




**The M-21 Steve Earle
Custom Signature Edition**

Steve Earle M-21 Custom Artist Edition

A Straightforward Stage & Studio Model With Classic Style 21 Appointments

With Texas roots, Nashville credentials, New York sensibilities, and maverick spirit, singer/songwriter Steve Earle leaves any pre-conceived notions regarding his music in the dust. That includes the guitars he plays, and helps explain how the new Martin M-21 Steve Earle Custom Edition came to be.

In 2005 Earle moved to New York City and soon found his way to Matt Umanov Guitars. Matt Umanov, who has been matching players with instruments since 1965, guided his new customer in the purchase of a few Martin guitars and along the way introduced him to the M body style, which combines jumbo (0000) size with 000 depth. Umanov knows the body style well; his conversion of an old Martin archtop for David Bromberg in the 1960s served as the pattern for the Martin M in the 1970s (for additional information, see the David Bromberg article in the July 2006 "Sounding Board"). The Martin M quickly became Earle's favorite acoustic, so much so that he now tours with a pair of them.

His enthusiasm for the Martin "M" jump-started development of a Martin Steve Earle signature guitar. Earle turned to Umanov for help with the details and together they created the Martin M-21 Steve Earle Custom Edition, a "poor man's" M that showcases this body style's big, balanced sound and playing comfort in an elegant, affordable package.

Like the route to his namesake Martin guitar, Steve Earle has never been predictable. Raised in Texas, he found the guitar at age 11 and found his first musical mentor in songwriter Townes Van Zandt while still a teenager.

At age 19 he moved to Nashville, where he took odd jobs, played in various bands, wrote songs and connected with some of Music City's new generation, most notably singer/songwriter Guy Clark. Some of his early songs were recorded by Carl Perkins, Vince Gill and Steve Wariner.

His earliest recordings – in the early 1980s – were in the rockabilly vein and received scant attention. Everything changed with the release of *Guitar Town* in 1986; the album received glowing reviews, eventually went gold and netted him his first two Grammy nominations. *Exit O* in 1987 and *Copperhead Road* in 1988 continued the hot streak, with hit country singles and excellent sales. But drugs began to take their

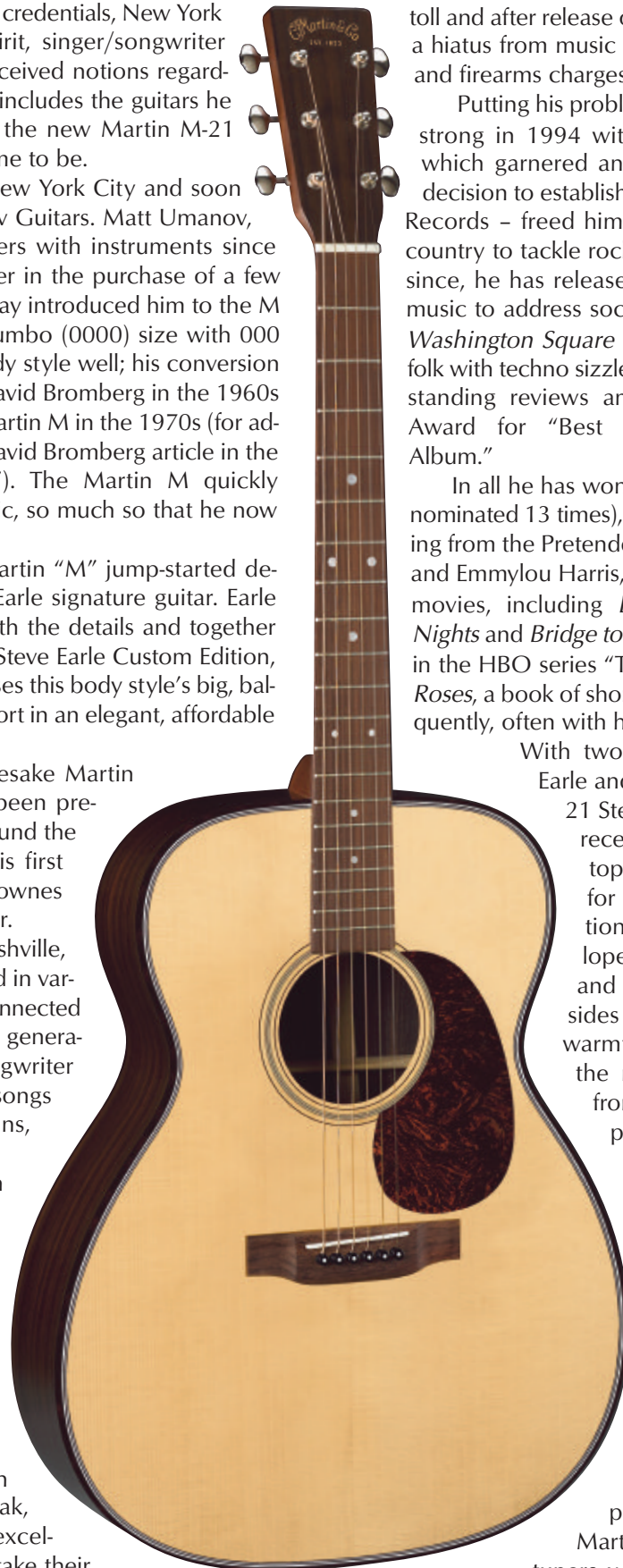
toll and after release of *The Hard Way* in 1990, he took a hiatus from music that included time in jail on drug and firearms charges.

Putting his problems behind him, Earle came back strong in 1994 with the acoustic *Train a Comin'*, which garnered another Grammy nomination. The decision to establish his own record label – E-Squared Records – freed him to move beyond contemporary country to tackle rock, folk and bluegrass. In the years since, he has released seven albums, often using his music to address social and political issues. His latest, *Washington Square Serenade*, which blends acoustic folk with techno sizzle, was released late in 2007 to outstanding reviews and received the 2008 Grammy Award for "Best Contemporary Folk/Americana Album."

In all he has won two Grammy Awards (and been nominated 13 times), had songs covered by artists ranging from the Pretenders and Joan Baez to Johnny Cash and Emmylou Harris, had his music featured in several movies, including *Dead Man Walking*, *Talladega Nights* and *Bridge to Terabithia*, played a recurring role in the HBO series "The Wire," and written *Doghouse Roses*, a book of short stories. He continues to tour frequently, often with his wife, Allison Moorer.

With two guitar perfectionists like Steve Earle and Matt Umanov in charge, the M-21 Steve Earle Custom Edition naturally receives superb solid tonewoods. The top is Italian alpine spruce, revered for its clear, rich tone, and the addition of 5/16" forward-shifted scalloped top bracing enhances balance and responsiveness. The back and sides are East Indian rosewood for warmth and power. The 1 11/16" (at the nut) low profile neck is carved from genuine mahogany. The headplate, fingerboard and bridge are all East Indian rosewood.

Like Martin Style 21s of the past, the M-21 Steve Earle Custom Edition blends Style 18 and Style 28 appointments, plus a few unique to Style 21. The Style 18 rosette and Style 28 checkerboard backstrip blend beautifully with the subtle Style 21 top and back purfling and tortoise-color binding. The polished headplate frames the old style gold C. F. Martin logo decal and Waverly nickel tuners with butterbean buttons give the





Prodded by the sonic superiority of his various M-sized Martin models, Steve Earle chose to preserve everything important to tone while discarding decoration. The result is a plain but powerful stage and studio guitar suitable to the professional player.

headstock a decidedly “old school” look. The fingerboard features Style 21 “Doppler dot” (progressively smaller) position markers from the 5th to the 17th frets, and the “black with white dots” bridge pins and end pin are also Style 21.

The polished and beveled nitrate tortoise color pickguard and aging toner on the top complete the instrument’s vintage-inspired style. The body showcases Martin’s flawless polished gloss lacquer finish; the neck receives a satin finish for player comfort.

Delivered in a blue molded hardshell case, each Martin M-21 Steve Earle Custom Edition guitar features an interior label personally signed by Steve Earle and Matt Umanov, and numbered in sequence without a total. Left-handed instruments may be ordered at no additional charge. Factory-installed electronics and a sunburst finish are extra-cost options. Authorized C. F. Martin dealers will begin accepting orders for the M-21 Steve Earle Custom Edition immediately. ❖



STEVE EARLE CUSTOM SIGNATURE EDITION – SPECIFICATIONS

MODEL: M-21 Steve Earle Custom Signature Edition
CONSTRUCTION: Standard Series, Gloss Lacquer
BODY SIZE: M (0000), 14-fret
TOP: Italian Alpine Spruce
ROSETTE: Style 18
TOP BRACES: 5/16" Width, Forward Shifted, Scalloped
BACK: East Indian Rosewood, 2 Piece
BACK PURFLING: Style 28 Checkered Backstrip
CAUTION STAMP: None, "C. F. Martin & Co., Nazareth, PA" Stamping
Between 1st & 2nd Back Braces
BLOCK TO READ: (Laser Etched Martin Logo)
M-21
Steve Earle
Serial Number

SIDES: East Indian Rosewood
RIBBON: Spanish Cedar
END PIECE: Tortoise Color
END PIECE INLAY: None
BINDING: Tortoise Color
TOP INLAY: Style 21
BACK INLAY: .0325" Black White Style 21
NECK: Genuine Mahogany, With Headstock Wings
NECK SHAPE: Low Profile, Without Diamond Volute
TRUSS ROD: Adjustable (Two-Way)
HEADSTOCK: Solid Square Tapered With Old Style Decal Logo
HEADPLATE: East Indian Rosewood
HEELCAP: East Indian Rosewood
NUT: Genuine Bone
FINGERBOARD: East Indian Rosewood
SCALE LENGTH: 25.4" Long Scale
OF FRETS CLEAR: 14
OF FRETS TOTAL: 20
FINGERBOARD WIDTH AT NUT: 1 11/16"
FINGERBOARD WIDTH AT 12th FRET: 2 1/8"
FINGERBOARD POSITION INLAYS: Style 21 Mother Of Pearl Dots
9/32" at 5th Fret
1/4" (2) at 7th and (1) at 9th
3/16" (2) at 12th, (1) at 15th, (1) at 17th
SIDE POSITION DOTS: White, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, double at 12th, 15th, 17th.
FINISH BODY: Polished Gloss Lacquer
FINISH TOP: Polished Gloss Lacquer, Aging Toner
FINISH NECK: Satin, Gloss Headplate
BRIDGE: East Indian Rosewood
BRIDGE: Belly, 2 1/8" Spacing
SADDLE: Genuine Bone, Not Compensated - Not Long Saddle
ACTION: Low, 2 & 3
TUNING MACHINES: Waverly Nickel With Butterbean Buttons
STRINGS: SP 4100 Light Gauge Phosphor Bronze
BRIDGE & END PINS: Style 21 Black With White Dot
PICKGUARD: Delmar Nitrate, Polished & Beveled
CASE: Blue Molded ABS Hardshell Case
INTERIOR LABEL(S): Personally Signed By Steve Earle, Matt Umanov, Numbered In Sequence Without Total
ELECTRONICS: Optional
NO CHARGE OPTIONS: Lefthanded At No Additional Charge
CHARGED OPTIONS: Choice of Electronics Installation or Sunburst Finish

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE

\$4299.00

This model may be ordered
through your local
Authorized Martin Dealership

"What I wanted was an M-size guitar that went with my clothes. You, know dressed down a bit. I've always had a thing for Style 21 Martins and I own several so we started there."

Steve Earle

