



FENDER® LAUNCHES NEW GLOBAL PROGRAM – FENDER NEXT – TO SUPPORT, AMPLIFY THE VOICE OF TODAY’S ARTISTS

FENDER NEXT SET TO ANNUALLY ELEVATE GLOBAL ARTISTS REPRESENTING THE NEW FACE OF GUITAR IN MUSIC AND CULTURE

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF. (February 28, 2019)—Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) today announced the inaugural launch of a new annual global artist marketing program, Fender Next, geared toward elevating artists that represent the new face of guitar in fresh, innovative ways. The first of its kind for Fender and the musical instruments industry, the program aims to support a diverse set of artists; the goal is to amplify their voices as they evolve throughout their respective careers.

“The music industry has dramatically evolved in the last 10 years – from the diversity of artists, genre and new inventive usage of guitar to streaming service platforms, labels, social media and the emergence of accessible recording via home studios,” said Evan

Jones, Fender CMO. "Guitar is healthier than ever before and being used in more inventive ways by an increasingly diverse set of artists across genres. In our recent research study, we found a new face of guitar is emerging with African American, Latino and female players making up 19, 25 and 50 percent of beginning/aspirational guitarists, respectively."

"The Fender brand voice is the sum total of the artists and players that create with our products. So, as a global company whose products are represented on countless albums and stages around the world, we decided that it was time to make a deeper, long-term commitment to elevate and amplify artists that are moving music forward today. We have and will continue to invest in artists across every aspect of our marketing mix, but this program just deepens that ongoing commitment to a growing allegiance of artists keeping guitar at the forefront of music and culture."

Since 1946, Fender has been serving players at every stage of their musical journey, and the Fender Next program is the newest iteration of its continued investment in that core belief. In addition to providing global performance opportunities and Fender product, Fender Next artists – such as Melanie Faye, Cautious Clay, Tash Sultana and Sam Fender – will be featured across Fender content from editorial to social, telling their individual stories as they progress through their creative journey. This will be the first year in what Fender plans to be a long-term, ongoing commitment to support today and tomorrow's artists. With plans to expand global reach even further in 2020, a new lineup of Fender Next artists will be chosen through a submission process each year.

Fender is invested in driving increased exposure for Fender Next artists through media and the brand's 16 million followers across platforms. The full list of Fender Next artist benefits includes:

- Select guitar, amp, effect pedals, accessories and audio equipment serving artist needs across the signal chain
- The benefits of Fender's industry leading marketing efforts, including: social media promotion and takeovers and PR/communications support, as well as the opportunity to be featured in Fender marketing launches and ads
- To bring fans even closer to their favorite artists, Fender will collaborate with musicians to develop social media/campaign creative content, as well as mini docs with select artists

reflecting their passion points and latest releases; that content will be distributed by exclusive partners, as well as on Fender social media and artist channels

- Inclusion on Fender Next playlists through music streaming services, like Spotify and more
- Inclusion of select artist songs in Fender's digital learning platform, Fender Play
- Backline support for international touring
- Fender swag

In 2019, Fender Next will illuminate 50 (28 North American artists - 26 American, 2 Canadian – and 22 international) of the most exciting new artists from around the world representing the diverse state of music globally. Artists were selected via a submission process; they include: Ashley McBryde (USA), Boy Pablo (Norway), Cautious Clay (USA), FKJ (France), FIDLAR (USA), Japanese Breakfast (USA), King Princess (USA), Larkin Poe (USA), Melanie Faye (USA), Phoebe Bridgers (USA), Sam Fender (UK), Tash Sultana (Australia), Wallows (USA), King Gnu (Japan), HYUKOH (Korea), and others. A full list of Fender Next artists, including their bios and headshots, can be found [here](#).

"Supporting and servicing artist needs first has long been at the core of our artist marketing efforts," said Matt Watts, VP of Artist and Integrated Marketing. "Artists are the centerpiece of everything we do, and we've been giving them the tools they need to create for more than 70 years. Fender Next deepens those authentic relationships even further through the program's direct investment in those artists – from cultural icons to those at the early stages of their careers. We're beyond excited to see how Fender Next elevates players, as they make music on stages and in studios around the world – from Hollywood and Nashville to Tokyo, London, Sydney and beyond."

Fender Next artists will be the cornerstone of Fender events worldwide, and on March 14-15, 2019, Fender will kick off the program with a unique interactive pop-up experience at SXSW in Austin, Texas: The Fender Next House. Here, fans will have the chance to attend thought leadership discussions and intimate concerts featuring Fender Next artists, pick up a guitar and try [Fender Play](#) at demo stations, and more. There will also be guitar techs on site to assist with set ups for all artists in the Fender family. Only Fender gear will be accepted for set ups on a first-come-first-served basis at the Fender Next House. In addition to SXSW, Fender Next will also activate at The Great Escape Festival in the UK for the second year this May, as well as other global music festivals in Japan and Australia through 2020.

Activations will feature a mix of rotating daytime programming and nighttime concerts, as well as meetups with industry personnel to help artists foster meaningful relationships.

Fender is also teaming up with Lucky Brand as an event sponsor to show the leading denim brand's commitment to artists in the Fender Next program. The storied Los Angeles denim brand will create custom merch for Fender Next artists at SXSW. The brands also collaborated on a custom photo booth for fans to enjoy and snap the perfect picture. Both Lucky and Fender uphold high standards of craftsmanship, pouring care and passion into every detail of their clothing and instruments in order to tell a story that celebrates artists and their individuality.

For additional information on Fender Next, Fender products or to find a retail partner near you, visit www.fender.com. Join the conversation on social media by following @Fender.

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FENDER MEDIA CONTACT:

Christina Stejskal

Head of Global Communications

Fender Musical Instruments Corp.

CStejskal@Fender.com

Press@Fender.com

ABOUT FENDER

Since 1946, Fender has revolutionized music and culture as one of the world's leading musical instrument manufacturers, marketers, and distributors. Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC)—whose portfolio of owned and licensed brands includes Fender®, Squier®, Gretsch® guitars, Jackson®, EVH®, Charvel®, Bigsby®, and PreSonus® – follows a player-centric approach to crafting the highest-quality instruments and digital experiences across genres. Since 2015, Fender's digital arm has introduced a new ecosystem of products and interactive experiences to accompany players at every stage of their musical journey. This includes innovative apps and learning platforms designed to complement Fender guitars, amplifiers, effects pedals, accessories, and pro-audio gear, and inspire players through an immersive musical experience. FMIC is dedicated to unlocking the power of musical expression for all players, from beginners to history-making legends. In 2026, Fender celebrates 80 years of giving artists "wings to fly," carrying on the vision of its founder, Leo Fender, and connecting players through a shared love of music.

CONTACT DETAILS

GLOBAL MEDIA INQUIRIES

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation
press@fender.com

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