

# Wood & Steel

## LIMITED EDITION SHOWCASE

All-Koa 12-Fret

Walnut/Cedar GS

Granadillo/  
Cedar GA

Honey  
Sunburst 300s

Blackwood  
Baritones



**John Petrucci's  
Acoustic Side**

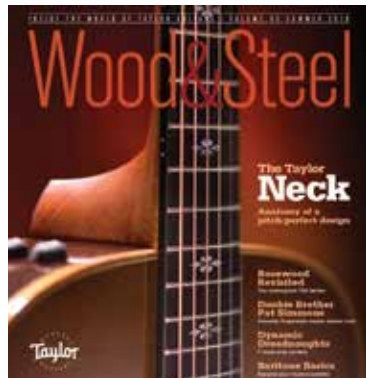
**New: Cutaway  
Grand Orchestra +  
Nylon 114ce-N**

**Trey Hensley's  
Flatpicking Fire**

# Letters

## We'd like to hear from you.

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



## Slick Pick

It looks like Pat Simmons is wearing a thumbpick in the photos in *Wood&Steel* [Summer 2016 issue, Vol. 85], but you can't see the pick from the angle of the photo. What kind of thumbpick is it? It looks like a nice design, with some kind of elastic band.

**Guy**

*Ed. Note: It's a custom thumbpick that Pat made himself.*

## A Worthy Replacement

Having grown up on a '61 [Gibson] J-45 with an Adirondack spruce top, I was amused at what I thought was hyperbole attributed to Lutz spruce in your article "Mahogany Makeover," about the 500 Series, in the Winter 2016/Volume 84 edition of *Wood&Steel*. The only other guitar that I thought ever sounded remotely like my old long-gone CMI-era J-45 was a Tacoma-made Guild D-40, which also featured a spruce top. However, I have always preferred the "whumpy" low-end bass of the shorter-scale large bodies, despite never finding other J-45s that could measure up to my first.

Shorter-scale instruments also give my aging fretting hand a break as well. My 810 was a wonderful instrument, but longer scale length steel-string flat-tops moved me into a 414ce-N a couple of years ago. (I always wondered why my first guitar teacher moved from a Gibson L-7 to a C-1 Classic in later years; now I know!)

Recently I was steering a friend toward his first Taylor (I'm a fan) in

a store and noticed a new slotted-head 510e (which now resides at MY house). After all these decades of missing my ol' J-45 (which I traded in on a trombone for one of our kids many years ago, in a grandiose fit of lunacy), I have finally found a real replacement!

It sounds exactly like what I remembered and loved about my original J-45, but better. I love the bass tone and overall voice, which may be a bit better focused and definitely better balanced than I remember the guitar I grew up with so many years ago. I also really love the vintage V-neck feel, and the familiar, crisp look of the fine details. Thank you!

**Steve Yetter**  
**Santa Cruz, CA**

## Better Than New

I own a 2013 514ce (a highly under-appreciated model) and recently sent it to you for repair. I had rested it against the couch to do something, and as my pooch pawed one of his toys near my guitar, he somehow flipped my guitar and caused the neck to smash on the coffee table, putting two huge dings on it in places where your thumb would rub during chord movements, etc. I couldn't live with it the way it was and generally don't trust many people with my guitars, so I decided to send it to you in El Cajon to be fixed right. I also thought it might be cool to have a bone nut and saddle put on. I am totally blown away by the workmanship. You cannot tell that there was ever any damage. Bravo! The bone appointments take the tone of this guitar to the stratosphere as well. It smoothed out something in the highs that really translates well when recording. This is why I bought a Taylor: because your guitars play great, sound great, look great, and you do professional work at all levels of your company. I am a Taylor player for life.

**Robby Lapp**

## Art Appreciation

My wife and two teenage children and I just returned to the UK from an extended tour through California, taking in San Francisco, Yosemite, Santa Barbara, Huntington Beach, LA, San Diego, and various points in between. When we got home, we asked ourselves, "What was the best single thing about the trip?" One said whale watching at Monterey. Another said the San Diego Zoo. My wife was very taken with the Big Sur and San Francisco skylines at dusk. We loved all of it. But for me, the best single bit was the tour of the Taylor Guitars factory in El Cajon. To be honest, it wasn't on the itinerary

at all initially, but as we were working out how to fill the last afternoon before flying out of San Diego, I realized that we were only about half an hour away and it would be a perfect way to round off a memorable holiday. No one else in my family is a guitarist, so I wasn't sure it would be anyone else's cup of tea, so to speak, but thankfully everyone expressed the requisite amount of enthusiasm as we set off after checking out of our final hotel.

The tour was hosted by Steve from your sales department. He was excellent: very informative, educational and good-humoured too. I learned a lot, particularly about the different properties of tonewoods. I was especially impressed to learn about how each guitar is fitted with an electronic tag so that its whole life story can be tracked from the moment it starts to be made.

I have one of those "big" birthdays coming up next year, and having spent the first 49 of my allocated trips around the sun without a high-end guitar, I am very hopeful that turning 50 could mark the start of the Taylor phase of my life. I have my eye on a 614ce or something like that. Happily, as a result of the tour, my wife (not a guitarist) now has a much deeper appreciation of the true art form that is Taylor guitar-making, and she tells me she recognizes the real artistic value rather than just seeing the price. So my birthday aspirations may hopefully come true. Fingers crossed!

Thanks again for your hospitality.

**Nigel Broadbent**  
**Halifax, West Yorkshire, England**

## Taylor Trifecta

I have had a Baby Taylor Mahogany for about six years. That's all I could afford at that time. I would take it camping, backpacking, and wherever I went. Then last year I was hanging out at my favorite music shop and got attached to a koa Baby Taylor with electronics, since my old Baby Taylor didn't have any. I bought it out of impulse, and sold my old Baby Taylor. This year in January I fell in love with a beautiful GS Mini Koa-e and couldn't resist buying it. It sounds so big and amazing for its size and has become my favorite guitar that I play on the couch [or] while watching TV in bed.

Then in March I had this crazy thought and sold all of my old acoustic/electric guitars (Fender J5, Garrison G20, Epiphone DR-500MCE and a Martin GPCPA4 RW I bought about a month ago) and ordered a Taylor 322e (mahogany and Tasmanian blackwood). I loved the feeling of a Grand Concert body type and the warm, balanced, dark sound of this tonewood combo.

Now I can't put this guitar down. I keep both the GS Mini and 322e on the couch and play them alternately. I have thoughts of buying a 522e, but I must say I am very happy with the three Taylors I own – three sizes for different occasions. This is the best guitar collection I have ever owned, and this year I want to do some busking to expand my singing/guitar playing and musical horizons.

**Aruna Kalutanthri**  
**Ottawa, Ontario, Canada**

## Birth of the Baritone 8

I only play guitar, and all my life I have collected and sung traditional and antique music from around the world. Always searching for instruments that would best express the tones and the atmosphere of music and songs that are so deeply rooted in human feelings and history, I have tried and played a variety of 6- and 12-string guitars and banjos.

I proudly own three Taylor guitars now: an NS62ce, a K26e, and your baritone 8-string, which I recently found at a resale. While I love the first two, I am amazed at the sound of the 8-string. Its deep, warm resonances seem perfect to recreate the magic of ancient Christmas music such as "Down in Yon Forest" or "Coventry Carol," as well as add drama to old ballads or spirituals. For the first time I can create a sound that may substitute for the very complex Portuguese guitarra and maintain an almost authentic feel of fado. Your instrument sounds just as great with an old Sephardic melody as it does with early blues. I know it is and will be my cherished companion for years to come.

I would love to know who in your company had the original idea of adding the two extra strings to the baritone guitar.

**Giuseppe Frascini**  
**Houston, TX**

*Ed. Note: As we shared in our story on the 8-string baritone in the Fall 2009 (Vol. 61) issue ("Range Rover"), the guitar was an offshoot of two separate models designed to celebrate Taylor's 35th anniversary: a 6-string baritone Grand Symphony and a 9-string Grand Symphony that was meant to add some upper-octave 12-string flavor without going all the way. It turned out that tonally, the two complemented each other in a uniquely captivating way, so our design team made a prototype 9-string baritone. The consensus was that it was slightly too jangly, so we made an 8-string version, and voila!*

# social circles

## Join the Taylor community

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**Twitter:** @taylorguitars

**Youtube:** taylorguitars

**Google+:** taylorguitars

**Music Aficionado:** taylorguitars



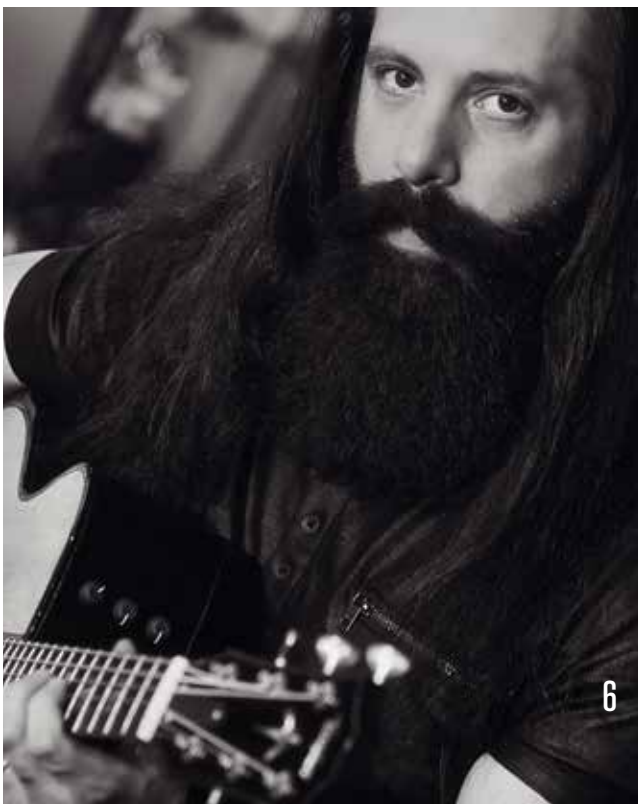


### ON THE COVER

#### 18 THE FALL 2016 LIMITED EDITIONS

An irresistible all-koa 12-fret, figured walnut and granadillo paired with cedar, blackwood/mahogany baritones, and a pair of sweet honey sunburst 300s flavor this year's collection.

COVER PHOTO (L-R): K22E 12-FRET LTD,  
WALNUT/CEDAR 416CE LTD



## FEATURES

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Dream Theater's prog-metal guitar virtuoso shares insights on his acoustic playing and how his 916ce inspired him on the band's rock opera *The Astonishing*.



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The integration of machine vision technology allows our new robotic ES2 pickup assembly unit to make smarter decisions.

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An ultra-limited release of two tone-forward Taylor models reveals our ability to spray a sunburst top without adding to the finish thickness.

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Singer-songwriter Tolan Shaw reflects on how traveling abroad has catalyzed his musical creativity and nurtured his soul.

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The next-generation bluegrass player played the Grand Ole Opry when he was 11, scored props from Tony Rice, and now honors the music of the mountains on his Taylor Dreadnoughts.

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The 18-year-old British singer-songwriter has come of age thanks to a voracious appetite – and aptitude – for honing his craft.

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The importance of passion and purpose.

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Sophisticated woodworking techniques enable us to get more value from a tree than ever before.

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Why the guitar has become the most popular musical instrument in the world.

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Fresh T-shirt designs, guitar accessories, gifts and more.



Passion and Purpose

I recently watched part of an American TV show called *Shark Tank*. The show features entrepreneurs who pitch their idea to a group of investors in order to raise money. On this episode, the entrepreneur had patented an idea for guitars. One of the investors offered him \$500,000 for 51 percent of his patent and thought the best opportunity to make money would be to license the patent to other guitar makers and collect royalties.

The investor reasoned, “Why go through all the trouble to make and sell guitars when you can just license the idea?” When the entrepreneur turned down his offer, the investor accused the guitar maker of being greedy.

It was remarkable to me that the investor, whose sole purpose was to make money, would accuse the man whose purpose was to make guitars of being greedy for not wanting to sell 51 percent of his company. And for not wanting to license his idea to other guitar makers, instead of making guitars himself.

Something I really love about the guitar business is the people and their passion to create instruments. Their purpose is to make instruments and be involved with creating music, not to make a lot of money, though we all hope to make a living doing it. The purpose is not to build instruments because people want to buy them or because we perceive that there’s a

demand to be filled, but because our purpose is to design and build guitars. If you go into this business thinking you can make a lot of money and have that as your purpose, you’re doing it wrong; you’ve got it backwards. Making money is just an end result of doing everything else right.

Take authors. They write because they want to write. That’s not to say that they’re always inspired; they have to work at it. But they don’t write books because they’ve estimated that there’s a market for so many books per year, and that people spend so many dollars per year on books, and that they can capture some percentage of that market for themselves. Wrong purpose.

Or songwriters. They’re inspired to write songs and love writing songs. Again, it’s not always easy; it’s also work. They can get really good at it and write a lot of hits and make a lot of money. Or write a lot of songs and not make any money. But the potential of making money isn’t what’s driving the person; it’s the purpose and passion to write songs and create music.

It’s similar with Taylor Guitars. We design and build guitars because that’s our purpose. We design and build the best guitars we can, and we’re continually advancing that. It’s a job that’s never finished. We design and build guitars that people love and want to buy. We don’t build guitars because there’s a world of people who want to

buy guitars. That’s an important distinction, and it speaks to our purpose.

Our purpose has led us to build and own and operate our own manufacturing facilities in El Cajon, California and Tecate, Mexico. It has led us to establish and manage our own warehouse and offices in Amsterdam in order to sell our guitars throughout Europe and the Middle East. It has led us to co-own and operate an ebony processing mill in Cameroon, Africa, to ensure that the processing of ebony remains legal and sustainable.

Whatever it takes for us to continue with our purpose of creating and building guitars, and our sub-purposes such as creating jobs and worthwhile careers, and safeguarding the natural resources we use, we will consider. We will continue doing more, not less, and we won’t consider shortcuts for the sake of making more money or doing it more easily. The work itself it what’s most important, not the potential reward.

As for the entrepreneur with his idea and patent who turned down the \$500,000 investment, I don’t really know why he decided against it. But I want to believe it was for the same things we believe in.

– Kurt Listug, CEO

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## Living in the Material World

Nearly three years ago we released our redesigned 800 Series guitars, which proved to be a great leap forward in tone for Taylor Guitars. Then came the 600 Series, and finally nearly all the guitar models that we make in El Cajon. Andy Powers did a masterful job of targeting appropriate tones for each model and coaxing those tones to life. He's got a wonderful talent for making the parts of a guitar work in the way he expects in order to give the player a great musical experience. We've always felt that there are many ways to improve the guitars, and we keep the spirit of invention and improvement alive each day here at Taylor. Even now, we're making changes in our building designs and methods to improve the guitars and to improve our relationship with the materials.

When it comes to acoustic guitars, the materials are almost exclusively wood. Since the day I sold my first guitar at 18 years of age, the guitar ads and catalogs have always purported to use the finest wood available. The thing is, there's always that word "available." That's the caveat, and that's what allows for variation. If one looks way back in time, the wood was often of a quality that would be considered poor in today's market. Imagine how hard it would have been to get South American timbers to Spain 200 years ago, or to cut and ship it to the big U.S. cities 150 years ago. Consequently,

they used the finest wood available, but not always the finest woods.

In our lifetime we have had an ideal situation in the sense that all the countries were open to production and also to transport, so we really did see super-fine wood, and we got used to it. But then something happened that brings us to where we are today: Many of the great trees have been cut, and we and other people around the world are working to save the ones left by not cutting them. Good on us! But that leaves trees of a quality that perhaps

see guitars that are the most beautiful we've ever made and hear guitars that are the best sounding. Wood cutters at the mills are doing their best work, getting more and more value out of each tree than ever before by implementing the latest in sawing technology and by pushing themselves to obtain results that they couldn't imagine 20 years ago.

Being woodworkers, toolmakers and engineers, we find it satisfying to observe current characteristics in the available wood and then adapt how we

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**This year we will make thousands of guitars using wood that was planted by man rather than having grown naturally in a forest.**

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we would have passed up just 20 years ago. Now they look good to us. And again, we can say that we use the finest wood available.

Watching this happen over the years and having my hand in it as I have, it's been quite interesting to see what incredible work can be done with wood of all types when luthiers apply their passion and skill to the wood to make a great guitar. We're doing that now. It's quite pleasing to me to

This year we will make thousands of guitars using wood that was planted by man rather than having grown naturally in a forest. As a player you won't be able to easily target these guitars to either avoid them or to embrace them because they're completely legitimate and blend in with the choices of other guitars made from traditional forest wood. There's not enough of this kind of wood to make all the guitars from it yet, but this is a huge breakthrough and signals a way forward. We are now starting our own tree-planting projects specifically for guitars in the future, with our first plantings being ebony in

Cameroon and koa in Hawaii, and of course we are admiring the work of Steve McMinn as he plants maple in Washington.

I hope you're willing to hear a wood report from me often, nearly every time I write, because it's become one of the most important aspects of my contribution to the world of guitars. I'm very fortunate to have Andy and our great staff, who all work together to put wonderful guitars in your hands, allowing me more freedom to concentrate on the health of our future wood sources.

— Bob Taylor, President



## 2016 Taylor Factory Tours & Vacation Dates

**Please note that we've modified our tour schedule at the Taylor Guitars Factory.** A free, guided tour of the factory is given every Monday through Thursday 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](http://taylorguitars.com/contact).

We look forward to seeing you!

## Factory Closures

**Friday, October 14**  
(Taylor Guitars Anniversary)

**November 24-25**  
(Thanksgiving Holiday)

**Monday, December 26 through Friday, January 6**  
(Company Vacation)

# ACOUSTIC • *Dreaming*

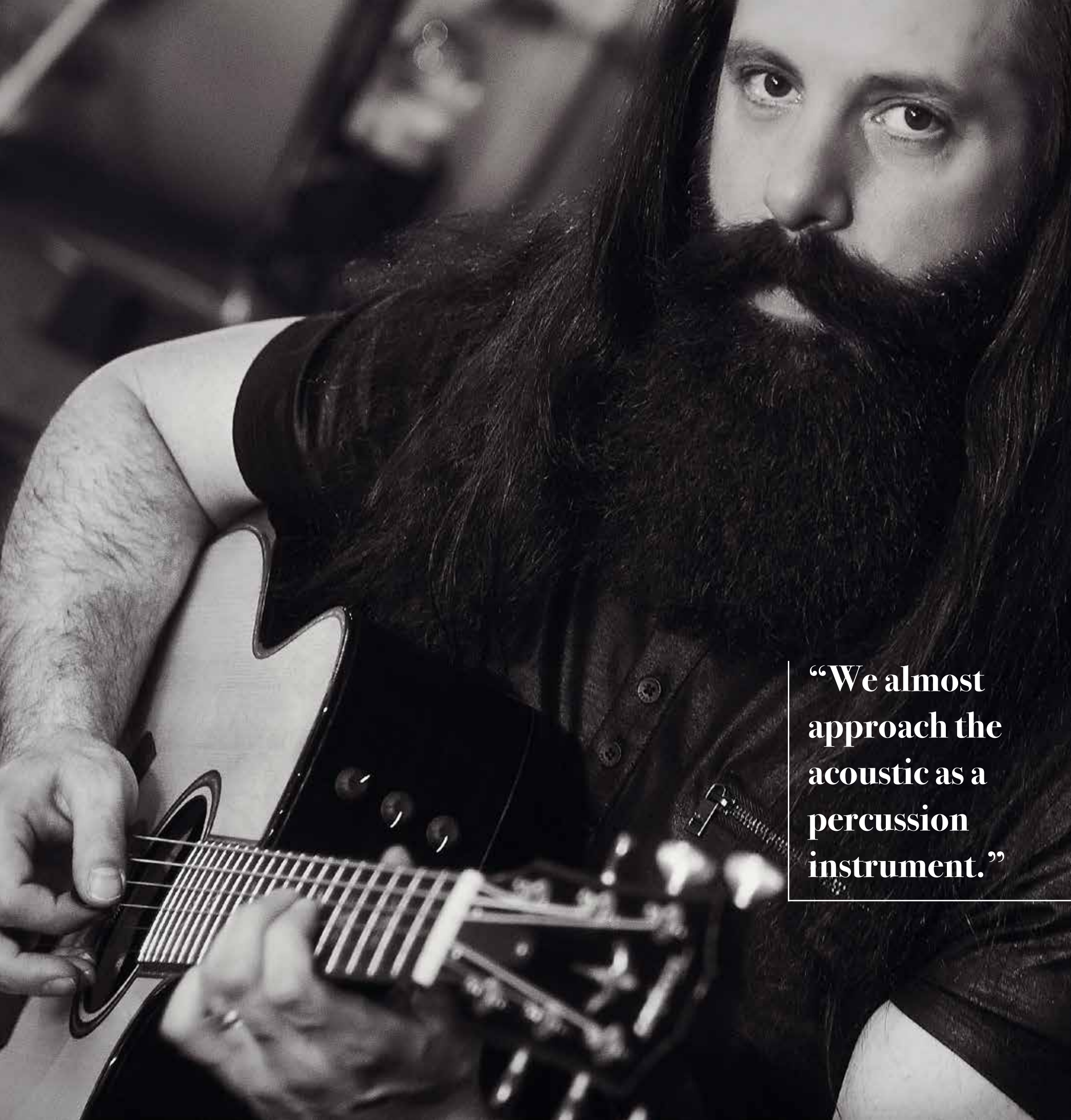
THE DREAM THEATER GUITAR VIRTUOSO  
SHEDS LIGHT ON HIS APPROACH  
TO PLAYING ACOUSTIC AND WHY  
HIS TAYLORS ARE MAINSTAYS  
OF HIS MUSICAL TOOLBOX

BY SHAWN PERSINGER  
PHOTOS BY RAFFAELLO PAVESI

Whether you're a diehard fan of John Petrucci and his acclaimed progressive metal band Dream Theater or merely recognize his name from countless "Greatest Guitar Players" lists, you probably know that most of the attention has centered on his virtuosic electric playing. So you might be surprised to learn that much of Dream Theater's latest album – the two-disc, 34-song rock opera *The Astonishing* – was refined on acoustic guitar. Specifically Petrucci's Taylor 916ce.

"The most organic way to score the music to the story was to pick up the acoustic and get down to the heart of the matter," Petrucci shared with a genuine enthusiasm that carried through our entire conversation, held during a break between the summer and fall legs of the band's current tour.

Our chat gave Petrucci a great reason to speak at length about the game-changing impact of discovering Taylor acoustics, recording with his 6- and 12-string guitars, and the appeal of an armrest.



**“We almost  
approach the  
acoustic as a  
percussion  
instrument.”**

**Wood&Steel:** How does it feel to talk about acoustic guitars for a change?

**John Petrucci:** It's great! I have a very musical household. My wife is a guitar player, my kids all play, there are guitars everywhere. And [Wood&Steel] comes to the house, so I was just telling my wife, "You know that Taylor magazine? I'm about to do an interview for that. It's cool because it's not something that I normally do. In fact I'm not sure if I've ever done an interview strictly about acoustics."

**W&S:** We're happy to be the first! So how did you come to play Taylor guitars?

**JP:** It's been a long time now, but a really good friend of mine said, "Oh man, you've gotta try Taylor guitars." At the time this friend also had a lot of great things to say about [Ernie Ball] Music Man, before I was using Music Man, so I value this friend's opinion very much. He said, "If you want an amazing acoustic, try a Taylor." And the moment I did I was like, "Alright, this is a whole different level than what I'm used to."

**W&S:** And what was that new level?

**JP:** It was a combination of all the elements. Yes, the neck felt amazing, but also the immediate sound of the guitar, as soon as you play one chord. The way that it resonates and speaks, and of course the level of quality and beauty of the instrument is something that stands out. It's the combination of

those things, they all made an impact on me. That was many, many years ago, and I never looked back, as far as acoustics, once I got my first Taylor.

**W&S:** And you own a fair number of Taylors...

**JP:** I do! I started a relationship with the company and we went through a few different body shapes because I didn't have a lot of acoustic experience, so wasn't really sure what body shape I would like. So they sent me a few that I ended up keeping and buying at the time. Those Taylors made their way onto numerous Dream Theater albums. Every time I go in to do an album and I'm going to play acoustic I'll always bring those guitars, three or four. The new album [*The Astonishing*] is the first time I didn't bring those in, and I exclusively used the 916.

Also, as I said before, my wife is a player, so I got her a Taylor acoustic and a 12-string, which I would borrow for the Dream Theater albums [laughs].

**W&S:** Is the 856 12-string on the new album your wife's?

**JP:** No, it's not; I finally got my own [laughs]. But I did use hers on previous albums; you can hear it on *Octavarium* and *Six Degrees of Inner Turbulence*. Also, at a certain point down the road, we got all our kids Taylor acoustics. So they all have really beautiful guitars. There are Taylors sitting all around the house.

“A few NAMM shows ago I picked up one of the Taylors that had the armrest and I thought, ‘This is unbelievable!’”



**W&S:** Speaking of the 12-string, on the song “Surrender to Reason” [on the self-titled *Dream Theater* (2013)] the sound of the 12-string reminded me of Alex's Lifeson's guitar on Rush's “Closer to the Heart.” Is that a coincidence or did you go in thinking, “I want this track to have that Alex Lifeson sound”?

**JP:** I totally did, absolutely. I'm a huge Rush fan and I would say that the two bands and guitar players that have influenced my usage of the acoustic in composition and recording would be Yes and Steve Howe and Rush and Alex Lifeson. So yeah, I wanted to hear back to that old school Prog sound with the 12-string, and “Surrender to Reason” totally has that effect.

**W&S:** The 12-string on the new album has a beautiful stereo spread. How did you achieve that sound?

**JP:** We close-miked the guitar with an Earthworks QTC50 and a Royer R122V, and with every acoustic performance we double everything and hard pan them left and right. I've been doing that forever with rhythm guitar tracks. Every time you hear a heavy rhythm you have the initial performance on the left and then the double on the right. In both cases, with the acoustic or the electric, the cool thing is you're not just putting a processor on it that spreads the image, but since there are two different performances, the little dif-

ferences — discrepancies in timing, different pick attacks — make it a constant stereo image.

**W&S:** Does the 12-string encourage you to play differently?

**JP:** Yeah. I don't think I'm alone in saying it's definitely more of a challenge to play 12-string, especially if you're primarily used to electric. When you pick up the 12 and you're recording, it's close-miked, you have headphones on, you hear everything — every incorrect fretting, the way your hand is getting in the way.... My approach is, I have to be really conscious of my hand position and every sort of creaky movement to make sure that all 12 strings ring in a nice chimy way. So I get hyper-focused on hand position.

**W&S:** Does that sort of awareness inhibit you, or do you thrive off of that challenge?

**JP:** It doesn't inhibit me, but I feel more like I'm up for the challenge. It's like an athletic challenge — I have all the 12-string recording to do today, I have to eat a good breakfast...make sure I'm poised and ready to approach it.

**W&S:** The 6-string recordings on the new album have this lovely, subtle shimmer of an effect. Is that processing or simply the stereo set-up?

**JP:** I think it's the stereo set-up, and I think it's the way Rich Chycki EQs and

engineers the guitar. It's something I love where the Taylor has a full-bodied sound, but there's this beautiful, sort of crystal top to it. That type of thing could be brought out and accentuated with reverb or compression, but it's more sort of the way Rich will EQ and mic the guitar. It's always a part of the sound.

**W&S:** Do you compose on the acoustic?

**JP:** A little bit, not as much as on electric. I'm very purpose-driven: If I want to have a song that will have an acoustic intro, I'll specifically pick up an acoustic and write on it. I will say, though, that on the new album there was a lot more acoustic inception as far as compositions.

**W&S:** To that I'll ask, the acoustic guitar on “The X Aspect” seems atypical Petrucci, not a way you normally play. Was that new for you?

**JP:** It's probably not something that most people hear from me, but when I pick up an acoustic and I don't have a pick in my hand, that's how I play. It's a very simplified fingerpicking. It's not any standard classical thing where I'm using all of my fingers on my right hand. I'm primarily using my thumb and index finger. It's definitely my own version [of fingerpicking].

**W&S:** Like a Doc Watson/Jimmy Page hybrid...

# “The Taylor has a full-bodied sound, but there’s this beautiful, sort of crystal top to it.”

**JP:** Yeah. It's not incredibly efficient, but it gets the point across for me.

**W&S:** If I can backtrack to the recording of the new album, besides miking the guitar, did you plug in direct as well? Blending in the Taylor ES2?

**JP:** It's all miked, we didn't do a blend. But while we were writing the album we would demo those compositions, and in that phase, in order to save time, we did use the direct method and it sounded killer. And it is the method I'm using live.

**W&S:** Do you have any processing in your live signal chain?

**JP:** I do. It goes Taylor > Shure UR-1 Belt Pack > Shure UR4+ Receiver > Universal Audio 710 Twin-Finity Preamp (Line Level/ Gain 4/ Output 4.5/ Tube) > Preamp out to PA and monitor systems.

**W&S:** You mentioned that the Taylor on the new album, and the one you play live, is a 916ce. You play the model with the armrest. What do you like about that?

**JP:** As an electric player I've always been very sensitive to the way that my forearm sits on the guitar. With the acoustics — as great as they play and beautiful as they feel — there is always that feeling that your arm is being pushed out a little bit. As an electric player going to acoustic it's a bit of an adjustment. So a few NAMM shows ago I picked up one of the Taylors that had the armrest and I thought, “This is unbelievable!” I had never played an acoustic that had that armrest feature. It makes that transition, as an electric player, that much smoother, that much easier.

**W&S:** Let's talk about the new album, *The Astonishing*, which is a rock opera.

Does your interest in this style of long-form composition stem from traditional opera; the rock operas of The Who, Rush, and Pink Floyd; maybe even Broadway; or all of those genres?

**JP:** It wouldn't be from traditional opera, I don't have enough experience with traditional opera. But certainly as a fan of progressive music I'm hugely influenced by *The Wall* [Pink Floyd] and by *Tommy* [The Who] and *Operation Mindcrime* [Queensrÿche], but mixed in with that there is definitely a Broadway influence. *Jesus Christ Superstar* was a big one for me growing up. Our original keyboard player and I grew up together, and we used to watch that all the time, and we learned all the songs. *Les Mis* is another one, where there are multiple storylines and recurring musical themes that are particular to certain characters and certain events; that was an influence. Above and beyond that, sci-fi and fantasy in general. Being a *Star Wars* fan, and a *Lord of the Rings*, *Game of Thrones* fan, things like that.

**W&S:** Regarding your interest in recurring themes, I noticed “Our New World” is a variation of “Savior in the Square”; “Astonishing” has elements of “The Answer.” Did you map that out before you started to compose or did you let it grow organically throughout the process?

**JP:** That took a lot of work. Across the two CDs there are 34 songs, so it was very strategic, very crafted, the way that the themes would be introduced, where they would be restated, how they would be restated...I actually used a computer writing program that a lot of novelists use to help with that process because...it was almost like storyboarding a movie.

Actually, Jordan Rudess [Dream Theater keyboardist] and I decided to do a little series where we pick a theme and we get into the origin of that theme, the different incarnations and appearances throughout the album, and break down the theory as to how we made it different, or reharmonized it, or whatever. It's going to be a YouTube series; it's kind of low-key: just Jordan and me sitting in a room with my

guitars and his keyboards. It's called *Inside The Astonishing*.

**W&S:** In “A Life Left Behind” the acoustic guitar takes a prominent role, playing, solo, the long opening phrase that is then picked up by the bass and keyboard. This sounds like another Steve Howe-influenced line, but I also hear some Mike Keneally [fellow Taylor artist] in there as well, yes?

**JP:** Well, I love Mike. Mike is a brilliant musician, guitar player, keyboardist, singer; he's unbelievable. I would say that as far as influence, you nailed it with the beginning of your question with Steve Howe — there is definitely a Yes influence.

**W&S:** On the song “Begin Again” you're playing acoustic, but as the song develops I hear what sounds like the “thwack” of the pick against the strings but I don't hear the chords. Is that you strumming muted strings or a percussion track?

**JP:** This is something I've done for a long time: We almost approach the acoustic, as far as its role, as a percussion instrument. So we'll bring out that stuff we talked about before, that high-end chimy thing, and I'll be as precise as I can with the strumming. So that's not me muting, it's just me playing the strummed acoustic chords but with the EQ set so that it brings out that high-end shaker type of sound.

**W&S:** Are you using a thinner pick than you would normally use?

**JP:** I am. I've been using Dunlop Jazz III picks forever. And I have my signature Dunlop picks, which are an Ultex material, so it's a very hard material, which could sound really great on acoustic, really smooth and precise, as far as single-note stuff; but for the chimy strumming thing I have these Dunlop Herco picks, which are normal-sized, and I'll use either a light or a medium, something that will glide over the string and emphasize that chimy top-end.

**W&S:** In “Lord Nafaryus” there's a tango rhythm! Whose idea was that?

**JP:** That idea was mine, but it came

out of a funny glitch. When we were demoing the song something glitched in the way that it played back the part and it sounded like a tango...in a weird way, and I thought, “That's interesting. I know it's a mistake, but let's try this part as a tango. That might be really cool.”

**W&S:** That's great. And what's recorded on the album is just idiomatic enough to make one say, “Oh that's a tango,” but it's a Dream Theater tango.

**JP:** Exactly, and that's something we've done for a while, where we take traditional music forms and play them in more of a metal or progressive way. That's a very signature Dream Theater thing to do. It supports the idea that in progressive music you can really do whatever you want. So if we want to put a tango in there, we'll put a tango in there!

**W&S:** On this current tour Dream Theater is playing *The Astonishing* in its entirety. Considering that the acoustic guitars come in and out of songs, how are you incorporating them into the live performance?

**JP:** Live, we're using the method where the acoustic is on a Gracie guitar stand and I still have the electric on. I'm able to approach that stand, lean over it, play the acoustic part, then go back to the electric. I do that throughout the night.

**W&S:** Are both the 916ce and 856ce on stage at the same time?

**JP:** They come on and off the stage. So at the time those guitars are used, my tech will bring them on stage. It's all very well choreographed with the crew. In fact, all the crew members have special jump suits that are “official” that they all have to wear in order to walk on stage. It's very well orchestrated, very well thought out. And so you see those Taylors coming on and off stage throughout the night. **W&S**

For the latest news on Dream Theater, including the band's fall tour dates, visit [dreamtheater.net](http://dreamtheater.net).

## JOHN PETRUCCI'S TAYLOR ARSENAL



# Ask Bob

## Guitar vs. piano soundboards, the Cindy inlay explained, and cutaway differences

I have a couple of unusual questions comparing guitars to pianos. I understand that spruce piano soundboards have a layer of finish on both sides — underneath the string plate (facing the audience) and also under the piano (facing the floor). What is the effect of finish on a soundboard, and why are guitars not finished inside?

Tim Williams  
Dallas, TX

Tim, the effect of finish on a soundboard is that it dampens the sound. This is why we make such a big deal about the 3.5-mil (90 microns) finish thickness that we put on our upper-end guitars like the 600, 800 and 900 series. This is super thin, almost half the thickness of the finish used on most good steel-string guitars and our other gloss models. This is very difficult to do and requires almost 40 percent more labor. One treat that you get with a satin finish, like on some of our models, is that the finish by nature is very thin and sounds great. We wouldn't want to finish the inside of the guitar for a couple reasons. One, it would dampen sound. Two, it would be very difficult to do and would increase the cost of the guitar with no added value or benefit. A piano is a huge instrument, with many times (I'm guessing 100 times) the mass of a guitar. The finish they put on it is very thin, like our satin finish. In the end, it has very little effect on a piano and a lot on a guitar. An analogy: a 50-pound weight on your back is heavy, but on an elephant it is nothing.

I've always felt my Taylor 714 (rosewood with cedar top) was a perfect guitar for my light fingerstyle play. On a recent vacation in Phoenix, some friends took my wife and me to an acoustic guitar shop. After "test-driving" a few, my wife asked why I didn't play the "most beautiful guitar" there. It was an unusual preowned Taylor custom Grand Auditorium guitar with ebony back and sides and an old-growth redwood top. I said the guitar was beautiful but would play like a brick

under my light touch. To prove my point, I gave it a try. What a shock to hear the rich, resonant sound from some easy fingerpicking! To my ear, it sounded better than my 714!

Is it the redwood top that makes such a beautiful, rich sound paired up with the hard ebony? Or is ebony a more active tonewood in spite of its hardness? And why wouldn't we see more of these two woods in your standard product line? My cedar top seems more delicate than spruce; could the redwood top be even more sensitive to cracking and/or damage?

Kelly Jones  
Lisle, IL

Thanks for the compliments on the ebony/redwood guitar, Kelly. Ebony has more tonal potential than one might think. Especially the ebony that comes from Cameroon, which is livelier than the Macassar ebony we've used for some time. The Macassar inventory is very old and nearly gone, and we are starting to process some ebony in our mill in Cameroon now for sides and backs. It's actually a good use for the more colored ebony! Coupled with redwood it's very nice. The reason you don't see more redwood is because it's quite hard to get. Usually we only get it from a log that has been under water for a century and gets dislodged by a storm. So the combination of the rare ebony and the rare redwood puts a natural limit on how many can be made. When we do, it's pretty cool, but it can't happen in large quantities. And, by the way, the redwood may be more delicate than spruce, but most people take good enough care of the guitars that it holds up very well.

After 20-plus years of enjoying my 1993 555 [mahogany/spruce Jumbo 12-string], it was stolen during a house break-in. I loved everything about that guitar. Now I am looking to replace it, and after reading the [winter] issue of *Wood&Steel* and a visit to the Taylor Road Show at A# Music in Renton, Washington, I am more confused than ever. My playing is mostly for my own enjoyment at

home and occasionally with other people. I do love the Expression System on my 2007 GS7e and 2011 312ce. What do you suggest is the best replacement for the 555?

James J. Carreño

James, I had an exchange with Andy Powers about this and he has a few different recommendations. Take it away, Andy!

Andy: James, I'm always sorry whenever I hear about the loss of a favorite guitar. That feels like a real part of you was ripped away. There are three distinct instruments I'd like you to try. The first would be a more contemporary counterpart to your 555, a 556. This guitar is a Grand Symphony shape, with mahogany and Lutz spruce. Compared to the traditional Jumbo, the GS has a slightly narrower lower bout, and a slightly wider waist. That guitar makes a wonderful 12-string — it's clear and dry sounding, with significant power and warmth. These guitars are being built with our Performance bracing. Just for grins, you should try either an all-mahogany 562 or mahogany/cedar 552 Grand Concert 12-string. The balance, projection, and clarity are remarkable for a 12-string, not to mention the physical accessibility of the smaller body. Finally, try an 858. This is a rosewood and Sitka spruce Grand Orchestra. It simply is the biggest-sounding, most powerful 12-string. It's similar in size to the traditional Jumbo shape, with a huge voice. Although nothing can ever compare to love that has been lost, I hope some of these new guitars we are making can inspire some great music.

I am one of those guys who always wanted to play the guitar but didn't take up the hobby until later in life. My playing became considerably better when I purchased a 210e a few years back, but I'll be the first to admit that my awkward fingerpicking and chord-slapping style sounds better to me than anyone else. I would love to upgrade to a 300 Series Grand Auditorium, but I have a difficult time justifying the cost to my wife (and myself) and that I need a "better" guitar when the 210e sounds so good. Would purchasing a 300 Series guitar help take me to the "next level" as the 210e did? Any advice for an aspiring yet practical musician?

Joseph G

Joseph, I'm glad you asked. The answer is no, it won't. Practice and study will. Now, I would add that if



**I currently have a GS Mini and am getting back to playing after about a 30-year hiatus. I have shorter fingers and was curious as to what Taylor guitar would be a step up for me to reach clearer barre chords. I mostly fingerpick versus strum. Any suggestions?**

Dan Janczewski

Dan, if you want to stay a little small in size and a little short in scale, I'd recommend a Grand Concert 12-Fret. The 612e 12-Fret and the cutaway 612ce 12-Fret are super guitars. There are guitars with this configuration in the 500, 700 and 800 Series as well. They're also killer guitars: small, powerful, gorgeous tone, easy to handle and play.

you love the 300 Series more, think it sounds better, or just like it and want to spend more time with it, then that will help your practice and study. But overall, your 210e is a great guitar. If I could have bought a guitar like that when I started playing, I might not have ever made a guitar! I could have been an architect or a cowboy. I'm glad the 210e wasn't around then!

**I have a question regarding your options of building a left-handed guitar versus restringing a right-handed guitar left-handed. What effect will there be if a right-handed guitar is strung lefty? Given that the bridge is set at an angle in reference to the peghead, will this affect tuning? What effect does it have given that the strings are now a different length in tuning, playing and moving up and down the scales? I have a 414ce and an 814ce, both built lefty. If I considered a Dreadnought in the future, this is the only time I would consider that option, but since I really want my guitars to be mine, I would probably get the guitar built lefty. However, seeing this as an option in your ordering list, I am curious how many people go this way and what if any drawbacks there are.**

**Eric Hiltunen**

*Ed. Note: One of our service experts, Chris Bearden, fielded this question when it originally came in, so we thought we'd share his response. Bob concurs.*

Eric, it's true that leaving the bridge in a "righty" position can affect the intonation of the guitar if you string it lefty. That can be corrected by having the bridge replaced too, which can cost you \$100-200 in most shops. Depending on the player, this intonation issue may or not be noticeable, so it's possible to get away with it. We would always recommend that a left-handed player have a "lefty" guitar, as the internal bracing also reflects which way it's strung. The option you see of "lefty strung righty" actually pertains to a special group of players who are left-handed but learned to play by simply flipping a right-handed guitar over – so they learned the fretboard upside-down! In this scenario the guitar is built for a left-hander, but the nut, saddle and bridge are positioned and properly compensated for the strings to be "righty." If you are not used to playing with your strings upside-down, then "lefty strung righty" is not an option for you.

**Why are some Taylor Venetian cut-aways curved and others flatter? On page 28 of the summer issue of Wood&Steel, the rosewood 400 Series model pictured [414ce-R] has a "curvier" cutaway, and the 200 Deluxe Series model [214ce-QM DLX] has a "flatter" cutaway.**

**Mike Wolfe**

Mike, it's a matter of the physics of the material. Let me explain. Guitars in the 300 Series and up are made of solid wood sides and backs. The sides and backs on the 200 Deluxe and down are made of layered wood. When we bend the sides of a solid-wood side we have a sophisticated machine that wraps the wood up like a noodle around the form of the shape you see. Then, it unwraps itself, thus releasing the side. On layered-wood guitars the press is different because it's gluing the layers together with tremendous pressure. Because of this it has to be a one-piece form and cannot unwrap itself with the complexity that the solid-wood bender has. So it all has to do with the production process. Sorry if my answer was a little detailed, but you deserved more than a sentence, right? Each guitar is bent to a shape that befits the material and production method.

**I'm moving from one of the wettest places on earth, upcountry Haiku, Maui, to Hood River, Oregon – a relatively dry place, especially in the summer. What should I expect, and what should I do? I have a 16-year-old 810ce that is completely adjusted to the climate here. In fact, you guys helped out in that regard 12 years ago when I moved from Salt Lake City, Utah. I had to send it to you in El Cajon for a month or so, as the guitar became unplayable within only a few weeks of our arrival on Maui. Is it possible to deal with the transition myself?**

**Michael Nash**

Michael, your guitar is going to dry out a bit (or a lot), the wood will shrink some, and it will likely need some adjustments. You'll want to use a humidifier, which you would have shunned in Hawaii. If your strings end up being low and buzzy that's because the guitar dried and shrunk a tad. Then we'd reset your neck like we did when you moved to Hawaii, but this time with an angle that's good for Oregon. Hood River is pretty normal, not super dry, but certainly dryer than Hawaii. Since you've been an islander, we've opened many more service centers and have trained them all. It'll be easy

to take care of you in a lot less time. But you'll want your guitar to settle in a bit. Now that it's 16 years old it'll likely move less than when it was new, but it will move some. We're here to help, and we're easy to reach when that day comes.

**Bob, my first Taylor was a 414ce, made on my wedding day, August 9, 2010. My wife and I visited your factory in September of 2011, and that**



**was the first time I physically saw a 900 Series with Cindy inlays. In November of 2011, I ordered a 914ce with a cedar top. I still love that guitar today. My Taylors are symbolic of my love for my wife. I know that you designed the Cindy inlay to honor your wife. I feel as if each marking has a specific meaning to you, and I would love for you to elaborate.**

**Dzuy Nguyen**

Dzuy, I'm happy to elaborate, but I hope it doesn't crush your romantic notion of the inlays. When I designed that inlay, I was making a little koa guitar for my wife, Cindy. The photographer who photographed our wedding was coming to take a portrait of me making a guitar. I thought it would be nice if the portrait (which hangs above our fireplace even now) showed me making the guitar that I was making for Cindy. Both the portrait and the guitar were a surprise for her. His appointment to shoot motivated me to move the guitar along – otherwise who knows how long I would have spent making it! Well, I needed an inlay idea, and next door to Taylor Guitars at the time was Deering Banjos. My friend Greg Deering had made a banjo inlay based on a tattoo of

a client for that client's banjo. I remember the name written across the inlay was "Tito," so Tito, if you're reading, I guess you can call me a rip-off. This was a long time ago! The gist of that inlay was the bird and the vine, which I didn't exactly copy, but I almost did. After that part was drawn and placed near the body of the guitar, I simply took elements from the vine and modified them a bit to make the position markers. I took that guitar to a NAMM Show and people loved it. They found out I made the guitar for my wife and

dubbed it the "Cindy Inlay." Then they asked if I'd make one for them, and there you have it.

**On average how long does it take from the time a guitar is designed and a prototype is made before it's decided if it will be something that will be manufactured? Also, what percentage of prototypes never sees production?**

**Bob Blades  
Beaverton, MI**

Bob, if we were going to war, we could design a prototype, make changes, and have a decision in a month, and tool for it in four months. If it's a simple change to an existing model, it could go faster.

In normal business times it takes a year. The hardest part is deciding which of the wonderful prototypes we have already designed get to be brought to production. We only have the power to do a few, so we try to choose wisely. It's hard, but a fun kind of hard.

**I have a 214ce, and I love how you have shown your process for making guitars through Wood&Steel and online videos. I've noticed that the way you talk about making the guitars is very precise, with a reason for each different aspect of the process. It seems like almost a scientific process of finding what works and what doesn't, and making the best guitars you can with the best process.**

I've recently watched some videos from PRS, and Paul Reed Smith kept talking about how making their guitars is an art form. And while they definitely have their own process, it just seemed a bit more subjective. I think PRS guitars are great, and I don't intend to compare PRS to Taylor. It just made me wonder about your approach to making guitars as more of an art, or as a science.

**Andrew Miller  
Woodward, OK**

Andrew, I know Paul Smith and he's a maniac for details! Sort of like we are. I think we talk differently about it more than we work differently about it. I have to go with the middle answer – that it's a combination of art and science. But when it comes to production, we really like each and every step to be purposeful and well thought out because that's our opportunity to really get that part right, and we don't want to blow it. At that point the art is somewhat already done because the design of the guitar is complete. The design phase is almost pure art, even though that's based a lot in science. We express the science with art and creativity, taking physical properties and forming them into a guitar that works. Andy Powers does that now for Taylor, and he's the best I've ever known. Then we have to make it, and by cracky, we love to do that well, with a precise system for every step.

**Got a question for Bob Taylor?**

**Shoot him an e-mail: [askbob@taylorguitars.com](mailto: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.



[Innovation]

# VISION QUEST

**Our latest robotic pickup assembly system gets a fresh perspective with the help of machine vision technology**

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**A**s Taylor robotics engineer Tyler Robertson leads the way into Taylor's sunlight-drenched product development studio, where many guitar-making prototypes are born and incubated, he apologizes if he's showing any lingering signs of jet lag. He's back from a work trip to Italy, where he spent a week with our robotic integrator, Pinnacle Technologies (known in Europe as INTEC Robotic Solutions), to finalize the design details for a pair of new buffing robots that will soon be shipped to the Taylor factory.

"The new ones will read the RFID [radio frequency identification] tags inside the guitars and buff them based on the tags, so people won't have to know which program it is," he shares. "They'll also have one more buffing wheel, and the wheels on the motor drives are much more responsive, so the buffing process will be smoother."

Robertson has been busy since he joined our product development team in late 2014. He handles the programming and maintenance of our robotic machinery at the factory, and helps create a smoothly integrated working environment between our craftspeople and the high-tech machines we use for processes like spraying finish, buffing finished guitars, and assembling our Expression System® 2 pickups. Before Taylor, he played a lead role in successful robot integrations in the automotive, aerospace and medical industries. He also loves guitars and amps, and in a prior life played hundreds of live shows with several bands in his native Canada.

Inside the studio, we stop at a glass-encased workstation that houses a network of strategically arranged

that could handle the detailed assembly work.

While the robotic work has gone smoothly since then, the assembly process still relies on several manual steps, including the hand-loading of piezo crystals into each pickup insulator before the robot can take over. The new robotic assembly system was designed to eliminate as much tedious handwork as possible.

The new system was initially designed by Taylor's now-retired ES2 developer, David Hosler, along with Taylor veteran David Judd and in-house mechanical engineer Rick Marcks, with input and implementation from an outside robotic integrator. Robertson and Judd later redesigned some of the hardware and electrical, and most of the software and vision components in

and more. A vibrating feeder holding piezo crystals sits next to the workstation, while a conveyor leads from the feeder through an open window into the encased workstation. The feeder is used to deposit a procession of crystals onto the conveyor. Once inside the workstation, the first camera will determine whether the correct side is facing up based on its color. If it's upside-down, an air nozzle blows it aside (it will travel back to the feeder and start over again). If it's right-side-up, the next camera identifies the angle and instructs the robot to match that angle in order to pick it up. The third camera helps the robot match the angle with that of the laser-cut hole in the insulator pickup housing that will hold the crystal, and then place it in position.

Although programming is an essential part of getting everything properly calibrated and integrated, Robertson says the camera technology is especially critical, from using the right lens to calibrating the focal length to applying the proper light filters in order to provide a crisp picture. Robertson said Taylor staff photographer Tim Whitehouse (whose guitar photos grace these pages each issue) shared helpful tips during development.

"It's important because the light is constantly changing in this room, and with these components you're dealing with shadows and reflections," Robertson explains. "Someone like Tim becomes really helpful – he might say, 'You should use a polarizer or a diffuser on that' – and it makes a big difference."

With the ES2 now as the standard pickup on almost all steel-string acoustic/electric guitars in the Taylor line, the new robotic assembly unit promises to consistently deliver exceptional quality and allow us to produce pickups in sufficient volume to support our guitar production needs.

Though Robertson has worked with robotics and vision systems in other industries, many of his other projects have involved bigger components and processes – like locating a hole in a steel I-beam. In this case, between the smaller parts and the subtle issues with lighting, the project proved to be one of the most challenging.

"But now that we've done it," Robertson adds, "the next project will be easier. And with vision software getting better and better every day, we could



*Interior view of the workstation with Taylor's David Judd (left) and Tyler Robertson in the background*



*Piezo crystals travel into the workstation to be inspected by the vision system*

machinery – dormant for now but clearly poised for some industrial-grade choreography once activated. This is the next-generation robotic pickup assembly unit for our Expression System 2 pickup. Inside are two Epson G3 robotic arms, three Cognex industrial cameras, plenty of wiring, and a gleaming bed of custom aluminum fixtures fabricated by our tooling team, including a carousel that can hold ten of our three-pronged pickup assembly components.

As we reported in our story on the development of the ES2 back in our Spring/Summer 2014 issue (Vol. 79), the intricate pickup assembly process – which requires copper to be folded around the part of the pickup assembly that holds the piezo crystals – led to our first foray into small-scale robotics. The hardware included an Epson 4-axis robot with an articulating arm

order to make everything accurate and reliable.

One of the specific objectives was to preserve the integrity of the tiny square piezo crystals during the process.

"Picking up each crystal and pressing it in by hand can sometimes crack or chip or even crush it," Robertson says.

The central thrust of the new system is the integration of machine vision technology, which in this case amounts to three powerful smart cameras that enable a robot to optically analyze the pickup components and take appropriate action. Think of it as giving the robot a set of eyes and some logic-based brain function to make decisions.

Now, rather than having to manually install piezo crystals into tiny laser-cut holes in the pickup insulator housing, the new work center takes care of that

The high-resolution smart cameras come with proprietary software that helps with the integration process.

"You can plug the cameras right into a PLC [programmable logic controller] or robot," Robertson explains. "There are drivers for them, so they send signals themselves. You can set up a program in the software, save it to the camera, and then basically disconnect from it, and that camera will just operate with that program."

The cameras are also programmed to visually inspect each crystal for possible defects. Each crystal is given a score compared to what a perfect crystal should look like.

"Any blemish on it starts to reduce that score," Robertson says. "We set our cutoff at 98 [out of a possible 100] for its aesthetic properties. If the second camera sees a defect, it won't let the robot pick up the crystal."

With the original robotic assembly process, it takes about 30 seconds for the robot to place the crystals and then another 30 seconds to take care of the rest of the assembly process. The new system cuts that time in half. Each assembled pickup is ultimately tested before it can be approved for production.

"I don't think we've had a single bad pickup since it's been fully set up," he says.

The new assembly unit is being gradually worked into the production process with feedback from veteran electronics department staffer Chhoeuth On to ensure a smooth transition. Our current pickup production volume is about 600 units per day across two work shifts. Robertson says once the new unit is fully integrated, we could produce upwards of 1,000 per day.

get really far down the rabbit hole."

Future applications at Taylor could include parts identification for machine programs, spray finish inspection, or even wood grain analysis.

For all the high-tech components of the new system, both Robertson and Judd agree that one of their favorite finishing touches was decidedly low-tech. They needed a way to dispose of the paper the robot removes from the adhesive-backed copper before folding it around the pickup assembly unit so the paper wouldn't pile up inside the workstation. They decided to cut an exit hatch in the floor of the workstation and program the robot to drop the paper into a collector, where it could be emptied periodically.

"We went over to Wally's World of Mufflers down the street and picked up a nice piece of steel tubing," says Judd. "And it's just perfect." **W&S**

[Model **Spotlight**]





# Tobacco

**A breakthrough color application process gives our special-release 814ce-SB and 914ce-SB an elegant tobacco sunburst without adding finish thickness**

# Twins

**G**reat tone. Aesthetic appeal. Normally these two compelling virtues of an acoustic guitar aren't at odds with each other. Unless, of course, you happen to be talking about our envelope-pushing, tone-enhancing pursuits here at the Taylor factory, in which case things get trickier. Specifically when it comes to the finishes we apply to a guitar. We know that customers love the high-end look of a high-gloss finish on an acoustic guitar. The issue is that the thicker the finish, the more it dampens a guitar's tonal response. We're talking about a subtle difference that won't even register to most people's ears. But in the quest for the best possible tone, it matters to us.

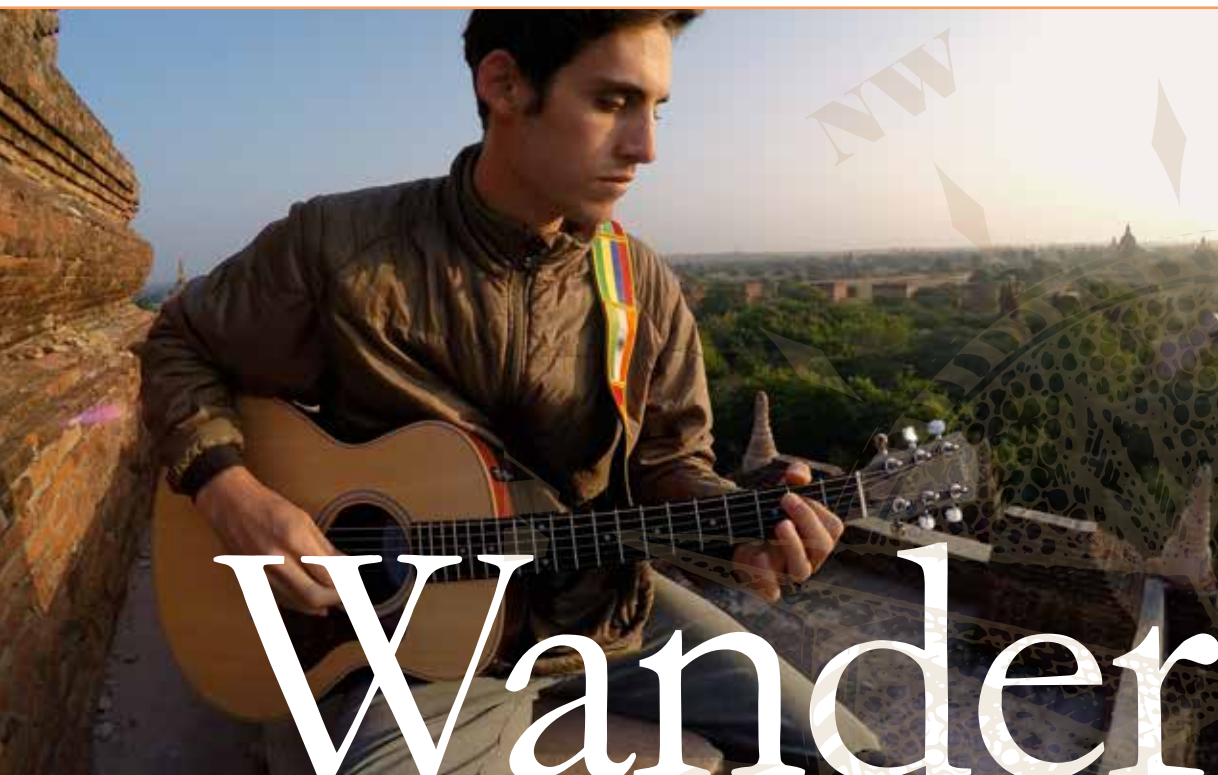
In 2014, the launch of our revoiced 800 Series marked a Taylor milestone on a variety of fronts in terms of guitar-making improvements, but arguably none was more difficult to achieve than the reduction in thickness of our gloss finish from 6 mils (1 mil = .001 inch) to 3.5. Put it this way: below 3 mils a glossy look isn't even possible. The same refinements were later applied to the redesign of our 900 Series.

The redesign of our 600 Series in 2015 went a step further, allowing us to offer an ultra-thin 3.5-mil gloss finish *and* color – our hand-rubbed Brown Sugar stain, applied to the maple back and sides – without adding any material thickness. The result was a transformation in both tone and appearance for our maple guitars.

Our latest breakthrough, thanks to the exceptional efforts of our finish department, is the ability to spray a sunburst on a spruce top without adding any material thickness to the guitar. With the new process, our finish experts spray sunburst colors directly on the top in a way that soaks into the wood. Another thin coat of sealer is then sprayed over the stained color, which also soaks into the wood. Then we continue with our normal thin-finish application process to achieve a rich, glossy luster.

We're pleased to introduce this new color application with the extremely limited release of our rosewood/spruce Grand Auditorium 814ce-SB and 914ce-SB models, which feature a tobacco sunburst top. The 814ce remains a flagship Taylor offering and one of the industry's top-selling high-end acoustic guitars. On its detail-rich counterpart, the 914ce, the refined vintage look of the sunburst showcases another level of aesthetic sophistication together with the beveled ebony armrest, sparkling paua top trim edged with koa, and clean, pickguard-free soundboard.

Due to the specialized skill and effort required to execute this color application process, we plan to craft no more than 50 of each model this year. The guitars were scheduled to begin shipping in October. Because of the limited availability, you can contact us or check the Taylor website to find out which dealers have ordered them.



# Wandersong

TRAVELING with TAYLOR

## A YOUNG SINGER-SONGWRITER SHARES HOW EXPLORING THE WORLD HAS ENRICHED HIS LIFE AND INSPIRED HIS MUSICAL CREATIVITY

By Tolan Shaw

As someone who makes a living as a singer-songwriter and guitar player, there is nothing like traveling abroad to inspire new musical ideas. I recently returned from my latest songwriting adventure – a four-month journey through Southeast Asia accompanied by the two loves of my life: my wife Sarah and my Taylor GS Mini. The trip was inspirational beyond words; I came home with 21 new songs. It was intriguing, cultural, uncomfortable, thought-provoking, and wonderfully different in so many ways. My favorite parts of the trip? There were so many. The famous temples of Angkor in Cambodia. An elephant sanctuary in Laos. A three-day trek through rural Myanmar. An incredible monkey-spotting and treehouse adventure. A yoga retreat along a misty river in the jungle. Snorkeling around Thai islands. Five-dollar, hour-long massages. The food everywhere. If you haven't traveled there, you should!

Throughout my trip, I looked forward to coming back to my hotel after a long day of exploring, picking up my GS Mini, and playing it outside on the patio or porch. Fresh melodies, words and phrases flowed as freely as the bowls of noodle soup served in every little street stall in Asia. For songwriting, being in different surroundings and immersing myself in an exotic culture is like picking up a guitar I haven't played before, or discovering a new tuning; all of these unique possibilities and creative avenues I'd never thought of or experienced start flooding in. And having a songwriting and performance tool like a GS Mini to compose songs and confidently play in live venues anywhere in the world is a beautiful thing.

As a professional singer-songwriter, I knew I couldn't (nor did I want to) skip town for four months without releasing new content to keep my fan base engaged. My solution was *Wandersong*, an online video series I created to docu-

ment the musings of a travel-inspired singer-songwriter. The series combined a blend of culture, fun personal footage, and brand-new songs written along the way with narration that explains how the songs were inspired.

A few months before the trip, I proposed the idea to Tim Godwin, Director of Artist Relations at Taylor, over a plate of barbeque in San Diego, and he loved it. Together we brainstormed how I could make it come to life. He also had the idea to present it to the music department at GoPro, who ended up supporting the project by supplying GoPro cameras and gear and assisting with the creative direction. The result was nine *Wandersong* episodes through nine different countries in Asia, all with original, travel-inspired songs and stories incorporated into each 2-3 minute episode. One of my personal favorites was episode 4, featuring a song called "Wild Side" that I wrote on a ziplining adventure through a pristine jungle in Laos.

To make the videos and record the new songs, and to do so while carrying everything on my back, I used the following gear: my rosewood GS Mini-e, my Macbook pro, and an Apogee ONE interface. I used Apple's Logic recording software and simply recorded one track at a time using the GS Mini and my voice. I tracked almost everything in live takes, with a few edits and overdubs here and there. The idea was to

create simple, raw demos to get the point across and to supply an organic soundtrack to the series. As for video footage, I recorded everything using a GoPro Hero 4 Silver and a GoPro Hero 3+, along with multiple mounts to get interesting angles, such as the GoPro Jaws Clamp Mount, a head mount, and a selfie stick. I also brought along a Ricoh Theta S 360-degree camera to capture 360-degree photos and videos that are used in my latest music video. Needless to say, I learned a ton about video and audio editing and recording in the process.

Many people ask, "Why Asia?" and "What made you want to go for four months?" My wife and I were bitten by the travel bug early in our lives. Both of us were lucky to experience some international travel while growing up, and to participate in a study abroad program during college (at the University of San Diego) called Semester at Sea. Since graduating in 2011 we've saved all of our pennies for these extended, shoestring-budget backpacking trips; we want to experience as much of the world as we can. Immediately after graduating we took off for eight months to Central and South America. I came back with a few albums' worth of songs, from which I chose the best and recorded my first solo release. Southeast Asia was next on our "big trip" list because, like Central and South America, it's very affordable,

and it's a bit more of an intense and challenging experience – compared to, say, Europe – and we realize we need to do this type of travel while we are young! So we decided to pull the trigger, with the intent to write songs for the next album and to create some sort of video project, which evolved into *Wandersong*.

### Breaking Out of the Box

One thing I love above traveling is that it gives me a certain distance from the norm that forces me to think outside the "box" of my daily life, and to challenge what I know about myself and the world, as well as my music and my songwriting. It gives me time and space specifically dedicated to getting to the core of what I'm feeling and experiencing, with no distractions (we unplug and only use the Internet at the hotel at night when traveling). At home, I find myself getting so ingrained into a pattern: wake up, check phone, work out or practice yoga, do emails, practice music or write, go to meetings and co-writes, and play gigs at night. It becomes hard to think outside that routine, and though I am still writing songs, I find I yearn for new worldly experiences and inspiration.

During and after travel, my songs serve as my journal. When I go back and play them, it instantly takes me back to when and where I wrote them; the sounds, feelings and smells come rushing back. It's the most amazing thing. For

example, here's a story of a song from the *Wandersong* journey that brings me back to one morning in particular.

It was December 24, and Sarah and I had made it to Bagan, Myanmar, after a 10-hour night bus ride. Bagan is an amazing, ancient city in the North of the country, occupying a dry, sandy flatland that wouldn't be too spectacular if it weren't for the temples. Thousands of oddly shaped, crumbling, towering pagodas of different sizes poked across the horizon, making the views after climbing to the top of one absolutely stunning. And when there are stunning

plains, and the silhouettes of temples slowly started to form in the orange glow as the sky brightened. And just as the sun started peeking above the horizon, 40 hot air balloons rose from the distance and floated directly above us. I remember smiling and laughing so hard my cheeks hurt. The experience in itself was insanely cool, but during all of this, I was jotting lyrics and strumming a new melody to a song, aptly titled "Sunrise," which made it into one of the *Wandersong* episodes. "There's nothing quite like the sunrise / As the day's first rays hit my eyes / I say hello to the world

traveling is the interaction with locals. I can't tell you how many conversations or friendly gestures (often times English wasn't spoken) were shared when I brought out the guitar in public places. Little kids would come flocking to it and want to touch it or play a few chords, or just stare. Musicians would come up and say "Oh Taylor! Good guitar!" or "Hotel California?" I'd start strumming or playing something I'd be working on, and their faces would light up. These music-induced smiles from all over the world have become ingrained in my mind. These are always special experi-

same sky, from his room in Southeast Asia / A different boy is wishing the same thing."

While my main acoustic is a Taylor 814ce — with which I play 150-200 shows a year — the GS Mini is the perfect tool for songwriting, performing and travel. Taylor's factory technicians accommodated my request to set it up to be able to withstand really humid conditions (Asia is hot and sticky!), and it was amazing. It stayed in tune, was durable and comfortable with its backpack carrying case, and was the perfect size to bring on buses, boats, trains, planes

time. You'll learn things you never would from books or jobs. And you'll see what it does for your songwriting!

As for me, I am absolutely planning to continue *Wandersong* with future trips. The ultimate goal would be to do a "season" of *Wandersong* every year or two. If it became something interesting and professional enough, I'd also love to pitch it to travel companies such as Lonely Planet or Fodors, or travel TV channels. A dream would be to be the "Anthony Bourdain of music."

This year I'll be releasing multiple singles and music videos, including one

"That morning was one of the highlights of the whole trip — maybe even my life so far."

views, we have learned that you *cannot* miss a sunrise or sunset from these locations. So on Christmas day, we woke up at 5 a.m., hopped onto our rented motorbike with my GS Mini and a thermos of tea, and rode an hour on sketchy, sandy trails in the pitch dark (and freezing cold!) to a lonesome temple, far away from the crowds. We climbed to the top and sat with tea and guitar in hand for the most amazing sunrise I have ever witnessed in my life. Mist rose from the

again / Every morning brings a wonder I can't explain." That morning was one of the highlights of the whole trip — maybe even my life so far.

### Making Music Connections

Whenever I travel (and I'm sure other adventurers can attest to this), I always come to realize that many of the best experiences revolve around engaging with people. And one of the coolest things about bringing the GS Mini while

ences for me. Music truly is a universal connecting force in which, everywhere in the world, someone else can feel and experience joy.

One wonderful interaction with people on our Asia journey was at an orphanage called Happy Home in Chiang Saen, Thailand. We stayed for a brief five days and were able to get to know the staff and 30 or so kids who stayed there. Each night I brought out the GS Mini to share some of my music and to work on a song with the kids to sing for their Christmas concert. Hearing them sing and watching them smile and giggle shyly at the goofy "pharang" (white man) was a powerful and emotional time of the trip for me. It made me realize how much music can do to unite and be a force of good in the world, and it made me want to strive to do that as much as possible with my own music. These kids were amazing, down-to-earth, and saintly human beings, despite the terrible cards many had been dealt. Though our time there was short, I learned so much from them, and I've taken that experience with me as a grounding force and an inspiration for how to live my life. The kids at Happy Home also inspired a song about how humans on every corner of the planet are feeling and desiring and suffering in the same ways. "A boy stares at the stars from his bed in California / Wishing he accomplishes his dreams / Under the

and automobiles (I was always able to carry it on). You sometimes hear horror stories about guitars and travel, but this thing made it through four months of rough travel and tons of play without a scratch, and sounding better than ever. Despite the smaller size, what I love is that it sounds way better than other travel guitars out there. The tone is rich and almost as big sounding as a full-sized guitar, but in a smaller package. It also has the Expression System 2, so I was able to plug in and play a few shows and open mics during the journey with no hassle. Honestly, every time I travel, this guitar is with me.

For any of you songwriters, Taylor players, or simply those intrigued by travel, I encourage you to get out there into our big world! I have found endless inspiration and depth through these journeys — for my songwriting, and for my growth as a person as well. Many people say, "I could never go away like that," or "I could never afford it," and yes, sometimes it is quite out of my comfort zone, in more ways than one. But that's the point for me: to challenge myself, to learn more about what makes the world and its people tick. You can still travel parts of the world for \$20-\$30 a day. We spent less money per day in Asia than we do at home in daily life. It just takes some effort and the desire to do it. I have never, ever, heard a person say that they regret taking a trip of a life-

I recently uploaded on YouTube called "Change the World," with some of the best GoPro and Theta S 360 footage from Southeast Asia. I'll be playing Southern California shows, doing small tours, and writing constantly for myself, for film and TV, as well as for other artists. This fall/winter I will pick my best songs, including some from the Asia trip, to take to the studio, and release new music with a big campaign of touring, videos, and new songs through 2017. Some international travel and touring are in the works as well! And maybe a management deal? Fingers crossed....

Until the next journey, stay inspired, songwriters and Taylor players! **W&S**

*Tolan Shaw is a San Diego-based singer-songwriter whose EP, Chin Up, earned him a San Diego Music Award for Best Pop Album in 2015. To view Tolan's Wandersong videos, hear music, and follow his journey as a traveling singer-songwriter and Taylor artist, visit [www.tolanshaw.com](http://www.tolanshaw.com), and follow him on [youtube.com/tolanshaw](https://www.youtube.com/tolanshaw), [facebook.com/tolanshawmusic](https://www.facebook.com/tolanshawmusic), Instagram @tolanshaw, Twitter @tolanshaw, and Snapchat @tolanshaw!*



FALL *F*L



# OURISH

## A FRESH BATCH OF SEASONAL LIMITED EDITIONS SHOWCASES FIGURED WALNUT, GRANADILLO, AN ALL-KOA 12-FRET AND MORE

Much of the appeal of cooking up a seasonal limited edition lineup is the chance to step outside Taylor's existing guitar line and improvise. Each fall carries the promise of something new (no predictable pumpkin spice flavors from this camp), and we won't make something that doesn't excite us.

Ahead we present this year's collection of fresh acoustic flavors, featuring a gorgeous all-koa 12-fret, honeyburst 300s, blackwood baritones, and two rich-voiced cedar-top models, one paired with figured walnut, the other with granadillo. Enjoy.



### K22e 12-Fret LTD

**Back/Sides:** Hawaiian Koa

**Top:** Hawaiian Koa

**Neck:** Mahogany

**Binding:** Figured Maple (Body, Fretboard, Backstrip, Heel Cap)

**Fretboard Inlay:** Koa/Boxwood Ocean Vine

**Rosette:** Figured Maple Fishbone Pattern

**Other Noteworthy Appointments:** Shaded Edgeburst Body & Neck

**T**his exquisite all-koa K22e12-Fret LTD serves up a unique musical treat. It starts, of course, with richly figured Hawaiian koa. Visually, the 12-fret neck's slotted peg-head enhances the seductive neo-vintage aesthetic, while figured maple binding adds a striking counterpoint against the shaded edgeburst finish treatment. One highlight of the beautifully rendered detail work is visible on the back of the guitar, where the binding also incorporates a figured maple backstrip down the center, with the edgeburst applied along either side. This "window shading" treatment amplifies the mirror-like symmetry of the guitar's two bookmatched koa back panels.

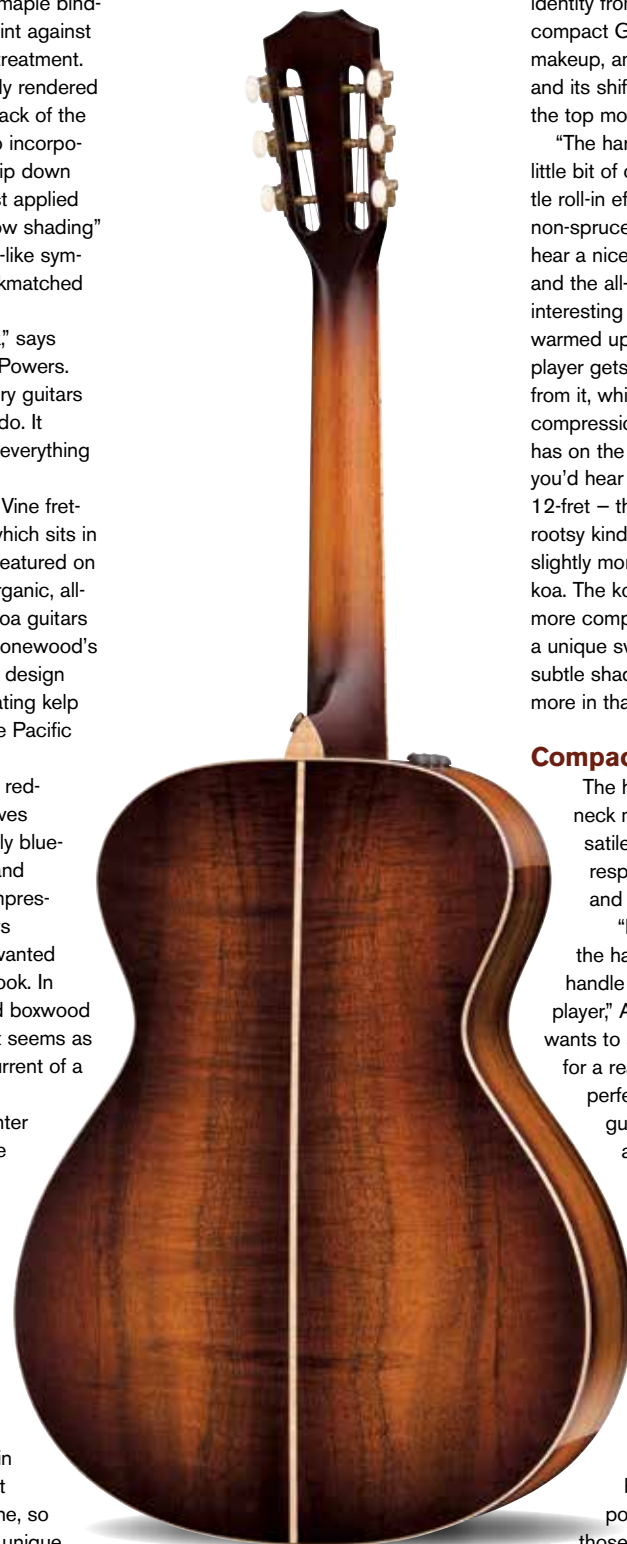
"It's a custom kind of look," says master guitar designer Andy Powers. "It's not typical for most factory guitars because it's more difficult to do. It takes a lot more effort to get everything trimmed out correctly."

The koa/boxwood Ocean Vine fretboard/bridge inlay scheme, which sits in for the fluid Island Vine inlay featured on the Koa Series, honors the organic, all-wood aesthetic spirit of our koa guitars and offers a variation on the tonewood's hallowed island heritage. The design inspiration came from the floating kelp forests Andy often sees in the Pacific Ocean while surfing.

"I took that image of rusty red-brown kelp with its broad leaves twisting in the current of steely blue-green-gray water," he says, "and drew the inlay as a stylized impression. Those kelp colors always make me think of koa, and I wanted to retain that warm, organic look. In this case we've used koa and boxwood to create a vine-like motif that seems as if the inlay is flowing in the current of a fingerboard."

The rosette features a center ring of laser-cut figured maple pieces arranged in an interlocked "fishbone"-style pattern.

"You can't really bend a wide single strip of wood for a rosette, and a single-cut piece tends to get lost in its own figure," Andy explains. "So we chose to cut individual pieces and fit them together in interesting shape, reminiscent of a lightning bolt or a fishbone, so that they interlock but have a unique



pattern. It is a way to ensure the binding and aesthetic details are all cohesive and achieve the right visual weight."

### Clear, Warm & Punchy

The guitar draws its unique sonic identity from the interaction between the compact Grand Concert body, its all-koa makeup, and the way the 12-fret neck and its shifted bridge location articulate the top movement.

"The hardwood koa top gives you a little bit of compression – it has that gentle roll-in effect we often talk about with non-spruce tops," Andy explains. "You'll hear a nice clarity from the smaller body and the all-koa construction. What's interesting is the way the sound gets warmed up by using a 12-fret neck. A player gets a strong midrange punch from it, which starts to push past the compression effect the hardwood top has on the attack. It's similar to what you'd hear from an all-mahogany 522 12-fret – that kind of bluesy, organic, rootsy kind of character – but with the slightly more high-fidelity response of koa. The koa is a little clearer, a little more complex than mahogany, with a unique sweetness. We're talking in subtle shades here, but it leans a little more in that direction."

### Compact & Versatile

The hardwood top and the 12-fret neck make this an exceptionally versatile small-body guitar because it responds well to both fingerstyle and strumming.

"It's a unique guitar because the hardwood top will allow it to handle a lot of energy input from a player," Andy says. "So if somebody wants to strum it and they're looking for a really focused voice, this will be perfect. It'll be a great recording guitar because it'll fit so well on a track. It's got warmth and punch without the big rush of air that you get from a big body. It'll be an awesome slack key guitar, or work for the person who's playing altered tunings. Even though it won't have that big whoosh of air that some players want for the low-register notes, the way that the guitar is braced will produce a lot of power and focus, so it'll keep those low notes very clear."



## 416ce LTD

**Back/Sides:** Figured Walnut

**Top:** Western Red Cedar

**Neck:** Hard Rock Maple

**Binding:** Maple

**Fretboard Inlay:** Engraved Victorian Italian Acrylic

**Rosette:** 3-Ring Maple Fishbone

**Other Noteworthy Appointments:** Maple Back Mini Wedge



It's been a few years since we've made a batch of guitars with a walnut/cedar wood pairing. Not because we don't love the sound, but because finding instrument-grade walnut, Andy says, can be a challenge.

"Most of the walnut you find is flat-sawn," Andy says. "It'll have knots, it'll have visual interest, but not always the particular grain you'd want for instrument-grade wood. Instruments require material with special characteristics because we're working at the very

margin of what that wood will allow us to do."

### A Big, Warm, Responsive Voice

In terms of tonal character, walnut tends to combine certain attributes of mahogany and maple.

"It has the dryness of mahogany, but also shares maple's transparency – 'player-reflective' would be another way to describe it," Andy says. "When you combine that with the touch sensitivity and warmth a cedar top brings to a guitar, you wind up with something that has a quick response, but in a huge range of tonal colors. That's why fingerstyle players love the combination of walnut and cedar. People who use

Celtic tunings love that wood pairing. And even though we often associate Hawaiian koa with slack key music, a slack key player sounds great playing a walnut/cedar guitar. These guitars go well with anybody who wants a big response out of a light touch."

This guitar works well for a strummer, but particularly one with a softer articulation hand as the cedar top tends to magnify a gentle touch when the wood pairing is used with a slightly larger body. In this case, we chose our Grand Symphony (GS) to unleash more dynamic range.

"You've got a lot of power behind you with that bigger GS body," Andy says. "It's a combination we used once before on a very small run of Builder's

Reserve guitars [offered in the fall of 2012]. What's different this time around is this model has our updated Performance bracing, so it has a different reservoir of power and dynamic range."

### Bold Looks to Match the Sound

That potent sonic personality influenced the visual aesthetic, especially the back of the guitar. The walnut blends rich color variegation, bold grain structure, and bookmatched figure, while a maple mini wedge adds a striking visual contrast. The guitar also incorporates a maple neck, maple binding, and a maple rosette arranged with interlocking "fishbone"-style pieces.

"With the guitar hanging on a wall, especially with the back facing out, you'll notice its visual boldness from across the room," Andy says. "And as soon as you touch the strings, it will respond with the same boldness."

The fretboard inlay features an engraved Victorian design in Italian acrylic. The material was chosen because it shares an aesthetic quality with shell, and because our design team is able to laser-engrave it in-house to add extra visual detail. Additional features include a Venetian cutaway and our onboard Expression System® 2 electronics.



## 514ce LTD

**Back/Sides:** Granadillo  
**Top:** Western Red Cedar  
**Neck:** Mahogany  
**Binding:** Sapele  
**Fretboard Inlay:** Italian Acrylic Mini Diamonds  
**Rosette:** Single Ring Sapele Fishbone  
**Other Noteworthy Appointments:** Shaded Edgeburst Back/Sides/Neck



Granadillo is another tonewood that we love but can be difficult to procure. We last used it for a limited edition run in the spring of 2013. Sonically, its tonal personality is similar to Indian rosewood, but with its harder and denser makeup, it produces a complex response with strong bell-like overtones. As we noted in our spring 2013 issue of *Wood&Steel*, the wood traditionally has been used for marimba bars because of its clear, chimy tonal quality, and classical guitar makers later

adopted it for similar reasons. What you probably don't know is that as part of our revoicing efforts with the 600, 800 and 900 Series, Andy's design of our Advanced Performance bracing incorporated granadillo for the bridge pin plate on the underside of the soundboard where the strings are anchored.

"It's similar to the marimba bar effect," Andy says. "It works exceptionally well for that. It's a really nice component of those guitars."

### Broad Response, Expressive Voice

Since we still had wood from the original batch of granadillo we purchased, we wanted to use it for another run of guitars, but in a fresh way. Last



time around we paired it with spruce tops; this time Andy opted for Western Red cedar in the form of a Grand Auditorium body. Players can expect the clear, ringing, long-sustaining notes of a spruce-top edition, but the cedar adds more touch sensitivity, warmth and complexity.

"Cedar combined with the incredibly overtone-thick response of the back and sides makes a huge sound," Andy says. "You play a single note but get everything in return. It's a great ballad guitar for that reason. You drag a pick over the strings and it will blossom and flower before it fades. It's like when you throw a rock into a pond and watch the ripples hit every shore. That's what this guitar sounds like. Each note starts and

emanates into all sorts of places before it ebbs into silence. For the fingerstyle player or somebody who's looking for a very broad kind of response, it's a really expressive sounding guitar."

While Andy isn't one to impose limitations on a guitar's use, he says in this case the complexity of the response might not be the ideal match for a bluegrass picker or shredder.

"Someone who plays a lot of notes, or really complicated kinds of things with a hard attack, might get so much overtone drama it drowns out their performance," he says. "The way the guitar responds might start to work against what they're playing."

### Complementary Colors

Visually, each set of granadillo displays a unique blend of red, orange and brown hues, and is subtly embellished by a shaded edgeburst on the back, sides and neck. Sapele binding adds a tasteful color complement between the granadillo and cedar, with a matching sapele rosette featuring "fishbone"-style interlocking pieces. Additional appointments include Italian acrylic mini diamonds and black and white top purfling. The guitar also features a Venetian cutaway and Taylor ES2 acoustic electronics.

# 326e Baritone-6 LTD

## 326e Baritone-8 LTD

**Back/Sides:** Tasmanian Blackwood

**Top:** Mahogany

**Neck:** Mahogany

**Binding:** Black

**Fretboard Inlay:** Italian Acrylic Small Diamonds

**Rosette:** 3-Ring

**Other Noteworthy Appointments:** Shaded Edgeburst Top



Ever since we unveiled our first baritone guitar to celebrate Taylor's 35th anniversary back in 2009, we've delighted in exposing musicians to its unique sound and playing applications. The combination of our Grand Symphony body, a 27-inch scale length, and the B tuning (a fourth below a standard guitar), together with our signature tonal balance and clarity, gives players an inviting platform to explore its deep, rich musical register. And for a guitar that by definition might be classified as a specialty instrument, its utility and versatility will

surprise you. (For more on that, see last issue's "Baritone Basics" story.) To expand the baritone's sonic palette further, we also designed an 8-string in addition to a 6-string, both of which are represented here.

### **Blackwood & Mahogany: A Baritone-Friendly Pairing**

As the Taylor line has evolved over the past few years, so have our baritone wood pairings. Recently, as we've introduced more hardwood-top models, we've made several batches of mahogany-top baritones because the natural compression of the top helps even out the response across the tonal spectrum. The 300 Series has been a natural place for us to go, first with a sapele/mahogany pairing, and as of this year, the pairing of a mahogany top

with blackwood back and sides. This has proved to be a favorable combination because it keeps the voice focused and clear, which is no small task, as Andy explains.

"One of the challenges with low-register instruments is that it's hard to make well-defined notes whose overtones don't get in the way of everything else," he says. "It's the same as sitting in front of a piano and playing close-interval block chords on the low keys, where the combined notes become mushy. They may be close harmonies, but notes and their overtones are so densely clustered they don't work well. All the overtones end up stepping on each other's toes. Typically, what a pianist will do is voice chords with a long distance in between individual notes in the lower register. They'll put octaves or

fifths in between notes to spread that voicing out over a larger range in order to keep all the notes separate and distinct. It's a tricky issue in addressing the lowest register."

With a baritone guitar, choosing woods with the right tonal properties will help it function well musically.

"A hardwood top like mahogany is really good, he says. "Blackwood is also a good fit – it's responsive and keeps everything warm, yet has a clear focus to it. Together, the two woods are well suited for a baritone."

The 8-string edition incorporates two additional octave strings (paired with the third and fourth strings) that sprinkle some 12-string shimmer into the midrange without adding too much jangle. Single strings on the low and high ends of the tonal spectrum help

preserve clarity for walking bass lines and lead runs.

The appointment package for both limited edition models falls in line with our standard blackwood/mahogany 326e, including an all satin-finish body, shaded edgeburst top, and black pickguard for a dark, vintage look. And plugged in, our Expression System 2 pickup articulates the baritone's rich voicing nuances with inspiring depth and definition for live performance.

Whether you lean toward the 6-string or the 8-string version, a baritone promises to open up a whole new musical landscape for you to explore, with all the familiar playing comfort and accessibility of a standard Taylor 6-string.

## 312ce LTD

## 316ce LTD

**Back/Sides:** Sapele

**Top:** Sitka Spruce

**Neck:** Mahogany

**Binding:** Black

**Fretboard Inlay:** Italian Acrylic Small Diamonds

**Rosette:** 3-Ring

**Other Noteworthy Appointments:** Honey Sunburst Top



Sometimes the design choices for a limited edition offering can be as simple as applying a single aesthetic upgrade to an existing model and stepping away from the guitar. Such was the case with this pair of sapele/spruce 300 Series models. A hand-sprayed honey sunburst adds an artful blend of color that bathes the soundboard in a warm, visually seductive glow. Both feature the pairing of sapele back and sides with a Sitka spruce top for a clear, balanced sound with the appealing sonic complexity of an all-solid-wood guitar. Choose from two body styles: the

compact Grand Concert 312ce LTD if you favor the physical comfort and focused voice of a smaller-body guitar, or the Grand Symphony 316ce LTD if you want a strummer with extra low-end sonic torque and horsepower. Both feature a Venetian cutaway and ES2 electronics.

*All limited edition models feature a Taylor limited edition label inside the guitar. Look for them in stores starting in October. For complete specifications and more information on availability, visit [taylorguitars.com](http://taylorguitars.com).*



[Backstage Pass]

# OLD GROWS NEW

BLAZING FLATPICKER TREY HENSLEY HAS KEPT THE BLUEGRASS TORCH BURNING BRIGHT WHILE FORGING HIS OWN MUSICAL PATH

By Dan Forte

Photo by Nicholas Rowledge

**"I** first met Trey Hensley at a concert in East Tennessee when his guitar was almost bigger than he was," country music legend Marty Stuart remembered in 2014. "He played me his version of 'Jimmy Brown the Newsboy' by the Carter Family that night, and I instantly became his fan. As a musician, singer, and songwriter, I've watched him evolve since that first meeting, but the one thing that has never changed is Trey's authenticity. It's one of his God-given virtues. In the ever-changing world of country music, it's comforting to know that the real deal still exists. I'm counting on Trey to keep

the voice of the mountains alive because mountain boys always have something to say that's worthy of a listen."

As one of traditional country and bluegrass music's biggest advocates, Stuart didn't just sing Hensley's praises; he brought him onto the stage of the Grand Ole Opry back in 2002 when Hensley was 11. And to make the young talent's debut even more special, he also invited Earl Scruggs, on guitar, whose recording of the song had served as both Stuart's and Hensley's blueprint.

Call it "old-time music," but in terms of genres, bluegrass is one of the youngest types of American music. An-

tecedents aside, its Big Boom came 70 years ago, in 1946, when mandolinist/singer Bill Monroe, the "Father of Bluegrass," formed his classic lineup of the Blue Grass Boys, with guitarist/singer Lester Flatt, banjo icon Earl Scruggs, fiddler Chubby Wise, and bassist Howard Watts, a.k.a. Cedric Rainwater.

In '48, the Stanley Brothers recorded the classic "Molly and Tenbrooks," and the Osborne Brothers, Jim & Jesse, Red Allen, Jimmy Martin, and others comprised bluegrass's first generation.

But if bluegrass is a comparatively new genre, bluegrass guitar, as a lead instrument, is even younger. Today, every

bluegrass unit, from Nickel Creek to Alison Krauss and Union Station, features guitarists such as Sean Watkins, Dan Tyminski, Josh Williams, and Cody Kilby flatpicking acoustic solos. But it wasn't until Doc Watson's flatpicking took the place of a fiddle in Jack Williams & the Country Gentlemen, and then on festival stages as a solo artist in the early '60s, that bluegrass guitar as we know it today came into being.

Around the same time, teenager Clarence White's dazzling flatpicked runs were fueling the Country Boys, who became the Kentucky Colonels. Heroes like Norman Blake, Dan Crary,

and Tony Rice added their own stamps to the style, and today bluegrass is more popular than it's ever been.

Trey Hensley hails from Jonesborough, in East Tennessee.

"It's past Johnson City and is the oldest town in Tennessee," the 25-year-old details. "A pretty obscure place. And I actually grew up in an even smaller town, Telford" — population 921 in the 2010 census. Hensley adds that Johnson City has the ETSU (East Tennessee State University) bluegrass program, which is renowned all over the world.

"Because East Tennessee is musically rich, I had a lot of opportunities

to play with other musicians,” he says. “Although there weren’t a lot of places to play, I did have some good people helping me when I first started playing – especially getting started at a young age. G.C. Matlock was my teacher. He played in a great band in the ’70s from East Tennessee called Hard Times. [Ed. Note: Matlock’s current band is Tennessee Skyline.] He’s just one of those guys, when you hear him play it always sticks with you. He’s still my favorite guitar player. I know I probably wouldn’t have stuck with the guitar had I not heard him play. I took lessons from him for six months to a year; then it kind of turned into going to his house and having jam sessions, which I did for a long time. I also met and picked quite a bit with Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash. Most of the Carter family lived in Hiltons, Virginia, which is about a 45-minute drive from Jonesborough, so I used to go up there quite a bit.”

Even as a pre-adolescent, Hensley’s singing was as impressive as his playing. He remembers his first encounter with Marty Stuart.

“I’d been playing about six months when I got to meet Marty,” he says. “He was playing at a fair in Johnson City [Tennessee], and I got to play for him backstage. A few months later, in February 2002, he had me on the Grand Ole Opry. I’d been playing for about nine months or so. That was really cool.”

You can find a video of that performance on YouTube and Hensley’s website. As soon as Hensley opens his mouth to sing, the Opry crowd goes wild.

Though he got a guitar at age nine, Hensley says he “didn’t really have much interest in it.” But at 10, he went to a bluegrass festival and saw Jimmy Martin and Charlie Waller.

“That made me want to pick up a guitar.”

His early inspirations included bluegrass pickers Doc Watson, Clarence White, and Tony Rice.

**“I’D NEVER HEARD OF BLACKWOOD. IT’S LIKE MAHOGANY ON STEROIDS!”**



Rob Ickes (left) and Hensley

“Bryan Sutton was also a big influence,” he adds. “As years progressed, I got into more different kinds of music. At 17, I switched to electric and got into a lot of country players and rock & roll guitar players. What got me into electric guitar was hearing the first guitar break on the Buck Owens album *The Carnegie Hall Concert*, where Don Rich comes in and plays this great solo – pretty short, pretty simple – on ‘Act Naturally.’ It hit me in a way that made me want to grab an electric guitar. Then I was always searching for that feeling, and now I listen to anything from John Scofield to Warren Haynes, Wes Montgomery, and a lot of horn players. Just trying to pick up anything I can from as many kinds of music as I can.

“My ‘method’ is pretty unknown,” he confesses. “I know nothing about what I’m doing, so it’s not easy to explain. I always played by ear, so as far as theory, I’ve never really known anything. When I first played electric, I played like an acoustic guitar player playing electric guitar. You just have to develop your chops on anything. Electric guitar, to me, is a totally different instrument than an acoustic guitar. I play them totally different. It’s a whole new set of problems,” he laughs.

Meeting Tony Rice, Hensley says, was a big deal.

“I got to meet him after I’d been playing a couple of years, and he was just the nicest guy in the world,” he recalls. “He let me play his Santa Cruz guitar and spent a lot of time with me and made me feel great. He was always probably my biggest hero.”

Rice is famous for somehow getting a big sound using a light touch.

“That’s always been something that I really admired, because that’s definitely not easy to do in a bluegrass setting,” Hensley shares. “I always came from the ‘play louder than the banjo’ philosophy; he came from the mindset of ‘make the banjo be quieter.’ It’s totally cool that he could do that. He kind of set his mind

to, ‘I’m not going to abuse my hands or do anything harder than I should.’ It’s the type of finesse that is lacking in a lot of guitarists’ playing, including my own. A very cool thing.”

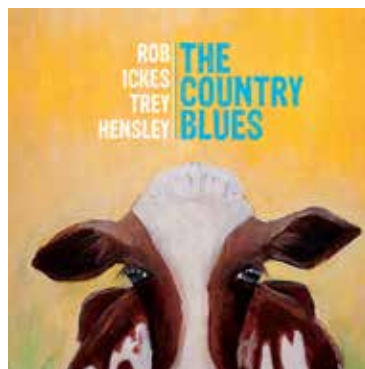
The two Taylor Dreadnoughts Hensley owns are the rosewood/Sitka spruce 910e and a limited-edition 510e with Tasmanian blackwood back and sides and a Sitka spruce top. He got the 510e first and has had it for about three years now.

“I’d never heard of blackwood,” he says. “It’s like mahogany on steroids! I’ve always loved mahogany back-and-sides guitars because they have a certain snappiness. It’s not really as mellow as a rosewood guitar – although I love them too. But for my type of playing, which is flatpicking bluegrass kinds of songs, that snappiness comes through the mix. Rosewood guitars are kind of reserved. They sound great in the studio, but I love the way this blackwood guitar sounds.”

On *The Country Blues*, Hensley’s new CD with Dobro player Rob Ickes, he used the 510e on every song.

“I brought a bunch of guitars into the studio – rosewood, mahogany – but that one really cut through the mix better than all the rest. I used it on the whole thing.”

After playing a 910e from Taylor’s recently revoiced 900 Series on the Taylor stage at this year’s Winter NAMM Show, Hensley added one to his acoustic quiver.



“It’s kind of become my main guitar – but I still bring the 510 out quite a bit too,” he says. “I’ve alternated between some others, but the Taylor Dreadnoughts are my primary guitars.”

In addition to the sound of both models, Hensley particularly likes their feel.

“They just feel great,” he explains. “When I picked up the first Taylor, it was like, ‘Yeah, this is what I’ve been searching for.’ I love the shape of the neck. And the intonation on those guitars is incredible. It’s nice, because in a live show I like to be as fast-paced as possible. With those guitars, it’s basically tune them up once and go. It’s comforting to have that and know that no matter what I play, it’s going to be in tune and easier to play.”

As a young bluegrass player living in the modern era, Hensley says he’s been plugging in the past few years, and liked what he heard from the Taylor Expression System 2.

“It’s just an endless search for acoustic guitar players who are used to normally playing through a mic,” he says. “With the Expression System 2, I don’t have to EQ it. I run it through a Fishman Platinum Pro DI, and I basically use that just to have a DI and a boost and a tuner at my feet. But I don’t have to EQ it at all; it’s basically flat. Soundchecks take 30 seconds. I fought with so many pickups through the years; it’s nice to have something I know is going to sound great.”

Hensley has released four solo albums so far: *First Time Out, Backin’ To Birmingham, Looking At My Future*, and *It Is What It Is*. As *Vintage Guitar* magazine’s Steven Stone wrote: “His take on country music isn’t merely a neo-traditional rearrangement of the musical furniture, but a complete gut of the room. Hensley’s ability to include the best parts of traditional country while eliminating the polluting elements of modern Nashville hot-country ‘radio friendly’ fodder demonstrates a level of musical taste and discernment only a very mature musician can muster.”

Hensley’s 2015 collaboration with Ickes, *Before The Sun Goes Down*, garnered a Grammy nomination for Best Bluegrass Album.

“The first time I met Rob was through Earl Scruggs,” Hensley recalls. “He played with Earl about 10 years. So I met him when I was a kid. Then he played in a band called Blue Highway, and I opened a few shows for them. When they were working on their last record, they needed a scratch vocal on a song, which I think they were going to send to somebody else to record. I lived pretty close to the studio they were using and knew the owner, so he said, ‘My buddy Trey lives down the road. He can come in and sing the song, and you can have it replaced later.’ So I did the song, and they liked what I did and ended up leav-

**“WHEN I PICKED UP THE FIRST TAYLOR, IT WAS LIKE, ‘YEAH, THIS IS WHAT I’VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR.”**

ing my vocal on the album. A couple days afterwards, I got a call from Rob saying, ‘I really liked what you did, and I’ve been watching some videos. If you’re ever in Nashville and want to pick, give me a call.’ And my wife and I had actually been talking about moving to Nashville. So when we did move, Rob and I started picking together, and it all fell into place. About two months later, we started working on *Before The Sun Goes Down*. It went smoothly, without any effort or planning, and it’s always been fun to pick with him, so it’s been nice to take the duo a little further.”

*The Country Blues* features guest vocals by Vince Gill and Carl Jackson, and cameos by fiddlers Aubrey Haynie and Andy Leftwich and Ron Block on banjo, with the rhythm section of drummer John Alvey and bassist Mike Bub. Augmenting Hensley’s vocals and the Dobro and guitar (acoustic and electric) licks being tossed back and forth, the result is a winner.

But on tour, the pair prefers the duo format.

“Most of the time, our live shows are still just the two of us,” Hensley says. “The two CDs have been with a full band, but we enjoy the simplicity of the duo thing. At a bluegrass festival, it’s just totally different from what people have been hearing all day. It’s scaled down from what people normally hear, but it still has the energy of a full band.”

Like Marty Stuart says, mountain boys always have something to say that’s worthy of a listen. **W&S**

# Ahead of the Curve

**At 18, singer-songwriter James TW is already a well-rounded talent with a passion for honing his craft**

By Jim Kirlin

Photo by Ziggy Chareton

**"I**'m having one of the best times of my life," shares British singer-songwriter James TW in a lilting accent by phone from Baltimore in August. The young multi-instrumentalist (guitar, piano and drums) has been out on tour opening for pop sensation (and fellow Taylor player) Shawn Mendes, strumming atop the biggest stages he's played on so far in his career. "I feel like I'm growing as a performer because I'm getting to try so many different things," he says. "Being able to build in a bit of writing on the road means that I'm doing two of the most important things an artist should be doing – performing and writing."

What immediately comes across in conversation with James is his dedica-

tion to his craft, and at the age of 18, he already embodies the refined musical sensibility – both in his songs and performance chops – of a seasoned artist. Both were on display on the Taylor stage at the Winter NAMM show earlier this year, where James played with poise and polish. He's a soulful singer and guitar player, capable of the nimble vocal runs of Ed Sheeran and the slick, riffy fretwork of John Mayer, both of whom he counts as influences (he covered Mayer's "Neon" during his NAMM set). He also loves classic soul singers like Bill Withers, Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder. One of the crowd-pleasing highlights of his NAMM set was a deep-grooved acoustic interpretation of Wonder's "Superstition" using a looper, showcasing his ability to lay

down a richly layered acoustic groove on the fly, flavored with beatbox-style vocal percussion and a funky wah-wah solo on a 714ce.

When I bring up the rendition, he shares his looper origin story.

"I started using that when I was 15," he says. "Honestly, it came from when I was playing at pubs and clubs on the weekends, and some places didn't want me. They'd say, 'Why would we have you, an acoustic singer just doing a bunch of covers, over a band, which would sound much more powerful and give people arguably a better time?' And I remember being a bit pissed. So I thought, you know what, I'll sound like a band then. So I got the [Boss] RC-300 and I still use that one today."

It comes as no surprise that James

took to music early on, thanks in part to his guitar-playing father, who named his son after James Taylor. (His full name is James Taylor-Watts, but he changed his stage name to James TW after fans searching for his uploaded videos on YouTube instead were led to those of his namesake.)

"My earliest memories are of my dad playing a lot of Damian Rice, Ray LaMontagne, James Taylor – acoustic soulful voices – in the kitchen when he was cooking," James recalls. "And he always used to put live concerts on the TV, mainly AC/DC. He'd give me drumsticks and get me to play on the arms of the sofa. I loved doing it."

Before long, James had a chance to bang on some real drums. He also got his first taste of the stage when the

drummer in the wedding band his dad played in couldn't make a gig, so James sat in – at age 10.

"That was a huge moment for me," James recalls. "To play for one hour was a long time, and we'd been playing for a couple of hours. I had the worst blisters on my hand, but I was having the most fun I'd ever had in my life. The crowd was loving it; they were all dancing and having a good time, I got to do a drum solo, and I said to myself, 'I want to do this again.' Luckily for me the drummer didn't want to play with the band after that so I became the drummer," he laughs. "I ended up playing with them for five years."

Sitting behind the drum kit and watching his dad and the lead singer interact with the audience spurred him

to pick up the guitar at age 12 and piano at age 13 so he could get closer to the front of the stage and connect with the crowd. His dad taught him some rock songs on guitar, and he took a few guitar lessons in school, but what he was learning didn't interest him, so he turned to YouTube.

"I just wanted to go learn new songs or how Angus Young did that solo," he says. "With YouTube, I found that I could watch people play, figure out where they were on the neck, and then kind of copy what they were playing that way," he says. "And the same happened with piano."

James went on to play rock tunes in his own band, covering bands like Foo Fighters, Muse and one of his favorite acts, the Stereophonics.

### Blind Discovery

During his Winter NAMM Show performance, James told the crowd he'd been playing a Taylor almost as long as he'd been playing guitar, and that he actually chose his first Taylor during a blindfold test drive in a music store at age 12.

"I'd played a bunch of gigs and earned a bit of pocket money, and I wanted to buy a nice acoustic guitar because I'd been playing my dad's Tanglewood up to that point," he says. "So I went in the store and said, 'Here's my budget, I want to try a bunch of different guitars [brands and models], but I don't want to see the guitar; I just want to base it purely on how it feels and sounds to me.' So we did that. I spent half an hour not being able to see anything, and we drew it down to two guitars. One was a [rosewood/cedar] Taylor 714ce, and the other one was a Taylor as well, a koa model. My dad was with me, and at this point he'd taken the blindfold off, and with me being 12, I think he was a bit nervous that I wanted the koa one. He was like, 'You're kind of jumping in the deep end,' and it was out of my budget as well. I ended up with the 714ce. I loved it. I was so glad it wasn't white or pink. That was my main guitar for five years, playing in pubs and clubs. I still love playing it."

James says he likes the guitar's responsiveness to his picking attack and its versatility.

"I play almost more picking than strumming in my live set," he says. "I love playing intricate picking patterns. What's so great about the 714ce is that it lends itself to both nice hard strumming and picking."

At NAMM, James took full advantage of the Taylor room's abundant model display and fell in love with an 812ce 12-Fret.

"I must've played half the guitars on the wall," he says. "I definitely needed

a cutaway because I like to play those picky things up high. And the slotted peghead on the 12-fret is so sexy looking. I was torn between getting an 814ce, which I thought sounded incredible, and the 812ce [12-Fret], and I thought, the 814ce feels similar to my 714ce. I'd rather have a completely different feeling guitar so I could be a bit more versatile."

He also likes the 12-fret's compact neck design.

"Because the neck is shorter, I don't have to travel around as much," he says. "And I like the thin-feeling neck. I need that because I like to use my thumb on top and I'm less chordy."

James ended up adding the guitar to his Taylor arsenal, and it's his primary acoustic guitar on tour. He also has a koa GS Mini out on the road, which he uses for TV and radio appearances and to play on the tour bus.

### Connecting with Shawn Mendes

If anyone can testify to the power of social media to shape an aspiring musician's career, it's James. Like a lot of young artists, he grew his fanbase by uploading performance videos to YouTube. He'd begun to attract label interest and had flown to New York City for some meetings. It turned out that Shawn Mendes had also seen some of his videos. Mendes himself had amassed a huge following via social media channels. He'd gotten his start at age 14 by posting six-second video snippets of him singing cover tunes on the popular video-sharing app Vine. That led to a record deal with Island Records at age 15 and an opening slot on Taylor Swift's 1989 album tour, before headlining his own world tour this year. Mendes currently has more than 7.3 million followers on Twitter, 12.9 million on Instagram, and 1.5 million subscribers on YouTube. The video for "Treat You Better," the first single from his new album, *Illuminate*, has been viewed more than 110 million times.

So when Mendes sent out a tweet saying that he was inspired by James's YouTube videos, the endorsement made an immediate impact.

"I woke up jet-lagged in New York and my phone was going crazy with notifications on Twitter," he says. "I knew of Shawn, thought that was a lovely thing for him to say, and I kind of thought that was it. Then he DM'd [direct messaged] me and wanted to meet up and hang and maybe play some stuff."

Coincidentally, the two were in New York at the same time so they met at the office of Mendes's label, Island Records. James played for him and a couple of Island A&R reps and then they

brought in David Massey, President of the label. James ended up signing with Island.

"I felt a real warmth from Island," he says. "And really, it's credit to Shawn because he was the one who was showing them YouTube videos of me playing covers and originals, and now he's obviously brought me on his tour. He's been a real champion. I'm very grateful for all that he's done for me."

### Songwriting Evolution

Earlier this year, James released his debut EP, *First Impressions*, which presents a strong sampling of his craft as a writer, singer and multi-instrumentalist (he played all of the instruments on the EP). He shed some light on the evolution of his writing process so far.

"In the beginning, it was all autobiographical — crushes and how I felt about school and all of that — but it's definitely expanded," he says. "I feel free to write about different things now, and I have greater inspiration because I'm more open-minded about what I want to write about. With some song ideas I'll want to go straightaway and just write. It could be 11 o'clock at night and I'm trying to go to bed at home, but if I get an idea that I really like I'll get out of bed and just stay up until 3 o'clock in the morning to finish it. With other

ideas, I'll stash them; I'll leave an idea in my notes for a while and come back to it. If it seems like a good idea a week away then I'll go for it."

One song that began as a note in his phone is the poignant ballad "When You Love Someone," which appears on his EP and he played at NAMM.

"It's about a kid I was teaching drums to, whose parents were getting divorced, and I wanted to try to capture

## "If I have too much to say in a song, then it's going to be a good song."

that," he shares. "All the note in my phone said was, 'Parents explaining to child that they're getting divorced.' From there I would think of all the different things I'd want to say in the song. I remember I felt like I had so much to say. If I have too much to say in a song, then it's going to be a good song. When I'm struggling to try to come up with the second verse or the bridge, then it's going to be a bit trickier."

### Connecting with the Crowd

James is equally eager to elevate his performance chops for bigger audiences. One gratifying part of touring

with Mendes has been the way audiences have embraced him. He's been especially impressed by how familiar they often are with his music when he takes the stage, even though he's the opening act.

"Shawn's crowd is everything a support act could ask for," he says. "They get to the venue early, they do their homework, they know about the support act; it's not just walk in and see what it's

like. They come with signs; they come knowing my name. I really appreciate that."

There's also a sense of musical kinship that emanates from James as he reflects on touring with Mendes — especially as fellow 18-year-olds who are learning as they go.

"What's great about Shawn is he doesn't make you feel like you're the support act," James explains. "He makes you feel like you're sharing the stage. He'll come and watch me play my set from the side stage, and when I come off he'll suggest things that he thinks I should try that might go down better with the crowd, and vice-versa. He's open; he wants me to critique his set and let him know what I like and it feels very mutual. We're both growing and helping each other learn."

Part of that learning process, James says, is tuning in to what a particular audience wants on a given night. As a British artist who's been playing a lot of shows in America this past summer, he's become attuned to cultural differences.

"The sense of humor is different," he says. "Sweden, for example, has a very British sense of humor; they're big on sarcasm, so that can be put into the show deliberately because you'll connect with the audience better. Americans tend to like the fact that I have a British accent. It's about reading the crowd and giving them what they want. Sometimes they don't want to be involved; sometimes they want you to take another round on the solo and show off your [guitar] licks, like at NAMM, whereas sometimes you should add another sing-along because you can tell that's what people are there for and they want to be a part of it. What's fun is that every crowd is different"

He's also raising his game in other ways while on tour.

"We've been playing a ton of ping-pong," he says. "Everyone has gotten five times better on this tour!" **W&S**



On the Taylor stage at NAMM with his 714ce

# Taylor Notes

## Cutaway Grand Orchestra Models Are Here

If you've been waiting patiently for the arrival of a cutaway Grand Orchestra, the day has come. All standard Grand Orchestra models are now available with our Florentine-style cutaway.

Since its introduction in 2013 as the successor to our Jumbo body style, the Grand Orchestra has been produced exclusively as a non-cutaway to accentuate the nuanced contours

The cutaway brings even more versatility to a groundbreaking design that richly expanded the musical capabilities of a big-bodied acoustic guitar. From the new footprint to the deeper body to Andy's hybrid scalloped-meets-parabolic bracing scheme, the GO's bold voice manages to match impressive low-end power with uniform sonic character across the entire tonal spectrum. It also makes the shape



L-R: K28ce, 618ce

of our newest, biggest and deepest body shape in its purest form. Now that the GO has taken root in the acoustic guitar world and settled into the Taylor family of shapes, the time seemed right to branch out with a cutaway version.

Andy Powers, who designed the GO, chose to incorporate the sharp Florentine cutaway rather than the more rounded Venetian version used on other Taylor cutaway models for aesthetic reasons.

"We feel like Florentine cutaway looks better on the big body," Andy says. "The larger radius curves blend together more harmoniously with the body lines than a tightly bent Venetian cutaway."

surprisingly responsive to a light touch, giving players a remarkably dynamic acoustic palette to explore. With the cutaway, solo players can now reach those upper register notes and count on a rich, solid treble response, adding even more sonic detail to a lush and powerful acoustic voice.

The cutaway editions include our standard 6-string and 12-string Grand Orchestra models. A cutaway is also an available option for Grand Orchestra guitars ordered through our custom program.

## 712e 12-Fret Review: "Sonically Vivacious"

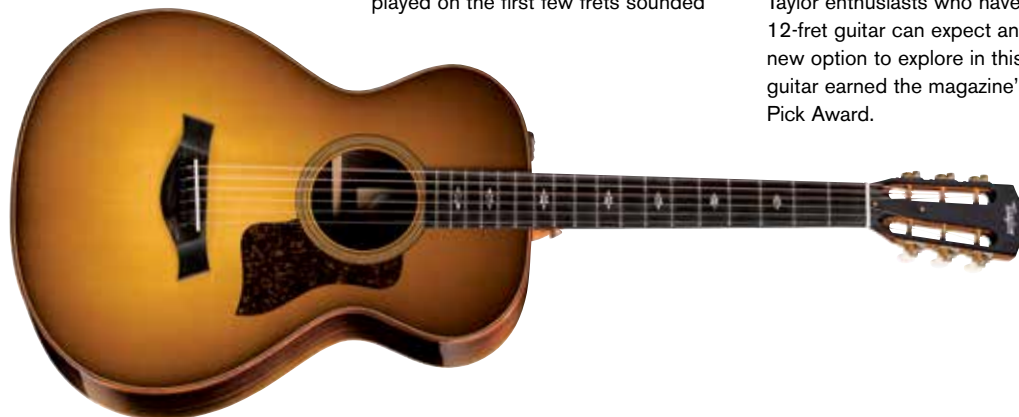
Our 712e 12-Fret made a great impression on *Guitar Player* magazine's acoustic "Frets" editor Jimmy Leslie, who called it "sonically vivacious" in a review that appears in the publication's November edition. After admiring the new features of the redesigned 700 Series, including the Western Sunburst top on the model he sampled, Leslie noted the "unique personality" of the 12-fret design in terms of its appealing feel and sound.

"It practically calls out to be fingerpicked," he writes in reference to the compact relationship between the 12-fret neck and intimate Grand Concert body. "It inspired me to pluck away in open tunings, where simple chords and melodies fell naturally under the fingers, and a light glass slide felt fantastic gliding across its light strings."

Leslie also liked the "lively" and "super responsive" nature of the guitar. "Open strings shimmered, and notes played on the first few frets sounded

crisp," he says. "The focus was fundamentally in the middle range, but it didn't lack lows or highs. It sounded as balanced as an Olympic gymnast as I jumped from string to string and ran up and down the ebony fretboard."

Despite its fingerstyle-friendly nature, Leslie was also impressed with the guitar's ability to handle some heavy strumming. "I couldn't detect any compromise at high volumes," he writes." Ultimately, he concludes, Taylor enthusiasts who haven't played a 12-fret guitar can expect an intriguing new option to explore in this model. The guitar earned the magazine's Editors' Pick Award.



## New Nylon: Introducing the 114ce-N

We love the nylon sound. We also love how modern players (and producers) have embraced its use in fresh ways and numerous musical genres. Even as a secondary guitar, the unique sonic flavors and textures make it an inspiring addition to your acoustic toolbox. Stuck in a rut on your steel-string? Grab your nylon. It will take you to a different place.

In the spirit of making the nylon-string experience more accessible to players around the world, we're adding a new nylon model to the 100 Series this fall: the 114ce-N. We're also introducing two tone-enhancing updates that will be applied to other nylon-string models within the Taylor line as well: a revamped top bracing scheme and a shift to a newer style of nylon strings from D'Addario: Pro-Arté Carbon Hard Tension, featuring carbon treble strings and Dynacore composite core bass strings.

Andy Powers, who refined the bracing and recommended the change of strings, says the overall sound will be louder and richer, with improved top-to-bottom balance. Increasing the tonal output can be a tricky proposition, as he explains.

"Nylon-string guitars tend to be unforgiving to the builder," he says. "There is very little inertia to work with [due to the lighter string tension], so all the components need to be working in

close harmony with each other in order to perform well."

Andy says the Carbon strings from D'Addario intonate and project better. In his opinion, they also blend the best of the traditional gut-string sound with the performance of modern string design.

"These sound, to my ears at least, a little more like real gut strings," he says. "Traditional twisted gut treble strings have a brilliance and a singing quality that most modern strings don't possess. Nylon is far more consistent, more reliable, and less expensive than gut. These newer strings D'Addario is making cleverly capture more of the musicality I miss in traditional gut strings together with the convenience of a synthetic string."

In addition to the bracing and string updates, the 114ce-N will feature one other material change: layered rosewood back and sides rather than the layered sapele back and sides of our other 100 Series models. Otherwise, the remaining features follow our 100 Series design specifications: a solid Sitka spruce top, 4mm dot inlays, black binding, and a matte finish body. Nylon-specific specs include a 1-7/8-inch nut width, 20-inch fretboard radius, and our ES-N pickup. The guitar comes with a gig bag and is slated to start shipping later this year.





## Taylor Hosts Manufacturing Roundtable with U.S. Secretary of Commerce

On her recent swing through San Diego, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker visited Taylor Guitars to moderate a roundtable discussion for local manufacturers, followed by a tour of the Taylor factory. The event marked the first-ever visit from a member of the Presidential Cabinet. Secretary Pritzker was joined by local Congresswoman Susan Davis, who represents California's 53rd District.

While most people might not immediately think of San Diego as a manufacturing city, the area Taylor has called home since our inception is in fact the third most patent-intensive region in the world, based on a study recently released by the World Trade Center San Diego. Manufacturing and exporting are huge drivers of our local economy. During the roundtable discussion organized by the San Diego

East County Economic Development Council, the participating business owners – representing Northrop Grumman, ActionDrone, CalBiotech, Deering Banjos, and other companies – were encouraged to share their challenges along with their opinions on how they could work alongside the government to relieve some of the pressures that manufacturers are experiencing. It was a collaborative discussion, with each business owner receiving personalized feedback from both Sec. Pritzker and Rep. Davis. Each owner seemed to echo the same sentiment: We need to continue to encourage young people to choose manufacturing jobs by partnering with high schools and community colleges to offer classes that teach different trades for college credit. The participants came away feeling grateful for the discussion and were enthusias-

tic about the feedback they received from both federal and state government representatives.

Following the roundtable, Taylor Vice President of Product Development Ed Granero gave Sec. Pritzker and Rep. Davis, along with their staff and local media, a brief tour of our factory. Ed presented highlights of our manufacturing process, including precision tooling, detail-oriented, hands-on craftsmanship, robotic applications, and most importantly, our staff. During the tour, Sec. Pritzker took the opportunity to speak with employees in the final assembly department about their passion for their jobs and the quality of our products.

It was a productive morning for all involved, providing a unique opportunity for us to interface with members of the government.

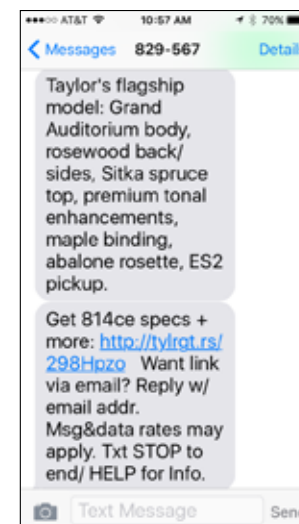


**Top left:** The roundtable discussion on the Taylor campus; **Far left (L-R):** Rep. Susan Davis, Sec. Pritzker and Bob Taylor; **Left:** Sec. Pritzker talks with Taylor employee Steve Klages in the final assembly department during a factory tour with Ed Granero (center)



## Text for Taylor Model Info

The next time you're in a music store, find yourself under the seductive pull of a particular Taylor model, and need more product details, simply fire up your mobile phone and text the model name as it appears on the label inside the guitar (e.g., 814ce, 214ce-SB DLX) to **829567 (TAYLOR)**. You'll receive an automated text reply with a link to that model's product page (optimized for your mobile device), which will allow you to see the model description and complete specifications. You'll also have the option to reply with your email address and have the link sent via email. We're only able to do this for standard models that have their own product page, so if you need more information about a Taylor custom guitar, flag down a store employee for additional specs. Please note that this service works in the U.S. only and that text message and data rates may apply.



Text any model number to 829567 (TAYLOR) to get product information.

**Above:** Text reply with basic specs and a link to the 814ce product detail page on the Taylor website

# Calendar

For all the latest Taylor event listings, visit [taylorguitars.com/events](https://www.taylorguitars.com/events)

Fall means a fresh season of Taylor Road Shows and Find Your Fit events, and our friendly guitar experts are already out on tour to share the latest from the Taylor factory. At each Road Show event, they'll demonstrate how different our guitar shapes and woods affect tone, offer tips on how to choose the right guitar for your playing style, and answer all your guitar questions. You'll also be able to play and compare the latest models from the Taylor line, including our redesigned rosewood 700 and 800 Series, maple 600 Series, mahogany 500 Series, electric/acoustic T5z, and more. Our crew will also have special Road Show-exclusive models on hand, plus a new assortment of custom guitars.

Whatever your skill level, everyone is welcome, so whether you're a longtime Taylor player or are thinking about getting your first guitar, come join us for a fun, informative event.

In addition to Road Shows, our Find Your Fit events take things a step further with a one-on-one consultation to help you choose the right guitar. Our guitar experts will talk to you about your playing style, musical goals, and other preferences, and recommend models that will best match your particular needs.

Below you'll find our latest Taylor event listings. We hope to see you!

## NORTH AMERICAN ROAD SHOWS

### California

**Clovis, CA**  
Tuesday, October 25, 7 p.m.  
Gottschalk Music Center  
(559) 298-4400

**Ontario, CA**  
Tuesday, October 11, 6:30 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(909) 484-3550

**San Jose, CA**  
Wednesday, October 26, 6:30 p.m.  
Guitar Showcase  
(408) 377-5864

**Santa Rosa, CA**  
Thursday, October 27, 6:30 p.m.  
Bananas At Large  
(707) 542-5588

**Thousand Oaks, CA**  
Monday, October 24, 7 p.m.  
Instrumental Music  
(805) 496-3774

**Torrance, CA**  
Monday, October 10, 6:30 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(310) 214-0340

### Connecticut

**Manchester, CT**  
Wednesday, October 12, 6 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Manchester  
(860) 648-3900

**New London, CT**  
Monday, October 10, 6:30 p.m.  
Spindrift Guitars  
(860) 444-2112

### Illinois

**Buffalo Grove, IL**  
Monday, November 7, 6:30 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(847) 253-3151

**Edwardsville, IL**  
Tuesday, October 11, 6:30 p.m.  
Mojo's Music  
(618) 655-1600

**Lombard, IL**  
Tuesday, November 8, 6:30 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(630) 424-0767

### Indiana

**Evansville, IN**  
Wednesday, October 12, 6:30 p.m.  
Opus 1 Music  
(812) 479-6787

### Kansas

**Overland Park, KS**  
Monday, October 10, 6 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Overland Park  
(913) 451-0700

### Massachusetts

**Boston, MA**  
Tuesday, October 11, 6 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Boston  
(617) 247-1389

### Michigan

**Fraser, MI**  
Friday, October 14, 6:30 p.m.  
Huber Breese Music  
(586) 294-3950

### Nevada

**Las Vegas, NV**  
Thursday, October 13, 6:30 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(702) 734-0007

### New Jersey

**Asbury Park, NJ**  
Wednesday, November 16, 6:30 p.m.  
Russo Music  
(732) 455-8397

### Phillipsburg, NJ

Tuesday, November 15, 6:30 p.m.  
Dave Phillips Music & Sound - Phillipsburg  
(908) 454-3313

### New York

**Huntington Station, NY**  
Thursday, November 17, 6:30 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music - Huntington  
(631) 421-9333

### Roslyn, NY

Thursday, October 13, 6:30 p.m.  
The Music Zoo  
(516) 626-9292

### Ohio

**Cincinnati, OH**  
Thursday, October 13, 6:30 p.m.  
Third Rock Music  
(513) 843-5739

### Lyndhurst, OH

Thursday, November 10, 6:30 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(440) 446-0850

### Oregon

**Keizer, OR**  
Friday, October 21, 7 p.m.  
Uptown Music  
(503) 393-4437

### Portland, OR

Thursday, October 20, 7 p.m.  
Portland Music Company  
(503) 228-8437

### Texas

**Arlington, TX**  
Thursday, October 13, 6 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Arlington  
(817) 277-3510

### Austin, TX

Wednesday, November 16, 6:30 p.m.  
Strait Music  
(512) 476-6927

### Boerne, TX

Tuesday, November 15, 6:30 p.m.  
Heart's Home Acoustics  
(830) 331-9840

### Corpus Christi, TX

Monday, November 14, 6:30 p.m.  
Sound Vibrations  
(361) 884-8981

### Houston, TX

Wednesday, October 12, 6 p.m.  
Guitar Center - North Houston  
(281) 537-9100

### Houston, TX

Thursday, November 17, 6:30 p.m.  
Great Southern Music  
(281) 550-4545

### League City, TX

Tuesday, October 11, 6:30 p.m.  
Danny D's Guitar Hacienda  
(281) 338-1830

### Longview, TX

Monday, October 10, 6:30 p.m.  
Mundt Music - Longview  
(903) 758-8872

### Washington

**Olympia, WA**  
Wednesday, October 19, 7 p.m.  
Music 6000  
(960) 786-6000

### Seattle, WA

Monday, October 17, 7 p.m.  
Dusty Strings  
(206) 634-1662

### Tacoma, WA

Tuesday, October 18, 6:30 p.m.  
Ted Brown Music  
(253) 272-3211

### Canada

**Levis, QC**  
Tuesday, November 8, 7 p.m.  
MSP Musique  
(418) 831-9010

### Mississauga, ON

Tuesday, October 25, 7 p.m.  
The Guitar Shop  
(905) 274-5555

### Montreal, QC

Wednesday, November 9, 6 p.m.  
Musique Diplomate  
(514) 274-5413

### Ottawa, ON

Thursday, November 10, 7 p.m.  
Lauzon Music  
(613) 725-1116

### Richmond Hill, ON

Thursday, October 27, 7 p.m.  
Cosmo Music  
(905) 770-5222

### Toronto, ON

Wednesday, October 26, 7 p.m.  
The 12th Fret  
(416) 423-2132

### Toronto, ON

Monday, October 24, 7 p.m.  
KAOS Music  
(416) 233-2232

### Victoriaville, QC

Monday, November 7, 7 p.m.  
Gerald Musique  
(819) 752-5912



## NORTH AMERICAN FIND YOUR FIT EVENTS

### Arizona

#### Tucson, AZ

Saturday, November 5, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Rainbow Guitars  
(520) 325-3376

### California

#### San Diego, CA

Saturday, October 8, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(619) 573-9669

#### Santa Monica, CA

Saturday, October 29, 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
McCabe's Guitar Shop  
(310) 828-4497

### Kansas

#### Arkansas City, KS

Friday, November 11, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sparks Music  
(602) 442-5030

#### Lawrence, KS

Wednesday, November 9, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Mass Street Music  
(785) 843-3535

#### Wichita, KS

Thursday, November 10, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Senseney Music  
(316) 262-1487

### Maine

#### South Portland, ME

Saturday, November 5, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Portland  
(207) 822-9822

### Maryland

#### Catonsville, MD

Monday, November 14, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Appalachian Bluegrass Shoppe  
(410) 744-1144

#### La Plata, MD

Friday, October 7, 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
Island Music Company  
(301) 392-3960

### Nebraska

#### Lincoln, NE

Tuesday, November 8, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Dietze Music  
(402) 434-7454

#### Omaha, NE

Monday, November 7, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Omaha  
(402) 330-1709

### Nevada

#### Las Vegas, NV

Saturday, October 15, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(702) 734-0007

### New Hampshire

#### Dover, NH

Friday, November 4, 2 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Earcraft Music  
(603) 749-3138

### New York

#### New York, NY

Friday, October 14, 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Times Square  
(212) 354-7040

### Ohio

#### Lyndhurst, OH

Saturday, November 12, 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sam Ash Music  
(440) 446-0850

### Oregon

#### Ashland, OR

Saturday, December 3, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Cripple Creek Music Co.  
(541) 482-9141

#### Eugene, OR

Saturday, December 3, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
McKenzie River Music  
(541) 343-9482

### South Dakota

#### Rapid City, SD

Saturday, October 29, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Haggerty's Musicworks  
(605) 348-6737

### Texas

#### Addison, TX

Saturday, October 8, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Tone Shop Guitars  
(972) 661-8663

### Tennessee

#### Nashville, TN

Thursday, December 8, 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Nashville  
(615) 297-7770

### Virginia

#### Falls Church, VA

Tuesday, November 15, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Guitar Center - Falls Church  
(703) 533-8500

#### Gloucester Point, VA

Wednesday, November 16, 2 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Winter Sound  
(804) 642-6434

### Canada

#### Richmond Hill, ON

Saturday, October 29, 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
Cosmo Music  
(905) 770-5222





## THE CRAFT

### An Open Invitation to Play Pondering the unique factors behind the guitar's enormous popularity

An article I read recently reported that the guitar was the most popular instrument in the world. I had to pause and think about this for a while. It seems like a staggering statistic, considering the vastness and variety of the world's musical landscape. The writer noted many valid reasons for the guitar's seemingly universal appeal: physical portability, widespread availability, and other economic factors. Two other reasons that I found especially interesting are deeply woven into the guitar's lineage.

The first was the unique way many folks approach learning the guitar. From its beginnings, the guitar has been an instrument of the people. As a reference point, it helps to consider how a person traditionally learns an instrument. In my case, I started with the piano, learning in a typical way. My parents signed me up for some lessons with a local teacher. I was lucky, since our piano teacher was both a wonderful musician and kind to kids, unlike her own teachers. Once a week we'd go to her house and sit at her white piano.

We'd learn the notes, how to read musical notation, and how notes are grouped together in the form of scales, harmonies and keys. We learned about rhythms. Sometime later, we learned a first song – really just a single, simple melody. Slowly we expanded and began to learn more complicated songs, always reading from books of music. If you asked me then to play a song with another musician, I would scour the pages of my music book looking for a song marked “duet.” The idea of playing in a band was so far

from my reality I wouldn't have thought of it.

Many instruments are learned in this traditional system of formal lessons and written music. The guitar, however, is often a different learning model. The most common approach usually involves a friend who had a guitar and knew some chords, or seeing a favorite band play guitars, followed by acquiring a guitar of your own and learning some chords to play those songs. It's what could be described as a peer-to-peer learning model. Rather than needing a formal introduction, the guitar meets people wherever they are in life. While I was studying the piano, I picked up the guitar that leaned in the corner of our living room, and my parents showed me some chords. Within a short time, I could strum along with the songs my dad played on his mandolin. Make no mistake, I love the time-honored, disciplined approach to learning an instrument. I will carry the benefit of that upbringing with me as long as I live. But I find this fearlessly informal “watch and learn, then try it myself” approach wonderful, as it brings musical participation to a level where everyone can be included. By default, this approachable context instantly turns music making into a social event. Some of my closest friendships have been formed as a result of meeting someone who knew the last two chords of a song I couldn't play completely, then getting to play the

duty. It's capable of driving rhythms like a drummer, establishing harmonies like a piano, and filling in melodic lines. Combined with its heritage as a peer-learned instrument, it's no wonder the guitar has spread throughout the world as the instrument of the people.

This leads to an interesting consideration for a guitar maker. What makes for the best accompaniment guitar? If this supporting role is where the guitar will live much of the time, it only makes sense to consider what musical factors allow a particular guitar to soar. Many qualities are shared with a soloist instrument, like volume, projection, sustain, balance and responsiveness. There is another quality I have a hard time labeling. The best description that comes to mind sounds like a phrase borrowed from an elementary school report card: “Plays well with others.” A great accompaniment guitar – in fact, any great guitar – should offer fullness and support, power and richness, and yet be gracious in leaving space for others, whether other instruments or other voices. The sonority needs to have a voice well matched to the music, yet versed in the art of musical conversation.

These traits of approachability and musical relevance are two qualities I've enjoyed most with the new 700 Series guitars we're building. Sure, they play well and offer gratifying, robust sounds, but the notes they make have a special

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**The guitar is perfectly suited for accompaniment duty. It's capable of driving rhythms like a drummer, establishing harmonies like a piano, and filling in melodic lines.**

---

song together once the missing holes were filled in.

The second point of interest in the guitar's widespread popularity is how brilliantly the guitar morphs into an accompaniment instrument. Sure, we celebrate the guitar's solo repertoire and the heroic instrumentalists who carved their names into the guitar's totem through their timeless performances. Yet, in nearly every case, most of the guitar music we hear is playing an accompaniment role at least part of the time. Whether leading a flamenco dancer, a blues singer, a rock band, a jazz quartet, or a bluegrass string band, one of the most common and significant roles the guitar plays is to support other musicians. The fact is the guitar is perfectly suited for accompaniment

quality that seems like an open invitation to other instruments. It's almost like the guitars themselves are saying, “Come play with me.”

An open invitation to play – that must be a mark of a great instrument. Or at least, it's the hallmark of my favorite ones. Whether you are fortunate enough to approach the guitar through formal study, a casual introduction, or sheer inspiration from other musicians, the guitar is able to meet you where you are. Few other instruments offer such a hospitable welcome.

– Andy Powers  
Master Guitar Designer

# TaylorWare

CLOTHING / GEAR / PARTS / GIFTS

## NEW

### Ladies' Half-Zip Hoody

Slim Fit. 55/39/6 poly/cotton/rayon. Half zip placket. Longer back length. Blue contrast stitching and drawcord. Front pouch pocket. Left chest embroidery with Island Vine inlay design on sleeve. Sizing up is recommended. (Gray #4700; S-XL, \$48.00)

## NEW

### Zip Front Hoody

Unisex fit. 50/50 cotton/poly zip-front hoody. White polyester drawcord, metal zipper. Kangaroo pocket. Crossed guitar necks shield design on left chest. Sizing up is recommended for men. (Pewter #2298; S-XL, \$49.00; XXL, \$51.00)

*Cooler weather means prime hoody time, and we've obliged with two fresh, comfy designs. L-R: Angie from our Human Resources crew models our Ladies' Half-Zip Hoody, while James, a graphic designer on our Marketing team, rocks our new Zip Front Hoody.*

Fall 2016



### Sherpa Lined Jacket

60/40 cotton/polyester body with 100% polyester Sherpa lining. Athletic fit. (Charcoal #3950; S-XL, \$65.00; XXL, \$67.00)



## NEW

### Taylor Star T

Fashion Fit. 100% cotton. Short sleeve. (Light Olive #1433; S-XL, \$24.00; XXL, \$26.00)



### Ladies' Baseball T

Slim fit. 50/38/12 poly/cotton/rayon. Contrast 3/4 sleeve. Sizing up recommended. (Black/Natural #4310; S-XL, \$38.00)

Glassware



1



2



3



4

**1) Water Bottle**  
24 oz. (#70016, \$16.00)

**2) Etched Pub Glass**  
20 oz. (#70010, \$10.00)

**3) Taylor Etched Peghead Mug**  
15 oz. Ceramic. (Black #70005, \$15.00)

**4) Taylor Mug**  
15 oz. Ceramic. (Brown with cream interior, #70006, \$10.00)



**Roadie T**  
Fashion fit. 60/40 cotton/poly. Ultra-soft, worn-in feel.  
(Charcoal #1445; S-XL, \$25.00; XXL, \$27.00)



**Kid's Icon T**  
Children's 100% preshrunk cotton T-Shirt.  
Available in infant, toddler, child and youth sizes.  
(White #1392, \$20.00)



**Two-Color Logo T**  
Standard fit. Heavyweight preshrunk 100% cotton.  
(Sand #1651; S-XL, \$22.00; XXL-XXXL, \$24.00)

Caps

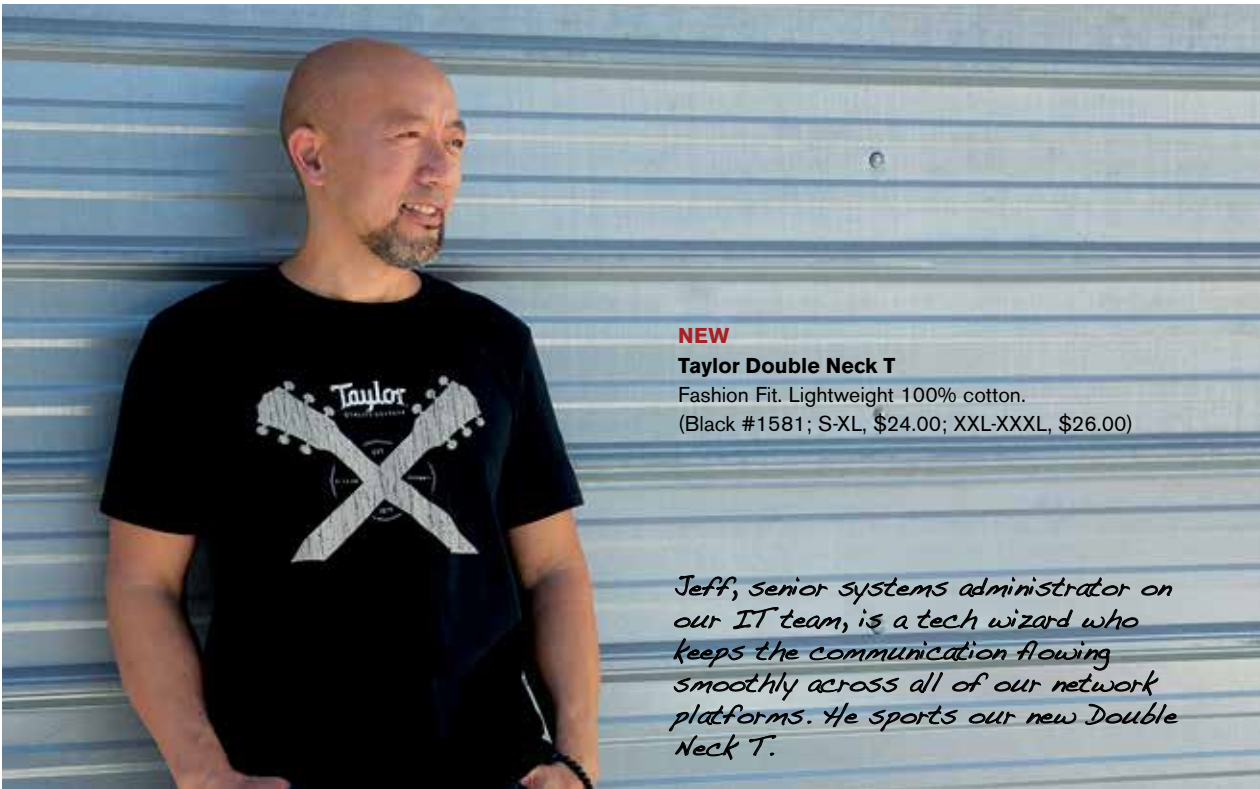
**Taylor Trucker Cap**  
Plastic snap adjustable backstrap.  
(Black #00388, Olive #00389, \$20.00)



**Men's Cap**  
One size fits all.  
(Black #00378, \$25.00)



**Contrast Cap**  
Snap back, flat bill. One size fits all.  
(Charcoal #00381, \$25.00)



**NEW**  
**Taylor Double Neck T**  
Fashion Fit. Lightweight 100% cotton.  
(Black #1581; S-XL, \$24.00; XXL-XXXL, \$26.00)

*Jeff, Senior systems administrator on our IT team, is a tech wizard who keeps the communication flowing smoothly across all of our network platforms. He sports our new Double Neck T.*

## Guitar Care



**Taylor Guitar Polish**  
Spray-on cleaning polish that is easily and safely wiped away. 4 fl. oz. (#80901, \$12.00)



### The D'Addario Two-Way Humidification System®

The complete kit includes two pouches and three packets (#80356, \$30.00). Replacement packets (3) also available (#80357, \$20.00).

### NEW

**Men's Long Sleeve Baseball T**  
Standard fit. 52/48 cotton/poly. Contrast raglan long sleeves with cuff sleeve trim. Gold Taylor logo on front; gold/orange "Taylor 74" on back. (Brown #2021; S-XL, \$35.00; XXL, \$37.00)

*Chris, our marketing coordinator, helps orchestrate the hundreds of Road Shows and other events we present each year. He's shown here in our sporty Long-Sleeve Baseball T.*



### Taylor Guitar Straps

Choose from a wide selection of Taylor straps. Visit [taylorware.com](http://taylorware.com) for complete descriptions and specs.



## Gift Ideas



**Taylor Bar Stool**  
30" high.  
(Black #70200, \$99.00)

24" high.  
(Brown #70202, \$99.00)



### Taylor Key Chain/Pick Holder

Leather key chain featuring an interior pocket to hold picks. (Brown #71033, \$18.00)



**Guitar Stand**  
Sapele/Mahogany. Accommodates all Taylor models. (#70100, \$70.00; assembly required)



**Travel Guitar Stand**  
Sapele, lightweight. Accommodates all Taylor models. (#70198, \$59.00)



**Black Composite Travel Guitar Stand**  
Accommodates all Taylor models. (#70180, \$39.00)



### Ultex® Picks

Six picks per pack by gauge (#80794, .73 mm, #80795, 1.0 mm or #80796 1.14 mm; \$5.00).

### Primetone Picks™

Three picks per pack by gauge. (#80797, .88 mm, #80798, 1.0 mm or #80799 1.3 mm, \$8.50).

### Variety Pack (shown)

Six assorted picks per pack, featuring one of each gauge. Ultex (.73 mm, 1.0 mm, 1.14 mm) and Primetone (.88 mm, 1.0 mm, 1.3 mm). (#80790, \$10.00)



# TaylorWare

CLOTHING / GEAR / PARTS / GIFTS

1 - 8 0 0 - 4 9 4 - 9 6 0 0

Visit [taylorguitars.com/taylorware](http://taylorguitars.com/taylorware) to see the full line.



# Wood&Steel

A Publication of Taylor Guitars  
Volume 86 / Fall 2016

Taylor Guitars | 1980 Gillespie Way | El Cajon, CA 92020-1096 | [taylorguitars.com](http://taylorguitars.com)

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

## 12-Fret Magic

Our 12-fret guitars continue to captivate players with their uniquely inspiring feel and sound. It starts with the physical comfort of our compact Grand Concert body and shorter 12-fret neck. Add to that the tonal clarity, balance and responsiveness that make them a great choice for fingerstyle and recording. But what surprises many is how lively they are as strummers, producing a level of midrange warmth and punchy power that one might not expect from a smaller-body instrument. For more on our versatile 12-fret guitars in this issue, read why one guitar reviewer raved about our new 712e 12-Fret (shown here), and don't miss the enticing all-koa 12-fret from our seasonal limited edition collection.

