

Meet The Luthier at...

Stuart Keith

Stuart started playing guitars at the age of twelve and instantly began to take them apart, refinish, re-fret, setup, and re-wire them. As a product of the golden era of classic rock the electric guitar held a special fascination for him.

As a young man he owned a print shop and also worked as a journeyman lithographer... a skilled artisan position. He worked on all the Black Flag label artist albums, Paramount Movies promotional standees and VHS jackets, the Temptations albums, Beatles movie VHS jackets, too many to list.



***The first time I picked
“Molly” up, I knew...
It was like she was built
just for me.***

- Shredder Pinstripe

After the print shop Stuart became a commercial pilot and flight instructor. He worked at a professional flight school for a few years and then instructed free lance for ten more years. When given the choice to fly for the airlines or start a business building composite aircraft propellers he chose to build propellers. Stuart owned and operated that business for 20 years, doing research and development for Lockheed, Raytheon, Honeywell, etc. and was recognized as an expert in the field. That business delivered over 20,000 commercial propellers and amassed an excellent safety record.

Aviation is a serious business. It was necessary for Stuart to employ cad/cam/cnc in order to be taken seriously in that industry. As he mastered the software programming and machining skills to produce composite propeller molds and tooling he also began to draw his first cad models for guitars. This opened the door for him to finally produce what had been his real passion...electric guitars. In 2004 he started producing guitar parts and played his first guitar design in 2009.



***The 6.6 lbs. was a surprise
but what is in those 6 lbs.
will impress you. “Molly”
packs a punch!***

- Shredder Pinstripe

The commercial propeller business was sold in 2009 and Stuart has been a full time guitar builder ever since. He brings a serious attitude, an inherent understanding of vibration in structures, precision manufacturing experience, and artistic sensibilities and style into his guitar building.

These machines are accurate to within .0003", which is to say that when the machine is told to go somewhere it will arrive there to within one-seventh of a human hair. This accuracy, if truly understood, harnessed, and applied by the designer, can help to make an instrument that "disappears" in the hands of the player, allowing them to focus more on their music and less on making notes. But more than simple play-ability, this accuracy can aid greatly in the creation of artistic ideas.



***She plays any genre of
music from blues to
screaming heavy metal***

- Shredder Pinstripe

With large Haas (VF4 and TM3) CNC milling machines in a shop out in the forest, it's an odd juxtaposition that inspires both his artistic and meticulous nature. Stuart's goal as a cad/cam specialist is not to mass produce instruments, but rather to develop processes that convey the accuracy capability of these production level machines into his instruments for the sake of play-ability and artistic expression.

Guitars

With comments by Shredder Pinstripe

By Duane M. Everts

Bridges, knobs, pickup rings, covers, and even string tees are all designed and made in his shop. This offers full control over artistic continuity and function. Stuart's bridge designs articulate much the same as conventional bridges but they offer added benefits of carrying other aesthetic design elements of the guitars and full control over the string track.



Designing his own bridges allows Stuart to follow the string throughout the entire instrument and guide it along its path. He designs the string path such that at no point does the string bend around

any sharp edge. This results in a constant tension along the entire length of each string. The final result is that Stuart Keith guitars stay in tune even after vicious bends... and they don't break strings.

I've known Stuart Keith Gort since my college days. Over the years, we had gone our separate ways in life and both been involved in many endeavors. It seems ironic that many years later we would reconnect only to find that Stuart had become a luthier and I had started a magazine about luthiers...Go figure! - editor.



If you're only going to buy one guitar to be with you for the rest of your life, from novice to rock star, Molly from Stuart Keith Guitars should be your weapon of choice.

- Shredder Pinstripe

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Stuart Keith Guitars
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