

GUITAR: Instrument features rare, coveted wood

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gave a hint of its intense figuring.

When the loggers felled the tree by ax in 1965, things went terribly wrong. The trunk landed in a ravine, where it proved impossible to extricate even after being halved by a tractor.

The tree had been resting in the ravine for more than a decade when saw-mill owner Alan Mauney rediscovered it. He brought it to the attention of Robert Novak, an American wood importer who happened to be in the area in search of rosewood. Flooding prevented them from visiting the fallen tree for a month. When Novak at last encountered it, he immediately sensed its magnificence and entered a protracted bidding war that involved several other parties.

Since its extraction, guitar builders the world over have been coveting and trying to garner some of its wood, renowned for its incredible

figuring and beautiful tone.

“I got involved with The Tree early on, like in 1992,” Howlett told *The Nugget*.

He saw and played a guitar made with its wood and “I fell in love with it.” He obtained a quantity of the wood and had Breedlove make a guitar for him from it — starting a relationship with the guitar company that continues to this day.

“I became sort of obsessed with it,” Howlett confessed.

He tracked down other sets of the coveted wood — and when he heard that Breedlove was contemplating a special guitar for the 20th anniversary SFF raffle, he wanted to contribute.

“They said they were going to do something special for the 20th anniversary, and I said, ‘You want to do something *really* special?’ And I was just happy to donate it and I hope it makes a few extra bucks for you... I just wanted to give back to the community there.”

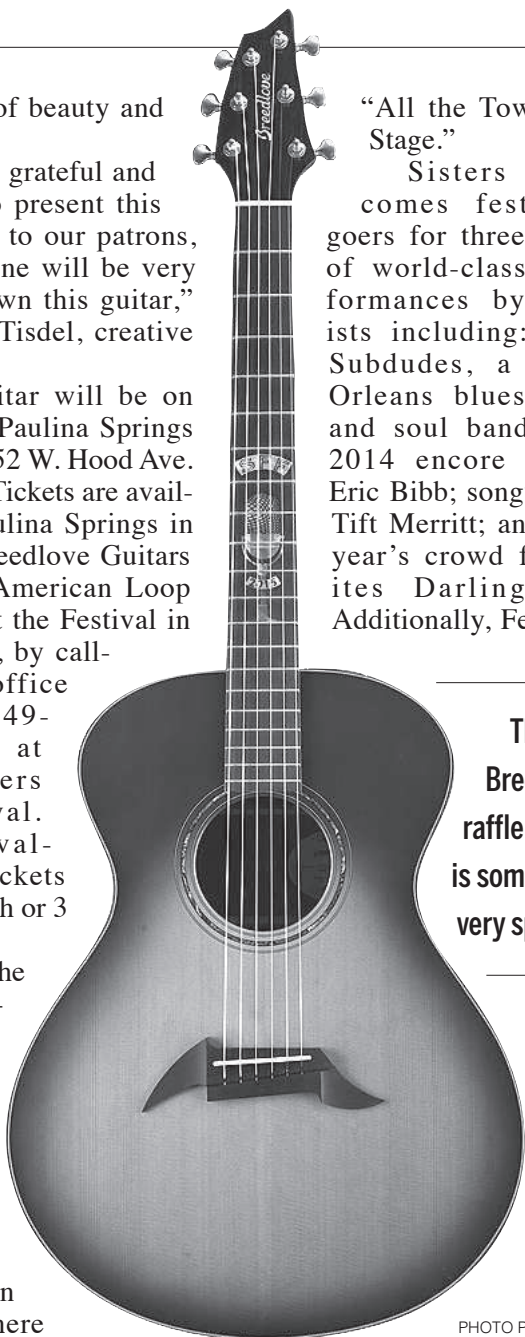
The wood Howlett donated has been crafted by Breedlove Guitars into a one-of-a-kind instrument that celebrates the Sisters Folk Festival’s 20th anniversary in extraordinary ways. It

is a thing of beauty and mystery.

“We are grateful and honored to present this instrument to our patrons, and someone will be very lucky to own this guitar,” said Brad Tisdell, creative director.

The guitar will be on display at Paulina Springs Books at 252 W. Hood Ave. in Sisters. Tickets are available at Paulina Springs in Sisters, Breedlove Guitars at 61573 American Loop in Bend, at the Festival in September, by calling the office at 541-549-4979 or at www.sistersfolkfestival.org/festival-raffles. Tickets are \$20 each or 3 for \$50.

This is the 20th anniversary celebration of what has become a nationally recognized festival in Sisters, where



The SFF Breedlove raffle guitar is something very special.

PHOTO PROVIDED

“All the Town’s a Stage.”

Sisters welcomes festival-goers for three days of world-class performances by artists including: The Subdudes, a New Orleans blues-rock and soul band; the 2014 encore artist Eric Bibb; songwriter Tift Merritt; and last year’s crowd favorites Darlingside. Additionally, Festival

organizers are proud to bring Boston-based bands Session Americana; Laura Cortese and the Dance Cards; Ryan Montbleau; and the duo Tall Heights. Other acts on the bill are: Mandolin Orange; The Bills; Shinyribs & the Tijuana Train Wreck Horns; Gretchen Peters; Zydeco master Andre Thierry; Beth Nielsen Chapman; Canadian roots band New Country Rehab; Liz Longley; Australian-songwriter Jordie Lane; Breedlove-sponsored artist Luke Wade and No Civilians, Jonathan Byrd and the Pickup Cowboys, The Ballroom Thieves, Gretchen Peters, The Young Dubliners, Tracy Grammer, Chris Rosser, Jefferson Hamer, Buddy Mondlock, Lance Canales & the Flood, Halden Wofford and the Hi Beams, and many more.

A limited number of three-day festival passes are left. To purchase a weekend pass or to view this year’s line-up, please visit www.sistersfolkfestival.org.

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