

# Sweetwater® SweetNotes®

April/May 2008 Issue | Vol. 80

(800) 222-4700 | www.sweetwater.com

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## from the editor



Mitch Gallagher  
Editorial Director  
mitch\_gallagher@sweetwater.com

Why do so many of us love the guitar so much? What is it about six strings and a couple of pieces of wood that causes such infatuation? It's pretty remarkable when you think about it. The guitar as we know it has been around for several centuries (though its ancestors reach way back, many centuries before that). Yet the guitar is more popular than ever, and in fact, the guitar is one of the only non-electronic instrument that is still undergoing constant development, evolution, and re-invention.

What brought this home for me was planning this issue of *SweetNotes*. Initially, it was going to be a "regular" issue, covering the broad range of topics we normally cover. But as I dug into what was new and cool in

the world of Sweetwater, it became apparent that we needed a special guitar issue to address them all! From new guitars to new amps to an incredible ever-expanding array of pedals and processors, the guitar is hotter than ever.

Besides, the guitar is just plain fun. I've been playing for about 30 years now, and I still get a thrill every time I pick one up and strum a chord. But I recognize that not everyone strums the strings, so fear not, there are plenty of non-guitar articles for you to peruse in this issue as well!

Enjoy the issue!

**guitar**  
*Special*



## Limited Edition/ Collectable Guitars

At some point in our lives, we've all stared longingly at a wall of guitars, our eyes wandering up and lingering on the topmost row — that premium piece of real estate reserved for the most elite of the elite axes. And, of course, we've wanted to take one of those guitars home.

There's just something special about owning an instrument that you don't see everywhere, yet too often we associate limited edition/collectable guitars with that exclusive upper row, dismissing the possibility of owning one before we even let ourselves really look. Sure, there are handcrafted and historic guitars that are as valuable as some homes, but there are also many limited edition beauties out there in just about every price range, waiting for that special someone to take them home.

It's because of their limited numbers that these guitars have an aura about them, making it even more fun to own one. Yet, it's also worth bearing in mind that, like anything, guitars adhere to the law of supply and demand,

and limited editions — of all kinds — will likely accrue serious value over time to collectors, making them a great investment.

If you're looking to enter the world of collectable guitars, you may want to start with a modern spin on a classic. Gibson has just released an affordable line of **BFG Les Pauls** that boast the familiar Les Paul body style with a redesigned P-90/humbucker pickup system for huge, biting tone. With this release of the BFG, they're offering four distinct, limited-edition colors, and only making 200 of each. You can choose from Natural, Ink, Bullion Burst, and Silverburst, taking home your own piece of Les Paul history at a price that won't break the budget.

If you want something a little funkier, but still affordable, you can own another Gibson collectable with the **Reverse Flying V**. Maintaining that epic Flying V tone, Gibson's flipped the body shape around to create a truly unique instrument — and they're only making 300 in each color worldwide.



continued on page 2



GUITAR SPECIAL GUITAR SPECIAL GUITAR

GUITAR SPECIAL GUITAR SPECIAL GUITAR SPECIAL

Limited Edition/Collectable Guitars continued from page 1

For those who love the full, punchy tone of Martin guitars, there are currently gorgeous commemorative acoustics available including the **175th Anniversary Edition**, and the **Elvis Presley D-28**. Limited to 175 guitars, the Elvis D-28 comes complete with a tooled leather cover that made the King's own D-28 so recognizable, while other special Elvis touches include inlaid star position markers, and Elvis' silhouette gracing the headstock.

Right now, Paul Reed Smith has two limited edition beauties in both of their signature Custom 22 and 24 body styles. The just-released **Custom 22 Soapbar** is a stunner with its premium flame-maple 10-top and tortoise shell finish — and we'll only see 200 of this model produced. The eye-catching **Custom**

**24 Experience PRS 2007** is complete with two zebra bobbin humbucking pickups, and a Raging Ruby, Champagne Fizz, Calypso Green, or Warp Speed Blue body and headstock. This model is limited to a 300-piece run.

Fender offers a beautiful line of **Masterbuilt Stratocasters** in 20 different finishes to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of their Custom Shop, giving each Masterbuilt reverse-wound, reverse-polarized 1969 middle pickups, locking Schaller tuners, and engraved neckplates. You can also take home another piece of Fender rock history with the limited-edition **Rosewood Telecaster** — George Harrison used one of the original Rosewood Teles on *Let It Be*, and this Tele has that same late '60s profile, and '60s Custom Shop Tele pickups.

If you're after the rarest of the rare, Gretsch is making only 59 of their gorgeous **Brian Setzer Tribute**, and they've carefully preserved all of the cosmetic and electronic details of the Stray Cat's legendary 1969 Gretsch 6120 — from the worn-out stickers, to the minute scratches, dice knobs, dual TV Jones classic pickups, and, of course, it's complete with a hole for the tone switch.

No matter what your budget or taste in guitars, there's a special limited-edition model out there for you!

And the good news is that these beauties are almost sure to increase in collector value as time goes by. A great deal!

>> Gibson Limited Edition Les Paul BFG  
Sweetwater price \$1332.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/lpbgikgm](http://www.sweetwater.com/lpbgikgm)

>> Gibson Limited Edition Reverse Flying V  
Sweetwater price \$2299.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/dsrvebgh](http://www.sweetwater.com/dsrvebgh)

>> Paul Reed Smith Custom 24 Experience 2007  
Sweetwater price \$2599.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/CustExp07rr](http://www.sweetwater.com/CustExp07rr)

>> Fender Custom Shop Rosewood Telecaster Limited Release  
Sweetwater price \$4199.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/telerwltld](http://www.sweetwater.com/telerwltld)

>> Martin D-28M Elvis Presley Limited Edition  
Sweetwater price \$9199.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/d28melvis](http://www.sweetwater.com/d28melvis)

>> Gretsch Custom Shop Limited Edition Setzer Tribute  
Sweetwater price \$23,999.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/setzertrib](http://www.sweetwater.com/setzertrib)

## Hands On Marshall JVM 2 Series

By Mitch Gallagher

When I want a crunchy, powerful guitar tone, I immediately reach for my early '80s vertical input 50-watt Marshall JCM 800. The problem is that *that* sound is really the only one my JCM 800 is good at — versatile, it's not. But with the JVM amps, the company has created the ultimate versatile Marshall. With the JVM 4 Series, you can instantly access 12 sounds from a footswitch! That's more than I need, so I was interested when the JVM 2 Series amps came out.

These amps provide up to six sounds accessible from a footswitch, and offer plenty of versatility and power. I had a chance to sit down with the **JVM 210C** and put it through its paces. (Fifty- and 100-watt 1x12 JVM 2 combos and heads are also available.)

The JVM 210C is an all-tube combo amp featuring 100 watts of EL34-driven power, and two different Celestion 12" speakers, a Heritage and a Vintage. The amp has two completely independent channels (Clean/Crunch and Overdrive), each with Gain, Volume, Bass, Mid, and Treble EQ controls, and separate reverb control. Each channel has three different "modes," giving you a total of six sounds you can select using the footswitch, front-panel buttons, or MIDI (which can access 128 amp setups). There are master Presence and Resonance controls, two effects loops (one footswitchable), and dual footswitchable Master Volumes. A speaker-emulated direct out allows for silent recording. In other words, this Marshall is feature-packed!

Stepping through the three modes for each channel adds successively more gain and changes the voicing. Starting with the Clean/Crunch channel, you can go from a '50s-style clean sound — possibly the best clean I've ever heard from a Marshall — to tones reminiscent of early- and late-'60s models. On the Overdrive channel, you'll move through JCM 800-style overdrive to more modern high-gain tones. The variety is surprising, and each tone holds its own as a solid Marshall sound appropriate for several musical genres and eras. The mismatched dual speakers add real depth to the sound, with plenty of bottom, and great presence and punch.

Whether using single-coils or humbuckers, it wasn't difficult to dial in great sounds. The amp is easy to navigate and logically laid out. The footswitch uses colored LEDs to display which channel and mode you're in. You can also easily program the footswitch to control any functions on the amp you desire.

Unless you need even more Marshall tones at your disposal — in which case the 4-channel/12-mode JVM 4 Series is for you, the JVM 2 Series should be able to cover just about any application you might have. I've been very impressed with the new Marshall models lately — I think the Vintage Modern is stellar, for example — and the JVM 2 Series impresses me even more. This may just be the new Marshall that makes me give up my trusty "vintage" amp!

>> Marshall JVM 210C  
Sweetwater price \$2299.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/jvm210c](http://www.sweetwater.com/jvm210c)

## Sweetwater Welcomes Seymour Duncan

In our never-ending quest to bring you the best guitar gear, we're pleased to announce that we've added Seymour Duncan pickups and pedals to the Sweetwater family of products. Now you've got access to the same pickups and effects the world's most discerning players rely on daily for their signature tones.

With a client list that reads like a "who's who" of virtually every genre, Duncan pickups and pedals are in use everywhere in the world.

So why do the pros choose Seymour Duncan? Quite simply, it boils down to tone. Seymour Duncan has spent the majority of his life refining the art of creating pickups. He tinkered incessantly throughout the '60s, doing repair work for icons such as Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton, and Jimi Hendrix, and eventually opened up shop in California in the late '70s selling custom pickups. To this day, Seymour is dedicated to getting the best tone possible from his pickups, from modern high-output monsters to faithful reproductions of gems from the '50s and '60s.

We know tone is important to you, which is why we chose to offer Seymour Duncan pickups. With the massive number of different pickups and effects available from the crew at Seymour Duncan, you're certain to find plenty of options that will help you produce the perfect sound from your guitar!



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May 31, 2008

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plus many more.



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- Manufacturer display updates and special guests
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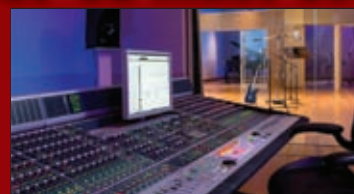
#### Legendary Engineer Bruce Swedien

Hear this five-time Grammy winner recount his sessions with McCartney, Michael Jackson, and more!



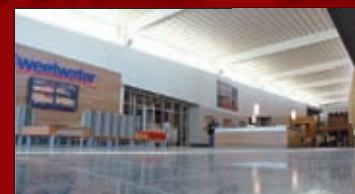
#### Peavey's Famous Chopper

Check out Peavey's Orange County Chopper guitar and awesome OCC motorcycle!



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## Hands On PRS MIRA

By Mitch Gallagher

Last Fall, at the Experience PRS event at the Paul Reed Smith Guitars' headquarters in Maryland, the guitar maker unveiled his latest model; one that was a fair departure from his previous line of guitars. The new model, the **Mira**, is a straight-ahead "player" instrument. It features a thinner solid mahogany body, without the traditional carved maple top found on most other PRS models. It

has a 24-fret neck with the usual PRS 25" scale length and either a wide-thin or regular neck carve. Abalone bird inlays are the only option.

The Mira has a pickguard, another uncommon feature on a PRS — it holds the master volume and tone controls as well as the 3-way pickup selector and coil-tap switches. The dual humbucking pickups in the pickguard are a brand-new design, and harken back to the vintage pickups of the '50s. A stop tailpiece/bridge and locking tuners round out the package. The best part? This is PRS' most affordable U.S.-made guitar ever!

I've been able to put my hands on five different Miras over the past few months, and all have been incredibly responsive and resonant. The guitar is quite versatile, with a range of tones from sparkling single-coil to thick humbucker, with vintage-level output and clear, articulate high end.

**PRS** PAUL REED SMITH  
GUITARS

Whether you prefer the wide-thin or regular neck carve (my vote is for "regular") you'll find the Mira exceptionally easy to play, both for rhythm and lead applications. The Mira is available in a range of colors, from vintage mahogany stain to Seafoam Green to Wild Mint to classic Black, with coordinating pickup and truss rod cover colors.

No matter what perspective you take — tone, feel, looks, construction, features, value — the new Paul Reed Smith Mira is a complete success. The biggest problem with it is putting it down!

>> Paul Reed Smith Mira  
Sweetwater price \$1549.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/miravch](http://www.sweetwater.com/miravch)

# MXR Pedals at Sweetwater



When MXR released their first pedal back in the 1970s, the **Phase 90**, it had a couple of factors going for it right out of the gate: It sounded great, was easy to use, and didn't have a ton of competition to face off against.

MXR continued with a vast and varied lineup of compressors, distortion boxes, noise gates, choruses, and flangers, all featuring quality construction and housed in sturdy, road-friendly packages. Of course, the stompbox landscape became very crowded (you might say it is now more than ever), but the MXR brand has never lost its reputation as a player's choice. In fact, there

are entire segments of the pedal population devoted to approximating the "classic" sound of some of MXR's most popular pedals. But nothing beats the originals! And MXR continues to stay ahead of the curve with an ever-expanding selection of new products — true originals destined to be copied, but never bettered.

### Modulation Sensations

The aforementioned Phase 90 has found its way into some of the most renowned guitar rigs in the business. Its slim profile makes the Phase 90 right at home on any pedalboard, while its large, single knob makes on-the-fly adjustments easy. Taking this design a step further, the new **EVH Phase 90** sports Eddie Van Halen's distinctive "Frankenstein" criss-crossing paint job, as well as the bonus of being essentially two Phase 90s in one: You can switch between vintage "Script Logo" and more modern "Block Logo" phase tones. Similarly, MXR's venerable Flanger gets the EVH treatment, with a special switch that calls up the guitar great's signature sound. If you're pining for a lush chorus, the **Stereo Chorus** offers everything from flattering shimmer to underwater warble, all in true stereo so you can fill the stage with 3D tones!

### Distort, Squeeze, Funk-ify, and Repeat

MXR's venerable Distortion+ pedal has been a classic secret tone weapon of lead guitarists for years, providing a razor's-edge combination of natural grit and fuzz, with enough output to punish the front end of a tube amp for sweet solos. The updated **Distortion III** provides even better distortion tones, while its output knob carries on the boost capabilities of its ancestor. Of course, some of us enjoy keeping volume spikes and transients under control (affirmative nods from Nashville), and that's where the **Dyna Comp** shines. This streamlined compressor pedal gives you command over your chicken pickin', adds sustain to blazing fretboard runs, and generally keeps your playing dynamics on even keel. It's incredibly affordable, too. MXR's **Auto Q** box is, quite simply, a lot of fun in a little package. Use it for cool auto-wah effects, or dial its controls to achieve tones that are uniquely "you." If you want to add anything from a touch of slapback echo to atmospheric effects — but want to keep your rich analog setup intact — the new **Carbon Copy** analog delay pedal will be right up your alley. This compact little beauty uses bucket-brigade technology to produce delay times up to 600ms, and its built-in modulation switch adds even more color to your tone!

All of these great MXR boxes are available at Sweetwater now. Check out our website and put incredible new tonal colors at your feet today!



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# Electro-fying!

When Gretsch first saw the light of day 125 years ago, no one could have possibly guessed that the small musical instrument shop opened in 1883 would some day be responsible for the sound that would later define rockabilly and country music. Yet some 125 years later, Gretsch guitars are sought after by guitarists in all genres, bringing their signature “twang” to hit after hit. The price tag on American-made Gretsches — often reaching well beyond \$2,000 — keep these iconic instruments out of many players’ hands. But that all changes with the ultra-affordable and very cool Gretsch Electromatic Collection.

First up is the **G5120 Electromatic Hollowbody**, which bears a striking resemblance to the hugely popular G6120. These primed-for-rockabilly rockers sport maple tops, backs, and sides with a rosewood-based Adjusto-matic Bridge. Electronically, a pair of chrome-covered humbuckers feed individual volume controls as well as master tone and volume controls. Just like its higher-priced cousins, the G5120 boasts “thumbnail” inlays running the length of its neck and a bound fingerboard. To seal the deal that this is an authentic Gretsch despite the moderate price, a Bigsby tailpiece is included for that signature vibrato. These beauties are available in black, sunburst, and, of course, Gretsch’s trademark orange stain.

The solidbody **Electromatic Corvette** draws immediate parallels to other set-neck, mahogany-bodied axes, but adds touches that let you know up-front this is a Gretsch through and through. Two Mega ‘Tron pickups provide fiery tone with the perfect amount of jangle, and a Bigsby anchors the strings and adds coolness to the vibe. This baby is built for rockin’, yet elegant enough for lower-key affairs.

And speaking of more subdued, the final entry is actually a member of the Synchronomatic Series. The **Synchronomatic Archtop** is a throwback to the jazzboxes of the 1940s, using a spruce top and maple back and sides to create tones that snap and sparkle with just the right amount of warmth. A Gretsch single-coil pickup floats at the neck position with pickguard-mounted volume and tone controls. The rosewood fingerboard is adorned with vintage-style wide pearloid block inlays, and the Archtop is available in black or natural finishes. While technically a jazz guitar, don’t let the demure appearance fool you ‘cause this looker can really wail.

These models pack everything that makes a Gretsch a Gretsch, and manage to do it without putting a huge dent in your pocketbook. Couple with that the fact that you look undeniably cool with a Gretsch in your hands, and there’s no reason not to have one!



Every great guitar needs an amp, and this blonde marvel is dripping with vintage vibe. The **G5222 Electromatic** boasts a tube pre-amp with a power amp pushing five watts — perfect for studio work or informal jams with your buddies — and measures less than a foot squared. Plus, it’s the perfect complement to a Gretsch Electromatic guitar!

## Hands On Tech 21 Character Series

By Mitch Gallagher

Tech 21 first made a name for themselves with their SansAmp analog guitar processors, which create the sound of amped up guitars, then they expanded their line into guitar amps and stompboxes. Now the company has expanded their pedal offerings with the Character Series, a new line of analog pedals that recreate the sounds of classic amplifiers.

There are five pedals in the series: **British** creates the sound of a famous UK tube stack amp. **Liverpool** emulates a popular Class A tube combo amp. **Blonde** creates the “deluxe” tones of vintage tube amps of the ‘50s. **California** sounds range from the original high-gain Mark II amp that often had a hardwood cabinet and a wicker grille to the newer Rectifier models. **VT Bass** goes after the sound of a huge tube amp played through eight 10" speakers.

Each pedal has Level, Low, Mid, High, Character, and Drive knobs. These interact, especially with the Character control, which changes several parameters at once. The pedals can feed an amp or can be used to direct record or feed into a PA.

The Liverpool pedal has all the highs and presence of an “AC” amp — you can easily conjure chiming, bright clean tones as well as driving rhythm sounds. But the pedal has tons of gain that can take your guitar way over the top, with loads of sustain. If you’re using a Fender or a Marshall, this pedal offers an easy way to get AC-style tones without adding another amp. I was similarly impressed with the VT Bass pedal. It provides all the drive and thump of the original, in a *much* smaller package. It makes a great complement to a DI-d bass when recording, or as your complete studio or live bass tone.

The Character Series pedals offer a convenient and simple way to achieve the signature tones of a variety of amps through your existing rig. At this price, why not get them all and cover all the amp bases?



- >> **Gretsch G100CE**  
Sweetwater price \$670.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/g100cebck](http://www.sweetwater.com/g100cebck)
- >> **Gretsch G5120 Electromatic Hollow Body**  
Sweetwater price \$600.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/g5120or](http://www.sweetwater.com/g5120or)
- >> **Gretsch G5135 Electromatic Corvette**  
Sweetwater price \$530.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/g5135](http://www.sweetwater.com/g5135)
- >> **Gretsch G5222 Electromatic**  
Sweetwater price \$195.00  
[www.sweetwater.com/g5222](http://www.sweetwater.com/g5222)

## Pedaltrain Pedalboards

Murphy’s Law dictates that your homemade or plastic ‘board will bite the dust at the worst possible time — onstage, in the airport, loading in or out — while you scramble to assemble all your precious effects and power supplies. It’s not a question of “if”; it’s a question of “when.” What if you could get your hands on a bulletproof solution?

Pedaltrain pedalboards provide what you need in a ‘board in spades, while throwing out all the needless bells and whistles. You want a sturdy, no-nonsense, lightweight surface with plenty of room for your stompboxes, right? That’s what Pedaltrain gives you. What makes these units so darn practical? One: rugged, lightweight aluminum construction, with reinforcement exactly where you need it. From the compact PT/JR-SC (17" wide by 12" deep by 2" high) to the arena-ready PT/PRO-HC, a formidable 32" by 16" by 3" unit, Pedaltrain ‘boards all use the same construction method, which gives you plenty of surface area for easy mounting while generous openings let you route cables

and power supply cords for a tidy setup. Two: These pedalboards come ready to travel. The PT/JR-SC and PT/2-SC models have tough padded gig bags, while the PT/2-HC comes with a tour-grade flight case. The top-of-the-line PT/PRO-HC travels in a locking flight case with low-profile wheels. Your pedals travel with class with Pedaltrain! Three: You get plenty of adhesive hook-and-loop material with every pedalboard, so your stompboxes and power supplies stay where you place them.

Next time you hit the road or the club stage, put a Pedaltrain pedalboard at your feet. Your pedals will thank you!



- >> **Pedaltrain PT/PRO-HC**  
Sweetwater price \$299.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/ptprohc](http://www.sweetwater.com/ptprohc)

- >> **Tech 21 Liverpool**  
Sweetwater price \$149.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/sacsliver](http://www.sweetwater.com/sacsliver)
- >> **Tech 21 VT Bass**  
Sweetwater price \$149.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/sacsvtbass](http://www.sweetwater.com/sacsvtbass)

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# StompIO



IK Multimedia's AmpliTube put guitarists in complete control of a virtual signal chain consisting of the most sought-after amps and effects of all time from within a DAW. Immediately the thought of being able to tap into that same sonic horsepower in a live performance setting came to mind, but there was no intuitive and easy way to manage it all onstage.

That all changes with **StompIO**, a USB foot controller and audio interface designed expressly for use with AmpliTube. Through a whole host of buttons, switches, knobs, and the included expression pedal, StompIO lets you have immediate access to over 4,000 presets — you'll never run out of available sounds! Where do these

sounds come from? Well, StompIO comes loaded with AmpliTube 2, Ampeg SVX, AmpliTube Jimi Hendrix, AmpliTube Metal (previously only for registered AmpliTube 2 users) and AmpliTube XGEAR. That's a staggering amount of software *plus* a control surface/interface for under \$900. A good amp could easily cost that much (not to mention the added price of stompbox and rack effects), and StompIO offers much more flexibility at its modest price. A direct out lets you easily connect to a mixer or use the unbalanced out to pipe your sounds to a guitar amp for on-stage amplification.

Not just for the stage, StompIO excels in the studio as well. Balanced +4dBu stereo outputs bring your signal into virtually any recording setup, and the internal A/D and D/A is 24-bit for optimal fidelity. To further enhance studio functionality, StompIO ships with Mackie Tracktion 2.1 audio/MIDI software, T-Racks EQ, SampleTank SE, and 500MB of Sonic Reality loops.

Simply based on its number of available tones and flexibility, StompIO is worth the price of admission. Add in the extra software and the ability to control these sounds with a foot controller anywhere you want, and StompIO becomes an indispensable piece of your rig.

>> **IK Multimedia StompIO**  
Sweetwater price \$899.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/stompio](http://www.sweetwater.com/stompio)

## Korg PX5D

Instead of rattling off every single thing the new Korg **PX5D** guitar multi-effect processor can do, we'll mention some things it can't do: It can't make coffee. It doesn't translate languages. And no, it won't do your taxes. But this pocket-sized wonder will make your guitar or bass sound incredible, provides great accompaniment and training tools, and even lets you record directly to your computer! And, as they say, much more.

The newest member of Korg's Pandora family of guitar processors, the PX5D takes the "all-in-one" processor concept even further by including an integrated USB interface. Along with the bundled Ableton Live Lite 6 Korg Edition software, this computer-connectable device gives you a powerful digital recording tool. It can even be powered by your computer via USB!

But just because the PX5D is ultra-useful "in the box" doesn't mean it's not a player on its own as an effects unit. Korg packed amazing amp, cabinet, pickup, and effect models into this palm-sized dynamo (over 180 in all), from vintage to modern and everything in-between. Looking for an effective practice tool? The PX5D includes 744 rhythm and bass patterns for accompaniment, and its 80-second phrase trainer lets you sample and slow down



your favorite passages without changing the pitch.

Bass players benefit from this pint-sized tonal tool, also: The PX5D includes effects specifically voiced for bass. We won't go into detail about how cool this box sounds on just about everything (including keyboards), but rest assured, it's a versatile performer. And speaking of performers, you'll appreciate the PX5D's amazing effects onstage, thanks to a jack that allows any common footswitch to be used to select programs. Small enough to find a home in any gig bag, the Korg PX5D puts the power of Pandora onstage, in your studio, practice room, and anywhere else you want to take it!

>> **Korg PX5D**  
Sweetwater price \$249.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/PX5D](http://www.sweetwater.com/PX5D)

## Hands On Line 6 Spider Jam

By Mitch Gallagher

How many guitar amps include a variety of amp/cabinet models? Okay, quite a few. How many add built-in effects and artist-created tones? Still quite a few. How about a tuner, headphone and recording outs, and Celestion speaker? Now look for guitar, aux, MP3 player, and microphone inputs. The number is shrinking rapidly! Add built-in pro rhythm tracks and a looping recorder, and the number falls way down! In fact, to find these features plus a whole lot more you need the Line 6 Spider Jam!



The Spider Jam is a 75-watt combo amp with a 12" custom Celestion speaker, a 2" tweeter, a tuner, CD/MP3 input, XLR microphone input, headphone and POD 2.0-style recording outputs, 12 Line 6 amp models, seven Smart Control effects, over 200 artist-created presets covering a broad range of styles, over 150 song-based presets, and space for 36 user-programmable presets. But what sets it apart are more than 100 Endless Jams (pro rhythm section tracks) in ten styles — each Jam has an intro, A section, A alternate, B section, B alternate, C section, fills, and an ending. There are also 80+ drum rhythms played by session drummers in studios such as Abbey Road.

The looper can record any of the inputs, and keeps the built-in Endless Jams on a separate track. This lets you play along with a Jam, then listen back to evaluate your performance. You can store 100 loops internally with a total of 24 minutes of record time; an SD card in the built-in slot will provide plenty of extra storage space.

Despite all that power, the Spider Jam is easy to use. The guitar amp section operates just like any amplifier, and the Jams and Looper are controlled using just a few buttons. The sounds are uniformly excellent. If you're tired of practicing along with a metronome, you'll love having your choice of drum tracks or Jams. The volume level is comfortable for bedroom use, but there's plenty of power for rehearsals or smaller gigs.

You'd be hard-pressed to come up with a better self-contained practice rig than the Spider Jam, but don't think this amp is just for beginners or bedroom shredders — this is a versatile, good-sounding amp that can cover a lot of ground whether you are a novice or a pro.

>> **Line6 Spider Jam**  
Sweetwater price \$449.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/spiderjam](http://www.sweetwater.com/spiderjam)



The Internet has changed our world — how we communicate, obtain information, and do business. Guitar players, in particular, have benefited by having many more choices in electric, acoustic, and bass guitars. The local mom and pop guitar shop may have been a fun place to hang out, but when it came time to actually purchase an instrument, the choice was to take something from the limited selection hanging on the wall or custom-order a guitar.

Thanks to the Internet, guitarists can take a leisurely stroll down the long aisles of Sweetwater's virtual guitar showroom, with hundreds of electric, acoustic, and bass guitars from the best names in the business. You already know that modern manufacturing techniques have resulted in the

*continued on page 10*



Inside

**Sweetwater**

Music Instruments & Pro Audio

**Chuck Surack**

We've been talking a lot about our new campus in these pages, on the Sweetwater website, and elsewhere. We're just so proud of it! So naturally, to celebrate the completion of this project, we're throwing one heck of a party! And you're invited! On May 31st,

we'll be holding our Grand Opening celebration along with GearFest '08. The festivities will take place right here at Sweetwater's headquarters, and will kick off the night before with an exclusive concert by the hottest soul band ever, Tower Of Power. The next morning, GearFest '08 will open, and the Grand Opening celebration will launch into high gear with seminars, workshops, and a keynote address featuring super-engineer Bruce Swedien playing and discussing tracks from Michael

Jackson's *Thriller*. On top of that, the industry's leading manufacturers will be exhibiting tradeshow-style, showing and demonstrating their latest and greatest products. We'll have a wall of guitars on display you won't believe, the Peavey OCC chopper will be here along with the Gibson Tour Bus, there will be tours of our state-of-the-art theatre and studios, celebrity appearances — not to mention unheard-of sale prices on gear — and we're just getting started. It's going to be an incredible, action-packed day! Check out page 3 for information on how to pre-register and sign up to win great prizes!

Please make plans to attend our Grand Opening and GearFest '08. It's going to be a music and pro audio experience like no other. We're pulling out all the stops for this grand opening and gear expo, I hope you'll be able to join us!

#### New At Sweetwater

Our latest effort on behalf of music education is something we call the "Sweetwater Academy Of Music." The Academy of Music is essentially a music school operating as a division of our company. An entire wing of our new facility is dedicated to practice rooms, fully equipped lesson suites, and group lesson areas. Students can sign up for weekly lessons in piano/keyboards, guitar, electronic drums and percussion, bass, and more with some of the best instructors in the region. In the future we'll also be offering technology and recording classes and seminars, many of which will be offered to our customers across the country.

I'm so excited about new Academy Of Music. I'm always learning new things about music and technology, and I'm thrilled we're going to be able to help so many musicians on their own quests for knowledge.

## Redmatica Compendium Bundle

One of the coolest aspects of working "inside the box" — mixing, recording, and manipulating sounds in a computer-based digital audio



environment — is how the world of sampling can open up to you, allowing more and more creative doors to be thrown open as the technology improves. Of course, having the right tools is key. Redmatica's **Compendium** sampling suite puts Logic and Logic Express DAW applications, as well as the great EXS24 sampler, to work for you with improved functionality, amazing features, and incredible ease of use.

Compendium includes three applications: the first is ExsManager, standalone software created for EXS24 and GarageBand instruments. Want to speed up instrument loading and eliminate all those little glitches and hassles? That's what ExsManager is expressly designed to do. You can create ready-to-play EXS24 instruments via your Mac and a synth with the AutoSampler application. This program lets you turn hardware tones into virtual instruments with ease, and you can combine multiple sounds for amazing results. Keymap 1.5 rounds out Compendium's collection. This advanced sample editor puts the tools at your command to create, edit, import, and reshape samples to your liking — without having to leave Logic. From intuitive drag-and-drop operation to in-depth functions such as harmonic resynthesis, the capabilities of this editor will inspire you to new creative heights.

If you want to get the most out of your Logic DAW or EXS24 sampler, add sampling horsepower with the Redmatica Compendium bundle!

>> Redmatica Compendium Bundle 1.5  
Sweetwater price \$389.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/compendium](http://www.sweetwater.com/compendium)

## Hands On

# Fender American Series

By Mitch Gallagher

You'd think that after 50-some years, Fender would have seen and done it all with their Stratocaster and Telecaster guitars, and Jazz and Precision basses. After all, these are classic designs that have evolved and morphed into a variety of models that work for a wide range of musical styles and players. But at this year's Winter NAMM Show, the hard-working folks at Fender rolled out brand-new versions of their staple American Series guitars and basses, each of which carried a number of new features that make great designs even better.

The **American Standard Strat** is available with either three single-coil pickups or a humbucker and two single-coil pickups. I tested the triple single-coil version. New features with the American Series for 2008 include a new bridge with improved bent-steel saddles and a copper-infused tremolo block that adds resonance and sustain. The neck is vintage-tinted, with a satin finish on the back, and either a rosewood or gloss-maple fingerboard. The one I played had the gloss maple fingerboard; the combination of satin finish on the back and gloss on the front is brilliant — extremely comfortable. The fingerboard edges are also "rolled" to simulate a guitar that's been "played-in" over many years; once again, a nice comfort feature. The finish undercoat is thinner, which is said to make the instrument resonate better. The guitar comes with a Fender-exclusive SKB molded case.

The new **American Standard Tele** has similar new features wrapped into a "traditional" Telecaster format. Because the Tele has a fixed bridge instead of a tremolo, the new bridge saddles are mounted to a stamped-brass bridge plate for increased resonance and sustain.

Are the changes an improvement? Absolutely! These are guitars that "feel" right straight out of the box. They glide under your fingers and hands like guitars that have been played for years.

The tones are rich and sweet, with plenty of crystalline highs, full lows, and round midrange. The Tele twangs nicely, and the Strat has loads of "quack" in positions two and four on the pickup selector switch.

If you're looking for a great new Strat or Tele that feels great and sounds even better, but you don't want to spring big bucks for a Custom Shop model, then you need to check out the new American Standards. These guitars (and the complementary American Standard Jazz and Precision basses) offer tremendous value in an American-made instrument, with lots of player-friendly features and numerous enhancements over previous models — all at extremely player-friendly prices!



>> Fender American Standard Strat  
Sweetwater price \$1099.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/stratamrssh](http://www.sweetwater.com/stratamrssh)  
>> Fender American Standard Tele  
Sweetwater price \$1099.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/teleammrct](http://www.sweetwater.com/teleammrct)

# A Legend Reborn!



When the original Mackie SRM450s hit the streets, bands and DJs rejoiced. These lightweight wonders provided truly professional sound in a straight-ahead package — just plug in your mixer and you had great sound. With the **SRM450v2**, Mackie sets out to improve on a time-tested design,

packing even more performance into these portable powerhouses — while shaving 11 pounds off the total weight.

These retooled active speakers push 400 total watts, which is ample power for mid-sized indoor or outdoor gigs. A 300-watt Class D “Fast Recovery” power amp drives the single 12” neodymium woofer, while 100 watts and a 1.75” transducer handle the highs. Fidelity is assured via the built-in phase-accurate 24dB Linkwitz-Riley electronic crossover. The key here is phase coherency — the crossover makes sure the highs and lows arrive at the listener’s ear at the same time so the sound is as clear and punchy as possible, devoid of cancellation issues. Every component inside the revamped SRM450v2 is matched to make sure they are as easy to use as humanly possible. There’s no need for external processing such as EQ — just plug in and play!

The innards aren’t the only aspect of the SRM450v2 that reaped the benefits of being redesigned, as the exterior shell is completely new. The former grey cabinet is now a sleek Midnight Blue, but these latest incarnations sport the same “built-for-the-road” toughness that made the originals so popular. There are mounting options galore, as well. You can pole-mount it, or use the built-in mounts to fly the speaker. Should you need a wedge monitor, lay the SRM450v2 on its side, and you’ve got instant monitoring. And since it’s a full 11 pounds lighter than the previous generation, anyone can set them up for the show.

Mackie completely disregarded the old adage “If it’s not broken, don’t fix it,” and came up with a powered PA speaker that stays true to its heritage while boosting its performance in virtually every area. The original SRM450s were a huge success, and based on the response to the v2s, these are well on their way to becoming as legendary as their predecessors.

>> **Mackie SRM450v2**  
Sweetwater price \$749.99 (each)  
[www.sweetwater.com/srm450v2](http://www.sweetwater.com/srm450v2)

# SSL Rocks The DAW

Addition by subtraction? How about addition by subtraction, plus big-time addition? A stalwart in the realm of pro-quality studio console and signal processor designs, Solid State Logic has been making incredible inroads into the digital world of late. As you’ll see, two exciting new products promise to bolster this British company’s reputation as an innovator, making their quality available to the masses while removing hurdles from the recording process.

SSL’s Duende was a hit right out of the box a couple of years ago, putting the sound and functionality of an SSL console into the DAW environment while using standalone digital signal processing (DSP) to power plug-ins. This FireWire processor allowed computer-based recording setups to benefit from the incredible sound of a legendary SSL console, while the host CPU was spared most of the heavy lifting. Now SSL puts the quality, power, and convenience of Duende in a very attractive package for any studio with the 16-channel **Duende MINI**.

The space-friendly (1/3U) MINI packs plenty of processing power, and includes SSL’s XL9000k channel strip plug-in. Its 16-channel capability can be upgraded to 32, allowing your studio setup to expand without costly hardware growing pains. MINI is also compatible with all Duende plug-ins, making this diminutive unit very versatile. The one-two punch you get from MINI shouldn’t be underestimated:



Solid State Logic

Imagine 16 instances of authentic SSL channel strip sound quality, combined with increased efficiency from your computer, thanks to less CPU drain. You truly get more for less with MINI!

Once you’ve got all that processing power up and running, you’re going to want to make tracks. But what if you want to transfer your session to a different recording platform or facility? SSL is way ahead of you with the ultra-convenient new **Pro-Convert** digital audio project translator software. This application allows you exchange entire audio projects between different audio programs — according to SSL, Pro-Convert is compatible with over 40 different applications! This means you can record in your home or project studio, easily transfer the session to another facility, and be able to take it practically anywhere for mastering, effortlessly! Post-production engineers and producers will especially appreciate how Pro-Convert removes compatibility issues from their project workflow (a godsend when multiple contributors are involved in a single project). Easy-to-use menus, handy markers, an audio file format batch converter, and a convenient Search & Replace function combine to make Pro-Convert a studio essential. SSL’s Duende MINI and Pro-Convert let you take your DAW to the next level, while making recording easier than ever!

>> **Solid State Logic Duende Mini**  
Sweetwater price \$795.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/duendemini](http://www.sweetwater.com/duendemini)

## GUITAR 101

By Jon Schafer

Of all the effects available in a guitarist’s palette, delay is one of the most flexible. From giving the perception of bending the laws of space and time to simply generating a bit of ambience, a delay serves as a very musical way to spice up your sound. In the right hands (like U2’s The Edge), delay can be used to forge a signature sound.

Delay units do just what they say they do — they delay the passage of signal to the amp. When a signal enters the delay circuit, the original passes through unaffected, while a “copy” of the signal is offset by a user-determined amount of time and then added in to the output signal. Short delay times create basic echo sounds (like those heard on early country recordings, often called “slap-back”), while longer delay times are effective for creating spacious soundscapes, reminiscent of Jimi Hendrix’ work on *Electric Ladyland*.

The history of delay reaches back to guitar legend Les Paul and his pioneering forays into the world of tape delay. Tape delay worked by recording the signal as it was played and then passing it across a playback head. The distance between the recording head and playback head dictated the amount of delay. Soon thereafter, self-contained tape delay units began cropping up. Boutique effects manufacturer Fulltone has resurrected the tape echo — minus the tape jams that plague the vintage units — with their **Tube Tape Echo**.

Most delay pedals sport basic controls that offer control over delay time and a means of controlling how often the delayed signal is to be reproduced (normally called “feedback” or “regeneration”). A “mix” control is used to blend the delayed signal with the unaffected signal. These controls interact to shape the sound of the delay from mild echoes to severe, mind-bending feedback effects. Delays often provide more unconventional sounds via settings such as ping-pong (where the regenerated signal “bounces” from left to right in stereo) or tap tempo capabilities to sync the delay with the song’s tempo.

Vintage reissues are a running theme in the world of delays. BOSS recently issued the **RE-20**, a reworking of the legendary Roland RE-201 Space Echo — the delay unit that was used to great effect by Pink Floyd’s David Gilmour — in a dual-pedal format. Another modern rendering of a classic, Gibson Labs has created a digital version of the **Echoplex** that acts as both a delay and a looper. Nothing says “vintage” like electro-harmonix, and the **Deluxe Memory Man**, which merges 550ms of delay with chorus and vibrato.

So how do digital and analog delays differ? In simplest terms, a digital delay offers longer delay times (up to 23 seconds with BOSS’ **DD-20!**), and is often more flexible when it comes to control. Signal integrity stays strong no matter how long the delay time or amount of regeneration dialed in. Some of the more advanced digital delay units like TC Electronic’s **ND-1 Nova Delay** can color the audio to mimic the anomalies that can occur in analog delays, adding more “grit,” if you will. But it’s these very same audio oddities that make analog delays so endearing to many. Analog delays aren’t quite as perfect, with each subsequent repeat a bit different than the last — which is part of what makes them so cool. Delay times on analog units like the MXR **Carbon Copy** reach 600ms, and the Moog MF-104Z can do up to 1,000ms.







## Hands On **Digidesign Eleven**



By Mitch Gallagher

While, as a guitar player, there's nothing I love more than plugging into a red-hot glowing amplifier, both as a player and as a recording engineer, I'm a huge fan of using plug-ins in a DAW. Though there is a visceral thrill to the cranked up amp scenario, it's often just not practical. Plus, plug-ins offer so much flexibility, to say nothing of the great features like recall of sessions, presets, automation, and more.

There are many products out there that can provide great guitar tones in the box. Digidesign's Amp Farm (co-created with Line 6) has been a long-standing stalwart in the field. Now Digidesign has upped the ante with **Eleven**, a plug-in that can operate in Pro Tools HD or LE using the company's TDM or RTAS formats.

While some plug-in packages go for creating the entire guitar signal path including effects and processing, Eleven stays focused on creating great amplifier tones, speaker cabinet emulations, and microphone modeling. A

variety of amp models are provided, from Fender- to Vox- to Marshall- to Boogie-style, and on to many other types. When you select an amp or preset, the graphics change to offer you the controls found on that amp. There are 16 amp models, seven cabinets (1x12 to 4x12), and eight microphones (dynamics to condensers to ribbons). The mics can be placed on- or off-axis, and you can dial in the exact amount of speaker breakup you want. A gate keeps things clean when you have the gain cranked up.

The plug-in is simple to operate and quick to dial in. The presets that come with it sound good, and offer a great variety of starting points to tweak from. But the real fun is when you start playing with the controls yourself, trying different combinations of amps, cabinets, and mics, then tweaking in the finer details like EQ and gain settings, mic placement, and speaker breakup.

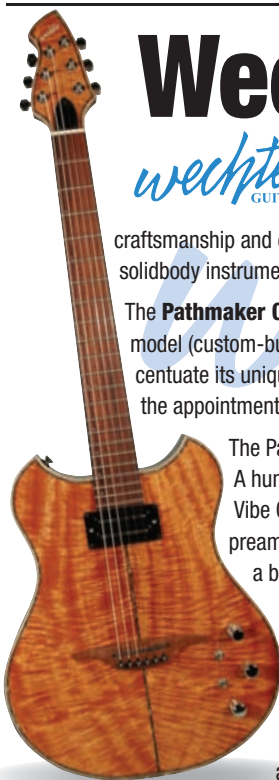
I found that Eleven sounded great. You can dial in very realistic-sounding

tracks without much effort, and in far less time than it takes to set up an amp and mic it. Is it as good as the "real thing"? In the context of a mix, I can't imagine a listener could tell a real amp from Eleven. But even if you're a complete amp purist, you'll still find Eleven useful for "reamping," experimenting with tones, and processing non-guitar tracks.

The biggest problem with Eleven (aside from the nearly irresistible tendency to want to make Spinal Tap references)? It's so much fun tweaking tones, you could easily while away many hours just trying out sounds when you should be getting work done!

>> Digidesign Eleven LE  
Sweetwater price \$395.00  
[www.sweetwater.com/elevenle](http://www.sweetwater.com/elevenle)

>> Digidesign Eleven TDM  
Sweetwater price \$595.00  
[www.sweetwater.com/eleventdm](http://www.sweetwater.com/eleventdm)



## Wechter Model 9600

wechter  
GUITARS

Abe Wechter's distinctive double-cutaway Pathfinder acoustic left an indelible impression when it was introduced just over a decade ago. Since then, Wechter has been designing and building great guitars that combine the best elements of old-fashioned craftsmanship and cutting-edge technology. Now the company brings us an impressive new lineup of chambered solidbody instruments that, while recognizable as Pathmaker-family guitars, introduce amazing new features.

The **Pathmaker Chambered Solid Body Model 9600** guitars all sport double-cutaway body designs. Each model (custom-built in Wechter's shop) features a breathtaking okume top, in sunburst or natural finish to accentuate its unique, beautiful pattern. Michigan walnut is used for the body and neck. Wechter didn't skimp on the appointments, including Michigan curly maple and abalone binding and mother-of-pearl fingerboard inlays.

The Pathmaker solidbodies bridge the gap between conventional electric and acoustic guitars. A humbucker graces the neck position; you can choose among covered, open-coil, or a Vintage Vibe Charlie Christian HCC blade-style pickup. A Graph Tech Ghost Acoustiphonic piezo pickup and preamp system is voiced for balanced acoustic tones. If that's not enough tonal flexibility, you can get a built-in MIDI pickup for accessing synths and samplers!

Wechter uses Plek Pro technology to ensure optimal string action on nearly every guitar leaving the factory. This system dresses the nut slots and frets under real playing conditions for a perfectly set up and intonated instrument. Whether you're seeking a clear, woody sound, magnificent electric tones, or an unique sound that's all yours, pick up one of these great solidbody Wechter guitars!

>> Wechter Model 9600  
Sweetwater price \$4049.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/PathCSB13CCH](http://www.sweetwater.com/PathCSB13CCH)

## Grand Sound, Great Value!

YAMAHA



Here at Sweetwater, we go back a long way with Yamaha products, and the company never fails to impress. But how does this industry-leading producer of both quality acoustic pianos and electronic keyboards fare when they set out to create a digital piano that hits all the marks at once: sounds, features, feel, and price? Predictably enough, they get it just right.

The first thing you notice when you sit down with the slim, lightweight 88-key **P85** digital piano is its incredible feel and sound, thanks to Yamaha's Grand Hammer Standard (GHS) weighted keyboard action, meticulously sampled concert grand piano sound, and onboard stereo speakers. It's easy to close your eyes and imagine yourself at the helm of an acoustic piano on a recital stage — a very realistic playing experience. Tear yourself away from the grand piano sounds and you'll find that the P85 has a lot more to offer, including other stellar instruments. An array of great-sounding electric pianos, organs, strings, and harpsichord sounds are available at the touch of a button,

and the P85's Dual Voice capability allows you to play different combinations at once.

This keyboard provides an ideal foundation for beginners as well as seasoned players. A built-in metronome allows you to practice in perfect time, while the P85's full complement of weighted keys gives you an accurate representation of an acoustic piano. Dual headphone jacks, a sustain pedal, and a music rest are also included. You can even play along with an onboard selection of 50 songs, or record your own with the P85's built-in song recorder. Want to take it even further? MIDI connectivity means you can record tracks on your computer, or use the keyboard to control external sounds.

If you're looking for a home keyboard that provides a great playing experience without taxing your budget, Yamaha's P85 represents an astounding value.

>> Yamaha P85  
Sweetwater price \$599.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/p85](http://www.sweetwater.com/p85)

## Eddie Kramer visits Sweetwater

Hendrix, Zeppelin, Kiss, Woodstock — to say legendary engineer/producer Eddie Kramer has an amazing résumé is an understatement! Sweetwater was pleased to have Mr. Kramer drop by recently for a public seminar sponsored by Waves — who were also celebrating the release of their amazing Studio Classics Collection. The audience was taken through the production of a complete song utilizing Waves Studio Classics Collection plug-ins, and treated to an extensive Q&A session plus great stories from rock music's halcyon days!





I remember when Chuck, Sweetwater's owner, first discussed his vision for our new headquarters. My reaction was, "Really?" It was almost too much to comprehend! The end result is beyond anything I imagined. Why go to such extremes? How does it benefit our employees? More important, how does it benefit our customers?

We believe that if we don't do all we can to create a positive, professional, creative, efficient, and, *fun* work environment, we can't expect employees to be motivated to treat our customers in kind. Our new facility sets the tone for the level of customer service we provide. We're in this for the long term and we want our employees to have a long-term mindset as well. This environment is also a

large part of how we're able to hire and retain high-quality people. Let's dig into some specifics.

**LEED Certification** — Sweetwater has always worked hard to be a good steward of the environment, participating in the "Cans for Habitat" program, recycling, and more. The new headquarters takes this to an entirely new level by using available technology to reduce energy consumption and minimizing environmental impact. Our building will be the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold-certified building in Northern Indiana. Go to [www.sweetwater.com/feature/expansion/leed.php](http://www.sweetwater.com/feature/expansion/leed.php) for details.

**Performance Theater** — Why retain the Russ Berger Design Group, an 8-time winner of the TEC Award for design excellence, to create a training space for our sales staff? Put simply, because training our staff is just that important. We have a minimum of three hours of training each week and with a growing team, we needed to be able to do this effectively. In our new space, we can hear and see the gear better than ever. The end result is that we're better able to assist you with selecting the best equipment for your needs. Plus, we aren't hoarding this cool facility. The 250-seat hall available for use by the local community (piano recitals, not for profit functions, etc.). See it at [www.sweetwater.com/feature/tour/04\\_01.php](http://www.sweetwater.com/feature/tour/04_01.php).

**Recording Studio** — Russ Berger also designed our new studios (see them at <http://productions.sweetwater.com/studios.php>). This is the heart of Sweetwater and where it all started back in 1979. While Sweetwater Productions is

a standalone division within our company, it's also accurate and convenient for evaluating new gear. In addition, the Sweetwater studios are a great place to display and demonstrate the gear we represent.

**Health Club and Personal Trainer/Dietician** — I don't know about you, but I'm not a fan of John Derek's quote, "Live fast, die young, and leave a good-looking corpse." I want to see my kids grow up and, God willing, hang around to spend time with my future grandchildren. We do a lot to encourage a healthy lifestyle here at Sweetwater, including company-sponsored smoking cessation and weight-management programs. A health club on site makes it a lot easier to take better care of ourselves.

**Other Fun Stuff for our Customers and Employees** — This includes the video games, ping-pong, pool, and foosball tables, golf-simulator, and putting greens, plus an in-house restaurant and a DVD/video game lending library.

Believe it or not, I haven't covered the full gamut of "amenities"! Suffice to say, it's an amazing place to work. I believe that makes it an amazing place to work *with* as well. A company comprising hard-working, motivated, and enthusiastic employees ensures consistency of performance. We're working harder than ever to provide the "Sweetwater Difference" for you! Please stop by to see us, we built this facility to serve you!

Rock and Roll!

Jeff Radke

Vice President of Sales

*TechNotes continued from page 6*

highest quality guitars ever made. It's never a question of "Will you find the perfect instrument?" but rather, "How will you choose from such a huge inventory?" Fender, Martin, Gibson, Paul Reed Smith, Taylor, Gretsch, Parker, Epiphone, Squier, Ibanez, Tobias, Guild, Valley Arts, Peavey, Takamine, Ovation, Wechter, and more — they're all here, in stock and ready to ship straight to your door.

Need help choosing the right guitar for your needs? Our experienced Sales Engineers can provide expert advice and will take all the time required to help you make the right decision. Once you've made your choice, your guitar is assigned to one of our expert guitar techs and it's given a 55-point inspection that includes a complete setup, so it's ready to play right out of the box. From there, it moves rapidly to shipping where it's safely packaged for the journey across the country — or around the world — and into your hands.

## Customer Studio: Soundfaith Studio

By Mark Hutchins

Northern Ohio has many great attractions: In the east you'll find the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; head west and you'll pass one of the biggest amusement parks in the country. Berlin Heights, Ohio, however, offers our favorite kind of attraction: Soundfaith Studio, a cozy project facility owned and operated by Steve Hockenberry.

Just a few miles south of the Ohio Turnpike lays the sleepy village of Berlin Heights, with all of a few hundred residents. Enter Hockenberry's unassuming abode, step downstairs, and you're greeted by the Aurealex-treated confines of Soundfaith Studio. While Hockenberry's DAW-centered setup represents the modern standard of recording, his initial urge to build a studio of his own dates back to the days when tape ruled the earth. "Back in the '70s, I had aspirations of putting together my own studio, but it was very expensive back then," he remembers. Having experienced recording on the performer's side of the glass, Hockenberry patiently waited until the economics began to catch up with the technology. Finally, he procured an ADAT system in the mid-1990s, then moved to a hard disk recorder. "Being from the 'old school,' I started out with an analog board," says Hockenberry. "A few years later I went over to computer-based recording." This move coincided with his first contact with Sweetwater.

"Once I got more serious about evolving my studio, I got in contact with [Sweetwater Sales Engineer] Paul Lea," Hockenberry says, adding, "The switch was pretty much predicated on the fact that I didn't want to get left behind by technology. I just decided to step up."



the percussion power. "Basically, everything's done start-to-finish here," he says, "except for mastering. I'll do small-run CD burns here, however." For now, Hockenberry uses Soundfaith Studio "basically for networking with Christian-based musicians and songwriters who are in my personal circle." He has completed four recent recording projects for area musicians, and more are currently underway.

Hockenberry says his relationship with Sweetwater gives him the ability to keep moving forward with his studio. "I really enjoy working with Sweetwater," he says. "I continue to see the quality of what I get out of my system improving." He points to Lea as a big help when it comes to advice on gear choices. "He knows all his products," Hockenberry says. "I can call and ask him anything and he's on top of it. Paul is a real straight shooter, and he's steered me in a positive direction. Some other places just want to sell you something, but I've found Sweetwater to be a helpful, professional company to work with."

You can contact Soundfaith Studio and Steve Hockenberry at [hocky@roadrunner.com](mailto:hocky@roadrunner.com).



# SYNTH TRICKS

By Daniel Fisher

Yamaha's **Motif XS** is a highly popular keyboard due, in part, to its incredibly large built-in ROM samples that span every genre. The effects are top notch and the arpeggiators and sequencer have something to offer regardless of the types of music you play. Then there's the beautiful color display, sliders, knobs, ribbon controller, pedals, well...you get the idea.

Despite this, it's interesting that many people are unaware of the powerful sampling capabilities in the Motif XS. Since my official title here at Sweetwater is "Director of Product Optimization," I thought it was high time we created the ultimate Motif XS bundle to raise the awareness of this extraordinary feature.

First we add 512MB of RAM (an \$85 value) so you won't have to worry if you have enough room for your sampled instruments. Then we include a 1GB USB Flash drive (a \$29.99 value) so you'll have plenty of room to save your work. But maybe you don't want to have a USB drive sticking out of the back of your keyboard. No problem! Working together with Yamaha, Sweetwater now offers an exclusive back plate that lets you mount your flash drive internally! We even



include the USB extension cable to connect it all. Now you've got a complete sampling system with built-in RAM and built-in storage.

So what might make this bundle even more interesting? One of the best things about Yamaha's flagship S90 ES is that it has one of the most respected stereo sampled grand pianos ever put into a professional keyboard. (It's a stunning recording of their custom-built \$250,000 Yamaha S700 grand piano.) Well, we're including a DVD with the full, longer version of the S90 ES S700 that includes the half-damper samples as well as the soundboard resonance. And since your piano is stored on an internal flash drive you can set your Motif XS to AutoLoad it every time you turn it on.

You still want more? How about 192 additional analog synthesizer emulations using all of the power of the new XS sound engine. And 100 new MIDI drum loops to get you started. More? Okay we'll include Yamaha's excellent training DVD, *The World of Motif* (a \$29.99 value) with almost four hours of in-depth instruction and throw in a Cubase training DVD (yet another \$29.99 value) to make you an expert in the free included copy of Cubase AI.

And finally, we throw in another DVD-ROM packed with many hundreds of dollars of sample libraries to fill your Cubase's HALionOne Sampler including: IK Multimedia's Sampletank SE with 170 instruments from the Miroslav Philharmonik and Sonik Synth 2 Libraries, AmpliTube Duo, 1.3GB of piano, bass, guitar, and drum instruments from Sonic Reality along with 500 Acidized WAVs, a special version of BFD with 700MB of drums, a free bonus pack of Yamaha marching drums, and a special 40-sound version of Arturia's "Analog Factory 2."

To put it simply: You can't get this Sweetwater Exclusive "XSpert" bundle anywhere else at any price. So...now you're wondering, "How much is this XSpert bundle going to cost me?" Nada, nothing, zip, bupkus. For a limited time we're including the entire XSpert bundle completely free of charge with every new Motif XS 61-, 76-, and 88-note keyboard purchased from Sweetwater! Everybody's getting a Motif XS...make sure you're one of the people who can actually use it to its full potential.

>> Yamaha MotifXS8  
Sweetwater price \$3199.99  
[www.sweetwater.com/motifxs8](http://www.sweetwater.com/motifxs8)

# Hands On Parker PJ24

By Mitch Gallagher

While Parker is perhaps best-known as the manufacturer of the amazingly light, high-tech Fly series of solidbody electric guitars, the company also delves into other aspects of the guitar world, including basses, a unique line of acoustic-electric instruments, and now a limited run of thin-line hollowbody guitars aimed at jazzers (though they're perfectly appropriate for other styles as well). This guitar, dubbed the PJ24, offers a great combination of high-quality woods, great electronics, excellent playability, and a unique, attractive look.

I sat down with two examples of the PJ24, one in natural finish and the other a sunburst finish. The first thing that strikes you is the shape of the body — I found it to look great, and because it's quite thin in depth, very comfortable to play, even if you're more accustomed to solidbody instruments. The PJ24 features a solid carved spruce top and carved maple back for a full acoustic tone. The guitar has a 24-3/4" scale length with 24 frets, and a comfortable "C"-shape to the 5-piece rock maple neck. The compound radius fingerboard and tailpiece are ebony with pearl inlays, the bridge is ebony, and the headstock has classy abalone and mother-of-pearl inlay. Grover Titan tuners top the headstock, and a gold Egnator mini-humbucking pickup floats off the end of the fingerboard. Volume and tone controls are discreetly mounted under the pickguard.

The instruments came out of their cases strung with flatwounds, and were set up with low action — they were extremely comfortable to play! Plugging in resulted in full, fat tones, with great articulation and sustain, and a rich depth and complexity. Whether pick- or fingerstyle, the sound was balanced, with good dynamic response.

If you're in the market for a hollowbody guitar for jazz or other styles, and you're willing to look outside the "traditional" body shapes (though not too far out), the PJ24 limited edition will make you extremely happy.



>> Parker PJ24 Thin Line  
Sweetwater price \$3149.97  
[www.sweetwater.com/pj24tlsb](http://www.sweetwater.com/pj24tlsb)



## Meet Brendan Murphy

**Name:** Brendan Murphy

**Title:** Sales Engineer

**Years at Sweetwater:** Five

**Instruments I play:** Synth/keyboards, terrible bass player.

**What were you doing before you joined the Sweetwater Team?** Mix engineer, nightclub manager, playing in a rock band.

**Family Info:** Rachel, my beautiful and talented wife (I met her when I came to Sweetwater); new baby daughter, Whitney.

**What best prepared you for the work you do at Sweetwater?** I was a live sound guy for many years. A soundman has to mix the show but also ends up being a problem-solver for the band. Repair cables, fix flat tires, find the lead singer... whatever it takes to make the show happen. This is similar to how we approach helping our customers here at Sweetwater: We do whatever it takes!

**What did you dream about doing for a living when you were growing up?** Jet pilot — maybe it was all the buttons and lights that interested me, because I sure

don't like heights.

**Describe the most dramatic situation in which you provided the "Sweetwater Difference" for a customer:** A customer missed his flight to Michigan for a gig. So, he got a flight to Fort Wayne and my wife and I drove him four hours north to the show. He and his band were very happy he made the gig!

**Favorite hobby:** Remodeling my home, collecting things that make cool sounds.

**Motto:** Read the directions!

**What makes working at Sweetwater fun for you?** It's very interesting to be around so many highly intelligent and creative people. Plus there's *Galaga* in the game room!

**Favorite movie you've recently seen:** *Cool Hand Luke*, also check out *Into The Wild*, great soundtrack.

**Guilty pleasure of choice:** Blue Bell ice cream, dark chocolate!

**Place you'd most like to visit:** The Smithsonian in Washington, DC.

**What is the most important thing you've learned at Sweetwater?** How to multitask.

**Favorite magazine:** *Architectural Digest*. All those big houses need studios!

**Real-life hero:** My parents, Michael and Carole, they have supported my music since I was about seven years old.

**Artists who have influenced me:** Flood, Brian Eno.

**How would your boss describe you?** Persistent.

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