

First Fret

BURTONFEST SET FOR '08

The 2008 James Burton International Guitar Festival and Expo/Trade Show will be held August 22-24 at the Shreveport Convention Center in Shreveport, Louisiana. The festival includes a three-day trade show and exhibition, as well as two live events – Concert On the Riverfront and the James Burton and Friends concert. Proceeds from the event go to the James Burton Foundation, which provides guitars and lessons to young people and continues to expand through schools, communities, and hospitals. For more information, visit jamesburtonmusic.com or call (318) 424-5000.

DJANGO FEST NORTHWEST ANNOUNCES LINEUP

The Whidbey Island Center for the Arts, Langley, Washington, will this year present its eighth annual DjangoFest Northwest by bringing to North America some of the biggest names in Gypsy jazz.

Slated for September 24-28 at Whidbey Island Park, the festival will play host to world-renowned acts including the Sebastian Giraux Trio with Mathieu Chatelain and Jeremie Arranger from Paris; the recently re-worked John Jorgenson Quintet; jazz giants Howard Alden and Mimi Fox, and the Marc Atkinson Trio. Also appearing will be regional favorites Pearl Django and Hot Club Sandwich from Seattle, and Whidbey's own Billet-Deux, and others. Perhaps most notable will be a performance by the Rasenberg Trio, making its first U.S. performance in 10 years – and only U.S. performance in '08.

For more information, visit WICAnline.com.

FENDER INDUCTS BURTON, OTHERS TO HALL OF FAME

Fender Musical Instruments will induct James Burton, Bill Carson, Don Johnston, Robert "Bob" Perine, the Beach Boys and Dan Smith in the 2008 class. The ceremony will be held August 8 in Tempe, Arizona. Fender's Hall of Fame honors artists, innovators, leaders and historically significant contributors to the Fender legacy. For details on the accomplishments of each inductee, visit fender.com.

GRETSCHES HONORED BY GEORGIA MUSIC HOF

Fred and Dinah Gretsch, president and C.F.O. of The Gretsch Company, will become the first musical instrument



Guitars in the booth of German guitar builder Stefan Hahl, at the Montréal Guitar Show.

Builders Shine in Montréal

THE MONTRÉAL GUITAR Show, held June 27-29, combined an exhibition of high-end instruments with an elite group of performers and speakers. The show featured over 100 luthiers from Canada and the U.S. and another 17 from France. Held at the Hyatt Regency in Montreal, the show was staged in conjunction with the Festival International de Jazz de Montréal, an 11-day event that draws tens of thousands of people from around the world.

Unlike NAMM shows, which feature only new instruments by manufacturers, or vintage-guitar shows, which offer a variety of vintage, used, and new guitars for sale by dealers, the exhibitors at Montréal were hand-builders who were there by invitation based on their reputation for fine craftsmanship. The majority were individuals who produce no more than 15 instruments per year, many of which are custom made.

A variety of guitars were on display, ranging from classical and traditional flat-top and archtop steel-string guitars to avant-garde archtops, electric guitars, and harp guitars. Virtually all the exhibitors had at least 10 years of experience as professional builders, and some had 40 or more. All had a very high degree of skill and dedication to their craft.

The experience of being among more than 100 extraordinarily talented luthiers was enhanced by the workshops, seminars, and performances that began at 11 a.m. and continued until nearly

midnight. Seminar hosts ranged from high-end instrument collector Jeff Doctorow to inlay artist Grit Laskin to author Tim Brooks. A series of mini-concerts ran continuously through the day, with performers – presented by various makers – changing every 20 minutes. Evening concerts (three per night) ranged from Django-inspired John Jorgenson to ukulele dazzler Jake Shimabukuro to the solo jazz of Martin Taylor. The experience was enhanced by the setting, proximity to the jazz festival, and simply being in the beautiful city of Montréal.

The show left no doubt that guitar buyers have access to more skilled hand-builders. Although no individual hand-craftsman is in a position to take over a large segment of the market, their work is of far greater influence and significance than the sheer number of instruments they produce. Just as craftsmen such as the Larson Brothers, D'Angelico, and Stromberg remain famous long after their lifetime, today's hand craftsmen are working to produce the finest instruments their imaginations can conceive and are destined to leave their mark in history. Due to the fact that there are hundreds of such individuals producing handmade instruments today versus only a very few during the 1930s or '50s, collectively, their influence in the market is very significant. – *George Gruhn*



The main exhibit hall at the Montréal Guitar Show hosted primarily French exhibitors.

Stolen Gear

Dave Talbott, San Marcos, California, was the victim of theft the night of July 11, when two electric bass guitars were stolen from him.

One is a modified 1952 Fender Precision with a contoured body and translucent dark red finish. The bass has no serial

number and the bridge is non-original. At the time of the theft, it had Seymour Duncan active P-J pickups and preamp. The other bass was a Ken Lawrence Associate five-string. Talbott is offering a reward, and anyone with information is asked to contact him at

(760) 739-5935 or davetalbott@actioncoach.com.

Erik Dietz, proprietor of Dietz Brothers Music, Manhattan Beach, California, reported that his store was burglarized June 9. The culprits stole a few cheap guitars and accessories, as well as a Dale Unger American Legend Series guitar with serial number

003, 17" body, 25" scale fretboard, blonde finish with ivory binding, a floating pickup with volume control, the name on the tailpiece, and ebony buttons.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Dietz at (310) 379-6799, e-mail erikdietz@hotmail.com, or Detective Knickerbocker at the MBPD, (310) 802-513.