



COLLECTOR'S SOUL

A PROFESSIONAL JAZZ musician in the U.S. and Europe for nearly 40 years, Jess Rosen is the co-chair of the Atlanta Entertainment Practice at Greenberg Traurig, LLP. As a highly successful entertainment lawyer, Jess represents and advises a broad spectrum of some of the industry's preeminent recording artists, songwriters, and producers, including Kenny Chesney, Sammy Hagar, Meat Loaf, Martina McBride, Missy Elliott, Neon Trees, Brad Paisley, Shinedown, and the Steve Miller Band. His passion for all things Italian takes him to the *bella* country yearly with his wife, Debbie, and daughters, Chandler and McLane.

• **How did you start collecting guitars?** Playing as a professional musician for many years attracted me to fine instruments. My guitar collection includes contributions from a number of my past and present clients,

including Sammy Hagar, the late Waylon Jennings, Marty Stuart, Alan Jackson, B.B. King, and George Jones, to name a few. The collection really jumpstarted when I began making signature guitar deals for some of these artists, many of which were done with Mike Eldred at the Fender Custom Shop.

• **How do guitars fit in with the design aesthetics of your home?**

I like my guitars to be easily accessible. I have several archtops set up in our family's music room. When we built our current home, my wife, Debbie, designed a pool-table room with beautifully encased, lighted niches housing 10 guitars. She wanted as many as possible out of the cases. Not only are they great to play but they are wonderful pieces of art and make for great conversation.

• **What do you look for in a guitar, and what motivates you to purchase it?**

It all comes down to that comfortable feeling and sound that inspires you to want to pick up the guitar and play. Every guitar has its own personality and soul, and if I like the way a guitar sounds and feels, that's when I make a purchase.

• **What was your first major purchase?**

A limited-edition Aria Pro II Robert Conti archtop. Back in 1978, I studied with Bob and he had these beautiful archtops created by Aria. That's how I got hooked on big guitars.

• **What are some of the guitars in your collection?**

I have, among others, a 1958 Epiphone Triumph, a D'Angelico New Yorker, a Fender D'Aquisto prototype, a Gretsch White Falcon and a Jimmie Vaughan Synchronomatic, Fender Marty Stuart and Waylon Jennings custom Telecasters (the Waylon is serial number 007—love that!), a limited-edition Martin D-41G given to me by

George Jones, and a Gibson B.B. King Lucille autographed by B.B.

• **Which of the guitars is your favorite, and why?**

It's a toss-up between the 1958 Triumph and the D'Angelico. Although I really love the wood tone of the Epiphone, you can't beat the overall D'Angelico playing experience. And it was a birthday gift from Debbie.

• **What is your dream purchase?**

Either the elusive 1950 Stromberg Master 400 or a primo Sixties blonde Gibson Byrdland. **GA**

Rosen at his home in Atlanta, with (from left) his B.B. King-autographed Lucille, Gretsch Jimmy Vaughan Synchronomatic, Fender D'Aquisto prototype, D'Angelico New Yorker, Fender Marty Stuart Telecaster, Gretsch White Falcon, Epiphone Triumph, and Fender Waylon Jennings Telecaster