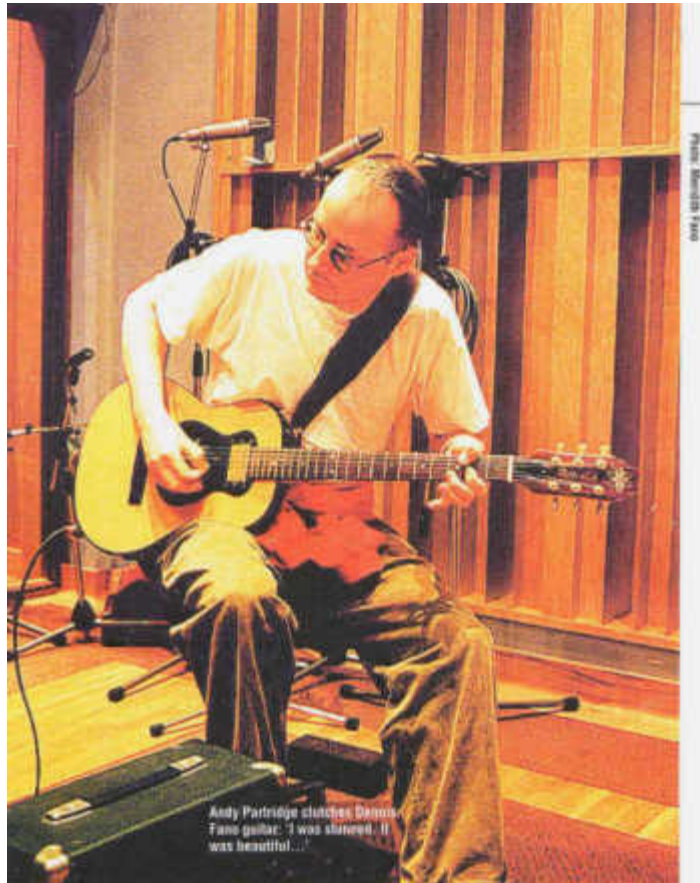


Fingers Working Overtime: THE XTC GUITARFILE

With the departure of Dave Gregory XTC have lost a considerable arsenal of vintage sounds, including Andy Partridge's favourite amp, a Fender Super Reverb. But they get by - and a mad XTC fan and guitar builder in New York has helped them out in the best way possible... Partridge still owns and plays his venerable '75 Ibanez Artist (the newly released song *My Brown Guitar* is not, sadly, a tribute to this long suffering instrument but a paeon to the Partridge todger.) His main acoustic is an early '70's Martin D-35, his only bass a Kay-badged Woolworths model (it's plywood... sounds like a tuba). Strangely, his most played guitar of recent years is a cheap 3/4 sized Romanian classical belonging to his daughter Holly, a guitar which led directly to his latest acquisition. 'A musician friend, David Yazbek, was visiting Matt Umanov's guitar shop in Manhattan and noticed one of the guitar repairers there had an XTC tattoo,' explains Partridge. 'David mentioned he knew us, and the guy fell on the floor saying he'd always wanted to make a guitar for us. So I got a phone call from this chap, whose name turned out to be Dennis Fano, and he offered to make me a guitar, and I tentatively said, "Well... um... okay, then," and when he asked what kind of guitar I wanted I ended up talking about this cheap classical that I'd been playing. 'To be honest, I wasn't expecting much of it - you know, maybe a cigar box with some rubber bands on it - but it turns out that Dennis is a fantastic guitar builder. This incredible electric guitar arrived with the same body proportions as the classical and all the controls on little wheels around the edge to keep the looks clean. I was stunned. It was just beautiful. He's making me another one, too, although I tried to refuse - they're worth a grand and a half, easily - and this one'll be based on his standard model, the Satellite, in glorious Las Vegas-style white, which is the colour guitar I've always wanted.' 'Dennis made me a bass, too,' chips in Moulding. 'I haven't quite got used to it yet, but it's beautiful and it's on some of the new album.'





Excerpt from Guitar Magazine, July 2000.

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