

Wood & Steel



Spring Limiteds

Koa 300s / Cocobolo 800s

Premium GS Minis

Baritone 416ce

**Builder's Reserve
Rare European Maple
Art Deco Guitar + Amp**

Latin Guitar Grooves

David Mayfield



Letters



Going Deutsche

Two days ago I received *Wood&Steel*, Vol. 70 [Winter 2012], and it is written in German. This really surprised me. Generally, I don't need a German version, and I'm sure most of us here don't. But it shows your relation with one of your most important markets. And the decision to go that way is absolutely correct. Congratulations. Reading it will give me hours of relaxation.

Frank Kern
(XX-RS, XX-MC, DCSCM)

Guitar Sustain

I just finished reading the latest issue of *Wood&Steel* and want to thank Bob, Kurt and everyone at Taylor for actively pursuing business practices that support the environment and promote environmental sustainability. When I'm playing my Taylor guitars it is nice to know that I not only have a great-sounding and great-playing guitar, but that I am also supporting a company with a conscience. I applaud Taylor for setting an example and taking the lead in this area.

Fred Leonard

Slow Ride

Thank you for the great article "Slowly But Surely" [Winter 2012]. I always wanted to learn to play the guitar but knew I was musically challenged, intimidated and worried about failure. My wife finally bought me a guitar and then a lesson. While my progress has been slow, the article was very inspiring. We all learn at a different pace, and if you keep playing, progress will come.

Pat

Chance Encounter

I have been an electric guitar player all my life, dabbling in acoustic guitars every now and then. I was at a local

ing *Wood&Steel* for my reading pleasure. This company truly cares about me and my guitar, and for that I am truly grateful. The only question on my mind now is, which Taylor to buy next!

Fionn Closs

P.S. If this letter makes it into *Wood&Steel* and my wife is reading, please buy me the suede Taylor guitar strap.

Smooth Operation

I would like to thank your team for the great service and instrument quality. I called your PR office and asked if they could locate a Blue Edgeburst T5-C1 within 100 miles of my house. They immediately followed up with the stores in my area that had acquired this guitar. I called Accent Music in Wilmington, Delaware, who did not have any, but they came back with, "We can have one for you in a week." They then called Taylor and secured the exact guitar and model year I wanted. Everything went smoothly until I opened the case. Wow! I almost lost it. This is not only a beautiful work of art, but a smooth-playing, great-sounding guitar. I am highly impressed. I have been playing for 10-plus years and own over 15 guitars, some very high-end. I would like to thank Bob, all the craftsmen, and the rest of your team for making my new year start off very well.

Philip Oneschuk

Mixed Feelings

When I retired, I vowed to do what I'd never done throughout my life: settle down and really learn to play guitar. At that time I had an acoustic dreadnought and a 12-string. I made pleasing progress until – *Ouch!* – I sliced my left palm when woodworking. Blood everywhere. My local hospital delayed too long before microsurgery; as a result, my left hand index finger has virtually no feeling, and my middle finger has seriously impaired feeling. If "finger memory" exists – and I now definitely believe that it does – it was as if those fingers no longer knew where to go when I was playing unless I watched them closely and controlled every movement. Guitar sizes became an issue, and I lost motivation.

Several years after the accident, I encountered the GS Mini. The combination of size, shape, shorter scale, sound and comfortable feel transformed my musical life and banished my hitherto lost sense of motivation. I enjoyed playing again! Maybe not perfectly, but definitely enjoyably.

My fingers have never regained their sense of feeling. If anything, things have worsened, but the GS Mini has allowed

me to develop my own rather unconventional left hand technique, which works just right for me. I won't ever be as good as I'd hoped to be, but I *love* playing the Mini. So, thanks to Bob and the entire Taylor team. Here's one UK retiree who salutes you with gratitude.

Alan Sturgess
Gargrave, North Yorkshire, UK

Downsizing

Last year I finally purchased what I thought would be the guitar of guitars. It was a 2010 416ce [walnut/spruce] Spring Limited. As expected, I was not disappointed with its full but clear sound. Shortly after the purchase, I realized there was a problem. I had been experiencing some pain issues in my right shoulder and found that the bigger size of the GS did not feel comfortable. I subconsciously began to avoid playing it and instead would pick up the T5 or the Baby Taylor. I recently realized why, and thought a slightly smaller guitar might do the trick. I visited my local Taylor dealer, and lo and behold, they had a 412ce-LTD in stock. It took only five minutes to realize I had found the perfect acoustic guitar for me. After negotiating a trade on my 416ce, I brought her home and I am playing and smiling more than ever. Just about all the reviews on guitars are about the sound or the bling. But you don't read much about the fit – how it feels when you have it in your arms. I found that to be very important. I am so thankful that you make several great shapes in each wood combination. This 412ce-LTD has such beautiful sound in the highs, mids and the lows. For a fingerpicker who doesn't wander from the designated music room in the house and plays for pure self-enjoyment, there couldn't be a better size/wood combination. My shoulder loves it too. Thank you!

Gary Livesey
Knoxville, TN

Life With Guinnevere

In 1983, after playing guitar for a few years, I went shopping for a "good" guitar. I went to the local guitar store, expecting to try Martins, Gibsons and a few other brands, but there in the rack were three Taylor guitars, a brand I had never heard of. They were a 515, a 615 and a 555. Of all the guitars in my budget range, the 615 was the one I fell in love with. The appearance and craftsmanship were outstanding; I couldn't believe a guitar that size could be so light and vibrant. Twenty-eight years later, other guitars have come and gone, but I still have "Guinnevere." She is my lifetime guitar, the one I will never sell.

A few months ago, I took her into my local Taylor dealer for some repair work. I was pleasantly surprised, as I had actually forgotten about the lifetime warranty, which covered everything except a re-fretting. In addition, the technician registered the guitar for me, which I apparently neglected to do in 1983! Then, this afternoon, I found my first issue of *Wood&Steel* in my mailbox – another unexpected pleasure. I now feel like a long-lost cousin who has been welcomed back into the family!

I am now saving up for another Taylor to complement Guinnevere. Thanks to the great info in *Wood&Steel*, I am thinking either a 512ce or a mahogany 12-Fret. Then again, I'm also lusting for an all-mahogany GS Mini. Maybe I'll get that while I'm saving for the Grand Concert.

Thank you for building wonderful guitars and for your great service.

Dave Morse

Energy Boost

I wanted to share with you the positive experience I had in a chance meet-up with [Taylor district sales manager] Eric Sakimoto here in Longmont [Colorado]. This past Christmas I purchased a little Taylor Swift Baby Taylor for my 8-year-old daughter. My goal was to get her excited about playing music and expose her to positive energy. We had just finished up a guitar lesson when we were approached by Eric. He had spotted her Taylor guitar and asked how she liked it. She was surprised and excited that anyone took notice of her guitar! He showed her a super nice Taylor and asked her if she'd like to hold it, which she did and was just thrilled. Thanks to Eric and Taylor Swift, you now have a lifelong customer! We met with her girlfriends after that, and all she talked about was the guitar and how cool it was. She's always playing her guitar now, and soon she will be playing for friends and at school. I guarantee you other parents are going to be looking into Taylor guitars! Anyway, I was appreciative of Eric's professionalism and passion for getting kids excited about music.

Cory Dudley

Wood&Steel

Volume 71
Spring 2012



On the Cover

18 The 2012 Spring Limiteds

Our seasonal serenade revives the senses with exotic koa and cocobolo, an ovangkol baritone, and a trio of premium-wood GS Minis.

Cover photo: (L-R) Cocobolo 814ce-LTD, GS Mini Maple



Find us on **Facebook**. Subscribe on **YouTube**. Follow us on **Twitter**: twitter.com/taylorguitars

Features



6 David Mayfield's Americana Parade

The generously bearded newgrassier reflects on his bluegrass past, humor-laced performances, and recording his Taylors with vintage gear.

12 Builder's Reserve V: Euro Meets Deco

Our latest small-batch guitar/amp release pairs European maple with European spruce and embraces a vintage Art Deco aesthetic.

14 Latin Guitar Grooves

Wayne Johnson explains how to weave independent thumb and finger picking patterns together to create Latin rhythms with percussive effects.

16 The NAMM Show

We showcased a colorful lineup of guitars and artists at one of our industry's top trade shows.

22 Guitar Spotlight: The Nylons

We've put a modern twist on the classical guitar with the help of our slim, easy-playing necks. Choose from 16 models and an array of appointment packages.

28 What Are You Working On?

A look at humidity control within the factory, repairing a crack in a sunburst top, and laminating and bending Baby Taylor sides.

Departments

2	Letters	5	Editor's Note	27	Taylor Notes
4	Kurt's Corner	10	Ask Bob	30	Events
5	BobSpeak	24	Soundings	31	Calendar
				32	TaylorWare

We'd like to hear from you

Send your e-mails to:
pr@taylorguitars.com



Kurt's Corner

NAMM's Music-Making Mission

You've likely heard of the NAMM Show before, and in this issue you'll read about our presence at this year's winter show. NAMM stands for the National Association of Music Merchants and is the U.S.-based trade organization representing the musical instrument industry. NAMM is best known for the huge trade show it produces each January in Anaheim and its summer show each July in Nashville. The shows provide an exhibition for those working in the industry, such as music store owners and employees, along with the press, as opposed to a public show that's open to anyone. In terms of its scope, it is one of the largest musical instrument trade shows in the world, rivaled in size by only the Musikmesse held each spring in Frankfurt, Germany.

The NAMM Show is an exciting event to attend, with virtually every musical instrument manufacturer or distributor present displaying their newest products. The exhibit halls are full of creative, optimistic people who feel passionate about the things they've invented or produced, and are anxious to tell the world about them. There are non-stop musical performances on stages throughout the convention center, in exhibitors' display booths, in performance rooms such as Taylor's huge room, in nearby concert venues, and in the hotel lobbies until well after midnight. Many of our musical heroes can be seen performing live, and we have the opportunity to see them up close and speak with them afterwards.

NAMM does a fabulous job produc-

ing these shows, but that's far from all that NAMM does. NAMM is a non-profit organization, endowed with a mission to expose more people to the benefits of playing music, create more music makers, and grow the industry. I had the opportunity to learn more about all that NAMM does, as I just finished a three-year term on the organization's Board of Directors. It was an honor to serve on the Board, and it was an enriching experience for me.

NAMM works in many ways to grow our industry and help create more music makers. It provides grants to many organizations that teach people to play an instrument or expose people to the benefits of playing music, such as Little Kids Rock (www.littlekidsrock.org), Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation (www.mhopus.org), or Music Monday (www.musicmonday.ca). The work these organizations do, and the events they produce, all serve to create more music makers and generate more positive news stories about the benefits of playing music.

NAMM also provides a voice in Washington to those of us who are in the business of making and selling musical instruments. Lawmakers need to understand the impact of the decisions they make and the legislation they pass, and they wouldn't know their impact on music stores and musical instrument manufacturers if NAMM wasn't there telling our story and representing our interests. To help facilitate this, NAMM organizes an annual Advocacy Fly-In Event, sending members to Washington

to meet face-to-face with Congressional officials and urge their support for music education.

NAMM has filmed scores of video testimonials with musicians, celebrities, athletes and politicians who have one thing in common: they love to play music. The video spots all feature the person sharing why they play music and what benefits they derive from playing an instrument. You may have seen a few of these on TV, such as the spot by Robert Downey, Jr. You can check these out at www.wannaplaymusic.com.

Have you ever wanted to hear one of the founding members of the Doors talk about how the band was formed? Or how BB King came to buy his first amplifier? Or how Gary Hurst developed the Tone Bender? Do yourself a favor and visit the Oral History section of NAMM's website, in the Library section (www.namm.org/library/oral-history). There you'll find more than 1,000 oral history interviews with the talented musicians, inventors and entrepreneurs of this great industry. I know you'll have a lot of fun.

The executives and staff of NAMM do a terrific job, some of it quite apparent to the eye, such as the highly-successful NAMM Show, and much of it behind the scenes yet equally important. I encourage you to take a moment to visit NAMM's website and learn more about the important role the organization plays in keeping music alive and in the forefront in our culture.

– Kurt Listug, CEO

Wood&Steel

Volume 71
Spring 2012

Publisher / Taylor-Listug, Inc.
Produced by the Taylor Guitars Marketing Department
Vice President of Sales & Marketing / Brian Swerdfeger
Director of Brand Marketing / Jonathan Forstot
Editor / Jim Kirlin
Senior Art Director / Cory Sheehan
Art Director / Rita Funk-Hoffman
Graphic Designer / Angie Stamos-Guerra
Photographer / Tim Whitehouse



Contributors

Jonathan Forstot / David Hosler / Wayne Johnson / David Kaye / Kurt Listug
Shawn Persinger / Shane Roeschlein / Bob Taylor / Glen Wolff / Chalise Zolezzi

Technical Advisors

Ed Granero / David Hosler / Gerry Kowalski / Andy Lund / Rob Magargal
Mike Mosley / Brian Swerdfeger / Bob Taylor / Chris Wellons / Glen Wolff

Contributing Photographers

Rita Funk-Hoffman / David Kaye / Steve Parr

Circulation

Katrina Horstman

Printing / Distribution

Courier Graphics / CEREUUS - Phoenix

©2012 Taylor Guitars. TAYLOR, TAYLOR (Stylized); TAYLOR GUITARS, TAYLOR QUALITY GUITARS and Design; BABY TAYLOR; BIG BABY; Peghead Design; Bridge Design; Pickguard Design; 100 SERIES; 200 SERIES; 300 SERIES; 400 SERIES; 500 SERIES; 600 SERIES; 700 SERIES; 800 SERIES; 900 SERIES; PRESENTATION SERIES; GALLERY; QUALITY TAYLOR GUITARS, GUITARS AND CASES and Design; WOOD&STEEL; ROBERT TAYLOR (Stylized); TAYLOR EXPRESSION SYSTEM; EXPRESSION SYSTEM; TAYLORWARE; TAYLOR GUITARS K4; K4, TAYLOR K4; TAYLOR ES; DOYLE DYKES SIGNATURE MODEL; DYNAMIC BODY SENSOR; T5; T5 (Stylized); BALANCED BREAKOUT; R. TAYLOR; R TAYLOR (Stylized); AMERICAN DREAM; TAYLOR SOLIDBODY; T3; GRAND SYMPHONY; WAVE COMPENSATED; GS; GS MINI; ES-GO; V-CABLE; and GA are registered trademarks of the company. DOYLE DELUXE; GA MINI; YOUR TONE. AMPLIFIED; and FIND YOUR FIT; NYLON SERIES; KOA SERIES; WALNUT SERIES; GRAND AUDITORIUM; GRAND CONCERT; SIGNATURE MODEL; GS SERIES; LIBERTY TREE; LEO KOTTKE SIGNATURE MODEL; DAN CRARY SIGNATURE MODEL; DYNAMIC STRING SENSOR are trademarks of the company. Patents pending. Prices and specifications subject to change without notice.

2012 Taylor Factory Tours & Vacation Dates

A free, guided tour of the Taylor Guitars factory is given every Monday through Friday at 1 p.m. (excluding holidays). No advance reservations are necessary. Simply check-in at the reception desk in our Visitor Center, located in the lobby of our main building, before 1 p.m. We ask that large groups (more than 10) call us in advance at (619) 258-1207.

While not physically demanding, the tour does include a fair amount of walking. Due to the technical nature, the tour may not be suitable for small children. The tour lasts approximately one hour and 15 minutes and departs from the main building at 1980 Gillespie Way in El Cajon, California.

Please take note of the weekday exceptions below. For more information, including directions to the factory, please visit taylorguitars.com/contact. We look forward to seeing you!

Holiday Closures

Monday, May 28

(Memorial Day)

Monday-Friday, July 2-6

(Independence Day/Company Vacation)

Monday, September 3

(Labor Day)



A Glimpse Ahead

Matt Guzetta and I were once the entire tooling department at Taylor Guitars. Or should I say, I was, and then Matt joined me. But Matt had been an industrial next-door neighbor for years, with his own shop, making motorcycle accessories, and we shared ideas even before he joined Taylor. Soon after Matt joined us, the workload began to pile up, so we decided we needed help.

We were in the middle of some projects that seemed like they'd never be completed, so Matt called his machinist friend, Pete. Pete was running a home-based machine shop and was pretty busy, but Matt wooed him, saying that Taylor Guitars was a fun and stable place to work. He told Pete about projects we were behind on and how we needed his help.

As Pete considered, he had one question: "What am I supposed to do when we finish this machine you want me to build?" We told Pete not to worry, that we had lots of work for the future, even though we couldn't tell him what it was yet, because we didn't know.

Pete retired from Taylor a year or so ago at over 70 years of age, and he literally had to break away from the work he was doing. It turned out that there was sufficient work for him, even though when he left, the department had about 20 people working alongside him. I think Matt might be hitting the happy trail of retirement at the end of this year, but we all will believe it, and mourn, when we see it! There's plenty of work for him as well.

Which is why I'm amazed at times that I ever bother wondering what the next thing of interest will be at Taylor, and when it might present itself as a major project. The world keeps unfolding before our very eyes, even in the midst of record production and sales, alongside a fulfilling array of new designs, projects and inventions. Can I give you just a little glimpse? I know all you bass players are sitting up straight right now, hoping for news about a new bass, but alas, I'll talk about guitars. Sorry, guys.

David Hosler is at it again. He's reinventing guitar pickups. It's true, and this is something new altogether, and really quite remarkable. You know, ideas come when they come, and this one came to him probably in the night. Now we're pouring considerable resources into the idea, and we'll have something to show before long.

Now remember, these are glimpses, not announcements. My service reps will probably clobber me because you'll all start calling and asking when the new pickup is coming out, but we don't know, we honestly don't know; we still have to finish inventing it. I just thought I'd share how we keep finding new things here that are worthy to develop.

Andy Powers, who I believe to be the most talented guitar maker I've ever met, walked into my office the other day with a new prototype guitar that is an all-new body shape, and also an all-new sound. As I've explained, Andy is a fantastic player. I mean a really

accomplished player, one who knows the difference between good and great guitars. He designed this guitar to sound...well, how can I say it, perfect? It has perfectly even notes in volume, from the open strings to the 20th fret. They all work together, without beating each other up. The tone is clear, loud, harmonious and sweet. It's musical. And what blows my mind is that Andy pre-destined it to be like that, taking his theories and then fashioning them into a guitar that performed like he hoped. Yeah, he's a better guitar maker than me. I don't do too badly, but I'm happy to have him on my side.

We're deep into a guitar case design project. Cases and bags are always a big challenge as we try to keep the cost reasonable enough to not eat up any profit we might try to make from our guitar operation and yet still deliver a nice case. Look at an average hardshell case sometime and ask yourself how that can be made and sold for the \$100 price tag that's on it. The dollar constraints we have on the product make it very difficult to get the job done, so we've put our best minds on it, and together we're exploring new ground. I believe we will have something to be proud of within a couple years.

We're trickling out a limited number of ukuleles and guitar amps now as well – just enough to put something nice into the market and test the waters. We want to branch out and make nice musical instruments, so

Editor's Note

Sounds of the Season

Out here in San Diego, our consistently pleasant climate occasionally takes a jab from transplants who pine for the more dramatic seasonal changes they've experienced in other regions of the country. As a native of the East Coast myself, I understand, although, more often than not, the quibbles I hear mostly stem from missing the bold-colored scenery of fall. Winter, not so much.

Though we might not experience quite the same dynamic shifts from Mother Nature here each quarter, people who spend time here come to appreciate the incredible diversity of our regional microclimates – the ocean, inland valleys, mountains and desert – which present us with a variety of year-round outdoor options. We actually have an abundance of seasonal changes; they're just different. Wildflowers bloom in the desert each spring. Gray whales migrate along our coastline each winter. Surf swells and ocean temperatures change throughout the year.

It's not so different here at Taylor. Like the weather, there's a level of year-round consistency to our guitar production, thanks in part to people like our internal climate control guru Jim Setran, whose role we explore in this issue's installment of "What Are You Working On?" Yet we also have our own seasonal product developments that bring new guitars to the world: the debut of our new guitar line each winter; spring and fall limited editions; Builder's Reserve specials; and usually something fun each summer, too.

I was reminded of the benefits of working for a Southern California guitar company as we planned an outdoor photo shoot for this issue's spring limiteds and realized we'd be able to shoot outside in warm, blue-sky conditions, in mid-February. It was the perfect kind of day for sitting in the sun and strumming one of our beautiful new GS Minis. Wherever you live, I hope the weather has invited you to get outside and play.

– Jim Kirlin

with these we're starting very slow and learning our craft and the market at the same time.

This issue is filled with all the cool stuff we're doing right now. Guitars you can buy now, our latest work, our best efforts. Yet it seems that even while people are signing their credit card receipt as they purchase a new Taylor guitar, they often ask me what is next for us. I often shrug and say, "We'll do something of value, I promise. I just don't know exactly what the next thing is."

– Bob Taylor, President

Wood&Steel **Online**

Read this and other back issues of *Wood&Steel* at taylorguitars.com

THE WOOD&STEEL INTERVIEW

Retro Fit

ROOTS REVIVALIST

DAVID MAYFIELD TALKS

ABOUT HIS BLUEGRASS

PAST, THE ART OF

SHOWMANSHIP, AND

THE WAY HIS TAYLOR

DREADNOUGHTS SUIT

HIS VINTAGE SOUND

By Jim Kirlin

Photo by Josh Joplin

After seeing David Mayfield's rollicking set

in the Taylor room at the NAMM Show, one impression lingered above the others: This guy is fully committed to his craft. Though the set was shorter than a normal gig, and the audience atypical compared to a public show, Mayfield, a self-confessed ham since he was a kid, didn't hold back, embellishing his well-honed Americana tunes with playful, Vaudeville-meets-*Hee Haw* humor and showmanship. By the end of the set, the entire room had become an extension of the stage, with Mayfield revealing a fondness for on-stage tumbling, a knack for flatpicking solos while lying on the floor surrounded by the crowd, and an eagerness to test the weight limits of our TaylorWare counter in the back of the room.

But what makes Mayfield's stage antics ultimately work is the substance of the music behind it — strong, heartfelt songwriting and musicianship. A nimble flatpicker with a sweet, high-lonesome tenor, Mayfield is something of an Americana alchemist, adept at tapping the different strains of traditional roots music and stirring them into a rich melting pot. His songs are like heirloom recipes he has inherited and preserved, and yet made his own. From vintage rock & roll to lovelorn bluegrass ballads, his tunes have elicited waves of critical raves, and some of his biggest fans are acclaimed Americana peer-friends like Mumford & Sons and the Avett Brothers.

Bluegrass is in Mayfield's bones. His parents each played in bluegrass bands prior to meeting and eventually formed a band together. As a pre-teen growing up in Kent, Ohio, Mayfield got in on the family act, as did his younger sister Jessica Lea. The road became home after his folks sold their house and bought a 1956 Flex touring bus, which they lived in for three years as they traveled between festivals and performed together. The experience taught Mayfield the ropes both as a musician and entertainer. The family later settled in Nashville for a time before ultimately returning to Ohio, but Mayfield migrated back to Music Row to ply his craft. He scored a gig as a touring guitarist with country artist Andy Griggs, and also played bass with his singer-songwriter sister. It was through her that he met Scott and Seth Avett (the Avett Brothers), who became good friends and encouraged Mayfield's own musical pursuits. Mayfield joined the acclaimed newgrass band Cadillac Sky in 2009 and contributed substantially to their 2010 album *Letters in the Deep*, produced by fellow Ohioan Dan Auerbach

of the Black Keys. When the band members amicably parted ways, Mayfield recorded an album as the David Mayfield Parade, with "parade" serving as an apt description for the fluid cast of musical contributors, including the Avetts and his sister, who have helped bring his music to life.

We caught up with Mayfield in early February, a few weeks after the NAMM Show. He had just finished recording his sophomore DMP record at a pair of historic studios in Nashville and was gearing up for the first leg of a tour that will cover about 200 dates in 2012. He talked about how his Taylors — a pair of DN3s and a DN8 prototype — fit into the recording sessions, reflected on what he learned as part of an itinerant family band, explained the benefits of working with a shifting ensemble of musicians, and offered his thoughts on the current mainstream embrace of Americana music.

How did the recording sessions go?

Great. We got the whole record done with the exception of a few overdubs and maybe some guest spots that we'll do after this tour. We were in two studios. One was RCA B, which is the historic studio where all the Roy Orbison hits were recorded, and where Elvis recorded a bunch of songs, and Dolly Parton and Jim Reeves. We did three days there and then three more days at Quonset Hut, another famous studio where "Crazy" was recorded by Patsy Cline. It was really neat to not only be in those spaces with all that history but to use that same equipment. I sang into the same microphone that a lot of those hits were recorded on. It was pretty cool to be in there and to have vintage microphones and all this warm analog gear, and then a brand new Taylor.

That vintage vibe just suits your music so much. For some people, the studio experience can feel sterile, but in this case I would think it would be a compatible environment. Did you feel comfortable?

Yeah. I think before we got into the studio the anticipation was killing me because it is such a special space — so much greatness has been captured there that I didn't want to do it any injustice. But once you get in there, you understand why so much great music was recorded there. It's just a really great environment to work in, in the way it's laid out. Everyone's in a big room [at Quonset Hut] and can see each other, and you don't need to wear headphones to be isolated; you just treat it more like

getting a great sound as a whole, as opposed to all the separate little isolated sounds in more modern studios. So, once we got in there and the first couple songs were recorded, we knew it would be easy.

Why did you record in the two different studios?

At first we had talked about doing it all at RCA B and found out later that it probably wasn't the best room for the really loud, rocking stuff because of the layout. It would be tons of bleed onto everything because you're so close in this room. So that's when Mike Janas, who engineered the record, recommended that we go over to Quonset Hut, which was kind of RCA's arch enemy back in the late '50s when they were each other's biggest competition. That room was set up so we could get those sounds easier. We did the softer, more acoustic sounds at RCA B and the louder, rowdier ones at Quonset Hut.

Did you record with the band you had out at the NAMM Show?

I used them and I used a few other musicians as well, and some people who may be touring with me in the future. It kind of feels like a parade of musicians, which was kind of what we were going for — not making it some kind of star-studded roster, or a giant list of different people on every song, but there's a core and then lots of different flavors added.

I wanted to ask you about that because as I've listened to your music and read about your career, you've had a lot of interplay with different artists and ensembles. Do you see it as a natural part of the Americana scene?

I just like to play with as many different people as possible. I'm constantly learning from people and getting different ears on my tunes because, like a lot of songwriters, I tend to go to the same places a lot of the time because that's where I'm comfortable. So then you bring someone else in, and they may have radical ideas about my ideas, and then that takes things to a different place. If you just play with the same people, then you can end up in the same places as well. So, it's always nice to bring new people in and stretch your comfort level. Also, I just think this type of music, Americana or folk-rock or whatever you want to call it, has always been very collaborative.

continued next page



Mayfield and his Parade at NAMM

How does the material on this record compare to your previous record?

I definitely feel like it's a more mature record than the last one. On the last one, some of my songs were really old, and I feel like that record jumps genres a lot – like, this is my country song, and this is my AM radio song – and it dances around because I had all these different songs that I had been working on and none of them had really found a home, and that's kind of where I was prompted to do a record. Now that I've had a year of really solid touring and growth, this next record feels a lot more focused and more aware of a whole vision, as opposed to just a bunch of songs thrown together.

I will say in tribute to that first record that although there was

a lot of diversity, as a listener it felt really cohesive, and there was enough variation that it felt like a journey. I don't know how much you worked on the sequencing of the songs.

Yeah, I pained over the sequence for a little while. I worked on the sequence of this next record before we ever went into the studio. It was telling a story. It's not quite a concept album, but there are songs here and there that are kind of attached to each other in some way.

In the past you've talked about a couple of your favorite albums, Simon & Garfunkel's *Bridge Over Troubled Water* and Randy Newman's *Sail Away*, and made the point that the records that really stick with you feel like a cohesive whole.

Yeah, I miss the days of getting a record and lying on my belly on the floor with headphones on and just diving in and really exploring it. Now even more so with Spotify, where you just pull a record up and flip through songs a little bit or hear the single. The art of the album is being sort of lost somewhere along the way, so I really like current bands that are keeping that up.

Will you be pressing your record in vinyl?

Yeah, definitely. I would like to put it out on cassette tape, too, just to make my dad happy because he's got a tape player in his truck.

I wanted to ask you about using Taylors on the record. One of the photos from your recording sessions showed you playing what

looked like a tobacco sunburst DN8.

Yeah that's the prototype we got from Soundcheck [a staging company that supplies music gear, rehearsal space and storage]. I don't know a whole lot about it, other than that it was rosewood with a spruce top. [Ed. Note: It's one of several revoiced Dreadnought prototypes that Taylor luthier Andy Powers brought to Nashville last summer.]

How did it sound to you?

Amazing. Actually I had a very similar [other brand] guitar in the studio that my buddy had brought for me to use if I wanted. I said, "I have this prototype, so I'll see how it sounds." The other guitar was rosewood with an Adirondack top, almost a sloped shoulder design. They'd be in the control room, and I'd switch from the other guitar and grab the Taylor,

and they'd say, "Oh, yeah, that sounds good. What'd you do?" It's so funny because I come from the bluegrass and folk world. I'm not supposed to play a Taylor; I'm not even supposed to *like* a Taylor. So it was cool to have these guys there in these old studios who have recorded all these [vintage guitars] and hear them talk about how easy it is to record that Taylor because it's so even; it's just a balanced sound. They didn't have to try to move the microphone around to the right place to get rid of things.

From talking to people over the years, I've heard of other instances where artists and engineers have ghost-recorded with Taylors for similar reasons. You also had both of your Taylor DN3s in the studio, right?

I did. On the one I put the D'Addario high-strung set – Nashville tuning – so it's an octave up, and we added that on some tracks. I strung the other one with a set of flatwounds. So we kind of had this whole spectrum of tone that we could layer up acoustically. We had the rosewood powerhouse [DN8 prototype], and then we had the high-strung DN3 for sparkle, and the flatwound one for that kind of dead, thuddy sound. On one song we used the flatwound Taylor for almost the whole thing, and then on the last chorus played the prototype, and it sounded like someone just kicked some kind of amazing filter on the guitar and it just opened up.

When you use your Taylors on stage do you use the ES pickup?

My DN3s came without pickups, and I put other pickups in them, but I used the Expression System on the DN8 I played at NAMM and it blew me away. So I plan to get a DN8 as my next road guitar and use the ES with that.

I wanted to touch on your formative years and musical development. You won some guitar and mandolin competitions when you were young. Were you a flatpicker?

Yeah. When I was 13 or 14 I was going around to the different festivals in Ohio and Kentucky and Indiana just trying to get into that world. I won a few little contests, and some mandolin contests.

You also played in your parents' band as a kid. What was that like?

My parents actually met at a bluegrass festival. They were both in bands, so they had a band ever since they were together, and I think I was about 12 when I decided that I should probably be in the band as well. I kind of talked

them into it. I said, "I could play bass," and they said, "We don't have a bass." So I said, "Well, buy me a bass and I'll learn to play it," and they said, "How about this: You learn to play bass on the guitar, and then we'll buy you a bass." So I practiced and practiced, and I learned to play a bunch of their songs just on the bass strings of a Fender acoustic that my papaw had bought for me at a pawn shop. We'd sit in the living room and practice, and I'd pluck as loud as I could so they could hear me play those bass lines. I think my dad got an income tax [refund] check and took me down to the store and bought me an electric bass. So I joined the band. And my younger sister, who's now a very talented singer-songwriter in her own right, Jessica Lea Mayfield, she joined the band a few years later, and then my parents had to let the non-family members go, and we became more of a straight family band. Then my parents decided to sell their house and we bought an old bus and dropped out of school and just lived in the bus and traveled the country kind of as this bizarre gypsy bluegrass family.

What are your memories of that period? You must have met so many interesting characters.

Yeah, it was so bizarre. We went into home schooling, and you hear people say that home schooling is great but there's no social interaction for the kids. I definitely had the social scene covered, but it was always with people who were 30 or 40 years my senior and were completely crazy. We'd play at some festival or something, and then we'd have a week before our next run of shows, so some old widower at the festival would say, "Come park your bus on my farm for the week." So we'd

go out there and milk some cows, and he'd end up teaching me chords on a fretless gourd banjo. Living in a bus for three years, we had all these strange adventures. But it was great. My family was so close, and it made us all feel like we were equals, even when I was 13 or 14 years old, because the whole family was supporting itself. It's not like dad was busting his ass all day and I was home playing video games. We all were going to clubs and county fairs, working as a family, and busking on the streets of Nashville.

It must have helped you hone your performance skills. Did you learn how to be not only a musician but also an entertainer, or did that come later?

No, I definitely was a ham back then, and that's one thing I really thank my parents for. They made me aware of what an entertainer's role in society could be. My dad would say it's no different than a janitor. It's not about us. For a lot of musicians I think it's turned into this ego thing. I have no problems with ego because you can't play rock & roll without ego. But I think a lot of people forget that the audience comes and pays their hard-earned money to be entertained, and that's the whole idea for the David Mayfield Parade. It would be this almost vaudevillian, *Hee Haw*-inspired show, and when we do our full-on set there's a lot of comedy and a whole scope of unpretentious, unbridled entertainment. And my parents really instilled that in me in those years on the road with them.

Do they ever come out to your shows these days?

Yeah, if we play Cleveland or somewhere nearby they'll come. We're taping a PBS special later in February just outside of Nashville, and they might make the trip down for that. It's us and The Civil Wars.

Throughout your career, you've played with some interesting bands that have become pretty popular, like the Avett Brothers. Did you connect with them when you were playing with your sister?

I did. I was playing bass for her, and we opened for them for a bunch of shows and just kind of instantly hit it off. I think at that time they were only selling a hundred tickets here, 200 there, so they were growing but hadn't had that big Rick Rubin blowup yet. We just made good friends with them, and I actually played drums with them for a bunch of shows, including Bonneroo. I'm not even a drummer; I was just faking it [laughs]. But they've been a big help, and they played and sang a



Above: Photo by Josh Marx; **Below left:** Mayfield in the studio with a prototype DN8. Note the double pickguard on his DN3 in the background. Photo by Crackerfarm

bunch of harmonies on my last record, and when I started my own band they had me come and open shows for them.

You also have played with Mumford & Sons. What's your take on the rise and mainstream popularity of these Americana bands?

This kind of music has always been going on; it's just now starting to be more readily accepted I think in part because you really can't go much further in the world of digital pop music. I don't know where innovation is going to be unless it's just the computer writing the songs and singing them. But I think people are like, OK, after Lady Gaga, where else is there to go but back to something like Mumford & Sons, which is just four guys with acoustic instruments. They could play their show in your living room. They don't need big TV screens and

pyrotechnics. So, I think people are [feeling that] folk and Americana music are real, and it could be them doing it. That's what a lot of people loved about Dylan – he was just a guy with an acoustic guitar. That could be me, or I could be Mumford & Sons. Or even the Avett Brothers. They're not virtuosos on their instruments. It makes it seem more attainable. There's a lot of that produced pop stuff that I still enjoy listening to, but it doesn't grab me in the same way. It might grab me as ear candy or something to dance to, but it's not going to really tug at my emotions. **W&S**

For more on David Mayfield, visit www.thedavidmayfieldparade.com. You can also watch a NAMM performance clip from the Taylor room on the Wood&Steel page at taylorguitars.com.



Ask Bob

Sinker redwood, pore-filling pumice, and armrest impact

I saw the sinker redwood/Massacar ebony guitar on the back of Volume 69 [Fall 2011] of *Wood&Steel*, and all I could say was "Wow!" To my surprise, a few days later my wife commented on how beautiful it was and suggested that I sell my koa T5 and my 914ce and get one. It was the first time she'd ever noticed anything in the magazine, so I thought I'd better pay attention. My previous Taylor was a cedar-top 710ce. How would that redwood GC compare in tone to the warmth of the 710, or the transparency and clarity of the 914? Also, please explain what you mean by "sinker redwood."

Bruce Stevenson
Frisco, TX

Bruce, first off, sinker redwood is a term that all of us luthiers, not just Taylor Guitars, have coined to describe these redwood trees that the rivers up in redwood country cough up once in a while. The trees sank a hundred years ago. A storm can dislodge them, and we make guitars out of them. It's a cool thing. A GC compared to your 710 will sound, well, smaller. Just smaller. Brighter and not as good for strumming. Overall, I'd say that the sound I think of when I hear Macassar and redwood is what I like to call "low-fi" in that it's clear but in a duller sort of way. How's that? Clear and dull? Yep, that's what I said. It reminds me of some of the cool old Gibsons. And note that I said "reminds me" of them, not "sounds like" them. Compared to the clarity of the 914, it wouldn't be as clear. The main thing is that you need to compare body size to body size, and then start talking about the wood differences.

It's been said that spruce tops are best for strummers, and cedar fits fingerpickers. I play in a duo, songs like "Crash Into Me" by Dave Matthews but also Motörhead, so I do both. I sometimes strum very hard, though I like the warm sound of cedar much better than the clearer spruce sound. Are there any disadvantages regarding the cedar top when strumming hard? Could a

spruce-top GS guitar solve those "problems"? My shop doesn't have one. I could only compare an 814 to a 514 — and the 514 won. Should I take a beautiful 514 and that's it?

Bastian Schwinghammer

Bastian, take the beautiful 514 and go make music. Every rule can be broken. These are generalities that we talk about when it comes to tone. One of the big contributors to tone is what we call "bone tone," which is the tone that you bring to the guitar. Don't worry about liking a cedar guitar that most people like for fingerpicking. You can play your Motörhead songs on it. It's all good.

Bob, have you done any research on the pore-filling process using pumice during the French polishing procedure? Would it not be better to have stone (pumice) up in those pores on the open-pore woods rather than gummy, tone-deadening filler? I realize French polishing is not the best for average or professional use, but the open-pore woods need to be filled before finish can be applied. I have done some research on the Stradivarius violins. Sandpaper was not invented yet, so this is what they used, along with soaking the wood in various solutions. Is this the secret to the famous tone? This subject has always intrigued me. What do you think?

Rick H
Los Banos, CA

Yes, Rick, it would be better. Better tone anyway. So, I will agree, and if we could do a French polish finish after that, it would be incredible. But here's the deal: Someone would have to pay for that. You might be interested to know that we're working on some hand-applied finishes, very much like those you describe, which may be an available option in the future, and could be cool for the person who wants an extra pop of tone from the guitar. Now, before some readers get cranky because they think I admitted that we use gummy, tone-deadening filler in our

guitars, I didn't. The filler is really not that bad, and those are Rick's words. I'm just agreeing that something like pumice and French polish would be the ultimate.

I am not a huge fan of standard cutaways on acoustic guitars. However, I think a Florentine cutaway is beautiful. I recently looked at a 2010 Fall LTD 816ce with the Florentine that was amazing. Why doesn't Taylor make more Florentine cutaways available on standard guitars?

Brad Hennessee

Good question, Brad, and not every one gets a "good question" from me! It's like when the waiter says "Good choice, sir" when I order; I feel like I passed a test! The answer is really simple and practical. Florentine cutaways are more detailed and time-consuming to make. There's just not enough time in the day to make them. It would also raise the price of guitars a bit. The Venetian cutaway is one piece and rounded, so it's not only integral with the side, but the binding work is simple by comparison. Considering how many cutaway guitars we make every day, we just wouldn't have the capacity to piece together Florentine cutaways on all those guitars.

I was fascinated by your article about building a classical guitar and wanted to know what progress has been made on that project.

Robert Wheeler

Robert, we've made some progress in the area of "thinking," which is a way of saying that over the last eight months we haven't touched them. But we've thought a lot about them. Actually, in the practical world, we're in the process of making some tooling that will allow the development to continue, and we're totally committed to the project, so you will see it come to fruition before too long.



My sweetheart and I have a few Taylor guitars between us: a Baby, a SolidBody and a 414ce. I'm writing about this last one in particular. We play together frequently (at home, open mics, bars, jam sessions) and want to get another acoustic guitar to complement the 414's sound when we play together. Can you recommend some Taylor models that would give us and our audience a pleasing contrast of sounds?

Dave
Menlo Park, CA

Dave, if you and your sweetheart strum, I'd add a GS to your quiver. But if Sweetheart likes to fingerpick while you strum, or if you like using capos and getting high up on the neck, then I'd add a GC, as being little would be a real sweetie-pie together with the 414. So, strum equals GS, and fingerpick equals GC.

After years of fighting against your very sensible humidification advice (I just couldn't trade the sight of those beautiful instruments and spur-of-the-moment picking for ugly piles of guitars in cases around my playing area), my Road Show-purchased K26ce spurred me to give in. For a couple of years I hid that beautiful koa guitar in its case (yes, with Humidipaks and everything), but it broke my heart to do it. This week I decided to order a glass-front display case from Acoustic Remedy in Wisconsin. The AR case has a UV-glass option, an upgrade I ordered on the assumption that UV radiation can't do any instrument long-term good, but that led me to wonder about something. Since Taylor uses UV to cure its guitar finishes, might there be some particular relationship between sunlight and Taylor guitars that would make UV protection more appropriate for them than for traditional varnish or lacquer finishes?

Don Jonovic

First of all, Don, bravo for buying a humidified display case. I'm glad you realize that a fine musical instrument's primary function is playing music, not being on display. Display is great, if one takes care of the environment, so thanks for setting the example. To answer your question, the UV that we expose the guitar to during finish curing doesn't imprint any need for the guitar to be protected from UV light in its future. UV light will darken the spruce and lighten the koa, and make the guitar's appearance age quicker, as it would with any other guitar.

I have crowned my Taylor collection (11 acoustics) with a 710 (cedar top, built in 1998). This guitar is a beautiful masterpiece and beats everything I played before. The sound is very warm, clear and brilliant. The fretboard is a dream for fingerpicking. Unfortunately the guitar is without electronics. I do not want to ruin the guitar with a pickup installation in the sides, and soundhole pickups do not look very nice on the guitar. Is there any under-saddle system Taylor uses or recommends?

Dr. Udo Steppat
Frankfurt, Germany

Udo, we like both Baggs and Fishman pickups. They both have systems that do not need holes in the guitar, so that's where I would start. [Ed. Note: These other brands of after-market pickups can be easily installed by most qualified service technicians.

It's not necessary to send it to our Factory Service Center for installation.]

Two quick questions: 1) According to your "tone guide" [a visual chart created by Taylor to show the frequency ranges of different tonewoods], koa and walnut have a break-in period [for the low-end frequencies to emerge]. What is the ballpark break-in period in hours? 2) True or false: Applying fretboard oil to condition the fretboard has an effect on tone, since hydrating the fretboard would affect its ability to transmit vibrations.

John Hlasney
Flemington, NJ

John, the break-in period is a cross between playing and time. I'd have to say the first change happens within days and the next change happens years later. As for your second question: false. Oiling the fretboard doesn't change the tone of the guitar. Whatever effect it has on the tone could not be heard by any of us, in my opinion.

In September I purchased an awesome custom GC TF [12-Fret] with AA rosewood, a particularly striking sinker redwood top, and a Gothic Vine fretboard inlay. It's truly one of the most beautiful guitars I have ever seen. How much lower is the string tension due to the shorter scale, and is the top braced more lightly in consideration of the reduced string tension? If I wish to go to an alternate tuning, should I consider tuning up rather than down?

Mark Kantrowitz
Hillsdale, NJ

Mark, to be clear, let's not confuse a 12-fret with a short scale. A 12-fret and a 14-fret have the same string length. The bridge is farther back on the top to compensate on the 12-fret. That said, all of our GCs have a shorter scale than our other models, independent of where the neck meets the body, and that scale is 3/4 of an inch less than our other, longer scale. The tension is a bit less, but that tension changes the feel and the tone, so we don't want to try to compensate for that by changing the bracing, if you know what I mean. The tops on GCs are lightly braced because of the size of the guitar, more than because of the length of the string, but it all marries together anyway. You can tune up or down; they'll both work. The thing to remember is that it is what it is, and you like it

because of that. We don't want to try to make that guitar be a different guitar, or it wouldn't be that guitar. Make sense?

I have owned a lot of Taylors through the years. You guys have always been innovators. When will you release an acoustic 12-string with a neck narrower than 1 7/8, perhaps 1 3/4? Those of us with small hands need it. Also, would an Engelmann spruce top on a 12-string GS prove to be more fragile over a long period of time?

Jim Nakao
Huntington Beach, CA

Jim, first, the Engelmann. No, it's plenty strong. We make a narrower neck on the T5 12-string, and people seem to dig it. Maybe we could offer it on acoustics someday as a BTO option. Good idea. We'll consider it.

I live in Tallahassee, which is in the very northern part of Florida. The summers here are long, hot and humid. My guitar friends tell me I should never take my Taylor 510 outside in the summer (due to the effects of the humidity) or even during the cold winters. That said, while reading the latest edition (Volume 70/Winter 2012) of *Wood&Steel*, I couldn't help but notice the cover showing you and Andy Powers playing the guitars outside. Then I noticed all through the edition that the guitars are presented at picnics, truck tailgates, etc. I love it! Will my guitar sustain any damage (short- or long-term) from being played outdoors due to humidity or cold? I always keep my Taylor in its case and always inside my home or office. I would really enjoy taking it outdoors and letting it be more a part of my lifestyle.

Paul A. Posey, CPA

Paul, your guitar is granted parole this very day! Its whereabouts must be monitored, and it isn't allowed to carry a handgun or work in a carwash, but it can go outside accompanied by you as long as you return it to its rightful resting place at the end of the day. Do it now, and send us a photo of you playing it outside.

I own a 714ce and wondered if it's a good idea to run the [guitar cable] directly into a mixer and into

the board for recording. The sound man recently doing the recording for me was using a mic close to the soundhole, but I thought it might be better to plug in directly. He advised against it, but I thought I would ask if you or others have experience in this area.

Tracey McFadden

Well, Tracey, that's a big one. The most natural sound will come from using a mic. Period. So that's that. But what if you don't want a perfectly natural sound? What if you like the sound of the pickup? Then plug it in. You know what? Some people love the recorded sound when you do both. And that gives you lots of tonal control. It's music – there are no hard and fast rules, so you can experiment. But a good mic will always record a sound that is closest to what you hear with your ears when you play unamplified.

A few years back I decided to purchase a Taylor nylon-string acoustic simply for the fact that I could be more flexible with my fingerpicking. I wanted a guitar that had a wider 1 7/8-inch or 2-inch nut so I could get a little more fingerpicking room for my technique. The nylon's nut width helps me a lot, but I miss the sound and comfort of steel strings. Do you offer any steel-string guitars with a wider nut width? An electric would be even sweeter.

Eric S.

Eric, we do offer a wide neck option for acoustic steel-string guitars through our BTO program (but sorry, not for electrics), and that neck width is 1 7/8 inches (47.6mm), which would probably make you a happy guy. Anytime you're ready, we have our tools out, sharpened and waiting.

I love the photos of your guitars in the [winter] Guitar Guide issue that comes out each year, but I've always had a question about the armrest feature on some of the higher-end guitars. The pictures are usually at an angle, and I wonder how the body size and shape are affected by the addition of the armrest. Is the top smaller? Is the body larger? If it's all the same, how did you do that? A picture of the body from the lower bout end – lying flat, like taking a picture of the end pin and the battery compartment – would really help me visualize how that works. Especially one that compares a

non-armrest guitar with an armrest one, one above the other. My local stores (Russo's and Guitar Center in Omaha, NE) have never had Taylors with armrests when I've been there, so I don't know if I'll ever see one in person!

Michael Wolfe

Michael, it requires some pretty tricky woodworking. The outside of the body is the exact same size, and yes, the armrest does take away a little of the vibrating top. But they still sound great, and most people wouldn't hear the difference. And remember, like I said in response to another question, it is what it is.



Body depth of a standard maple Grand Auditorium



A maple Grand Auditorium with an armrest

Got a question for Bob Taylor?

Shoot him an e-mail:
askbob@taylorguitars.com

If you have a specific repair or service concern, please call our Customer Service department at (800) 943-6782, and we'll take care of you.

euro deco

For our latest Builder's Reserve guitar/amp pairing, rare European maple and European spruce receive the Art Deco treatment, while a neo-vintage cabinet design echoes the sentiment



Our special celebration of amplified acoustic tone continues this quarter with our Builder's Reserve V Series, as we unveil the latest in boutique-level Taylor craftsmanship with an ultra-limited guitar/amp pairing. Each Builder's Reserve offering is uniquely inspired by select tonewoods, and for this small-batch release, Bob Taylor personally secured a cache of European maple and chose to pair it with European spruce tops. European maple is lighter in color and density than the more prevalent Big Leaf maple that we typically use. As a result, it produces a slightly more complex tone, adding a splash of extra warmth to the clear, focused tone associated with maple. Similarly, the European spruce yields a distinctive sonic profile relative to other spruce species, blending the power and headroom of Adirondack spruce with a touch of cedar's warmth. The unique tonewood combination is paired with our Grand Auditorium body style, making for a guitar that will match well with sophisticated chords and fingerstyle arrangements, strummers with a firm attack, and any player looking for a fast, clear response.

Inspired by the shared European heritage of the woods, Taylor guitar designer Andy Powers revisited an earlier era of guitar-making and conjured an Art Deco aesthetic reminiscent of European design in the 1920s and '30s. Figured Hawaiian koa provides a dramatic visual counterpoint to the blond hues of maple and spruce, appearing as a back mini wedge, backstrap, armrest and binding. The fretboard and headstock inlays also feature a contrasting mix of maple and koa, arranged in a geometric Art Deco design that blends diamonds, triangles and circles in a symmetrical descent down the neck. Geometric elements also appear within the alternating koa and maple rings of the rosette.

The retro, wood-rich aesthetic carries over to the beautiful hand-built cabinet for our Expression System® acoustic amplifier. The cabinet is crafted from figured Big Leaf maple and embellished with an Art Deco "cloud lift" that extends out from each side. A contrasting speaker baffle of figured koa, adorned with three maple "fins," helps transport the amp to another era, evoking the elegant look of a vintage radio cabinet.

The Builder's Reserve V guitar and amplifier are sold as a pair, and only 50 sets will be made. For a list of dealers who stock them, along with full specifications and photos, visit taylorguitars.com.

Guitar

Model: BR-V

Shape: Cutaway Grand Auditorium

Back/Sides: European Maple with Koa Mini Wedge

Top: European Spruce

Backstrap: Hawaiian Koa

Binding/Armrest: Hawaiian Koa

Inlays: Maple and Hawaiian Koa

Amplifier

Model/Type: BR-V ES Acoustic

Power: 40 Watts

Technology: Solid State

Speaker Size/Type: 8-inch Custom Poly Cone Woofer, 1-inch Textile Dome Tweeter

Speaker Arrangement: Bi-Amp

Cabinet: Big Leaf Maple

Speaker Panel: Hawaiian Koa with Maple Fins

Right: The BR-V's contrasting wood details include (from top) a figured koa mini wedge, armrest and binding; koa/maple inlays adorn the headstock and fretboard, and form the rosette

Below: The maple amp cabinet features a triple cloud lift on the sides, a figured koa front panel, and contoured maple fins



LATIN GUITAR GROOVES

With a little practice, you can weave separate fingerstyle patterns together to create your own Latin rhythm section

By Wayne Johnson

I'm excited to share one of my favorite guitar-playing techniques: a Latin rhythm fingerstyle pattern with percussive effects. I first learned the "coolness" of independent right hand thumb and finger playing from lessons with Mick Goodrick, a jazz guitarist and instructor at Berklee College of Music, back in Boston many years ago. Since then, it seems I've always had gigs that featured solo guitar and vocal at some point in the evening – including shows with Manhattan Transfer, Rickie Lee Jones, Bette Midler and Natalie Cole – so I've put this to good use. Over the years

I've developed many different patterns, but they all have a common thread: to simulate all the essential parts of a band's rhythm section – bass, drums/percussion, and harmony (guitar) – played simultaneously.

This is a fingerstyle concept, so if you use a pick, you can lose it for now. Thumb picks are acceptable, but I prefer the sound and feel of the thumb's flesh. Although this style of comping seems to be made for nylon-string guitar, you can also apply it to steel-string and even electric guitar, with each instrument producing a unique sonic flavor. I use this concept

in a variety of situations with all of my gigs, on different guitars, and for different musical textures, not just Latin grooves. With some practice, you'll be able to do the same.

One last note before we begin. There are several details to incorporate into this lesson (although it is only two measures long). Because these details are very visual, it may be helpful to watch my companion video to this lesson now, which you'll find at taylorguitars.com (under "Lessons & Tips"). In fact, you may be able to "get" most of the lesson just from the video.

OK, time to assume your playing

position! For your fretting hand, we're going to use a basic Am7 bar chord on the fifth fret. For your picking hand, you'll want your thumb on top of the sixth string and fingers 1-4 below strings 4-1, in that exact order. You should be touching every string except the fifth. Your thumb will eventually play it as it alternates between strings 6 and 5.

This playing pattern can take a lot of repetition before you feel comfortable. If your fretting hand cramps up along the way, feel free to change chords or even let go of the neck entirely for a break, but be sure to keep your

picking hand pattern going. Since this is more of a physical exercise and you're actually trying to promote muscle memory, you may find it less fatiguing (once you start to "get" it) to watch TV while you practice. When I first moved to Los Angeles and started working on my right hand thumb and finger independence, I would practice these and other fingerstyle string sequence patterns while watching a movie every afternoon, not thinking too much but working on the patterns to develop that muscle memory. It was amazing what I was able to accomplish in a week. Of course, when you start to apply your

newly learned pattern(s) and make music, you'll want to turn the TV off and your creative brain back on! This process will be like learning to ride a bike: unnatural at first, but once you get it, you'll never forget it.

Let's look at Figures 1a-c. Here you see all three elements (guitar chords, percussive finger clicks, and bass notes) in a two-measure pattern that repeats over and over via notation and tablature. We are going to divide each measure into eighth notes, so we'll have eight beats per measure: four downbeats and four upbeats. Notice that the pattern starts on the "&" of beat 4 going into it. A metronome will be helpful as you count these eighth notes in your head or out loud:

& [: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & | 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & :]

Everything in this lesson is either on a downbeat (1, 2, 3 or 4) or on the "&" beat, an upbeat. Visualizing both is helpful for proper rhythmic placement while playing.

The Bass Pattern

Let's start with just your thumb playing the bass line (Fig. 1c). Keeping your fingers in place below strings 4-1, start with your thumb on top of the sixth string, using mainly the side of your thumb's flesh. All bass notes are down strokes. Remember, we're holding down that Am7 bar chord on the fifth fret with your other hand. Count off one measure: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &. You start the pattern on the "&" of 4 and come right back to play the downbeat (1), holding it through beat 2. On the "&" of 2 you play the E on the fifth string, seventh fret, and then come right back and play it again on the downbeat (3), holding it through beat 4. At this point, it simply starts over again. The second measure is identical to the first.

Note the rhythmic symmetry for your bass line. You play four times per measure on beats 1, "&" of 2, 3 and "&" of 4. The first two notes are A, the second two notes are E. The notes on beats 1 and 3 are sustained, and the beats on the "&"s are shorter. I'm sure you've heard this common Latin pattern before. Practice it over and over with a metronome until it's ingrained in your soul. It will be the backbone for not only this pattern, but many derivations. Next, it starts to get interesting!

The Chord Pattern

Now we're going to add our chords on top of this bass line. Fig. 1a is what this looks like. Notice that this pattern also starts on the "&" of beat 4. What is unique about this chord pattern is that it continues being played on every "&" of all four beats (every upbeat). This constant upbeat makes this pattern totally symmetrical. It does

not change. That said, I'd like to note a little detail regarding your fretting hand that's holding down the Am7. As you start the pattern (on the "&" of 4), the first chord is "tied" over the bar line to the downbeat (1), which is why that downbeat is not played. You should hold down (sustain) the chord through this beat (1) until you re-pluck it on the "&" of 1. This re-pluck is not sustained as it is followed by a rest. This is when you can let up on the chord, or "take a breath," as we say when talking about phrasing. The following "&"s are played the same way (in groups of two): first long, then short, long, short, long, short, etc. And that's the whole chord pattern.

Combining Patterns

Now let's try putting our two separate patterns (Fig. 1a and 1c) together. This is the part that's like climbing on a bike for the first time. Hang in there. You'll get it and it will be fun! We'll get to the third element, the percussive click, in a moment. In playing them together we're going to slow the process down and look at the activity for each individual eighth note. Your beginning "&" of 4 starts with both parts. Pluck your thumb (bass) and fingers (chord) simultaneously, Am7. On the downbeat (1), re-pluck just your thumb (bass) on the sixth string (A) while your fingered chord remains held down from the initial pluck. On the "&" of 1, while holding down your bass note, pluck another upbeat with your fingers (chord). Now let's insert the percussive click (Fig 1b). On the downbeat (2), continue to sustain the bass note, but take your fingers that just plucked the chord and tap them back into playing position between the strings to create a percussive sound. Often, a finger or two will make it all the way to the guitar's top as you tap, which is where the "click" term comes from. I'll cover these percussive clicks more in the companion video.

So far we've covered four eighth notes, with three individual patterns (bass, chord and percussive click) played simultaneously. Rhythmically, you're done! These four eighth notes simply repeat to complete the measure, with one alteration: the bass note (thumb) changes in this second half of the measure to the E, fifth string, seventh fret (remember the opening exercise, Fig. 1c?). Let's walk through this last half measure with the bass note change. We left off on the downbeat 2 performing the click.

Now this eighth-note pattern starts all over again on the "&" of 2 with the bass (thumb) and fingers (chord) playing together, but this time our bass note is the E on the fifth string, seventh fret. On the downbeat (3), you re-pluck

Fig. 1a
Chords

Fig. 1b
Click

Fig. 1c
Bass

Composite

just your thumb (bass) on the fifth string E while your fingered chord remains held down from the previous eighth note. On the "&" of 3, while holding down your bass note, pluck another upbeat with your fingers (chord) and finally, on the downbeat (4), you perform another click.

Since we started our measure with an eighth note pickup on the "&" of beat 4, we are now back to the beginning of the pattern, ready to start it all over again for the identical second measure. Down the line when you feel comfortable with this two-measure Am7 pattern, try substituting another chord in the second measure, such as D9. (The Am7 to D9 pattern is very popular.) From here, you can start playing different chord progressions and entire songs. You'll probably be coming up with your own derivations of this pattern as well. The only thing

to be aware of when playing different chords is the string order of bass notes. Depending on whether the root of each chord is on the sixth string or fifth string, your first degree to fifth degree bass line will either be sixth string (root/first degree) to fifth string (fifth degree), as in this lesson, or fifth string (root/first degree) to sixth string (fifth degree). When playing a chord whose root is on the fifth string, the fifth of that chord is always on the same fret (as the root), sixth string.

One final note on percussive clicks: If you grow your fingernails out for picking, and especially if you use a coating to strengthen them, be aware that aggressive "clicks," where you actually tap the guitar top, can leave very small dents in the finish. Over time it can become more visible. You can protect the guitar top in that area with a variety of non-adhesive, cling-on,

removable pickguards. If you need more information, contact Taylor's Customer Service department.

That wraps up this lesson. As I mentioned earlier, because of the specific details presented here, my companion video will provide a useful visual reference. Watching it will help you smoothly integrate these pattern elements. I'll also include extra tips, including an extended chord progression using this lesson's technique, along with several variations. Good luck and make it fun! **W&S**

You can watch Wayne's video lesson at taylorguitars.com, in our Blog section under "Lessons & Tips." You can also find him at www.WayneJohnsonOnline.com

Winter NAMM

January 19-22, 2012
Anaheim, California



The Silent Comedy on the Taylor stage at NAMM



The Wayne Johnson Trio

Taylor's 2012 guitar line came alive in the hands of our many guests

For four days in January, Taylor's annual home away from home at Winter NAMM was abuzz with music and conversation as we welcomed old and new friends and unveiled our 2012 guitar line. A steady stream of guests, including dealers, artists, industry peers, the media, vendors and other Taylor-loving drop-ins, stopped in for some hang time, blissfully surrounded by walls of guitars, including some Build to Order stunners. One of the most enticing aspects of the room is the ability to play and compare so many different Taylor models in one setting. That, coupled with our friendly and helpful staff, always makes the room a favorite destination of many.

The show opened on a sweet note, as our 814ce was named "Best Acoustic Guitar" by the music trade publication *The Music and Sound Retailer*. The awards are voted on by

dealers across the nation, and it was gratifying to be recognized by so many of our retail partners. Taylor was also recognized elsewhere at the show. One of the NAMM U Breakfast Sessions was hosted by marketing and social media expert and bestselling author David Meerman Scott ("The New Rules of Marketing and PR"). Scott spoke about the importance of engaging customers through real-time marketing, and cited Taylor-playing musician Dave Carroll's "United Breaks Guitars" viral video from 2009 as a case study. Scott chronicled Taylor's quick response on the Web, which in turn provided players with helpful information about flying with guitars.

Among our new offerings, the redesigned Koa Series and vintage-look 700 Series were big winners. The mahogany-top GS Mini also found its way into lots of hands, while our nylons

were widely embraced as they debuted their expanded range of appointment packages. On the electric wall, people marveled at the breadth of our electric line, especially the flexible options offered with the SolidBody. Taylor Product Specialists Corey Witt and Kelly Hulme handled electric demos during the show and said the swappable pickup/pickguard assemblies especially impressed players. The nearby Builder's Reserve wall was never lonely, as visitors were eager to check out our first ukulele and acoustic amp.

Our domestic and European sales team spent a lot of time with dealers at the show, and the meetings set a great tone for the year.

"This proved to be one of our most positive NAMM shows in recent history," reported Director of Sales Monte Montefusco. "Dealers were enthusiastic about our refreshed model lineup and thanked us for our efforts to keep customers excited. The majority of dealers attending NAMM grew their business with us in 2011. Like last year, there

were more hugs than handshakes."

Members of our European sales team were equally enthused about the year ahead, especially after a year spent building the infrastructure of our European headquarters in Amsterdam. They were excited to see the winter issue of *Wood&Steel* printed in Spanish, French and German – a move, they said, that demonstrates Taylor's level of commitment to European dealers and customers.

On the Taylor Stage

As we do each year at NAMM, Taylor hosted several artist performances in the afternoons. On Thursday, the **Wayne Johnson Trio**, featuring **Steve Haas** on drums and **Rufus Philpot** on bass, pumped out an adventurous blast of jazz-rock fusion. Wayne confessed it was his first live gig with the new lineup, an impressive feat given the band's nimble interplay and polyrhythmic grooves. The sonic shapeshifting veered from Wayne's Latin-flavored nylon fretwork (914ce-N) to electro-industrial space funk. Wayne played his red SolidBody Classic on most songs and noted it was the first time he played a trio gig with single coil pickups, which he had swapped out as a loaded pickguard.

Later that day, our friends from **Sixwire**, a bona fide sideman supergroup, dialed up a tight, rocking set filled with soaring vocal harmonies and well-groomed electric tones. The band played several catchy new tunes from an album-in-progress, along with a pair of cover tune medleys that have become fan favorites: one with a nod toward strong vocal harmonies (à la The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, the Eagles, the Doobie Brothers, etc.); the other (dubbed "The Beast") stitching together some of the best-known classic guitar riffs in rock history and serving as the ultimate showcase for Taylor's SolidBody pickups. Frontman **Andy Childs** talked about the band's longstanding relationship with Taylor and acknowledged our receptiveness to their feedback on our electric models over the years.

Friday brought a pair of neo-Americana roots acts. San Diego's **The Silent Comedy** played a rousing set that swelled from dark, haunting balladry to exuberant, foot-stomping folk-punk.

Steeped in traditional music but not confined by it, the band mingled traditional instruments like banjo, mandolin and acoustic guitar with electric guitar, adding quirky touches like donkey jawbone as a percussion instrument. The spirited urgency of the music connected with the crowd as they blended originals with covers that included

Tennessee Ernie Ford's "16 Tons" and "Tonight's the Night" by Neil Young.

The David Mayfield Parade (see the W&S interview this issue) kept the retro vibe going with their unique amalgam of old-school roots, drawing from bluegrass, early rock & roll, country and folk. Frontman David Mayfield was equal parts bandleader, singer and comedian, reeling in the crowd with his plaintive tenor, on-stage banter, ferocious flatpicking, and comical interplay with listeners – which culminated at the end of the set with him climbing up on our TaylorWare counter in the back of the room in a parody of over-the-top showmanship.

Saturday brought a special appearance by rocker and former Runaway **Lita Ford**, who played acoustic versions of her classic hits "Kiss Me Deadly" and "Close My Eyes Forever" joined by guitarist/producer **Gary Hoey**. Goo Goo Doll **John Rzeznik** also dropped by with guitarist **Brad Fernquist** and played a surprise two-song set featuring their hits "As I Am" and "Broadway." In between songs, Rzeznik thanked Taylor for making guitars that he said have helped the band carve out their sound over the years.

Other featured performers included singer-songwriter **Javier Colon**, winner of the first season of NBC's "The Voice," who opened with a knockout cover of Adele's "Someone Like You," wowing the crowd with his vocal chops. Colon performed a mix of original tunes from his new record, *Come Through For You*, plus other covers, ending with a soulful rendition of "Time After Time," the song he played in his audition for *The Voice*.

Closing out the day was Grammy-winning gospel artist **Israel Houghton** with his band **New Breed**, who reprised last year's inspired NAMM performance with another raise-the-raffers set. The 10-piece gospel/R&B ensemble's electrifying sound segued seamlessly from song to song, with Houghton and his band in command every step of the way. He thanked Taylor for designing a custom T3/T5 hybrid with separate outputs, which he played throughout the set.

When all was said and done, the Taylor room had once again proven to be a dynamic microcosm of the greater music world. From Bob and Kurt affably chatting with dealers and artists to players eagerly gorging on cool guitars, there was no doubt that the show had helped re-inspire the musical pursuits of many.

To watch performance clips and see more photos from the Taylor room at NAMM, visit taylorguitars.com. **W&S**



Clockwise from top left: Sixwire, Javier Colon, David Mayfield, Israel Houghton and New Breed, Houghton with his custom T3/T5, (L-R) Goo Goo Dolls Brad Fernquist and John Rzeznik, (L-R) Gary Hoey and Lita Ford

SPRING PICKIN'

**A seasonal selection
of exotic woods, plus
an ovankol baritone,
highlight this year's
Spring Limiteds**

On the heels of refreshing the 2012 line, Bob Taylor and his design crew keep the creative juices flowing with an inspired batch of Spring Limited Editions. For this year's run, ever-popular cocobolo joins the 800 Series, exotic Hawaiian koa pays a rare visit to the 300 Series, an ovankol baritone brings a unique voice to the 400 Series, and the GS Mini adds a triple-shot of fun with three premium laminate models. Look for the Spring Limiteds at local Taylor dealers. For more photos and full specifications, visit taylorguitars.com.

Cocobolo 800 Series

Models: 814ce-LTD, 816ce-LTD

Few woods can match cocobolo's assertive visual beauty, expressed through bold, fiery hues and dramatic variegation. Tonally, cocobolo is known for its volume and a deep low end that's balanced by an overall brightness, making it a favorite among players. Normally used for our Presentation Series and Build to Order guitars, this spring we've paired cocobolo with our premium 800 Series appointments, featuring contrasting curly maple binding and our popular pearl inlay design.

Front and back of a
cocobolo 814ce-LTD.
(Note: Some cocobolo
backs feature
light-colored
sapwood, while
others do not)

GS MINI

GS Mini Limiteds

Models: GS Mini Blackwood, GS Mini Rosewood, GS Mini Maple

The raves keep coming for the mighty GS Mini as it continues to redefine what a small-bodied guitar can be. A big sound, a real Taylor playing experience, and a do-it-yourself add-on pickup option already make it hard to resist, but we thought we'd up the ante with some beautiful wood veneer options, too. Choose from gorgeous maple, blackwood and rosewood laminate for the Mini's backs and sides, all with a solid spruce top.

Clockwise from left: GS Mini Rosewood, Maple and Blackwood



BARITONE KOA 300

Hawaiian Koa 300 Series

Models: 310ce-LTD, 312ce-LTD, 312ce-N-LTD, 314ce-LTD, 314ce-N-LTD, 316ce-LTD

Hawaiian koa occupies rare air among tonewoods, and for good reason: Its tone is crisp and complex, its figure can be variegated and striking, and it is among the more difficult woods to procure. Though it's normally reserved for the upper end of the Taylor line, our years of buying whole koa logs can sometimes yield sets of wood that have all the tonal character and charm of premium koa but aren't quite as figured as the most prized sets reserved for the Koa Series. That's where our 300 Series Koa Limiteds come in, offering a special treat and a great value.

416ce-LTD Baritone

We're excited to bring the Taylor Baritone-6 to the 400 Series in this one-of-a-kind Spring Limited, taking advantage of ovangkol's full midrange and bright top end. Though slightly less dense than most rosewoods, ovangkol shares much of rosewood's clarity and fidelity. This pairs well with our baritone design, producing a deep, rich voice with rosewood-like richness and clear note definition. The baritone's lower B tuning, coupled with a 27-inch scale length, make it possible to generate tonal depth with normal string tension, giving players a familiar playing experience. It's a great choice if you have a lower vocal range or favor a de-tuned guitar sound.



L-R: 314ce-LTD, 416ce-LTD Baritone

Nylon Mesh

Our hybrid nylon-string models blend the best of both worlds: evocative classical tone and an easy-playing Taylor neck. For 2012, they join our steel-strings in an expanded array of models and appointments.

By Jim Kirlin

814ce-N

Bob Taylor has built a flourishing guitar-making enterprise by following a deceptively simple premise: remove the barriers to a good playing experience. He began with a fresh take on the steel-string acoustic, delivering slim, comfortable necks with the playability of an electric guitar. Years later, our nylon-string models arrived in response to a similar crossover goal: to rethink the traditional classical guitar with the contemporary steel-string player in mind. Once again, we retooled the neck, splitting the difference between a wide, two-inch classical neck and the standard 1-3/4-inch neck found on most of our steel-strings, opting for a 1-7/8-inch width and our comfortably thin profile. We also introduced a gentle 20-inch fretboard radius

(a classical fretboard is typically flat, while our steel-string acoustics have a 15-inch radius). The radius helps push the middle strings into a player's hand, making it easier to fret cleanly, particularly on barre chords. Another modern feature was a cutaway, which steel-string players had grown to appreciate for the access it offered to the upper register. Lastly, we added onboard electronics, making it easier to bring that nylon tone to a performance environment. The end result was a design that invited more players to explore a classical guitar's unique tonal flavors with the familiar feel of a Taylor neck.

These days, the nylon acoustic sound is more popular than ever, across a full spectrum of musical genres. Singer-songwriters including

Jason Mraz, blazing flatpickers such as Zac Brown, and scores of touring sidemen have embraced our nylon-strings as an expressive tool that delivers a range of sonic textures, from mellow to dramatically percussive. For the guitarist who's on the hunt for new tonal flavors, a nylon-string is an essential addition to one's musical quiver. For people with hand ailments, the lighter string tension reduces hand strain. And for those of us who often fall into the rut of familiar playing patterns, a nylon-string can make those well-tread chord progressions – or even a simple arpeggio – come alive in fresh, exciting ways.

This year brings the deeper integration of our nylon-string models with their steel-string siblings throughout our acoustic/electric line. We began

by expanding our selection, doubling our available models to 16 and adding new tonewood pairings to the mix. Now our 300 through 900 Series feature Grand Auditorium and Grand Concert nylon-string models, while our 200 Series offers both a cutaway and non-cutaway GA. New wood choices include mahogany/cedar (500 Series), rosewood/Engelmann spruce (700 Series), and ovangkol/Sitka spruce (400 Series).

By weaving our nylons into different series, we've also diversified the visual appeal. Our 600 Series offers a vibrant palette of color options. The 700 Series presents a dark, vintage look. The 800 Series brings a splash of contemporary style. Our 900 Series exudes upscale sophistication. For players on a budget,

the rosewood laminate 200 Series is a wonderful option.

The next time you're at your local music store, try one and see where it takes you. Whether you've always wanted to learn "Classical Gas," jazz up your repertoire with some Jobim, or cover your favorite Willie Nelson tune, our nylons promise to make it easier to get there. **W&S**

All Taylor nylon-string models come with ES-N® electronics. As a standard model option, any nylon-string guitar can be ordered without a cutaway at no additional charge. Top substitutions are also available on the 500-900 Series.



L-R: 914ce-N, 712ce-N, 612ce-N

Soundings

Strait Talk

When country legend **George Strait** (custom cocobolo 910) reached out to us late last year to order a custom Taylor guitar as a Christmas gift for his songwriter son, Bubba, we couldn't resist asking the elder Strait what he remembered about his first Taylor playing experience.

"It was so much easier to play and had such a great tone," he shared. "The neck just felt right. My hands aren't the greatest for getting around a guitar, but it all seems easier on my Taylors."

After George and Bubba co-wrote the hit tune "Living for the Night" from Strait's 2009 release, *Twang*, the two ramped up their shared tunesmithing, collaborating on seven songs from George's latest album, *Here for a Good Time*. George says his favorite part about the co-writing experience has been seeing the creative side of his son fully emerge.

"For so long he was focused on his rodeo career, which I also loved, but I always bounced ideas off him just to get a feel for what his tastes were in music," he elaborates. "He listened to everything but would always come back to country music. Maybe he had a little bias there, but we tried not to discourage him from listening to other kinds of music. In the end, though, to be able to share and create songs together is a very rewarding thing for me. I've been fortunate as a parent to be able to share in his love of rodeo and songwriting."

With Strait's amazing track record of hit songs, we asked what advice he might offer an aspiring country artist.

"Stay focused. Don't let outside influences affect your choices, whether it be material or other career decisions. Take what you can get out of them, but in the end make your own choices. If they're good, it's very rewarding. If they're bad, you file it away, live with it, and move on."

Strait launched a tour in January and in March celebrated the 30th anniversary of his annual Team Roping Classic rodeo event. He says he plans to do another record sometime after that, but that it's not set in stone. "In the meantime," he says, "I'll work in a lot of fishing and golf!"

www.georgestrait.com

Online Meet-up

Singer-songwriter **Tyrone Wells** (GSRs, 814ce, 810, 714ce) recently

kicked off a cool online promotion to showcase his new release, *Where We Meet*, and engage his passionate fan base. Wells and his label, Position Music, are asking fans to cover "Freedom," the first track from the album, and upload their version onto YouTube.com. (He posted his original rendition of the song on YouTube with the lyrics and guitar chords.) The winner, as selected by the label, will receive an opening slot for Wells at an upcoming show, a GS Mini guitar, backstage passes, tickets and more, with additional prizes given to second- through fifth-place entrants, all to encourage fans to express themselves.

At press time, the contest had generated more than 50 videos, and Wells was preparing for the release of the new record, his fifth studio effort, debuting songs from the album at the South By Southwest Music Festival in Austin, Texas in mid-March. From there, he and his band were headed out on a multi-city headlining tour across the U.S.

www.tyronewells.com

Gray's Brighter Day

We recently caught up with rising UK-bred singer-songwriter **Sam Gray** (510ce, 710ce), who's been juggling several high-profile music projects.

Set to kick off a tour around the UK, Gray has been out promoting his latest album, *Brighter Day*, and recently debuted a video for his new single "All of My Life." Gray also recorded an in-studio session at the BBC's Radio 2, and is featured on Q Radio and Bauer playlists. After spending time in Germany writing for *The Voice*, he planned to head back to work with Katy Waissel and Abi Phillips from *The X Factor* and *Hollyoaks*, a UK-based TV soap opera. You can learn more about Gray and see the video for "All of My Life" at www.samgray.co.uk.

Heard it Through the Gripevine

Add Internet entrepreneur and author to the resume of Halifax, Nova Scotia-based singer/songwriter **Dave Carroll**. Carroll, you may recall, shot to fame in 2009 after using a now

famous song and video-gone-viral, "United Breaks Guitars," to detail his frustrating customer experience after United Airlines caused irreparable damage to his beloved **710ce**. Now Carroll is using his voice to give other consumers a voice. A new website he co-founded, Gripevine.com, is a first-of-its kind social media platform for collecting consumer complaints and seeking resolution with the companies involved. Visitors to the site, including representatives of the reported companies, can browse by company and complaint type, and respond directly to their customers or leave a comment to seek resolution.

"At the end of the day, a company knows exactly what they need to do in order to get the complaint resolved to the satisfaction of the consumer," says Carroll. "It's just a matter of bringing it to their attention in an informative, precise and direct manner. We are in a unique position to level the playing field between consumers and companies by ending the negative stereotypes that are often unfortunately associated with customer service."

Meanwhile, Carroll has finished writing his first book, "United Breaks Guitars: The Power of One Voice in the Age of Social Media," which will be published by California-based Hay House Publishing in May. The book will detail Carroll's United experience, cover his time on Capitol Hill lobbying for musician's travel rights, and chronicle the way he parlayed his social media savvy into consulting work for various companies to help them improve their customer service functions.

www.davecarroll.com

World Figure

In our fall issue, we announced the Guitar Center Singer/Songwriter contest that Taylor and other industry players were sponsoring to give one artist a career-boosting opportunity: a three-song EP with Grammy-winning producer **John Shanks** (914ce, **Bartone 8-String, 855ce**), plus studio time, cash and gear, including an **814ce** for the Grand Prize winner and 10 GS Minis for the 10 finalists. The contest generated nearly 17,000 submissions and was whittled down to a final pool of 200, from which 10 were hand-selected by Shanks to perform at an industry showcase at Hollywood's Hotel Café venue in mid-February.

Shanks, who has worked with the likes of Kelly Clarkson, Bon Jovi, Michelle Branch, Keith Urban, Stevie Nicks and Van Halen, told us he was seeking to select a winner with more

than just flash and sizzle, someone whose music made a visceral connection.

Our own Chalise Zolezzi from Taylor's marketing team attended the showcase, which was emceed by musical tastemaker **Nic Harcourt**, the longtime Music Director of Los Angeles radio station KCRW and former host of the influential program *Morning Becomes Eclectic*. Among the finalists were Taylor strummers **Sarah Bella** (GS Mini), **Josh Doyle** (GS Mini with ES-Go pickup), **Ashlee Williss** (Custom cocobolo GA), **Caleb McGinn** (310ce) and **Madilyn World** (GS Mini), each of whom performed original songs for the packed room, with Shanks on hand to crown the winner.

"All the singers deserved to be here," Shanks said after taking in the performances. "What I loved about everyone is that their music is very timely."

In the end, he chose Josh Doyle, a husband and father of two originally from England now based in Antioch, Tennessee, who had performed his song "I Figured the World Out" on the GS Mini he won as a finalist. Doyle said afterward that he'd been concerned about playing his GS Mini into a mic in the venue, so he purchased and installed the ES-Go pickup the day before the show.

While Doyle says he has always been confident in his music, without the support of a label, he felt his reach was limited. He hopes that winning the contest will help change that.

"I work a job that barely pays the bills, so not only does this prize mean money, which will help with that burden, it will also help me find ways to get my music out there to more people," he said afterwards. "Plus, the studio time with John Shanks will get me on the radar of business folks and get me the high-quality recordings I've been craving to showcase my songs."

As the winner, Doyle receives an **814ce** and quality gear from other contest sponsors. "All I really, really wanted, no word of a lie, was to win the Taylor GS Mini," he shares. "I was playing an acoustic with issues and was too broke to buy another one. It's an awesome guitar. It is very easy to play, which means I can do more with it chord-wise, or picking-wise. The sound of it is very rich and full. Also, I tour the UK when I can since I have a lot of fans over there... it easily stores in the overhead compartment of a plane even with other bags up there, and even on domestic flights there's no added stress trying to find room."

In the coming months, Doyle will be recording his three-song EP with Shanks. You can watch Doyle's performance of "I Figured the World Out" on

the Taylor website in our media gallery. www.joshdoyle.com

Covert Operation: Time Machine Guitar

As some Taylor owners can appreciate, a custom Taylor guitar is capable of transporting us to a place no other guitar can. Then there's **Ralph Covert**'s time machine guitar. Covert (514ce, 614ce), a Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter and creator of the family music rock group Ralph's World (www.ralphsworld.com), wanted a customized Taylor to facilitate time travel on a new show he has in development, *Time Machine Guitar*. Alas, as that specification wasn't offered on the options menu of our Build to Order program, he enlisted the show's director and cinematographer, Eric Hurt, to add some radical aftermarket modifications to his 114e to equip it for "a rock 'n' roll adventure across time." Covert recently unveiled the tricked-out guitar (see photo, opposite page), and we think it's pretty cool.

Covert has used the guitar to visit Ben Franklin, Beethoven and Bach with his friends on the show: Beauregard, who's part Portuguese water dog; Malcolm, a psychic cat; and Rani, a squirrel who can fix just about anything. With the help of the fundraising site kickstarter.com, Covert and his production crew have launched a sponsorship campaign to help them independently produce the show in Charlottesville, Virginia as they shop it around to broadcast networks. To learn more about the show and see photos and video clips, check out www.timemachineguitar.com.

Three of a Kind

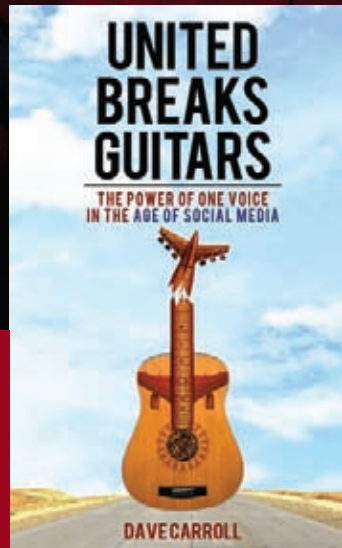
Fans of warm, well-braided vocal harmonies are bound to love *Three*, the latest release from **the Refugees**, the singer-songwriter super-trio featuring former Taylor clinician **Wendy Waldman** (XXX-MS, 910, GSRs), **Deborah Holland** (812ce) and **Cindy Bullens**. Dubbed "Crosby, Stills & Nash with humor," the trio's rich musical chemistry is readily on display, giving the record a cohesive sound that often feels as intimate as a living room house concert. Each is an accomplished individual songwriter in her own right, and the way their respective talents complement each other makes for a collaborative synergy that's truly special. *Three's* contemporary Americana sound runs from coast to coast, from the Appalachian bluegrass of "Can't

continued next page

www.taylorguitars.com



Clockwise from top left: Josh Doyle's winning performance; The Refugees (photo by Lance Craig); Ralph Covert and his time machine guitar (photo by Billy Hunt); Sam Gray; cover art for Dave Carroll's new book



Stop Now” (with Sam Bush on fiddle) to shimmering SoCal folk-rock. Waldman’s former Bryndle bandmate, Scott Babcock, adds drums and percussion to the largely acoustic arrangements, with earthy mandolin and accordion textures adding to the acoustic guitars. Through their passionate harmonies, these three friends prove to be musical sisters capable of tapping into something deep, pure and true together, and it sounds like they had a lot of fun doing it. www.therefugeesmusic.com

Flatts Screen

Fans of country megastars **Rascal Flatts (714ce)** are invited to submit a guitar design to the band for a chance to win a flyaway prize package that includes a Taylor guitar. The unique contest was put together with the help of the band, their label, Big Machine Records, and CMT. Through April 30, fans can submit artwork to be featured on the spruce soundboard of a Taylor GS guitar, and the winning design will be screen-printed on a pair of GS8s that band members **Joe Don Rooney** and **Jay DeMarcus** play during their summer tour. Fans can visit cmt.com, where they’ll find a link to the contest page. There they’ll be able to access a template of the GS shape and an array of graphic elements that can be incorporated into the design and then saved and submitted. Fans will also have chances to win band-autographed GS Mini guitars at select concert dates, on *CMT Radio Live with Cody Alan*, and at CMT.com. More information is available at www.rascalflatts.cmt.com. Entrants must be residents of the continental United States.

Songs Against Bullying

For over 30 years, **Tim** and **Laura Battersby** have entertained children and enchanted audiences with their whimsical musical follies. With the help of their Taylor guitars (**855ce**, **916ce**), the couple has performed for the likes of national audiences, country presidents and the iconic character Big Bird from Sesame Street, notching numerous appearances on PBS, CBS, ABC, UPN, Fox and NBC shows, as well winning as an Emmy award. In 2011 the musical couple earned a Grammy nomination, but 2012 proved to be their lucky year. On Sunday, February 12, the couple shared the Grammy award for “Best Children’s Album” for their song contribution, “I Know a Kid,” to the compilation album *All About Bullies...Big And Small*.

“Winning a Grammy is flattering for any musician, but to win for a project we really believe is incredibly satisfying for us,” Tim Battersby shared in a recent call. “It’s something we’ll always, always, treasure.”

Proceeds from the album’s sales benefitted the Pacer National Bullying Prevention Center. The project attracted a some heavy hitters, including **Steven Van Zandt** (Bruce Springsteen’s E Street Band) and children’s author **Barry Louis Polisar** (“Juno”), and collected a variety of themes as a means to encourage kids to stand up to bullying.

The duo is currently at work on their next album, *I’m on the Old Side of Young*, and will be on the road this spring. www.battersbyduo.com
www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org

The Legend of Excalibur

We love sharing personal stories about Taylor owners and their guitars, so when an opportunity arrived to shoot a video segment with veteran music producer **Rob Cavallo**, currently the Chairman of Warner Brothers Records, we happily seized it. From the

studio of audio engineer/mixer **Chris-Lord-Alge** in Los Angeles, Cavallo reflected on his first exposure to Taylors, what he likes about them as a player, recording engineer and producer, and how they fit into some of the hit records he’s made with bands over the years. Cavallo signed both **Green Day** and the **Goo Goo Dolls**, producing multiple records for each, and his creative guidance has shaped some of the most popular pop-rock sounds of the last 15 years, including records from **Alanis Morissette**, **Fleetwood Mac**, **Jewel**, **Paramore**, **Shinedown**, **Eric Clapton**, the **Dave Matthews Band** and **Switchfoot**.

Cavallo’s musical companion throughout the interview was his trusty 1996 **514c** (“my first real studio-quality acoustic”), dubbed “Excalibur” by Billie Joe Armstrong of Green Day for its legendary status as a hit machine over the years. Early on, Cavallo says, it established itself as the go-to acoustic in the studio, especially because the young bands with whom he was working typically didn’t have the money for a good acoustic guitar. It quickly became a personal favorite for him and his artist clients. He calls it “a player’s guitar,” in reference to its sound, reliability and versatility in a variety of playing contexts.

“A lot of acoustics do one particular thing, which is fine,” he explains. “This actually has a lot of range of control. It’s a very expressive instrument.

“It’s kind of bright, but it’s also mid-rangy – it gives you a good throw,” he elaborates. “. . . If you play it light, you get a nice bell tone, but it’s also very aggressive sounding, so if you want to play it and hit it, you can make it sound heavy.”

Cavallo estimates that Excalibur has been used on close to ten No. 1 hits, including Green Day’s “Good Riddance (The Time of Your Life),” The Goo Goo Dolls’ “Slide” and “Iris,” and Shinedown’s “Second Chance.” Eric Clapton used it to record the ballad “Blue Eyes Blue” for the film *Runaway Bride*, and liked it so much he borrowed it for six months to score a movie.

You can watch the interview with Cavallo at taylorguitars.com in our media gallery.

For Folk’s Sake

The 24th International Folk Alliance Conference was held February 23-26 in Memphis, Tennessee, and as usual, it was a multi-generational

affair, making for some great cross-pollination of vintage and new forms of Americana music. Taylor staffers Andy Lund and David Kaye manned a booth that featured some of our new 2012 models and offered free string changes to attendees. Both reported that plenty of Taylor artists participated in the conference, which featured various workshops as well as musical showcases that ran into the wee hours of the night. Among our Taylor friends at the show were **Steve Poltz**, **Jimmy LaFave**, **Wendy Waldman**, **Justin Roth**, **the Dunwells**, **Mary McAdams**, **Brian Ashley Jones**, **Caleb Hawley**, **Dan Navarro**, **Annabelle Chvostek**, **The Flyin’ A’s**, **Kathy Mattea**, **Jon Vesner**, **Joel Rafael**, and **David Jacobs-Strain**.

After five years in Memphis, the conference will move to Toronto in 2013 and then on to Kansas City, Missouri in 2014 and beyond. Special thanks go out to our dealer Eric Martin of Martin Music for helping us with our booth, and to all the other cool Memphis people whose kindness and Southern hospitality have enhanced the Folk Alliance events over the last several years. www.folkalliance.org

Taylor Notes

New Federal Aviation Bill Creates Consistent Policy for Flying with Instruments

Good news for troubadours who fly with their guitars: The American Federation of Musicians (AFM) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) have approved a uniform national policy regarding musical instruments on airplanes as part of a new FAA bill. The new law means that all airlines must adhere to a policy that allows any instrument that can be safely stored in the overhead compartment or underneath the seat to be brought on board as carry-on luggage. Additionally, the bill sets standard weight and size requirements for checked instruments, and permits musicians to purchase a seat for oversized instruments, such as cellos, that are too delicate to be checked. Prior to this law, each airline was allowed to set their own policy regarding musical instruments, and size requirements varied widely for both carry-on and checked baggage. President Obama is expected to sign the approved bill into law. Additional information about specific measurements and weight restrictions can be found on either organization’s website. www.afm.org
www.faa.gov

Another change to the site’s organization makes the Taylor guitar line accessible in more ways than ever. Now you can conveniently explore our acoustic models based on shapes, woods, series or guitar categories. We’ve also refined our Support section to make it easier to register your guitar, care for it, and arrange for service and repair. Our new Community section houses a Media Gallery, featuring an array of photos and videos – including performance clips from NAMM – while our beefed-up Blog content covers everything from the latest factory developments to artist news to lessons and tips. Look for more Taylor voices and stories to be added to our online conversation over time. So far, the user response has been overwhelmingly positive, and we were thrilled to learn that in March, our site was chosen as the “website of the week” by *Communication Arts* magazine, one of the most prestigious of all visual design magazines. We’d like to thanks our friends at Digitaria, the digital design agency with whom we partnered to create the new site, for

New Taylor Website Launches

If you’ve been to the Taylor website in the last few months, you’ve no doubt experienced the first stage of

their ideas and expertise in the redesign effort.

Our next wave of website enhancements will include a completely revamped TaylorWare store later this spring, along with a new dealer locator that will be integrated with Google Maps. Also in the works are an expanded Sustainability section that will spotlight our innovative sourcing partnerships around the world. As with everything we do, we’ll continue to bring new refinements as we move forward, and we welcome your feedback.

Repair Revisits the Spirit of ’76

Repair department manager Josh Mundt from our Factory Service Center in El Cajon flagged our Marketing department in February when a 1976 Taylor 810 arrived for service. The “vintage” Taylor Dreadnought was one of the guitars Bob and Kurt built during the year the company made the switch from being the Westland Music Company to Taylor Guitars. As a year of firsts, 1976 also marked the first year we began the numbering system to denote model types and started building guitars using Indian rosewood in addition to Brazilian rosewood. The 810 is among the first batch of Taylor guitars to feature a bolt-on neck design. The guitar needed some minor work but was in relatively good condition. Our repair technicians started by stabilizing the guitar at an optimum humidity level of 45 percent. Then they reset the neck, replaced and dressed the frets, and gave it a good all-around cleanup.

Taylor Guitars Honored as Chamber Business Member of the Year

On Thursday, February 16, Taylor Guitars was recognized as the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Member Business of the Year. The award, as voted on by the Chamber’s Board of Directors, hailed Taylor as a thriving business in the community and noted the company’s local charitable efforts in supporting music education through the Taylor Guitars for Schools program. Taylor representatives attended the dinner, including Bob Taylor, who accepted the award.

Harry Tuft Inducted to the Colorado Music Hall of Fame

We’re happy to share the news that Harry Tuft, owner and proprietor of the Denver Folklore Center, a Taylor dealer, was inducted into the Colorado Music Hall of Fame in February. Tuft founded the Folklore Center in 1962, and it

soon became known as *the* musical outpost for musicians between Chicago and the West Coast. Tuft’s commitment to instruments and the local music scene would attract some of the folk and rock world’s great talents to his store, from Joan Baez and Jack Elliott to Muddy Waters and Sonny Terry to Jim Morrison and Frank Zappa. The Folklore Center celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Congratulations to Harry on the many musical pursuits he has helped inspire.

Service Tips: Shipping Your Guitar

As a Taylor owner, at some point you may find yourself needing to ship your guitar to our Factory Service Center in El Cajon or Amsterdam for a repair, service package or Expression System® installation. We thought



we’d share some advice based on the thousands of guitars we’ve shipped and received over the years. While it requires a few steps, it’s not hard to do, and it’ll increase the likelihood of a smooth journey for your guitar. You can also check with your dealer to see if they can assist you.

Here’s what to do:

1. Call our Customer Service department to get a service ticket number. The number in North America is 1-800-943-6782; in Amsterdam, the number is +31 (0) 20 667 6033. (European customers can also check our website for each country’s toll-free number.) Please have the serial number of the guitar handy when you call.

2. You’ll need a guitar shipping box. Ideally it’s the same Taylor box we use to ship new guitars to our dealers.

It’s a unique size that most shipping services won’t have in stock. However, many music stores will give you a box or sell you one cheap.

3. Try to get a Taylor box with the black plastic inserts. The inserts hold the case securely within the box and cushion both ends. Otherwise, you’ll need to use layers of bubble wrap or balled-up newspaper to cushion the ends and fill the voids. Do not use packing peanuts, as they shift and settle, allowing the case to move inside the box.

4. Once you have the guitar boxed up and taped shut, you’re ready to ship. We suggest going directly to a UPS customer center to avoid the extra service charges tacked on by retail shipping services. Visit ups.com or call 1-800-742-5877 in North



Rascal Flatts (photo by Randee St. Nicholas)



WHAT ARE YOU

Working On?

By Chalise Zolezzi

On any given day, the Taylor factory is flush with creative activity. In our recurring feature, we offer a closer look at the work our employees do. With this installment, we see the critical impact of climate control on guitar production, check in with our repair and service center in Amsterdam, and visit our factory in Tecate to examine the work that goes into laminating and bending guitar sides.

Jim Setran

HVAC Manager
Building
Maintenance
Department

What he's working on:
Checking humidity levels within the factory



Heating, ventilation and air conditioning may not sound as hip as crafting guitars, but without Jim Setran and his colleague, Gustavo Vicencio, the Taylor factory would not be the nurturing cocoon for guitar "birth" that it is. Jim,

a 13-year Taylor veteran, is responsible for every machine and filter that uses air, from the computer mills that employ vacuum pressure to hold guitar parts in place to the industrial humidifiers that maintain an optimized guitar-building

environment within Taylor's walls.

Jim's job is not tied to a normal workday. Whether an air filter needs to be replaced at 2 p.m. or a machine breaks down at 2 a.m., he is there. Arguably his most important focus is climate control. He takes great care each day, and often nights, to ensure that optimum humidity in most areas of the factory remains at 44 percent. Some areas, like the Visitor Center in our main building, can be challenging to maintain due to the high ceilings and constant opening and closing of the front doors.

"Humidity is subject to spatial displacement," Jim explains. "If we keep it at 44 to 45 percent, we can help to offset the greater air exchanges that happen here."

Two humidifiers are responsible for about two thousand square feet of the Visitor Center. They protect the 40 or so guitars that are displayed on the walls for guests to pick up and play. From the Visitor Center, Jim follows a short hallway to an adjoining area of the factory, a wing of our Final Assembly department, where bridges and electronics are added to the guitars. Up toward the ceiling are two large,

wall-mounted humidification units, which have copper water supply and drain lines and a high-temperature hose to deliver steam. The two units for the Visitor Center each can release 10 pounds of water in an hour. (One gallon of water weighs about 8.35 pounds.) The larger Final Assembly area uses four humidification units that each have the capacity to pump out 30 pounds of water per hour. Using electrodes to heat the water, the humidifiers send the steam down a ventilated tube through an air conditioning duct that is routed through the Visitor Center.

As with all the humidity control machines at Taylor, the system is linked to a main "dashboard" that Jim can access through his computer to monitor levels. Each humidity machine is auto-regulated, so in the event of too much humidity in the air, a machine will make adjustments.

While on the factory floor, Jim receives a call asking him to check on a climate control system just down the hall. In a small room, two 15-ton compressors are responsible for both comfort cooling (temperature control for employees) and dehumidification, which provides consistency in sensi-

tive climate-controlled areas like Final Assembly.

"Since the guitars are built in different areas and each component undergoes a different process, it's important that they're constituted in the same humidity levels," Jim explains. "Here in Final Assembly, just because the components are already built doesn't mean that humidity is any less important. Guitars should be assembled at the same relative humidity levels so that when it comes time to ship, each guitar has been stabilized at the same level."

An area where one might not suspect a need for humidity control is the finish spray cell, where each guitar receives its beautiful finish. In the rafters directly above the cell sits a machine that looks like a cross between a hotel icemaker and water heater. The 480-volt polyphase steam generating cylinder takes water in through a filter system, ensuring that most mineral deposits are removed, although, as Jim explains, some mineral content is desirable because it increases the conductivity between electrodes, improving the heating efficiency of the units. More than 155 pounds of water per hour are pumped into the spray cell, maintain-

ing a humidity level of no less than 50 percent. The cell itself is heated to between 80-85 degrees, and together with the moisture, the controlled environment provides the optimized climate conditions to give the guitars a flawless finish.

The machine, like the others in the factory, can be recalibrated based on feedback from production staff within the factory – and beyond it. For example, at one time our guitars were built at an overall humidity level of 47 percent, but over time that has been adjusted to the current 44 percent to help them fare better in the sometimes dry conditions of the retail world.

Spending a little time with Jim reveals a mere fraction of his overall scope of responsibility. Like other Taylor employees, he is not only busy, but also deeply committed to his work.

"There's a pride in taking care of both employees and guitars," he explains. "As a company, there's been such an impact on the music world."

That impact includes his favorite band, the Rolling Stones.

"When I see someone like Mick Jagger come out on stage with his 414, I'm just so proud to be part of the team here," he says.



Roy Willems

Guitar Repair Technician
Repair & Service
Department,
Amsterdam

What he's working on:
Repairing a top crack



It was just over a year ago that Roy Willems learned of the opportunity to work in the new factory service center that was being established as part of Taylor's European headquarters in Amsterdam. As an independent guitar shop owner, Roy had seen just about everything in the repair world. He'd also built his fair share of electric guitars with his business, Roy Willems Guitars (www.roywillemsguitars.nl), located in his hometown of Assen, the Netherlands. Roy jumped at the chance to be a part of Taylor's international growth, and Amsterdam, he decided, was a nice place to live.

Via Skype, he displays a guitar he's been working on: a sunburst 514ce with a top crack, the result of a player dropping the guitar.

"This kind of repair is hard because there's color on the top," he explains. "But I like it because it's challenging."

Because the crack ran through the sunburst color gradient, Roy not only had to repair the crack itself, but also restore the color. He started by removing the bridge, so when the time came to match the color he'd have a clean slate. The crack ran along the bass side of the lower bout, and he repaired it using "Jet and buff," a combination of Jet glue and buffing to seal the damage. Once dried, he says, the guitar will undergo a color treatment to match the sides so that no trace of damage is visible and the sunburst color is perfectly matched, a process that will take an hour or two, he estimates.

After the color is successfully restored, Roy will give the guitar a coat of Taylor's UV-curable gloss finish, then sand it. The guitar will undergo another round of finish and be rubbed out and buffed further, for a smooth, glassy finish.

While at the service center, the guitar will also undergo a "Revive" service package that includes a neck angle adjustment, a full fret dress, a Tusq nut and saddle replacement, re-humidification if needed, and more. All told, the process of repairing this guitar will take two days to finish, but it's the challenge of getting it perfect that Roy relishes.

"Restoring this guitar completely so that the customer is satisfied is what I like," he says.



Yuri Ramírez Serrano

Sidebender/Lamination
Laminating
Department,
Tecate Factory

What she's working on:
Laminating and bending Baby Taylor sides



Just a short, 40-minute drive separates Taylor's El Cajon factory complex from our production facility in Tecate, Mexico. Here, employees craft our laminate models: Baby Taylors, Big Babys, GS Minis, and 100 and 200 Series guitars. Yuri Ramírez Serrano has been with Taylor for nearly five years, first in sidebending, and as a result of her expertise there, she's now leading the new laminating department, which consists of several sidebending machines, back presses that create the slight arch in the back of certain laminate models, and a large glue roller.

The sides will be laminated and bent as one double-wide sheet and later cut into two separate sides. To begin the six-step lamination process, the interior and exterior wood layers must be perfectly aligned to ensure a smooth finish. After inspecting a sin-

gle sheet of sapele veneer to be used on a Baby Taylor, Yuri takes a thin sheet of poplar wood, which will serve as the "meat" in the lamination sandwich. Next, she meticulously inspects it for any blemishes that could diminish its strength. After guiding the poplar through the glue roller, which coats both sides, she places it onto one sheet of sapele and then places the other piece on top of it. With a quick flick of her wrists, Yuri rocks the piece of wood back and forth in her hands as she makes her way to the sidebending machine, which is heated to 220 degrees. Here she'll lay the piece to rest for three minutes.

"The heat from the machine helps to harden the glue," she explains. With a gentle touch, she places the wood in the bender and clamps it in place. Three minutes later, a curved form emerges. After cooling, it will

leave the laminating area and head to a computer-controlled mill, where it will be cut lengthwise down the center and then trimmed at the ends to create a perfect pair of sides for a Baby Taylor. Once it has had a day to reacclimatize to the relative humidity in the factory, it will be matched with its back and top.

During her shift, Yuri will complete 65 sets of sides, including all types of laminate models. She feels proud of her role at Taylor and says she appreciates Taylor's high quality standards and the amount of processes that go into crafting a guitar. She also enjoys the environment.

"It's a peaceful place to work," she says. **W&S**

TaylorWare®

CLOTHING / GEAR / PARTS / GIFTS

Darren (Materials Management) and Jessica (Sales Administration) help keep our shipping operation and dealer payment programs running smoothly. Darren sports our new Baseball T, while Jessica models our Ladies' Nouveau T in red.

Spring 2012



shirts for the Taylor fan

A) Men's Appliqué T

100% cotton, fashion fit. Distressed-edge TG appliqué on front, Taylor Guitars label on side, small round logo on back. (Smoke #1250; M-XL, \$28.00; XXL, \$30.00)



B) Men's Logo T

100% pre-shrunk cotton. (Prairie Dust #1700; S-XL, \$20.00; XXL-XXXL, \$22.00)



C) Men's Long-Sleeve Logo T

100% pre-shrunk cotton, ribbed cuffs. (Black #2060; S-XL, \$25.00; XXL-XXXL, \$27.00)



D) Ladies' Nouveau T

100% cotton jersey, pigment dyed for a slightly faded effect. "Nouveau" inlay elements from our Presentation Series form a Taylor headstock. (Charcoal #4110, Red #4120; S-XL, \$22.00)



E) Taylor Dri-Fit Polo

Dri-Fit fabric draws away sweat to keep you dry and comfortable. Embroidered Taylor logo on chest. Made by Nike. (Charcoal #2705; M-XL, \$49.00; XXL, \$51.00)



F) Full Zip Hooded Sweatshirt, Cross Guitars

Unisex, regular fit eco-fleece with kangaroo front pocket. Enzyme-washed for a super soft feel. Taylor screen-print with crossed guitars and label on side. (Black #2812, Olive #2813; M-XL, \$48.00; XXL, \$50.00)



G) Men's Vintage Peghead T

100% combed cotton. (Black #1480; S-XL, \$24.00; XXL-XXXL, \$26.00)



H) Taylor Half-Zip Pullover

100% yarn-dyed French rib cotton with embroidered Taylor logo, imported by Tommy Bahama. Warm and soft, with relaxed style. (Brown #2800; M-XL, \$96.00; XXL, \$98.00)



I) Taylor Work Shirt

Permanent press, stain-resistant poly/cotton blend. Two front pockets. Distressed screen print over left pocket and on back. (Charcoal #3070; M-XL, \$34.00; XXL-XXXL, \$36.00)



Baseball T (shown left)

Cotton/poly blend for an ultra soft, worn-in feel. 3/4 raglan sleeve, with Taylor Guitars headstock banner print. (White/Sand #2295; S-XL, \$28.00; XXL, \$30.00)

great gift ideas



1) Guitar Lessons by Bob Taylor. (Wiley Publishing, 2011, 230 pages; #75060, \$20.00) **2) Taylor Porcelain Cup.** 11-ounce thermal cup, flexible lid, Taylor peghead icon on one side, Taylor logo on the other. (#70008, \$15.00) **3) Black Flex Fit cap.** Taylor logo on comfortable six-panel brushed twill with a matching red guitar embroidered on the back. One size fits all. (#00370, \$25.00) **4) Suede Guitar Strap.** (pictured Honey #62000; not shown Black #62001, Chocolate #62003, \$48.00) **5) Digital**

Headstock Tuner. Clip-on chromatic tuner, back-lit LCD display. (#80920, \$29.00) **6) Taylor Silver Dial Watch.** By Fossil. Stainless steel, Taylor-branded tin gift box included. (#71025, \$99.00) **7) Men's Wallet.** Genuine leather with embossed Taylor logo. Card slots, I.D. window and bill compartment. By Fossil. (Brown #71302, \$40.00) **8) Taylor Picks.** Marble or solid color. Ten picks per pack by gauge. Thin, medium or heavy. (\$5.00) **9) TaylorWare Gift Card.** Visit our website for more information.

new for spring

New A



A) Taylor Plush Towel
Oversized 40 x 70" heavyweight towel. 100% cotton. White body with Taylor hibiscus design in red, orange and gold. (#74000, \$39.00)

Jonathan from Marketing kicks it poolside with a blackwood GS Mini in our new Dri-Fit Polo (listed on page 33).

B) Tattered Patch Cap
Flex fit, two sizes. (Brown, S/M #00150, L/XL #00151, \$25.00)

C) Military Cap
Enzyme-washed 100% cotton chino twill, Velcro closure, one size. (Black #00400, Olive #00401, \$22.00)

D) Taylor Guitar Beanie
Featuring Taylor name with a guitar emblazoned along the side. 100% acrylic. (Black #00116, \$16.00)

E) Driver Cap
Classic style, wool blend, sweat band for added comfort. Taylor label on back. One size fits most. (Black #00125, \$25.00)

F) ES-Go™ Pickup
Exclusively for the GS Mini. (#84022, \$98.00)

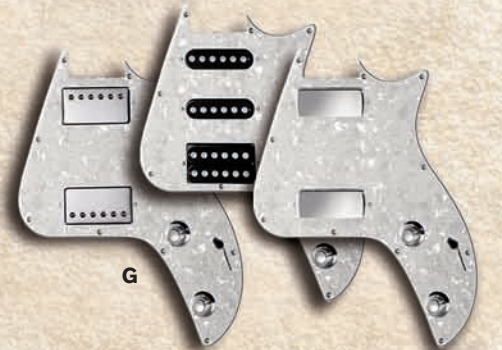
G) Loaded Pickguards
Swappable pickup/pickguard unit for your SolidBody. For a complete list of ordering options, go to taylorguitars.com/taylorware. \$195.00 (Single HG Humbucker: \$148.00)

H) Travel Guitar Stand
Sapele, lightweight (less than 16 ounces) and ultra-portable. Small enough to fit in the pocket of a Baby Taylor gig bag. Accommodates all Taylor models. (#70198, \$59.00)

hats



accessories



TaylorWare
CLOTHING / GEAR / PARTS / GIFTS

Visit taylorguitars.com/taylorware to see the full line.



Mixed Sources
Product group from well-managed
forests, controlled sources and
recycled wood or fiber
www.fsc.org Cert no. SCS-COC-001210
© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council



Wood&Steel

A Publication of Taylor Guitars
Volume 71 / Spring 2012

Taylor Guitars | 1980 Gillespie Way | El Cajon, CA 92020-1096 | taylorguitars.com

Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Phoenix, AZ
Permit No. 5937

The paper we used is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. The FSC is a non-profit organization that supports environmentally friendly, socially responsible and economically viable management of the world's forests.



Electric Improv

"This board would make some killer electrics," gushed Taylor's Brian Swerdfeger as he spied a beautiful hunk of figured Hawaiian koa while surveying wood for our Spring Limiteds. Sometimes that's all it takes for an incredible new guitar to take shape around here. The koa happened to be wide enough for a SolidBody or even a T5. We carved the koa into a SolidBody Standard with a double cutaway, inset a figured koa top, installed uncovered Vintage Alnico pickups, and borrowed the new Koa Series fretboard inlay. We don't have many boards at this width, but we'll keep building until the wood is gone. These models don't even have a name yet, but if you tell your Taylor dealer you want a "back cover" koa electric, we'll take it from there.