

OCTOBER 2025

MG

proaudio

mangogroove

40 YEARS
OF MUSIC,
MEMORIES, &
MOMENTS

Finding Your Keyboard

Find the right Sound for you

The Season of Sound

Openair gigs, community concerts,
and road trips filled with music

24 STRINGS

Four of Africa's finest
guitarists join forces

ISF Technology

How to *Shape* Your Sound

**SCHOOL
of ROCK**
PARKTOWN NORTH

ELI SINCLAIR | RAEL FINE | SOFIA VAN DER WALT

Epiphone

**Play it.
Feel it.
Live it.**

OCTOBER EDITION OF PROAUDIO **MUSICGEAR** MAGAZINE

In this edition, we dive into the heart of festival season — helping you gear up for the months ahead with features on portable performance setups, live-ready guitars, and the technology shaping modern tone.

From the timeless elegance of the Gibson Mary Ford Les Paul Goldtop to the innovative Epiphone DC PRO Wild Ivy and the precision of Blackstar's ISF Technology, every page is designed to inspire your next performance.

We also shine a light on South Africa's own musical legends and rising stars, celebrating those who continue to push creativity, passion, and sound to new heights. Whether you're rehearsing in your bedroom, hitting the stage, or fine-tuning your setup for that next big gig — this issue is for you. So plug in, turn up, and let the season of sound begin.

From all of us at MusicGear Magazine, thank you for being part of our growing community of musicians, dreamers, and creators. We wish every performer taking the stage this festive season nothing but great music, unforgettable moments, and the pure joy of doing what you love.

STAY LOUD. STAY INSPIRED.
Proaudio MusicGear Team

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Product Library

This magazine is designed to inform, supply, and provide information relating to the industry that we find ourselves in. Some of the material that we have used is resourced from websites around the world to help bring perspective and insight to your business' and your lives. Products highlighted and reviewed may or may not be available, if you have any questions relating to the information herein, please contact us.

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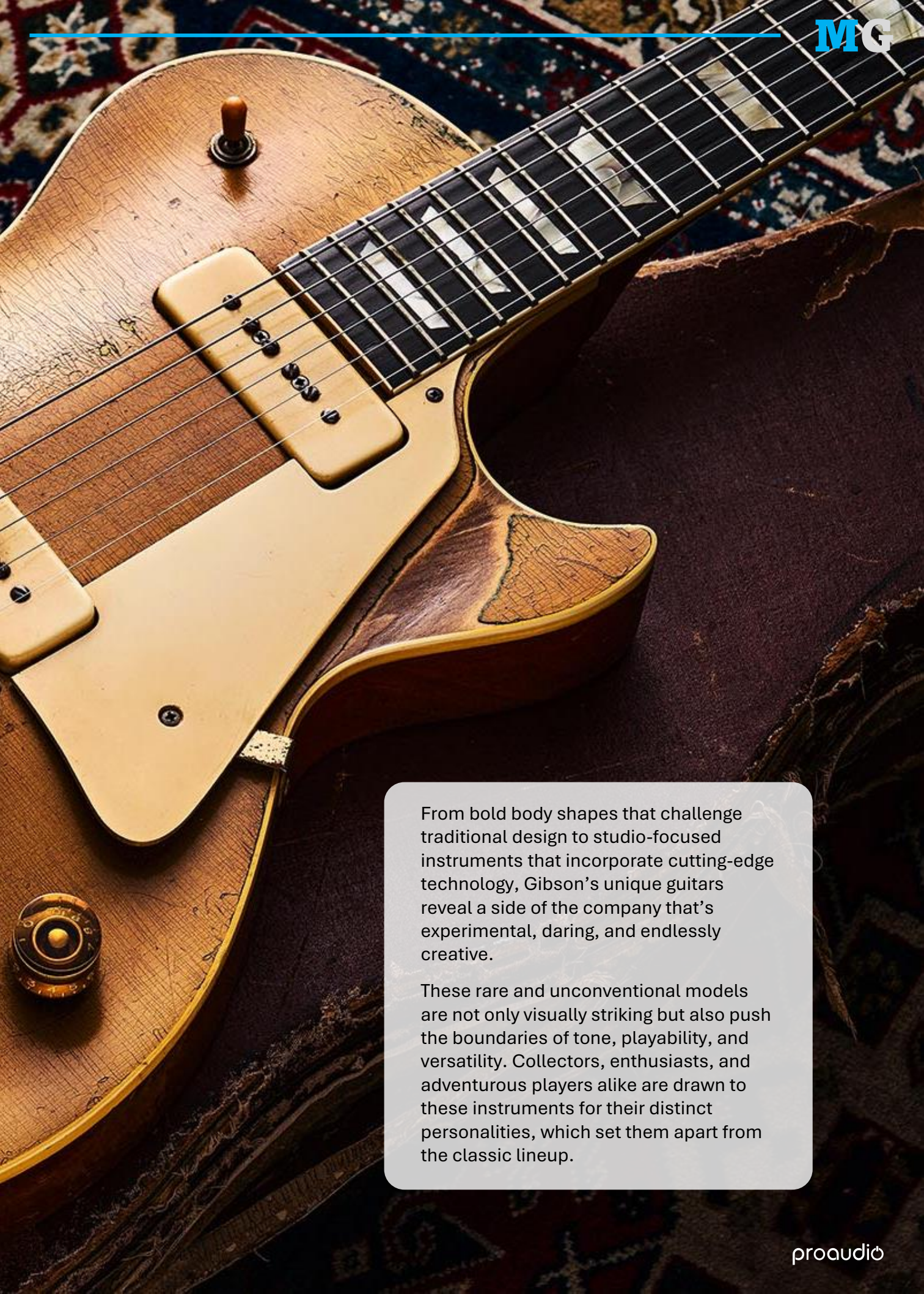
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The Most Unique Gibson Guitars Ever Made

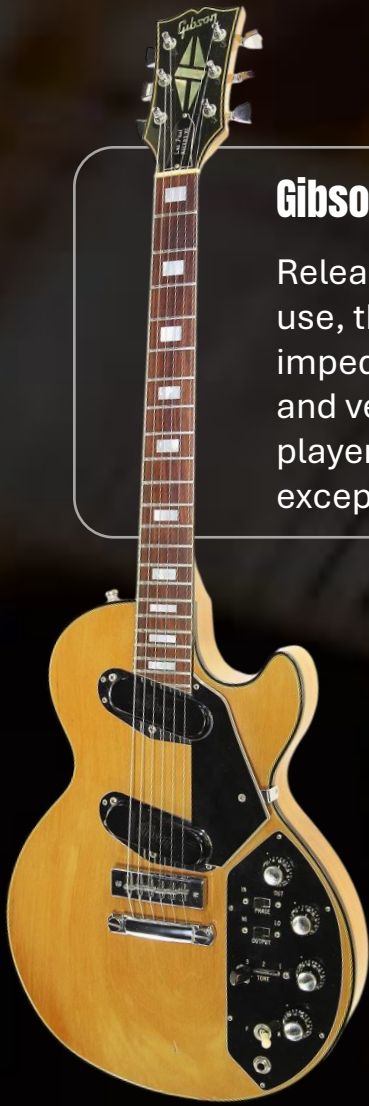
Gibson is a name synonymous with legendary guitars and timeless rock 'n' roll. For over a century, the company has been at the forefront of innovation, producing instruments that have shaped the sound of music across generations.

While models like the Les Paul and SG are instantly recognizable and beloved by countless musicians, Gibson has also ventured into uncharted territory, creating guitars that are as unusual as they are iconic.



From bold body shapes that challenge traditional design to studio-focused instruments that incorporate cutting-edge technology, Gibson's unique guitars reveal a side of the company that's experimental, daring, and endlessly creative.

These rare and unconventional models are not only visually striking but also push the boundaries of tone, playability, and versatility. Collectors, enthusiasts, and adventurous players alike are drawn to these instruments for their distinct personalities, which set them apart from the classic lineup.



Gibson Les Paul Recording

Released in the late 1970s for studio use, this model featured low-impedance pickups, a built-in preamp, and versatile tonal controls, allowing players to record directly with exceptional clarity.

Gibson Flying V2

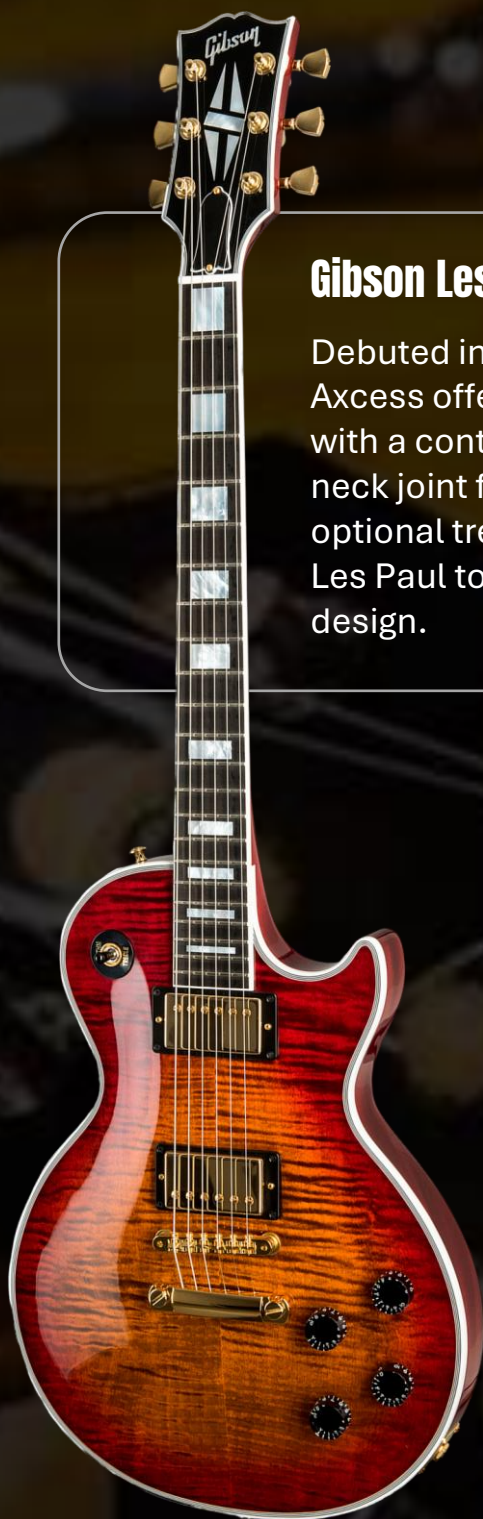
Introduced in 1981, the Flying V2 was a radical redesign of the classic Flying V with an angular body, multiple pickups, and bold finishes like blackburst and candy apple red, making it a favourite for avant-garde collectors.



Gibson Nighthawk

Released in the late 1990s, the Nighthawk blended Gibson tradition with Fender-style versatility. Its unique pickups, adjustable bridge, and contoured body made it stand out in Gibson's lineup.





Gibson Les Paul Axxess

Debuted in the late 1980s, the Axxess offered modern playability with a contoured body, beveled neck joint for upper fret access, and optional tremolo, combining classic Les Paul tone with progressive design.



Gibson Explorer Retro

A reimagined version of the 1958 Explorer, this guitar featured sharp body angles, bold finishes, and unique pickup setups, making it a collectible for players seeking extreme designs.

From studio innovators like the Les Paul Recording to radical designs like the Flying V2 and Explorer Retro, Gibson has never shied away from pushing the boundaries of guitar design.

Each of these unique models highlights the company's creativity, whether through groundbreaking technology, unconventional shapes, or versatile playability.





Together, they showcase Gibson's willingness to experiment while still maintaining the tone, quality, and craftsmanship that players expect.

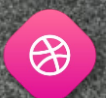
For collectors, musicians, and enthusiasts, exploring these rare and unusual guitars offers a fascinating glimpse into the adventurous side of one of the world's most legendary guitar brands.



MANGO GROOVE



mangogroove





40 Years of Music, Memories & Moments

For four decades, Mango Groove has been the heartbeat of South African music, blending Marabi, Kwela, and pop into a sound that has become instantly recognisable across generations. From the hopeful notes of “**Another Country**” to the jubilant rhythms of “**Special Star**,” their music has not only entertained but also carried the soul of a nation through times of change and celebration.

Now, in 2025, the band marks an extraordinary 40-year journey with *Memories and Moments* – a year-long celebration of music, heritage, and unity. In this exclusive interview, Mango Groove reflects on their surreal journey, the stages that shaped them, the timeless sound that still resonates today, and the exciting new projects set to carry their legacy into the future.

MG **Mango Groove is celebrating an incredible 40 years this year. When you look back on the band's journey - from those early gigs in the 1980s to becoming one of South Africa's most iconic acts - how does it feel to reach this milestone?**



Slightly surreal, actually! Perhaps above all we feel very fortunate, because we have had so much support from all South Africans through the years, and – to our surprise – have also somehow managed to reach new generations of listeners. They say you grow up on the music your parents listened to, but we've somehow managed to reach and touch the grandparents too, lol.

MG **The Kirstenbosch Gardens show in January set the tone for these celebrations. How will the upcoming Johannesburg concert at Walter Sisulu Gardens capture that magic while offering something unique to Jozi fans?**



We were blown away by the support we got at the Walter Sisulu show, and were so delighted that the show sold out.

Joburg is not an easy gig, to be honest, as it often overflows with competing events, and given that it is essentially our home base, we had some trepidation about it, and really wanted it to be extra special. We were ecstatic with the show and the support, though, it was a very special and moving event for us.

MG **Your sound - that distinctive blend of Marabi, Kwela, and pop - has always been instantly recognisable. How did that penny-whistle sound in "Special Star" originally come about, and how has the band kept the sound fresh over the years?**



Well, thank you for the compliment, as "distinctive" can be double edged in relation to music. We've always relished eclecticism in music, art and culture, and actually the Mango sound has many influences, including pop, marabi, swing, and even early Punk and New Wave. The specific Kwela (penny whistle) influence came about from John Leyden's early love affair as a child with the original penny whistle greats such as Spokes Mashiane and Lemmy Special, along with various '50s and '60s urban styles celebrated by Miriam Makeba and others.

The penny whistle is actually a global folk instrument – hence its familiarity and appeal – but in the historical context of South Africa, it came to have a very bittersweet combination of celebration and joy, but at the same time a certain poignancy and sadness.



You've played some historic stages, from Nelson Mandela's inauguration in 1994 to the Hong Kong handover and the Montreux Jazz Festival. Which moments do you still carry closest to your heart, and why?



A tough choice: It would have to be the first Democratic Inauguration Concert at the Union Buildings. Sure, a big crowd, but such an honour to be there, and a momentous and hopeful event that represented so much more than music.



MG Songs like “Another Country” became soundtracks for South Africa’s journey to democracy. How do you reflect on Mango Groove’s role in the country’s social and cultural history?



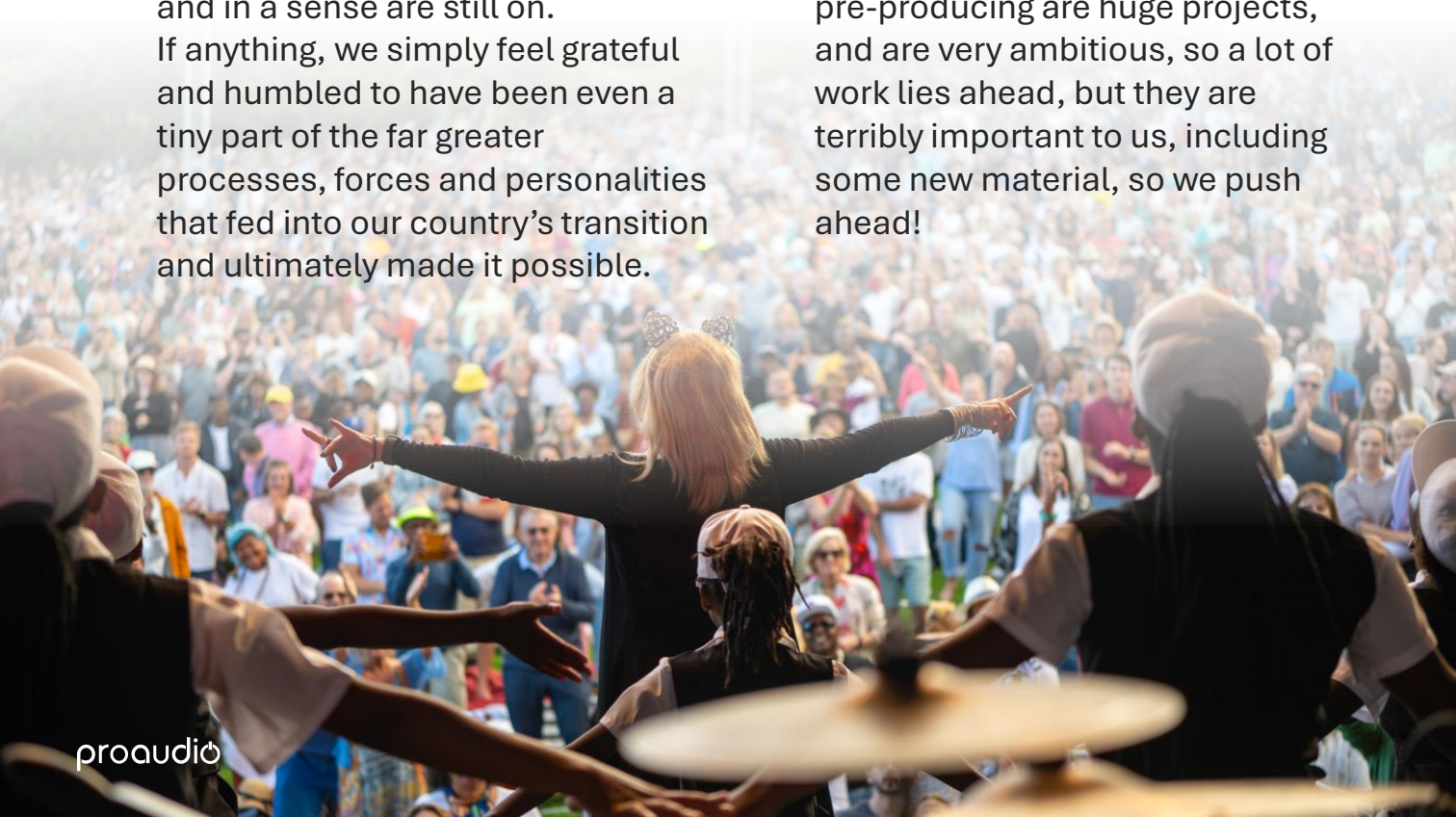
Well, thank you again for the very kind words. We have never been overtly sloganeering or obviously political in our career – we’re a pop band, at the end of the day – but in the context of our history, and like many artists, we always invariably drew on our emotions experiences and in that way, I guess, reflected what we were grappling with as South Africans, and the very complicated journey we were on, and in a sense are still on. If anything, we simply feel grateful and humbled to have been even a tiny part of the far greater processes, forces and personalities that fed into our country’s transition and ultimately made it possible.

MG Alongside the concerts, you’ve announced exciting new projects - a documentary (Special Stars), a docu-drama (The Groove), and even a stage musical (Gladlands). What inspired you to tell Mango Groove’s story through these new mediums?



Interestingly enough, the global music market is thoroughly dominated by catalogue songs over new music, so it made sense to explore the ways we could celebrate our catalogue and give it new life and expression.

The Groove and Gladlands, and in fact a movie documentary we are pre-producing are huge projects, and are very ambitious, so a lot of work lies ahead, but they are terribly important to us, including some new material, so we push ahead!



MG The music industry has changed dramatically since the 1980s, with digital platforms and social media reshaping how music is shared. How has this evolution influenced Mango Groove's approach to recording and connecting with fans?



I guess new recording technologies and social media have empowered artists to connect more directly with their listeners, but at the end of the day, whatever the technology or medium, it's still about connecting emotionally with people, and that has always been the case with art.

In this age of AI, moreover, originality and human content, and the ability to move people, have become more important than ever: a key component, maybe of why live concerts are so central to this business.

MG After the Johannesburg concert and the 40th anniversary celebrations, what's next for Mango Groove? Are there new projects, collaborations, or dreams still waiting to be explored?



"We've only just begun...", lol. Was that a Carpenters song? Well, as long as the love and support is there, we will explore as many projects as possible, and I hope reach new generations and new ears.



As **Mango Groove** looks ahead, one thing remains clear: **their story is far from over.**

With landmark concerts, ambitious new projects across film, theatre, and music, and a commitment to connecting with new generations, they continue to remind us of the power of music to bridge divides, celebrate culture, and inspire hope.

Forty years may be a milestone, but for Mango Groove, it feels like the opening bars of a melody still being written—one that will echo long into the future.



Mango groove



“At the end of the day, whatever the technology or medium, it’s still about connecting emotionally with people—and that has always been the case with art.”

– Mango Groove

Gibson®

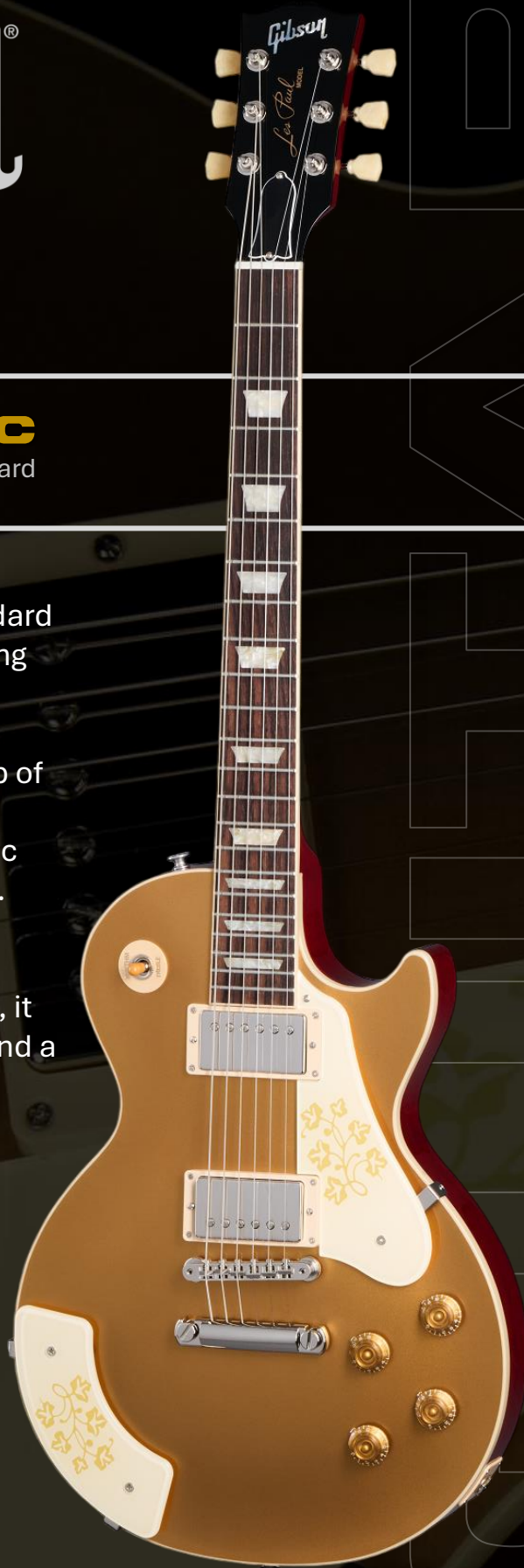
LPSMFOO-GC

Mary Ford Les Paul Standard

The Gibson Mary Ford Les Paul Standard Goldtop isn't just a guitar — it's a living piece of history.

Inspired by the legendary partnership of Les Paul and Mary Ford, this model celebrates the dawn of modern music recording and the golden age of tone.

With its radiant Goldtop finish and unmistakable Gibson craftsmanship, it stands as both a collector's dream and a player's powerhouse — elegant, expressive, and endlessly inspiring.



WHY IT'S WORTH IT

This Goldtop is built with the same meticulous attention to detail that made Gibson's original 1950s Les Pauls world-famous. The solid mahogany body and maple cap give it the warmth and resonance that define the Les Paul sound, while the dual P-90 pickups deliver the perfect blend of clarity, bite, and vintage growl.

Every note feels alive under your fingers — articulate yet rich, smooth yet full of energy. The 50s-style rounded neck offers that classic, comfortable grip, while the premium hardware ensures modern reliability on stage or in the studio. The Goldtop finish isn't just cosmetic; it's iconic. It's a statement piece that reflects both legacy and prestige, making it as beautiful to behold as it is to play.

WHAT KIND OF MUSIC IS IT GOOD FOR?

The Mary Ford Goldtop thrives across a wide spectrum of styles. Its P-90s handle blues and jazz with silky warmth, rock and classic pop with raw punch, and even soul and gospel with vibrant clarity. The dynamic response of the pickups means it reacts to your touch — soft picking brings out shimmering cleans, while harder playing unlocks gritty, expressive overdrive.

It's that balance of refinement and rebellion that makes the Goldtop so versatile. Whether you're playing smoky club gigs, worship stages, or vintage sessions, this guitar feels right at home.

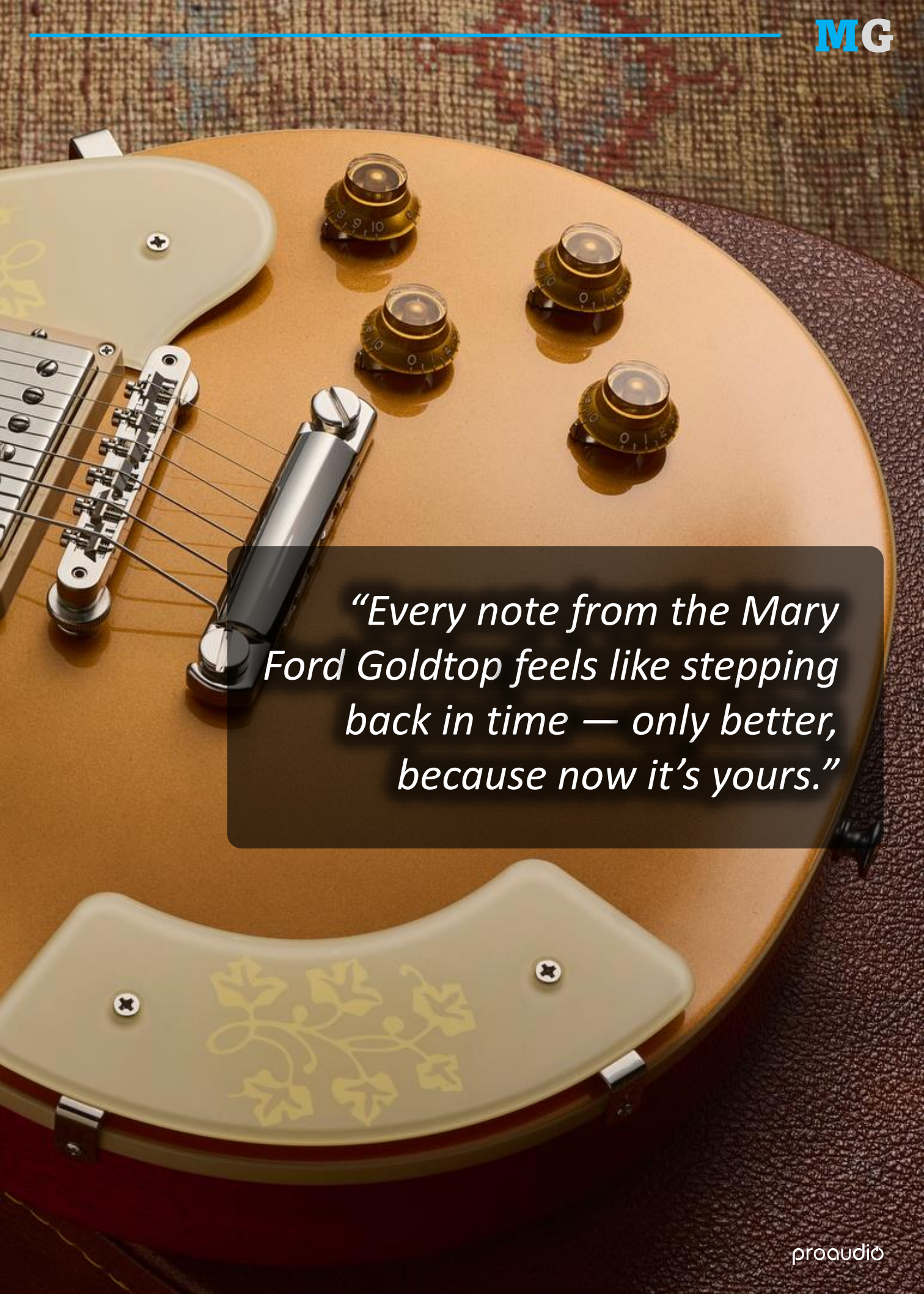


WHO WOULD USE IT?

This is a guitar for players who understand that tone is part of their identity. It's made for professionals who want stage presence and tonal range in one instrument, and for collectors who value heritage and history.

The Mary Ford Goldtop speaks to those who appreciate artistry — not just in how a guitar looks, but in how it responds to emotion and expression.

From the session musician chasing that golden-era tone to the modern performer crafting new sounds with vintage soul, this Les Paul bridges generations of players who live for feel, dynamics, and resonance.



“Every note from the Mary Ford Goldtop feels like stepping back in time — only better, because now it’s yours.”

A full-page background image of a male musician with long, wavy, reddish-brown hair that is flying in the air. He is wearing a black leather jacket over a black t-shirt and a necklace with large, circular silver medallions. He is playing a black Gibson Les Paul electric guitar. The background is dark with blue stage lighting.

THE SEASON OF SOUND

Gear Up for Festival Season

As the air warms

and the outdoor stages light up again, musicians across South Africa are tuning up, charging batteries, and getting ready to make the most of festival season.

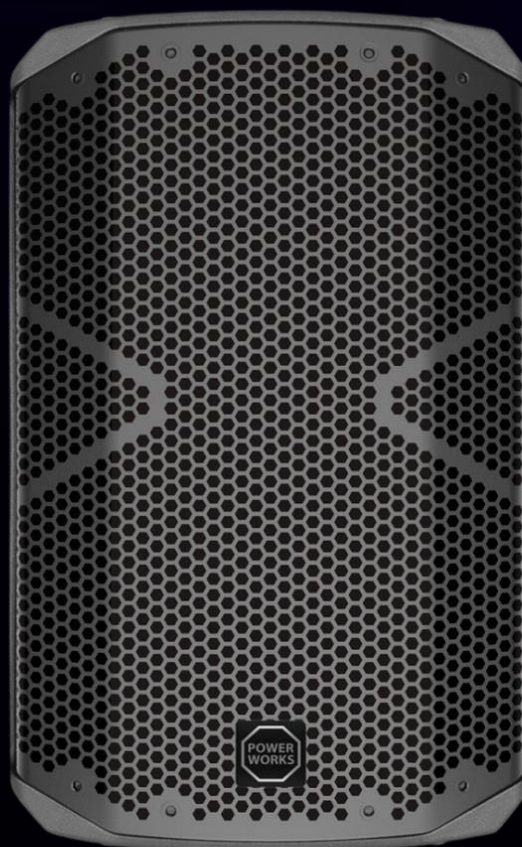
October marks the return of open-air gigs, community concerts, and road trips filled with music — and that means one thing: it's time to talk gear.

From intimate acoustic sessions to high-energy DJ sets, the right setup can make or break a performance. This is the time of year when portability, power, and reliability matter most.

Whether you're a solo artist with a compact PA or a full band taking on a festival stage, every piece of equipment needs to earn its place.

Among the standouts this season are the **Blackstar Carry-On Travel Guitar and Fly 3 Packs** — perfect for musicians on the move.

The Carry-On delivers the feel and tone of a full-sized instrument in a travel-ready body, while the Fly 3 Bass and Guitar Packs punch well above their weight, proving that small amps can still sound massive.



Add to that PowerWorks' versatile active speakers and Turbosound's rugged portable systems, and you've got sound solutions built to handle anything from dusty festival fields to beachside jams.

Of course, great performances rely on more than just power — they depend on precision and feel.

That's where instruments and accessories built for reliability come in.

Midas consoles help shape a musician's tone on stage with pristine clarity, while Audio-Technica microphones capture every nuance of an instrument's character.

For guitarists, Blackstar's LT pedal range offers the flexibility to sculpt your drive and dynamics without losing touch sensitivity, and Epiphone and Gibson guitars remain go-to choices for players chasing that perfect stage tone.


DJs and hybrid performers will find equal inspiration in Pioneer DJ's latest AlphaTheta gear, seamlessly blending live instruments with electronic energy.

This time of year reminds every musician why we play. Festival season is a celebration of connection — the sound of strings vibrating in open air, the rhythm of drums carrying through a crowd, the pulse of a bass felt as much as it's heard.

From the busker with a loop pedal to the headlining guitarist stepping onto a main stage, everyone shares the same heartbeat of live music.

Festival season is here. Tune up, power on, and take your sound outdoors. Because music was never meant to stay inside.





“The best part of festival season isn’t just the music — it’s the moments where your sound meets the crowd and something bigger takes over.”

A Note to Our Readers

To all the musicians taking the stage this festive season — whether you’re performing under city lights, on a quiet beachfront, or in your own backyard — we wish you every success. May your sets be smooth, your sound be strong, and your audiences inspired. Keep the music alive, and thank you for being part of the rhythm that drives us all.

From all of us at MusicGear Magazine — play loud, play proud, and have an incredible festive season ahead.

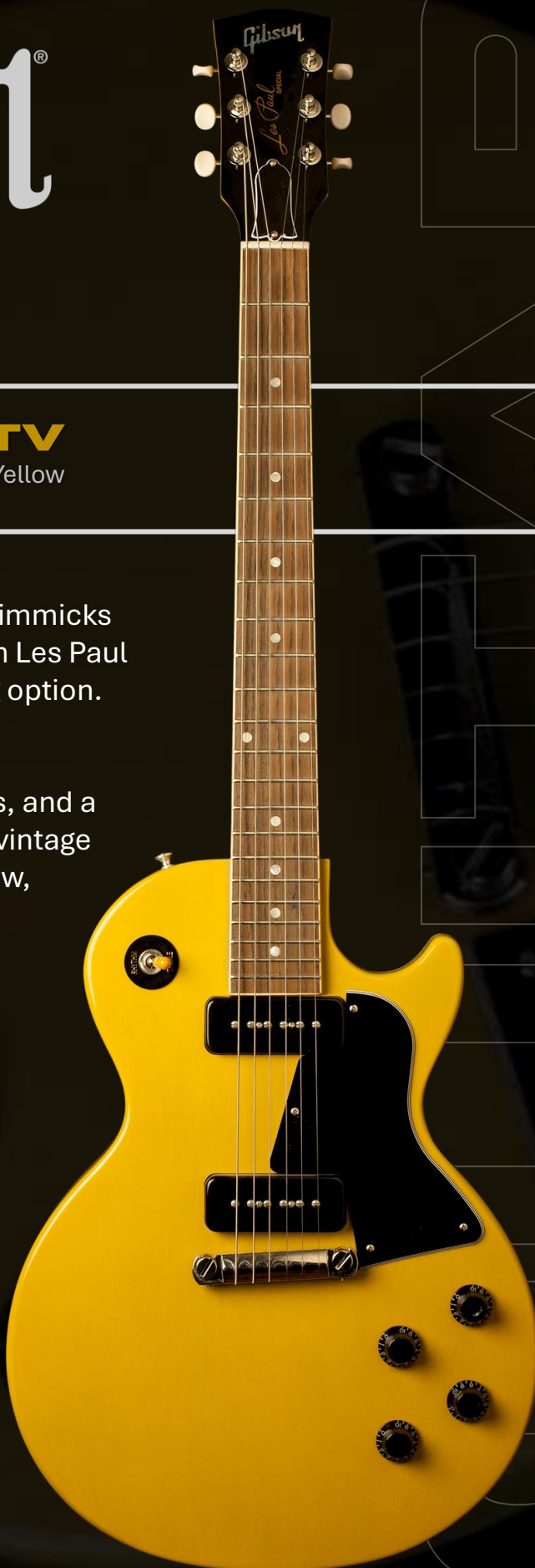
Gibson

LPSP00-TV

Les Paul Special TV Yellow

If you love guitars that strip away gimmicks and go straight for tone, the Gibson Les Paul Special (TV Yellow) is a compelling option.

With its bold TV Yellow finish, slab mahogany body, dual P-90 pickups, and a hard shell case included, it wears vintage roots on its sleeve while offering raw, responsive modern playability.



WHY IT'S WORTH IT

The Les Paul Special TV Yellow is the essence of purity and purpose. There's no excess, no distraction — just honest craftsmanship that rewards touch, tone, and passion. The slab mahogany body resonates beautifully, coated in a thin nitrocellulose finish that lets the wood breathe and mature over time. Dual P-90 “soapbar” pickups deliver everything from warm cleans to snarling grit, living perfectly between the chime of a single-coil and the punch of a humbucker.

Every detail is intentional: the 50s-style neck profile feels substantial and confident in the hands, while the wraparound bridge enhances sustain and clarity. The control layout is intuitive, letting players shape their sound effortlessly. With the inclusion of a sturdy hard case, this guitar isn't just a purchase — it's an investment in tone that will last a lifetime.

WHAT KIND OF MUSIC IS IT GOOD FOR?

The Les Paul Special thrives in genres that demand character and emotion. Blues musicians will fall in love with its expressive midrange and touch sensitivity. Rock and punk players will appreciate its unpolished power and ability to cut through a live mix. Indie and alternative artists will find the P-90s deliver an organic, vintage flavour that adds depth and honesty to modern arrangements.

It's a guitar that performs best when played with intent — responsive to every nuance of the player's fingers, pick, and personality. Whether plugged into a vintage tube amp or a modern setup, the result is always the same: unmistakable tone with attitude.





“Push the P-90s hard and they growl; play softly and they sing with warmth.”



WHO WOULD USE IT?

This is the guitar for purists, performers, and storytellers. It's ideal for players who appreciate vintage design but demand modern reliability. It suits gigging musicians looking for a rugged workhorse, studio players chasing organic tone, and collectors who admire the Les Paul legacy in its most stripped-back, soulful form. It's not about flash — it's about feel. The Les Paul Special TV Yellow invites you to dig in, play harder, and rediscover why the simplest guitars often leave the deepest mark.

24 strings

A Symphony of Guitar Mastery
Four guitars.
Four masters.
One unforgettable sound.



When four of South Africa's finest guitarists join forces, the result is nothing short of extraordinary. *24 Strings* is not just a band—it's a bold musical experiment that has blossomed into an unforgettable performance experience, blending fiery solos, intricate harmonies, and dazzling artistry into one seamless sound.

At its heart lies **Corneille Hutten**, a visionary whose career spans international acclaim, multiple awards, and the creation of the globally celebrated guitar duo *CH2*. As the founder of *24 Strings*, Corneille always wondered what magic could be created when four great guitarists united. That dream has now come to life, two decades in the making.

The group features **Christiaan**, Corneille's long-time partner in *CH2*, whose mesmerizing rhythm and unique percussive guitar techniques are unlike anything else in the world.

Joining them are **Anton** and **Tian**, two master musicians with decades of performing experience and technical brilliance that elevate the group to new heights.

Together, these four virtuosos create a sound that defies categorisation—part reinvention of timeless classics, part unveiling of bold new compositions. From electrifying solos to lush, layered harmonies, *24 Strings* is as innovative as it is entertaining, proving the guitar's limitless potential.





This is not just music; it's an experience. Whether playing to intimate audiences or packing out auditoriums with thousands of fans, *24 Strings* delivers performances that transcend boundaries and speak to the universal language of music.

And with their combination of technical mastery, stage presence, and fearless creativity, *24 Strings* is set to take the world by storm—showcasing the power of collaboration, the depth of South African talent, and the timeless beauty of the guitar.



About Corneille Hutten

- Lee Ritenour International Guitar Competition Winner
- South African Music Award-Winning Guitarist
- Producer & Director
- SAMA-Nominated Sound Engineer



Epiphone

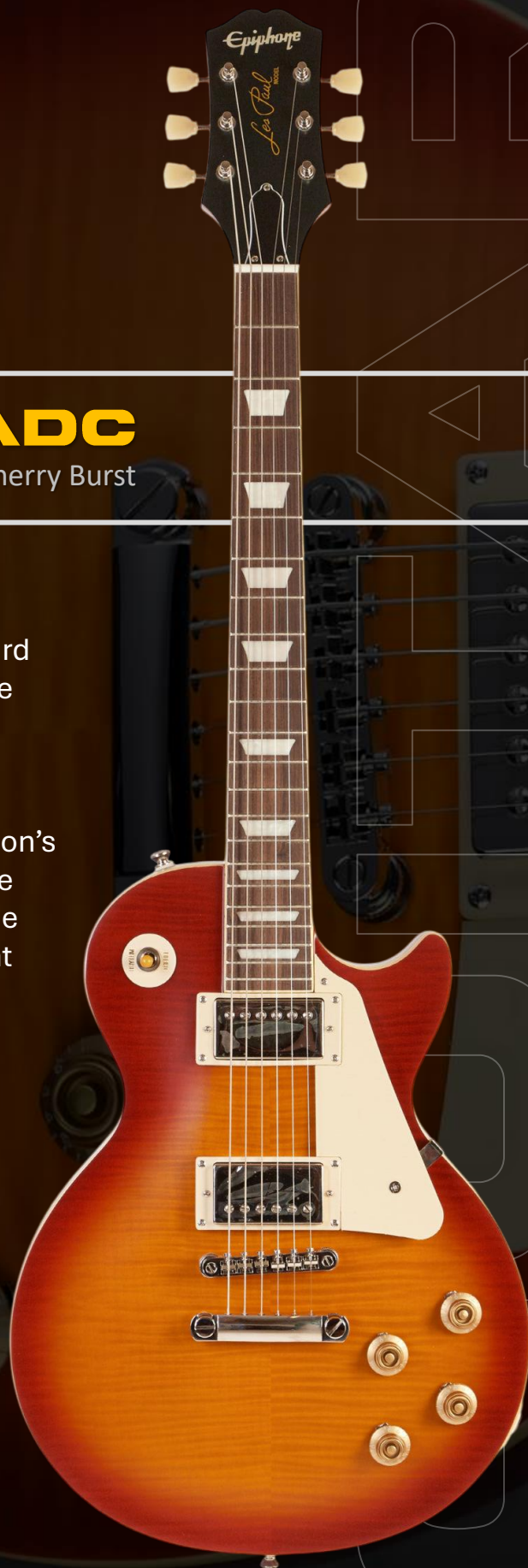
ENL59-ADC

Les Paul Standard Aged Dark Cherry Burst

The Epiphone 1959 Les Paul Standard Aged Dark Cherry Burst captures the magic of one of the most legendary guitars ever made.

Designed in collaboration with Gibson's Custom Shop, this model blends the elegance of the late-'50s era with the craftsmanship and accessibility that make Epiphone so beloved.

It's a guitar that looks, feels, and sounds like history reborn — rich, resonant, and full of attitude.



WHY IT'S WORTH IT

This isn't just another Les Paul — it's a faithful recreation of the golden-era design that defined rock music. From the solid mahogany body and maple cap to the long neck tenon and '50s-profile neck, every detail has been crafted to evoke the feel of the originals. The Aged Dark Cherry Burst finish gives the guitar a mature, road-worn look straight out of the classic era, while the smooth gloss and subtle patina add character and charm.

Epiphone didn't cut corners here. Under the hood are Gibson USA Burstbucker 2 and 3 pickups, delivering the same dynamic response and tonal depth found in high-end Gibson models. The electronics are wired with CTS potentiometers and Mallory capacitors for authenticity and warmth. Every note rings with that unmistakable Les Paul fullness — rich lows, singing mids, and creamy sustain. Paired with the included hard case, this guitar offers Custom Shop quality at a price that's surprisingly accessible.

WHAT KIND OF MUSIC IS IT GOOD FOR?

The 1959 Les Paul Standard was built for players who live for tone. It's perfect for blues, rock, and jazz musicians who want depth and clarity in equal measure. The Burstbuckers handle classic rock crunch effortlessly while cleaning up beautifully for soulful blues and articulate jazz phrasing. It thrives in studio environments where detail matters but roars on stage when pushed through a driven amp. Its voice is unmistakably vintage — warm, responsive, and full of nuance — yet modern enough to handle today's demanding genres. Whether you're channelling Clapton, Page, or Bonamassa, the Aged Dark Cherry Burst will make you feel connected to the golden age of electric guitar.



WHO WOULD USE IT?

This is a guitar for players who appreciate history but demand modern reliability. It's ideal for professionals seeking the feel of a late-'50s Gibson without the vintage price tag, and for passionate hobbyists who want an instrument that will grow with them for decades. Its weight, balance, and tactile resonance make it perfect for stage and studio alike.

Collectors will admire its meticulous detailing, while performers will fall in love with its responsiveness and soul. It's the kind of instrument that makes you want to play longer, dig deeper, and rediscover why the Les Paul remains the most iconic name in guitar history.



“Every note rings with that unmistakable Les Paul fullness — rich lows, singing mids, and creamy sustain.”

A close-up photograph of the bridge and strings of a Blackstar Carry-On Travel Guitar. The guitar has a sleek black finish and a light-colored wood body. The bridge is a chrome-plated tremolo bridge with four strings. The strings are white and pass through the bridge. The background is a blurred wooden surface.

Carry-on

The Blackstar Carry-On Travel Guitar in sleek black is proof that great things really do come in small packages.

Blackstar[®]
AMPLIFICATION



Designed for musicians who refuse to compromise on tone or feel, this compact powerhouse delivers the playability of a full-sized guitar in a body small enough to take anywhere.

Whether you're backstage, on the road, or simply practising at home, the Carry-On turns every space into a stage.

What makes it outstanding is the way it feels — the moment you pick it up, you forget it's a travel guitar.

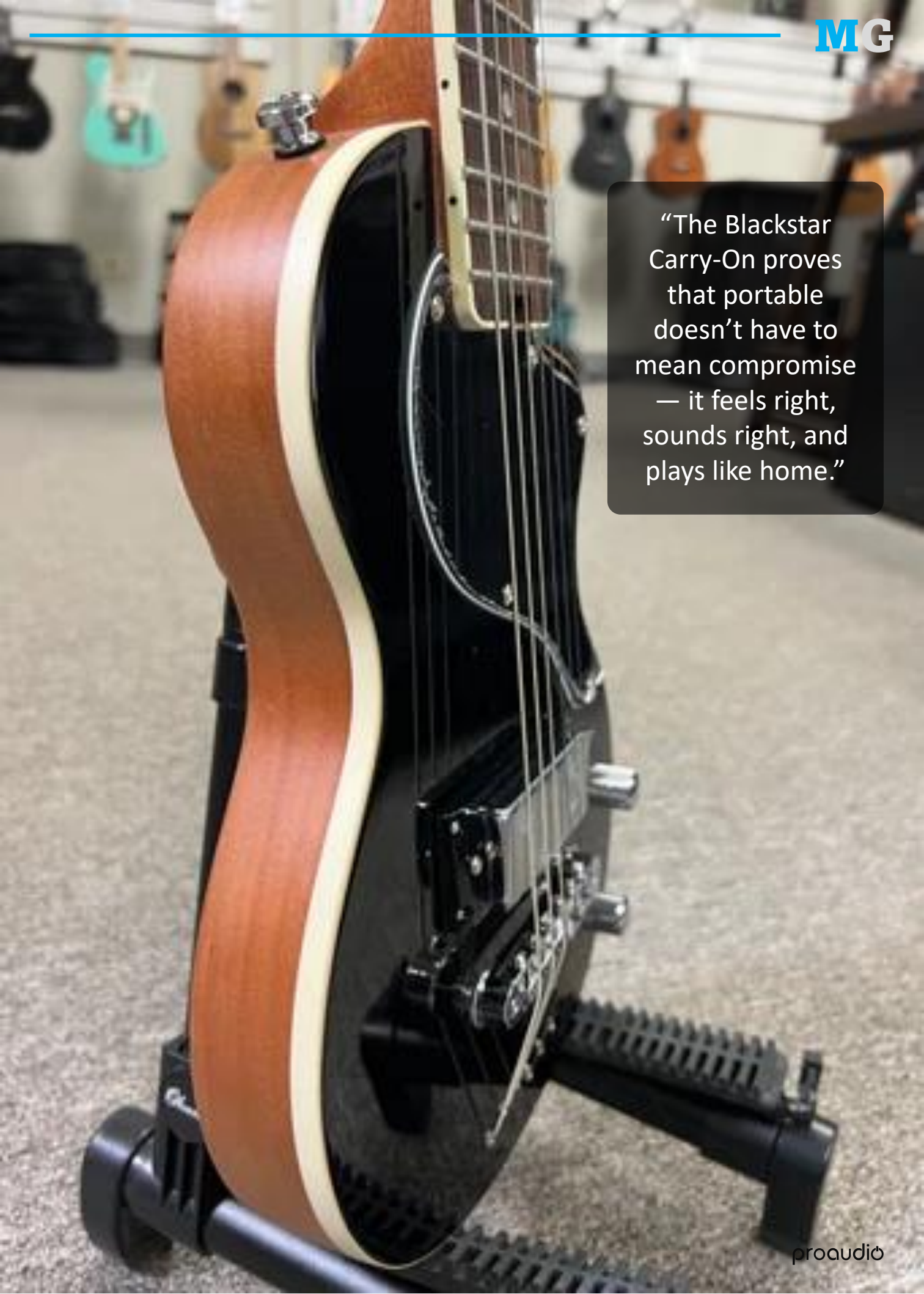
The solid mahogany body gives it depth and resonance well beyond its size, while the set neck and 1:16 ratio tuners keep everything stable and smooth.

The mini humbucker packs a punch too, offering a surprisingly rich tone that's equally at home through a clean amp, a pedalboard, or even a small practice combo.

This isn't a novelty instrument; it's a serious guitar built for players who demand real performance. The short 20.7" scale length makes it incredibly comfortable, but it still holds tuning and sustain like a full-sized model.

Whether you're a touring pro who needs a reliable travel companion or a hobbyist looking for inspiration on the go, the Carry-On is an easy yes.





“The Blackstar Carry-On proves that portable doesn’t have to mean compromise — it feels right, sounds right, and plays like home.”

Fly 3 Bass Pack

Big Tone in a Small Box



Don't let its size fool you — the Blackstar Fly 3 Bass Pack delivers serious low-end punch. Designed for players who want great tone anywhere, this compact amp-and-extension cab combo packs surprising warmth, clarity, and power into a portable setup that fits easily on your desk, in your backpack, or on stage for practice sessions.

From the first note, it's clear this isn't just a toy. The Fly 3 Bass features Blackstar's signature tone-shaping EQ and a sub-control that adds real depth to the sound.

"The Fly 3 Bass proves you don't need a wall of amps to sound huge — just smart design and great tone."

Whether you're practising quietly at home or jamming with friends, it handles dynamics beautifully — smooth, rich, and responsive. The overdrive circuit gives you that extra growl when you dig in, while the MP3/line input lets you play along with your favourite tracks.

What makes it so good is how natural it feels. The Fly reacts like a full-size amp, keeping the bottom end tight and punchy even at low volumes. The included power supply and extension cabinet turn it into a stereo setup that sounds far bigger than it looks. For bassists who travel, record, or just want to keep their chops sharp, it's the perfect grab-and-go rig.





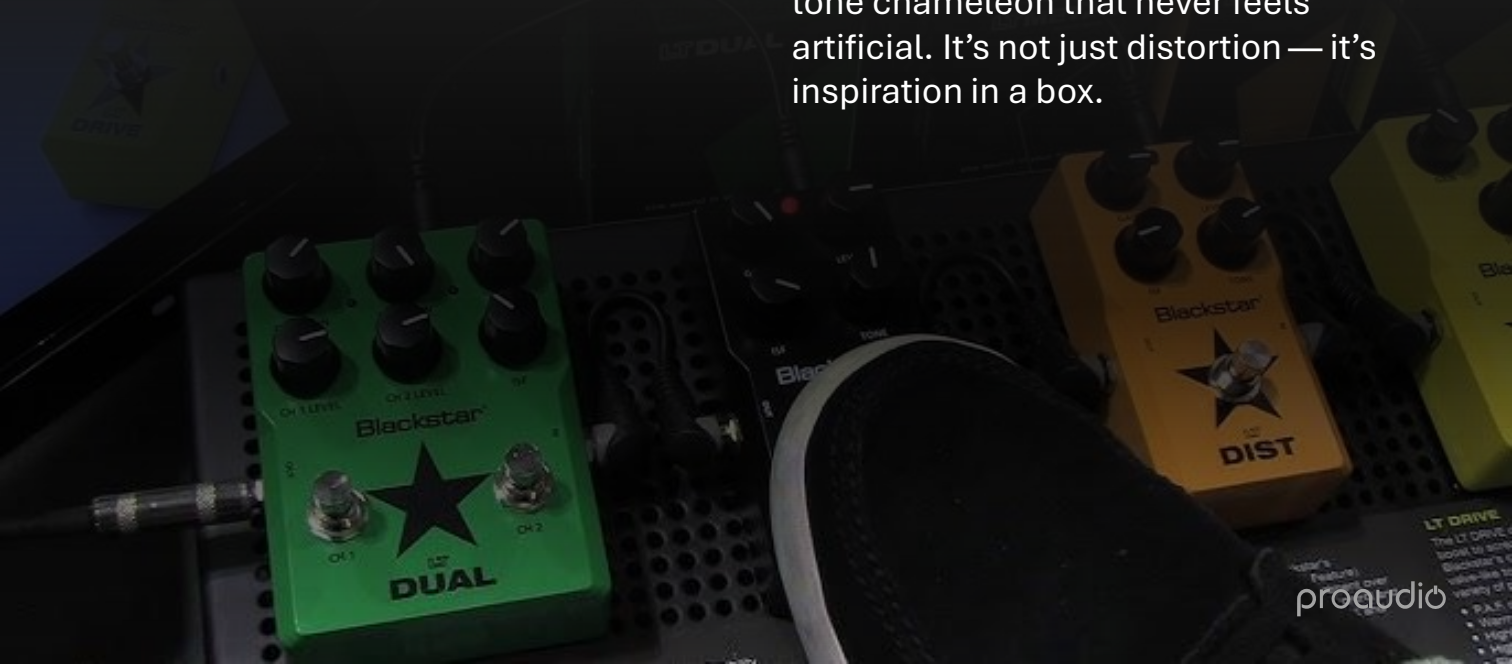
The Heart of Your Drive Tone

The Blackstar LT-DUAL isn't just a distortion pedal – it's a full-blown amp feel under your foot.

With two fully independent channels, it gives you everything from warm, touch-sensitive crunch to the kind of roaring distortion that makes solos sing and power chords bite. It's compact, solid, and built for players who want tone they can trust night after night.

What makes it special is the way it reacts to your playing. Roll back your guitar's volume and it cleans up beautifully; dig in and it growls with authority. The ISF control is the secret weapon — twist it one way for tight, modern American tones, or the other for that thick, mid-rich British punch. It's like carrying two pedalboards in one, and it feels alive under your fingers.

Plug it into any amp, and it immediately brings your rig to life. For players who move between blues, classic rock, and heavier styles, it's a tone chameleon that never feels artificial. It's not just distortion — it's inspiration in a box.



Understanding Blackstar's **ISF Technology** and How to Shape Your Sound

Blackstar amps are known for their versatility and ability to deliver authentic tones for players of every style. One feature that truly sets them apart is **ISF — Infinite Shape Feature** — a unique control that lets you sculpt your amp's overall character and discover a sound that's entirely your own.





What is ISF?

ISF stands for **Infinite Shape Feature**, and it's Blackstar's proprietary tone-shaping control. Unlike standard EQ knobs that adjust bass, middle, and treble independently, ISF adjusts the overall personality of your amp's tone.

With the ISF knob, you can fine-tune the tonal response of your amp along a spectrum:

- **BRITISH-LEANING ISF:** Produces a tighter, more focused tone with pronounced mids and a sharper edge. It's ideal for punchy rhythm playing and aggressive lead tones.
- **AMERICAN-LEANING ISF:** Offers a more open, airy sound with smoother mids and softer highs. This is perfect for clean tones, dynamic playing, and versatile studio applications.

Sliding the ISF knob along this continuum allows you to explore a virtually infinite range of sounds, all from a single Blackstar amp.

Blackstar amps that include ISF include popular models like the **Debut Series (Debut 10E, 15E, 100R)** and the **ID:Core Series (ID:Core 10, 20, 40, 100)**, among others. These amps demonstrate the versatility of ISF across entry-level, practice, and performance amps.



Why ISF is a Game-Changer

Traditional amps often lock you into a fixed tonal character. Blackstar's ISF technology breaks that limitation by letting you customize the overall voice of your amp. Whether you need a tight, focused sound for high-gain riffs, or a spacious, smooth tone for clean playing, ISF gives you the flexibility to get there without changing amps or relying heavily on pedals.

HOW DOES IT WORK?



How to Use ISF to Shape Your Sound

1. **START NEUTRAL:** Begin with your EQ set to the middle positions and gain low. This creates a neutral starting point.
2. **ADJUST THE ISF:** Slowly turn the ISF knob and listen to how the tonal response changes. Notice how the mids, highs, and overall clarity shift as you move along the spectrum.
3. **REFINE WITH EQ:** Once you've selected a general ISF position, use your EQ to fine-tune your tone. Small tweaks to bass, middle, or treble can help you achieve exactly the sound you want.
4. **EXPERIMENT WITH GAIN AND EFFECTS:** ISF interacts with the amp's gain and any pedals you may use. Higher gain settings on the British-leaning side will feel more aggressive and cutting, while the American-leaning side will remain smoother and more responsive.
5. **SAVE YOUR SETTINGS:** If your Blackstar amp allows presets (like the ID:Core Series), save your favorite ISF settings for easy recall in future sessions.



Epiphone

ENG2-WI DC

PRO Wild Ivy

The Epiphone DC PRO Wild Ivy is a guitar that demands attention — not just for its striking finish, but for how effortlessly it balances vintage elegance with modern playability.

With its double-cut Les Paul-inspired body, flamed maple top, and rich Wild Ivy green burst, this is an instrument built for players who want to look as bold as they sound.

It's refined, powerful, and unmistakably Epiphone — proof that style and substance can live in perfect harmony.



WHY IT'S WORTH IT

The DC PRO Wild Ivy isn't just about looks; it's a serious performer under the hood. Its solid mahogany body and flamed maple top deliver warmth and bite, while the ProBucker™ humbuckers bring classic Gibson-style tone with modern versatility. Roll back the volume for glassy cleans or push it for thick, expressive overdrive — the dynamic range is impressive.

A coil-splitting feature adds even more flexibility, allowing players to switch between humbucker thickness and single-coil sparkle at the flick of a switch. Add a bound neck, ebony fingerboard, and 24 frets, and you get a guitar that feels luxurious in the hands yet ready for the rigours of live performance. From its craftsmanship to its tone-shaping power, the DC PRO delivers far beyond its price tag.

WHAT KIND OF MUSIC IS IT GOOD FOR?

This guitar was made for musicians who cross genres with confidence. It thrives in rock, blues, funk, and fusion, offering the sustain and power Les Pauls are known for while giving players more upper-fret access for expressive solos. The coil-split tones make it equally comfortable in pop, country, or jazz settings, where clarity and articulation matter most.

Plugged into a clean amp, it sings with articulate shimmer; through a driven stack, it growls with the authority of classic hard rock. The Wild Ivy finish might turn heads, but the tone keeps them listening.

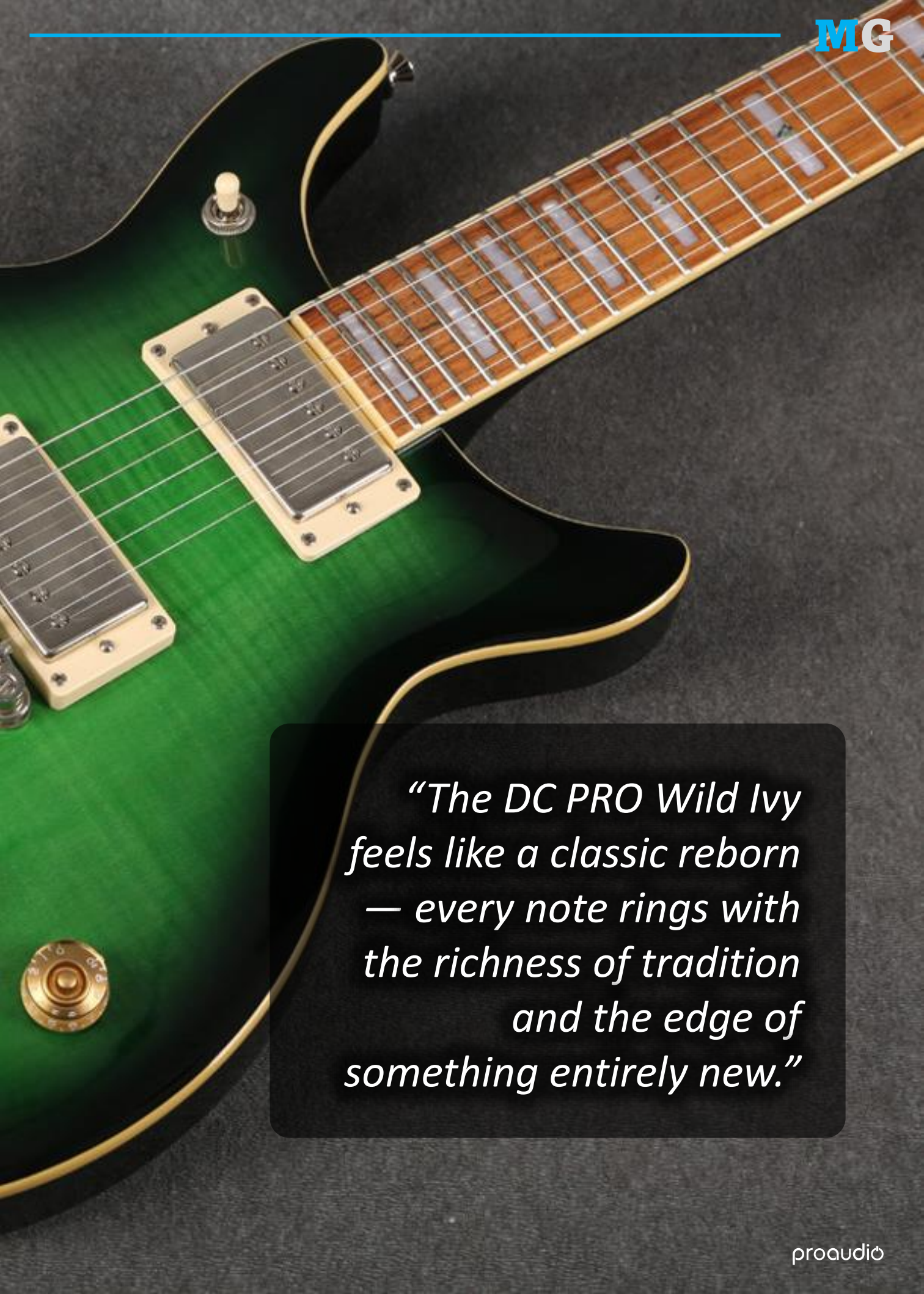


WHO WOULD USE IT?

The Epiphone DC PRO Wild Ivy is for players who want a professional-grade instrument without the Custom Shop price.

It's ideal for gigging guitarists who need versatility, session players who want tonal range in one guitar, and passionate hobbyists who crave premium feel and sound.

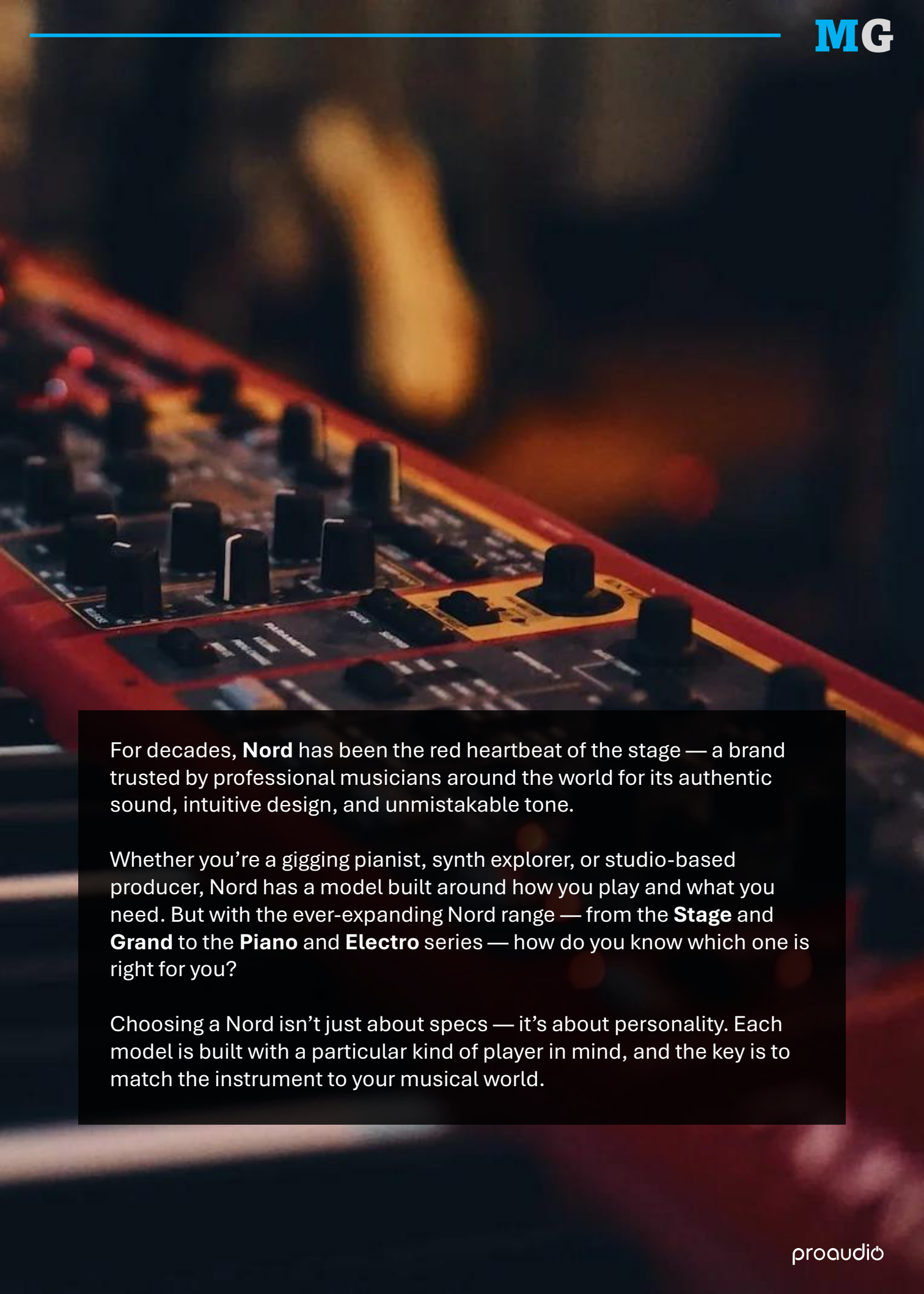
It's also a great fit for performers who like to stand out — both visually and sonically. With its elegant double-cut design, gold hardware, and deep green burst, the Wild Ivy doesn't just play the part — it looks it.



“The DC PRO Wild Ivy feels like a classic reborn — every note rings with the richness of tradition and the edge of something entirely new.”

FINDING YOUR SOUND

How to Choose the
Right Nord Keyboard



For decades, **Nord** has been the red heartbeat of the stage — a brand trusted by professional musicians around the world for its authentic sound, intuitive design, and unmistakable tone.

Whether you're a gigging pianist, synth explorer, or studio-based producer, Nord has a model built around how you play and what you need. But with the ever-expanding Nord range — from the **Stage** and **Grand** to the **Piano** and **Electro** series — how do you know which one is right for you?

Choosing a Nord isn't just about specs — it's about personality. Each model is built with a particular kind of player in mind, and the key is to match the instrument to your musical world.



The Performer's Choice **Nord Stage**

If you live on stage and need versatility, the **Nord Stage** is the ultimate all-in-one keyboard. It's the workhorse of professional touring musicians because it combines three powerful engines — piano, organ, and synth — all accessible in real time. You can layer sounds, split the keyboard, and tweak everything instantly with its hands-on controls.

The Stage line is perfect for performers who move between genres in one show — think gospel, pop, jazz, or rock — and need seamless transitions without breaking the flow. If you want a single instrument that can do it all, the Nord Stage is your powerhouse.



The Pure Pianist

Nord Grand & Nord Piano

For players who live and breathe piano, the **Nord Grand** and **Nord Piano** are all about authenticity and feel. The Nord Grand's triple-sensor weighted keybed, developed by Kawai, delivers the closest experience to a real acoustic piano you'll find in a digital instrument. It's perfect for stage pianists, recording artists, and educators who demand that deep connection between fingers and sound.

The Nord Piano, on the other hand, offers the same immaculate sound library and dynamic response in a slightly more streamlined format. It's lighter, simpler, and perfect for those who want the legendary Nord piano tone without the extra layers of synth and organ.



The Gigging Musician Nord Electro

The **Nord Electro** has become a favourite for players who want professional sound in a portable package. It's the go-to choice for gigging keyboardists who jump between small venues, church services, and studio sessions. With stunning organ and electric piano sounds, it nails everything from vintage Wurlitzer grit to Hammond warmth.

The Electro feels alive under your fingers and is built to travel. It's ideal for musicians who need that balance between portability and the unmistakable Nord tone.



The Sound Designer

Nord Wave & Nord Lead

For those who see the keyboard as a canvas for sound creation, the **Nord Wave** and **Nord Lead** series open up a world of synthesis.

These are for producers, experimental musicians, and live performers who love to sculpt tone in real time. Whether it's analog-style warmth, digital precision, or hybrid layering, the Nord synths reward creativity with a level of depth and immediacy few instruments can match.

“Every Nord feels alive under your hands
— it’s not just an instrument, **it’s a
conversation between sound and soul.**”

THE TAKEAWAY

Every Nord is built to inspire — it's just a matter of finding the one that speaks to you. The Stage gives you everything in one instrument, the Grand and Piano offer pure performance perfection, the Electro keeps things simple and gig-ready, and the Wave and Lead turn sound design into an art form.

Try them. Feel them. Let your hands decide. Because choosing a Nord isn't just about getting a keyboard — it's about finding your musical voice.

stage 4

Stitchrock

PARKTOWN NORTH



SCHOOL OF ROCK[®]

PARKTOWN NORTH

Situated in the heart of Johannesburg, School of Rock Parktown North is the latest addition to South Africa's growing rock-based music education movement. Opened in November 2024, this dynamic school offers a performance-driven approach to learning—empowering students of all ages to master instruments, vocals, and stagecraft through real band experiences.

From young beginners in the *Little Wing* program to teens in *Performance* groups and adults in *AllStars*, students learn by doing—rehearsing and performing in live shows that build confidence, creativity, and musical skill.

With expert instructors, a vibrant musical community, and a passion for rock at its core, School of Rock Parktown North is where future musicians come to find their sound and shine on stage.





SCHOOL OF ROCK Shakes Comic Con with 4-Day Music Takeover

By Jarred Rosenberg

Johannesburg, South Africa — This year's Comic Con wasn't just about cosplay and comics—it rocked harder than ever thanks to School of Rock Parktown North's four-day music showcase. Students, instructors, and fans came together to celebrate the power of live performance with explosive sets, interactive moments, and unforgettable energy.

Rocking the Stage

Across all four days, our student bands lit up the Comic Con stage with classic rock anthems, metal favourites, and crowd-pleasing hits. Each show drew bigger audiences, all clapping, singing, and cheering on our young rock stars as they showcased the confidence and skill honed through hours of rehearsal.



Fans Become Rock Stars

In true School of Rock style, we didn't just play *for* the fans—we played *with* them. Every day, audience members were invited onstage, handed instruments, and taught parts of a song by our instructors. Within minutes, they were performing live with the band, turning first-timers into rockers and creating unforgettable moments of shared music.

Photo Booth & Guitar Giveaway

Our stand was a hub of excitement, featuring a photo booth where fans could capture their own rock star moment. The most-shared photo on social media scored a brand-new **Epiphone** guitar, courtesy of our friends at **Proaudio**.

A Community of Music Lovers

From jamming with free-to-play instruments to chatting with instructors, our booth became a meeting point for musicians, beginners, and fans alike. The vibe was electric—proof that music truly unites people from all walks of life.

A Weekend to Remember

From electrifying stage performances to fan-driven jam sessions, **School of Rock Parktown North's** Comic Con debut was a weekend of pure rock energy. Students walked away with confidence, fans left with memories—and some with new guitars—and everyone shared in the joy that only live music can bring.

Ready to rock the stage next time?

Join **School of Rock Parktown North** and turn your passion into performance.

Marching to the Beat of His Own Drum

Some musicians find their calling; others are simply born with rhythm in their veins. For Eli, a student at the School of Rock, music isn't a choice—it's a destiny. With his trademark wit and offbeat humour, he describes himself as an "acoustic triangle player who occasionally flirts with the drums"—but make no mistake, this young artist has serious chops.

ELI SINGCLAIR



What instrument do you play?

I play the acoustic triangle and on rare occasions, the drums.

Who is your favourite artist?

TENBLANK...I know they're fictional. Seriously though, don't tease me, but it's a tie between Fourplay and Chris Botti.

What is your favourite song to sing/play?

アイドル by YOASOBI, but the Tatsuya Amano version and Faint by Linkin Park

What made you want to start playing music?

I was born this way. I've been drumming since the womb (just ask my mum). The moment I came out, Billy Kilson's solo on Indian Summer (Live in Boston, 2008) had me banging the pots and Tupperware.

What was the best part about playing at Comic-Con?

I didn't play Comic-Con. I like the stage because it's a proving ground. There's no second takes. Just energy. And if I'm doing it right, the crowd vibes. Then I know, I'm not just good in my imagination. I actually am as good as I think I am.

The Beatle Behind the Keys

For Rael, music isn't just a hobby—it's a lifelong companion. Sitting behind a piano or keyboard feels as natural to him as breathing, a passion that began when he first placed his small hands on the keys at the age of six.

What started as curiosity soon became devotion, setting the tone for a journey filled with melody, creativity, and heart.



What instrument do you play?

Piano/keyboard

Who is your favourite artist?

My all-time favourite has to be the Beatles

What is your favourite song to sing/play?

Layla by Eric Clapton

What made you want to start playing music?

I've always loved music and started playing the piano when i was 6

What was the best part about playing at Comic-Con?

Playing for a large audience at an international event

Finding Her Groove

For Sofia, music is more than a passion—it's a legacy. Holding her red Yamaha bass guitar, an instrument lovingly passed down from her grandfather, she carries not just the rhythm of the song but the heartbeat of her family's musical heritage.

**What instrument do you play?**

I play bass guitar that I inherited from my grandpa.

Who is your favourite artist?

I listen to a wide variety of genres and artists but I enjoy Radiohead, Current Joys, and Billie Eilish.

What made you want to start playing music?

I wanted to start music because my family is very musical and I saw Sting perform live and I loved it.

What was the best part about playing at Comic-Con?

The best part about playing at Comic-Con was seeing all the people dressing up, and playing in front of a bigger crowd for the first time

Thank You To Mango Groove

MG

Pioneer Dj

AlphaTheta



audio-technica

dBTechnologies



MIDAS



SONANCE
BEYOND SOUND

Turbosound®

Powersoft

ENOVA

TANNOY

LAB.GRUPPEN

SOUND TOWN

Blackstar®
AMPLIFICATION

Carry-on

Epiphone

Gibson®

KRAMER
Guitars

Proudly brought to you by

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Are you mixing with the right company?