

Our Families 29 years of Successful Business in Ft.Lauderdale...

The Guitar Broker was incorporated in June 1989 from an idea between my wife of 36 years, Patti & myself, Craig Brody. Our goal was to take our hobby of collecting vintage guitars, basses & amplifiers & bring them to collectors Worldwide at fair prices.

I started my working career selling new cars for Automobile dealerships in South Florida in August of 1979. I was only 20 years old & made great money selling foreign cars during the gas crisis. After 10 years I was tired of working for other people that tried to control our income. We followed our dreams & took control of our own destiny. This was the start of our financial freedom.

Our 1st location was a 900 ft. shop on Davie Blvd. in Ft.Lauderdale. We started with our life savings & purchased 70 instruments & hung them on the walls. Before you knew it we started selling out our inventory & needed to buy more & more to replenish our shop.

By 1994 we moved to an upscale 3000 ft. shop in the International Building across from the Galleria Mall on Sunrise Blvd. We got our 1st website www.guitarbroker.com & jumped on the internet band wagon. We employed as many as 7 people at that time to service our cliental the best way we knew how to. We had added a fabulous Vintage Guitar Museum in our shop that was all behind glass & it became a worldwide phenomenon as people from all over the globe came to visit & view things they had only seen in books & magazines. We created a reputation amongst the most

avid collectors & have become one of the top 10 Vintage Guitar Dealers in the World. At that time we averaged between \$1M. - \$1.5M in yearly sales & truly enjoyed what we did.

As the Retail Market changed directions & online sales soared, we chose to down size our retail guitar business in 2002 & moved our shop into a beautiful warehouse we purchased in Weston by our home. At that time Patti & I pursued my 2nd hobby, collecting European Sports Cars & we opened our 2nd business, C.Brody Investment Motorcars. We acquired our Car Dealer License & set up our new shop to house 7-10 unique Collector Cars & about 200 vintage guitars, basses & amps all in one location.

Working by appt. & from our home, Patti & I raised our kids to be very successful & independent. Our 33 year old Daughter, Jennifer is an artist & an author getting her 1st book purchased by Random House this year. She lives in Dunedin Florida with her Husband Camillo. Our 27 year old Son, Dustin, has worked alongside us since he was 16. He has a wonderful wife, Ashley & we now have 2 beautiful Grandsons as Dustin has become a great Father & Partner in our businesses.

That brings us to April 2015 as we have purchased this old 10K ft. warehouse in Progresso Village at 816 NW 6th Ave. We wanted to make an investment for our 2 businesses & our Son's future & felt this neighborhood had quite a potential to turn around in the near future. We bought the building in rather bad condition & did not realize just how dilapidated it was from the outside. Knowing well it needed a new roof...we had no idea it needed to be modernized

beyond our wildest imaginations. Jumping in with all of our cash, we have replaced over \$300K. in renovating this empty shell & turned it into a viable building worth putting all of our assets into it for our future. We moved in with all of our Cars & guitars this past March.

Some of these improvement's we have done include the following:

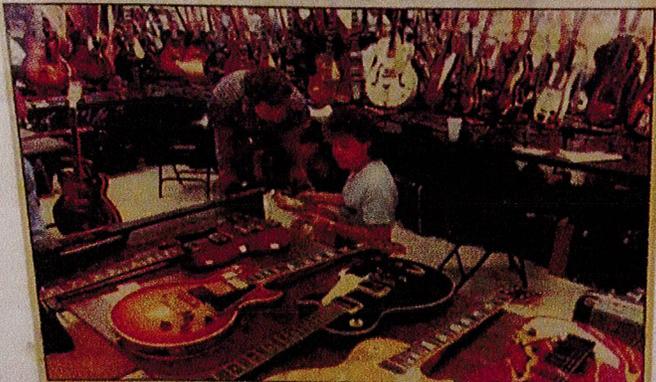
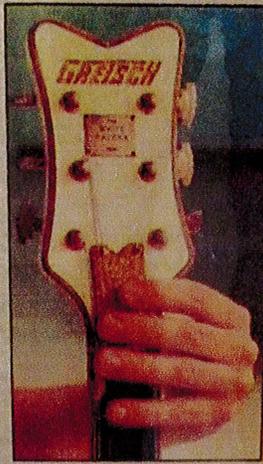
- Enlarging its 4 entry doorways & installed 4 larger, more modern safety spec fire doors.
- We removed & replaced all of the electric lines in the building.
- We have improved the complete structure's strength inside & out with major cement block reconstruction.
- We completely renovated its cement exterior having a massive stucco process filling 50 years of age.
- We then refinished it into a cool New York style "Red Brick" building that's already the talk of the City.
- We have added a state of the art security system having full camera access in 100% of its interior & exterior.
- We installed a complete new roof w/a 30 year warranty.

We are now ready to improve its interior cosmetics, install all Hurricane proof windows & doors, new modern lighting & fully air condition the whole structure to offer a modern showroom for high end cliental with the help of the CRA for our families future in Progresso Village. We also have 6000 ft. of space to rent out to some new upscale retail businesses to add to Progresso Village's new vive & reputation. We are honored to be one of the 1st in the area to make our future lives matter in this great City.

Sun-Sentinel

Sunday, May 20, 1990

HOT LICKS & COOL CASH



Craig Brody, right, owner of The Guitar Broker in Fort Lauderdale, inspects Rob Sylvester's guitar.

Investors fret over markets, tune into vintage guitars.

By LANE PELLEY
Plenty of investors take note that guitar is one of the hottest markets in the world. It may even be a hedge against inflation. A 1958 Les Paul or Fender Telecaster built in the 1950s, for less than \$200, could be worth as much as \$10,000. A 50 Les Paul — named after the famous guitarist — may bring more than \$200,000, some dealers say.

The '59 Fender-top Les Paul is what everyone dreams of having," said Michael Wofford, a Fort Lauderdale guitar collector who owns a Fender-top Les Paul.

Dealers have a lot to do with the boom in vintage guitars, which began about five years ago. Guitar players who hunted more than in the 1980s began getting sentimental about their instruments, buying instruments made famous by their favorite musicians.

add to the sentiment a dose of economic reality.

Increasingly, about interest rate volatility in the stock market and the

investor's rise against the dollar in recent years has raised the value of all kinds of collectibles, guitars and otherwise, is correct.

Moreover, he said the first \$10 million Ferrari — probably an early 1960s GTO — is only a few stations away. And the first \$100 million gold watch, a Japanese buyer paid \$1.1 million for a Van Gogh.

For guitars, Japanese and European collectors also have spurred much of the jump in prices, though the top-end Van Gogh and Ferraris. Last month, a European buyer paid \$250,000 for the Strat played by rock 'n' roll wizard Jimi Hendrix at Woodstock.

George Girvin, a Nashville instrument dealer and one of the nation's best out of the guitar market, knows what he's talking. "I've seen Japanese and European buyers out of the guitar market, and they're not going to stop," Girvin said.

For guitarists, however, some buyers want to sell to Japanese or European buyers, even though their in-

vestors often will pay a premium price.

"I just don't negotiate with the Japanese and the Europeans. Not very often," said Craig Brody, who owns The Guitar Broker, a vintage guitar shop in Fort Lauderdale.

Brody said a Japanese buyer new to Fort Lauderdale recently to look at Brody's collection of about 100 guitars at his store on Lytle Boulevard. One instrument that caught the buyer's eye was a 1960 Gretsch White Falcon, a guitar made popular by musicians such as Roy Clark, Stephen Stills and Neil Young.

Brody initially wanted \$1,000 to \$1,500 for the Gretsch. Now, after the look-see from the Japanese buyer and another from a European buyer, Brody is asking \$12,000.

Guitar collecting began in the late 1970s, after the folk boom when acoustic instruments were in vogue. Then came rock 'n' roll with the electric market taking off in 1984, Girvin said.

The most expensive guitars are celebrity instruments such as the Les Paul or one of Eric Clapton's Gibson Les Pauls. Next month, he'll auction off Buddy Holly's Strat, which is expected to

bring more than \$50,000. The celebrity ownership makes the instrument one of a kind and boosts the price 10 times or more beyond what it would bring strictly as a vintage instrument.

However, rarity, or one-of-a-kindness, is not what transforms a guitar from being simply old into a vintage instrument.

"Rarity is not a factor. A hemophiliac is rare, but I wouldn't want to be one," Gruhn said.

Guitar collectors are looking for certain manufacturers known for making high-quality instruments, and for certain models. Gibson and Fender dominate the market, though guitars made by Gretsch, Rickenbacker, Martin and Epiphone also carry top prices.

Collectors also place the highest values on certain models, and not necessarily the top-of-the-line instruments. The Strat was not Fender's top-of-the-line model in the 1950s; the Jazzmaster and other models cost more.

By comparison, rarity is crucial in determining the value of coins, stamps and vintage cars. A '59 Cadillac Eldorado convertible in good condition is worth more than \$100,000 these days because the car is no longer in production and — most importantly — because it has the famous LaSalle design.

Yet the most expensive vintage guitars still are in production, with the same design and sometimes similar machinery.

Reissues of the '50s Strats now sell for about \$800, or less. New Les Pauls cost much more — about \$3,500 — but come in limited-top versions and look a lot like the '59 model that is worth \$20,000 now.

Another difference between guitars and cars is how looks affect their value. A beat-up old Cadillac needs to be restored to bring big bucks; but restoring a guitar usually hurts its resale value. Guitar collectors want the real thing with only original equipment.

A mint-condition instrument will always bring top dollar, but doing any serious work on it — such as refinishing or replacing original equipment — usually brings the price down.

A refinished guitar is valuable, whereas a restored car usually helps the value," Wofford said.

Many pickers play only old instruments. Les Paul players want the sound of the humbucking pickups — the metal bars under the strings that serve as microphones for the instrument. Humbucking pickups originated with the guitar in 1932, but they still are made and easy to buy.

Peter Shigley, 38, who plays guitar in a band — the Fishbones Fleetwoods — and also collects guitars, said he is partial to old Les Pauls and Martin guitars.

"All I play is old guitars," said Shigley, who lives in Parkland. "They're a lot warmer sounding, the older ones."

Wofford agrees, but he says new Les Pauls and Japanese machines can be customized to sound as good or better than the 1950s models.

Wofford said the prices for old electric bear no relation to their playability.

"I've had kids to buy a new Les Paul and put old pickups on it, which cost about \$200," Wofford said. "That's the whole guitar story."

But the value of some old instruments and even is comparable. Some guitars are even better values.

For example, a '59 Fender Telecaster convertible in excellent condition sells for about \$20,000

now, which is what a '59 Les Paul in comparable condition should bring. The T-Bird sold new for between \$2,800 and \$3,600. The Les Paul sold new for between \$300 and \$400. The Les Paul yielded more bang for the buck.

Some guitar collectors say they buy the instruments just to play them, not for their investment value.

Richard J. DeSanto, an Oakland Park attorney who has about 40 guitars, said he started collecting because he plays in a weekend rock 'n' roll band — The Mullet Men. DeSanto collects old Les Pauls, Stratocasters, Fender Telecasters and Gretsches because those were the instruments played by his favorite guitarists.

"I don't sell them, I just collect them and keep them."

Why the Les Paul and Strat have become some of the most valuable guitars is no mystery. His favorite players all mastered music's hottest licks on their particular instruments. Hendrix and Eric Clapton made the Strat famous. Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin and Dickie Betts of the Allman Brothers play Les Pauls.

"People relate to bands, like the '60s bands," Brody said. "Instruments that were electric were much more popular than acoustics back then."

Not that acoustics are worthless. Probably the most expensive vintage guitar now is a 1930s Martin D-45, worth maybe \$40,000 in excellent condition. Old Gibson arch-tops also bring thousands. Art Bickel, a Fort Lauderdale collector, said he just bought a Gibson arch-top, a 1972 Super 400.

"A couple of years ago you couldn't give away arch-tops," Bickel said. "Now if you can get one for less than \$3,000, you're doing pretty good."

Choose the days when you could walk into a pawnshop in a small town and find a bargain hanging on the rack. Wofford said most pawnshop owners know guitar values better than the players who rock the instruments.

Five or 10 years ago you could walk into a pawnshop and deal," Wofford said. "Nowadays, you go in and they want you to pay retail."

News Photo © 1990-1212



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Craig Brody peeks out from behind a row of vintage guitars at his shop The Guitar Broker in Davie.

Staff photo by URSULA E. SEEMANN

6-STRING SPECIALIST



Craig Brody sits on a 1964 Fender Stratocaster behind his 1993 Nissan SC Mustang.

By DIANORA ADAMS
Staff writer

DAVIE — In Craig Brody's rock 'n' roll heart, the Fall Four will forever live.

In fact, in Brody's of the Beatles, their sound and their instruments, that his vintage guitar store boasts an enclosed shrine to Beatlemania.

There is the mop-top wig, the concert t-shirt from 1968, the plastic skulls of John, Paul, George and Ringo in their trademark, 1967 suits. Don't forget the Ludwig drum set, the same kind used

by Ringo, with a bass drum head signed by Ringo and his post-Beatle touring bandmates.

And, of course, there are the guitars. Not the ones the Beatles really played. Not the same makes, the 1961 Hofner bass like Paul plucked, a 1962 Gretsch Country Gentleman similar to Gretsch models strummed by George.

They help give Brody's store, The Guitar Broker, its distinctive feel. It is part business, part history lesson. Part guitar shop, part guitar museum.

"Anything the Beatles touched, anything

A rock guitar collector turns his passion into a unique business.

[Eric] Clapton touched, everybody wants to get the same thing their heroes had," Brody said. "And everybody wants something that's not around anymore."

Brody specializes in vintage guitars — those more than 20 years old. He collected and sold them in Fort Lauderdale for nine years, then moved to a Davie shopping center in August to tap into the growing western Broward County population.

Tuesday, the walls of his 2,000-square-foot store are lined with more than 300 guitars, spanning the A.B.'s of rock hardware: Fender Gibson, Martin, Rickenbacker.

Among the relics: a 1936 acoustic Gibson L-1 Century of Progress and a 1932 Martin D-18 Special. Some have famous ties: a custom-made Shobud acoustic with the name Ray on it, a guitar allegedly owned by Roy Clark, sold to Brody by one of Clark's bar buddies and worth \$4,000 to \$5,000.

Some guitars can be purchased for as low as \$300 to \$400. Then there are those for big spenders: Brody recently

sold a Fender "Mary Kay" Stratocaster with blond finish, in mint condition, for \$60,000.

Brody keeps his collection in two enclosed sections of his store at 8329 State Road 94. The one in the back features Fender guitars and amplifi-

ers. The one in the middle includes Beatles items, Vox amps, several Rickenbackers and a 1964 Gibson Every Brothers acoustic that Brody had signed by the brothers at a concert. The Every gem, Brody figures, is worth about \$10,000.

"It's playable art," said Brody, 32, who sports long, curly hair and a guitar-shaped earring.

Most of the pieces in his collection are not for sale. They mostly feed his fascination.

"The real fun is the find, the chase and the acquire," he said.

Dealing in vintage guitars is good business, said Ward Meeker, editor of *Vintage Guitar* magazine in Blomark, N.D. He said the market soared during the 1980s, when Baby Boomers decided to buy the same kind of guitars their rock idols played.

"Because they had the money to play with, the market boomed," said Meeker, adding that the industry leveled off but remains strong.

Brody's love of guitars began at age 13 on Long Island, when he learned to play bass and jammed with his brother. At 17, his girlfriend's mother loaned \$250 to Brody for an instrument, money he spent on a Gibson bass.

"Ever since then, I've been hooked," said Brody, whose family

moved to Miami when he was 18. Brody didn't chase the dream of becoming a rock star. Instead, he decided on a steady income selling his other love, cars.

In 1968, he started buying and selling guitars on the side. He found guitars through magazine ads, pawn shops and guitar stores. By spring the following year, he got frustrated with the car business and quit, deciding to make a living of his guitar hobby.

In June 1969, he pulled out his collection of about 70 guitars and opened The Guitar Broker.

Brody didn't abandon his love of automobiles. He once swapped a Porsche and \$20,000 worth of guitars for a red 1970 Lamborghini Miura. Today his pride and joy is a black 1982 Saturn SC Mustang convertible, which has the license tag GITTENAN.

"I used to sell cars to buy guitars. Now I sell guitars to buy cars," said Brody, who lives in Weston with wife, Pam, and children Jennifer, 14, and Dominic, 9.

Brody says he sells 75 to 100 guitars a month through his shop and mail-order business. He still looks for good buys at trade shows and even does business with some celebrities.

Brody said a studio for Clapton bought a 1963 Gibson jazz guitar from him. Now an autographed photo of Clapton with the words "great guitar" jumps on one of his walls.

He said he sold guitars to members of B.B.K.M. and U2. He sold a 1967 Fender Precision bass to R.E.M.'s Mike Mills, and saw Mills playing it in MTV videos and on *Saturday Night Live*.

"He's jamming around on stage," Brody said, "playing my bass, and I'm sitting. Yeah."

PHOTO BY URSULA E. SEEMANN