

Wood & Steel

Steven Curtis Chapman The Signature Model

Fall Limiteds

Figured Mahogany GS

Deep Dreadnought

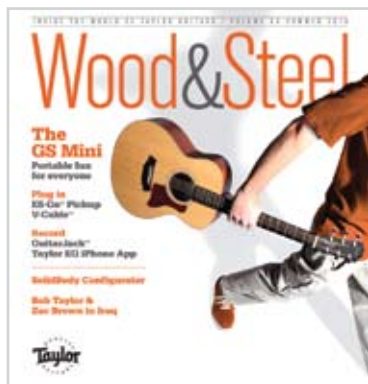
12-fret GA

Koa 500s

**All-mahogany
Electrics**



Letters



Taylor is a Girl's Name, Too

I just wanted to tell you how much I have enjoyed being a customer for several years (1997 414 pinless) and how much I appreciate *Wood&Steel*. I really enjoyed the Zac Brown stuff inside the summer issue. You can really see that Bob's zeal for life shines through your company. I just had a baby girl, and my wife and I had already decided that if she would have been a boy, we would have named him Taylor (we are saving the name for a later date). Thanks for all that you do.

Jay Hefner

More Nuge

Is it really necessary to print every person's opinion in *Wood&Steel*? Specifically, someone who takes exception to something that Ted Nugent stands for instead of accepting the article about playing NAMM for what it is. There are many people who own Taylors who I do not agree with. Will you print them if I give them to you, or are you also interested only in the politics of the player? Can't we all get along?

Dan Alexander

Ed. Note: Dan wasn't the only one who criticized our decision to publish the letter last issue ("No Nuge is Good Nuge") responding to our coverage of Ted's performance at the Winter NAMM show. The letter struck a nerve with a number of readers who felt its negative rhetoric didn't belong on this page. It certainly wasn't the sort of letter we typically run. We had received several letters with sentiments in a similar vein — some even stronger in tone — and we opted to publish one. Our intent wasn't to politicize our pages or implicitly endorse the letter's point-of-view, but simply to reflect the nature of the responses that our coverage of Ted elicited. But as several readers pointed out, publishing that opinion unnecessarily lowered the quality of discourse. That's not something we want, and we apologize.

Classical Crossover

I've played classical/flamenco guitar for the past 25 years and

decided to buy a new guitar, so I went to my local shop in Edinburgh, Scotland. They deal mainly in electric and acoustic guitars, so there was not much choice of traditional classical guitars for me to try. One of the guys in the shop said, "What about a nylon Taylor?" which I did not know existed. Well, after playing an NS24ce for five minutes, I bought it there and then. The sound is amazing. It's a lot tighter than a classical guitar and has a certain sharpness to the sound, which I consider an excellent crossover between the two types of guitar. It gives classical/flamenco a different feel played on this guitar. I have started learning acoustic blues, which sounds great on it. The only downside for me is that the neck/fretboard is narrower than a classical guitar, but I've been used to classical guitars and am getting used to it now.

Bill Thomson

The Best Hand-Me-Down Ever

When I was in high school, I became a huge fan of Steven Curtis Chapman. I was a self-taught guitar player and one day tried out a Taylor 915 in a guitar shop in my hometown of Houston, Texas. I fell in love. The instrument was comfortable to play and had a full, rich tone that was striking in contrast to the cheap acoustic I'd been playing for years. It was Chapman who introduced me to Taylor and a test run of a Taylor that opened new doors to me as a guitarist. I got a new guitar for my high school graduation, and it was very good, but I had still never played a guitar I loved as much as that Taylor. I'm nearly 32 years old now. My father bought his first Taylor last year, a 214ce, and later he fell for a solid mahogany custom GS during a Taylor event in Phoenix. Knowing that it would be years before I'd be able to afford a Taylor on an EMT's pay, dad gave me his 214ce. It's the best gift I've ever been given. I have discovered that there really isn't any such thing as a low-end Taylor; that 214 plays just as comfortably and has the same full-bodied tone that I fell in love with years ago. I'm proud to say I'm finally the owner of a Taylor, and I enjoy playing publicly again. Now if I could just get to a Chapman show so he could autograph it. Keep up the amazing work!

**Melissa Baker
Phoenix, AZ**

Care Package

Wow! That is the only word to describe the customer service department at Taylor Guitars. While in San Diego, I took the factory tour and stopped by customer service to see about retro-fitting my 2000 Taylor 810 with the electronics package. The customer service was awesome...from start to finish. I purchased a bone upgrade, the electronics, and a service package. It was really clear that the service rep cared about making this experience awesome in every way. Got my 810 back. Looks like new. Sounds phenomenal. The electronics package was worth every cent. I remember Bob Taylor writing an article in *Wood&Steel* months ago about creating world-class customer service in their repair center. Well, congratulations, Bob. You've done a great job!

Gary Jones

A Good Old-Fashioned Approach

I attended a Taylor Road Show in North Georgia and was thoroughly excited by the event. The two [Taylor] guys, Aaron [Dablow] and [repair technician Sam Eakins], were outstanding, a great representation of Taylor. I brought my nearly new 110 and told them my wife had just bought it for me and that I am trying to learn to play. The Taylor team treated me as though I had your most expensive guitar and spent a lot of time answering my questions with genuine interest. I equate the event to doing business with the corner hardware store of the 1950s: The owner was always glad to see you even if you only needed a few washers. I get the feeling that Taylor does business the old-fashioned way in trying to connect with their customers, and I like that. You have a customer for life. As soon as I learn to play the 110, I look forward to purchasing a Taylor electric. Keep up the personal touch. It really makes a difference.

Christopher C. Mayes

Six-String Support

When I was almost 50 years old and experiencing my midlife crisis, I came up with two ideas: buy a motorcycle or learn to play guitar. Guess which one my wife liked better! My family laughed at the guitar idea and said I was too old to learn. I got a guitar and started practicing, hoping I would be a natural. Guess

what? I wasn't, but it didn't stop me, and my wife was very encouraging.

About a year later I walked into a music store in Flagstaff, Arizona and took a Taylor off the wall. When I held it I knew I had to have one. I had tried a number of acoustic guitars, but none of the necks had the feel of the Taylor. Fast forward a couple of years. I found a used 710ce-L9 on eBay. My progression was slow, but I never gave up, and I always got positive support from my wife. In 2005 she was diagnosed with cancer. I would practice by her side while she was resting from radiation, chemo and surgery. One of her doctors was a real fan of music therapy. She was the strongest person I've ever known, but it was not enough. It has been three years since Carmen passed away, and I have improved a great deal on my guitar, but she is not here to enjoy the progress. My Taylor guitar has been therapy for me in the grieving process and has done much to fill a huge void in my life just when I needed it most.

Richard D. Gress

BTO Love

I just could not let one more minute go by without letting you know how happy I am with my new BTO koa Grand Auditorium. I was a little hesitant to order such a guitar sight unseen, sound unheard, not to mention [without playing it]. After talking with Jim at Guitar Rodeo, I decided to give it a try. Am I glad I did. After working through all the appointments I wanted with Jim, who was awesome, I sat back and waited until today, and I must say you guys nailed it. I could not be more pleased. Thank you for being so good at what you do and for making such a beautiful guitar for me.

**Kevin Karnes
Durham, ME**

Sweet Memories

I must say that reading the Susan Cowsill article [Summer/Vol. 64] brought back a rush of memories. As young teenagers we briefly hung out in Narragansett, Rhode Island. We rode the school bus together, and sometimes we would talk about her family and career. For me (being a naive teenager), she represented a world beyond the small town in which I lived. I can see her as a confident, skinny adolescent and fondly remember her as a kind person. It was a pleasure to see the past and present photos of her and her family while reading the article. Back in the day, I had a bit of a crush on her. Like Susan, music and songwriting have been my passion for the past 40 years, and I love my Taylor 710ce. Susan, if you read this, thanks for the memories (albeit brief) and the innocent kiss from days long gone.

Tom Hynes

Commercial Appeal

What a wonderful surprise to turn on the British Open and see Bob Taylor walking through the factory in a GE Capital commercial. It was like watching a member of my immediate family on television. Great job by the guitar techs, too. (You're family too, but more like my distant cousins.) I heard it said that great actors need not say anything to hold a scene... nice eyebrow raise, Bob! Looking to add an Oscar to the mantle? Seriously, it gave this Taylor owner a great sense of pride to see his choice of guitar on a national broadcast. Like everything Taylor Guitars does, it was very high quality!

J. S. Surette

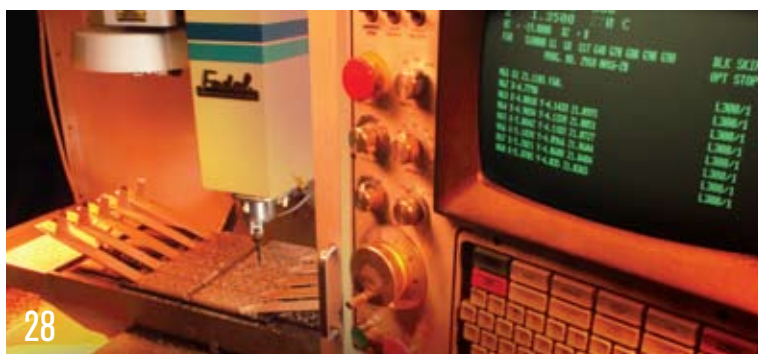
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hear from you**

Send your e-mails to:
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One of the most popular artists in Christian music reflects on his musical journey and the new signature guitar that was inspired by his daughter Maria.



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To Bob Taylor, Mastercam developer Mark Summers is a rock star. If it weren't for him, Taylor might be a much different company.



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Kurt's Corner

A Path of Purpose

It can be remarkable to look back at decisions you've made, paths you've taken, and places they've led you. Forty years ago this month I entered college. I'd always been good with math and science, so I decided to take classes in those subjects. But I'd also been playing piano for 10 or 12 years, and guitar for five or six years, and really loved music.

Eventually I did. I dropped out of college, met Bob Taylor, and we bought the American Dream and started Taylor Guitars.

Who knows what my life would be like today if I had made different decisions. But I can say without a doubt that music and the arts still make me happy, and there's nothing I would rather be doing. I still love

factory tour attendance swelled to record numbers this summer.

As we head into the fall, we're fortunate to be benefiting from this passion for music, for guitars, and for our brand. We're presently at a record level of employment, having added scores of jobs this year. Our production is at the highest level of guitars we've ever made – more than 500 per day. And financially speaking, we'll generate the highest revenue in the company's history this year.

I really don't think in terms of fate; I think in terms of purpose, and of following a purpose that one really cares about and believes in. Purpose is what drove both Bob and me to choose our paths, and somehow the paths we chose brought us together to create Taylor guitars, the instruments, and Taylor Guitars, the company. Thanks to all who have contributed to our success and prosperity. Enjoy the fall and the coming holidays.

— Kurt Listug, CEO

I really don't think in terms of fate; I think in terms of purpose, and of following a purpose that one really cares about and believes in.

I was also good at building things, or at least I thought I was good at building things, as this was before I met Bob – without a doubt an extremely gifted craftsman.

By the time I made it to my second semester of college, I was unhappy. I'd discovered that although I was good at math and science, I wasn't in love with them. I was in love with music and the arts. So I started changing my course curriculum, and when my high school buddy Bob Huff got a "bench" working at the American Dream guitar shop, I started pestering him to see if he could get me one there, too.

what I do, and I consider myself really fortunate to be in a business that's all about crafting instruments with which people create music.

Judging by the letters and resumes we receive, I think a lot of people would love to find a way to make music and guitars more of a centerpiece of their lives or their careers. It's certainly their passion. That's why people get into the guitar business or work for a guitar company. And judging by the massive crowds we've been hosting for our daily factory tours, seeing how guitars are made is a huge interest and attraction for many people. Our

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2010 Taylor Factory Tours & Vacation Dates

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

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

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

Holiday Closures

Friday, October 15
(Taylor Guitars Anniversary)

Thursday-Friday, November 25-26
(Thanksgiving holiday)

Monday, December 20 through Friday, December 31
(company vacation)



BobSpeak

Great Adventures

I'm proud to see Steven Curtis Chapman on the cover of this issue of *Wood&Steel*. We've known each other for 20 years now. I can remember putting my family in the car back in the early '90s and driving up to Washington to visit my parents and sisters. We drove through Utah on the trip, on I-15, which is textbook wide-open country. That drive makes a guy feel like he's getting away from it all. My girls Minet and Natalie were about 11 and 6 years old at the time, and we drove to the sounds of Steven's *The Great Adventure* album and title track.

The girls were at that age where they'd sing at the top of their lungs. Oh, wait, they're still that way today. I remember getting up in the cool of the morning, piling in the car, and searching for a pancake restaurant by the freeway outside of Salt Lake City, singing along to "The Great Adventure." We had our pancakes, and we sang to that song 50 times. I think we knew all the songs on the albums *For the Sake of the Call*, *The Great Adventure* and *Heaven in the Real World*. Maybe Christian music hasn't been on your radar, but these are awesome albums, just straight-up good music. You should give them a listen.

Good days, back then.

These are good days for Taylor Guitars right now. If you're waiting for

your GS Mini, or to see the first one, just know that we're working hard to make these guitars. You know what happens when you design a guitar that just works? I'll tell you. People want them. This happened with the T5 for us, and that was an expensive guitar. We had to make about 50 T5s a day for two years to get out of the woods, so to speak. The GS Mini is super affordable, sounds so good, and is portable and so cute that 50 a day doesn't put a dent in the demand. But don't worry; it's my nature to make lots of guitars. That's the way we roll in El Cajon! We're ramping up the numbers every week.

While we operate at our highest levels of production, the United States is leading the way in the world to end illegal logging. As a matter of fact, the rest of the world has its eyebrow raised like I did on the GE Capital commercial, saying to the U.S., "I didn't know you cared about saving the forests." I'm talking about the Lacey Act, and I'm pretty proud that this has finally happened.

Europe has instituted a similar law, and it has become very difficult to engage in the trade of illegal wood products. This has made it harder for us to get some woods, like ebony, but mostly we had good wood harvesting relationships in place already, and with many of our species, we have the best examples of harvest-

ing that one can imagine. The ebony trade is scrambling to become legal all the way back to the individual tree. If they don't, nobody can buy their wood. This is exciting, even though it makes the job harder for a period of time. I'll gladly take that pain to ensure a longterm survival of the species, and to see those people who rightfully own the wood getting the money that they need and deserve. There is so much good being accomplished right now in this area. I'm proud of the people who did the work to make this law.

When I think of new laws that I've been required to comply with during the lifetime of Taylor Guitars, I think of the innovation we've had to nurture in order to mold and shape our company into compliance and fit into the new world in which we live. That also causes me to think of the article in this issue about Mark Summers, the founder of Mastercam. Think of Mastercam as the T5 of the CAD/CAM world. It just works, and it enables us to make anything we want to make, from the guitar itself to the tools to make the guitar, to even tools like our UV ovens, which allowed us to lower our emissions and become a good corporate environmental citizen. I hope you enjoy that piece as you read about someone who took his dream to reality, which in turn helped enable my dreams to come true.

Editor's Note

Learning by Doing

We often celebrate people who've mastered their craft, yet we also live in a viral media culture where the notion of becoming an overnight success is perpetuated, especially in the music world. This may be truer than ever thanks to YouTube, but it's also easy to be forgotten if you're not putting in the work to sustain that success. I was reminded of the merits of old-school musical craftsmanship frequently as this issue came together. As we note in *Soundings* this issue, the Zac Brown Band received several CMA award nominations this year, including one for New Artist of the Year. Category technicalities aside, the irony is that Zac and his band are far from "new"; they've spent years honing their craft and building a fervent following the old-fashioned, grassroots way: through constant touring and learning how to connect emotionally with their audience.

In conversations with featured artists Steven Curtis Chapman and Janet Robin this issue, both recount their efforts to master the skills of playing guitar and writing songs. Both had natural talents, but their success didn't come easy. Hearing about a young Chapman being routinely reduced to tears by a tough songwriting mentor or Robin absorbing the taskmaster treatment of bandleader Lindsey Buckingham early in her career reminds us of the struggles and growing pains that often accompany the process of becoming good at something.

Of course, the story of Taylor Guitars comes to mind, perhaps extra vividly for me this quarter because Bob Taylor has been writing a book (see Taylor Notes), and I've been fortunate to read some of what he's written so far. Early on, Bob shares stories from his formative years that serve as a prelude to his adult pursuits as a craftsman, including the youthful epiphany that he had a driving passion for making things and understanding how they're made. He also was pretty good at it. It just so happened that he also liked guitars. But the accolades that Bob and Kurt now routinely receive took copious time, effort, sacrifice and corrected mistakes to earn. Between the two of them, they managed to fuel their pursuits with enough talent, passion and resolve to sustain the lean years – very lean years – until they were able to put the pieces together.

One tip for building a fulfilling career, as Bob has written and Kurt writes in his column this issue, is to find a way to combine a talent and an interest and nurture them together. Without the interest, natural talents probably won't be developed to their fullest. If you do have the interest, and you put in enough time, chances are you'll get pretty good at it. Sometimes it just comes down to whether you love it enough to put in the work to learn. Whether you can make a career out of it may be another story. But for some people, there's no turning back.

– Jim Kirlin

Wood&Steel Online

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

In the next few days, I leave for Spain with my wife, and both daughters. We've eked out yet another vacation with the four of us together. I keep thinking the last one was the last one, but we work it out. It's a road trip this time, like driving

through Utah, and I think we'll spin *The Great Adventure* for old time's sake, as we drive from Madrid to Galicia. Thanks, Steven, for those memories that are important to our family.

– Bob Taylor, President

A photograph of Steven Curtis Chapman sitting in a stadium filled with rows of empty blue seats. He is wearing glasses and a blue button-down shirt, and is holding a sunburst Taylor acoustic guitar. The background is a vast expanse of blue seats stretching into the distance.

Steven Curtis Chapman

seeing and believing

One of Christian music's most prolific artists reflects on the essence of a great song, his journey through loss, and a very special guitar.

By Jim Kirlin

Steven Curtis Chapman is already primed to chat about guitars and music when he phones from Nashville on a waning summer afternoon in late July. For much of the day he's been immersed in stories with his father and others who had gathered for the funeral of an old family friend.

"He played music with my dad," Chapman remembers. "Probably some of the first guitars I ever held in my hands were guitars that this guy had. They used to play a lot of folk and bluegrass music, so it's kind of appropriate to be talking guitars. I haven't seen a lot of these folks in 30, 40 years, since I was a little boy watching them play music. Kind of a surreal deal."

Those boyhood experiences helped ignite a passion for guitars and songs that would, in time, propel Chapman into one of the most celebrated artists in the Contemporary Christian Music circles. With 17 studio albums, more than 10 million records sold, 56 Dove Awards (more than any other artist), five Grammys, and 45 No. 1 radio singles to his name, Chapman's polished songcraft has not only earned heaps of critical and commercial acclaim; it has helped transform the CCM genre, infusing it with a radio-friendly pop and rock sensibility that catalyzed its growth over the last two-plus decades.

"Steven was among the best of that new breed that came along, along with Michael W. Smith," says Tommy Coomes, a pioneering musician, producer and executive who's been influential in Christian music circles since 1970. "He forged a new path of the singer-songwriter/performing artist who really cared and did it with excellence on every [level]. He's got the hit-making sensibilities, and I don't think one could possibly overshoot the fact that he's inspired so many other people to write better songs and go for it, just like the Beatles gave bands permission to write their own songs and sing, and not just do what an A&R guy says. Like a Renaissance man, he does it all, and that's very unique."

In the course of conversation, Chapman reflects on his musical roots, his songwriting mentors, his enduring love affair with his Taylors, including his new signature model, and his journey through darkness following the tragic loss of his five-year-old daughter Maria in 2008. Chapman talks about navigating

through the emotional and spiritual turmoil and how it ultimately led to the raw, poignant and "desperately hopeful" album *Beauty Will Rise*, which he describes as a collection of "the most honest songs, with no agenda, I've ever written."

Chapman grew up in Paducah, Kentucky, in an environment he describes as "acoustic guitar rich." His father, Herb, owned a music store, Chapman Music (which he still runs), and performed with his group, the Village Singers, every weekend.

"They had upright bass, two acoustic guitars and a banjo," Chapman recalls. "They'd do some bluegrass standards and some old folk music. My earliest memories are of my brother and me falling asleep in the back of the concert hall listening to them Saturday nights."

Chapman says he pretty much grew up in his dad's guitar shop, where he was exposed to a lot of acoustic instruments.

"My dad had an old, awesome [Martin] D-28 that really defined what an acoustic guitar was supposed to sound like to me as a boy. My first acoustic was a little guitar that had Roy Rogers on the front of it, kind of a little toy. He saw me take some real interest in it, so he got me a Lotus, which was actually a real guitar, and I was so thrilled."

Chapman credits his father not only with sparking his interest in playing, but also in the creative process of writing songs.

"He and his buddies would lock themselves in the kitchen for hours with their little reel-to-reel tape recorder," he says. "I remember pressing my ear up to the door to listen and being fascinated that they were in there creating music and writing songs. I was always really enamored with that; there was something cool and mysterious about it."

His father's songwriting pursuits piqued his interest in other ways, like when his dad would bring his songs to Nashville and return raving about the session players he had encountered.

"He'd say, 'Man, these guys aren't like any musicians I've ever seen. You play a song for them one time, and they play it back twice as good as you played it, in five minutes. These guys are masters.' To hear my dad talk about how great they were, my goal was to become a studio musician, a session player."

Chapman was also influenced by the records his dad had in the house,

including those of '70s singer-songwriters like Jim Croce, John Denver and James Taylor.

"Especially the cool acoustic riffs they'd write their songs around," he adds. "And then bluegrass – Ricky Skaggs was a huge hero of mine. And Glen Campbell, who most people thought of as kind of a pop star/singer, but who guitar players know was a phenomenal player. I would listen to his live record and slow it down from 33 to half speed and try and figure out what he was playing, [especially] some of those crazy jazz solos that he'd do. I also used to watch *The Mac Davis Show*. He'd go out in the audience with his guitar, people would throw out a song title or just a phrase, and then he'd write a song on the spot around that title or those words. I was a Jerry Reed fan, too. He probably influenced some of my playing, some of his kind of blues-influenced swamp guitar style."

Chapman worked in his dad's store, and as his guitar chops progressed, he was enlisted to give lessons. He started writing songs in high school, but was encouraged to go to college. "My dad had basically said, 'If you have a good brain in that head, get a real job and then play around with music, and if it works out, great, but if not, you've got a real job.'"

Chapman had vague pre-med aspirations, but taking a college chemistry class helped him realize he wasn't cut out for it. Around the same time, he had taken a summer job at Opryland USA in Nashville, where he played and sang in a country band to help pay for school. An audience member got wind that he was an aspiring songwriter, and soon an introduction was made with Bill Gaither, an influential publisher in gospel music circles, who took Chapman under his wing.

Working at the publishing house would prove to be his songwriting boot camp.

"It was an era, at least in Nashville, when there were publishers that were sort of mentor craftsmen," Chapman recalls. "I had a guy, Ron Griffin, who was my first publisher. I was as green as they come, but I had this great love for music and wanted to be a songwriter. So, while I was working at Opryland I'd write songs, and then I'd walk into [Griffin's] office and he would proceed to rip them to shreds. I would leave his office in

tears almost every time, to the point where I just thought, I'm no good at this. Occasionally, I'd think, I wish he'd play me some of *his* songs. As is often the case, the teacher has never actually written a song; they just teach you how to write them. *But*, I'm thankful that this guy was a great listener; he really did know a great song when he heard it. He knew how to direct me back to the drawing board."

Though the experiences weren't fun at the time, Chapman says Bill Gaither was supportive.

"Bill would drive around with me and say, 'Don't let him get under your skin. You're a great songwriter. They're gonna try to tweak it, but don't lose your heart! I learned a lot of great things about what I guess you would call 'technique.'"

Chapman says if he were to distill everything he absorbed during that time down to a fundamental idea about songwriting, it came down to figuring out how to move people.

"I loved the size of the 714; I loved writing on it. It had a great spot within a band setting; it cut through."

"I remember a songwriter being interviewed who said, 'If a song moves you and you want to be a great songwriter, the best thing to do is take that song apart and find out what it is that moves you. If you can figure that out and begin to infuse that into the music you write, then you'll move people.' That was a great thing for me, taking songs apart and going, man, I love that melody, I love those chord changes, the way that lyric tells a story and invites me in; it's not just some story from somebody else's life, but I can really put myself in that. It's those kinds of things. Some of it you find you're already doing, and all of a sudden you realize, oh, *that's* why this is working."

Chapman's dedication to his craft would pay off. He signed with the Christian label Sparrow Records, and his debut record, *First Hand*, was released in 1987. The recording sessions would later lead him – indirectly – to his first Taylor. One of the Nashville session musicians on his record had played another brand of guitar that had sounded great to Chapman in the sessions.

"At that point I told my wife, 'I want to get a really great guitar, and I've heard this guy play a [different brand], so that's what I want, and I'm going to find one.'"

Chapman went to Cotten Music in Nashville to play some of that brand's models.

"I was picking a few off the wall, and the salesman said, 'Hey, have you played a Taylor?' And I said, 'No, what's Taylor?' And he said, 'There's a guy named Bob Taylor making these guitars and they sound great. You gotta check them out.' And he pulled [a 510] out of the case. I strummed it, and, man, I was transported back to my Dad's D-28. It just felt like what I remembered those guitars sounding like when I was a kid. I fell in love with it and sat there playing for about an hour."

Unfortunately for him, Chapman never told his wife. She went to the store a few weeks later to surprise him for Christmas and bought him the other brand he'd told her about.

"Christmas morning, I open it up, and I had to do my very best job of being excited and surprised, and yet figure out how to ask her, 'Is it OK if I trade it in on this new guitar I've discovered called a Taylor?' And then she told me, 'They kept telling me you liked this Taylor guitar.' The store was gracious and let me trade in for the Taylor, and I've been a big, big fan ever since."

Chapman later added a 714 to his arsenal, and it eventually became his main guitar, in part because he stopped touring with the 510 after the neck had to be replaced a second time due to airline mishaps. Taylor's sales director at the time, T.J. Baden, had sent Chapman a cedar-top 714 that he says really complemented his playing preferences and performance needs.

"I loved the size of it; I loved writing on it," he explains. "I think it fits great in a track. With my music being sometimes rock and needing a guitar that just cuts through the wall of sound, it's got to have a more compact sound. I love the huge range of the Dreadnought when it's being

picked or when it's really the main thing going on, but when you get all these tracks, it ends up getting washed out. The 714 had a great spot within a band setting; it cut through. So, that's when that guitar became my favorite. And the cedar, for some reason, just feels great with a band around it. Some of the stuff I do is real rhythmic; for a lot of the playing I do with the band, the guitar is part guitar and part percussion instrument. On a lot of my stuff, like 'Dive' or more up-tempo, shuffle-beat kind of stuff, the 714 has always been the one. Inevitably, I'll go somewhere to do a TV show, and almost without fail a [sound] guy will come over and say, 'Man, that sounds great plugged in. Sounds like a real guitar.'"

Chapman's songwriting approach has always drawn deeply from the personal experiences of his life, largely involving his family and his faith. During a performance on the Taylor stage at the Winter 2010 NAMM show, he referred to his songs as "my little notes on the refrigerator door. That's how I remember things." He elaborates over the phone.

"I'm incredibly grateful for the gift of songwriting because I'm a terrible journalist; I've tried to do that, but I can go back and listen to my records and literally chronicle my life and remember what was going on in my life and the lives of my kids, and what was happening – the good, the bad, the hard. You really remember all of that stuff because it's come out of life experience.

"One thing that can be a danger in this town," he adds, "is with guys who go to work every day and say, 'My job is to write a song today. What do you want to write about? Let's write about blah-blah-blah.' Those songs get written a lot, and a lot of them end up hit songs on the radio. But the ones that really are great songs, that really leave a mark, are about something that's impacted their lives. You know it's coming from their soul."

Chapman's life would be impacted in a devastating way in May of 2008, when his 5-year-old daughter Maria was killed in an accident outside the family's home. The tragic loss upended everything in his and his family's life and deeply challenged his faith, leading him to wonder how to carry on and to question whether he would ever write songs again. Months later, he would begin to express his raw feelings through

music, not necessarily with the intention of writing songs, he says, but simply to attempt to work through his grief.

"That is the way that so much processing happens for me," he reflects. "Songs are the way I ponder and wrestle with things and think through things. I've referred to these songs [on *Beauty Will Rise*] as psalms more than songs. I know they're kind of synonymous – psalms are thought of as songs in the Bible – but they were my psalms in that they were my intimate conversations with God, mostly crying out to God in the darkness, saying, 'God, where are you? I don't know what I believe, but I'm gonna anchor my heart to this,' because if I don't, I just feel like I'm drifting into the abyss of hopelessness.

"In a way it was probably safer for me to set some of those thoughts to music than to just say them," he continues. "Putting them to music was a real healing thing because it's like, OK, I can do that. I definitely didn't write them thinking, I need to do another record, so here are the songs I'm going to record. I had to say it, I had to do it, and they were so healing and so important in the process for me. And then I got enough of them and I thought, I do have enough here to put them together in a body of work that would really allow people to take a journey with me and my family. Ultimately, the most healing thing we've been able to do is to see, out of our pain, others find hope and encouragement. That's the stuff that really begins to mend your broken heart. It doesn't explain it, it doesn't say, oh, this happened so that that would happen, but it is so helpful when you're able to say, 'Well, out of that, this good is coming, and that person was encouraged and helped.'"

The circumstances also compelled Chapman to take a radically different approach to recording the songs. Much of the music was recorded on the fly during his 2008 "United" tour with Michael W. Smith, in between shows, in locations from dressing rooms and hotels to office cubicles and locker rooms. Rather than soliciting a lot of outside production input as he normally would, Chapman worked straight from his gut. He collaborated closely with bassist/producer Brent Milligan, who toured with him and whose arrangements respect the exposed

sentiment. It's a powerful album in many ways, for its honesty and vulnerability and passion, as a musical document of a man openly struggling with and reaffirming his faith in the face of despair. And despite the pathos, Chapman's talent for writing fully formed songs gives *Beauty Will Rise* a transformative and musically uplifting impact, especially the title track. Chapman says the feedback from listeners has been wonderful.

"It's been phenomenal, the stories and the encouragement, and the people who've said, 'That record helped save my life, or save my heart, or helped me through this tragedy and my own loss.'"

When Chapman considered the design of his signature Taylor guitar, a 714 was the obvious choice, and he wanted a sunburst top – a nod to a sunburst Taylor he had once owned but accidentally left in the trunk of a cab in Washington, DC, never to be recovered. He also wanted to celebrate Maria's creative spirit. The headstock and fretboard inlays are replications of drawings that Maria had done the day of the accident, which also inspired the song "See" on *Beauty Will Rise*.

"It's a beautiful tribute visually, and it sounds great, too," he says of the guitar. "It's my favorite Taylor of the several that I have in my arsenal now – this is really the exact outline and image of Maria's little flower that she drew, so it's just really precious, and obviously very, very cool to me as a father, just an amazing gift to have in a guitar. I couldn't be happier and more thankful and more blown away that Taylor would do this and honor me but really my family and our life and our story so beautifully like this."

Chapman was planning to have his signature model out with him on a unique family tour this fall. Billed as "A Night with the Chapmans," the live events include personal stories shared by his wife, Mary Beth, who recently published the book *Choosing to SEE: A Journey of Struggle and Hope*. The shows also feature a performance from Chapman and his sons Caleb (guitar) and Will Franklin (drums).

"They'll be out doing an opening set and then playing with my band," Chapman says, "and I'm really excited about it. Caleb's an incredible guitar player; he can make a Taylor sound as good as anybody. I'm excited to bring some of my older songs back out. It sort of feels

Maria's Inlay Artwork

At the Winter NAMM show, Chapman explained the personal significance of Maria's drawing, which he and his wife, Mary Beth, found the morning after the accident, when they returned to their house to collect some clothes:

"We were desperate to see something that would tell us that our faith is real in this moment of such great, deep despair. In our dining room there's a little art table that two of my daughters would sit at and color, and Maria had a little flower that she would draw. It was kind of her signature flower. It was on all of her papers, and she'd color in all the petals different colors. I noticed there was a little flower drawn on a piece of paper on the table, and that was the only piece of art that was out. She'd been sitting there the morning of the accident, so I knew this was something she'd done that day. But I noticed only one petal was colored in and the rest of them were blank. She had just done the outline and gotten one petal colored in – her favorite color, blue, the one she always started with. Then I noticed something else bleeding through the paper, something she had written on the back. She had just turned 5; she could write 'I love you, Mom,' 'I love you, Dad,' and she could sign her name, and those were the only words that she would write. I turned the paper over, and there was a little butterfly that she had drawn – another signature picture she would draw a lot – and then right beside it were the letters 'SEE.' And to our knowledge, she'd never written it before. It was, for us, a very precious gift; we felt like God was answering that cry of our heart to let us see something. And in Maria's own words, she said, 'See, it's all true, it's all good, I'm OK.' And as we looked more at that unfinished flower, it became a really important message to us, because we have six children and realized that there are six petals on the flower, but only one of them is colored in. It's a message that, 'I'm whole, I'm complete now. I know it was only five years; it seems short in your idea of understanding right now, but you're gonna see it and realize I'm whole. The rest of you are waiting for your colors.'"

like a new season to really breathe some new life into some of my older songs, but the evening will be pretty acoustic-driven – still drums and still rockin', but more in an acoustic kind of direction."

Steven and Mary Beth also continue to pour their energies into a pair of adoption advocacy initiatives (three of their daughters, including Maria, were adopted from China). The first is the non-profit organization Show Hope, named after their daughter Shaohannah, which supports families looking to adopt orphaned children.

"We started helping a family here and there with the cost of adoption, people who saw us living out our miracle and who would share that they had a dream to do the same but couldn't afford it," Chapman says. "And from that, it's grown to where we've been able to help families adopt kids from over 45 different countries. I think we've been able to give close to 2,500 grants now to families to help them."

The second initiative, Maria's Big House of Hope, named in honor of Maria, is a special needs facility for children based in Luoyang, China.

"It's an orphanage, but it's also a healing home in a way because it's there to give children the medical attention they need, including surgeries, which gets them in a physical condition where they can be put in the system for adoption," Chapman says. "And then there are some who will never survive. But we're able to make them comfortable and have someone with them. Those kinds of things have been an incredible gift for us, and we're pretty blown away that we get to be a part of it and tell the story." **W&S**

For more information on Steven Curtis Chapman, Show Hope, or Maria's Big House of Hope, visit StevenCurtisChapman.com or ShowHope.org. To watch video clips from Steven's performance on the Taylor stage at the Winter NAMM show, go to taylorguitars.com

The Steven Curtis Chapman Signature Model

Inspired by a 714, the Steven Curtis Chapman Signature Model (SCCSM) features Indian rosewood back and sides, a tobacco sunburst cedar top, and Indian rosewood binding. The inlay design is a recreation of a drawing that Chapman's daughter Maria made. The headstock inlay is a flower with a single petal colored in blue, while the fretboard design features a mother-of-pearl butterfly in at the 12th fret, accompanied by the word "SEE" in Maria's handwriting. Pearl fret marker dots are aligned along the bass side. Other features include an abalone rosette, abalone-dotted bridge pins, and Taylor Expression System® electronics. Each SCCSM comes with a custom guitar label and a certificate of authenticity personally signed by Chapman. To find out which Taylor dealers have the guitar in stock, go to taylorguitars.com and look for our signature models.



Ask Bob

Monkey pod, laminate tone, telegraphing and guitars in cars

I know Taylor has done really well with the Koa [Series] and was wondering why you haven't started doing some other Hawaiian tonewood guitars. Monkey pod is just as, if not more, beautiful than koa. It also makes good tops! Another striking Hawaiian wood is mango. I've seen flamed mango, spalted mango, and other highly figured mango ukuleles. It is also good for tops. The monkey pod is commonly used for tikis and bowls here in Maui, as well as guitars and ukuleles. I currently own an 810ce and would love to pick up a monkey pod Grand Auditorium LTD.

Jack Rutkowsky
Maui, Hawaii

Thanks for the suggestions, Jack. Those woods would make a good guitar. I love monkey pod. Neither wood is generally available to us in the way koa is, and we buy whole logs when we buy koa. Maybe sometime we'll pick up a monkey pod log. Mango is tough because more often than not, it's sort of "blah" in the grain patterns. A beautiful log would have to come along, and the price would have to be right. I'll give it some thought.

In the last issue, you responded to an inquiry [about the sound of a cedar-top BTO 512c] regarding how cedar would "run out of steam" before [a spruce-topped] rosewood [712c and 814ce]. I also hear about a guitar's "headroom" from time to time. What does "running out of steam" mean in this context, and what is a guitar's headroom?

Robert Kelly
Texas

Robert, what I mean is that it reaches a point where it won't get louder, but rather, will distort. Spruce will be louder, and you can play it harder.

Cedar is actually louder than spruce with a soft touch, but then reaches its limit, or "runs out of steam."

I have a few questions regarding the laminate rosewood on the back and sides of my 210e. What exactly is the difference between it and "non-laminate" rosewood? Also, I've read that I can actually expect my guitar to lose its tone over the years because of the laminate body. Will it lose tone, maintain its tone, or sound better as it ages?

Thomas Nichols
Austin, Texas

It'll sound better as it ages; it doesn't matter what anyone says. The top isn't laminated, and it ages. An all-solid guitar will age better because of the backs and sides aging, but your guitar will improve. It won't lose sound — you can scratch that off your list of worries and start worrying about your sugar intake or something. Your veneered back and sides have three layers of wood with glue between them. The outside layer is rosewood, and the inside layers are less valuable. They are strong and make a good guitar, but they can't produce the complexity of tone that you hear in a solid wood guitar. The solid wood guitar is a piece of rosewood all the way through.

I recently bought an NS32ce, my first Taylor and my first guitar with a compensated saddle. "Ask Bob" in the summer issue had a question about compensated saddles but didn't address my question: Why do steel-string guitars have a compensated B string and NS models the A string?

Jay Smith
Jacksonville, Florida

Jay, the simplest answer is each string needs what it needs, so we give it what it needs. The B string on a steel-string guitar is a pretty big string, compared to the others, because the core of the fatter strings is small compared to the B. B strings on classicals aren't the same thing. It has to do with how the string is made, not what note the string is playing. Also, wound strings and unwound strings all work differently.

I started wondering if storing my 100% cotton guitar cleaning cloth in the guitar case was a good idea. It seems that since humidity is such a sensitive matter, putting a large rag that was advertised as being absorbent for cleaning up oil residue from your hands would counteract the effects of a humidifier.

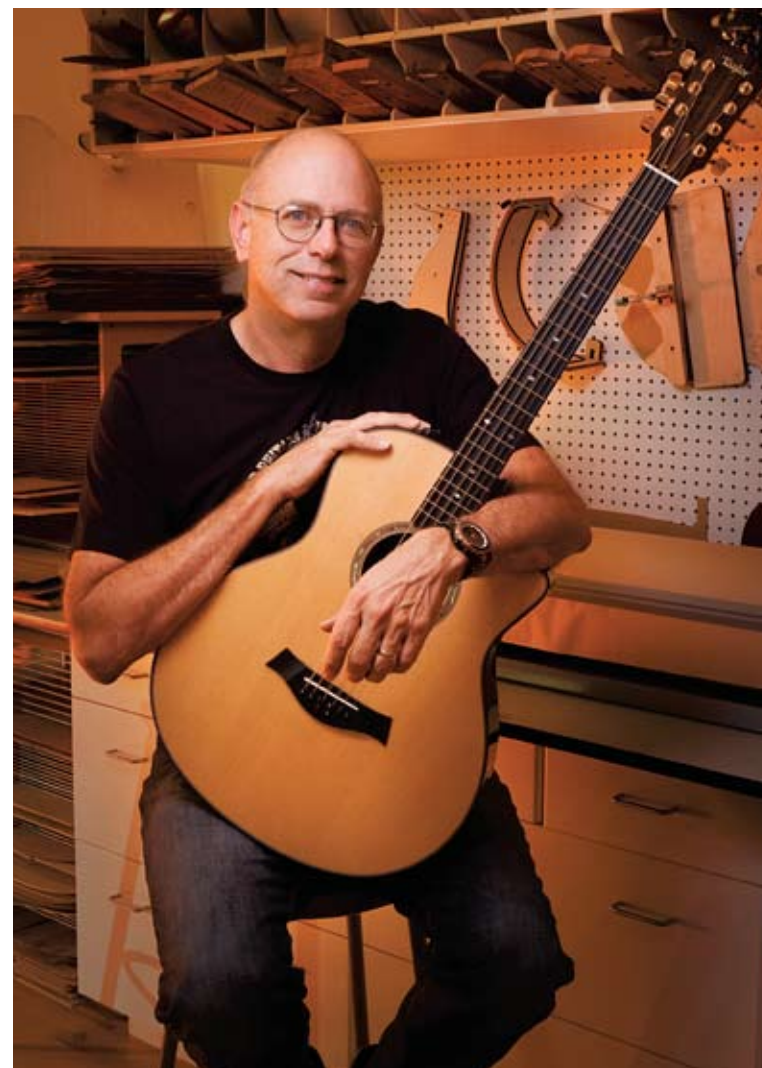
Bill Galvan

Bill, at least you're thinking, which is great! But it won't hurt anything because it will equalize to the humidity in your case and will just be part of what's going on in there. Kinda like things in your refrigerator, where the cola and the cantaloupe all reach the same temperature.

I read in the Taylor FAQs that exceeding the string gauge a top was braced for could create excessive tension or tighten the top, restricting its ability to vibrate. When considering the string tension difference between short and long scale, can tops and braces be built lighter on short-scale instruments as opposed to longer-scale instruments? It seems to me that, given the same string set gauges, a top braced for short scale would be more responsive than a top braced for the higher string tension of a long scale. However, the short scale braced as such might be more easily overdriven compared to the long scale instrument.

Darryl Turpin
Danville, Virginia

Darryl, everything you said there is true. Your thinking is correct, so go to the head of the class and give an oral report! The comment I'd



I was intrigued by the new Mini you are building. The ES-Go pickup system is really cool and should be a great seller. I purchased a 214 about a year ago and have really enjoyed this guitar. Do you think this new pickup would be a good candidate for my 214 if I wanted to go electric?

Daniel J. Doody

Yes, it would, Daniel. But we have to make one just for it, because the GS Mini has a clip that's installed to receive the pickup when we make it, while yours doesn't. There's also a fold-over clip inside the Mini to secure the wire, and the endpin is designed with the optional pickup in mind. So, for a guitar like yours, we'd have to make a kit that would have to be professionally installed, which is why we designed the ES-Go pickup and the GS Mini the way we did, so that any Joe or Jane could do it on the kitchen table in 10 or 15 minutes. So the answer is yes, and no. We'll announce more about it when we solve it.

make, though, is that by changing tension, and leaving the bracing the same, you get a different sound, and people notice that. It's a great way to have different sounds to experience. By re-bracing for the lower tension you get another different sound, but not necessarily better. Guitar making has no end to the possibilities, so sometimes we luthiers just draw an arbitrary line and say, "Hey, here's a guitar. How do you like it? Yes, I could have done it 10 different ways, but I didn't; I did it this way." So, I'm answering a supposed "why" in your question that you might not be asking, but I thought I'd toss it in since I'm a nice guy!

We are now a four-Taylor family – two days ago my son received his T5-S1 Cherry Burst and has hardly stopped playing it. On each of my three Taylors (555, GS8e, Baritone 8) I use the Planet Waves Humidipak. My son is about to head to college in New Orleans, where the humidity gets very high, and I think his guitar will need some protection. What's the best way to use the Humidipak with the T5 since it doesn't have a soundhole, or do you recommend something else for the T5 in that climate?

Jim Handsfield

Jim, thanks for buying so many Taylors. I'm going to remember you in my will. I might not be leaving you anything, just remembering you. But, you can toss that Humidipak in the case, up by the peghead. It will absorb moisture, but there is a limit. So, just keep an eye on it. I doubt you'll have any problem if it's kept in the closed case when not being played. Plus, he'll be living in air conditioning, which takes the moisture out of the air and leaves it at about 50 percent, which is perfect for a guitar.

Do you offer myrtlewood for the back and sides on a BTO and/or limited editions? If not, why not?

**Richard Yi
Seattle, Washington**

Well, we've done a myrtlewood guitar here and there in our lifetime. We don't offer it now because we don't have any that blows my skirt

up. If we see a good batch we'll probably buy it because we love wood, but with myrtlewood it has to be just right for me to get into it.

I played a short-scale Taylor at a local store and loved it! Then I was screwing around on my 114ce and thinking about the NT neck, and I began dreaming of how nice my guitar would feel with a short-scale neck. Since the NT neck is a bolt-on, would it be possible to replace my neck with a short-scale one without there being any intonation issues?

Thomas Roybal

No, Thomas, there would be issues. You have to count the scale from the 14th fret both ways. That's because the 14th fret remains in the same place (where it joins the body) in any scale we produce. So, the nut gets closer to the 14th fret, and so does the bridge. Make sense? If you swapped necks, you'd still have to move the bridge up...and the braces, etc. Oops, what's that I hear? Another guitar in your collection? Sorry, man!

I am the proud owner of a 514ce. As of late, I have become quite curious about the different types of strings as paired with various wood combinations. My friend has a spruce/rosewood guitar that sounds great with phosphor bronze strings. However, I've heard people say that 80/20s are much better for mahogany guitars. On top of this there is gauge to consider, and, of course, the incessant cacophony of opinions about whether coated or uncoated strings are truly superior. So, I was wondering if you could help me sort through all of this. Does string choice really just boil down to preference, or are there some general guidelines I can follow (specifically with regard to my 514)?

Luke Townsend

Luke, it ALL boils down to what you like. It doesn't matter what everyone says. It's what you like. It's just that simple. Coated vs. non-coated, that's something different. Coated strings will last longer, and they sound the way they sound.

If I were to describe their sound, I'd say they lose that brand new sound of uncoated strings, but that sound only lasts a couple hours on a guitar anyway. A coated string sounds like a three-hour-old set of uncoated strings, basically. I like the sound of coated strings, and their sound lasts a long time. I like Elixir® strings because they really stay clean and sound and feel fresh for a ridiculously long time. And since I'm a guitar maker, I'm really crappy about changing my strings, so I need all the help I can get.

I recently purchased my fourth Taylor, an NS72ce, and I absolutely love this guitar. My question is about the cedar top. I have noticed indents, or creases, over the bracing, both behind the bridge and above and below the soundhole. I have seen this before (especially behind the bridge), but never to this extent. I have researched this and have been told that this happens when the tension is applied to the top via the strings, and that there is nothing wrong with the guitar. Is this true? The guitar sounds so nice. I really wish this aesthetic issue wasn't present.

**Mark Visconti
Liberty, New York**



Thanks, Mark. We call that "telegraphing" when the braces show through. We could fix that by making the top thicker, but making the

telegraphing go away isn't the goal of the guitar maker. Sound is the goal. You're right that it's an aesthetic issue. I'd say try to change your point of view and embrace it as a good aesthetic. Your top was made with care and is the proper thickness, and the proof is that you can see the braces. That's kind of the way it is with nylon-string guitars. Go with the flow. I'll add that guitar makers who naturally have some space between them and their customers have a tendency to over-build guitars simply to avoid causing a person to worry about a guitar, whereas a maker who sells face-to-face has the freedom to train and teach the player what to expect. For example, I have one bracing pattern that I only sell through my brand R. Taylor, because the customer needs to hear the full explanation of that pattern before I agree to sell it. Your guitar is safe and properly built, and I'm so glad to be able to explain it to you here.

Recently, I found a 1998 Baby Taylor in great shape, with the hard-molded case, at my favorite guitar store (Wild West Guitars, Riverside, California), so I put it on hold and plan to bring it home next month. I plan to take it in the case with me when I travel, but I have always worried about taking guitars in a car/truck on road trips, and I know that leaving a guitar in the trunk is a mortal sin. If you were going on a road trip, what steps would you take to protect your instrument from the temperature and humidity swings that occur in a car?

**David Frye
Corona, California**

David, a Baby is great for traveling. There will be times when you have to leave it in your car. I don't know how you travel, or how full your car/truck is, but here are some tips. Park under the shade of a tree, and crack the windows a bit. This substantially reduces the heat buildup in the car. Put it down low, like on the floor; I have found that by folding up a sleeping bag so that it's a few layers thick and placing it over the guitar, the guitar will remain relatively cool down there while you're in the restaurant or on the roller coaster. Test it out before you leave for your trip, while you're still at home, and I

think you can learn how to keep the guitar cool inside the car.

I was really excited to read about the GS Mini. I've owned both spruce- and mahogany-topped versions of the Baby Taylor, and the new Mini looks like it addresses the issues I've had with them.

When I think of small-bodied travel guitars, I think of the inexpensive mahogany-topped models that rode the rails with the homeless men of the Great Depression or that headed west with the families displaced by the Dust Bowl – simple, no-frills guitars with dark looks and a bit of road dust to the midrange. Woody Guthrie's Martin 0-17 comes to mind. Of the two Baby Taylors I've owned, I much preferred the vibe and tone of the mahogany-topped model. Listening to the YouTube clips of the GS Mini makes me think I'd also prefer it with a mahogany top.

So, even though I'm bracing for the reply, I have to ask anyway – will the Mini be available with a mahogany top?

**Dave Payne
Orem, Utah**

Definitely. But not yet, because we have to get up to one hundred a day in production just to begin to deal with the orders we have. We'll have to wait for the demand to level off first. You can do your part by not ordering one. But seriously, these guitars would straight-up rock with a mahogany top. We won't miss that opportunity when the time comes. I completely know what you mean.

**Got a
question for
Bob Taylor?**

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

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

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Now in their fourth year, our Road Shows are more popular than ever.

By Chalise Zolezzi



With fall comes the fresh renewal of traditions – school, football season, holiday planning, and in our world, Taylor Road Shows.

Now four years strong, Taylor's guitar night get-togethers remain a favorite event of Taylor dealers and players around the country. In that time, we've presented more than 500 Road Shows in the U.S., Canada, Europe and Japan, and by all estimates, about 30,000 fans have filled stores and other venues to stoke their interest in guitars. By making the evenings fun, informative and hands-on through the immensely popular Taylor "petting zoo," we've given folks not just an inviting environment to sample guitars, but also a chance to connect in a personal way with their local dealers and each other.

It's no secret that the most successful independent stores have become part of the fabric of their local communities and a hub of their area's music scene. Music, after all, is a shared experience, and fueled by Taylor's all-inclusive approach, Road Shows provide a down-to-earth environment to learn something new and bond with fellow music lovers. Just ask Paul Tobias, co-owner of Tobias Music in Downers Grove, Illinois, whose parents opened their store in 1978 and have been a Taylor dealer for almost 29 years.

"They've built up a strong foundation of very loyal Taylor fans," he says. "It's like a Taylor culture here in the Chicago area. It seems that once one of our customers attends one of the shows, they bring two or three friends with [them] the next year. It just continues to grow in popularity."

The numbers back him up. A Tobias Music Road Show in 2009, held at the Tivoli Theater in Downer's Grove, set a record for the highest attended Road Show event, drawing nearly 600 people. Paul considers it a main event for driving sales each year.

Tobias isn't the only dealer who savors the opportunity to bring music lovers together. Brian Fischer of Ear Craft Music in Dover, New Hampshire, a six-time Road Show host, boasts that it's his favorite in-store event. "We have lots of customers who love to see what's new, and for others, it's become somewhat of annual reunion for meeting other Taylor players and friends they've made in previous years," he says.

"The vibe is just electric," raves Brent Moss of The Guitar Shop in Mississauga, Ontario. "And the response is just tremendous. People leave with a solid education on the Taylor product and a better understanding of how woods and body shape affect tone."

Bruce Schaubroeck of the House of Guitars in Rochester, New York is equally effusive.

"Guitar addicts love coming in and hearing about guitars, as well as getting the deep education that goes into building one," he says. "It's a whole new level of excitement for our customers and business, and one we know that customers relish."

And what musician wouldn't enjoy the chance to learn about their instrument, as well as play and lust after a multitude of exceptional guitars? Taylor aficionado Dale Browning of Jacksonville, Florida and his wife Marcie (who does not play guitar but enjoys seeing friends made at past Road Shows) never miss the chance to attend a Road Show and will travel to Central Florida and across state lines to Alabama and Tennessee in their quest for a guitar "mini vacation." Having attended five Road Shows, Dale's enthusiasm hasn't dampened over time. He says each event presents new information and product knowledge, including tips from Taylor's Road Show crew, which help him become a better guitar player. He recalls a special evening with Taylor product specialist Marc Seal. It turned out to be the night he bought his first Taylor.

"Marc was nothing short of phenomenal," he recalls. "On that trip, we'd driven from our home in Jacksonville to an hour north of Nashville. I think we got an award for traveling the farthest that night, but the chance to select my first Taylor and see Marc was well worth it."

Meet the Specialists

Key to the Road Shows is our very talented and friendly group of Taylor product specialists, who together represent more than a hundred years of pro-gigging, technical and guitar experience. One of those is the aforementioned **Marc Seal**. Based in San Juan Capistrano, California, Marc has spent the past 30 years honing his craft. Since graduating from the Guitar Institute of Technology in Los Angeles, he's embraced the opportu-

nity to teach, record and pursue his musical dreams. Among his career highlights has been sharing the stage with Eric Clapton and John Mayer at the Crossroads Festival, and a discography that includes 10 studio albums and one live album. Even with his prolific recording schedule, Marc enjoys hitting the road to be around other like-minded people who deeply enjoy music.

"My favorite thing about Road Shows is when you see the audience really getting into it," he says. "Seeing the passion and inspiration they have, feeling them want to play so bad, and hearing different styles and approaches is inspirational to me." Marc also draws inspiration from his dream guitar, a SolidBody Custom with HD pickups and a tremolo, with which he regularly gigs. When he's not on the road, you can find Marc in his studio teaching advanced guitar techniques to 50 students per week or on *The Ultimate Guitar Show*, a syndicated



Marc Seal

cable TV program which airs weekly on Cox Communications affiliate stations. You can also catch Marc in several videos on the Taylor website.

Another familiar face from our website videos is **Corey Witt**, an Orange County, California-based guitarist. Originally from Houston, Texas, he traces his inspiration to pick up a guitar to Van Halen's *5150* album.

"I remember when the album was released and I wasn't athletic enough to get a girlfriend, so the album became the perfect storm of inspiration to pick up and play an instrument," he says. After 25 years of guitar playing, Corey finds personal satisfaction in the Road Show experience through the people he meets along the way. The most gratifying part, he says, is "meeting the spouse, significant other, parent, grandparent – essentially the non-guitar player – who comes up to say that he or she had a great time and learned more about why guitars sound the way they



Corey Witt

do. Guitar players will show up for the romance and the chance to dream about new instruments, but at the Road Shows I get the opportunity to demystify [guitar playing]."

His favorite Taylor model? Probably a 516ce.

"I have an aggressive picking and strumming hand, so the cedar top and mahogany back and sides are a little more forgiving with their natural compression and midrange squish," he explains.

Motorcycle-riding product specialist **Michael Lille** joined the Road Show team earlier this year. Michael currently lives in Texas, but his 40-year musical journey has led him to play in such exotic locales as New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia, Nepal and Bhutan. Having played alongside such luminaries as Bob Dylan, Warren Zevon, Little Feat, Alison Krauss and Leo Kottke, Michael has pursued a variety of solo projects and played in The Sherpas (with Tom Prasada-Rao and Tom Kimmel) and SGGL, a Washington, D.C.-based folk quartet. He now shares his wealth of guitar knowledge with fans from coast to coast. He says that having the opportunity to play so many beautiful Taylors and witness people's passion for their Taylors are two of his favorite things about Road Shows.

"Meeting and sharing stories with other guitar enthusiasts and helping them find their dream guitar is a major



Michael Lille

highlight for me," he adds. And with four decades of guitar experience, he knows his guitars. His favorite is a 1974 Brazilian rosewood LoPrinzi model he purchased as a teenager, but when it comes to functionality, duality and having a versatile guitar that's great for touring, the T5 is his top choice. "I've been using the T5 with my band," he explains. "It's so great to fly with that guitar and have acoustic and electric tones right at my fingertips."

Another fan of the T5 is Spokane, Washington native and Southern California resident **Wayne Johnson**, who knows a thing or two about life on the road. The Grammy® winner,



Wayne Johnson

best recognized for his extended tenure with the pop/jazz band Manhattan Transfer, along with his Wayne Johnson Trio, has spent just about every week of his 30-plus-year career composing, recording, traveling or performing, entralling fans along the way. Having recently finished an extended run as a guitarist in Bette Midler's Las Vegas show, the multifaceted guitarist has six Trio recordings and two solo albums to his credit, plus a trail of Road Shows, of which, he says, he never tires.

"I love to teach, and what I love about that is feeling all those guitar players feeding off you and wanting information," he reflects. "I can really feel it every time I play for a Road Show crowd."

Wayne's new favorite Taylor model is the T3.

"Up until recently, I would have said it's the T5 – a really, really great sounding koa-topped one," he says. "Now, though, it's the T3 that stands out for me. It's more flexible as a great rock and country instrument and has the necessary depth to become a jazz guitar. I've been using a T3 for my regular gig every Wednesday, and I love it!"

Another product specialist, **Andy Lund**, hails from Arlington Heights,

Illinois, and is a prolific player, producer, sound/recording engineer and songwriter in addition to his regular role as Taylor's in-house product communications manager. Among his standout Road Show memories is the night he and sales rep J.R. Robison pulled an unplanned Road Show doubleheader.

"We were at Firey Music in Oklahoma, who held the event off-site at the Old Burnett Mansion," he recalls. "There were over 400 people there, and there was no way that everyone could enjoy, let alone see, the Road Show. So, we decided to break the group into two separate staging areas within the mansion and do two shows."

Andy's favorite aspect of the Road Shows is the chance to enhance people's appreciation for the nuances within the Taylor line.

"I love it when people comment on how much they've learned after a Road Show," he shares. "Especially when they make it a point to mention that they have never been able to hear the differences in guitars before."

Like many Road Show attendees, Andy found his proximity to so many guitars spurring new ideas. "Right



Andy Lund

now I'm lusting over Grand Concerts," he says. "I really dig the body size and the intimacy of that shape. I might need to get one with a mahogany top."

New to the Road Show team this year is **Jason "Spanky" Salzman**. A 20-year career player based in Atlanta, Georgia, Spanky brings a wide range of musical experiences, from playing in Broadway-style productions and rocking out in front of huge crowds to time in the studio both composing and playing in sessions. His first Road Show was a memorable one that left a lasting impression on him, as he could see the enthusiasm that players have for their Taylors.

"I was with Monte [Montefusco, a Taylor sales rep] at Manchester Music Mill in Manchester, New Hampshire," he recalls. "We had a great show at a great dealer with a great crowd. While there, a customer 'adopted' a new



Jason Salzman

Taylor and was almost in tears – you could tell it was a major decision and a turning point in his playing career. He asked us to take a picture with him, his family and his new Taylor to mark this special occasion. It helped me understand just how special the relationship is between Taylor Guitars and its loyal players."

Like many of his product specialist colleagues and Road Show friends, Spanky says he found his dream guitar, or in his case, dream guitars – a Taylor 12-Fret and a Baritone 8-String – through the Road Show.

"The 12-Fret has a voice like no other guitar I have heard," he says. "It just sings with a certain midrange sweetness and is a joy to play. The Baritone 8-String has such a unique voice and character. It pulls music out of me I did not know I had!"

Taylor's Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Brian Swerdfeger – the original product specialist when we first launched our Road Shows – points out that the Road Shows yield another rewarding dividend back at the Taylor complex: They give us an excuse to go "off the menu" and cook up some cool custom guitars just to share with guests at shows.

"It makes every event truly unique," he says. "So, even if you've been to a Road Show before, you'll get a chance to see and play something new every time."

With close to 100 Road Shows happening throughout the fall and more on tap for next spring, we hope to get within range of as many Taylor owners as possible. For the most current list of Road Show dates, be sure to visit taylorguitars.com/roadshows.

ROCKIN' ROBIN



From electric slinger to acoustic troubadour, Janet Robin has learned from some of the best. And she keeps getting better.

By Jim Kirlin

A career as a musician is a crazy undertaking. Lots of us love to play guitar, some of us play gigs alongside our real jobs, but a scant few, relatively speaking, possess that mix of passion, talent, perseverance and adaptability to go all-in and embrace music as a full-time pursuit for very long.

Janet Robin has it. She's put in the time to learn the many facets of her craft – of mastering an instrument, of writing and recording songs, of performing both with a band and on her own, of managing the day-to-day business of music, and of cultivating an audience that supports her artistry. She may not quite be a household name or have an eye-popping bank statement, but she's been making a living doing what she loves for more than 20 years, which most of us would probably define as success. Cheers to that.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Robin was the youngest and only girl with a couple of older brothers, a self-confessed tomboy who eagerly shadowed her brothers' pursuits early on. Among them were classical and folk guitar lessons starting, for her, at age 7.

"I really took to it quite fast," she says. "No one seemed to have to push me to practice; I enjoyed the challenge and really loved music."

When her brother Steve wanted to take electric guitar lessons, the family switched to a music school that was just a few blocks from their North Hollywood home, where a teenage instructor named Randy, the son of the music school owner, had been recommended. After begging to get in on the electric lessons, Robin got her first Strat at age 9 and became Randy's youngest and only female student. Randy was 18-year-old Randy Rhoads, who had just co-founded the hard rock band Quiet Riot and who would later certify his status as a rock & roll guitar god with heavy metal icon Ozzy Osbourne on a pair of albums before his untimely death in a tragic plane crash in 1982.

"He was amazing – a quiet, laid-back teacher," Robin remembers. "We did riffs, scales, progressions. I would play a progression, and he would solo like a madman. A lot of these progressions were songs he was working on. He was very patient and encouraging and amazing just to watch at the lessons. I soaked it all in. I even brought friends and cousins sometimes to my lessons just to show him off. My guitar-playing style has actually evolved over the years from other influences, but Randy will always be that rocker player in me."

In the mid-'80s Robin joined the all-female hard rock band Precious Metal, which gained a considerable following in the L.A. club scene and helped her establish a reputation around town as a girl who could really play guitar. When the band broke up, she took on studio work in town until landing an audition with Lindsey Buckingham for a touring band

Photos by Jane McCord

he was putting together following his 1992 solo release *Out of the Cradle*.

"Lindsey wanted to put together a guitar army – he wanted two male guitar players and two female guitar players, and I got the call," she says. "There really weren't a lot of female guitar players around at the time – Lita Ford, me, Jennifer Batten."

Robin says that with Buckingham, it was all about the music.

"It doesn't matter about the money or the fame or anything else," she explains. "It's very clear with him. It's the music, and it's got to be perfect all the time. Obsessive is a light word," she laughs. "The biggest thing I learned from him was to keep it real with your music. Be true to yourself, be as good as you can, don't let any detail go by, and practice as much as you can. At rehearsals, our guitars and our vocals were all being individually recorded on separate tracks without our knowing until the end, when he sat down with all of us and said, 'I've been listening to everybody's tracks, and you need to work on this, on that, on your time, your pitch, and if you don't get it together I'm replacing you.' It took me from this hard rock '80s metal band thing to this really high level of professionalism, and he really inspired me."

Robin says that the experience of playing with Buckingham between shows and during downtime took her fingerstyle chops to new heights, bringing her back to her early acoustic fingerpicking days. Her playing style continued to evolve into a hybrid fusion of acoustic and electric playing techniques, which she incorporated into her songwriting and recording approach.

In 1995 she was looking for an acoustic guitar to complement her style, and after a recommendation she picked up her first Taylor, a Dan Cray Signature Model, a rosewood/spruce cutaway Dreadnought which she says perfectly suited some of her percussive flatpicking lines with fast pull-off licks. (The guitar, Taylor's first official signature model, had been designed with a special bracing pattern for Cray, a renowned bluegrass flatpicker, to yield a louder, more responsive treble and a more "musical" bass with more midrange overtones.) Fifteen years later, Robin's DCSM remains her main acoustic.

"I do 100-150 dates a year, and after every show – it never fails – a guitar player comes up to me and

says, 'What is that Taylor? Is it an 810?' I'm telling you guys, you've got to reissue this model!"

Robin also loves the narrower 11/16-inch neck width and the slightly slimmer profile, a characteristic of Taylor's older "classic" necks.

"It's almost like an electric guitar neck to me," she says. "When someone asks about it, I let them hold it, and they're like, 'Wow, this is so easy to play!'"

Over the years, Robin has had the opportunity to play with a lot of great artists. Back in her Precious Metal days, she met Ann and Nancy Wilson from Heart and had a chance to play and write material with them. In the '90s she toured with Meredith Brooks. She's worked with Michelle Shocked, and she's a friend and touring partner of Colin Hay (Men at Work). She also was a touring guitarist with Air Supply.

Along the way, Robin says she's worked hard to develop her songwriting and singing chops, which she has parlayed into several of her own albums, starting with her debut, *Open the Door*, in 1998.

For her latest release, *Everything Has Changed*, she recruited Grammy-winning producer John Carter Cash and recorded at Cash Cabin Studios in Hendersonville, Tennessee, where Johnny Cash recorded his *American* series with Rick Rubin and John Carter. The project materialized in an unusual way, as Robin explains.

"There are so many restrictions here in the U.S. [in terms of] genre, gender and age. In Europe, they're just about the music."

"A friend and I were watching *Walk the Line*, and my friend said, 'I know you're not a country artist, but you should think about covering a Johnny Cash song.' And I realized that other than his hits, I didn't know many of his songs. So I went online, did some research on his life, and found out that he and June had a son who was a producer. I saw that he was around my age and wondered what he was doing, so I looked him up and saw a video of him on YouTube discussing his life growing up with his parents, the kind of music he listened to – stuff like Iron Maiden, AC/DC and Zeppelin – and then he got into a bunch of singer-songwriter stuff, and that he was

producing a lot more acoustic material now. And I thought, I need to talk to this guy, because I have a mixture of this hard rock background, yet I'm doing more singer-songwriter stuff right now. I really liked what he was saying about what he tries to get in a studio with an artist, and he sounded very genuine."

Robin reached out to him online to express her interest in possibly working with him, and a couple of weeks later he responded back, saying that he had listened to some of her music and liked it.

A year went by, during which Robin was busy touring with Air Supply while Cash was writing a book about his parents. Eventually they reconnected to discuss the project and the budget. Though she felt it was the right creative match, the prohibitive estimate (around \$20,000) forced her to look for creative ways to trim the cost, like recording fewer songs.

"He told me we could try to nail six songs and that if there was time we could do two more acoustic ones. So we narrowed it down to like 10 grand. Of course, that doesn't include the duplication, the mastering and all that."

Some independent artists do pre-sales for an album, which provides working capital to help complete the project. But with little time to raise the money in order to fit Cash's schedule, Robin opted for a different approach.

"I went directly to my fans and basically said, 'This is my opportunity to work with this guy, and this is the budget. It's a really cool opportunity, and I need \$10,000! The only thing I offered was a free house concert for people who donated over \$1,000. If they wanted to make their \$1,000 back, they could charge their audience."

"A few people sent in \$1,000, some people sent in \$100, some people sent in \$20, and it all added up," she says. "I have some very loyal fans, and they knew I wasn't going to use the money to go out and buy clothes."

She had two donors take her up on the house concert. One charged

for the show but ended up giving the proceeds back to her.

She would go back to her fans a second time after the initial recording sessions because she had signed a distribution deal with a European label that wanted two additional songs for the record.

"I wanted to go back to John's and do it right and do it with the same musicians again," she says.



Janet with the crew at Cash Cabin. L-R: John Carter Cash, Chuck Turner (engineer), Janet, Mark Winchester (bass), Jerry Roe (drums)

The record's acoustic-electric pop-rock sound is layered without being overly embroidered with detail, allowing Robin's rhythmic acoustic and electric guitar work to drive the songs. Her husky voice is sweetened with her harmonies, and the moods range from the raw, naked acoustic sound of "Bruise Easily" to the lightly trippy California surf-rock vibe of her cover of "Dream Baby" to the acoustic instrumental "CHR Number 137," which showcases Robin's signature playing style on her DCSM. A pair of tunes, including the spare, churning acoustic track "Clean Getaway," were co-written with singer-songwriter Maia Sharp, a longtime collaborator with whom Robin has penned nearly 20 songs over the years.

"Maia and I have very different styles, but we really work well together and very much appreciate our differences in music," she says. "I think it actually helps us come up with unique songs and chordal arrangements. Then we get to take these songs and record our own versions indicative of our own styles. She's one of my favorite writers to work with. We've written some great songs together over the years that people still request."

In the last few years, Robin has spent more time touring Europe, where she has found a receptive audience that she has built upon.

"I knew it would be a good area for me, considering the style of music I do, my age, and that I'm a woman playing guitar the way that I do," she says. "I knew people there would be really open to that. There are so many restrictions here in the U.S. [in terms

of] genre, gender and age. In Europe, they're just about the music."

The European music label she signed with, Hypertension Music, based in Germany, has also been a good fit.

"Colin Hay turned me on to them," she says. "Joan Armatrading is with them, Midge Ure, the Bacon Brothers, Nils Lofgren, Mick Fleetwood's blues band. They're a boutique label, but they have distribution all over the EU. They're also a booking agency, so they're an all-in-one thing, which makes sense because the more their artists are working, the more records they'll be selling."

When Robin isn't on the road, she also teaches guitar at home in L.A. She says about 80 percent of her students are young girls, and she's happy to see that today's music scene is more encouraging than when she was growing up.

"Back in those days, when I walked into Guitar Center they were like, 'What are you doing here?' Of course, I was able to say, 'Well, Randy Rhoads is my guitar teacher. I want a Les Paul!'"

www.janetrobin.com **W&S**

Soundings

Coming Up with Coheed

This summer, Taylor caught up with prog-rockers **Coheed and Cambria** before a show in San Diego. The lead duo of **Claudio Sanchez (616ce, 815ce, Baby Taylor)** and Travis Stever were on the front end of a 27-date tour in support of the band's latest release, *Year of the Black Rainbow*. Sanchez, who has been playing his 815ce on live acoustic versions of fan favorites like "Wake Up" and "Pearl of the Stars," had just been in town a few weeks earlier to attend Comic-Con. While here, he called us to borrow a **616ce** to use for an acoustic performance of "Here We Are Juggernaut" on San Diego's local alternative rock station, 91X.

The next leg of the band's tour covers North America and Canada, and they're hosting a contest to find local opening bands in every city. As Claudio explains on the band's blog, when they first started touring, local bands were an important element of shows. "Now it's much more common to have a set national package of bands touring through all the cities," he says. "While that can be easier at times, it makes it tough on local bands, and local scenes haven't flourished like they once did. Hopefully this helps bring awareness to some good up-and-coming music." Fans can visit the Coheed and Cambria website to learn how they can enter to win an opening slot.

www.coheedandcambria.com

Town and Country

Another Taylor artist we chatted with during a recent tour stop is **Trace Adkins (610ce, 615ce, GS6, T3)**, who took time to hang with some of the Taylor family, sign a few Baby Taylors, and then put on a heck of a show at Cricket Wireless Amphitheater in Chula Vista, California. Adkins, who's currently sharing the bill with Toby Keith on the "American Ride" Tour, performed a few songs from his new album *Cowboy's Back in Town*, including chart-topper "This Ain't No Love Song." The album debuted in the No.1 spot on Billboard's Country

chart and at No. 5 on the Top 200. Meanwhile, Adkins was readying the release of *The Definitive Greatest Hits: Til The Last Shot's Fired*, a 28-track collection that includes "You're Gonna Miss This," "(This Ain't No) Thinkin' Thing," "Ladies Love Country Boys," and "Honky Tonk Badonkadonk."

The "Hillbilly Bone" co-singer was slated to join a hot lineup of top country acts, including Jason Aldean, Dierks Bentley and the **Charlie Daniels Band (810, 910)**, in celebration of the Grand Ole Opry's return to the Opry House that was damaged earlier this year during the historic Nashville flood. After that, Adkins will head out on a USO tour through the Middle East. www.traceadkins.com

10 Years Worth of SolidBody Love

For **Brian Vodinh**, the guitarist (and former drummer) of the alternative metal band **10 Years**, his Taylor SolidBody models occupy a special place in his arsenal of axes. Vodinh, who proudly branded himself with a tattoo of the Taylor logo, is out with the band in support of their fourth studio album, *Feeding the Wolves*, and, as he puts it, is melting the faces of fans and other players with his several **SolidBody Classics**, each featuring a different pickup configuration. "I have blown the minds of a bunch of people on the road by showing them the SolidBodys," he said via e-mail. "People who have been Les Paul guys their entire lives have shown some love and were surprised at how amazing these guitars are." www.10yearsmusic.com

Jar of Success

When L.A.-based singer-songwriter **Christina Perri (614ce)** was just 16 years old, a curiosity struck her. Her older brother, who had moved away to college, had left his beat-up guitar behind in the family's Philadelphia home. The precocious teen decided to teach herself to play

guitar by watching VHS tapes of the '90s band Blind Melon performing. After deciding to pursue music, Christina moved to Los Angeles with little more than a suitcase and a \$40 guitar she had begged her mother to buy, and after a few years of trying to make her way, she scored her lucky break. Her song "Jar of Hearts," which was written after a raw and emotional breakup, aired on Fox's *So You Think You Can Dance* on June 30 as a back-drop to a choreographed dance. The song instantly struck a chord with viewers and raced up the charts, landing at No. 25 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 1 on Amazon's digital singles chart, translating into over 200,000 downloads in three weeks.

Since then, life has been moving fast. We spoke with Christina as she was driving in Los Angeles, having just returned from a recording session in London with Taylor artist **Jason Mraz**. She'll be on the road as the opening act for Mraz at a few of his fall tour dates. After that, she's looking forward to wrapping up her debut album, due in February. Her black 614ce has been her companion in the studio and on the road. "I love this guitar," she says. "It's been amazing to me!" www.christinaperri.com

Steel Loving You

For rising country newcomers **Steel Magnolia**, their summer was filled with water – Brad Paisley's "H2O" tour, that is, for which they've been opening. Principals **Meghan Linsey** and **Joshua Scott Jones (810ce, 610ce, T5)**, plus a supporting cast that includes guitarist **Dominic McManus (710ce, several SolidBody Classics, T3/B)**, have been on the road since May 21. McManus kept us in the loop along the way to share his affection for his growing Taylor collection. "All I'm using are Taylors now," he shared. "Four SolidBody Classics are in the rig, each with different pickup configurations and tunings. I love them; they're fantastic guitars and have received a lot of attention on the tour." The band's debut album was scheduled for a September 21 release. The album features the breakout hit, "Keep on Loving You," which was released as a single earlier this year on the movie soundtrack for *Valentine's Day*. September also

saw the band receive their first-ever CMA nomination for Vocal Duo of the Year. www.bigmachinerecords.com/steelmagnolia

Swift Release

Taylor Swift's third studio album, *Speak Now*, will be dropping on October 25. The country-pop powerhouse released her first single, "Mine," in late summer, and at press time, the track was racing up the charts. The video for "Mine" debuted on August 27 on CMT, MTV, VH1 and MTV, reaching more than 160 countries around the world. You might also have seen her print ad as part of the well-known "Got Milk" campaign, which features a "milkstached" Swift with her black **SolidBody Classic**. www.taylorswift.com

Zac's Back

The **Zac Brown Band** also has a new record out. The title, *You Get What You Give*, is a credo (which Zac has as a tattoo) that has guided his life. "It's a defining record," he says of the album. "Every step of it's done the right way, and I expect people are really going to love this record and see the depth of our musicianship...we're always growing."

Meanwhile, Zac and the band are still reaping the accolades from their debut release, *The Foundation*. In September they earned four CMA Award nominations, for Entertainer; Vocal Group; Musical Event (for "Can't You See" featuring Kid Rock); and New Artist of the Year. Zac and bandmate **John Driskell Hopkins** also each picked up an individual nomination for their hit "Toes," (Song of the Year), which they wrote with Wyatt Durrette and Shawn Mullins.

High Test Grades

During the summer, we joined forces with Elixir® Strings, Elixir® Cables and SonicBids.com in an acoustic "Test Drive" contest to help sift out some emerging artist talent. Out of hundreds of entrants, the top five were selected by a fan vote and a panel of judges. Among them were soulful singer-songwriter **Anamieke Quinn**, contemporary

folk-rocker **Andy Brown**, energetic songwriter-guitarist **Jerry Stamp**, plus a pair of bands: polished pop-rockers **Goodnight Sunrise** and **Senator and the New Republic**, whose melodic sound blends mellow moods and haunting vocals. As part of the contest, we sent 300 and 400 Series Taylors equipped with Elixir strings and cables for the artists to make a video of themselves and their new Taylors to be considered for the Grand Prize: free gear from Taylor and Elixir, plus session time at New York City's Tainted Blue Studios.

Of his new guitars, Andy Brown shares: "I love my Taylors, especially the built-in Expression System. The playability, quality and tone are superb. [The **414ce** and **314ce**] Grand Auditoriums have surpassed my expectations in every way possible." Artist Jerry Stamp echoed the sentiments: "Taylor has always been one of those guitar companies that every guitarist worth their salt knows to be a strong brand known for quality. The overall brightness, but well-balanced brightness, makes for great recording. I hadn't played one live in a while and literally got it in the mail and took it to a gig without spending much time with it, so I was really impressed with the Expression System. Normally I've had to use a feedback buster for playing larger clubs because of the mics/pickups, but with the ES I could get the monitor nice and loud without any annoying feedback."

As of press time, the contest was still in its final stages.

From Wacky to Slack Key

Weird Al Yankovic guitarist **Jim "Kimo" West** touched base at the end of the summer leg of *Weird Al's* tour to mention that his **SolidBody** and **T5** have been enjoying the spotlight. "I've been using the white Classic live on two of Al's originals: 'Skipper Dan' and 'Frank's 2000 TV,' he reports. "It's got a nice, punchy clean tone and gets really 'meaty' on the overdrive settings. I've also been using my koa T5 on a few tunes: 'Good Old Days,' 'You're Pitiful,' and 'The Saga Begins,' Al's epic *Star Wars* number in the encore." West says he also used the SolidBody to record several tracks on Al's upcoming CD, as well as some cartoon show scores he's been recording.

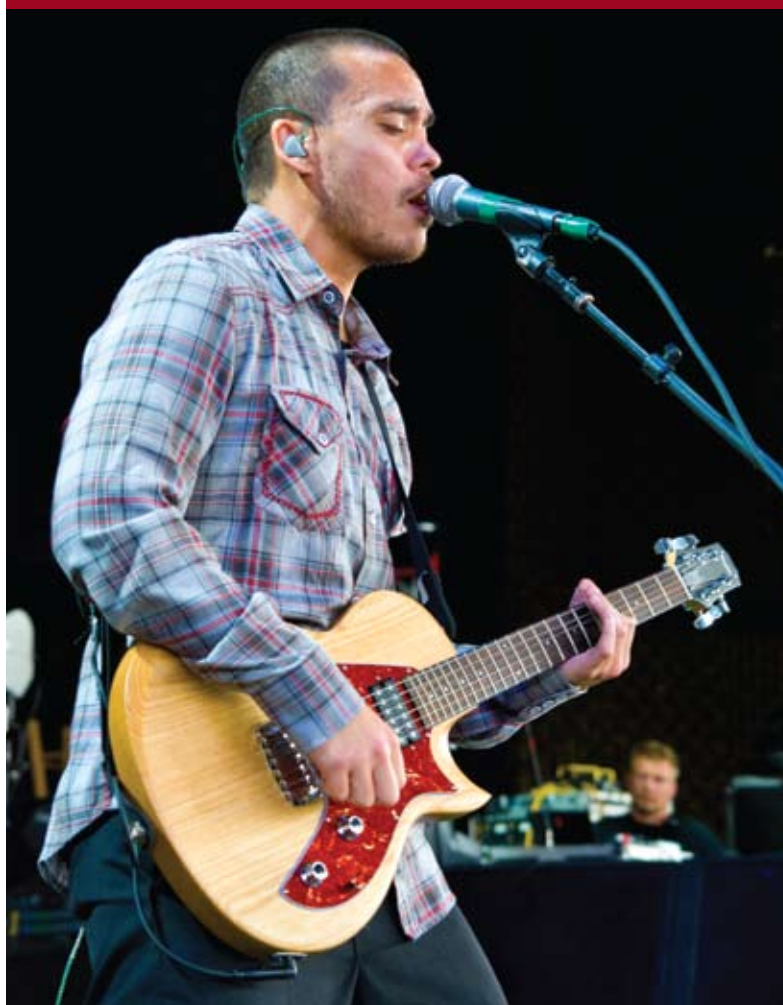
Meanwhile, in his alternate guitar life, West continues to play, perform and record Hawaiian slack key music with his **514ce**. With the holidays on the way, his CD *Kimo's Hawaiian Slack Key Christmas* gives the Island treatment to an assortment of holiday classics, plus an original, "Mauna Kea Sleigh Ride." The acoustic fingerstyle instrumentals feature West's dulcet-toned slack key tunings and arrangements. If you want the perfect antidote to holiday stress, pop in this CD in and let your mind dream of a white sand Christmas. www.jimkimowest.com



A Pair of Officials

Taylor Guitars will be the official guitar of the VH1 Save The Music Foundation's Gala 2010, which takes place November 8 in New York City. This year's honorees, singer-songwriters John Mayer and John Legend, along with the ASCAP Foundation, have worked for years on behalf of VH1 Save The Music to promote music education in public schools. They will join an esteemed group of past honorees that include former President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Grammy award-winning singer Mariah Carey, NAMM, the International Music Products Association, and VH1 Save The Music Foundation Founder and Vice Chairman John Sykes. www.vh1savethemusic.com

Taylor also was the official guitar of a major music gathering presented by Next BIG Nashville (NBN), which paired up with Leadership Music Digital Summit (LMDS) for a four-day event held September 29-October 2 in Nashville, Tennessee. Billed as two of the most progressive music events in Nashville, the conference/festival combo was conceived to promote creative collaborations within Nashville's music scene, providing opportunities for independent artists, established artists, application developers, digital graphics designers, and music industry employees. At night, more than 150 artists performed at over 15 venues. www.nbnsummit.com



Clockwise from top left: Trace Adkins; Christina Perri; Goodnight Sunrise; Coheed and Cambria's Claudio Sanchez (photo by Chalise Zolezzi); Brian Vodinh of 10 Years; Adam Greenberg from Senator and the New Republic; Dominic McManus with Meghan Linsey from Steel Magnolia



The 2010 Fall Limiteds

Seasonal Variety

Figured mahogany, fresh inlays and koa 500s supply a savory assortment of guitar flavors this fall. Also on the menu: a deep-body Dreadnought, a 12-fret GA, and a pair of all-mahogany electrics that evoke retro style. Dig in.

The process of plotting out our annual mix of Fall Limiteds tends to range somewhere between deceptively simple and brain-bendingly intricate. Often, the guiding theme is as understated as, "Let's build some cool guitars." From there, the inspiration can come from any number of places: special reserves of wood, a new, tone-enhancing technique, a fresh aesthetic motif.

This year's collection showcases a mixed approach that touches all of the above. Earlier in the year, we were able to procure a small batch of exceptionally flamed mahogany, providing an artistic centerpiece around which we designed a worthy series of appointments. Next, we gave our rosewood 800 Series a neoclassic revival of sorts, adding intriguing twists in the form of a deep-body Dreadnought and a 12-fret Grand Auditorium. For our 500 Series Limiteds, we took a special cache of koa and designed a new wave-inspired inlay. And we honored the vintage era of mahogany electrics with a matching SolidBody and T3/B that reaffirm why mahogany remains one of the guitar world's finest tonewoods.

As always, our Fall Limiteds are intended to entice you with something truly unique that you won't otherwise find in our standard guitar line. May our fresh inspiration become yours. Look for the Fall LTDs in stores starting in mid-October. For complete specs, visit taylorguitars.com.

800 Series

Woods: Indian Rosewood/Sitka Spruce

Inlay: Engraved Victorian

Models: 810e-LTD, 812ce-LTD, 814ce-LTD, 816ce-LTD

Our 800 Series Fall Limiteds celebrate the enduring appeal of the rosewood/spruce pairing that has long anchored the Taylor line, yet also branch out into fresh territory. Making a special return is the crisp white binding that Bob Taylor

avored for years on his rosewood guitars. A new fretboard inlay design bridges the past and present, incorporating Larry Breedlove's "Victorian" scheme and reflecting back to the era of detailed banjo inlays. This time around, though, we've embraced a modern Italian acrylic inlay material (which luthier Greg Deering turned us onto), allowing us to cut it on a laser and add precision-engraved detail. From that common aesthetic foundation, each of the four body shapes was tweaked to articulate its own unique identity.

Our non-cutaway, deep-body Dreadnought 810e-LTD was inspired by several source points: Bob Taylor's earliest Dreadnoughts, the more recent Style 3 Dreadnought designs of Taylor's über-boutique offshoot R. Taylor, and even the traditionally deeper Dreadnought bodies that many of us can appreciate in other guitar brands. A quarter-inch deeper than a standard Taylor Dread, it's "got more down there," as Bob says, yielding an extra-strong traditional Dreadnought tone – slightly "Dreadnoughtier" if you will – yet with all the clarity and playability that Taylor enthusiasts will love.

The 814ce-LTD officially introduces a 12-fret Grand Auditorium with a slot-head and short-scale design. Like our Grand Concert 12-Fret, the shorter scale and relocation of the bridge change the top movement, adding liveliness to the sound in the form of warmer, fuller and arguably louder tone. Sonically, it's reminiscent of an older guitar.

The 816ce-LTD pairs our bold GS body with our equally bold Florentine cutaway, creating a signature look that updates the longtime pairing of a sharp cutaway with the Jumbo shape on our 815ce.

The Grand Concert 812ce-LTD borrows the slot-head design normally offered on the GC8 from Taylor's acoustic line. Coupled with the short scale neck, it promises to make a fine fingerstyle partner.

L-R: 816ce-LTD, 814ce-LTD, 812ce-LTD, 810e-LTD





The 2010 Fall Limiteds

All Mahogany SolidBody Classic and T3/B

Woods: Mahogany

Inlay: Small Clay Dots

Models: SB-X-LTD, T3/B-LTD

As Bob Taylor likes to say, mahogany didn't get to be the king of woods by being average. A favorite of woodworkers for three centuries, on guitars it's a good weight and sounds great. That it used to be cheap and plentiful made it attractive to guitar makers throughout much of the 20th Century. It was so cheap and abundant, in fact, that it became associated in some acoustic circles as a wood for entry level guitars and subordinate to rosewood. Well, a couple of things have happened in the ensuing decades. For one, mahogany's prolific use helped it establish its own tonal footprint in the music world, especially with its warm, earthy midrange bloom. Second, its days of bountiful supply are gone, so it now has a premium value.

Our all-mahogany SolidBody Classic and T3/B Fall LTDs together celebrate mahogany's vintage heritage in the electric guitar world. For the Classic, we used a special reserve of mahogany that was milled to unique dimensions, allowing us to cut the neck and body from the same boards, in many cases side-by-side, for a beautiful match. In addition to a traditional mahogany stain, other vintage aesthetic touches include a parchment pickguard on the SolidBody and parchment binding on the T3/B, plus our vintage alnico humbuckers, perfect for dialing up some old school classic rock tunes. The T3/B also features a Bigsby vibrato tailpiece, and the look of cool chrome against deep mahogany hues makes for an inspiring throw-back vibe.

*Right (L-R): SB-X-LTD, T3/B-LTD;
Opposite page (L-R):
GS Mahogany, koa 514ce-LTD*

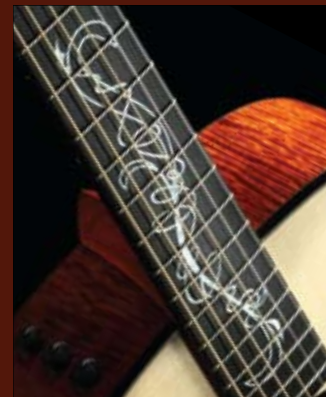


The 2010 Fall Limiteds

GS Mahogany

Woods: Figured Mahogany / Premium Sitka Spruce
Inlay: Engraved Twist

Figured mahogany is a rare delicacy in the guitar world, so on the occasions when it comes along, it deserves special treatment. This particular wood was discovered while harvesting hurricane blowdown in Central America, from which we were able to purchase only 75 sets. Our GS body style was selected to give shape to the finely flamed figure, while a premium Sitka spruce top that features Adirondack spruce CV bracing coaxes extra richness out of an already full-bodied GS voice. Ebony offers striking visual counterpoints in the armrest, mini wedge, backstrap and binding, while a new, engraved "Twist" fretboard inlay, designed by Taylor's Larry Breedlove, adds a splash of abstract expression, perhaps as an inspiration for players to explore new dimensions through their music.



Koa 500 Series

Inlay: Engraved Pipeline

Models: 510ce-LTD, 512ce-LTD, 514ce-LTD, 516ce-LTD

Hawaiian koa's seductive character is hard to resist. Even the sets that we don't use for our Koa Series are among the nicest you'll find in the guitar world, with rich variegation and other subtle nuances that give each guitar a truly unique personality. This year's koa LTDs, like our other Fall Limiteds, incorporate a new inlay design. It's based on an existing concept that Larry Breedlove had filed away in his inlay archives, loosely inspired by island themes. The wave motif – subsequently dubbed "Pipeline" – seemed a natural fit for koa's Hawaiian homeland. Four body styles are offered, each adorned with rosewood binding and an interlocking koa rosette formerly offered on our 500 and 700 Series.



Taylor Notes

GS Mini Production, Shipments Ramping Up

After a summer filled with eager anticipation, the GS Mini began shipping in August. Although the initial quantities have been limited in order to spread the first wave of inventory across our network of dealers, the good news is that we've continued to ramp up our production numbers each week, allocating more build slots to our production schedule to respond to the demand. The first arrivals were expected to disappear quickly from stores, but we're working with dealers to replenish the supply as fast as we can. Keep in mind that our Road Show crew will be traveling with Minis, so if we make it to your neck of the woods this fall and you still haven't been able to get your hands on one, be sure to come check them out. And feel free to contact your local dealer for an update on the Mini's expected arrival date in their store.

The Book of Bob

As if he wasn't already busy enough, Bob Taylor has been spending part of the summer and early fall churning out chapters of a book that's slated to be published early next year. It's not intended as a chronological history of Taylor Guitars or a conventional memoir, though it will contain elements of both. More than anything, it will be a collection of personal stories in which Bob draws from his learning experiences along his unique journey in life – of learning how to make things, build a company, deal with failure, engage with people, and more. Part of the beauty is that it's not ghost-written; it's Bob in his own voice, sharing stories in his own colorful, down-to-earth way that casually deliver interesting insights about life. From what we've read so far, the book promises to be one that anyone would enjoy, not just guitar lovers or budding entrepreneurs. If the book stays on track for being published early next year, we'll share an excerpt in next issue. If not, then probably in the spring.

Lacey Act Update

Last issue we shared information on the implications of the Lacey Act, a U.S. law passed in 2008 that banned the commerce of plants and plant products, including timber and wood products, that are illegally sourced from any U.S. state or foreign country. Effectively the world's first official ban on trade in illegal wood, it significantly impacts the music industry. Where wood procurement had in the past sometimes occupied gray area in terms of being able to prove that it was legally sourced, the Lacey Act makes things much more black and white – if you don't have legal documentation tracing back to the logging of the tree, basically, it isn't legal. We asked Bob Taylor for his take on the ongoing ramifications of the restrictions.

"We're getting some really great reports that suggest that there could be up to 40 percent less illegal logging already because of Lacey," he says. "It's kind of inspiring that the U.S. can just make a law for people in the United States about importing and exporting stuff that can in turn affect the world so much that in the deepest, most remote places, people are switching their logging practices to something much more legal."

Lacey, Bob says, has had more impact than other environmental initiatives like using wood that's certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

"There are a lot of reasons that someone would want to be FSC-certified, but it's voluntary – it's not against the law to use uncertified wood. Lacey is proving to be that game changer – it's basically a cold, dispassionate set of rules that you have to follow or you'll get in big trouble."

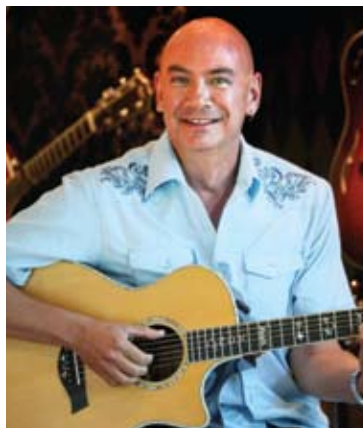
One type of guitar wood whose trade has been affected by Lacey is ebony.

"Right now we're getting ebony at half the fill rate of our orders, so there's definitely an effect," Bob says. "But for us and everyone, I think Lacey is a great thing because it's going to end up protecting these resources for the long-term. Even if we have to use less of it now, the result is that we can continue to

have it 5, 10, 20 or maybe a hundred years from now, rather than just 'eat-ing' it all, then it's over."

Tim Godwin to Head Up Artist Relations

We're happy to introduce Tim Godwin as our new Director of Entertainment Relations. Godwin comes to Taylor from Line 6 in the Los Angeles area, where he was Artist Relations Manager for the past 12 years. He was an integral part of the team that worked on the company's product development, strategic partnerships, and brand awareness. During his tenure there, he developed relationships with such world-class artists as The Edge of U2, James Taylor, Lenny Kravitz and Dave Mustaine of Megadeth.



Prior to joining Line 6, Tim toured the world as a guitar player with such notable acts as Air Supply and Laura Branigan. He has also appeared on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* with Grammy-winning country star Shelby Lynne, and as a member of the house band on Fox's *Sunday Comics*. He also co-founded the band Farmer with music producer Marshall Altman. His collaboration with Farmer led to a publishing deal with EMI and a record deal with Aware Records, current home to multi-platinum artists John Mayer, Five For Fighting, and Train. Godwin also worked with Grammy-winning producer Pete Anderson, playing on the 2009 release of a new Tanya Tucker record. He recently composed the music for the film short *Last 3 Minutes*, which is gaining worldwide attention. It was directed by Po Chan and filmed by Shane Hurlbut, ASC Director of Photography for *Terminator Salvation*.

"I am very excited to be part of the Taylor family and look forward to

working with Taylor artists," Godwin says. "Having been in the MI industry for 12 years, I can appreciate the passion that artists have for their Taylor guitars. It's personal, too – I love my rosewood/cedar GS!"

GE Consumer Financing Program Extended

With the holidays on the way, we're happy to inform customers that we are extending our GE consumer financing offer through December 31, 2010. Through GE Money, you can get 0% interest for 12 months on the purchase of all Taylor gloss-finish acoustic guitars (500 Series/Acoustic 5 Series and up), all SolidBody models, the T3 and T3/B, and the T5 Standard and Custom. The program is available through participating Taylor dealers.

Bob's Classical Guitar Camp

The week of August 9 was a special one for Bob Taylor, as he hosted a weeklong crash course at the Taylor factory on how to make classical guitars. Only he was primarily the stu-

dent, not the teacher. Bob invited his friend, classical guitar maker Pepe Romero, Jr. (peperomero.com/luthier) of the celebrated Romero family – his father, Pepe Sr., is a world-renowned classical player as was his grandfather, Celedonio – to spend a week at the Taylor complex with a core group of Taylor luthiers and a few other special guests.

Bob had taken a crack at a pure classical guitar about eight years ago, but concedes that it was a swing and a miss. While Taylor went on to successfully develop the Nylon Series, it was designed as more of a hybrid guitar that borrowed considerably from steel-string guitar design. A true classical guitar is an entirely different proposition, and one that Bob had thought he might take on later in life as a personal project in retirement. But he says the recent GE Capital commercial he appeared in changed his mind.

"I'm in a GE Capital commercial featuring Taylor Guitars, a steel-string guitar company, and the music is flamenco guitars," Bob wrote in a lengthy blog post about his weeklong classical experiment. In the course of

Music Savers

For Peter and Andrea R., the winners of the Ultimate Dave Matthews/VH1 Save The Music auction, Friday, August 20 proved to be a memorable night. It was the first time the couple, from Greenwich, Connecticut, had the chance to meet Dave. After bidding on the auction item through the online auction site CharityBuzz.com, the couple flew to San Diego, toured the Taylor factory, hung backstage with Dave prior to his show, and took home a Taylor Guitars prize pack, which included an autographed Dave Matthews Signature Model. Both have been fans since the early '90s, and while Peter tells us it's hard to say exactly how many shows they've seen, he assures us the number between the two of them is well over 150. "In the past four years alone," he says, "I've lost count."

Peter shared with us that he and his wife decided to bid on this prize as it was a chance to be philanthropic as well as fulfill their dream to meet Dave. "We just couldn't pass it up," he says. "Also, as someone who has played guitar, I was excited to get the 'Taylor experience.'"





Clockwise from top: Bob Taylor flexes one of Pepe Romero Jr.'s tops as Pepe looks on; Pepe Jr. samples an early prototype; Andy Powers (left) and Taylor's Ed Granero check the alignment of a neck and soundboard; guitarist Marija Temo tunes a prototype before playing for the group; classical virtuoso Pepe Romero Sr. performs at the factory

shooting the commercial, he had a chance to spend time with the guitarist hired to play the parts, Marija Temo (marijatemocom), an accomplished classical and flamenco performer.

"Good thing Marija was flexible, because she picked up a hybrid Taylor nylon, which is not the kind of guitar for the music she plays, and made the best of it. For me, the best of it resulted in fanning the flame of my desire to learn to build classicals."

In addition to inviting Pepe Jr. for the week, Bob invited another talented and versatile local luthier friend, Andy Powers (andypowersinstruments.com). He also invited Marija back to hang for the week and be part of the experience. Part of



Bob's goal was not just to learn how to make a classical in the traditional Spanish construction style, but to experiment with Taylor's modern tooling and manufacturing methods, such as the NT neck design, to see if a pure classical could be made with a more modern approach without compromising the tonal essence of a classical guitar. The goal was to make six guitars by the end of the week. For each guitar incorporating traditional Spanish-style construction, they would also make a "sister" guitar whose only difference was having a Taylor NT-style neck, thus allowing the group to fairly compare each pair. Bob soaked up the experience of working with Pepe.

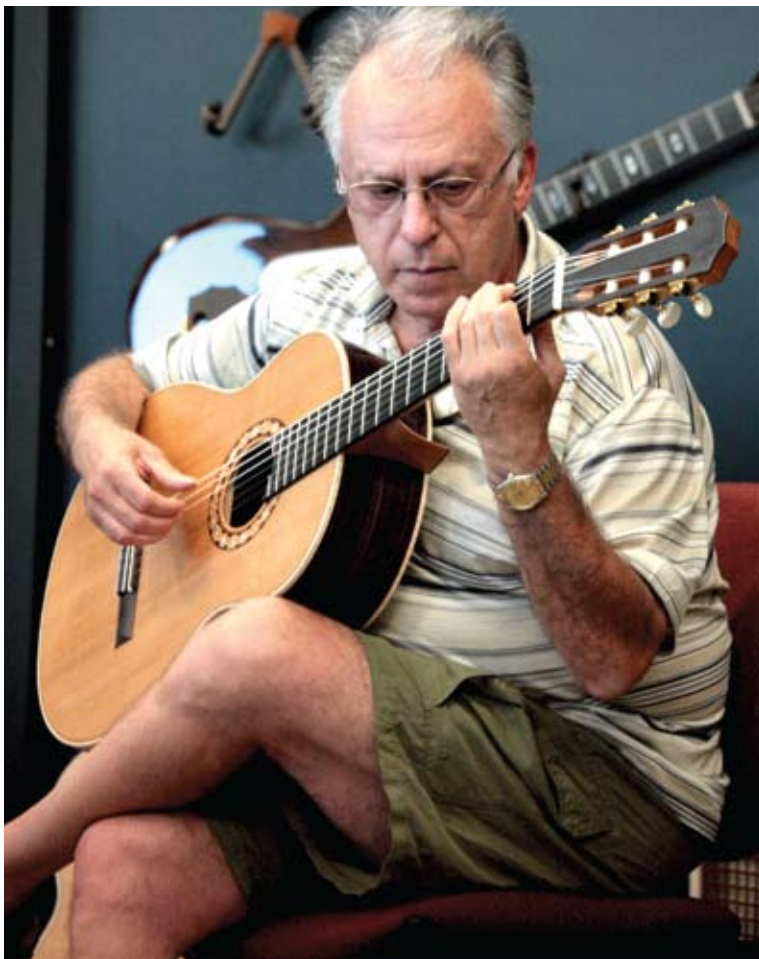
"Pepe taught me the feel of a classical top, how it was graduated, how it feels, how it bends," Bob explained in his blog post. "He braced them and taught me the process. Each day he changed the bracing to a new pattern and style and made sure I felt it. I would stand around and bend and twist the top while we talked, like one of those stress balls you squeeze."

By Friday afternoon, the group had seven guitars strung, with an eighth slated for string-up on Monday. Proud of what they had accomplished and eager to share their results, Bob arranged a small gathering of Taylor staffers, during which Marija played, after which Pepe Sr., who had stopped by, delighted the room with a performance on several of the guitars. It was clearly a special moment for everyone involved, but noticeably for Bob.

"I was proud to have them both there, so happy that they'd think enough of what we were doing to come and be a part," he said. "It was one of those inspirational moments that you love to experience."

"People wondered what I'm planning to do with all this, and the answer is that I don't know," he wrote. "Maybe a classical will come out of Taylor sometime, and probably will, but I always start with a guitar that inspires me. I still have a lot to learn but I'm on a good path and can experiment on my own now."

So, don't expect a classical guitar from Taylor anytime soon. But Bob plans to deepen his exploration of what has become an interesting new realm of design for him. Bob's full blog post is a great read. Look for our blog link under the Resources tab at taylorguitars.com.



On The Web



There are always new things happening at taylorguitars.com and through the Taylor Facebook community at facebook.com/taylorguitars. For starters, our Fall Limited Editions are currently featured on the Taylor website, including photos, specs and dealer availability, and Taylor News is updated regularly. Here's a rundown of other online features being presented this fall.

Facebook Friday Fan Photo

When we launched our first-ever Taylor Guitars Photo Contest earlier this year, we were impressed by the volume of responses from Taylor owners. Since then, we've continued to maintain an open forum for sharing photos through our online Facebook community. In fact, every Friday we highlight a Taylor fan and his or her photo submission at facebook.com/taylorguitars, where we share the picture with the rest of our Facebook fans. We also give a Taylor t-shirt to the community member whose photo we highlight.

Once such Taylor owner was Tommy Wright, who posted a great

photo of him playing his Taylor 314ce in a plane shortly before a skydiving jump.

"My fellow skydiver Dave Bryce took this photo of me above Jump-town in Orange, Massachusetts," Wright says. "I absolutely love playing this guitar and being able to combine it with my skydiving lifestyle gives a whole new level of inspiration."

Guitar Solo Showdown Contest

What's the secret to a great guitar solo? Care to show us? We're inviting Taylor players to share their chops as part of our first-ever video guitar solo "Showdown." The process is simple: Just video-record yourself, showing off your best solo licks, and upload at taylorguitars.com/promotions/guitar-solo-showdown-2010. Video submissions must be 30-60 seconds in duration, and you have to be playing a Taylor – acoustic or electric. The two main categories are original material and cover material, and within each category two winners will be selected, for Best Acoustic Solo and for Best Electric Solo. The

four winners will be chosen by a vote of the Taylor Facebook community. Each Best Acoustic Solo winner will receive a brand new Taylor acoustic guitar, and each Best Electric Solo winner will receive a brand new Taylor SolidBody Classic. May the best solos win!

The Ultimate Serj Tankian Experience

We're hosting an online guitar giveaway sweepstakes to celebrate the release of singer-songwriter and multi-platinum recording artist Serj Tankian's new album *Imperfect Harmonies*. One grand prize winner will receive an autographed Serj Tankian Signature Model T5, as well as merchandise prize packs from Serj and Taylor Guitars. The winner will also get VIP tickets and a meet-and-greet with Serj at one of his shows. In addition, three online friends recruited by the winner will receive an autographed Baby Taylor guitar, along with a merchandise prize pack from Taylor Guitars and the band. You can enter to win at taylorguitars.com.

Cool Codes for Taylor Content Via Mobile Web

More people are using smart phones for mobile access to the Web, and some interesting new technology is helping to provide direct access to content on the fly. One involves the use of QR codes, funny-looking graphics which are basically two-dimensional bar codes – usually with a square, black-and-white pixelated design (see below) – that serve as a picture equivalent of a hyperlink. If you can access the Internet with your phone, you can use your phone to take a picture of these graphical "tags," and then a software app converts the code to a link that gives you access to additional online content. (There are various free QR code reader apps available online; NeoReader is a popular one.)

Various print media have started to incorporate QR codes into their story layouts to integrate multimedia components to their stories. We're intrigued by the idea for *Wood&Steel*, especially since it gives us a great way to give readers immediate access to guitar-playing content like performance videos and guitar demos directly from these pages. We plan to experiment with the technology and see how it works out, and we invite those of you who can to give these codes a try and let us know what you think.

Warren Brown's 1975 Taylor Dreadnought Service

A companion video to our story on the restoration of Warren Brown's vintage Taylor Dreadnought (page 26) takes a closer look at the work done by Taylor repair manager Josh Mundt. Simply launch your QR reader and hold it over the code to watch it. You can also see the clip online by going to: <http://bit.ly/DNrepair>



1975 TAYLOR

Baritone 8-String Demo

If you're wondering what our Baritone 8-String sounds like, don't miss this wonderful demonstration courtesy of Nashville songwriter, session guitarist and producer Don Potter, whose playing career started with Chuck Mangione and who produced much of Wynona Judd's work. You can also watch the video by going to <http://bit.ly/DONpGSB>



BARITONE 8-STRING

GuitarJack Demo

In last issue's story on the new GS Mini, we also introduced some accessories that make it easier to plug in and record with it. Besides the ES-Go™ pickup and the Taylor V-Cable™, we noted the GuitarJack®, developed by our friends at Sonoma Wire Works as a hardware interface to allow you to record into your smart phone from anywhere. This QR code will take you to a cool video demonstration of the GuitarJack in action. Also access it at <http://bit.ly/GSgtrjk>



GUITARJACK

Taylor Tweets

For the latest happenings at Taylor, be sure to check out our Twitter posts. The micro-blog site will keep you updated on Taylor news, thoughts and, well, just about anything you want to talk about. Be sure to check out our posts, often several per day, and drop us a line if you feel so inclined. Just remember to keep it to 140 characters or less.

Mixed Media

SolidBody Wish List

Musicplayers.com

In a recent review of a customized SolidBody Classic on Musicplayers.com, writers Scott Kahn and John Quigley were impressed with the guitar's playability and sound and awarded the model a WIHO award, an acronym for the site's "Wish I Had One" honors.



Kahn, who had reviewed our SolidBody guitars back in 2008, decided to give the new online SolidBody Configurator a try and came away with a Classic in sage green metallic with three noiseless single coil pickups and a tremolo bridge. The guitar's features, Kahn notes, are "flawless," specifically the sleek Taylor bridge, which, he says, "you just can't wait to rest the heel of your palm on." Highlighting the safety aspects of the guitar, both Kahn and Quigley were "extremely impressed and intrigued" with the Fused String Ground, a feature in all Taylor guitars with electronics that prevents a musician from being electrically shocked in the event of improper electrical ground when plugged in.

Once the duo had the chance to

plug in and play, they discovered a variety of "vintage tones sure to satisfy the old-school guitarist," but that also will "appeal to modern players looking to create their own voice." They found the tones to be "amazingly clean and pristine, providing brilliance and sparkle to the overall spectrum." They also loved the guitar's tonal sustain and bloom, and took note of the "double tones" and "harmonic swell."

Kahn and Quigley leave players with a strong recommendation for a Taylor SolidBody as their next purchase. "Taking into consideration the craftsmanship of the instruments and all the advanced technology and design, not to mention Taylor's obvious attention to detail, you would be well advised to check these guitars out when it's time for your next acquisition."

Baritone 8: In A Word, Award

Guitar Player

September 2010

It was a long day when the Baritone 8-String arrived at the offices of *Guitar Player* magazine, but only because a line of players had been eagerly awaiting its arrival. "Everyone was impressed," noted Senior Editor Art Thompson, who was eventually able to wrest it away for a test-drive and review, which he caps with an Editors' Pick award. Calling the guitar "immediately captivating," he admires the guitar's "very tasteful" and "flawless" construction and appointments. The Indian rosewood back and sides, paired with the Grand Symphony shape, "help to provide a tight, punchy response, and their rich graining looks stunning on this guitar."

After praising the Expression System®, Thompson compliments the neck construction. "There was no buzzing to be heard despite the fairly low action," he writes, "and the intonation is also very tuneful sounding as you finger chords up and down the neck." His assessment of the tone: "The low-end delivery is massive. You can feel it in your body when strumming a chord, and it's deeper and more powerful than anything delivered by a standard dreadnought- or jumbo-sized guitar."

Thompson goes on to call the Baritone 8-String one the most entic-

ing acoustic guitars he's played. "Baritones offer a whole different experience from that of a standard acoustic, and what Taylor has done here takes that experience to an entirely new level," he concludes. "It's practically impossible to not be impressed by everything the Baritone 8-String does, and that's why it receives an Editors' Pick Award."

Solid Edge

Guitar Edge

August 2010

When we invited Jordan Wagner from *Guitar Edge* magazine to give the new SolidBody Configurator a try, his immediate response was simple: "Cool!" Wagner, who reviewed a SolidBody Standard with humbuckers and a tremolo, was impressed with the guitar's look, performance and tone. Plugged in, the bridge humbucker was "fat and powerful, while still retaining articulation." He found the neck humbucker equally impressive, and writes of having a blast flipping through the five switching options. When faced with the mag's question, "Is it for you?" Wagner offers this bit of advice: "If you're a fan of balanced, single-cut body design yet long for the versatility of a smooth and stable tremolo, take a look at the SolidBody Standard...when you combine Taylor's attention to detail, flawless construction and tons of options, you can't go wrong."

Grux of the Matter

Guitar Aficionado

Summer 2010

Paul Riario of *Guitar Aficionado* and *Guitar World* magazines reviewed the Dave Matthews Signature Model earlier in the year and immediately took note of its dynamic range. Playing it unamplified, he picked up on the guitar's "crisp" response and other acoustic textures. "Its tight, defined bass response and percussive knock give syncopated rhythms and figures an extra dimension of swing," he elaborates.

After plugging in, Riario discovered that the DMSM isn't a guitar that should stay home, but rather "screams to be played live." "This acoustic's primary mission is to be a stage guitar, and when Taylor's excellent and incredibly natural-sounding onboard Expression System® electronics [are used], the guitar really comes alive."

Orchestral Maneuvers

Guitarist Acoustic, France

September 2010

Calling the Baritone 8-String an "orchestra below your fingers and ears," pro musician and writer Olivier Rouquier of *Guitarist Acoustic* in France heaps high praise on the guitar, including its design. He notes that one does not feel the difference of 8 strings over 6 strings and finds it comfortable and effortless to move through chords. He calls the tone

"enormous" and revels in the uniqueness of the guitar's voice: "It [cannot be compared] to only a bass and an acoustic 12-string, there's a blast that's very rich and reminiscent of the piano..." After plugging in the guitar, he muses that the Expression System paired with the guitar's expansive voice is "a good way to fall out with the bassist and keyboardist."

Rouquier goes on to characterize the Baritone 8-String as a truly original instrument that has no counterpart and "belongs to a genre that largely exceeds that of the guitar."



GS8: Loud & Proud

Acoustic, UK

September 2010

At the outset of his recent review of the GS8, Sam Wise of *Acoustic* magazine poses this question: "The size of this guitar is impressive to say the least. But is it just about volume level?" Through his examination, he finds his answer. Wise admires the build quality and features, calling the quality of the tonewood "excellent" and the grain of the top "fine and even, one of the best I've seen recently..."

After his first few chord strums, he notes that the spruce/rosewood pairing is a great choice of woods, especially together with the GS shape: "The big body could have resulted in a boomy low end, but because of the woods, and no doubt a little Taylor magic, the low end is in fact punchy and powerful... with tons of sustain across the board and a midrange which, if not full, certainly doesn't sound thin."

Wise goes on to explain that, especially when players put some power into their playing on this guitar, it comes into its own, whether unplugged or amplified. "It only gets better the louder you play it. The GS8 will be most at home in front of a crowd: It's loud and proud, and the ES will let you pump up the volume with no fear of feedback."



Class of 1975

Imagine pulling that old acoustic out of storage, only to discover it was one of Bob Taylor's earliest guitars. Warren Brown shares his memories of a chance trip to a small guitar shop and, 35 years later, enjoys a reunion with Bob.

By Warren S. Brown

1975 was the year the Vietnam War ended and *Saturday Night Live* began. In June of that year, John Denver's "Thank God, I'm a Country Boy" became a No. 1 song. But these bits of ancient history are not what marks 1975 in my mind – at least not now. On June 8 of that year I found my way to a small shop in Lemon Grove, California that housed a fledgling guitar-making enterprise. There I bought my first and only steel-string guitar – a Taylor 810 Dreadnought.

Until last Christmas Eve, my vintage Taylor guitar had sat neglected in a closet for over 20 years, its place in Taylor history entirely unknown to me. For Christmas, my wife Janet and I had bought a mini-electric guitar as a gift for our seven-year-old granddaughter, Natalie. After Natalie had opened her guitar with great excitement, I retrieved my old Taylor guitar from the closet and played a little for her (until my fingers hurt). I noticed that evening in the case the old bill of sale, dated June 8, 1975 and signed by Robert Taylor. Other than signing a memory of buying the guitar, the significance of all of this meant very

little to me that night. Natalie and her dad had decided to take guitar lessons together, and I began to think Granddad should join the fun. So, to build up my finger calluses and try to remember how to play, I started playing my 810 every day. It was so much fun to start playing again.

You have to understand that, for 35 years, since that visit to the Taylor shop, I had paid absolutely no attention to the guitar industry. For all I knew as of last Christmas, Taylor was still a small, obscure guitar maker in Lemon Grove. A few weeks later, I told a friend who played guitar at church that I had gotten out my old guitar and was playing. I mentioned that I have a Taylor. He was impressed, which was my first clue that Taylor was not only still in business, but had a reputation as one of the great guitar makers. This sent me on a quest to learn about Taylor Guitars and my 810.

From the perspective of 35 years, there are only a few things I remember about my visit to the Taylor shop. I lived in Pasadena and, as a new Ph.D. in psychology, was driving to Point Loma Nazarene University in

San Diego each weekend to teach a four-hour Saturday class on physiological psychology (I can't believe students tolerated this). I must have told someone at Point Loma I was interested in buying a steel-string guitar (to replace the cheap nylon-string I had at the time). Whoever I was talking to recommended a new, local guitar maker's shop in Lemon Grove. So, on our way back to Pasadena, my family (Janet and our two small children) and I stopped by the Taylor shop.

I have a clear memory of the small shop and a few finished guitars hanging on the wall. I remember playing a couple of them ("play" for me meant strumming a few open cowboy chords) and choosing one. I knew next-to-nothing about guitars, but I liked the deep, resonant bass of the one I chose. (I learned later that I had bought a Dreadnought.) I also remember that the person who was showing me guitars was notably happy when I bought one. Given the signature on the bill of sale, that would have been Bob Taylor. From my memory and the pictures I have seen of Bob, we were both 1970s guys with lots of hair and

fuzzy beards then, and we are both balding and beardless now.

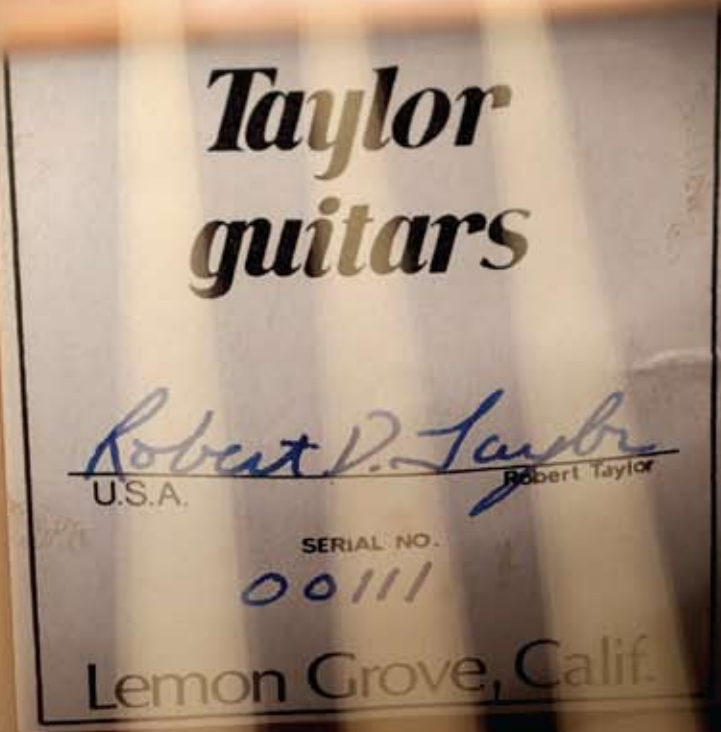
I took a few lessons and played my Taylor off and on for six to eight years. I occasionally played for small groups who sang at my church. But I mostly just played guitar around the house for my own enjoyment and occasionally to entertain my children. When my son found out I was writing this article, he e-mailed, "Make sure to let them know about your all-time hits 'Home on the Range' and 'Streets of Laredo'! They were big with your kids!"

In 1975, our two children were 2 and 5 years old (both are now physicians). With the demands of a growing family and the rigors of "professing," I gradually quit playing. (Of course, once I lost the calluses on my finger tips, it became too punishing to try to play.) My guitar settled into entombment in its case, which was buried in a closet for most of the next quarter century. I can only remember one Christmas during that time (somewhere around 1985-88) when our daughter was playing the violin that she and I played a couple of violin/guitar Christmas carols on

Christmas Eve. Our son took my guitar to college (back at Point Loma) for a term and left it under a window facing the damp ocean air, which nearly ruined the case but did very minimal damage to the finish of the instrument.

The resurrection of my Taylor guitar since last Christmas Eve has been a delightful and interesting experience. First, when I found out that Taylor is now a bigtime guitar maker, I went online and absorbed myself in the current Taylor world... very impressive! This confirmed that I owned a guitar from a first-rate guitar maker. Next, I read the history of Taylor Guitars and found that I had bought my guitar somewhere during the first full year of the company's existence. I checked my serial number (#00111) and realized my guitar must be about the 11th guitar they had made.

Some weeks later, I was at a local guitar shop and noticed a guy repairing guitars. We struck up a conversation, during which he explained that most guitarists get their guitars "tuned up" every year or so. "Well," I said, "I have owned a guitar for 35



years and never had anything like a tune-up. Perhaps I should bring it in." A few hours later, I was back in the shop to have my 1975 Taylor 810 tuned up for the first time ever. He started to assess it, looked at the

label inside, then looked at me and said, "I really don't want to touch this guitar. You need to take it down to the Taylor factory." I presumed he meant that it was in really bad shape, but he explained that he did not want

to mess with such a vintage Taylor. He thought Bob Taylor himself would want to see it and perhaps do the repairs himself.

So, there you have it. After 35 years, my guitar is back at the now-

very-large Taylor factory in El Cajon, marking sort of a full-circle journey. For me, it was 35 years of blindly ignorant Taylor guitar ownership. But I must say, my 1975 Dreadnought still sounds great to me, I love play-

ing it, and it has been a wonderful surprise to find that I have owned such a high-quality and historically significant instrument all these years.

W&S



A Return to the "Shop"

After sending his vintage 810 to Taylor's factory service center for a long overdue tune-up this summer, Warren and his friend Daniel drove down to the factory to pick it up in mid-July. After taking the factory tour and marveling at the scale and sophistication of Taylor's operation, they spent time with customer service manager Glen Wolff and repair department manager Josh Mundt, who had handled the work. The guitar had been in pretty good condition, Josh noted as he pulled the newly serviced Dreadnought out of its case to explain the work that had been done. He had removed the frets and re-radiused the fingerboard from its original 10-inch radius to a smoother 15-inch contour (standard on our current steel-strings). He had also deepened the fret slots before refretting, sanded the bridge down to lower it, and replaced the nut and saddle. Inside the body he had reglued the X-brace on the treble side. He had also cleaned and buffed the body to restore the luster of the finish. Overall, the work helped lower the action and enhance the playability.

Bob Taylor stopped in a short while later to give Warren a warm welcome, and the two spent time chatting and reminiscing about their original encounter 35 years earlier. Though the two couldn't determine who might have referred Warren to the Lemon Grove shop, Bob said he clearly remembered making

the guitar and confirmed that the three-piece back and sides were Brazilian rosewood. It was more difficult to determine precisely which guitar it was in Taylor's production sequence, Bob admitted, as the early years saw a transition through several different serial numbering systems. Bob recalled that it may have been shortly after they had instituted a numbering system that started with 100, which would make Warren's guitar number 11, although he couldn't say for certain. "It's definitely among the very first guitars we made," Bob assessed as he examined the label inside the guitar.

"We were a little more Wild West back then," he conceded with a chuckle. "I was 19." He examined the guitar some more. "I think Kurt [Listug] might have even worked on this one." Bob and Warren continued to piece together the little details of their exchange in 1975, both genuinely enjoying the nostalgic rewind to a shared point in time so many years ago. Warren noted that since he now had a bona fide collector's item on his hands, he'd have to get a new Taylor to be his

everyday guitar. Bob agreed, but he was also quick to encourage him to continue playing his original, that it deserved to be enjoyed as long as it was cared for. Before Warren left, he played a new 12-Fret in the Visitor Center, and one could tell that he was beginning to fall under its spell.

A couple of days later, Warren sent an e-mail to thank the service crew and Bob for their work and hospitality, with an update on his new and improved 810.

"It plays great!" he wrote. "It is much easier to play chords cleanly. And it still has a great big sound that has always impressed me. When I got home, I played for about an hour, fingerpicking and hand-strumming. Then I grabbed a pick and strummed a chord and, wow, that huge sound. It also looks really great!"

"Josh, thanks for treating it with such care and fine detail! Thanks also for inviting me (and Daniel) down to pick up the guitar, meet you all, and have an hour to hear about my instrument. It was a very enjoyable, friendly, and special time."



Clockwise from top left: Warren and Bob examine Warren's freshly serviced 810; the neck heel and three-piece Brazilian rosewood back; front photo showing small block inlays and teardrop pick-guard; a soldering gun heats the frets for easier removal. To access video footage of the restoration, see "On the Web," p. 24





Toasting the Toolmaster

Mark Summers' Mastercam software helped Bob Taylor carve out his future. When Mark's daughter got married, Bob helped her celebrate hers.

By Jim Kirlin

During Taylor's factory tours, people often ask which big-name artists were the "early adopters" who helped lift the company from relative obscurity to the radar of public recognition. A handful of names are usually trotted out – Neil Young, John Denver, Prince, Alabama's Jeff Cook, and Leo Kottke, to name a few – but if you ask Bob Taylor, he'll cite a different kind of key player, one whose name is far from any venue marquee, yet whose impact on Taylor's success is greater than all of the above names put together. His name is Mark Summers, and he's the co-founder and president of CNC Software, Inc., whose flagship product, Mastercam®, enabled Bob to revolutionize the way that Taylor guitars are made.

Summers founded his company in 1983 with his brother Jack, and with his Mastercam program brought a PC-based interface to computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM) software. Mastercam enabled machinists and engineers to design product parts in 3-D and then used that information to generate machine code-driven tool paths that would direct computer numerical controlled (CNC) machines to execute a variety of processes, like cutting, routing, and contouring. The end result was parts that could

be made with exacting precision. It's the kind of technology that's common with many manufacturing operations these days, and it's the kind of resource that can help a small company get to the next level in terms of quality assurance, consistency and efficiency. In Taylor's case, it would help the company transition from a guitar shop into a manufacturer.

It was 1989 when Bob took the plunge, purchasing his first CNC mill and Mastercam software after seeing how his friend, fellow luthier Tom Anderson, had embraced CNC technology to make his electric guitars. At the time, Taylor was making about seven guitars a day. Between the CNC mill and the software, the investment was more than \$100,000.

"I'd never spent that much money on anything before," Bob says.

Summers had been inspired to create Mastercam and start CNC Software in the early '80s, when he was working as an applications engineer for a machine tool company.

"I would go out and train the customers to program their parts," he says. "I got pretty good at geometry and trigonometry, but no matter how good you get, it's still a slow process. That's when we hit upon the idea to develop this little program on an Apple IIe to help them do their job – really to help me do *my* job. I even-

tually showed a couple of customers, and they said, 'Hey, let me buy a copy of that stuff; it looks like it'll save me a lot of time,' and the light bulb went off. We sold a few customers copies of the software, and it changed their work process and made their job a lot easier because they could take on more complex work faster, with higher quality, the whole works."

Bob vividly remembers learning to use the Mastercam software on his IBM AT computer.

"I would work all day, then sit in my little office at night, put on the Nanci Griffith album *Storms*, and load Mastercam," he says. "That's the only album I played – it was Nanci, Bob, and Mastercam – I could totally zone away. I must've listened to that album 150 times learning to use the program.

"It wasn't easy but it wasn't hard," Bob recalls. "What was great was that it made sense. It had the best user interface; the menu structure meant something, as opposed to other CAD programs where you'd have to learn what every word meant. The next thing you know, just through figuring it out, I'd drawn a guitar bridge like I'd drawn on plans, except, when I said six inches, it was six inches, not six inches and the width of a pencil lead. When you're

making a guitar and you're trying to be accurate, lines have weight because they have dimension."

Once Bob had a drawing of his bridge, Mastercam allowed him to use the dimensions to generate the tool paths for cutting and shaping it from wood.

"It would memorize the shape of my bridge by zooming around the line I drew," he explains. "So, now it has a tool path, and then another screen comes up, and it asks you all these things that it needs to know: What's the diameter of your cutter? How fast do you want to spin the spindle? Which direction, clockwise or counter-clockwise? Which side of the line do you want to cut on? And then you click it and it spits out G-code that the machine can read. I'd go back and forth between my office and the machine at night and figure it out. And then I'd push the button on the machine, and it would start feeding and cutting, and when it was done I'd pick the thing up and I'm like, whoa, I just cut this piece of wood into the shape of a bridge on this machine! I can do this. It's like learning the first three chords on your guitar; it doesn't ever get more fun than that."

Bob says that Mastercam marked the first time as a guitar craftsman that he was able to get the precise shapes and slots he really wanted.

"The cool thing was, when I was done with that, I could say to one of our employees, 'Hey, push this button for the rest of the afternoon, and put this wood on, and take this wood off and make bridges.' Pretty soon they're learning to run the machine and they're setting it up and changing the tools, figuring out how the programs work. Meanwhile, I'm using Mastercam to draw a fingerboard and a guitar body. So, our guitars got more accurate, and more people in the shop could make more accurate parts."

As we've detailed in other stories, many Taylor innovations, such as the NT neck®, would never have been possible without the precision and consistency of Mastercam software. The ever-evolving marriage of quality and efficiency that Mastercam has made possible is now deeply entrenched in much of Taylor's everyday production process. Taylor currently operates 26 CNC mills in its main factory complex in El Cajon, California, and will soon be adding its 16th computer mill to its plant in Tecate, Mexico.

"Without Mastercam, Taylor wouldn't look like we do at all," Bob reflects. "You have to stop and appreciate someone like Mark, who had his dream, which nested with mine, and allowed me to grow Taylor."

Today, Mastercam software is integrated into a broad range of manufacturing markets, from aerospace (aircraft parts) to medical tools and body replacement parts like heart valves, to the auto racing industry, to furniture, to the making of molds in a variety of industries.

Based in Tolland, Connecticut, CNC Software largely remains a family business. Though Mark's brother Jack, with whom he co-founded the company, retired eight years ago, his brother Brian is a VP, his wife Jamie is the CFO, and his daughter Meghan – the original namesake of Mastercam before the name was changed – has worked there since March of 2009. The company currently has about 125 employees.

And yes, Mark plays guitar. He owns three Taylors: an 814ce, a Jewel signature model, and a slot-head 30th Anniversary Grand Concert XXX-RS.

"I've been playing for about 35 years, but I always tell people three months because that's about how good I am," he quips.

Despite the fact that Mark and Bob have known each other professionally for years and have talked at trade shows, Mark hadn't actually visited the Taylor factory until this past March. He says he was surprised to discover how big Taylor's operation truly was.

"I had no idea it was so involved. It seemed very well organized and well run."

Mark made the trip with Meghan, who came with a special agenda: She wanted to spec out a Build to Order guitar as a wedding gift for her fiancé Brendan, who has played guitar most of his life but had never owned his own.

"I wanted to do something really special, and a guitar was the best thing that came into my mind," she says.

Bob gave Mark and Meghan a personal tour, showing them the many aspects of production at Taylor that involve Mastercam programming, after which Bob and Taylor's Joe Bina helped Meghan design the guitar, starting with wood selection. When Meghan learned that koa was an option, she got excited, since she and Brendan had lived in Hawaii for three years while attending school, she for her graduate degree in management, he for his bachelor's in psychology.

"Our relationship really fell into place in Hawaii," she shares. "And a

lot of our friends were musicians, so whenever we had parties it would be a circle of people playing guitar or ukulele and people singing. We later bought a dog together, a yellow lab we named Koa, which was a big step. So, for the guitar, koa was perfect."

Meghan selected a spectacular master grade set, with a koa top as well. She opted for a GS body with a Florentine cutaway, mother-of-pearl tropical vine fretboard inlay, rosewood binding, black and white

purfling, an abalone rosette, and Gotoh tuners.

Bob wanted to do something extra special in honor of the occasion, so he asked Taylor's marketing group to coordinate with production to shoot some photos of the guitar in various stages of being built. The photos were later incorporated into a printed iBook that would accompany the guitar as a special memento for Meghan and Brendan. The finished guitar and iBook were shipped in advance of their wedding in June.

"When I first got the guitar and opened it up, the wood was absolutely spectacular," Meghan says. "It took my breath away."

She surprised Brendan with the guitar the night before the wedding, prior to the rehearsal dinner.

"I gave him the book first because I knew if I handed him this big guitar case it would be pretty obvious," she says. "At first he was really confused, then he started flipping through the pictures a little bit, and he kept looking up at me going, 'I'm not

really sure what's going on here, but I think I'm about to get excited,' and then finally says, 'Is this *mine*?!' He was just shaking. And I'm through the moon, smiling. And I was like, 'You know what, I forgot something outside.' In the meantime, my dad had put the guitar there for me, so I brought it in. Brendan was shaking as he opened up the case, and then he just stared in amazement, going, 'I don't even know what to say.' It was a really, really special moment for us." **W&S**



After the wedding, Meghan's brother Braden, a professional photographer, captured a moment with Meghan, Brendan and his new guitar (bottom left). "Brendan used to live with my cousin," Meghan says. "That's how we met. He and my cousin would write songs together. There was one song that they wrote that he always used to sing to me. So that night, right after Braden took the picture, Brendan played that song for me. It was pretty magical."

Left, from top down: Mark Summers and Bob Taylor; Bob and Meghan selecting woods for the guitar; Meghan and Brendan after the wedding
Right: The finished guitar



Events

Crossroads Guitar Festival

June 26, 2010
Chicago, Illinois

After spending a week in Nashville attending Summer NAMM, Taylor product communications manager Andy Lund and trade show manager David Kaye loaded 17 cream-of-the-crop BTO guitars into a “stow & go” style van and set off for Eric Clapton’s Crossroads Guitar Festival in Chicago. Andy demonstrated the sort of ace van-packing skills that come with working plenty of Road Shows and other festivals – even the hotel valets gave him a nod of approval as he triumphantly closed the van doors before driving off.

Along the way were two custom guitar sales events. The first was at Fazio’s Frets & Friends in St. Louis, and the second was held at

Naperville Music outside of Chicago. The BTOs on board were “simply incredible,” according to David.

“They were BTOs on steroids,” David says. “We had examples of armrests, exotic wood binding and matching backstraps, turquoise-colored binding, lime green purfling and custom inlays. We even brought a couple of Brazilian rosewood guitars from the Taylor vault. Every guitar was a masterpiece, and at each event the guitars were swooned over.”

Upon reaching Chicago, the two were greeted by temperatures pushing 100 degrees with a full dose of humidity. As a festival sponsor, they were allowed onto the grounds a day before the concert to set up the Taylor booth in the exhibitors’ village. The following day, the booth was overrun almost as soon as the concert gates opened.

“Both Andy and I were constantly engaged in conversations with Taylor owners and admirers alike – and with adult beverages being consumed by a number of attendees, some of those conversations were very ‘interesting,’” David laughs.

The Crossroads concert itself was a star-studded event that featured the likes of Sheryl Crow, ZZ Top, John Mayer and James Burton.

“A special highlight was Steve Winwood joining Eric Clapton for several songs,” David shares. “Who knew Winwood was such a good guitar player! But for both Andy and me, the showstopper was Jeff Beck and his band. After their tour-de-force set, we just looked at each other and shook our heads.”

Though billed as the last Crossroads Festival ever, Clapton took a break in his set to announce that there will indeed be one more festival in the future. The proceeds help fund the Crossroads Centre Antigua. (crossroadsantigua.org).

“Oahu-Island Style” Slack Key Guitar Festival

August 15, 2010
Waikiki, Oahu, Hawaii

The GS Mini made its official Hawaiian debut this summer, accompanying Taylor staffers Billy Gill and David Kaye to the 28th annual “Oahu-Island Style” Slack Key Guitar Festival held on August 15 in Kapiolani Park in Waikiki. Prior to the festival, Billy and David did some island-hopping and brought their prototype GS Minis to sales events at Bounty Music on Maui, Hilo Guitars on the Big Island, and Island Guitars on Oahu. At each event the consensus was unanimous – the GS is a hands-down winner. “Such a big sound!” was a comment heard over and over again.

Billy and David were able to confirm firsthand how travel-friendly the guitars were, as they conveniently stowed their Minis in the overhead compartments on both flights to and from the mainland.

“Even on the inter-island flights, fitting them into the overheads was never an issue,” David says.

This was Taylor’s sixth year of sponsoring the “Oahu-Island Style” Slack Key festival, and the Taylor love continues to grow.

“I was blown away by all the performers playing Taylors,” Billy says. “This was my first time at the festival, and as soon as we walked in, the first four players I saw ready to go on stage all had Taylors.”

At the Taylor booth, the GS Mini was the focal point, as it seemed every visitor wanted to give the two protos a go.

“The hardest part was telling people they couldn’t buy the GS Minis we brought with us,” Billy says. “We had to take them home!”

A big thanks to Jim Danz and Neil Shimibukuro and the rest of their staff at Island Guitars for once again helping Taylor with our booth at the festival.

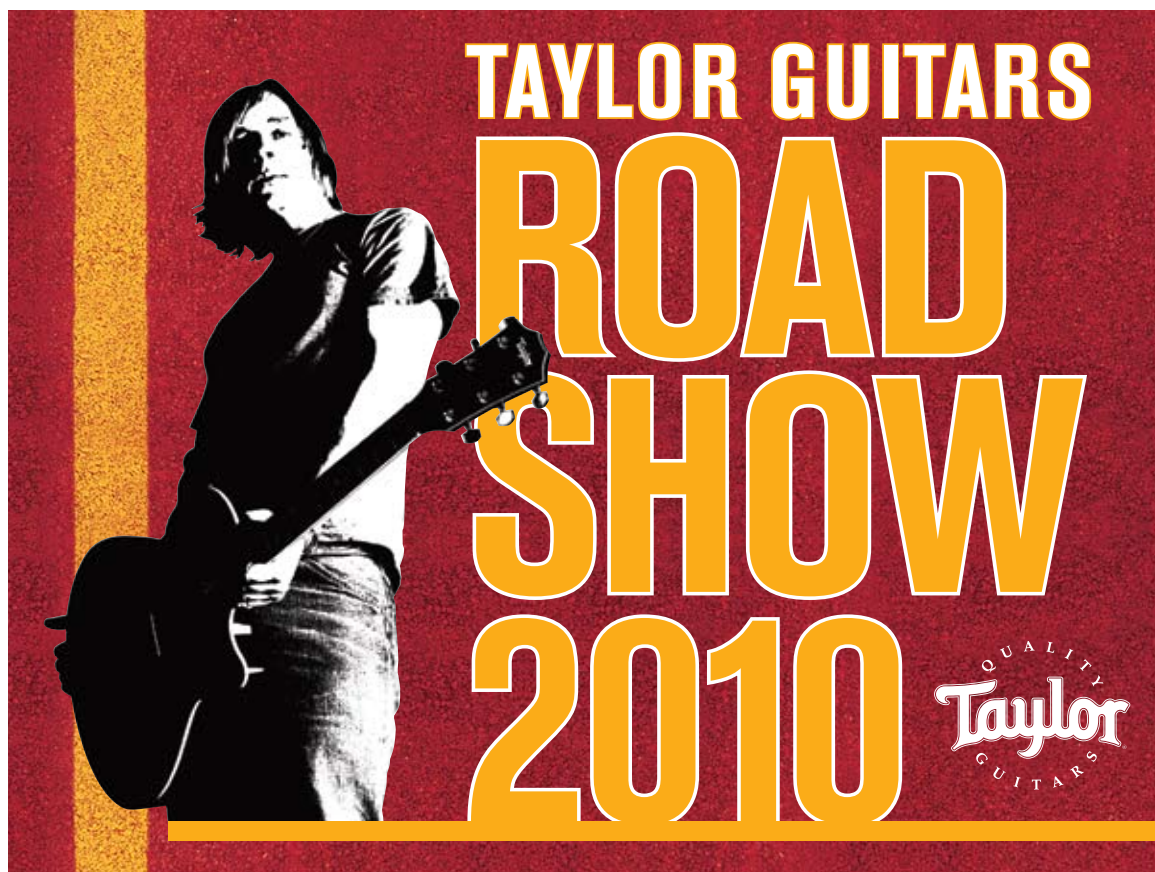


Left: The crowd at the Crossroads Festival concert; **Above:** Slack key guitarist Jeff Peterson; **Below:** A Taylor gets some curbside exposure on the Big Island courtesy of Hilo Guitars (photos by David Kaye)



Calendar

For the latest event listings, including Road Shows, Doyle Dykes workshops, festivals and other Taylor events, visit the Taylor online calendar at www.taylorguitars.com/calendar.



After presenting over 200 Road Shows worldwide last year, this fall picks up where we left off, as our Road Show crew brings you the latest and greatest from the Taylor factory, from acoustics to electrics, with plenty of enticing one-offs and custom models on-hand to play. Be sure to check www.taylorguitars.com/roadshow for the latest dates.

North American Road Shows

Dover, NH

Ear Craft Music
Tuesday, October 12, 6 p.m.
(603) 749-3138

Madison, WI

Madison Music Co.
Tuesday, October 12, 6 p.m.
(608) 257-5877

Lexington, MA

The Music Emporium
Wednesday, October 13, 7 p.m.
(781) 860-0049

Wausau, WI

Jerry's Music
Wednesday, October 13, 6:30 p.m.
(715) 842-3272

Clifton Park, NY

Parkway Music
Thursday, October 14, 6 p.m.
(518) 383-0300

Minneapolis, MN

Guitar Rodeo
Thursday, October 14, 6 p.m.
(612) 767-2800

New Hartford, NY

Big Apple Music
Friday, October 15, 6 p.m.
(315) 732-3502

Houston, TX

Great Southern Music
Monday, October 18, 6 p.m.
(281) 550-4545

Roanoke, VA

Fret Mill Music Co.
Monday, October 18, 6 p.m.
(540) 982-6686

Houston, TX

Rockin' Robin
Tuesday, October 19, 7 p.m.
(713) 529-5442

Barboursville, WV

Route 60 Music
Tuesday, October 19, 7 p.m.
(304) 736-7466

Corpus Christi, TX

Sound Vibrations
Wednesday, October 20, 6 p.m.
(361) 884-8981

Pittsburgh, PA

Empire Music
Wednesday, October 20, 7 p.m.
(412) 343-5299

San Antonio, TX

Alamo Music
Thursday, October 21, 6 p.m.
(210) 224-1010

St. Clairsville, OH

C.A. House Music
Thursday, October 21, 7 p.m.
(740) 695-5929

Rochester, NY

House of Guitars
Monday, October 25, 6:30 p.m.
(585) 544-3500

Portland, OR

Portland Music Co.
Tuesday, October 26, 7 p.m.
(503) 226-3719

Vestal, NY

Audio Classics
Tuesday, October 26, 7 p.m.
(607) 766-3501

Seattle WA

Dusty Strings
Wednesday, October 27, 6 p.m.
(206) 634-1662

New Haven, CT

G Guitars
Wednesday, October 27, 6 p.m.
(203) 786-4734

Bellevue, WA

Bellevue American Music
Thursday, October 28, 6 p.m.
(425) 641-5005

Little Neck, NY

The Music Zoo
Thursday, October 28, 6 p.m.
(718) 631-9292

Daytona Beach, FL

Total Entertainment
Monday, November 1, 6 p.m.
(386) 254-8727

Asheville, NC

Musician's Workshop
Tuesday, November 2, 7 p.m.
(828) 252-1249

Doyle Dykes Workshops

Granville, OH

Guitar Guys
Monday, October 11, 8 p.m.
(740) 522-0277

Fairborn, OH

Absolute Music
Tuesday, October 12, 7:30 p.m.
(937) 878-0123

Indianapolis, IN

I.R.C. Music
Wednesday, October 13, 7 p.m.
(317) 849-7965

Buford, GA

Jackson's Music Store
Monday, October 25, 7 p.m.
(770) 904-2535

Greenwood, SC

Newell's Music
Tuesday, October 26, 8 p.m.
(864) 223-5757

Columbia, SC

Sims Music
Thursday, October 28, 7 p.m.
(803) 772-1185

Asheville, NC

Musician's Workshop
Friday, October 29, 7 p.m.
(828) 252-1249

Tustin, CA

Jim's Music Center
Friday, November 12, 7 p.m.
(714) 669-3600

Festivals/Trade Shows

Music China

Shanghai, China
October 12-15, 2010
www.musicchina-expo.com

Salon De La Musique Paris

Paris, France
November 19-22, 2010
www.salon-musique.com

Winter NAMM

Anaheim, California
January 13-16, 2011
www.namm.org

TaylorWare®

CLOTHING / GEAR / PARTS / GIFTS

Fall 2010

With the holidays just around the corner, visit TaylorWare online for a full selection of Taylor clothing, accessories and gift items.



Taylor Pub Glasses

20-oz glass, set of four.
(#70011, \$25.00)



New

Taylor Guitar Beanie

Keep your head toasty warm and well appointed with our embroidered beanie, featuring the Taylor name with a guitar emblazoned along the side. 100% acrylic. Choose from three colors. One size.
(Black #00116, Maroon #00115, Charcoal #00117, \$16.00)



Suede Taylor Guitar Straps

(Black Suede #62001, Honey Suede #62000, Chocolate Suede #62003, \$35.00)

New

Taylor Men's Fleece Jacket

Wrap yourself in cozy warmth with our Sherpa-lined hooded fleece jacket. Boasting a hefty 14-ounce 80/20 cotton/polyester body with 100% polyester Sherpa lining, the jacket is stonewashed for a well-worn look and soft feel. Features a Taylor appliqué with an embroidered guitar across the chest, cuffs with thumbholes, front pockets, plus a secure media pocket with an interior hole for headphones. Charcoal with plush black lining. (#2891, S-XL, \$65.00; XXL, \$67.00)



Ed, a longtime Taylor staffer, manages all kinds of big projects, from product development to systems implementation to building renovations, and always with a smile on his face.



Military Cap

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



New

2011 Taylor Guitars Wall Calendar

You asked and we delivered. Our 2011 wall calendar showcases a beautiful array of Taylor acoustics and electrics, offering fresh playing inspiration each month. The split Wire-O binding makes flipping and hanging a breeze. 14.5" wide x 8.875" high; 28 pages, 12 months. Each month includes a description of the featured guitars. For additional photo previews, visit our online TaylorWare store. (#73000, \$20.00)



New

Tattered Patch Cap

Our newest cap sports a vintage, distressed look with a frayed-edge screen print Taylor patch on brown, with contrasting light stone stitching. Soft structured, garment-washed six panel design. Flex fit. Two sizes. (Brown S/M #00150, L/XL #00151, \$25.00)





Front Pocket Wallet

Crafted from genuine leather, this Fossil wallet is tastefully embossed with the Taylor logo. Features three card slots, two slip pockets, and a money clip. Fossil tin included. (Brown #71300, \$35.00)



Taylor Logo T

Short-sleeve, sizes: S-XXXL.

(White #1435, Blue Dusk #1434; S-XL \$15.00; XXL-XXXL \$17.00)



New

Taylor Silver Dial Watch

Our men's Fossil stainless steel watch sports a clean, classic look that fits any occasion. Silver dial with silver strap, raised hour markers, luminous hands, and the Taylor Quality Guitars logo in cool gray. Water-resistant to 5 atm. Taylor-branded tin gift box included. (#71025, \$99.00)



Taylor Water Bottle

Stainless steel, 24-oz, threaded loop cap. Taylor logo on back. Hand wash only, not suitable for microwave, cooking, freezing or hot liquids. (Black #70014, \$15.00)



Taylor Porcelain Cup

11-ounce thermal cup, flexible silicone sipping lid, Taylor peghead icon on one side, Taylor round logo on the other. Microwave and dishwasher safe. (#70008, \$15.00)



Antique Logo T-shirt

Short-sleeve, pre-washed, 100% cotton. Slim fit. (Green/Tan #1438, Red/Gold #1428, Navy/Gold #1437; S-XL, \$20.00; XXL, \$22.00)

New

Half Guitar T

A Taylor guitar gets the setting sunburst treatment, dipping behind a Taylor Guitars horizon on this 100% fine jersey cotton long-sleeve. Reinforced with ribbed collar and cuffs. (Brown #2085, S-XL, \$25.00; XXL, \$27.00)

Billy, one of our district sales managers, lives the California dream by land and by sea, cruising on his motorcycle when he's not surfing or diving.



Track Jacket

80/20 blend of cotton and polyester fleece. Full zipper with pockets, cut as a slim fit. (Navy #3920, S-XL, \$54.00; XXL, \$56.00)





Taylor Swift Guitar Strap

Two-inch-wide adjustable strap, brown suede and polyester. (#66000, \$25.00)



New

Taylor Scarf

Scarf it up Taylor-style with Taylor's name/guitar embroidery to coordinate with our new beanie. 69" long x 7.25" wide. (Light Gray #00100, Black #00101, \$20.00)



Vintage Peghead T

100% combed cotton. (Black #1480, S-XL, \$22.00; XXL-XXXL, \$24.00)



Money Clips

Developed with the William Henry Studio, this limited edition offering of money clips features two motifs: one with a built-in pick holder, the other with a teardrop-shaped tonewood embellishment. Choose from two different materials: titanium or "raindrop"-patterned mokume, a metal laminate of copper, brass and nickel silver that boasts an exotic wood grain appearance. For full details and pricing, see taylorguitars.com/taylorware

New

Ladies' Crest T

Our crest design incorporates Taylor's peghead crown into a shield that showcases a silhouette of a Taylor guitar, a pair of guardian lions, and elements of our Byzantine inlay. 100% sheer jersey cotton, combed for softness and comfort, with subtle stretch and delicate texture. Extra long sleeves with a clean finished neck. Slim fit and form-fitting; sizing-up recommended. (Black #4531, Eggplant #4532, S-XL, \$25.00)



Angie, a graphic designer in our marketing department, wears one of her latest designs on the Crest T.



New

Taylor V-Cable™

The V-Cable puts volume control at your fingertips anytime you plug in a guitar, bass, keyboard or other musical instrument that has a pickup but lacks active controls. Simply plug one end of the quarter-inch V-Cable into your amplifying device, such as a guitar amp, keyboard amp, or PA system, and the other end into your instrument. A volume knob located on the cable jack that plugs into your instrument makes it easy to adjust your volume anytime you need to. Together with the ES-Go™ pickup, it's the perfect plug-in accessory for the GS Mini™. 250K.

3 Ft. #80850, \$62.00, **6 Ft.** #80851, \$63.00, **10 Ft.** #80852, \$66.00, **15 Ft.** #80853, \$68.00, **18 Ft.** #80854, \$69.00, **20 Ft.** #80855, \$70.00, **25 Ft.** #80856, \$74.00



Taylor Bar Stool

30" high, black matte, vinyl finish. Easy assembly. (#70200, \$99.00. Additional \$5.00 shipping charge for each bar stool ordered.)



The Taylor Hard Bag blends the protective properties of a hard case with the lightweight portability of a gig bag. Designed to fit both the Grand Auditorium and Dreadnought, it features a tan, 600-denier exterior and a 70-denier interior that's reinforced at the peghead and tail end. Supportive structure includes rigid PVC sidewalls, full-length Correx/EPE foam hard top and back, and an EPE foam neck rest with a hidden internal pocket. Also includes vinyl-wrapped carry and pull-up handles and sewn-in adjustable backpack straps. (#86149, \$139.00. *Add an extra \$5.00 shipping for each Taylor Hard Bag ordered. Overnight delivery not available.*)



Weathered Peghead T

Pigment dyed, 100% ringspun cotton. preshrunk. (Mocha #1440, M-XL \$20; XXL, \$22.00)



Flex Fit Cap

Taylor logo on front, matching color guitar embroidered on back. Two sizes: S/M and L/XL. (Maroon S/M #00371, L/XL #00372; Gray S/M #00373, L/XL #00374, \$22.00)



ES-Go™ Pickup

Designed by Taylor exclusively for the GS Mini, the ES-Go is a magnetic soundhole pickup that anyone can easily install in minutes with just a screwdriver. The pickup "floats" in the soundhole with the help of a connecting bracket that's pre-installed in every Mini. Just replace the guitar's endpin with the endpin jack and you'll be ready to plug in and play in no time. (#84022, \$98.00)



Taylor Guitar Picks

Marble or Solid. 10 picks per pack. Available in thin, medium or heavy gauge. (\$5.00)



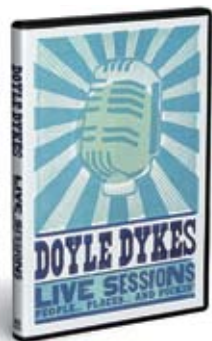
Guitar Parts. Choose from an assortment of replacement parts like chrome or gold tuners, nuts and saddles, guitar cables, pickguards and bridge pins — with or without abalone dots.



New

Our **Sketch T** hearkens back to Taylor's freewheeling early days when our guitars were crafted largely by hand. 100% combed cotton. (Navy #1419; S-XL, \$22.00; XXL, \$24.00)

Randy, our production planner, helps keep our production schedule finely calibrated and as far from sketchy as possible.



Doyle Dykes / Live Sessions: People... Places... and Pickin'

This DVD features Doyle Dykes with a stellar lineup of friends. In addition to the performances, there's plenty of bonus footage, including an interview between Doyle and Bob Taylor at the Taylor factory, along with interviews from his *Bridging the Gap* sessions. 21 songs. (#72040, \$24.00)



Visit our website for more information about the TaylorWare Gift Card.

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



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Wood&Steel

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Rosewood Reserve

Ten sets of select figured Indian rosewood have made for an ultra-limited offering of five custom Grand Auditoriums and five Grand Concerts, each topped with premium Sitka spruce and voiced with Adirondack CV bracing. The rosewood backs boast beautifully mottled figure with an elegant mingling of earthy hues, including rich espresso, deep-toned ocher, and a reddish cast, while a rich bloodwood center strip and binding provide a striking visual counterpoint. On the front, the bloodwood binding also adorns the soundhole, fretboard and peghead. Additional appointments include a figured rosewood backstrap, our new laser-engraved Victorian inlay design, a green heart abalone rosette, and antique Gotoh tuners.

Available at:

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