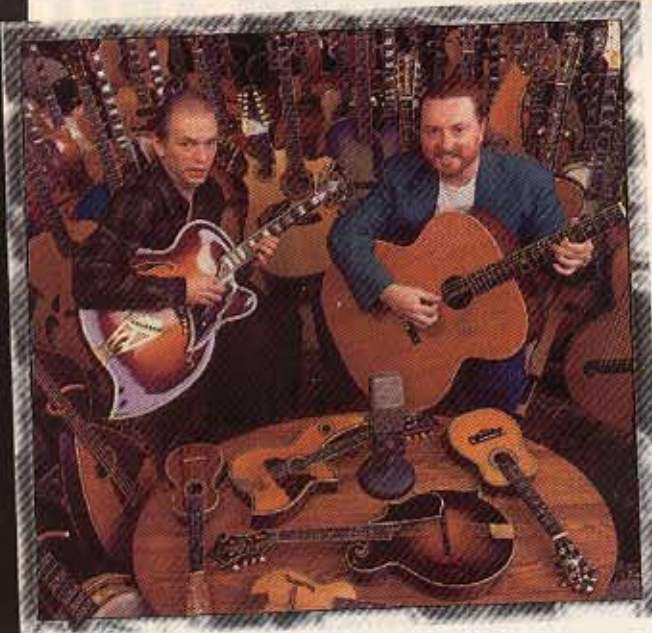


Steve Howe & Martin Taylor

THE MAGNIFICENT 700



by HP Newquist

In the back country of Pennsylvania, so far from urban life that the locals are Amish who ride in horse-drawn wagons, guitarists Steve Howe and Martin Taylor are recording an album with some of the world's most valuable guitars. They toil in a beautiful studio secretly housed in an old, nondescript farm building, a structure which sits inconspicuously alongside a railroad yard. Howe, who has just finished participating in a Yes reunion, and Taylor, a jazz guitarist known for his work with Stephan Grappelli, are surrounded on this particular afternoon by dozens of vintage instruments from The Chinery Collection. Many of these instruments, some of which date back to the turn of the century, have never been recorded before.

Howe was asked by Scott Chinery, who owns the most extensive and elaborate collection of vintage guitars anywhere, to oversee the recording of these instruments. Howe, in turn, chose Martin Taylor to perform most of the pieces for the record, which includes a range of tunes from pop standards and originals to jazz pieces. "There's a fair sprinkling of everything in there," claims Howe.

"It's really been a question of finding the right guitar for the right song," says Taylor.

"We've gone through lists of songs and matched them with lists of guitars, but that didn't always work. More often, you pick up a guitar and a song suggests itself, or it tells you directly 'Play this on me!'"

Chinery has wanted to do something more with his collection than just dedicate a wing of his house to it. (That

same house also contains the original Batmobile from the old *Batman* TV series.) "These are such beautiful instruments, and I thought they should be heard and not just looked at," he says. The 35-year-old Chinery, who made what can be modestly termed a fortune as the founder of Cybergeneics nutrition supplements, can certainly indulge himself in almost any way he wants—which extends to working with Howe. The two initially crossed paths via their love of guitar collecting. (Howe's own collection can be seen in *The Steve Howe Guitar Collection*, Miller Freeman Books.) "When I decided to have these guitars recorded, I chose Steve, because when I was a kid he was my favorite guitarist—the guy I had posters of on my wall. More than anyone else, his playing gave me an appreciation of many different styles of music."

According to Howe, "When Scott approached me, I felt I wanted to produce it, and have Martin play, with me adding a few bits here and there. Martin's a friend of mine, and we had worked together on a record called *Artistry*. When Scott heard *Artistry*, he understood why Martin was the right person for the record. Plus, it presented Martin and me with a perfect opportunity to work together again."

Dealing with Chinery's collection, however, was not something Howe took lightly. "We started with nearly 700 guitars, so it was quite a task," Howe admits. "Just keeping them in tune and deciding on string gauges was a big job. We narrowed it down to about 50, which we put on a truck and brought out here. Ultimately, some of the guitars were chosen because they worked well with each other."

Taylor has a new record out, *Portraits* (Honest/Linn), which features several duets with Chet Atkins, while Howe has just released *Homebrew* (Herald), a collection of unreleased and demo versions of his work with Yes, GTR, ABWH (Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman & Howe), and from his solo recordings. A new live Yes album, featuring the classic *Tales From Topographic Oceans* lineup, is due this fall. Howe is also working on a number of other projects, ranging from guest performances to partnerships. How does he manage to keep from overextending himself? "My life is actually very uncomplicated," he laughs. "Except for those times when I get back together with Yes."

Several weeks after the Howe/Taylor session is over and the record is put to bed, Scott Chinery holds a party at his New Jersey home to unveil yet another new addition to his collection, a series of 25 "blue guitars" hand-crafted by the world's foremost luthiers. Howe is there playing on the living room sofa, as is Scotty Moore (of Elvis fame), Tal Farlow, G.E. Smith, Arlen Roth, and a handful of other guitar luminaries. Outside by the pool, Norman Blake has just finished a solo acoustic set and Johnny Winter is cranking out some searing blues with his three-piece band. It is all a long way from Pennsylvania Dutch country, but the guitars sound every bit as sweet. ☐

Q During the '70s, Emerson, Lake & Palmer were the young gods of progressive rock. Cocksure and brimming with musical prowess, the trio released prog-rock staples like *Tarkus*, *Trilogy*, and *Brain Salad Surgery*. **& A** Not surprisingly, the individual members' egos fractured the band over the years. Keith Emerson's hand problems with repetitive-stress injury added to the difficulties. Today, however,

Greg Lake

by Pete Proven

Welcome back, my friends

ELP is back with a vengeance, reissuing their complete catalog on Rhino and touring all summer. Guitar sat down with Greg Lake to talk about the band's history and the groundbreaking, yet critically reviled, music that made them one of the most popular art-rockers ever.

Is the band going on the road as a three-piece?
I think so. What we'd like to do is go back to how we were originally, which is really without a lot of equipment and theatrics, and no symphony.