

# Guitar Makers Show Off Their Unorthodox Wares

## Eight Amazing Axes

by Gary Graffman

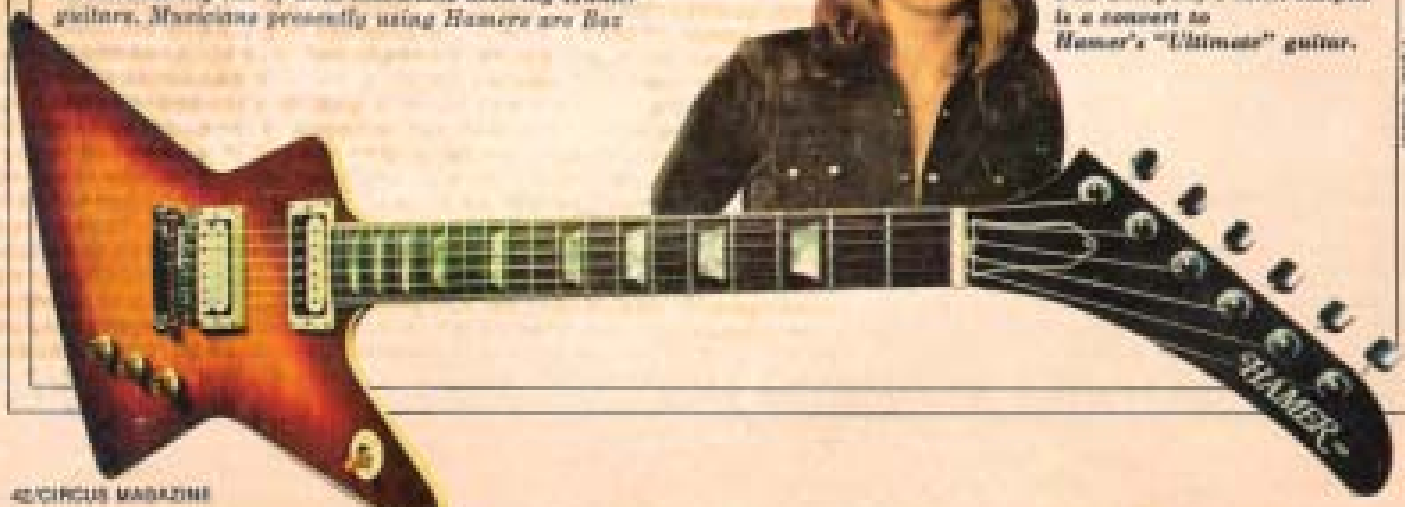
The individual personality of a guitar is important to its owner. It should come as no surprise to learn that guitars, as with automobiles and clothes, are often customized. In addition to customizing for particular individuals, many companies are currently designing unusual "standard" models. The guitars on the following pages feature some interesting examples of both—synthesizer guitars, guitars fashioned from lush woods with handcarved inlay, guitars with built-in filters, and recreations of classic Fifties models—in an entourage of astonishing axes.

**2** There is usually no problem identifying the Hamer guitar on stage due to its "shark fin" style body, actually a modified version of the legendary Gibson Explorer. Other than the shape, the uniqueness of this guitar lies in the attention each guitar receives and the applied philosophy behind the company. States Paul Hamer, "the intention has always been to construct the finest possible instrument regardless of time or cost involved. We refuse to cut corners in order to cater to the demand." Each Hamer guitar is handcrafted, a job requiring two months work. The result is that only eight guitars a month are produced and there is presently a five month waiting list of avid musicians desiring Hamer guitars. Musicians presently using Hamers are Bar

Furrell, Mick Ralphs, Al Cooper and Jan Akkerman. Covered with a Les Paul type finish is a top piece, book-matched maple top over a mahogany body. The special pickups are DiMarzio recreations of the late Fifties Gibson Humbuckers.

### HAMER CUSTOM

Bad Company's Mick Ralphs is a convert to Hamer's "Ultimate" guitar.



Eichi Sayan's guitar was too hot for Kiss.

### CRESCENT KISS CUSTOM

**1** When Paul Stanley of Kiss asked Charles LaBue of Alex Guitar Lab in New York for a crescent shaped guitar, he had no idea the shape was a symbol of evil according to his girlfriend's religious beliefs. Not one to court evil spirits, Stanley immediately sold the outrageous guitar to Japanese musician Eichi Sayan, who does electronic work at Alex's. Eichi put his technical know-how to work and modified the guitar's electronics even further. The half-moon axe now contains a compressor for incredible string sustain, a light indicator which signals when the compressor is operating, three pickups—bass, treble and midrange—which Eichi can use and match to duplicate any guitar sound, and then some. The guitar is constructed of a mahogany body and has a small vanity mirror next to the pick guard. The Japanese musician, who has cut four LP's in Japan, currently plays his crescent guitar around the New York club scene with his group, Moon.

Maryn Vroman

Paul Hamer