

Rolling Stone

**SPECIAL
COLLECTORS
EDITION**

Keith Richards

The Ultimate
Guide to His
Music & Legend

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Keith Richards

Special Collectors Edition

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Introduction

IN 1971, AS THE ROLLING STONES PREPARED to record *Exile on Main Street* in an airless basement in the South of France, Keith Richards sat for perhaps the greatest interview of his life. Over several days, he talked to ROLLING STONE'S Robert Greenfield about everything from his school days to his most famous riff to the tragedy at Altamont. At 27, Richards had already experienced a lifetime's worth of amazing highs and incredible turmoil. "Who says you've got to live three-score and 10 years?" he said. "Everybody can't make 70."

Well, here we are 44 years later, and Keith isn't just still with us. At 71, he's a rock & roll force of nature, a guitar legend, a pirate and a gentleman. He has survived his own mythic penchant for the high life, as well as several arrests, a handful of near-death experiences and, most important, 50 years of love and war with his "wife" (his term) Mick Jagger. "Hey, I've been there – the white light at the end of the tunnel – three or four times," he told ROLLING STONE'S David Fricke in 2002. "But when it doesn't happen, and you're back in – that's a shock."

Richards' reputation as a permanently soused wild man mumbling and stumbling through life is deeply misleading – in truth, he's a whip-smart raconteur who's endlessly quotable. The interviews in this book, which span more than 40 years, prove as much. Keith on his legendary booze and drugs intake: "Intoxication? I'm polytoxic." Keith on flower power: "You paid a fair amount of lip service to it... But I am quite proud that I never did go and kiss the maharishi's goddamn feet." Keith on not getting laid during the Stones' first U.S. tour: "We noticed a distinct lack of crumpet." Keith on rumors of his immortality: "All right, if you want to believe it – I will write all of your epitaphs."

Still Smokin'

Richards photographed for RS in 1988. "I will write all of your epitaphs," he later said.

Like Richards himself in these interviews, we've had a bit of fun with

the man's legend, recounting his 20 wildest adventures, from his '77 drug bust in Toronto to his brief stint as a "nanny" in Australia to that time he claimed to snort dear old Dad's ashes. Of course, no one would care about any of this if it weren't for the music. Which is why we've paid tribute with a list of Richards' 20 greatest songs – his best Stones lead vocals, plus solo cuts – and told the stories behind them.

Richards' classic riffs – "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," "Jumpin' Jack Flash," "Brown Sugar," "Start Me Up" and many, many more – are among the most indelible in rock history. He's also a brilliant songwriter, an underrated bandleader and an unflashy technical innovator on his instrument. "What Chuck [Berry] is to Keith, Keith is to me," writes Nils Lofgren of the E Street Band, in a section of tributes that also includes kind words from Tom Waits, Buddy Guy, Joan Jett, Billy Gibbons and others. Lofgren could be speaking for thousands of players.

We love Keith Richards because he's a rock & roll original who's always lived by his own code. "Whatever it was I did," he told Anthony DeCurtis of ROLLING STONE in 1988, "no matter how stupid or flamboyant or irresponsible it may have seemed from the outside – and I can understand it appearing like that – to me it's always been very important to know what I'm made of, and what I'm capable of doing." What can we say? Keith contains multitudes.

Keith Meets the Mounties

When Keith was busted in Toronto in 1977, it put the future of the Stones in doubt

BY CHET FLIPPO

Excerpted from RS 238, May 5th, 1977

MY CAB IS CRUISING THROUGH THE WINDING ENTRANCE OF the Harbour Castle Hilton in Toronto, temporary home for the Rolling Stones, and I have no idea what to expect. All I know is what I've read (and written myself): Keith Richards has been busted again; his bust – right here at the Harbour Castle – happened just days after his common-law wife, Anita Pallenberg, was arrested by Mounties at the airport; and there is serious talk that the Stones have had it. * I know the Stones are here to record two nights of shows at El Mocambo Tavern to complete a live album. But now with the busts, the Stones are once again in chaos. I'd been with them before, in 1975 on their Tour of the Americas, and there had been speculation then that the end was near. I'll have to face Mick Jagger with what has become a tired question:



On tour.
in 1975

Could this be the last time? Perhaps for the first time, he'll have to give the question serious thought, and an answer.

But first there was the Stones hierarchy – aides, attorneys, security and the two men I would run up against most frequently in Toronto: Paul Wasserman, number one among rock & roll press agents, who is often paid to keep his clients out of the press. And manager Peter Rudge, a dapper but hyper Briton, known for pulling the unexpected. Rudge has been trying to keep the activities of the Rolling Stones in Toronto a secret.

After I check in to the Harbour Castle, I slip into the lobby – which is packed with local journalists and patrolled by Mounties – and run into Bill Carter. He is a tough lawyer out of Little Rock, Arkansas, who is now the Stones' very efficient American attorney and chief of tour security. I know him from the '75 tour. We retire to a corner of the Quayside bar to talk.

Not 10 minutes later, Peter Rudge walks by, sees me and turns pale. Later, he comes over to shake hands – gingerly. "I forbade American press, you know," he says. "Also, we knew you were coming. Why do you think you couldn't get a room on our floor?" I am stuck on the seventh floor, while the Stones entourage is scattered between 29 and 34.

I'll have to face Mick Jagger with what has become a tired question, one he'll have to give serious thought: Could this be the last time?

"I already have the rooming list," I tell him.

"I'll bet you do," he says, and walks away. (I had acquired a list of the most important rooms, thanks to the worldwide tendency of hotel chambermaids to trade information for cash.)

On February 24th, Keith Richards and Anita Pallenberg were stopped at the Toronto airport. Customs agents and Mounties from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police narcotics office at the airport searched Pallenberg's 28 pieces of luggage and allegedly found hashish and traces of heroin. While she was being booked and released – in Brampton, which has jurisdiction over the airport area – Keith and their seven-year-old son, Marlon, went to the Harbour Castle Hilton. Keith registered in six different rooms, using the name "Redlings." These rooms are called "floaters" in the rock & roll world, and they can be very useful to major rock stars. When you have no name and many rooms, then you are not there.

Three days after Anita's bust, Mounties and Ontario provincial police swarmed through the hotel, armed with a search warrant with Pallenberg's name on it. She was not registered, and it took the police 45 minutes before they located one of Keith's floaters, where they allegedly found an ounce of heroin.

Then the Mounties made a mistake. Presumably since they work out of the airport and since the warrant had Anita's name on it, they took Keith back out to Brampton to book him, rather than remaining in Toronto proper, where the authorities might have been more concerned. The justice of the

peace in Brampton released Keith on a \$1,000 no-deposit bail. He didn't have to post a cent.

That did not please the Mounties. They had charged him with possession with intent to traffic – a serious charge that can draw seven years to life in prison. High vs. low bail for Keith Richards, Rolling Stone, became an issue.

While the band went on with all-night rehearsals at rented studios, action picked up at the Harbour Castle. The lobby was suddenly populated with plainclothes Mounties, groupies and reporters. The Stones' own beefy security force flew in.

I leave Bill Carter at the Quayside and go off in search of Wasserman, the press agent, to see what he is not allowed to tell me. When he opens the door to 3016, he sighs. "Why didn't you call me from New York? I could have told you that you weren't allowed to come."

"I'd rather hear it in person," I say. "So – the Stones will play El Mocambo. Now, is it tonight?"

He sighs heavily. "It doesn't matter. You can't get in anyway. No press. And you can't talk to the Stones either."

"Thanks a lot," I say on my way out. "I'll keep you posted on what's happening."

"Thanks. By the way, they won't be there tonight. There's a party here which you are not invited to. If you mention any of this to Peter, I'll deny having said it."

I decide to check out El Mocambo with a local reporter. There is a small crowd gathered outside the front door, which is locked. We knock at the window, and an enormous bouncer scowls: "Closed session." Eventually, we talk our way in and go upstairs to watch opener April Wine play. It looks like a perfect place for the Stones: small, dark, sleazy and crowded, with a big orange moon and black palm trees as backdrop.

On the eighth day of the Stones' latest crisis, Thursday, March 3rd, I am awakened by a phone call from Wasserman. "We know that you got into El Mocambo last night," he says. "Why didn't you stay here and come to the party?"

What could I say to this master of double talk?

Wasserman resumes: "Carter and I are taking Anita to court this morning, but there's no reason for you to go to that. They'll just remand her hearing to the 14th. The Stones are working on new material for a studio album. I didn't tell you that. *Ciao*. Remember something: All the phones here are tapped."

A friendly source within the Stones camp does tell me some interesting tidbits: "You can spot the Mounties in the lobby because they wear tiny receivers in their ears... We still don't know whether there was an informer in the hotel. I'm afraid this is serious. The Stones, especially Mick, are desperate and depressed. They think these are the last albums, the live one and the studio one."



ON THE NINTH DAY, FRIDAY, MARCH 4th, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's 28-year-old wife, Margaret, suddenly enters the picture. But let's set the scene.

At 6 p.m., the 300 lucky ticketholders meet at CHUM [radio] and, without being told their destination, board buses and are driven to El Mocambo. The club is virtually surrounded by police. By dint of money and a police card, I get in. During the show, just as the Stones start "Star Star" (better known as "Starfucker"), who should sit down at a ringside table but Margaret Trudeau? She had arrived in a Stones limo and leaves



Jumpin' Mick Flash

The Stones in Philly, 1975

DROPS IN ON THE STONES.

That night, I manage to get into El Mocambo and settle down at a stagefront table with [journalist] Lisa Robinson and John Rockwell of *The New York Times*. Rudge spots me at the table but can only grind his teeth.

The Stones are magnificent. Sitting five feet away from them when they are at full power is nothing but awesome: Billy Preston slides in behind his keyboards, Ollie Brown takes up his percussion behind Charlie Watts, Bill Wyman is diffidently at the right end of the tiny stage, and Jagger is flanked by Keith and Ronnie Wood. Keith is gaunt and unshaven but occasionally smiling, leads them in with “Honky Tonk Women,” and Jagger, in a green and white jumpsuit open to the point where his pubic hair presumably begins, puts on the most defiant, cocksure, strutting performance I have ever seen.

During “Star Star,” Mick gestures toward our table, shouting “star fuckers!” Then, as “Jumpin’ Jack Flash” ends, I sense the presence of someone behind me. Peter Rudge is motioning to Mick and pointing to our table. Then Rudge grabs Lisa Robinson’s hair and Jagger flings a pitcher of ice water at us. Revenge at last.

in a Stones limo and takes a suite at the Harbour Castle and holds a well-guarded party for the band.

On the morning of the 10th day, Saturday, Toronto begins turning itself upside down. Banner headlines everywhere: MARGARET

The Stones, accompanied by Margaret Trudeau, leave for a private party.

ON DAY 11, AFTER RUDGE MISSES AN APPOINTMENT to meet me, I get a phone call: “Mr. Flippo? This is Mr. Jagger.”

“Bullshit,” I say. “This is Rudge or some lackey. Listen....”

“This is Mr. Jagger. I can prove it. You had a note delivered to me that said you wanted to talk to me. I’m just sitting around waiting to get busted. Come on up.”

I go up to 34. No bodyguards around, so I wander on down to 3424 and there, through the open door, is Jagger, dressed in a tan suit and red boots, sitting alone, watching TV. He waves me in.

“What happened to all the vaunted Stones security forces?”

“Why bother?” he says. “Have a seat.”

Charlie Watts comes in and after a moment the two of them are giggling at a *Candid Camera* segment where some poor woman in a beauty shop keeps seeing a demon image in a mirror opposite her. Deviousness obviously appeals to the Stones.

“How does it feel to be a bar band again?” I ask.

Jagger: “Very nice, it’s a nice gig. We got half the bar money the first night – \$371. We didn’t do it for the money, obviously. We wanted to get a good sound, and we liked the idea of playing a club. Toronto just seemed part of North America. It was



easy. But it didn't turn out that way. Keith got busted – it won't be so easy for Keith."

On Margaret Trudeau:

"She just dropped by [Mick says this with a sly grin]. Someone said she wanted to come to the gig, so we took her. I had never met her before. But I guess she likes to go to clubs and go rocking and rolling like everyone else – young girl, you know."

"One of our mums," Watts adds.

On the Stones' anxiety level:

"I don't want to talk about it, because the more I talk about it the worse it gets. I don't want to talk because they all read this fucking crap – that's the trouble, these people.... It's difficult, you know. You get busted all the time; it makes it very hard."

What about the future?

"We can't really do a five-year plan at the rate things are going. I did do a plan for two years, but it's going to be changed [*laughter*]."

Would the Stones tour if Keith was in jail?

"Yeah, I should say so, if they wanted to. Obviously we wouldn't if Keith were only in jail for a month or two months. But if he were in jail for a long period of time, I suppose we'd have to. We can't wait five years. In five years we won't be touring at all – not much anyway, just a few lounges."

Do you think the Saturday performance at El Mocambo might have been the Stones' last performance?

He throws his hands in the air. "Our Knebworth concert was the 'last Rolling Stones performance.' We'll let you know when the last one is, or we won't let you know."

Watts: "When my drums start to get blown up, that's the last one."

Well, I say, that's not what I'm after, but when I came into the hotel on Wednesday, the feeling here was *Prisoner of Zenda* – the band will never get out unless you pull an Entebbe raid.

Jagger laughs. "It's not that difficult to get out of here."

Yeah, I say, but they took all your passports.

Jagger sits up: "What? Why would they take our passports?"

Well, that is what Wasserman told me. He said the Mounties seized 28 passports and...

"Wasserman told you that? Why would they possibly take Charlie's and my passport? They took Keith's. But they didn't take ours, what for? Wasserman told you that, you sure?"

I'm certain, I say.

We talk music for a while, and then Mick decides he wants to watch TV some more.

DAY 12, MARCH 7TH, IS KEITH'S DAY IN court. A bit late (at 1:30, Anita had to borrow a razor for Keith), he pulls up in a station wagon shortly after two. He is wearing a black velvet suit, and with his head up and his white scarf flying, he marches up the steps.

His heroin-charge hearing is set for March 14th, but in a private session in the judge's chambers, Keith and attorneys Carter and Clayton Powell (a former Crown prosecutor here) are informed of a second charge. The Mounties claim that during the initial raid they seized a second substance, and lab tests proved that it was 1/5 ounce of cocaine. Keith is privately told to appear in court the next day, Tuesday.

I find out that the federal prosecutor, David Scott, is planning to ask for revocation of bail and to move that Keith be jailed immediately. The Stones camp panics. Meetings are held all night. Strategy is finally agreed upon: The only way to keep Keith out of jail is to ask that bail be substantially increased, since the Mounties' beef is that a Rolling Stone got busted by them and essentially was released without bail.

Keith's court appearance the next day is an official secret. The Stones' defense team decides that \$25,000 in cash should be offered in exchange for Keith's body.

Day 13, Tuesday the 8th. I have breakfast with Rudge, Carter and Wasserman. Rudge pleads with me to get the story out that Keith Richards, the epitome of rock & roll, cannot be jailed in Toronto, that it will mean the end of Keith and the Rolling Stones and rock & roll.

Back to Their Roots

The Stones at El Mocambo Tavern in Toronto, March 1977 (above). Right: The Glimmer Twins in 1975.



I arrive at Provincial Courtroom 26, where Keith's case is scheduled to be heard. I look at the docket: no Keith Richards. The first afternoon case confirms Judge Vincent McEwan's tough reputation: a 17-year-old kid gets 18 months probation and a criminal record for supposedly possessing eight grams of green marijuana leaves that the RCMP watched him grow in a public park. The charge: intent to traffic.

At 2:20 p.m., Keith enters. Prosecutor Scott, who once worked for defense counsel Powell, opens by complaining about the low bail. Keith stands in the prisoner's box. Clayton Powell submits that since the Crown seems worried about the low bail, the Stones are ready to hand over \$25,000 in cash as good-faith bail. The judge agrees, and at 2:50 p.m. Keith has his passport back and is out on bail.

During the hearing, Margaret Trudeau checks out of the Harbour Castle and leaves for New York City. Ron Wood and Mick Jagger also leave for New York – separately.

At 5 a.m., I get a frantic call from Wasserman. “Did you see

“I can’t believe the government cares about rock & roll bands in its country. There isn’t any way for somebody like me to get a fair trial.”

the *Globe*? It says Margaret ran off to New York with Mick and Ron.” I can’t possibly sleep, so I go downstairs and check out. Wasserman has just come back from the newsstand with the morning *Sun*, which is bannered WHERE’S MAGGIE? Inside, an angry editorial complains: “C’mon, Maggie, either behave with distinction or stay at home.”

Reading the editorial, Wasserman becomes even more agitated. “I’ve got to get out of this fucking country before they find me,” he says. “Carter, I’m leaving. Meet me at the airport. They threatened to arrest me yesterday for allegedly tipping off the press to that hearing. I’ve got to go. C’mon, Flippo.” We catch a plane back to LaGuardia.

Rudge finally met with me in New York and said he was afraid it was all over for the Rolling Stones.

And Keith Richards still had to go to court.

MARCH 14TH, I AM BACK IN TORONTO, in courtroom 26. On the way into old City Hall, I run into attorney Powell, who had just gotten Anita off with only a \$400 fine.

The court hearing takes about 20 seconds. Crown prosecutor Scott walks over to a calendar hanging on the wall, leafs through it idly and sticks his finger on June 27th. He returns to the bench and proposes that June 27th be the day that Keith is remanded to court, at which time a plea may or may not be entered and at which time an actual trial date will be set. Agreed.

At midnight, I am summoned to Keith's chambers. Compared to the quiet splendor of Mick's suite, Keith's is frenzied and I feel that I have suddenly entered Rock & Roll Supreme Headquarters and hit the very core of rock: farther than this one cannot go.

“Honky Tonk Women” is blasting from giant speakers, and guitars and tape recorders and amps are everywhere. The television is on but the sound is turned off: The program being shown is of a church service. Wine is being poured everywhere.

Keith calls room service for another fifth of Jack Daniel's, then settles onto a couch beside me. He is wearing jeans tucked into boots and a red shirt and a red-and-blue newsboy's cap. Anita drifts in and out in a nightgown, and young Marlon sprawls on the floor. “These are the Paris tapes,” Keith yells to me over the din. “These are good, but I’ll play you the El Mocambo tapes – they’re better in some ways.” He’s right.

He also says he’s been thinking he might someday like to teach college music seminars and that he’s been writing songs daily and the first one – still untitled – is about prison.

We retire to a quieter room and open the Jack Daniel's. Keith begins, speaking softly: “Since I have been stuck for a week in Toronto by myself, I’ve been getting some rough mixes down from the El Mocambo gigs – the second night, we recorded some good sounds. The first night, the band sounds like it was playing for something in New Delhi; there were these weird sort of quarter tones, out of tune, very frantic. It was all adrenaline.”

But the second night, I say, was amazing: the Stones really kicking ass in a bar.

He smiles. “We haven’t played a place that small since ’62. But it all fell into place, it felt very natural, you know. It has been a long time since I’ve had my legs stroked while playing, you know, I’d forgotten all about that.... It’s a full circle. We started off playing the real low bars and we have only just played our first bar this side of the circle, so maybe it just means we are going to start playing a whole lot of bars again. A lot of bands would like to do it, to break this system of these enormous tours – it’s so hectic, three months and then everything explodes just as it is getting good and it’s really starting to go to a top gear that you didn’t know was there.”

He snaps his fingers. “Then it stops. No gigs for nine months.... If every band could play three or four gigs a month, but it’s not structured that way – how do you break that? I mean, the band is just as happy playing in a place like that [El Mocambo] as in Madison Square Garden. To play one of those once a month would be great to stay in shape. It’s really a very unprofitable way of using the energy – this system of tours and huge auditoriums. It can’t go any bigger, you know. With any other sports, OK, they build a special place for you to play that game in. If you play football, you go to a football field. Rock & roll – you don’t get a rock & roll building, you know, you just play in a fucking football field.”

Marlon comes in as we get fresh drinks and cigarettes, and he starts talking. Keith: “Shh, son, Daddy’s working right now.”

What sort of material, I ask, is he cutting now?

“I’ve got time to put down all these songs I learnt from Gram Parsons. I was very tight with him for a long time. I used to spend days at the piano with Gram, just singing, you know. I did more singing with Gram than I’ve done with the Stones. He taught me all the Everly stuff and the cross harmonies and shit like that. We lived together when we cut *Exile on Main Street*. He wrote songs, man, he would go all day without repeating himself.

“But it’s been eight years since he taught me.... I’ve never really done anything more than put them on cassette just to remember the lyrics, so I thought I would put them down, a dub sort of thing, mostly country songs, Merle Haggard and George Jones. There’s a few Dallas Frazier songs. ‘Say It’s Not You.’

‘Apartment No. 9.’ A couple of Jerry Lee Lewis things like ‘She Still Comes Around.’ ‘Six Days on the Road.’

“I took this opportunity to sort of wrack my brains and put down everything I had floating around in my head: songs, half-songs, riffs, I got it all out on tape, very efficient for me. So that killed some time in Toronto.”

What does Keith think about the future of the Stones?

“I don’t think I feel any differently about it – as far as I know, it is just going to go on because it feels good to go on right now.... If someone is unable to be with the others for a while, then there will just be a gap, but it will go on. I mean, Charlie was getting better and better, man, you just can’t let that go, when things are improving all the time. In its own perverse way, we all feel it’s getting better. There was a time when nobody thought an act could last more than two years, especially at that point when we started out. I mean, Muddy Waters has just put out a great new album. There is no reason that rock & roll has to be played by adolescents and juveniles. It still feels better from this end. You know, Fred McDowell, all my favorite cats, kept on playing till they dropped, 70 or 80 years old.”

I wonder aloud why entire countries regard Keith as the devil incarnate.

He smiles but shakes his head. “It’s convenient.... They don’t have to look any farther. I can’t answer it. I’ve seen simple little trials – the prosecutors, for some reason it becomes so enormous to them, they feel they have to prove themselves. That’s something to do with it, but it’s not all of it, but I feel that they want to show this kid or that kid that, see that they [the prosecutors] have got some balls, that’s one attitude I come across an awful lot.

It’s like Lenny Bruce, but – once they start on something, they don’t let up, man, they just don’t. It’s very easy to pick up somebody and give them a bad name.... There’s all this incredible rivalry that goes on between different branches of the legal department even on the international scale. If the English cops can’t do it, then ‘let’s show them.’ I guess also by popping me, they think that’s worth popping 150 or 200 ordinary people. It shows people that your police are really on the ball.”

Well, what is Keith Richards’ immediate future?

Another sly grin: “Finish this live album, beat this rap, hopefully do some gigs in the States later on this year. South America – I’d like to bust that one wide open. I look at South America and I think of the potential rock & roll audiences.”

On tours, he says, “you go around like nomads on these well-beaten tracks. I mean, there’s people screaming for it. It’s like BP not going and tapping some huge oil field, you know, just not bothering. Can you imagine that? It’s equivalent, the audiences. They’d be down there like a shot after the pipelines. Rock & roll is ignored. There are thousands of record buyers. They should be knocking on Moscow’s fucking door, hitchhiking down to

South America. You could go to New Delhi or Calcutta, there are thousands of street kids there. Africa has got to be another place where we could get it together.

“I mean, if Leningrad is going to go potty over Cliff Richard... in towns like Bratislav, there are these posters in the street of rock & roll stars, completely music-crazy, then the tanks came in and that was it.”

All these governments, though, all they can think about is drug convictions, drug arrests, drugs. Right?

“Yeah, I think they are just scared of association or whatever. I can’t believe that a government would spend two seconds of its time worrying about what rock & roll band is coming to its country. But they do.... The idea is: ‘Let’s grab him.’ So it just becomes political outlaws – there really isn’t any way for anybody in our position or my position to get a fair trial, because of the image, or the prejudice, anything, anyway. It’s already against me just because of the image.... Illegal, they are really out to make rock & roll illegal.

“Really, it would be illegal to play the goddamn music, that’s the basic drive behind that whole thing. They are just scared of that rhythm. Certainly every sound has an effect on the body, and the effects of a good backbeat make these people shiver in their boots, so you are fighting some primeval fear that you can’t even rationalize, because it’s to do with the chromosomes and the exploding genes.”

But you, Keith Richards, have had a lot to do with it, with songs like “Satisfaction” and “Street Fighting Man,” which don’t lose their impact.

“Songs – yeah. People think you’re a songwriter, they think you wrote it, it’s all yours, you are totally responsible for it. Really, you are just a medium – it’s like being at a seance; they just pop out of the air. Whole songs just come to you, you don’t write it. Songs come to me en masse. I didn’t do anything except to happen to have been awake when it arrived.”

When I finally got back to New York, I called the Harbour Castle and found that Keith was still there, trying to decide where to go next. I heard that Bill Carter and his briefcase were on their way back to Toronto. And I also heard that Margaret Trudeau was sporting a black eye.

And then came the final, depressing call from the Stones camp: “You better cover your ass, Flippo, and mention somewhere there is one hell of a chance that this will be the last Stones album ever. All work on the studio album has stopped and there is talk of breaking up the band.”

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The Accused

Richards in Canada, March 1977. He was apprehended and unable to leave the country for a month.

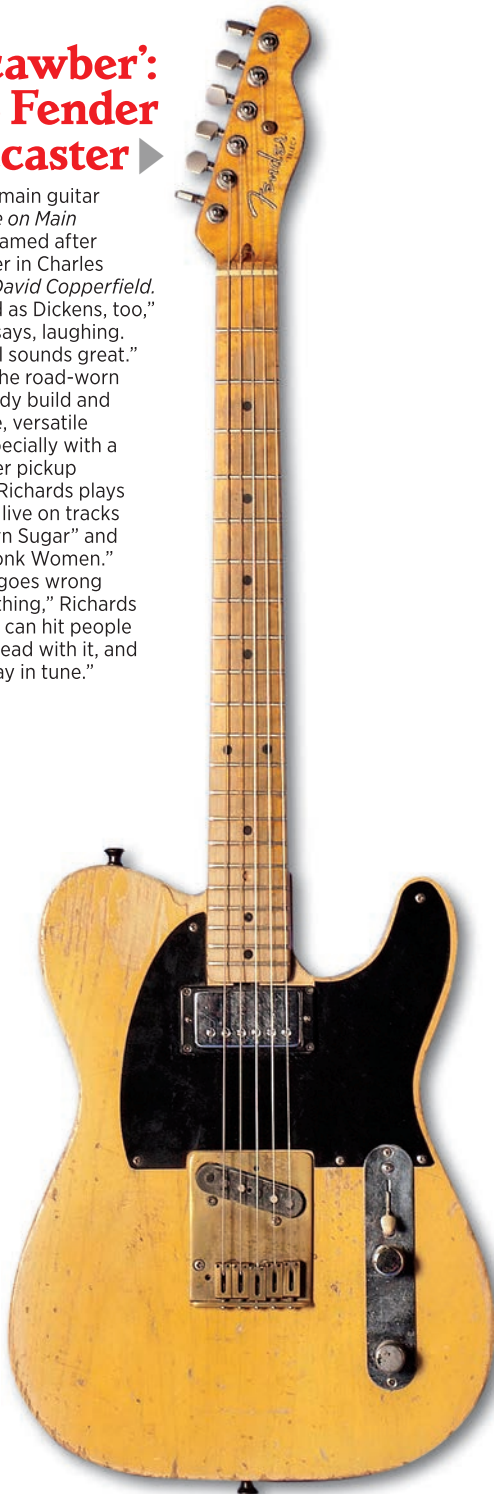
Postscript: In October 1978, Richards pleaded guilty to possession of heroin. More serious charges were dropped. He received a one-year suspended sentence and a year’s probation, which required him to continue treatment for drug addiction and play a benefit concert in Canada.

Keith's Guitars, A

An in-depth guide to the tools of his trade: from Micawber

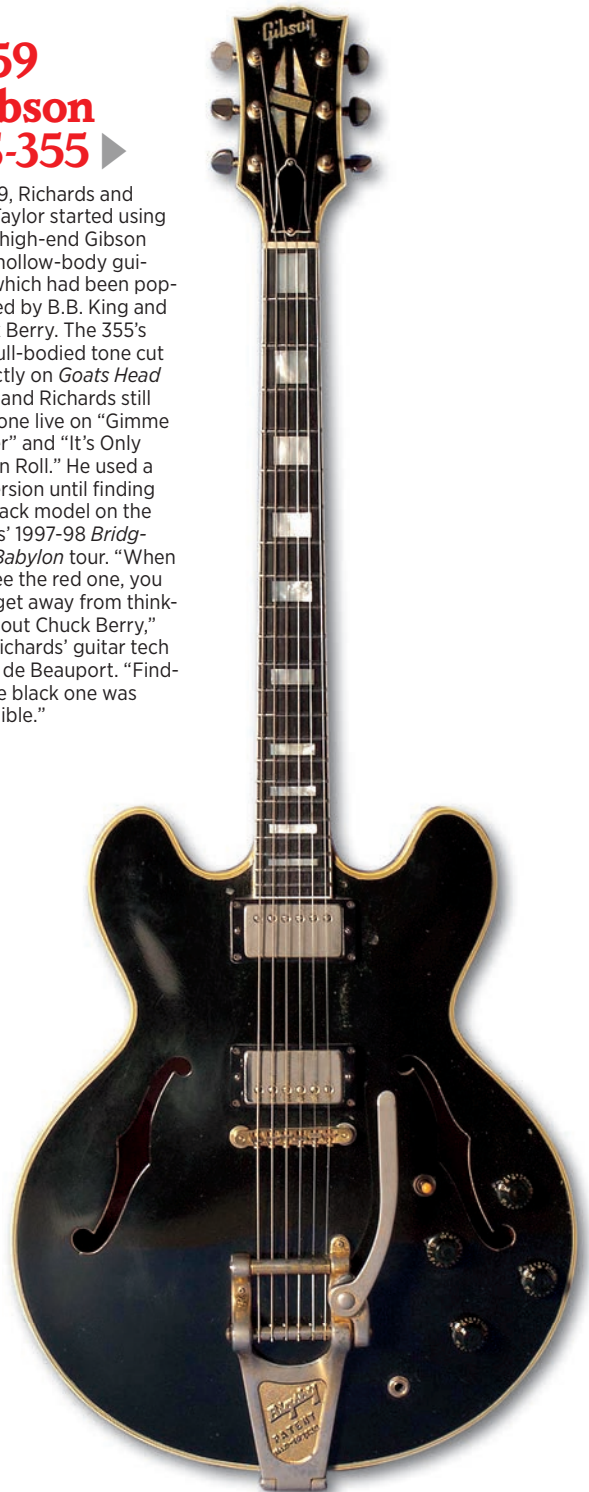
'Micawber': 1953 Fender Telecaster ▶

Richards' main guitar since *Exile on Main Street* is named after a character in Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*. "It's as old as Dickens, too," Richards says, laughing. "But it still sounds great." He loves the road-worn Tele's sturdy build and distinctive, versatile tones, especially with a humbucker pickup installed. Richards plays Micawber live on tracks like "Brown Sugar" and "Honky Tonk Women." "Nothing goes wrong with that thing," Richards said. "You can hit people over the head with it, and it'll still stay in tune."



1959 Gibson ES-355 ▶

In 1969, Richards and Mick Taylor started using these high-end Gibson semi-hollow-body guitars, which had been popularized by B.B. King and Chuck Berry. The 355's rich, full-bodied tone cut perfectly on *Goats Head Soup*, and Richards still plays one live on "Gimme Shelter" and "It's Only Rock 'n Roll." He used a red version until finding this black model on the Stones' 1997-98 *Bridges to Babylon* tour. "When you see the red one, you can't get away from thinking about Chuck Berry," said Richards' guitar tech Pierre de Beauport. "Finding the black one was incredible."



All Down the Line

to a gift from Ronnie Wood to a custom oddity, and more

'Dice': 1958 Gibson Les Paul TV Junior ▶

Richards named this guitar Dice, a stage staple since the Seventies, after a dice decal formerly on the body, according to the book *Rolling Stones Gear*. The Juniors were first produced in 1954 as a more affordable version of other Les Paul models; it later became the preferred guitar of Johnny Thunders and Joan Jett. Richards started using them while recording in Kingston, Jamaica, during the *Goats Head Soup* sessions. Its single P-90 pickup produces a gritty, roaring tone you can hear today on live versions of "Midnight Rambler."



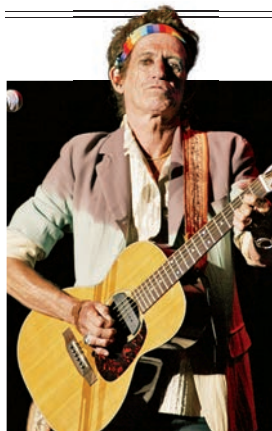
Ampeg Dan Armstrong 'Plexi'

Richards got this clear prototype in 1969, notable for its six interchangeable pickups. "I used the first [Plexi] made," he said. "But it got stolen, and when I got more from the factory, they just weren't of the same standard."



Gibson Les Paul 'Black Beauty'

Richards became associated with Les Pauls when he used them for television appearances like *The Ed Sullivan Show*. He owned at least four Black Beauties beginning in 1966, using its rich tones on *Beggars Banquet*.



Martin 00-21

Asked if he could own just one acoustic guitar, Richards didn't hesitate: "I'd take a Martin." He owns several 00-21s, using them live on songs like "Ruby Tuesday" and "Angie." He also owns an even more valuable 1931 Martin 000-45, considered the Holy Grail of acoustics.



Zemaitis 'Macabre'

This custom five-string was a gift from Ronnie Wood, who favored guitars from the legendary British guitar-maker. Richards lost the original in a house fire in 1978; he began playing a replica on the mid-2000s *A Bigger Bang* tour.

PATRICK DOYLE

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The Legend of Keith

— FEATURING —

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How he wrote his classic songs

His guitar secrets revealed

THE 20 GREATEST KEITH STORIES