

Met exhibit explores the art of rock ‘n’ roll

By KATHERINE ROTH
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Museum exhibits tend to be quiet. Not this one.

In “Play It Loud,” an exuberant show that can be heard as well as seen, the Metropolitan Museum of Art takes on the history of rock ‘n’ roll through iconic instruments on loan from some of rock’s biggest names. There are flamboyant costumes worn by Prince and Jimmy Page, videotaped interviews with “guitar gods,” even shattered guitars.

The show runs here from April 8 through Oct. 1 before traveling to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, in Cleveland, where it will be on view from Nov. 20, 2019, through Sept. 13, 2020.

“We’re looking at rock ‘n’ roll instruments as an art. They serve as muses, tools and visual icons, and many of them are hand-painted and lovingly designed,” says Jayson Kerr Dobney, curator in charge of the department of musical instruments at the Met. He organized “Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock and Roll,” with Craig J. Inciardi, curator and director of acquisitions at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

For anyone who ever dreamed of climbing onstage at a rock concert for a closer look, this may be your best shot.

“Instruments are some of the most personal objects connected to musicians, but as audience members we are primarily used to seeing them from far away, up on a stage in performance. This exhibition will provide a rare opportunity to examine some of rock ‘n’ roll’s most iconic objects up close,” says Dobney.

Highlights include Chuck Berry’s ES-350T guitar (at the entrance to the exhibit), John Lennon’s 12-string Rickenbacker 325, an electric 500/1 “violin” bass on loan from



AP Photo/Seth Wenig

A guitar played by Chuck Berry is displayed at the entrance to the exhibit “Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York on Monday. The exhibit, which showcases the instruments of rock and roll legends, opens to the public on April 8 and runs until Oct. 1, 2019.



AP Photo/Seth Wenig

Guitars used by Jimi Hendrix, left, and Eric Clapton are displayed with concert posters at the exhibit “Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll,” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York on Monday.

Paul McCartney, Keith Moon’s drum set, and the white Stratocaster played at Woodstock by Jimi Hendrix.

Interviewed by The Associated Press on Monday, Page, the guitarist and founder of Led Zepelin, said that when curators approached him and explained their vision of the

exhibit — you approach it through the Greco-Roman art galleries and then suddenly come upon Berry’s guitar — he was all in.

“My guitar was confiscated if I took it to the school field to play,” he says. “That’s the kind of respect given to guitars in those days.

“So to see guitars from

people I listen to, it’s absolutely phenomenal. It’s humbling.”

Over 130 instruments are featured in the show, including ones played and beloved by the Beatles, Elvis Presley, Bruce Springsteen, The Rolling Stones, Lady Gaga, Joan Jett, Metallica, Steve Miller, Page and other rock ‘n’ roll greats. The collec-

tion spans 1939 to 2017. All the instruments are on loan, most by the musicians themselves, although Miller has promised to donate to the Met his 1961 Les Paul TV Special guitar, painted by surfboard artist Bob Cantrell.

The show features its own rock ‘n’ roll soundtrack and is organized in thematic sections.

“Setting the Stage” explores rock’s early days in the American South of the late 1940s and early 1950s, when pianos, saxophones and acoustic guitars were among the instruments of choice. Soon, Berry helped revolutionize the sound, establishing the electric guitar as the genre’s primary voice and visual icon.

Also featured is a setup like that used by the Beatles on “The Ed Sullivan Show” in 1964. After that performance, “thousands of rock bands were formed using that same lineup: two guitars, a bass and a drum set,” says Dobney.

The “Guitar Gods” section traces that phrase to Eric Clapton’s stardom and a piece of 1966 graffiti in London proclaiming, “Clapton is God.” Others dubbed guitar gods included Page, Jeff Beck, Pete Townsend and Hendrix. All exemplified virtuoso musicianship and awe-inspiring swagger. By the 1970s, women, too, were fronting bands and finding platforms for their own personae and skills, Dobney says.

“The Rhythm Section” explores the sources of the genre’s powerful rhythms, with accented backbeats created using a drum set and electric bass guitar.

Even as guitars were lovingly painted, and sometimes even built by the musicians who played them (like Eddie Van Halen’s red and white “Frankenstein” guitar, featuring a Fender-style body and neck with Gibson electronics), instruments were also famously destroyed by rock stars as

part of their act.

“It may be the only musical genre where destruction of instruments became a part of the performance,” Dobney says.

Featured is a fragment of a Hendrix guitar that he set on fire and smashed onstage at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967; a Gibson SG Special guitar destroyed by Townsend during a photo shoot with Annie Leibovitz for Rolling Stone (and preserved in Lucite); and a modified Hammond L-100 organ used by Keith Emerson as a “stunt instrument,” which he would jump on, pull on top of himself, stick knives in and — in this instrument’s case — set ablaze during performances.

“Expanding the Band” explores the way the classic four-piece rock band was augmented by instruments like dulcimers, sitars and a range of experimental keyboards to expand the sound.

“Creating an Image” opens with an enormous, jagged electric piano housed in acrylic with built-in lights, owned by Lady Gaga. That section also includes Prince’s “Love Symbol” guitar and a dragon-embroidered outfit once worn by Page.

A wall image of Springsteen taken from behind with his guitar over his shoulder illustrates how for some stars, the guitar became almost an extension of their body.

“Creating a Sound” explores the technical side of rock music, with the amps, guitars and rigs used by Page, Keith Richards, Van Halen and Tom Morello. Each of the four rigs is accompanied by a videotaped interview with the artist explaining how they created their unique sound.

The show ends with footage of some of rock’s most iconic moments, along with decades of posters advertising groundbreaking concerts.

AMERICA’S TEST KITCHEN

Short ribs in a beer and cider vinegar lead to great tacos

To make shredded beef tacos, we braised short ribs and then added beer and cider vinegar for a gentle, spicy kick.

Carne deshebrada, literally meaning “shredded beef,” is a common offering at Mexican taco stands. It’s made by braising a large cut of beef until ultra-tender and then shredding the meat and tossing it with a flavorful rojo sauce made with tomatoes and/or dried chiles.

Although short ribs are a bit nontraditional, their ultra-beefy flavor made them an excellent choice. To achieve flavorful browning, we raised the beef up out of the braising liquid by resting it on onion rounds; the ambient heat browned the short ribs just enough for this dish.

Next, we created a braising liquid that would infuse the beef with flavor and later act as a base for our rojo sauce. Beer and cider vinegar provided depth and brightness, and tomato paste boosted savory flavor. Smoky-sweet ancho chiles gave the sauce a rounder flavor and a gentle, spicy kick.

Cumin, cinnamon, cloves, oregano, and bay leaves added warmth and complexity. Once the beef had finished cooking, we pureed the braising liquid into a sauce with a smooth, luxurious consistency. A bright, tangy slaw provided a nice counterbalance to the



AP Photo/Carl Tremblay

This undated photo provided by America’s Test Kitchen in March 2019 shows Shredded Beef Tacos in Brookline, Mass. This recipe appears in the cookbook “How to Braise Everything.”

rich meat. Use a full-bodied lager or ale such as Dos Equis or Sierra Nevada

Nutrition information per serving: 521 calories; 187 calories from fat; 21 g fat (8

g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 94 mg cholesterol; 846 mg sodium; 44 g carbohydrate; 9 g fiber; 9 g sugar; 35 g protein.

For more recipes, cook-

ing tips and ingredient and product reviews, visit <https://www.americastestkitchen.com>. Find more recipes like Shredded Beef Tacos in “How to Braise Everything.”

SHREDDED BEEF TACOS

- Servings: 6-8
Start to finish: 3½ hours
1½ cups beer
4 dried ancho chiles, stemmed, seeded, and torn into 1/2 inch pieces (1 cup)
1/2 cup cider vinegar
2 tablespoons tomato paste
6 garlic cloves, lightly crushed and peeled
3 bay leaves
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons dried oregano
Salt and pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 large onion, sliced into 1/2 inch-thick rounds
3 pounds boneless beef short ribs, trimmed and cut into 2 inch cubes
18 (6 inch) corn tortillas, warmed
1 recipe Cabbage-Carrot Slaw (recipe follows)
4 ounces queso fresco, crumbled (1 cup)
Lime wedges

Adjust oven rack to lower middle position and heat oven to 325 F. Combine beer, anchos, vinegar, tomato paste, garlic, bay leaves, cumin, oregano, 2 teaspoons salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, cloves, and cinnamon in Dutch oven. Arrange onion rounds in single layer on bottom of pot. Place beef on top of onion rounds in single layer. Cover and cook until meat is well browned and tender, 2½ to 3 hours.

Using slotted spoon, transfer beef to large bowl, cover loosely with aluminum foil, and set aside. Strain liquid through fine-mesh strainer into 2 cup liquid measuring cup (do not wash pot). Discard onion rounds and bay leaves. Transfer remaining solids to blender. Let strained liquid settle for 5 minutes, then skim any fat from surface. Add water as needed to equal 1 cup. Pour liquid into blender with reserved solids and blend until smooth, about 2 minutes. Transfer sauce to now-empty pot.

Using 2 forks, shred beef into bite-size pieces. Bring sauce to simmer over medium heat. Add beef and stir to coat. Season with salt to taste. (Beef can be refrigerated for up to 2 days; gently reheat before serving.)

Spoon small amount of beef into each warm tortilla and serve, passing slaw, queso fresco, and lime wedges separately.

Cabbage-Carrot Slaw

- Makes about 8 cups
1 cup cider vinegar
1/2 cup water
1 tablespoon sugar
1½ teaspoons salt
1/2 head green cabbage, cored and sliced thin (6 cups)
1 onion, sliced thin
1 large carrot, peeled and shredded
1 jalapeño chile, stemmed, seeded, and minced
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 cup chopped fresh cilantro

Whisk vinegar, water, sugar, and salt in large bowl until sugar is dissolved. Add cabbage, onion, carrot, jalapeño, and oregano and toss to combine. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours. Drain slaw and stir in cilantro right before serving.