**INFLUENCES**

**Rock (Maybe in this order)**

Eddie Van Halen – Every Boomer guitarist remembers the moment they first heard the song Eruption from Van Halen’s First album. He was an Alien Surfing on the Guitar. His use of superhuman speed tapping licks, Whammy Bar Disbelief, lighting flash scales, and tremolo picking was always my lifelong goal and standard as a guitarist. The only thing I wanted to do was to be able to sound like Eddie but his chops were way beyond mine. Even at this age to be able to sound a bit like him playing a Frankenstrat at Guitar Center is an unreal feeling. I can also say I was able to see him perform live during his prime (Van Halen 2 Tour).

Carlos Santana - Of all my guitar gurus Carlos’ Soulfulness and electrifying playing stuck with me the quickest, maybe it’s my Latin Roots but I was known as little Santana in my early years. Carlos’s connection to the soul with every single note he plays makes him stand out amongst any player he plays with weather they be Jazz, Rock, latin, Pop, shredders. I am beyond blessed to have seen him perform 3 times (Earlier years, Later & and much later years).

Jeff Beck – I can remember the first time I heard his Blow-by-Blow album especially “So We’ve Ended as Lovers” the way he spoke through his guitar was like listening to a singer with a beautiful voice. His guitar sang, every note had a wonderful purpose. I had never heard a vibrato quite as expressive as his weather it be through the tremolo bar or his fingers. He’s a Fusion of Rock and Jazz at it’s best. And the best of the big three from the yardbirds (Clapton, Page & Beck) in my opinion.

Jimmy Page – His mastery of making a solo into a composition is evident in Stairway to Heaven. I learned every one of his recorded licks and they are a part of my inner improvisational elements. No other single guitarist is responsible for so many classic guitar riffs and compositions.

Eric Clapton – Most of my Blues and slide playing comes directly from Clapton. His slow hand approach is also inspiring and builds emotion and feelings. His connection to the notes is almost as close as Santana’s. He’s also responsible for some of the greatest songs ever. He’s the ultimate triple threat with his vocal, guitar and compositional abilities.

Jimmi Hendrix – Unlike many of my other peers, I wasn’t all about Jimmi when learning to play. I understood his greatness but didn’t learn too many of his songs or riffs. It is recently that I have reached a greater appreciation to Our Guitar Father in Rock. He’s also very underrated as a singer and rhythm player (I see him as a soloist rhythm player).

George Harrison – An under-rated guitarist George has some of the most iconic solos in Rock history. (Something, Let it Be, Helter Skelter, I Feel Fine etc.). The let It Be solo was the first entire solo I ever learned (other than And I Love Her which I don’t count). His guitar work with the Beatles is the ultimate compliment to Lennon and McCartney. I know McCartney wanted him to play more like Clapton but Harrison’s body of work is as impressive as Clapton’s.

Chuck Berry – Much more than a showman, he helped shape the sounds to come on the guitar and Rock n- Roll. His double-stops are still the bread and butter of all Blues and Rock guitarist. His use of the tuning of 4ths and fretting two notes at the same time creates the movement of 4ths dating to the renaissance era.

Alex Lifeson – I Think Alex was always overshadowed by Eddie Van Halen (At least that’s the way it seemed to me), but the test of time has revealed his importance in the rock guitar world. Not many guitarists can brag about a chord (Sus power chords) being named after him unless you’re Jimi Hendrix (#9) or Andy Summers (9th power chord). Saw him perform live during their Hemisphere’s tour and the show was mind blowing to say the least.

Steve Howe – Yes’s Steve Howe’s ability to play classical style guitar and his amazing chops was so impressive to me that I auditioned for college with his “Mood for a Day” guitar solo which impressed by learning it by ear. Thanks Steve! I also got to see him live with Yes.

Frank Zappa – It took me a while to recognize Zappa’s genius but once I did All around genius, motivation, fearless,

David Gilmore – Gilmore’s solos are mini compositions with unbelievable bends, rhythmic motifs and lush sound on his Strat. Unbelievably to me, his most famous solo (Another Brick In the Wall) was played on a Les Paul.

Brain May - That guitar that cool hair that sound that vibrato that solo that sounds like a classical composition he was the total rock guitarist and driving force for to Queen’s majestic (see what I did there) sound. Aside from being knighted he is also literally a rocket scientist that works for NASA. (Sheldon with talent)

Tom Sholtz – What a first and really only successful album. Every song on it was a masterpiece written and mostly performed by this amazing man who was a MIT graduate. The way he told the record label that he was only producing his original tapes crated in his basement. His legend will last forever

Skunk Baxter, Elliot Randall & Steve Lukather – These two are responsible for many of those classic guitar solos in Steely Dan. Both were what they call in the business as hired guns that could record a track on the take.

Stevie Ray Vaughn -

Steve Vai (Crossroads Enough Said)

Joe Satriani (Solo Guitar Alien of Rock) Saw play

(Finds as an Adult)

Yngwie Malmsteen (Smooth lighting Fast Electric Classical) (saw play)

John Petrucci (Crazy Fast Bad Ass)

Paul Gilbert (Picking Speed/String Skipping Jedi)

Rick Graham (Versatile Badass)

Eric Johnson

Guthrie Govan (Everything Under the Sun Guy)

Great guitarist that made their groups sound unique due to their skills and sounds - Joe Perry (Aerosmith-Walk This Way/Sweet Emotion, Angus Young (AC/DC-/TNT/Thunderstruck), Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top-La Grange/Cheap Sun Glasses), Pete Townshend (The Who/My Generation/Eminence Front), Slash (Gun and Roses/Sweet Child of Mine/Welcome to the Jungle), Neal Geraldo (Pat Benatar/Hell is for Children/Hit me With Your Best Shot), Jerry Garcia (Grateful Dead/Truckin’/Casey Jones), Neal Schon (Journey/Any Way You Want it/Lights), Andy Summers (The Police/Roxanne/Message in a Bottle), Elliot Easton (The Cars/Just What I Needed/My Best Friends Girlfriend), Mark Knopler (Dire Straits/Money For Nothing/Sultans of Swing, Brian Setzer (Stray Cats/Rock This Town/Stray Cat Strut), Duane Allman (The Allman Brothers/Ramblin Man/ ), Sweet Home Alabama/Freebird Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, Fleetwood Mac, The Doors, CCR, Chicago

**Blues**

Robert Johnson (So ahead of his time that people claim he sold his Soul)

B.B. King (Our Roots on the Guitar)

Larry Carlton (Melodic Classiness) saw play

**Country**

Chet Atkins (The Country Gentleman on Guitar)

Roy Clark (Hee Haw, Fiddle, Bluegrass Great)

Glen Campbell (Studio Player, Television Host, Vocalist Rhinestone Cowboy)

Carl Perkins

**Finger style**

Tommy Emmanuel (Exciting Fun Percussive Guitar legend) saw play

Martin Taylor (Fusion of Pop & Jazz)

Les Paul (Father of Solid Body Guitars)

**Jazz**

Wes Montgomery (The Man)

Pat Metheny (Modern Jazz Virtuoso)

George Benson (Singing on Strings) saw play

Pat Martino (Fastest Melodic Lines)

Mike Stern (Electric Rock Jazz) saw play

Joe Pass (Solo Guitar Genius)

Carlos Antonio Jobim (Brazilian Heartbeat)

Django Reinhardt (Virtuoso Gypsy King)

**Classical**

Andres Segovia (The Granddaddy of Them All) Saw play

Fernando Sor, Heitor Villa-Lobos & Francisco Tarrega (The Great Teachers)

Niccolo Paganini (Violinist Virtuoso that inspired the early guitarists and Neoclassicalism)

Johann Sebastian Bach (Provided first Transcriptions for the Classical Guitar)

**Guitar Songwriters**

Paul Simon (Guitar Song Writer Extraordinaire)

Paul McCartney & John Lennon (The Match From Heaven) saw play

Bob Dylan (Father of Political Songwriting)

Jim Croce (Storyteller on Guitar)

Jimmy Buffet & James Taylor

Jose Feliciano saw play

The Eagles saw play