

But man, Wolfie worked his butt off. He had four hours of school every day and a gig at night. He was working overtime. From rehearsing here in the studio, to rehearsing at CenterStaging and two weeks at the Los Angeles Forum while he was still in regular school. I can't believe he did it. If you saw the final rehearsal at the Forum, he was already good. And as he got more comfortable with all the traveling, the actual gigs and the daily four-hour tutoring on top of it, he got into a groove, and his confidence grew. It didn't take long for him to be in command of his instrument and become a true equal.

**How can a kid want to go back to school after touring?**

It's just hard to do it all. I don't think I'd be able to, nor would I want to. I don't see how Wolfie pulled it off. A few times he was sick as a dog, and he still played and sang his ass off. He's more professional than most people I know. We never canceled or postponed a gig because of him. We've canceled a few because of some other people, including me. (Laughs.) Just a few weeks ago I almost yanked him out of school. But I do want him to graduate. The thing is, he already has a profession and a career that he's successful, talented and gifted at. It's not just, "Hey, man, he's my son; let's just prop him up there for the hell of it." He lives and breathes music just like his uncle Alex, and me, his father. You should hear him play drums; he's fucking scary good. It's his main instrument.

**When can we hope for the new CD?**

First, he graduates, and then Janie and I are getting married. Then we'll sit down, give Dave a call and ask him if he feels like whooping and hollering a little bit. I've got a ton of music.

**Is there going to be a live CD/DVD from the tour?**

We did film and record seven shows, but we kind of thought, why give people what they just saw? We have it. Maybe later. We just didn't feel like the timing was right. Why give them exactly what they just saw?

Somewhere in the future I'm sure it'll surface. Maybe, if and when we decide to put everything we have out. Including things like me playing guitar at the 6th grade talent show. There's all kinds of cool and funny shit we could put out. Who knows, really, when there are so many other things to do first. Like put out some new tunes.

**Will your upcoming wedding be a traditional ceremony or a rock star bash?**

It's a small wedding, with only family and a few close friends here at home in our backyard. It'll be nice. My brother is going to marry us. He can actually legally marry people. He's an ordained minister. Reverend Al. It's gonna be great.

**Who will be the best man?**

My son Wolfgang, of course.

**It'll be a real family affair.**

I have very few friends. Janie and I, we don't go out much, except to the market. She's a great cook, so why go out? I've never been the

type to hang out much or do the Hollywood thing and that kind of shit. That's why you don't see me in the tabloids very often. We enjoy our privacy.

**Tell us about your line of guitars and amps that are coming out.**

I've been designing and building amps for quite a few years now. The new "5150-III" amps have been available to the public since the summer of 2007. I've built guitars since day one. For one reason: because nothing existed that did what I wanted it to do. The brand-new "Wolfgang Guitar" is a culmination of about 35 years of experimenting with guitars. Everything that I destroyed, stumbled on to, learned and experienced is in this guitar. Along with Matt Bruck and Chip Ellis, we examined and upgraded every aspect and component of the guitar to the highest standards possible. The only similarity to the previous Wolfgang is the body shape, and even that's changed. You name it: We upgraded to stainless steel frets, double-potted custom-wound pickups, five-piece matching binding on the body and headstock, custom-made signature tuning machines and Floyd Rose bridge, new low-friction volume and tone controls, and the list keeps going. It took two-and-a-half years to complete. We left no stone unturned. I can go on and on talking about what it took to build this guitar. The bottom line is if you take the time to play one, I'm willing to bet you'll go with a Wolfgang. Then you will feel what I feel. IT'S JUST BETTER.



They will be out in January 2009. Just

go to [EVHGear.com](http://EVHGear.com) for details. And you'll see all the equipment EVH Brand has to offer.

**Whereas most musicians just slap their names on a guitar, you really take a hands-on approach to creating one.**

Well, yeah, it's my guitar. It's got my name and my son's name on it. Nowhere will you see any other name on it. Fender manufactures my amps, but they aren't Fender amps. It's EVH brand, and I'm hands-on every step of the way with my partner and friend Matthew Bruck. Chip Ellis is in charge and oversees the guitar end, and Mike Ulrich is the amp man.

**Do you have any advice for young musicians?**

When fans or beginner guitarists walk up to me and ask, "What does it take to make it?" the first thing I ask is what do you mean by "making it"? Do you want to be famous? Do you want to be a rock star? I don't really know what to do to be famous except jerk off in public. You'll get arrested, and you'll be famous. (Laughs.) But if you want your livelihood and your life to be music, then play and play and play until you get there.

**Do you still play every day?**

I do now. After the tour I was a couch potato for a good five months, but I'm back! I'm writing. I'm doing everything—including interviews. (Laughs.)

**Are you also doing a sneaker line?**

I took a pair of tennis shoes and stripped them up myself and thought it was cool. It is my actual trademark, and I thought the shoes were cool. We're finally putting them out after all these years.

**Is clothing design something you're interested in?**

I wear clothing half the day. (Laughs.)

**Any chance you'll make Wolfgang stripe bowling shoes?**

Hey, you know...yeah, maybe I'll make some for myself first. That kind of applies to my guitars too. I didn't build these to sell, really. The thing is a lot of people want what I use. With the guitars and amps, I'm not forcing these down anyone's throats. But if you want what I use, now they are available.

**Is that the secret of your success: You do things for you?**

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. You have to. It's like writing music. I don't know what a fucking hit is. Everybody laughed when I played "Jump." The overall consensus was, "Hey, Ed, you're a guitar hero; nobody wants to see you playing keyboards." Well, it's the only #1 hit single we've ever had. So I guess I got the last laugh.

**What is the best part about being Eddie Van Halen in 2009?**

I guess for the first time in my life I really feel good. I don't really wanna get into the whole sobriety trip. But I'm just workin' on a lot of things to get better at being here in the moment and stay clear, you know? I have been drinking, smoking and playing guitar since I was 12 years old. I still smoke, and I'm definitely playing guitar better than ever. I guess one of the three had to go. Along with some other shit. But alcohol was the wonder drug for me. It's a trip to look back and go, *Fuck, I've been doing this for over 40 years.* I'm lucky to be alive. I'm healthier and happier than I've ever been.

Janie and I are getting married in June. She's a beautiful, sexy, sweet, strong and smart woman who loves me unconditionally. And of course vice versa. I mean the love part. I have the most insanely gifted, talented, wonderful son (a direct gift from God), whom I love more than he'll ever know. My brother Alex, who I just love so fucking much, it makes me wanna cry out of joy that I'm so blessed to have him since the day I was born. My best friend Matt, who I've known for over 20 years and works with me on just about everything I do. My friend Ryan and a few other people. A great career. And of course my own company, EVH brand of guitars, amps and accessories. What the fuck more could I ask for? I feel like my life is just beginning. That's what the best part of being Eddie Van Halen is...in any year. 🍀