

FENDER® TAKES INNOVATION TO NEW HEIGHTS, RELEASES FIRST SEMI-HOLLOW STRATOCASTER WITH GRAMMY-WINNING GUITARIST ERIC JOHNSON

THE ERIC JOHNSON SIGNATURE STRATOCASTER® THINLINE – JOHNSON’S THIRD SIGNATURE MODEL – CAPTURES LIQUID, ARTICULATE GUITAR TONE TO EXPAND SONIC PALLETES

HOLLYWOOD, Calif. (February 20, 2018)—Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) today released the Eric Johnson Signature Stratocaster Thinline – Fender’s first custom-chambered semi-hollow Stratocaster guitar to include a traditional Stratocaster arm and body contours. Grammy-winning, multifaceted guitarist Eric Johnson is known for his *Ah Via Musicom* album and hit song “Cliffs of Dover,” as well as his perpetual search for ideal tone and new sounds. After nearly two years of refinement, Fender and Eric Johnson have co-designed his third Artist Signature Series model. Lightweight and resonant, it combines tones from his favorite semi-hollow body guitars and signature Stratocaster, pushing the boundaries of innovation at Fender and beyond.

“With this third signature model it was important to me that we create something new that could widen horizons and pull in different styles of music,” Johnson said. “When I’m writing, my go-to instrument is a Strat, because it’s so universal and versatile – but I’ve always loved semi-hollow body guitars. There’s a certain resonance you get out of an acoustic guitar, and I was curious if combining that with a Strat would add another dimension. I knew Fender was the perfect partner to work with on this, and the process of bringing new innovations to players is always exciting.

“Johnson is currently playing the Eric Johnson Signature Stratocaster Thinline on the road during his North-American tour, performing selections from his recent release, *Collage*, and

his celebrated album *Ah Via Musicom* in its entirety. Scheduled appearances are here. This same model was also used to record guitar parts on *Collage*.

"Fender has been making guitars for well over 70 years, but we always learn something new about guitar making and tone every time we work with Eric," said Justin Norvell, SVP Fender Products. "It rejuvenates our curiosity and thirst for innovation. We worked very closely with Eric to retain everything that everyone loves about a Stratocaster, while still conveying that unique tone he was searching for. Knowing this guitar passes Eric Johnson's sonic test is an honor for us.

"Bringing to life the vision of one of the most respected guitarists in the world, the Eric Johnson Signature Stratocaster Thinline is an R&D tour-de-force. Throughout the process, Johnson worked very closely with Fender as a co-designer to shape the model to his unique specifications. After testing several configurations, Johnson settled on the lightweight capped alder semi-hollow body with an F-hole, which resonates with pure Fender tone. He and Fender's R&D engineers together developed a custom Eric Johnson neck. What resulted was a custom quartersawn "'57 Soft V"-shaped one-piece maple neck that slightly smooths the sharpness of a "V" profile, rounding it out so it's more comfortable for rhythm and lead playing. Strong and stable, this neck is comfortable for any playing style. The guitar also features single coil pickups to capture Johnson's uniquely articulate sound.

Custom chambers and traditional Strat contours make this guitar sound as good as it looks, and the nitrocellulose lacquer finish not only lets the body breathe with its true tonal character, it also ages and wears in a distinctively personal way. Johnson's signature Stratocaster also has no tremolo cavity cover on the back and no screw holes for one. Other features include a vintage-style synchronized tremolo bridge and staggered tuning machines that provide the proper break angle at the nut for improved tuning stability. According to Johnson, the final product still sounds like a Fender, but with a thick, woody tone for lead guitar from the bridge pickup and a chimy tone for rhythm parts.

In true tradition, Fender's Artist Signature Series models honor popular and iconic musicians through product progression and storytelling, creating instruments inspired by the unique specifications of the world's greatest guitarists and bassists. Fender's new Eric Johnson Signature Stratocaster Thinline is available now at local dealers and on www.Fender.com.

For a full product description, [click here](#); and product images, [click here](#). For technical specs, additional information on new Fender products and to find a retail partner near you, visit www.fender.com. Join the conversation on social media by following [@Fender](#).

ERIC JOHNSON SIGNATURE STRATOCASTER THINLINE: AVAILABLE NOW - \$1,999.99

The Eric Johnson Signature Stratocaster Thinline (\$1,999.99) is the first semi-hollow Strat that combines custom chambers with a traditional Stratocaster arm and body contours. In 2015, Johnson approached Fender to co-design a lightweight, resonant instrument that combined the tones of his favorite semi-hollow body guitars and his Stratocaster. What resulted was an R&D tour de force featuring a custom-chambered body finished with nitrocellulose lacquer, as well as three single-coil Stratocaster pickups specially voiced to meet Johnson's specifications and mounted to the semi-hollow, two-piece alder body with countersunk screws for even more vibration transfer. Other features include a comfortable "'57 Soft V"-shaped quartersawn maple neck with a 12"-radius maple fingerboard and 21 medium-jumbo frets; a vintage-style tremolo with silver-painted block; '57-style string recesses; a thin headstock with vintage-style staggered tuning machines; '57-style parchment pickguard and an "ashtray" bridge cover.

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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

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