

# Guitarist

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HOWARD  
ROBERTS

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# The **NEW** Howard Roberts

by Steve Haskin

**I'M DOING SOMETHING** tonight that I haven't done in 30 years: blowin' into town and hitting the stage in a club to play standards." So said Howard Roberts May 18 at the Artists Quarter in Minneapolis. "I brought some fusion charts but it just doesn't feel right tonight. Tonight, I think, we'll just play jazz." Howard turns to pianist Mikkel Romstad. "How 'bout something by Hoagy Carmichael?" he says. "How 'bout Skylark?" Mikkel begins playing an intro and Howard says, "A little more like Freddie Green" and the piano becomes more staccato. Kenny Horst and Billy Peterson hover over their instruments, then enter simultaneously and the band sounds like they've played together forever.

As I listened to Howard play that evening I realized how little I really knew about him. He is perhaps best known as a guitar teacher. His seminars, his monthly column in *Guitar Player* and his role as founder of the Guitar Institute of Technology in Los Angeles are what come to mind when I think of Howard Roberts. But because his recordings are no longer available and his performances are few and far between I really don't know his playing. As I watched his fingers fly over the fingerboard I wondered about his early years in L.A., his introduction to studio work, his first teaching experiences and I wondered about his future. What was next for Howard Roberts? The next afternoon I satisfied my curiosity in a conversation with Howard.

**Guitarist:** Tell us about your first year in Los Angeles.

I arrived in Los Angeles in 1950. Most of my first year I stayed in Watts. I didn't have a car, I didn't have any money. All I had was a guitar and an amplifier. But I kind of wanted it that way. I just wanted to do nothing but eat, sleep and play the guitar. When I first arrived I wasn't aware of the jazz scene because Los Angeles is a huge town and I was only aware of the small part of town where I lived. So I just kicked around downtown, playing in clubs like Sonny's Chicken Shack, where sometimes the music would go all night. I got to play with all kinds of first-rate people, name horn players and things like that. So that was my first year. That was it. I didn't do much in the way of work. I was just bummin' around, sittin' in, things like that.

**Guitarist:** So how did you make a living?

Every now and then I'd end up with enough of a gig to make ends meet, to pull through. I was sleeping in the back of a friend's car or on someone's couch, just getting by.

**Guitarist:** What happened after that first year?

Well, I found myself inching closer and closer to Hollywood and meeting more and more people along the way. Then I started getting some gigs: hotel groups, lounge bands, things like that. I did a lounge thing in Vegas for a short time. These were jazz-oriented groups. Not really what you'd call heavy-duty jazz. More of a lightweight jazz. But I was making

a pretty good living doing that six nights a week or so. So I did that for about my second year.

**Guitarist:** Did you ever play with Charlie Parker or any of the Be Boppers?

In the course of that first year I ended up playing with most of them. Then in the mid-50's jazz kind of got rediscovered by the record companies. They started recording jazz again and they were recording a lot. That's when I started really working with those heavies. But I never did play with Charlie.

**Guitarist:** You've mentioned guitarist/arranger Jack Marshall as being your mentor. What was that relationship like and when did it begin?

It began when I was inching my way from downtown L.A. toward Hollywood. We met in a club called The Hague that was across the street from the Ambassador Hotel. One night Barney Kessel was going to be playing in there with, I think, Dave Brubeck or something. I had to hear that, so I went in there and ordered a Coke and was sitting at a table when a guy comes up to me and says, "Are you Howard Roberts?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "I'm Jack Marshall." Of course, I knew of him because he was one of the real heavy-gun studio guitarists around Hollywood. He was on the staff orchestra at MGM. What I didn't know was that my name had gotten around, people knew me but I didn't realize that I had a reputation. Well, the long and short of it is that Jack had me out to his house for dinner and we became friends.



**Guitarist:** But why do you consider him your mentor?

Jack taught me how to think about things. You see, I came from the Arizona desert and I had practically no social skills at all. I was, frankly, scared to death of all the pretty people in Hollywood. I didn't know how to talk to anybody. I really felt awkward and very much out of place. He kind of helped me with all of it. He helped me meet other guys, he gave me things to study. The first thing he said to me when I met him at the club was "What do you know about the classical guitar?" I said, well, I'm crazy about the guys who play it—Segovia and Carlos Montoya and that handful of guys who can play real good, 'cause I'd been admiring them since I was a little kid. It's not hard to pick out who's a good guitar player or not. Then I said, "But I don't know how to play the darn thing, though." He said, "Follow me," and leads me to a back room there in the club where he had his guitar. He then played me some Villa Lobos. That started me studying classical.

**Guitarist:** You've been called "King of the studio guitarists." How did your work in the studios begin?

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At about the time I showed up in L.A.—1950 and '51—the film writers, orchestrators and composers began to become aware of the electric guitar as an orchestral instrument. Before it was amplified, it didn't have the dynamic range to be heard in the orchestra. Just enough guitar players had come up that could, first of all, have enough command of the instrument to be able to play a line with horns in a way that horn players would phrase it. In L.A. at that time there couldn't have been more than five guys that could do that. There weren't enough guys that could read, follow a conductor and show up on time. That's how I got my break. It was a supply-and-demand situation.

**Guitarist:** *So when you first went into the studio and played with an orchestra were you intimidated?*

Absolutely terrified.

**Guitarist:** *How long did it take before you began to feel comfortable?*

Probably 10 years. But you never get comfortable because it's a very on-the-edge type of a job. You never know what you'll run into there. You can meet your nemesis around any corner. Sometimes you'll make a mistake and freeze. I don't know any studio player it hasn't happened to. It's that kind of pressure. There's a saying "The studio business is 90 percent boredom and 10 percent stark terror, and you never know when that 10 percent is coming up."

**Guitarist:** *You're well known as a teacher through your column in *Guitar Player*, your famous seminars and your founding of the *Guitar Institute of Technology*. How did your roll as guitar educator begin?*

I got a call from Johnny Smith around '69 or '70, something like that. He said he was doing a guitar seminar down in Colorado Springs. Well, I had never heard of such a thing. As far as I know it was the first organized by a jazz guitarist. I had no idea what to expect when he asked me to be a guest instructor. The seminar was to last for three days and there were 40 students enrolled. Now I taught my first guitar lesson about a week before I took my first one. I found out, without realizing it at the time, that teaching is a great way to learn. There's nothing like it. You go and take a lesson from some guy and you might not quite understand what he taught you for a week, 10 days. But try giving a lesson to someone on the subject and after the hour you've got it. Anyway I always hated giving lessons. But I always did because there were other players around town that wanted to get together and I wanted to be open to that sort of thing. The problem was that a guy would come in for an hour and you would see that the problem that he had required a very accurate rifle shot. It's

like a surgical thing. It's not like a shotgun where you blast this and you blast that. You look into the guy's problem and narrow it down to the thing that it really is more than anything else. Then you draw a fine beam on that problem, hit the trigger slowly and knock it out of the box. That way you know you're getting somewhere. For me, the best lessons were when as soon as diagnosis was made and careful aim was taken I gave an analysis of the player's problem and recommended a remedy. These lessons take about 10 or 15 minutes. But unfortunately the guy has driven halfway across town and he expects at least an hour so you blab about this and you blab about that and by the time you get through with the hour you've diffused the whole issue. I knew that private lessons weren't working for that very reason. When I participated in that seminar by Johnny Smith I said, "That, by God, is the answer."

**Guitarist:** *How did your seminars eventually lead to the founding of the *Guitar Institute of Technology*?*

Well, there was a guy named Pat Hicks who coordinated the seminars for me. One day I said to him, "Pat, I'm getting worn out flying all over the country giving these seminars. From now on if someone wants to study with me they'll have to come to Los Angeles." I told Pat that I wanted to start a guitar school in L.A. and he agreed to take care of the administrative details while I concentrated on curriculum. So that was the beginning of G.I.T. and the last seminar I did.

**Guitarist:** *Can you explain your approach to the guitar?*

I certainly can. My approach differs, I believe, from the standard approach. You know that different people use different senses to measure their environment. The two basic types are those who sense with sight the most and those who rely on sound to the greatest degree. I have a theory that guitarists are "eye people." The guitar fingerboard is so visual that it appeals to anyone leaning in the direction of spacial orientation, visual diagrams and patterns. If you look at guitar music and the way it's presented in visual form you'll find it to be full of diagrams and patterns. The guitar neck is presented as a grid and you associate sounds with patterns on the grid. Other musicians occupy the sense of the ear. The guitar player is more of the engineering type of personality. The guitarist is more interested in arithmetic, geometry, angles, combinations and shapes and designs of a visual nature. If you check for the little Freudian slips you'll find that it's the guitar player that always says, "Let's go see Joe Pass." You'll never hear a sax player say that. So my approach to the guitar differs in that I learned to play by ear because there was no guitar methods available where I grew up in Arizona. The only source of information that I had was what I heard come out of the radio.

I just played the sounds that I heard and then I played the sounds I wanted to hear. That's where I'm different.

**Guitarist:** *On Thursday night during your performance at the Artists Quarter you mentioned that someone had once called from the audience, "We want the old Howard Roberts," and you had retorted "I am the old Howard Roberts." They were referring to your playing fusion and rock rather than straight-ahead jazz. How did you, unlike your contemporaries, Barney Kessell, Herb Ellis and Joe Pass, lose interest in straight jazz?*

In the early '50s I won a Downbeat award. That led me to go to New York and out on the road and to become a jazz star. I was playing in the top jazz clubs and being on TV but you've never seen such a lonely and unhappy guy in your life. I felt there was something missing in my life. I didn't want to keep playing the same tunes night after night. I wanted to learn more about music so I returned to L.A. as a student. I studied orchestration, composition and counter point at UCLA. For me it was an intensive upgrade. I started hanging around cello players and they gave a whole new dimension to putting your finger on a string and plucking it. After that I was no longer interested in jazz only.

**Guitarist:** *What's next for Howard Roberts? What's on the horizon?*

I can't tell you what exact form it will take. That would be predicting the future. But I can tell you the direction I would like my future to take. There are so many avenues of music that I've thought of but had to put aside because I was making a living doing other kinds of music. There are so many things that I want to do, sounds to make and not necessarily guitar sounds. I would like to go out and explore some of those areas through performing, recording and producing music but I want to do it in a way that is not at all in the mainstream of trendy music. I've been in that all my life and I figure paying your dues to trendy music and whatever happens to be popular this week. I figure nearly 50 years is enough so that I can say, "O.K. folks, I've had enough." I don't want to hear any more, "Give me the old Howard Roberts." 'cause you see, the old Howard Roberts has been the new Howard Roberts all along. ■

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Concerts, Engagements, Lessons

## Sherry Minnick: performing & writing for positive change

by Cathy Nixon

**S**HERRY MINNICK doesn't just want to sing. She wants to change the world. The rich, colorful warmth of her voice perfectly projects her yearning for change, and clearly reflects the depth of her concern for others. A conversation begun about her singing and guitar-playing quickly fills with her thoughts on peace and justice. As her music captivates the audience, so do her ideas stimulate the listener until her songs and guitar connect easily with the world.

Sherry hasn't actually played the guitar much herself tonight. Her partner, John Van Orman, handles most of the accompaniment on instruments ranging from the guitar to the fiddle to his own handmade hurdy-gurdy. The audience at the New Riverside Cafe in Minneapolis is half-listening through their meals, as usual. Some of us listen intently. We are treated to a melodic trip back into history and far away places as Sherry and John's vibrant voices bring to life the songs of the British Isles and Appalachia. Though their instruments fill and embellish their songs, Sherry and John often sing a cappella, which eerily rivets the audience's attention. Sherry ends the evening's program by hauntingly singing alone one of the many versions of the story of cold-hearted "Barbara Allen."

Sherry Minnick comes from Rhinelander, Wis., where she began her music career at age 16. "I started out as the girl singer in a band called the Debonaires," she said, smiling at the memory and adding humorously, "'Featuring Sherry.' I never played. I'd say, 'Are you ready, boys?'" But picking up the guitar has enabled me to change all that. I mean, you get away from the idea that you are the center of attention. Being in a band is really a community situation, and not a solo thing. Of course, bands like to feature singers, and sort of fade into the backgrounds so it seems that the music happens by some miracle, and the only thing happening is singing. I'm still primarily a singer, but I think it really made a difference when I picked up the guitar because all of a sudden I could be the band and the singer. And I think the guitar has done that for a lot of people. Music becomes more mobile and its scope is much greater in terms of what you can do with a guitar and voice. It's certainly enhanced folk music."

Sherry didn't start playing the guitar until 1972 when she was well into her singing career. After playing around with the instrument for awhile, she finally found herself having to learn to play rhythm guitar when she became associated with a bluegrass band in Oklahoma called Haywire. Before that, however, there was a lull in her music career



SHERRY MINNICK and JOHN VAN ORMAN will perform July 1 at a folk festival in Fergus Falls.

for a few years after her stints with the dance bands. During that time, Sherry concentrated on her undergraduate studies in comparative literature and obtained a master's degree in library science. She moved from Wisconsin to Texas and then to Oklahoma, where she joined her first bluegrass band.

"I made a friend who played bluegrass who needed a singer for a band," she explained. "They called me up one day and asked me to audition. Well, I'd never heard bluegrass in my life, but I sang some songs I knew. They said they liked it and asked me to sing with them. After that they took me aside and dropped a needle on a Bill Monroe record. I went, 'What's that?' It was bluegrass."

It wasn't that Sherry didn't want to play, or didn't enjoy playing instruments other than her voice. At one point she wanted to enter a music school as a French horn major. "I didn't think of myself as a singer, you see," she said, shaking her head as though finding it hard to believe herself. "But you know how you don't pay that much attention to what's happening to you. I mean, there was always a lot of singing in my family. So I just took singing for granted. I didn't have the same attitude towards it that I have now. It's like you come around to the same place, but you go through this transformation in between. Then I thought, well, I'm not a good singer because I'd heard lots of good singers when I

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## Days of Glam & Poses

by Tim Alexander

'72 was boring. I was in the ninth grade and, musically, nothing was happening at all. Led Zep. Stones. Grand Funk. Black Sabbath. An endless stream of AM airwave drivel. A short talk with an older cousin hipped me to David Bowie and Lou Reed—whose albums I with my limited resources were unable to find. Till one day I hit upon Bowie's *Images 66-69* and bought it. I was disappointed: Anthony Newley meets the Chipmunks . . . Back to the radio. Walking through the school commons with *Images* under my arm, I bumped into Marty. He was always hip; he had Beatle boots in the third grade and Lennon glasses in the fifth. Rumor said he had a band. "Hey, Tim, that album any good?" he asked. "I don't really like it," I replied. "Trade you for this one?" It was a copy of *The Man Who Sold the World* by Bowie (RCA NL 84654). "Sure," I said. BAM! I was transformed. Glam kid, glitter rocker—whatever you'd like to call it. My friends at Catholic school witnessed with dismay. The new space-oddy music was all I could talk about.

Next came *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* . . . and then Lou Reed . . . and then Mott the Hoople . . . I ran out and bought my first guitar.

Fifteen years or so later, on November 28, 1988, Ian Hunter and Mick Ronson returned to the Twin Cities and took the First Avenue stage for a night to remind the faithful just what that rousing rock sounded like. I was in heaven!

Ian Hunter was the lead singer/songwriter for Mott the Hoople in the '70s. Mott scored a handful of hits in their native U.K., but only made the charts here with "All the Young Dudes," a Bowie-penned tune. Mott broke up in '75, and Hunter went solo.

Mick Ronson played lead guitar for Bowie not only on *Ziggy Stardust* but on a number of early albums. He was "retired" in '73.

whereupon he put out two ignored solo albums, briefly joined the disintegrating Mott the Hoople in '75, then followed Hunter into his solo career, laying down some brilliant guitar tracks on the LP *Ian Hunter* (CBS 33480).

The Hunter-Ronson band toured the U.S. and Europe before parting company for a time; Hunter continued to pursue his solo career while Ronson joined Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue.

In 1979, the two settled their differences and got back together to make *You're Never Alone with a Schizophrenic* (Chrysalis CHR 1214). This LP gave them chart status and they toured with it quite successfully. The live shows are documented on *Welcome to the Club*, a shockingly beautiful double LP which, in my opinion, is a hand-stompin', foot-clappin' masterpiece of live recording equal to anything released by "major" bands.

Local rockers may remember, also, that Ronson spent some of last winter here in Minneapolis producing Funhouse's first LP. He appeared onstage at the Cabooze during MGS's Blues Guitarathon.

Hunter and Ronson were in fantastic form the night I saw them—playing as if they'd been together all these years since *Schizophrenic*. They pulled out the '70s gems, the old U.K. Glam chartbusters as well as some of Hunter's more introspective tunes and, of course, the downright stompers from the *Club* set. It was a real treat for all us H&R zealots to get eight new numbers on top of all that.

Ronson dished up instrumental versions of Patsy Cline's "Sweet Dreams" and Richard Rodgers' "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" that had me and my guitar-playin' buddies swooning, gasping and clawing at ourselves.

Their set was received enthusiastically; either the folks who came remember H&R from their own golden age of rock n' roll, or else had been turned on by older brothers and sisters.

When I spoke to Hunter and Ronson, they were tightlipped about the past, but very excited about this tour, which consists of 50-odd dates Stateside followed by appearances in Europe. In '89 sometime, an album is expected to come from all this.

It was inspiring to see, hear and meet the very gents who got me into rock in high school. I was by no means disappointed, although I *did* feel 16 again, and that was a horrible feeling.

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# Howe does he do it?

## An overview of the career of guitarist Steve Howe

by Anthony A. Vasquez

### Introduction

Steve Howe, born in England on April 8, 1947, is without question one of rock's greatest guitarists. Throughout his career with bands such as Tomcrow, Yes, Asia, GTR, and soon with Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman and Howe, Steve has made known his passion for the guitar in all its forms and all its styles. This eclecticism makes Steve's style difficult to pin down. At one moment he may be playing a fast-moving, finger-picking piece such as *The Clap*, the next minute playing a more classically inspired piece such as *Mood for a Day*. He could be playing several types of electric, acoustic and steel guitars with the band Yes on their 3-song album *Close to the Edge*; he may be exchanging keyboard-style licks with Geoff Downes on Yes' *Drama*; he could be playing a moving classical duet with harpsicord on Yes' *Tormato*, or he may even be playing the relaxing *Sketches in the Sun* found on GTR's self-titled LP.

### Training & Experience

Having been confronted by such command of the guitar and other fretted instruments, many guitarists assume Steve had formal training. Dishearteningly for those of us religiously practicing Segovia's diatonic scales and other such drills, Steve's only teacher has been his passion for the instrument, a passion began simply enough at age 10 by dancing around to the records in his parents collection. Included in that early collection were such artists as Les Paul, Mary Ford and Bill Haley (all of which he still listens to). By the time he had his first guitar at age 12, his brother had introduced him to Barney Kessel, Django Reinhardt, Tal Farlow, Kenny Burrell and other jazz greats. Steve was off and running, being moved by the music and interpreting key musical phrases from the things he heard. He also started listening to Chet Atkins, Charlie Christian, Julian Bream and Andres Segovia, to name a few, with Atkins and Bream especially making lasting impressions on Steve. As he told Dan Hedges in the May 1978 issue of *Guitar Player*, "Somehow, it doesn't seem right to say, 'Well, I just sat around and played,' but that's basically what I've always done." He found it important to get into what each guitarist was doing, eventually being able to improvise from each new platform presented him.

Steve augmented his studies at home with session work, believing that it was important to work with other people in order to refine his

playing. By age 16 he had formed his first band (The Syndicats), and his career took off—to a dead end, as it turned out. He went through two other groups, gaining a sort of underground reputation as he went, but the final group Bodast ended as a big disappointment. It was a timely phone call from Chris Squire several months prior to *The Yes Album* that ended the "whatever happened to Steve Howe?" questions once and for all. His involvement with Yes continued to add to his abilities, allowing him to concentrate more on his actual playing than on composing band material.

Along with inspiration provided by the sounds of the guitar and playing with others, Steve's natural ability also has been developed by time and effort. His practice sessions usually consist of running through those scales he finds helpful for warming up, improvising from either his own or others' compositions, and sometimes working out a piece from sheet music. By his own admission, Steve doesn't read sheet music very well, but the tediousness of counting pitches on the staff is offset by his sheer passion for the guitar and the opportunity to get into someone else's thinking. He says, however, that after 25 years of playing it is still necessary for him to keep in top form, but maintaining and improving that form doesn't require two hours per night of "practice." He finds performances to be learning experiences, and he values them as crucial practice time.

The approaches Steve has used to develop his talent may or may not be helpful to the variety of players reading about him. However, there is an undeniable inspiration that comes from reading any interview with Steve Howe that anyone can find useful, especially after the umpteenth attempt at that one, excruciating musical phrase which just doesn't work!

### Equipment

According to an interview in *Rolling Stone*, February 22, 1979, Steve has "115 pluckable instruments" in his collection. Most are guitars, but he has several mandolins, banjos, steel guitars, and even a Portuguese 12-string vachalia (used in "Your Move" from *The Yes Album*, among other places). His favorite among them all is the Gibson ES-175 D electric guitar, on which he has turned around the treble pickup to warm up the tone. Another guitar he is very partial to is the Martin 0015 acoustic. Other prominent guitars in his collection: Danelectro Coral Sitar Guitar, Fender Broadcaster, Fender Stratocaster, Fender Telecaster, Fender Twin Neck Steel, Gibson Artist, Gibson EB6 Bass, Gibson

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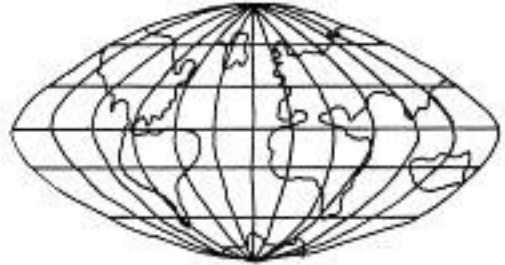
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# LETTERS

## Music store owner disagrees

Dear *Guitarist*,

In your May/June issue of *Guitarist* we read an editorial by Jeff Zuehlke which we found to be generally untrue about music stores and sales people in our area.

We, Jim Harms, Russ Heidorn, Adam Kapel are not arrogant or unfriendly to our trade.

We service people like Reuben Ristrom whom you featured in this issue. He was just in Saturday buying supplies.

I wonder what your advertisers are thinking as I did not see a Guitar Center ad in the publication. I enjoy rapport with other music stores and we all felt that we were intimidated by the remarks made.

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## MINNICK, from 4

got away from home. I finally quit comparing myself with others, realizing the futility and uselessness of that. And then, things got exciting."

Sherry continued with her thoughts on singing and playing the guitar around a concept she learned from poet and historian Meridel Le Sueur regarding linear and goal-oriented ways of proceeding through life versus circular ways. She applied the concept to her observations of the differences between how men and women approach playing the guitar. "It's hard to say whether it's something socially and culturally imposed or whether it's some innate characteristic, but men are very much into this goal-oriented approach," Sherry said. "I guess it doesn't matter, but the upshot of it is that they grow to be very competitive. It's very difficult to think of themselves as innately valuable. No matter who—they're better than, or they're not as good as. I think that drive has something to do with why so many men launch into the guitar playing in such a goal-oriented way and get to be so good at it. Not that women don't do that, too, and not that there's anything wrong with that. It's just an orientation that I don't vibrate with."

Sherry's own experience in learning to play the guitar always revolved around her singing and eventually she came to realize and accept that. She described practicing flat-picking with Kate McKenzie, whom she met shortly after she moved to Minneapolis in 1975. "We were both into bluegrass pretty heavy," Sherry said, "and if you played bluegrass, you flat-picked the guitar, in addition to being a strong rhythm player, which I had already mastered. We spent countless hours, I can't tell you how many hours Kate and I spent playing the same old tunes over and

over again and doing exercises, trying to learn flat-picking. I don't know at what point I gave up, different times I think, but it occurred to me that I had absolutely no desire to be good at this. I was more interested in writing songs and finding songs, and I think that just goes hand in hand with discovering that I am a singer."

That discovery had led Sherry comfortably away from playing the guitar so much herself, and also to singing a cappella. It's a frightening thought to a lot of people, the idea of singing without any accompaniment, but Sherry revels in its magical quality. She spoke with eyes shining, "It almost commands more attention than when you make a lot of noise, actually . . . It's like weaving a web or casting a spell. There's always some talking in the audience while I'm trying to explain something, but when I start the song, about the third verse, people start to get drawn in. I love it. I'm hooked on that story-telling."

Music has always been an important vehicle for change, and Sherry plans to write songs to that end. Specifically, she wants them to be heart-wrenching, detailing how people got to be where they are, but without editorializing or moralizing. She wants to craft songs that tell people about the way things are in such a way that they can't deny it. Through that effort Sherry hopes to make her contribution for a positive change in the world.

Outside of performing and writing, Sherry works by day as record buyer for Homestead Pickin' Parlor in Richfield. She also raises her 12-year-old son, Ben Granger, who shares his time with Sherry and his father, Adam Granger. Sherry and John Van Orman are scheduled to perform at a folk festival in Fergus Falls on July 1, where they will be featured along with Peter Ostroushko, Dean Magraw and Boiled in Lead. ■

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Florentine Electric Mandolin, Gibson Les Paul Custom, Gibson Les Paul Recording, Gibson The Les Paul, Kohno Spanish Guitar, Martin 00045, Martin Mandolin, Rickenbacker 12 string, and So Bud Pedal Steel. A good percentage of the above mentioned guitars are usually brought on the road. In addition to the standard guitars, Steve's experience in GTR brought familiarity with guitar synthesizers such as made by Roland and Ibanez, and MIDI patches to the Synclavier and Fairlight keyboards.

As far as amps are concerned, he has been using two Fender Dual Showmans and Dual Showman cabinets since before 1973. His pedalboard setup includes a Gibson Fuzz Tone, Cry Baby wah-wah, two Electro-Harmonix Big Muffs, a DBX noise reduction unit, and four Sho-Bud volume pedals—a set up which has not changed much from the early Yes days.

In addition to the complex equipment, Steve is a big fan of another piece of equipment he is not as well-known for—his unique pick. Though most guitarists don't get excited about picks, Steve considers his "plectrum"—a piece of plexiglass 1/8 inch thick, tapering down to a sharp edge at the playing point—an important part of his playing. The combination of the thick pick and the fact he doesn't anchor his right hand on the pickguard combines to give Steve a very light touch and a sound he is very particular about.

### A Final Note

Steve Howe was voted best guitarist by *Guitar Player* magazine in 1977 and 1978. He is not one to rest on his laurels, however. Since then, he has been involved with Asia and GTR, and this year fans will also be pleased to know that his new group—Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman, and Howe—will be releasing their album June 20 (pre-released tracks already are being aired). We can all look forward to another chapter in the Steve Howe musical

saga and continue to wonder, "Howe does he do it?"

### A Selected Steve Howe Discography

*Missing from this list are Steve's several guest spots on other artists albums, videos from Yes, Asia, and GTR performances, as well as a book of selected compositions entitled Steve Howe Guitar Pieces, published by Wise Publications in 1980.*

#### With Tomorrow:

*Tomorrow*, Sire SES 97021

#### With Yes:

*The Yes Album*, Atlantic SD 19131

*Fragile*, Atlantic SD 7211

*Close to the Edge*, Atlantic SD 7244

*Yessongs*, Atlantic SD 3-100

*Tales From Topographic Oceans*, Atlantic SD 2-908

*Relayer*, Atlantic SD 19135

*Going for the One*, Atlantic SD 19106

*Yesterdays*, Atlantic SD 18103

*Tormato*, Atlantic SD 19202

*Drama*, Atlantic SD 16019

#### Solo:

*Beginnings*, Atlantic SD 18154

*The Steve Howe Album*, Atlantic SD 19243

#### With Asia:

*Asia*, Geffen GHS 2008

*Alpha*, Geffen GHS 4008

#### With GTR:

*GTR*, Arista AL8-8400

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The third annual American Finger-style Guitar Festival will take place in Milwaukee between August 1 and 5. The festival will feature concerts by some of the most prominent practitioners of finger-style guitar including: Tuesday, August 1: Raymond Kane, Bob Brozman. Wednesday, August 2: Benjamin Verdery, Pierre Bensusan. Thursday, August 3: Tommy Jones, Guy Van Duser & Billy Novick. Friday, August 4: Tuck & Patti. Saturday, August 5: John Renbourn, Roy Rogers & the Delta Rhythm Kings.

**Lecture/Demonstrations** will include presentations by Tuck Andress, Pierre Bensusan, Bob Brozman, Peter Danner, and John Renbourn. **Presentations** will include such topics as "Arranging for Guitar", "Macintosh and MIDI", "Guitar Repair", and "Teaching American Finger-Style Guitar". **Panel Discussions** will include "Guitar as an Accompaniment Instrument". Historic **Films** will be shown including Elizabeth Cotten, Reverend Gary Davis, Jesse Fuller, Eddie "Son" House, Fred McDowell, Sam "Lightnin'" Hopkins, and Mance Lipscomb, along with a special presentation by Ethnomusicologist Peter Roller. Plus selected **videotapes** from the Milwaukee Foundation for Guitar Studies video archive.

A competition will be judged by a distinguished panel including Guy Van Duser, Benjamin Verdery, John Stropes, Peter Danner, and John Renbourn. The first, second and third place winners will receive a fine guitar. The first place winner will have the opportunity to perform a concert for the Milwaukee Classical Guitar Society during the 1989-90 season. A special and separate award will be given for the best original composition presented during the course of the Performance Competition.

**FEES.** Your Festival registration fee includes the following:

- Admission to all Lecture/Demonstrations, Presentations, Workshops, Films, and Panel Discussions.
- Admission to all Concerts
- Admission to final round of Performance Competition
- Reception and Picnic

Registration fees are \$225.00 payable in advance. If you cancel before July 20, 1989, your registration fee will be refunded minus a processing fee of \$25.00. No refunds will be made after July 20, 1989.

Interest and enthusiasm for the Festival is high, and since we can only accommodate 250 registrants, we urge participants to register early in order to avoid disappointment.

Out-of-town participants may stay either at the conveniently located UW-Milwaukee Sandburg Halls or at one of many motels or hotels located nearby. Approximate rates per

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Through a special agreement from *Frets* magazine, American Airlines is offering a special Meeting Saver Fare, saving 40% off the full coach fare. (If a lower fare is available you'll receive an additional 5% off any applicable fare.) Call 800-433-1790 and refer to Star number 518Z9VM when making reservations.

The American Finger-Style Guitar Festival is cosponsored by the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and administered by the Milwaukee Foundation for Guitar Studies.

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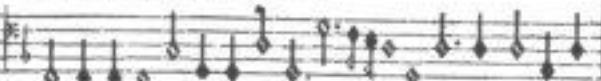
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