

# Interactive Guitar

ISSUE  
**13**

EXCLUSIVE  
INTERVIEW

**Authrie Stovall**

Reaching new heights!

## Derek Trucks

The slide king interviewed  
+ gig footage + slide technique special

## Don Alder

Guitar Idol winner exclusive  
acoustic performance + interview!

**Marshall at 50** - live in the Marshall amp vaults! + Marshall 50th anniversary gig footage + interviews with Joe Satriani, Paul Gilbert & Doug Aldrich!

**Bass** - EBS Reidmar head/cab, Peavey TKO digital combo, G&L 5 string & Aphex Punch Factory FX

**Acoustics** - Simon & Patrick Pro Parlor, Bedell dreadnought + Mariner Vertys

WIN!



Aphex FX pedals!

**REVIEWS**

EXCLUSIVE - Vigier 7-string, G&L Ascari, Sonuus Wahoo, TC Flashback x4, Fender Tele, Orange OR15, Peerless, Egnater, Aphex, Pro Co Rat, Snark & In Time Trainer



THE QUIET ROOM\_AN INTRODUCTION

MENU

# THE QUIET ROOM

This issue of the Quiet Room has a special treat in store - an interview with the remarkable Canadian fingerstyle guitarist Don Alder. Winner of numerous international awards and widely regarded among his peers as one of the world's finest players, Don came into our studio to perform a series of stunning pieces. In addition to his trusty Yamahas, he also brought with him a special treat - his vintage Dyer harp guitar, which you can hear and see him in action with.

Never heard of a harp guitar? It's an instrument that is starting to make a comeback after over 100 years of relative obscurity - indeed Gi's Paul Brett has become a leading champion of the instrument.

From our next issue, Don joins the Guitar Interactive Quiet Room team as a guest columnist too - so don't miss it!

Product wise, we have a strong line-up, including a Simon and Patrick parlour guitar (also hailing from Canada), a dreadnought acoustic from US newcomers, Bedell and something very different indeed - a UK-designed guitar from Mariner, a company which is making a name for itself by using only woods from 'sustainable' sources. You may never have heard of some of the woods they use, but you will certainly be able to hear the guitar in our review!



Gary Cooper - Editor  
gary@iguitarmag.com



THE QUIET ROOM\_DON ALDER

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Don Alder

# a touch of genius

Guitar Interactive is proud to welcome Canadian fingerstyle maestro Don Alder for a revealing interview with our own **Giorgio Serci**, plus a series of exclusive video performances. And don't miss our next issue when Don joins us for a short series as a guest Quiet Room columnist!

**Gary Cooper** profiles the man widely acknowledged as one of the world's finest and most musical fingerstyle guitarists.

It's offering a hostage to fortune to describe any guitarist as 'as good as it gets' (there's always someone new just around the corner) but it's an almost inescapable reaction to hearing Canadian fingerstyle genius Don Alder. Music isn't a contest to see who's best, but if it were - well, the list of guitar competitions Alder has won stretches back to 2004, when he swept the board in his native Vancouver, managed a creditable fourth in Germany's Openstrings International Fingerstyle Competition and then went on to grab prizes in completions and festivals around the world, culminating in the international Guitar Idol competition held in London in 2011. Don has now won all three major international guitar contests, including 2010's North American Guitar Superstar contest and the 2007 International Fingerstyle championship. Meanwhile, praise has been showered on him by fellow musicians and manufacturers have been keen to snap him up as an endorser - including both Yamaha guitars and Seymour Duncan pickups.

*Sherry Hudson 2012*



THE QUIET ROOM\_DON ALDER

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Don Alder Interview Part 1

Having begun as a young child on a cheap catalogue guitar, bought for him while he was convalescing from an illness, Don eventually gravitated to a better instrument, catching the fingertsyle bug along the way. But a budding career nearly ended in tragedy when, as a teenager, he was thrown from a truck coming home from from a fishing trip. With him was a friend, Rick Hansen. While Alder recovered, Hansen's spinal injuries resulted in his confinement to a wheelchair. Not that this stopped Hansen, who was determined to live life to the full. In 1985, Alder suspended his musical career to help his friend achieve his goals, including a round the world wheelchair tour from 1985-7. So heroic was the story that it has since been used both as the basis for a theatrical production and a movie (Heart Of A Dragon), in which (and this is probably

another first for an acoustic guitarist!) Alder's character is portrayed by an actor.

"My character is played by British actor Andrew Lee Potts who's gained a lot of popularity in roles for TV," Alder says. "I then went back into music and with the lessons in determination I learned from Rick during the tour I went on becoming the only guitarist in the world to win all three major contests. There were some key lessons I learned that may be of value to share with other aspiring guitarists.

"A lot of times people never pursue their dreams for fear of failure,when really, failure is just not having the courage to try. It sounds corny but it's true, especially for a guy like me that cannot read or write music in a functional aspect.

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THE QUIET ROOM **DON ALDER**

"After the tour I got involved with non profits and disability related areas due to my time on the Rick Hansen tour, so in other words more socially responsible, aware and involved. In 1987 music was just a hobby. The wheelchair tech skills I got from the tour eventually let me to representing Canada as the equipment manager/tech for the 1996 and 2000 Paralympic Games. I retired from that then got involved with the Vancouver Adapted Music Society, which led to playing in a band called Spinal Chord that had two members with quadriplegia.

The band came to an end when the lead singer/keyboardist became mayor of Vancouver. That's when I started to go solo."

And what a solo career Don has had! In between making CDs and winning contests, he has toured extensively both on his own and with others, including Andy McKee.

"It's amazing to see Andy have such an impact on the acoustic guitar around the world, great guy and proud to know him," he says.

Don's association with Yamaha is well known but he doesn't play Yamahas exclusively - and, indeed, has become something of a star on the harp guitar. Harp guitars seem to be starting a renaissance currently and Don is an accomplished exponent on his - a 1918 Dyer, which he bravely took on tour in the UK in 2012 and brought into Guitar Interactive's studio - you can see a performance with it in this feature. Don reveals that he is currently working on a signature model with Scott Burwell, the owner of Holloway Harp Guitars.

That said, Don's stage guitars are Yamaha LLX hand-crafted series, A3CR A-series, and silent guitars and he also has a Greenfield Signature

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**Don Alder Interview Part 2**

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Don Alder and Giorgio Jam



Don Alder - DRDR Performance



Don Alder - Blue Shift Principle Performance



Don Alder - Finger's Finger Performance



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Don Alder - Vibrato Lesson



Don Alder - Not A Planet Performance

Model, the G4-DA Fanfret. Like many of the latest generation of, let's say 'athletic' acoustic guitarists, the Yamahas sometimes take a beating and Don is wryly proud of the fact that the Yamaha he used to stun those of us lucky enough to witness his winning performance at the 2011 Guitar Idol final, was held together with liberal applications of duct tape! I'm honestly not sure whether that says more about Yamaha or Don!

As our interview with Giorgio Serci shows, Don is an engaging and modest man with an astonishing talent, but it is in his performance pieces that he shines - and where he shines isn't solely with technical brilliance (though he has it in spades), it's by

displaying an impeccable feel - that quality which you can write reams about and yet still never manage to capture the essence of. The best acoustic guitarists (two that spring to mind are the late Bert Jansch and the late John Martyn) both exemplified it. Though technically gifted, it wasn't their technique that mattered.

Guitar Interactive is proud indeed to welcome Don Alder to the Quiet Room, both as a remarkable performer and, from our next issue, as a guest columnist.



Don Alder - Over The Top Performance