



Grab your favorite pumpkin-spiced beverage and put on your coziest sweater because October is here! We've worked up a doozy of a newsletter for you this month. First, highlights from our talk with Friend of the Folklore Center Gordon Gano from the Violent Femmes. Then we remember the ones that got away - instruments musicians wish they had a chance to play again. And what's so special about our Kremona steel-string guitars? We'll tell you! Plus our music teacher spotlight, latest Staff Picks video and a haunted Americana Halloween playlist.



Friend of the Folklore Center: Gordon Gano

[Violent Femmes](#) co-founder Gordon Gano is not only a singer, multi-instrumentalist and songwriter, he also happens to be a Friend of the Denver Folklore Center. We spoke to Gordon on the day of his first live concert since the pandemic began and discussed his relationship with the store, playing live music again, his musical influences and more.

When Harry Met Gordon

Gordon's visits to the Folklore Center started quite a while ago, when founder [Harry Tuft](#) still owned the store. "I go so far back that I've picked up CDs there. I talked with Harry - and later saw him play and sing, which I enjoyed very much - and read up on the whole [history](#) of the place. What he's done is just great. At one point Harry had me sign a book, something along the lines of him saying 'I have no idea who you are, but some people who work here say I should have you sign this book'. It was so honest. I think very nice thoughts of him."

He says he "loves the store. It's something that's special for me. The relaxed feeling, there's not big pressure, just letting people play and check out instruments and take their time. Not every place is like that.

"I've picked up all kinds of supplies, guitar straps, odds and ends. I explored the different range of banjo picks and talked about them with people at the store and found the ones that worked for me. I saw a ukulele on the wall. It was beautiful and it sounded so nice. I had been thinking about getting a special gift for somebody, so I bought it and it's still getting played today."

The Multi-Instrumentalist

Gordon is a man of many musical talents. Not only does he write, sing and play guitar, he also plays banjo, fiddle and the piano. He sees the value in taking music lessons as he took (violin) lessons through elementary school - "I'm very grateful for that. It was public school and they still had a music program. I could never improvise with the violin, but maybe 10 years ago, because I had been doing some work with the piano, I thought what if I take this idea and play it on the fiddle. It opened up a whole new world for me!"

Read our entire interview with Gordon [HERE](#).



The One that Got Away

Have you ever had an instrument that you sold or somehow lost and still think about? Here's a story about "the one that got away" from Saul Rosenthal, Co-Owner of the DFC:

"For my 16th birthday my parents bought me a Gibson FJN Folk Singer Jumbo guitar like the one pictured below. It was my first acoustic guitar and I wanted to show it off to my friends. I took it to school one day and while a couple of boys were roughhousing, one of them landed on the guitar inside its chipboard case and crushed the top.

"Three months later Gibson sent the guitar back to me from their repair shop with a new top. I played that baby for about 15 years before selling it, probably to buy something else I was yearning for at the time. Since then I've owned guitars from Martin, Breedlove, Huss & Dalton, Bourgeois, Seagull, Santa Cruz and Taylor. Of all the guitars I've owned the Gibson is the one I would love to get back."

Read more stories about "the one that got away" from musicians like Judy Collins, Jimmy Page, and John Gorka [HERE](#).

Do you have your own story to tell? Share it with us!



What's So Special About Kremona Steel-String Guitars?

A lot! Kremona's steel-string guitars live up to the quality standards set by the Bulgarian company's terrific nylon-string guitars. Here are the highlights of those currently in stock at the store.

First, an OM-size guitar, the M15E features a solid European spruce top and laminated African mahogany on the back and sides, with a bright, clear voice that works very nicely for flatpicking.

Next, the Kremona R30E is an all solid wood dreadnought built from European spruce and Indian rosewood, with a hefty, near-vintage style neck and a bold sound. Appointments in abalone add a bit of visual flash, but a clear pickguard and a matte finish on the back and sides balance the inlays with some visual modesty.

And the R35E is a beautiful, all solid wood instrument hand-built in Bulgaria, but with an affordable cost that makes it a steal for a guitar with solid rosewood components. The top is a tight-grained cut of Sitka spruce, and back and sides are constructed from Indian rosewood, providing the guitar with a glowing, highly present sound. It also features scalloped X-bracing for an outstanding, open sound not unlike a Martin OM-21 or OM-28.

Learn more about these guitars [HERE](#).



What People Are Saying About Us

"Guitar received! I am beyond satisfied. The condition is stunning. It is quite possible that I've bought new guitars that were not as clean as this old Gibson. You can quote me on that." - Cheers, Morris



An Americana Halloween

Halloween is this month and the folks at DittyTV have a Halloween playlist ready with "haunting tunes, ballads of murder, songs of sin, redemption, and love, war and revenge. It's an Americana Halloween!"

A sampling of the songs includes: "Bad Ritual" by Timber Timbre, "Snake Eyes" by The Milk Carton Kids, "Red Banks" by Amy LaVere, "Reverend" by Baskery, "Slaughterhouse" by Carlos Elliot Jr. and The Cornlickers, "The Waiting Swamp" by Christopher Paul Stelling, "Your Love is a Ghost Town" by Crooked Brothers, "Ring Around the Moon" by Elephant Revival. See the whole list [HERE](#).

photo credit: dittytv.com



Staff Picks: 1988 Dobro 60DS

OMI Dobros are still, to many players, the gold standard in square-neck resonator guitars, and this sweet little 1988 60DS shows why. Hear Ian from the Denver Folklore Center demonstrate why we love this instrument [HERE](#). Then check it out on our website [HERE](#).



Music Teacher Spotlight - Barry Brown

Piano and voice teacher Barry Brown began teaching at Swallow Hill about 13 years ago.

“They needed a teacher for a men's beginning singing class that had students but no teacher. A friend of the school director knew me from all the shows she had seen me perform with my group. She put us together and they gave me the opportunity!”

Currently, Barry teaches at the Englewood Swallow Hill location and on-line to students across the nation and around the world – “one of my singers Zooms in from Vietnam” – both individual and group music experiences. He ‘loves developing friendships with many of the folks who have music experiences with me. We text, Facebook and send videos of music. My music friends

“I first ask a new student what they want and to imagine themselves in the future doing music the way they've dreamed of doing it. What does that look like? Who are they playing for? Where are they playing?”

Then Barry focuses on their individual learning style. “Reading piano music, playing by ear, chord charts or what? What music do you love? What have you always wanted to do musically? It's important to practice listening to music, to explore, to find out what all is out there, what you like and what moves you! And practicing expressing emotions through storytelling is the other side of music. I love to watch a student become competent and then confident in expressing

send me invites to their shows, we do open mics and karaoke together, we sing and perform at church together. It's just great!

He believes music should be fun and wants to help a person love to play and/or sing.

themselves and the music they are creating."

Learn more about Barry [HERE](#) and see him through Oct 30th at [Silver Dollar City](#) in Branson, MO where he's appearing as "Master Pumpkin Carver".

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