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Steve Vai, Eric Johnson, Robben Ford, John Jorgenson, Sonny Landreth, Andy McKee, Mark Selby Band, Trio Balkan Strings, Richard Smith, Rory Hoffman, Stig Mathisen & Chris Casello To Perform at 11th Annual Guitar Town

Scott Goldman to Return as Emcee and to Perform Opening Set

Free Festival Featuring Top Guitar Legends & Virtuosos to Converge on Copper Mountain, Colorado Aug. 7-9, 2015

Annual Guitar Town ArtGuitar Silent Auction to Benefit MusiCares

COPPER MOUNTAIN, CO (February 25, 2015) - This August, Copper Mountain, Colorado will once again heat up with the sounds of **Guitar Town**, the popular annual FREE outdoor festival, Friday, August 7 - Sunday, August 9, 2015, featuring performances by several of the globe's top guitarists at the Village at Copper, nestled in the heart of the Rocky Mountains.

This year's bill includes virtuosos **Steve Vai, Eric Johnson** (performing acoustically), **Robben Ford, John Jorgenson** (performing in three different configurations: John Jorgenson Quintet, J2B2 - John Jorgenson Bluegrass Band featuring Herb Pedersen, Jon Randall & Mark Fain, & John Jorgenson Electric Band with special guest **Chris Casello**), **Sonny Landreth, Andy McKee, Mark Selby Band, Trio Balkan Strings, Richard Smith, Rory Hoffman**, and **Stig Mathisen**. L.A.-based fingerstylist **Scott Goldman** will return as emcee for the weekend's performances in addition to his festival-opening set.

Guitar Town has widely become known as a yearly gathering of some of the very best guitarists in the world. The festival always includes a star-studded display of guitar virtuosity featuring live performances by a "who's who" list of players. Acoustic Day is set for Saturday, August 8, and Electric Day will take place Sunday, August 9. Day-ending all-star guitar jams and fun, informative morning workshops with artists from the Guitar Town lineup are always two popular highlights from the weekend. Guitar students and fans are granted an opportunity to connect on a personal level with the guitarists during workshops in a "living room-style" format while hearing stories, witnessing once-in-a-lifetime jams, and gaining valuable technical insight. On both August 8 & 9, the guitar workshops run from 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at the Copper Conference Center, and live music begins on the Guitar Town Main Stage at Noon.

"Guitar festivals are an opportunity to bask in the audio glow of the coolest instrument ever made, and I'm thrilled to be a part of this year's Guitar Town Festival," Steve Vai said. "With the other fine artists on the bill, this year's show will be a supernova of guitar glow."

"I'm very much looking forward to the Guitar Town festival, which I've played only once before," Robben Ford said. "It's a pleasure to be a part of something like this, done for all the right reasons, mainly, love of the guitar."

"Following 2014's exciting 10 year anniversary of Guitar Town reuniting many favorite alumni of past years, we're excited to move forward into a new era," annual Guitar Town featured artist and "de facto" creative director John Jorgenson said. "This year we are mixing it up with some returning Guitar Town players like Eric Johnson and Robben Ford, and some new Guitar Town artists like Steve Vai, who is sure to bring his own special vibe to the proceedings. Last year, a couple sets were cut short by weather, so Sonny Landreth is returning for another chance to perform, too. Our audience gets more and more familial each year, and the workshops have become a must see even for non-guitarists, as the artists are presented together in a casual and interactive way, with plenty of chance for questions from the audience."

Jorgenson added, "The fact that this much world class entertainment is also still free is just incredible, and to be presented in such beautiful surroundings makes for an unbeatable combination. For me, it's an unusual situation that all three of my ensembles would be performing during one event, like a big family reunion that I'm really looking forward to."

Guitar Center will be on-site offering re-stringing and tune-ups for guitars with its Guitar Center Garage. Several custom luthiers – including Michael Anthony Guitars, Big Hollow Guitars, Robbie O'Brien, Deltoro Guitars, and Jeff Bamburg – will be a part of Guitar Town's Custom Luthier Expo, displaying their craft and answering questions from Guitar Town attendees about their work.

Fun music activities for kids and the whole family will also once again be a part of the Guitar Town festivities. New for 2015 will be Andy May's Acoustic Kids Showcase on the West Lake Stage. The showcase (not a contest) is an opportunity for young guitarists of any skill level (through age 16) to perform on the festival stage in a supportive environment. Accompanists may be any age, and bands are eligible as long as at least one featured performer is 16 years of age or younger. As a show, the Acoustic Kids Showcase is not for kids only – it's for music lovers of all ages who would like to come applaud the efforts of the next generation. Instructions to apply for the Acoustic Kids Showcase at Guitar Town 2015 will be available soon at www.villageatcopper.com/guitarTown. The application deadline is July 15, 2015. For more information about the history and philosophy behind Andy May's youth performance showcases, visit www.acoustickids.com.

The annual Guitar Town ArtGuitar Silent Auction will benefit MusiCares®, a charity that provides a safety net of critical resources to music people in need. Guitar Town's ArtGuitars will be on display at Guitar Center in Denver, who is once again sponsoring the auction. Artists from around the community and around the state will design, decorate, paint and create art from damaged guitars. To see past ArtGuitars: <http://bit.ly/MHiRes> For more information on MusiCares®, visit: <http://www.grammy.org/musicares>

See these amazing guitar slingers in action at *Guitar Town 2015*:

Steve Vai

While many artists fit easily into a single category, Steve Vai remains unclassifiable. He is a musical alchemist of the highest order. Throughout the years, Vai has awed fans of all genres with his exceptional guitar skills and musicianship. He boasts career sales of over 15 million records, three GRAMMY Award wins, and 15 GRAMMY nominations. He's toured the world as a solo artist, as a member of G3, and with Frank Zappa and bands such as Alcatrazz, The David Lee Roth Band, and Whitesnake. As an accomplished audio producer, Vai has written, produced, and engineered all of his solo albums, released via Favored Nations, his own independent record label that has released over 70 albums by legendary musicians such as Tommy Emmanuel, Steve Lukather, Eric Johnson, Billy Sheehan, Larry Carlton and many more. For Vai, virtuosity and versatility are not mutually exclusive. He has created music for blockbuster films, bestselling video games, national sports franchises, and corporate brand initiatives. His career accomplishments have earned him honorary doctorates from Berklee College of Music and Musicians Institute. Having recently signed a multi-recording agreement with SONY/Legacy, Vai's new CD/DVD, *Stillness In Motion - Vai Live in L.A.*, will be release April 7, 2015.

Eric Johnson

The GRAMMY Award winner and six-time GRAMMY nominee known as the masterful studio craftsman behind his acclaimed million-plus-selling breakout album, *Ah Via Musicom* and its Top 10 hit, the GRAMMY Award-winning "Cliffs of Dover," as well as hits such as "Trademark" and "Righteous," has been honored by periodicals in the music space for decades. Eric Johnson is enshrined in *Guitar Player* magazine's "Gallery of Greats," while *Musician Magazine* named him one of the *100 Greatest Guitarists of the 20th Century*. He continues to refine and expand his musical brilliance in his own electric and acoustic tours (playing both guitar and piano), and his recent live collaborations on both electric guitar

with jazz player Mike Stern and slide master Sonny Landreth. Avidly collaborative, Johnson has recorded and/or performed with a long list of artists, including B.B. King, Chet Atkins, James Burton, Steve Vai and Joe Satriani (on the original G3 tour), and John McLaughlin. Throughout his career he has consistently won and placed high in numerous readers and critic polls conducted by guitar publications, most recently in 2010 when he was named Guitarist of the Year by *Guitar International*. Johnson has also won more Austin Music Awards (33) than anyone else. He is a member of the Texas Music Hall of Fame.

Robben Ford

One of the premier electric guitarists today, Robben Ford is particularly known for his blues playing as well as his ability to be comfortable in a variety of musical contexts. A five-time GRAMMY nominee, he has played with artists as diverse as Joni Mitchell, Jimmy Witherspoon, Miles Davis, George Harrison, Phil Lesh, Bonnie Raitt, Clause Ogerman, Michael McDonald, Bob Dylan, John Mayall, Greg Allman, John Scofield and many others. Robben's impressive, acclaimed body of work continues to receive praise from critics and peers alike. Larry Groce, Host of NPR's *Mountain Stage*, has said, "If you see a list of the greatest guitar players of the last 50 years that doesn't include Robben Ford on it, be suspicious." Guitar.com has noted that Robben's playing can be summed up in one word: "Sophistication. The term describes Ford's music on a number of levels. The eclectic musician regularly touches on blues, jazz, R&B, and rock, blending instrumental and lyrical ideas into a package so elegant, yet musically invigorating." Ford's new album, *Into The Sun* – the follow-up to the critically acclaimed *A Day In Nashville* – will be released March 31. The recording features guest appearances by Warren Haynes, ZZ Ward, Keb' Mo', Robert Randolph, Sonny Landreth and Tyler Bryant.

J2B2 (John Jorgenson Bluegrass Band featuring Herb Pedersen, Jon Randall & Mark Fain)

Bluegrass supergroup J2B2 is comprised of four legendary, GRAMMY Award-winning musicians: Desert Rose Band founding members John Jorgenson (Elton John, Bonnie Raitt, Earl Scruggs) on mandolin, acoustic guitar, and vocals and Herb Pedersen (The Dillards, Old And In The Way, Linda Ronstadt), along with Jon Randall on acoustic guitar and vocals (Emmylou Harris' Nash Ramblers, Sam Bush, Earl Scruggs) and Mark Fain on stand-up bass (Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder, Alison Krauss, Dolly Parton). The foursome delivers bluegrass like no one has ever heard it before, thanks in part to the quartet's fresh harmony vocal sound, which combines bluegrass with elements of 60's and 70's West Coast folk rock. The band's undeniable live shows have received stellar reviews and showcase a spot-on union of impeccable musicianship, incomparable songwriting, and seasoned showmanship. Traditional bluegrass standards fit seamlessly next to contemporary songs like the Pedersen-penned classic "Wait A Minute" and Randall's CMA Song of the Year, "Whiskey Lullaby." This is the "high lonesome sound" of American roots music at its finest. The debut album by J2B2 is set for release later this year.

John Jorgenson Quintet

The New York Times has called music virtuoso John Jorgenson "perhaps the best jazz guitarist alive." Known for his blistering guitar licks and mastery of a broad musical palette, Jorgenson has earned a reputation as a world-class musician and guitarist who has collaborated with the likes of Elton John, Bonnie Raitt, Luciano Pavarotti, and Bob Dylan. The GRAMMY Award-winning artist and in-demand studio musician is known for creating a unique musical experience that equally enthralls the most discerning and the casual music fan. His dynamic Quintet's authentic gypsy jazz—the string-driven

swing created by Jean "Django" Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli in 1930s Paris—is recognized internationally. One of the elite gypsy jazz players in the world, Jorgenson portrayed Django Reinhardt in the Hollywood feature film *Head In the Clouds*. [All About Jazz](#) has described the John Jorgenson Quintet's performance as "a mix of soulful romance and rollicking celebration, with Jorgenson's fingers a blur that created avalanches of notes and chords, his dazzling prowess often caused listeners to gasp at the speed and sound..." The John Jorgenson Quintet is comprised of Jorgenson (acoustic guitar, bouzouki, clarinet, vocals), and noted master musicians Jason Anick (jazz violin), Simon Planting (bass), John Jarvis (piano) and Rick Reed (percussion). The Quintet's new album will be released in 2015.

John Jorgenson Electric Band ***With Special Guest Chris Casello***

Master guitarist John Jorgenson and his crack electric band easily move between rock, country, blues, and many other styles giving Jorgenson a solid platform to exhibit the virtuosity that earned him a GRAMMY Award in 2008, ACM Guitarist of the Year three consecutive times, inclusion in Guitarist Magazine's "100 Guitar Heroes" and "100 Most Influential Guitarists," and Guitar Player Magazine's "Album of the Year" with the Hellecasters. Guitar fans can expect some amazing tones and dazzling fretwork on his signature Fender model guitars. Renowned Scottish bassist Alan Thomson (Rick Wakeman, John Martyn, Jeff Beck), Italian drummer Cesare Valbusa (James Burton, Carl Verheyen) and keyboardist Franz Bazzani (Albert Lee, Tommy Emmanuel) follow Jorgenson at every stylistic and dynamic turn while always leaving plenty of room for exciting group improvisation. A new album by John Jorgenson Electric Band is scheduled for a 2015 release. Jorgenson and his Electric Band will be joined by very special guest **Chris Casello** this year. The award-winning Casello is one of the most dynamic and entertaining guitarists in the world of roots music today. With influences including Les Paul, Chet Atkins, Chuck Berry and Link Wray, Casello's high-energy, swinging rockabilly blues explosion is so embedded in American roots, you can smell the greens and taste the hot sauce.

Sonny Landreth

Louisiana slide wizard Sonny Landreth, whose music has always been evocative – a vibrant mixture of indigenous sounds and images informed by Delta blues and Faulkner alike – began playing guitar as a teenager with his friends in their parents' houses in Lafayette, Louisiana. In the 1980's, he recorded two albums for the Blues Unlimited label out of Crowley Louisiana, *Blues Attack* and *Way Down in Louisiana*, the latter of which got him noticed by record executives in Nashville, which in turn led to his recording and touring with John Hiatt. That led to still more work with John Mayall, who recorded Landreth's radio-ready "Congo Square." Landreth has worked with/played with New Orleans bandleader and pianist Allen Toussaint, Dire Straits guitarist Mark Knopfler, Joe Satriani, Eric Johnson and many others. Landreth's 11th album, bearing the fittingly evocative title *Elemental Journey*, is something very different from the Louisiana slide wizard. Released on his own Landfall label, the recording is Landreth's first all-instrumental effort and his most adventurous work to date. Landreth's new album is set for a March 2015 release.

Andy McKee

Andy McKee is among the world's finest acoustic guitarists and his 200 million+ YouTube views underscore his emergence as one of today's most unique and influential artists. To fans of virtuoso musicianship, it is McKee's attention to song structure and melodic content that elevates him above the rest. To fans of popular music, McKee entertains both the eye and the ear as he magically transforms the steel string guitar into a full orchestra via his use of altered tunings, tapping, partial capos,

percussive hits and a signature two-handed technique. In the past two years, McKee has toured America, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, France, England, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, China, Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Russia – and recently garnered plum exposure playing with Prince at sold out arena shows in Australia as a featured soloist and special guest member of Prince's extraordinary live band.

Mark Selby Band

Swampy blues rocker and rare-triple threat talent Mark Selby – a gifted songwriter with serious guitar chops and a voice to match – has been lighting up the Guitar Town stage with his rocking band every single year since the festival began (the only artist to do so) and his performance is an annual highlight. Selby has written four No. 1 hits, including "Blue on Black" by Kenny Wayne Shepherd (named Billboard Magazine's Rock Track of the Year in 1998), the GRAMMY-winning "There's Your Trouble" by the Dixie Chicks, and more than 10 Top-40 singles. A dynamic live performer, Selby has shared the stage with B.B. King, Jeff Beck, John Fogerty, Robert Cray, Levon Helm and many more. He is signed to ZYX Records in Europe and headlines frequent successful tours there. He is currently touring in support of his latest release, *Blue Highway*. Rolling Stone has said of Selby, "the music does the talking and American Songwriter has noted, "As a singer/songwriter, Mark Selby's in the same league as Bruce Springsteen, with meaty words, a compelling voice, and tracks that have more groove than a vintage vinyl record."

Trio Balkan Strings

Trio Balkan Strings (Zoran Starcevic & sons) performs its original guitar music, a fusion of Balkan music: Serbian, Gypsy, Macedonian, Romanian, Moldavian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Mediterranean, Greek, Oriental and Jazz, Gypsy Swing, Classical music, asymmetrical rhythms plus original guitar interpretation. The result, combining many cultures, is Balkan Swing – Jazz Guitar - Ethno - World Fusion – virtuoso, rich and unconventional, fresh and spontaneous, brimming with energy. The trio invented six hands playing on one guitar, and that is their trademark. The group, who has performed in numerous countries all over the world, has received rave reviews from John McLaughlin, who has been quoted as saying, "Trio Balkan Strings' dedication to the music of the Balkans and central Europe is inspiring. The guitar interpretations of this music are wonderful. Really good!!!"

Richard Smith

When Richard Smith picks up a guitar, it's a treat for the ears and the eyes. Audiences watch in amazement, while his fingers dance over fretboard and strings, and listen in delight, as melody and groove fill the room. It's a natural gift. Born in Beckenham, Kent in England, Smith is well-known for mixing it up – using various techniques and playing a wide range of musical styles. Blues, Joplin Rags, Bach, Chopin, flatpicking fiddle tunes, Sousa Marches, and fingerstyle jazz to straight Merle Travis picking tunes make up his evolving repertoire. Smith has played with Chet Atkins, Tommy Emmanuel, Les Paul, John Jorgenson, Boots Randolph, Nato Lima and many others. Smith is a National Fingerstyle Guitar Champion and was inducted into the National Thumbpickers Hall of Fame in 2009.

Rory Hoffman

An astounding Nashville-based guitarist and multi-instrumentalist, Rory Hoffman plays stringed instruments in his lap overhand and demonstrates his abilities and inventiveness on every instrument he plays (he currently plays over a dozen stringed, keyboard and wind instruments). Nashville's critically acclaimed concert series, *Music City Roots*, had this to say about a performance by Hoffman:

"We were treated to one of the most amazing displays of multi-instrumental virtuosity by a single musician we've seen yet on *Roots*. What he does with frets and a pick in that unorthodox configuration is nothing short of wondrous." *Now Playing Nashville* adds, "Rory Hoffman can only be described as a force of nature on anything he decides to pick up." Keith Urban has said of Hoffman: "Within five seconds of listening to and watching Rory Hoffman for the first time, I was transfixed. His technique is frighteningly original. I was also really struck by his touch, tone and soulful dynamics. Chet Atkins said of himself that he learned to play the way he did because he didn't know how you were supposed to do it, and thank God Rory developed his style before some 'expert' told him he was doing it 'all wrong.'"

Stig Mathisen

Stig Mathisen is a guitarist and educator from Northern Norway, currently residing in Los Angeles. Mathisen has a Masters and a Doctoral degree in guitar performance from University of Southern California, where he graduated with numerous awards for outstanding achievements. He studied Classical guitar at Tromsø University for over 6 years, and has worked extensively as a freelance guitarist and University lecturer in both Norway and in the U.S. An eclectic guitarist by nature, Mathisen is equally comfortable with rock, jazz and classical music, and has rubbed shoulders with numerous world-class musicians over the years. A passionate explorer and a relentless seeker of all knowledge pertaining to guitar, improvisation, composition, music history and music philosophy, he has been on a quest since his formative years to discover the inner mechanics and the deeper secrets of music. Mathisen is currently the Chair of the Guitar Program (GIT) at Musicians Institute, in Hollywood, California, and he has written several of the books currently in use as core curriculum at the college.

2015 GUITAR TOWN SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

All events are FREE and open to the public.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2015

4:00 pm

Guitar Town Workshop - "Learn To Play Guitar In A Day!" with Marlene Hutchinson

A program designed for the absolute novice

(As seen on PBS and featured on CBS, NBC & in *Acoustic Guitar*)

Lower Level Copper Conference Center - Hasty's

5:00 pm

Guitar Town Fingerstyle Workshop with Jim Deeming

Lower Level Copper Conference Center

7:00 - 8:00 pm

Guitar Town Acoustic Guitar Pull

Bring your guitar and jam with other guitar enthusiasts

In Front of the Fire Globe in the Village

Guitar Town After Party

Center Village Restaurants & Bars

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2015

10:00 am

Guitar Town Workshop - "Learn To Play Guitar In A Day!" with Marlene Hutchinson

A program designed for the absolute novice

(As seen on PBS and featured on CBS, NBC & in *Acoustic Guitar*)

West Lake Stage

10:30 - 11:30 am

Guitar Town Acoustic Guitar Workshop

With Eric Johnson, Andy McKee, John Jorgenson,

Trio Balkan Strings, Richard Smith, & Rory Hoffman

Copper Conference Center

Noon - 4:00 p.m.

Guitar Center Garage, Guitar Luthier Expo & Kid Zone

Attractions include:

- Giant Guitar Themed Mural
- ArtGuitars for kids: create your own piece of art to take home. Paint, brushes and soundboard templates provided.
- Rhythm Corner with Andrea Antognoni during main stage set breaks
- Guitar Center Garage with guitar techs on hand to teach, tune and tighten.
- More guitar-themed vendors and luthiers

Noon - 6:00 p.m.

Guitar Town - Acoustic Day Live Performances

Scott Goldman

Rory Hoffman & Richard Smith

Trio Balkan Strings

John Jorgenson Quintet

J2B2 (John Jorgenson Bluegrass Band featuring Herb Pedersen, Jon Randall & Mark Fain)

Andy McKee

Eric Johnson

All-Star Acoustic Jam

Main Stage

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Andy May's Acoustic Kids Showcase

(For young guitarists of any skill level through age 16)

West Lake Stage

Instructions to apply for the Acoustic Kids Showcase will be available soon at www.villageatcopper.com/guitarTown. The application deadline is July 15, 2015.

7:00 - 8:00 pm

Guitar Town Acoustic Guitar Pull

Bring your guitar and jam with other guitar enthusiasts

In Front of the Fire Globe in the Village

Guitar Town After Party

Center Village Restaurants & Bars

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2015

10:30 - 11:30 am

Guitar Town Electric Guitar Workshop

With Steve Vai, Robben Ford, Sonny Landreth, John Jorgenson, Chris Casello, Mark Selby

Copper Conference Center

1:00 pm

Guitar Town Workshop - "Learn To Play Guitar In A Day!" with Marlene Hutchinson

A program designed for the absolute novice

(As seen on PBS and featured on CBS, NBC & in *Acoustic Guitar*)

Lower Level Copper Conference Center

Noon - 4:00 p.m.

Guitar Center Garage, Guitar Luthier Expo & Kid Zone

Attractions include:

- Giant Guitar Themed Mural
- ArtGuitars for kids: create your own piece of art to take home. Paint, brushes and soundboard templates provided.
- Rhythm Corner with Andrea Antognoni during main stage set breaks
- Guitar Center Garage with guitar techs on hand to teach, tune and tighten.
- More guitar-themed vendors and luthiers

Noon - 6:00 p.m.

Guitar Town - Electric Day Live Performances

Mark Selby Band

John Jorgenson Electric Band with Special Guest Chris Casello

Sonny Landreth

Robben Ford

Steve Vai

All-Star Electric Jam

Main Stage

6:30 p.m.

ArtGuitar Gallery & Presentation

West Lake Stage

Visit www.villageatcopper.com/guitartown and www.coppercolorado.com for more information.

About Copper

Copper gives guests the freedom to define their own vacation experience. Easy access to several 14,000 ft. peaks, hundreds of miles of Colorado Scenic Byways, an 18-hole championship golf course and long stretches of celebrated fishing waters make Copper a premier summer destination. That access, combined with an intimate resort village that produces world-class events and entertainment, is especially appealing to hikers, road bikers, runners, anglers and others seeking personal growth and wellness through their mountain experience. To see more, visit www.coppercolorado.com.

About MusiCares®

Established in 1989 by The Recording Academy, MusiCares provides a safety net of critical assistance for music people in times of need. MusiCares' services and resources cover a wide range of financial, medical and personal emergencies, and each case is treated with integrity and confidentiality. MusiCares also focuses the resources and attention of the music industry on human service issues that directly impact the health and welfare of the music community. For more information, please visit www.musicares.org. For breaking news and exclusive content, please like "MusiCares" on [Facebook](#), follow MusiCares on [Twitter](#) (@MusiCares), and join us on [Instagram](#).

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