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"Did we really fly 3,500 miles and play out of tune on American TV?"

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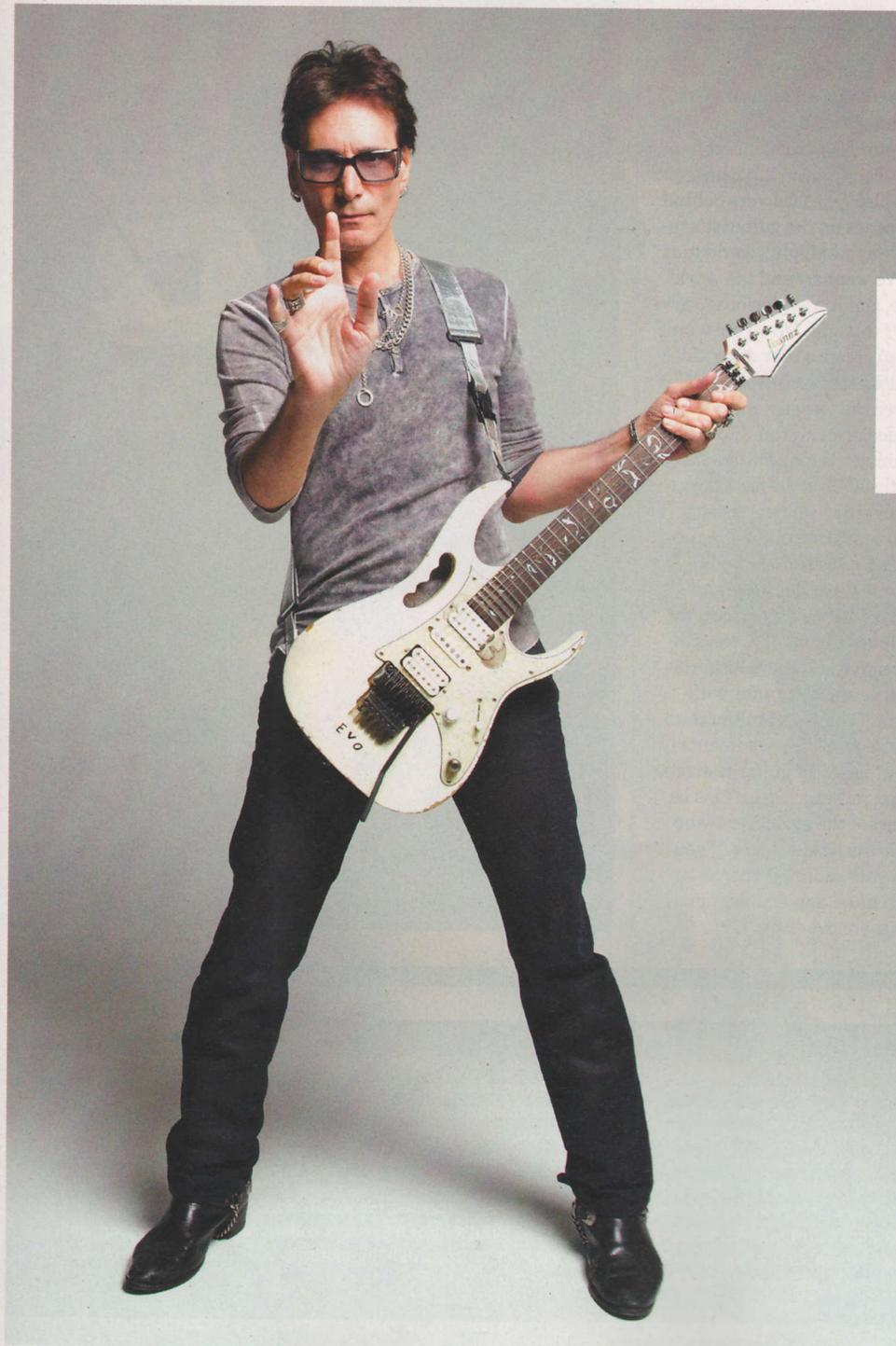
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Hot for Teacher

STEVE VAI'S NEW GUITAR CAMP EXPERIENCE AND DVD OFFER UP-CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH A ROCK GUITAR ICON.

by Alan di Perna

▶ **"THROUGHOUT MY** whole life, I've always enjoyed teaching—sharing the things that I've learned and experiences I've had," says Steve Vai.

The legendary guitar virtuoso will be doing just that for four straight days, August 2–6, at Vai Academy 2015: All About the Guitar, to be held at the Arrabelle resort hotel in Vail, Colorado. A live-in guitar camp experience presented by Dreamcatcher Events, the Academy will offer happy campers a chance to study, hang and even jam with Steve Vai and co-teachers Eric Johnson and Sonny Landreth.

"I always felt that one day I would do something like this," Vai adds. "Then this came along and everything fell into place more beautifully and naturally than I ever could have expected."

This year's camp will be the second annual Vai Academy. As he did the first time around, Steve has selected an overriding theme for the event. This year, he says, "it's the guitar itself. How it's built, why it sounds the way it does, and how you can alter elements of the instrument to find the sound that is intrinsic to you." →

Vai has convened a panel of renowned experts to lead workshops on the intricacies of the electric guitar. Larry DiMarzio will lead a class on pickups, Sterling Ball will elucidate the finer points of guitar strings and Ibanez guitar honchos will be on hand to collaborate with Vai on building a custom guitar from scratch. Other classes will address topics including tone woods, guitar electronics and the proper way to set up a guitar, adjusting intonation, string height and other crucial parameters.

And of course there will be classes in playing technique led by Vai, Johnson and Landreth—an opportunity to learn the mysteries of fretboard mastery from some of the masters themselves. But even more exciting is the fact that every single camper will have an opportunity to get up onstage to jam with Vai and his band.

“Everybody gets to jam, and everybody’s abilities are accepted,” Vai confirms. “Nobody is dismissed. I’ve had people up there who can hardly play a note. But all they had to do was play one note and we worked around that. It gave them a great sense of confidence, enjoyment and independence. And occasionally you get someone who comes up and I’m like, ‘Whoa!’ They’re playing some serious shit. The jams are one of my favorite parts of the whole thing.”

And for those who can’t make it to this year’s camp, Vai’s new DVD *Stillness in Motion—Vai*

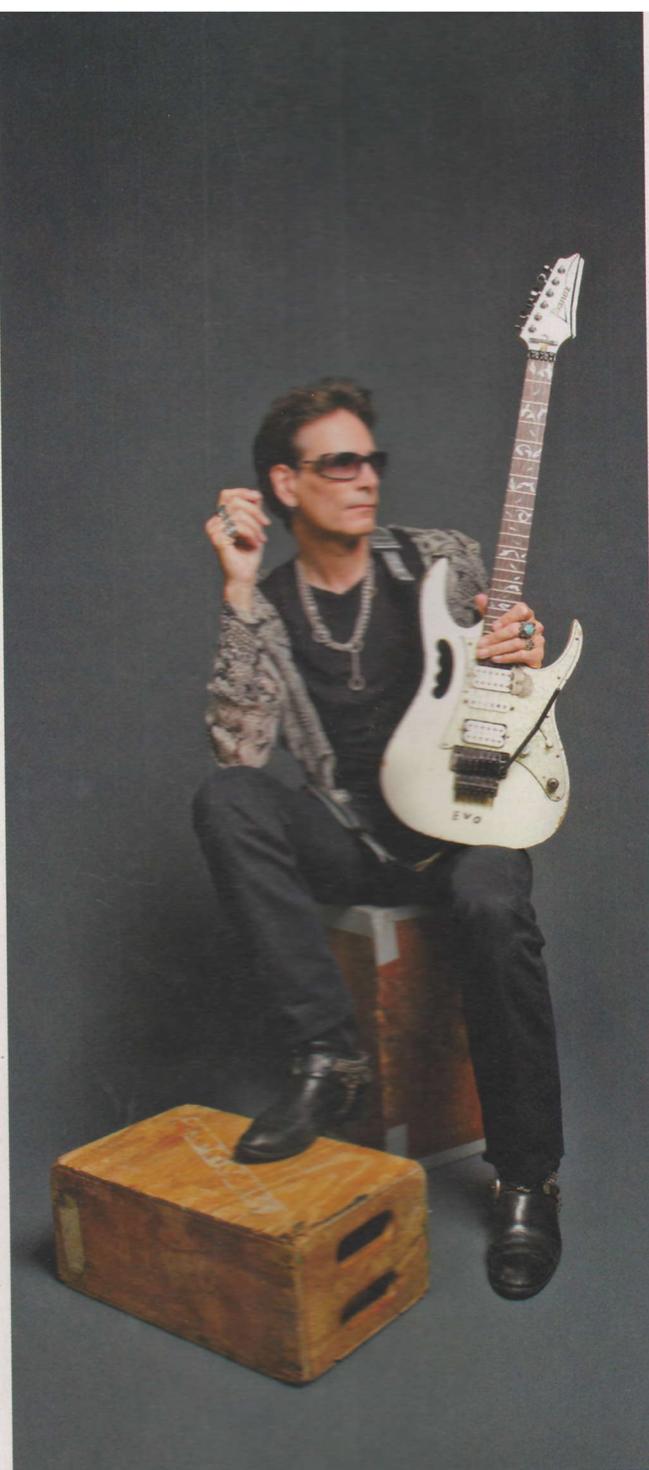
“Everybody gets to jam, and everybody’s abilities are accepted.”

—STEVE VAI

Live in L.A. offers an up-close and personal encounter with the guitarist and his band. Along with stunning live concert footage culled from an L.A. show, the DVD also takes viewers behind the scenes on the guitarist’s recent “Story of Light” world tour.

“We went around the world twice, and it was glorious,” says Vai. “I thought, How cool would it be to create a tour diary video, with excerpts from every city that we were in—onstage and offstage? It ended up being three hours and 40 minutes. It took me five or six months of 15- to 18-hour days to put together. But watching it, I feel like it’s one of the greatest things I’ve ever done.”

Some three decades into his groundbreaking career, Vai continues to find new ways to be creative and share his love of music and the guitar with others. “There’s a proliferation of these music environments today,” he says; “guitar festivals, camps, master classes. This is all part of the evolution of the whole music spectrum. If you keep your radar up, there’s so much more opportunity now than there ever was.”



IN BRIEF



Found in Far Away Places, the forthcoming album from Pennsylvania metalcore act **August Burns Red**, is due out on June 30 via Fearless Records...**Dweezil Zappa** plans to issue his first new album in 10 years in May. The record, which was entirely crowd-funded, will feature all original music, including “Dragon Master,” the only song Dweezil ever co-wrote with his father, the late Frank Zappa...**Between the Buried and Me** will have a new album out on July 10. *Coma Ecliptic* will be the North Carolina prog-rockers’ seventh studio album...**Warren Haynes’** latest solo album, *Ashes and Dust*—only the third album in his long career to be released under his own name—is scheduled for a July 10 release. For the recording, Haynes brought in New Jersey-based Americana band Railroad Earth as collaborators...**Mark Tremonti’s** latest album, *Cauterize*, is due out June 9 via Fret 12 Records. The album is the follow-up to 2012’s *All I Was*, and features Wolfgang Van Halen on bass.