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April 1994

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Eldon Whitford, David Vinopal & Dan Erlewine

Gibson's Fabulous Flat-Top Guitars

Gibson acoustics rarely receive the attention they deserve by collectors, but this book should change that. Starting with Gibson's Depression-era L-series guitars and continuing through the company's current custom models, the book details the development of almost every Gibson flat-top ever produced. The photos of players with their Gibsons show that these guitars have been many musicians' instruments of choice. If you own a Gibson acoustic or are thinking of getting one, this book is an indispensable guide to some of America's underrated treasures. GPI Books. —CG

Dan Erlewine

Guitar Player Repair Guide, 2nd Edition

Dan's updated bible features over 100 additional pages, with expanded coverage of fretting, acoustic repairs, and factory setups for Fender, Gibson, and Martin. Also new are a ten-step Strat tweak, more pro stuff (including the tech specs on the guitars of Stevie Ray, Jeff Beck, Albert Collins, Buddy Guy, B.B. King, and John Mooney), a larger finishing section, and tons of photos and diagrams. You'll find a complete listing of tools, vintage dealers, luthier schools, books, and organizations. There's even a transcription of "Walkin' Blues" in case you get the urge to snap a string or two while waiting for the metal-flake to dry on that old D'Angelico. \$22.95 from GPI Books. —AT

VIDEO

Legends On Video

Newly formed Vestapol Films makes a fabulously auspicious debut with three hour-long videos

p i c k s

•**Jawbox**, *For Your Own Special Sweetheart*, Atlantic: Take Gang Of Four's harsh textures and objectified structures, filter through the brainy heaviness and ensemble

Salif Keita.

•**Fahy, Harley & Kramer**, *Egomaniacs*, Shimmy-Disc (Box 1187, New York, NY 10116): Acid-indie "supergroup" blends fey Syd Barrett/Nick Drake fragility with buoyant, swirl-'n'-drone textures straight out of the Maharishi-era Beatles. A rainbow of trippy period tones cut with a dash of '90s noise.

•**Duane Jarvis**, *D.J.'s Front Porch*, Medium Cool (2541 Nicolet Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55404): While Jarvis, a veteran of the Divinyls, Odds, and Michelle Shocked's band, doesn't quite attain the dizzy altitudes of the Gram Parsons/Clarence White-era Byrds, his strong songs and solid playing are a welcome echo of that exalted era. Winning and unpretentious.

•**Joshua Breakstone Quartet**, *Walk Don't Run*, Evidence (1100 E. Hector St., Ste. 392, Conshohocken, PA 19428): Perverse or what? Breakstone, a model of jazz guitar taste and restraint, records a set of tunes associated with the Ventures. But Joshua and Nokie share little besides their songbook—no twang here, just elegant, Grant Green-influenced soloing, but with a rounder, more pillowy tone. Lovely neo-retro stuff.

•**Ancient Future**, *Asian Fusion*, Narada Equinox (1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202): Northern California's

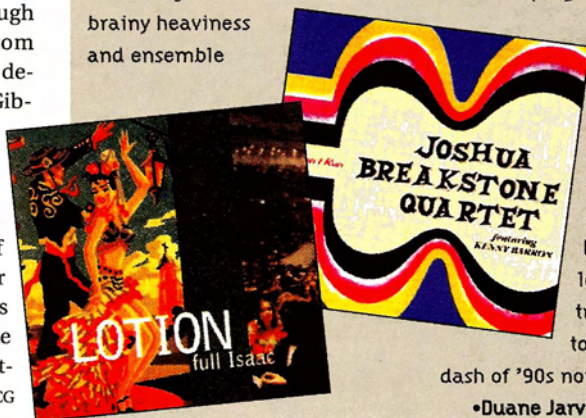
self-proclaimed "world fusion" band do more than simply throw together players and instruments from East and West. They rebuild at the sub-molecular level, puréeing the varied melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic idioms into tuneful, somewhat new-agey compositions. Leader Matthew Montfort conjures lovely Asian zither-like inflections with a scalloped-fretboard guitar.

•**Lotion**, *Full Isaac*, Spin Art (Box 1798, New York, NY 10156-1798): Grease me up, Scotty! As produced by Kurt Ralske, Ultra Vivid Scene's medium-fi neo-psychedelic brainiac, Lotion oozes buckets of groovy, playfully off-kilter tones.

•**Ricardo Iznaola**, *Virtuoso Romantic Music*, IGW (Box 462072, Aurora, CO 80046): Even casual classical listeners will have heard these virtuosic Chopin, Liszt, and Ravel warhorses—but probably never on guitar. The Cuban-born Coloradoan has both the guts to create solo guitar transcriptions of devilishly difficult piano repertoire and the skill to pull them off successfully, not to mention his own virtuosic, neo-Romantic *Ten Concert Études*.

•**Ron Jackson**, *A Guitar Thing*, Muse (160 W. 71st St., New York, NY 10023): Go Wes, young man! An impressive debut from yet another twenty-something guitarist bent on reviving Montgomery's muse. Jackson offers a further tip of the thumb with cool originals in the ol' Indianapolis vein.

•**Babkas**, *Babkas*, Songlines (Box 421, 810 W. Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., Canada): If there really is such a thing as rock-bop phrasing, Babkas guitarist Brad Schoepach's got it.



precision of Helmet, add fresh harmonic ideas and unconventional tones, and you'll probably have something like this overpowering, cliché-free ouch-rock.

•**Leni Stern**, *Like One*, *Lipstick* (Vogelsangerstrasse 193, 50825 Köln, Germany): Stern's lick-free solos always seem to grow organically from her harmonically imaginative tunes. A case study in the interactive properties of composition and improvisation, arts Leni practices with remarkable originality and understatement.

•**Oumou Sangare**, *Ko Sira*, *World Circuit* (dist. by Rounder, 1 Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140): Sublime Malian vocalist Sangare spins her heartbreakingly beautiful melodies over interlocking webs of guitar, electric bass, and indigenous stringed instruments. Checks in somewhere between traditional Malian music and the sleek international stylings of, say,