

BEANO 'BURSTS: CLAPTON, GREEN, TAYLOR

Vintage Guitar

magazine

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VINNY ROTH

Guitar Stew

Vinny Roth's latest album, *Red Wine, Sunshine, and Loud Guitars*, was inspired by his musical heroes, but fully sprinkled with his mix of styles.

"I had the material 80 percent written beforehand, and really took my time recording," he said. "The other 20 percent came naturally with the cats on the project."

Those cats included Zappa alum Ike Willis (VG, May '17). "It was great picking his brain and hearing Zappa stories," said Roth. "He laid down a killer vocal on 'Shaking What She Got.'"

Roth was born in Queens and his family moved to Virginia when he was 13. An Elvis movie and the lick to Aerosmith's "Walk This Way" spurred his interest in guitar; he took lessons and starting learning on his own. The Allman Brothers' *Live at The Fillmore East* taught him much about improvisation.

"I like live albums most because the bands

let loose," he said. "I'd slow down the turntable to steal licks from the Allmans, Eric Clapton, the Dead, B.B. King, James Brown, and Hendrix."

Today, he continues to be inspired by guitarists.

"There are so many current players I like, especially Oz Noy, Jimmy Herring, Guthrie Govan, and Joe Bonamassa," he said. "They raise the bar. I also love Mike Campbell from the late, great Tom Petty's band. He always played what the tune needed, and his tones are pure perfection."

For studio and stage, Roth prefers a simple setup.

"I use a Yorkville Traynor 85-watt tube combo, an Ibanez TS-9, Exotic EP, and a Morley Bad Horsie wah. I also played through an Avid Eleven Rack in the studio because we were running Pro Tools. I'm a tube-amp guy, but the Eleven Rack gave me perfect David Gilmour tones when I need them."

"I recorded using an '80s American Standard Strat, a '90s Strat Plus with JBE pickups, and a Lengardo Milano, which is chambered and has JBE pickups. It's a true tone machine."

Along with gigging, Roth teaches guitar to 40 students.

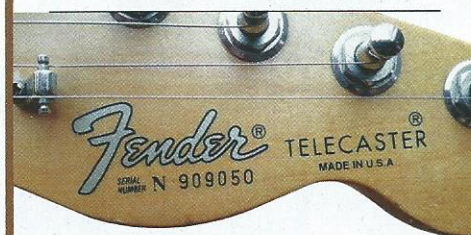
"I love teaching anybody who wants to learn, and I always learn from teaching. There's a ton of new music out there, and it's my job to guide players away from processed pop music and to the legends. Players from my era had more ear training, so we learned mostly by slowing down vinyl. Today, all you need is a video or tabs online. There's nothing wrong with that, but you need a good ear to play great melodies and create hooks on the fly."

He recently took lessons from Commander Cody vet Bill Kirchen and came away with a batch of "new" country licks in his repertoire. Effort like that exemplifies Roth's desire to continue growing musically and as a person. Speaking of growth, he has already started on his next project.

"I would love to record with Dickey Betts, Clapton, Billy Gibbons, or Stevie Wonder. So, if any of them read this, please hit me up!" he said... half-jokingly. — **John Heidt**

Ask Zac

WITH ZAC CHILDS



The headstock decal on a '90s American Standard Tele.

I recently bought a Telecaster with a truss-rod adjustment at the headstock, six-saddle bridge, and an adjustor in the neck plate. The serial number starts with N9 (on the headstock decal), but when I removed the neck, it had a "Jan 08 1991" date stamp. Also, the headstock decal says "Made in the USA," but there's the word "Solis" on a white sticker and "Hector Montes" stamped in ink on the neck heel. So, is it a real American-made Fender? — M. Deniel

The bridge, truss adjustment at the headstock, and Micro-Tilt adjuster in the neck plate are all features of the American Standard Tele first offered in late 1988. Yours was made in '91, despite what the decal indicates. Fender mistakenly ordered N9 (1999) decals instead of N0 (1990), and used them throughout '90 and '91. The names on the heel are those of Fender employees; Hispanic-Americans have a history with Fender going back to Tadeo Gomez, whose famous "TG" stamp appeared on the heels of many necks he shaped for early black-guard Teles, along with Abigail Ybarra, who wound pickups from 1956 until she retired in 2013.

Serial numbers on decals can be an inaccurate way of dating because they were at times ordered in large quantities, so they'd take years to use. For example, E4 decals can be found on instruments with heel-date stamps from 1984 through '88.

Zac Childs is a guitar tech in Nashville. If you have a question about guitars, from nuts and bolts to historical or celebrity-related inquiries, drop a line to him at zac@askzac.com or visit facebook.com/askzac.