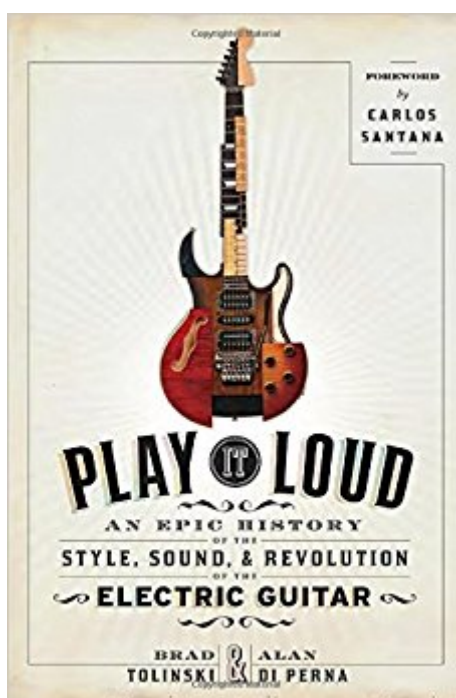


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# Play It Loud: An Epic History Of The Style, Sound, And Revolution Of The Electric Guitar



## Synopsis

"Every guitar player will want to read this book twice. And even the casual music fan will find a thrilling narrative that weaves together cultural history, musical history, race, politics, business case studies, advertising, and technological discovery." —Daniel Levitin, Wall Street Journal

An unprecedented history of the electric guitar, its explosive impact on music and culture, and the players and builders who brought it to life. For generations the electric guitar has been an international symbol of freedom, danger, rebellion, and hedonism. In *Play It Loud*, veteran music journalists Brad Tolinski and Alan di Perna bring the history of this iconic instrument to roaring life. It's a story of inventors and iconoclasts, of scam artists, prodigies, and mythologizers as varied and original as the instruments they spawned. *Play It Loud* uses twelve landmark guitars — each of them artistic milestones in their own right — to illustrate the conflict and passion the instruments have inspired. It introduces Leo Fender, a man who couldn't play a note but whose innovations helped transform the guitar into the explosive sound machine it is today. Some of the most significant social movements of the twentieth century are indebted to the guitar: It was an essential element in the fight for racial equality in the entertainment industry; a mirror to the rise of the teenager as social force; a linchpin of punk's sound and ethos. And today the guitar has come full circle, with contemporary titans such as Jack White of The White Stripes, Annie Clark (aka St. Vincent), and Dan Auerbach of The Black Keys bringing some of the earliest electric guitar forms back to the limelight. Featuring interviews with Les Paul, Keith Richards, Carlos Santana, Eddie Van Halen, Steve Vai, and dozens more players and creators, *Play It Loud* is the story of how a band of innovators transformed an idea into a revolution.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Every guitar player will want to read this book twice. And even the casual music fan will find a thrilling narrative that weaves together cultural history, musical history, race, politics, business case studies, advertising and technological discovery. It could serve just as easily as a text on entrepreneurship and corporate R&D in the 20th century as it could a weekend vacation read.” —Daniel Levitin, *Wall Street Journal* “A lively and fascinating history. You’re going to want to keep your tablet or phone nearby as you read it, because you’ll be absolutely compelled to find and listen to the signature songs and riffs referenced throughout the volume. The authors do a great job of introducing just enough technical information to make their points, while keeping explanations clear enough so that those of a nontechnical bent like this reviewer can follow them. Tolinski and Di Perna have produced a book that lives up to the urgent, innovative, all-encompassing spirit of its subject.” —*Minneapolis Star-Tribune* “More than the story of an iconic instrument, *Play It Loud* is a cultural history, calling up the tastes, styles and fads, the economics and even the geopolitics of 90 years of music-making.” —*Dallas Morning News* “A brief tour of rock history, led by the instrument most associated with that screaming, swaggering genre. Getting to know the instruments behind the music you love is a worthwhile endeavor. Better still is getting to know the people behind those instruments, and *Play It Loud* does a good job of cracking the legend of Les Paul to reveal the mad scientists, itinerant tinkerers and passionate musicians behind the development and evolution of the electric guitar.” —*Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star* “Fast, fun and informative, this book delivers lots of quick bits on your favorite hits just like a good 45 used to.” —*Houston Press* “The electric guitar from the Resonator of the 1920s and Charlie Christian’s jazz playing in the 1930s, through Les Paul and the heyday of Jimi Hendrix and Jimmy Page unfolds in the pages of *Play It Loud*. The book... tells its story through both technical developments and the inventors and musicians who made it all happen.” —*Salon* “The definitive book about the history and business of the electric guitar.” —*Forbes.com* “The authors... bring freshness to chestnuts through technical nuggets aplenty.... The electric guitar changed the world, and Tolinski and di Perna impressively reveal its epic story.” —*Kirkus Reviews* (starred)

review)“Providing a holistic overview packed with contextual insights, music journalists Tolinski and di Perna skillfully pinpoint the watershed innovations and key musicians who turned a novelty into a mainstay of popular music.”An engaging introduction to a fun topic with broad appeal.

Library Journal (starred review)“A comprehensive history of the electric guitar, tracing its roots in George Beauchamp’s experiments in search of a way to amplify a guitar’s vibrations... The authors engagingly explore the importance of amplifiers on artists’ sounds, particularly the Vox amps used by the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix’s manipulation of feedback.”

Publisher’s Weekly“Play It Loud is a dynamic history of the electric guitar, but more important, it’s about the artists who painted the universal tones, colors, textures, and movements on the world canvas, through their fingertips, into a consciousness revolution to our hearts and minds. Brad and Alan get inside the note of the political and cultural significance of the guitar.”

from the foreword by Carlos Santana, Grammy Award-winning artist and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee“Play It Loud is a fascinating, elegantly written, page-turning account of how a musical weakness—the guitar’s inherently low volume—led to the development of the instrument that transformed contemporary music and culture: the electric guitar. It’s all here—the history, the science, the musicians, and of course, the stringed beauties and the sounds they helped create. An essential addition to any serious guitarist’s library.”

Jonathan Kellerman, New York Times bestselling author of The Murderer’s Daughter“It’s all here: everything knowable now becomes known about the plugged-in ax that changed the world. A comprehensive history of the electric guitar in cultural context is something long wanted, awaited and needed. At long last, it has arrived.”

Billy Gibbons, ZZ Top guitarist/vocalist and Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame inductee“Brad Tolinski and Alan di Perna’s Play It Loud is a marvelous survey of how the electric guitar has rocked its way into the hearts and minds of millions of music lovers. This is a rich trove of unforgettable anecdotes and vignettes. Highly recommended!”

Douglas Brinkley, New York Times bestselling author of Rightful Heritage

BRAD TOLINSKI was the editor-in-chief of Guitar World, the world’s bestselling magazine for musicians, for twenty-five years. He is the author of Light & Shade: Conversations with Jimmy Page. ALAN DI PERNA is a longtime contributor to Guitar World and Guitar Aficionado and has written for Rolling Stone, Creem, Billboard, Guitar Player, and other leading music publications. He is the

author of Guitar Masters: Intimate Portraits.

I'm about 2/3 of the way through and I love it. It answers so many questions I had about the history of rock (generally speaking, without going into the various genres) and of the guitars that made history. If you love music the way I do this book is great and for you.

As interesting and entertaining (and factual) a history of electrics as I've found in 30 years in the industry. Tolinski knows his stuff, and knows how to write a story that never bogs down with minutiae, but keeps the reader engaged. Highly recommended.

I'm not even a guitar player but I sure do admire those who do, I loved this book, well written, very informative, it's lead me on to other books about the guitar players that it mentions throughout the 50s and up to the 80s

Guitar player? Know someone who is? They should read this book. It's not just a book about guitars. It is the entire history of the electric guitar illustrated with great stories. From the first use of an electric guitar to today, Play It Loud reads much more like a novel than a history book. Recommended!

This was a great book that not only detailed the history of the development of the modern electric guitar but also the many stories that went along with getting to today. It was really well researched. I am a relatively new guitar player so I was unaware of a lot of this so very educational but even if you have been playing for years you will find the stories behind the stories to be fascinating.

Loved reading about so much of the history of the electric guitar. Some very cool stories about the development through the decades and how the players of the time used and shaped them. This book is not for everyone, but if you love guitar music or play guitar you'll almost certainly get something from the stories within these pages.

Excellent oral history of the many key developers, makers, players, promoters, and cultural settings of the electric guitar as well as their inter-relationships. Not bogged down by technical electronic or acoustical detail (you'll have to go elsewhere if that's what you want).

Gives me a new appreciation to music I've loved but took for granted.

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