

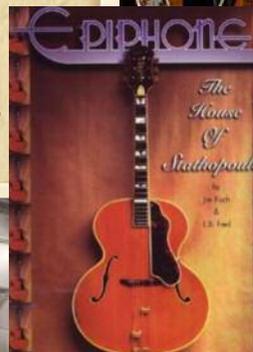
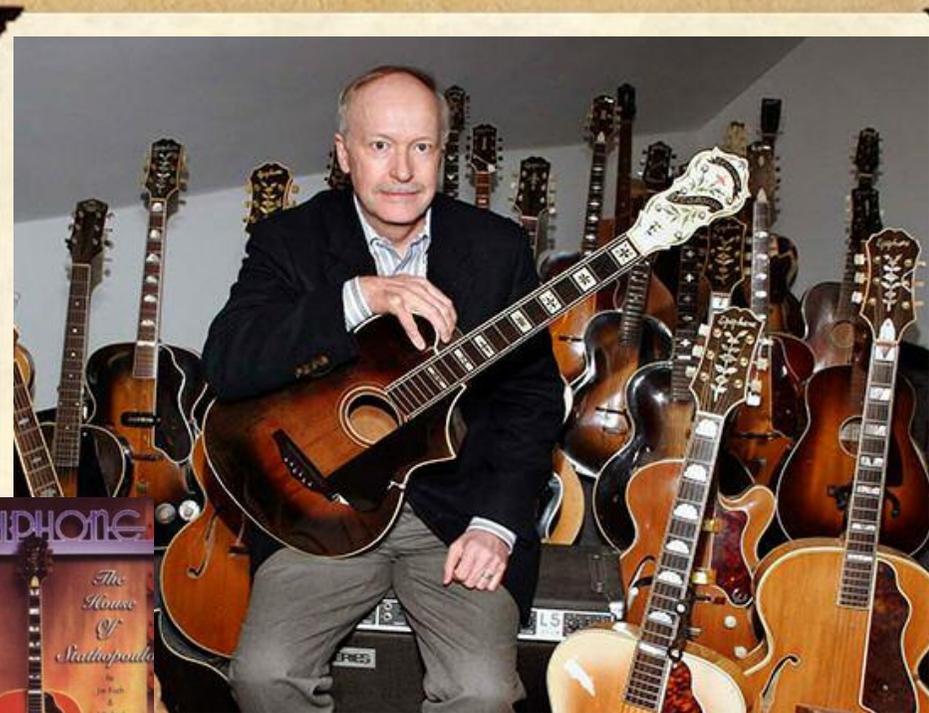
ΕΠΙΡΗΘΟΝΕ

The House of Stathopoulos

When Anastasios Stathopoulos moved his family (including his oldest son Epaminodas nicknamed "Epi") to New York City from the Turkish coastal town of Smyrna in the early 1900s hoping for a better life and a chance to continue his modest instrument business, Anastasios certainly would never have imagined the Stathopoulos family name would live on into the 21st century.

Today, the modern Epiphone instrument company is based in Nashville, Tennessee and its state of the art headquarters serves as the hub for a vast network of distributors, artists, designers, retailers, and factories. At the center of this modern hub is the Epiphone Historic Collection, an ever-growing ensemble of the history of Epiphone instruments from the 1900s through 1957 when Epiphone was purchased by Gibson and moved from the east coast to Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Visitors to Epiphone's home in Nashville will see evidence of the company's history on display everywhere—in the lobby, in meeting rooms, but especially Epiphone's new showroom where most of the Historic Collection sits right along side an example of every modern Epiphone in production. The Historic Collection serves as an everyday reminder of Epiphone's long history as both an innovator in guitar manufacturing and a canny provocateur, ever ready to challenge and befuddle other manufactures.



The Epiphone Historic Collection began with the purchase of renowned Epiphone collector Jim Fisch's priceless collection of Epiphone banjos, archtops, amps, advertisements, photographs, and business papers that traced the Stathopoulos's long journey from Greece to New York.

The heart of the Historic Collection centers on Epi's stewardship of Epiphone from the early 20s through the beginning of WWII, during the time of Epiphone's most heralded instruments including the original Masterbilt series and numerous flat tops and archtops that regularly battled Gibson guitars for supremacy (including the 18" wide Emperor).

As luthier Rober Benedetto wrote in the introduction to Jim Fisch and L.B. Fred's landmark book Epiphone, The House of Stathopoulos: "During the productive years of the New York Epiphone Company, the guitars were purchased by one type of individual: guitarists who judged the instruments on their own merit, as musical instruments and nothing else."

Epiphone purchased Jim Fisch's collection in 2007 and today, it remains a labor of love for Gibson President Dave Berryman who continues as its main curator and champion. But finding those vintage Epiphones is not always easy since Epiphone owners—both yesterday and today—are notoriously loyal both to the brand and to their own instruments. Enjoy the Tour!



1907 Stathopoulos Mandolin

With a label that reads *A. Stathopoulos – Manufacturer of all kinds of Musical Instruments*, this pre-Epiphone lute-style back or “potato bug” mandolin is the earliest example of Stathopoulos’s hand-made instruments in our collection. It features beautiful and very ornate craftsmanship. From the highly flamed lute-style back with a “rope and basket weave” of pearl marquetry around the top, to the fine pearl inlaid lyre design on the headstock, this piece is truly a work of art.



1911 Perfectone "Sextachorda" Harp Guitar

This Sextachorda Harp Guitar is one of the most striking and mysterious pieces acquired with the Fisch collection. The label lists the brand as Perfectone, manufactured by The House of Stathopoulos. This model was only known to have been advertised in a recently discovered Greek-American instrument catalog. There is also debate as to the actual year of its production as well as doubts as to whether Anastasios Stathopoulos was actually involved in its construction, as the level of craftsmanship seems to fall far short of the quality he was known for.



1911 Perfectone

In 2015, Epiphone was lucky to find the Six-String brother to the Perfectone Sextachorda Harp Guitar. It shares many of the Harp Guitars design characteristics in addition to its murky history. As Stathopoulos had previously specialize in Greek instruments such as Bouzoukis and Mandolins, this is thought to be the first six-string known to be manufactured by The House of Stathopoulos and is the only one known to still exist.

1920s Epiphone Recording Tenor Banjo

Epiphone was well known for their ornate banjos in the 20s and 30s. This Recording Model is one of the more extreme offerings with generously painted pearloid carving and engraving throughout. This piece shows some modest modifications to the peg-head face, a re-fret, and some minor repairs. But it remains in remarkably good condition and it includes its original leather trimmed case.



1928 Epiphone Model 4 Flat Top

This rare Epiphone Model 4 Flat Top features a unique, eye catching headstock veneer as well as staggered bridge pins. This fine example of early Epiphone craftsmanship also features an arched back. The serial number is 673 and would have been built in 1928 at Epiphone's factory Long Island City, New York.



1928 Recording Model B

The Recording Series was introduced in the mid-1920s. The Recording Model B, one-up from the entry-level Model A, was also a flat top but featured a violin-inspired arched laminate maple back. The maple neck has a center strip consisting of three laminates and features a white bound rosewood fingerboard with a fairly unusual pearl dot inlay pattern. The ornate headstock shape was borrowed from the Recording Series of banjos and features a pearloid head veneer decorated with a banner-style Epiphone logo and model designation. It is outfitted with Planet banjo-style tuners. This model is a 15 1/2" auditorium size and sold for \$85 in 1928.



1930 Epiphone Recording Model E

At the top of the Recording Model line, the Recording E featured a fine carved Spruce top and laminated figured maple back and sides. The body is triple-bound and sports an elevated black pickguard with a shape that follows the outer contour of the body. The bound ebony fingerboard featured celluloid block inlays that are engraved and painted with a floral design. The headstock was similarly veneered in the front and back. The face is adorned with the Epiphone logo and model name engraved into black banner graphics and is outfitted with Planet style banjo tuners.

1930s Epiphone Mayfair Tenor Banjo

A nice vintage tenor banjo with a simple brass tone ring, a 19-fret walnut neck, and a very cool floral decal on the back of its walnut resonator. Epiphone built the Mayfair between 1928 and 1935 and this fine example is all original except for the replacement patent style tuners. It also has the original vintage hard shell case.



1930s Regent Tenor

This piece is one of the more recent additions to the Historic Collection. It is in extremely good condition showing only a modest amount of fret wear, but very little of the finish fatigue that you would expect from an instrument of this age and level of use. It was the Tenor companion to the Epiphone Spartan but differed from the Spartan in that it has mahogany back and sides as opposed to the Spartan's maple back and side and f-holes rather than the Spartan's circular sound hole.



Early 1930s - Epiphone Style 4 Archtop

The Epiphone Style 4 was at the top of the Numbered Series models. It featured an arched laminate maple back and an unusual X-Braced carved spruce top with a round sound hole. Information on the Numbered Series Epiphone is limited. If the serial numbers are chronologically consistent with those of the Recording models, these are from the transitional phase between the earlier idiosyncratic novelty instruments and the later Masterbilt flat tops. They were most likely produced in the late 20s or early 30s. Our sunburst version is crack-free, all original, and plays and sounds marvelous.



1930s Epiphone Zenith

The Zenith was Epiphone's amateur grade entry-level archtop and was available until Epiphone merged with Gibson in 1957. Our late 1930s version shows the change to "cello style" f-holes and the wider 15 3/8" wide body. It features the popular after-market magnetic pickup system by DeArmond.

1931 Recording A Tenor

This tenor is a post Fisch acquisition. The Recording model body style is one of the most distinctive and iconic of all of the Epiphone models. This particular instrument has been heavily reworked with a good sense of style if not particularly true to the original design. Note the two additional pickguards, replacement banjo tuners and Ebony finish. However, in spite of the extensive and questionable restoration, this is great playing, loud and remarkably full bodied sounding instrument.



1932 Epiphone Broadway

The Broadway was one step down from the Epiphone Deluxe. The early 30s Masterbilt version had a 16.3/8" wide body constructed of laminate Walnut and a solid carved spruce top. The 5-piece maple neck has a white bound rosewood fingerboard with large four-point pearl inlays at the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th and 12th frets with a rectangle pearl block at the 14th. The asymmetrical Masterbilt headstock has a black plastic veneer, inlaid with pearl banners, sporting the brand and model logos. Our 1932 sunburst version is all original, save the heel-cap. It plays and sounds wonderful.



1932 Epiphone Triumph

First introduced in 1931, the Masterbilt Triumph became a workhorse of the Epiphone line, offering a high quality, great sounding instrument at a reasonable price. Our example from 1932 has a 15 1/4" wide body of laminate walnut and a solid carved spruce top. The 5-piece maple neck has a white bound rosewood fingerboard with paired split-diamond inlays. The off-set Masterbilt scrolled headstock has a plastic head veneer with the Epiphone logo and model etched into pearl banners. Our example has a repaired crack in the treble rim and the fingerboard binding has been replaced, but overall is in very good condition.



1933 Concert Recording Banjo

Also known as the Recording Banjo Style C, these were produced from 1925 until 1935. Epiphone's top end banjos featured a high level of ornamentation, including pearloid graphics, carving and extensive engraving on their gold plated components. The company's success with banjos led to them having to move to a larger facility.

1934 Zenith Masterbilt

The Zenith was Epiphone's amateur-grade acoustic and was produced from 1931 until the company's merger with Gibson in 1957. The original Masterbilt Zenith had a 13 5/8" wide maple rim and back with a solid carved top. It had a mahogany neck with a rosewood fingerboard with pearl dot position markers, but no side dots. The black plastic head veneer with logos etched and an angled "Zenith" etched in gold. With our 1934 "Sunburst" version, there is some binding shrinkage and there has been a rim separation, but the wear is minimal and it is crack free.



1935 Electar Spanish Guitar

Epiphone's Electar Spanish Guitar was Epiphone's first venture into the electric guitar world. The 1935-36 Electars utilized a pickup design commonly called a "Horseshoe Pickup", very similar to those used on the early Rickenbacker electrics. This early electric required extra bracing to support the addition weight and stress due to the new pickup and also needed a large access panel in the back of the instruments to allow for the mounting of the electronics.



1935 Electar Hawaiian Guitar

This Electar Hawaiian features the black teardrop shape with a "horseshoe" pickup and a single volume control. The fingerboard is rosewood white line fret indicatorlap steel is exceptional, with only minimal playing wear.



1935 Ideal

Very little is known about the very rare "Ideal" brand or who it was made for. The guitar is clearly a relabeled 1930's Epiphone made archtop, similar to a Zenith model. We are lucky to have one of only four models know to exist.

1935 Epiphone Tudor

The Tudor is a rare and a short-lived Masterbilt acoustic archtop produced between 1933 and 1936. It was a step below the top of the line De Luxe. It featured a 16 3/8" wide body of solid, highly figured maple and a carved spruce top. The body was bound top and back in 3-ply w/b/w Pyralin. The 5-piece maple neck has a single bound rosewood fingerboard with notched pearl diamond and triangle inlays. Our 1935 "Sunburst" features a rosewood head-veneer with a block pearl Epiphone and a pearl vine inlay. This example plays and sounds great and is in very good condition with original hard shell case.



1936 Epiphone Navarre Flat Top

The Navarre flat top was introduced in 1931 as a Spanish/Hawaiian instrument. Our 1936 version has Mexican mahogany back and sides and a solid spruce top with ladder bracing. The 20 fret mahogany neck joints at the 12th and the black head veneer has the script Epiphone logo and a "Stick Pin" pearl inlay. The unbound rosewood fingerboard has pearl dot inlays at the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 12th and 19th frets. The Navarre bridge normally had staggered bridge pin holes, however this example has them all straight in line. The "English Brown" finish is in good condition and there is only minimal binding shrinkage. The playability is good and it sounds great.



1936 Epiphone Olympic Tenor

Introduced in 1931, The Olympic series was Epiphone's least expensive student grade archtop. Our 1936 model has the body width increased to 15 1/4" and the f-holes had been changed to the open, "cello style". It has mahogany back, sides and neck and a solid spruce top. The logo lost its "Masterbilt" designation in 1936 as well as adding single white binding added to the top and back. Our Tenor is all original with the exception of the bridge and the heelcap. It is currently strung and tuned in an "octave mandolin" set-up, which seems to work very well with this particular instrument.



1937 Epiphone Broadway

The Broadway saw substantial design changes in 1936. The body size increased to 17 3/8" and Epiphone added white binding to the headstock, and additional block inlays at the 1st and 15th frets. The newly-bound headstock had the center dipped scroll and "Epiphone" inlayed in pearl script letters and vine inlay. Our 1937 sunburst version is all-original except for the heelcap. It has had the pickguard removed and has been modified to accommodate the adding of a pickup. It plays and sounds wonderful and is in excellent condition and has its original hard shell case.

1937 Epiphone Zenith

The Zenith was Epiphone's amateur grade acoustic archtop and was produced from 1931 until the company's merger with Gibson in 1957. The original Masterbilt Zenith had a 13 5/8" wide maple rim and back with a carved solid spruce top. Our 1937 version has a body width increased to 16 3/8". It features the rounded peak headstock with a script Epiphone logo, a "Stickpin" headstock inlay, and dot fingerboard inlays. This piece has been poorly refinished in natural and the pickguard is missing.



1937 Epiphone De Luxe

Introduced in 1931, the De Luxe was the top of the line Epiphone until the addition of the Emperor to the archtop line. This 1937 version still sports the Masterbilt asymmetrical headstock with the "Tree of Life" inlay, but had added the Frequensator tailpiece. The body is constructed of highly figured maple and its width had been increased to 17 3/8". It has a 5-piece highly figured maple neck and cloud inlays on the fingerboard. This piece is all original. There is ample finish crazing and the binding has suffered a great deal of shrinkage and cracking, but is all still intact. The neck angle is a little low, but the instrument is still very playable and has a rich tone hard shell case.



1938 Epiphone Blackstone

The Blackstone was first introduced in 1931 and was as an upper-end amateur-grade instrument in the Masterbilt line. Originally, the Maple body width was 14 3/4", increased to 15 1/2" in 1934 and increased again to 16 3/8" in 1936. Our 1938 version features a rounded peak headstock shape with the elongated notched diamond pearl inlay and the script Epiphone logo. It has been rebound and refinished natural. It plays and sounds great. The Blackstone model was discontinued by 1949.



1941 Epiphone Zephyr

Introduced in 1939, the Zephyr was to become a long lasting Epiphone electric model. This 1941 version features the "Master Pickup" with adjustable pole pieces, a volume control and a "Master Voicer", which consists on an individual bass and treble controls piggy-backed on the same concentric control potentiometer. The body used an all-laminate maple construction, and a maple neck with a walnut center stripe.

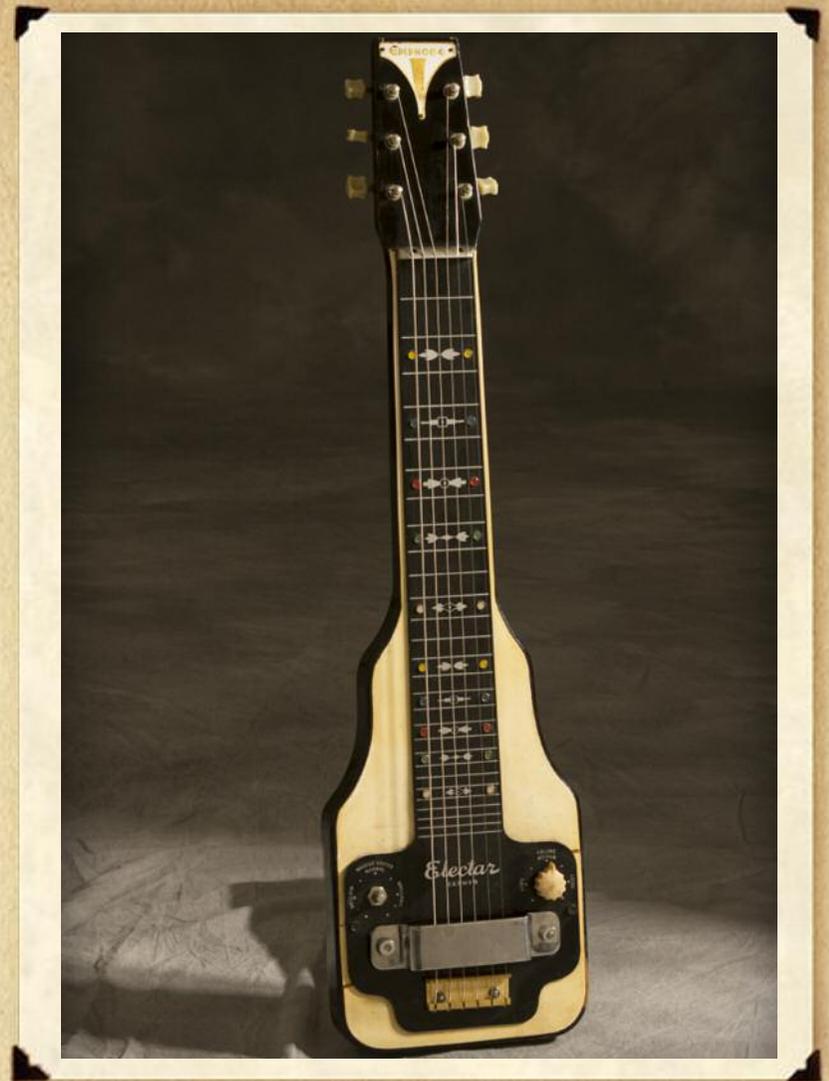


1941 Epiphone Triumph

This 1941 vintage Triumph is the standard non-cutaway version and features a 17 1/2" wide figured Maple rim and back as well as a solid carved Spruce top. It has a bound Rosewood fingerboard with large split diamond inlays. The back appears to have been refinished and has had some seam repairs. This guitar looks, plays, and sounds great.

1942 Electar Century Hawaiian Guitar

The mid-priced Century Hawaiian Guitar featured a simple but very functional Art Deco "Rocket Ship" design popular in the time period. As with the Zephyr, it was available in six, seven or eight string versions. We have used this particular model as our inspiration for our 2016 Century Steel offering.



1942 Zephyr Hawaiian Guitar

Introduced in 1939 and designed by Herb Sunshine, the Zephyr Hawaiian was a single neck instrument that could be ordered in six, seven or eight string configurations. It sported the Epiphone "Badge" on the headstock and the white Pyralin plate on the black lacquered maple body, give this lap steel a bold Art-Deco look.



1943 Epiphone De Luxe

This 1943 Epiphone De Luxe features a 17 3/8" wide body with flame maple back and sides. The spruce top is bound, and features cello-style f-holes and a 5-piece maple neck with "Segmented Cloud" pearl on a rosewood fingerboard. This body and pickguard of this instrument appear to have been rebound and refinished, with the top shaded in an unusual opaque cream color around the perimeter. The neck angle is good and it plays and sounds great.

1946 Epiphone Spartan

The Spartan, introduced in 1934, held the distinction of being the only Epiphone archtop produced with a round soundhole. However by 1936, it had changed to the more traditional f-hole. It was offered as a direct competitor to Gibson's L-4—a midrange archtop. It was originally offered with a round sound hole and changed to f-holes at about the same time as the Spartan. Our blonde 1946 version features a 16" white mahogany (primavera) rim and back and a carved Spruce top. It has a mahogany neck and a rosewood fingerboard and features clay split block inlays as well as a clay script logo and column headstock inlay.



1946 Epiphone Triumph

First introduced in 1931, the Masterbilt Triumph became a workhorse of the Epiphone line offering a high quality, great sounding instrument at a reasonable price. This 1946 example has a 17 3/8" wide body of solid maple with a solid craved spruce top with "cello style" f-holes and a Frequensator tailpiece. The 5-piece maple/walnut neck has a white bound rosewood fingerboard and large split-diamond inlays. The headstock now features the center dip scroll with a script Epiphone logo.



Late 1940s Zephyr

Introduced in 1939, The Zephyr was to be a long-lasting Epiphone electric model, undergoing many changes until the company's demise in 1957. Our natural late 1940's version features a laminate figured maple 17 3/8" wide body and a laminate spruce top. The electronics consists of a first generation "Tone Spectrum" pickup, Volume and "Master Voicer" tone control. This instrument is fitted with a clear plastic pickguard that has had the underside spray-painted, presumably due to war time material shortages.



1947 Zephyr Deluxe

The Zephyr Deluxe was introduced in 1941 and was viewed by fans as either the electric version of the Deluxe or a fancy version of the Zephyr. The flagship of the early Epiphone electric, it features a 17 3/8" wide body with laminate maple back and sides and a laminated spruce top. The 5-piece maple and walnut neck has a multi-bound rosewood fingerboard with cloud pearl inlays. The "Master Pickup" is located in the middle position where as in earlier models, it was in the bridge position. There is a volume and "Master Voicer" tone control. The pickup has been rewound by Tom Brantly and sounds great. It also has a nicely done replacement pickguard.

1950's Electar Century Hawaiian Guitar

Epiphones midrange Hawaiian Guitar gets an update in 1950, going to a more guitar shaped body with a nice sunburst flamed veneered body. This model was also offered in six, seven and eight string versions.



1951 Zephyr Deluxe Regent

Introduced in 1948, the Zephyr Deluxe Regent became one of the classic Epiphone big-bodied jazz electrics. It featured a 17 3/8" wide laminate maple body and laminated spruce top. The electronics are Duo-Tone Spectrum "New York" pickups with a single volume and tone and a three-way slider pickup selector switch.



1952 Epiphone Emperor

The Emperor was first introduced in 1934 as a direct competitor to Gibson's Super 400. As the flagship of the Epiphone archtop line, it was the finest and most ornate guitar the company ever produced. The 18 1/2" wide body, made of highly figured book-match maple back and sides, was designed to cut through the big bands of the day. The carved book matched spruce top has three-ply bound f-holes. The body is bound top and back with thirteen-ply white/black Pyralin. The 7-piece flame maple and walnut neck features an ebony fingerboard with mother-of-pearl and abalone segmented block inlays and a triple bound rosewood head veneer with a pearl logo and Epiphone's "Tree of Life" inlay pattern.



1953 Epiphone Century

The Century electric model was introduced in approximately 1939 and although it underwent many changes over the years, it remained in the Epiphone product line until the sale of the company in 1957. Our 1953 version features the smaller "Tone Spectrum" pickup with cream-colored housing in the neck position. The 16 3/8 inch wide body is constructed of laminate maple and a single-bound top and back. The mahogany neck has an unbound dot inlays and a rosewood fingerboard and uses an Epiphone "Badge" for its headstock logo.

1953 Epiphone Deluxe Cutaway

Introduced in 1949, the Deluxe Regent added a cutaway to Epiphone's popular De Luxe model. Our 1953 version's body has the 17 3/8" wide body, narrowed from the 18.5" body of the previous two years. It features a flame maple back and sides and a 5-piece neck. The multi-bound rosewood fingerboard and head veneer have pearl "cloud" inlays and "Tree of Life" headstock inlay. This instrument has seen an extensive restoration and refinish by Top Shelf Music. This formally acoustic archtop has also been nicely electrified using a Benedetto S-6 floating pickup and controls mounted in an appropriately retro-style pickguard.



1954 Epiphone Devon

Offered as an economic alternative to Epiphone's more lavish archtop guitars, the Devon was introduced in 1949. The 17 3/8" wide bodies were originally constructed of laminate mahogany back and sides as well as a carved spruce top and a cherry neck with a maple center stripe. This model offers simple appointments with a white and black bound top and single bound back and neck. The rosewood fingerboard features large oval pearl inlays. Our guitar was made in 1954 with a Primavera body. The truss-rod access had been moved to the headstock in 1952. This instrument plays and sounds great.



1954 Epiphone Emperor Regent

The flagship of the Epiphone acoustic archtop line, the Emperor, with its 18 1/2 inch highly figured carved maple back and sides and carved spruce top, instantly became an icon of the jazz guitar world. Our 1954 blonde Emperor Regent's body, front, back, sides, as well as the 7-piece flame maple neck and headstock are all adorned with multi-bound white and black Pryalin. The fingerboard has segmented pearl and abalone blocks and the "Tree of Life" inlay in the rosewood clipped-dovetailing head veneer. The pickguard is an excellent reproduction and some of the neck binding has been replaced. It plays and sounds great. The condition is very good and it has its original hardshell case.