



"In uncertain times, music reminds us we're not alone."

- Harry Tuft, Denver Folklore Center Founder

As we close the book on 2020 all of us at the Denver Folklore Center want to thank you, our wonderful customers, for your support and loyalty. Many of you decided that working or studying from home was the perfect opportunity to take up an instrument for the first time. Others who were already players thought, given the circumstances, you ought to be playing a higher quality instrument. We were honored to help each of you find just the right guitar, banjo, mandolin or ukulele to lift your spirits during what was a very challenging year.

As Harry reminds us, music has the ability to help us get through even the most difficult times.

We wish you health and happiness in the year ahead. May 2021 be filled with music and music making for all of us. Please visit us in the coming weeks and months as we enjoy our 59th year of serving the acoustic music needs of the Denver community and beyond.

Saul Rosenthal and Claude Brachfeld
Co-Owners



Take Our Mandolin Video Tour!

Jeff, manager of the Denver Folklore Center and mandolin enthusiast, walks you through some of the most common questions about mandolins in our [Mandolin 101: Buyer's Guide](#). In this video he touches on mandolin body shapes and construction, sound hole shapes, and what you get in a mandolin at different price brackets.

See our large inventory of [mandolins](#) and [contact](#) us or come into the store and let our team help you choose the ideal instrument in your price range.

And be sure to read our blog [post](#) to learn about Mandolin Differences: F-Style vs A-Style in our Learning Center.

Tony Rice Memorial

We would like to make note of the passing of the most influential acoustic guitar flatpicker of the past 50 years, Tony Rice. Tony passed away on Christmas morning at the age of 69. He was not only an incredible instrumentalist, but he was one of the most powerful bluegrass lead vocalists throughout his career until a medical condition left him barely able to speak, let alone sing.

He was the front man for his own band, The Tony Rice Unit, as well as an integral part of other groundbreaking bands like J.D. Crowe and The New South, The Bluegrass Album Band and The David Grisman Quintet.

Watching Tony Rice perform was always a humbling experience for any guitarist. His abilities as a rhythm player as well as his blazing leads were the stuff of legends. Few people have ever been able to take control of a stage like Tony did whenever he would launch into one of his mind-blowing leads or break into the lead vocals of a classic bluegrass song. Listen to [J.D. Crowe and the New South](#).

Staff Focus - Claude Brachfeld

Claude Brachfeld, co-owner of the Denver Folklore Center, has a long history with music. Growing up in New Jersey, his first musical influence was his mother who played piano and guitar and would sing to him. He began playing guitar around 10 years old and took lessons.

In high school and college, he played in country-rock and bluegrass bands.

“Then and now, I was fortunate enough to have friends and bandmates who were always much better than me and shared their expertise in helping me evolve as a musician. Now I learn from my sons.”

“I have a vivid memory from mid-70s of [J.D. Crowe and the New South](#), which was really the record on which Tony and other extraordinary musicians showed that jazz and pop stylings and strategies could be introduced into bluegrass music and would expand the horizons of that music enormously. He was a tremendous influence on the music overall and on me.”

In 2016, he and Saul took over the Folklore Center, but Claude had been a customer for about 20 years. He'd buy strings and accessories, have pickups installed in his instruments and “look longingly at

Claude's studies and 30-year career as an interventional cardiologist didn't allow time to play in bands. But about a dozen years ago, his friend and Folklore Center's co-owner Saul Rosenthal recruited him for a band in their synagogue. "That was my major ensemble work...I played in subgroups of that band in different contexts as well."

He plays guitar (his primary instrument), ukulele and is working to get better on the mandolin. And his musical interests are pretty eclectic, mostly focused on Americana (acoustically-oriented singer/songwriter, music that evolved from bluegrass and from the American-Appalachian tradition).

Claude's musical heroes include Sam Bush, singer-songwriter, Richard Thompson and the Allman Brothers. But his guitar hero is Tony Rice (who died over Christmas).

the instruments they had". He describes his first meeting with Folklore Center Founder, Harry Tuft as memorable. "We came in to rent a guitar for my young son...Harry showed us the rentals...and his kindness and warmth toward us was very special."

Claude's favorite part of working at the store is "the interaction with a customer who looks to me for help in finding the right instrument. Putting the player together with the right instrument is a fascinating process. When we're able to do that, and we usually can, it's a thrilling sensation for both parties."

"I think the most important thing to know is that live music is still a real thing and we anticipate that the appetite for it is going to come roaring back once we're allowed to perform together again. We should all do what we can to support musicians in the meantime by patronizing whatever performances we can."

We Recommend...

Sam Bush

Among the second generation of bluegrass players, few are as respected and beloved as mandolinist Sam Bush. Born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in 1952, Sam gained prominence for his teen-age performances at national fiddle

competitions. In 1970 he joined the Bluegrass Alliance, where his driving right-hand technique and wide-ranging musical tastes provided the platform for developing the band's signature sound as well as the emergence of an approach that came to be known as Newgrass.

He soon became the founding member of New Grass Revival, a band based in Louisville, Kentucky. The NGR was characterized by the virtuosic and groundbreaking playing of such young luminaries as [Bela Fleck](#) as well as its inclusion of pop and rock tunes in its repertoire.

The band expanded the audience for its unique approach to bluegrass by touring with blues-rock legend Leon Russel.

Sam went on to join the Nash Ramblers, the touring and recording band for Emmylou Harris. Continuing to forge new musical territory, the Ramblers helped drive the emergence of the genre now known as alt-country. Sam has gone on to both front his own band and continue playing in numerous ensembles composed of the world's best and most innovative players.

Learn more about Sam and his music career [here](#).

What People Are Saying About Us

"I'm writing to express my appreciation for all the help everyone gave me, yesterday. Thanks for all of the kindness and willingness to help someone who's very new to the guitar world." - J.P.



NEW IN THE STORE! Kremona Ukuleles

Kremona Ukuleles are the product of Bulgaria's venerable Kremona lutherie, established in 1924. Long relied upon by musicians throughout the world, Kremona now offers their traditional European craftsmanship to North America. Recognized for superb build quality and expansive tone, Kremona musical instruments remain one of the industry's astonishing values. We are thrilled to offer these amazing ukes in our store. Go [here](#) to see a demo of these beauties in action. And our [website](#) to learn more.

How to Choose Strings for Your Instrument

Choosing the right set of strings can feel daunting given the wide array of options. But while there are seemingly dozens of strings for every instrument, if you know what gauge and alloy you're looking for, it can go a long way in narrowing down your range of options to just a few well-suited for your instrument.

Gauge

No matter what sort of instrument you're restringing, the gauge of the strings will be the biggest factor in terms of the sound and playability of your instrument. In the world of guitars and banjos, a light gauge sits right in the middle of the spectrum and is a good fit for most people. If you're a newer player and your callouses are still developing, a custom or extra light set will be easier on your fingers.

Medium gauge is typically preferred by guitar players with big guitars, or by banjo players who play in a clawhammer style.

Learn more about how to choose strings for your instrument [here](#).

Auld Lang Syne

aus Schottland

The image shows a musical score for the song "Auld Lang Syne" in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. The chords are: F, Dm, Gm, C7, F, F7, Bb, F, Dm, Gm, C7, Dm, Bb, C7, F, F, Dm, Gm, C7, F, F7, Bb, F, Dm, Gm, C7, Dm, Bb, rit. C7, F, Bb, F.

Should auld ac - quaint - ance be for - got, and nev - er bro't to mind? —

Should auld ac - quaint - ance be for - got, and days of auld lang syne? —

For auld lang syne, my dear, for auld lang syne, —

we'll tak' a cup o' kind - ness yet for auld lang syne —

2. And here's a hand, my trusty frien',
And gie's a hand o' thine;
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.
*For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne;
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.*

Did you know that the classic “Auld Lang Syne” was originally written as a poem by Scottish poet and lyricist Robert Burns in 1788, and was set to the tune of a popular folk song at the time?

However, it didn't rise to major prominence until 1929, after Canadian-American band leader Guy Lombardo and his band played “Auld Lang Syne” at midnight as the radio broadcasts transitioned. Lombardo and his band continued to play the song every New Year's Eve that followed. After his death, the song remained a New Year's Eve tradition, and continues today.

Listen to Bluegrass band No Tent put their own spin on this New Year's Eve [classic](#).

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