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THE GUITAR MAGAZINE

ISSUE 370

# Guitarist

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# Contents

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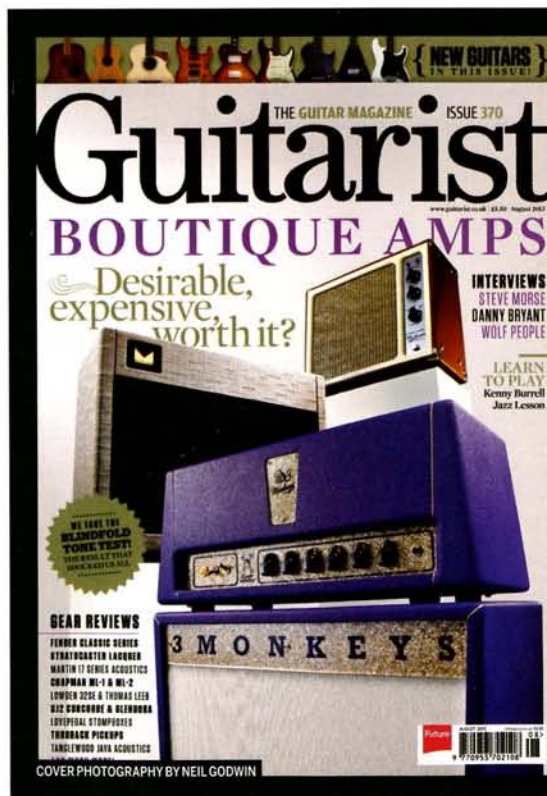


## People & Playing

Eric Schenkman .....	42
Danny Bryant .....	50
John 5 .....	52
Martin Harley .....	54
Steve Morse .....	74
Wolf People .....	78
Aces: Kenny Burrell .....	82
Blues You Can Use .....	148

## Regulars

Welcome From The Editor .....	9
Front End .....	33
Reader Letters .....	45
New Music .....	49
Subscribe .....	100
Longterm Test .....	141
Gear Q&A .....	141
Readers Ads .....	157



58  
**Boutique Amps**  
Join us as we delve deep into five fabulous noise boxes .....

68  
**Blind Listening Test**  
Can our team hear the difference between exotic and everyday?

**The British** bluesman on his cyclonic new studio album, *Hurricane*, and a forthcoming Fret-King signature model...

# Danny Bryant

I think blues is a human expression of emotion. Everyone can feel pain and I think it's a way of expressing how you feel," reflects Danny Bryant, explaining why he felt called to blues music even though he grew up in Hertfordshire, a world away from the music's heartlands in America's Deep South.

"Most music can do that, but I think blues in particular is all about that. You can be highly technical with it or you can be like T-Model Ford and just play a couple of chords – but it can still move you."

Sticking with the automotive theme, Danny's new album, *Hurricane*, is more of a hot-rod than a sedate roadster – with his gutsy, committed soloing driving each track forward. How much was he shooting from the hip with those lead parts?

"They were completely improvised. Richard Hammerton, who produced it for us, came up with this idea and he'd say, 'Right, you've got three takes of this solo and, if you don't get it, we'll leave it till tomorrow,' because he wanted the soloing to still sound live and spontaneous.

"The solos don't sound too polished in that sense, because I'm a fan of guitar players who aren't really polished. I like the Hubert Sumlin thing and the Buddy Guy thing when they're on the edge and you're not sure if it's all going to fall apart any minute. That's what excites me."

The full sound of standout tracks such as *Prisoner Of The Blues* came courtesy of a Marshall TSL100 combined with Danny's go-to Fret-King solidbodies and a smattering of classic Gibson and Fender tones. A wah and a UniVibe were among the few effects used.

"I mainly used my Fret-Kings. The two that I used on the album were original prototype Coronas that Trevor Wilkinson [Fret-King founder and designer] gave me years ago. They're like Strats, but they do more than that. I actually bought a Goldtop Les Paul about three weeks before we went in and I decided that *Prisoner Of The Blues* needed a straight-up Gibson sound, so I used that on it. I also had my Gibson BB King Lucille with me and an old '74 Strat that I've had a while. The acoustic was a Martin D-1, I think."

## My Corona

Danny now has a new, super-versatile Fret-King signature model in the pipeline, but it arrived just too late for the recording, he explains.

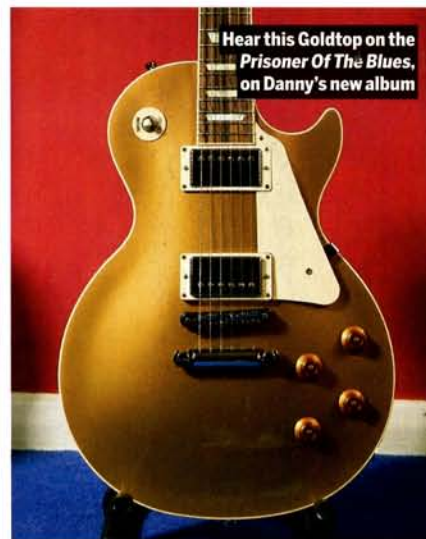
"Trev Wilkinson is a genius with his guitar designs and he just asked me what I wanted out of the guitar. I have the first prototype here, but the actual signature is going to be like a Candy Apple Blue, which really stands out. It's got an American alder body and it will have a maple fingerboard.

"I loved the P-90 but I said I kind of missed having a humbucker and he said, 'Well, we'll put that in then!' I still wanted to be able to get the single-coil Strat sound, especially in the neck position, so that's what we went for. Sometimes, I want that real treble bite, so it's great that you can roll off to a single-coil Strat-style pickup, too. It pretty much does every sound I want. I love it."

Encouragement from mentor Walter Trout also lit a fire under Danny's playing on the album. Danny formed a creatively inspiring friendship with the veteran American blues guitarist after attending



Danny has used this prototype Fret-King Corona for years



Hear this Goldtop on the *Prisoner Of The Blues*, on Danny's new album

one of his gigs as a teen. "He's mentored me ever since. I've jammed with him 30 or 40 times, he played on one of my albums and he's still my favourite player," says Danny.

"He taught me the whole thing about, 'Play everything with feeling' and 'Be honest in what you play.' He's always told me, 'You've got to be able to come back from a gig, look in the mirror and know you've done your best.'" [MF]

## Passing Notes

**DANNY BRYANT** Out now: *Hurricane*  
More info: [www.dannybryant.com](http://www.dannybryant.com)  
Download: *Prisoner Of The Blues*

## What we're listening to



**Whitesnake**  
*Made In Britain*  
Riff-happy romp around Blythly on tour with Coverdale and co. Spandexcellent.



**Bosnian Rainbows**  
*Bosnian Rainbows*  
Omar Rodríguez López and his Mars Volta pals furrow their brows on glitchy, gothic alt-rock debut.



**Guy Clark**  
*My Favourite Picture Of You*  
Unvarnished acoustic songcraft from a Texan master. Wise and bittersweet, it's one to savour.



"I'm a fan of guitar players who aren't really polished... you're not sure if it's all going to fall apart"



**Garrett Lebeau**

**Rise To The Grind**

Bobby Womack fans will dig Garrett's dive-bar blues guitar and oh-so-classy songwriting.



**Arthouse Hours**

**All For One**

Savagely inventive Russian prog with warped, Yes-meets-Biffy riffage throughout. Bleak.



**Mike Zito & The Wheel**

**Gone To Texas**

Gritty blue-collar ballads with prime-cut slide solos and a wounded heart.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILL IRELAND