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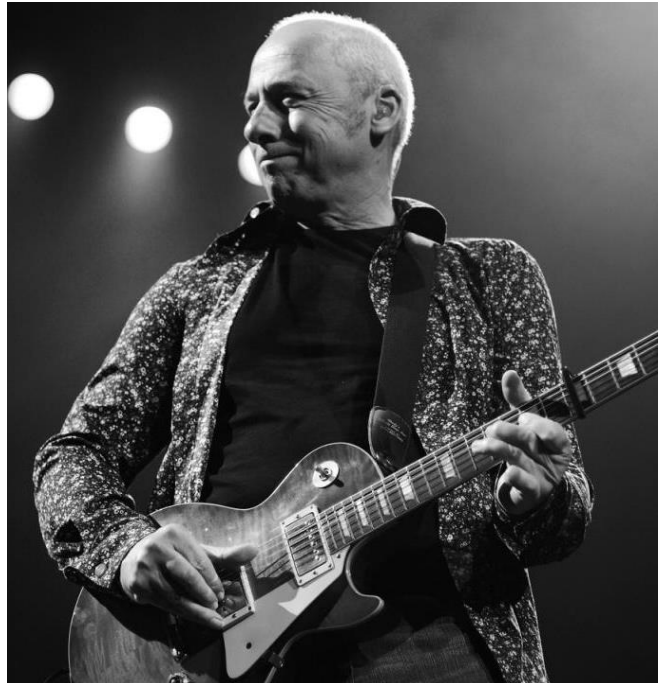
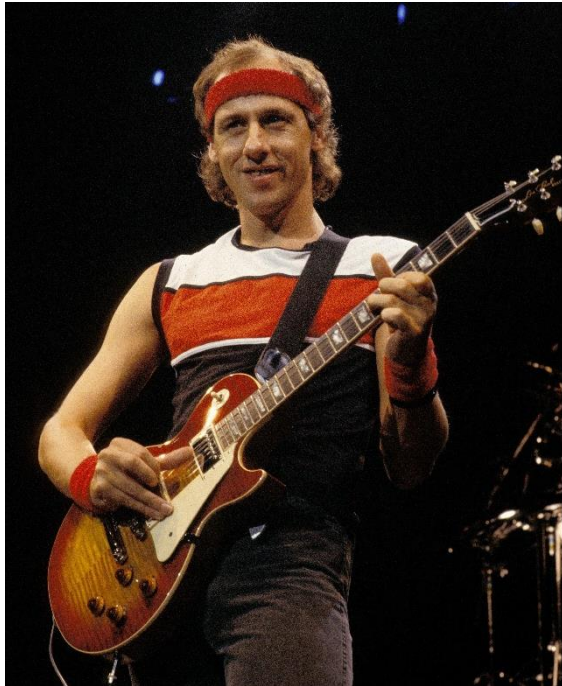
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THE MARK KNOPFLER GUITAR COLLECTION

**CHRISTIE'S TO AUCTION GUITARS FROM THE PERSONAL COLLECTION OF
MUSIC LEGEND MARK KNOPFLER**

**Highlights will tour to New York in December ahead of the
London auction on 31 January 2024**

**25% OF THE TOTAL HAMMER PRICE WILL BE DIVIDED EQUALLY AND DONATED TO
THE BRITISH RED CROSS, TUSK AND BRAVE HEARTS OF THE NORTH EAST**



Left to right, Mark Knopfler playing: his Gibson Les Paul Reissue, 1983, on the Brothers In Arms Tour, 1985 © Ebet Roberts / Getty Images; and playing his Gibson Les Paul Standard, 1959, on the Kill To Get Crimson Tour, 2008 © Sarah Askaroff

London – Breaking news for music aficionados, fans and collectors around the globe: Christie's will auction guitars from the personal collection of music legend Mark Knopfler, the celebrated singer-songwriter, guitar hero and frontman of the iconic British band, Dire Straits, on 31 January 2024 in London. Presenting fans with more than 120 guitars and amps, the collection spans the 50-year career of one of the world's most influential musicians and chronicles the diverse array of guitars Knopfler has used to write, record and perform an extensive catalogue of compositions for Dire Straits, as well as multiple successful solo albums and film soundtracks. Renowned for his distinct and virtuoso finger-picking style,

Knopfler chose each instrument for its individual sound and tone, assembling a wide-ranging archive which includes iconic and world-famous names such as Fender, Gibson, Gretsch and Martin alongside custom-built models by Rudy Pensa and John Suhr, and bespoke examples crafted by luthiers from across the globe. 25% of the total hammer price will be divided equally and donated to charities that Knopfler has supported for many years: *The British Red Cross*, *Tusk* and *Brave Hearts of the North East*. Estimates range from £300 to £500,000, providing opportunities for fans and collectors to participate at many different levels. Highlights will be on public view in New York between 9 to 13 December, followed by the full collection being on show in the pre-sale exhibition at Christie's headquarters in London, from 19 to 30 January 2024.

Mark Knopfler: *"Wherever I go I'm still crossing streets to look at guitars in the windows of music shops. I've done that since I was a little kid. I've lived with this love affair for over sixty years. That has meant a passion for all kinds of guitars: the impossible dreams and plenty of the less expensive ones too. As a career in music made it possible for me to realise some of those dreams, guitars of all shapes and sizes began to appear. Over the years I bought a range of acoustics and electrics. For whatever reason, a collection of beauties soon began to grow and a pretty sizeable rack of instruments would be on hand, either in the studio or in the wings of concert stages on tour. I've always had one or two of these lovely things to pick up and play at home when writing songs between tours, or in whatever hotel or dressing room when on the road.*

It's time to take some of these treasured six-string companions out of their cases and leave them in the care of Christie's to allow them to have new adventures with new owners. You can be sure I'll be sad to see them go but we've had wonderful times together and I can't play them all. To you fellow players, enthusiasts and collectors, I wish you many good times with these old friends of mine."

Amelia Walker, Christie's Specialist Head of Private and Iconic Collections, London: *"We are thrilled to be offering this incredible group of guitars for sale, including so many that played a key role in the musical upbringing of generations of fans, young and old, around the world. From the 'Money For Nothing' Les Paul, to the Fender MK Signature Strat, these instruments tell the story of Mark Knopfler's incredible career, including many that were played on his upcoming album, due for release in 2024. The Mark Knopfler Guitar Collection celebrates one of the greatest talents in British music and his position in the pantheon of guitar gods."*

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS:

Leading the collection is Mark Knopfler's **1959 Vintage Gibson Les Paul Standard**, which he used for performances on the Sailing To Philadelphia Tour in 2001 and the Kill To Get Crimson Tour in 2008, as well as several recordings (estimate: £300,000-500,000, *illustrated top right of page 1*). Having written, recorded and performed on a 1983 Les Paul Standard '59 Reissue at the height of Dire Straits' fame (*illustrated top left of page 1*), he treated himself to the real deal in the 1990s, when success enabled him to purchase two vintage Les Pauls, a 1958 and this 1959. It is a true collector's instrument, with a beautifully faded cherry-red sunburst finish.

Another important vintage guitar is Knopfler's **1958 Gibson ES-335** which offers collectors an extremely rare opportunity to acquire a 'blonde' ES-335 with an unbound fingerboard (estimate: £60,000-90,000). One of no more than an estimated 50 that left the Gibson factory during the first year of production of the

first semi-hollowbody electric guitar, it is one of three vintage Gibson ES-335s that Mark purchased from Rudy Pensa in the late 1990s, two of which are included in this sale.

Knopfler's **1983 Les Paul Standard '59 Reissue** was used to record both the title track and '*Money For Nothing*' on Dire Straits' 1985 album *Brothers In Arms*, as well as performances on the subsequent tour, and most famously on stage at Live Aid in 1985 when Dire Straits performed '*Money For Nothing*' with Sting on vocals (estimate: £10,000-15,000, *illustrated top left of page 1*).

The music history magic continues with the **1988 Pensa-Suhr MK-1**, which was completed in record time so it would be ready for Knopfler to play at the Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute concert on 11 June 1988 at Wembley Stadium (*illustrated right with Eric Clapton* © Ilpo Musto / Alamy). The guitar made its debut a week earlier when Knopfler played '*Money For Nothing*' and '*Layla*' with Eric Clapton's All-Star Band at the Prince's Trust Rock Gala on 6 June 1988 (estimate: £6,000-8,000). Imagined as a crossover between a Stratocaster and a Les Paul in order to cut down on guitar changes during sets, the very first MK-1 model was custom built by John Suhr, incorporating design modifications drawn up by Knopfler and Rudy Pensa – his longstanding friend – on the back of a napkin. It became a favourite studio and performance guitar for the next five years, used extensively during recording of Dire Straits' 1991 album *On Every Street* and throughout the 1991-92 On Every Street Tour.



A **Red Schecter Telecaster** was purchased by Knopfler in 1984 and used to record the hit Dire Straits song '*Walk Of Life*' and its accompanying music video (estimate: £4,000-6,000). This vermilion red workhorse has become one of his most recognisable and long-serving instruments, with a live performance history spanning Dire Straits' 1985-86 Brothers in Arms Tour through to Knopfler's 2008 Kill to Get Crimson Tour, with notable appearances at the Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute Concert in 1988 and on the 1996 live concert DVD *A Night in London*.

The **Gibson J-200 Celebrity** was produced in a limited run of just 90 instruments to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Gibson Company in 1985. Knopfler's J-200 is number 40 of 90 (estimate £5,000-7,000), and John Illsley received number 42, which was later sold to David Gilmour and auctioned at Christie's in 2019 for \$237,500. It was used for a performance with Chet Atkins, both using their J-200s, of John Lennon's '*Imagine*' and the 1924 song '*I'll See You In My Dreams*' at The Secret Policeman's Third Ball in aid of Amnesty International at The London Palladium, 26-29 March 1987.

The **Fender Mark Knopfler Signature Stratocaster Prototype** was the result of a collaboration between the iconic California guitar makers and Mark Knopfler in 2003. Combining elements of a '62 reissue neck dated 2002 and a 1997 body, the prototype was finished in Knopfler's favourite Hot Rod red, in the style of his childhood hero Hank Marvin of The Shadows (estimate: £4,000-6,000). It was the only prototype made for the MK Signature Strat, and was used for various one-off performances in 2009, as well as on his Privateering Tour in 2013.



Gibson Incorporated, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1959
A Solid-Body Electric Guitar, Les Paul Standard
Estimate: £300,000-500,000



Gibson Incorporated, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1958
A Semi-Hollowbody Electric Guitar, ES-335 TN
Estimate: £60,000-90,000



Pensa-Suhr, New York, 1988
A Solid-Body Electric Guitar, MK-1
Estimate: £6,000-8,000



Schecter Guitar Research, Van Nuys, California, 1983
A Solid-Body Electric Guitar in the manner of a Telecaster Custom
Estimate: £4,000-6,000



Gibson Incorporated, Nashville, Tennessee, 1985
An Acoustic Guitar, J-200 Anniversary, Celebrity
Estimate: £5,000-7,000



Fender Musical Instruments Corporation, Corona, California, 1997 and 2002
A Solid-body Electric Guitar, Artist's Prototype, Mark Knopfler Signature Stratocaster
Estimate: £4,000-6,000

For more information please visit [Christies.com/markknopfler](https://www.christies.com/markknopfler)
IMAGES FOR PRESS USE AVAILABLE [HERE](#).

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Mark Knopfler plans to donate no less than 25% of the total hammer price received, to be split equally between The British Red Cross Society (a charity registered in England and Wales with charity number 220949, Scotland with charity number SC037738, Isle of Man with charity number 0752, and Jersey with charity number 430), Brave Hearts of the North East (a charity registered in England and Wales with charity number 1006247) and the Tusk Trust Limited (a charity registered in England and Wales with charity number 1186533).

About Christie's

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** Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue. *Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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