

David Tipton

Chapman Stick Artist

“The years I spent playing guitar and bass were merely a prelude to the musical possibilities revealed by the Stick,” says David Tipton.

The Stick® is a unique musical instrument invented by Emmett Chapman in 1969. It consists of a long fretboard with twelve strings spanning a bass and guitar range. Sound is produced when the strings are “tapped” against the frets by the fingers. An electronic pickup is used to amplify the sounds. This technique allows the musician to use both hands to play multiple parts, as on a piano, while having the direct fingers-to-strings control and feel similar to a guitar. See www.stick.com for more information.

Beginning in his early teens, Cleveland, Ohio native David Tipton played guitar and bass with a wide variety of musical groups. He also spent many years performing as a solo fingerstyle guitarist.

In the late 90’s, struggling with tendonitis in his left arm and pondering his musical future, David dreamed he was playing a multi-stringed instrument in the middle of a forest. When he woke up, he knew what he had to do... “I ordered a Chapman Stick, of course!”

“I loved playing bass in a band situation where I could just groove, but I also loved playing solo fingerstyle guitar. The Chapman Stick gives me the best of both worlds,” says David.

Since he acquired a Stick in 2001 David’s guitars have been collecting dust. He found that the light touch and ergonomic position of the Stick allowed him to play for hours with no pain or discomfort.

“Playing the Stick led to a revolution in my musical world. I found that by learning the chord progressions in the left hand and melodies on the right hand, I could learn and memorize tunes faster than I ever could on guitar. The Stick’s unique tuning facilitates lush harmonic arrangements.”

In 2008 David packed up his belongings and moved from Ohio to a small town in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. Since moving he has been refining his craft, composing and performing exclusively on the Chapman Stick. In June of 2009 David released his debut recording of original music, “Residue.” The CD quickly garnered praise from fellow Stick players, including the instrument’s inventor Emmett Chapman.

“I like to consider myself a musician who happens to play the Stick. After all, it is the music that’s most important to me. The Stick provides me with a broad palette for musical exploration.”



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