

# Fender®

M A G A Z I N E

ISSUE ONE || SPRING & SUMMER 2012 || FENDER.COM

Albert Hammond Jr. of  
The Strokes, shot on location  
in New York City







FENDER | SELECT

SELECT INSTRUMENTS

*for*

SELECT INDIVIDUALS

THE  
GOLDEN  
AGE OF  
FENDER



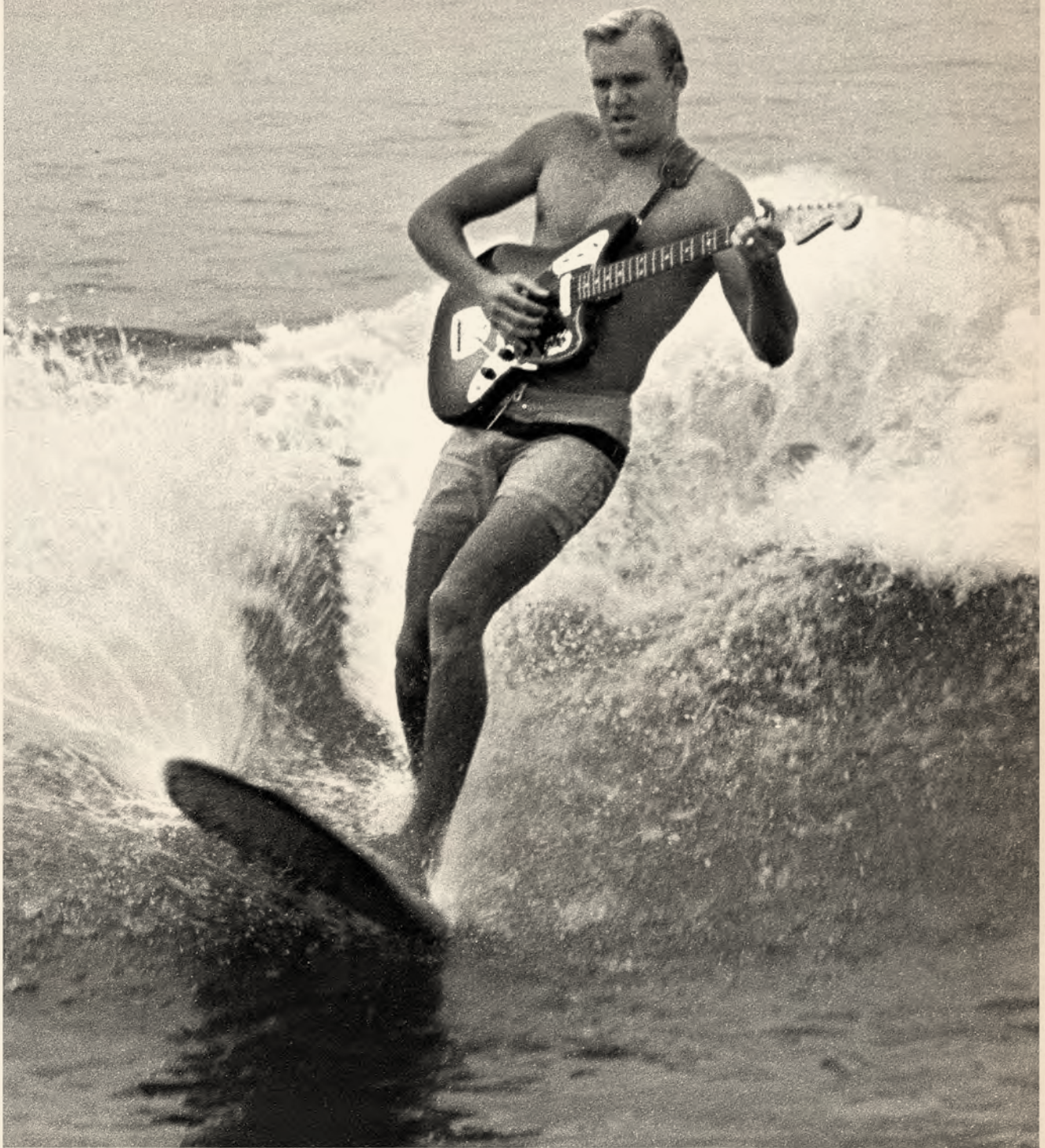
You won't part with yours either\*

Fender's *You Won't Part  
With Yours Either* ad campaign

CREATED BY ROBERT PERINE (1922-2004)

The *You Won't Part With Yours Either* ad campaign featured a wholesome cast of Fender-toting players inhabiting a sun-kissed Californian utopia. No guitars were harmed in the making of the ads, despite them being adventurous productions involving pristine instruments being entrusted to various daredevils – including skydivers, skiers and surfers – to capture the shots.

You won't part with yours either\*



Even if you're unfamiliar with this classic series of ads, you'll have seen the work of its creator, Bob Perine, a thousand times. He became Fender's art director from 1957, and when he designed a new logo for the 1958-59 catalogue, Leo Fender summoned him to the factory, pointed to the "F", and said, "You see Bob, it should be like the curve of a woman's back; it has to be just right." Perine duly designed a more curvaceous form for the logo. Leo approved: it was trademarked in 1960, first appeared on the Jazz Bass, and has been used until the present day.



**THE  
GOLDEN  
AGE OF  
FENDER**



The campaign was a real family affair, often featuring Perine's daughters and their friends, and Bob's red 1957 Ford Thunderbird. Bob had learned to play guitar in the Navy during the war, and he too can be seen in the ads, playing Strats, Teles and Jazzmasters. The role Perine's work played in popularizing Fender can't be underestimated: following his 2008 induction into the Fender Hall Of Fame, the company made his work available to buy in various art-print formats from <http://fender.artehouse.com>.





WELCOME  
TO...  
**Fender**<sup>®</sup>  
M A G A Z I N E

**GREEN DAY'S MIKE DIRNT IS A LIFELONG FENDER FAN**

**W**HEN I WAS ASKED TO WRITE AN INSERT for Fender Magazine's first issue I thought of different ways to write an irreverent, cool piece. But after a few minutes I thought, to hell with it. Let's just tell the truth for once!

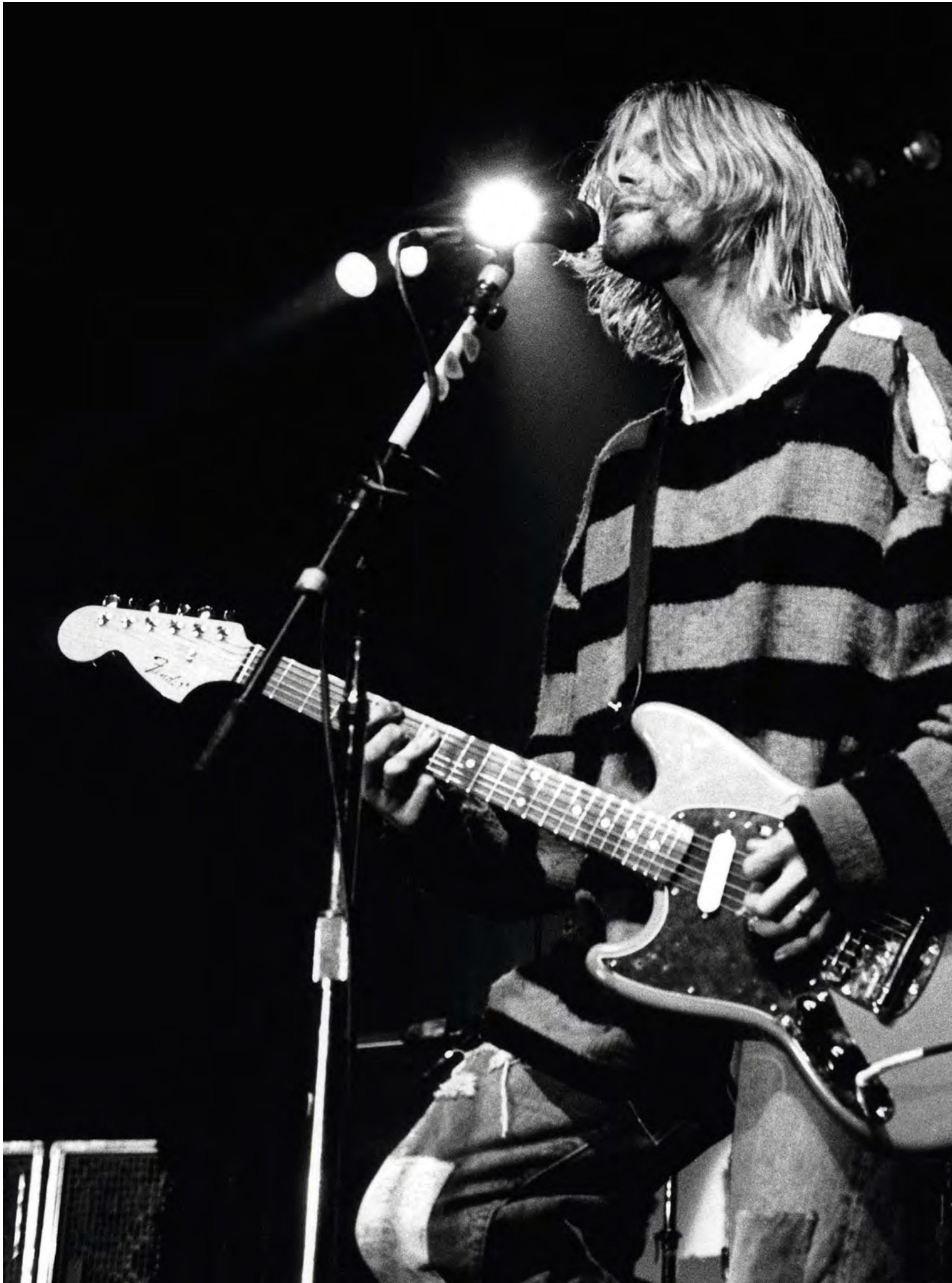
Fender musical instruments have shaped my life well beyond imagination. When I was a little kid I listened to the radio like it was my best friend. I hung on every musical note and still remember every catchy guitar line or riff I have ever heard. That was my escape, and still is. But it wasn't until years later that I connected the bands and songs I loved to a company named Fender. I actually knew what a Stratocaster looked like before I knew who made it. It's the guitar that Hendrix played... and so on. I've always felt like music was the emotional outlet that you can't get from anything else. For me, this intangible force was life-shaping and, dare I say, larger than life itself.

If you're reading this and you're under 65 years old, Fender has been working hard throughout your lifetime to make our world a better, more musical place. Working closely with many of the people at Fender for years has been great. Fender is like a company of skilled musical 'superfans', who all want to make the biggest and best musical instruments of the past, present and future all at once.

The hallways at Fender headquarters are filled with musicians, technicians and history. I'm a bit older now, but will forever be a kid – and although I don't believe in Santa Claus anymore, I do believe that if he does exist, his workshop looks something like Fender's.

**MIKE DIRNT**  
**FEBRUARY 2012**





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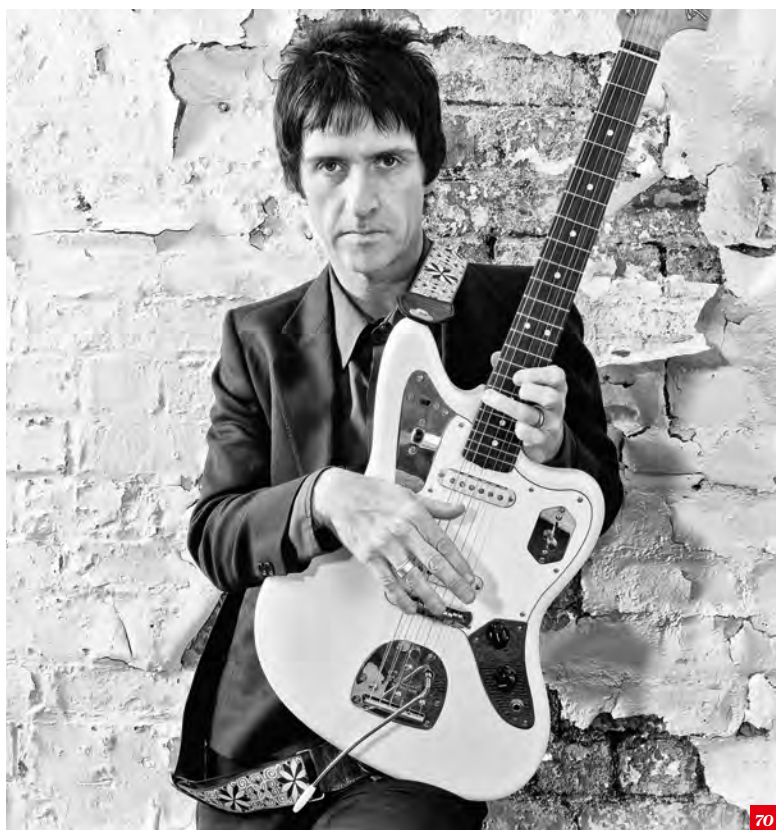
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# Fender® MAGAZINE

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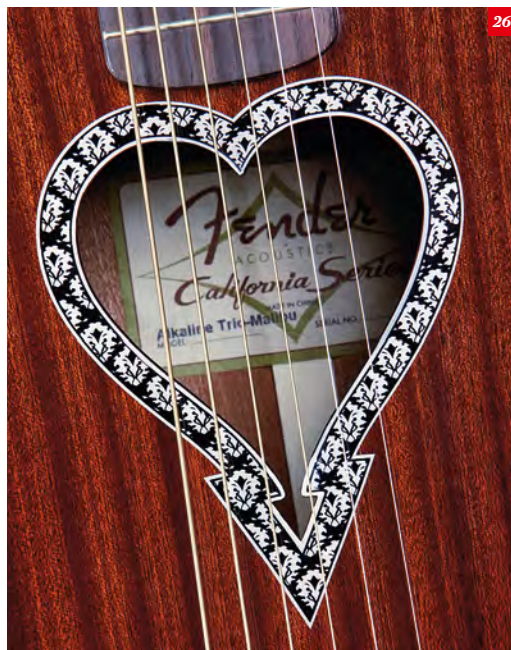
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# The BUZZ

NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF  
Fender®

{EXPERIENCE FENDER}

## The spirit of Rock 'n' Roll

Fender's Visitor Center is the ultimate place to submerge yourself in the culture and heritage of a way of life that's lasted more than 60 years...

**T**HERE'S NOT MANY EXPERIENCES in rock 'n' roll where you can just turn up and go, "right, hit me with everything you've got," but Fender has put just such a thing together with the Visitor Center. This is Fender history and heritage up-close and personal, and is a really great dive into a world that has been created over the last 60-plus years. Opened in September 2011 at Fender's Corona, California factory, this sumptuous showcase is packed with

**Below**

It's not just about guitars... note those classic Fender amplifier models reclining on their flightcase



**Hall of Fame**

The Custom Shop's exact replicas of famous players' guitars, from Stevie Ray's "Lenny" to Clapton's "Blackie", form just one of the Visitor Center's showpiece attractions



# THE LEGENDS

*“This is Fender history and heritage up-close and personal... a dive into a world that’s been created over 60-plus years”*

# The BUZZ

NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF

Fender



**Left**  
Rock players through the ages have adopted, and adapted, Fender's instruments for their darker musical purposes



**Below left to right**  
Fender's own inspirational figures are celebrated; the Center's so new, the Fiesta Red paint's still drying; lap-steels, the Broadcaster prototype, and Leo himself all take a bow; and last but not least, the greatest Fender player of them all

►► entertaining and educational exhibits for every guitar lover that will hook you into whichever moment in time you're looking at.

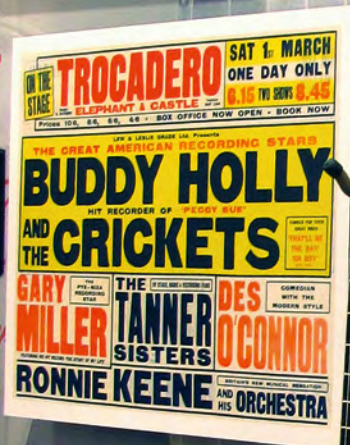
The whole exhibit runs to more than 8,000 square feet and hosts hundreds of instruments and amps, photos, historical artifacts, interactive displays and much more to grab you. From classic instruments to the tales of the guitar and bass legends that play them, this is the real inside story of the company, from 1946 to today.

There's the chance to personalize your next Fender in The American Design Experience, and to shop for apparel, accessories, collectibles and other items in the retail shop, but another really cool part is still to come... ►►

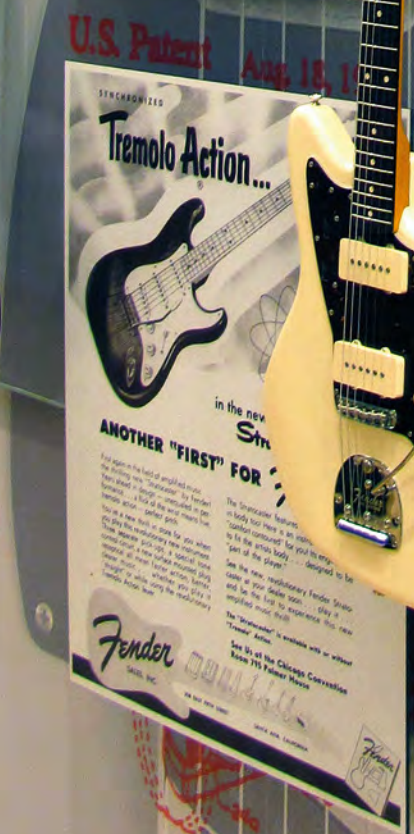


**Right**  
Reproductions of vintage Fender ads help visitors appreciate the visual impact Fender models made when they were introduced

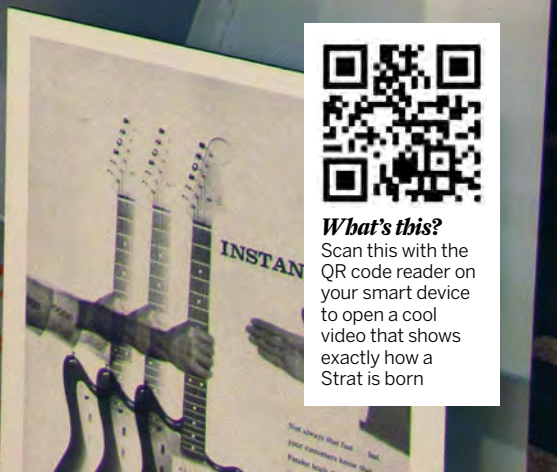




1958 "JAZZMASTER"  
With a great feel of chrome and control, Fender's 1958 deluxe electric guitar model, the Jazzmaster, is essentially found and endorsed not by the traditional jazz players it was intended for, but by 1950s, swinging rockers in the 70s and the 80s instead. It remains a stylish reference favorite among guitarists who prefer the road less traveled.



**What's this?**  
Scan this with the QR code reader on your smart device to open a cool video that shows exactly how a Strat is born



## Experience the Factory and Custom Shop tour

From the Visitor Center you can embark on the Factory and Custom Shop tour, which offers a close-up look at the awesome transformation of raw materials into guitars, basses, amplifiers and other products – it's where the magic happens.

Watching Fender's expert craftspeople at work in the Wood Mill, Metal Shop and so on is an amazing experience, and you get to witness how the instruments and amps take shape.

Finally, you'll find your way into the "Dream Factory" – the world-famous Fender Custom Shop – for an unprecedented first-hand look at the Master Builders creating Fender's finest guitars.



## Fender Visitor Center and Factory Tour

Open to the public every weekday except Wednesday

### Hours of Operation

#### Visitor Center:

9 am – 4 pm

#### Factory Tour:

10 am and 11:30 am

The Factory Tour lasts approx. 45 – 60 minutes

### Guest Policies

- The Visitor Center is open to all ages
- The Factory Tour is open to children aged nine or over with a parent or guardian

- For safety, guests on the Factory Tour must wear closed-toe shoes
- Maximum number of guests per tour is 10; larger groups, please call ahead for a special appointment

### Contact Information

**Website:** [www.fender.com/visitorcenter](http://www.fender.com/visitorcenter)

**Phone:** 951.898.4040

**Email:** [visitorcenter@fender.com](mailto:visitorcenter@fender.com)

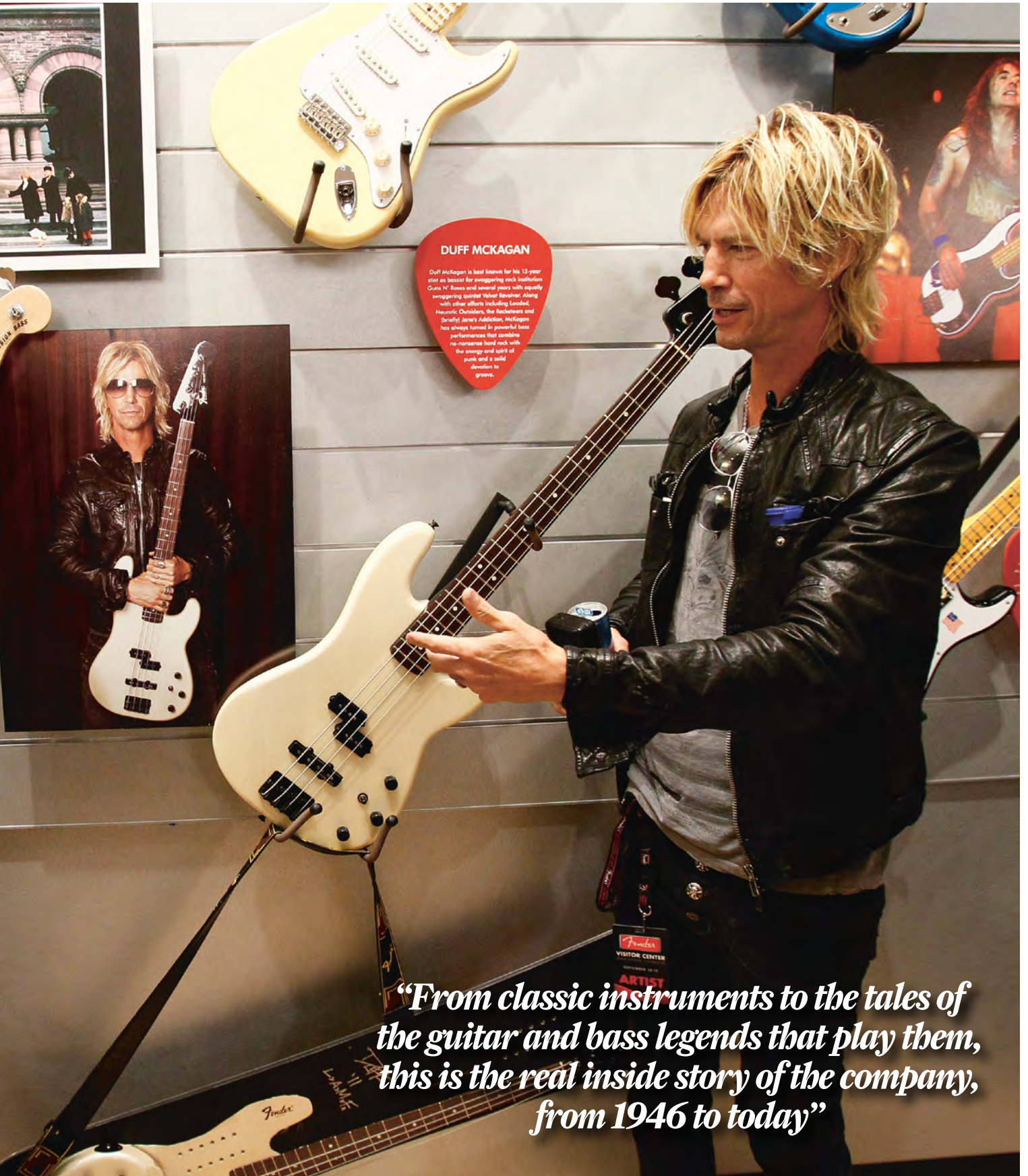
**WIN!**  
**A TRIP TO  
THE FENDER  
VISITOR  
CENTER**

See page 32



### Left and main

An array of neck choices in the American Design Experience room; Superstar bassists Tony Franklin (The Firm, Kenny Wayne Shepherd) and Duff McKagan (Guns N' Roses, Velvet Revolver) admire the scenery



**DUFF MCKAGAN**

Duff McKagan is best known for his 12-year stint as bassist for swaggering rock institution Guns N' Roses and several years with equally swaggering quintet Velvet Revolver. Along with other efforts including Loaded, Neurotic Outsiders, the Racksteers and (briefly) Jane's Addiction, McKagan has always turned in powerful bass performances that combine no-nonsense hard rock with the energy and spirit of punk and a solid devotion to groove.

*“From classic instruments to the tales of the guitar and bass legends that play them, this is the real inside story of the company, from 1946 to today”*

Fender spoke to Green Day bass maestro Mike Dirnt for "early and much-needed feedback" on the new Pro Series Super Bassman

{DOWN AND DIRNT-Y}

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bassman

Green Day bassist Mike Dirnt champions the new Pro Series Super Bassman range

**F**RESH FROM HANGING OUT on the Fender stand at NAMM 2012 (the music industry's biggest annual show) in January, Green Day bassist Mike Dirnt has collaborated with the company on the Pro Series Bassman amps and cabinets.

The flagship is the 300-watt Super Bassman head: a tough, world tour-ready

two-channel tube head loaded with the best of vintage and modern tones at the flick of a footswitch. It's one of the most powerful bass amps Fender has ever created, and offers tonal versatility with the warmth of the Vintage channel's passive tone stack contrasting with the Overdrive channel's active tone stack and its more aggressive, modern response.

Fender's Automatic Bias system monitors the performance of the tubes, automatically re-biasing output and providing alerts if servicing is needed. The head can also be muted for silent recording via the XLR output.

The Bassman 100T has the same preamp but runs in either 100-watt or 25-watt mode. Both heads feature classic



Blackface styling, and there's a range of new cabinet configurations - 810 NEO, 610 NEO, 410 NEO and 115 NEO.

Green Day's *American Idiot* musical will hit the UK and Ireland in October 2012; in the meantime, see [www.fender.com](http://www.fender.com) for info on the Super Bassman, and visit [www.fender.com/squier](http://www.fender.com/squier) for more about the Squier Mike Dirnt Precision Bass.

## The Fender Interview

Q&A WITH GREEN DAY'S  
MIKE DIRNT

**FM: How did this latest collaboration with Fender come about?**

MD: "I used to have a classic amplifier, that I considered my secret weapon. Over the last few years I would pester the guys at Fender, asking them whether they would try to make something in that vein."

**Fender says you gave them "early and much needed feedback" on the Bassman Pro Series.**

**What features did you talk to them about, and what did you most want to be included?**

"I just wanted an amp that truly let the sound of your bass come through. I've also played with pedals for distortion. The pedals always cut my signal and made my sound smaller by compressing my volume. They overdrove the sound in a non-organic way."

**Now you've played the finished versions, what's particularly impressed you about them?**

"Fender nailed the blended gain. The distortion you get off of the amp can be subtle or completely over the top! They also created the best direct-out that myself or my soundman has ever heard, it's a perfect signal. It really helps reduce stage noise in my live sound."

**What you've needed from your bass sound must have changed over your long career - in what ways has it evolved from the early records to your latest work?**

"Honestly, I feel my sound has come full-circle in many ways. I prefer to keep things simple, and let the quality of the tone drive the bass. I think there was a period of time where I overthought my tone."

**You're a noted fan of the Precision Bass model, and you now have a Squier signature model to add to your Fender model from 2004. What can your fans expect if they pick one up at a music store?**

"Expect to be the envy of everybody in the store! It's just a great, loud, sexy bass - expect to be happy!"

**If you had to choose, what would be your three favorite basslines of all time?**

"*Rearranged*, by Pete Rypins from Crimpshrine; *Anesthesia (Pulling Teeth)* by Cliff Burton, Metallica; *Running With The Devil* by Michael Anthony from Van Halen [laughs]..."

© Todd Pitt/Getty

Green Day are in the studio recording their ninth album. Head over to [www.greenaday.com](http://www.greenaday.com) for news and updates.



{SQUIER FIREPOWER}

# Back to the Root

Slipknot and Stone Sour shredder Jim Root teams up with Squier to produce an affordable rock machine

**C**OULD THIS BE THE HEAVIEST sounding take on Leo Fender's original design ever? The Squier Jim Root Telecaster - a new addition to the Squier Artist Series - is certainly closing in on the accolade. Based on its popular Fender equivalent, the Jim Root-designed Squier may share the timeless Telecaster silhouette with its more polite siblings, but there are some key ingredients here making this a unique molten-rocker worthy of the guitarist's uncompromising, fleet-fingered style.

The mahogany body, finished in flat satin, is a departure from the classic blueprint, as are the taut, string-through-body bridge and single-knob, single-switch controls. A modern 'C'-profile rosewood-board neck with a flatter radius makes this a highly playable choice for players who count speed as a priority. At the heart of its darkness is a pair of high-output passive humbucking pickups, nestling behind black covers and brimming with the crushing tones that Jim's fans revere him for.

Choose between one of two mean-looking inverse monochrome color schemes, and the rock-ready picture is complete. For more info on the Jim Root Telecaster and other new Squier Artist Series signature models, including the new Avril Lavigne Telecaster and Mikey Way Mustang Bass, visit [www.fender.com/squier](http://www.fender.com/squier).



**Jim Root Telecaster**  
 High-output humbucking pickups and a mahogany body ensure that Jim Root's new signature model Telecaster is ready to rock



## Skatepunk special

### DUANE PETERS ACOUSTIC BREAKS ALL THE RULES

As an old-school skateboard master, daredevil Duane Peters is known as the Master Of Disaster. But in his other life, as frontman of punk heroes US Bombs, Peters is a dreamer of a screamer. You get the best of both worlds with the limited-edition Fender Duane Peters Sonoran SCE '61.

Only 500 models are being made of this skate-tough model, decked in a custom graphic finish featuring skulls and red and black stripes.

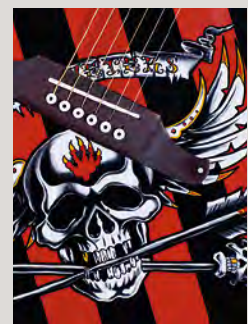
#### SKULL-BODIED TONE

Like skate-punk Peters, the signature acoustic disobeys the "rules". Its specs include a tight dreadnought cutaway body shape, solid spruce top with scalloped 'X'-bracing, mahogany back and sides, a 20-fret 'C'-shaped maple neck, and a Stratocaster headstock shape. There's also a Fishman Isys III pickup, with active onboard preamp and tuner. Play it hard, stay on your feet, and be quick – there are only 500, so skate over to [www.fender.com](http://www.fender.com) to find a dealer.



#### Above, below

The Duane Peters Sonoran SCE '61 is as shy and retiring as the US Bombs and skateboarding legend himself



© Denny Renshaw/Corbis Outline

## Under the covers

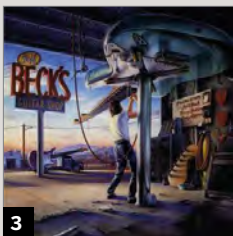
WANT AN ICONIC ALBUM COVER?  
STICK YOUR FAVORITE FENDER ON IT!



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7



8

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1. Bruce Springsteen</b><br/><i>Born To Run</i><br/>Modified Telecaster /<br/>Esquire hybrid</p> <p><b>2. My Bloody Valentine</b><br/><i>Loveless</i><br/>Jazzmaster</p> <p><b>3. Jeff Beck</b><br/><i>Guitar Shop</i><br/>Stratocaster-shaped<br/>Hot Rod</p> <p><b>4. Rory Gallagher</b><br/><i>Against The Grain</i><br/>RG's 1961 Stratocaster</p> | <p><b>5. The Pretenders</b><br/><i>Get Close</i><br/>Telecaster</p> <p><b>6. Eric Clapton</b><br/><i>Slowhand</i><br/>EC's 'Blackie' Stratocaster<br/>(see page 77)</p> <p><b>7. Jimi Hendrix</b><br/><i>Band Of Gypsys</i><br/>Stratocaster</p> <p><b>8. Alkaline Trio</b><br/><i>Damnesia</i><br/>Alkaline Trio Malibu<br/>acoustic</p> |
|--|---|

...Turn to page 26 for more on Alkaline Trio's guitar

*“The new Mustang Floor unit encapsulates the features of the Mustang amp range, and opens up a variety of real-world uses for guitarists”*



**Below and main**  
Select one of the 100 onboard presets – many created by famous artists







{ FENDER GEAR }

# Floored genius

The new Mustang Floor, Fender's first-ever multi-effects unit, places a world of sound and versatility at players' feet

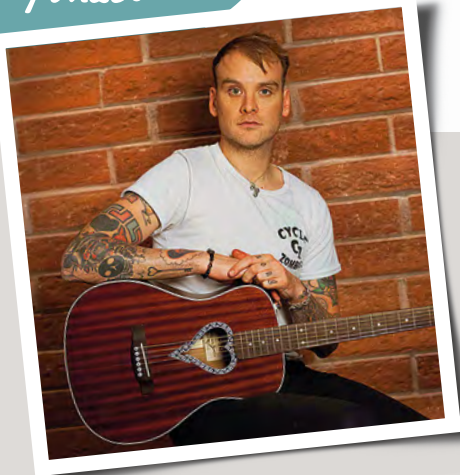
**C**AST ASIDE YOUR DOUBTS about digital modeling and multi-effects units... your preconceptions are *so* 2011. These days, advances in technology have resulted in a new generation of do-it-all multi-FX, ready to give the old-school "pedal boards into amps" brigade a real run for their money.

Fender's new Mustang Floor unit encapsulates the features of the Mustang amp range, and opens up a variety of real-world uses for guitarists.

As a straight multi-FX unit driving any guitar amp, you have 100 customizable preset sounds – many designed by artists – 37 effects, and 12 amp models to sculpt your own tones. An individual stompbox mode means you can bypass the amp models to nail specific effects. When playing live, nine footswitches offer ample access to sounds in the heat of battle, while the ability to alter the parameters of effects on the fly using the in-built aluminum control pedal enhances onstage versatility.

Line-level outputs make the Mustang Floor equally useable as a modeling preamp through a front-of-house PA (and also a gig-saving back-up if your amp blows a fuse).

Stereo headphone outs and aux input make for a great silent practice system for playing along to mp3s, and the Mustang Floor also excels as a direct-to-digital USB recording system: the free Fender FUSE software adds deeper parameter control and extra functionality. Find out more at [www.fender.com](http://www.fender.com).



## The Fender Interview

Q&A WITH ALKALINE TRIO'S  
MATT SKIBA

**FM: Why did you choose the intimate semi-acoustic approach for your *Damnesia* album?**

MS: "We wanted to celebrate the songs on their initial stages. Most of those songs were written on acoustic guitars so it made sense to celebrate the songs' births from a more recent perspective. And it was really easy."

**How did the Alkaline Trio Malibu acoustic guitar come about?**

"Derek [Grant, drums] thought of the initial design for the cover and when Fender saw it, they kindly offered to make one to shoot for the album art. From there, Michael Schultz at Fender suggested we put them into production..."

**How much input did you have into its design and development?**

"Fender pretty much got it right off the bat. They know how to build guitars and we left it to them. I have the actual guitar from the cover at my place and it's my primary writing guitar. It's got a great vibe."

**Why did you choose the Malibu model?**

"Fender suggested it. I love the fact that it's a Malibu! I surf Malibu, ride my

motorcycle up in Malibu Canyon and now I play one all the time, too. Malibu is my church all around, including the guitar."

**What do you like about this guitar?**

"It's really comfy and light and has a vibe where you feel the songs write themselves when you play it. I have it within arms' reach at all times when I'm home."

**What are the guitar's strengths in terms of playability and tone?**

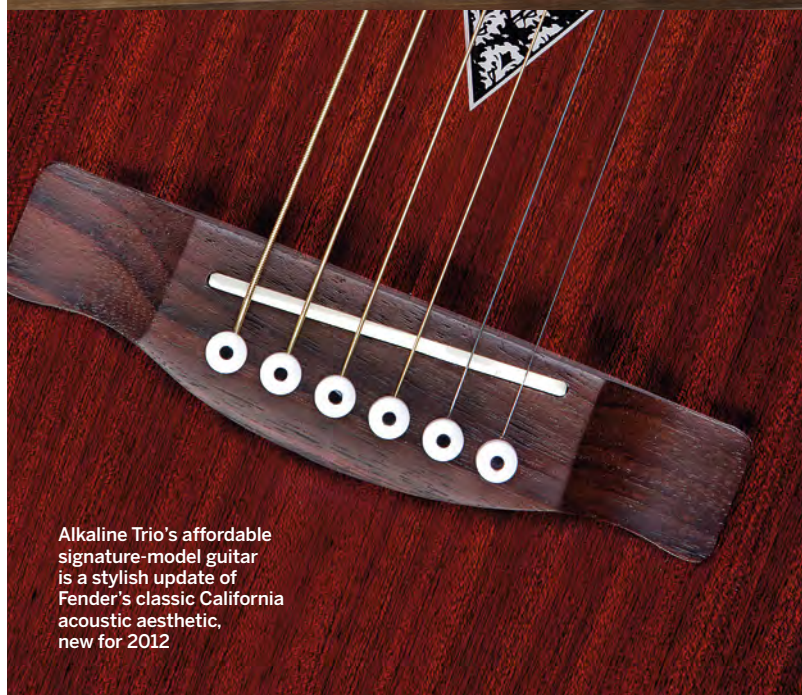
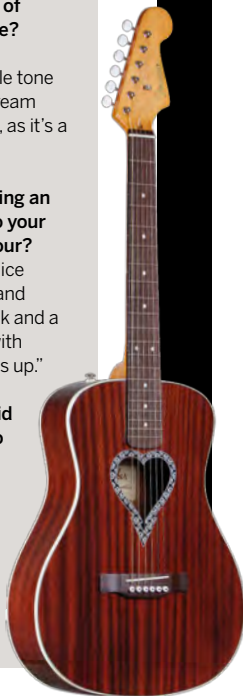
"It has a really nice, percussive yet gentle tone and it plays like a dream with thinner strings, as it's a smaller acoustic."

**Is it refreshing having an acoustic section to your live show on this tour?**

"It is... It creates a nice dynamic in the set and gives us a little break and a sense of intimacy with everyone that shows up."

**If someone had said to you 15 years ago that you'd have a signature Fender acoustic named after your band, would you have been surprised?**

"Yes! Big time. I'm surprised now!"



Alkaline Trio's affordable signature-model guitar is a stylish update of Fender's classic California acoustic aesthetic, new for 2012



{ ALKALINE AND DANDY }

# Heart-shaped box

Alkaline Trio's new signature Malibu acoustic will tug at your heart strings, but not your purse strings

**Y**OU WAIT FOR AGES FOR Fender to release a punk-rock signature acoustic, and then two come along at once. Hot on the heels of the company's limited-edition Duane Peters acoustic model (read more on page 23), comes this strumsome acoustic – the Alkaline Trio Malibu.

The Chicago punk-rock outfit designed the Malibu's heart-shaped rosette, a nod

to their logo and their Heart & Skull record label. And if it looks familiar, that's because the guitar has already featured on the cover of the band's acclaimed 2011 acoustic album, *Damnesia* [see page 24].

Based on Fender's sun-and-surf-evoking California Series acoustics, the AT Malibu has a resonant all-mahogany body, scalloped X-bracing, and a 20-fret maple Stratocaster neck with a 'C'-shaped

rosewood fingerboard. A bound body and neck, both with gloss finish, complete the luxurious picture – and for a very reasonable outlay that won't put the band's fans out of pocket.

Alkaline Trio are celebrating their 15th anniversary with a tour of the US and Europe. See [www.alkalinetrio.com](http://www.alkalinetrio.com) for the dates, and [www.fender.com](http://www.fender.com) for more info on the Alkaline Trio Malibu acoustic.



{ FENDER GEAR }

# Fabled cable

Protect your tone and get the most out of your gear setup with Fender's Custom Shop Performance Series Cables

**Y**OUR SIGNAL CHAIN IS only ever as good as its weakest link. And yet how many times have you seen expensive gear connected together with the sonic equivalent of silly string?

Worry no longer - Fender Custom Shop Performance Series Cables are here. With extra-thick 8mm diameter PVC jackets and 95 per cent copper coverage shields, they're optimized for live use, and

have a lifetime warranty. Styles include Tweed and Black Tweed, with straight or angled jacks, and different length options to suit. Plus there are XLR versions, too.

All Performance Series cables are engineered to avoid twisting and kinking, and to resist developing any 'physical memory' (and doing that eerie, serpentine curling thing that makes you think your lead has a will of its own). Find more info and a nearby dealer at [www.fender.com](http://www.fender.com).

## Cable Tips

### 1. CLEAN TONE

Clean your jack inputs from time to time, to reduce crackle

### 2. SHORT AND SWEET

The shorter the cable, the smaller the distance the signal has to travel. The result? Less loss, better tone

### 3. GET HOOKED

Hook your cable through your strap, and your amp's handle. Or risk embarrassing silence when you accidentally step on it and pull it out...



Fender's Custom Shop Performance Series and Performance Series Cables are engineered for live use



HERE'S OUR PICK OF THE CROP OF GUITAR APPS FOR YOUR IOS DEVICE...



1

**1 IK Multimedia AmpliTube 2 Fender**

[www.ikmultimedia.com](http://www.ikmultimedia.com)  
You'll need to buy an iRig-style interface to physically plug your guitar into, but once you're all set up, the AmpliTube Fender app opens up a range of uncannily accurate Fender amp and FX models for you to practice and record with.  
*For: iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad*



2

**2 GarageBand**

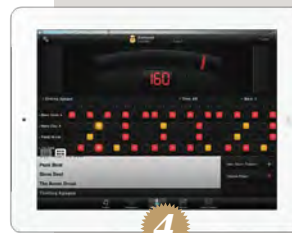
[www.itunes.apple.com](http://www.itunes.apple.com)  
Simple-to-use eight-track recording, smart and virtual instruments and much more.  
*FOR: iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad*



3

**3 TC Electronic PolyTune**

[www.tcelectronic.com](http://www.tcelectronic.com)  
Strum all your strings and see instantly which ones need tuning. Spooky the first time you use it, magic from then on.  
*For: iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad*



4

**4 GuitarToolkit 2.0**

<http://agilepartners.com/apps/guitartoolkit>  
This do-it-all app, complete with tuner, metronome, chord library and drum machine, could become the working guitarist's new best friend.  
*For: iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad*



5

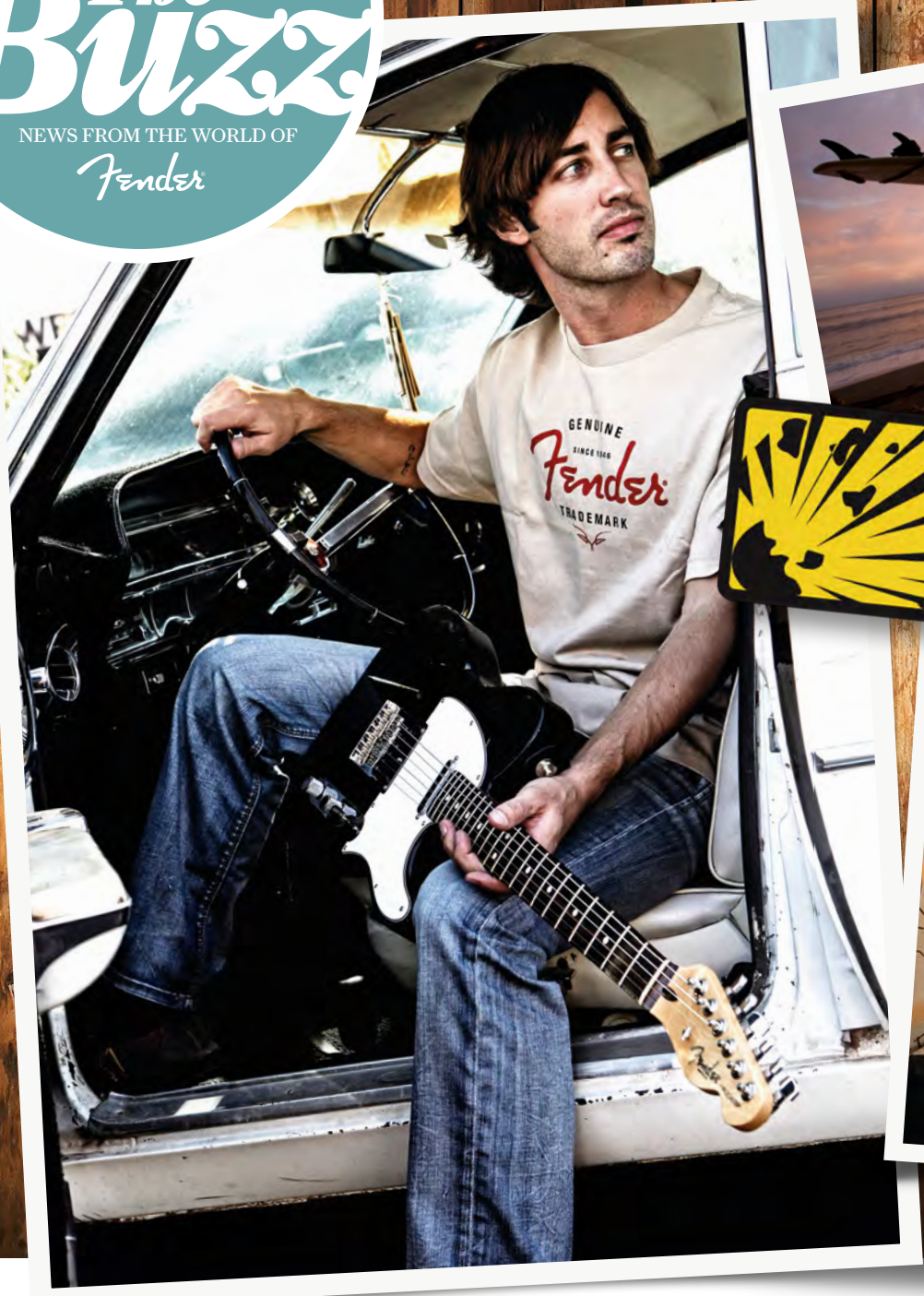
**5 Tascam Portastudio**

<http://tascam.com>  
Journey back to that lovely old-school world of bouncing tracks with this fun, nostalgic recreation of the four-track recorders of yesteryear.  
*For: iPad*

**Also check out...**

*Chord Bank Pro  
Set List HD  
Guitarist's Reference  
Capo*

The **BUZZ**  
NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF  
*Fender*



# Living the Fender life

This is your magazine as much as it is ours – so let us know what you think...





DETROIT  
STAND BACK 20 FEET



*What's this?*  
Scan this with the QR code reader on your smart device to open the Fender Facebook page, and click the Like button!

## Get Involved

Find Fender on Facebook,  
Like us, get talking...

Let us know what's on your mind by logging onto Facebook, finding Fender's page, Liking it, and answering the question we're asking that week. Then we'll take the best of the stories, anecdotes, tips for playing and inside info on finding local bands, music shops and gigs, and put it all together for a dose of reader-powered, Fender-flavored goodness in our next issue.



Visit [www.facebook.com/Fender](http://www.facebook.com/Fender) to join in!

© Corbis (2)

**W**E DON'T TELL YOU how to play your guitar or what settings to dial into your amp, we just give you the means to do it your way -and that's how we feel about this magazine too.

We don't just want to give you our point of view, we want you to take part in our project, get your name in our pages and tell us what you think.

Which bands that play Fender have set your world on fire? Which jam nights and gigs can you not wait to take your Fender

to? Which festivals are you going to be guitar-spotting at? Which local guitar shop gets you excited as soon as you walk in through the doors?

We want to know what makes up the Fender world that you live in, and when you've shared it with us via the Fender Facebook page, we'll choose the best stuff to put in the next issue of Fender Magazine.

So how do you do this? Simple. Find the Fender page on Facebook, Like it, find out what question we're asking that week, and join the discussion...

{ COMPETITION }

# WIN! A trip to the Fender Visitor Center

**WIN!**  
*A HOLIDAY  
FOR TWO*

Enter our comp and you could win a trip to California for the Fender experience of a lifetime

**F**ENDER'S VISITOR CENTER in Corona, Riverside County, California is a must-see for fans of the company's guitars and amps. As you'll have read in our feature on pages 14-19, its brand-new premises run to more than 8,000 square feet, and are packed with rare and ultra-desirable instruments both old and new. The story of Fender's 60-year-plus heritage is brought to life via a series of interactive exhibits, and the whole experience is guaranteed to have guitar-playing fingers twitching from the first moment to the last.

You'll see how key figures, players, instruments and events have all played their part in shaping Fender's reputation as the household name that it is today. Take the Factory and Custom Shop tour, and you'll witness how the company has refined its expertise into a state-of-the-art production process, seeing the best

guitar craftspeople on the planet and their creations up close and personal.

And you'll have some fun into the bargain, too - especially in the American Design Experience section, where you'll be given the opportunity to create your own dream guitar from an array of Fender parts. Ours is a Surf Green '62 Relic Strat with a rosewood 'board and Texas Special pickups... Look, we can but dream; you could be going there for real.

### **How To Enter**

To be in with a chance to win this superb trip for two to the Fender Visitor Center, including flights to California, all you have to do is visit [www.fender.com/trip](http://www.fender.com/trip) and follow the instructions to enter.

Read the terms and conditions section on the website for full details about the prize and travel expenses. Good luck!



**Fender Visitor Center**  
Visit [www.fender.com/trip](http://www.fender.com/trip) and enter the comp to win a trip for two to California, where you'll experience the Fender Visitor Center in all its glory





**What is this?**  
Scan this with the QR reader on your smart device to visit the Fender website and enter the competition



# SELECT INSTRUMENTS *for* SELECT INDIVIDUALS

New for 2012 is the Fender Select Series. This elegant range of Fender guitars and basses offers choice tonewoods, handcrafted finishes, the very best necks and fretboards, and specially voiced pickups. Here's the lowdown on 'Fender's finest' at affordable prices...





The Strokes' Albert Hammond Jr. steals a moment with his ravishing new companion, the Fender Select Telecaster

“FENDER MAKES A LOT OF GUITARS, and it can sometimes be confusing to differentiate between a lot of the models.

We wanted to make a capstone to the product line – high-end and beautiful. There have been a lot of “boutique” companies who, shall we say, “work on our platforms”, so we wanted to restate Fender’s 60-year heritage. That’s 60 years of wood selection, of craftsmanship, components, knowledge... This series is a reassertion of Fender’s longevity and position, and of the fact that we are looking forward as well as back.

“There are different types of people. Some like their jeans to be distressed, some like their jeans brand-new or tailored. We’ve maybe had a gap in that more artful, more beautiful area – an exotic-wood guitar. We’ve done it before, but not on a traditional Stratocaster, Telecaster or Precision Bass or Jazz Bass design...”

JUSTIN NORVELL, VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING FOR FENDER ELECTRIC GUITARS, EXPLAINS THE REASONING BEHIND FENDER’S NEW SELECT SERIES



## Fender Select Stratocaster

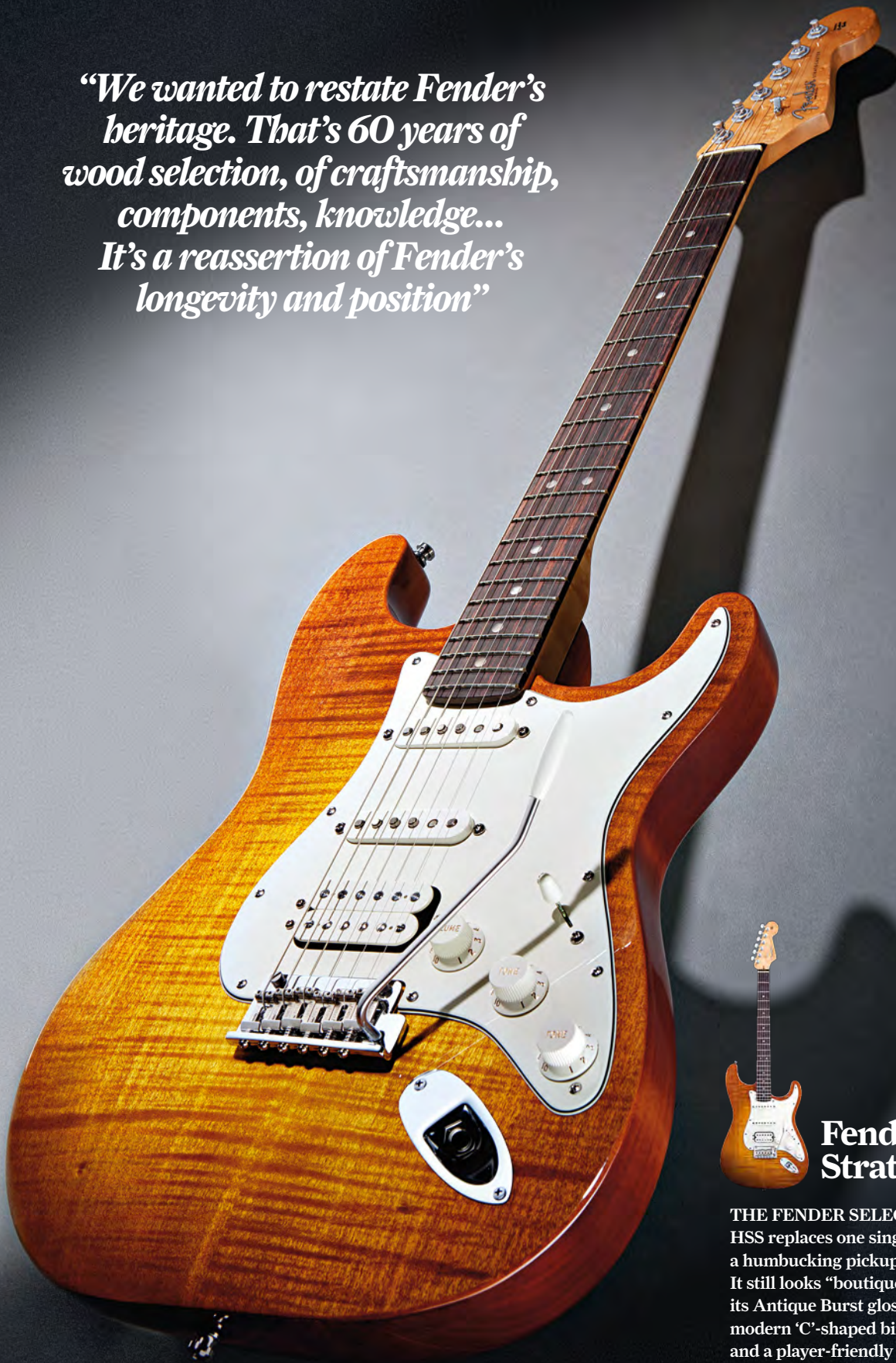
THE FENDER SELECT STRATOCASTER looks like a classic Strat, but with its Dark Cherry Burst gloss-lacquer finish and natural binding on a flame maple-topped body, it looks pretty opulent. Its modern ‘C’-shaped neck is super-playable, and all other components are top-grade. There is impressive detail in its parchment-black-parchment three-ply pickguard, as well as a refined “engine” courtesy of those new Fender Select pickups.

The new maple-topped bodies have been a tricky proposition, says Norvell: “We’ve had to reinvent a lot to produce the Select Series. The carved tops have been a challenge, the compound-radius fretboards on this scale of production was a challenge. And the finishing was a challenge. The stains on these guitars are all rubbed-in by hand. It’s not a regular paint process, but it helps the great sunken-in grain look. This isn’t just paint on top of a wood grain.”



The stunning flame-maple tops adorning the Select Series are a first for Fender, at least on its classic models

*“We wanted to restate Fender’s heritage. That’s 60 years of wood selection, of craftsmanship, components, knowledge... It’s a reassertion of Fender’s longevity and position”*



## **Fender Select Stratocaster HSS**

THE FENDER SELECT STRATOCASTER HSS replaces one single-coil pickup with a humbucking pickup for more attack. It still looks “boutique” though, with its Antique Burst gloss-lacquer finish, a modern ‘C’-shaped birdseye maple neck, and a player-friendly compound-radius rosewood fretboard. Justin Norvell: “All the Select Strat guitars’ pickups sound smooth and glassy, creamy with distortion: they’re modern-sounding, but with the intrinsic characteristics of what you’d expect a Stratocaster to sound like.”

W

HO ARE THESE FENDER SELECT SERIES GUITARS FOR? NORVELL says: "The idea is, if someone walks into a dealer, and they haven't spent weeks researching the nuances of all the models Fender makes, but just asks: What's the 'best' one? Well the Select Series is pretty much it. They're guaranteed to sound good, they have the best woods, the best pickups... that's the vibe."



## Fender Select Telecaster

THE TELECASTER WAS FENDER'S first legendary guitar model. 60 years on, it's been reborn, with ornate looks and formidable sonic substance. There's a Violin Burst gloss-lacquer finish and natural binding, atop a resonant honeycomb-chambered ash body with a solid flame-maple top. The modern 'C'-shaped birdseye maple neck has a comfortable contoured heel and, as with all Fender Select Series guitars, it's adorned with a rear-headstock "Fender Select" medallion. The weight of all these guitars has been a key issue for the designers.

Justin Norvell explains: "All Select Series guitars are under eight pounds. We have a new type of chambering on the Tele. It's like a labyrinth or maze in the body, which leaves the weight balanced but everything still sounds great."



To think, when it was first released, the Telecaster was mocked by competitors for lacking style...





Koa is an unusual electric guitar tonewood choice – it's more often used to make acoustics – but it works beautifully with this carved-top design

**Fender Select  
Carved Maple  
Top Telecaster**

This is similar in build to the Koa, but with a carved flame-maple top. You still get a modern 'C'-shaped flame-maple neck, plus a satin lacquer finish. Fender staff spent two years in R&D testing the Select Series, with much focus on the woods to be used. Justin Norvell: "We eventually lined up 15 to 20 instruments, made out of different wood combinations, and played them 'blind'. And we chose the best-sounding."



**Fender  
Carved Koa  
Top Telecaster**

THE FENDER SELECT CARVED KOA Top Telecaster is perhaps the most visually stunning of the new models. That's thanks to the Sienna Edge Burst gloss-lacquer finish, on a lightweight empress body with a carved koa top. "We got to playing with different woods," says Justin Norvell. "We did the Tele-bration guitars in 2011: a bamboo Telecaster, laminates, spruce tops. And out of that came the Koa. One of the really cool things is that the control plate bends with the carved top. It's flush, and recessed. It's a cool touch."

These guitars may not look like worn '50s specimens, but Norvell says they sound the part. "The pickups are fat and sound almost overwound, but they're intrinsically what you know as a Telecaster."



## Fender Select Jazz Bass

THE FENDER SELECT JAZZ BASS AIMS for style and power, with a striking Amber Burst gloss-lacquer finish and flame-maple top. And the pickups took a lot of work. Justin Norvell says: "The Select Jazz Bass pickups are super-fat, but they can still growl. The neck pickup can almost take you into P Bass territory. I think I'm most proud of these pickups. We went through so many versions and revisions, but we got them sounding fantastic."

*"The line will reinvent itself every year. What you see now won't be in the line in 2013. Because by then, we'll have new Select models. New designs, new woods, new innovations"*



Guitar players get all the glory – so upstage yours with one of these. Plus, thanks to its new pickup design, the Select Series Jazz Bass has the tonal versatility to back up its flaming looks





You've come a long way, baby: Fender's Precision Bass was the first successful electric bass, and this Select model is one of the finest examples



## Fender Select Precision Bass

THE PRECISION BASS WAS THE first commercially successful solidbody electric bass guitar, and Fender's new Select Precision Bass adds craft and sonic punch to this heritage. The combination of two-color sunburst gloss lacquer and a flame-maple top is unprecedented for a Precision Bass: add newly designed pickups, compound-radius neck and black pearlloid position inlays and you have a new, luxurious take on a classic.

### Pickups and prices

The Fender Select Series boasts all-new pickup designs. Says Justin Norvell: "We started with the most highly regarded, best-selling pickups in our line. We zeroed in on some of the Custom Shop pickups: the Fat '50s, the Broadcaster pickups for Tele guitars, the '60s Jazz Bass pickups. We adjusted the windings, all sorts of things. We wanted each pickup to give the best of all worlds. The Select Series is a 'bridge,' if you like, to the Custom Shop guitars... but with quite a gap in the pricing."

## THE FUTURE OF FENDER SELECT



**T**hese particular Fender Select Series instruments won't be around forever. Justin Norvell explains: "I feel these are all special and collectible. And they're limited. I feel the line will reinvent itself every year – what you see now won't be in the line in 2013. Because by then, we'll have new Select models. New designs, new woods, new innovations... you could see Select Jazzmaster guitars for example, bubinga wood being used, who knows?"

### What's this?

Scan this with the QR reader on your smart device to go straight to the Fender Select HD movie *Selected*





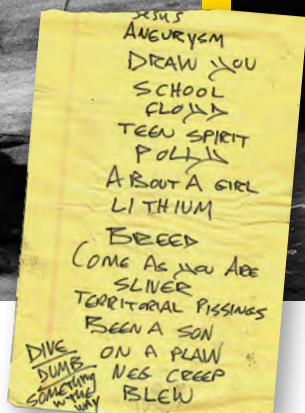
Kurt puts his Jaguar through its paces at the record-release show for *Nevermind*, at Seattle's Beehive Records in 1991

DRAIN YOU  
FLOYD  
SLIVER  
TEEN SPIRIT  
COME AS YOU ARE  
BREED  
ABOUT A GIRL  
TERRITORIAL P.  
BLEW  
BEEN A SON  
SCHOOL

## Closer to Nirvana

With his raw power, relentless mods and a trail of smashed-up guitars in his wake, Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain was a seriously uncompromising guitar player. Two decades after *Nevermind*, Fender has honored him with a signature Jaguar and a Mustang range. Here's how, in his hands, these unsung sons became the anti-hero's go-to guitars...

This sequence shows Kurt in his element during Nirvana's headline slot at 1992's Reading Festival



**A**T SOME POINT ON THE EVENING of 16 January 1993, Earnie Bailey was crouched on the side of a stage at the Estádio do Morumbi stadium in São Paulo, Brazil, watching one of the most influential bands of all time, Nirvana, at the peak of their popularity and their powers. Bailey, the band's guitar tech, remembers the show as being a "bit surreal", and in a mischievous moment, he picked up a cantaloupe melon and rolled it, bowling-ball style, towards the feet of Kurt Cobain. Kurt smiled, reached down and picked the melon up. He then proceeded to play his guitar with it, first strumming and then finally smashing the strings with the fruit until it had been reduced to a pulped mess. Bailey told Fender: "I remember

looking at it and thinking, 'God, I don't want to clear that up...'"

The incident encapsulates Cobain's irreverence to guitars. His was a minimal, punk ethos and he consciously rejected the studied note-perfect virtuosity of many of the era's rock guitarists. Like a select few before him, Cobain's aggressive and intense guitar style was forged more by what he couldn't play than what he could.

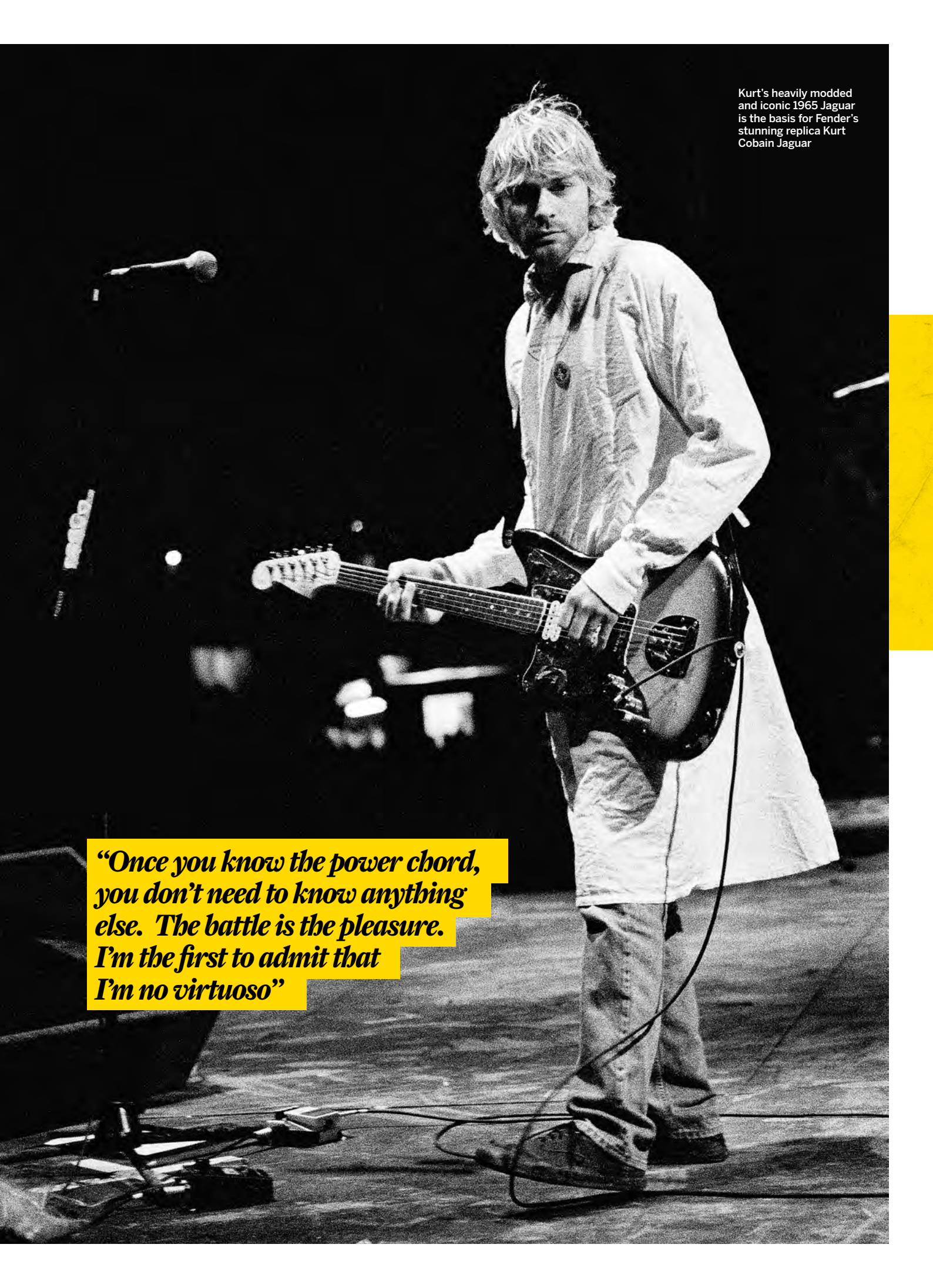
"Once you know the power chord, you don't need to know anything else," he said. "The battle is the pleasure. I'm the first to admit that I'm no virtuoso. I can't play like Segovia. The flip side of that is that Segovia could probably never have played like me."

Cobain's attitude stemmed from the fact that he was, first and foremost, a songwriter. As he once put it: "A good song is the most important thing, it's the only way to really touch someone." That said,

the guitar was his tool and he loved the instrument. He also spent a great deal of time and effort getting his guitars to sound exactly the way he wanted them.

### Kurt's Jaguar

It was August 1991, on the eve of a Nirvana European tour, when Kurt Cobain bought his first Fender Jaguar. He played almost every Fender model throughout his life, but favored the shorter 24-inch scale-length necks of the Jaguar and Mustang. Being a left-handed player restricted the choice of guitars open to him, but he managed to find a '65 sunburst model Jaguar that suited his needs. As Earnie Bailey recalls, it was the look of the guitar that first drew Cobain to it. "I think he just liked the lines of the Jaguar, and I think he just liked the whole California surf thing and the history that went along with Fender guitars." ➔

A black and white photograph of Kurt Cobain, the lead singer and guitarist of Nirvana, performing on stage. He is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved button-down shirt and jeans. He is holding a Fender Telecaster electric guitar and looking towards the camera with a serious expression. A microphone on a stand is visible to the left. The background is dark with some stage lights.

Kurt's heavily modded and iconic 1965 Jaguar is the basis for Fender's stunning replica Kurt Cobain Jaguar

***“Once you know the power chord, you don’t need to know anything else. The battle is the pleasure. I’m the first to admit that I’m no virtuoso”***

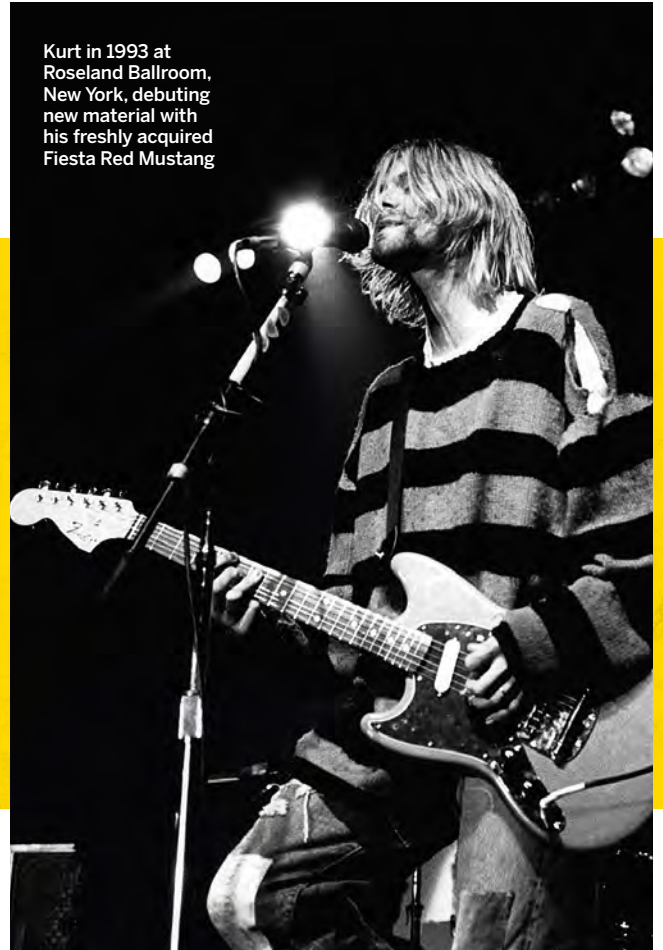


***“[Kurt’s 1965 Jaguar] had all these Tom Verlaine-style mods going on with it. So it was either a weird prototype, or maybe a custom one-off”***

It begins. Kurt prepares to meet fans and sign autographs after the Beehive launch show for *Nevermind*



Kurt in 1993 at Roseland Ballroom, New York, debuting new material with his freshly acquired Fiesta Red Mustang



► Cobain bought the Jaguar after spotting the guitar in the free classifieds publication *LA Recycler* and it became his main touring guitar for the *Nevermind* tour. The previous owner had heavily modified the instrument, adding a pair of DiMarzio humbucking pickups, a black chrome bridge, a three-way pickup switch and an extra volume control. Cobain's Jaguar also had a bound neck and a Strat-sized headstock with a '50s "spaghetti-style" Fender logo and block Jaguar lettering.

"It had all these interesting Tom Verlaine-style mods going on with it," recalls Bailey. "So it was either a weird prototype or maybe it was a custom one-off." As Nirvana made their stunning ascent from left-field

alt-rock darlings to global Geffen-signed rock royalty, the Jaguar began to feature prominently onstage.

Cobain bought another Jaguar in Autumn 1992 from a guitar store in Texas, this time choosing a '60s model with DiMarzio pickups. But it was his '65 Jaguar that took precedence.

### Signature Model

In 2011, 20 years on from the release of the band's landmark album *Nevermind*, Fender launched the Kurt Cobain Jaguar, a signature model of the Nirvana frontman's iconic '65 Jag.

This Mexican-made replica model reproduces the idiosyncratic modifications of the original, right down to the battered finish. The three-color

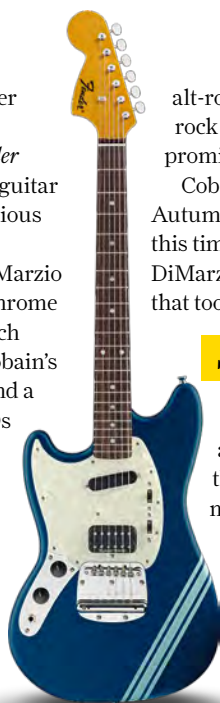
sunburst finish has been applied with nitrocellulose, and then given a Relic finish to reflect Cobain's original.

Bailey speaks fondly of Cobain's '65 Jag and is clearly impressed by its qualities. But considering how huge Nirvana became, he is surprised that the previous owner of the guitar never made themselves known.

"That's the greatest mystery," he says. "Who owned that Jaguar and why haven't they come forward and said, 'Hey, that was mine?' But it's really a fascinating guitar."

### Kurt's Mustang

The Jaguar may have been a guitar of choice for Kurt Cobain, but another model proved just as enduring - the Fender Mustang. In his pre-Nirvana years, Cobain owned a mongrelized model, a bizarre composite of assorted parts. Cut to 1991, though, as Nirvana started to break through





Kurt with his Sonic Blue Mustang in December 1993, during the MTV Live And Loud show in Seattle



commercially, and Cobain had access to whichever guitar he wanted. He bought his next Mustang at the same time as his first Jag, in August 1991, as Nirvana prepared to embark on a European tour.

It was an unusual choice. Conceived by Fender as an entry-level instrument for budget-conscious novices, the Mustang was hardly the obvious choice for alt-rock heroes on the cusp of global stardom. But then again, Cobain had shown what he could achieve with lower budget guitars, and for an iconoclastic figure such as the Nirvana frontman, an anti-hero guitar seemed fitting.

The instrument he bought in 1991 was a Lake Placid Blue Mustang with matching headstock and three white 'competition' racing stripes on the body. This was fitted with two black, single-coil pickups and a white mother-of-pearl pickguard. It rapidly became one of his favorite guitars, and

attained immortality when used by him in the promo video for *Smells Like Teen Spirit*.

This Mustang makes its filmic debut 16 seconds into the video for Nirvana's anthem, although it's not until 1:29 that the first full close-up appears of him playing it. As the band bring the dynamic back down for the second verse – half-observed by cheerleaders wielding pom-poms and sporting anarchist logo T-shirts – viewers are treated to the first, striking glimpse of the Lake Placid Blue Mustang.

### Mustang Models

By the release of *Nevermind*, Cobain was gigging regularly with a Mustang selection. He ordered four new models from Fender for the *In Utero* tour, three in Sonic Blue and one in Fiesta Red. On the request of Cobain, these were all routed by guitar tech Earnie Bailey for the fitting of different pickups.

"I installed Seymour Duncan SH-4 Jeff Beck (JB) humbuckers in Kurt's guitars and he liked them," recalls Bailey. Cobain also asked his tech to modify the tailpiece to block the vibrato. Bailey removed two springs for the vibrato bar, adding washers to the posts beneath the bridge plate to lock it down to the plate.

These Mustang guitars featured in landmark Nirvana videos and live shows. A Mustang in Sonic Blue stars in the *In Bloom* video; another was used at the Hollywood Rock concert in Brazil. Cobain received the Fiesta Red Mustang with tortoiseshell pickguard (later swapped for a white pearl one) just before the Roseland shows in New York, and used it on the *In Utero* tour. This was his first Mustang to be fitted with the JB humbucker.

Unlike most guitarists, Cobain didn't pamper or clean his guitars. In his eyes, the





*Above and right*  
Some close-up detail shots from the Fender Kurt Cobain Jaguar. Note the realistic wear and tear on the nitrocellulose lacquer

**“Kurt liked being a little bit uncomfortable. He liked to mix things up and switch guitars and keep things from getting run of the mill”**

more distressed and beaten-up his guitars were, the better they looked. The Nirvana frontman was also constantly changing, refining and replacing elements on his guitars to create the ideal instrument, sonically and visually.

The results of this relentless modification are evident in the Kurt Cobain Mustang, an authentically crafted replica hot off the Fender production line, new for 2012.

Inspired by his numerous modded guitars, this Mustang features the classic 24-inch scale length and an angled single-coil Mustang neck pickup. A Seymour Duncan JB humbucking bridge pickup is mounted directly into the body, and for tone shaping, there are dual on/off phase in-out switches for each pickup.

The body is alder, coated in polyester, and the guitar features an Adjust-o-matic bridge with dynamic vibrato tailpiece.

Fittingly, given the fact that Cobain was left-handed, right- and left-handed models are available. Color options include Fiesta Red, Sonic Blue and Dark Lake Placid Blue (with competition stripe).

### **Mixing It Up**


Cobain rarely stuck with the same instrument throughout a tour. As Earnie Bailey recalls, he was wary of settling on one instrument permanently, because he was fearful of becoming complacent, and wanted to retain an edge. “I think he sort of liked being a little bit uncomfortable. He liked to mix things up and switch guitars and keep things from getting run of the mill.”

In one interview, Kurt Cobain claimed that he had around 200 guitars, but Bailey believes the figure was closer to 50, adding that most of the guitars played by Cobain were just recycled versions.

“A lot of what you see in ‘91 through to the end is the same five, six or seven guitars just being recycled over and over with different parts. You know – change the pickguard, put a different color on there, a different neck and suddenly it appears to be a completely different guitar. We’d keep ‘em out there until they were really just beyond repair.”

For Bailey, who started out occasionally helping the band with their gear, in between running a café with his wife, watching Nirvana’s transformation from local band to all-conquering global phenomenon was startling.

“I remember standing on that stage in São Paulo in South America and looking out at 90,000 people and thinking that it was only three years earlier that I saw them in a really small place. And I was thinking, ‘Wow, this is the same group.’”



# WHEN YOU'RE READY

When you're ready for the ultimate Fender instrument,  
look no further than the Fender Custom Shop.  
Whatever you desire, be it faithfully  
Fender or pure fantasy, they  
can build it here





**Main**  
Fender's Custom Shop began life in the late-1980s as a small workspace with a Hegner saw and some hand tools. Today, the handcrafting ethos is still upheld, but on a much larger scale

**T**

HE FENDER CUSTOM Shop is not just a place where great guitars are made – it's where *your* dream guitar is made.

Since 1987, the Fender Custom Shop has been its own “Dream Factory”, crafting guitars that are to playing what Ferraris are to driving. The superbly skilled craftsmen in Fender’s Corona, California facility are renowned worldwide for guitars that range from the fine to the fantastic.

The Fender Custom Shop draws on the knowledge of Fender’s finest craftsmen as well as the input of numerous guitar legends: Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, James Burton, Robert Cray, David Gilmour and Pete Townshend are just a few of the guitarists who have instruments built here.

“You can have your guitar built at the same factory where Eric Clapton’s guitar is built, by the same people,” says Mike Eldred, Custom Shop Director of Marketing. “Nobody else does what we do.”

A guitar just like the stars’ can be yours. Or you can also have one built to your own unique specifications. And the ultimate of the ultimate? Having a Fender Custom Shop guitar hand-made by one of Fender’s Master Builders.

### **The Master Builders**

Fender’s Master Builders have become famous in their own right. A visit to the [www.fendercustomshop.com](http://www.fendercustomshop.com) website reveals a healthy, ongoing dialogue with their customers: there are testimonials, a series of Master Builder tips, in-depth video demos and the latest Custom Collection guitars, all showcased with the enthusiasm that has forged the team’s reputation among guitar aficionados.

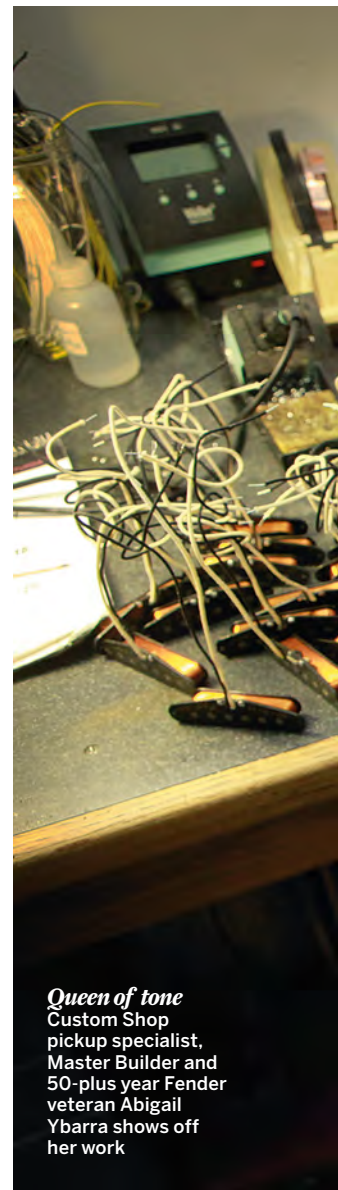
The Master Builders have household name fans, too. John Mayer, John 5 of Rob Zombie, Chris Allen of Neon Trees and Keith Richards are just some of the stars who the Custom Shop has created guitars for. Read on for insight into the process from Custom Shop head, Mike Eldred... ➤



**Above, right**  
A flame-maple Telecaster neck hits the buffing wheel; measuring polepiece height



**Below**  
A Custom Deluxe Stratocaster in Candy Red finish, from the 2012 Custom Collection



**Queen of tone**  
Custom Shop pickup specialist, Master Builder and 50-plus year Fender veteran Abigail Ybarra shows off her work





**Above, left**  
Master Builder Paul Waller in action; a collection of exotic Strat necks await the next stage; a Relic Stratocaster bridge is hand-assembled



# TALKING SHOP

Cloning Hendrix's Strat, creating guitars with keyboard necks and prototyping new Fender gear is all in a day's work for the Fender Custom Shop team



**I**T'S 5.30A.M. IN Scottsdale, Arizona, and Mike Eldred is already on his way to work. As Director of Marketing at Fender's famous Custom Shop, Eldred is inevitably a busy man. "It's always been busy!" he laughs. "Today, I go in, I meet early with all the Master Builders. Later in the morning, a bunch of dealers are coming to talk about ordering guitars for their stores. This afternoon? I'm looking at some Custom Shop prototypes and some hardware things we're working on - that's always interesting. Tomorrow, we're talking about 2013 projects."

With all this, does Mike Eldred ever get time to actually pick up a guitar and play? "Oh, of course! Every day."

Eldred loves guitars. He started building his own guitars at 18. He became a customer of Grover Jackson's Charvel company and then became Jackson's first full-time employee. He then went to Yamaha, before being asked to join

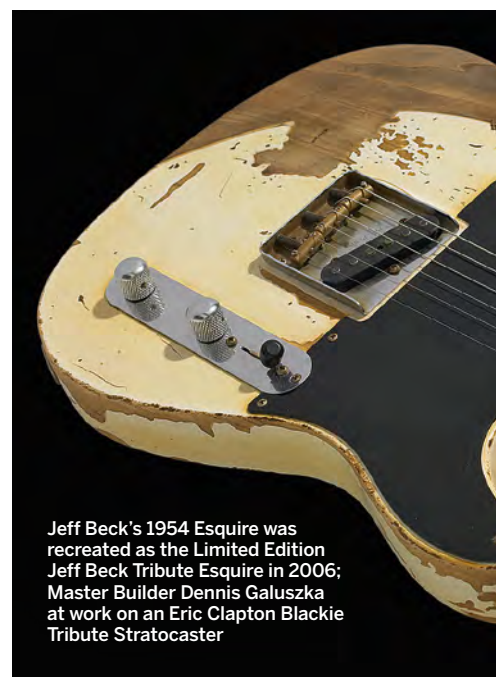


the Fender Custom Shop. "I started in the Fender neck department. I made a bunch of changes, changed the whole finishing process. And they kept promoting me. I became the manager of the shop, then Director of Sales and Marketing, then Custom Shop Director of Marketing."

The Custom Shop is famously entrusted to build the replicas of iconic guitars played by legends such as Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Ray Vaughan. It can also build any Fender you want - its Master Builders regularly create instruments to order based on specs that range from the timeless to the otherworldly. This creation of custom orders for individual customers has become the biggest part of the business. "That's why we say: When You're Ready," says Eldred. ➤

**Left**

Most of the Custom Shop's Master Builders worked on the Eric Clapton Blackie Tribute Stratocaster



Jeff Beck's 1954 Esquire was recreated as the Limited Edition Jeff Beck Tribute Esquire in 2006; Master Builder Dennis Galuszka at work on an Eric Clapton Blackie Tribute Stratocaster



**Number One fan:**  
Master Builder John Cruz  
prototyped Stevie Ray  
Vaughan's "Number One"  
Stratocaster by hand



## Custom Shop Aging Options

*How old do you want it?*

### **N.O.S. (New Old Stock)**

A new guitar built with replicas of vintage parts

### **Closet Classic Aging**

Imagine the look of a '50s or '60s classic Fender that's been left in its case under a bed for a decade. Kinda "musty" looking, but plays like new

### **Relic Aging**

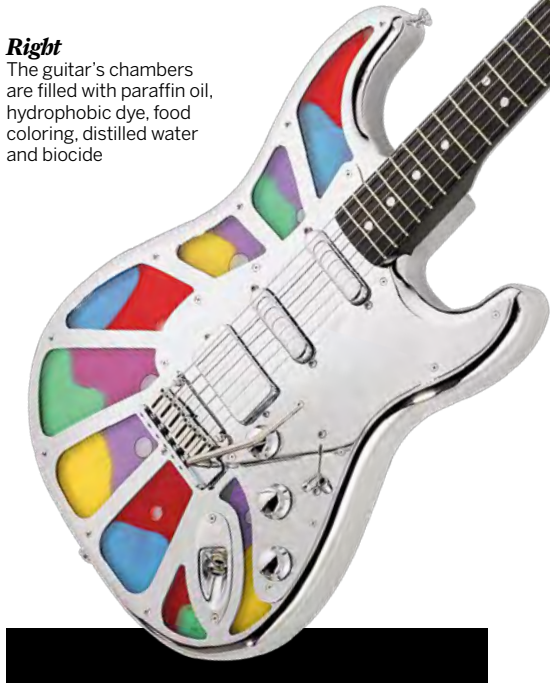
Body "dings", finish flaws and scrapes. This will make your new Custom Shop guitar look like a road-worn, beaten-up, working guitar

### **Heavy Relic Aging**

The ultimate for those who want their new guitar to feel flawless, and look like an antique – but it will still play like new. Clever

**Right**

The guitar's chambers are filled with paraffin oil, hydrophobic dye, food coloring, distilled water and biocide



**Strange Customs**

Mike Eldred has overseen some amazing one-off designs, including this tour de force from Custom Shop Uber Builder, Scott Buehl, who designed and built the outlandish instrument you see on this spread. Eldred: "The most difficult guitar I've ever experienced at the Custom Shop was a Stratocaster with liquid and oil-filled chambers. It was a design contest guitar, where the winner could get whatever they wanted. The whole guitar was made of steel and aluminum plating, and took six to eight months. It's nicknamed the "Splatocaster" – see [www.fendercustomshop.com](http://www.fendercustomshop.com) to see video of us building it. It's amazing. I still look at the video and think, man, that was crazy." ▶









**Above left, above**  
Master Builder Yuriy Shishkov deep in concentration; an example of Yuri's stunning inlay work

► Over the years, Eldred and his team have become used to building the most boundary-pushing instruments. "Dennis Galuszka did a guitar for the band Fall Out Boy. It was a double-neck, but the second neck was a keyboard. So the body was made of wood, but this keyboard then had to be bolted onto the body of the 'bass' neck. It was a fantastic achievement. But we all looked back when it was done and said – that's just nuts! That may be the most extreme one we've done."

The "Tribute" instruments – the Shop's 100 per cent-authentic replicas of various rock stars' historically significant guitars – is another facet for which the Custom Shop has become famed.

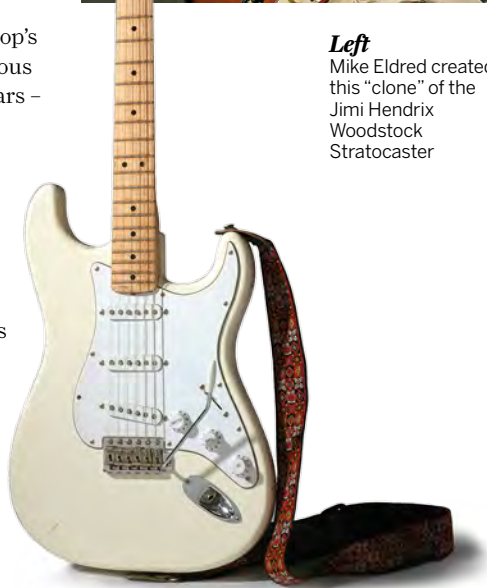
"The first time we really took it to the 'clone' stage, raised the bar, was the Hendrix white Stratocaster – the one he played at (1969's) Woodstock festival. I'm a big Hendrix fan so I said: can I build this one myself? It was really rewarding for me. I went out to Seattle where Paul Allen (Microsoft's co-founder, who bought the Woodstock Strat at auction) has the original one, and I looked at it closely.

"When I told them we had to take it apart to see what it was ►



**Left, below**  
Jason Smith, son of company Hall Of Famer Dan Smith, and Master Builder with an SRV "Lenny" Strat; an eye-catching Bass VI in Metallic Green

**Left**  
Mike Eldred created this "clone" of the Jimi Hendrix Woodstock Stratocaster





**SRV "Lenny" Strat**  
Fender knocked it out of the park with this detailed recreation of Yankee legend Mickey Mantle's autograph on the Stevie Ray Vaughan "Lenny" Stratocaster

**Right, below**

Master Builder Paul Waller recreates bassist Dennis Dunaway's "Billion Dollar" Jazz Bass. The bass player for the original Alice Cooper band lent his bass to the Fender Custom Shop for detailed accuracy in the build




► really like, they hesitated! We filmed it all, weighed the body, weighed the neck... it's a very detailed process. That stuff is really interesting. When we were taking the neck plate off, someone asked: "So what is that green stuff?" And I say, 'Sweat. Jimi Hendrix's sweat'. Stuff like that is amazing. But when we did Eric Clapton's Blackie, when we did Stevie Ray Vaughan's Lenny, it's all the same."

**X-ray Specs**

"We X-ray the guitars' bodies. We do everything on these Tributes. It's like being a forensic scientist. When Master Builder Todd Krause did the Blackie prototype, it had dirt underneath the fingerboard finish. So what happened there? We figured out

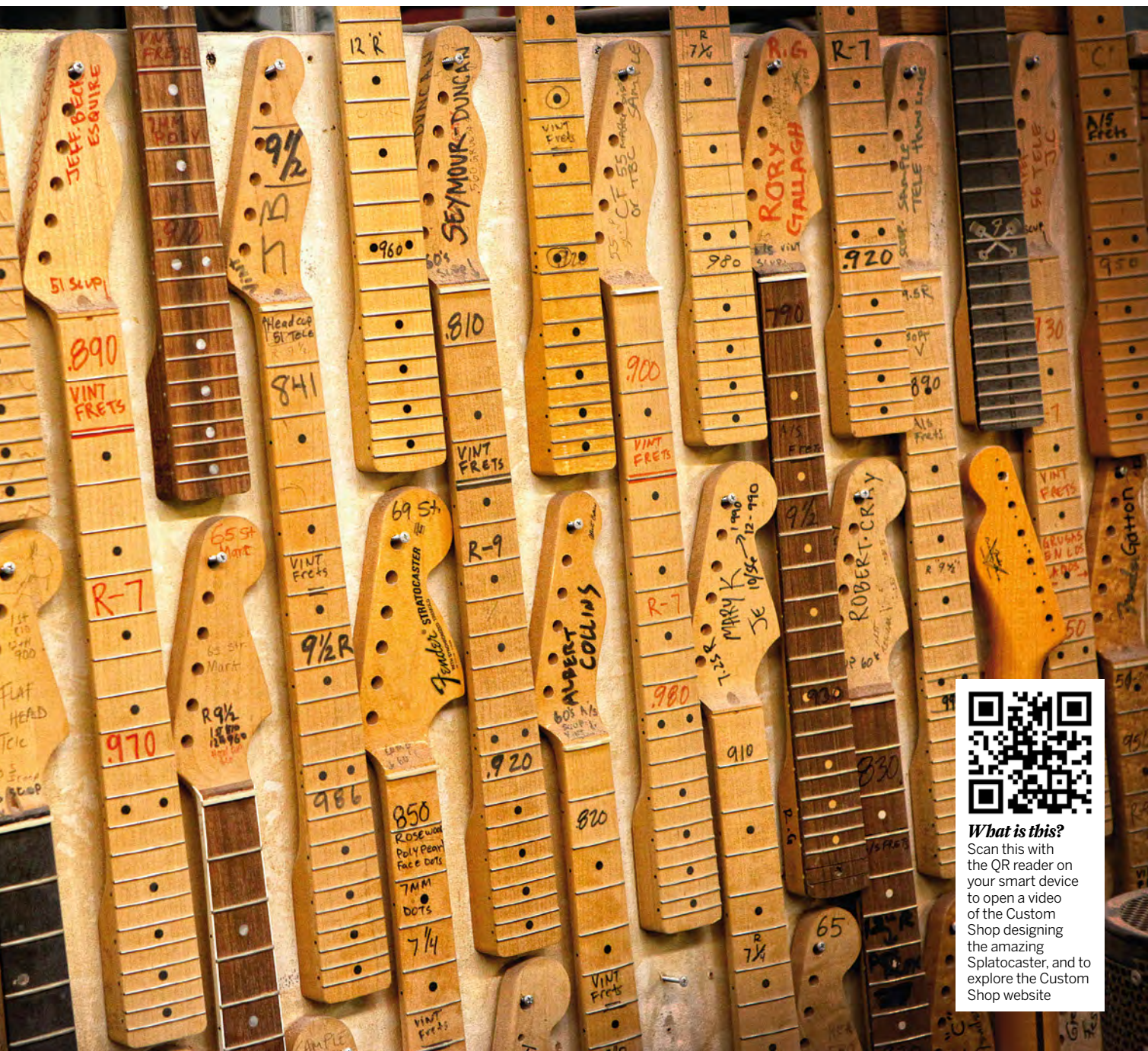
that the guitar neck had been refinished but the original dirt was left under the new finish. So we had to replicate that. When it gets like that, it gets weird."

Ultimately, Eldred and the team just love making instruments. The main focus is all about us ordinary guitar players who want extraordinary guitars. "We just love guitars. There's guys out there who get their guitar, sit back and play and go, that's the one. I don't! Sometimes my job is hard, because every time I see a new Custom Shop guitar I think, oh, I want that one too.

"We've just been looking at new species of wood to make bodies, and me and the Master Builders were sitting looking at this wood. And we all got excited. I can't wait to make a guitar out of this stuff." 



**Above and right**  
Neck templates for a storied list of Fender Custom Shop Tribute models, rare vintages and signature artists; painstaking handwork goes into every Fender Custom Shop instrument



**What is this?**  
Scan this with the QR reader on your smart device to open a video of the Custom Shop designing the amazing Splatocaster, and to explore the Custom Shop website



## Spread The Love

*All of Fender's brands benefit from the Custom Shop's R&D*

**F**ENDER'S CUSTOM SHOP is not only where your dream guitar can be built, it also acts as an extension of Fender's R&D force. Only the most talented workers are asked to join the Custom Shop, and it's a new ideas factory as well as a place where the past comes to life.

Mike Eldred: "Something a lot of players don't realize about the Custom Shop is our main aim is to push design 'down', if you like, all the way to Squier. So, if you look at an American Deluxe Stratocaster, that

was a Custom Shop guitar five years ago. The Select Series has a Custom Shop 'vibe' to it, certainly. You'll see Squier guitars now with lipstick pickups and matching headstock colors – the only way you could once get that was from the Custom Shop.

"We focus on things like that more so than ever before. There is a real synergy between the Custom Shop and Squier. We kick ideas around all the time, with the idea that some features of Custom Shop guitars will end up on Squier at some point."

# The top 20

## THINGS TO TAKE ON THE ROAD

Home has all your guitars and gear in it. Why venture out? If you feel you must, though, wherever you and your guitar are going, here's what we recommend you take with you...

ILLUSTRATION: Dave Hopkins



### 20 SPARE STRINGS

Make sure you always have a set in your backpack, wherever you and your guitar end up. You aren't going to impress the ladies with a trumpy looking guitar, so look after it, and it'll look after you.

### 19 BEARD

What self-respecting tortured indie-rock guitar player would be seen without one? Earn bonus points for styling it on an American Civil War-era soldier, and accessorizing with a checked shirt.

### 18 CONTACT CARD

It's not exactly rock 'n' roll, but invest a few dollars in a set of business cards, hand 'em out when you play, and the gigs and call ups to deputize will follow.

### 17 CAPO

Oh humble capo, where art thou? A trusty must-have for instant transposition when you find yourself working with different singers, it's also a fantastic aid to composition when you're struggling for inspiration. And it fits in your pocket, too.

### 16 PLUSH HARDCASE

Protects your beloved axe in transit. Collects loose change when you're busking. Doubles as a suitcase on the road.

### 15 CLIP-ON MIC-STAND DRINK HOLDER

Possibly just as important as your guitar, this accessory is not merely useful – it shows you do this for a living. Playing live that is – not just drinking...

### 14 SLIDE

A little bit of slide playing goes a long way to wowing an audience. Just put your guitar in open-G or open-D tuning and scrape away for instant Delta-blues cool.

### 13 ROADIE

If you can't afford one of these, try asking a well-meaning friend if he (or even better, she) will carry your guitar case into the venue. Instant kudos.

### 12 EBOW

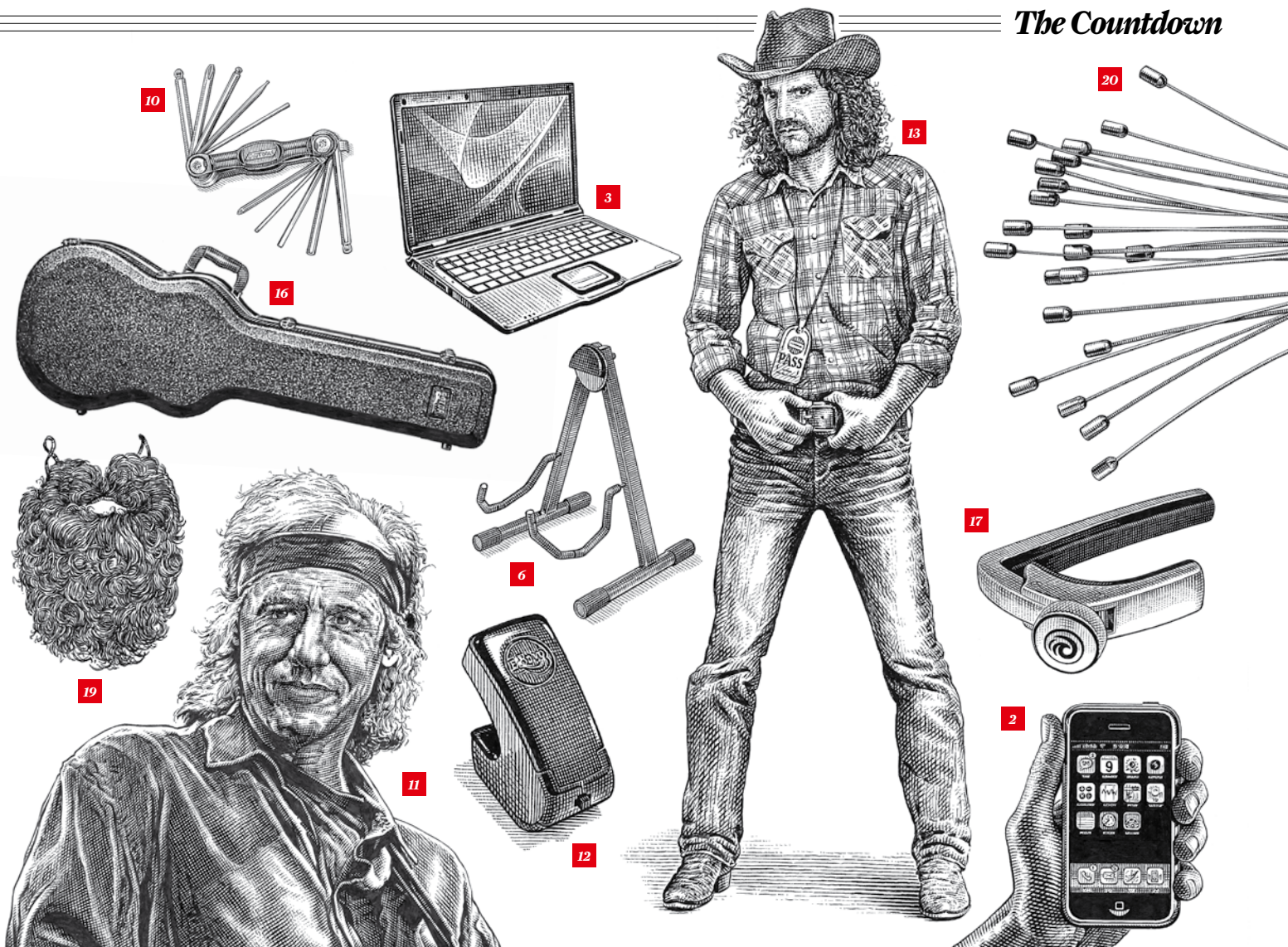
Whether you're playing an acoustic or an electric, the magnetic sustain and violin-like dynamic range of the EBow adds up to a timeless effect. It's also a dead-cert way to impress the non-guitar-savvy members of the audience, who'll think you are a magic man with magic fingers.

### 11 HEADBAND

More so than any other accessory or item of clothing you could possibly conceive of, a headband will impart a dangerous, edgy, Mark Knopfler-esque guitar-hero vibe to everyone you meet out there on the road. A ridiculous top hat will also work.

### 10 GUITAR MULTI-TOOL

When you hit the road, be sure to invest in a guitar-specific multi-tool with screwdrivers, fret files, Allen keys, a string winder, and so on. Then you can relax safe in the knowledge you're packing a Swiss Army Knife-load of solutions for just about any problem live playing can throw at you – from a broken string to a loose jack socket. Just never ever lend it out. Ever.



**9 PORTABLE TUNER**

Clip-on tuners like Fender's FT-004 may be cute, but they're far from gimmicks. Visible under stage lights and near-as-damn-it accurate, one of these little fellas could be the difference between a winning performance and a discordant disaster.

**8 FENDER MUSTANG MINI**

This bijou, portable, battery-powered seven-watt amp may not be as toneful as a Fender Twin, but it packs a surprising amount of grunt. Plus it's far less hassle to carry to an open-mic or impromptu jam than its tonesome counterpart.

**7 SONGBOOK**

Stick a simple songbook with chords in your guitar case for those impromptu 3am campfire singalongs, and you'll at least know that you were playing the right version of Em7 when the other residents chase you off the site. We particularly recommend *The Beatles Complete...*

**6 FOLDAWAY STAND**

Just buy one of these – they're inexpensive, and more importantly they guarantee that you'll never have to witness the sickening sight of your guitar plummeting headstock-first onto the stage. Ouch.

**5 HONEY AND LEMON**

Dissolve this in hot water and sip it instead of grabbing another coffee while you wait around to go onstage – it's Mother Nature's very own remedy for sore-voiced singers. A must-have for those days when your singing voice sounds huskier than Macy Gray chewing a wasp.

**4 GROLSCH (IN GLASS BOTTLES)**

Don't recycle your beer bottles! Those red rubber washers you find on the cap mechanisms of Grolsch lager bottles are the best designed, most reliable, least-hassle guitar-strap locking system yet devised. And each one comes with a free drink.

**3 LAPTOP**

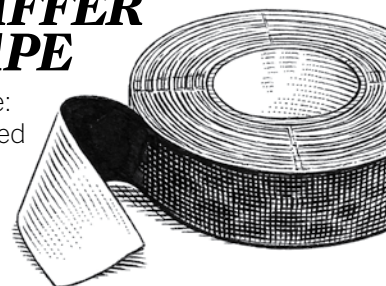
You'll need something to record your ideas on, practice with, email your tracks with... on second thoughts, perhaps just stay at home. It's much easier.

**2 IPHONE & IPAD APPS**

With its ever-expanding wealth of handy music-making apps, the iPhone is like a portable guitar tech, tutor and bandmate rolled into one. See page 29 for a list of our favorite guitar-playing apps.

**1 GAFFER TAPE**

Ask any roadie: you always need gaffer tape.







# 50<sup>th</sup>

## Anniversary Fender Jaguar



**Above:**  
First ever Fender Jaguar ad  
shoot with Jaguar E-Type car;  
an early Jaguar in the factory

LAUNCHED IN 1962, THE FENDER JAGUAR HAS RIDDEN WAVES OF SURF POPULARITY AND GRUNGE APPEAL. AND IN 2012, IT'S MORE ALLURING THAN EVER...

LEO FENDER WAS A perfectionist. And even though his classic 1950s designs of the Telecaster and Stratocaster became staples of early rock 'n' roll, Leo always believed he could improve on them, and reach more musicians.

Even with two smash-hit guitars in the Tele and Strat, Fender's R&D division kept trying to hone the perfect guitar. In 1958, Fender launched the Jazzmaster – aimed at jazz players, of course – and in 1962, the Jaguar. It was against this early '60s backdrop when Fender's Forrest White went to Leo with the idea for the instrument's forward-thinking design. White thought the company should produce a new guitar that could give two completely different tones with the flick of a switch. But as White later recounted: "Leo didn't play guitar, he couldn't even tune a guitar, so he didn't think this was important." So Leo Fender – engineer extraordinaire, but not a guitar player – originally rejected White's idea.

Luckily for White, and all Fender fans, a musician named Alvino Rey came into Fender's Fullerton factory and Forrest pitched the idea to him. Rey was

primarily a pedal-steel player and also a then-famous swing and jazz bandleader, and his enthusiasm for White's idea changed Leo's mind. Mr. Fender promptly went to work, and the Fender Jaguar went into development.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2012, the Jaguar was designed as the ultimate Fender six-string: "One of the finest solidbody electric guitars that has ever been offered to the public," cooed the original brochure. "The new Jaguar is unhesitatingly recommended to those desiring complete instrument versatility."

The body shape was similar to that of the Jazzmaster, as was the vibrato tailpiece, while it also offered slimline single-coil pickups and White's vision of numerous slide switches for different tones. Then, as now, the Jaguar looked like something out of *Futurama*, and was different in many ways: with 22 frets spanning a 24-inch scale length, rather than the usual Fender 25.5-inch, it was designed for easy playability. The shorter scale meant brighter tone, and the chrome-laden body was designed to look sharp. Some of the sumptuous custom colors available were Shell Pink, Shoreline Gold, Fiesta Red, Lake

► Placid Blue and Inca Silver. And clad in its custom-color finery, the Jaguar was the flashiest Fender on the block.

### Surf's Up

Despite its eye-catching looks and sonic versatility, Fender arguably misjudged the Jaguar guitar's initial market. At first, it didn't appeal to players looking for a guitar even more advanced than the Stratocaster: the first fans of the Jaguar were players of the early '60s surf scene, and bands such as The Surfaris, The Chantays, The Trashmen and The Beach Boys all toted Jaguar guitars at various times. The cutting sound of the Jaguar's high-pass filter — commonly known as the 'strangle' switch — was perfect for surf, as was the vibrato design which could produce an appropriately wave-like shimmer. Listen to the intro of The Beach Boys' now classic *Surfin' Safari* and you'll hear the Fender Jaguar.

But as the '60s progressed, the surf craze ebbed away. The Jaguar was, perhaps oddly, never widely favored by rock and blues players (although Jimi Hendrix did own and play a '63 Jaguar which was given to him by The Rolling Stones' Brian Jones) and its early popularity started to wane.

Fender gave the Jaguar cosmetic makeovers throughout the '60s — such as a bound neck, maple fingerboard with black binding and even pearloid block inlays — but its initial sales struggled to match those of the iconic Telecaster and the firmly established Stratocaster.

So although it was a quality instrument, some found the Jaguar to be just too quirky, and Fender removed it from its catalogue in 1975, after 13 years of production.

### Grunge Rebirth

In many ways, the temporary break in Fender production of the Jaguar actually helped its rebirth. As a discontinued model, it was often only found languishing in pawn shops and second-hand guitar stores in the '80s and early '90s, and it was cheaply priced. Fender Japan began building Jaguar guitars again in the mid-'80s, but in the USA it

© Getty Images (1), Rex features (1), Megan Finley (1)

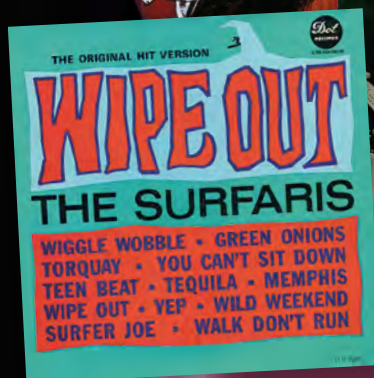


*“One of the finest electric guitars that has ever been offered to the public”*

*The 1963 Fender brochure*



*Left to right:*  
The Surfaris *Wipe Out* album sleeve; the 1964-1965 Fender brochure; 1960's Date Records company 7" single sleeve





STEVE CHEN  
THE AIRBOURNE  
TOXIC EVENT

GRAHAM COXON  
BLUR

THURSTON MOORE  
SONIC YOUTH

remained unavailable to buy as a new model until the late 1990s.

So when a new generation of indie rockers in the '80s and '90s went looking for a guitar, they started to gravitate towards the Jaguar, Jazzmaster and Mustang models. New noiseniks such as Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore, Dinosaur Jr.'s J Mascis and Nirvana's Kurt Cobain probably could not afford a lavish new Stratocaster, and neither would they want one — the Stratocaster was then-associated with the sophisticated blues soloing of Eric Clapton, Robert Cray and Jeff Beck. But the new breed still wanted Fender quality, which made the Jaguar and Jazzmaster so appealing.

It was Kurt Cobain, in particular, who did much to revive the popularity of the Jaguar, and his 1965 sunburst Jaguar was his main guitar during the *Nevermind* era.

Kurt had bought his Jaguar second-hand from a seller in the *LA Recycler* newspaper around August 1991. Although that would've been enough to gain it some notoriety, that classifieds paper has played an interesting cameo in rock 'n' roll beyond Cobain's purchase — Mick Mars joined Mötley Crüe after placing an ad answered by drummer Tommy Lee, James Hetfield answered an ad placed by Lars Ulrich, ultimately leading to the birth of Metallica, and Duff McKagan replied to an ad placed by Slash

and Steven Adler leading to an early incarnation of Guns N' Roses.

For Cobain, though, the *LA Recycler* was just a good source of a cheap but quality guitar. Kurt's Jaguar had already been heavily modified when Cobain bought it, being retrofitted with humbucking pickups and having tape covering the on/off and phase switches. It was beaten, bruised and non-standard — and therefore perfectly in keeping with Cobain's pawn-shop aesthetic.

While Cobain's heavily modded Jaguar has eventually led to his posthumous signature model (see pages 42-49), even a few years after *Nevermind* you still couldn't buy a new Fender Jaguar.

Fender Japan had reissued the instrument in the 1980s, but not many were even exported, and it was 1999 before Fender USA resumed production. So grunge fans who were initially inspired to seek out Jaguar guitars because of Cobain and the new breed of grunge guitarists were still having to find them second-hand... yet now the price of these rarities was rising.

Fender USA's reissuing of the Jaguar in 1999 was part of its American Vintage Series. The build was as close to a vintage '62 as possible, though with some minor changes. Importantly, the American Vintage Series Jaguar guitars looked the part, originally coming in a range of ▶



**What is this?**

Scan this with the QR code reader on your smart device to go to the 50th Anniversary Fender Jaguar website



► vivid custom colors such as Candy Apple Red, Sherwood Green, Ice Blue Metallic and Ocean Turquoise.

### **Alt-rock Icon**

And so, as the sparkling new millennium dawned, the Fender Jaguar was very much back in vogue with the coolest of the new breed of guitar players.

Red Hot Chili Peppers guitarist John Frusciante mostly had a torrid '90s. He suffered serious drug addiction and lost all of his guitars in a house fire. But when he was back on track and rejoined the Chili Peppers, he decided to reward himself. Frusciante's first guitar

purchase of his clean comeback? A vintage 1962 Fiesta Red Fender Jaguar.

"I bought that at a guitar store on Sunset [Boulevard, Los Angeles], in 1997," Frusciante told *Guitarist* magazine. "I didn't have a guitar and then I got some money and that was my Christmas present to myself."

Frusciante's Fender Jaguar can be heard on the band's hugely successful *Californication* and *By The Way* albums. The band even recorded a 15-minute demo track called *Strumming In D On ♯*: "The title literally means strumming in the key of D on the Jaguar. I hope that we put it out, as it's a really good funky

song." Despite his wishes, unfortunately the track remains unreleased.

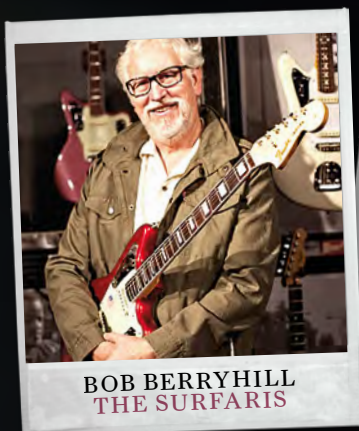
Billy Corgan used an early '70s Jag in Smashing Pumpkins, and another '90s fan of the Jaguar was Placebo's Brian Molko, who has three. "They're all older than me. That's very important. The Jags are all women, and they all have names: 'Bitch', 'Goddess' and 'Tattoo'."

Placebo's hit single *Pure Morning* is a prime example of Molko's Fender Jaguar in action, though the song's non-standard tuning (F B, E, G# C C, low to high) is the stuff of expert players. Graham Coxon has an early '60s sunburst Fender Jaguar, used extensively on Blur's 1994 *Parklife*

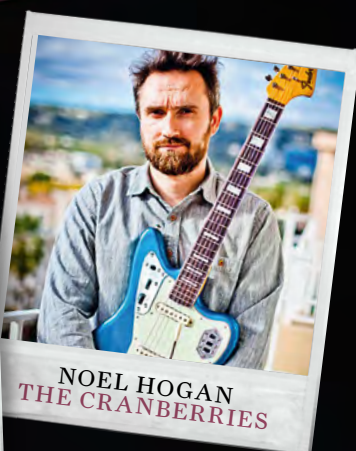
# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fender Jaguar

*“I think the Jag is beautiful. I love the body shape and the chrome. It’s my perfect guitar”*

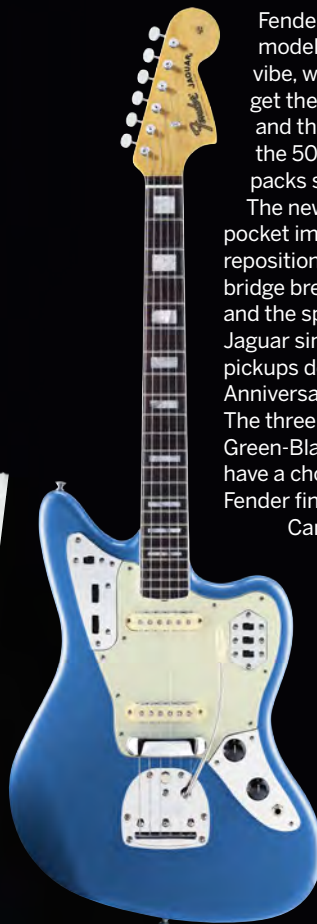
*Johnny Marr*



**BOB BERRYHILL**  
THE SURFARIS



**NOEL HOGAN**  
THE CRANBERRIES



Fender’s 50th Anniversary Jaguar model maintains the classic 1962 vibe, with a few tweaks. You still get the classic 24-inch scale length and the “classic” contouring. But the 50th Anniversary Jaguar also packs some technological updates. The new one-degree neck-angle pocket improves pitch; the newly repositioned tremolo plate increases bridge break angle and sustain; and the specially designed hot Jaguar single-coil neck and bridge pickups deliver fatter tone. The 50th Anniversary Jaguar is a looker, too. The three-ply pickguard is Mint Green-Black-Mint Green, and you have a choice of classic vintage Fender finishes – Lake Placid Blue, Candy Apple Red and striking Burgundy Mist Metallic, which authentically evokes the original Jaguar guitar’s Burgundy Mist finish option.

Half a century later, the numerous versions of the Fender Jaguar come with enough options to satisfy any player, and should rejuvenate the popularity of one of the Fender brand’s unsung classic electric guitars.

tour. Coxon’s Jaguar can be seen in the video for Blur’s *Bang* and his solo single *Bittersweet Bundle Of Misery*.

Coldplay’s Jonny Buckland is another current fan of the Jaguar. He mainly relies on Fender Thinline Telecaster guitars, but Buckland wrote and played Coldplay’s breakthrough hits *Shiver* and *Yellow* on his sunburst reissue Jaguar.

So how did we get to now? From surf to grunge, from indie to alt-rock, to funk and arena-rock, and despite being discontinued for a time, the Jaguar has played a major part in guitar history – yet it’s been a misunderstood beast for much of its life.

## *The Jaguar In 2012*

The Jaguar nevertheless remains one of Fender’s most stylish, versatile and attractive guitars. It’s had 50 years of highs and some lows, maybe, but Forrest White and Leo Fender’s original ideas hold true. The Jaguar is a unique guitar and for some, it’s the ultimate “outsider” Fender electric.

For the purist, the new 50th Anniversary Fender Jaguar (see boxout) packs original ‘60s features and stunning finishes. And another new chapter has opened with the Fender Johnny Marr Jaguar (see pages 70-71). As the musical mastermind of The Smiths and

a later member of Electronic, The The, Modest Mouse and The Cribs (as well as numerous collaborations), Johnny Marr knows guitar. He owns over 100, of all makes, but the Jaguar is the first model he’s designed and put his name to.

Johnny Marr says: “I was attracted to the Jag by the way it sounded – this big, clear, ringing sound – it sounds like I’m supposed to sound. Aesthetically, I think the Jag is beautiful. I love the body shape and chrome – the early ‘60s idea of space-age design. It’s my perfect guitar.”

It may have taken 50 years, but the Fender Jaguar guitar’s time has finally come.

{ MY GUITAR }

# Johnny Marr

The Fender Johnny Marr Jaguar Signature Model retains the best of the old while adding a player's-eye-view dash of design flair. Here, in the Brit guitar legend's own words, is Johnny's thinking behind the mods he made...

PHOTOGRAPHY: Carl Lyttle

## 1 Building bridges

"The Jag trem, which I use a lot, is without doubt the best vibrato system on any Fender guitar, but the floating bridge can take a pounding with constant use. We resolved the problem by designing special bushings that keep the bridge posts in position and stable. It's made a huge difference to the guitar."

## 2 Keeping it clean

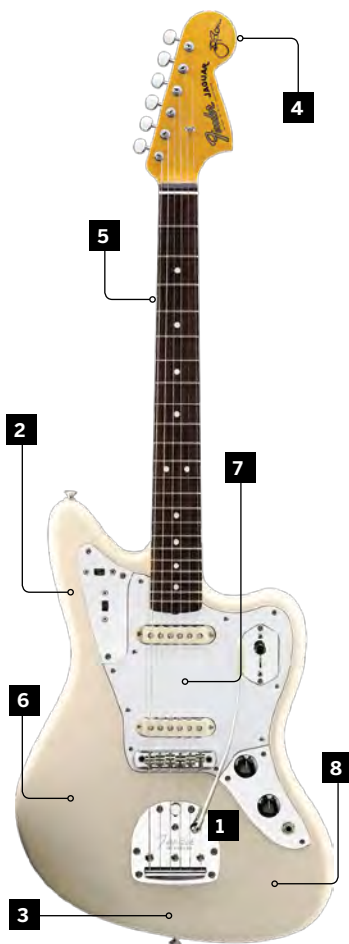
"I wanted to keep things simple but give the player a lot of choice with a wide range of tones. We've given the player 10 distinct clean tone settings to choose from... The fourth-position humbucking effect has made a big difference, and the tone switches take it a step further."

## 3 Color corrected

"I always loved white-on-white Fender guitars: white 'guards on Olympic White bodies. The burnt orange of the 'Metallic KO' color is taken from a faded-out '66 Jag. It started out life as a Candy Apple Red but has faded to this fantastic copper shade that I love."

## 4 Proud father

"For someone who's grown up from a little boy thinking the guitar is the greatest object in the world bar none, it's a very special feeling to have designed your own model."



## 5 The skinny

"The neck on my Jag is modeled after an unusual 1965 example. It has a fuller, less skinny feel than usual Jag necks and is more resonant. It makes a real difference to the overall tone of the guitar."

## 6 Body talk

"I wanted to make the body more comfortable and copied the rear scoop in the back from my 1963 Lake Placid Blue Jag. The chamfer on the front was copied from a mid-'50s Stratocaster, so it really sits on your body perfectly."

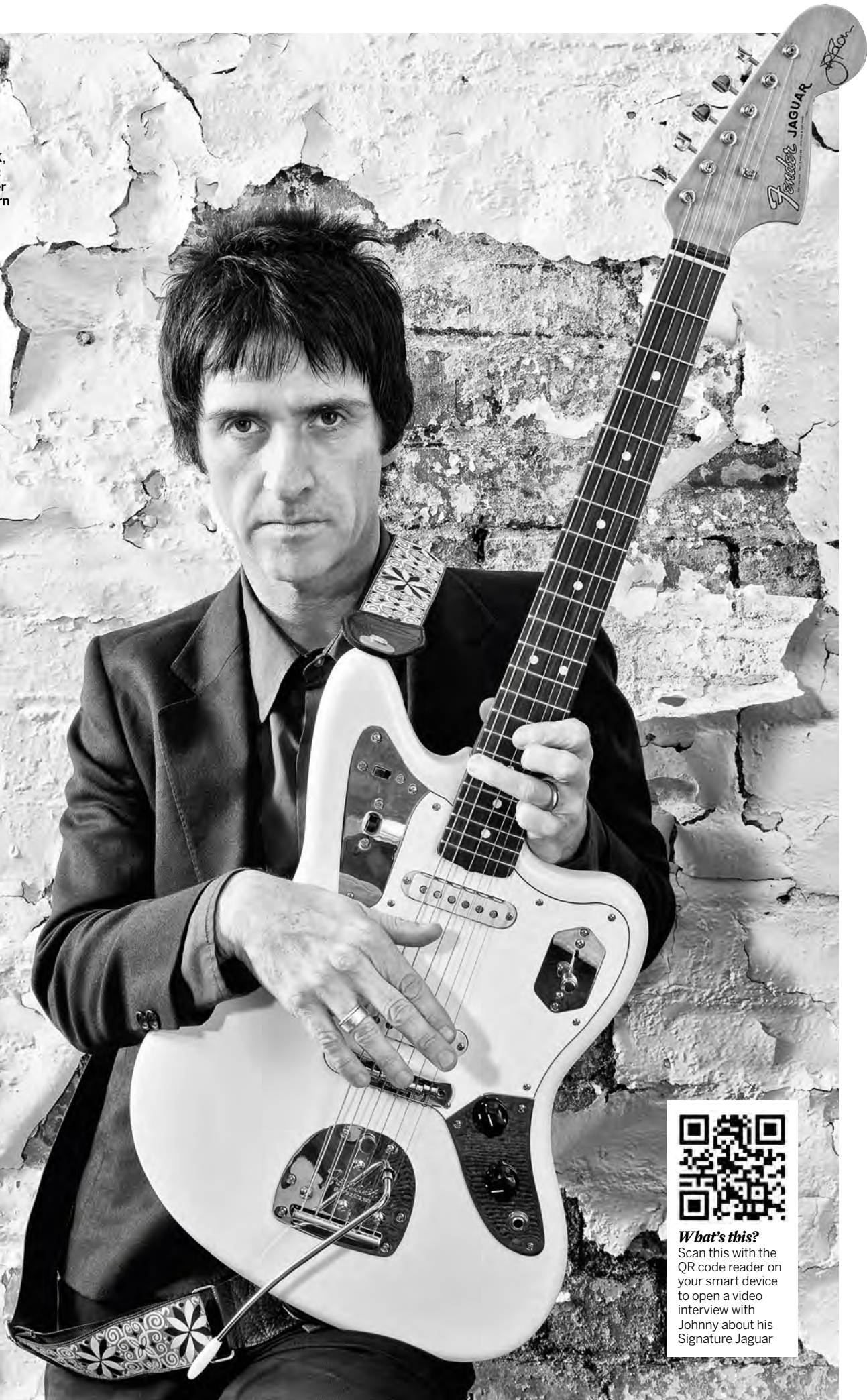
## 7 Vintage voice

"The pickups on my Jag are copied from vintage '62 pickups - I decided to change things from the original Jag design and had the pickups wound so that the polarity is the same on both instead of opposed. This definitely gives the pickups a more focused sound."

## 8 Daily debate

"The Cribs are real experts. They were really good sounding boards, constantly asking me what we were going to do about this, that and the other, from the case to the headstock... There was a daily discussion - these amazing arguments about things like, No way did they do that lighter Seafoam Green in '96!"

Johnny Marr,  
Manchester, UK,  
7 October 2011:  
the proud father  
with his newborn



***What's this?***

Scan this with the QR code reader on your smart device to open a video interview with Johnny about his Signature Jaguar

**Hood vibrations**

The guitar, also known as the "Bonecaster" and "The Billy", is plated with metal from the hood of a 1987 Ford LTD

**Smokin' tone**

Arizona jewelry artist Kit Carson created the guitar's unique appointments, which include this vintage tobacco tin

**Push skull**

This pickup selector matches the skull motif of the volume and tone controls





**Boneward bound**  
The distinctive "bone" binding was hand-carved by Kit Carson



**Star guitar**  
The Fleming/Carson Esquire was crafted by Master Builder Chris Fleming and is owned by Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top



## Custom Shop One-offs

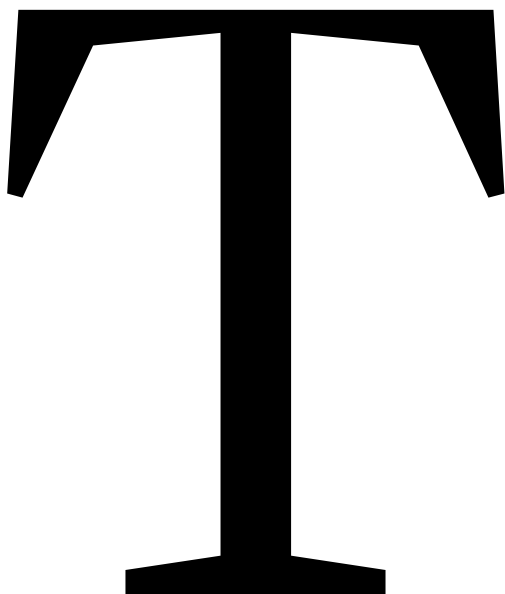
Fender's Custom Shop can create guitars beyond your wildest imaginings – so feast your eyes on some unique designs from the Fender archives

**THIS ISSUE: THE FLEMING/CARSON ESQUIRE**

# Signature Tone

Eric Clapton was the first player to be honored with a signature Fender guitar. Now he's the first guitarist to put his own name to a series of Fender amps. Here's the full story...

PHOTOGRAPHY: George Chin



THE EC SERIES OF SIGNATURE amplifiers is a first, for both Eric Clapton and Fender. The legendary guitarist has never before put his name on a series of amps and, perhaps surprisingly, the EC Series also represents Fender brand's first signature amps by any player.

It's a landmark collaboration, but an apt one too – Clapton and Fender go back a long way. His use of Fender Stratocaster models is well-known, also culminating in another first with 1988's Fender Eric Clapton Signature Model Stratocaster. Clapton's use ▶▶



Fender's new EC Series offers three distinct variations on classic '50s designs favored by Eric over the years



► of various Fender amplifiers has also played a major part in his stellar recording history.

EC's preference for Fender amps really began to gel in the early 1970s. Just as he started to rely on his Brownie and Blackie Fender Stratocaster guitars, Clapton started pairing them with classic Fender backline. The combination produced an early high watermark on Derek And The Dominos' classic 1970 album, *Layla And Other Assorted Love Songs*.

The album's late producer Tom Dowd told *Guitar World* magazine: "Clapton and Duane Allman were set up in the studio facing each other, looking one another in the eyes and playing live through small Fender amps — a Princeton and a Champ.

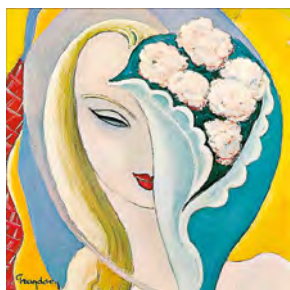
"These guys weren't wearing earphones," Dowd recalled. "They were just playing softly through those little Fender [amps]. If they talked while they were recording, you would have heard it over the amplifier. It's funny, too, because when I did Cream, Eric was playing through double stacks of Marshalls and it literally hurt to be in the room with those guys. When Eric showed up for *Layla*, he had a Champ under one arm and a Princeton under the other and that was it. He and Duane used those amps, switching back and forth."

Clapton's love affair with Fender amplifiers arguably started here, and continued through the 1970s to projects in recent years. The sound of '70s Clapton classics such as *Layla* and *Motherless Children*, as well as more modern cuts such as *Run Back To Your Side*, have all depended on the marriage of Fender Stratocaster and 1950s-style tweed amps.

When Cream reformed for their landmark shows of 2005, Clapton was seen coaxing his fabled tones from his '57 tweed Twin reissue — his own vintage '57 tweed amps and their 2000 reissue versions then formed the bedrock of his live and recording tone. ►►

The EC Series Twinolux updates the chime of a '57 Twin by adding vintage-voiced tremolo and a power attenuator





**Left to right**  
Classic Clapton albums; 1970's *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*, 1989's *Journeyman*, and 1974's *461 Ocean Boulevard*.

The lovingly recreated worn nitrocellulose finish on Fender's 2006 Tribute Series replicas of EC's Blackie Stratocaster. The original Blackie sold at auction in 2004 for \$959,500, to benefit Clapton's Crossroads Center in Antigua



## Clapton And Fender

*Six decades of sonic collaboration*

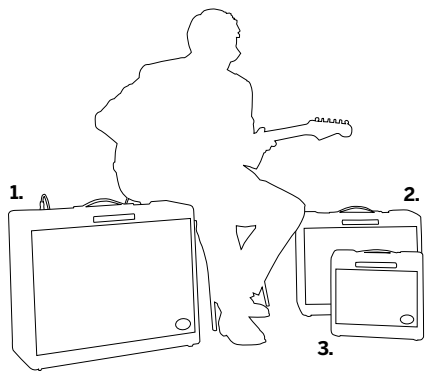
**E**ric Clapton's love of Fenders dates back to the 1960s, when he used Telecaster and Jazzmaster models with The Yardbirds. He played other makes in the later 1960s, but by 1970's *Layla And Other Assorted Love Songs*, Clapton had switched to a 1956 tobacco-sunburst Stratocaster, nicknamed "Brownie". He later amalgamated three mid-'50s Strat guitars into his favorite guitar, the famous "Blackie".

"My first Strat was Brownie, and I played it for years and years, a wonderful guitar," Eric recalled in his foreword to Tom Wheeler's book, *The*

*Stratocaster Chronicles*. "Then I was in Nashville at a store called Sho-Bud, as I recall, and they had a whole rack of old '50s Stratocaster guitars in the back, going second-hand. They were so out of fashion you could pick up a perfectly genuine Strat for two hundred or three hundred dollars — even less! So I bought all of them. I gave one to Steve Winwood, one to George Harrison, and one to Pete Townshend, and kept a few for myself. I liked the idea of a black body, but the black one I had was in bad condition, so I took apart the ones I kept and assembled different pieces to make Blackie, which is a hybrid, a mongrel."

Blackie became his main live and studio squeeze from 1973 to 1985, appearing at 1985's Live Aid in the process. Neck wear meant Blackie was mostly retired soon after, but she became the template for Fender's first artist instrument, the Eric Clapton Signature Model Stratocaster. This had Fender Gold Lace Sensor pickups and a boosted tone circuit offering humbucking pickup-like tone when needed. In 1991, it was offered with a plain Blackie-like finish: the Custom Shop has evolved its various Signatures over the years, according to Eric's specifications.





**Left to right**  
The rigorous attention-to-detail extends even to the amps' badges; hand-wiring the range's output-tube bias tremolo circuit; a view inside the Twinolux's handcrafted chassis

## The EC Series

*Fender's first-ever signature amp range marries the old with the new*

The amps in the new EC Series pack plenty of history into their fetching tweed enclosures. Handmade in the USA, the three new tube amps not only bear Clapton's name, but also his own distinctive design touches, resulting in voices as full and authentic as the guitarist's own.

The amps are based on classic Fender tweed tube models of the 1950s — the '57 Twin, '57 Deluxe and the '57 Champ. Clapton has returned to these lodestones of tone for specific sounds at various points throughout his six-decade career.

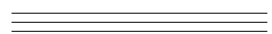
Clapton specified that each model should incorporate a '50s-era output tube-bias tremolo circuit, which produces a more throbbing pulse than later Fender tremolo circuits, and a switchable power attenuator, which reduces speaker output.



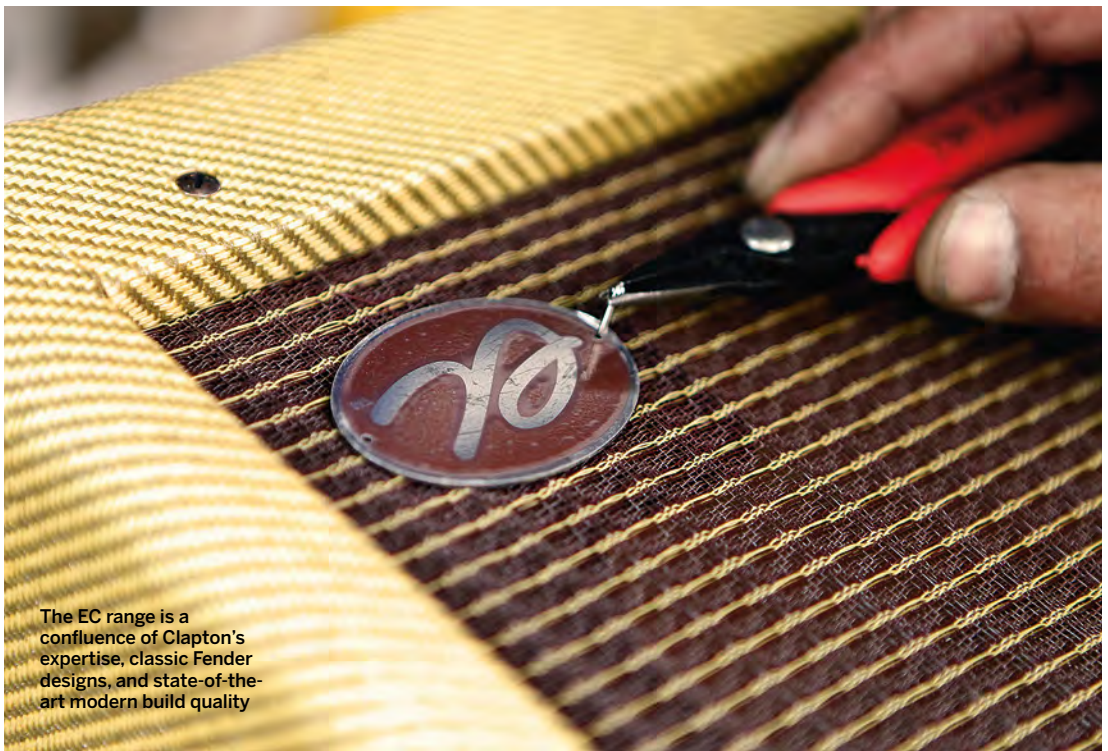
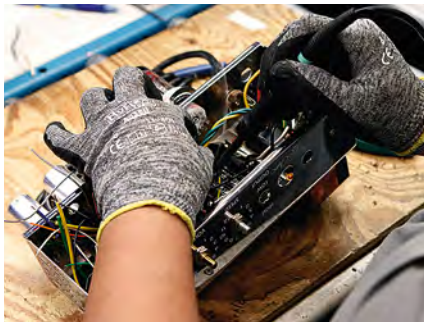
**1** **Fender EC Twinolux**  
The big daddy of the range is based on a '57 Fender Twin: the classic twin-speaker guitar amp famed for its chiming, clean tone. Unlike the EC Vibro Champ and EC Tremolux, the EC Twinolux's output can be dropped further by disabling one of the amp's pair of speakers. These are a special 12-inch Weber By Eminence design, ensuring classic Twin tone with superb dynamics and sensitivity.

**2** **Fender EC Tremolux**  
The 12-watt Fender EC Tremolux is the mid-sized combo in the series. Based on a '57 Deluxe, but with twists, the Tremolux adds separate high- and low-gain inputs and fixed bias to increase "headroom" (clean volume before distortion). The EC Tremolux employs a Celestion Heritage G12-65 speaker, for its high-gain handling: this can be bypassed in favor of an external 8-ohm cabinet.

**3** **Fender EC Vibro-Champ**  
Clapton is a fan of the original Fender Champ, having used the classic '50s amp for countless recordings. Unlike the original design, the Fender EC Vibro-Champ has the EC Series' vintage tremolo built in, and it can be switched on and off with an optional footswitch. The power attenuator is another new feature, and the Vibro-Champ also houses an 8-inch Weber signature speaker.



**Badge of quality**  
 All EC Series amps are handmade in the USA. Built with a finger-joined solid pine enclosure, each authentically evokes Fender's original 1950s' golden era with lacquered tweed covering, vintage-style brown/gold grille cloth and a leather strap handle. And in the most outwardly visible personal touch, each amp bears an "EC Series" badge at front lower right, and Clapton's signature on the control panel. Each amp also includes a deluxe fitted cover



**What's this?**

Scan this with the QR reader on your smart device to open a video of the legendary Buddy Guy testing the EC Series amps...



The EC range is a confluence of Clapton's expertise, classic Fender designs, and state-of-the-art modern build quality

1

The Excelsior offers warm retro tone via its guitar, microphone and accordion inputs



# Pawn again

Retro radio meets Cold War cool with two new combos from the Pawn Shop Special range

PHOTOGRAPHY: Philip Sowels

BACK IN THE AUSTERE DAYS of 1950s Britain, when rock 'n' roll began to cross over the Atlantic, young cash-strapped guitarists searching for the sounds they heard over the airwaves would frequently convert the old tube radios they encountered the music on in the first place into amps for their guitars.

It wasn't actually too difficult – conveniently enough, radios

generally housed most of the parts needed for conversion into a makeshift guitar amp. All it required was the enthusiasm, a bit of know-how and, of course, a radio.

Rafts of inventive teenage players used this method, including the 13-year-old Jeff Beck who, back in 1957, was using a radio as a guitar amp – two years before joining his first band, the Deltones.



The Greta has a handy built-in input for an mp3 player, so you can use it as a stereo and play along to your tunes through the amp's four-inch Special Design speaker

2



## 1 THE PAWN SHOP EXCELSIOR

Six decades on, Fender has launched two new tube amps in the Pawn Shop Special range that nod affectionately to the '50s radio-as-guitar amp trend: we'll start with the 13-watt Excelsior.

Sporting brown textured vinyl covering, a stylish 'E' grille design and a rather fetching cross-swords badge on the front panel, the Excelsior exudes Cold War cool.

The amp's simplicity belies a powerful feature set. There's authentic grunt from two 12AX7 preamp tubes and two 6V6 output tubes powering a single 15-inch Special Design speaker – and there's no danger of unwanted detuned-station hiss either.

Fender has equipped the Excelsior with novel “guitar”, “microphone” and “accordion” inputs, each with



optimized circuitry. Built-in tremolo adds pulse; there's a bright/dark switch, and a 1/4-inch internal speaker disconnect enables the amp to drive an external speaker cab. From clean to raw and raucous, the Excelsior packs the tones to match its retro appeal.

## 2 THE PAWN SHOP GRETA

Fender's other Pawn Shop star is the Greta. Place this little beaut on the family breakfast table and the chances are dad will attempt to tune into the morning news – so convincing is its retro radio vibe. Weighing in at a bijou two watts, with a four-inch Special Design speaker, the Greta features bright red wooden front and back panels, with a gold-finished metal top and sides.

A 12AX7 preamp tube and 12AT7 output tube power the Greta, with volume and tone controls producing low-volume clean and crunchy overdriven sounds (an old-school VU meter displays “clean” to “overload”).

There's also the option to plug in an mp3 player, so the Greta doubles as a stereo or playalong practice tool. All that remains is for you to tune in to this pair's Pawn Shop tones – you're sure to uncover a brand-new retro vibe to your playing.

# CUTTING TONE

Fender's new Machete amps offer high-gain sound sculpting, with a dash of go-faster automobile style

PHOTOGRAPHY: Philip Sowels

**W**HEN IT COMES TO styling, there's a distinct late-'60s, early-'70s vibe to the Machete, the new 50-watt dual-channel combo from Fender. Dominating the amp's black vinyl covering is a dramatic gray stripe – complete with steering wheel-grip characteristics and white piping – which conjures images of souped-up roadsters, vintage NASCAR and every road movie you've ever seen rolled into one. The look is completed by chrome Telecaster knobs, a black silver strand grille cloth, and all-new corners and hardware.

It turns out this souped-up auto theme is entirely fitting. The Machete is a high-performance combo aiming for the finely tuned ears of discerning guitarists and amp connoisseurs. It also boasts a dedicated high-gain channel as well as an extremely clear clean channel that can be pushed into aggressive rhythm territory; while the addition of onboard digital reverb adds shimmer and depth.



## Blade Runner

There's serious tone-shaping potential here: the Machete's robust enclosure houses a 12-inch Celestion speaker pumping out 50 watts of rich and pummeling response, with a midrange notch control (see boxout), and useful push-pull pots for bright boost and gain boost on the rhythm channel.

Further options at the end of the signal chain include adjustable speaker damping for fine-tuning performance, XLR output with switchable speaker muting and cabinet emulation: great options for guitarists who understand the vital role a speaker's detail plays in defining tone. A four-button footswitch and cover are included, ensuring the Machete is ready to hit the stage from day one.

Catering to players who need a turbocharged sound they can adapt to their needs and experiment with, the Machete is a formidable addition to any amp arsenal. And its looks will doubtless attract some intrigued glances from the audience, too.

## Turbocharged Tone

*The Machete offers cutting-edge sound shaping*

**A**ny guitarist who loves to dabble in heavier rhythm styles will love the Machete's ability to shape the EQ and "response" of its power amp and speakers. Rock and metal rhythm players rely on being able to fine-tune the midrange frequencies of their

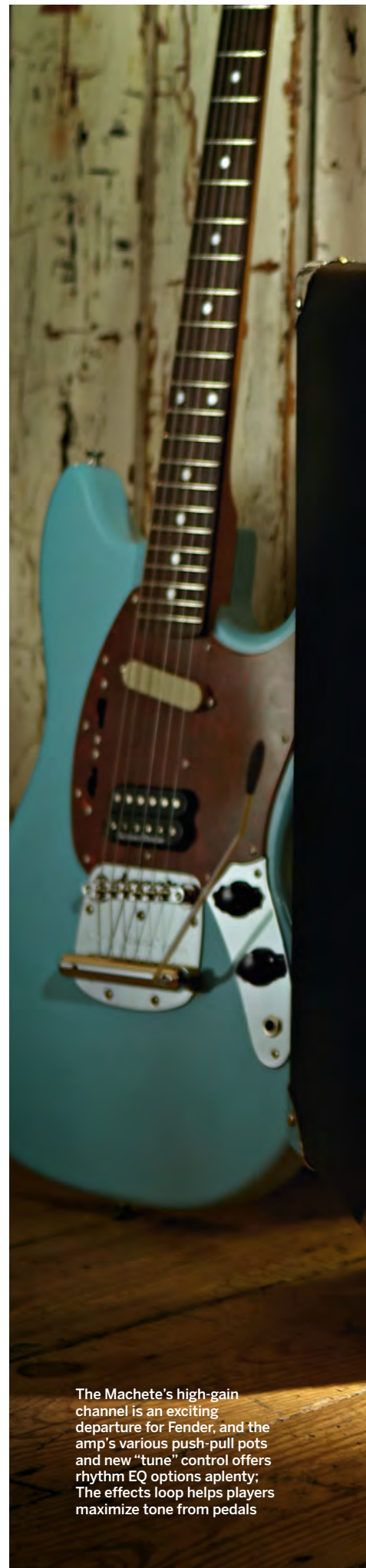
amp's sound to cut through the band's mix while retaining bite and snarl: the Machete's pioneering damping and tune controls do precisely that, providing a range of British and American tonal flavors. Zap the QR code to the right to hear these features in action.



### What's this?

Scan this with the QR code reader on your smart device to go to the Fender Machete website for a demo of the amp's special features

The Machete's high-gain channel is an exciting departure for Fender, and the amp's various push-pull pots and new "tune" control offers rhythm EQ options aplenty; The effects loop helps players maximize tone from pedals





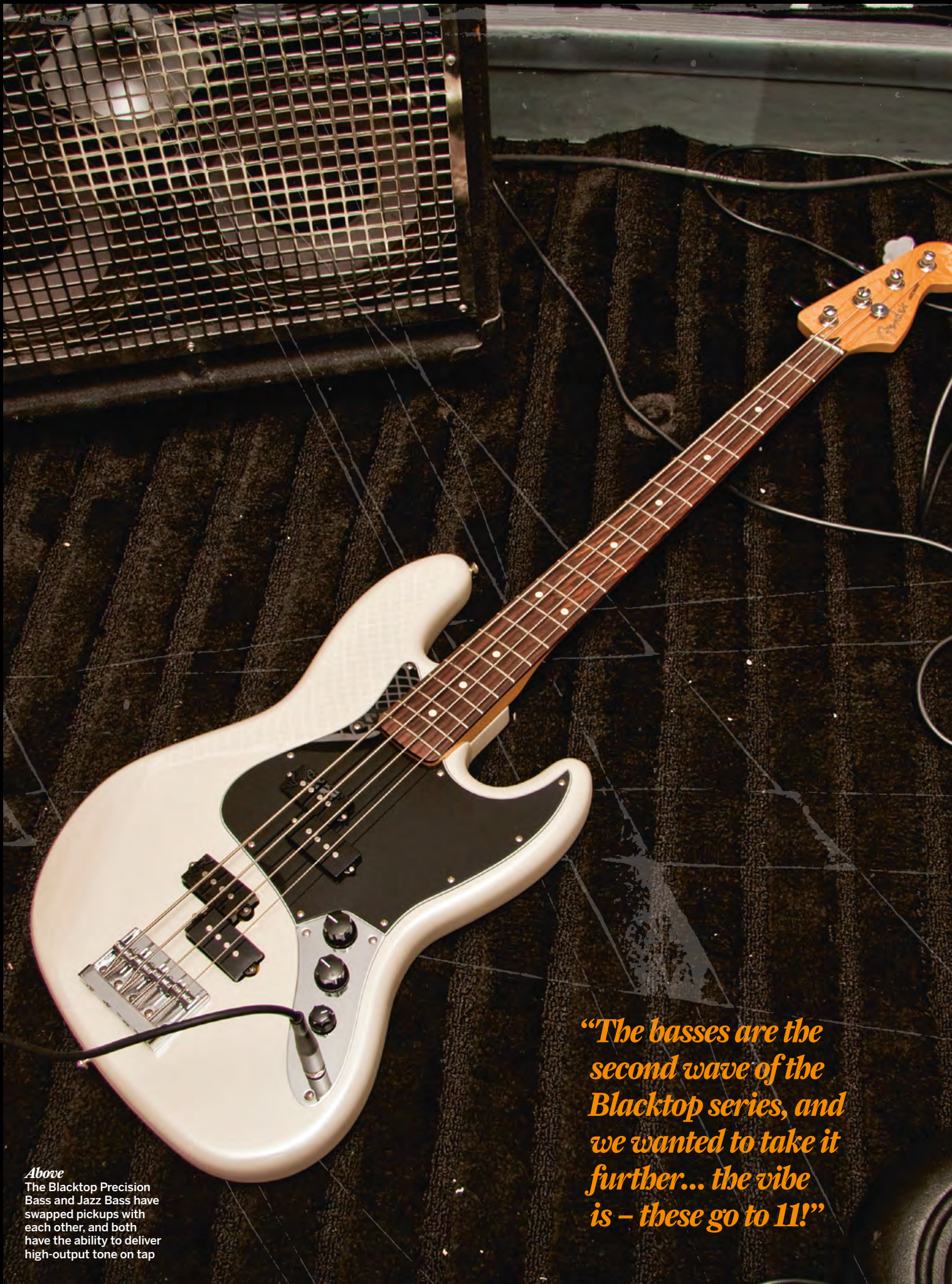
INSIDE

FENDER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS  
CHANNEL ONE CHANNEL TWO MACHETE  
INPUT PAD PULL BRIGHT PULL GAIN BOOST GAIN VOLUME LOW MID HIGH TUNE GAIN VOLUME LOW MID HIGH TUNE CH 2 REVERB DAMPING

Fender

MACHETE

Fender MACHETE  
CHANNEL SELECT CHANNEL ONE GAIN BOOST EFFECTS LOOP REVERB



*Above*  
The Blacktop Precision Bass and Jazz Bass have swapped pickups with each other, and both have the ability to deliver high-output tone on tap

*“The basses are the second wave of the Blacktop series, and we wanted to take it further... the vibe is – these go to 11!”*

# BLACKTOP™

Fender's Blacktop Precision Bass and Jazz Bass add a fresh twist to two classics...

# F

ENDER'S PRECISION BASS AND JAZZ Bass are undoubtedly the most famous electric basses ever. The P Bass, in constant production since 1951, has been a bass staple since the first days of rock 'n' roll. The Jazz Bass, which debuted in 1960, added brighter tones, a curvier design and more sophisticated appeal. The original designs were so impressive that little has needed to change beyond cosmetics for years – until now.

The new Fender Blacktop Precision Bass and Blacktop Jazz Bass look, to the casual observer, just like their forebears. But a closer look at the pickup configurations show them to be very different. Unlike original P Bass and J Bass, these Blacktops pack a more aggressive tone that mixes the best

of modern and classic. Just like their Blacktop guitar brethren (Stratocaster, Telecaster, Jaguar, Jazzmaster, and the also-new Telecaster Baritone), the Blacktop basses are built in Mexico for an impressive build quality at a good price. Aficionados would rarely confuse them with a USA-built Fender, but then these models aren't designed to appeal to bassists who want a faithful recreation of '50s and '60s classics.

Justin Norvell, Fender's Vice President of Marketing, says: "The idea of this whole series is to be an entry point for Fender guitars and basses. They're simple, if you like, and aimed at younger people who play aggressive music.

"We have a lot of history of humbucking instruments, with things like the Fender Tele Deluxe that are really popular, so we just wanted to do more with humbucking pickups. The basses are the second wave of the Blacktop series, and we just wanted to take it further. They're modern. The vibe is – these go to 11!

"So, you have the P Bass that has two pickups, and a Jazz Bass that has two humbucking pickups. But we wanted to make these instruments even more different. So you have the humbucking J-pickups on the P Bass, and the double P-pickups on the J Bass."

Counterintuitive? Norvell says not. "It comes from what people have ▶▶



## Blacktop Telecaster Baritone

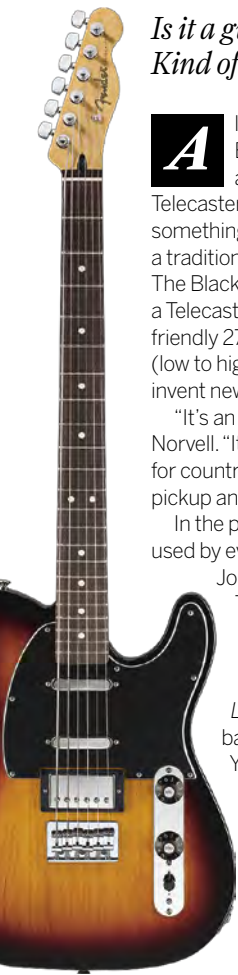
*Is it a guitar? Is it a bass?  
Kind of... It's a Baritone*

**A**longside the Blacktop Precision Bass and Jazz Bass, Fender has also just launched the Blacktop Telecaster Baritone. A baritone guitar is something of a halfway house between a traditional six-string guitar and a bass. The Blacktop Telecaster Baritone has a Telecaster body, but with a guitarist-friendly 27-inch scale. And tuned B-to-B (low to high), it will encourage players to invent new chords and new sounds.

"It's an aggressive guitar," says Norvell. "It's great for rock but also good for country, with a single humbucking pickup and two single-coils."

In the past, baritone guitars have been used by everyone from Aerosmith to Johnny Marr, Cream to The Cure, The Beatles to Placebo. And it's an idea that has come back into vogue once again.

"On Foo Fighters' *Wasting Light*, Pat Smear played baritone on nearly every track. You get an octave space between bass and guitar sometimes, and the way to fix that is with a baritone," says Norvell. "Baritone guitars are a great studio/recording instrument, even if they're not the focal point of the band."



***"[The new Blacktop Precision Bass] is possibly the most powerful bass Fender has ever offered"***

► done in the past. Guys like session player Reggie Hamilton and Blink-182's Mark Hoppus have been messing around with P Bass and Jazz Bass models for many years. They flip pickups around, customize their Fenders, and they sound great. So we took a little inspiration from these players."

### **Basses High**

Neither model messes with the fundamental outline of these two legendary designs. But there are some very "now" twists. The Blacktop Precision has a modern 'C'-shape neck profile, alder body and a gloss urethane neck. The feature that will cause a "second-take" is that this P Bass has J Bass pickups and knobs. Separate volume controls and one master tone control your sound. Norvell says: "This is possibly the most powerful bass Fender has ever offered."

There are none of the fancy sunburst finishes that may appeal to older players: the Blacktop P Bass comes in Black or a new color, White Chrome Pearl.

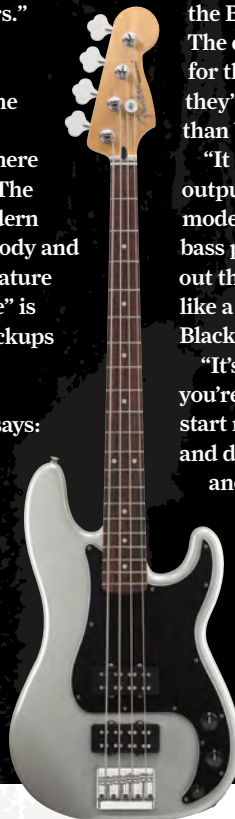
The Blacktop Jazz Bass flips the idea. It looks just

like a Jazz Bass, but comes loaded with dual split-coil Precision pickups. Specs are pretty much the same as the P Bass, including three-ply black-white-black pickguard, open-gear tuners and chrome hardware. It's again available in Black or White Chrome Pearl. Norvell describes the Blacktop Jazz as "supercharged". The experimentation with the pickups for the Blacktop Bass took a while, but they've emerged with a different tone than before.

"It definitely results in a higher output than you might expect. But in modern rock and metal, that's what bass players want. We had to balance out the sound and make it still sound like a great Fender bass, but the Blacktops certainly have that '+1' sound."

"It's a cool mix. You still feel like you're playing a P Bass, but then you start rolling in the second volume knob and dial in the bridge J Bass pickup and it's great. It even gives the player some of the J Bass 'cutting' sound."

"You could play both of these basses' pickups flat-out, and that would be a lot of tone. But the idea is to experiment with one pickup sound against the other. When you do that, you can really get a lot of tonal variations."



# P Bass and J Bass Players

*The roll call of Precision Bass and Jazz Bass and players is second to none*

## Precision Bass players

**Roger Waters**, pictured (Pink Floyd)

**Colin Greenwood** (Radiohead)

**Adam Clayton** (U2)

**Eric Avery** (Jane's Addiction)

**Mike Dirnt** (Green Day)

**Nikolai Fraiture** (The Strokes)

**Steve Harris** (Iron Maiden)

**Gary Jarman** (The Cribs)

**Duff McKagan**

(Guns N' Roses,

Velvet Revolver)

**Nate Mendel** (Foo Fighters)

**Sting** (Police, solo)

**Pete Wentz**

(Fall Out Boy, Black Cards)

**Matt Freeman**

(Rancid, Devils Brigade)

**Tony Franklin** (The Firm,

Kenny Wayne Shepherd)

**Daniel Tichenor**

(Cage The Elephant)

## Jazz Bass players

**Guy Berryman** (Coldplay)

**Flea** (Red Hot Chili Peppers)

**Mark Hoppus** (Blink-182)

**Geddy Lee** (Rush, solo)

**Jaco Pastorius** (Weather Report, solo)

**Marcus Miller** (Miles Davis, solo)

**Reggie Hamilton**

(Queen Latifah, Mariah Cary)

**Michael Rhodes**

(Taylor Swift, Brooks & Dunn)

**Victor Bailey** (Weather Report)

**James Johnston** (Biffy Clyro)

**Juán Calleros** (Mana)



COLIN GREENWOOD  
RADIOHEAD



NATE MENDEL  
FOO FIGHTERS

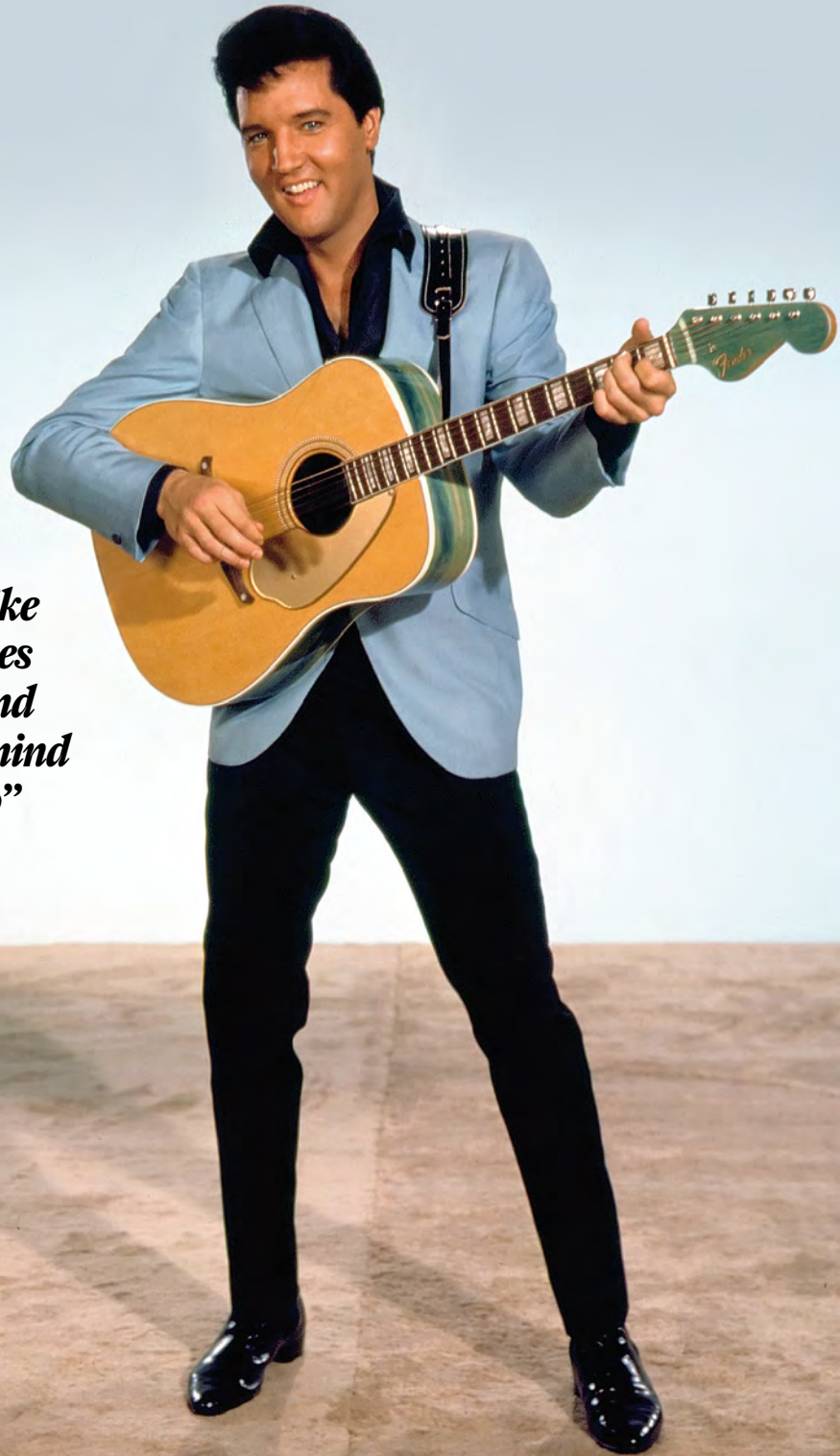


GEDDY LEE  
RUSH

Elvis Presley cradles his exotic Fender Kingman Wildwood VI model acoustic, in this promotional shot from 1967

*“They played it like that in the shanties and juke joints and nobody paid it no mind ‘til I goosed it up”*

*Elvis Presley*





# Fit for The King

The futuristic Fender Kingman acoustic Elvis sported in his mid-'60s movies is an iconic instrument, synonymous with The King in his prime. Now Fender has reissued this legendary model, and we unearth its story...



**A**SK ANYONE TO SUM up Elvis Presley's talents and it's unlikely that guitar playing will come top of the list. But when it came to steamrolling rhythm accompaniment, his guitarist "Scotty" Moore said Elvis had an uncanny sense of rhythm and timing. Johnny Cash was equally complimentary, classing Presley as one of the greatest rhythm players he had ever seen. Certainly, by the time of the famed 1968 "comeback" television special *Elvis*, he was exhibiting some nifty touches on the guitar.

Presley obviously had access to whichever guitar caught his eye. But one year before the *Elvis* TV special, in April 1967, he was introduced to a distinctive acoustic that echoed the visual ethos of the era – the Fender Kingman.

Elvis had just bought a 163-acre ranch in Mississippi called Circle G, near Graceland, where he, his future wife Priscilla and his

tight-knit group of friends dubbed the "Memphis Mafia" would hurl themselves into wholesome outdoor pursuits, such as horse riding. On strict studio orders, the King was earnestly trying to get in shape for the start of filming in April 1967 on his 25th movie, *Clambake*.

The Fender Kingman was used by Presley in the movie, and became a defining image. It also featured heavily in the promotional photos for this and his previous film, *Double Trouble*, released as he began shooting for *Clambake*.

The guitar incorporated some of the features established years earlier with electric guitars, such as a bolt-on maple neck with a headstock modeled after that of a Stratocaster. It also had a bolted and glued bridge with six adjustable steel saddles for proper intonation. These electric-style features were revolutionary: they ushered the acoustic guitar firmly into the '60s, imbuing it with a contemporary, almost futuristic aesthetic.

The Kingman was a dreadnought model with back and sides constructed using veneer from exotically dyed beechwood, known as the "Wildwood" finish. The range also featured a Wildwood veneer on the face of the headstock that matched the body, with bound rosewood fretboards and block inlays. The 1967 range of Kingman guitars boasted six optional colors, each denoted by the Roman numerals I-VI. Presley's model, which sported blue/green back and sides, was the Fender Wildwood VI.

## Signature Model

Fifty years on from the introduction of the Kingman, and 35 years since Presley's untimely death, Fender has launched the Elvis Kingman signature model. Features include Presley's signature on the front of the Wildwood-style headstock; an ivoroid neck and body binding; a maple neck; and a 20-fret rosewood fingerboard with block position inlays and bone nut.

The new Kingman also features a solid spruce top with scalloped X-bracing and a laminated Wildwood-style back and sides. It's an instrument ready and able to produce the characteristic resonant tone synonymous with Presley's playing.

Back in June 1956, Presley was asked how he developed his distinctive guitar style. His response was typically forthright, and like the man himself, had a rhythm all of its own:

"They played it like that in the shanties and juke joints and nobody paid it no mind 'til I goosed it up," he said.

"I got it from them. Down in Tupelo, Mississippi, I used to hear old Arthur Crudup bang his box the way I do now, and I said if I ever got to the place I could feel all old Arthur felt, I'd be a music man like nobody ever saw."



**Left to right:** Sporting futuristic electric design flourishes, the Kingman was an early frontrunner of the Fender brand's fledgling acoustic range

# TOP SECRET

A glimpse behind the scenes sees Fender's artisans hard at work on a few surprises for 2012...



Fender's guitar R&D staff Conner Herman (left) and Ryan Zalevsky (right) deep in discussion of an intriguing prototype design – a honeycomb-chambered Telecaster with a graphite neck

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

**G**UITAR INNOVATION IN 2012 is a many faceted business, and to be successful at it means staying ahead of a game whose ante is always being upped, and where the rules could change at any time.

Because the truth is, guitarists are hard taskmasters. As a tribe, their tastes are at once ultra-traditional, revering the designs and craft of the past, while always being attuned to daring designs and sonic innovations which will make their sound individual and their look stand out.

So if you're the world's most celebrated guitar company, how do you satisfy this capricious yet conservative crowd, pulling you in two different directions at once?

The answer seems to be: do both, but make sure one approach always informs the other. The Custom Shop feature in this issue (see pages 50-61) demonstrates how, by combining a mix of decades-old and up-to-the-minute technology and the collective expertise of its Master Builders, Fender's 'Dream Factory' can create instruments that are at least the equal of anything from the company's celebrated golden era.

Yet take a look at the One-offs feature on page 72, and the same luthiers who can lovingly recreate an artist's guitar to the last ding in its nitrocellulose can also turn their hands and imaginations to designs that really push the envelope. And it all has to make sonic sense and live up to the legend

behind the logo? That's some balancing act.

Recent Fender innovations like Relic finishing, the Time Machine series and Limited Edition ranges, Tele-bration and anniversary editions, new pickup types, and exploring the potential of new woods and materials have all arisen out of this creative tension between innovation and heritage.

The guitar above is a perfect example. With twin humbucking pickups, weight-reducing honeycomb chambering and high-tech graphite neck, it's still a Telecaster in name, but is about as far from the classic blueprint as its possible to get. Or is it?

Check back next issue for another peek at what Fender's designers are dreaming up for 2012 and beyond.



The Deluxe Staggered  
Cast/Sealed Locking  
Tuning Machines and  
series emblem on a  
Fender Select Series  
Stratocaster  
*See page 36*

# FENDER | SELECT

SELECT INSTRUMENTS *for* SELECT INDIVIDUALS

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MAGAZINE

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