



SISTERS, OREGON

*Thompson*  
PRESTON THOMPSON GUITARS

Modern. Vintage. Tone.

[WWW.PKTGUITARS.COM](http://WWW.PKTGUITARS.COM)

# OUR HISTORY

Preston devoted years of study and understanding to determine what details work and what players have been most significantly impacted by, in other words what do players want in a great guitar and why? What works best from traditional designs and why? What are the features that could and should work better and why? . The construction techniques employed by Thompson Guitars keep our instruments refined and beautiful by taking more time and energy to keep our quality standards extremely high throughout every aspect of construction. Our team has captured what the company was founded on and is proceeding into the future with pride.

Our fine guitars were designed by master guitar luthier Preston Thompson and discovered by bluegrass virtuosos Charles Sawtelle and Peter Rowan in the 1980s, Preston got his start building guitars under Charles Fox at the School of the Guitar Research & Design Center in Vermont, the first school for guitar makers in North America. During the 1970s, he honed his guitar-making skills at the legendary Randy Wood's Old Time Pickin' Parlor, the center of Nashville's bluegrass music jam scene. Preston built his reputation in the 1980's for handmade, original vintage guitars based closely on measurements and sound quality of Charles Sawtelle's rare and famous pre-war vintage guitars.



## **Preston Thompson 1956-2019**

Preston led a uniquely talented group of craftsmen while passing along his skills and knowledge to each member of the team. Over time, this developed into complete trust in us to build guitars that create the vintage tone he so cherished. He is greatly missed, and his legacy will live on in every guitar we build



knowledge



# HANDCRAFTED DIFFERENCES

## ADIRONDACK SPRUCE TOPS

We start off with selecting Adirondack Spruce as our standard top wood. This is not an upgrade, but what we feel gives our guitars the best sound projection. We do offer additional excellent woods like Sitka Spruce, European Spruce, Lutz Spruce, Redwood and Port Orford cedar as soundboards on our guitars.

From time to time we come across unique supplies of top woods, such as our recent procurement of Sitka Spruce that was submerged for several decades as a part of a barge in Alaska.

## TONEWOODS

Thompson Guitars are built using the finest woods for back and sides available today. We are constantly seeking suppliers of older salvaged woods and sustainable new woods.

We currently offer Brazilian Rosewood, Madagascar Rosewood, East Indian Rosewood, Honduran Mahogany, Koa, Oregon Myrtlewood and a striking flamed Walnut.

Also in the works are limited editions of Cuban Mahogany, Sinker Mahogany, Quilted Mahogany, Flamed and Quilted Maple.



## DOVE TAIL NECK TO BODY JOINT

has long been recognized as a stable and strong method of construction for steel string instruments. Our dovetail joints are 5/8" deep and are an integral piece to the signature Thompson Guitars tone; they provide a vital sound-conducting link from the body to the neck and also serve as a functional construction element, allowing for disassembly of the neck and body if needed.

We **HAND GRADUATE** our soundboards to assure each top delivers the utmost in responsiveness and tone. Quality material deserves to be heard so we take extra measures to achieve the most tone that a piece of wood possesses.

Each top is sanded in a symmetrical pattern so the bass side of the top thins out from the bridge plate area. The same is done for the treble side of the top however, the treble side is left a little thicker than the bass side. The resulting top has the ability to excite more vibrational energy and therefore deliver superb tone and volume.



**HAND CRAVED BRACES** - Just as our tops are individually hand graduated, the braces on our tops are hand carved and scalloped. This traditional approach gives us the control to achieve the most tone from the soundboard. We can lighten the overall mass while retaining strength. There are many configurations for the placement of the X brace. We generally use the 1930's position referred to as Advanced X or Forward Shifted X. This X position frees up the rocking movement of the bridge and the top is allowed to move more, once again adding to responsiveness, volume, and tone.

**NITROCELLULOSE LACQUER** - This mainstay finish, which was developed in the 1920's, does a wonderful job of showing the beauty and grain of the wood. It hardens but never completely cures like a Poly finish, which makes it an excellent protector. It retains a degree of flexibility and is therefore not as constricting as other finishes, which adds to the guitar's resonance and volume. Nitrocellulose ages very well and a guitar finished with this lacquer may get scratches and dings as any well-loved instrument will but the beautiful patina adds character that thick plastic finishes can't come close to.



We offer a variety of models from a Dreadnought to a Parlor.

**Mahogany**

**Madagascar**

**East Indian**

**Brazilian**

**WE OFFER DIFFERENT SIZES AND TONEWOODS TO GIVE PLAYERS A WIDE RANGE OF TONE AND FEEL FOR A VARIETY OF PLAYING STYLES AND SOUNDS.**





# Dreadnought - 12 & 14 Fret

PRESTON THOMPSON DREADNOUGHT MODELS ARE ALL CRAFTED TO PRODUCE THE TONE AND VOLUME THAT THE DREADNOUGHT GUITAR WAS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE. THESE ARE TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENTS BASED ON THE FAMOUS 1937 HERRINGBONE DREADNOUGHT, OWNED BY THE LATE, GREAT CHARLES SAWTELLE. IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SOUND, AND THAT IS WHAT THE THOMPSON DREADNOUGHT SPECIALIZES IN.

THESE ARE LIGHT WEIGHT POWERFUL INSTRUMENTS THAT, WHEN NEEDED, STAND UP TO THE VOLUME OF A MANDOLIN, FIDDLE AND BANJO. THEY HAVE THE BASS RESPONSE THAT PROVIDES AN ALMOST FULL ORCHESTRAL BACKING TO VOCALS. THEIR MID-RANGE RESPONSE AND BRIGHT TREBLES TAKE FLATPICKING AND LEAD PLAYING TO NEW LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT.





# Slope Shoulder- 12 & 14 fret

THE THOMPSON **SLOPE SHOULDER** 14 FRET DREADNOUGHT IS A COUSIN TO OUR STANDARD 14 FRET DREADNOUGHT MODELS. THESE COMFORTABLE AND GRACEFUL GUITARS HAVE THE POWERFUL PRESENCE OF ALL THOMPSON DREADNOUGHTS BUT ARE NOTED FOR HAVING A BALANCED TONE ACROSS THE BOARD. THEY ARE VIBRANT GUITARS WITH A STRONG, CLEAR RESPONSE AND LUSH WARMTH.





# 0000 (T-1) - 14 Fret



**THE 0000** OR AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY CALLED AT THOMPSON GUITARS, **THE T-1**, WAS THE FIRST GUITAR BODY SHAPE DRAWN AND BUILT BY PRESTON WHILE HE ATTENDED THE SCHOOL OF GUITAR RESEARCH AND DESIGN. MANY OF THE VERY FIRST THOMPSON GUITARS ARE 0000'S AND ARE KNOWN FOR A BIGGER 16" LOWER BOUT GIVING THE GUITAR TONE AN EXCELLENT BALANCE. THESE MODELS OFFER THE APPROXIMATE VOLUME OF DREADDOUGHTS BUT ARE VERY COMFORTABLE INSTRUMENTS TO PLAY BECAUSE OF THE TIGHTER WAIST AND NARROWER BODY DEPTH.



# OM/14 Fret 000

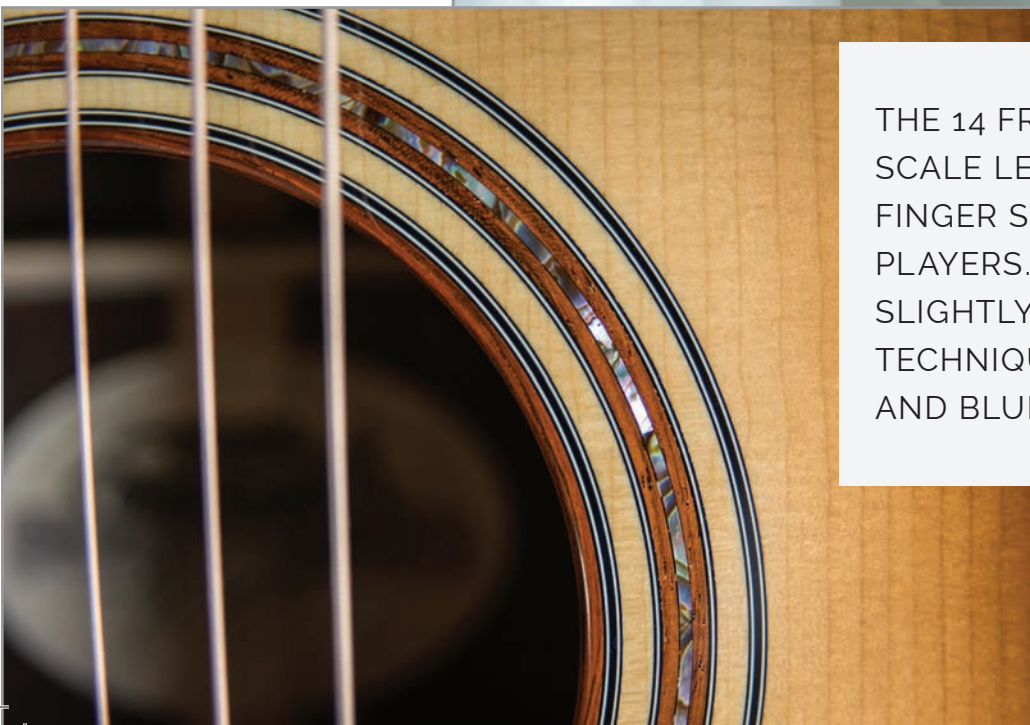
PRESTON THOMPSON **OM AND 14 FRET 000** GUITARS LOOK JUST ABOUT IDENTICAL AND SHARE MANY SIMILAR QUALITIES, INCLUDING SUPERB RESPONSIVENESS AND A LOVELY SWEETNESS IN TONE.

THE RELATIVELY SLIMMER BODY DEPTH GIVES PLAYERS A QUICKNESS TO THE SOUND DELIVERED WHILE ALSO DELIVERING THE STRING TO STRING AND BASS TO TREBLE BALANCE THESE OM MODELS ARE RENOWNED FOR.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN OM AND THE 14 FRET 000 IS SCALE LENGTH. THE OM (ORCHESTRA MODEL) HAS A 25.4 SCALE LENGTH GENERALLY GIVING THESE INSTRUMENTS A LITTLE MORE PUNCH AND VOLUME, MAKING IT A PERFECT FOR PLAYERS THAT BOTH FLATPICK AND FINGERPICK.



THE 14 FRET 000 HAS A SHORT 24.9" SCALE LENGTH WHICH IS PERFECT FOR FINGER STYLE PICKERS AND BLUES PLAYERS. THE STRING TENSION IS SLIGHTLY LESS WHICH MAKES CERTAIN TECHNIQUES LIKE BENDING STRINGS AND BLUES STYLE RIFFS ENHANCED.







perfection







For us, at Thompson Guitars, adorning our headstocks with one of our **original torches** or a **unique design** brings something special to the overall look to share with generations to come.

Original Thompson Torches designed and crafted by our own Inlay Specialist, **Simon Haycraft**

Regency, Lotus , GeoDeco (from top to bottom)

A variety of materials are available for these torches



Shipwreck and the Three Sisters





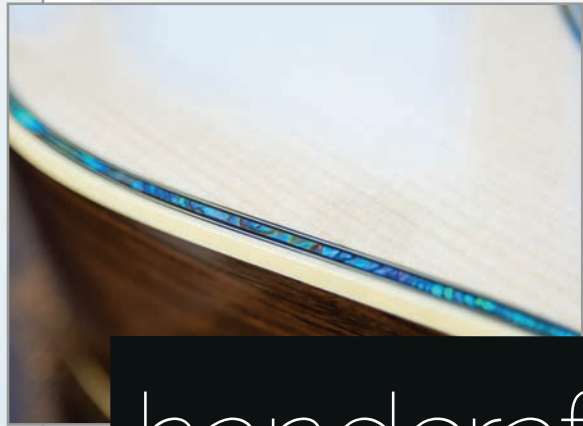
# 000 12 Fret



PRESTON THOMPSON **12 FRET 000** GUITARS ARE BASED ON AN EXCEPTIONAL 1929 000 OWNED BY CHARLES SAWTELLE WHO WAS PART OF THE POPULAR BAND HOT RIZE AND A FRIEND OF PRESTON'S.

FOR YEARS BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DREADNOUGHT BODY STYLE, THE 12 FRET 000 WAS THE LARGEST GUITAR AVAILABLE. TO US, THIS GUITAR IS STILL ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND AESTHETICALLY PLEASING GUITARS EVER CREATED. THE TONE AND VERSATILITY ARE UNEQUALLED. YOU CAN THROW ALL THE GUITAR ADJECTIVES AT THIS ONE: SWEET, RESPONSIVE, LOUD, WOODY, LIVELY, ETC AND YOU'D STILL COME UP SHORT IN THE TRUE TALENTS THIS MODEL POSSESSES.

A FEW OF THE DESIGN FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE GUITAR'S SOUND AND PLAYABILITY IS THE 12 FRET NECK JOINT, PLACING THE BRIDGE MORE IN THE CENTER OF THE GUITAR'S LOWER BOUT FOR EFFICIENT USE OF THE SOUNDBOARD. THE SLOTTED PEGHEAD ALLOWS INCREASED STRING RAMP OVER THE NUT AS THE STRINGS WIND ONTO THE TUNER POST CENTERED IN THE HEADSTOCK. THIS GUITAR IS BUILT WITH A STANDARD 25.4 SCALE LENGTH WITH A RED SPRUCE ADIRONDACK TOP AND ANY OF THE BACK AND SIDE TONEWOODS WE OFFER.



handcrafted



# 00 12 or 14 Fret

OUR **00 GUITARS** ARE MADE TO SIMILAR SPECIFICATIONS AS OUR 000'S AS EITHER A 12 OR 14 FRET MODEL.

DOUBLE "00" GUITARS ARE SMALLER BODIES MODELS THAT FILL A NICHE BETWEEN LARGER GUITARS AND SMALLER PARLOR SIZE GUITARS. FOR THAT REASON, THEY HAVE AN INTIMATE FEEL AND VOICE THAT IS ELEGANT AND INSPIRING.



SOLO PERFORMERS AND SONGWRITERS HAVE ENJOYED THE SWEETNESS AND CHARM OF THESE SMALL BUT POWERFUL GUITARS. WE EVEN HAVE A FEW BLUEGRASS PICKERS ENJOY THE RICHNESS OF THE TONE THAT THESE GUITARS CAN DELIVER. THEY ARE TRADITIONALLY A SHORT SCALE 24.9" BUT WE OFFER A LONG SCALE VERSION SIMILAR TO THE OM.

unique voice



# 0 12 Fret and size 2 parlor

tone



THE **12 FRET 0 MODEL** HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN KNOWN AS THE "CONCERT" SIZED GUITAR. TODAY MOST PLAYERS TEND TO THINK OF THIS MODEL AS SMALL, BUT FOR DECADES IT WAS MORE OR LESS A STANDARD SIZED INSTRUMENT. WITH A 13 1/2" LOWER BOUT. THE 12 FRET 00 MEASURES 14 1/8" ACROSS STILL QUITE A BIT LARGER THAN THE SIZE 2 PARLOR, WHICH HAS A 12" LOWER BOUT. DESPITE THE SINGLE 0'S SMALL STATURE IT IS MORE OF A MID-RANGE INSTRUMENT WITH THE SOUND SURPRISING MOST PLAYERS. THE TONE, VOLUME AND SUSTAIN ARE ONLY SURPASSED BY THEIR BEAUTIFUL BALANCE.

OUR **SIZE 2 PARLOR GUITARS** ARE BASED UPON A VINTAGE 1892 MODEL OWNED BY PRESTON. THAT PARTICULAR GUITAR WAS BUILT FOR GUT STRINGS, SO WHEN THE THOMPSON SIZE 2 WAS DEVELOPED WE CHANGED THE WOOD THICKNESS AND BRACING TO ACCOMMODATE STEEL STRINGS. THE THOMPSON SIZE 2 WITH IT'S MAHOGANY BACK, SIDES AND TOP IS OUR VERSION OF ONE OF THE VERY FIRST PRODUCTION STEEL STRING GUITARS EVER MADE. (ALSO AVAILALBE IN ALL SINKER MAHOGANY AND OTHER TONEWOOD COMBINATIONS) EACH SIZE 2 HAS THEIR OWN UNIQUE VOICE SUITED TO A VARIETY OF PLAYING STYLES.





# Custom Inlay and Appointments

Many of our clients ask for **Custom Inlays** and over the years we have had a variety of suggestions. From Billy Strings asking for the "Bride of Frankenstein" on his headstock to a longhorn beetle for a client who studied them extensively and a family home with a special maple tree that honored a grandfather. Nature images of all kinds are our specialty too.

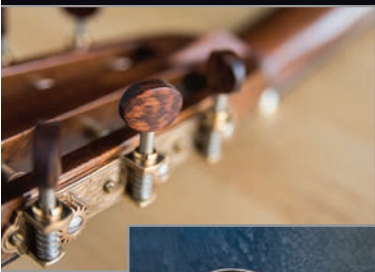
Our guitars are heirlooms to be passed on and adding that special design **gives it meaning for families and individuals.**



## The DETAILS

We offer many **different appointments**, anything is possible down to the finest of details.

- From wood binding made of Brazilian, Koa, Maple or Ebony.
- Different rosettes with abalone or wood.
- Beautiful sunbursts of various shades and the perfect aged toner.
- Torches, both traditional and original, made of pearl or wood.
- Different fretboard makers like the Mystic Snowflakes, 45 style snowflakes or our own Regency markers.
- We also offer a variety of pickguards and tuner knobs.





# Musicians

**Guitar players** over the years have enjoyed the sound, playability and quality of our handcrafted instruments.. Peter Rowan and Charles Sawtelle played a Thompson at The Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas in the 1980's and so began something special...

When Preston started the current company in 2013 he was looking ahead to the future generations of players and was thrilled to get these special guitars in the hands of so many talented pickers. We are happy to have all types of guitar players include a Thompson in their collection.

We thank you all for the support of our shop here in Sisters, Oregon.

## The TALENT



## Preston Thompson Guitars

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541-588-6211

### Exclusive USA Dealers

Area 22 Guitars - NC

Carter Vintage Guitars- TN

Dream Guitars - NC

Drum & Strum - VA

Eddie's Guitars - MO

Fuller's Guitars - TX

Guitars San Diego - CA

Hilltop Music Shop- OR

Martin Music - TN

North American Guitar Company - TN

Sound Pure - NC

Stay Gold Guitars - NM

Sylvan Music - CA

The Acoustic Shoppe - MO

### International Dealers

Blue- G - Japan

Fellowship of Acoustics - Netherlands

Leadmusic - Switzerland

Mak's Guitars - London

New Acoustic Gallery - Germany

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