



FENDER CUSTOM SHOP™ TO RELEASE REPLICA OF VIRTUOSO JERRY GARCIA'S ICONIC AND HEAVILY MODIFIED "ALLIGATOR" STRAT® GUITAR –STICKERS, CIGARETTE BURNS AND ALL

**AS RECOUNTED BY LONGTIME GARCIA ASSOCIATE, STEVE PARISH,
MASTER BUILDER AUSTIN MACNUTT METICULOUSLY BUILT 100
STRATS THAT ILLUSTRATE ICONIC GARCIA TOUR MOMENTS AND
MEMORIES**

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF. (Aug. 23, 2022) Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) and the Fender Custom Shop (FCS) announced today the launch of the Jerry Garcia Alligator Stratocaster® guitar in celebration of Garcia's 80th Birthday. This Masterbuilt, bespoke guitar is a meticulously crafted replica of the infamous Strat® that Garcia and team, including his then guitar tech and dear friend, Steve Parish extensively modified. Every inch of this well-worn instrument tells a story—from the hammered brass control plate

to the iconic Alligator decal that earned the Strat® its moniker. A guitar this curious could only come from the mind of Garcia and his crew of like-minded visionaries. The Alligator Strat® guitar is not only an ode to the joys of instrument modification but to the nature of collaboration and community that Garcia nurtured throughout his storied career.

“Having the opportunity to replicate an iconic guitar from such a legendary artist is a Masterbuilders’ dream,” said Mike Lewis, VP of Product Development, Fender Custom Shop™. “Recounting how each scratch was made, the stories behind each sticker and every modification made on the guitar felt almost like we were there with Jerry Garcia rocking on stage in the 70s. We are so grateful to Steve, Andy Logan/Grateful Guitars Foundation, and the Jerry Garcia Family for their trust in us. Now 100 others will have the opportunity to carry on the Garcia Alligator Strat legacy.”

While Jerry Garcia is perhaps best known for his kaleidoscopic playing with the Grateful Dead, the story of the Alligator begins with a different, albeit equally historic musical act. By 1970, Garcia had earned himself quite the reputation. He was called into the studio by acts like Jefferson Airplane and Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young as a session player. That same year, singer-songwriter and co-founder of Crosby, Stills and Nash, Graham Nash, began recording his solo album, *Songs for Beginners*. Among the roster of rock and roll greats he enlisted to play on the album was twenty-eight-year-old Jerry Garcia. Nash was so impressed by Garcia’s playing that he decided to gift him with a 1955 swamp ash Stratocaster® guitar. Garcia was immediately infatuated with the lightweight guitar. The single coils allowed him to conjure the twang of his country and western heroes, while the guitar’s remarkable high-end response provided clarity even when played through heavy distortion.

But just as Garcia was entering the honeymoon phase with his new go-to axe, the ‘55 Strat® guitar almost met its demise. In November 1971, Garcia had just hit the stage at Boston Symphony Hall when the frigid November weather hit him like a ton of bricks. He hit the first note of his set and just like that, the lower half of the pickguard cracked wide open. As the guitar’s electronics spilled out, Garcia frantically waved his tech, Steve Parish, onstage for a helping hand. Parish started shoving the guts of the instrument back in place while keeping everything together with nothing more than a roll of gaffer’s tape. Miraculously, Garcia and the Strat made it through the rest of the show. Some days later, the pair decided to replace

the missing chunk of pickguard with a Masonite plate (replaced with a brass plate in the early 80's). From there, the modifications just kept coming. By 1972, the Alligator was hardly recognizable from the 1955 Stratocaster® that Graham Nash gifted Garcia back in 1970. However, thanks to the countless personal touches added by Parish and Garcia, it has become one of history's most iconic guitars.

"There's a lot I can tell you about this guitar," said Steve Parish. "I'm very lucky because I got to work with Jerry to take care of his guitars... Jerry played a lot of guitars and a lot of Strats but he never had a favorite. Fender, Fender, Fender everything. He played Fender Twin Reverb because he loved it, and we collected every Fender we could buy. But this guitar quickly became his favorite."

To honor Garcia's lifelong devotion to pushing the limits of creativity and this legendary instrument, Fender Custom Shop has recreated the Alligator Strat® with staggering accuracy. Starting with the headstock, the attention to detail is immediately noticeable. This Fender Custom Shop™ Stratocaster® comes with Schaller M6 tuning heads and a disc string tree, some of the Alligator's® first modifications. The one-piece rift sawn maple neck was fabricated from a digital scan of the original guitar's neck. Per Garcia's preference, the neck is a 7.25" radius and outfitted with medium vintage frets.

The body of this guitar is where Garcia's influence shines through the most. All three iconic stickers, the "police helper" and Harley-Davidson logo on the upper horn and the infamous grinning Alligator in between the neck and middle pickup, have been faithfully recreated. The infamous brass control plate can be found housing the volume pots and 5-way toggle switch. The bridge is also made from custom brass and is reinforced with a rosewood base plate. As far as pickups are concerned, the Alligator Strat® comes equipped with custom wound '55 style single-coils, providing classic Stratocaster® bell-like tones with singing mid-range and cutting highs. "This guitar is a piece of American history," said Austin MacNutt, Fender Custom Shop Master Builder. "There is so much history behind each alteration and modification made to the guitar; to have the opportunity to have the original for a day, take it apart, look inside and replicate it has been an honor."

Additionally, fans around the world can also learn to play Garcia's classics via [Fender Play®, Fender's complete online learning app for guitar, bass and ukulele](#) starting August

30th. The collection of songs written by Jerry Garcia and longtime collaborator Robert Hunter includes hits from the Grateful Dead and his solo catalog. To support this collaboration, in the latest episode of Fender's serialized content series, Dream Factory. [In this episode of our Fender Custom Shop series, Austin MacNutt sits down with Steve Parish to bring you the Jerry Garcia Alligator Stratocaster based on the original owned by the Grateful Dead guitarist. The Masterbuilt Strat features Schaller tuners, a hammered brass pickguard, Jerry's stickers, a soft "V" shaped neck and more. Watch Daniel Donato take it for a spin.](#)

High-resolution lifestyle and product images of the Jerry Garcia Alligator Stratocaster® guitar can be found [HERE](#).

For technical specs, additional information on new Fender® products and to find a retail partner near you, visit www.fendercustomshop.com. Join the conversation on social media by following @Fender and @FenderCustomShop.

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Jerry Garcia Alligator Stratocaster® guitar (\$20,000.00)

The Fender Custom Shop is proud to introduce the Jerry Garcia Alligator Stratocaster—a faithful recreation of one of Garcia's most famous instruments. Every detail is meticulously recreated, from the carefully measured contours and radii of the one-piece ash body to the hammered brass control plate, replica pickguard and body stickers, and custom replica "Blaster" clean-boost output jack assembly. Master built in the Custom Shop by Austin MacNutt, the Jerry Garcia Alligator Stratocaster is limited to 100 built-to-order instruments.

All three pickups are Josefin hand-wound '55-style single-coil Stratocaster pickups replicated from the Alligator itself, along with five-way switching, standard vintage Stratocaster wiring and replica "hat" control knobs on a three-ply parchment pickguard. Premium features also include a Relic® lacquer finish, one-piece rift-sawn maple neck with a profile scanned and replicated directly from the original guitar, 7.25" fingerboard radius and 1.625" brass nut width, 21 Medium Vintage frets, custom brass bridge and tailpiece with rosewood base plate, Schaller® M6 tuners, disc string tree with custom retainer bar, and custom birdseye maple back plate. Custom hardshell case included.

ABOUT FENDER CUSTOM SHOP™:

Since 1987, the Fender Custom Shop™ and its esteemed builders have astounded players and collectors worldwide with marvels of creativity, ingenuity and artistry. From its humble Southern California beginnings, the Fender Custom Shop™ has grown to become the world's preeminent maker of highly collectible, custom instruments operating in Corona, Calif. Known as the "Dream Factory," the Fender Custom Shop™ is also home to an honored group known as the Master Builders – some of the most-skilled luthiers in the world – who craft Fender's legendary instruments and push the boundaries of possibility. The distinguished Master Builders make dream guitars a reality for players – from Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, H.E.R. and Jimmy Page to collectors, working professionals and guitar enthusiasts. As the epicenter of innovation at Fender and the pinnacle of the brand, ideas and production techniques devised in the Fender Custom Shop™ for both Masterbuilt and Teambuilt guitars go on to inspire and influence Fender's other production line models.

ABOUT JERRY GARCIA:

Jerry Garcia (1942-1995) created an unparalleled legacy across the American landscape, most notably in his role as a founding member, singer, songwriter and lead guitarist of the Grateful Dead. Garcia's unmistakable guitar tone enchanted multitudes of "Deadheads" throughout the band's 30-year career and beyond. His work with the Jerry Garcia Band, Old and in the Way, Legion of Mary, Garcia/Grisman, and projects with Merl Saunders, only scratch at the surface of his musical influences, as he set out to master the Great American Songbook. Unequivocally devoted to the craft of music, Garcia continues to inspire future generations through the body of work he has left behind and his creative spirit.

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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

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COPY LINK

<https://fender.pr.co/271687-fender-custom-shop-to-release-replica-of-virtuoso-jerry-garcia-s-iconic-and-heavily-modified-alligator-strat-guitar-stickers-cigarette/>