



ACES & AXES

Photographer Jay Blakesberg captures the passion of rock stars and their guitars

Jay Blakesberg launched his photography career in the late 1970s when he shot a Grateful Dead show with a borrowed camera. The San Francisco-based lensman's work has since been featured in *Rolling Stone* and *Vanity Fair*. His eighth book, *Guitars That Jam*, showcases artists including Neil Young, Carlos Santana and Trey Anastasio (above, at the Brooklyn Bowl in 2014) playing some of rock's most iconic guitars. "Shooting an artist onstage is easy," says Blakesberg, "but capturing an intense moment—lightning in a bottle—is a different challenge altogether." The following pages offer a sampling of his work. For more, go to blakesberg.com.

**GRACE POTTER, 2014**

Grace is playing with her band, the Nocturnals, at the Lockn' Festival in Arrington, Va. She's very dynamic—I always come away with epic shots of this beautiful woman. They call her Gibson Flying V signature model the "Flying Grace."

CARLOS SANTANA, 2014

This is at New Orleans' Jazz Fest. That's one of his Paul Reed Smith guitars—the 2006 Santana II signature model, one of his workhorses. I was going for a high-energy moment of Carlos that also captured the beauty of that instrument.



**DEREK TRUCKS, 2014**

The Tedeschi Trucks Band performed a mini-acoustic set at the Lockn' Festival. Derek is playing a 1936 Gibson L-00, one of a couple of vintage guitars he breaks out for those songs. He's channeling an old-school, Robert Johnson vibe.

MICHAEL FRANTI, 2014

This is at the Mountain Jam music festival in upstate New York. That's a 2008 Maton acoustic-electric, Michael's primary instrument for live shows. It's a beauty. This was taken onstage looking out—and the crowd is in the groove with him.



**AL SCHNIER, 2014**

This is from a moe. show in New Orleans. The bass player, Rob Derhak, and Al just hit a big note playing that beautiful 1956 Les Paul Goldtop. I love the vibe, the feeling and the lighting—plus the way the angle captures a bit of the crowd.

NEIL YOUNG, 2012

Neil's performing with Crazy Horse in Seattle, playing his famous 1953 Gibson Les Paul. I wanted the wear and tear of the instrument to be visible as I captured his intensity. His body language is interesting and he's deep in the moment.

