



## COLLECTOR'S SOUL

**BORN IN FRANCE IN 1961**, Laurent Picciotto began playing guitar at the age of 14. He started with a Yamaha classical but soon graduated to an Aria Stratocaster copy. In 1988, after stints in both the banking and insurance industries, Picciotto opened a luxury watch boutique, Chronopassion, on Paris' Rue Saint Honoré in the first arrondissement. In the ensuing years, he became intimately acquainted with the world of high-end collecting through his many clients. Along with guitars and watches, Picciotto, who comes from "a family where several of us like to accumulate objects," collects motorcycles and, he confesses, shoes.

**• How did you get started collecting guitars?**

I've always had a real passion for

beautiful objects of all types, but until about four years ago, I would generally give one guitar away when I got another. Then I met Julien, who has a vintage guitar shop in Paris called Woodstore. He's very knowledgeable about instruments, and about 80 percent of the guitars in my collection come from him. He knows what I like, and we get along. I don't collect guitars to enshrine them in a museum but to play them when my friends and I get together to jam. I've found that a certain thematic unity and coherence has begun to emerge from the collection as I continue to add instruments to it.

**• How do guitars fit in with the design aesthetics of your home? Do you have them out or keep them locked away?**

I own about 60 guitars, and they're in every room of my home, both hanging on the walls and on stands.

**• What do you look for in a guitar?**

Sound and playability first and foremost, but the way a guitar looks also counts for me. I occasionally buy new or recent instruments, but I'm more attracted to vintage pieces because I feel that the individual character of each one is more distinct.

**• What was the first major purchase you made for your collection?**

A white 1961 Les Paul Custom.

**• What are some of the other guitars in your collection?**

I have a 1976 Gibson Explorer, a 1972 Flying V, a 1964 Candy Apple Red Fender Stratocaster, a 1964 Fender Bass VI, a 1953 Martin 000-28, and a 1951 Fender Telecaster formerly

owned by both Jeff Beck and Roy Buchanan that I recently purchased at auction. I also own a trio of Gibson "Century of Progress" instruments from the Thirties, including a mandolin, a flattop, and an archtop.

**• Which is your favorite, and why?**

The '51 Telecaster. Its previous owners imparted some serious mojo onto it, and it sounds phenomenal!

**• What's your dream purchase?**

I'm always looking for my next guitar, knowing only that it will be an instrument that will surprise and delight me.

Laurent Picciotto on the roof of his Paris home with his 1964 Candy Apple Red Fender Strat and a selection of guitars from his collection of approximately 60.