worcester St, Natick, MA 01760. For more info contact Peter Occhineri (860) 983-6774 Paocchineri@comcast.net <https://www.facebook.com/NortheastGuitarExpo>

OCTOBER

Greater Pittsburgh Guitar Show, October 4, 11:30 am - 4 pm, at the CFS Bank Event Center, 111 Gallatin Rd, Belle Vernon, PA 15012. For more info contact Scott Talarico (412) 716-8411 GuitarShowUSA.com

Southern Ohio Guitar Show, October 11, 11 am - 5 pm, at the Chillicothe High School, 425 Yoctangee Parkway, Chillicothe, Ohio, 45601. For more info contact www.sohioguitarshow.com

Chicago Vintage Guitar Expo, October 11, 9 am - 3 pm, at the

Marriott Hotel, 50 N Martingale, Schaumburg, IL. For more info contact (847) 931-0707 Bakesguitar@aol.com www.Chicagovintage-guitarexpo.com

2026 Tampa Guitar Show, October 23-25, 10 am - 5 pm, at the Florida State Fairgrounds, 4800 U.S. 301. Tampa, Florida 33610. For more info contact Marty Beeson at (813) 400-0803 info@mvvguitarshows.co/m <https://mvvguitarshows.com/>

NOVEMBER

Great American Guitar Show (Fall Philly), November 7 & 8, at Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, Rt. 422, Exits at Oaks, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA 19456. For more info contact Bee 3 Vintage at (828) 298-2197 www.bee3vintage.com

2027

JANUARY

Orlando International Guitar & Music Expo, January 30-31, (dealer day Jan 29). Public hours Sat. 10 am - 5 pm, Sun 10 am - 4 pm, at the Central Florida Fairgrounds. 4603 West Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL. For more info contact Britt Keen at (850) 294-5537 orlando-guitarexpo@outlook.com. or Morty Beckman www.guitarexpo.net

MARCH

Chicago Vintage Guitar Expo, Sunday March 7th, 2027. Marriott Hotel, 50 N. Martingale, Schaumburg, IL. 9am-3pm. For more info contact Beverly Bakes (847) 931-0707 Bakesguitar@aol.com www.Chicagovintageguitarexpo.com

If you have information regarding upcoming guitar shows or events, visit <http://www.vintageguitar.com/guitar-show-submission> or e-mail Mike@vintageguitar.com. All submissions must be received by the 10th of each month, or they will appear in the next available issue. This listing is done as a service to our readers and we reserve final determination as to its contents.

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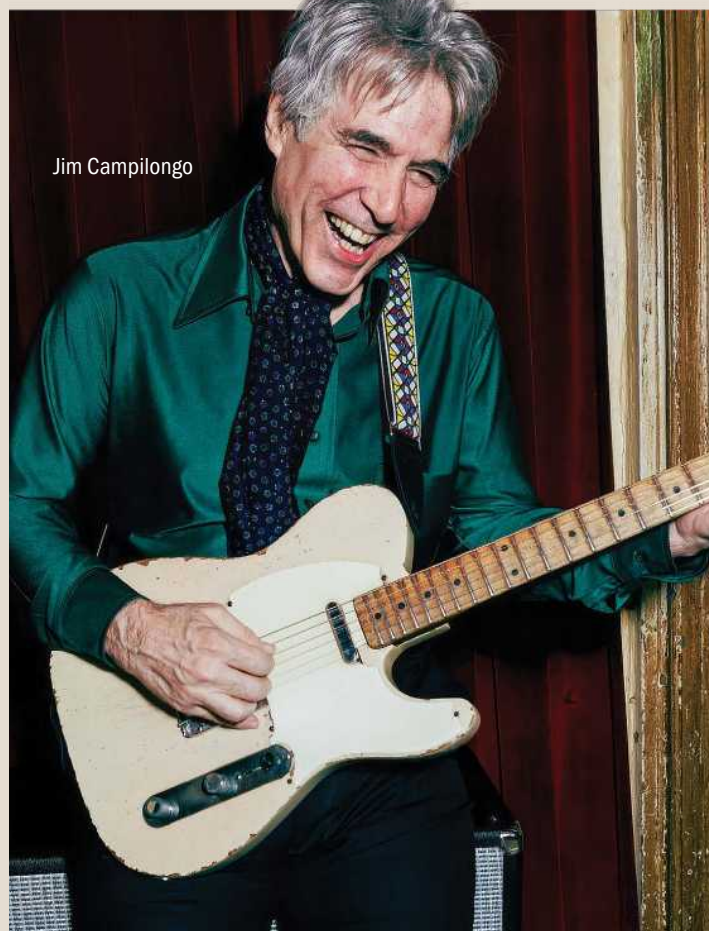
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Jim Campilongo

SIDEWALK FUNK

Jim Campilongo's reputation as a versatile master of Tele-driven twang, country, and jazz in various blends first gained notice in the '90s. His work as a sideman for artists including Martha Wainwright, Charlie Hunter, Peter Rowan, and Gillian Welch is only part of it, while his New York band, the Little Willies, featured vocals by Norah Jones. He has signature Teles by the Fender Custom Shop and Hahn.

Recorded in Argentina with local sidemen, on *Man in a Ball, In a Ball*, Campilongo creates mature, moody explorations and masterfully blends country, rock, and jazz on "Grey to Blue." His steel-guitar-like statements that begin the thoughtful and expressive "Until We Meet Again" are complemented by sympathetic pedal steel. Snarling, spare-but-powerful riffs drive the rocking title track, riding atop Latin-flavored rhythm.

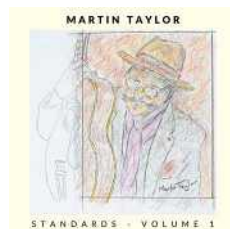
Another side surfaces on sensitive, nuanced unaccom-



Jim Campilongo
Man in a Ball, In a Ball

panied renderings of "Over the Rainbow" and "More or Less." "Villa Crespo," with trombone and sax, reaffirms a mastery of dynamics and space that enhances the song's melancholy – a direction he continues on the dark, somber "Oblivion."

Campilongo's past work revealed humor, wit, harmonic inventiveness, and a deep understanding of country and jazz traditions. This darker, lower-keyed effort is no less satisfying. – **Rich Kienzie**



Martin Taylor
Standards, Vol. 1

The Great American Songbook has been interpreted so many times that in 2026 the artist's challenge is to make standards their own, turning familiar into fresh. Martin Taylor does just that, and though you'd swear you're hearing multiple parts simultaneously, the 69-year-old Scotsman reports, "I recorded it in one day in my studio at home, with no overdubs."

The result sits alongside Joe Pass' *Virtuoso* in the annals of solo jazz guitar. Akin to pianist Oscar Peterson treating a given song with multiple feels and techniques, Taylor reveals each song's adaptability as well as his own versatility. "I'm Old Fashioned," penned by Jerome Kern and Johnny Mercer, begins rubato, with cascading fingerpicking segueing to snatches of the melody before Taylor

establishes a swinging groove, eventually slowing again to add some perfectly placed harmonics.

Coaxing a warm-but-defined tone from his signature Fibonacci Joya, he transforms the Carpenters' ballad, "I Won't Last a Day Without You," into a quick, urgent bossa nova.

The notion of leaving space, letting notes hang, was never demonstrated better than his take on Hoagy Carmichael's "Georgia On My Mind." Taylor's command is staggering, as is his taste – never sacrificing musicality for parlor-trick chops displays. – **Dan Forte**



Biréli Lagrène
Elegant People

A jazz star since he was barely 14, Biréli Lagrène is now 59 and a master of his craft. While he emerged as an acoustic gypsy-jazz ace, today,

he commands nearly every style of jazz, as conveyed on *Elegant People*.

On the title track, the Frenchman blends modern bop with electric fusion, effortlessly dovetailing clean and dirty guitar textures. There are no musical boundaries in his world; "Flair (around Giant Steps)" borrows ideas from John Coltrane's legendary "Giant Steps," but reinterprets it with Scofield-like funk and a blend of blues licks with half/whole diminished-scale flavors. "Kings Cross" delves into the organ-trio format, with predictably swinging results, though Lagrène's overdriven tone is a cool switch-up. "Anjo de Mim" echoes Pat Metheny, with ambient reverb and echo to match the lilting world-jazz vibe. He even sweep-picks on "New Blues," like a modern-day Barney Kessel. Lagrène's improvisations are consistently dazzling, and the chord work is supreme.

Though excessive variety has toppled many a jazz record, Lagrène leaps sub-genres with ease and holds it together with magnificent touch and technique. Even 45

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Murray Attaway



MURRAY ATTAWAY: BACK IN ACTION

By Dan Forte

“If I ever find the guy who coined the term ‘jangle-pop...’” Murray Attaway’s mock threat trails off, but he’s made his point. Wikipedia devotes a whole page to the subgenre’s etymology, characteristics, and history, but he’s not buying it.

Guadalcanal Diary, the band he co-founded in the ’80s, was lumped into the pseudo category largely due to geography – its Marietta, Georgia, base not far from the Athens scene of R.E.M. and the B-52s. Stylistically, the quartet was darker and edgier than pop janglers of the day – north, south, east, or west.

Their indie debut, 1984’s *Walking in the Shadow of the Big Man*, was picked up by Elektra, and they released three more before dissolving in ’89. All four members had a

hand in writing, but the lion’s share came from Attaway and lead guitarist Jeff Walls. Attaway’s 2025 solo album, *Tense Music Plays*, was dedicated to Walls, who was 62 when he passed away from pancreatic cancer in 2019.

The two were high school friends and, after Guadalcanal Diary’s breakup, Walls played in the rockabilly/lounge Hillbilly Frankenstein and the garage-rock Woggles. Though Attaway played rhythm in Guadal, *Tense* is the first record on which he played every guitar part.

“It would’ve been a whole lot easier if I could have called Jeff to say, ‘Put this lick on here,’” he says. “I used his copperburst Jerry Jones Longhorn six-string for the bass parts that I did. Jeff could improvise, and I still can’t. So for some of the songs, I’d have a ‘written solo,’ as he called them. He’d want me to play those, even though he could play them better.”

The 68-year-old cites “Eleanor Rigby” as the first song that really hit him. “It came out in ’66,

so I was eight or nine. I liked the Beatles already, but I was also heavily into horror movies. That song had strings in it, and they sounded like the strings that were in some Universal horror films. If you look at their timeline, three years before *Revolver*, they were doing the mop-top stuff, and then *Revolver* has ‘Tomorrow Never Knows.’ That’s quite a leap, and they almost invented that style. It pre-dated psychedelia.”

Important guitar influences include Richard Thompson, Robert Johnson, Jimmy Page, Buck Owens, and the Buckaroos’ Don Rich. His ’93 solo album, *In Thrall*, was produced by Tony Berg and found him backed by a bevy of session types, including guitarist Robbie Blunt, violinist Sid Page, drummer Jim Keltner, and keyboardists

Benmont Tench and Nicky Hopkins. From the organic/friends nature of Guadal to what he calls “my Hollywood record” was a major step. “It was fun doing it,” he says of the Geffen release. “I met cool people. But to me, you track the vocals around the third week, not three months later.”

Geffen rejected his ’95 followup, *Delirium*, and Attaway went into web development. Of *Tense*, he says, “I wanted to do this record for 30 years, but I never could make the time, with raising my kids and running my business. So I needed to do it in a very insular manner. My wife, Layla, went to a Swimming Pool Q’s show, and she said, ‘Maybe you should ask Robert Schmid to play drums.’ He also plays bass, so he’s on three songs. Most of the electric guitar tracks are my ’67 SG Junior, which I have from the Guadal days. For slide, I used a Gretsch Jim Dandy parlor guitar [fitted] with a Gold Foil pickup. The wiggliest guitar I used was a ’67 Mosrite Celebrity. I used a Jamstick Studio [MIDI guitar] for some string parts, and an original Stylophone and some kitchenware on ‘Old Christmas.’”

Other electrics in service were a Gretsch Synchronomatic, Gretsch Streamliner, Danelectro U2 reissue, and a Highway One Telecaster.

“The acoustic I used most is my ’63 Gibson J-45, along with a Taylor Mini GS Koa,” he continues. “I wanted a J-45 for a long time and finally found one at a guitar store in Cornelia, Georgia, up in the mountains. They listed it online, and someone outbid me. I called and asked if they had anything similar, and they told me the buyer had backed out of the deal. I said, ‘I’m on my way.’ I’ve played it ever since. Another is my ’63 Gibson LG-0, which was what you found under the tree when you were six, if your folks had a little money. I got mine for 700 bucks.”

As for the recording process, he enumerates, “Electric tracks are all through my Drawmer 1960 Dual Vacuum Tube Compressor & Preamp and then direct to Mac. The acoustics are through the Drawmer, as well, but I used a matched stereo mic pair, so they’re all actually in binaural – a cool technique.”

The album credits Mark Williams – whose production resume includes Southern Culture On The Skids and Joe Walsh – as “enabler and kibitzer.” “I imagined a very small ensemble of offbeat players,” Attaway muses. “And, of course, it’s me doing it.”

years since his teen breakout, he remains formidable. – **Pete Prown**

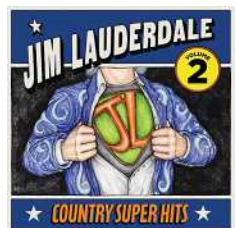


High Fade Twice as Nice

Stubbornly independent in its musical vision, High Fade is a funk-rock trio from Scotland that treads a serpentine path on its solid second album.

Folkie buskers with open guitar cases, they ain't. Vocalist/guitarist/founder Harry Valentino, bassist Oliver Sentence, and drummer Heath Campbell weave punk, metal, disco, soul, and jazz into their swirling funk. "Swamp" zips on a fast groove but the tempo shifts, including a slow guitar riff. "The Fly" is terrific, hypercaffeinated jazz-funk with spitting guitar and bass, along with organ and trumpet accents. "War" starts funky then transitions to heavy rock.

Sentence and Campbell really lock in on "Sick of Myself" before Valentino's fluid mid-tempo solo riff leads the song into a tempo change. R&B/soul radiates from "Room 634." The danceable "Time for a Cig (Twice as Nice)" includes slick bass licks and Campbell's speedy rhythm solo. Thanks to daredevil musicianship, with High Fade, you never know what's coming next. – **Bret Adams**



Jim Lauderdale Country Super Hits Vol. 2

Ironical title aside, this set of originals written or co-written by Lauderdale is straight-ahead honky-tonk. The full-bodied studio band features Nashville A-listers like Kenny Vaughan, Craig Smith, Brent Mason, and Chris Scruggs. Paul Franklin, Russ Pahl, Steve Hinson, and Robby Turner handle pedal steel, while Jay Weaver, Alison Prestwood, or Glenn Worf play bass. In various combinations, their energy and skills enhance Lauderdale's voice and no-frills lyrics.

On the ballad "People Get Hurt Sometimes," Franklin's rich, empathetic work provides a perfect counterpoint to Lauderdale's understated, twangy vocal. Franklin and Mason are subtle but effective behind the lament "I've Still Got You," a social commentary about current economic woes.



High Fade's Harry Valentino onstage with bassist Oliver Sentence.

Vaughan and Turner create a Bakersfield ambience for the bubbly "I'm Waggin' My Tail Again," and continue it on "Neighbors," with a sharp Vaughan solo.

The shuffle-driven "Artificial Intelligence," part cautionary and part ballad, features Hinson's steel. Pahl ably handles all guitars on lightly swinging "Making a Believer Out of Me." Scruggs adds an eloquent break to "I Can't Get Around It." Smith and Hinson enhance the rocking "You're My Honest to Goodness." Lauderdale's vocal and writing skills are a given – he also knows the right pickers to hire. – **RK**



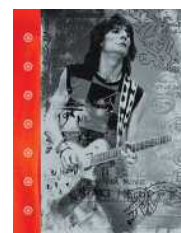
Mike Finnigan Mike Finnigan

Playing organ behind Jimi Hendrix on *Electric Ladyland* is just one credit from the inestimable resumé of Mike Finnigan, who also worked with Bonnie Raitt, CSNY, Dave Mason, Taj Mahal, Buddy Guy, and many more. When he passed away in 2021, Finnigan was recording his first solo album in nearly 50 years. Thankfully, producer J.J. Blair took on the task of getting the project across the finish line.

Finnigan's soulful B-3 and vocals are the stars of the show, but there are also six-string highlights. On the B.B. King staple, "Don't Answer the Door," Josh Sklair solos in the

intro, with Blair providing the lead fills after. Brian Ray and Sklair swap leads on "It Ain't Fair," and "Lay Around and Love On You," which borrows the riff from Freddie King's "San-Ho-Zay," and features a tasteful solo by studio legend Dean Parks.

Joe Bonamassa stands out on "100 Years of B.B. King," and Val McCallum's slide shines on "All That You Dream" and "Sing Me Back Home." The latter, a Merle Haggard two-step, is refashioned as a waltz-time gospel tour de force. It's a particularly poignant swan song. – **DF**

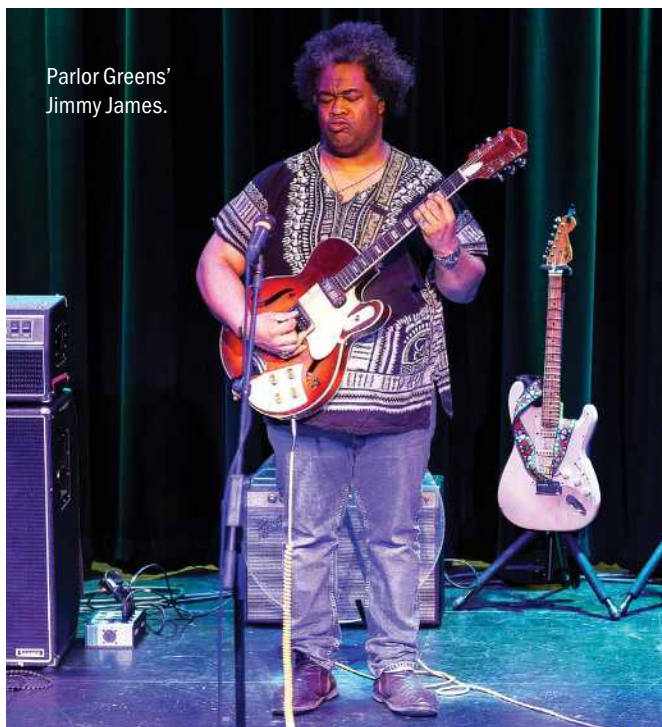


Ronnie Wood Fearless

Genesis Publications is known for its posh illustrated hardcovers, and this autobiography is no exception. Not only does it convey Ronnie Wood's personal saga, but includes historic photos, album covers, and his own drawings and artwork. Hailing from actual water gypsies who lived on London's waterways, Wood was raised in a musical family, a born entertainer on the move – ample training for a future touring musician.

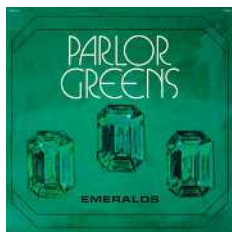
For gearheads, there are heart-stopping photos of guitars and amps. While Wood's Tele from the Birds was lost, he had a replica built; see it leaning against his original-logo '64 Marshall JTM45 head and cabinet. You

Parlor Greens'
Jimmy James.



can also admire close-ups of the '68 Telecaster Bass and Jazz Bass from his Jeff Beck Group stint.

During the Faces era with Rod Stewart, Woody switched to lead guitar and slide, often using a Stratocaster or a metal-front Zemaitis like the black single-cut with three humbuckers. In the Stones, Wood has used Strats, Explorers, Les Pauls, a black L-5S – and yep, more by Zemaitis. As the book's title suggests, Ronnie Wood is something of a fearless gear explorer. – **PP**



Parlor Greens Emeralds

Soul-jazz organ trios will never die, and Parlor Greens is keeping that sound fresh with supreme joy. On their second studio album, organist Adam Scone, drummer Tim Carman, and guitarist

Jimmy James keep it real and make it greasy. It's the sound of Muscle Shoals on creatine and the fat-free stylings of James, as he magically orchestrates the links between Jimmy Nolen, Steve Cropper, and Phelps "Catfish" Collins.

Eleven tracks of grooviness permeate lo-fi production and luscious reverb, compliments of producer Doug Krebs and the band. "Eat Your Greens," "Mustard Sauce," and "Drop Top" get things rolling with beefy B3 and titillating vintage tones from Harmony and Silvertone guitars. On "Letter To Brother Ben" and the title track, James wields R&B double-stops like a Kung Fu master, echoing the gospel sounds of early-'60s Chicago. The band pumps things up on "Francisco Smack" with its retro cop-show vibe and James' stream-of-consciousness soloing.

James Brown and Grant Green fuse on "Lion's Mane," while "Red Dog" is a great, twisting-at-the-beach instrumental. The band performs an awesome cover of "Jolene" by Dolly Parton, while the ballad "Queen Of My Heart" showcases a heartfelt tribute. – **Oscar Jordan VG**

extra. EXTRA



AMANI BURNHAM Roots & Wings

On Amani Burnham's ear-opening debut, the Hendrix/Trower/SRV blueprint is clear as the 20-year-old singer/guitarist plays astonishing leads and rhythms with his thumb. The instrumental "Fastlane" hits with ripping chords and wah, while the light-funk title track includes a creamy solo. The eight-minute "Bleeding Heart" is a slow-blues showcase. Thanks to young Amani, '60s psychedelic guitar remains in capable hands. – **BA**



NILI BROSH Eventide

Guitarist Nili Brosh (Dethklok, Danny Elfman) is back with a menagerie of high-tech instrumentals, all played with passion, finesse, and splendid creativity. Compositions like "Roulette," "Every Player Wins," and "Losing Grip" get an assist from Dethklok, but it's Brosh's show, and she wails like a virtuoso. Highlights include "Lavender Mountains," "Song for Hope," and the slightly acoustic "Tip the Cap." – **OJ**



ALTERED FIVE BLUES BAND Hammer & Chisel

Too often, the term "modern blues" can signal a bastardization of the form. But this Milwaukee quintet manages to straddle contemporary and traditional, like their nod to Muddy Waters, "Dare Me To Do It." Throughout, Jeff Schroedl's fat-toned guitar complements the husky vocal of Jeff Taylor (who died April 30), as on the gospel-tinged "The Will Of Man." – **DF**



VAN HALEN 5150 (Expanded Edition)

This 40th-anniversary edition showcases Van Halen's 1986 release debuting frontman Sammy Hagar, which earned their first #1 album. Included are rare singles, extended versions, promo clips, and 1986's *Live Without a Net* video. Dig EVH's wild eight-minute "Guitar Solo" featuring "316" and "Eruption." Listening back, Eddie obviously had a blast making 5150. David Lee Roth purists, however, may balk. – **BA**



BLACK LABEL SOCIETY Engines of Demolition

Zakk Wylde delivers window-shattering metal riffage, psychotic soloing, and traumatically confessional lyrics – and he's been doing it with BLS for more than 25 years. Highlights include "Above & Below" and "Better Days & Wiser Times." In the wake of Wylde standing in for Dimebag Darrell during the Pantera reunion, *Engines of Demolition* delivers a thud that is raw and unholy. – **OJ**



NICHOLAS MYCIO Please Plant Flowers

Jazz-fusion newcomer Nicholas Mycio conjures the ECM sound of the 1970s, his fretboard work bringing to mind timeless Metheny and Abercrombie. "Siniy" is a scorcher, blending rich harmonies, high-speed picking, and clean, muted tone immersed in reverb. Nicholas' swift chord work is evident on "Elegy for Norman," while "Signals in Black" is hip, urban, and aggressive. Keep an eye on young Mr. Mycio. – **PP**

DIGGING DEEPER

The LSL Chris Fleming '50s Saticoy SSS

When one reaches the upper tiers of guitar buying, things can get dicey. Plunking down a lot of money for a guitar creates high expectations. The folks at LSL Instruments know this, and put a lot of thought into delivering on that promise.

For this new build, LSL founder Lance Lerman teamed with Chris Fleming, who worked for the Fender Custom Shop and other ventures, accumulating a lifetime's knowledge of solidbody design. For the collaboration, Fleming trained a team of craftsmen at the factory, sharing his concepts on shaping, mixing finishes, electronics, pickups, fretwork, and more. The resulting Chris Fleming '50s Saticoy SSS digs deep into the vintage double-cut concept.

The '50s Saticoy SSS offers up a Strat recreation that aspires toward Leo Fender-perfection – no easy feat. Among its features are an alder body with light aging, and nitro over a two-tone sunburst with light relic'ing. There's a maple neck and fretboard (9.5" radius) and Fleming's personal neck carve, which is a soft V to C shape. Touches include lightly aged nickel hardware, parchment pickguard, VTT five-way electronics, and Chris Fleming Recipe Pickups handwound by LSL. Its 21 frets are Jescar 6105, which is the preferred vintage spec.

In hand, the '50s Saticoy is a joyous experience. Weighing in around six pounds, 15 ounces, it's a friendly gigging heft. The neck is terrific, adding a dash of '50s girth that isn't chunky and sits snugly in your palm. No surprise, the setup is spot-on, as it's set up per Fleming's specs. Other bonuses are the Fleming pickups and electronics, which are Strat-erific and deliver the timeless tones you're after. Twang to your heart's content.

Sure, the Chris Fleming '50s Saticoy SSS is still an upper-price instrument, but it comes with the knowledge that the axe has been carefully tweaked in all the right places and delivers the old-school goods. Everyone and their grandmother makes a Strat copy, but this LSL/Fleming collab is a cut above. – **Pete Prown**

Price: \$3,675
www.lslinstruments.com



www.wamplerpedals.com.

MONSTER MAKER

The Wampler Golden Jubilee

Brian Wampler wants to drop a stack on your pedalboard. With the Golden Jubilee, the effects mastermind aimed to capture the sound and feel of two amps that shaped the heaviest music of the '80s in one dual-circuit pedal.

More than a distortion or drive, the DS circuit is designed to sound like the Mesa Mark IIC+, spawned to answer Metallica's need to pair heaviness with articulate definition. Its partner in crime is the OD circuit, which runs a little darker and more compressed – a ringer for the beloved Marshall JCM800 2203. Each circuit has independent Level, Tone, and Gain controls, and players can activate both simultaneously – and toggle their stacking order – for rich saturation. With tweaking of the Character switches, we were thunderstruck to find this pedal could enable a Fender Deluxe to chug like a Marshall or send a solid-state Quilter into hair-band land.

The Golden Jubilee delivers all the monstrous joys that cascading gain stages made possible in the originals – thumping bottom, chomping crunch, liquid-metal leads, controlled feedback, and days-long sustain. All of this, in a sparkling green-and-gold housing with a footprint no larger than a cell phone. All told, it may be the closest thing to dual stacks in your garage without bearing the inaccessible price, the 200-pound haul, or the divorce. – **Rich Maloof**

EXTENDED FUN

Eastwood's BG 64 Baritone Guitarlin

The first time you gaze upon the Eastwood BG 64 Baritone Guitarlin, feel free to drop your expletive of choice because you've never seen anything like it.

What is it? In short, it's a 35-fret baritone guitar, giving the low-end thump of a bari *along with* the extended upper range of an electric mandolin. Does it work?

The Guitarlin has a solid-alder body, C-shape maple neck with jatoba (Brazilian cherry) fretboard and medium-jumbo frets. Weighing 9 pounds 2 ounces, it has two custom single-coil pickups controlled by master Volume and Tone knobs (in mismatched black and white) and, instead of a toggle, on/off pickup switches like a Fender Jaguar. A final switch is labeled Rhythm/Solo and it adds a breath of high-end clarity. Our tester came with a stop tailpiece, but you can add a vibrato bridge for \$209.

In hand, the BG 64 feels something like a bass when you first grab it, owing to a 30" scale and neck like a giraffe. Its set neck gives a unique feel, but once you start to thump it, its bari persona begins to emerge. Like many baritones, it's tuned B to B, giving the bottom-end tones that powered a million Nashville and honky tonk hits, plus surf, indie, and twang. This adjusted mindset comes into play when you look for the 12th fret, which is actually nearer the middle of the fretboard rather than closer to the heel. But, when jamming, the BG 64 delivers as promised. The baritone range is perfectly thumpy, while frets 22 to 35 offer dog-whistle pitches for upper-range adventurers.

All told, the Guitarlin is a specialty guitar and therefore, one's ability to accurately grab ultra-high notes – on close frets with heavier strings – will be dependent on their technique. While not for everyone, for the right player, the Eastwood BG 64 could be an extended-range game changer. – **Pete Prown**

Price: \$999 (stop tail);
\$1,208 (vibrato)
www.eastwoodguitars.com



GEARIN' UP



GIBSON J-45 CENTURY 12-FRET

Gibson's J-45 Century 12-Fret has a mahogany body, Sitka spruce top, SlimTaper mahogany neck with rosewood fretboard and mother-of-pearl dots, sloped rectangle closed-slot rosewood bridge, bone nut and saddle, Tusq bridge pins, and hand-sprayed satin nitrocellulose lacquer finish. Other details include open-back tuners with cream buttons, and an early-1900s script logo.



TRACE ELLIOT DUAL BAND COMPRESSOR

Trace Elliot's Dual Band Compressor uses the classic dual-band compression circuit from the company's TE-1200 bass amp. It has controls for Lo Band and Hi Band, Input Level, and Output Level. Housed in a die-cast enclosure, it uses 9-volt DC power supply or battery.



DAREDEVIL PEDALS DOUBLE COCKED

Daredevil Pedals' Double Cocked is a combination wah/gain pedal with footswitchable sweep settings, Gain control to add dirt and/or boost leads, and Blend to control how the two are mixed. Hand-wired in the U.S., it offers true-bypass and is powered by 9-volt battery or external DC supply.

Got something new and cool? Let us know at www.VintageGuitar.com/Gearin-Up-Submission



SERIOUS TONE

EarthQuaker's ZEQD-Pre

How seriously do you take your tone? While it's easy to plug directly into an amp simulator, modeler, IR loader, or recording interface, the results often lack the authenticity of a *real* amp. EarthQuaker has teamed up with Dr. Z Amplification to create the ZEQD-Pre pedal, a box that offers tube tones for live or digital recording situations.

The ZEQD-Pre has a three-band tone stack along with Level and Boost controls; in the top center, a protruding silver disc houses an EF86 tube. As a pro tool, it has a multitude of ins/outs for functionality. If you have a tube amp and want to pump things up, put the ZEQD-Pre in front like a conventional stompbox. It will take your tube amp's straight tone and make it better, or can be combined with a favorite overdrive or fuzz for extra punch.

Things get really interesting when you stick it in front of a modeling amplifier. Using a '75 Stratocaster into a Boss Katana,

the results were palpable. While the amp excels at super-clean and crunch modes, the "slightly overdriven" realm is underwhelming. But with the ZEQD-Pre, the Strat delivered warm, chewy notes that bloomed in the right places. Another test was to run it between the guitar and a Focusrite interface. Here, the Headphone Out jack that's use-

ful for silent late-night jamming, also delivered a line-level signal; again, the tracks we recorded were significantly more meaty than straight gui-

tar tone. The EQ controls are powerful, so they need to be used judiciously.

While pricier than some other tube preamps, the ZEQD-Pre is a serious box for players who value the sonic magic that a tube can bring. For the modern player, it might become a regular part of your pedalboard, in a home studio or tucked into a gig bag. In fact, if you really value good tone, the ZEQD-Pre could be simply indispensable. — **Pete Prown**

Price: \$399
www.earthquakerdevices.com



Price: \$149
www.trem-band.com

VIBRATO REVAMP

The Trem-Band Brass Tremolo Blocker

Designed for Floyd Rose-licensed vibratos and similar devices, the Trem-Band Brass Tremolo Blocker offers guitarists with floating whammy bars the option of preventing upward motion, which in turn yields improved tuning, especially after enthusiastic application.

Installing the Trem-Band requires no drilling or disassembly. It simply slides over the guitar's vibrato block and is held in place by two compression screws along with pieces of brass that keep it level in the cavity. It can be adjusted to accommodate a gap as small as $\frac{3}{16}$ " and as large as $\frac{1}{2}$ ", which ensures the vibrato is perfectly level. Wedged between the wood and vibrato block, it more efficiently transfers vibrations from the strings through the block and into the wood.

In a superstrat with a Floyd Rose, the Blocker noticeably improved richness, warmth, and enhanced midrange resonance. And because it limits the vibrato's movement, changing strings is easier, and many tuning issues disappear. Double-stop bends stayed in tune and alternate tunings were a breeze.

The Brass Tremolo Blocker is a great tool for guitarists who want to improve upon what they already own. The difference is night and day. — **Oscar Jordan**



SUPERBLY VERSATILE

Fender's 75th Anniversary Vintera Road Worn 1951 Telecaster

To mark the 75th anniversary of its Telecaster, Fender is rolling out an array of variants. The Vintera Road Worn 1951 Tele pays tribute to the first model to wear the name following the 1950 introduction of the Broadcaster.

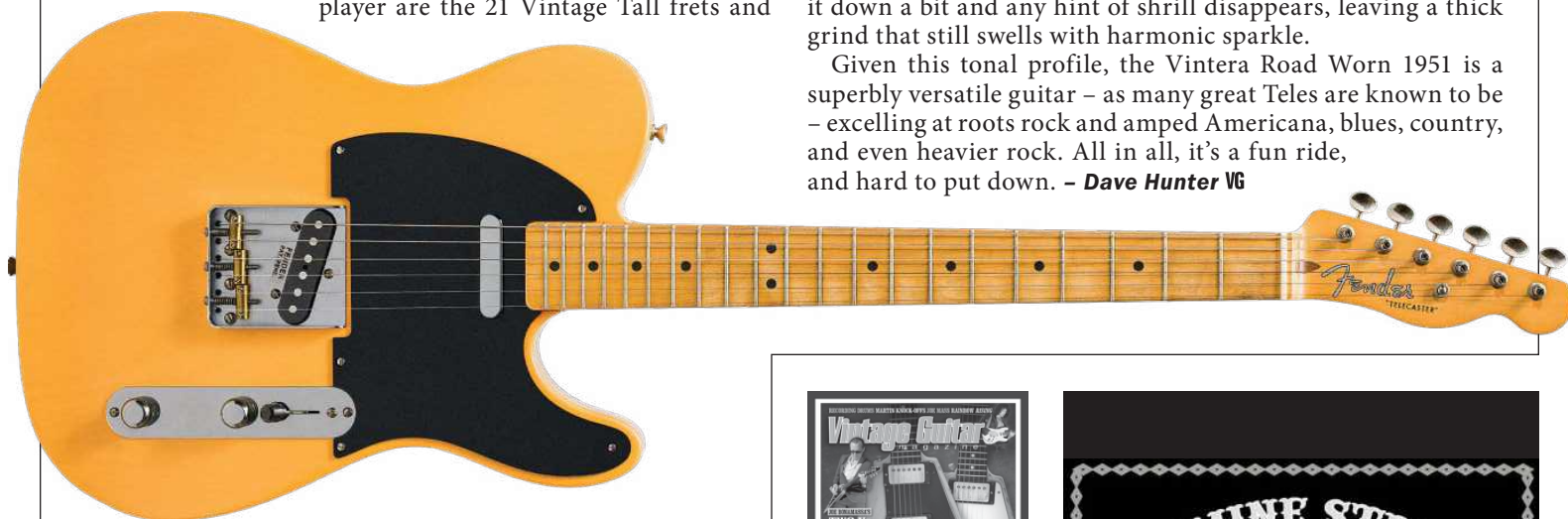
Among its period-correct specs are a swamp-ash body in butterscotch blond finish, solid maple neck with deep U profile, 7.25" fretboard radius, rounded/knurlled knobs, barrel switch tip, "Pat. Pend." bridge plate with brass saddles, and Fender's Pure Vintage '51 Single-Coil Tele pickups. Two concessions to the modern player are the 21 Vintage Tall frets and

Price: \$1,899
www.fender.com

on the heavy side at 8.2 pounds; some early Teles were indeed that or more, but many were a *lot* lighter, and players today tend to prefer the less-corpulent examples.

Tested through a '64 Bassman with 2x10" cab and a Matchless Spitfire 1x12" combo, the Vintera Road Worn 1951 leaned toward the thicker, meatier end of the Tele spectrum, with a girthy twang in the bridge position and a warm-yet-biting neck pickup. Like many Teles, it can be shrill and spikey on the bridge setting if you let it, but that's what the Tone control is for; dial it down a bit and any hint of shrill disappears, leaving a thick grind that still swells with harmonic sparkle.

Given this tonal profile, the Vintera Road Worn 1951 is a superbly versatile guitar – as many great Teles are known to be – excelling at roots rock and amped Americana, blues, country, and even heavier rock. All in all, it's a fun ride, and hard to put down. – **Dave Hunter VG**



pickup wiring, which tweaks neck, both, and bridge pickups with master Volume and Tone in all positions.

Ageing is tasteful and understated, with checking throughout the nitrocellulose finish on the body, but no significant dings or bare spots. The neck's finish is "worn" nearly to the wood in more places but retains a tactile, easy playing feel. It's a real club of a neck, too, at around .953" deep at the first fret and a hair over 1" at the 12th. The body is arguably a tad

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01 Tom Van Effen's Gibson/Epiphone family includes (top left) a Korina '58 Flying V, Coronet, '81 S-1, Epi '61 SG Standard reissue, and a reissue Explorer. Along the bottom are an Epi Hummingbird Pro, Custom Shop Les Paul, and a '91 Gibson Dove.

02 Randy Barnett found this '30s Cromwell (made by Gibson) G4 hiding under a table at a recent guitar show. Happy to take it on as a resurrection project, he removed its damaged back to fix the bracing, and it's now a steadfast home picker.

03 Bengt Hedbjork firmly believes the Gallery needs more Deans! Here are his '06 Black Gold V, '02 Avalanche, '04 Cadillac Select, '07 Hardtail DOA, and '04 Z79.

04 Kerry Hudson's collection of memorabilia includes this '97 Gibson Les Paul Classic, '03 Epi Explorer, refinished '74 Gibson L-6S, and amps by Marshall, Gibson, Vox, and others.

05 After they met a decade ago, Terry Ross encouraged Steve Penn to up his game so they could gig near their homes in Port Austin, Michigan. Now, they do just that, Terry on A-style mandolin, Steve with his '64 J-50.

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON WWW.VINTAGEGUITAR.COM



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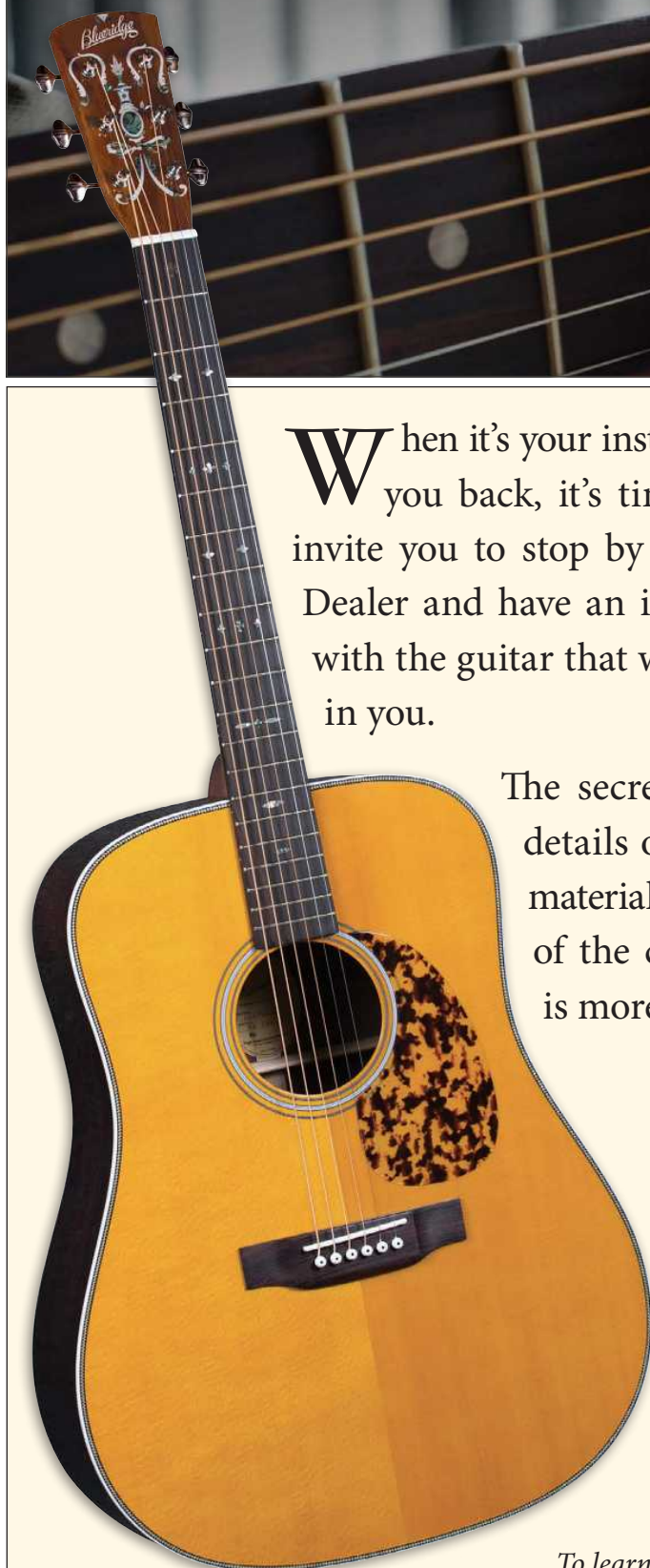
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