

GUITARS: Couple builds double-body guitars

Continued from page 28

Mexico City.

As Farretta recalled, Shelton told him, “I can’t repair it, but give me some time, and we’ll design a double body that won’t fail.”

In 1981, Shelton designed and built the guitar for López Ramos.

From there Shelton-Farretta began building double body classical and flamenco guitars, including two more for Ramos.

A double-body guitar is essentially a guitar with a shell over the back and sides. The shell is attached to the guitar at the neck, the end block and along the sides. But the shell and the guitar back do not touch.

This shields the player’s body from contacting the back of the guitar, so it can resonate freely. According to their website, this gives the guitar an unusual “presence.” The site says, “These guitars are very difficult to build and use as much wood as two traditional guitars.”

Farretta said there may be Spanish guitar makers who design double bodies, but they don’t know anyone else who makes them.

Shelton and Farretta worked out of four different small shops in downtown Portland before they relocated to Alsea in 2005, where they have a machine shop and an assembly room next to their home.

They build double classic, double flamenco, classic and flamenco guitars, ranging in price from \$3,000 to \$4,600. They use cedar, spruce, cypress and various kinds of rosewood, depending on the type of guitar.

“We used to go out and get the wood ourselves. Now I’m 75 and can’t do it anymore,” Shelton said.

Either one of them can perform all of the tasks involved in guitar building, Shelton said. As a lifetime woodworker, he prefers to do all of the sawing and work in the machine shop and has all of the measurements memorized.

Farretta opts to do the bindings, linings and fine fitting for the guitars.

Shelton and Farretta consider themselves semiretired, so they don’t build as many guitars as they used to.

“We used to make 20 a year. Now we’re down to six or seven,” Shelton said.

“We now work two or two and a half hours a day, because if you work longer than that you start making mistakes, and we can’t have mistakes,” Shelton said.

They still get orders from national and international buyers.

“We’ve sold everywhere from Yemen to Hong Kong,” he said.

Shelton calls building guitars a labor of love.

“I don’t make a lot of money with it, but it’s fun,” he said.

Two years ago, Shelton and Farretta made a new acquaintance in the guitar world, which will lead to another new guitar they will build.

They met Berto Boyd, a flamenco guitarist, composer and artistic director of the Corvallis Guitar Society. Carson Willie, a student of Boyd’s, passed along a request for Boyd to play guitar at a funeral service for Margaret Sparrow, who owned a Shelton-Farretta guitar.

Shelton and Farretta showed him Sparrow’s guitar before he was set to play. They built her the guitar in 1990.

“They pulled this guitar from the case, and it was like the Holy Grail,” Boyd said.

He ended up playing that guitar, instead of the one he brought.

“It was one of the most profound musical experiences that I’ve had,” Boyd said.

Afterwards, her family gave the guitar to Willie, who lent it to Boyd to perform

“The Spanish Guitar: From the Streets to the Concert Stage” in April 2016 at the Majestic Theatre. The two worked out a deal, and he eventually gave the guitar to Boyd.

“Luthiers like this in Oregon making this level of guitar is extremely rare,” Boyd said.

Shelton-Farretta also custom-built a guitar for Boyd, which he used last month to perform at the Chintimini Chamber Music Festival.

After the concert, Boyd realized he needed a new classical guitar. Shelton and Farretta are set to build a guitar for him that may be the first of its kind, he said.

“They’re going to make a double top, double body classical guitar for me. This is cutting-edge,” Boyd said.

The double top guitar is two tops sandwiched together. In between them is a honeycomb type of material called Nomex, which makes the

guitar more stiff and creates more projection, Boyd said.

The luthiers have seen what a new style of guitar can do for their business.

Farretta said, “This is the Manuel LÚpez Ramos of the new Shelton-Farretta age. This is a whole new development, and it’s revolutionary.”

Four of Boyd’s students also own Shelton-Farretta Guitars.

The couple has noticed an increase in interest for their guitars since meeting Boyd.

“We were still selling, but not quite as fast,” Shelton said. People interested in buying a Shelton-Farretta guitar should expect to wait at least a year, he said.

Boyd is determined to buy one of every Shelton-Farretta guitar they make.

“I’ve owned some very high-end instruments from Spain, but there is something about their guitars that really speaks to me that I love,” Boyd said.



— Serving all of Central Oregon —



Sandy Goodsell
Principal Broker
ABR, CDPE, CIAS, GRI, SRES
541-480-0183



Jonathan Hicks
Broker
865-335-6104

LICENSED BROKERS IN THE STATE OF OREGON

goodsellandhicksellcentralor.com



GOODSELL & HICKS



ELLEN WOOD:
A GIANT AMONG REALTORS
Selling or Buying in Central Oregon?
Call me for a FREE home valuation now!



Ellen Wood
Broker, GRI, ABR
541-588-0033
290 E. Cascade Ave.
Sisters, Oregon 97759

www.SistersLuxuryHomes.com

CUSTOM HOMES • RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PROJECTS

J.P. Pierce
GENERAL CONTRACTING LLC

Becke W. Pierce
General Contracting LLC
541-647-0384
CCB# 190689

Arne J. Pierce
General Contracting LLC
541-668-0883
CCB# 208020

Serving the Sisters Area Since 1976
Strictly Quality

Live in Sisters? Love it Here?

We’re looking for two team members who are the perfect fit

Potential candidates must be...

- Detail-oriented • Motivated • Outgoing
- Licensed in Oregon • And enjoy a boutique-style firm

Two locations: 282 Cedar St., Sisters & 3305 S. Hwy. 97, Redmond

To learn more or to apply visit... bit.ly/joinlegacyrealty



LEGACY REALTY
WWW.LEGACY.PROPERTY

Live Priceless Moments at The Ranch

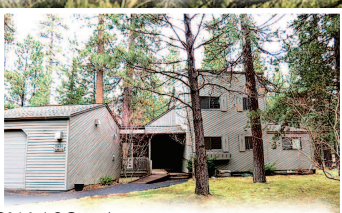




EAST MEADOW 4 – \$675,000 mls 201706500
Incredible views!



GLAZE MEADOW 302 – \$1,125,000 mls 201706639
Lovely greatroom with golf course view



SOUTH MEADOW 108 – \$560,000 mls 201707468
NEW LISTING! Wonderful location



We’re your neighbors...
Exclusive Onsite Realtor –
and over half our agents live here!

Black Butte Ranch
THERE IS A PLACE

Don Bowler • Gary Yoder • Dick Howells • Phil Arends • Carol Dye • Joe Dye • Ross Kennedy

Come see us! Open from 9 to 5 daily, adjacent to the Lodge Pool Complex
541-595-3838 | View all our listings at howellsrealtygroup.com

Wine & Cheese Open House – every Wednesday evening, 5:30 to 7!