



years of study, practice, hard work and skill.

Höfner has one of the largest wood collections around. We have Masters whose job is to go out and buy wood direct from the actual forest themselves. This way we can reject wood and check grain patterns and look for other key factors. We buy spruce and maple mainly from the Black Forest and often travel to other countries like South America for the orchestral bow wood.

several models of jazz guitars. Some models still are based from earlier models but with some updated and new features for the modern player's needs.

**When it comes to the production of your guitars, what touches make a Höfner instrument special?**

I think it is all of the handwork and special care that goes into each and every instrument. Our German production is still handmade by trained and true Masters. The necks and tops are carved by hand and our bows are bent over a flame. The word "Master" can be much overused today, but in Germany it is very complex and difficult to actually become a true Master. The schooling and tests required to pass are extremely tough and the process takes



In the end, it means that each instrument is consistent and has an individual character.

**Tell us about the John Lennon guitar, and the work that went into it.**

The Höfner Club 40 was John Lennon's first electric guitar ever! This guitar was designed and based from his 1959 Club 40, in celebration of our 120th Anniversary. Only 120 of these John Lennon Club 40 guitars are being produced, and we are proud to donate a portion from each sale to the John Lennon songwriting charity.

The guitar itself is all hollow construction (like a small archtop without f-holes). It is short scale with one single custom-built neck pickup. It is very light in weight and a real blast to play.

**120 years is a milestone for any business, let alone in the music industry. Have there been any real challenges Höfner has had to face throughout its lifetime?**

Of course over a 120 year period, there will be changes and hurdles in any business. Musical styles change and rotate around a bit — therefore the preferred and desired instruments change as well. Höfner's guitar production developed quickly into a fairly wide variety of instruments and had enough history and uniqueness to keep up the demand.

On the bass guitar side, having the Beatle Bass and the history associated with the instrument retained a lot of interest ever since the Beatles hit. The "British Sound" is really in again, and jazz music is also gaining in popularity. Generally speaking, during the 70s and 80s, solidbody guitars increased in popularity and hollowbody instruments were less fashionable — but Höfner always kept up production. In contrast, the orchestral (violin) side of the business does not change around and go through the trends like the guitar and bass side of the business.

**Did Höfner ever go out on a limb and try something that just didn't work?**

We have heard a few comments in the industry that something we make won't sell in their opinion because, "it does not look like this" or "sound like that," etc. The Jazzica Custom model is radical and a totally different guitar from a traditional archtop guitar, but players purchase this guitar over our competitors because of its unique features.

We do a lot of research and development and get many players' opinions before we go to market. Sometimes a product is even created or reissued because of an overwhelming amount of phone calls and emails asking for a prior model. The Club