In our letters section on page 3, a reader asked why we offered different brand names of products. Why indeed, of course Fender, the most famous name in guitars, recommend a name other than Fender?

MUSCIAN'S INSTITUTE
You're going to learn about these hot new instruments from the stand point of two outstanding instructors at the Musician's Institute of Technology (MIT). One on guitar, the other on bass. One from the experimental jazz scene, the other on the very edge of rock 'n' roll. One has been around the world with the biggest names in the business, the other is just now starting to blossom. Both are at the very top of their craft.

Heartfield

Wider Bridge Pickup Poles
Poles are farther apart to remain at center of string's vibration for maximum output.

A Closer Look at the Line
Close attention to the smallest details. That's what sets Heartfield apart from the rest.

Russ Parrish is considered to be one of the youngest and most gifted new rock guitarists on the L.A. circuit. Since graduating from GIT at age 18, he has worked as a master instructor at the school. Russ counsels an average of 250 advanced GIT students a week, while spending many of his nights gigging at the hottest, most prestigious clubs in Hollywood. He recently joined Ex-Dokken bassist Jeff Pilson's new band, and his added writing and retrimming to his already busy schedule. All in all, Russ spends anywhere from 9 to 12 hours a day with a guitar in his hands!

TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE
According to Steve Bailey, he walked into MIT with the first Heartfield that had ever been through those doors. "I played it in what we call 'open counselling,' where all the students just sit around and ask questions." he remembers. "Now the Heartfield has become the number one bass over there. Students have been to local Hollywood music stores and just bought them out!" Russ Parrish first heard of Heartfield when Fender invited him to evaluate some new prototype guitars. "I really dug the Heartfield over the rest," he confesses. "The neck feels slim, yet there's a little more wood between the frets and the neck, so it's easier to grab. The specially rounded edge of the fretboard cuts down on hand fatigue during long playing sessions, and also makes string bending more accessible. A comfortable neck was quite important."

(continued on page 28)
A Closer Look at Steve Bailey’s Heartfield Bass

Lo Z Output
The quietest signal possible for “direct to board” recording

Pickup Pan Pot
Allows you to variably dial in any combination of tonal color between the pickups.

guitar models, another innovative design feature is the placement of the magnetic poles in the bridge position pickup: about 10% wider than the spacing of the neck pickup pole pieces. Why? As the strings get further apart, they remain more evenly centered over the pole pieces of the pickups in both positions, providing more powerful harmonics and the most sustain possible.

Just ask Russ, who teaches through little solid-state amps at GIT. “The Heartfield pickups make them sound like tube amps”, he says. “The guitar totally screams! And it’s got every tone imaginable—from ‘clean’ to that cool, ‘Ritchie Blackmore Strat bite’, with tons of sustain.”

Variety is a quality that an in-demand studio and live musician like Steve Bailey especially appreciates. “I always try to impress on my students the importance of being able to stay busy out there in the ‘real world’. Something that keeps me working a lot is my sound. The Heartfield bass really has user-friendly electronics that allow me to tailor my sound with a simple pickup selector pan control. I’m able to get so many different tones so quickly that it’s really all I need.”

And while good distortion is important to guitar players, bass players avoid it like the plague. The special low impedance output, found on all Heartfield basses, gives Steve an edge in the studio, by allowing him to plug the instrument directly into the board. “The result is an extremely quiet signal making the [recording engineer] ‘man behind the window’”, as Steve puts it. “It’s a very happy person. Happy enough to remember the experience and call me back next time he needs a bass player.”

Russ Parrish feels that part of the appeal of the Heartfield line has to do with the contemporary look, such as the “sharp edged” design of his Talon Y. “This is not your father’s Stratocaster,” he says. “Heartfield makes a totally different statement while maintaining the quality of a Fender.”

Steve sums it all up, in his eyes: “The bottom line,” he says, “is that professionals have to pick the instrument they feel will best enable them to express themselves and create their own voice. I see a lot of bass players who feel, increasingly, that Heartfield is the instrument of choice to really do that.”