

Special Coupon

OFFER EXPIRES December 31, 2018.

Detach and return this page of this brochure with your inquiry to receive a \$5 discount on your next order. Offer valid for repair and build work. Void where prohibited.

Location & Contact

1819 East 45th Street
Ashtabula, Ohio 44004-6105

440-344-0570 (mobile)



Brochure production design by Erie
Looking Productions, Ashtabula, Ohio.
<http://erielookingproductions.info>

Costs

Estimates are free.

Travel guitars starting from \$550.00.

Mountain Dulcimers starting from
\$350.00.

"LG" Acoustic Guitars starting at
\$1,500.00.

All instruments are made from solid book-matched woods. All in-lays and binding materials are made of wood or shell. No plastics are used in the construction of the instruments. Attention is paid to aesthetic qualities along with obtaining the best resonating quality from the materials for the instruments. Choice and availability of particular materials as well as the constantly changing global trade environment will influence the final cost of an instrument you choose to purchase.

Repair work is also performed on stringed instruments from minor adjustments to major reconstructions. Free estimates are given for repair work.

Related Materials

Please also consult us for your microphone upgrade needs at South Shore Microphones online at <http://www.southshoremicrophones.com/>.

MJK Instruments

Michael J. Kellat
C. Erissa Kellat

The Builder and His Philosophy

I first started to build mountain dulcimers in 1976. My instructor was Lou Krico, a math professor at Cleveland State University. He, in turn, was taught by "Old Jake". Shortly afterwards, I started to do repairs on instruments of my own and those of friends.

While working on various factory-made instruments, I noticed that there is a cookie-cutter approach to the way instruments are built. This led in to a period of research into the how and why instrument are built the way that they are. All the factories and instruction books on the subject treat wood as if it is a consistent material like metal or plastic. It was not until I read an interview with European classical guitar builder Jose Romanillos that wood was regarded as an inconsistent material.

About this time I joined the Guild of American Luthiers. They presented the idea of wood being inconsistent work material. They stressed using only certain types of traditionally-used woods.

In building mountain dulcimers I found that there are good woods other than the traditional selection of the past. I experimented with cedar for a guitar top. At the time, it was only used on flamenco guitars. To use cedar on a steel string guitar was unthinkable. I now use cedar as a first choice for sound boards. Black Walnut has been the wood of choice for dulcimers for years but no guitar maker would consider it for an acoustic guitar. Through varied experience in building different stringed instruments I have developed unconventional ideas in constructing instruments while honoring traditions practiced at the turn of the 20th century.

Repairing stringed instruments has been an interesting endeavor. Many people have instruments that are in great need of repair but just let them sit. Many times instruments are thrown out when instead they could be repaired and played again. Instruments that look like a "pile of junk" at times can be fixed while at other times I must attempt to fix someone else's "repair". This can lead to problems because most people do not understand what needs to be done to fix it properly.

Knowledge of proper adhesives and repair practices to properly an instrument is obtained over time. Most times an improper repair will make the proper repair difficult and expensive to accomplish. With 42 years experience building and repair stringed instruments my work is done in the tradition of luthiers of the past.

In 2016, my daughter Courtney asked to

apprentice under me to learn the craft of making guitars and dulcimers.

Pictures



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