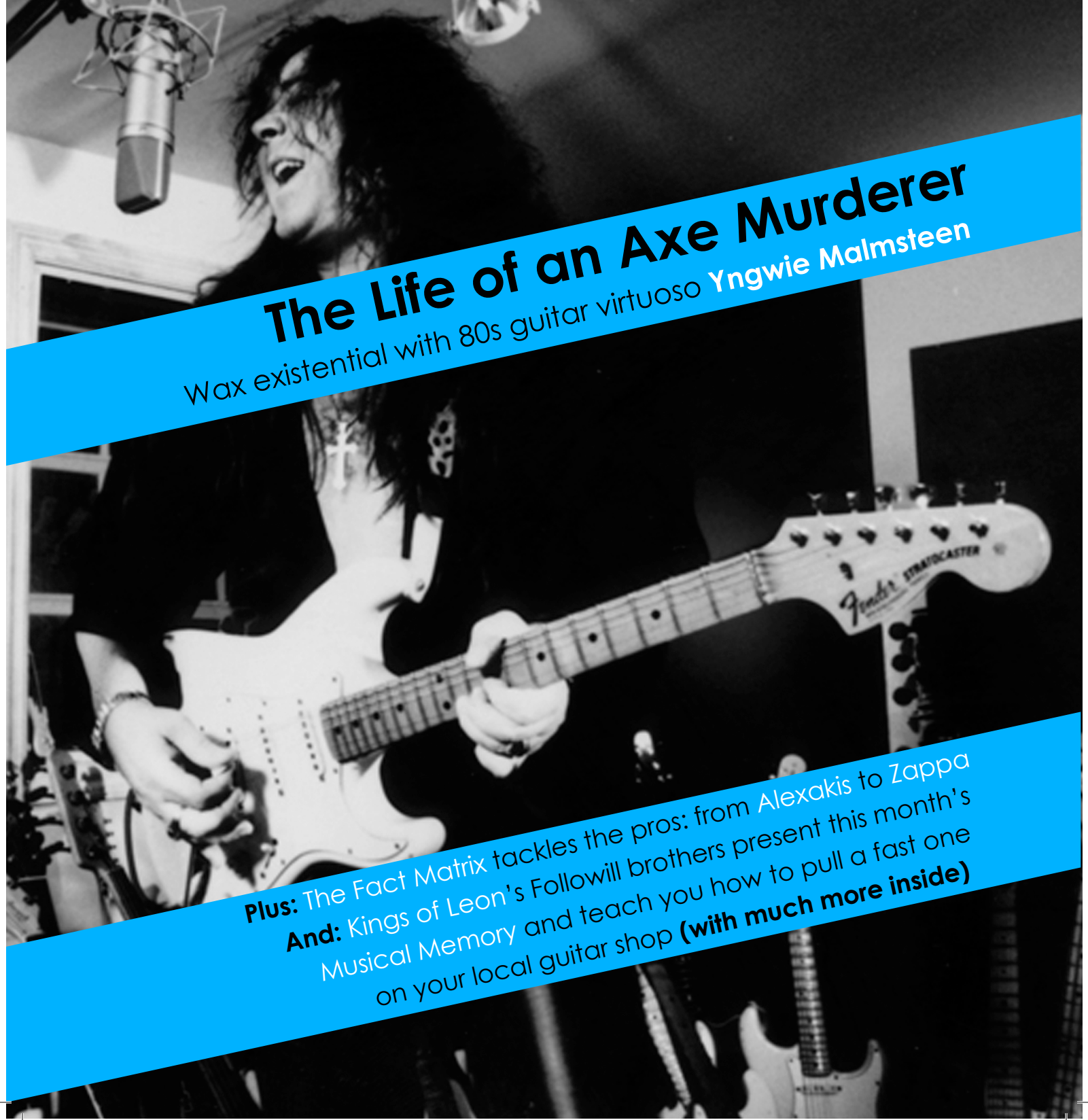


VOCAL! MUSIC

The **Guitar Issue**: Tribute to the Six String

APRIL 2008



The Life of an **Axe Murderer**

Wax existential with 80s guitar virtuoso **Yngwie Malmsteen**

Plus: The Fact Matrix tackles the pros: from Alexakis to Zappa
And: Kings of Leon's Followill brothers present this month's Musical Memory and teach you how to pull a fast one on your local guitar shop **(with much more inside)**



Me and the Devil

The History Channel is proud to present a new documentary from critically-acclaimed filmmaker Ken Burns (The Civil War, Jazz) uncovering the life of Robert Leroy Johnson, the enigmatic blues guitarist, known to some as the “Grandfather of Rock & Roll.”

Check your local listings for showtimes, or visit thehistorychannel.com/meandthediabol



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The Fact Matrix

Get all the pertinent tidbits about five all-star guitarists.

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Read a tale penned by two of the boys from Kings of Leon.

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Boo-Yah!

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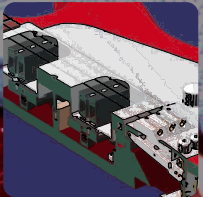
"Quotes"

"Quotes" imagines a very heated debate betwixt Jimi Hendrix and Bret Michaels.

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Guts

Dissections of every major variety of guitar, from lap steel to flying V.

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Chicks with Picks

They don't always get the glory but the fairer sex knows a thing or two about hot licks. Just ask "bad" rocker Jennifer Batten.

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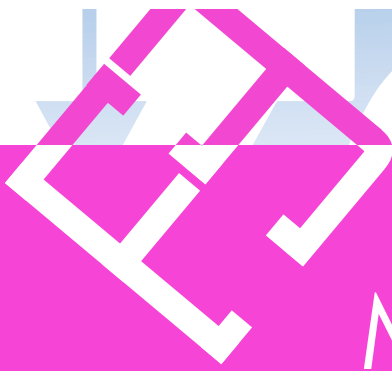
Get a good look inside the world's largest personal guitar collection.

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The Life of an Axe Murderer

Hugh Ochoa sits down with evil rock genius, Yngwie Malmsteen, and learns a thing or two about Sweden, guitars and love.





THE FACT MATRIX

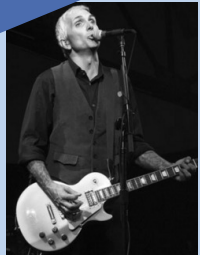
The *guitar* transcends genre, versatile enough to rock, roll, shred, cook, crunch and twang. The *FM's* got five guitarists who can do all that and more with their strings.

Genre:

Known for:

Big Hit:

Guitar:



Art Alexakis

Mid-90s
Alternative Rock

Everclear and his
political pursuits

“Santa Monica”
(1995)

Taylor Solidbody



B.B. King

Memphis Blues

Being the most
recognizable name
in blues

“The Thrill is
Gone” (1970)

Gibson Blueshawk



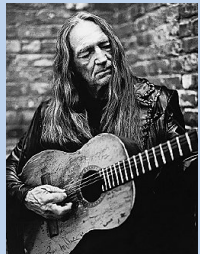
“Jimbo” Mathus

Gypsy Jazz

The Squirrel Nut
Zippers and his
love of the South

“Put a lid on it”
(1997)

1969 Epiphone
Sorento



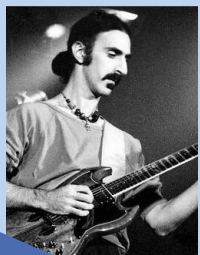
Willie Nelson

Outlaw Country

The Highwaymen
and his personal
drug policy

“On the Road
Again” (1980)

1940 Martin D-18



Frank Zappa

Experimental
Classic Rock

The Mothers of
Invention and his
unique kids’ names

“Who are the
Brain Police?”
(1966)

Gibson ES-5
Switchmaster

This month, *Nathan and Caleb Followill of Kings of Leon* teach you to pull a fast one on your local guitar shop in a story they call, “*The \$950 Man*”

A MUSICAL MEMORY



THE GAME IS CALLED “THE \$950 MAN” and it was a regular pastime of ours when we were growing up in Mount Juliet, Tennessee. The way it works is you go into a guitar store in another town. You have to pick another town because it’s crucial that no one in the store knows who you are. The game works best if you look a little spoiled. If you can’t manage dressing cool, then at least dress nicely. For us, that usually meant wearing our church clothes and praying we stayed clean.

From the moment you walk in, you have to be either very determined or very bored. When the two of would go together, or when Jared would join us, we would take turns on being the customer. The goal is to trick the store into believing you are a legitimate big spender in order to get them to wait on you, hand and foot.

The first thing you do is head straight to where they keep the high end guitars without getting noticed by an employee. At most Tennessee guitar shops, this meant you had to head to the back of the store. Avoid the obvious models that attract inexperienced youth, so, no Fender Stratocaster and no flying anything. Pick up one that costs at least a thousand dollars, making sure that no one sees you looking at the price tag. Play a strong riff that you know well, preferably something bluesy. Don’t overdo it by playing something too popular or ostentatious. Though we mostly played country music and church music back then, we knew a few Robert Johnson tunes.

When an employee finally comes over, you have to act vaguely dissatisfied with the guitar you’re

playing. Flip it over, change settings, stare down the neck, basically do anything that makes it look like you have discerning tastes or a sensitive ear. Now, take a look at the price tag and say, “Oh, well, damn. That’s way too expensive. I can’t possibly spend anything over \$950 on a new guitar.” The game works best at stores that pay their employees a commission because then the employee will try to convince you that you can afford more than \$950. He’ll offer a discount or say you can have a free case. Keep hemming and hawing until the employee gets around to the idea of a trade-in.

This is where the real con begins. Tell the employee that you’ve got something you might be willing to part with, then say, “I mean, it’s kinda of an old junker... it’s my grandpa’s old ’59 Rickenbacker 360v.” Now, you have to hope that your mark knows his guitars and is a little greedy. The way this ought to work is that the employee will tell you that you’ve got an expensive piece of equipment on your hands. Even if he tries to lowball you, he’s going to tell you that you can afford a more expensive piece of equipment. With any luck, you’ll be playing a Chet Atkins Country Gentleman before you know it. When you’re ready to leave, tell the employee that you’ll be back next week with your granddaddy’s Rick’ and he’ll show you out with a smile on his face and dollar signs in his eyes. ■



the
life
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Born Lars Johann Yngwie Lannerback, in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1963, Yngwie Malmsteen came from a family of talented classical musicians. He spent his youth wood-shedding and immersing himself in music. Through the guidance of his rock heroes and his older sister, Malmsteen began to explore classical composers like Mozart, Vivaldi, Bach and Beethoven and began to shape his signature style.

VI: Jimi Hendrix was your inspiration to play the guitar?

Yngwie Malmsteen: Ok, to make this so it's proper, what happened was, I was the youngest kid in my family. My

older brother and sister were really good musicians. And they started playing at a very early age. So, my brother played piano, drums, guitar, bass, accordion, everything. My sister played very good piano, sang. She still sings really good. She plays classical flute, in an orchestra, and all that stuff. So, my mom really wanted me to be a musician. She gave me a guitar on my fifth birthday but I didn't start playing till I was seven.

VI: So what made you start?

YM: The reason I wanted to start playing was because they showed on

the news, "Today, Jimi Hendrix died." It was September 18, 1970. Then they showed him setting his guitar on fire at Monterey. I didn't hear any music, I just saw this guy burning his f***ing guitar, man. And all I could say was. "That is sooooo cool, man." So I took the guitar off the wall and finally started to play because I wanted to learn. Then eventually I got into Deep Purple and that was the biggest influence.

VI: Was it that moment and the influence of Deep Purple that gave rise to your now famous fascination with the classic Fender Stratocaster?

murderer

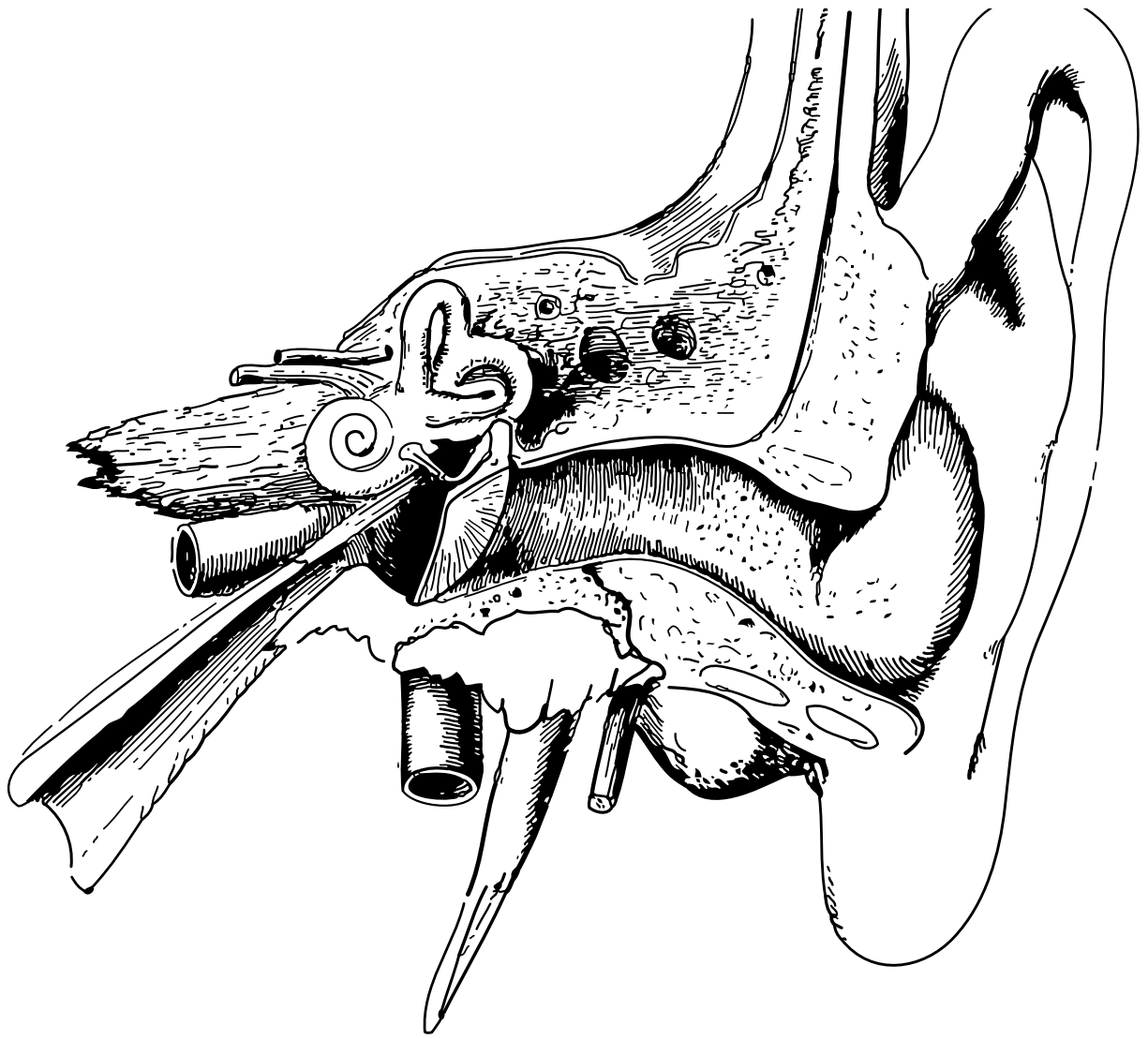


YM: Well the first time I saw Jimi Hendrix, you know, you've seen that Monterey guitar-burning clip, right?

VI: Yeah.

YM: You can't even see what the f*** it is. And one year later, my eighth birthday, my oldest sister gave me the Deep Purple album Fireball. And musically, that was an incredible impact! I don't know if you've heard that record. Starts out, "Dubba-dubba-dubba-boom-chuck." Actually, I was a DJ on Sirius today, Sirius Radio, and I played that. That's one of the songs. But, um, I didn't really see what it was he was holding there. My older brother had an electric guitar that

continued on next page



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