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The Player's Guide to Ultimate Tone
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80 Years of Magnatone USA

Inspired by the originals, the new Magnatone amps are not mere knockoffs—they are far, far better than that. Ted Kornblum and company have created a line of stunning performance amps, and they offer much more than the vintage amps ever could. The pitch shifting vibrato is a spectacular effect, and the reverb and tremolo are equally inspiring, but it is the fundamental tone of these amplifiers that makes them worth owning. True vintage tone is yours, enhanced with state of the art build and design quality that is simply unsurpassed. Enjoy!



TQR: How has the Magnatone line of amps performed for you since the launch of the company?

TED KORNBUM (CEO)

Prior to bringing the Magnatone brand back to the market at the 2013 NAMM show, I wanted to make sure we had done our homework on pretty much most of the tones needed in a professional amp line. We did this to avoid the rush to react to the market requests and end up engineering while at market. I knew the Magnatone brand had been frozen in time since it went out of busi-

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ness around 1969, so I wanted to allow the brand to enter the market gradually to allow both word of mouth to grow among consumers, artists, and dealers so that we saw strong sell through and reorders. We have accomplished this. Now in our fourth year, we see that more and more people learn about us each day and we sell to a select number of retailers and maintain our pricing so the consumer does not need to worry about finding an amp at a better price and dealers don't need to worry about a fellow dealer undercutting the MAP price. We want to have a "friendly dealer network" worldwide.

TQR: You have attracted some impressive endorsements and seem to have done very well.

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)



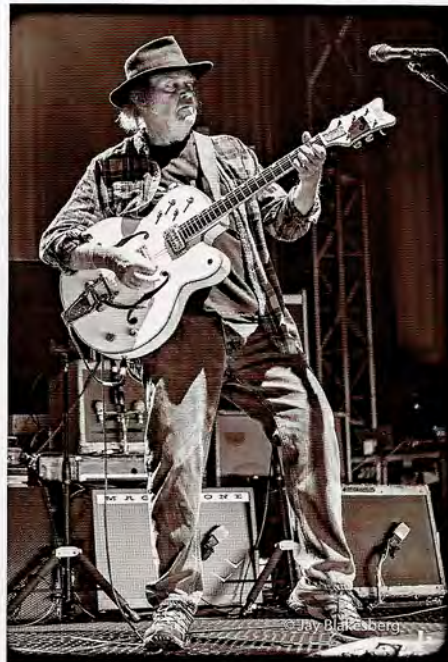
We look at endorsements as customers, because often, the word "endorsement" implies exclusivity, or suggests that artists get amps for free. The great thing about guitar amps, is that a player

generally uses more than one amp to get their tone. I'm happy that Magnatone is one of their amps, especially since we don't make channel switching amps. The artists that play Magnatone are all delighted to find a newly made amp that has the tones and familiarity of the sound of some of the most famous vintage amps that we all love. The world and artist in this case, do not need any extra gear unless it's really going to incrementally add to the experience. Many of our artists and end users are aware of how good a vintage amp can sound, but know they are fragile and scarce. So we have successfully been able to replace some very famous vintage amps, or shall I say, allow them to be retired from the road and kept safely at home.

We all know there are only about nine or so famous amp models from various brands that are the benchmark to shoot for, so the new Magnatone amps have been voiced to compete with many of these famous vintage sounds, but with such added features as our patented pitch shifting vibrato, boutique

build quality, and American-made craftsmanship. Artists have seen so many products over time, and especially some of the legendary artists we work with, that it takes a lot to impress them, not to mention get them to buy a new amp. Magnatone amps have been a wonderful surprise to all our artists and I can still hear them say, "I didn't know a new amp could sound this good!" All the artists who play new Magnatone amps buy them, as I made a promise to myself that we would sell amps to artists, and not give them away for free. If the amp is good, and in our case, great, then they'll buy it. Those players who use the Master Collection, most notably Billy Gibbons, Jeff Beck, and recently Ted Nugent, and Kid Rock like the Master Volume feature that is on the Master models. We did not want to make channel switching amps so we make the Traditional models (brown and gold) that don't have a Master Volume and then make the Master models that do have a Master Volume, and that allows us to cater to both customers without compromise.

The players who use the Traditional Collection of models, most notably Neil Young, Lukas Nelson, Jason Isbell, Kelvin



Holly, Pete Townshend, and others (there are too many to list here), prefer non-master volume amps, and the touch sensitivity, and the dynamic range on these amps really blows them away. They can add a pedal if they like to get the extra gain if they need it, but they

generally use the volume knob on their guitar and turn it down to clean up the amp tone or open up the volume knob on their guitar and then the amp "blooms" by allowing the power tubes to get the natural distortion.

Another great player who played the Traditional Collection was the late Tom Petty. On this last 40th Anniversary Tour, in his dressing room he had truly, True Dimensional Sound set up in the rehearsal room. He had a Panoramic Stereo Head with an extension 1x12" speaker cabinet on the left, while in the middle he had a 2x10" speaker cabinet, and on the right side he had another 1x12" speaker cabinet. When he played

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this year's Music Person of the Year event, where he was being honored, he played his Twilighter Stereo 2x12" Combo. Sadly, the day we received his check was the day they announced his death. What a great talent he was.

But the fact is, when people first plug into our amps, they can find their sound very quickly. We call that the "15-30 second rule". If you can't get the amp to please you in that amount of time, then it is not for you. Larry Cragg, I believe told me this quote and Larry was and remains my benchmark.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)

Magnatone amps have done very well and have garnered love and support from many in the artist and musician community. We are very pleased to be able to continue to represent the history and future of the brand. It has been really great to see all the outpouring of acceptance. I guess the good sounding amps help, too.

TQR: What were the most challenging aspects of launching a new amplifier company?

TED KORNBLOM (CEO)



Probably getting enough people to become aware that Magnatone was not just back in business, but better than before. There are a lot of amp companies that I greatly respect and for a new amp company to get the attention and retain it over time – that's the real test. We have passed this test

I believe but again, the world is a big market, and over time, more and more people will find out about Magnatone.

Because we make everything by hand and put so much attention into every detail, this takes extra time and costs more. So this limits the size of the market we can reach. The cost of making amps like we do does limit our factory output at times but we are still small and as we grow our production efficiencies will increase accordingly. Starting a company from scratch is a daunting task, but we remain focused on making the best, and not the most units.

It seems like players underestimate the importance that the guitar amp plays in their tone and they put a ton of money into buying their guitar only to use an average amp. I know the guitar is a super important and crucial part of the tone one gets, but the amp is at least half the sound, so it's important to find the right balance between amp and guitar.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)



We had many challenges—operational logistics, manufacturing, marketing plans, finances, you name it. Every aspect of the business has had its challenges as we continued moving forward as a product and a brand.

TQR: Were there any surprises along the way?

TED KORNBLOM (CEO)

Finding the right retailers that have a knack for catering to the high-end customer took a bit of time since they have so many choices of new amps to choose from. I have found a nice surprise in that some stores that primarily sell vintage gear do carry new Magnatone amps as our amps sound vintage but are not as temperamental as vintage ones that could have wear and tear inside and out.

Another thing we learned is that the consumer that buys our Master Collection models is not insistent on having vibrato and tremolo built in. They tend to like a Master Volume and an effects loop, which our models have, but the built-in effects are not always used. However, those effects do add a lot of cost to the unit. So in 2018 we will offer them with and without effects and the models without effects will be less expensive due to fewer parts. But the quality of the amp will be the same. It's sort of a win-win for everyone as we

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can pass the cost reduction on to the consumer and still offer our Traditional models with effects as we know that customer does use the vibrato for sure.

I'm also impressed by how our international sales have picked up in the past year. Prior to Magnatone originally going out of business around 1969, the company never sold amps outside the USA. So, now that we are in our fourth year we are seeing export sales pick up and it's gratifying to turn the world onto Magnatone.

Lastly, we know that people like the idea of using a power soak or power attenuator on amps, but we chose to not include this in our design. But we do like the sound of some well-made attenuators that allow the power amp of our non-master volume models to be pushed, without pushing the sound level too loud so the neighbors complain.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)

Of course, we had material issues—changing deadlines or lead times, surprise compliance inspections, and more. Did you know that Magnatone has full electrical and safety compliance? I don't think very many others can say this. We have regular factory inspections for our processes and safety component compliance.

TQR: One of the most important aspects of starting a new company is in achieving consistency. Since you must depend on products from many different suppliers - caps, resistors, transformers, speakers, etc., how have you monitored and maintained consistency so that each amplifier you build reflects the design and performance specifications you initially set?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

One thing that is for sure, all our amps sound consistent and their tone does not vary within the model. We set benchmarks for the tone of each model and keep a very high standard of quality control and part vendors. We brought into the development process early on the need for our amps to be easily serviceable. Bob Dixon of Amp Hole, Vintage Tube Amp Repair, came to visit us to inspect our products before going to

market, so we were sure that our parts were super high quality and that the amp serviceability was taken into consideration.

Larry Cragg, long time guitar tech for Neil Young, also played a critical role in using proven parts and vendors that made parts that were reliable. He is an expert on vintage amps



and knows how to spot a flaw and we listened to him closely. Neil Young has been and remains the main influence for the Traditional models. What's great about working with Neil is that he knows exactly what he wants, and is like

an arrow—he goes straight to the power and tone. I give thanks to Larry Cragg for his interpretation of what Neil wanted and his ability to put it into technical terms.

Tim Mulligan who is Neil Young's long time FOH engineer and Dave Lore have told me that many times after the show the fans ask them, "Is Neil's new Magnatone sound special and has it been modified?" They answer with a smile and say, "No, it's totally stock and you can buy the same amp as they all sound consistent." That's a high compliment because we pride ourselves on great quality parts and quality control in our manufacturing. Neil has bought about five new Magnatone amps and mostly uses the Twilighter 1x12" and Twilighter Stereo. Also they smile when answering because so much of Neil's rig is vintage and requires unbelievable amounts of maintenance, they are thrilled to have a reliable and equally worthy new amp that pleases both them and Neil.

Billy Gibbons remains our foundation of the Master Collection models as he inspired us to make models that had Master Volumes. And Elwood Francis, Billy's long time tech was a key to unlocking and interpreting the words of Mr. Gibbons. Billy has made a huge impact on the resurrection of Magnatone as he was one of the first people I told I was going to rebuild the Magnatone brand. One of his requirements was to "retain the gain, or feel the pain." So, that being said, the Master Collection models all have effects loops and Master Volumes. His goal was to make a Magnatone that did not require a pedal to get the "Gibbons Tone" as he certainly knows what is and is not needed when making a new amp today. Billy is sort of like a father to Magnatone and takes great pride in introducing Magnatone amps to many of his friends and fans. One notable friend he introduced Magnatone to is none other than a real master of tone, Jeff Beck. Jeff has been using Magnatone Super Fifty-Nine MK II's as he prefers the

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tour used a Magnatone Twilighter Stereo 2x12 combo. She's a great guitarist and compliments Jeff so well.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)

We are simply maintaining the "formula" for each amplifier. All components are from the same vendors. We are lucky to work with some great people like Magnetic Components and Warehouse Guitar Speakers. They maintain a level of quality and consistency commensurate with our standards. Of course there are the "golden samples" that we do regular A/B tests with. These are some of the first units built back in 2013 and approved by Larry Cragg (with signature). Our benchmarks are always kept in house.

CHRIS VILLANI (Production)

We have not changed vendors for any components since the day we went into production. We maintain samples of each model to reference parts, wire routing, and performance. We undergo a safety compliance inspection twice a year to ensure there is no change of parts, build, and quality control required of our power supplies.

TQR: There is a definite similarity among all the Magnatone models while each amp is also slightly different. Based on user feedback, what are the most popular features in your amps?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

The obvious popular feature is our unique pitch shifting vibrato effect. We recreated the same Varistor based effect that made Magnatone famous in the 50's, but with the expertise of engineer Obeid Khan who made the amp sound even better with the vibrato. The vintage vibrato models sounded great

extra headroom when playing into 4x12's. It's a true honor to have Jeff behind Magnatone now and you can hear them on his new DVD filmed live at The Hollywood Bowl. Carmen Vandenberg who plays guitar with Jeff on this DVD and

but not as great as the new ones and I give credit to Obeid for knowing how to make the amp sound great first and foremost, and then when the vibrato is tuned on, the tone and headroom is not negatively impacted. The early Magnatone amps were sort of hindered by the use of the varistor vibrato when the effect was not engaged. He found a way to work around this and it took real skill on his part.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)

The clean sound and the vibrato, Larry always said and I firmly believe as well, that it had to sound good as an amp first and foremost. I think we have achieved that. Our customers tell us every day how the Twilighter is the best "deluxe" type amplifier they have ever heard. With the exclusive pitch shifting vibrato—there is simply no other amp that has the full integration of the sound like we have achieved. Pedals are just not the same, the vibrato is so organic and responsive within the gain breakup of the amp, and it is truly a unique identifiable sound that everyone falls in love with.

TQR: The Varistor Pitch Shifting Vibrato has been an obvious success. Do you have plans for any new features in the future?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

We have been asked about making a pedal version of our Varistor Vibrato, but we want to keep the "magic" loading inside the Magnatone amp. And when made in stereo, it's really three dimensional sounding. We want to keep control of our Varistor Vibrato, as anyone can make a vibrato effect using a variety of parts, but our varistors are what made us unique, and so the last thing we want to do is dilute the real thing.

We do have plans to make other products that have vibrato in them, but none immediately. It is a known fact that the Roland JC-120 Stereo amp was based on the sound of a vintage



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Magnatone 280 and they make theirs using solid state technology. So, I would imagine that at some point we could make a model that incorporates that technology so they can be available at a lower price point, but the

last thing the world needs is more stuff. That's really just more of the same thing that everyone else makes.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)

New features as in new gimmicks and bells and whistles? No, we do not put unnecessary stuff in our amps. Guitarists are a very traditional breed. Even the young guys out there today, they still aspire to the tube sound and the classic amps of the glory days of rock and roll. We may have some new products, but they will always have a functional feel and design to them.

TQR: We just wrote a review of a vintage Magnatone 190 1x12 amp. In our opinion it is one of the most toneful vintage 1x12 amps ever built by anyone. It is different from a Deluxe - clearer with more headroom, while still delivering plenty of overdriven grease. It may be the best sounding 20 watt 1x12 we have ever heard. Do you have any plans of resurrecting this model?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

I read the review ToneQuest did on the Model 190 and was lucky enough to buy one and learn about it. I like the rotary selector that allows you to select frequency cuts and boosts, and so easily. Also, that amp has an additional small speaker with the 12" main speaker, which is similar to the original concept of high fidelity in the Model 280. I also like the fact that the Model 190 uses a top loaded chassis and that makes the knobs more accessible than the rear mounted knobs. Also, since the Model 190 has no effects in it, it allows us to offer amps in the Traditional Collection. Not all amps need to have effects, but when appropriate we include vibrato.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)

Ted has a huge stash of vintage Magnatone amps and electronics. We have not done any true reissues of any of the older products. We may do some in the future, but it's Ted's call.

CHRIS VILLANI (Production)

There are a lot of great "sleeper" amps out there and this is certainly one of them. This particular model is just different enough from other models we have in our Traditional Series to take a serious look at and possibly resurrect in some form, using the original model as a tone reference.

TQR: What lies ahead for Magnatone? Will you develop new models in the future? What can we expect from your company?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

We have plans to make available in 2018 a lower wattage model in the Master Collection that will be 15 watts and have



Super Fifty-Nine's

a Master Volume. It will allow us to offer a lower price than the Super Fifty-Nine models as they are both 45 watt amps. The new Super 15 will have two EL84's and a few cool features that we will show at NAMM 2018.

OBEID KHAN (Engineering)

Again, I would say it depends on what Ted has in mind as we continue to grow.

TQR: What were your expectations when you considered launching a new amp company, and how has the experience followed your expectations, and surprised you as well?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

I'm not a guitar amp designer, so I have surrounded myself with the best of the best, people who know this art better than I do. What fascinated me was the challenge to bring back to life an American brand like Magnatone and make it even better but retain the famous pitch shifting vibrato effect. I have learned a lot from other companies and the good and not so good things that have happened to them over time. I knew we all longed for products that were made in the USA and increased in value and sound as they get older, so I wanted to make products that last, not just gear that meets a price point and are copies of the work of others.

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I feel proud of the team that I have assembled and know that as a small company, we have the ability to form a relationship with both the consumer and the retailer that is meaningful and healthy. We don't over distribute and don't cut corners on quality to get a price point. There is already too much of this done today, so that's far from what my goal was with Magnatone.

I get tremendous gratification from being able to make more jobs available in the manufacturing of products in the USA and want to help propel my team to grow with the company. Too many companies expand too fast, or follow price to the bottom and that is a trap. The low end segment of the market is full of choices, so why just add more? I believe in making something meaningful, and running a business that is as transparent as possible to both the consumer, and our employees. People and talent go hand in hand and that's what makes success.

TQR: What did you learn from having so many people involved in shaping the sound of your amps?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

I am constantly humbled by the vast talent of the many people who I have been fortunate enough to take part in the Magnatone relaunch. If you build and manage the right team, you have a powerful vehicle that can move mountains. I learned from an early age by watching bands tour and seeing the many different roles that make the band successful. The bands that stay current and last are the ones that value the people who



help them along the way, from their fans, tour staff and guitar techs, to management. We are all human and in the music business we make either equipment or songs, but both make people happy and allow them to take a break from life's realities. So, making musical products makes me happy and if that makes others happy, and can create jobs, and a foundation for a solid life... I'm happy.

TQR: What's ahead?

TED KORNBLUM (CEO)

I believe that we don't need to make too many guitar amp models as that is a trap that many companies fall into and then their

brand becomes diluted and/or confusing to sell or purchase. I do have an affinity to the high fidelity sound of music and do plan to enter the high-end consumer audio market in the near future. Making something that is able to play music to listen to, and looks and sounds great is attractive to me. I see this as a natural fit for Magnatone as the company did make tube mono-block power amps, record players and coin operated radios, all before they even made their first guitar or guitar amp. Again, following the footsteps of what was done by the early days of Magnatone is where I get my insight, as I have bought over the years more than 400 different Magnatone products. So I know that this market once existed and we can improve either with tube or new technology and bring more than just guitar amps to the market over time.

Magnatone did enlist Paul Bigsby and Paul Barth to make electric guitars in the 50's and they do have their place in the history book. However, the guitar market is so cluttered with great products both low and high priced, that it seems like a market not go to at this time, but one never knows... as long as it is a quality product, dealers feel they can sell it, and there is consumer demand, the sky is the limit. Even car audio is of interest, after all we invented "stereo" and "true dimensional sound" and I could see pushing a button



on a product that expands the sound using a non-moving part to create a pitch shifting musical effect. That's where Magnatone originally came from with their vibrato as they were inspired to invent the vibrato effect based on the need to stabilize the picture tube of television sets when they were being made in the USA. Of course that was before digital and LED technology.

Next year Magnatone will celebrate our 80th Anniversary and we plan on offering a couple of limited edition models throughout the year. I have an enormous collection of vintage Magnatone products that pretty much encompasses everything they made beginning around 1937 and I'd like to make a coffee table book and publish it with a high-end publisher.

Also I have been in discussion with a number of interested parties that would like to host a traveling museum that showcases these vintage items. The 80th history book will be available for sale at that time, Magnatone: Past to Present. **TQ**

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BEHIND THE SCENES

The Making of Magnatone Amps

Super Fifty-Nine MK II Combo (Also available as head)

We wanted to make a model that was more "pedal friendly" as the MK I was designed to be specific for lower volume and not need a pedal. Billy Gibbons, for example, likes to plug-in and get his sound from the amp, and not need a pedal. We accomplished that for sure. We find the user of the MK I likes to play at lower volume and have the gain structure, but the MK



Super Fifty-Nine's MK I

II player wants to play with pedals and generally louder stage volume. Both have the same power tubes yet the MK I has two extra gain stages. In 2018 we plan on making one model that has both the MK I and MK II in the same amp and so the user is able to engage the higher gain stages by the foot pedal, included. Also, the new model will not have effects built-in, but have the effects loop as it does now. We have found the user for the Master Collection tends to not require vibrato or tremolo as much as the customer for the Traditional models that do have tremolo, vibrato, and reverb. Also, by removing the parts cost of the vibrato and tremolo in the new Master Super Fifty-Nine we can reduce the selling price to make these models more affordable with no compromise on tone and or quality. Just the elimination of the effects helps reduce cost and we will pass this savings on to the consumer.

Panoramic 2x10 (Also available as head)

We wanted to create a stereo model that was less power than the popular Twilighter Stereo, which has 44 watts, and therefore is kind of heavy. So the Panoramic Stereo is lighter in weight and is about the same weight as the Twilighter 1x12. But it's stereo and has two pair of EL84's with a preamp similar to the Varsity Reverb, which has only one pair of EL84's.



Varsity Reverb (Also available as head)



This is the same sound and design as the previous model with the same name, but had Studio Collection cosmetics. People love the amp as it has two EL84 power tubes, in the same size

cabinet as the Twilighter 1x12, and shares the same Traditional gold and brown cosmetics. It does have a full size tube driven reverb but we did not include vibrato or tremolo as these two effects would increase the cost and we wanted make this amp the most affordable model in the Traditional Collection, with all the hand-wired and point to point wiring that we used in the Studio Collection. We will retire the Studio Collection models for now as we find that it's easier for the consumer to choose between two cosmetic collections, rather than three. So we offer the Master Collection (black and silver) and the Traditional Collection (brown and gold).

Attention to detail:

- Amp Covers made by the same manufacturer who makes convertible tops for Rolls Royce. Made in the USA and bear the Victoria Luggage logo inside them. Same with the reverb bags.
- Amish Leather Handles
- 100% Cotton Bookbinding Covering
- Footswitch Included
- Remote Speed Pedal
- Patented True Pitch Shifting Varistor Vibrato Stereo/Mono
- Hand-Wired in USA
- Tube Tremolo

Larry Cragg, Larry Cragg Guitar Repair and Vintage Instrumental Rental, took a personal interest in creating the Twilighter 1x12 and Twilighter 2x12 amps. As you are about to discover they are his favorite Magnatones.



The mono Twilighter 1x12 is the amplifier of our time. It's good soft, it's good loud, it doesn't weigh a lot and it has the biggest, baddest tone ever. What

more do you want? The Warehouse Guitar speaker we used

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really helps the sound, more so than a Celestion. If you're a regular player the Twilighter 1x12 is the amp, and if you are a rock star you get the 2x12 stereo version. If you A/B them the 2x12 is just a little bit bigger and richer, but it weighs a lot and you'll need a roadie. It's actually two mono Twilighters – two completely separate amplifiers.

TQR: How much of this amp was created from the ground up?

Well, you know the first one was the Single V which is the tweed Pro with 2x12's. We really nailed that one but it weighs a lot and costs a lot. I love that amp – two 6L6's, 30 watts. If you turn that up stand back. It's just an amazing amplifier. People around here need the mono Twilighter because they can pick it up and this amp sounds good played soft or loud, it takes pedals real well, and you can carry it. It just has a big, rich sound. I have A/B'd it with a blackface Pro Reverb which is a great amplifier, and the Magnatone is about 22 watts, and it sounds bigger, richer, and even more Fendery. It does what a Pro Reverb does, only better. It's less flat sounding than the Pro. It's an amp for our time.

Gregg Hopkins, Vintage Amp Restoration, has been restoring vintage amps and creating new amplifier designs for over 30 years. He was instrumental in the development of the Magnatone cabinets. We asked Gregg to comment on the design and construction of Magnatone Amps which are truly stellar in design and tone.

TQR: Gregg, tell me what you did that impacted the sound the Magnatone amps?

We experimented with different construction methods and kind of went with what had already been done. Vintage American amps typically were made from finger-jointed pine, while British amps tended to be made from birch plywood. So we stuck with finger-jointed pine and we experimented with the size of the amps, especially with the smaller ones. Making them as small as possible wasn't necessarily such a good idea, because making them a little larger enabled them to actually sound like a bigger amp.

TQR: It must have taken a while to get that all sorted out.

Yeah, Ted had an idea what he wanted the amps to look like, and he got me going in the very early stages of designing the amps. He would ask me to make a cabinet with approximate dimensions and I would come back and tell him that we needed to know what the amplifier part of it, the chassis was going to look like. He got an understanding of that and he was able to get some very good engineers involved that could do some 3D prototyping so we would know where the speaker was going to fit with the transformers and that was very help-

ful. It wasn't such a blind process.

TQR: And you built the first cabinets, correct?

Yes, the first prototypes. I built dozens of prototypes.

TQR: How do you think they turned out?

Wonderfully. They look great and they sound great. I always cautioned Ted about not offering too many choices. If you do, each amp can become a custom order and that doesn't work in a production environment.

TQR: Well, I agree that you did a great job designing these amps. They are truly exceptional.



They are pricey, but there is a market for everything. If you want it to be an American product, and your competi-

tion is manufacturing offshore, you have to offer something truly special and unique. The Master Series cabinets for the Magnatones were very difficult to build. The wraparound grill in the front is very difficult to get right, and I think that's one of the coolest looking amps there is. It was a departure from what Magnatone had done in the past, and we made a lot of improvements in the construction of the amps. We went to the factory that actually makes the fabric that covers the amps and had a lot of prototypes made. Ted and I sat in a conference room as they ran samples.

TQR: They are true custom made amps.



Twilighter Stereo

Yes. It's a process. There are a lot of features of those amps that are not "off the shelf." The vintage Magnatones did a lot of things

very well, but I think these new modern Magnatones are far more useful for modern players. **TQ** magnatoneusa.com

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45 Watts of Brilliant Tone, Power & A Unique Signature Sound

Super Fifty-Nine MK II



The MK II is the latest edition of the Magnatone flagship amp with four bridgeable inputs, two volumes, and Bright and Normal channels.

The master volume and British 4-band tone stack create '70s Marshall crunch at any volume, and the tube buffered effects loop and Magnatone's exclusive Varistor Pitch Shifting Vibrato make this amp entirely unique. Power output is 45 watts push/pull Class A/B.

The MK II runs on two EL34 power tubes with four 12AX7 and a 12DW7 preamp tube. Choose High and Low Sensitivity, Normal and Bright. Add a Tube buffered Effects Loop, and True Pitch Shifting Vibrato switchable to conventional tremolo.

Differences between the MK I and MK II include updated solid state circuitry in the MK II, a diode rectifier, and the MK II has a much deeper single stage Vibrato effect. The MK II has four bridgeable inputs plus two volumes, and includes both bass and treble controls. Bridging the inputs blends both, creating even more varied tones.

The MK II is a worthy performance amp with plenty of power to compete with a band. Its voice is deep, rich and powerful, and like the other Magnatone amps, the bright treble tones are full and sonorous but never thin or sharp. This amp has



adequate clean tones – more than enough for clean chords and soloing at high volume, and you can also dial up thick overdriven tones with a simple touch of the volume control on your guitar.

As with the other amps reviewed here, the Pitch Shifting Vibrato steals the show, but not to the extent that it detracts from the excellent reverb and tremolo effects.

With a good guitar the MK II is capable of giving you a full range of tones and textures that span the entire working range of the electric guitar. This amplifier allows the unique character of the guitar to emerge, while subtly adding its own flavor to the mix. Sustain and overdriven distortion are musically pleasing, and the clean tones are pure and pristine. The stock ET90 speaker by Warehouse Speakers is perfect for this amplifier. With its expanded power handling and big voice coil, the ET90 gracefully handles the MK II and produces big clean and overdriven tones without a whimper. You'll love this speaker, and you'll love this amp. *Quest forth... TQ*

Lush & Rich—One of the New 'Must Have' Amps

Panoramic Stereo



The Panoramic Stereo is an interesting and toneful design in an amplifier that is worthy of recording and live performances.

The Panoramic's two 10" speakers are powered by four EL84s in push/pull mode for 12 + 12 watts of all tube stereo power. Add Varistor Pitch Shifting Vibrato (switchable to tremolo) and Magnatone's excellent reverb and you have an extremely versatile amplifier with a truly classic voice. Best of all, you needn't pay for all this groovy tone by being forced to deal with complex controls of dubious value. The Panoramic is simply adorned with Volume, Bass, Treble and Reverb with Intensity and Speed for the pitch shifting vibrato. The pitch shifting vibrato is the star of the show along with Magnatone's excellent reverb. What you can expect is a truly vintage voice with these effects, the pitch shifting vibrato being the more watery and liquid effect compared to the tremolo. It is an addictive sound that imparts added depth and a vibrato effect unlike any other.

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The amp is lush, rich and well defined, with a clear, clean tone that gradually spills over into a rich overdriven voice that is



beefy and stout from '7' and up on the volume control. Mids and bass hold their own at high volume, making for a very rich and imposing tone. However you set the controls for the Panoramic, you can expect full fidelity and a bold presence that holds up all the way to "10". And this is good.

What we like best about the Magnatone amps is their ability to excel at both clean settings and at higher volume levels. You can easily roam between clean tones and beautifully busted up overdriven tones simply by managing the volume on your guitar. The fidelity of the Panoramic Stereo is striking and not to be missed. And even at 12 watts + 12 watts this amp packs plenty of volume and presence. It has been voiced so that you needn't cut treble when increasing volume. The treble tones are smooth and musical without becoming harsh or strident. If you're in the mood for vintage tones, a beautiful and expansive vibrato effect adds depth and mystery to your sound, the tremolo is equally fine, and the reverb is full and rich. The Panoramic Stereo has been carefully voiced to create a tone and feel that is entirely unique to this amplifier, and we recommend this amp for a true vintage voice that is sure to please the most demanding players. *Quest forth... TQ*

15 Watts of the Best Signature Tones Money Can Buy

Varsity Reverb

The first time we cranked up the Varsity Reverb we thought, "This is a willin' 'plug & play" amp that you can ride with all night long." And it is...

The Varsity Reverb is a 15 watt push/pull amp powered by a pair of EL84's. Preamp tubes are dual 12AX7's and a 12DW7 with a GZ34 rectifier. Controls are Volume, Treble, Bass, Reverb, and an On/Off switch for feedback. There are also jacks for a remote speaker and a line out. The Feedback switch is a nice feature. 'ON' gives the amp a very clear and balanced tone while 'OFF' increases gain and midrange. Both are very



useful depending on what you need.

The Varsity Reverb is rated at 15 watts, but it sounds more like 20 watts easily. The tone of the Varsity is exceptional – bright, lively and loaded with harmonic overtones. It is an



inspiring amplifier that will no doubt inspire you to discover some new sounds. Never heavy and plodding, the Varsity possesses really good energy, and a feel that is very colorful and uplifting. We like its simplicity and limited number of controls – you get what you need and no more, which makes dialing in your tone straightforward and easy. And the tone of the Varsity is so rich, detailed and pure that you'll have no trouble dialing up any number of variations using EQ and the Feedback switch. Clean tones are beautifully detailed, rich and deep, and the Off position delivers added girth and overdriven sustain that would make Billy Gibbons proud. Billy, by the way, uses Magnatone amps on tour exclusively.

You really can't miss with the Varsity Reverb. A better sounding 15-20w amp simply doesn't exist, and it will complement any guitar and pickup combination you care to play through it. The build quality is impeccable – far, far above anything achieved by the original Magnatone company, and easily one of the finest amplifiers built today. If you need or just want a low power amp that gushes beautiful tones and is equally impressive played clean or dirty, the Varsity Reverb is your amp. *Quest forth... TQ*

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A Professional Rig For Tonefreaks

Twilighter Stereo



The Twilighter Stereo is one of the stars in the Magnatone line and if you are considering a new amplifier the Twilighter Stereo is

not to be missed.

Operating with four 6V6 power tubes, five 12AX7's, two 12AU7's and a GZ34 rectifier, the Twilighter pushes 22 watts + 22 watts of Class AB stereo sound through two Magnatone Custom 12" speakers made by Eminence.

The Twilighter also features Magnatone's True Pitch Shifting Varistor Vibrato switchable to conventional tremolo and the Pitch Shifting Vibrato features Mono/Stereo/Wet/Dry operation.

Controls include Volume, Treble, Midrange, Bass, Reverb, Mono, Stereo, Wet/Dry, Dry/Wet controls for the Vibrato effect, and Intensity, and Speed controls. Add two inputs, remote 8 ohm speaker jacks and Line Out jacks on the main control panel to complete the package, and you have an impressive, feature rich vintage amplifier imbued with true vintage tone.

The Twilighter is a truly professional rig packing more than adequate power, two excellent speakers that can really move some air, and vintage tones that range from clear and rich bass, to excellent midrange tones with clear treble presence,



to bright but not sharp treble tones, and still excellent bass and midrange response from the bridge pickup of the

guitar. 'The guitar' in our case was the '58 Gibson ES335 we recently received for review. The combination of this guitar and amp is one of the most memorable we can recall in a very long time. If we had to get by with one guitar and amplifier we would not complain one bit if it were the Gibson and the Twilighter and there are little if any clean or overdriven tones we couldn't easily pull from this guitar and amplifier. It is a memorable combination.

The Magnatone has an excellent and versatile tone stack that gives you plenty of options for dialing in a wide range of optional tone settings. This amplifier excels at both clean and overdriven settings, and the reverb effect is as good as it gets. You will also enjoy the Mono, Stereo, and Wet/Dry/Dry/Wet settings on the Twilighter. They simply add a wider range of tones that are all very usable. Whether you need sparkling clean tones or heavily overdriven tones with harmonic complexity, the Twilighter can do it all. It has plenty of power in reserve, but we never felt that the 22 watts + 22 watts were too much for moderate volume levels. The power and volume are there if you need them, but you aren't forced to work with the full 22 watts, which makes the Twilighter extremely versatile for a wide range of settings.

The Twilighter presents a beautifully detailed and complex range of tones that we would describe as 'vintage', while offering a range of variable EQ settings and valuable features that are both useful and creatively inspiring. Indeed the Twilighter is among the most toneful and inspiring amplifiers being built today. Highly recommended, this amp could immediately enhance your relationship with the electric guitar.

Quest forth... TQ

Artists Comments

"Magnatone is a clean machine with a bunch of the crunch!"

—Billy F. Gibbons

"The amps are really touch sensitive, just like my playing."

—Jeff Beck

"You can tell the amps are well made just based on the detail that went into their workmanship. I mean they just sound great the moment you plug in."

—Charlie Sexton

"The Super Fifty-Nine sounds like a really good old Marshall... and I can't wait to use the Twilighter Stereo in the studio."

—Joe Walsh

"I really dig your new Magnatone amps man. In fact I played the Twilighter Stereo when I was honored at the Music Cares

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2017 'Person of The Year' concert and it sounded really good."

—Tom Petty

"The Twilighter Stereo amp really jumps and has that really fat mellow sound, like an R & B rock sound, that's got this really nice airy sound that really kicks, and the tone controls don't have any of that annoying midrange sound some amps have. The Magnatone has a lot of punch with loads of headroom without even breaking up yet....The Twilighter really pushes the sound."

—Brent Mason

"I think Magnatone is going to do really well filling the shoes of some of those famous amp companies that have been asleep for years and the new Varsity Reverb does it and is on tour with me."

—David Crosby

"Congratulations on your new amp company, you did it...and you did it RIGHT!"

—Neil Young

"The sound of my Twilighter is just perfect. What else can I say...the amp speaks for itself."

—Graham Nash

"Ted Kornblum and his dedicated kickass all American team have resurrected the mighty classic Magnatone amplifier line that I started out with in 1959 and I am celebrating the greatest guitar tone in the history of the world with the Super Fifty-Nine! Made in America by American badasses."

—Ted Nugent

Larry Cragg Talks Tone

Larry Cragg has been Neil Young's guitar and amp tech since the early '70s. He has also worked with many other artists like Carlos Santana over the years, and he maintains a thriving guitar repair shop while also maintaining an extensive collection of vintage amplifiers available for rental. You could easily describe Larry as a tonefreak, and a very good one at that. He also plays pedal steel and guitar, and he knows as much about how these instruments work and how to make them sound their best as anyone on the planet. In this edition of the Quest he talks about setup tricks he has learned and developed over the years. Enjoy.

TQR: Tell us about your setup tricks, Larry.



For the nut, I use a soft pencil. Early Fenders and Gibsons had a plastic nut and that's OK. Don't

forget to lube the string tree – friction is the enemy. Big Ben's Nut Sauce has this little curved applicator that's really good to use.

Neck pocket cleanup for Fenders...For a long time they had paper tags in the neck pocket to insulate the neck from the body. They would have a couple on top of the finish and one in the finish. I want the wood to touch wood, so scrape out the tags and then I use Goof Off to clean up any residue.

Where the screws go into the neck, they make a little hump. So I take an X-acto blade and I scrape that hump off because it holds the neck away from the body, and you don't want that.

Micro-adjust necks... Do not use them. Terrible. What a bad idea.

Shims in the neck... They are rarely necessary, but if you have to use a shim, I make super thin ones out of maple so that the neck is touching wood. But that's really rare. I want wood-to-wood contact everywhere.

TQR: Your Magnatone amps are very, very good.



The Stereo Twilighter is two mono amps literally, and it's just bigger, richer and heavier. This is the one Brent Mason is talking about on YouTube. It has the midrange control where the mono Twilighter does not. They are both wonderful amps. And then the Single V is a tweed Pro that has largely been forgotten, unfortunately. It's a great amp, but you have to be able

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to play it loud enough, and when you do it is totally over the top. It has no master volume and it is my favorite amp.

TQR: Let's talk about acoustic guitars.

Yeah, I get a lot of pretty new Martins and they come with that cast bridge saddle, and the high E is coming from the middle of the saddle and it's flat, and the A is coming from the front of the saddle so it's sharp. It should be coming from the rear, the low E is coming from the rear as it should be, and the G is coming from where it should be. It's a compensated bridge saddle done incorrectly

So I straighten the neck, which leaves the high E almost laying on the frets, so I put a nice bone saddle in it that's taller and compensated correctly. The neck has to be straight. I put the hybrid bridge pins in, of which I've sold hundreds and hundreds of sets all over the world, and I use a Dremel tool on the low strings to hog off the groove a little bit above the ring right below the top of the bridge pin. That way the low E doesn't keep the bridge pin from going all the way down.

TQR: Remind me again what your formula is for the bridge pins...

Water buffalo horn on the top three strings, and ebony for the bottom three strings. Plastic that they come equipped with of course absorbs all of the sound. So get rid of those. Listen to the high E string first and then replace the plastic with the water buffalo horn and listen to the difference. And then I wake up the top. I have a machine that vibrates it, and I only do it in specific spots. You don't want to do anything in front of the bridge, because it kind of cuts the balls off the guitar.

TQR: How long do you vibrate the top?

Quite a while. You know about the ToneRite? It really doesn't do much. This is really vibrating the top. And the straight neck makes a difference. It resonates and sustains. You do all these things and it really transforms a Martin.

TQR: How long do you have the guitar vibrating?

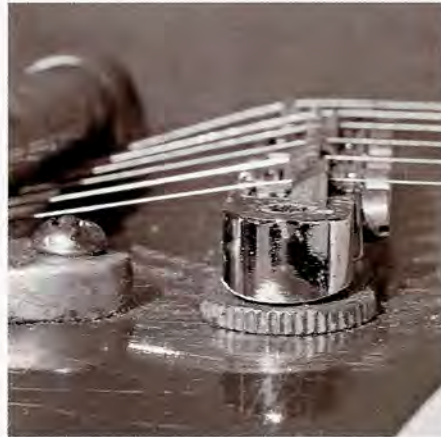
It depends, but usually about an hour. After that the tone just falls out of it. The guitar sounds less constricted. Even great old guitars can be helped by this.

TQR: How long have you been doing this?

Twenty years. Dave Matthews wanted to rent six of my guitars. I started doing this and I found that even great sounding guitars will atrophy if you don't play them. I can't play them all. So I came up with this, and the guitars sound better than ever. I've done this with mandolins too.

TQR: How long does it generally take?

A day. I charge \$120 and if I'm doing a complete setup I'll have it until everything settles down.



There are a couple of other things I wanted to talk about... Virtually every tune-o-matic bridge that comes in here is bent. I have a jig that I use to straighten them out, but you know,

it's just pot metal – it's just crap. I don't want to sound like an ad for Callaham, but it's a revelation. I got him to turn around two of the bridge saddles because I couldn't get the old ones flat enough or sharp enough.

The tone of the Callaham bridge is a little clearer and brighter and resonates more. Callaham also came out with their solid billet steel tailpiece and mounting studs and you do all these things and it really makes a difference. Without plugging it in you can hear a monstrous difference, and they don't bend. When I'm doing the Neil Young style guitars with the really low bridge saddle, a Bigsby and tune-o-matic, you can't use anything past a .052 or .053 gauge string because it has the wrong neck angle. If you have a tune-o-matic it is probably bent.

TQR: When you set the height of the tailpiece on a guitar with the tune-o-matic do you set it as low as it can go?

No! I don't like that. I don't want it cranked all the way down because it's gonna bend your bridge. I don't think you necessarily have to have a bone nut. On an acoustic guitar it is really critical and I really believe in bone. On an electric, some of the plastics they use for the nut takes a pencil lead much better. Getting a really sharp point on a lead pencil is my favorite way of lubing the strings. I use Big Bends Nut Sauce from the top three strings if I can't get a pencil in there, but you don't put it in the groove – you put it on top of the saddle. I use nut sauce and drag the string through it. If you put it in the groove it will deaden the string.

Also, with every guitar I work on I make sure the groove isn't grabbing on to the string and goes ping. Then I take 2000 grit sandpaper, cover the nut file with it and make it super smooth

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in each groove so it doesn't grab the string.



And I'm a true believer in Tri-flow. It's a synthetic oil that doesn't get gummy. I'll put a little drop

on the worm gear and the star gear as well. Friction is the enemy when tuning, and if people say their guitar won't stay in tune it's usually the nut.

Also, when you're tuning you want to do it with a Strobotuner and check the tuning right after you pluck the note, because that's how you play the guitar. I see guitars from my competition and I don't know what they are doing. When I tune a string I compare the open string to the sound of the string played at the 12 fret. Not the harmonic. You have to use a Strobotuner and check the note right after you pluck the note.

TQR: A lot of people use the Boss TU-2 tuner.

I know. They should all be crushed. You have to use a strobe tuner because the Boss tuner is too slow. By the time it figures it out it's too late to tune. You have to tune right after you pluck the string. That's how you play the guitar. I really believe in the Strobotuners, and you can even get a Peterson app for your I-Phone. Also I flatten my B ever so slightly when I tune. Tune all of your strings straight up and then flatten your B ever so slightly and see how much sweeter it is.

TQR: What tuner do you use?

I use a Conn Strobotuner that I modify. I put a 10 turn pot in the calibration, so it takes a bunch of turns to even affect it at all, but it doesn't drift. It has to be really fast, and a Strobotuner is the only thing that is fast enough. People just don't understand. Or they tune with harmonics, and if you go back to the Strobotuner it's wrong. If you played with harmonics all the time it would work, but you don't. The harmonic is actually flatter because the string has more excursion.

We have talked about straight necks before, the book says you have to have relief, and so think about it, from the 12th fret up the ski jump is on its way back up, so the angle between the string and the next fret up is getting less and less. That's why it buzzes out. When I was 14, I just found out that you could get lower action with less buzzes with a straight neck. Carlos has had straight necks all along and he lives in those upper

registers and it's really clear for him. But these wives' tales about you gotta have relief is basically bullshit. That being said, when I set up Duck Dunn's or Billy Talbot's basses I would give them relief because they spend a lot of time down by the nut and they pick really hard. If you're a bluegrass player that stays down in the first position and picks really hard I'll give them some relief.

You heard my Lindy Fralin Telecaster pickups. My theory was that I wanted Alnico V on the bass strings and Alnico II on the treble strings. That was the theory and I had Lindy Fralin make them 5% overwound. I have my Road Worn Telecaster with my pickups and brass bridge saddles. I flatten the stock bridge plate so that it touches the body all the way across, with two screws in the front to hold the bridge plate down, and brass bridge saddles are critical.



I use a super tall D pole that balances the pickup out.

That's how I set up humbuckers, too. On neck humbuckers I usually raise the high E pole ever so slightly.

Stratocasters? You hear this all the time, that you have to keep the pickups far away from the strings because the magnetic pull will change the way they vibrate. That makes sense, but in reality I've found that the low E is the only thing that does this. If you get that low E too close to the string the Strobotuner will freak out. Experiment with it some time. Crank up the low E and see what happens. If you don't have a Strobotuner you are lost. The other tuners are just too slow.

Are you familiar with the Road Worn Telecasters and Stratocasters?

TQR: Very much so.

I got turned on to them quite a while ago, and the old ones I like the best because I know they were doing this process back then and I don't know if they are still doing it. Around '07 or '08 they moved the Custom Shop down to Mexico and they would vibrate the neck and dry it out. So if you bang on the back of the neck on one of these guitars it's like iron wood, like a real '56 Stratocaster or Telecaster. It's hard. On my guitars if you bang on the back of the neck it goes through

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the whole guitar, like a real '56 Stratocaster.

I find that I have to mill the middle of the frets within the first five or six frets to prevent them from fretting out when you bend the strings. I love the shape of the neck, I like the frets, and the roll at the edge of the fingerboard, and it just sounds great. If you put my pickups in the guitar, and do everything I said to the bridge plate and brass bridge saddles, and you'll have the best sounding Tele ever, and it hardly cost you anything.

Same deal with the Road Worn Stratocaster. That guitar just feels right. I order my Stratocaster pickups from Lindy – a Blues Special 5% overwound in the neck and middle, and I have the middle reverse wound with the magnets upside down. In the bridge I have a steel pole which is really a P90 that looks like a Strat pickup. I have that overwound quite a bit – 10,500 turns and it really rocks. Then I turn the bottom knob into a master tone control, and the middle knob into a knob that blends in the neck pickup when it's normally not on in positions 3, 4, and 5.



The reason I like Lindy Fralin pickups so much... I asked him why his pickups sound so much better and he said

well, we all start with magnets, a bobbin and wire. He said he measures his pickups six times when he's winding them to make sure there is enough air in there. They are just richer, like there is an extra helping of tone in there.

TQR: It sounds as if it just comes down to technique. The right materials are not hard to come by today, but the technique is because that's something you have to learn.

Well, I'm just a huge fan of Lindy because he was my pickup winder way back when. I keep an open mind because I have different pickups coming in to be installed in guitars all the time. But what I find is that most bridge humbuckers are kind of cardboardy and go "ha, ha". Where the Fralins have a little more "er" in them and it's almost as if they have some neck pickup mixed in. It's the only bridge humbucker I have heard that actually has some tone in it – it's not just flat and lifeless. So if you get the 8K-9K set it's just hard to beat. These are just the ordinary humbuckers he makes. I like the bridge pickup fairly close with the D pole up a little bit, and the others totally flat with the cover. And I like the D pole up a little bit on the neck and the high E up a little and the rest

flat with the cover. And, I want the pickups exactly parallel to the strings.

When I have an old Les Paul Jr. I'll lower the poles and raise the coil to get it as close to the strings as possible. That's what you want. And I use Tri-Flow lubricant on guitars because it doesn't get gummy. **TQ**

Larry Cragg Guitar Repair & Vintage Instrumental Rental
www.vintageinstrumentrental.com
 415.453.3336

PROBABLY THE BEST VINTAGE MAGNATONE EVER BUILT

'59 Magnatone 190 Professional



You aren't likely to see many of these amps, but if you were to find one, we suggest you not screw around and make it yours. Of all the 1x12 twenty watt amps we have

owned and reviewed, the Magnatone has a unique and very desirable tone we have not heard in any other amplifier. Of course, it possesses a nicely overdriven voice cranked, but there is a purity of tone and a definite lack of trashy overtones that makes this amp unique. It has a beautiful sustain and depth of field, but there are no undesirable or odd overtones or trashy distortion artifacts in this amp whatsoever, even at full volume. It is clear, vivid and balanced with excellent low end, midrange and smooth treble tones, and the fidelity and depth of field are definitely unique to this amp.

Powered by two 5881 power tubes, this may be part of the secret to the tone of this amp. The 5881s in our amp are the original Sylvania's, as is the Sylvania 5U4 rectifier tube. The preamp tubes appear to be Mullards. Could they be original to this amp, too? They certainly look as if they could be. In any case, these vintage tubes are profoundly influencing the tone of the amp.

The Magnatone also has a very large (and original) power transformer for its size. When we say very large, we mean the size of a 50 watt transformer... Could this explain the unusually vivid clarity and percussiveness of the Magnatone? The output transformer is the normal size for a Deluxe, so we

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suspect that the large power transformer is contributing to the presence and

clarity of the amp. The Magnatone was clearly extremely well built. It has no replaced parts yet it sounds fresh and strong, with luscious tones emanating from the tubes as if it were brand new. The 4-way switch in channel two that offers Mellow, Flat, Bright and +Treble tones works extremely well in delivering optional tones and EQ that are very versatile and desirable. Channel One offers Volume, Bass and Treble controls while Channel Two offers only Volume and Tone. Both channels are equally desirable, with Channel Two perhaps delivering a slightly more overdriven voice and enhanced midrange tones.

The original Oxford speaker is clear and robust, and we have never heard a better sounding vintage Oxford. This amp sounds so good, that we intend to have Jeff Bakos blueprint it with the intention of building an accurate replica. Can we reproduce the tone of the original? We'll see. It certainly would be worth doing, and perhaps building a few more for some lucky players as we did with the Dearmond 1x12 a few years ago. Stay tuned, and should you happen to find a Magnatone 190, grab it! *Quest forth...TQ*

SCOTT BAXENDALE

Revels In the Builders Art

We received the Minerva guitar from Scott Baxendale, and if you recall this is a '40s era instrument. It has lots of honest wear but is in very solid shape. The back and sides are maple with a spruce top and a very nice, new rosewood fingerboard. The lower body measures 14 3/4 inches at the lower bout by 19 inches long, making it a medium sized acoustic. We say "medium sized" in overall dimensions of the body only, for this guitar is a cannon, and an exceptional acoustic guitar in all respects. In fact, we are confident that the majority of guitar players have not heard or played a guitar of this size with the volume and character of the Minerva. Yes, it's that good. Simply put, this guitar has tremendous projection and a deep resonance that is rare indeed. Its tone is more complex than the most expensive acoustic guitars made today because the Minerva was made seventy years ago. You understand I'm sure.



Acoustic guitars are a curious thing. You can spend a lifetime playing them and count a mere handful as being extraordinary. It is the confluence of exceptional wood and inspired construction practices that result in an extraordinary instrument, and few achieve this with any consistency. The Minerva reflects the most one can hope for in practicing the builder's art. It's deep, sonorous tone is complex and beautifully detailed. Resonance and sustain are free flowing with a slow decay that lingers long. It is the perfect guitar tone in

our opinion, one that is the product of both time and inspired, yet simple design. This guitar can teach you more about tone in an acoustic guitar than a lifetime of practice with common and ordinary materials. The only thing that can be done with those is to build common and ordinary guitars.

Here is Scott's description of the guitar in detail...

The guitar was unplayable when we got it. So it was impossible to assess any tone except from past experiences, which tells me that the sound is crude with a basic fundamental note with no harmonic overtones and little sustain. The neck was already off the guitar



This guitar went through our entire remanufacturing process, with additional work including a new modern adjustable truss rod and a new replacement rosewood fingerboard.

First, we disassembled the guitar by removing the neck, bridge, back binding and the back. Then, after all the old internal bracing is removed from both the top and the back, and the shell is cleaned out we begin rebuilding the guitar with our proprietary tuned scalloped bracing.

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All defects, such as cracks are repaired from the inside of the guitar while the body is apart. Once all the new top and back bracing is installed and all structural repairs are completed we reassemble the body. Next we rebuild the neck. In this case after removing the neck we also removed the old dyed pear wood fingerboard. We jokingly refer to this

wood as "Kansas Pisswood" because of the way it crumbles to pieces when trying to do any fret work. With the fingerboard removed it makes it pretty simple to install a new adjustable truss rod, which adjusts through the soundhole. So we installed a new rod and then made a new rosewood fingerboard. Once the neck is rebuilt we reset the neck to the body. In this step we go for a 1.5-2 degree back angle which give us a bridge thickness and saddle height that maximizes the drive on the top. This being roughly .350" thick bridge and a 3/16" tall saddle, and still have low-medium action, with room to adjust either up or down depending on players needs and technique.

This guitar has maple sides and back with a spruce top and mahogany neck. The new bracing is made from quartersawn Englemann spruce. The new fingerboard and bridge are Indian rosewood and the nut and saddle are cow bone. The new gears are Grover Sta-Tite vintage style gears.

I think these 40's era Harmony made guitars with the "Figure 8" body make some of the best conversion guitars and once completed I believe they compare to Martin OM guitars made in the mid 1930's, or some of the 30's Gibson LOO's. Often, I think they sound even a little better.

This price for this one is \$1950, with hard case and new guitar warranty, and K&K pickup.

If you want to experience the beautiful magic that a guitar like the Minerva creates, we suggest you call Scott Baxendale and claim the Minerva as your own. No quibbling, no needless wringing of hands, and no skeptical pessimism or certainty that you'll be disappointed. Play the Minerva and you'll know. Or not. It's up to you.

Quest forth... and stay tuned for the Baxendale makeover of our Kay Jumbo coming soon. **TQ**

baxendaleguitar.com

1972 GRETSCH 6120

Can You Play A Hollowbody?



The Gretsch 6120 is the flagship of the Gretsch line and has been for years. A full sized hollow body two and 3/4 inches deep with generous f-holes and a maple neck just under an inch thick with a smooth ebony fingerboard and medium frets makes playing the 6120 effortless. The fully adjustable gold bridge works well, and of course the Bigsby is precise and dependable. The big Grover gold tuners are designed to perform smoothly, and the

neck and fingerboard with neoclassic thumb print inlays create a super-smooth playing surface. The Filtertron Gretsch pickups define the sound of this classic American guitar, and they nimbly range from clean country to overdriven rock tones rich in harmonics and bad boy attitude. The big 17 inch wide maple body of the 6120 helps create a sound that is entirely unique to this guitar – deep, resonant and jangly with remarkable sustain and presence for a fully hollow guitar.

The Filtertron pickups define the 6120 and they insure that this guitar will sound like no other. The sound of the 6120 is big and full throated with a formidable presence. The 8.95 lb. hollow body creates a penetrating sound rich in harmonic textures, but you must also be mindful of this hollow body

getting away from you with its vivid low end and midrange tones that are vulnerable to feedback. In tight spaces where you can't get some distance from the amp, feedback on the low strings can quickly emerge. Such is the charm of a guitar designed in 1953. You'll no doubt eventually learn how to control feedback soon enough, but at first expect the guitar to be unruly and brash.



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Pickup selection, distance from the amp and your technique will influence the amount of feedback you experience. With the proper attitude, thought and practice, you can keep things under control. On the other hand, the big gold Bigsby wasn't unruly in the least. The strings went back to their original and correct pitch quite nicely. As long as you use fresh strings and stretch them when installing them you should have no problems. If you haven't much experience with big arch tops you're in for a treat. The Gretsch will spoil you with its big, booming voice and bright tones, but you must learn how to coax its considerable potential while avoiding unwanted feedback. You can do it, but this guitar perhaps more than any other will challenge you until you have learned the ropes. And you will learn. *Quest forth... TQ*

GRETSCH 6128

The Duo Jet Rocks



When you need guitar tones that are decidedly different from those you can expect from a Telecaster, Strat or Gibson with humbucking pickups, Gretsch is often the default alternative for many players. Why? Because Gretsch guitars sound great in their own unique fashion, they look good, play well, they are very well built and the cool factor remains solidly intact.

Made in Japan, we acquired a Gretsch Duo Jet in Cadillac Green for your consideration. The 6128 is a lightweight and extremely comfortable guitar to play thanks to the C-shaped mahogany neck that is uniformly carved throughout the length of the neck, and the slightly narrow and tall frets that make the rosewood fingerboard fast and easy. The body style, shape and weight of the 6128 also gives the Gretsch a very good feel, in fact, you aren't really conscious of the guitar hanging on your shoulder. The weight relieved mahogany body produces a 7.5 lb. guitar that is exceptionally comfortable to play.

We also like the narrow peghead on the 6128, the vintage style tuners, the humpback fingerboard inlays, the tall and narrow frets, the Melita bridge, and of course, the Bigsby tailpiece. All of these features conspire to create a guitar with an extremely player-friendly geometry that poses no challenges



whatsoever. There is no struggle in playing the Duo Jet. It is simply a very willin' and toneful guitar.

Of course, in many respects the Dynasonic pickups are the stars of the show. The Gretsch reveals honest clarity in all three positions with excellent sustain and moderate and subtle distortion with the AC30 set clean. The neck pickup produces a rumbling, deep tone still with good definition and clarity on the plain strings, the middle position offers the perfect combination of treble clarity and bass and midrange presence, and the bridge pickup delivers an old school trebly guitar tone anchored with mids and bass that don't disappear. At higher volumes or with the Vox set with a lower distortion threshold, the Gretsch pickups produce excellent harmonic overtones and distortion that is clear and compelling. The Dynasonics give you a lot of room to vary your tone with volume and pick attack.

No matter how we pushed and bent strings on the Gretsch, it stubbornly remained in tune. A rhythm player with a heavy hand or a lead player who relies on big string bends will have no tuning trouble with the Gretsch. Ours remained stubbornly in tune even with heavy use of the Bigsby.

What the Gretsch won't give you are huge sweeping power chords that dominate the stage like a Strat, Telecaster or many guitars with humbucking pickups. The Gretsch requires a more subtle hand that relies on the effect of harmonic overtones, sustain and textural distortion to produce its considerable rewards. Which is to say that you just don't roll the volume to 10 and bang away with this rig. The best results will be had by those who can intelligently milk the Gretsch in the manner it demands.

And what will it cost you to play a Duo Jet? The lowest price we found for a clean used model was \$1600. We found a mint '53 model with all the original case candy for \$49,000. We saw an original '53 model for \$12,999, a '55 for \$3995, and another '55 for \$9107. A clean '59 was \$7564. Masterbuilt models go for \$4500-\$5,000, and a George Harrison model might be \$2,000-\$3,000. These guitars don't seem to be as beat as some '50s vintage guitar models. Have a look, and by no means should you feel that you are slumming it by buying a recent 6120 or 6128. They are excellent guitars, very well made in Japan and plentiful. *Quest forth... TQ*

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Sound Better Play Better™

WD Music Products has created a **10% OFF COUPON** specifically for ToneQuest readers. Visit www.wdmusic.com and enter coupon code **TQWD** at checkout to **SAVE 10%** on your retail purchase. Please note: Coupon good for wdmusic.com web orders only. Not valid on wdbiz.com or by phone.

NEWS! Check It Out

Lollar Guitar/Pickups: The standard of high-quality pickups and the choice of many of the most highly respected instrument manufacturers, found on stage and in studios.

Celestion Limited: Fifty years of loudspeaker design. Celestion tone, quality and brand appeal at extremely competitive prices. For manufacturer sales enquiries contact Ralph Nichols, for retailer sales enquiries contact Katherine Moore. Celestion America: 732-683-2356, sales@celestion.com. For general information and technical enquiries about Celestion speakers past or present, contact drdecibel@celestion.com with countless professionals around the world.

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

Carr Amplifiers: Carr Amplifiers is a small company located in downtown Pittsboro, NC. With six dedicated full-time craftsmen Carr Amps kicks out some of the best-made, professional grade, and dimensional-sounding tools a guitarist can have, whether onstage or at home.

Carr Amps models are all: hand-wired using true point to point construction. Loaded with premium electronic components, i.e., Solen capacitors. Equipped with cabinets made in-house from local NC yellow pine with dovetailed joints for tank-like sturdiness.

Issued a lifetime warranty for the original owner. Made by Americans at a fair wage.

The Lincoln (19w) embraces the simple Lone Wolf vibe yet goes so much further with ultra-expanded tonal range and the convenience of channel switching. This American intrusion into Vox territory features sparkling cleans to heavy overdrive all at the tap of a toe, lush reverb available on both channels, and a two-position power attenuator for the full 18 giggable watts, or a house-trained 6 watts, and a 12" Celestion Creamback M65. The clean channel chimes along in a

Voxy way, i.e., The Jam. The dirty channel gets more into Jeff Beck's Yardbirds tone, and the boost takes that channel into Randy Rhoads/Van Halen territory, both of which are loads of fun! This is an explosive amplifier and must be heard to be believed.

Channel 1: Volume, Treble, Bass, Reverb and a Normal/Bright mini-toggle

Channel 2: Drive, Tone, Master, Reverb and a Low/High min-toggle

The Raleigh (3w) is a versatile practice/studio amp designed to deliver both pristine cleans and heavily overdriven tones at usable volumes. The clean side has startling clarity, and the dirty side is fantastically dirty! Two extremes in one amp. The Raleigh's styling pays homage to the funky practice amps of the late 50s and early 60s.

The Impala (44w) is one of those very rare amps that can do it all. From sweet glassy clean tones to pushed, in your face, American overdrive---you will find it here. The control panel is deceptively simple with its ultra wide range Volume control the star. At lower settings the Impala stays in the 60s American clean voice while taking the Volume past 3 o'clock brings in heightened preamp toothy overdrive. The Master Volume allows you to dial in the right amount of power tube thickness and overall loudness. Amazing with pedals due to its wonderful solidity and openness.

The Slant 6V (40w) offers an impressive array of legendary American and British tones, and unprecedented versatility and usable power without sacrificing warmth, clarity, and hand-built all tube tone that are the hallmark of our amplifiers. At the heart of the Slant 6V are two independent footswitchable

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channels; Channel One bridges our shimmering clean tone with gutbucket, overdriven blues, while the dual gain settings on Channel Two offer pure tube crunch, soaring sustain and fluid dynamic response. The Slant 6V can be operated at half-power in cathode bias (18W) or fixed bias mode (22W), yielding tones reminiscent of early tweed and AC-style tones combos in cathode mode, and a punchier, more tightly defined sound in the fixed bias mode. And at full power, the Slant 6V runs four 6V6 tubes split in cathode and fixed bias pairs, placing every conceivable classic tube tone at your fingertips.

The Skylark (12w) is the ultimate low-powered American inspired amp! The Skylark idea began with our love and appreciation for classic home/student 60s American amps such as the Harvard to name but one. These small student amps delivered organic tube juice and vibe at real world volumes, making them super usable and very satisfying. Our Skylark takes all this fun utility a giant leap forward.

Spring reverb, built in power attenuator, Hi/Lo Gain switch, and the extended range Presence control offer an incredible pallet of tones from the Skylark's beautiful dove-tailed cabinet. This amp goes from the round clarity of Joe Maphis to the nasty savagery of Hound Dog Taylor.

The Sportsman (19w) Fusing the insistent purity of 60s American 1x10 reverb-style amps with the more aggressive dual 6V6 power section on the late 50s, we bring you the Sportsman! Tones ranging from clear and snappy to Texas pushed twang to intercontinental grind are all under the hood of the Sportsman! The combination of Volume, Headroom, and Mid controls puts

the entire tonal palette at your caloused fingertips!

The Rambler (14/28w) is a wonderful all around amplifier. It delivers a classic American Deluxe tone with dramatically expanded clean headroom, solid bass response, and the included option of 28w Pentode and 14w Triode. The Rambler is warm, crystalline, and very seductive with a high threshold of clean tone. The Rambler is considered by many to be the quintessential club amp, voiced to meet the needs of virtually any player, all types of music, and is the perfect platform for all types of pedals.

The Viceroy (7/33w) is a little boogie amp, built small and tough, like little pit bull. This 6L6 amp is biased deeply into Class A, yielding a pushed, ready-to-jump feel, explosive and forward tilting. It distorts in a large curd Tweedish way when cranked. It's got plenty of power, warmth, clarity, and a few features. The Mid-Boost is footswitch-controlled and frees up a blast of mids for your disposal during a solo. The pot on that footswitch allows you to preset the level, like any pedal. 7/33 watts rotary switch allows you to start off the evening in 7 watts with plenty of power, setting your tone to your taste, then pop it up to 33 watts when the crowd shows up, folks get drunker, and the drummer starts playing louder, and you'll never have a problem being heard, and it doesn't change your tone when you use it. The Drive pot is a cool Viceroy feature that adds grit and hair to your basic clean tone, also adding a touch of volume. I call this the "Mick Taylor pot." Features include reverb, 7/33 watt power selector, variable Drive, foot-switchable mid-boost.

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

Celestion Limited. 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 manufacturer sales enquiries contact Ralph Nichols, for retailer sales enquiries contact Katherine Moore. Celestion America: 732-683-2356, sales@celestion.com. For general information and technical enquiries about Celestion speakers past or present, contact drdecibel@celestion.com

Collings Guitars: Bill Collings' story provides a classic example of what can be achieved with an

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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
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
davesguitar.com 608-785-7704*

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*

Fishman: Widely recognized as the premier designer and manufacturer of acoustic amplification products,

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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 micro-

phone quality. Anytime, anywhere. 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

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

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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
juststrings.com info@juststrings.com*

Lollar Custom Guitars & Pickups: What started more than three decades ago with one man building guitars and winding his own pickups has become the standard of what a high-quality pickup should be. With a product and service lineup featuring pickups for electric guitar, bass, steel guitar, and more, as well as custom items and vintage pickup repair, Lollar Pickups has been an authority in the field since 1995—the choice of many of the most highly respected instrument manufacturers and found on stage and in studios with countless professionals around the world. Every Lollar pickup is handmade with pride in Tacoma, WA, USA and hand signed by its maker.

www.lollarpickups.com

Martin the Guitar

It was a rainy night near the North Carolina seashore and the Montessori School kids assembled before a soggy campfire were restless, if not downright rebellious. In desperation, the Director of the school turned to me and said, “Harry, tell them a story.” “You mean make one up?” I took a breath and off the top of my mind said, “There was a music store where all the instruments came to life...”

The chattering stopped and at that moment I embarked on a journey called “Martin the Guitar”.

Since its publication in the summer of 2012, “Martin the Guitar” has delighted the hearts and minds of children the world over. Characters such as the parlor sized guitar “Martin”, the bullying “Big D”, and the old world wisdom of “Strada” the violin, capture the imaginations of children who love music and the world of instruments.

The story takes place in the New York music store of Mr. Beninato where every evening the instruments awaken and compete for a place of honor in the music emporium.

With the help of “Strada”, “Martin” finds his courage, and in the end learns to “believe in himself.”

Summer of 2017 brings the long awaited sequel entitled, “Martin the Guitar: On the Road”. Published by Centerstream Publishing, the book is an adventure where “Martin” guides his fellow instruments out of danger, and in the end, finds a little romance.

“Martin the Guitar: On the Road”, like its predecessor, is illustrated by Brian Barr, a graphic novelist and art professor at Georgia Highland College in Rome, Georgia.

Harry Musselwhite is an active writer and musician (he even writes for The ToneQuest Report!), and he also created a soundtrack for both books.

The online music for “Martin the Guitar: On the Road” can be downloaded upon the book’s release later this summer of 2017.

Centerstream Publishing has indicated that the “Martin” series should be a trilogy, and Musselwhite has begun writing the story at this time.

Dick Boak, Director, C.F. Martin and Co. Archives wrote: “The new children’s book sequel “Martin the Guitar – On the Road” is once again beautifully illustrated by Brian Barr and playfully written by Harry Musselwhite who has personified typically inanimate musical instruments and provided them with suitable personalities and adventures to boot. Young and old will enjoy these escapades!”

The “Martin” books can be found at all the usual outlets, and more can be learned at:

martintheguitar.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

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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

Ruokangas: Juha Ruokangas is the founder and sole owner of Ruokangas Guitars (est. 1995). He designs all the Ruokangas guitar models, and builds them together with his small dream team in Finland. Juha is one of the very few Finnish luthiers with a Master's Degree, and his guitars are regarded in various books, magazines and other independent sources as some of the

finest in the world. Juha is also a co-founder and the vice president of EGB (European Guitar Builders association) and the chairman of Guild of Finnish Luthiers.

"In the world of boutique guitars, Ruokangas sets the bar as a standard by which all of the boutique guitar companies should be measured against for making an outstanding product. I am a very proud owner of these instruments!"
- Jay Jay French / Twisted Sister

"Ruokangas guitars are well-made and they sound really sweet. They're built in what I'd call the right tradition." – Mick Box / Uriah Heep

"Last time I bought an electric guitar (Telecaster) in 1966, and now it was time to buy another one. The Mojo Grande is the most acoustic electric guitar I've ever played. This is superb!" – Tommy Emmanuel

"My Duke is an indispensable tool in my toolbox. It is an exceptionally made guitar that sounds and plays like a top quality instrument should. The feel and finish is as good as it gets. It barks and growls like a p90 loaded 50's era guitar. It will always be a part of my arsenal. I use it all the time." – Josh Smith

"Your attention to detail and sonic resonance is as good as it gets. The fret work is perfect and they almost have a bell like ring to them, even the solid bodies but especially the Unicorn Artisan. Great work, keep it up!" - Bob Willcutt / Willcutt Guitars

"The Ruokangas guitars kick ass!"
– *Matias Kupiainen / Stratovarius,*
Finland

Ruokangas Guitars, Harviala, Finland
juha@ruokangas.com
www.ruokangas.com

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 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

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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

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 Chorus and Echo. These products quickly made an impact with users and dealers alike. Visual Sound became know 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.

In summer 2015, Truetone introduced the new 1 SPOT Pro CS-7 and CS-12 power supplies that are capable of powering just about any effects device, and are usable anywhere in the world.

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

Truetone.com
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

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

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