

Diane Ponzio Inspires The Ultimate Jumbo

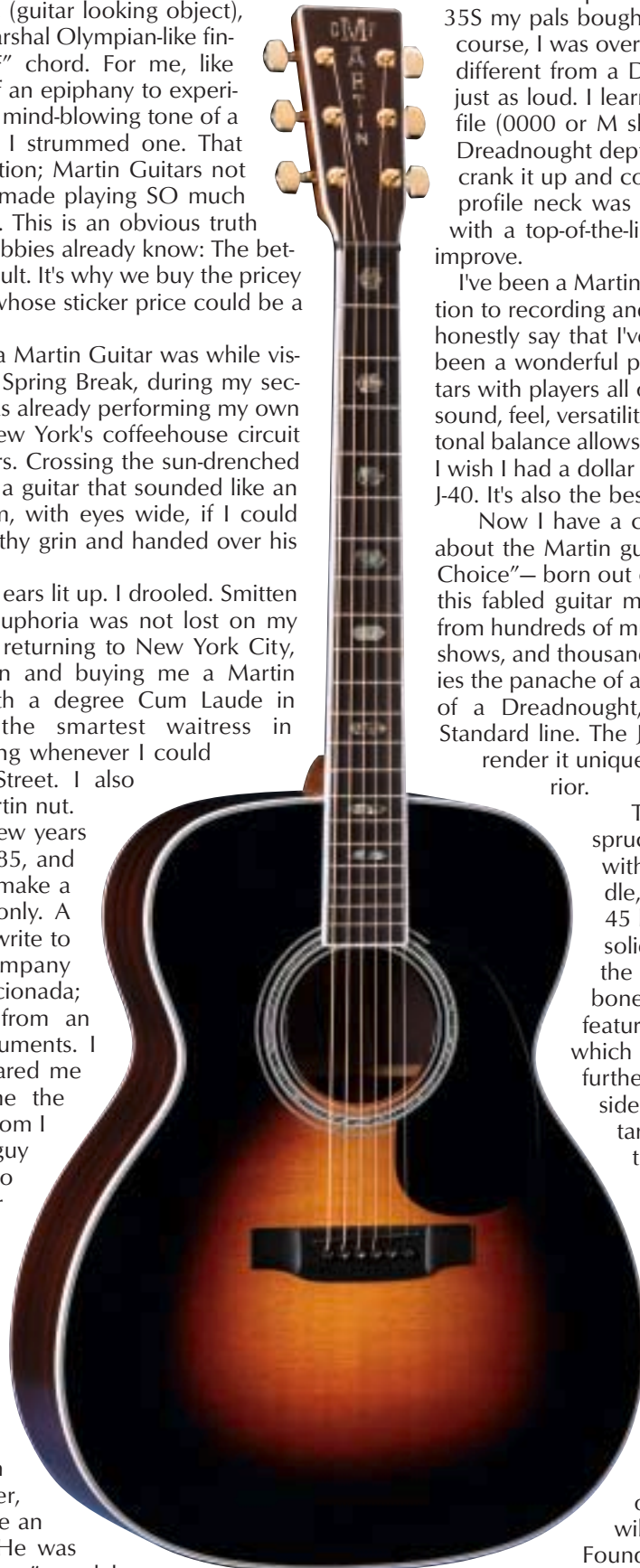
Classic Elegance and Tonal Balance Are Combined With The Jumbo Size To Create
"The Panache Of An OM, The Balance of a 000, and The Engine of a Dreadnought!"

Few people begin playing the guitar on a Martin; most of us learn on a G.L.O. (guitar looking object), and I remember having to marshal Olympian-like finger strength to barre an "F" chord. For me, like many, it was nothing short of an epiphany to experience the butter-like ease and mind-blowing tone of a Martin Guitar the first time I strummed one. That maiden voyage was a revelation; Martin Guitars not only sounded amazing, but made playing SO much easier and more pleasurable. This is an obvious truth that enthusiasts of diverse hobbies already know: The better the tool, the better the result. It's why we buy the pricey golf club, or the sauté pans whose sticker price could be a mortgage payment.

My first encounter with a Martin Guitar was while visiting Berkeley, California, on Spring Break, during my second semester at college. I was already performing my own songs with my G.L.O. on New York's coffeehouse circuit and was enchanted by guitars. Crossing the sun-drenched campus, I saw a guy playing a guitar that sounded like an orchestra. When I asked him, with eyes wide, if I could have a try, he shot me a toothy grin and handed over his D-28. I played an "E" chord.

My mouth fell open. My ears lit up. I drooled. Smitten and bitten. This display of euphoria was not lost on my group of friends who, upon returning to New York City, surprised me by chipping in and buying me a Martin Guitar. After graduating with a degree Cum Laude in Mathematics, I became the smartest waitress in Greenwich Village, performing whenever I could in the clubs on Bleeker Street. I also became a self-confessed Martin nut.

Fast forward through a few years of gigs and burgers... It's 1985, and I've decided that I HAVE to make a living at music, and music only. A dear friend suggested that I write to the Martin Guitar Company because I was such an aficionada; maybe they needed help from an artist to promote their instruments. I called her delusional. She dared me to do it, while handing me the address of C.F. Martin IV, whom I assumed was an old, fat guy who smoked cigars. Partly to shut her up, I wrote the letter and sent a tape of my music and some bio materials. Imagine my shock when I heard from "Chris" Martin, a.k.a. C.F.M. IV, a young, forward-thinking businessman who was enthusiastic about my music and intrigued by the notion of doing Martin clinics with an unknown singer-songwriter, one who just happened to be an avowed Martin Guitar fan. He was also keen to promote a "new" model: the J-40.



I was a skeptic at first. How could I abandon the beloved D-35S my pals bought me? But, I tried the "new" Martin. And of course, I was overwhelmed by (naturally) the sound! It was so different from a Dreadnought – not as bassy or boomy, but just as loud. I learned that because it had a tight-waisted profile (0000 or M shape) it was tonally more balanced, but its Dreadnought depth and scalloped braces insured that I could crank it up and compete with Dreadnought volume. The low-profile neck was immediately comfortable and, like a golfer with a top-of-the-line driver, I saw (heard!) my "game" vastly improve.

I've been a Martin Guitar clinician for seventeen years, in addition to recording and running a full concert schedule, and I can honestly say that I've never met a Martin guitar I didn't like. It's been a wonderful privilege to share my passion for Martin guitars with players all over the world. But I've always preferred the sound, feel, versatility, and look of a J-40. Its classic elegance and tonal balance allows players of any genre to sound far above par. I wish I had a dollar for everyone who has fallen in love with my J-40. It's also the best songwriting tool I've ever had.

Now I have a chance to share with you what I've learned about the Martin guitar. Consider this JDP model a "Clinician's Choice"—born out of my nearly two decades as an insider with this fabled guitar maker, imbued with the experience gleaned from hundreds of music stores all over the world, scores of trade shows, and thousands of concert appearances. The J-40 embodies the panache of an OM, the balance of a 000, and the engine of a Dreadnought, making it the unheralded gem of the Standard line. The JDP will incorporate appointments that will render it uniquely attractive, collectible, and sonically superior.

The first thing you'll notice is the sunburst spruce top, whose artful beauty is accentuated with a black Corian® nut and black Micarta® saddle, highlighting the abalone rosette, and style 45 headstock.

The three-piece, solid Indian rosewood back, being offered for the first time on a jumbo body, sports herringbone backstrips between the wedges. The top features 1/4" forward-shifted, scalloped braces, which will unequivocally boost volume and tone, further colored by the solid Indian rosewood sides. You'll notice as you fret this full-gloss guitar in first position that there is no volute on the neck, insuring comfortable play.

In these times, playing an acoustic guitar is one of the few things that continues to make sense to me. Whether you strum, pick, bend, play lead, rhythm, or are just content to keep drooling, you deserve a guitar this good.

Orders for the JDP will be accepted by Martin dealers and distributors until April 16, 2003. After the ordering period closes, the size of the edition and the names of participating dealers will be posted on the Martin Web site. A portion of the proceeds from sales of this instrument will benefit the NY Chapter of The Alzheimer's Foundation. ❖

Diane Ponzio is working on her sixth CD. Please visit her at www.dianeponzio.com for tour and CD information.

Sounding Board Article

Sounding Board Extras



As a longstanding Martin clinician, Diane Ponzio shares her vision of what an optimum performance guitar can be. The Jumbo JDP is a clinician's choice in the truest sense of the word, blending Diane's preferred tonal and visual attributes.



You'd be hard pressed to find a musician that knows Martin guitars inside and out the way that singer, songwriter, guitarist, and longtime Martin clinician **Diane Ponzio** does. She has drawn from her knowledge and experience to create the **JDP** Signature Edition, a sensible and stylish rosewood Jumbo perfect for professional performance, be it instrumental or vocal accompaniment. ❖