

Guitar Makers

Guitar Manufacturers

Barbara Guitars

The company was founded in 2001. "I have been playing, customizing and building guitars since I was seven years old. After a brief career at a local guitar icon – I started the company to build guitars on my own that the big guys wouldn't build. I named the company as a tribute to my Mother who was my first music teacher and who had recently passed away." Alan R. Kenyon Luthier/Owner

Bertoncini

Guitars currently produced in Olympia, WA since 1995. Dave Bertoncini builds custom-made acoustic, acoustic/electric, and electric guitars as well as mandolins in his one person shop. Each guitar is entirely custom-made by him, which allows the customer to choose what he or she wants. Dave usually has ongoing projects, but he encourages customers to request special orders so he can start from scratch on the instrument of choice.

Bourgeois

Bourgeois Guitars are handcrafted in Lewiston, Maine by master luthier Dana Bourgeois. Dana is known around the world for his superb craftsmanship and also as one of the foremost authorities on the voicing, selection and utilization of fine acoustic tone woods.

Dana selects and matches the woods for each Bourgeois guitar at the beginning of the production process and, once each acoustic guitar is complete, checks it from top to bottom insuring it is aesthetically perfect and sounds and plays up

to the demanding Bourgeois standard. Throughout the production process you can find Dana applying bridges, spraying a sunburst top, buffing the final finish coat, selecting and applying pick guards as well as overseeing the eight other individuals working on the various facets of the guitars being built.

Breedlove

Breedlove Guitars was established in 1990 by luthiers Larry Breedlove and Steve Henderson, while working at Taylor Guitars. After moving to Oregon, Breedlove and Henderson began specializing in custom, fingerstyle six and twelve string guitars. In 1991 the first Breedlove guitar model appeared, after experiments with the JLD bridge truss system and various bracing techniques. Around 1994, Larry's brother, Kim Breedlove, joined Larry and Steve as a master craftsman. Breedlove strives to be environmentally conscious, and is "dedicated to selecting alternatives to endangered rainforest woods."

Carvin

Instruments currently produced in Escondido, CA since 1969. Previous production was located in Covina, CA from 1949 to 1969. Carvin instruments are sold through direct catalog sales, as well as through five factory stores in CA: Covina, Hollywood, Sacramento, San Diego, and Santa Ana.

In 1946, Lowell Kiesel founded Kiesel Electronics in Los Angeles, California. Three years later, the Kiesel family settled in Covina, California, and began the original catalog business of manufacturing and distributing lap steel guitars, small tube amps, and pickups. The Carvin trademark was derived from Kiesel's two oldest sons, Carson and Gavin. Guitars were originally offered in kit form, or by parts since 1949; Carvin began building complete guitars in 1956. By 1978, the glued set-neck design replaced the bolt-on necks. The majority of

the current guitar and bass models currently feature a neck-through design.

Carvin has always been a mail-order-only company, and offers players a wide range of options on the individual models. Even though they can't be tried out before they're bought, Carvin offers a ten-day money-back guarantee. Because Carvin sells factory direct, these guitars are not stocked in music stores. It is suggested that a current copy of their catalog be requested (free of charge) to find out more about the company's current models and pricing. Carvin also used to have a factory store in Sherman Oaks.

Carvin offers a full range of guitar and bass replacement parts in their full line catalog. The Carvin company also offers mixing boards, power amplifiers, power mixers, P.A. speakers, monitor speakers, guitar combo amps/heads/cabinets, and bass amps/cabinets. Lowell Kiesel passed away on December 28, 2009.

Collings Guitars

Instruments currently built in Austin, TX beginning in 1986.

Luthier Bill Collings was born in Michigan, and raised in Ohio. In 1973, Collings moved from Ohio to Houston, Texas, and originally did guitar repair work. Colling's first flattop guitars date from this period. In 1980, Collings relocated his workshop to Austin, Texas. In addition to his flattop guitars, he also began building archtop guitars. Collings Guitars was founded in 1986. Today, the company maintains tight quality control over their production, and consumer demand remains high. In 2005/2006 Collings moved to a new building within Austin, TX. In 2007, Collings released a new electric line of guitars

Danny West

Danny custom builds his guitars in San Francisco.

DeMarino

Instruments previously built in Copiague, NY between 1973 and 2000.

Deeply rooted in music, Ronald J. DeMarino's career spanned four decades. DeMarino was playing New York clubs in 1956, when he had his first meeting with John D'Angelico (DeMarino was having his 1948 Gibson L-5 repaired!). D'Angelico took a liking to him, and after spending a great deal of time in his shop, DeMarino was fascinated with the idea of guitar building. DeMarino experimented for years, and finally launched his own shop.

DeMarino Guitars was established in 1967, and was in continuous operation since the inception of the business. DeMarino was a second generation, family-owned business, and for twenty-seven years specialized in the restoration of fine instruments, as well as custom building special order guitars and basses.

Fender

Instruments currently produced in Corona, CA (U.S.), Mexico, Japan, Tianjin (China), and Korea. Distributed by the Fender Musical Instruments Corporation of Scottsdale, AZ. The Fender trademark was established circa 1948 in Fullerton, CA.

Clarence Leonidas Fender was born in 1909, and raised in Fullerton, California. As a teenager, he developed an interest in electronics, and soon was building and repairing radios for fellow classmates. After high school, Leo Fender held a bookkeeping position while he did radio repair at home. After holding a series of jobs, Fender opened up a full-scale radio

repair shop in 1939. In addition to service work, the Fender Radio Service store soon became a general electronics retail outlet. However, the forerunner to the Fender Electric Instruments company was a smaller, two-man operation that was originally started as the K & F company in 1945. Leo Fender began modestly building small amplifiers and electric lap steels with his partner, Clayton Orr Doc Kaufman. After K & F dissolved, Fender then formed the Fender Electric Instrument company in 1946, located on South Pomona Avenue in Fullerton, California. The company sales, though slow at first, began to expand as his amplifiers and lap steels began meeting acceptance with West Coast musicians. In 1950, Fender successfully developed the first production solid body electric guitar. Originally the Broadcaster, the name was quickly changed to the Telecaster after the Gretsch company objected to the infringement of their Broadcaster drum sets.

Soon Fender's inventive genius began designing new models through the early 1950s and early 1960s. The Fender Precision Bass guitar was unveiled in 1951. While there is some kind of an existing background for the development of an electric solid body guitar, the notion of a 34 in. scale instrument with a fretted neck that could replace an upright acoustic doublebass was completely new to the music industry. The Precision bass (so named because players could fret the note precisely), coupled with a Fender Bassman amplifier, gave the bass player more sonic projection. Fender then followed with another design in 1954, named the Stratocaster. The simplicity in design, added to the popular sounds and playability, makes this design the most copied worldwide. Other popular models of guitars, basses, and amplifiers soon followed.

By 1964, Fender's line of products included electric guitars, basses, steel guitars, effects units, acoustic guitars, electric pianos, and a variety of accessories. Leo's faltering health was a factor in putting the company up for sale, and he first offered it to Don Randall (the head of Fender Sales) for

a million and a half dollars. Randall opened negotiations with the Baldwin Piano & Organ company, but when those negotiations fell through, he offered it to the conglomerate CBS (who was looking to diversify the company holdings). Fender (FEIC) was purchased by CBS on January 5, 1965 (actually in December of 1964) for thirteen million dollars. Leo Fender was kept on as a special consultant for five years, and then left when the contract was up in 1970. Due to a ten-year no compete clause, the next Leo Fender-designed guitars did not show up in the music industry until 1976 (Music Man).

While Fender was just another division of CBS, a number of key figures left the company. Forrest White, the production manager, left in 1967 after a dispute in producing solid state amplifiers. Don Randall left in 1969, disenchanted with corporate life. George Fullerton, one of the people involved with the Stratocaster design, left in 1970. Obviously, the quality in Fender products did not drop the day Leo Fender sold the company. Dale Hyatt, another veteran of the early Fender days, figured that the quality on the products stayed relatively stable until around 1968 (Hyatt left in 1972). But a number of cost-cutting strategies, and attempts to produce more products had a deteriorating effect. This reputation leads right to the classic phrase heard at vintage guitar shows, "Pre-CBS?"

In the early 1980s, the Fender guitar empire began to crumble. Many cost-cutting factors and management problems forced CBS to try various last ditch efforts to salvage the instrument line. In March of 1982, Fender (with CBS' blessing) negotiated with Kanda Shokai and Yamano Music to establish Fender Japan. After discussions with Tokai (who built a great Fender Strat replica, among other nice guitars), Kawai, and others, Fender finally chose Fuji Gen Gakki (based in Matsumoto, about 130 miles northwest of Tokyo). In 1983, the Squier series was built in Japan, earmarked for European distribution. The Squier trademark came from a string-making company in Michigan

(V.C. Squier) that CBS had acquired in 1965.

Froggy Bottom Guitars

Instruments currently built in Newfane, VT since 1970. Distributed by Froggy Bottom Guitars.

Luthier Michael Millard visited Michael Gurian's workshop in 1970 and was offered a job after his college graduate program was eliminated. Millard built his first Froggy Bottom guitar (a modified Gurian JM) in his apartment's kitchen in late 1970. In 1973, Millard moved with Gurian to New Hampshire and continued to work for him until 1974 when he left to start building his own guitars exclusively. Millard continued building Froggy Bottom guitars one at a time through the rest of the 1970s and most of the 1980s. As his guitars became more popular and widespread, demand started to pour in from guitar stores and dealerships. By the mid-1980s, Millard started attending NAMM shows, began developing a dealer network, and started selling guitars wholesale for the first time. Froggy Bottom is now the trio of Andy Mueller, Eric Goodenough and Millard, enhanced by the unique engraving skills of long-time collaborator Petria Mitchell. In 2008, the company moved to a new, off-the-grid post and beam workshop in central Vermont and produces about one hundred high-end acoustic guitars annually.

These instruments have won an Acoustic Guitar Magazine "Players Choice Award" in each of the years that poll has been conducted. Froggy Bottom is somewhat unusual in that they refuse to use their high-profile clients in their advertising; instead they prefer to deal with the functional needs of players directly and personally.

George Gordonitski Master Guitar

Luthier George Gorodnitski founded in 1980 his Master Guitar Company. He was born in Riga, Latvia, where he graduated from

a Musical College, Art Academy, and violin-making courses. After relocation to the United States in 1989, he continues to design and build a very specific line of high quality instruments : archtops, flattops, semi-acoustic, and electric guitars. All his instruments are unique in design, recognizable at first sight and have a great, distinctive sound. World class instruments for the likes of Yo Yo Ma, Wes Borland, Rush, Eric Clapton and more.

Gibson Guitar Corporation

Gibson Guitar Corp. is an American maker of guitars and other instruments, now based in Nashville, Tennessee. Orville Gibson founded the company in 1902 as "The Gibson Mandolin-Guitar Mfg. Co., Ltd." in Kalamazoo, Michigan to make mandolin-family instruments.[1] Gibson invented archtop guitars by constructing the same type of carved, arched tops used on violins. By the 1930s, the company was also making flattop acoustic guitars, as well as one of the first commercially available hollow-body electric guitars, used and popularized by Charlie Christian. It was bought by Chicago Musical Instruments in 1944, which was then acquired by the E.C.L. conglomerate that changed its name to Norlin Inc. This was seen as the beginning of an era of mismanagement.

Gibson built one of the world's most iconic guitars, the Gibson Les Paul. Many Gibson instruments are among the most collectible guitars. Gibson was at the forefront of innovation in acoustic guitars, especially in the big band era of the 1930s; the Gibson Super 400 was widely imitated. In the early 1950s, Gibson introduced its first solid-body electric guitar and in 1952 began producing its most popular guitar to date—the Les Paul, designed by Ted McCarty and Les Paul. The Norlin Corporation purchased Gibson in the late 1960s until early 1986, when the company was acquired by its present owners. Gibson Guitar is a privately held corporation owned by its chief executive officer Henry Juszkiewicz and its

president David H. Berryman.

During World War II, instrument manufacturing at Gibson slowed due to shortages of wood and metal. Instead, Gibson made wood and metal parts for the military. In 1944 Gibson was purchased by Chicago Musical Instruments. The ES-175 was introduced in 1949. Gibson hired Ted McCarty in 1948, who became President in 1950. He led an expansion of the guitar line with new guitars such as the "Les Paul" guitar introduced in 1952 and designed by Les Paul. The Les Paul was offered in Custom, Standard, Special, and Junior models. In the mid-50s, the Thinline series was produced, which included a line of thinner guitars like the Byrdland. The first Byrdlands were slim, custom built, L-5 models for guitarists Billy Byrd and Hank Garland. Later, a shorter neck was added. Other models such as the ES-350T and the ES-225T were introduced as less costly alternatives. In 1958, Gibson introduced the ES-335T model. Similar in size to the hollow-body Thinlines, the ES-335 family had a solid center, giving the string tone a longer sustain.

In the 1950s, Gibson also produced the Tune-o-matic bridge system and its version of the humbucking pickup, the PAF ("Patent Applied For"), first released in 1957 and still sought after for its sound. In 1958, Gibson produced two new designs: the eccentrically shaped Explorer and Flying V. These "modernistic" guitars did not sell initially. It was only in the late 1960s and early 70s when the two guitars were reintroduced to the market that they sold well. The Firebird, in the early 60s, was a reprise of the modernistic idea, though less extreme.

In the late 50s, McCarty knew that Gibson was seen as a traditional company and began an effort to create more modern guitars. In 1961 the body design of the Les Paul was changed due to the demand for a double-cutaway body design.[8] The new body design then became known as the SG (for "solid guitar"). The Les Paul returned to the Gibson catalog in 1968.

On December 22, 1969 Gibson parent company, Chicago Musical Instruments, was taken over by a South American brewing conglomerate, E.C.L. Gibson, Inc. remained under the control of CMI until 1974. In 1974 it became a subsidiary of Norlin Musical Instruments .

Between 1974 and 1984 production of Gibson guitars was shifted from Kalamazoo to Nashville, Tennessee. The Kalamazoo plant kept going for a few years as a custom-instrument shop, but was closed in 1984; several Gibson employees led by plant manager Jim Duerloo established Heritage Guitars in the old factory, building versions of classic Gibson designs. The company was within three months of going out of business before it was bought by Henry E. Juskiewicz, David H. Berryman, and Gary A. Zebrowski in January 1986. New production plants were opened in Memphis, Tennessee, as well as Bozeman, Montana. The Memphis facility is used for semi-hollow and custom shop instruments, while the Bozeman facility is dedicated to acoustic instruments.

Gibson also owns and makes instruments under brands such as Baldwin, Epiphone, Kalamazoo, Kramer, Maestro, Slingerland, Steinberger, Tobias, Valley Arts and Wurlitzer.

Godin

Instruments currently produced in La Patrie, Quebec, Princeville, Quebec, and/or Berlin, NH since 1987. Distributed by Godin Guitars (previously La Si Do, Inc.) in Baie D'Urfe Quebec, Canada.

Robert Godin has been a mainstay in the guitar building industry since 1972. At the age of seven, Godin got his first guitar and he has never looked back. By the time he was 15, he was working at La Tosca Musique in Montreal selling guitars and learning about minor repairs and set up work. Before long, Godin's passion for guitar playing was eclipsed by his fascination with the construction of the instruments

themselves. In 1968, Godin set up a custom guitar shop in Montreal called Harmonilab, which quickly became known for its excellent work and musicians were coming from as far away as Quebec City to have their guitars adjusted. Harmonilab was the first guitar shop in Quebec to use professional strobe tuners for intonating guitars.

Although Harmonilab's business was flourishing, Godin was full of ideas for the design and construction of acoustic guitars. In 1972, the Norman Guitar Company was born. From the beginning the Norman guitars showed signs of the innovations that Godin would eventually bring to the guitar market. Perhaps the most significant item about the Norman history is that it represented the beginning of guitar building in the village of La Patrie, Quebec. La Patrie has since become an entire town of guitar builders.

By 1978, Norman guitars had become quite successful in Canada and France, while at the same time the people in La Patrie were crafting replacement necks and bodies for the electric guitar market. Before long, there was a lineup at the door of American guitar companies that wanted Godin's crew to supply all their necks and bodies.

Before the actual Godin trademark appeared on a guitar, Godin introduced the Seagull acoustic line in 1980, the La Patrie line of classical guitars in 1982, and the Simon & Patrick line of acoustic guitars in 1985. Since Godin's factory had been producing necks and bodies for various American guitar companies since 1978, he combined that knowledge with his background in acoustic guitar design for an entirely new product. The Acousticaster debuted in 1987, and represented the first design under the Godin name. The Acousticaster was designed to produce an acoustic sound from an instrument that was as easy to play as the player's favorite electric guitar. This was achieved through the help of a patented mechanical harp system inside the guitar. Godin now presents a full line of Acousticaster-style instruments as well as full electric

solidbody guitars. Today, Godin Guitars employs close to 500 people in four factories located in La Patrie and Princeville, Quebec (Canada), and Berlin, New Hampshire. Initial company history courtesy Robert Godin and Katherine Calder (Artist Relations), La Si Do, Inc. (Godin Guitars), June 5, 1996.

Goodall

Instruments currently built in Fort Bragg, CA. Distributed by Goodall Guitars, Inc. in Fort Bragg, CA.

Luthier James Goodall grew up in Spring Valley, California. Apparently, there must be something in the water, for a number of high profile luthiers (such as Greg Deering, Geoff Stelling, and Larry and Kim Breedlove) have sprung from the same area. Prior to building his first acoustic guitar, Goodall's woodworking experience was limited to his surfboard building during high school (of course, having a father with wood carving knowledge certainly helps). After his initial success, Goodall began building guitars for friends, which lead to a backlog of orders by the mid-1970s. Goodall moved to full-time guitar building in 1972.

In 1984, Goodall relocated his shop to Mendocino, California. From 1984 to 1992, he produced an average of around forty guitars a year. From 1992 to 2008, Goodall moved off the continental U.S. to Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. His shop had nine employees, and shipped ten instruments a week. In 2009, Goodall moved back to the California from Hawaii and continues to build instruments in Fort Bragg, CA.

Hagstrom Electric

Instruments previously produced in Sweden between 1958 and 1983. Distributed by U.S. Music Corp. in Buffalo Grove, IL. Previously distributed by American Music & Sound (AM&S) in Agoura Hills, CA between 2004 and 2009. Early distributors included the Hershman Musical Instrument Company of New York

(under Goya logo) and Selmer, U.K. (under Futurama logo). In the mid-1970s, Ampeg became the U.S. distributor.

Hagstrom first began building guitars and basses in 1957, although many models appeared under the Futurama trademark in England (distributed by Selmer, U.K.) and either Hagstrom or Goya (distributed by Hershman Musical Instrument Company).

Hagstrom produced roughly 130,000 electric guitars and basses from 1958 to 1981 in Alvdalen, Sweden. During the early '80s until 1983, a few instruments were manufactured under the Hagstrom name in Japan. Due to quality concerns and ever-increasing competition, the doors were eventually closed in 1983.

Distributors included the Hershman Musical Instrument Company of New York, the Merson Musical Supply Company of Westbury, New York, Selmer, U.K. and eventually Ampeg. The evolution of the Hagstrom line was rapid, and approximately sixty-five different models of guitars and basses were produced. Early in its history, guitars were marketed in the U.K. as Futurama and in the US as Goya, Kent (a name that rarely appeared on the guitar and should not be confused with Kent trademark guitars) or Hagstrom. By 1965, all guitars were identified as Hagstrom.

Hagstrom produced both solid body and semi-hollowbody electrics, as well as an archtop model designed by luthier James L D'Aquisto. Also introduced was the first 8-string bass (four pairs of strings) and the "fastest neck in the world" which was accomplished by using an H-shape "expander stretcher" truss, a design that has allowed the necks to remain true even to this day.

In 2004, Hagstrom announced that they were building guitars again. This line was officially introduced at the 2005 NAMM show. The new line of Hagstrom guitars includes models for the vintage years such as the Swede and Hagstrom as well as some new designs. For more information contact Hagstrom directly.

Kauer

Kauer Guitars is a family run business started by Doug Kauer. With over 15 years of experience in wood-working, Doug was able to capitalize on his experience with CNC machinery to do precision work such as fret slotting, bridge placement, body shape and more. In tandem with the precise work their CNC machines offer, Doug still uses an overall hands-on approach to more delicate matters such as shaping necks, contours, fretwork, finishing and final setup.

Kinscherff

Instruments currently built in Canyon Lake, TX.

Luthier James Kinscherff has been hand crafting fine acoustic guitars for many years. Kinscherff built his first guitar in 1978 and the first guitar to bear the Kinscherff name on it was built in 1990. While Kinscherff has performed some repair work in the past (and accepts some currently), his main focus has been on building guitars. Until 2003, Kinscherff built guitars in Austin, TX when he relocated to the Briarwood Ranch, which is east of Wimberly in the Texas Hill Country. In November, 2006 Kinscherff moved again to Canyon Lake, TX. James estimates that he builds eighteen to twenty guitars a year.

Langejans

Instruments currently built in Holland, MI, since 1971.

Delwyn (Del) Langejans started Del's Guitar Gallery in 1970 and a year later was building his own guitar with the name "Langejans" on the headstock. Del is now up to serial number 1,268 and is dedicated full time to building and repairing guitars. Del has retired and no longer makes guitars.

Some notable players of Langejanes guitars are Muriel

Anderson, Earl Klugh, Peter Frampton, Gary Sadler, Buddy Greene Matthew Fox, Jerry Reed, Gordon Kennedy, Clint Milburn, Peder Eide, Steve Green, Charles Garrett, Thom Bresh and Phil Keaggy

Lipe

Luthier Michael Lipe began working in a music store during the 1970s and learned woodworking and finishing from an old violin maker. After working at the music store, Lipe began to work for Mighty Mite. In 1983, he began building guitars under his own name and became the self-proclaimed "original guitar doctor" of Los Angeles where he built and customized several guitars for many of LA's best guitar players. Lipe continued to build guitars until Ibanez purchased his company in 1989; however, he continued to work for Ibanez where he established the west coast custom shop for Ibanez and was a master builder for major endorsers in the U.S. Lipe also worked at Yamaha on the Pacifica line for two years as well as working for Höfner and as a Fender warranty service center at World Music in Santa Clarita, CA. In 2001, Lipe began building guitars under his own name again. Lipe offers several chambered solid body and hollow body electric guitars as well as electric basses.

Michael Lipe has built guitars for: Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, Brian May (Queen), Carlos Santana, Randy Rhoads, Paul Stanley (Kiss), Sting, Kurt Cobain (Nirvana), Paul Gilbert (Mr Big), Richie Kotzen (Mr Big, Stanley Clark, Poison), Reb Beach (Whitesnake, Winger, Alice Cooper), George Benson, Frank Gambale, Scott Henderson, John Fogerty, David Bowie, Jennifer Batten (Jeff Beck , Michael Jackson), Otis Rush, Tommy Shannon (Stevie Ray Vaughan), Coco Montoya (The Bluesbreakers, Albert Collins), Martin Barre (Jethro Tull), Andy Timmons , Michael Angelo Batio,

Magnum Opus

Guitars currently produced in Marina Del Ray, CA since 2006.

Magnum Opus Guitars offers custom-built acoustic guitars that are entirely built by hand. In fact, Magnum doesn't use any CNC in their construction. Only fine tonewoods and great detail are used for these guitars.

Malinoski

For the past 25 years, Malinoski has applied his Master of Fine Art degrees in Woodworking and Functional Design with his creative vision to construct instruments that are aesthetically influenced by 21st century design. The guitars are about the hand-built techniques of a singular craftsman where all design and construction ideas are considered to create unique instruments that are refreshing and new.

The look of Malinoski guitars is different from anything else while still in touch with the shapes and forms of traditional guitars styles, both electric and acoustic. They are of a design that emphasizes the qualities of the materials as well as the construction- an aesthetic of purity. Malinoski embraces the simple elegance of hand-wound magnetic pick-ups and creative switching, complete with passive piezo transducers to give these instruments wide tonal palettes- more than you would ever expect.

Martin

C.F. Martin & Company is a U.S. guitar manufacturer established in 1833 by Christian Frederick Martin. Martin is highly regarded for its steel-string guitars and is a leading mass-manufacturer of flattop acoustics. Martin instruments can cost thousands of dollars and vintage instruments often cost six figures. The company has also made several models of electric guitars and electric basses.

The company's headquarters and primary factory are in Nazareth, Pennsylvania, located in the Lehigh Valley region of the state. Martin also manufactures instruments in Mexico. Martin produced 182 instruments during 1900, increasing to 24,085 in 2000.

McCurdy

Instruments currently built in New York City, NY. Luthier Ric McCurdy has been producing custom guitars since 1983. Originally based in Santa Barbara, CA, he moved to New York City in 1991 where he studied archtop guitar building with Bob Benedetto. Since then, he has been concentrating on fine archtop and electric guitars for musicians. McCurdy has built and repaired guitars for several artists including John Abercrombie, Sheryl Bailey, Joe Beck, Paul Bollenbeck, Joe Cocker, Kenny Loggins, Jimmy Vivano, Jack Wilkins, and Jimmy Wyble. For model listings on electric archtops, refer to the Blue Book of Electric Guitars.

McElroy

Instruments currently built in Seattle, WA, since 1995. Brent McElroy has been building guitars since circa 1995. McElroy's guitars are hand built and supervised by his cat named Picasso. Guitars are based on traditional designs with McElroy's own twist on things.

McInturff

Instruments currently built in Sanford, NC. Previously produced in Holly Springs, NC and Moncure, NC.

McInturff has been building and servicing guitars since 1977. Terry McInturff's varied luthiery and musical experiences have resulted in the rare opportunities to experiment with guitar designs and to test those designs on stage and in the studio.

Moonstone

Instruments currently built in Eureka, CA (guitar production has been in different locations in California since 1972). Distributed directly by Moonstone Guitars of Eureka, CA.

In 1972, self-taught luthier Steve Helgeson began building acoustic instruments in an old shingle mill located in Moonstone Heights, California. By 1974, Helgeson moved to Arcata, California, and began producing electric Earth Axe guitars. By 1976, Helgeson had moved to a larger shop and increased his model line and production. Helgeson hit boom sales in the early 1980s, but tapered off production after the market shifted in 1985. Rather than shift with the trends, Helgeson preferred to maintain his own designs. In 1988, a major disaster in the form of a deliberately set fire damaged some of his machinery. Steve's highly figured wood supply survived only a minor scorching. Helgeson moved and reopened his workshop in 1990 at the current location in Eureka, California, where he now offers a wide range of acoustic and electric guitars and basses.

All Moonstone instruments are constructed from highly figured woods. Where burl wood was not used in the construction, the wood used is highly figured. Almost all necks are reinforced with veneers, or stringers. Bass necks are reinforced with through-body graphite stringers. Moonstone has always utilized exotic woods such as African purpleheart, paduak, wenge, koa, mahogany, Sitka and Engelmann spruce, myrtlewood, and black burl walnut.

Some older models can also be found with necks entirely made of graphite composite with phenolic fingerboards. Helgeson commissioned Modulus Graphite to produce these necks, and used them on models like the Eclipse Standard, Deluxe Basses, Vulcan Standard and Deluxe guitars, the M-80, D-81 Eagle 6- and 12-string models, as well as the D-81 Standard and the Moondolin (mandolin). In 1981, most wood necks were reinforced

with a Graphite Aluminum Honeycomb Composite (G.A.H.C.) beam with stainless steel adjustment rod. In addition to the standard models, Moonstone also offers custom guitars designed in accordance with the customer's request.

Morgan Guitars

Instruments currently built in North Vancouver (British Columbia), Canada, since 1981. Morgan acoustic guitars are hand crafted by luthier David Iannone, and feature premier woods and construction techniques. Iannone began building guitars in 1981. His apprenticeship carried on a guitar lineage that dates back to the very birth of the modern classic guitar. Morgan Guitars, named after his first son, is Welsh for "working by the sea" (which he does).

Parker

Instruments currently produced in Wilmington, MA, since 2003. Distributed by U.S. Music Corp. in Buffalo Grove, IL. Previously produced in New York from 1992-2003. Previously distributed by Korg USA of New York, NY.

Designer Ken Parker began building unconventional archtop guitars in the 1970s. He then took a job with (now defunct) Stuyvesant Music in New York City, working both in the repair shop as well as building Guitar Man instruments. Parker's background in repairing and customizing guitars became the groundwork for the innovative design of the Fly guitar.

In 1982, Parker met Larry Fishman (Fishman Transducers) while reviewing a prototype bass. Parker and Fishman joined forces, and attended the 1985 NAMM music industry show to gain financial backing for the new Fly model. The new guitar design attracted some interest in the market, but Parker and Fishman were interested in protecting the design, rather than letting unauthorized versions show up in the marketplace. Around 1990, Korg USA (distributor of Marshall amplifiers and Korg

keyboards in the U.S. market) took interest in the design and production applications. The Fly guitar debuted at the 1992 NAMM show.

Parker guitars are carved from solid wood, and then have a thin layer of carbon/glass/epoxy composite material applied as a strengthening measure. The fingerboard and peghead veneer on these instruments are made from the same synthetic composite material. While the futuristic design and composite material tends to mystify vintage-minded guitar owners, the Fly is still 95% wood.

In 2003, Parker introduced the Parker Custom Shop. Customers can now have guitars built to their specifications, where just about anything goes. Contact Parker for information on the Custom Shop. In 2003, they became a part of U.S. Music Corp., which also owns Washburn, Randall Amplifiers, and Oscar Schmidt. In 2006, Parker introduced a line of acoustic guitars with help with pickups from Larry Fishman.

Paul Reed Smith (PRS)

Instruments currently produced in Stevensville, MD since late 1995 and Korea since 2001. Previously produced in Annapolis, MD between 1985 and late 1995. Distributed by Paul Reed Smith Guitars in Stevensville, MD.

Combining the best aspects of vintage design traditions in modern instruments, luthier Paul Reed Smith designed a guitar that became very influential during the late 1980s. With meticulous attention to detail, design, and production combined with the concept of graded figured wood tops, PRS guitars have become touchstone in today's guitar marketplace. The concept of a 10 top (denoting clearly defined figure across the entire maple top with no dead spots) was introduced by PRS Guitars, and the phrase, "It's a 10 top with birds," has become magic for both PRS players and collectors.

As in the past, quality, tone, and player performance have become the key elements on all PRS instruments. Additionally, collectability on older PRS instruments, especially those guitars manufactured in the late 1980s/early 1990s with killer wood and/or 10 tops, has continued to be strong, with prices having risen dramatically over the past decade.

S. Talkovich

Instruments currently built in Woodstock, GA. Luthier Stephen Talkovich of Talkovich Guitars specializes in "T"-style guitars, all with a 1 3/4 inch wide nut and wide string spacing designed for fingerstyle, Blues, and Roots music. The extra fingerboard real estate facilitates bending, double stops, and first position chords. Their "medium chunky" neck designs use a soft "V" profile, top adjust single action truss rods, and hand carved and polished bone nuts. Talkovich guitars feature thin nitro lacquer finishes, thinline models, custom designed and wound calibrated single coil pickup sets made for Talkovich Guitars by David Budz in the USA. All electronic components, bridges, and saddles are USA built. Necks and bodies are USA-built. Bodies are electronically shielded with copper.

Sadowsky

Instruments currently produced in Brooklyn, NY since 1979. Distributed by Sadowsky Guitars Ltd. in Brooklyn, NY.

Roger Sadowsky, a noted East Coast repairman and luthier, has been providing quality customizing and repairs in his shop since 1979. Sadowsky originally apprenticed with Master Luthier Augustino LoPrinzi in New Jersey between 1972 to 1974. He then spent five years as the head of the service department for Medley Music Corporation located outside of Philadelphia, PA. Upon opening his own shop, Sadowsky initially concentrated on proper instrument set-ups and repair for studio musicians and touring personnel. This background of repair work on top-

notch personal instruments became the basis for Sadowsky's later designs.

Sadowsky's instruments are based on time-tested Fender designs, with a primary difference being the attention paid to the choice of woods. The better a guitar sounds acoustically translates into a better sound when used electronically. The nature of custom work versus production line assembly ensures that a player will get the features specified, and Sadowsky has also introduced his own custom active preamps and circuitry. Current staff members include Norio Imai and Ken Fallon.

Sadowsky builds an outboard version of his bass preamp for players unable (or unwilling, in the case of a vintage instrument) to have a preamp installed in their instruments. This preamp simply consists of a volume, bass, and treble knobs, but the simplicity of the controls belies the sophisticated nature of the circuitry.

Soloway

The 27-inch scale length is probably the most important design element to the Soloway Swan guitars, and the elongated neck that results from longer scale length is the inspiration for the model name "The Swan". The scale length (the distance from the nut to the bridge) is a critical characteristic of the design of any guitar. The shorter 24 1/2-inch scale length that is typical of Gibson guitars make string easier to bend and contribute to the rich tone. The longer 25 1/2-inch scale length of Fender guitars help provide the twang and snap that has made them so useful for country players and the bite that has made them a staple of R&B. When PRS first rose to prominence, one of the characteristics that set them apart was a then unique 25 inch-scale length that emphasized mid-range tones and provided a compromise between the traditional Gibson and Fender formulae. The 27-inch scale length of the Swan produces a remarkable level of clarity, presence, and articulation that

most guitarists have never experienced. When playing a Swan, the notes just seem to jump off the instrument. The Swan Long Neck guitars are not baritones. While they can be very effective in lowered tunings, they are designed to be played at standard pitch. Even with the longer scale length, the Swan was designed to be a very player friendly guitar. A very thin neck profile, a flat fingerboard radius and extra-large frets make the Swan extremely easy to play, so easy in fact that most people don't even notice the extra length. Difficult chords and intervals are still easy to reach, even at the bottom of the neck. The 7-string models get an even greater benefit from the longer scale length. Most 7-string guitars present a choice between two compromises. Either the added string is too loose, producing a muddy tone and poor articulation, or the string has to be too heavy which makes it both much louder than the other six strings and causes intonation issues at the bottom of the neck. The longer scale length of the Swan LN eliminates this compromise and allows the use of a string that produces a balanced tension and volume with the other 6 strings while also providing tonal clarity and proper intonation.

Suhr

Instruments currently produced in Lake Elsinore, CA since 1997.

Luthier John Suhr began building his own instruments during the late 1970s while he was playing in various bands. In the early 1980s, Suhr went to work for Rudy Pensa and Rudy's Music Shop in New York City, where they collaborated to create the Pensa-Suhr line of guitars. While at Pensa, Suhr gained notoriety for building guitars for numerous guitar players including Eric Clapton, Mark Knopfler, and Peter Frampton among others. In 1991, Suhr turned his attention to tube guitar amplifiers and moved to California to work with Robert Bradshaw where they designed several tube preamps. In 1994,

Suhr went back to guitars and became the Senior Master Builder in Fender's Custom Shop. After building custom guitars and working in R&D at Fender, Suhr opened his own shop in 1997 called Suhr Guitars. Suhr partnered with CNC expert Steve Smith where they had complete control over guitar construction. In the following years, many of Suhr's friends and colleagues from Fender came to work in Suhr's shop where they currently build around 150 instruments each month. Suhr also builds basses, guitar amplifiers, pickups, and effects.

Taylor

Instruments currently built in El Cajon, CA since 1987 and in Tecate, Mexico since the mid-1990s. Distributed in North America by Taylor Guitars of El Cajon, CA and in Europe by Fender Musical Instrument Corporation (FMIC) located in Scottsdale, AZ. Previously produced in Lemon Grove, CA between 1974 through 1987.

Founding partners Bob Taylor, Steve Schemmer, and Kurt Listug were all working at the American Dream guitar repair shop in Lemon Grove, California, in the early 1970s. In 1974, the trio bought the shop and converted it into a guitar building factory. The company went through early growing pains throughout the late 1970s, but slowly and surely the guitars began catching on. In 1983, Listug and Taylor bought out Schemmer's share of the company, and re-incorporated. Fueled by sales of models such as the Grand Concert in 1984, the company expanded into new facilities in Santee, California (near El Cajon) in 1987. In 1989, Taylor bought their first CNC machine. In 2007, Taylor reorganized their guitar line to distinguish their acoustic, acoustic/electric, and electric lines from one another. All cutaway electric models remain in the number series, while acoustic models were renamed and organized according to their body shape. Taylor also has a complete custom shop open. In 2008, Fender began distributing Taylor Guitars in Europe.

Teuffel

Instruments currently built in Germany since 1995. Distributed in the U.S. by Jamie Gale Music.

Ulrich "Uli" Teuffel's guitar models are unconventional new perspectives on the traditional design of the electric guitar. The flagship Birdfish model was first introduced in spring 1995 at Frankfurt MusikMesse. All models are custom-built in Germany, and feature top-rate construction details. Teuffel models feature moveable Alnico pickups, so the magnetic sources of tone generation can thus be varied for a wide range of tonal customizing. Teuffel does not sell to dealers, because he feels personal contact is very important when purchasing one of his guitars.

Thweet, Judy

Threet guitars have been individually handcrafted, by legendary Canadian luthier Judy Threet, since 1990.

Timtone

Instruments previously built in Grand Forks (British Columbia), Canada, between 1992 and 2006.

Timtone guitars are highly regarded handcrafted instruments designed for each client and built in small batches of four at a time. When in production, luthier Tim Diebert built about twenty instruments a year. He sold them direct to the end user, ensuring a truly personalized, no compromise project. Using either the MK or the MK7 Series, the BT Series and the Rikiyabass body styles as a platform, Tim Diebert offered a large array of base features and options. As of 2006, Diebert decided to stop building guitars. He may build a few more in the future to keep his feet wet, but no more standard production models are to be made.

Treker

Instruments currently built in Mona, UT.

Treker offers a range of quality guitar and bass models that feature the exclusive Floating Neck technology. Handcrafted bodies are joined to a neck that has an internal tension bar which offers structural support and allows the fretboard to vibrate free of the traditional static load of the neck/truss rod/fingerboard design.

Triggs Guitars

Instruments currently hand built in the Kansas City area. Previously manufactured in Nashville, TN.

Luthier Jim Triggs has been building instruments since the mid-1970s. While at Gibson between 1986 and 1992, Jim carried several titles, including Artist Relations, Custom Shop Manager, Archtop Guitar Supervisor, Custom Mandolin Builder, and Art Guitar Designer. Jim left Gibson in March of 1992, and has been custom building ever since. Triggs has also built for several famous clients including Alan Jackson, Steve Miller, Elliot Easton, Pat Martino, Mundell Lowe, Vince Gill, Marty Stuart, Joe Perry and Brad Whitford of Aerosmith, and S.P. Fjestad (we felt obligated to include Steve on our artist roster although we were a little apprehensive as we've heard rumors that S.P. has never changed a string on his collection of over 100 guitars).

Jim's son Ryan has been working with him in the shop since 2002, and this "team," maybe the only father and son duo currently working on archtops together. The Triggs Boys keep busy with a constant back order of flattops, archtops, and F-5 style mandolins. Much of Jim's time in the shop is spent on design work for other companies especially with Cort Guitars where several models are currently in their product line.

Turner, Rick

Instruments currently built in Santa Cruz, CA. Distributed by Rick Turner Guitars of California. Previously built in Topanga, CA.

Luthier Rick Turner was one of the original three partners that formed Alembic in 1970. In 1978, he left Alembic to form Turner Guitars, and opened a workshop in 1979 in Novato, California. Although artists such as Lindsey Buckingham favored Turner's guitars, the company was closed in 1981. Turner's records show that approximately 130 instruments were built during that time period (1979-1981).

As well as building instruments, Rick Turner has written countless columns on guitar building, repairs, and products profiles in guitar magazines. Turner reopened his guitar shop in 1989, and now offers a range of instruments.

Victor Baker Guitars

In the late 1990's Vic started his journey into guitar making in Philadelphia. Vic really broke out in 2001 when he was commissioned for 8 guitars. This led to a buildup of recognition and an extremely busy building period that lasted until 2008. At this point after assembling well over 200 instruments, Vic's guitars were in the hands of players around the world. These busy guitar shop years were a juggling act between building guitars and staying in the playing game as much as possible.

In late 2008, Vic was sidelined by a reoccurring injury to his elbow (caused by the grindwork of sanding and shaping the guitars) and was forced to take it easy. He had to limit 2008's output but as of late 2009 he is healed up and back in commission. Right now Victor is thoroughly enjoying a full schedule of building, gigging, composing, recording and playing with his group. In January 2010 he took the plunge and

relocated to NYC, and set up a new workshop in Brooklyn.

Warrior Anointed Hand Made Instruments

Instruments currently built in Rossville, GA. Distributed by Warrior. Warrior has been producing guitars since 1995.

Warrior Anointed Hand Made Instruments currently offers high quality custom-built bass models that feature bolt-on and neck-through designs, exotic woods, and an innovative “through-body stringing” that corrects the floppy feeling of the low B-string. Warrior has a full design team to create the guitars. They also do not produce a standard line of guitars. Most models have several options available and many customers do not order their guitars with only standard features.

Wayne Guitars

Instruments currently built in Paradise, CA since 1998.

Wayne guitars is currently operated by Wayne Chavel and his son Michael. Wayne has been producing guitars since 1962, and has produced guitars for many famous artists. Wayne has worked for Fender, Gibson, and B.C. Rich.

Williams

Laurie builds superior concert quality instruments featuring exquisite craftsmanship and a pallet of aural colors that are rich, expressive and inspirational.

His individually handcrafted acoustic guitars, mandolins and ukulele are built from some of the most unique and beautiful timbers of the world, including many from his native country of New Zealand, where he lives and works.

WR Guitars (William Raynaud)

William Raynaud has been working in the guitar industry in the

U.S. for the past 10 years, working with one the greatest Senior Master Builders from the Ibanez Custom Shop, Michael Lipe, Master Builder Art Esparza from the Fender custom Shop, and Master Painter Paul Slagle from Tobias Basses and James Tyler Guitars, as well as many years working with High end boutique builders in Los Angeles, CA.

William at WR Guitars also provides high end professional services such as repairs, re-frets, set-ups, relics, refinishing, and more, for artists and musicians in the Greater Los Angeles area and beyond.

WR Guitars has provided services to these artists and producers: Bruno Mars, Devin Bronson (Pink, Avril Lavigne...), JB and Chris Glenn (Black Robot / Buckcherry), Gilby Clarke (Supernova, Guns n roses, Halloween Jack...), Ted Kamp (Shooter Jennings...), Andrew Stockdale (Wolfmother), Joe Barrett (Big Joe and the space cowboys), Trace Ritter (Chalkfarm, Ritter Music company recording studio), Ric Markmann (Heart)

Zerberus

Zerberus-Guitars was formed in 2002 to satisfy the demands of the modern guitarist by providing high-performance musical instruments that are aesthetically pleasing. With designs that are fresh, original, yet highly functional, our instruments stand out from the crowd. Resonant timbers combine with the finest hardware and specialized circuitry to offer a broad spectrum of tonal possibilities. Delivering the perfect synthesis of modern design, reliable hardware and state of the art electronics, Zerberus-Guitars ensures that every one of its hand-built limited-edition instruments is manufactured to the highest quality standards.

Zimnicki

Instruments currently built in Allen Park, MI. Zimnicki has been building guitars since 1978.

Luthier Gary Zimnicki has been developing his guitar building skills since 1978. Currently, he builds classical and steel-string flattop guitars and acoustic and electric archtop guitars, mandolins, and ukuleles. As of mid-2012, Zimnicki had produced over 275 instruments.

Zion

Instruments currently built in Raleigh, NC. Previously produced in Greensboro, NC Zion has been producing guitars since 1980. Distributed by Zion Guitar Technology of Raleigh, NC.

Luthier Ken Hoover founded Zion Guitar Technology in 1980, after six years of repairs, restorations, and custom building experience. In 1983, Zion was commissioned by Guitar Player magazine to build the Silver Bird model that was featured on the cover – and commissioned again in 1991 to build the Burning Desire model for cover art. Hoover has worked with such artists as Phil Keaggy and Ty Tabor (King's X), as well as custom builders such as Joe Barden and Pat Wilkins.

Zion guitars have been famous for their high quality and amazing custom finishes, and the Zion guitar staff maintains an output of forty to fifty guitars a month. From 1980 to 1993, the peghead logo had block lettering and triangular wings. In 1994, Zion redesigned their peghead logo to feature a bold signature look, with a large Z. In the mid-2000s, Zion released "Zion By Design" that are affordable Zion guitars designed by Zion engineers but produced in China.