Special New Models And Editions
Keep Martin Fresh And Booming

Andy Summers
000C-28 Signature Edition
Story On Pages 20-21

Bellezza Bianca
Eric Clapton/Hiroshi Fujiwara
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Richie Sambora
Signature Edition(s)
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POW★MIA
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Roy Rogers
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FeLiX The Cat II
‘Where’s Felix’ Limited Edition
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Dear Sounding Board Readers,

At the time I am writing this (November), we are putting the finishing touches on the new Martin Visitors Center and Museum. The graphic panels are in place and we’re preparing the mounting brackets to install more than 130 instruments from our collection. By the time you read this, everything will be completed and it’s going to be fantastic. We’ve waited a long time to be able to tell our story the right way!

The Visitors Center building itself was completed as autumn approached, and everyone loves the new space. The 1833 Shop has been completely revamped, including a high-end player’s room that we call The Pickin’ Parlor. Soon we will hang about thirty more instruments in a special area of the lobby for visitors to sample. After all, what’s a guitar company without guitars to play?

As you approach the new entryway, you walk across a Martin headplate, then down a fingerboard through automatic “guitarist-friendly” doors into the lobby. The soundhole area is a circular reception desk, and the shape of a Dreadnought guitar is inlaid in marble in the floor, complete with pickguard and bridge.

The photo above was taken at our display at the summer NAMM Show in Indianapolis. My daughter Claire had a terrific time. As you can see, she actually became part of the display and did a much better job promoting her Signature model than anyone else ever could!

I sincerely hope you can plan a trip to Nazareth sometime in 2006 to visit our new Visitors Center and Museum, and to see how Martin guitars are crafted. That’s my personal invitation. Who knows? Maybe I’ll be your tour guide.

Sincerely,

C. F. Martin IV
Dear Mr. Martin,

Our housekeeper in Maine is married to a lobsterman, Normie, and he recently bought one of the beautiful M3M Sir George Martin Studio Edition guitars. As you can tell from the picture, he is thrilled. He got it on his birthday and his daughter made him a George Martin M3M birthday cake. Thought you might get a kick out of it. All the best,

John Kurgan
Acadia, Maine

Dear Mr. Martin,

I would like to say bravo to the DXK2 series guitar. They sound great and are affordable for the man who hasn’t a lot of money. I can see a future in the HPL guitars. You have made a very high quality instrument without losing any of that sweet tone that the Martin is well known for.

I have had my DXK2 for almost three years now. My brother-in-law liked mine so much that he got one for himself. It sounds great and sustains very well. I’ve played mine daily and it hasn’t a mark on it. Other people will soon take notice and be amazed at the sound quality. Keep up the great work.

R.D Bilderback
Granite City, Illinois

Dear Mr. Martin,

I thought you’d like to see the birthday cake I recently made for my mad, keen Martin enthusiast husband for his 37th birthday. This one will have to do for now! Sincerely,

Jo Wayte
Forster, Australia

Dear Mr. Martin,

My name is Peter Lindseman, and I’m holding my father’s well-worn Martin D-18 that belonged to Johnny Cash. My father had ordered a D-28 from a local dealer in Toronto; but when he went to pick it up, he was informed that Johnny Cash had come into the store the day before and traded a D-18 that he had for the D-28. My father ended up buying the D-18 that Johnny traded in. That guitar even had Johnny’s autograph in it. Every time my dad told people the story, no one would believe him, even when they saw the autograph.... so he removed it!

Peter Lindseman
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Mr. Martin,

We were so thrilled to meet John Mayer recently. He is a genuine talent and a warm human being who hasn’t lost the personal touch, as you can see by this photo of John and my daughter Mikaela. And, of course, he has great taste in acoustic guitars!

Elisa Salmaggi
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Martin,

I thought I'd convert my 14-fret neck to a 12-fret neck. Cut the wrong end. Oh well. Actually, I bought the headstock awhile back. It sat on my worktable until I got the headstock lamp idea. I traced the base from a 1920 Martin uke, bought some tuners, got the lamp fixings from a lamp store, got the shade, strung it up and voila. A headstock lamp!

Brant Weatherford
Cyberspace
Dear Mr. Martin,

While I was in the Army I was blessed to be with quite a few guys who played guitars. I had always wanted to learn but never seemed to have the time. While I was in Vietnam, there was a guy who played a D-18. I loved the sound, and he taught me a couple chords. I didn't have my own guitar though, so I didn't stick with it.

I am now at a point in my life where I want to learn. I was shopping for a guitar and came across the DVM model. I came home and told my wife, “I will own that guitar.” About a month later, she gave me a gift of #97. During this time, I had read an article on just what the Martin employees had to go through to produce this wonderful tribute to our veterans. This is a fantastic sounding guitar. I love playing outdoors, and living in the mountains of Vermont provides me with great places to play. The picture above was taken on top of Mount Killington.

Again, thanks to all of the Martin employees for such a great guitar. Sincerely,

Scott Warren
Killington, Vermont

Dear Mr. Martin,

This photo is taken on what used to be my house in Gulfport, Mississippi, after Hurricane Katrina leveled it along with many, many others. Although I lost everything, my Martin guitars and photos went with me to the hospital where I worked the night before the storm. (A person has to have their material priorities in order!)

I have a wonderful 1951 000-28 and 1975 D12-28, but my OM-28 John Mayer is my main playing guitar and probably my favorite. I am primarily a fingerstylist, and the Mayer model is perfect for that, yet extremely versatile. It is my opinion that Martin’s consummate quality and playability are as good as ever, so please, keep it up!

If you talk to John Mayer, tell him to please get back down here for a show. His New Orleans 9/27 concert was obviously cancelled, and my tickets are somewhere in the Gulf! Sincerely,

Dale Latimer
Gulfport, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Martin,

I’m the proud owner of an OM-28 John Mayer Limited Edition Martin. I bought this instrument through my local music shop and was impressed to hear it was the first of its kind brought into Australia. I made the decision to purchase the OM-28JM after playing a vintage OM-28 in the shop, being overwhelmed by the clarity and depth of such a small instrument. The OM-28JM was very similar but with an Engelmann spruce top, which added to the presence. Upon its arrival I was nervous but excited about what it might sound like, and I certainly was thrilled. It has unbelievable tone and is perfect for the fingerpicker. It’s also great on stage through a large PA or for recording at home. It gets better every day! I can’t wait to hear and play it in 20 years time. I’ve attached a photo of me recording with my OM-28JM guitar. Best Regards,

Chris Tulk
Canberra, Australia
Dear Mr. Martin,

I enjoyed my visit to the Martin factory immensely and was delighted that there was so much interest in my Martin D-18 guitar. I bought it from E. R. Plesz in December of 1943 at Bogue Field, North Carolina, for $25. It was in near perfect condition. My guitar shipped out with me to the Pacific Theater in December of 1944. My guitar and I survived my tour of duty in Hawaii, Ulithi, Okinawa, Manila, then back to Okinawa where the guitar was put in the LST hold with our seabags and withstood one of the worst typhoons ever in that region. After a five-month tour in Tientsin, China, I returned to my home in Virginia, and I’ve kept the guitar close by ever since. The pickguard has been replaced to cover pick wear, and I’m afraid I refinished the back with marine varnish, but the guitar still plays and sounds as good as ever. For the $25, I think 60 years of play represents a pretty good deal. Thank you!

Franklin G. Lee
Fairmont, Virginia

Dear Mr. Martin,

I was recently in a very serious accident. I had just picked up my Martin HD-28 from my local Martin dealer in Ephrata where it had undergone some final adjustments. I had placed it in the seat in its hardshell case and started on my way home when I was T-boned on Route 322. After flipping my truck several times and hitting my head on the windshield, I had a 5-1/2” gash on my head. Upon returning home from the hospital a day later, I pulled the Martin out of the mangled truck, then out of the case, and I found that the only damage it had sustained was that the low E string was out of tune. I am enclosing a picture of the truck for you to see how amazing it is that the guitar survived intact. Sincerely,

Nathan Horst
Ephrata, Pennsylvania

Retired Martin employee of 38 years, Gerry Altemose (left), attended a reunion with his World War II shipmates of the destroyer USS Hunt in September of 2005. A Martin Backpacker® was raffled at the gathering, and the lucky winner was Mary Lou Cambert of Columbus, Ohio. The reunion promoted fellowship among those that served on the vessel.

The Martin Guitar
© 2005 Edward G. Campbell

He came to America, left Germany.
Around 1833.
Started making Martin guitars before long.
They were in a league all their own.
Others copied things he’d done.
But his flat tops ranked second to none.

Got mine in ’76.
Like a good wine gets better with time.
Describes this axe of mine.
Jam up and jelly tight.
C.F.M. plays music right.
Really hard to put down.
Because of its fantastic sound.
There’s the best. Then the rest.
Never settle for nothing less.
Than a legend from Nazareth, PA

What else can I say.
Spook Handy
Singer/songwriter/guitarist Spook Handy of New Brunswick, New Jersey, has been picking, strumming and writing tunes on his sunburst Martin D-35 for over 20 years. Many of his spiritually laced and politically edged songs have fallen into the repertoire of other performers, most notably the legendary Pete Seeger. In 2004 he was named Best Folk Artist in the 16th Annual Makin’ Waves Awards presented by Jersey’s Courier News and Upstage Magazine. He’s shown above performing for a captive audience of school kids that really appreciated a break from the three Rs.

Tore Dencker
Tore Dencker is studying in Aarhus, Denmark to become a teacher. While not buried in the books, he is an avid musician, adept at both the trombone and the guitar. He writes and performs his own songs as well as covering material by artists like James Taylor, Paul Simon, Sting, Stephen Duffy and Paul McCartney. He loves his Martin D-28 and boasts that “Its sound is beyond compare!”

Annie Wenz
With five CD releases to her credit and an aggressive touring schedule, Annie Wenz is a poet on the road. A multi-instrumentalist, she accompanies her original compositions on acoustic guitar, percussion instruments from all over the world, Native American and indigenous flutes and piano.

More recently she has traveled with the German American Folksinger Tour (DAFT). Because she’s always on the move, she added an LXM Little Martin to her repertoire. At left, photographer Jayne Toohey captured this great shot of Annie hitting the backroads on her motorcycle. The shoulder straps on the Little Martin’s gig bag make it easy to bring a guitar along. Check out the rear view mirror!

NazFest
Members of the Unofficial Martin Guitar Forum (UMGF) once again made their annual pilgrimage to Nazareth for MartinFest in August of 2005. In addition to special tours of the factory and a catered lunch for all, this year’s event featured a huge exhibition of guitars on the second floor of Martin’s newly constructed Visitors Center and Museum.
John Baboian

Guitarist/composer John Baboian has been on the faculty at esteemed Berklee College Of Music in Boston for 25 years. His diverse work and compositions in jazz, swing, classical, blues, rock, R&B, Latin and ethnic music genres can be heard on TV shows from “All My Children” to HBO’s “The Sopranos.” He has played with Frankie Avalon, Connie Francis and many other legendary performers. John’s first solo CD is called “The Be-Bop Guitars...And More!” Shown here with his CF-1 Martin American Archtop model, John has been doing some Martin clinics in the New England area. For more info, check his website at www.bebopguitars.com.

El McMeen

A longtime Martin player and advocate, fingerstyle master El McMeen recently fell in love with one of the more obscure NAMM Show Special Martin models, an OM-42QMII with quilted maple back and sides and an Italian alpine spruce top. With scores of CDs to his credit, the prolific McMeen recently headed back into the studio with this guitar (and possibly a Martin koa custom) to record a new CD of spiritual music, anticipated for release sometime in 2006.

Joe Beck

During a career spanning five decades, jazz virtuoso Joe Beck has recorded with an incredible array of artists, composed music for TV and film, and has been honored five times with NARAS’s Most Valuable Player Award. Joe was so impressed with the Martin American Archtop CF-1 model that he bought one and has been doing Martin clinics around the country. Learn more about Joe at his website: www.joebeckmusic.com.

Tom Carr

Tom Carr of Erie, Pennsylvania visited the factory in the fall for a tour and to show us his new tooled leather guitar cover – a close replica of an original made for Rickie Nelson in the 1960s.
Guitars In The Classroom

Jessica Baron Turner (right), founder of the ever-expanding and effective Guitars In The Classroom (GITC) program, is shown here with her Martin herringbone D-28. Jessica’s award-winning books and recordings have inspired children in musical programs throughout the nation.

GITC has directly addressed the task of bringing music into public elementary and middle schools by offering regular classroom teachers free guitars, music education, song leadership, and music integration lessons through regionally based programs. GITC operates independently of school districts. However, school districts are welcome to support and participate in the process of establishing a GITC program that serves their teachers. GITC helps teachers make learning at school especially fun and creative by teaching them to play guitar, sing, lead children in song, and give them ways to integrate music into daily studies and activities.

A recent GITC program was initiated in Tuscon by Doug Bowers with guitars generously furnished by local businessman and guitar enthusiast Bert Williams. The teachers (shown above) are using LXM Little Martin guitars in their classrooms. This is a great program. Perhaps readers of this publication might have ideas about initiating such a program in their respective local communities. Check out the many possibilities on line at: www.guitarsintheclassroom.com.

The Charvel Twins

Influenced by a wide variety of musical styles, Bob and Rick Charvel (the twin sons of electric guitar maker Wayne Charvel) have developed a distinct and recognizable sound that continues to amaze audiences. Their super-charged lightning-fast instrumental CDs showcase their mastery of classical, jazz, fingerstyle, flatpicking, blues, gospel and swing styles, but also include many of their original compositions. Their virtuosity is further enhanced by their choice of acoustic guitars. As is clearly and proudly displayed on the cover photograph of their CD, Rick Charvel performs with a Martin DM Dreadnought, while his brother Bob prefers the smaller-bodied cutaway 000C-16GTE. For more information about the remarkable Charvel Twins, or to get copies of their many CDs, books and videos, visit their website at: www.charveltwins.com.
Walter Lambert 1929-2005

Affectionately known around the plant as “Wally,” Walter Lambert worked in Martin’s fretting department (and many other departments for that matter) for an unprecedented 54 years and 7 months. He was one of the last employees to have worked in the old North Street plant prior to the construction of the newer Sycamore Street facility in 1964.

Saddened by the passing of his wife, Walter joined her in July of 2005. His joviality, master craftsmanship, longstanding experience and love of his fellow workers will certainly be missed. Below he is shown proudly displaying his 50 year Martin ring in 2000.

Guitars For Hope Public Arts Project

Buffalo Bills Hall of Fame Quarterback Jim Kelly and Buffalo radio station WNED President and CEO Donald K. Boswell have initiated a collaborative project designed to celebrate music, art and hope in Western New York. Officials from Kelly for Kids, Hunter’s Hope and the WNED Buffalo Niagara Guitar Festival have joined forces to create Guitars for Hope, a public arts project that will benefit all three organizations.

Modeled after Buffalo’s highly successful Herd About Buffalo project and Cleveland’s Guitarmania, Guitars for Hope engages local artists and national celebrities to create and inventively transform fiberglass molds of oversized Martin Dreadnought guitars into works of art.

C. F. Martin & Co. joined the project and helped to design the six-foot fiberglass acoustic guitar mold, fashioned after the Martin D-28 guitar. Models were constructed by Merlinworks of Etobicoke, Ontario.

Fifty of the art guitars will be a part of the project, which is scheduled to culminate with a gala auction event during the 2006 WNED Buffalo Niagara Guitar Festival.

Artist Todd Dawes, a long-time friend and associate of Jim Kelly, traveled from his home in Florida to work on and contribute the initial piece of guitar art. His design incorporates an eagle carrying a “Support Our Troops” ribbon and an American flag. The flag on the painting morphs into an actual flag attached to the base of the guitar artwork. It also utilizes lightning bolts for strings and a Liberty Torch.

Martin hopes to carry the idea further by initiating a charitable project either local to the Nazareth area or on a broader national scale with Martin dealers. Stay tuned!
Eric's Special Case

In a 2004 Vanity Fair Magazine interview, Eric Clapton was asked “If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?” and he replied: “A Martin OM-45!” This deluxe case was commissioned in collaboration with Tom Dougherty of TKL Cases to house the guitar Eric was referring to – his custom OM-45 made in 2001. Apparently Eric likes the case as much as the guitar, as it graces the cover of his new CD “Back Home.”

Living The Creative Life

Morning, Noon and Night is an enthralling look into the creative mind of beloved singer/songwriter/guitarist Judy Collins, a woman known for her songs, books and watercolors. In this book, Judy carefully describes her approach to the creative process, breaking down each day of that process into morning, noon and night. It offers readers an insight into how they can remain creative throughout the entire day. As Judy says, “Creativity is natural to all of us.”

Rik Palieri

Folksinger/songwriter/guitarist/storyteller/master of ceremonies and author Rik Palieri was picked to assist Gene Shay as co-MC of this year’s Philadelphia Folk Festival (above). While the bands were in between sets, Rik kept the audience enthralled with stories and short performances on his Martin D-42. During the year, he tours a good deal and is a regular participant with the German American Song Festival, more commonly known as the DAFT Tour. (See Page 13)

Al Boden

In the spirit of Skiffle king Lonnie Donegan, Al Boden (often joined by his band of “Organic Hillbillies”) has been performing his unique mixture of bluegrass, old time music and humor for nearly four decades throughout the hillsides of Great Britain, up Birmingham way. He owns eight Martin guitars and loves them all, but gravitates toward the D-41 that he’s owned for 32 years for his many performances. “Once seen, never forgotten!”

The Organic Hillbillies

The wacky but musically talented band of “Organic Hillbillies” that accompany Al Bode goes by first names only: Al, of course, on guitar, harmonica and vocals, Robert and Rita on dueling fiddles, Jean the Tea-Chest Queen on washtub bass, Janet on washboard and Pete on banjo, guitar and vocals.
Dottie Rambo

Dottie Rambo, recording artist and undisputed queen of gospel music, began writing songs at the age of eight near her Morganfield, Kentucky home. Her talent soon received widespread recognition, resulting in many invitations to sing in churches and at various public functions. The demand became so heavy that she left home to embark upon a full-time career of singing and composing music. A long-time Martin player and legendary songwriter, Dottie has published more than 2,500 songs and has crafted tunes for the likes of Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, Jerry Lee Lewis and Whitney Houston to name a few. She’s photographed above with her Martin M-38. Learn more at www.dotierambo.net.

Jonathan Rhys-Meyers

“Bend It Like Beckham” actor Jonathan Rhys-Meyers is also a talented singer and musician, having performed his own vocals in “Velvet Goldmine.” More recently he appeared in CBS Networks’ mini Series “Elvis.” He borrowed the replica Elvis D-18 and case cover from the Martin Museum to add authenticity to his performance.

Tia Sprocket

Tia Sprocket played drums with Ministry and toured with Luscious Jackson before recording her debut EP with Hank Williams III in Nashville. A multi-instrumentalist performer, she has shared the stage with the Pretenders, Sheryl Crow and Bonnie Raitt. She always loves to “lose herself” with the guitar as she’s doing here with her well-worn Martin DM. Check out her site at: www.myspace.com/tiasprocket.

Birth Of The Dreadnought

Happy to be holding their new Martin guitars and ukuleles purchased from the Chas. H. Ditson store in New York, the “Four Aristocrats” (above) smile after signing with the Vitaphone label in 1926. Pictured here (second from left) is one of the earliest X-braced Dreadnoughts Martin produced. The New York Ditson store was the exclusive and original home to the Dreadnought guitar, which it co-created and named, from 1916-1930.

John Woodland and Peter Kohman have been doing extensive research on the development of the Dreadnought for their upcoming book “The Birth Of The Dreadnought.” In the process they have uncovered many fascinating documents, photos and instruments from the early 1900s pertaining to the unusual collaboration between Frank Henry Martin, Harry Hunt (of the Chas. Ditson Company) and John Deichman (foreman of the Martin factory at that time). This trio is credited with the Dreadnought’s design and development. John Deichman is perhaps the most mysterious of the three. He maintained a strong influence at the company for nearly forty years. He is pictured below in a rare family photo.
A Delicate Subject Rarely Discussed

by Bill Bush

May I ask you a personal question?
Do you have...ahem...gas?

A friend of mine has gas so bad that it's wreaked (no pun intended) absolute havoc on his home life and strained his marriage to the breaking point.

By “gas” I’m referring, of course, to Guitar Acquisition Syndrome, a mental affliction which strikes literally thousands of otherwise sane men and women worldwide every year.

Now if you don’t believe that guitar acquisition syndrome (or “collecting” as it’s politely called) qualifies as a Schedule One Neurosis, then you are simply deluding yourself — which, incidentally, is one of the classic symptoms of the disease.

As a service to Martin players, I’d like to review a few of those symptoms with you here.

Uncontrollable Urges. People with gas want every nice Martin they see — and they want it now. They just can’t control themselves. After awhile, it’s not enough to own one clean example of, say, a pre-war D-28. They want a D-28 from every single year since 1934 to the present. Or they want every limited edition model. Or every 000-18 built in 1950. It’s always one-of-every-something. I’ve seen this same obsessive/porker behavior manifested among collectors of Elvis whiskey decanters.

Delusional Thinking. Gas often causes a complete clouding of rational thought processes. For example, gas sufferers often delude themselves into thinking they are making an “investment” which somehow justifies cashing in a life insurance policy or little Billy’s college fund to make the down payment on a 1941 D-45. Now that might be a very smart investment. But gassers know deep down that they have absolutely no intention of ever selling that D-45 — at any price. Funny, you never run into this kind of “investor” down Charles Schwab.

Paranoia. This usually occurs very late at night after an especially costly or unusual purchase. Lucky you. You’ve literally stumbled onto this cream-puff 1959 D-28 at the flea market with a stunning German silver spruce top. Not a scratch on it; looks almost new. Sure, it was a stretch to buy it from the geezer in the old station wagon, but, hey, how often do you run across a beauty like this? At 2 AM you bolt upright out of a sound sleep, eyes wide open, sweat trickling down your face, a burning question screaming in your mind: why DON’T you run across a beauty like this?!!!!!!! Did Martin really use German silver spruce tops in 1959? Come to think of it, have you ever seen a Martin with a German silver spruce top? Would you know what a German silver spruce top even looks like? Is it a re-top?!? Is it a real Martin?!? It’s the middle of the night so you can’t call anybody at Martin who might actually know. Maybe somebody is working late at the factory. Should you call? Nighty nite.

Excessive Prevarication. A fancy word for lying — and oh, can gassers lie! The examples are rich and inventive:

• “I don’t really want the guitar for myself. I’d like to donate it to the orphanage to, hopefully, bring some small measure of joy to the little children.”
• “No, honey I did not buy another guitar.”
• “Heck, I can buy it from Gruhn for half that price!”
• “Heck, I can sell it to Gruhn for twice that price!”
• “No, honey, I did not buy another guitar.”
• “No, honey, I did not buy another guitar.”

Lying is usually accompanied by all sorts of devious behavior, including:

• Shipping a secretly-purchased guitar to a friend’s house so that you can later sneak it into your house under the cover of darkness without your spouse ever knowing it.
• Disguising checks sent to Gruhn Guitars, Mandolin Brothers and Elderly Instruments by making phony or cryptic check stub entries: “George’s Garage: Transmission Part #19230042;” “Mandolin Appreciation Society: Lifetime Membership;” “Home For The Elderly: Generous Donation.”
• Telling the family you’re “going trout fishing” — in Nazareth, Pennsylvania. (You’re fishing, alright, but it ain’t for trout.)
• Giving your wife a $22,000 Gene Autry D-45 Limited Edition as an “anniversary gift.”
• Hoarding old Martin catalogs as if real guitars were actually folded into the pages.

And on and on and on it goes. Isn’t having gas wonderful?!  

Bill Bush is an advertising writer/producer and music journalist whose articles have appeared in Guitar Player, Frets, Flatpicking Guitar, Acoustic Guitar, Pennsylvania Heritage, The Guitar Player Book (Grove Press), Artists Of American Folk Music (Quill Books), and liner notes for EMI/Capitol Records, Folk Era, and Bear Family Records. He’s had (gas) for years. This article is an edited version of the original that appeared in Flatpicking Guitar Magazine.
Martin’s Return To Markneukirchen
After 172 Years, An Emigrated Son Is Reunited With His Homeland

In 1833, the guitarmaker Christian Frederick Martin left his hometown in Markneukirchen, Germany and began his journey to America. At that time, nobody even remotely suspected that this decision would lead to the foundation of the world’s most respected maker of acoustic instruments. Today not many know of the 30-year dispute that prompted his departure, a dispute that had not been addressed or rectified until now.

On October 11, 2005 the exhibition “Christian Friedrick Martin and the Guitar Making in the Vogtland in 1800-1833” opened, documenting the art of guitarmaking in Saxony and the conflict between Martin and the Violin Maker’s Guild. The exhibition reunites the legacy of C. F. Martin with his homeland after more than 170 years.

In collaboration with the faculty of “Making of Musical Instruments” at the West Saxony College at Zwickau and C. F. Martin & Co. in Nazareth, Pennsylvania, displays for the first time in Germany, the roots and career of the young guitarmaker and later founder of the Martin Guitar Company in one coherent presentation. The exhibit shows a number of historic guitars that represent the traditions of guitarmaking in Saxony at the beginning of the 19th century as well as a variety of historic and current designs of Martin’s instrument making tradition.

In addition, the opening of the exhibition was accompanied by a presentation and thorough investigation of the historic dispute between Markneukirchen’s cabinet makers and the Violin Maker’s Guild. Katherina Muck of AMI in Munich - the Martin distributor for Germany - gave an in-depth talk about C. F. Martin, Sr.’s transition from Germany to America followed by a general overview of Martin’s many contributions to music and American culture.

Other presenters addressed the circumstances and conditions of guitarmaking in the region at that time. The Grand Opening concluded with a musical concert and celebration by the German American Song Festival known in Germany as the Deutsch Amerikanisches Folksänger Treffen on Tour (DAFT). Performers included Annie Wenz, Rik Palieri, Lowry Hamner and Frank Matheis of the USA with Robert Williams, Martina Höfer and Wilfried Mengs of Germany.

This initiative was inspired by a DAFT Tour concert in June of 2003 held in the courtyard of the Musical Instrument Museum in Markneukirchen.

In cooperation with WorldStrings Promotion in Phoenix, Arizona, and Laura Records in Eisenberg, Thuringia, a group of folk singers from both Germany and the United States came together for a concert tour throughout various German states. Sounding Board Volume 17 featured an article about this special event.

Among the goals of the exhibit coordinators, Professor Andreas Michel and Bernd Haeber, was to restore an appreciation for Martin in Markneukirchen and to open a new chapter in the book of German-American relationships. It has long been their desire to establish Markneukirchen as an attraction for musicians and lovers of guitarmaking from all over the world. The exhibition has drawn fans of Martin guitars to the birthplace of C. F. Martin, Sr. and has educated visitors about the great diversity of traditional musical instrument making in Saxony today.

Martin is especially thankful to the town of Markneukirchen and to the exhibit organizers for the great honor.

For everyone in Nazareth, the Markneukirchen heritage is viewed with great reverence. Finally their emigrated son has returned with honor to his beloved homeland. 🎸
OM-45 Deluxe Edition Pays Tribute To “King Of The Cowboys” Roy Rogers

Singer. Musical innovator. Movie star. Television pioneer. Roy Rogers was an American original whose talent and honesty shined in a career that spanned more than 60 years, and his legacy continues to shine today, eight years after his passing.

For most of his fabled career, Roy Rogers played a very special Martin guitar. Roy's 1930 OM-45 Deluxe - one of only 14 made - featured a unique floral inlay on the pickguard. Roy cherished this guitar throughout his life. Today it is a featured exhibit at the Roy Rogers-Dale Evans Museum in Branson, Missouri.

To commemorate the legacy of Roy Rogers, the most popular and enduring of all the cowboy stars, C. F. Martin & Co. introduces the OM-45 Roy Rogers Limited Edition guitar. This spectacular guitar recreates Roy's own OM-45 Deluxe and will be available in two versions: one with back, sides and headplate of rare pre-CITES Brazilian rosewood, of which 14 will be built to match the number of original OM-45 Deluxes Martin produced in 1930, and a second with back, sides and headplate of East Indian rosewood, limited to 84 instruments. The edition total of 98 guitars memorializes 1998, the year of Roy's passing.

Born Leonard Slye, Roy Rogers was raised in rural Ohio where he played mandolin and called square dances at local gatherings. In 1930, he moved to California, working jobs as varied as highway construction and peach picking to pay the bills. He learned to accompany himself on guitar and in 1931 appeared on “Midnight Frolic,” a radio show featuring amateur talent broadcast on KMCS in Inglewood.

Roy's radio appearance netted him a place in the Rocky Mountaineers, the first of several groups with which he sang and played during the next two years. In late 1933, he joined forces with Bob Nolan and Tim Spencer to found the Sons of the Pioneers. The group’s solid harmonies, fine original material (including “Cool Water” and “Tumbling Tumbleweeds”) and - with the addition of brothers Hugh and Karl Farr - impressive instrumental chops made it a seminal force in popularizing Western Swing. By 1936, the Sons of the Pioneers were featured on radio shows distributed throughout the United States, were recording for Decca and OKeh, and were appearing in western movies.

In 1937, Roy Rogers auditioned for Republic Pictures as a possible replacement for singing cowboy Gene Autry and was signed to a movie contract. The next year he played the lead role in “Under Western Stars.” The film was a hit and Roy Rogers suddenly was a movie star.

Over the next 14 years, Roy became the “King of the Cowboys,” appearing in more than 80 westerns as well as keeping a packed schedule of radio, concert (with the Sons of the Pioneers) and personal appearances. After his first wife Arlene died in 1946, leaving him with three small children, Roy fell in love with Dale Evans, his co-star in several pictures. The two were married in late 1947. Roy and Dale expanded the family with children of their own and went on to celebrate their 50th anniversary.

After co-starring with Bob Hope in “Son of Paleface,” Roy tackled a new medium: television. The Roy Rogers Show premiered on NBC in 1951 and remained a Sunday night favorite for six years. Dale Evans co-starred in the show and also wrote its theme song, “Happy Trails.”

In his later years, Roy devoted himself to business, investing in real estate and establishing a chain of Roy Rogers Restaurants in the 1980s. He also founded the Roy Rogers-Dale Evans Museum near his home in Apple Valley (precursor to the current museum in Missouri) to showcase a lifetime of show business keepsakes and often greeted visitors personally. He was the first person to be elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame twice, first in 1980 as an original member of the Sons of the Pioneers and again in 1988 in recognition for his own contributions to country music.

The OM-45B Roy Rogers Brazilian and OM-45 Roy Rogers Limited Editions feature impressive Martin Golden Era specifications throughout; only the variety of rosewood differentiates the two. The top is crafted with rare premium quality Adirondack spruce and supported by 1/4” scalloped Adirondack spruce braces. The long scale, 1-3/4” (at the nut) genuine mahogany neck showcases the Golden Era modified-V neck profile, solid square tapered headstock and elongated diamond volute. A black African ebony fingerboard and matching 1936 style black African ebony bridge add to the classic vintage character.

Style 45 abalone pearl accents
border the top, back and sides. The top and rosette abalone inlays are flanked by traditional black and white dyed holly wood line inlays; the back and sides inlay are flanked by wood fiber line inlays. Top, back, sides, headstock and fingerboard are bound with grained ivoroid, with the latter two also inset with mitered wood fiber inlays. Grained ivoroid is also utilized for the heelcap and endpiece. Additional vintage touches include Old Style 45 multicolored mosaic back strip, linen side reinforcement strips, fossilized ivory nut and through saddle and Old Style fossilized ivory bridge pins and endpin topped with 4mm black pearl dots.

The beveled and polished tortoise-color teardrop pickguard bears a recreation of the floral abalone inlay unique to Roy Rogers’ original OM-45 Deluxe. Also true to original OM-45 specifications, the bridge wings boast snowflake inlays and the headstock features the classic antique Martin torch inlay. The Golden Era® Style 45 snowflake pattern graces the fingerboard, with Roy Rogers’ signature inlaid between the 19th and 20th frets. Gold Waverly tuners with butterbean knobs, subtle amber shading on the top and polished gloss finish throughout complete the OM-45 Roy Rogers Limited Edition’s vintage look. Although this guitar is not available with electronics, left-handed instruments may be ordered with no additional charge.

Protected by a heavy-duty Geib-style hardshell case, each OM-45B Roy Rogers Brazilian Limited Edition and OM-45 Roy Rogers Limited Edition guitar bears a special “sheriff’s star” interior label personally signed by Roy Rogers’ son, Roy “Dusty” Rogers, Jr., and Martin Chairman, C. F. Martin IV. Each label will be numbered in sequence with the total of that version of the Limited Edition. After orders are taken for the entire edition, Martin will post the names of participating Martin dealers on its website, www.martinguitar.com.

An early promotional photograph of Roy Rogers (above) shows Roy with his OM-45 Deluxe (Serial #42125). One of only 14 made, lucky Roy bought it in a pawn shop for $30! Today, the priceless instrument (shown below) resides at the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Museum in Branson, Missouri. The Commemorative Edition OM-45B Roy Rogers guitar in Brazilian rosewood (left) is a close Golden Era® replica of the original.
Black To White
Eric Clapton And Hiroshi Fujiwara Create The Bellezza Bianca

In the summer of 2004, C. F. Martin introduced the Bellezza Nera, a spectacular black 000 guitar with silver accents collaboratively designed by British guitar legend Eric Clapton and Japanese fashion and music trendsetter Hiroshi Fujiwara. It proved to be a huge hit: a total of 476 of these visually and sonically inspired guitars were produced, among the most popular limited editions in Martin history.

In the 18 months since their masterpiece debuted, these two creative forces have barely slowed down to savor its success. Fujiwara brought out new clothing and accessory designs for both Tabletop™ by Hiroshi Fujiwara and Unsqueaky,™ and released two albums: “Classic Dub Classics,” a very contemporary take on classical music, and “Untitled,” a selection of post-modern blues featuring Eric Clapton. Clapton continued his exploration of blues master Robert Johnson with his CD/DVD “Me And Mr. Johnson” (featuring the Bellezza Nera on the CD cover), released “Back Home,” a relaxed, upbeat album of rock and pop, and reunited with former Cream bandmates Ginger Baker and Jack Bruce for a triumphant series of reunion concerts in London (documented on DVD and CD) and New York.

Clapton and Fujiwara also finished work on their next guitar collaboration for Martin; a sister instrument to the Bellezza Nera, but in creamy white, with a touch of black and pearl for dramatic effect. As beautiful as its predecessor in appearance and tone, this stunning 000 guitar could only be called Bellezza Bianca (“White Beauty”).

The twosome opted for a unique combination of solid tonewoods to give the new model a sound as distinctive as its look. The Bellezza Bianca features a top crafted from bookmatched Engelmann spruce, treasured by players and guitar builders alike for its clear, full tone and outstanding balance. Scalloped 5/16” top braces enhance the top’s dynamic range. Bigleaf flamed maple back and sides contribute bright timbre and impressive projection. The 1-3/4” (at the nut) modified V-shape neck with diamond volute is carved from genuine mahogany.

Polished gloss white finish on the body and neck provide the perfect “canvas” for Bellezza Bianca’s striking appointments. The distinctive rosette of “slotted diamonds” inlaid on a black background first seen on Bellezza Nera looks even better on Bellezza Bianca. Fine pattern herringbone purfling encircles the top and divides the back. Cream-colored grained ivoroid binding trims the top, back and side edges, with fine black/white/black line purfling accenting the back and sides. The grained ivoroid endpiece is likewise accented with black/white/black inlay. A beveled and polished black pickguard continues the black and white theme.

Like the Bellezza Nera, Bellezza Bianca’s bound and polished black African ebony headplate showcases the “alternative torch” inlay – a design created for one of the first Martin 00-45s in 1902 – in vibrant abalone pearl and special sterling silver-plated mini tuners with sterling silver-plated buttons. The bound black African ebony fingerboard, highlighted by mitered black/white line inlay, bears Martin Style 45 snowflake position markers from the 1st to the 17th fret, and “Bellezza Bianca” in script between the 19th and 20th frets.

To assure superb tone, Bellezza Bianca is fitted with a bone nut and compensated bone saddle. Carved from black African ebony, the belly bridge comes equipped with black ebony bridge pins inlaid with abalone pearl dots; a matching pearl-inlaid ebony endpin is also included.

Fitting for such a unique white guitar, each Bellezza Bianca is delivered in a distinctive white Geib style case with white plush lining and features a special white interior label signed by Eric Clapton, Hiroshi Fujiwara, Martin Artist Relations head Dick Boak and Martin Chairman C. F. Martin IV. C. F. Martin dealers and distributors will accept orders for the Eric Clapton/Hiroshi Fujiwara Bellezza Bianca Limited Edition until March 20, 2006.

After the ordering period concludes, the size of the edition and the names of participating Martin dealers will be listed on the Martin website at: www.martinguitar.com.

Thrilled with the outcome of their beautiful black “Bellezza Nera” design collaboration, Eric Clapton and Hiroshi Fujiwara wished to explore a similar model in white. Like John Lennon’s ivory lacquered piano, the Bellezza Bianca emerges with beauty and purity.

Composite Photo of Eric Clapton by Roy Kidney
Bellezza Bianca

Bellezza Nera
Scalloped “Hybrid” bracing enhances the full timbre of this tonewood combination. Body appointments are also similar, with a Style 45 rosette featuring a center ring of colorful paua shell, bold herringbone around the top, black/white back purfling around the back, grained ivoroid binding throughout, an HD Style zigzag back strip and a traditional OM teardrop polished and beveled tortoise-color pickguard.

The Spanish cedar neck with diamond volute is carved with playing comfort in mind, combining 1-11/16” width and low profile shape for easy fretting. The East Indian rosewood headplate sports Martin’s Old Style decal in silver rather than the familiar gold (another nod to the OM-28JM John Mayer Signature Edition) and nickel Gotoh open-gearied tuners with butterbean knobs. The black African ebony fingerboard highlights 1/8” mother of pearl position markers at the 5th, 7th (two), 9th, 15th and 17th frets, a unique 12th fret position marker of two dots flanking a slotted square, and John Mayer’s signature inlaid in mother of pearl between the 19th and 20th frets.

Style 45 white bridge pins and endpin are inlaid with abalone dots. The black African ebony bridge is fitted with a compensated TUSQ saddle, which combines with the factory-installed Martin Gold Plus Natural electronics for accurate, natural amplified sound. Adding to the beauty of this instrument is the flawless finish; vintage toner on the top, polished gloss nitrocellulose lacquer on the body and polished gloss on the headplate.

To provide a touch of his personal style to the OMJM John Mayer Special Edition guitar, John Mayer has created a unique art deco-inspired monogram, which is embroidered on the special vintage Geib Style hardshell case. Each guitar in this open series bears an interior label imprinted with the signatures of John Mayer and Martin Chairman C. F. Martin IV, and individually numbered in sequence.

The Martin OMJM John Mayer Special Edition guitar will be available soon from authorized C. F. Martin dealers and distributors worldwide, listed at: www.martinguitar.com.

Back in 2002, John Mayer burst onto the national music scene with hits like “No Such Thing” and “Your Body is a Wonderland.” The following year, when Martin introduced the OM-28JM John Mayer Signature Edition, people who had heard of John Mayer – and even those who hadn’t – were enchanted by the guitar. Its quick neck, ultra-responsive Engelmann spruce top, silver-color line inlays and accents at the bridge and headstock, and unique fingerboard inlay proved as popular as the musician who designed it. The sizeable edition of 404 instruments sold out completely.

Fast-forward to the present. The release of Mayer’s “Heavier Things” album in late 2003 resulted in two more hit singles, “Bigger than My Body” and “Daughters,” the second of which won Grammys for “Song of the Year” and “Best Male Pop Vocal of the Year.” Touring in 2004 took him to Australia, Europe, Canada and across the United States and included a memorable performance at the Crossroads Guitar Festival.

In 2005 he joined forces with bassist Pino Palladino and drummer Steve Jordan to create the John Mayer Trio, playing electric blues in a series of sold-out shows: the two-night stand at the House of Blues in Chicago was recorded for “The John Mayer Trio Live in Concert,” an album released in November. He also took time out to perform at benefit concerts for Hurricane Katrina relief in Atlanta and New York.

In light of John Mayer’s expanding reputation and fan base, the number of OM-28JM John Mayer Signature Edition guitars produced began to look awfully small. So, C. F. Martin & Co. asked John Mayer if he would create a second namesake guitar, one with many of the same attributes as his first, but one that would be more affordable and more widely available in the tradition of the wildly popular Martin 000-28EC Eric Clapton. He would and he did: The OMJM John Mayer Special Edition.

Like its predecessor, the OMJM John Mayer Special Edition features a top of Engelmann spruce and back and sides of East Indian rosewood for warm, rich tone. Simple Beauty

The John Mayer OMJM Special Signature Edition
On September 3, 2005, Eric Clapton performed the song “Broken Hearted” from his album “Pilgrim” live on Larry King’s 3-hour Special in support of Victims of Hurricane Katrina. Eric invited John Mayer to back him up, and both performed with their Signature Model Martin acoustics. After the performance, Eric donated his 000-28EC (that he and John signed) to the Higher Ground Hurricane Relief Fund’s Charity Auction. The closing bid on the guitar was $42,300.
From the sonic textures of the Police to the jazzy contemporary sound of his solo work, Andy Summers is a guitar innovator. Rock, classical, jazz, Brazilian, and just about everything in between. If it can be played on an acoustic or electric guitar, Summers has played it and in doing so has expanded its horizons.

In recent years, and particularly after many acoustic guitar tours in Brazil, an acoustic guitar with the capability of “plugging in” became one of his primary instruments. With considerable experience of the problems and nuances of getting an acoustic guitar to come across in live performances, the proposal by C. F. Martin to create an Andy Summers Signature Edition was welcome. To build a guitar that plays well, overcomes the classic problems of getting an acoustic guitar amplified and has an appearance that is singular in design, Andy worked closely with Martin’s Dick Boak. The Martin 000C-28 Andy Summers Signature Edition shows how he and Martin met this challenge. It is an extraordinary guitar in every way.

The 000C-28 Andy Summers Signature Edition features a top with a unique black/white “chevron checkered” binding, while the back showcases a Style 45 multicolored back strip with distinctive black fiber borders. Accenting the soundhole is a triple-ring rosette with a central ring of fine herringbone. The back and sides are bound in ivoroid, the latter with mitered black/white fine line purfling. In a salute to Martin history – and because the combination looks so elegant – a black African ebony pyramid bridge graces the top, but a pickguard does not.

Up the neck, the solid, square tapered headstock combines Martin’s antique pressure stamp on the back with an ivoroid-bound, black/white mitered black African ebony headplate inlaid with the Lotus flower, the Buddhist symbol of purity, on the front. The matching ivoroid-bound and mitered black African ebony fingerboard is inlaid in mother of pearl with Buddhist “Mudra” (hand gesture) position markers at the 5th, 7th, 9th, 12th and 15th frets, the yin/yang symbol at the 17th fret and Andy Summer’s signature between the 19th and 20th frets.

Exquisite premium solid tonewoods add to the beauty of this guitar and contribute to its superb tone. The top is crafted from Italian alpine spruce, renowned for warmth, balance and impressive dynamic range, and matched to 5/16” scalloped bracing for clear definition. East Indian rosewood back and sides add outstanding projection. A one-piece neck of genuine mahogany contributes structural strength and stability.

Several design elements make the 000C-28 Andy Summers Signature Edition a player’s delight. The short 24.9” scale, 1-3/4” (at the nut) neck with modified low oval profile and low action allow for easy fretting, even on difficult chords. The 000 cutaway body insures full fingerboard access and playing comfort both sitting and standing (a chrome strap button is installed at the neck heel). Waverly open-gear nickel tuners with butterbean knobs contribute smooth, precise tuning. The factory-installed Fishman Ellipse™ Blend electronics with a mic/under-saddle pickup combination and on-board controls allows effortless amplification.

The crowning touch to the 000C-28 Andy Summers Signature Edition is the finish. Polished gloss lacquer finish on the guitar’s body highlights both the elegant appointments and the golden aging-toned top. The headplate likewise features a gloss finish, while the neck receives a satin finish.

Moving to London in his late teens, Andy Summers spent the late ’60s honing his guitar skills with a variety of London-based groups including Zoot Moneys Big Roll Band, Dantalions Chariot, the Soft Machine and Eric Burdon’s New Animals. His love and relationship with the guitar after this period continued with four years of classical guitar study at Northridge University in California. Subsequent to this period, Andy returned to London and within three years joined up with Stewart Copeland and Sting to form “The Police.” With this classic and legendary group, Andy achieved worldwide prominence and became one of the most copied guitarists of all time. The group enjoyed countless number one records around the world, several Grammys and numerous awards, eventually selling upward of eighty million records. Andy won the number one spot in Guitar Player Magazine for five years in a row and eventually was inducted into the Guitar Player Hall of Fame. In March 2003 the group was also inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Even before the Police ended, Summers began taking his guitar in new directions, recording two jazz/world music albums with King Crimson guitarist
Robert Fripp. He spent a brief period scoring soundtracks for motion pictures like “Down and Out in Beverly Hills” and “Weekend at Bernie’s” before embarking on a solo career with “XYZ,” an album released in 1987. Successive albums (13 in all) allowed him to combine jazz and world music in his own signature style. These also include tributes to Thelonious Monk and Charles Mingus, and collaborations with Victor Biglione of Brazil, John Etheridge of the UK and Ben Verdery, the New York classical guitarist with whom he performed at Carnegie Hall in March of this year. Touring consistently on a worldwide basis, Summers keeps an active profile. His most recent release is “The X Tracks,” a compendium of the best tracks from the past few years. In addition to his musical endeavors, Summers is a fine photographer and published author. His most recent book, “Light Strings: Impressions of the Guitar,” written with Ralph Gibson, was published in 2004. St. Martins press will release his autobiography “One Train Later” in October of 2006.

Delivered in a Geib-style hardshell case, each Martin 000C-28 Andy Summers Signature Edition guitar bears an interior label personally signed by Andy Summers and Martin Chairman C. F. Martin IV and is numbered in sequence with the edition total. Authorized C. F. Martin dealers will be accepting orders for this guitar until March 20, 2006. After the order period, Martin will post the names of participating Martin dealers on its website at [www.martinguitar.com](http://www.martinguitar.com).

“With this Martin edition, I wanted to create a special guitar that completely satisfies my demands as a performer. With the appointments and inlays, I wanted to express my personal sense of art, spirit and taste. I’m thrilled with the result and think you will be too!”

Andy Summers
As lead guitarist and principal songwriter for Bon Jovi, Richie Sambora has reached the pinnacle of rock and roll success. Among the most enduring bands of the past 20 years, Bon Jovi has sold more than 100,000,000 albums, packed stadiums throughout the world and built a worldwide following for its mix of powerful, tuneful rock anthems and big ballads.

But beyond the stage lights, Richie Sambora has shown a more eclectic musical persona. His two solo albums, “Stranger in Town” and “Undiscovered Soul,” are rich with emotion and introspection and range beyond rock to include blues and acoustic. Acoustic guitars are essential tools in his songwriting, and he usually reaches for one of the numerous Martins he owns. Two of his favorites are a 1902 parlor guitar and a rare 1930 OM-45. He also has a fondness for 12-string acoustics and often plays one in duet appearances with lead singer Jon Bon Jovi.

When Richie discussed ideas for a namesake Signature Edition with C. F. Martin, he suggested a double-neck 6-string and 12-string guitar but finally agreed two guitars would be better than one. While the Martin OMC-41 Richie Sambora and MC12-41 Richie Sambora Signature Editions draw their inspiration from his vintage OM-45, these spectacular, stage-worthy guitars have a style all their own.

The body sizes he selected: an OM for the 6-string and an M (0000) for the 12-string, each with a rounded cutaway, offer balanced tone and outstanding access to the upper frets. The premium solid tonewoods chosen also show a connoisseur’s appreciation for tone: tops of Italian alpine spruce for brilliance and richness, and backs and sides of Madagascar rosewood, the tone-wood considered by many to be closest in appearance, projection and clarity to now-rare Brazilian rosewood.

Appointments selected (and in a few cases created) for these guitars are equally stunning. The Style 41 top inlay and Style 45 rosette, both in select abalone, stand out against the top’s unique vintage tobacco (yellow to brown) “Sambora” sunburst. Top, back, headplate and fingerboard are bound in grained ivoroid, and all but the top feature inset black/white fine line inlays. The grained ivoroid end piece and heelcap have identical black/white fine line accents. The distinctive pyramid belly bridge with Stauffer point is carved from black African ebony. A black polished and beveled pickguard protects the top.

Unique inlays highlight both the black African ebony fingerboard and headplate. Beginning at the 1st fret and continuing to the 17th, small abalone hexagon position markers on the fingerboard are bordered with exclusive mother of pearl, which are in turn accented on both sides by delicate black line inlays. Richie Sambora’s inlaid signature appears between the 19th and 20th frets. The headplate showcases an exclusive “heart and cross” Martin torch inlay in abalone and mother of pearl inspired by a bracelet designed by Richie Sambora’s wife, actress Heather Locklear.

A low profile neck – 1-11/16” for the 6-string and 1-13/16” for the 12-string – with diamond volutes at the base of the headstock and the Martin stamp on the back combines a modern feel with classic appearance. Gotoh gold tuning machines with small knobs, and a bone nut and compensated TUSQ saddle provide smooth tuning and precise intonation. The bridge pins and endpin are fashioned from fossilized ivory and topped by colorful pearl dots.

As is evident from his Signature Edition guitars, Richie Sambora is a musician whose influences and creativity run deep. A native of New Jersey, he learned to play guitar after hearing Eric Clapton. He also admired the playing of Jimi Hendrix, Jeff Beck and the Beatles, and integrated subtle elements of their styles into his own. By the early 1980s, he had played with a series of groups, toured with Joe Cocker, been called to audition with KISS and worked as a studio musician.

Around the same time, singer Jon Bon Jovi recorded “Runaway” with a band of studio musicians, and the single became a local hit. Record contract in hand, he soon joined forces with drummer Tico Torres and keyboard player David Bryan to create the core of Bon Jovi. Richie Sambora talked his way into an audition after hearing that Bon Jovi was looking for a new guitarist. He became the last member to join the band. Bon Jovi refined its rock sound

Richie Sambora Hits The Stage With Two Elegant Martin Signature Editions
with two modestly successful albums. Then, in 1986, came "Slippery When Wet," which sold more than nine million copies and produced three hit singles co-written by Richie Sambora: “You Give Love A Bad Name,” “Livin' On A Prayer” and “ Wanted Dead or Alive.” The band quickly moved from small venues to stadium shows. “New Jersey,” Bon Jovi’s 1988 album, continued the winning streak, producing two more hit singles: “Bad Medicine” and “I’ll Be There For You.”

The 1990s were a decade of considerable turbulence for Bon Jovi, but the band recorded three albums and continued to play big shows. In 2000, it returned to the top with the album “Crush” and its singles “It’s My Life” and “Thank You for Loving Me.” It has been full speed ahead for Bon Jovi in the new century, with a memorable performance at the Concert for New York City, a five-CD boxed set “100,000,000 Bon Jovi Fans Can’t be Wrong,” and the recent release of the album and hit single “Have a Nice Day.” Bon Jovi kicked off a world tour in November of 2005, with Richie Sambora supplying the guitar magic.

The Richie Sambora Signature Editions are beautifully finished in polished gloss lacquer. Stage-ready, both the 6-string and the 12-string come factory-equipped with Martin Gold+Plus Natural 1 electronics and a gold strap button. Also included is a special vintage Geib-style hardshell case with green crushed velour interior.

Each Martin OMC-41 and MC12-41 Richie Sambora Signature Edition guitar comes with an interior label personally signed by Richie Sambora and C. F. Martin IV. In addition, each guitar will be individually numbered in sequence with the edition total. The edition size of either model will not exceed two hundred instruments.

Authorized Martin dealers will begin taking orders for the OMC-41 and MC12-41 Richie Sambora Signature Editions immediately. The names of participating dealers will be posted on the Martin website at:

POW★MIA Edition Honors Sacrifice For America
“To Those We Have Lost, You Are Not Forgotten.”

One of the most difficult things to do is to say goodbye to a loved one, a friend, or anyone else who has been a special part of your life in one way or another. Can you imagine what it must be like for a family to not know the fate of a loved one?

“To those we have lost, you are not forgotten” is the theme that inspired a small group of Martin employees to design an instrument dedicated to the families of American servicemen and women who were held in captivity or are still missing in action - the POW MIA Dreadnought Special Edition Model.

This classic 14-fret Martin Dreadnought is crafted of premium, solid tonewoods - mahogany back and sides and Sitka spruce top with scalloped "hybrid" bracing. The body is finished in elegant black polished lacquer.

To contrast the black top, the soundhole is surrounded with a single ring of standard paua shell inlay. White Boltaron binding is used to outline and protect the top and back edges; the side inlay consists of thin black-white-black fiber. A Style 45 thick black mosaic backstrip joins the two-piece back.

The POW MIA modified low oval neck is comprised of genuine mahogany with a 1-11/16\\" neck width at the nut. Neck appointments include a black Corian nut matched by a black Micarta saddle and a black ebony belly bridge with abalone inlaid black bridge pins and endpin. In addition, the solid, square-tapered headstock is fitted with Gotoh chrome tuners with large knobs.

The truly touching appointments of the POW MIA Dreadnought Special Edition relate to the block, headplate and black ebony fingerboard. The laser engraving on the block reads “POW★MIA All Gave Some, Some Gave All.” In addition, the POW MIA flag with the slogan “You Are Not Forgotten” is displayed below the raised silver foil “C. F. Martin & Co.” logo on the black ebony headplate. An eagle with a waving, eight-star flag is inlaid in mother of pearl at the 1st fret of the fingerboard. This eagle with flag design was created by Martin employee Matthew Rinker as a lasting tribute to his father Barry Rinker. Barry Rinker was a dedicated Martin employee for 35 years and was very proud of both his service to our company and to our country. He was a United States Marine Corps Sergeant from 1963-1967 who served in Vietnam from 1964 to 1965, and his name was inscribed on the wall of honor for deceased veterans from Pennsylvania’s Lehigh and Northampton counties. The eight stars on the flag symbolize Barry’s unexpected death on the 8th day of the 8th month (August) 2002.

The POW MIA theme is further exemplified in the fingerboard with additional mother of pearl inlays: P O W from the 3rd to 5th frets, a small five-pointed star at the 6th fret, M I A from the 7th to 9th frets, double tear drops at the 12th fret, a single tear drop at the 15th and 17th frets and the Prisoner of War ribbon is suggested in colored pearl between the 19th and 20th frets. The Prisoner of War Medal and ribbon were issued only to those United States military personnel who were taken prisoner and held captive after April 5, 1917.

Delivered in a specially designed United States flag-themed case with black hardware, each Martin POW MIA Dreadnought Special Edition bears an interior label signed by Martin Chairman and CEO C. F. Martin IV and is numbered in sequence. In addition, a stainless steel bracelet will be sent to the original owner upon completion of the Martin warranty. POW MIA bracelets were first worn during the 1970s to draw attention to the prisoners and missing in action during the Vietnam War. They were engraved with the name, rank, service, loss date and country of loss. The bracelet accompanying this guitar will be engraved as follows:

“UNTIL THEY ALL COME HOME”

C. F. MARTIN & CO., INC.

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of each POW MIA guitar will be donated to the National Alliance of Families for the Return of America’s Missing Servicemen and Women. The mission of this group is to account for all prisoners of war that were left behind at the end of World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War I and the Persian Gulf War II.

Orders for the POW MIA Dreadnought Special Edition are
being accepted immediately, and the guitars will begin to appear in stores during the spring of 2006. In addition, detailed views and a participating dealer list will be posted on the Martin website at: www.martinguitar.com

The POW MIA Dreadnought Special Edition serves as an extraordinary complement to the DVM Dreadnought Veterans Special Edition Model. While it honors American servicemen and women who were captured and imprisoned, it also represents our commitment to the families of those who are still missing. These brave servicemen and women deserve to return home with honor and dignity.

In Memory Of Barry Rinker 1943-2002

The POW MIA project pays special tribute to Barry Rinker, a United States Marine Corps Sergeant and Vietnam veteran. In addition to being a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, Barry was a highly valued and loved coworker at Martin for 35 years, having worked in many positions including his positions as Shipping Manager and Plant Manager for Martin production when he passed away in 2002. His guitar manufacturing expertise, his dry sense of humor and his passion for Penn State football will forever be missed at C. F. Martin & Co., Inc.
Where’s FeLiX? Back At Martin, Of Course!

That Wonderful Cat Teams Up With Martin
For Another Wonderful FeLiX Limited Edition Guitar

Due to the overwhelming success of our first Felix The Cat Limited Edition guitar, Martin is proud to introduce a second – and totally different – Felix The Cat Limited Edition.

This new special version of Martin’s Little Martin LXM features all new Felix The Cat graphics from the studio of Don Oriolo, renowned artist, composer, arranger and son of Felix’s co-originator, Joe Oriolo.

It also includes an assortment of Felix “case candy” including a special red “laughing Felix” pick backed with the distinctive C. F. Martin & Co., Felix The Cat and Don Oriolo logos. In addition, a colorful miniature comic book is included featuring Felix’s band (“Felix & The Cats”) on the cover playing both of the Martin Felix Edition guitars.

In keeping with Felix’s keep-em-guessing personality and penchant for tricks, Don and fellow artist Jen Henning have created a hilarious “Where’s Felix!” motif for the top graphics. Over 100 miniature Felix figures in various poses are depicted, but with only one Felix holding a red Martin pick (and good luck finding it!). A “laughing Felix” on the black headstock under the C. F. Martin & Co. scroll logo completes the graphics.

Each guitar comes with its own high quality black travel gig bag with embroidered Felix logo. And, each guitar is personally signed by Don Oriolo and Martin Chairman and CEO C. F. Martin IV.

The overall result is a striking and irresistible companion to the first Felix edition. Fun. Colorful. And if it’s anything like its predecessor, very collectable. The first edition of 756 guitars sold out quickly, and the Felix II, limited to no more than 625 guitars, is expected to do the same.

Since the early 1900s when he first pawed his way into the homes and hearts of kids everywhere, Felix The Cat has remained one of the most enduring and endearing cartoon characters in history. To his legions of fans worldwide, however, Felix is more than a nostalgic piece of Americana – he’s an attitude, a philosophy of fun and sly wit, a faithful friend who can always be counted on for a chuckle and a surprise.

We think he’s the perfect spokescat for one of Martin’s most fun and versatile instruments.

The Felix II Little Martin combines a compact “0” tenor–shaped body with an adjustable, modified low oval 14-fret neck and a 23” scale. And while it is an ideal guitar for travel, practice or student use, it is still very much a Martin in tone and quality, built with state-of-the-art technology and materials.

The top, back and sides are constructed of black HPL (high pressure laminate) materials for durability; the top and back are reinforced with Sitka spruce braces for tone. The easy to play neck is constructed of Stratabond multi-ply wood laminate and features a black Micarta fingerboard, bridge, nut and saddle. Quality Gotoh “Cosmo Black” tuning machines imprinted with the CFM logo are used to hold the genuine Martin phosphor bronze strings (absolutely no cat gut is used).

Whether you’re a cat lover or not, this beautiful little feline is the purrrfect guitar for players, collectors and Felix fans.
The Ballad of C. F. Martin
©2005 by Nigel Foote

In eighteen thirty-three
Christian Frederick Martin
Made his first guitar in New York town
All the way from Saxony
With a wife, young son, and daughter
He made the best of what the family found

And he made guitars in the back room of
The old shop on Hudson Street
No violin was ever more of a masterpiece
But December brought memories
Of Christmas trees in Germany
And tears fell to the snow that Christmas Eve

In six years they moved away
To Nazareth, Pennsylvania
Bought some acres up on Cherry Hill
And the Country roads and lanes
Reminded them of Markneukirchen
And the people of a place from whence they came

And he made guitars that made his father proud
That they carried the family name
Though others tried, they never sounded quite the same
And a young man worked by his side
In shavings of Spruce and Rosewood
And the mystery and secrets of the grain

And the wind in the Pine
Still sings beneath my fingers
To a moon that sails an Ebony sky
And through each Grandson in line
Your memory lingers
Through the hands that make these instruments shine

In '59 they moved to town
Settled down on North and Main Streets
Built a factory and followed their peaceful ways
While the war around them raged
And the chain-gangs moaned and hollered
And Lincoln won the freedom of the slaves

And you made guitars that now sing true and loud
To the words of the poet's pen
Singing, Freedom, Oh Freedom Over Me
And the folksongs of our time
From the Woodstock generation
Were born of your guitars and are blowing in the wind

On a cold February morning
In Nazareth, Pennsylvania
Word got 'round that the old man's hand lay still
And the townsfolk came a calling
Along with the undertaker
And they lay you down amongst the Daffodils

And he made guitars that made his father proud
That they carried the family name
Though others tried, they never sounded quite the same
And though the years have rolled away
You have cast your light for others
For upon these strings, your spirit sings today.
000-18 Golden Era® 1937

This fine Golden Era® model closely replicates Martin’s classic 000-18 model of the 1937 time period. The 000-18 Golden Era model combines premium grade genuine mahogany back and sides, an Adirondack red spruce soundboard, 1/4" scalloped Adirondack spruce bracing contoured in the Golden Era style, tortoise colored bindings, interior linen reinforcement side strips and a laminate cellulose nitrate tortoise colored pickguard with vintage coloration. The 000-18 Golden Era guitar is offered with either a natural finish or with a 1935 Style sunburst top at an additional charge.

D-45 Marquis®

The D-45 Marquis is a Style 45 14-fret Dreadnought crafted with pre-war Golden Era appointments and woods that include Adirondack red spruce for the soundboard and genuine black ebony for the fingerboard and bridge. Like all Marquis series instruments, East Indian rosewood is utilized for the back, sides and headplate.

D-45 Marquis guitars feature Style 45 abalone bordering, grained ivoroid bindings, vintage snowflake fingerboard inlays, fossil ivory nut and saddle, Waverly® gold tuners with butterbean knobs and an abalone inlaid Golden Era Style 45 headplate.
Traditional Tributes and Bold Custom Shop Designs

Arts and Crafts Limited Edition

After visiting the famed Gamble House, Greene and Greene’s architectural masterpiece in Pasadena, California, Chris Martin was inspired to pay tribute to the Arts and Crafts movement with this special herringbone Dreadnought. Constructed with rare solid flamed mahogany back and sides and a heavily bearclawed Sitka spruce top, this Arts and Crafts Edition, limited to no more than 100 special guitars, combines a ginko leaf fingerboard inlay motif inlaid in gold mother of pearl, a herringbone rosette, a unique “leatherlam” pickguard, triple rosewood “bowtie” dovetails on the back and a Stauffer-style pointed pyramid bridge.

OMC Artinger Custom

This one-of-a-kind Custom Orchestra Model was made in collaboration with Pennsylvania-based luthier Matt Artinger. It breaks away from Martin tradition on several fronts, featuring an elliptical soundhole, an assymetrical bridge, a unique variation of hollow hexagon inlays for the fingerboard, a softly contoured armrest on the lower bass side bout, a side port, a scalloped nut, and flamed koa trim throughout. The sides and back are bookmatched from East Indian rosewood, and the top of bear-clawed Adirondack spruce is bordered with a band of abalone pearl. Stay tuned for future out-of-the-box collaborations with this gifted instrument maker.
Two New 16 Series Aura Equipped Jumbo Cutaways

JC-16ME Aura (Maple)
This Jumbo cutaway addition to the 16 Series features a polished gloss lacquered body, European flamed maple back and sides and a solid Sitka spruce top. The fingerboard and bridge are crafted from striped Macassar ebony. Each JC-16ME is equipped with the acclaimed Fishman onboard Aura™ sound reinforcement system. The Aura™ is capable of blending your choice of six acoustic sound images with the Martin Gold Plus under-the-saddle transducer.

JC-16RE Aura (Rosewood)
Like its maple counterpart shown at left, the JC-16RE Aura features a polished gloss body, a solid Sitka spruce top and a fingerboard and bridge crafted from striped ebony. The key difference is the selection of East Indian rosewood for the back and sides, yielding a warm, resonant tone. Each JC-16RE comes with Fishman’s onboard Aura™ for unequaled studio quality sound. Aura™ features include programmable digital EQ, feedback control and chromatic tuning.
New Bass and 6-String Acoustic Electric Cutaways

00C-16GTAE Acoustic Electric Bass
Crafted with solid mahogany back and sides and a Sitka spruce soundboard, this new addition to Martin’s line of acoustic basses blends a thin 00 cutaway body for player comfort with the specially calibrated onboard Fishman Prefix Pro Bass sound reinforcement system. Simply appointed with a bold herringbone rosette, black bindings and a gloss lacquered top, the 00C-16GTAE bass is ideal for on-stage use.

XC1T Ellipse Cutaway
Designed by Martin’s Women and Music Group, the new XC1T blends the attractive figured wood grain pattern of “Tawny Satinwood” high pressure laminate back and sides with a solid Sitka spruce top. This 14-fret 000 cutaway is rosetted with a unique inlay, laser cut from contrasting East Indian rosewood, maple and koa. With an onboard Fishman Ellipse Blend system and a light-weight zero gravity case, this stage model is perfect for the musician on the go.
I can’t remember if I cried
When I read about his widowed bride
But something touched me deep inside
The day the music died

– an eight-minute twenty-seven-second farewell, written on a D-28, 1971
Martin’s New Clapton’s Choice Strings

C. F. Martin and Company is proud to introduce a new line of acoustic guitar strings, Clapton’s Choice Phosphor Bronze. The Clapton’s Choice Phosphor Bronze guitar strings have a distinctively clear, warm tone with a hint of brightness that can highlight the subtleties of any player’s style. Live or in the studio, these strings deliver the kind of performance expected by Eric Clapton.

These new strings, available in light and medium gauged sets, were inspired by guitar legend Eric Clapton, who has worked with Martin on six signature guitars. The first Eric Clapton limited edition was the 000-42EC. Introduced in 1995, all 461 guitars sold out within days. Since then, Martin and Clapton have collaborated on the 000-28EC (1996), the 000-42ECB (2000), the 000-28ECB (2002), the Bellezza Nera (2004) and the Bellezza Bianca (2006).

Playing these exquisitely crafted Martin guitars, Clapton noted the superior strings that Martin manufactures for its instruments. The Clapton’s Choice Phosphor Bronze guitar strings are the result of this long-term successful partnership between the largest and most respected manufacturer of acoustic guitars in America and one of the world’s greatest guitarists.

The Phosphor Bronze Light, MEC-12 Light, is ideally suited for auditorium, orchestra models and other smaller body sized guitars and fingerstyle playing. The Phosphor Bronze Medium, MEC-13 Medium, is excellent for larger body guitars (like the Dreadnought) and popular for flat picking and strumming. These two new 6-string sets have a suggested retail price of $13.75 each.

Clapton’s Choice Guitar Strings are available through all authorized Martin Guitar dealers.

“When I play acoustic guitar, whether in a studio or on stage, these Martin strings are my choice. They deliver the sound that I demand.”
Eric Clapton

Tim Teel, Ed Golden and Bert Germick of Martin made their seasonal trek to visit Rob Ketch (left) and Larry Fishman (right) of Fishman Transducers of Wilmington, Massachusetts. Fishman is the industry leader in sound reinforcement, and the two companies closely confer on new product ideas.

This quirky Martin ad from the early 1970s poked fun at guitar endorsement with a fictitious super-musician Bobby Joe Fenster. Sorry folks. While it was a great deal while they lasted, there are no more posters available – not even for a dollar. Quite collectable though!
Kid Rock and Jerry Lee Lewis
On October 24, 2005, Kid Rock and Jerry Lee Lewis relaxed backstage with a Martin herringbone HD-28V on the first day of “I Walk the Line - A Night for Johnny Cash,” held at the Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles.

Dave Matthews and Trey Anastasio
On September 20, 2005, Dave Matthews and Trey Anastasio teamed up with their Martin Signature models in support of Katrina Relief for the fundraiser “From the Big Apple to the Big Easy” held at Radio City Music Hall in New York.
Bronx In Blue

Some people think I grew up on Rock & Roll. Not so! When I was a kid, there was no Rock & Roll. In the early 50s – late at night – I’d tune in to Wheeling, West Virginia (WWVA) and listen to The Blues, Howling Wolf’s How Many More Years, Jimmy Reed’s Bright, Lights, Big City. After school, I’d run home to catch the last half hour of the Don Larkin Country Show comin’ out of Newark. I was a Hank Williams junkie. For me, puttin’ country and blues together – that’s what I call Rock & Roll. Black music, filtered through an Italian neighborhood, comes out with attitude. Rock & Roll. Yo! The Music on Bronx In Blue was the undercurrent of every song I did: Runaround Sue, The Wanderer, even the foot stompin’ on Ruby Baby I got from John Lee Hooker’s Walkin’ Boogie. Though I’ve been carrying these blues and country gems around in my head for the last fifty years, I recorded this CD in two days. No tricks. No musicians. No vocal overdubs. Just me, my trusty 000C black Martin, my baby 00-21 and the Hurdy Gurdy man on percussion. Yes, surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, in the spirit of the “Early Fathers of the Blues” cheering us on, with their blessing, we Rock!

Take a listen.

Art Garfunkel and Paul Simon

Old friends Art Garfunkel and Paul Simon joined fellow celebrities in a concert benefitting Katrina Relief in New York City. As always, Paul performed with his OM-42PS Signature model Martin.
Chuck Suchy

A full-time cattle farmer in Mandan, North Dakota, singer/songwriter Chuck Suchy (pronounced SOO-key) has recorded several albums of original material using his wonderful Martin D-18. Check out Chuck's recent release, “Evening In Paris” at www.chucksuchy.com. (Len Jaffe)

Sally Barris


Bill Danoff

Bill Danoff, who wrote “Afternoon Delight” for the Starland Vocal Band and co-wrote “Take Me Home, Country Roads” that made the late John Denver a star, works these days with a Martin Alternative X Grand Concert. Bill's latest compact disc is “I Guess He'd Rather Be In Colorado,” an album of the twelve songs he wrote that Denver recorded over the course of his career... and they sound great on that Martin! www.billdanoff.com. (Len Jaffe)

Jack Lawrence

Jack Lawrence, who's been playing guitar with the great Doc Watson for more than twenty years, counts on several Martin guitars in his collection, including this D-18 given to him by the legendary musician himself. Hear Jack's excellent solo work on his newest album, “I Don't Need The Whiskey Anymore.” Find it at: www.jacklawrence.com. (Len Jaffe)
Four Corners

Martin guitars were abundant at the **10th Annual Four Corners Folk Festival** in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, held from September 2nd through the 4th, 2005. Clockwise from above: Bluegrass legend **Del McCoury** with his vintage D-28, **Tony Furtado** with his 00-17, **Jon Stickley** of the **Broke Mountain Bluegrass Band** with his D-18, **Rick Moore** with his DC sunburst cutaway performing with **Mollie O’Brien** and **Rob Miller** of **Sweet Sunny South** with his D-28.
Guitarist Shawn Watkins of the popular acoustic band Nickel Creek joined his bandmates Sara Watkins (on violin) and Chris Thile (on mandolin) at Amoeba Music in Los Angeles. Shawn owns a number of Martin guitars that he uses for recording, including an 0-17T tenor, a vintage D-18, plus the Brazilian rosewood 000-28 he’s playing in the above photo.

Geoff Muldaur has been producing great music for decades accompanied by his pride and joy – a lovely 1935 00-40H model. Stay tuned, as Geoff is working with Martin on a special custom mahogany version of this 12-fret 00.

An avid collector and player of many Martin guitars, rocker Patti Smith performed at WXPN’s “All About the Music Festival” at Wiggins Park in Camden, New Jersey, in July of 2005 with her 000-18.

Geoff Muldaur

Rising star Madeleine Peyroux soothes her audiences with serene and quiet songs from her hit album “Careless Love” on what appears to be a vintage mahogany-topped Martin 00-15.
Ray LaMontagne

New Hampshire born Ray LaMontagne has been receiving a lot of deserved attention lately. After graduating from high school, he had no idea what he wanted to do. Four years later, while working long hours in a Lewiston, Maine, shoe factory, he was inspired when he heard Stephen Stills on the radio doing a song called “Tree Top Flyer” from the “Stills Alone” album. That song changed his life!

Ray quit his job and started learning the songs of Crosby, Stills & Nash, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Ray Charles and Otis Redding. Over a period of years he taught himself to sing “from the gut.”

In the summer of 1999, LaMontagne recorded his first demo — a collection of 10 songs. There was a little theater in town that would bring in folk acts. He brought his tape down to the owner, and soon Ray started getting gigs opening for people like Jonathan Edwards and John Gorka. It wasn’t long before Ray was discovered and signed by Chrysalis Publishing. They recorded his debut album “Trouble” that has received wide acclaim. Ray’s record label is ATO Records – the same label as John Mayer and Dave Matthews – so he’s in good company. Throughout his career, he’s been a Martin player, performing and recording with his J-40 Jumbo and D-35 Dreadnought Martin guitars. Check out Ray’s website at: [www.raylamontagne.com](http://www.raylamontagne.com).

Dishwalla

Rodney Cravens and JR Richards (left) of the rock band Dishwalla recently wrapped up sessions for their new self-titled studio album. JR has been performing and recording radio promos prior to his Dishwalla concerts with his Ellipse equipped HD-28VE Martin. Rodney has also been performing with Martin guitars. The band recently stopped by the Martin factory for a factory tour, to sample some new guitars and pose in front of their touring van for the above photo. By the way, Rodney is second from the right in the front row.
Neil Young - Prairie Wind

Neil Young’s new acoustic CD Prairie Wind was written and recorded in Nashville in the days preceding Neil’s surgery for a brain aneurysm in April of 2005. The good news is that the surgery went very well, and Neil has made a full recovery.

The Prairie Wind CD has been receiving rave reviews from all camps, and we certainly must add our accolades. The songs are fresh and clear – perhaps reminiscent of Neil’s acoustic oriented releases such as “Harvest” and “Harvest Moon.”

When you open up this new CD, you will find a booklet of lyrics. One of the best songs on the album (we are prejudiced) is called “This Old Guitar.” (See lyrics on opposite page.) Facing the lyrics is a photograph of Neil’s vintage D-28. This is the same D-28 that was formerly owned by Hank Williams, Sr.

Though Neil has opted to not collaborate (at this time) on a Martin Signature Edition, this song is perhaps even a greater and more sincere testament to his love of and preference for Martin guitars.

David Gray – Life In Slow Motion

This is David Gray’s eighth album. His fourth album White Ladder was so overwhelmingly good that it’s been hard for him to top. Here David explores new territory, abandoning past introspection and sparsity for more instrumentation and production. It’s done well though, and there are many jewels here to be discovered, including a good bit of fine acoustic guitar work with his 000C Custom model.

The Rowan Brothers – Now & Then

The Rowan Brothers have been thrilling audiences since the early ’70s. With their latest release, and without the help of brother Peter (except for some background vocals), Chris and Lorin, have put together an invigorating double disc laced with Martin acoustics – one with all new material and one with ’70s songs – featuring the likes of Jerry Garcia, Bill Kreutzmann, Jim Keltner and others.

Marty Stuart – Badlands Of The Lakota

While many country artists are struggling to define themselves, Marty Stuart hits the nail on the head twice in 2005: first with his brilliant gospel tribute “Soul’s Chapel,” and now with “Badlands,” a heartfelt dirge and appropriate commemoration of the Native American Lakota Sioux tribe’s peril and tragedy. Marty’s knowledge of the Lakota is personal and genuine, and so is the music he presents here.

Tone Poets – Various Artists

This long awaited Acoustic Disc release adds to David Grisman’s series of Tone Poem compilations designed to showcase great instruments. This particular one is special to us because the sole guitar used to record the album is a 1933 Martin OM-45, considered by many to be the ultimate in workmanship, scale and balanced tone. Blended with a Loar mandolin, these instrumentals shine.

Bob Dylan

Live From The Gaslight – 1962

This rare remastered live recording from Dylan’s most prolific and formative era is refreshing, mostly because of its surprisingly refined level of guitarmanship and vocal musicality. It’s so refreshing to hear the sparsity and clarity of Dylan’s Martin Dreadnought – a perfect complement for this young artist. Who ever knew what a legacy he would create.
Eric Clapton – Back Home
Following this past summers’s historic and heralded Cream reunion, this is Eric Clapton’s first album of original material in nearly five years. As always, Eric’s guitar playing is stellar. He’s joined by John Mayer, Billie Preston, Steve Winwood and a tight all-star band. One of the many high points is the cover of George Harrison’s “Love Comes To Everyone.” For Slow Hand fans, this is a must.

Paul McCartney
Chaos And Creation In The Back Yard
This is a surprising effort, even for Paul McCartney whose Sgt. Pepper’s tune “When I’m Sixty-four” is soon to become a reality. Naturally our favorite songs are the acoustic ones, and Paul uses his Martin D-28 on six of the thirteen CD/DVD cuts. While it’s hard to compete with the vast collection of Beatles masterpieces, this album is one to add to your collection.

Bluegrass Invasion
Recorded in 2002, this collection of mostly traditional bluegrass covers the Martin guitar mastery of Gerald McCormick (with his D-45) paired with Martin clinician Richard Starkey (playing his Clarence White D-18). Mark MacGlashan’s mandolin, Gordon Reid’s fiddle, Haskel McCormick’s banjo and William McCormick’s string bass complete this talented and lively mix.

Diane Ponzio – In The Middle
As usual, Diane Ponzio’s original songs are intelligent, melodic and soulful, featuring delicious acoustic guitar, great vocals, in-the-belly bass and tasty percussion. Diane’s website chronicles her longstanding history as a clinician and advocate for Martin, lists her touring schedule, offers easily downloadable bio information, photos, reviews and a full discography. Check it out at: www.dianeponzio.com.

This Old Guitar
Words and Music by Neil Young
This old guitar ain’t mine to keep
I’m takin’ care of it now
It’s been around for years and years
Just waitin’ in its old case
It’s been up and down the country roads
It’s brought a tear and a smile
It’s seen its share of dreams and hopes
It never went out of style
The more I play it, the better it sounds
It cries when I leave it alone
Silently, it waits for me
Or someone else I suppose
This old guitar
This old guitar
This old guitar
This old guitar has caught some breaks
But it’s never searched for gold
It can’t be blamed for my mistakes
It only does what it’s told
It’s been a messenger in times of trouble
In times of hope and fear
When I get drunk and seein’ double
It jumps behind the wheel and steers
This old guitar ain’t mine to keep
It’s mine to play for a while
This old guitar ain’t mine to keep
It’s only mine for a while
This old guitar
This old guitar
This old guitar

From the album Prairie Wind
Reprise Records - Used with permission
© 2005 Silver Fiddle Music

Bright Eyes
I’m Wide Awake It’s Morning
Conor Oberst of Omaha, Nebraska, put out his first solo cassette when he was 13 years old. He’s 20 now, and he’s written hundreds of songs for dozens of major bands. Armed with his Martin 000 and his captivating vocal style, he has accomplished much at a young age. His primary focus has been his acoustic band Bright Eyes. This CD includes special guest EmmyLou Harris.
“Fixing” Vintage Guitars
by Bill Bush

There are few hobbies that bring out obsessive compulsive behavior more quickly, with more potentially disastrous consequences, than vintage guitar collecting.

There seems to be a peculiarly strong compulsion among many collectors to clean, buff, drop-fill, reset, reseat, replicate, adjust, spiff-up or otherwise “fix” venerable old guitars when they really should be left alone. Trust me on this, I know.

Certainly there is a need for legitimate repairs such as neck resets to restore playability, or sealing of cracks, or even complete restorations that save an instrument from total destruction.

What I’m referring to is the “diddle-ing around” genre of home repair, the “let’s-get-out-the-old-bottle-of-Meguiar’s-and-make-this-baby-shine-again” category, or the “this-neck-has waaaay-too-much-bow; where’s-the-Allen-wrench” school of amateur adjustment.

Basically, there are three major trouble areas — finishes, action adjustments and, my favorite, “miscellaneous.”

Finishes — Take a hard look at your 90 year-old grandmother. Those are finish checks. Granny has earned them for surviving 90 seasons of hot and cold, dry and wet, and she’s proud of them — gives her character. Now, you wouldn’t slap a dollop of Mirror Glaze #7 on the old girl would you? So why do it to an old guitar? I once took a positively stunning 1948 D-28 that had a build-up of what I thought was “grime” and attempted to clean it up with a mild polish. Well, it wasn’t grime. It was old, softened finish, and the reaction to the polish wasn’t pretty. You see, there are no inconspicuous places on a guitar to test finish reaction; and once you start polishing, you just keep going until you’ve screwed up the entire guitar. Something else. Polishing is not cleaning. Even on stable nitrocellulose lacquer, polishing removes finish along with grime. Old finishes are usually thin and brittle (like Granny), so the potential for real instrument devaluation real fast is extremely high. Shellac finishes? I wouldn’t even breathe on them. And, if you are attempting drop fills on an old guitar without having years of experience, you should be drop-kicked right in the seat of the pants. Want a shiny, flawless finish? Get a new guitar.

Action Adjustments — All guitars, regardless of age, require adjustments for action. Tops rise and fall, necks bow in and out. Vintage guitars without adjustable truss rods, namely Martins, may eventually require neck resets to restore playability. But don’t be in such a hurry. A neck reset is an extremely delicate operation — and who performs the operation makes all the difference in the world. Experts like T.J. Thompson and Dave Musselwhite are sooo good at neck resets that their work is virtually invisible; you’d never know the neck had been off the guitar. There are lots of repair people who are just as good, but you’d better know who they are first — before they fire up the steam kettle and blister the finish off Uncle Ed’s old D-45. Lots of neck resets are accompanied by bridge replacements, and I’m not so sure I like that. “Well, the bridge has been cut down too low — and it’s warped,” is the usual justification for replacement. Yeah, well that bridge is also original; and no matter how accurate the replica bridge, it’s still a replica and devalues the instrument. You have to decide whether the improvement in tone/action of a new bridge trumps originality. If it were me, I’d tell the repair person you want the neck reset to the original bridge if at all humanly possible. The experts can do it, no sweat.

The real problem comes with adjustable truss rods.

Today, anybody with an Allen wrench, socket wrench, nut driver or screwdriver can devalue a vintage (or new) guitar with a simple twist of the wrist. It’ll strip the truss rod nut and threads lickety-split. Neck adjustments are supposed to be made in baby steps, quarter turns at most. That squeaking sound that you’re hearing isn’t a mouse. It’s an over-tightened truss rod hemorrhaging under the fingerboard. Incidentally, Allen wrenches can chew up the edge of a soundhole better than anything I’ve ever seen.

Miscellaneous — Here’s an area rich in possibilities. How about installing saddles so high they act like a catapult for the bridge? Or using a reamer to “fit” bridge pins and strap buttons so they rattle around in the hole, completely nullifying their purpose? Oiling the fingerboard and bridge with a quart of lemon oil leaves a nice patina.

And, of course, “super glue” opens up a whole new field of home repair adventure — welding fingers together, ruining finishes and creating a “repair” that cannot be corrected without complete disassembly of the instrument.

I guess that the best advice I can give to a do-it-yourself diddler is to read up on guitar repair first. Then re-read everything say, oh, a hundred times. Dan Erlewine’s Guitar Player Repair Guide is an excellent reference source, as is Don Teeter’s The Acoustic Guitar (Volumes 1 & 2) and Irving Sloane’s classic book Guitar Repair.

What finally cured me of the compulsion to tinker with expensive, collectible guitars was a traumatic experience that occurred several years ago.
This is a true story.
I had just purchased a 1992 Martin D-45S Deluxe, an exquisite piece of art inlaid with heart abalone on virtually every border of the guitar. It literally glowed greens, reds and blues like an ornate Tiffany Christmas tree. I couldn’t look at it enough.

Pouring myself a second glass of wine one evening, I settled back on the sofa and held the guitar out at arm’s length to admire it. By turning it ever so slightly, the abalone would change colors in the light. Nice touch, went well with the glow from the wine. Then the unthinkable happened. I dropped it. On a brick floor. On its head.

Against all odds, the neck did not break, or even crack. Instead, the back corner of the headstock was flattened like a pancake. Four months and $480 later, my D-45S Deluxe came home from the Martin Repair Department, and you’d never know it had suffered a nasty blow.

When you are the recipient of a miracle such as this, you realize that guitar repair is an art form, a highly refined skill best left to the experts. And I am forever grateful to the Martin Guitar Repair Department for this revelation.

If you must involve yourself in do-it-yourself repair, go to Home Depot and check out the kitchen remodeling section. It’s cheaper.

Trust me on this, I know.

Bill Bush is an advertising writer/producer and music journalist whose articles have appeared in Guitar Player magazine, Frets magazine, The Guitar Player Book (Grove Press) and numerous liner notes. He no longer diddles.

Bill Bush

Chris Rowan of The Rowan Brothers kindly shared this beautiful and emotive photo from the cover of his new solo CD Swim, recorded in large part with his prized 1967 Martin D-18. He paid $325 for the guitar back then, played it hard on recordings and performances for more than 35 years, and of course it’s priceless to him now. He’s on the web at: www.chrisrowan.com.
Belgium’s guitar virtuoso Jacques Stotzem, shown above with his Martin OM-21, has made many friends in the world of acoustic music, and it’s no wonder. Beyond his technical mastery, he has the gift of composition. He’s also prolific. To date, Jacques has recorded eight instrumental albums and is a popular guest at all of the important festivals and trade shows in Europe and the USA.

Inspired by the fingerstylist Stefan Grossman, Jacques began studying the guitar at the age of 16. Quickly surpassing common fingerpicking styles, he developed his own unique sound that fuses rock, blues and jazz. Currently he’s been collaborating with Martin on the development of a Custom Signature model that suits his very specific demands. Hopefully, you’ll read about it in Volume 21!

A Civil Wedding

Fred Hocker of Kallhall, Sweden, purchased the Martin guitar shown above in 1980 when he was a college student. It is a Size 2 with Brazilian rosewood back and sides and a Spanish cedar neck. Mike Longworth identified it as possibly a style 22 variant, most likely made in the 1850s. Despite its age and a few repairs to cracks in the top and back, it still has an excellent sound. When Fred moved to Texas in 1984, he sold it to a local Martin dealer and immediately wished he’d kept it.

After he married in 1991, his wife conspired with his brother and mother to track it down. Remarkably, they found it, bought it back, and gave it to Fred as a Christmas present. Fred’s brother is an avid Civil War re-enactor. When he asked Fred to play at his period-dress wedding, this guitar of course seemed the perfect choice.

The photograph above shows Fred and his wife Emma with the Martin in the tintype taken by a period photographer. The little guitar had enough presence to fill a large church, and it still sounds remarkable today. Fred pampers this antique, deferring mostly to his less delicate 00-21 and M-38 Martin models. When he does play it, the amount of music that comes out of this little wooden box amazes him, as does the effort his family made to reunite him with it.
During the course of his extensive touring, Laurence Juber has been peppering his schedule with Martin clinics, both in Asia as well as the states. Here he was photographed at a Medley Music clinic in Philadelphia with one of the first OMC-28M Laurence Juber Custom Edition guitars constructed with Madagascar rosewood back and sides and an Adirondack spruce soundboard.

Mark Glaze (right) from Johnson City, Tennessee, stopped by the factory on his way to a bluegrass festival in New York to show his guitar to Chris Martin (center) and Vice President of Corporate Operations, Greg Paul. Mark’s guitar is one of the very early original 1939 D-28 Dreadnoughts of which he is quite proud. Though it is precious, Mark still loves to play it and takes it out to festivals for late-night picking. After all, that’s what it’s for!

This is the first photograph taken of Chris Martin in front of the new Martin Visitors Center and Museum.

While touring in Australia, former Highwayman, acclaimed actor and singer/songwriter/guitarist Kris Kristofferson visited with Greg Cooper of Jacaranda Music in Sydney. Greg is holding one of the D-18 Golden Era Martin guitars and Kris, who is often seen with vintage Martin acoustic guitars, is especially fond of D-18s. Thanks to Greg, we got in touch with Kris after the tour to discuss what he likes best about specific models in the hope that he might collaborate with Martin on a Signature Edition guitar project. Stay tuned to see if that develops. The original country music supergroup, The Highwaymen, was made up of Kris Kristofferson, Waylon Jennings, Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson – the latter two of which have already been honored with Signature editions.

Allentown Morning Call photographer Don Fisher met up with Dick Boak of Martin’s Artist Relations department to pick up instrument #2 of the Mike Longworth Commemorative Edition D-45. Don played a big role in helping with this guitar project. His great photograph of Mike appeared in The Sounding Board Volume 18. The photo was also used as the interior label for the guitar. You can see it in the soundhole. As Mike’s close friend, Don’s participation was especially meaningful.
Backpacker Stories

San Joseph River Expedition

On their latest adventure in August of 2005, Rob Lyon and Colin Doherty left their homes in the San Juan Islands in their Toyota Four Runner stuffed to the gills with fly tackle, camping and kayaking gear, the Backpacker® guitars and a pair of ocean-going kayaks strapped to the roof.

Pointing their headlights north, they headed for the extreme northwestern coast of British Columbia’s rugged Vancouver Island. It was rumored to be a big year for Coho salmon, and they spent the better part of a month paddling in search of them (with great success, we might add). Not only did they have a good chance at some first class saltwater salmon fly fishing, but they had the coast entirely to themselves.

The northwest coast of Vancouver Island is an uncivilized, unpopulated chunk paradise that requires a small, seaworthy boat that can be carried up onto the beach. While most fly fishing takes place in the boats, Ron and Colin fished from the shore as well. The best places for this are beaches fronting on surf with close running salmon or bays with schooling fish. After long exhausting days in rough water, there is nothing better than pitching camp and cooking the fresh fish of the day.

Colin is a young biologist and budding photographer. Rob is a seasoned sportsman, explorer and prolific author. They are both musicians and as with all of their expeditions, they found considerable solace strumming their Martin Backpackers around the evening fire as salmon fillets sizzled on the grill.

Iraq-packer

Spc. (Specialist) Zachary Johnson of the 25th ID(L) US Army Division is a soldier who loves Martin guitars. When he went to Iraq, he took a Martin Backpacker® with him. He’s pretty emphatic that his Backpacker was one of the only things that helped him keep his sanity in the box. In his own words: “If I had to spend a year in the desert without a musical outlet, I probably would have cracked. Your Backpacker was the perfect thing for me to have over there.”

The best attributes of course are the portability, playability and sound. The photo above is Zack playing off-duty in Iraq. His dream is to own a herringbone HD-28, but for now the Backpacker does the trick. As everyone knows, it’s not easy over there, and it’s nice to know that a small diversion like a guitar can provide much needed release.

We’d love to hear your Backpacker Stories!

Send your photos and stories to:
The Sounding Board
P. O. Box 329, Nazareth PA 18064
or to: editor@martinguitar.com
The 1830 Shop

Martin Owner’s Club member Hiroyuki Sato of Chiba, Japan, wrote to tell us of a Japanese sake brewery, Koshigoi near his house in Chiba, Japan. Hiroyuki likes Koshigoi sake almost as much as he likes his Backpacker. He’s impressed with their sign because Koshigoi was established in 1830, three years BEFORE C. F. Martin, Sr. set up shop in America, and they even have an “1830 Shop!”

Pop-Apart Backpacker

Martin Owners Club Member Ed Rossi is pictured above with his Alternative II Resonator cutaway (at left), which for some reason he calls his “Pit-Bull” rather than the traditional “Hound-Dog.”

But perhaps of greater interest is the contraption he’s holding. Ed bought a Backpacker in 2000; and although he loved its portability, he found it somewhat difficult to play. He found that it wanted to roll around – even with the strap attached. Not wanting to relegate the instrument to wall hanger status, Ed began thinking out a solution to the problem. He felt that the Backpacker could benefit from a larger body in order to make it more stable while sitting and playing in his favorite easy chair, but he didn’t want to modify (cut, drill, add or delete) any part of the guitar. Voila, the “Lego” concept came into play, and the result is a neat “pop-apart” support which maintains the Backpacker’s portability, but most importantly, gets it off his wall.

Ed deployed a piece of 1/4” plywood, a pattern traced from a small bodied guitar, some pegs and supports, a small bungee cord, felt and freedom of expression with paints and lacquers. The finished piece is shown below.
The Long Anticipated Return Of Martin’s Most Prized 5K Ukulele

The making of Martin ukuleles in Nazareth was put on hiatus in 1997. Now after eight years, Martin is proud to begin fresh with this faithful Soprano-sized recreation of our most prized 5K model. This premium ukulele features heavily flamed Hawaiian koa for the top, back, sides, headplate and bridge, a solid dovetail fit mahogany neck and a bound pointed ebony fingerboard inlaid with the traditional snowflake pattern. Grained ivoroid binding with abalone inlay trims the perimeter of the top, back and rosette, and the traditional Style 5K pattern graces the headstock. A masterpiece of hand-sculpted beauty and tone, the Martin 5K is considered the Holy Grail of ukuleles among top collectors and players worldwide.

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