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The Sifel Night Sky

Pearl Works and Knaggs Guitars collaborate on custom Larry Sifel acoustic

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When Pearl Works founder Larry Sifel passed away in May 2006, his wife Jean knew that his legacy would continue through the company's beautiful inlay work. A decade later Pearl Works celebrates Larry with a new commemorative guitar, the Sifel Night Sky.

The Sifel Night Sky is a limited edition acoustic by Knaggs Guitars, commissioned by Jean Sifel in honor of her late husband and Pearl Works Founder, Larry Sifel.

Larry was a dear friend to Joe Knaggs while he was a designer at Paul Reed Smith Guitars. Joe remembers wonderful conversations with Larry about building acoustic guitars together, and credits Larry with encouraging him to found Knaggs Guitars. Joe says, "Larry's advice and guidance was instrumental in making my final decision to start my own business."

"Larry was drawn to the idea of building acoustics with Joe," Jean remembers. "Joe has really outdone himself. These instruments are stunning."

The first editions of the Sifel Night Sky were hand-made for two of Larry's closest friends, musicians Al Petteway and Greg Artzner, and for members of the Pearl Works team. A version is also being produced for a special exhibition of inlaid guitar masterpieces this Fall at the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona.

During his lifetime, Larry was best known as an innovator in modern inlay techniques, and his company's work adorns guitars from Martin, PRS, Taylor, Fender, and many other instrument makers. Less known is that Larry was also a luthier who hand-built two dozen or so acoustic guitars—each inlaid with a distinctive "LS" monogram designed by Jean.

As a tribute to Larry, the Sifel Night Sky prominently features this "LS" monogram, along with a night sky motif inspired by the starry view from the back deck of Larry and Jean's home in rural Southern Maryland. Larry was fond of the moon and stars as a motif in his artwork.

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The Night Sky fingerboard features mother of pearl and blue paua abalone inlay. Gold stars separate the constellations, and a crescent moon at the guitar's 12th fret is inlaid with red abalone and mother of pearl. Pearl Works also designed the top purfling, rosette, head plate, and the star-adorned bridge. The guitar features a mahogany neck, maple binding, red spruce tops, Brazilian rosewood backs and sides, and an ebony head plate, fingerboard and bridge.

The Sifel Night Sky will be available on a special order basis, hand-built by Knaggs Guitars and inlaid by Pearl Works.

Based in Charlotte Hall Maryland, Pearl Works are pioneers in the field of precision inlay for the musical industry. Founded out of a love for music and a dedication to beautiful, high-quality inlay work, Pearl Works grew from a small shop in Larry Sifel's basement into today's team of skilled inlay artisans who carry on his tradition of uncompromised excellence. These artisans have dozens of years of experience designing and crafting custom inlay for projects both large and small. Pearl Works collaborates with clients including major instrument manufacturers such as C.F. Martin & Co., Paul Reed Smith Guitars, Taylor Guitars, and Kamaka Ukulele. Under Bill Seymour's leadership Pearl Works looks forward to fruitful new collaborations where they can share, showcase, and expand upon years of inlay expertise.

Knaggs Guitars have been carving a niche for themselves in the world of high-end American made guitars in just a few short years. Artists currently using Knaggs instruments include Grammy-Award winner Steve Stevens (Billy Idol, Michael Jackson, Kings of Chaos), Grammy Award winning guitarist and producer Larry Mitchell, Stuart Fraser (Noiseworks/ John Farnham), Jared Martin (Colton Dixon), Doug Rappoport (Edgar Winter Band), Tyler Tomlinson (Eric Parsley), two time Latin Grammy nominee Pablo Olivares and many others. For more information/contact: www.knagsguitars.com

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