

*Cme*<sup>®</sup>  
BANJOS







**ome**

**BANJOS**

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**M**y passion for the banjo began as a boy growing up in Kentucky with bluegrass music. The bright, sparkling and enthusiastic sounds of this magical instrument captured my heart and inspired me to play, then repair, and finally to design and build what I hoped would be a quality banjo at a reasonable price.

Over the years, my love for this instrument has deepened, and my original vision has expanded to include the designing and building of exceptional banjos in a wide variety of models and styles.

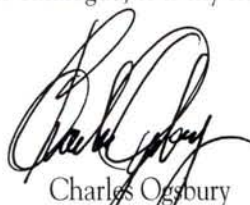
At OME, we make only banjos. All our efforts are directed towards producing the very finest traditional, jazz and bluegrass instruments combining superior tone, superb playability, unfailing quality and flawless beauty.

Each of the seven distinct styles of banjos we offer are designed with a specific combination of features required to meet the exacting needs of the most discerning musician. They embody the finest, time-proven characteristics of vintage banjos with the most advanced improvements and refinements of today.

A wide variety of exceptional models are also available in each of the various banjo styles. The Boucher, Jubilee and Juniper are patterned closely after nineteenth-century instruments and capture the spirit and flavor of that era. The Monarch, Magician, Juggernaut and Columbine offer more refined features while emphasizing the optimum in tone, playability and classic design. And the exquisite Mogul, Renaissance and Grand Artist models take the banjo into new dimensions of construction, artistry and performance.

OME's team of talented, dedicated people take great pride in the making of each and every instrument and in leaving their personal mark on some of the finest banjos ever made. Knowledgeable use of the highest quality materials; skilled, precision machining; innovative technical improvements and careful artistic handwork, continue to give OME instruments the quality of enduring excellence.

With the many models and styles offered in this catalogue, it is my hope that we can provide you with the instrument of your dreams.

  
Charles Ogsbury  
President and Founder



The woods used in OME instruments are carefully selected, thoroughly air dried and skillfully matched. Vibrant curly maple, chosen for its superior tone, flexible strength, and unusual beauty, form the neck, rim and resonator of most models. The fingerboard, peghead overlay, backstrap and heel cap are made only of striking Brazilian rosewood or rich Gaboon ebony and are artistically inlaid with colorful abalone and iridescent mother-of-pearl.

OME Artist necks are laminated with genuine ebony and maple centerstripes and fingerboard underlays, providing additional strength, stability and contrasting beauty. Every neck is fitted with our two-way adjustable truss rod and is gracefully hand-shaped for optimum comfort and playability. The precisely slotted fingerboard assures absolute accuracy of scale. All instruments are bound with simulated tortoise shell or traditional grained ivoroid.

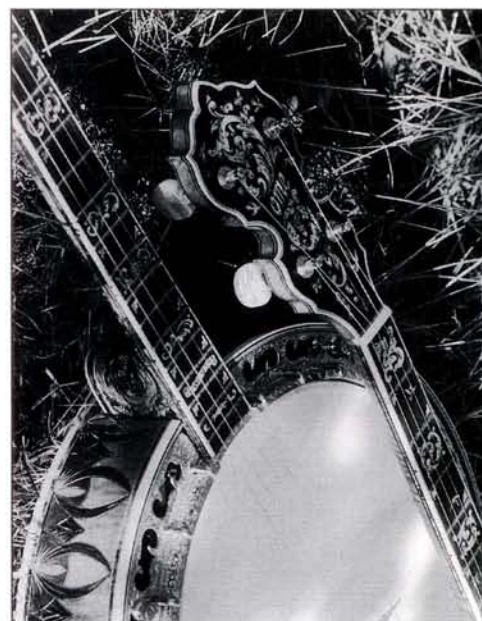


Light-fast, grain-enhancing stains are used to bring out the full beauty of the curly maple woods used on OME instruments. Multiple coats of catalyzed varnish are thoroughly cured, sanded and finely polished to produce an exceptionally durable and beautiful finish.

The metal parts used on OME banjos are specially alloyed, then cast, spun, stamped, and machined using our own patterns and dies. Final parts are meticulously polished, then triple-plated with traditional nickel, tarnish-resistant chrome or brilliant 24-kt. gold.

Great care is exercised during the final assembly of every OME, as wood and metal parts are precisely fitted together. Permanently lubricated and sealed planetary tuners are mounted to the peghead, and the neck is securely attached to the rim assembly with two adjustable rim rods. A high-quality tailpiece, bridge and strings are added to complete the instrument. Final set-up and adjustment are

Banjo Dimensions					
Neck	No. of Frets	Neck Width at Nut		Scale Length	
Tenor	19	1-3/16"	30.2mm	22-1/16"	560mm
Plectrum	22	1-3/16"	30.2mm	26-1/4"	667mm
5-String	22	1-1/4"	31.8mm	26-1/4"	667mm
Guitar	22	1-11/16"	42.9mm	26-1/4"	667mm
5-String Longneck	25	1-1/4"	31.8mm	31-3/16"	792mm







Unknown Minstrel

OME banjos are available in three different five-string styles, and in four different four-string styles, as described on the following pages of this catalogue.

Combining both the thump of the skin drum with the twang of the hunting bow, the banjo is one of the oldest of all stringed instruments. Its rhythmic, percussive melodies were first brought to America by African blacks during the early 1700's.

In the early 1800's the banjo was adopted by a handful of white musicians, such as Joel Sweeney and Dan Emmet. These early players altered its construction somewhat, and began to spread the banjo, and its music, throughout America in traveling minstrel shows during the 1830's and '40's.

The following decades changed the banjo in even more ways. The neck was shortened, and frets were added to improve playability. Innovative tone-rings provided both greater volume and the improved tone necessary for larger concert halls. The minstrel's enthusiastic "stroke-style" of playing gave way to genteel classic fingerstyle. Elaborate ornamentation transformed many instruments into stunning works of artistry and design.

OME Minstrel banjos capture the spirit and flavor of the classic 19th-century instruments. The 26 $\frac{1}{4}$ " scale, 11" maple rim, 24 individual tension brackets and our Minstrelspun™ brass tone ring combine to give a sweet, warm and woody tone, perfect for old-time playing styles. The solid mahogany neck is gracefully hand shaped, and finished in tung oil. A Brazilian rosewood fingerboard and peghead overlay are tastefully inlaid with colorful abalone and mother-of-pearl. Modern conveniences such as planetary gear pegs, adjustable truss and rim rods, and Fyberskyn drumhead make these instruments easy to tune and a pleasure to play. These banjos are available in the Minstrel Jubilee and Minstrel Juniper open-back models with optional Flushfit™ snap-on resonator.\*

## THE MINSTREL

The Boucher Minstrel, one of the first production banjos, was built by William Boucher, Jr. of Baltimore, Maryland about 1845. OME recreates this rare and beautiful instrument in either curly maple or cherry wood. It is stained a deep amber color, and finished with several coats of hand-rubbed tung oil. Solid brass hardware, the extra long 32" scale, a 12" maple pot assembly, nylon strings, ebony tuners and ebony tailpiece combine to give that old-time banjo sound. The OME Boucher is available as a 5-string, fretless, open-back banjo and comes complete with a padded gig bag and the OME Limited Lifetime Warranty.

\*Flushfit resonator — A resonator with low sides, that easily snaps on or off the inner coordinator rod of the banjo. Very useful if extra volume or projection is needed for string band work.

Minstrel-style banjos, left to right:  
Boucher, Minstrel Jubilee, Minstrel Juniper  
and Silver Magician with Victorian peghead shape.







Ken Pearlman

**B**y the end of the 19th century, the traditional five-string banjo had reached a peak in its development. Thanks to virtuoso players like Alfred Farland and Fred VanEps, it had become one of the most popular musical instruments in Victorian America.

When urban musical tastes changed during the 1920's and 30's, the five-string banjo returned again to the rural folk tradition. The remnants of the classic style were transformed into the old-time fingerstyle of players like Charlie Poole and Snuffy Smith, and eventually, became bluegrass. The old minstrel "stroke" playing evolved into the well-known frailing style of players such as Uncle Dave Macon and Pete Seeger, and the subtler clawhammer playing of Wade Ward and Fred Cockerham.

**O**ME has taken the most desirable features of the beautiful, turn-of-the-century instruments, and combined them with exclusive improvements in materials, construction, finishes, and technical innovations, to create the Traditional Five-String open-back banjo. The 9/16" curly maple rim is fitted with our unique Silverspun™ traditional tone-ring and 24 individual brackets with ball-end nuts. The rim is capped with black laminate, then carefully bound with grained ivoroid for beauty and protection. For a familiar old-time look, rims with 28 brackets, may be ordered on select models.

The tone on these banjos is sweet and warm, with a clear, crisp treble, a deep, strong base and a desirable balance between sustain and decay. A choice of heads, bridges and tailpieces (low tension or extension), allows each player to get the tone "just right." If extra volume or projection is needed for string band work, our new Flushfit™ snap-on resonator is available as an option.

The Traditional Five-String banjo comes in a standard and a long-neck version and is available in all models.

## THE TRADITIONAL FIVE-STRING

*Traditional-style 5-string banjos, left to right:  
Grand Renaissance, Silver Columbine  
and Grand Artist "Gryphon."*









Eddy Davis & Cynthia Sayer

**T**he early decades of the 20th century took the banjo from the parlors of Victorian America into the dance halls and concert theaters of the great cities. Electricity was lighting the streets, and "jazz" was electrifying the nation!

Banjos began to need greatly increased volume and resonance to be heard over the other instruments in the jazz bands, and a new, high-spirited playing style started to develop that was very different from that of the traditional five-string.

Steel strings quickly replaced gut, the fifth-string was eliminated, the scale length and tuning were changed, and the instrument was played with a flatpick instead of with the fingers — giving birth to the modern tenor and plectrum jazz banjos.

This lively period brought fantastic innovations in tonal systems and resonators, as well as numerous other technical advances and artistic embellishments. It was truly the Golden Age of the Jazz banjo.

**O**ME Traditional Jazz banjos recapture the appearance and feel of the earliest jazz instruments, yet have the superior tone of later resonator models. We begin with our Silverspun™ Jazz tone ring, carefully fitted to a 9/16" curly maple rim. Ivoroid binding, 24 individual brackets with ball-end nuts, and our new

Flushfit™ resonator complete the rim assembly.

These delightfully vibrant instruments have plenty of "snap." They yield a clean, sweet tone, with a clear, crisp treble, and a full, warm bass, particularly suited for solo and traditional playing styles. A choice of heads, bridges and tailpieces (low or high tension) allows further tone refinement.

High-quality geared pegs provide for rapid, accurate tuning without slipping. An adjustable truss rod, and dual rim rods allow easy action adjustments. These convenient features were unavailable on the early instruments.

OME Traditional Jazz banjos are versatile, light and compact, ideal for the traditional or traveling musician. They come complete with a hard-shell case or deluxe, padded gig bag. Traditional Jazz banjos are available in tenor, plectrum and guitar versions, and in all models.

## THE TRADITIONAL JAZZ

*Traditional-style Jazz banjos, left to right: Monarch tenor, Juggernaut plectrum with optional mother-of-pearl block inlays, and Magician golden-maple tenor.*









Perry Bechtel

**C**losed-back, or "standard" side-wall resonator banjos were first made in the mid-1870's, as five-string instruments, by Henry C. Dobson of New York.

This design did not reach wide popularity, however, until William L. Lange offered it on his "Paramount" banjos in 1921 (Gibson followed later, in 1924). Tenor and plectrum players, such as Michael Pingitore, and Harry Reser, soon discovered its improved volume and resonant characteristics, and this style quickly became one of the most popular banjos ever offered.

**T**he OME Standard Jazz banjo has consistently proven to be our most popular style. It is considered by many professionals to be the most outstanding four-string banjo ever made. Combining our standard resonator with our exclusive Silverspun™ Jazz tone-ring and "f-hole" resonator flange, this instrument is reminiscent of the great banjos of the 1920's. Its unique design produces an unusually resonant instrument with a full, balanced and melodic response throughout the entire playing range.

Optional features such as carving on the peghead back and on the heel, delicate hand-engraved mother-of-pearl inlays, a knee-mute and a deep resonator are available.

Standard Jazz banjos come in the tenor, plectrum and guitar versions and are available in all models.

## THE STANDARD JAZZ

Standard-style Jazz banjos, left to right: Grand Artist "Spring" tenor, Gold Columbine plectrum and Gold Magician plectrum with optional plum-maple color and heel carving.









Buddy Wachter

**T**op-tension banjos were first made and patented by George Teed of New York City in the 1860's. Around 1886, he added a deep-walled resonator to it. Later, classical player and composer Joseph Cammeyer, of Brooklyn, modified the design and took it to England, where it became popular as the English "zither" banjo.

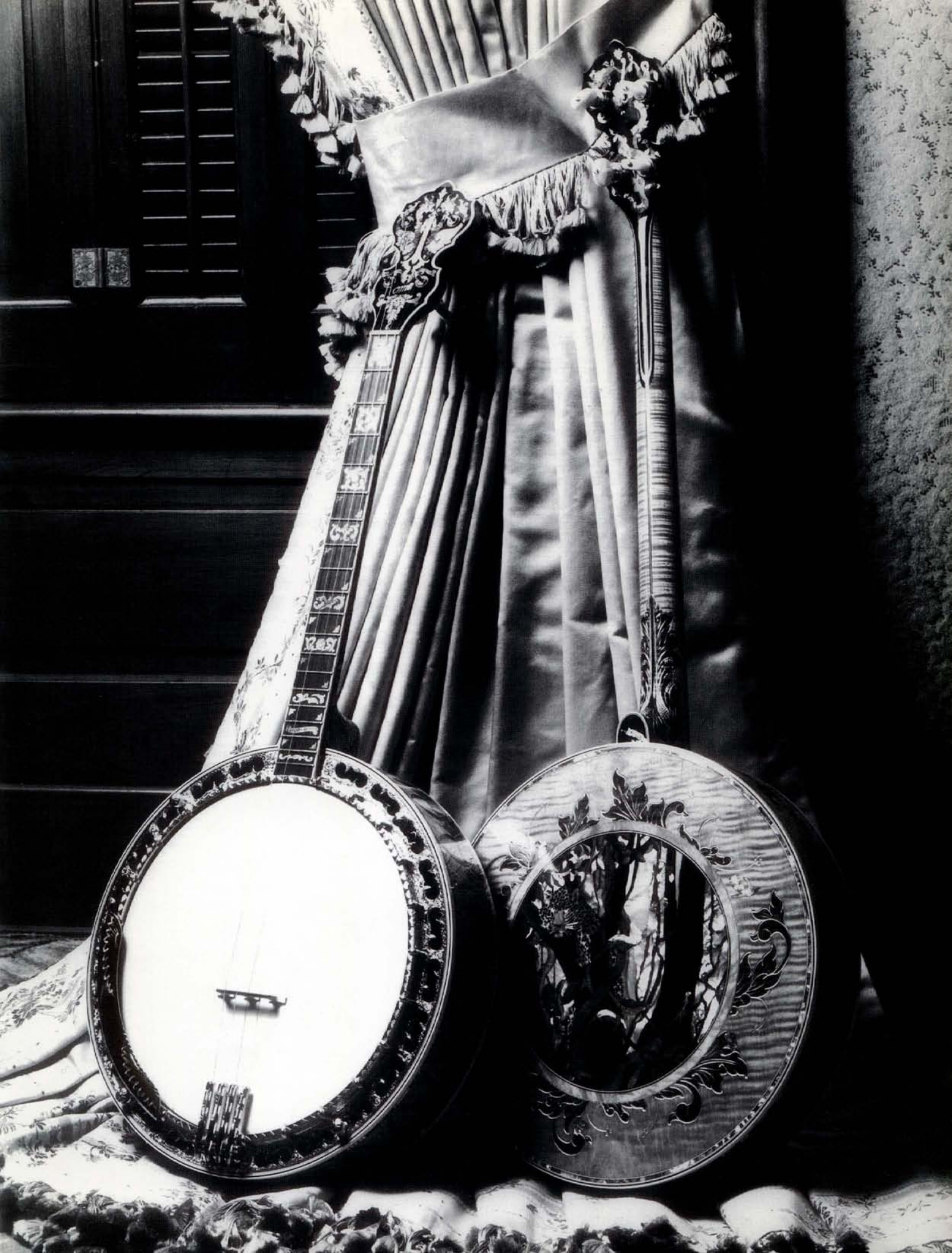
Plectrum artist, Eddy Peabody, is credited with bringing the design back to America, where it was further refined by the Vega Company of Boston, and became one of the most unique jazz banjos of the late 1920's and early '30's.

**T**he OME Megavox™ redefines the deep-wall resonator banjo for the needs of modern players. It features a 3" deep-wall resonator of curly maple beautifully bound with grained ivoroid. The exclusive top-mounted resonator flange with an integral tension-hoop is made of solid bell brass. A 24-bracket, 9/16" maple rim is expertly fitted with OME's Silverspun™ Jazz tone ring. The enlarged air chamber and our top-mounted resonator and flange of this unusual instrument produce a very deep, woody and resonant tone. The treble is well-balanced, the bass is mellow and full. A variety of heads, bridges and tailpieces provide more options for tonal quality. Hand-engraved metal parts and mother-of-pearl inlays, hand-carved neck and resonator, and hand-applied multi-colored stains are offered on select models. The Megavox banjo is available in tenor and plectrum versions, and in most models.

## THE MEGAVOX™

Megavox-style banjos, left to right:  
Grand Artist "Dragon" tenor and  
Grand Artist "Rain Forest" plectrum.











**O**riginally designed as a classical five-string banjo by renowned musician, Fred Bacon and talented builder and designer, David L. Day, this style of instrument soon became one of the world's most desired jazz banjos. The highly embellished, top-of-the-line models of this type were the favorites of famous players such as Roy Smeck, and Perry Bechtel (who later became one of OME's most well-known endorsers). They were also the most costly banjos of their time. In 1927 they sold for as much as twice the price of a new Model A Ford.



Tony Sullivan

## THE CLASSIC JAZZ

**T**he bell-shaped, spun-flange resonator used on OME's new Classic Jazz banjos gives them a very striking and unusual appearance. Combined with OME's Silverspun™ Jazz tone ring, this banjo produces an exceptionally clear, bright sound, with slightly more emphasis on the treble notes. It has the carrying power necessary to cut through other instruments in a jazz band, with a commanding presence of tone and volume.

Appearance details available with various models recall the artistry and showmanship of the golden era of jazz. These include an elegant ebony backstrap to reinforce the peghead, hand-engraved inlays (a classic block pattern is optional), and a die-colored, incise-carved neck, rim and resonator.

In keeping with the classic jazz banjo heritage, an Oettinger-style tailpiece is standard. The OME knee-mute provides instant control of tonal effects, and is optional.

The Classic Jazz banjos are available in most models.

Classic-style Jazz banjos, left to right:  
Grand Artist plectrum with floral relief carved solid resonator in golden-maple color, Grand Renaissance tenor with optional scroll metal engraving, and Silver Columbine plectrum.







**T**he Great Depression brought the Roaring Twenties to a crashing end. Changing musical tastes and new recording techniques soon brought the same fate to the popular use of the jazz banjo. The bright, enthusiastic sound of the banjo did not re-emerge until after World War II with a revival of Dixieland jazz, and with a spirited new form of music called Bluegrass. Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs and other bluegrass musicians borrowed heavily from both traditional and jazz playing styles to create their hard-driving tunes. Even the type of banjo adopted for this music was an unusual mix of styles — a rare five-string version of an instrument designed primarily for four-string jazz.



Pete Wernick

## THE MEGATONE BLUEGRASS

**O**ME Megatone™ Bluegrass banjos skillfully combine the most sought-after features of vintage instruments with outstanding improvements in materials, workmanship and design.

At the heart of the Megatone is a precisely balanced combination of our 3/4" laminated three-ply maple rim, our specially alloyed and shaped bell-brass tone ring, and either a standard one-piece zinc die-cast resonator flange or the exclusive OME cast-brass "f-hole" flange.

With the penetrating volume of these powerful banjos, the audience will hear your playing above the hardest-driving bluegrass band. The treble is exceptionally brilliant and the bass is deep and full. A rapid tone decay provides optimum note separation for crisp, clear finger-picking playing styles.

The expertly shaped and fretted neck is extremely fast and accurate, providing even the most demanding player with the speed and exacting intonation required for stage and recording work.

A two-way truss rod and double rim rods allow for micrometer-precise string action. An extension tailpiece, a one-piece armrest, and planetary tuners are standard. Keith D-tuners and our deeper resonator are optional.

These instruments take the art of banjo-making well beyond the best of the vintage instruments. They are available in all models.

Megatone-style Bluegrass banjos, left to right:  
Renaissance in golden-maple color with custom  
backstrap and center resonator carving;  
Gold Juggernaut and Silver Monarch.



## — MODELS —

*The OME banjo styles described earlier may be ordered in a variety of models as shown in the following pages of this catalog.*

### THE GRAND ARTIST™

For those who prefer an extraordinary instrument of exceptional appearance, matchless quality, and unquestioned prestige, OME offers the Grand Artist.

These original, "one-of-a-kind," "Limited Edition" banjos are individually made to the customer's specifications. We offer such exotic options as: our finest metal engraving, brilliant and colorful stone settings, original inlay designs (in pearl, abalone and other precious materials), high-relief figural carving on the heel and solid resonator back, and beautiful hand-applied, multi-colored stains and gold leaf.

The OME Grand Artist is available in the Traditional, Jazz and Bluegrass styles. Special order only.

Consider the possibilities.



*Grand Artist models, left to right:  
Standard-style "Hummingbird"  
plectrum in golden-brown color,  
Standard-style rosewood plectrum, and  
Traditional-style "Spring" 5-string.*



Ron  
Lynam

## THE GRAND MOGUL™ & GRAND RENAISSANCE™

Our top-of-the-line Grand Mogul and Grand Renaissance models contain hundreds of pieces of colorful abalone purfling on the highly figured, curly maple neck, rim and resonator. The heel of the neck and the resonator back are superbly hand-carved. Each model is completely bound with grained ivoroid and finished in a rich, golden Cremona color.

The Gaboon ebony fingerboard, peghead overlay, back-strap and heel cap are finely inlaid with hand-engraved mother-of-pearl in either the Grand Mogul or Grand Renaissance patterns. Metal parts are gold-plated and profusely hand-engraved. The tuners are the finest, and are fitted with genuine mother-of-pearl tuning knobs.

Additional options are: hand-carved rim and resonator sides, gun-style metal engraving and hand-applied, multi-colored stains.

The magnificent OME Grand Series is available in all styles. Each instrument is truly a work of art, and a continuing source of pride, inspiration and delight.

*Grand Mogul and Grand Renaissance models, left to right: Classic-style tenor with custom resonator center ring, Grand Mogul Megavox-style plectrum with optional die-coloring, and Grand Renaissance Standard-style tenor.*





Carl  
Jackson



## THE MOGUL™ & RENAISSANCE™

**S**tunning beauty. Rare and luxurious materials. Unsurpassed artistry in construction, ornamentation and finish.

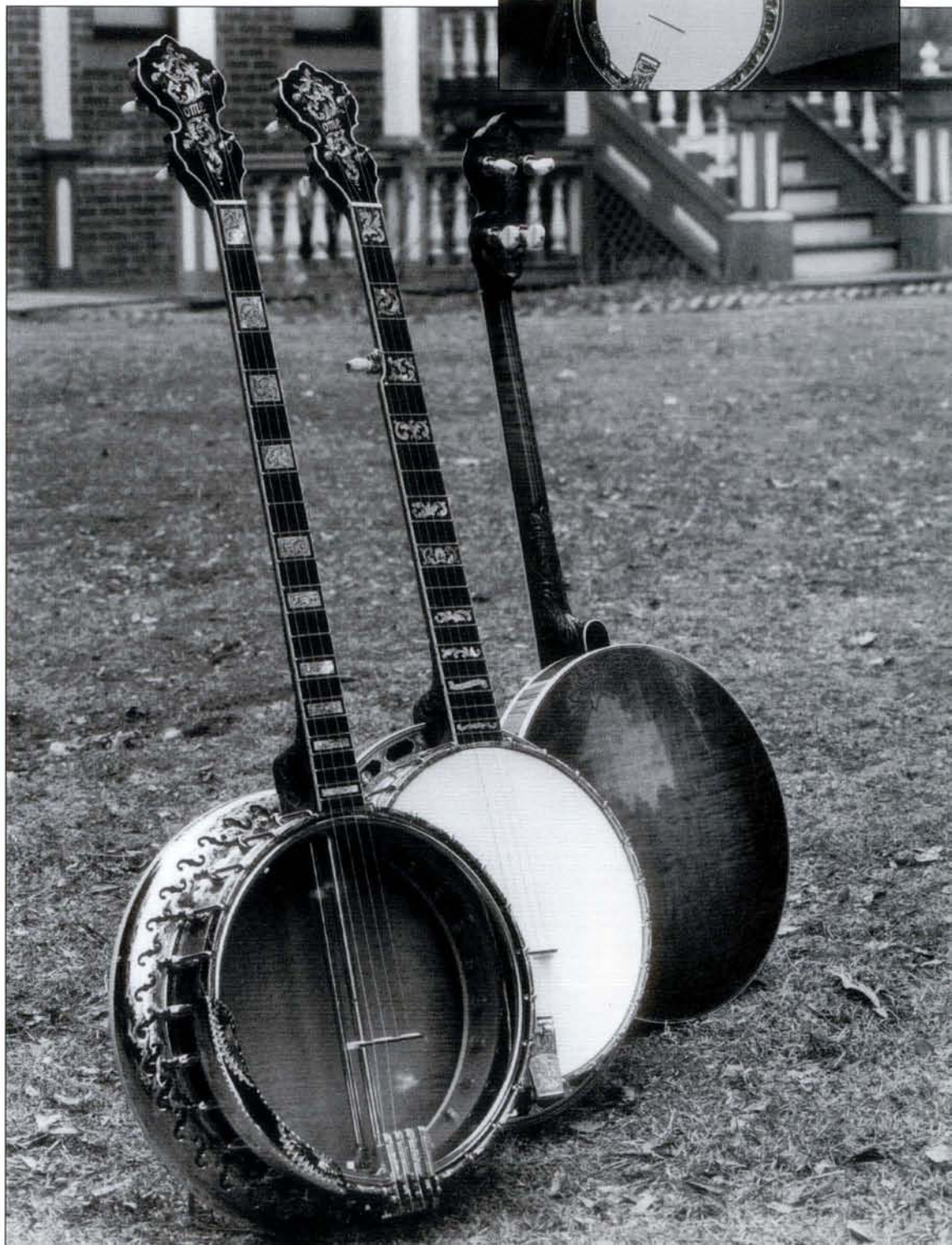
These qualities establish the OME Mogul and Renaissance as the ultimate choice for those with an uncompromising desire for artistic excellence.

These outstanding banjos are offered in the classic Mogul block pattern or the highly ornate Renaissance scroll pattern. Each instrument features artistically hand-engraved mother-of-pearl, meticulously inlaid into the ivoroid-bound, ebony fingerboard, peghead overlay and heelcap.

The heel of the neck, peghead and resonator back are elegantly hand-carved in a handsome scroll motif.

A beautifully shaded, golden antique Cremona stain emphasizes the curly maple's highly figured richness and character of grain. The rim is bound with grained ivoroid and capped in black. Metal work is lavishly enriched with ornate hand-engraving, and carefully plated with rich 24-kt. gold.

These outstanding instruments are available in all styles.



*Mogul and Renaissance models, left to right: Mogul Classic-style plectrum, Renaissance Megatone-style Bluegrass, and Standard-style tenor.*



Vince  
Sadovsky

# THE JUGGERNAUT, COLUMBINE™ & MAGICIAN™ *Also Silver & Gold Models*

**F**ine woods, ornate inlay in colorful abalone or iridescent mother-of-pearl, and carefully refined appointments with a wide range of desirable options, are some of the outstanding features of the popular Juggernaut, Columbine and Magician models.

These beautiful instruments offer select curly maple and ebony woods which are gracefully bound with grained ivoroid, stained and shaded a variety of vibrant sunburst or solid colors. They are finished in our highly polished and durable varnish.

The Gaboon ebony fingerboard and peghead overlay are finely inlaid with either the bold Juggernaut scroll, the delicate Columbine floral, or the engraved Magician Victorian (reference page 5) pattern.

Standard options include: nickel or chrome plating, Victorian or Artist peghead shape, engraved resonator purfling rings, and a hand-carved heel and peghead back.

The Silver Juggernaut, Columbine and Magician feature delicately hand-engraved metal parts. Gold models are further distinguished with finer woods and rich 24-kt. gold plating.

These banjos are available in all styles.

*Left to right: Gold Megatone-style Bluegrass with optional heel carving, Gold Columbine Classic-style plectrum with custom geometric metal engraving, and Juggernaut Standard-style tenor.*





Janet  
Davis



## THE MONARCH™

*Silver Monarch & Gold Monarch*

The outstanding OME Artist Series begins with the stately Monarch, offering features well beyond those of other professional instruments.

Select curly maple woods are carefully laminated with genuine ebony for lasting beauty. The rich Brazilian rosewood fingerboard and peghead overlay are skillfully inlaid with the combined beauty of colorful abalone and luminous mother-of-pearl in a distinctive floral motif. Grained ivoroid binds the gracefully hand-shaped neck, the curly maple resonator and the edges of the open back rim.

A deep amber color stain accentuates the striking figure of the maple, which is finished to a brilliant, high polish with our durable, catalyzed varnish.

The precision-made metal parts are highly polished and heavily plated with either traditional nickel or tarnish-resistant chrome.

The impressive Silver Monarch adds delicately hand-engraved metal parts, while the

Gold Monarch is further enhanced by hand-burnished 24-kt. gold plating and finer woods.

The Monarchs come complete with a hard-shell case or a deluxe padded gig bag, and are available in all styles.

*Monarch Models, left to right:  
Silver Monarch Classic-style tenor,  
Monarch Standard-style plectrum,  
and Monarch Megatone-style Bluegrass.*





Bill  
Greenfield

## THE JUBILEE™ & JUNIPER™

*Minstrel Jubilee & Minstrel Juniper*

The Jubilee and Juniper models combine elegant simplicity with classic design and construction to offer a quality, hand-made instrument at a modest price. The curly maple neck is gracefully hand-shaped and laminated with ebony and maple underlays for additional strength and lasting beauty.

The Jubilee features a traditional star-moon inlay pattern with an early scroll peghead shape. The Juniper offers a double-cut peghead and delicate floral inlays.

Modern conveniences such as planetary gear tuners, adjustable truss and rim rods and a Fyberskin drum head, make these instruments easy to tune and a pleasure to play. Nickel-plated metal parts, tortoise-bound open-back rim and resonator, and our satin lacquer finish are standard.

Both models come with a hard-shell, plush-lined case, the OME Limited Lifetime Warranty and are available in most styles.

The Minstrel Jubilee and Minstrel Juniper models feature mahogany woods, tung oil finish and our Minstrel brass tone ring.

The Minstrel models come with a padded gig bag, the OME warranty and are available in the open-back version. The OME Flushfit resonator is optional.

*Left to right: Juniper Traditional-style tenor with optional Flushfit resonator, Juniper Traditional-style 5-string, and Minstrel Jubilee 5-string.*

*Back cover: Grand Artist banjos, left to right: Megavox-style "Rain Forest" plectrum, Standard-style "Spring" tenor, Classic-style "Spring" plectrum, and Megavox-style "Dragon" tenor.*







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