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Nacho Guitars

We receive an unbelievably toneful, Telecaster from Spain and Nacho, the king of he Telecaster.

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the ToneQuest Report™

The Player's Guide to Ultimate Tone
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Nacho Telecasters

Musicians want to be the loud voice for so many quiet hearts.

— Billy Joel

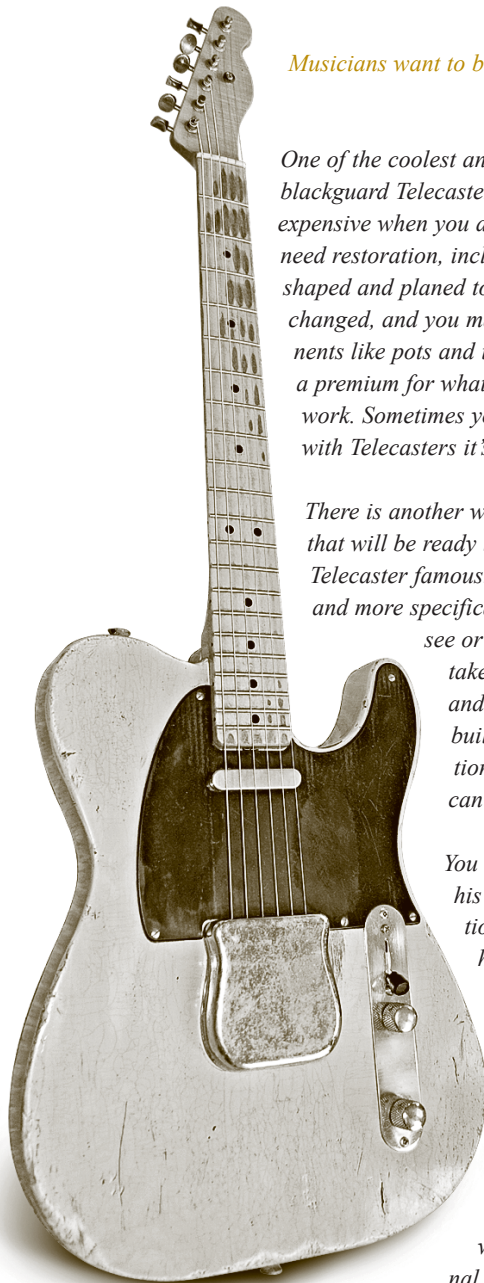
One of the coolest and most desirable guitars ever made is a vintage blackguard Telecaster. Unfortunately, they are hard to find and very expensive when you do, and we know from experience that many of them need restoration, including new frets, and often the neck needs to be reshaped and planed to be playable. Pickups and tuners have often been changed, and you may have to deal with replaced electronic components like pots and the tone cap. In many cases what you are paying a premium for what is simply a beater ash body and a neck that need work. Sometimes you can get lucky and find a real straight player, but with Telecasters it's rare, and when you do it's costly.

There is another way to acquire a great vintage Tele, however — one that will be ready to play with no issues and the tone that made the Telecaster famous. Meet Nacho Baños, founder of Nacho Guitars, and more specifically, the finest vintage replica Teles you will ever see or play. Skeptical? Well, log on to nachoguitars.com,

take your time to peruse the descriptions and photos and prepare to become a convert. Nacho has been building the coolest, most authentic vintage reproduction Telecasters for years, and nothing on the planet can compare to them. Nothing.

You need to understand that Nacho is obsessed, and his obsession has resulted in the finest aged reproduction Teles you will ever own. Except for the missing headstock decal these guitars are authentic vintage pieces crafted from new materials that look and feel old. The feel, playability, tone and vibe of Nacho's guitars is so authentic as to be identical to a fine old original Tele. Seriously.

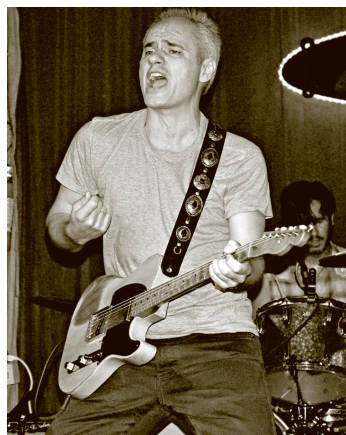
Nacho sent us 5.7 lb Emmy Lou direct from Spain, and all we can say is that we have to find a way to keep it. It is without a doubt the best Tele we have ever played, and we have owned two original '50s Telecasters. It's that good.



www.tonequest.com

Now, let's have a chat with Nacho and discover how he builds these amazing Telecasters. Enjoy...

TQR: What initially inspired you to create these guitars and when did you first begin, Nacho?



I started in 2009 trying to prove to myself I could do a worthy replica of the legendary Blackguard. I have been passionate about American music, guitars and old Telecasters in particular ever since I was a kid. I started playing in bands in around 1982. One of my school friends had bought an old Tele for \$300 from a

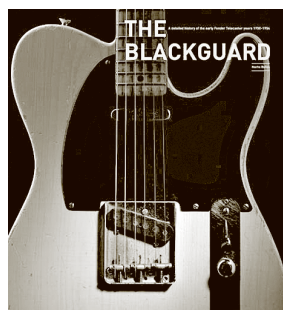
local newspaper that was strictly classifieds, so I started saving money. I bought that newspaper every week and one day my dad saw it and asked me "What are you doing with that weird classifieds newspaper?" I said I'm trying to buy a second hand guitar. Why?! he said. "Well I ain't got money for a new one" I replied. My dad was an old school kinda guy so he said, "Why you wanna have an old beat up guitar? Let me talk to mum maybe we can add your birthday and Christmas present for this". So he bought me my first real Telecaster in Christmas of 1986 for \$800. This was a new blonde US standard Tele from 1983. It was cool but much different than the ones portrayed in the covers of the vinyls of my guitar heroes; Keith Richards, Albert Collins, Roy Buchanan, Danny Gatton, Albert Lee, Roy Nichols... I never really enjoyed Springsteen music, but I just had to have a guitar like his...



I was born in Spain but received part of my school education in the US. During the mid to late 80s I stayed in California, Oregon and

Massachusetts for various periods of time. For five years I studied economics at the University of Valencia in Spain. In 1992 I was 26 years old and I came to Boston for a couple years to get my graduate degree in business administration (MBA). That was when I bought my first Broadcaster. I paid

\$4500 for it. I sold everything I had to get it. My parents were paying for housing and food and I soon realized I could move to a cheaper place and save some dough for guitars. They were sending me \$750 a month for rent. I ate junk food for the most part and I moved to a funky basement with a friend. By sharing the rent cost I managed to save about \$500 a month. This in 1993 meant I could buy a vintage Tele every 4-5 months. I came back to Spain and got a real job in 1994. Being single I could spend most of my income on guitars so I started building a collection. This was pre-internet so every month I called to check on dealers and they would send me printed pictures through snail mail. I was obsessed with the Telecaster and loved country music, blues and rock & roll, so it was 100% Teles with maybe a Strat or a Gibson here and there. In 2003 I realized by lurking at those internet forums that I knew more about this topic than the average Joe, so I decided to do a deeper research and wrote the Blackguard Book. This was like a doctorate project. I ended up analyzing every detailed spec of my favorite guitar and understanding how and why everything was made in a certain way.



Although my education is in economics I have always worked with technical engineers in manufacturing environments. My dad

was an industrial pioneer in Spain; he made the first plastic bottles here in the 1950s. He often worked long hours and weekends so a manufacturing plant was like a familiar place while growing up. Nowadays I work in point of sale advertising in Plastinsa (www.plastinsa.com) and my daily routines include project developments from scratch. We started out as a tooling maker in the late 70s and today we not only produce molds but also manufacture wood, plastic and metal Point of Sale advertising merchandise mostly for the food and beverage industry. We get a briefing idea, come up with a design, make a prototypes, make the tooling and produce the final product in Europe or Asia. So we are constantly thinking about ways to create and bring new functional and competitively priced products into the market.

Loving music and guitars the way I do, I guess trying to figure out how to make a good functional guitar was a natural step for me.

TQR: We would assume that you owned a number of original vintage Telecasters.... Tell us about your original Fenders Nacho - how and where you acquired them, your favorite features and character-

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istics related to them, and how they inspired you to create your own replicas...

I have been collecting guitars since the late 80s. The first real vintage guitar I bought was a 1972 Tele I found in Southworth guitars in Bethesda in 1990 for \$695. Then when I moved to Boston in 1992 I found my first Broadcaster and right then I knew the early Blackguards were the ones to get. Through the years I have met and bought guitars from many dealers in the US, some of them I call my friends today. In 1993 I met Jay Rosen and I started buying guitars from him. Jay has been instrumental throughout this long journey. He always seems to have the best guitars at the best prices. He is such a great guy, honest, friendly, low pressure, easy going and very informative. With him you always know what you are getting and he is also very much into early Fender stuff. I have been buying guitars from him for over 20 years, he knows everybody in the industry and he helped me to gather the impressive group of guitars used for the Blackguard Book.



Over the years my priorities have moved a bit. 20 years ago I would try to buy every single Blackguard Tele guitar available in the market. Nowadays I have a family (my wife Ana and four daughters Laura, Sophie, Annie and Clara) and prices for vintage guitars went out of reach years ago. So I have gradually downsized

my collection, looking for more quality and less quantity. My interest has shifted towards some of the earliest stuff like pre-1951 Fenders, Broadcasters and primitive Esquires. There is something magical about a pinebody guitar with a single pickup and a solid non truss rod maple neck which has stayed straight as an arrow for 65 years. I really think Leo got it right the first time around. To me those guitars are like the Stradivarius of popular music. So simple, functional and non-luxury, yet so perfect. It is crazy to think one musician's best choice nowadays may be to take one of these primitive guitars into the studio to record music with that beautiful warmly defined, resonant single coil magic bridge pickup tone. As crazy as to think you may be racing the Formula One Championship on Pole Position every Sunday behind the wheel of a Ford T.

TQR: You are clearly building the most realistic vintage Teles of any we have ever seen. How many vintage Telecasters have you owned to acquire such a vivid

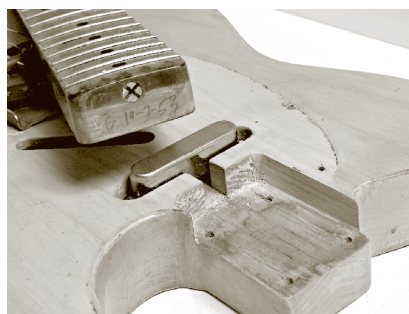
concept of how these guitars look, feel and sound? Your eye is really remarkable!



More than 200 vintage Telecasters may have passed through my hands over the last 25 years. When

you are so passionate and obsessed about something you get familiar with even the slightest nuances to the point you can tell right away if something is right or wrong, genuine or fake. All that info is imprinted in my brain and I use it when I have to make a realistic replica guitar. I remember one time there was a dealer at a Guitar Show in Texas with an original blackguard Tele he had just acquired. There was a small gathering of people so I went to have a look. The guitar was in its case closed and when he saw me coming he said something like "alright we are going to check the guitar with the gentleman here, lets see how good he really is at this, can you tell us what we have here without even opening the case?" Well, I was able to tell him the year of the guitar just by looking at the case. Then when he opened the case I told him the month the guitar was made. I explained why. They thought I was sick. I may very well be...

TQR: Where and when did you learn the building and aging skills that are required to create these Teles? Your work is really exceptional.



Writing the Blackguard book was like a 3 year doctorate program for me. I was lucky enough to count with the help of very knowledgeable people in different

fields. All details of the guitar were analyzed from the perspective of a builder. How things were done in a certain way and why. Once you gather all this data, you can start making your own recipes on what materials to use, what specs and procedures you need in order to achieve the desired result. Building a bolt-on neck solidbody guitar is not rocket science. If you know what you are looking for and you are using the correct data you just need to have access to scanning, programing and CNC routing technology, which, by the

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way, is very accessible nowadays. This may sound obvious and pretty straight forward but I believe only a handful of small details combined set apart a great guitar from a mediocre instrument.



Use good quality wood and cut it to correct specs. It is very important to have a good body/neck fit. Nut adjustment. This is key to have correct string vibration and action which will greatly affect the feel you get from playing the guitar. Hardware. Different bridge plates and saddles can have great effect on tone. Electronics. Pickups are determinant. Tones and caps are important. The voice of the pickup should marry well with the guitar's wood structure. Sometimes the same set of pickups sounds good on one guitar and phenomenal on another. Go figure.

Finish, lacquer and aging: using the correct type of lacquer will determine if the guitar ages in similar fashion as the genuine 50s counterpart. Finishing procedures should follow the 50s recipes (I published Leo's own procedure in the Blackguard book). Taking the time for the aging process using real vintage guitars as reference models will produce a realistic final look.

I do believe the finish is the icing of the cake here, the skin of the guitar, your ultimate connection with the instrument. Think of a great looking, feeling and sounding original 1950 Broadcaster and how different it would be if you completely strip the original lacquer and put a thick coat of poly finish. The wood, pickups and hardware would be the same but the guitar would sound, feel and look a lot different. Most of the magic would be gone. I don't really believe a guitar builder for solidbody guitars made of bolt-on parts needs exceptional manufacturing skills. For the same reason a good cook does not need to have a PhD on agricultural technology. You just need to understand how things are built, know the best ingredients and learn how to use them to achieve a desired result. Telecasters are like Paellas! (there you have it, the title for this interview) We all know the recipe for good Paella (typical Valencian Mediterranean rice dish). You can google it and it will give you exact ingredients and proportions. Well let me tell you, I have news for you baby. Even if we are both using the same exact ingredients, I bet your paella will sound a lot

different than mine, and I don't mean worse, I mean different. Everybody has a "holy grail dream Blackguard" idea in mind and I'm sure everyone's is different. That's the reason why I don't like to take orders. I just make guitars and put them out for sale. I will never try to make the guitar of your dreams. Instead, I have found a formula to make a very good acceptable product that matches my idea of how a 60+ year old Blackguard should look, feel and sound. And there are people out there who appreciate this. I am grateful for this and thank everyone for their support.

TQR: Nacho, how much variation in appearance, playability and tone have you noted among vintage models you have owned or played, and do you strive to reflect the complete range of vintage Teles or do you strive for a more consistent and narrower target ?



My problem is I love all of them. I like mint and pristine as much as I do love road warriors and everything in between. I do like to see the original finish in vintage guitars so I tend to stay away from refinished examples with the exception of particularly historical models like a pine body non truss rod Esquire.

I have found most people do not like an exaggerated relic look, so I try to not get carried away. Sometimes the guitar itself will lead you through the aging process and you will end up being a little more trashed than planned. But I try to keep everything on average levels so that there will be something for everyone. I can also make non aged guitars which will only come showing some fine weather checking and no wear marks. But I find this a little boring and I would only do that if someone asks for it.

TQR: Without giving away any trade secrets, how do you source wood light enough to build a 6 pound guitar? That can't be easy, and how do you also insure that your 6 pound Tele will project and possess the tone and volume you seek?

Not all light pieces of ash are created equal! The point is, we have played some unremarkable super light guitars... I agree with you on the super light guitar thing. I myself I'm not a huge fan of super feather weight guitars, but I have to confess the large neck - feather weight combo will almost

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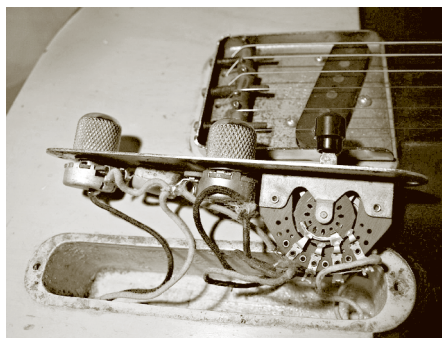
always be a home run. Emmylou at 5.7 pounds is a good illustration of this. I tend to like 6.5 to 7.5 pound guitars. I believe as long as we are under 8 pounds we are good. But then you have some 10 pound Broadcasters that sound like a million bucks and I love those too. So it is always hard to draw a definitive line. In recent batches I have received lighter wood because I made that point with my supplier and I paid an extra cost for that. We all know super light weight ash is hard to find so there is an inherent additional cost included. I never know how light can I go so I never comply with



super lightweight requirements in any case but I start shooting for lightest and keep my fingers crossed. I believe everybody will love a 6-7

pound Blackguard style guitar so if I keep close to that goal I know I will be safe. I also make 50s style Strats and those are usually a little heavier than the Teles.

TQR: How do you approach the wiring and electronics for your guitars? Do you follow vintage specs in regards to wire, pots and tone caps?



I am an Esquire, single bridge pickup kinda guy. I don't care much about the neck or middle position sound, but I understand it is important for

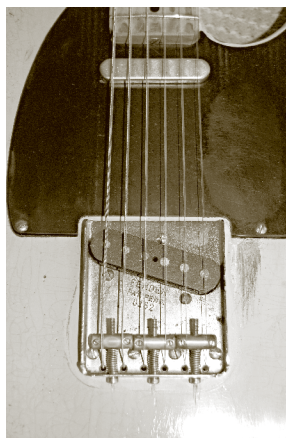
people to have at least three usable sound options. So I offer my guitars with a three way switch including neck pickup alone, both pickups together in series and bridge pickup alone. This gives you 3 very interesting choices. The "in series" position is very powerful and appropriate for heavier rock and roll numbers. I wire all connections using vintage correct cloth wire. For caps I have been using a stock of K42Y-2 and K40Y-g that I bought years ago. I also like to use Luxe caps. For pots I like to use the standard CTS250k and MEC mil.grade rectangular pots. Some clients like the 4-way position so they don't lose the classic middle position sound.

TQR: Where do you acquire the pickups that you use, and in general what are their specifications in terms of wire gauge, type of magnets used, and readings for each pickup? Do you have a specific target in terms

of resistance and overall tone or do your pickups vary based on the guitar they are going in? We know you have studied the actual specs of many vintage pickups. What are some of the most memorable pickups you have experienced, how much did the pickups vary and how have you strived to replicate those tones in your guitars?

I have wound my own pickups. Anyone familiar with this process can tell you how boring and tedious this is. Scatter wind? Of course we are all humans. Hand wind? Give me a break. A group of young Mexican girls were winding pickups at the Fullerton factory in the early 50s. With all due respect I don't think any of them had graduated from MIT. In the Blackguard book we went ahead and analyzed a group of early 50s pickups, both bridge and neck. We found out the magnet types, compositions and winding coils. If you take that as your starting point there is only so much you can do wrong. It's a trial and error process.

Once you have all pickup ingredients according to vintage specs (which again, are published) you can try different number of turns, magnet and coil type combinations to enhance certain sound properties you are looking for. I always work with one pickup builder as he is great and makes things the way I like but then I keep trying new things. So for a given batch of 8 guitars I may have two or three different types of pickups installed. Values range from 6.5 to 9.5k ohm for bridge units and 6k to 7.5k for neck units I don't like really hot, high output Telecaster style bridge pickups because you lose highs, clarity and definition, although there are also ways to compensate that.



One factor I believe is important is that my pickups are installed all through the aging process, so they end up being quite different from the day they got here. I am sure that also has an effect on the sound. Over the years I have found some very impressive and some average sounding guitars whose pickup reading values were all within range of what we have just discussed.

So this is not an exact science, nothing is written on stone. Fender was a frugal man using cheap materials and he kept changing specs, trying to be more cost effective, or simply trying to get the product out the door. Anyone working in a factory operation will know exactly what I mean. He had a large order to deliver to Fender sales and guess what? The magnet supplier had run out of Alnico Vs. Well tell him to send whatever he has available!

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I have found most Broadcasters with higher output pickups to sound darker, less defined and more aggressive. I have heard some amazing '51, '52 and '53 sounding Teles. I gig with a '56 Tele which is a tad brighter than a blackguard bridge but I love it anyway. I have found full sounding, nice and warm tone neck pickups. And I have also found some dull sounding examples. The fact

is you can try your best to work your way with all individual components but you will never know the end result until it all blends into the final assembled guitar and plug it into a good sounding amp.

TQR: How do you approach tone caps, what do you use and why?

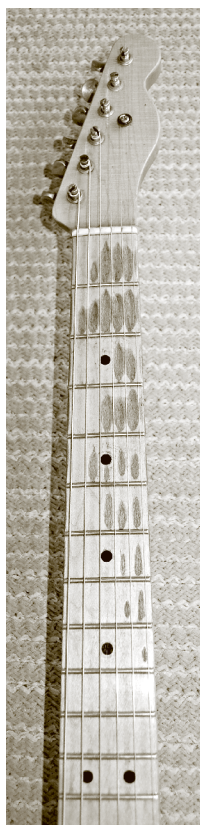
It has been a trial and error process. I started making replica paper wax caps many years ago. I searched for readily available modern units with correct values and tested them to see which ones were better. I scanned real CD caps from the 50s to make perfect replica paper labels and provided me with a couple boxes full of vintage wax resistors. I melted those to use the old wax and fabricated my own replicas. This is a pretty elaborate, boring process and that old wax smells like hell so I decided to search for somebody else out there making something similar. Nowadays I keep a stock of K40Y-g and K42Y-2, and I keep using Luxe caps. Donovan is really the best.



Redd Volkaert came to visit a few months ago. He is one of my guitar heroes and also a friend. We spent a good

afternoon in the studio testing tonal differences using various caps, pots, wiring directions... Believe it or not, it makes a difference depending on which way you solder the cap or the direction you plug your cable. There is always a world to learn from hugely talented perfectionist people like Redd. They are always looking to learn and improve, challenging themselves with new different things. I try to stick around them to see if that kind of talent is contagious but so far I haven't gotten lucky!

TQR: We really love the neck shape on Emmy Lou. How many different variations on the shape of a Tele neck have you noted and categorized?



Blackguard era necks are all over the place. Its hard to categorize in concrete patterns because there was a good deal of hand labor involved at the Fullerton factory back then. Vintage Tele necks always feel different from one another and this makes them so special. But we could group necks in Vs, Ds and Us profile shapes with all different dimension variations.

I am taking the flatter 9.5" fretboard radius and the 1.65" 1st fret width as the standard. Then I go for a whole different depth range. From typical largest V 0.95" from 1950 to the medium D or U 0.85" in 1951/52. In 1953/54 we usually get the large round U aka "baseball bat" profile at around 0.9" depth. I have found most everybody wants a full or medium size neck, so I tend to stay away from massive or tiny sizes. I also make sure to flatten the back sides a bit and get the rolled off effect on the fretboard ends so you get a comfortable grip feel on the palm of your hand when you go up and

down the neck. The neck on Emmylou would be like a baseball bat 1953 with a V feel to it. I am so glad you approve!

TQR: We have to ask, so please tell us what you can... How do you get the finish and aging to appear so realistic?

I believe using the correct type of nitro lacquer is the key here. There are plenty of lacquers out there today and most of them different from each other and really different from what US manufacturers were using in the 1950s. I tried many of them and they did not really work. Years ago I went ahead and analyzed chips of real genuine vintage lacquer to get an idea of what could be the most accurate composition. I was lucky enough to find a small lacquer manufacturer in my home town who agreed to provide different components so I can mix my own blend. Once you have a correct formula, time passing is the most important thing. You need months to let it cure and dry properly. Once lacquer is cured enough, temperature changes will make it check. I don't put random wear marks on guitars. I use real vintage guitars as models and I painstakingly replicate dings, wear spots, scars... one by one. So it is kinda like drawing a piece of painting. Its time consuming and you need to be VERY patient, but it

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pays off. I divide the work in small areas and work only in those areas until they look right. The end overall result is much more convincing if you do it this way. I don't have external pressures on this job. I don't make guitars for a living and I only make about 15 guitars a year, so I will do whatever it takes to make it look, feel and sound right.



I also take this from a humble perspective as a fun learning process. In 6 years I had two guitars returned by customers who were not satisfied with the result. Once I got them back I went ahead and redid the whole instrument, new paint job, hardware and electronics. I thought if they are not good for them they won't be good for anyone. I tried to improve myself and try different things to get a

better result. I do love and respect Fender and all the great builders out there. I don't come out claiming my product is better than anything else. I just put out my own, which is just a homage replica guitar, a tribute to the most amazing guitar ever made coming from a devoted passionate fan. I also make sure to represent my product in a proper way. I sign my guitars at the bridge pickup cavity. Routing specs and dimensions are close enough but different from the real vintage product so not to fool anyone eventually.

TQR: You have obviously invested a lot of time in observing the real aging characteristics of many vintage Teles... How consistent were they tonally and how did you develop your target for the tone of your guitars?



Every good vintage Tele is a world of its own and that's the beauty of most good vintage guitars. They have their own history and personality. They have aged in different environments. They have gone through diverse humidity and temperature levels. Different owners, acid sweat, filthy clubs, stinky recording studios, angry wives and husbands, jealous girlfriends and boyfriends, hyperactive children, hungry pets...you name it. Most of these guitars have really graduated with honors through the passing of 60+ years, and they are still 100% functional nowadays. I take out my vintage guitars all the time and sometimes they get

banged or fall on the floor. The cleaner they are the harder they fall. I am so glad I am not into Bursts. You can drag a Tele side to side through the stage floor, jump with it to the audience, roll around the club floor sticking the headstock in the bass drum kit during the solo and at the end of the song it will still be in tune. I don't think I will be this reliable when I get passed 65. So that is the basic "hardware department tool" concept I'm trying to replicate. I am offering a basic standard idea of a well played realistic worn out feel and looking 60 year old Blackguard style guitar that may be appealing to 90% of the fans out there. It is kind of like a melting pot of all the great vintage Teles I have ever loved. And then I try to make each and everyone of them unique, using different neck profiles, weight, finish shades, electronics and aging levels. I also call them with women names. I started first paying tribute to the Fullerton girls (Barbara, Virginia, Mary, Gloria...). Now its anything cool that comes to mind.

TQR: Wood varies. so how do you evaluate the wood you used to insure a consistent outcome in terms of tone and appearance?



It's a simple choice, swamp ash for bodies and maple for necks. I try to go as light as possible with

body weight. I am not picky with grain. I don't mind 3 piece bodies and I'm fine with mineral stains. I stay away from fancy highly figured maple. Most of the 50s Teles were plain woods and most bodies were two or three pieces, sometimes even four. I don't shoot really transparent lacquer so even though the grain will be visible the desert sand undercoat will cover most of the aesthetic imperfections.

TQR: How many guitars have you built over the years?

I started making the first trials in 2009 but did not really make the first batch until late 2010. I make about 15 guitars per year on average, so I have probably built about 70 guitars so far.

TQR: What kind of parts are you using?

The Parts are of mixed origin:

- The pickguard I cut myself in my CNC using exact composition phenolic sheet.
- Tuners are reissue kluson.

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- String tree and knobs are Mar Rutters.
- Bridge plate is Fender reissue. I have made my own tooling to stamp the numbers using the exact correct font type and size of the original 50s vintage.
- Control plate, neck plate, jack plate, strap buttons are Hosco's.
- Screws come from various vendors.

TQR: Do you have any favorite guitars and why?



I make them in batches of four. Once they are completed I post them for sale on my site and start using them on gigs and rehearsals. I try to make them all different so there is always one that speaks to me more than the others. Sometimes it is the way it resonates, the neck feel, the way, the looks... Its hard to describe. But I choose one and take it out with me until it gets sold. Then I "adopt" another one. Its fun because I not only get the chance to make guitars that I really like but also enjoy playing them for the time being. The fact that I keep using

them allows me to finely tune details here and there until they reach that "sweet" status where everything works. Sometimes I may need to change the pickups as much as three times on a single guitar until I get the desired results. Its interesting how a set of pickups will work wonders on a particular guitar and be nothing special on another. I also like to do a double set up process which means there is always an independent luthier who goes over the final set up after my work is done.

TQR: You enclosed a fascinating book of historical data related to vintage Teles. How did you acquire such information taken from the actual Fender records?



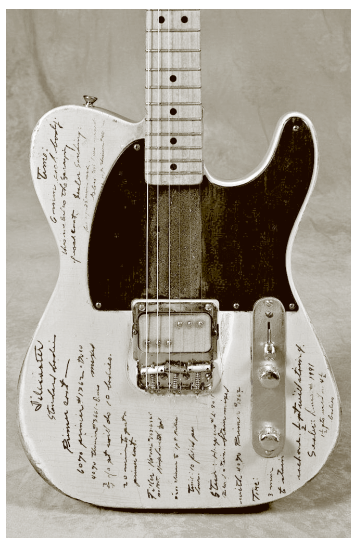
I met Richard Smith in 2003 when I started working on the Blackguard book project. He was nice enough to give me access to Leo Fender's factory files from the 1950s. I spent about 3 days diving through piles of boxes at the

meeting room of the Fullerton Museum, and these are some of the treasures I found. I went to visit the Corona Factory with Richard in 2004 and Dan Smith was kind enough to show me around the whole facility. I had some of these old files with me and I was surprised to learn he had never seen them before. He asked me for a copy. Leo was very meticulous and kept records of everything. In those notes you will find all the information you need to make a fender solidbody Spanish guitar as per factory specs in 1950/51. And I really mean everything, from finishing procedures to magnets values and hardware composition materials. Most of it was included in the Blackguard book.

TQR: Can you tell us about your connection with Billy F. Gibbons?

I met Billy a few years ago when he came to play in Spain. He was kind enough to provide VIP passes for me and my friends. We had a great time that night. After that we got to be real friends. Amongst other things, we share this passion for primitive vintage gear and he has helped me to acquire some great pieces in my guitar collection. You gotta love Billy; he is so much fun to be around. When we get together we may just hang out and say nothing or we may shoot the breeze non-stop for hours. From gazpacho recipes, bravas and homegrown tomatoes to EU monetary policies, bank defaults, Asian economics, plastic injection, recording tricks, silver crafts, magic blues tempos, hot rod wonders, bull fights, blackguards and everything in between. We were both born the same day so maybe there is some kind of cosmic connection out there...

TQR: Please tell us about the guitars you made for him.



Billy wants very light wood so I searched till I found super extra lightweight ash. I made two blackguard Esquire "prototypes" for him, using a Thomas Nielsen HB pickup with Glendale bridge plate that I had to completely modify. One guitar has a D profile neck with a creamy blonde finish ala 1951. The other has a V profile neck with a more butterscotch

shade ala 1950. Once both bodies were lacquered and aged I imprinted Leo Fender's own factory finishing procedure on the front and back. This is Leo's own handwriting explaining

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the finishing procedure steps for the Spanish solidbody guitar in 1951. I used luminescent ink so that Leo's writing glows in the dark making the illusion his words are lifted from inside the guitar body. I think Mr. Gibbons liked this!

TQR: What's ahead for you Nacho?



My job schedule and family keep me busy but music still plays a very important role in my life. I try to keep learning and playing music, working to become a better player everyday. I still gig with my band Tres Hombres on a regular basis and we record new material on occasion. Recently we did a short US tour through California and Texas and we hope to do it again soon. I keep following the vintage guitar market and attend the Texas shows twice a year.

The Blackguard book first edition is close to be sold out. I am currently selling the last available copies through my website www.theblackguardbook.com. We can say the project

is almost completed and the goal achieved. A couple years ago I started a new audio visual book project to be called The Pinecaster Book www.thepinecasterbook.com. This is going to be a thorough research project of the solidbody electric guitar scene starting from the mid 1930s till the early 1950s, giving special attention to the first prototypes and the pre-production non truss rod Fender guitars. The idea is to put together a round table of what Leo had on his radar when he started tweaking with the solidbody guitar concept in 1948 and use that to make AB comparisons with what finally came out of Fullerton. The goal is to not only picture and take detailed specs of these historical instruments, but to also document them in full video and audio settings in the hands of master players like Redd Volkaert. So far we have recorded about half of the video/audio demos and I hope to have the project published in 2016.

We all know how historically important these pre-production guitars are but we tend to overlook their role as a mere tools for the trade. Wouldn't you want to hear and watch a Fender

prototype in the hands of a master player? How does it sound and feel? How is the balance, the neck profile, the tone in different positions? How different is the sound of 1948 Bigsby from a 1949 Esquire or a 1950 Broadcaster? What was the inspiration, what were the references and how far off was the final product from its founding concept? What was based in what? How many pre-production guitars were made at Fullerton before the necks were equipped with truss rods in October of 1950? How many of them are alive today? For the last 30 years we keep looking at the same handful of non detailed pictures of a couple well known guitars. Aren't there any more out there? My goal is to find them, take them apart and get down to nitty gritty with all of them, taking all the detailed specs and recording them in video and audio, and present all this info with a very high quality exclusive limited edition coffee table book with audiovisual content. I am really enjoying the experience and I hope it will shed some light to one of the most interesting and unknown periods of the development of the Spanish solidbody electric guitar.

Review



As we said in the intro. Nacho builds the most realistic and eminently playable 'vintage' Teles we have ever seen of played, period. His eye is impeccable, his skills finely honed, and the result is a 'vintage' guitar that is incredibly realistic, playable and toneful. We really can't do his work justice with mere words, because the feeling you get playing these guitars is one of deep admiration and joy. Our guitar, aptly named

Emmylou, serial number 0152 is described on the parchment paper enclosed as having been finished in nitro, lightly cured and aged like fine Tennessee whiskey. We agree. As Nacho observed, this is a superlight 5.7 lb. tone monster with great projection and outstanding pickups measuring 6.9K and 9.77K ohms. It plays as if it has been played, with a perfect deep V neck with rolled fingerboard edges. The traditional Tele pickups are wired in humbucker mode in the middle position, and all three positions sound good enough to make you cry with joy. Nacho commented that he believed the Tele sounded great in all positions and feels like an old friend. We couldn't put it better. Best of all, Emmylou is a glorious testament to Nacho's love and appreciation of the Telecaster. He really couldn't have done a better or more inspired job of creating this wonderful guitar, and it is without a doubt the finest Telecaster we have ever played. Quest forth... **To**

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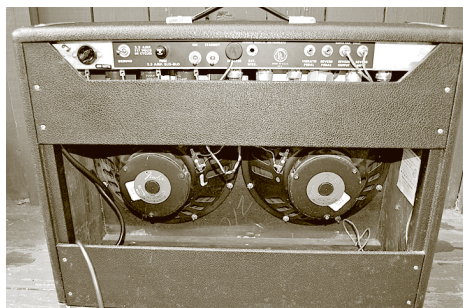
1968 Twin Reverb

What's in a name? Guitars and gear are called all kinds of names in an effort to create a certain appeal that will motivate you the potential buyer to stop, consider and ultimately reach for your wallet. Yet no such marketing creativity is necessary when you are dealing with a vintage Fender Twin Reverb amp, otherwise known simply as the 'Twin.'



The Twin is a legendary amplifier that needs no introduction to experienced players. For

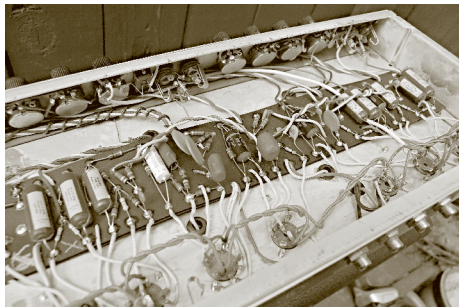
decades the Twin was the amp to own if you really wanted to rock, and rock we did on stages through out the south, from coastal clubs invariably near a military base to insure steady sales of beer, to more rural hideaways where southern boys and southern girls got their ya-yas out. The Twin ruled in the '60s and '70s, and with those tilt-back legs pointing it skyward, it deserved its steady reputation. Plug into a good Twin today and little has changed. Nothing rocks quite like a Twin, and when you hear one it's clear that the party is on. The early, 80 watt Twin is the true workhorse of the Fender black-face line, tested for decades and used on countless tours and recordings, most effectively by none other than Marty Stewart and Junior Brown – two of the most accomplished Twin players we know, and both of them are eminently capable of milking a Twin real good. How about you?



Yeah, a lot of players will decry the 80 watts and 70 lbs. of the Twin, but not us. We bought a '68 Twin in remarkably

fine condition just to wag a well-callused finger in yer face. Can you sound like this? Not without a Twin, and damn do we sound good! Stout, majestic and toneful in so many ways, we have rediscovered what a great Twin can do for your tone, creativity and playing that no other amplifier can quite do, and that's the god's honest truth. Hell, the Twin is the truth

in every respect, bold and honest, it hides behind nothing, which is the real reason why a lot of guitar players can't or won't play them. Let's face it, a lot of guitar players can't handle being that far out on a rope without hanging themselves. You got to know what you're doing with a Twin...



Ah, but there are countless rewards for knowing your business with a Twin. Even at low volume with a light touch

the Twin works its magic like no other amplifier. Full and rich, it brings out the very best in a guitar with a clean attack, thundering bass and a top end that is lush and pure. Chords almost seem doubled with the fidelity of the Twin, and single notes sustain for days. Lead lines take on a percussive quality like no other guitar amplifier, lending a feeling of spontaneity and urgency that is unmatched. Volume? Yes, the Twin can hold its own with a hard rockin' band, but let us remind you that you aren't cranking it to '8' all night and playing wide open, are you? If you need distortion at lower volume levels the Twin is the perfect pedal amp, and it gives up a distorted tone rich with fidelity like no other amplifier ever made. You may also safely pull two of the power tubes, either the two inside or outside for a busted up tone at lower volume levels. The Twin still remains relatively clean at moderate volume with two power tubes, but the roar comes faster, sounding very much like the four-tube version – just a little less loud. To be honest, we don't find the Twin to be painfully loud at all. Yes, it can fill a room, but the tone is so smooth and toneful that you may find it



much more desirable than many 40 watt amps. Really. Controls are simple - Volume, Treble, Middle and Bass on the normal channel, and

Volume, Treble, Middle, Bass, Reverb, Speed and Intensity on the reverb channel.

Tubes Matter

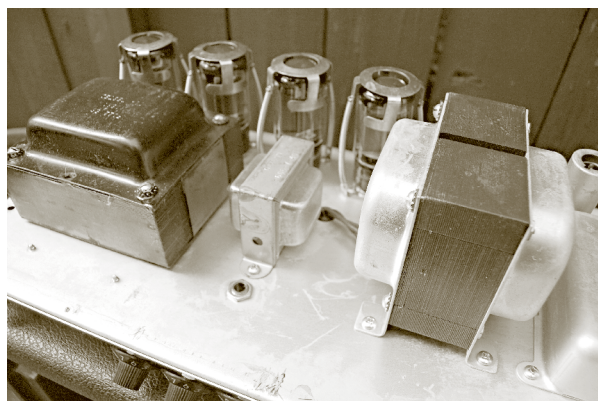
In a classic vintage amp like the Twin, tubes really matter, so we acquired a quartet of robust used Tung-Sol 5881s and broke out some of our best vintage preamp tubes. These tubes are the heart of an amp, so don't pass on the opportunity to

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maximize your tone with a few simple and affordable tube swaps.



Both channels sound very good in this amp, rich and full, and thanks to the quad of Tung-Sol 5881 tubes, vibrant and rich in the true blackface style. Even though this amp was built in 1968, it features a true AB763 blackface circuit – the last to appear in the Twin. This is why the '68 in particular has been so popular and sought after. We acquired our amp for just \$1300 – a steal on the vintage market, especially given its fine condition. Ten resistors had been replaced, but the amp remained in original condition otherwise, including the original Sprague electrolytics caps, which are in extraordinarily well-preserved condition. At Jeff Bako's recommendation, we swapped out the #6 12AT7 preamp tube for a vintage 12AX7 and added NOS 12AX7s to positions 2 and 4. Doing so smoothed the tone and lowered the threshold for natural distortion slightly – a solid move.



With four output tubes the Twin stays relatively clean up to about 6-7 on the volume control before subtle breakup occurs. The clean tones are different in this amp, however, with more depth and a tactile feel that makes the amp sound more captivating than a typical 40 watt head. The tone controls are quite effective in the Twin, enabling you to adjust and dial in the treble, midrange and bass response to taste. The reverb is extraordinary and the tremolo emits a lusty throb that can be moved from slow and rolling to fast. But it's the essen-

tial sound of the Twin that makes it such a winner, strong, robust, so beautifully toneful and not as painfully loud as you might imagine. The loudness of the Twin has more to do with tone than sheer volume, and as we said, you won't be playing it wide open, but perhaps at half or three quarter volume, which is entirely appropriate for a band with a good drummer. Headroom can be quite liberating and inspiring in an amp like the Twin. Simply put, the sound of our amp is quintessential Fender... silky, smooth, richly desirable and entirely unique, and with two output tubes pulled, the Twin develops about 70% power, volume, and a lower threshold for headroom and distortion. So don't fear the Twin... If you can really play, the Twin is an essential tool in the history and classic tone of the guitar. Still not convinced? We can promise you that your playing will improve when you play through a Twin. Credit the vintage output and power trannies – you will find a new voice that is both inspiring and unlike any other amplifier on earth. Be strong, be confident, and Quest forth.

Speakers

Original Oxford

Fender used a lot of Oxford speakers and unlike the pair in our amp, many have been blown, replaced or reconed. Our speakers have survived in excellent condition, and they don't sound bad at all – perhaps a little under-powered compared to many new replacement speakers, but overall smooth, balanced and very vintage with excellent bass, mids and a very tame treble response. You could certainly do worse, and while they may lack the dramatic character of some new speakers, the Oxfords do a fine job of producing the original Twin tone as conceived in Fullerton.

Warehouse WHG12C/S

An entirely agreeable speaker, rich and full, not too bright



with excellent low end and midrange. The G12C/S is an excellent choice in the Twin. Individual strings stand out well in chords and this is a speaker that is neither too bright, middy or bassy for a very solid 'American' tone. Recommended.

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Warehouse WHET90



Derived from and inspired by the ET65, this British-voiced speaker is dripping with tone and personality. Built with a bigger voice coil and a beefier motor, the ET90 is truly rich with personality. The tone is very well balanced, smooth and captivating. We really like this speaker a lot. It is vibrant, strong and toneful, yet never overbearing or brash. The larger voice coil produces a rich and vibrant tone that will compliment your best guitars. Highly recommended, and our favorite speakers among the three reviewed here, it was recommended by a staff member at Warehouse who clearly knows his business.

Speaker swaps are such an effective way to maximize the tone of an amplifier. They really can't be underestimated, and we're confident that the Warehouse ET90 will rock your world. Between tube and speaker swaps we have really optimized the tone of the Twin, and you can do the same for what adds up to a modest investment. Quest forth...

"Here's why quality is job one: A great sounding amp that breaks down goes from being a favorite piece of gear to a piece of crap in less time than it takes to read this sentence."

– Bruce Zinky

THE ELEGANT 1960

Dearmond R5 Amplifier

As much as we like a good Champ, you would be hard pressed to hear us recommend such a small amp as one of your main, go-to tools, but that's exactly what we're gonna do with the Dearmond R5 1x10 amplifier.

This isn't our first Dearmond, but as so often happens, it is fun to revisit these classic amps and experience still another example by comparison. Now, our memory could have faded,



but this R5 just acquired seems to be the best we have heard by far – eminently stout, toneful and surprisingly loud for such a small 1x10 combo. Just as important, the Dearmond is a rare and very collectible piece of art with its pinkish-brown tolex, gold sparkle grill cloth and solid copper control panel. The Dearmond is a rare classic alright, gorgeous to look at and a joy to experience with a guitar. They aren't as cheap as they used to be when you could find them for \$800, but regardless, this is one amp that every guitarist deserves to experience, because the experience is unforgettable.

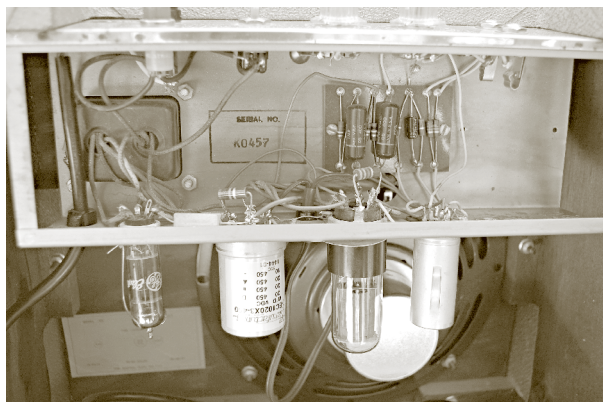


The seller wrote as follows: "Interesting story on this amp. It sat unsold, in its original box, in the back of a music store until the mid 1970's. The store went out of business and this amp was sold."

Now, just look at it. Unlike any other amp from 1959-60, the little Dearmond conveys a look of sheer quality and style through and through. Nothing looks or is as appealing as the R5, an amp that by its design standards could easily be used by musician in a tux and look entirely appropriate. Elegant is a suitable word to describe the Dearmond, and if you can imagine such a thing, it's overdriven tone is equally elegant.

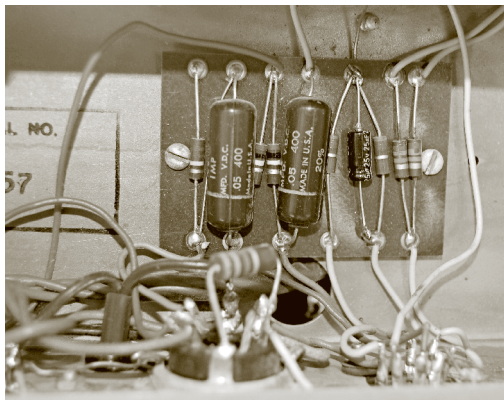
The Dearmond is also capable of producing elegantly overdriven tones at a volume level that belies its size. Easily comparable to a blackface Princeton, the Dearmond totes a mighty big note utilizing a 6X4 rectifier tube, single 12AX7 and 6V6 power tube. Our amp arrived with a Weber STG

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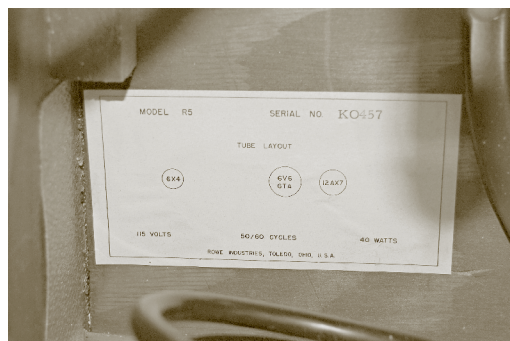
10A speaker installed, and the original and barely used Jensen SP-5403. After comparing the two we chose the Jensen for originality although the Weber sounded fine, fine, superfine, too. Between the two speakers the Jensen is a little brighter, but both speakers do a fine job of showing off the Dearmond circuit.

On 4 the Dearmond is clear and bright, on 7 it begins to produce a luscious break up and on 12 it thunders with a beautiful tone that is distorted yet pure and musical and surprisingly loud and lusty. As we have said before, we know of no other amplifier that sounds quite like the Dearmond, which is surely why they are so hard to come by today. The Dearmond is a particularly toneful slide amp, although simple chords also seem to acquire a lusty tone that is entirely unique to this amp. Bass is surprisingly solid and stout, mids are vivid and treble is sweeter than sharp. Yet there is something else unique to the tone of the Dearmond that is more difficult to describe that is related to how the notes bloom and develop after the initial attack... This is what makes the Dearmond so rare and desirable, imparting a tactile tone to each note, string and chord that is entirely unique to this amplifier. Difficult to describe in words, you'll hear it immediately and relish the unique tone and attack of the Dearmond, a sound and feel like no other amplifier ever made. How did they accomplish such a lofty feat? Careful design and component selection no doubt, which is even more remarkable when you note the rather spartan design and limited number of parts used.



Perhaps that is the secret, in which less is decidedly more. In any case, like us, you'll have no trouble

appreciating the unique tone and feel of the Dearmond at all volume levels. It really is quite amazing that so much tone can be produced from such a simple circuit.



Of course, such vintage tone will not come cheap. We bought our first

Dearmond over ten years ago for \$800, and this latest one cost us \$1750.00. That's the way it goes in the vintage amp market, and we won't complain. The R5 is still worth what it cost even today, since you won't find another amplifier that sounds, looks or inspires like the Dearmond. "Classic" is an overused term that completely applies to the Dearmond, and yes, it is worth the cost of three lesser amps. Do you want 'classic', 'almost classic' or 'cheap and ordinary'? For the discerning guitarist with taste the Dearmond represents the



epitome of true vintage tone that does not fall in the category of Fender, Gibson, Marshall or the like. To be sure, nothing sounds quite like the Dearmond, and with the right guitar (like

a Jerry Jones) it defines what we think of as 'vintage' tone. The lipstick tube pickups on the Jerry are the perfect foil for the Dearmond, and we are still chuckling from the sound of this guitar and amp. If you have owned your share of vintage guitars and amps and you are dead certain that there is a tone you missed, this could well be it.

So, to recap our impressions and recommendations for the Dearmond... You will not find a better looking amp on the vintage market. The pinkish brown tolex, gold sparkle grill



cloth and copper control panel simply create an impression of quality

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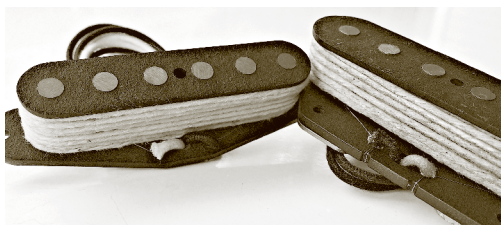
and superior design. The tone is beyond words, aggressive and chunky yet so toneful and deep. This amp records brilliantly and would remain one of our top recording tools to be sure. It is also loud enough to be successfully miked for larger venues, and it sounds equally good with single coil and humbucking pickups. As an investment, the Dearmonds can only go up in value since relatively few were built and they will remain highly desirable on the vintage market. In other words, you can't go wrong investing in one of these great amps, and we predict that you will absolutely covet your Dearmond with no regrets, quibbles or complaints. We had nearly forgotten just how good this amp sounds, one of our all time favorite amplifiers among hundreds we have reviewed, Now Quest forth...**To**

Vaughn Skow Pickups



Vaughn Skow is a pickup winder and amp builder, which is pretty unusual as these things go. But if that's what you want to do, Nashville is a good place to do it since there is a steady supply of

guitarists who depend on using pickups and amps.



Skows pick-ups are toneful indeed, but in a traditional

style that mimics what you would expect from vintage Tele,



Strat or Les Paul. Skow isn't experimenting (as far as we know) with overwound hot-ties with his Strat and Tele sets, just mining good, solid tones. The Tele set is solid and bright, very vintage sounding with excellent presence and a smooth attack. Measuring 7.55K/neck and

8.54/bridge, these pickups are made with Alnico II magnets

and 9,000 turns on the neck and 9,500 on the bridge. Nothing shrill or too sharp, and the bass tones are solid and rich. Our Mexican Tele sounded rich and full with a very pleasing treble character that is very musical and bright.



Our Mexican Stratocaster is one of the best we have ever owned, and Skows pick-ups sounded very vintage – not overwound,

but pure and realistic in all five positions. The 5.93K neck pickup is warm with plenty of treble presence, the neck and 6.60K middle combined sound just as they should and the middle pickup is one you can really live with for the long haul, bright with solid mids and bass. The middle/bridge is bright but endowed with an interesting mid tone supporting the treble and the out-of-phase presence that makes this setting and the neck/middle so appealing and useful. The 6.97K bridge pickup alone is bright but not thin, a very solid bridge pickup tone that excels for overdriven leads and cleaner rhythm tones. Very agreeable and toneful indeed. It is interesting to note that Skow uses Alnico II on the three high strings and Alnico V on the 3 low strings.



Skow's 8.30K and 8.0K Alnico V humbuckers are equally fine,

bright and toneful in the bridge position with a balanced tone that makes this pickup very appealing. Skow uses red poly 42 gauge wire on both. The combined bridge and neck produces the perfect tone, rich, bright and warm all at once. The neck pickup rumbles with solid bass, good mids and great treble presence on the top that creates a very vintage neck pickup tone.

Overall, all three sets reviewed here are very toneful, pretending to be nothing more or less than what they are – solid, vintage-voiced pickups with a smooth, vintage character and nothing not to like. Recommended.

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And now it's time to get to know Vaughn Skow as a builder.

TQR: Would you describe yourself as an amp builder who winds pickups or something else? Which came first?

No. I'm a guitar tone guy who makes pickups and amps! Both have come up together, I made my first pickup the same year I made my first amp, 1978; and yes, if you do the math ... I was 14 at the time. I still have that amp in my shop, just sitting there to remind me. The pickup is still in the guitar I also built, somewhere in my mom & dad's big farm house, buried deep in the "junk room".

Honestly, my deal is tone. I started playing guitar in bands at 13, started as a radio DJ at 15, and built my first semi-commercial recording studio at 16. I've never been much more than a "fair-to-middling" guitar player, but my tone has always been impeccable, probably because that's always been what's mattered most to me.

TQR: What is your unique approach to winding pickups?



Well, I make sets together, I always see the set as a tone-team, so I (or my assistant

Jordan) never wind, say a hundred of a particular bridge pickup and then a hundred of a given neck pickup and so on; yes, there would be a great time-saving to be had, but at the cost of a truly exceptional set. I completely hand-wind all my single-coil sets (including P-90s), as well as all my '57 (Alnico II) humbuckers; with these pickups I find there is a magic in the hand-wind that I have never been able to achieve even with my automatable CNC winder, which can actually "record" a hand-wind and then reproduce it EXACTLY. I do use the automated CNC winder to wind the rest of my humbucker models and my bass pickups; with these sets, I find the consistency of the coil is more important to the ultimate tone of the pickup than is an inconsistent scatter pattern.

In every phase of building a pickup, I try to think of the guitarist who will invest in them and ultimately put them to use. My pickups are by no means the most expensive alternatives out there, but they certainly are not inexpensive either; I

want to honor those folks who have plopped down their cash and put their tone in my hands. That's an honor I take very seriously. Oh, and last, my shop is VERY Zen. Soft Native American and Tibetan flute music plays 80% of the time, with classical and acoustic jazz the other 20%. I find it helps to cleanse and focus the mind, steady the hand, and just plain supports the kind of environment where folks can make truly spectacular guitar pickups. An adrenaline junkie would hate spending time in my shop.

TQR: Can you describe what makes your Tele, Strat and humbucking pickups unique? Would you call them 'vintage' in tone or something else?



Both, actually. I have two product lines, the "Historic" series and the "Custom" series. When I started

making pickups as a full-on commercial endeavor, I planned to make only "historic" reproductions, as that was what everybody here in Nashville was wanting ... and quite honestly, I was pretty much of the philosophy that there has never been a pickup made that can surpass those made during the "golden years" of about 1954-1964. For the most part, I still believe that, and so I offer many sets that are for the most part "historic" re-creations. However, even with those I do take what some might call slight liberties with wind counts, but from there on it's all dead-on vintage specs, and I compare them to good examples of real-deal sets to ensure they stand-up.

Now with the Custom sets, I still follow the vintage designs and assembly methods, but I do in fact have recipes that are all my own. These would be my Velvet Tele, Velvet Strat, A2-Z customs, dual-tap Powerglide P90, and Vaughn's Custom PAF. In every one of these cases their design came in the usual way, by demand! They all fill a specific need, and most have come about as a result of a lot of requests. The Velvet Tele set is the best example and is by far my most popular set; I've been sending them to top players all over the world, and everywhere I sell a set I can be sure many more orders will follow from that geographical region. Here's the way I describe the Velvet Tele set as coming to be:

Ask any true Les Paul player what is holy-grail guitar would be and they will almost unanimously mention a '57-'60 Les

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Paul, and if you ask what pickups they would like in it they will loudly proclaim “the originals, of course!” Ask a Strat affection-

nado the same question, and you will get ’54-’64 Strat almost all the time, and again with stock pickups, baby! Tele players are different, however. A true Tele guy will always say his holy-grail guitar would be a ’51-’62 Broadcaster/Nocaster/Telecaster. But when asked about what pickups would be in it things get downright crazy! Joe Barden, Jason Lollar, twin blades, stacked coils ... man, it’s all over the place. Actually, lots of folks say something to the extent of “Well, I’ve heard some really great sounding vintage Tele bridge pickups, but I’ve also heard some really awful ones; and it’s surprising how many died-in-the-wool Tele guys just flat-out say “Tele neck pickups always suck, I never use the neck pickup”. So, man, it was obvious that just reproducing historic Tele designs wasn’t going to be what most folks needed, so along came Vaughn’s Velvet Custom Tele Sets. The Velvet Tele sets have a bridge tone that is consistently holy-grail vintage Tele tone and a neck tone that, as I say, will have Strat players jealous of your neck tone!

TQR: Describe the materials you use and their importance.

Well, certainly the magnet material, wire, and the winding process are the big deals, and I’d like to speak to those ... but also certainly a pickup is only as good as its weakest link.

Magnets: The composition of a magnet, and more importantly the level of its charge, make a huge difference in tone, particularly in the Fender type designs where the magnet actually is the pole-piece. I charge each magnet/pole-piece to very specific levels of Gauss, which can sometimes get quite time-consuming. A true tone-connoisseur can easily distinguish even differences as small as 3-5% in the Gauss level of a pole-piece. So, yea, I guess I would say that it’s extremely important ... a lot of the magic of a truly top-shelf Strat pickup lies in the magnetism of each individual pole-piece.

Wire: When I go to trade shows, I have piles of Poly,

Formvar, and Plain Enamel coated wire with a sign that reads “Each pickup has approximately 60,000” of wire – that’s about ONE MILE! – Yes, Wire Matters!” I figure that’s enough said about that, right?

Hand-Winding: For single-coil pickups, the importance of a pickup winder/builder with years of experience gained from meticulous trial and error just plain cannot be over stated. Those simple designs can be magical, or they can be awful, and there’s about 2-degrees of separation between the two!

TQR: How consistent are the number of turns on your coils?



On the hand-winds (which are most of my pickups), they are consistent to about 50-turns, which works out to about one half of one percent. It’s easy to nail wind-count

with the reliability of digital counters available today, however, as we wind, we do place a high priority on nailing that last layer, as it’s so important to the reliability of the pickup, and so if we need to fudge the count a bit to make the last layer lay and terminate the way we want, so be it. Now, on the CNC winds, the wind count variance is even less.

TQR: How would you describe the tone of your pickups?

Well, honestly, they represent what I personally consider to be the best-of-breed in every category! I always work with some of Nashville’s top players on my designs, and take their feedback into consideration, but ultimately, I’m making what I consider to be Holy-Grail level tone. My history, by the way is that I spent most of 1985 to about 2000 engineering and producing in Nashville studios (and owning studios), with stints on the road as both FOH audio engineer or guitarist with a bunch of what at the time were “major acts”. I’ve also taught audio engineering and acoustics at Volunteer State College since 1998. I mention all this to support my claims to having pretty darn decent “ears”.

For me, guitar tone is ultimately a fully symbiotic thing. You and the guitar play off of one another ... when the sound the

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guitar is giving back is complex and inspiring, then you're enjoyment goes through the roof and you play better, and then the never-ending cycle starts all over again. It's as close to Nirvana as we'll reach on this planet.

TQR: How many different variations do you make for Strat, Tele and humbuckers?

I think ...

- 4 Historic Strat Sets and 3 Custom sets.
- 2 Historic Tele sets and 3 custom sets.
- 3 Historic and 1 Custom Humbucker sets.
- 1 Historic and 2 Custom P-90 sets.
- 1 historic and 2 Custom Mustang/Duosonic/Musicmaster sets
- My slightly customized take on P-bass, J-Bass, and T-Bass ('51 P-bass) sets
- My "personal" HSS set, what I play in my gigging Strat.

Plus, I still do fully custom designs. I just finished a set for a Gibson SG-Z bass that took forever, but boy was it rewarding. The SG-Z is a great bass with a cool premise, which was two soap-bar humbucking pickups, each of which can be switched to single coil, series humbucker, or parallel humbucker. The problem is that the stock pickups are just plain pathetic in standard humbucker mode ... and they amounted to nothing in single-coil or parallel-coil mode. I guess they never took the time to design a pickup that actually sounded good in all of those different positions. The design I arrived on sounds excellent in every position, and all the positions combine perfectly ... for a bass with 15 distinct tones ... all of which are great.

I sorta have two over-riding philosophies where my pickups are concerned:



My pickups are for folks who demand 100% holy grail tone, and are willing to take a little buzz if that's what it takes to get that tone. They are not for folks who want pickups that are 100% buzz-free, and are willing to

sacrifice some tone to get there. I will never produce some awful sounding crazy new design just for the sake of coming up with something "new" ...or worse, so I can have something I can own a patent on.

TQR: What's ahead for you?

I don't have plans to bring any new pickup models to market any time soon, but I guess that can always change if folks get to asking for something a lot. The pickups are really popular, and so I'm committing most of my time to them, which is great with me, I love spending time in my Zen shop! The amps have taken a back burner to the pickups. My amps are a labor of love; they are stupidly over-priced, and they will remain that way. I'll always keep playing. I play in a weird "Church" where we play anything but "Christian" tunes ... everything from George Jones to Melloncamp to Christina Aguilera to 9-inch Nails ... and everything in between. So that keeps my chops up, and I have my own little Rock-n-Blues trio that gets out every now and then "just for fun."

Our Gibson Rocks



We have reviewed a fair number of acoustic guitars – Collings, Martin and Gibson, but the one we have owned longer than any personal guitar is our 1952 J45, salvaged from a pile of guitars at Chamber's Music in Chattanooga back in the early '80s. We mention it now because it remains one of our all-time favorite acoustic guitars, and Gibson made a lot of

vintage J45's that remain available. That's a hint.

The J45 was a budget model when new, made with a mahogany neck and body, spruce top and rosewood fingerboard. The fingerboards were all Brazilian, and you often see them with heavy figure, sometimes with almost yellow streaks in the rosewood. The classic slope-shouldered J45 has a captivating tone unlike any other acoustic guitar with rich bass response and sweet treble. It sounds nothing like a Martin or any of the other Gibson models except the rare J50, and we

-continued-

swear that if you play one you'll be utterly captivated by its sweet, soulful and woody tone. It's the unique body style that gives this guitar its soul, and we have never played one that didn't have that unique, slope-shouldered tone. The necks are also special, carved in the shape of a '50s Les Paul. Our personal J45 is a slide monster and incredibly good guitar on all counts. We installed a Fishman pickup and it sounds equally good acoustically or plugged in to one of our older and smaller amps. We found one for Riverhorse locally that cost less than a grand. It was a bit of a beater, but in a good way and it had tone for days. He'll have that guitar for a long, long time, and so will you when you find yours. Quest forth...**To**

The Vibro Champ



Our favorite amp for the J45 is our Fender blackface Vibro-Champ. When we acquired it, it was loaded with a Weber 8" speaker that turned out to be less

than spectacular. Perhaps that is why the amp was listed on eBay... We replaced it with a reissue Jensen 8 and it was a very good move indeed. Our amp is loaded with NOS vintage tubes and it sounds incredibly good for acoustic or electric guitar, as only an amp with an 8 can sound. The blackface Vibro-Champ is a real sleeper in the blackface line, and we urge you to give one a try. For recording and low volume home playing it is very hard to beat, with plenty of get up and go and a very cool blackface tone. Quest forth...

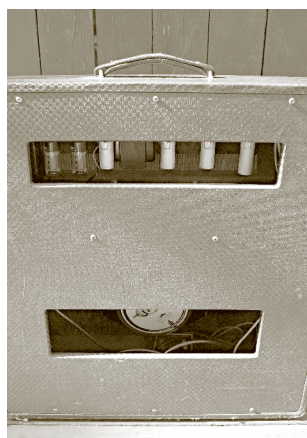
Ampeg Gemini II

Ampeg combo amps are the forgotten stars from the '60s, and not enough of you have paid attention to them. We have owned a lot of Ampegs – the mighty 60watt V2, 4x10 VT40, and we just had a fling with our 1x15 Gemini II, which, if you record or play out, you oughta have. Oh yeah, you would dig it no doubt. It isn't remotely like a Fender, Marshall or vintage Gibson – it's an Ampeg, and if you're thinking these amps were stodgy things built for guys wearing wool herringbone sport coats you'd be so wrong... One look at the tall 1x15 Gemini and you know the crew in Linden, NJ meant business. With two channels, guitar and accordion inputs in both,



tremolo, reverb and a tone stack that really works, these amps remain overlooked and misunderstood. All we did with our was replace the Jensen

15 with a toneful Eminence. The original 'Ampeg' tubes remained stout and the amp was in 'new' condition complete with the original 4-wheel dolly.



You might not know by looking at it, but it is a tremendous rock amp cranked, full, rich and absolutely toneful in every way. It loves Gibson and Fender guitars, and no, nothing in the amp world sounds quite like it. It could be your 'change of pace' amp, your secret weapon for recording, or your main squeeze and you'd be thrilled with the tone of the Ampeg. We

love it for slide and steady rockin', for rock is what it does. Cleaner than a Marshall, 'bigger' than a Fender, the Ampeg is a tone monster. The reverb is very cool, as is the tremolo, Channel One is hotter and Channel Two is a little cleaner, but not by much. Call it 25 watts, although the tall wooden cabinet and big 15 give it a resonant character that is unique to this model. We have had this amp for 4-5 years and enjoyed it, always marveling at its musical and stout tone. It's a piece of history no doubt, and now we're finally passing the history along to another player as we venture further into territory unknown. If you happen to see a Gemini II in good condition at a fair price (under \$1,000) we suggest you jump. You'll be glad you did. Quest forth...

Magnatone Tonemaster

Here's another grossly underrated piece of history that is desirable for its tone very bit as much as for its collectability. The Tonemaster was one of the Magnatones built for the Tonemaster company but to the exact same specs as a stock Magnatone. Only the name was changed.



Our Tonemaster was loaded with vintage tubes, including a fine pair of 6L6s, and we amped up the tone with a pair of Warehouse G12C speakers. The Tonemaster was

top of the line for Magnatone, with two channels and a Super Vibrato effect that is very cool. The Baxandall tone circuit put out about 35 watts peak power, and the tone of the Tonemaster was cool, cool, cool – woody and ‘old’ as only a classic amp can sound. The model 260 was cathode biased, giving it a very nice overdriven tone, as well as clean tones that were rich and full. The four-Varistor circuit produced the famous Magnatone Vibrato that remains unequalled among all vintage and current production amplifiers. This amp is loud enough to cut a gig and a great secret weapon for recording, with toneful throb that sounds like no other amplifier ever made. Definitely worth pursuing if you are in the mood to explore some classic vintage tones, and Magnatones have remained relatively affordable if not downright cheap at below \$1,000. With a little patience you can find a Tonemaster and revel in its classic tones just like Lonnie Mack did. We have.

1960 Tweed Deluxe

After almost 9 months we finally got our 1960 tweed Deluxe



back from Greg Hopkins with a vintage recover that is unrecognizable from an original. Yes, it was worth the wait. If you recall, we bought this amp in completely original

condition save for a poor recover in which the tweed had been applied inside out. Greg returned a classic, and this is the best sounding Deluxe we have ever owned. Yes, Jeff Bakos went through it and replaced a lot of out of spec caps, but man, does this amp rock. We are keeping this one as one of our go-to classics. We paid \$1900 for it and it was worth every penny. Greg has made it worth even more.

6Deluxe4

With lots of clean headroom up until around 6 on the volume

control, the Deluxe begins to spill over into some of the most tastefully overdriven tones imaginable beyond 6. From 7-8 you get gloriously overdriven tones, and beyond 8 the Deluxe burns down the house in the style of Neil Young and Crazy Horse. But let's not overlook those clean tones... They rock, so don't view the Deluxe as a one trick wonder... If you were to find one of these amps (have faith, we found one), you would no doubt cherish it as much as we do ours. The tweed Deluxe is not just an amplifier – it is a rare classic that is both incredibly liberating and inspiring. As you play through it, it is often tempting to stop and simply mutter, “That sounds incredible,” and it does. Some amplifiers simply inspire great music and the narrow panel tweed Deluxe is one of them. It is not uncommon to find these amps in unaltered, original condition. Just make sure you are using the best, most toneful power and preamp tubes possible, a great speaker like a Celestion Alnico Blue (not cheap but worth every penny in this amp), and you'll be set.

Gibson GA40



Here's another amplifier that was once somewhat common, now very hard to find. Why? They didn't build that many

and they sound so good that players tend to hold on to them. David Grissom had been known to use this amp on recordings, and it is a tone monster to be sure. Rated at approximately 20 watts, the GA40 runs on dual 6V6 power tubes, but the secret to the tone of this amp are the 5879 preamp tubes. This amp has an amazing overdriven tone unlike any other amplifier, intense and soulful, and the tremolo is just the best. With 4 inputs and two channels, the GA40 covers a lot of ground, from clean tones to really rippin' distortion that is perfect for rhythm and lead tracks. The 12 inch Celestion G12H 70th Anniversary speaker is a perfect match for this amp, equally good for slide, rhythm and lead tones. The GA40 sounds bigger than 20 watts, and the wooden cabinet produces a great vintage tone that won't be mistaken for anything built by Fender. The Gibson possesses more midrange than a Fender, with good bass response and treble that is less bright and splashy. This is our favorite Gibson amp, and we are not alone by any means. The secret has been out on the GA40 for a while now, but if you happen to find one we would jump on it. **TO**

Resource Directory

Sound Better Play Better™

Don't miss your opportunity to save 10% on selected products offered by members of your ToneQuest Resource Directory!

Look for exclusive ToneQuest discount offers in gold and reference TQR when placing your order.

TQR Directory News! Check out Wampler Pedals and updates from Carr Amplifiers, Visual Sound, Toneman Don Butler and more!

AllParts: Top players and guitar builders rely on Allparts for the right guitar and bass parts they need, in stock and ready to ship. AllParts offers a complete range of finished and unfinished guitar bodies in a variety of premium tone woods, including alder and swamp ash, with optional highly figured maple tops. Finishes include all of the most popular vintage colors, including see-through blonde! Premium necks are also available with maple, rosewood, and ebony fingerboards in a variety of neck shape profiles, with or without binding. Custom design your next guitar with AllParts, including tailpieces, tuning keys, bridges, nuts and saddles, pickups, pickguards (that really fit), knobs, hardware, and electronics for many popular models. Bass players and lefties can also find the parts they need at AllParts! You can also rely on Allparts for hard to find parts, along with vacuum tubes and amplifier hardware.

*AllParts, Houston, TX
www.allparts.com 713-466-6414*

Analogman TQR readers are invited to save \$25 on the Sunface NKT with Sundial Fuzz, or receive free shipping on all handmade Analog Man brand pedals, Foxrox, Teese wahs, and the PedalPower2: Mike Pira is one of the premier guitar effects dealers and manufacturers serving professional players worldwide. Analogman is unique, since it manufactures, modifies, buys, sells, and repairs vintage and new guitar effects. Specializing in vintage and high-end effects, you won't find cheap Taiwanese "happy meal" style, toy effects there. Analogman is dedicated to helping you successfully pursue your quest for tone, and every customer is treated as a pro-

spective friend. Analogman can meet all your effects needs, including: Buying and selling vintage, new, and custom built effects, and modifying pedals to sound and function better. A full repair service, including referrals to specialists. Creating the best new effects with vintage values, schematics, and original owner's manual copies. FREE help with effects problems by e-mail or in our Web Forum, plus professional consultation and technical services. Analogman specializes in pedal modifications for the Ibanez and Maxon Tube Screamers and several Boss pedals (SD-1, DS-1, BD-2, DD5, etc). They also modify Fuzzfaces to vintage germanium specs. Analogman hand-built pedals include the Clone chorus, Comprossors, and Sun Face fuzz pedals. There are 3 versions of the Comprossors available, based on the Ross style and/or the Orange Squeezer style of compression. Other hand-made pedals available from Analog Man include the FOXROX Captain Coconut and TZF flanger, Teese RMC wahs, Z Vex, Black Cat, Tubester, Ultravibe, Pedaltrain and George L cables. Jim Weider recently collaborated with Mike on the King Of Tone overdrive pedal, which is being introduced in December 2003! Please check the web site for more information, and e-mail if possible. If you must call, please mention ToneQuest and they'll make time to help you.

*Analog Man, Bethel, CT
www.analogman.com 203-778-6658*

Callaham Vintage Guitars & Amps New from Callaham! Check out the new billet steel ABR-1 style 'tune-o-matic' bridge: Bill Callaham is a builder of exceptional electric guitars that exceed the original quality, tone, and beauty of the vintage models that inspire his work. "Better than vintage" is an apt description for the Callaham "S" and "T" model electric guitars that feature premium lightweight ash and alder bodies, custom hand-shaped rock maple necks, and cryogenically treated Lindy Fralin pickups specially wound to Callaham's specifications for true vintage tone. Bill also offers cryogenically treated, pre-wired vintage pick guards for Strat style guitars, and his exclusive formula for cold-rolled steel alloy tremolo blocks continue

to delight players around the world with improved resonance and sustain. Callaham vintage saddles also improve sustain while minimizing string fatigue and breaks. Additional Strat parts include stainless steel trem arms, string ferrules, bridge plates and mounting screws, and string retainers. Attention Tele Players! Callaham now offers a complete line of custom Tele parts. Please visit their web site for information on pre-wired control plates with premium pots, capacitors, and cloth-covered wire, specially wound and cryogenically treated Fralin vintage Tele pickups, compensated brass bridge saddles, bridge plates, knobs, jacks, tuners and string trees! The only thing better than Callaham parts is a Callaham guitar. We said that, and you can take it to the bank.

*Callaham Guitars, Winchester, VA
www.callahamguitars.com 540-678-4043*

Carr Amplifiers Check out the ALL NEW Carr Artemus! The is a single-channel 30-watt combo featuring a 15-watt setting, four EL-84 power tubes, three knobs (Volume, Bass, Treble), two mini-toggle switches (Mid, Edge), and an Eminence Red, White, and Blues speaker.

The Artemus offers a wide range of tones from the crunch of Classic AC style British amps to the glassy mid-scooped blackface sound. The asymmetrical, open-sided, Howard Roark-inspired cabinet design measures 24.25" wide by 17.75" tall by 9" deep, top to bottom.

Carr Amplifiers is a small company located in downtown Pittsboro, NC. With six dedicated full-time craftsmen Carr Amps kicks out some of the most well-made, professional and dimensional-sounding tools a guitarist can have, whether that means onstage or in the bedroom. All Carr models are:

- 1) hand-wired using true point-to-point construction.
- 2) loaded with premium electronic components, i.e., Solen capacitors.
- 3) equipped with cabinets made from local NC yellow pine using dove-tailed joints for tank-like sturdiness.
- 4) issued a lifetime warranty for the original owner.

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Resource Directory

5) made by Americans at a fair wage.

Carr Amps is one of the few (if not the only) amp manufacturer to make all its cabinets in-house. The intense quality control afforded by this alone has not been lost on the thousands of players who've bought and kept their Carr amp over the years, as well as those to come.

Do you want to stop buying amps that have no tone? Do you want to stop worrying about your tone altogether? Construction, playability, portability, lush tone, high-quality customer service, lifetime warranty for the original owner--Carr Amps has all that taken care of for you.

Carr amps are professional tools and works of art that will inspire you for a lifetime. Check out the many stellar reviews and dealer locations for Carr amps at their web site, and contact the boys at Carr for more information about which Carr model is best for you.

Carr Amplifiers, Pittsboro, NC
www.carramps.com 919-545-0747

Celestion Ltd. Nobody knows more than Celestion about guitar loudspeaker design and manufacture. Think of your all-time favourite guitar riffs and solos, chances are, they were played through Celestion guitar loudspeakers. For the last fifty years - since the birth of the Celestion Blue (the first ever purpose-built guitar loudspeaker) - our magical mix of metal paper and magnets has formed an essential part of the sound of guitar music.

Some of the greatest speakers available today are part of the Celestion Classic Series. Over the years, we've applied our design expertise to build a range of speakers that will give you classic Celestion tone, no matter what style you play. The Alnico Series and the Heritage Series, both hand-built in Ipswich, England, are the result of meticulous attention to detail, created for those who are absolutely dedicated to the pursuit of true Vintage tone.

For high-volume OEMs, Celestion Originals represent outstanding value for money. We have the specialist experience coupled with the most advanced, high-volume manufacturing techniques to

deliver Celestion tone, quality and brand appeal at extremely competitive prices.

Celestion International Ltd
www.celestion.com

For OEM Enquiries, contact Andy Farrow
at Celestion America, 732-683-2356
For all enquiries, contact John Sanchez
at Celestion America, 732-683-2356,
sales@celestion.com.

Collings Guitars: Bill Collings' story provides a classic example of what can be achieved with an engineer's brain, a machinists' hand and an experienced repairman's eye. After dropping out of medical school in Ohio to work in a machine shop, Collings moved to Texas in the mid 1970's where the experience he gained repairing and restoring guitars guided his design of the first Collings guitars. His understanding of the flaws and shortcomings found in production instruments was instructive, and he set out to eliminate those shortcomings with the very first Collings guitars

Today, Collings has 50 full-time employees working in a new, 22,000 square foot, state-of-the-art facility, and Bill Collings remains hands-on, building all the tooling used throughout the shop and personally working on guitars at his bench whenever time permits. As the business has grown and processes refined, there is one thing that has not changed...Bill Collings' commitment to building the finest handmade acoustic steel string instruments in the world.

Collings instruments have grown to include 32 different acoustic guitar models including the famed dreadnought and OM models, seven award-winning mandolin models in both lacquer and varnish finishes, three archtop guitars, and a new line of seven electric instruments crafted to inspire rock, blues, jazz, country, and your music, too.

Bill Collings work is respected by professional and amateur musicians alike... anyone on the quest for quality. Some of these include artists: Keith Richards, Lyle Lovett, Pete Townshend, Emmylou Harris, Andy Summers, David Crosby, Chris Hillman, Joni Mitchell, Don Felder, John Sebastian, Lou Reed, John Fogerty, Tim O'Brien, Pete Huttlinger, Kenny

Smith, Brian May, Joan Baez, John Prine, Nigel Tufnel of Spinal Tap, and Steven Spielberg to name a few. We invite you to play a Collings today.

For more information on the complete line of Collings instruments and dealer locations, please visit our web site.

Collings Guitars, Austin Texas
www.collingsguitars.com, 512-288-7776

Dave's Guitar Shop: Dave's Guitar Shop offers guitars by Fender, Gibson, PRS, National, Taylor, Gretsch, Ernie Ball, Rickenbacker, Martin, Santa Cruz, Suhr, Collings, Tom Anderson and many other fine new and used instruments, plus new and used amplifiers such as Fender, Line 6, Matchless, Victoria, Bad Cat, and Dr. Z, plus hundreds of guitar effects, and aftermarket pickups from Joe Barden, Seymour Duncan, and more. Due to their inventory of over 1,000 guitars, amps, and accessories, Dave's is an excellent resource for top of the line Custom Shop and Historic reissues, to intermediate new and used gear. Unlike some dealers' out of date stock lists on the web and in print, Dave's inventory is updated daily. The selection of new and used instruments is truly exceptional, and you can often select among several models of the same new guitars to find that special instrument that was meant for you. Dave's staff is friendly and extremely knowledgeable about the instruments and gear that they sell, because they are players, too. Please check the web site for current inventory, and you are welcome to call for more information or an accurate, in-hand description.

Dave's Guitar Shop, LaCrosse, WI
www.davesguitar.com 608-785-7704

The Echopark Guitar, Los Angeles
Echopark Guitars are uniquely designed, handcrafted instruments that vividly reveal the vision, skill and experience of master luthier Gabriel Currie. Following the storied tradition of luthiers who have collectively defined the modern electric guitar, Gabriel has attracted a loyal following in the American boutique guitar market among some of the most discerning and influential artists today.

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Resource Directory

Dedicated to preserving and enhancing the tradition and culture of American craftsmanship, Echopark Guitars offers a definitive line of custom instruments ranging from the revered Clarence models, to the Downtowner family and the Ghetto Bird. Cut, carved, shaped and crafted by hand, there are no limits to Gabriel's exceptional creativity. Each piece of wood is hand selected from private reserves for the most stable, consistent and toneful blend for each specific model. Currie also supports and works with custom pickup winders such as Curtis Novak, Arcane Pickups and Jerry Amalfitano in creating a dynamic voice and personality that clearly set Echopark guitars apart as both works of art and exceptional musical instruments. The highest quality accessories and electronics only work to enhance the individual characteristics of each guitar. From the tree to the stage, in the studio or as part of a coveted collection, Echopark heirloom guitars represent Currie's lifelong passion and respect for handcrafted quality in the quest for pure, unchained tone. For detailed information on the 13 Echopark models currently offered, options and to view our image gallery, visit our web site at:

www.echoparkguitars.com
626-536-3317

Eminence Eminence is proud to present the Patriot and Redcoat series of guitar speakers. Incorporating both British and American cone technology into speakers that we manufacture in the USA gives us the ability to provide you with virtually any tone you desire. Be it British or American, clean or dirty, big bass or screaming highs, we have a speaker that will allow you to "Pick Your Sound." Choose from one of seventeen new models! Eminence has been building speakers to custom specifications for nearly every major manufacturer of guitar amplifier and sound reinforcement products since 1967. Their new Legend Series of guitar speakers captures the essence of the vintage American and British speaker designs that are held in such high regard today by so many discerning players. The Legend Series includes classic British and American designs for 6," 8," 10," 12," and 15" speakers utilizing ceramic and AlNiCo magnets, British or American cones, and Kapton polyamide voice coils for superior heat dissipation and durability. Best of all, because Eminence has

been successfully competing for years with other speaker manufacturers as an OEM supplier, the Legend Series speakers are priced far below those of many other popular manufacturers of "reissue" and custom speakers. The Eminence Legend Series delivers all of the tone and durability you need, at a lower price, with no compromises in quality. To locate genuine Eminence dealers in your area, please visit their web site or call Eminence Speakers.

Eminence Speaker LLC, Eminence, KY
www.eminence.com 502-845-5622
Contact: Chris Rose

Evidence Audio: was founded in 1997 by Tony Farinella to supply the MI and Studio community with performance-based cables at reasonable prices. The most well-known cable is the Lyric HG (High Gain) guitar cable. Readers of Guitar Player Magazine voted the Lyric HG as "Best Accessory of 2004" supporting the opinion drawn by editors of magazines from around the world.

In simple terms, cables from Evidence Audio are built different; as a result, they sound different. The Lyric HG features two solid core high grade IGL copper conductors and a braided shield that is grounded at the amp end only. This is the correct way to "drain" spurious noise. By using solid core conductors strand interference is eliminated as well. Designed to be neutral and honest, the cables don't actually "improve" your tone, they simply replace a cable in your signal path which was likely destroying it. What you hear is a tighter more muscular bottom end, a clearer more complex mid-range and a sweeter more detailed high end. Dynamics and harmonics are improved and sustain is no longer masked. Overall the guitar becomes more three-dimensional sounding, cuts through clearer and at the same time takes up less space in the mix.

The Siren Speaker Cable and The Source AC Power Cable compliment the Lyric HG. They offer a solution to distortions cause by cables in other areas of the signal path and power supply. The effects of the speaker and power cable are consistent with that of the Lyric HG: you hear the guitar and amplifier, not the cables. While not inexpensive, cables from

Evidence Audio are still one of the most cost effective ways of improving your tone. It's like changing pickups or a bridge – a small detail with big results. Please visit the Evidence Audio website to locate a dealer near you and demand a demo!

Audionova Inc., <http://www.audionova.ca>
514-631-5787 ext. 22

Fishman: Widely recognized as the premier designer and manufacturer of acoustic amplification products, Fishman is committed to making acoustic musicians heard while faithfully maintaining their own natural tone, for the best possible sound.

The Fishman product line began with the BP-100 acoustic bass pickup, originally developed to meet founder and president Larry Fishman's own jazz performance needs. With a track record of quality engineering, reliability, functional simplicity and - most importantly - the natural tone it enables, Fishman firmly established a reputation of excellence that consumers have come to expect from the brand.

For acoustic guitar, Fishman offers the flagship Acoustic Matrix Series active pickup system, the Rare Earth Series active magnetic soundhole pickups, and the Neo-D magnetic soundhole pickup, as well as passive undersaddle, classical, archtop, and resophonic guitar pickups. Fishman's new Ellipse series combines the Acoustic Matrix pickup with our industry leading preamp design. Designed to fit in the guitar's soundhole, the Ellipse system provides volume and tone control at your fingertips and easily installs without any modification to your instrument.

Fishman pickups are also available for banjo, mandolin, harp/piano, violin, viola, cello and acoustic bass. In addition, the Concertmaster amplification system for violin and the Full Circle upright bass pickup offer two elegant and cutting-edge string amplification solutions.

Utilizing cutting-edge Acoustic Sound Imaging technology, Aura features the most innovative acoustic amplification technology available today. This stompbox-sized unit captures your instrument's true acoustic sound with stunning, studio microphone quality. Anytime, anywhere.

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Resource Directory

Aura eliminates the boundaries of conventional acoustic amplification and gives the most natural, realistic amplified acoustic instrument sound available - both on stage and in the studio.

Joining the award-winning Loudbox and Loudbox Pro acoustic instrument amplifiers, the new Loudbox Performer completes Fishman's popular, highly-acclaimed family of acoustic amplifiers and represents the size, power and features that musicians demand. Setting a new standard in acoustic amplifiers, the Loudbox series feature a powerful tri-amped system that delivers sweet highs and undistorted lows-even at tremendous volumes.

As Fishman celebrates its 25th year as the leader in acoustic amplification, the company continues to redefine the benchmark of acoustic sound. For more information, please visit:
www.fishman.com.

Fishman Transducers Inc.
Wilmington, MA
978-988-9199

GHS – The String Specialists Who plays GHS strings: Artists as diverse as Eric Johnson, Martin Barre, Charlie Sexton, Will Ray, Warren Haynes, Tom Morello, Ritchie Sambora, Steve Howe, Brent Mason, Junior Brown, Zakk Wylde, Tommy Castro, Rene' Martinez and TQR advisory board member and AC30/Telecaster stud Mr. James Pennebaker, to name just a few! GHS has been manufacturing guitar strings since 1964, and whatever your musical tastes, GHS has the right string for you. You're invited to try a set of GHS classic Boomers, brilliant Nickel Rockers, Burnished Nickel strings for a warm, vintage tone, Compound Nickel strings for electric arch tops, and the recently introduced Infinity Bronze coated acoustic strings for extended tone and brilliance. All GHS strings are available in a wide range of gauges to appeal to every player. Refer to the GHS "Brightness Bar" found on select packages of strings and at our web site. It's your guide to determining which strings will produce the specific range of tone you're seeking.

Please check out the all new GHS web site at www.ghsstrings.com for expert

information about GHS strings, including technical documentation on the entire GHS line of strings for fretted instruments, tech tips, string tension calculations, the "Brightness Bar," and a comprehensive list of the top artists who play GHS strings. All GHS strings are manufactured to continually exceed your expectations.

GHS String Corporation
Battle Creek, MI
www.ghsstrings.com
1-800-388-4447

Jescar Fretwire Securely pressed into the fingerboard, the fret wire is the gateway between the musician and the instrument. It is one of the most critical components in the playing quality of the guitar. The interaction between the strings and frets determines the feel of the neck as much as the neck contour, fingerboard material, or finish.

There are many different fret wire profiles available, from small to large, low to high, narrow to wide, oval to round to triangular, all affecting the playing characteristics and feel of the instrument. Brass frets from days past have given way to today's standard material, 18% nickel silver, also called "German Silver." Our highly refined nickel silver consists of 62% copper, 18% nickel and 20% zinc. But even with 18% nickel silver, there are differences in hardness, tensile strength, surface quality, grain size, and other metallurgical properties that influence a fret's quality, performance and feel.

Beyond 18% nickel silver, new alloys have been employed in the production of modern fret wire that dramatically improves the performance and aesthetics of the guitar. Our stainless steel, with its greater hardness and tighter grain structure has much higher wear resistance for greater fret life. In addition, string bending is much smoother without the friction or grinding felt with traditional fret material. We have selected a stainless steel alloy that provides the best combination of fret life and installation ease. Most fretwire is manufactured in coils for ease of installation. Our FW39040 and FW37053 are only offered in 24" straight lengths to prevent twisting if coiled. Pricing is based on orders of one pound minimum quantity per size, plus shipping

via UPS, FedEx, or USPS. Gold colored EVO wire is available on selected sizes only. Individual frets cut to size, straight cut or cut and notched tangs, are available upon request. Minimum order quantity for pre-cut frets is 2000 pieces.

CAUTION: Jescar Fretwire will improve the tone and playability of your guitar.

www.jescar.com
877-453-7227

Just Strings.com: Now more than ever, guitarists are reaping the benefits of technical innovations in string making that have led to the widest selection of guitar strings ever available. JustStrings.com is dedicated to providing guitarists with the largest selection of acoustic, roundwound, and flatwound strings, complimented by exceptional personalized service and outstanding value. Trying different types of strings often results in amazing new discoveries that not only improve the sound of your instrument, but dramatically enhance your playing enjoyment. From traditional hand-crafted strings to high-tech exotics, **JustStrings.com exists to help you get the most out of your instrument.** Try a new set today, or order your favorite acoustic or electric sets and **SAVE!** Juststrings.com offers the best prices on all of the major and specialty brands, promptly delivered to your door. Shop online at JustStrings.com, or place your order by fax at 603-889-7026 or telephone at 603-889-2664..

JustStrings.com, Nashua, NH
www.juststrings.com info@juststrings.com

Keeley Electronics – Check out the new Keeley Katana Preamp! ToneQuest subscribers receive 10% off on all pedal mods and the Keeley Comp, Java Boost and Time Machine boost: Keeley Electronics recently won a Guitar Player Reader's Choice Award and Keeley is now the exclusive distributor for Framptone! Robert Keeley's Time Machine Boost, Keeley Compressor, and his custom, state-of-the-art modifications for vintage pedals continue to receive rave reviews from guitarists around the world. Keeley pedals are used by Aerosmith, Abbey Road Studios, Steve Vai, legendary producer Bob Rock, George Lynch, Peter Frampton, James Burton, and many, many

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more guitarists and music pros around the world. The Time Machine Boost is a versatile 2 channel, 3 mode pre-amplifier designed to drive your amplifiers into overdrive or saturation. The two channels are labeled "Vintage," and "Modern," with the "Vintage" side inspired by rare germanium boosts like the Dallas Rangemaster. The "Modern" channel is a new +23dB gain, dual JFET transparent signal amplifier. The Keeley Compressor is a superb audiophile and studio grade compressor with true bypass switching and premium metal film resistors and capacitors for the cleanest Ross clone compressor ever available. Available with a standard Ibanez/Boss style adapter jack and/or battery power, you can say good-bye to that old red Dyna Comp!

Robert Keeley pedal mods include 2 versions for TS9's – the TS808 mod, and the "Baked TS9" for searing hot Tube Screamer tone. Keeley uses the original TI RC4558P chip that appeared in the early TS808's, while increasing the bass response and overdrive range. The result is a perfectly voiced 808 that's cleaner when turned down and produces twice the drive/gain when turned up, with all of the stock 808 character in the middle. The Keeley modded BD-2 is not a fuzz pedal but has the best characteristics of a fuzz pedal, and it's much smoother and more realistic sounding. Other exclusive Keeley modifications include the Boss Blues Driver BD-2 Tube Mod, the PHAT Switch BD-2 Mod, Rat Mods, Boss DS-1 Seeing Eye Mod, Boss SD-1, and Boss Chorus CE-2. For detailed specs, user comments, dealer information, sound clips, and ordering information, please visit the Keeley Electronics website.

*Keeley Electronics, Edmond, OK
405-260-1385, www.robertkeeley.com*

Koch Guitar Amplification: was founded in 1988 by Dolf Koch in the Netherlands and are known worldwide as a manufacturer of high end boutique guitar amplifiers. They have many models for all styles of music from the new 20W Class "A" Studiotone combo to the 120W Powertone II head.

All amps are channel switching with two or three extremely versatile channels. They are recognized for having both sparkling clean channels and wide ranging

drive/gain channels. They were the first to utilize trim pots on their heavy duty circuit boards enabling anyone to adjust bias with only a screwdriver and voltmeter. Speaker damping switches which when toggled from high to low alter the tone to a more scooped sound. Rhythm volume switch on the footswitch (included) which when engaged drops the level to a pre-determined "Rhythm" level. It's the opposite of a boost and does not alter the lead tone as a result. It so useful guitar players tell us that they're surprised that no has done this before. All amps have Accutronics reverbs and Koch designed speakers that have a sweeter more extended high end. These speakers also handle more power and have a better bass response than almost any guitar speakers available. They are an integral component to the KOCH sound.

Other products include the Loadbox which attenuates a tube amplifiers output without destroying its tone, i.e. no huge loss of high frequencies. The Pedaltone is a semi-four channel, foot operated preamp which has four 12AX7 preamps tubes. One of these tubes acts as a .5W power tube! It has many patch points and output options for almost any application.

Some famous people that use Koch are: Paul Reed Smith, Al Di Meola, Randy Bachman, Buzz Feiten, and Jimmy Bruno to name a few. KOCH also manufactures the 300W EDEN VT300 all bass head and the 200W Sadowsky SA200 bass head on an OEM basis.

*Audionova Inc.
www.audionova.ca/
514-631-5787 ext. 22*

Lollar Custom Guitars & Pickups:

According to Jason, he never really set out to become a custom pickup designer and builder. Jason Lollar is a guitar builder on Vashon Island, Washington (near Seattle) who originally began building pickups for his own guitars and a few friends when he couldn't find the tone he was after. The word spread, and now Jason custom builds over 30 different pickups, including Strat, Tele, humbuckers, P90's, custom steels and Charlie Christian-style pickups, all personally designed and wound by Jason. He is especially well known for his P90, Imperial Humbucker and Tele replacement pick-

ups, but he has also designed pickups for many unusual applications.

Recently, Jason was acknowledged by gonzo pedal steel player Robert Randolph for having wound the pickups in his two custom Fessenden pedal steels. And the list doesn't end there – Jason has wound pickups for guitar greats such as Billy F Gibbons, Peter Stroud, Kevin Russell, Rick Vito, Elliot Easton, Duke Robillard, and the Beastie Boys, among others.

Jason is always happy to personally consult with his clients via phone and e-mail to determine the pickups that are right for each player, and TQR recommends Lollar pickups without exception. His Lollar Special Strat pickups are standard equipment in our custom built ToneQuest guitars.

Call Jason or check out all the options available on his web site.

www.lollarguitars.com
206-463-9838

Mercury Magnetics: The basis of every tube amp's characteristic sound is the unique design of its transformers. Mercury transformers are legendary for their stunning tonal superiority, build quality, consistency, and reliability. We believe in old-world customer service and single-minded focus. Transformers are our only business, allowing us to concentrate on providing you with the best-sounding guitar amplifier trannies in the world.

If your amp is suffering from bland and unexciting tone, then it's time for a transformer upgrade or repair. Here are your options:

ToneClone™: Best-of-Breed Series Transformers: Behind every great-sounding vintage guitar amp is a piece of transformer history. Within any amp line there are usually a large number of transformer variations, inconsistencies and just plain ol' building errors that affect their sound (good or bad). At Mercury, we seek out, study, blueprint and replicate only the best-of-breed transformer designs (including their all-important anomalies) and add these discoveries to our catalog. And we make these incredible tonal selections available to you through our ToneClone™ line.

Axiom® Series Next-Gen Transformers: Next-generation guitar amplifier trans-

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formers. The Axiom series are in a class by themselves. We've taken our advanced knowledge of modern transformer design and mated it with historically best-sounding designs of the past. Axiom trannys are hybrids that take vintage tone to the next level! More bloom, more overtone color, and awesome tonal depth. If you ever needed convincing as to how outstanding transformers affect your sound, Axiom trannys will astonish you.

Mercury Vintage™ Transformer Service:

Most vintage transformers have already outlived or are nearing the end of their life expectancies. That's the bad news – now for the good... Mercury will restore, rebuild or rewind your valuable original transformers. Or, we can clone your originals so that you can continue to play your old amp without fear of further "wear and tear."

Free Transformer Testing And Evaluation Service:

Do you think there might be something wrong with your transformer? Send it to us. We'll test it in our lab and report back to you. Our evaluation procedures are thorough, complete and reliable, and always free. The only transformers that come with a 10-year Manufacturer's Warranty and a Money-Back Tonal Guarantee. Made entirely in the U.S.A.

Mercury Magnetix
www.MercuryMagnetix.com
Sales@MercuryMagnetix.com
818-998-7791

RS Guitarworks: RS Guitarworks is the your one-stop source for expert finishing, refinishing and aging, complete guitar assembly and repair, custom electronic upgrade kits, pickups, hard-to-find hardware, and more!

Located in Winchester, Kentucky, RS Guitarworks began as a small repair and refinishing shop in 1994. As the word spread among guitarists, our business rapidly grew and today we receive expensive guitars from around the world for aging and refinishing. We offer many hard-to-find vintage replica parts and other specialty items related to vintage Fender and Gibson guitars, and we also custom build complete guitars, including our "Old Friend" Series, "Step-Side" and "Artist Replica" models.

RS Guitarworks Premium Wiring Kits offer a dramatic and immediate improvement over the factory electronics found in even the most expensive guitars. During a year of research and development we tested over 20 different tone capacitors and nearly every type of potentiometer made before developing our upgrade kits, which feature measured CTS pots within 10% of their specified value, and RS Guitarcaps in .022uf and .047uf values made expressly for us by Hovland. Our customers tell us that our wiring upgrade kits impart a fuller, clearer tone than standard factory components, with a smoother, more even and responsive taper from each pot. Additionally, each potentiometer is tested on a digital meter, checked for the proper sweep pattern and sorted and labeled as a neck/volume, neck/tone, bridge/volume or bridge/tone control. Wiring Upgrade Kits are available in 5 different styles for various Les Paul type guitars, as well as Telecaster, Stratocaster, and PRS guitars, and Explorer and Flying V types. Nearly any other configuration can also be built with a call to our shop. RS Guitarworks is also an authorized Fender, Jackson, Charvel, Guild and Gretsch Service Center.

Please call or visit our web site for complete information on finishing, refinishing and aging of new and used guitars, custom wiring kits, vintage repro parts and repairs.

RS Guitarworks
859-737-5300, www.rsguitarworks.com

Stewart MacDonald: Stewart-MacDonald offers a complete line of hard-to-find tools, parts, accessories, instructional videos and books for building, repairing, setting up, and optimizing the playability and tone of stringed instruments. Whether you are just getting started or you're a seasoned luthier, you'll find everything you need in the Stew-Mac catalog, including: fret wire, finishing supplies, glues and adhesives, wood, bodies, necks, binding, tuners, nuts and saddles, inlay, bridges, tailpieces, electronics, pickups, and free information sheets and professional advice! Their friendly customer service and technical support staff are trained to help you make the best product choices, and they also offer an Unconditional Return Guarantee. If you're not satisfied with an item for any reason, simply return

it.

Stew-Mac is the leading supplier of innovative products for guitarists and repair pros, and every thing they make is guaranteed to work well, because every product is tested by the professional luthiers at Stewart MacDonald first! The master builders and repairmen on staff include Dan Erlewine – well-known author of guitar repair books and magazine articles, member of the ToneQuest Report advisory board, and a regular contributor to TQR. Dan and all of the experienced luthiers at Stew-Mac personally develop and test every product the company offers, and they are also dedicated to education. The Stewart MacDonald catalog is packed with helpful tips, and the company produces an extensive series of training videos at their facility in Athens, Ohio.

For more information on the entire range of products available, please visit the Stewart MacDonald web site. In addition to their free online help service, your telephone call is also always welcome.

Stewart MacDonald
www.stewmac.com,
1-800-848-2273

Swart Amplification: Long before the first Swart amp ever appeared, Michael Swart had been playing through vintage amps for decades at live gigs and recording sessions as both a guitarist and recording engineer in Wilmington, NC.

Despite his access to countless vintage Fender, Vox, and Ampeg amps, Swart always felt the quintessential small recording/home use amp had yet to be built, thus begin the quest for the best tone via a small, manageable package. After a slew of suitcase amp wannabees, emerged the original Space Tone 6V6se, a Class A, 5 watt, Single-Ended, tube rectified beast with an über simple circuit revolving around the soulful 6V6. The amp delivered big sound with unmatched musicality along with amazing distortion. The 18w Atomic Space Tone soon followed to wide acclaim, and Swart amplifiers were quickly embraced by working pros and guitarists who shared Swart's appreciation for truly exceptional guitar tone.

Today, six different Swart models are hand-built to serve the needs of guitarists

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for live performance and recording:

Space Tone 6V6se - The amp that started it all. 5w, Class A, Single-Ended, Tube Rectified, 8" Weber, finger-jointed, lacquered tweed pine cab. Amazing STR-Tweed - Another BIG Class A, Single-Ended 5w w/extra stage, Swart reverb, and 12" speaker.

Atomic Space Tone - Perhaps the amp that REALLY put Swart on the map. Considered one of the finest made. 18w 6V6 or 6L6 with tube reverb & tremolo

AST Pro: AST circuit w/slightly larger cab, recessed knobs, 12" of choice
AST Head MKII - AST in a head w/ defeatable master volume and choice of cabinets

Super Space Tone 30 Head (SST-30) 30w of soulful 6V6/6L6/EL-34 mother of tone beauty. Richer than chocolate. Matching, custom tweed 2 x 12 Space Tone Cabinet

Head to Swart Online for the latest news, rants, photos, raves, artists, events, and dealer locations. Michael answers every call. Kelly responds to every mail. Personal service is #1 priority.

Swart Amplifier Co., Wilmington, NC
www.swartamps.com, 910-620-2512

Toneman: Veteran working guitarist Don Butler is an experienced tech who specializes in servicing, restoring JMI-era and modding Korg era Vox Amps to vintage specs. These, of course would be valve (tube) amps. As well as servicing & upgrading any '62-'89 era valve Marshall amps. He also services most other Golden era British valves amps like HiWatt, Selmer, Orange, Laney's and Sound City's. Also included are Tweed, Blonde, Brown and Blackface era Fender Amps.

Don offers a number of standard mods for reissue Vox, Fender and Marshall amps to bring them into "Vintage Spec" and achieve that original tone/sound that reissues sadly lack. These have earned him a solid reputation throughout the country for dramatically improved, authentic Vintage Tone from reissue amplifiers. Don has used the hand-made Mercury Magnetics Axiom/Tone Clone transformers for over 20 years along with vintage spec Sozo Premium caps (both the Iskra/"mustard caps" replicas and Blue Molded Fender types) and Carbon Comp

resistors in the signal path to bring reissue amps to Vintage specs. We also mod reissue Vox and Cry Baby Wah Wah's to original 1967 specs, Ibanez TS-9's and Upgrade Vox "Valve Tone" pedals.

Don is equally at home working on Gibson Historics and Standard Production guitars, Fender guitars, Rickenbacker, and of course, Gretsch Guitars. This applies to both Vintage models and current production guitars, electric and acoustic. Anything from re-frets & fret dressing, rewiring, etc. to simple set-ups and adjustments. Don was also the first dealer for German made Pyramid Strings, starting in 1995. Don does attend the NAMM Show and the Frankfurt Musikmesse for Pyramid. Providing his input, Pyramid has re-introduced the Round Core, pure nickel flatwound "Pyramid Golds" and the exceptional Round core/round wound "Nickel Classics". All Pyramids use a silver plated core of German Steel and pure nickel wire wrap. All plain strings are pure silver plated German Steel. Also available now are the Bronze Wound/Round Core Acoustic "Pyramid Western Folk". These strings are reminiscent of the strings from the '50's & '60's before most manufacturers went to Hex cores and smaller wrap wires. Strings can be ordered securely online through the website!

Toneman is open 10 am to 6 pm (Pacific Time), Tuesday thru Saturday!
661-259-4544, delb@earthlink.net,
www.tone-man.com

TonePros Sound Labs & Marquis

Distribution: Since our first published review article, The ToneQuest Report has enthusiastically recommended the patented TonePros system of guitar components.

TonePros tailpieces feature a patented locking design. For years, guitars with stop tailpieces and wrap-around bridges have been cursed by "lean" or tilt on their stud mounts. Since string tension was all that held tailpieces on, the only contact area was just a bit of the edge of the bottom flange, just a bit of the lip of the stud top, and often just as little contact with the intonation screws. TonePros® Locking Studs provide 100% of the contact area of the bottom flange, 100% of the contact area of the stud top, no lean,

and dramatically improved sustain, resonance and tone.

TonePros bridge and saddle components feature the "patented pinch" - the lateral pressure that is applied from the strategically placed "tone screws" that greatly reduce the play or wiggle of the bridge posts in their inserts. The posts are frozen in place, resulting in a solid connection between the strings, bridge, and guitar top, transferring more string vibration and resonance to the guitar body, resulting in an audibly stronger, sweeter, woodier type of resonance and sustain. And once your guitar is set up, it's locked. Bridge height and intonation settings remain intact and exact, even after re-stringing. TonePros® System II Components are found on the world's best guitars, played by the world's best artists.

TonePros Sound Labs International,
www.tonepros.com
www.guitarpartsdepot.com
818-735-7944

Marquis Distribution: At Marquis Distribution, we offer the highest quality guitar parts to fit your needs. We specialize in guitar replacement parts, and hard to find, vintage-inspired and vintage replica parts, including aged TonePros and TonePros Kluson parts, emphasizing your desire to achieve a vintage look and tone at an exceptionally high level of performance. Whether you need to replace one part on your guitar or outfit many guitars with whole new setups, our focus remains on the individual customer and your unique needs. Be sure to request the 10% ToneQuest Discount when ordering!

www.marquisdistribution.com
209-845-9579

Truetone: formerly known as Visual Sound, was launched by Bob Weil in his apartment in 1995. With a mix of innovative ideas, and plain old hard work, Bob became a member of the vanguard of stomp box builders that in the mid 1990's turned the effects world on its ear with new and exciting designs that finally gave guitarists everywhere a new pallet of tones to work with. Weil amply did his part with innovative products like the Visual Volume, 1 SPOT power supply, Route 66 American Overdrive, Jekyll and Hyde Ultimate Overdrive, and the H2O Liquid

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Resource Directory

Chorus and Echo. These products quickly made an impact with users and dealers alike. Visual Sound became known for having great sounding products that were backed up with top notch service and support. Visual Sound is now Truetone, but the people haven't changed and the products and service are still first rate.

Weil explains his vision this way: "We've worked hard for many years to make our products not only sound great, but also hold up to the demands of the working musician. The test procedures and quality control standards that Chief Engineer R.G. Keen and I have developed are extremely thorough. On top of that, we designed our switching system to pretty much last forever, and we're very picky about our critical parts suppliers, too. When it comes down to it, we hate to have our gear go down in the middle of someone's gig, so we've gone over the top with reliability. To prove it, we're now offering a lifetime warranty on all of our V3 pedals. And since we've been around since 1995, you can be confident we'll be around to support that warranty."

The V3 line of pedals began with the Dual Tap Delay, the first dual delay pedal with a tap function governing both delay circuits, followed by the Single Tap, which was half of the mighty Dual Tap. The line then expanded to the VS-XO Premium Dual Overdrive, followed by the V3 H2O, which both won the Editor's Pick awards from Guitar Player, and Platinum Awards from Guitar World. The latest in the V3 line are the new V3 Route 66 and V3 Jekyll & Hyde which are more than mere re-boots of signature pedals: they are carefully thought-out complete redesigns with all new features and additional tones.

Check out the Truetone website for information, videos and news about all the great Truetone products!

*Web: Truetone.com
Phone: 931-487-9001*

Warehouse Guitar Speakers® LLC: is an Internet-based retail speaker supplier and manufacturer based in Paducah, KY – an area of the country with a long history in speaker manufacturing that includes the original CTS company, Credence Speakers, Voice Communication Coil, and Hawley Products – the oldest cone manufacturer in the world. When an

OEM speaker manufacturer needed to clear warehouse space in 2006, WGS was born and began manufacturing and selling American-assembled guitar speakers to the public.

Today we build a wide range of high-quality and reasonably priced 10 and 12-inch Alnico and Ceramic magnet guitars speakers that celebrate and reprise the golden era of speaker manufacturing in the USA and England during the '60s and '70s, including the 15 watt Alnico Black & Blue™, 50 watt Alnico BlackHawk™, 60 watt Veteran 30™, 25 watt Green Beret™, 80 watt British Lead™, 65 watt ET65™, 30 watt Reaper™, and 75 watt Retro 30™, among others. WGS also builds high-power bass and PA speakers, and we are constantly developing and adding new speaker models to meet the demands of today's guitarists.

Why should you consider buying WGS speakers? At a time when speaker manufacturers have moved production to Asia, compromising quality and reliability while prices continue to increase, our speakers are proudly assembled in the USA by a team with decades of speaker design and building experience, at a reasonable price. Our employees take pride in building the very best speakers available anywhere. Selling direct via the Web enables us to keep prices low without compromising quality. You buy direct from the manufacturer, and we proudly stand behind our products with fast shipping and exceptional customer service.

For information on the entire range of WGS guitar and bass speakers, please visit our web site today.

*Warehouse Guitar Speakers
www.WarehouseSpeakers.com
270-217-0740*

WD Music Products: As a special offer WD® Music Products, Inc. is offering a 10% off coupon to Tonequest readers... Visit us at www.wdmusic.com and enter coupon code TQWD at checkout. Please note: Coupon good for wdmusic.com web orders only, offer not valid on wdbiz.com orders.

For the past thirty years WD® Music Products has been providing quality ser-

vice and parts to satisfied working musicians, discriminating builders and OEMs. WD® pioneered the field of aftermarket pickguards and continues to lead the way in the niche we created in 1978. We have manufactured thousands of pickguards and if you need a replacement or something you envision yourself we can make it happen. For many years WD® Music has also carried a full line of replacement parts for just about any stringed instrument.

WD® Music is proud to continue the legacy of Kluson® tuning machines, one of the most respected OEM and replacement tuners for decades. Replace or restore your vintage instrument with genuine Kluson® tuning machines from WD® Music. We stock Kent Armstrong® pickups, L.R. Baggs® acoustic gear, Q-Parts® custom knobs and accessories, Bigsby® tailpieces, Graph Tech® products, Wilkinson® bridges, Grover® tuners and accessories, Big Bends® maintenance supplies, Guitar Facelifts, effects and much more.

History is repeating itself with genuine Kluson® tuners, continuing with WD®'s customer service, and...Stromberg® Jazz Guitars. No one can attempt or claim to reproduce the prestige of the original archtop Stromberg® guitars. But with history in mind WD® is also proud to distribute Stromberg® Jazz Guitars. With six models to satisfy everyone from the serious working jazz musician to the rockabilly king Stromberg® offers an affordable, quality instrument for almost any taste or style. Stromberg® jazz Guitars is a small, limited production archtop guitar company whose main goals are quality, playability and affordability. Play one and see.

WD® Music Products. Thirty years of knowledge, service, quality parts and accessories waiting to serve you. Everything from pickguards, tuning machines, pickups, electronics, necks, bodies, bridges, prewired assemblies and hard to find hardware—if your guitar or bass needs it, chances are WD® Music has it. Old fashioned customer service, genuine Kluson® tuners, classic Stromberg® Jazz Guitars, and so much more.

*877-WDMUSIC
www.WDMusic.com*

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