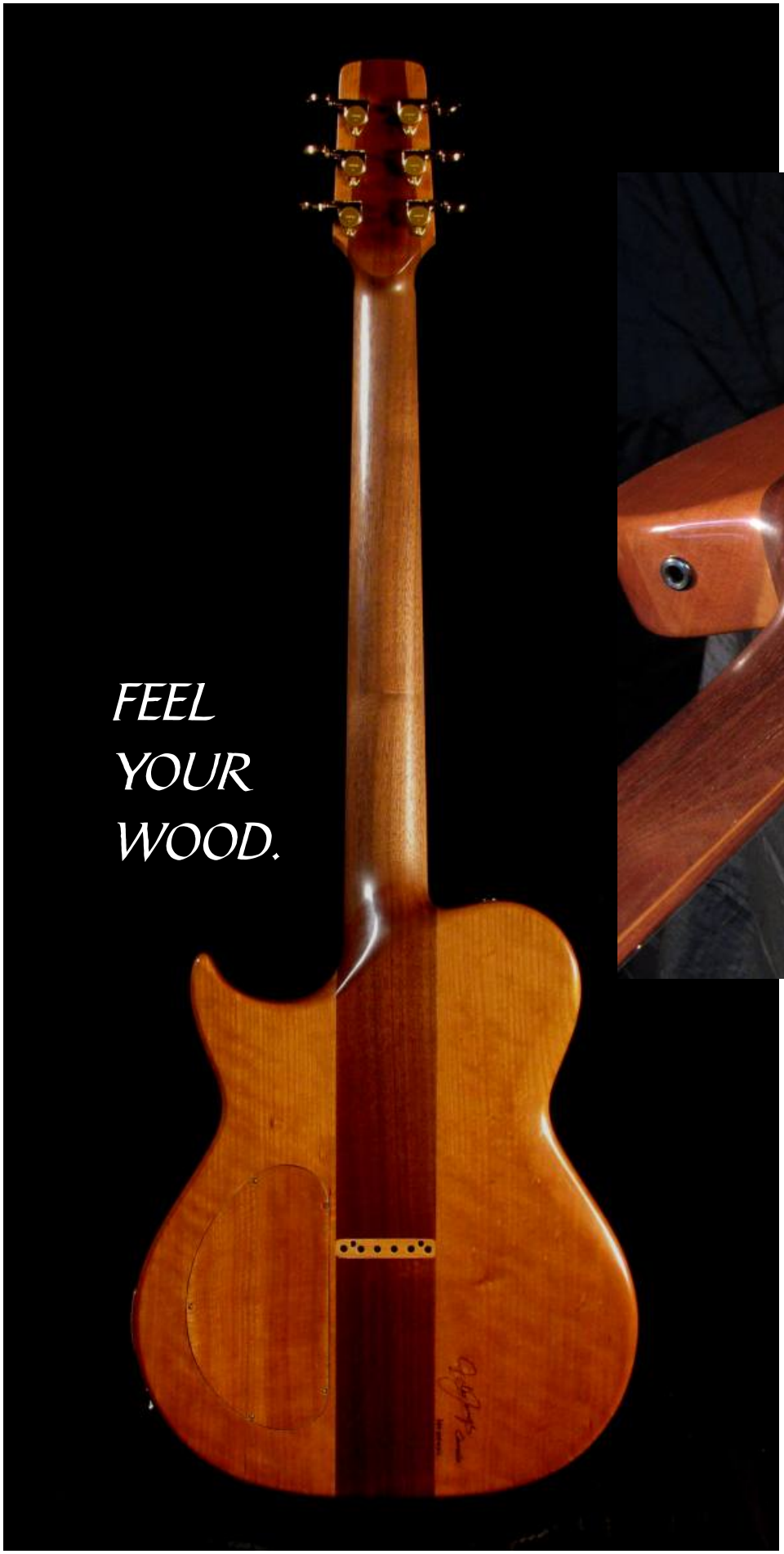
Imre
de Jonge
Guitars

Guitar #41
Model i
Owner's Guide



The one-piece black walnut neck is unfinished; the lacquer stops at the nape and the heel. The wood is sanded ultra fine and polished, the same way the lacquer is.

This makes for a smoother, slicker feel, with less friction when sliding up and down the neck. It also gives moisture a place to go, rather than sitting on the surface of a conventional finish especially with a porous wood such as walnut.

Guitar number: i-041-040311

(the last 6 digits encode the date of signing & lacquering Apr. 3/11)

Congratulations and thank-you for purchasing my 41st guitar, I can guarantee that you'll never regret this purchase; I'll see to it personally. Your guitar comes with a lifetime transferable warranty and free initial modifications to the wiring scheme.

Number 41 is my first guitar completed since I stopped building in 1989, so it marks a new beginning, and this is also my first owner's manual, which I hope you'll find useful.

My concept for this guitar was organic earth tones and classic shape with a natural 'coffee & cream' colour scheme. Playability, sound, and comfort are paramount for me, followed by durability and serviceability. I prefer parts made from wood and other natural materials, and I like whenever possible everything flush to the body. The light stripes running alongside the neck in the body are a lucky slice of sapwoood against the darker heartwood of the black cherry body blocks. This sapwood curves away from the back of the guitar and doesn't appear there.

I had already begun to build this new model when I quit in '89, (see picture) so you can bet the wood is well stabalized by now! It has a twin sister, (#40) that is thinner overall, but I went ahead of it and finished this one first. The model 'i' represents (or did) my ideal guitar, but that turns out to be a moving target.

This is also my first guitar that requires a battery, which is something I've never been keen on. According to Graph Tech, the Canadian company that makes the bridge saddle/pickups and pre-amp, the acoustic sound is far better with the pre-amp, which acts as a single-purpose equalizer. As well, to take advantage of the pre-amp's stereo/mix capability and pass-through to pin 7 of the MIDI jack, the mag signal must pass through the pre-amp for handling, and if the battery dies, the mag pickups lose half their volume, and the piezos don't work at all. I toyed with the idea of putting failsafe by-pass switching in the battery compartment, but weighed against how simple it is to have a spare in your case, the idea lost out. Just don't forget to unplug it.

Another note I would add abut the acoustic sound is to remember that the saddles can only pick up what the strings produce. If you use very light strings, you won't get nearly the same sound as a real acoustic gets from its much heavier strings. Even strung with electric 'regular light' 10-46 I find the light strings give it away somewhat, and if they're lighter still it takes very delicate technique to compensate for the lack of tension in getting that sound..

Although this guitar is unique and instantly recognizable, the signature and serial number could be erased from underneath the finish, so it's also hammered deep into the wood under the neck pickup, and again inside the control cavity.

Default Functions

General Specifications

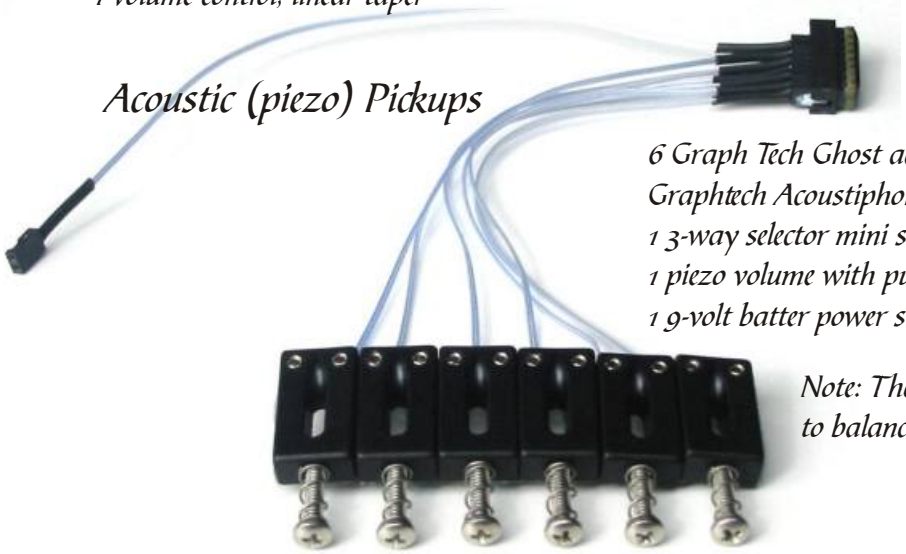
Construction: straight inline neck-through-body
Neck: 1-pce black walnut running full length with cherry wings on headstock; 43.5 mm wide, 20 mm thick @ nut
Body: black cherry
Truss Rod: of my own design and construction: 3/4" wide x 1/8" thick aluminum bar anchored in the heel and pulled by 3/16" steel rod attached at the 1st fret. Tension is applied by a bullet nut at the heel.
Fingerboard: satinwood with rosewood markers and binding; 24 frets
Bridge: 'Strat' style in 7mm thick satinwood; 2 pcs.; string spread: 56mm
String nut: ebony
Tuners: Gotoh gold plated
Bridge saddles: Graph Tech 'Ghost' self-lubricating graphite composite with built-in acoustic piezo pickups
Pre-amp: Graph Tech 'Acoustiphonic' Intelligent pre-amp with stereo/mono connection detection
Magnetic Pickups: Bartolini passive mini humbuckers, matched pair with full 4-line wiring
Pickup mounts: cross-laminated cherry, 7 mm thick
String anchor: 1-pce aluminum string block connected to ground, with satinwood cover block
Battery holder: black cherry; wireless connect
Cavity cover: black cherry laminated to sheet copper; 3mm thick
Strap studs: Schaller flush mount locking type

Electronics Overview

Magnetic Pickups

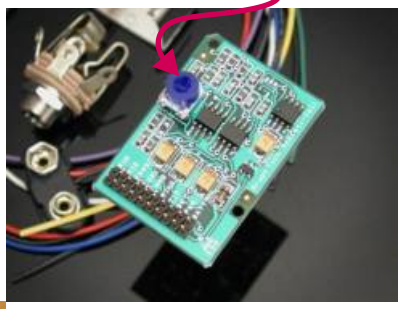
2 matched Bartolini mini humbucking pickups, with...
3-way selector switch (bridge pickup = down)
1 single coil (both pickups) mini switch (normal = down)
1 phase reverse mini switch on bridge pickup (n = down)
(has effect only when both pickups are on)
1 volume control, linear taper

Acoustic (piezo) Pickups



6 Graph Tech Ghost acoustic pickups integrated in bridge saddles with...
Graphtech Acoustiphonic Intelligent pre-amp
1 3-way selector mini switch (mag-both-piezo)
1 piezo volume with push-pull switch for piezo mid-range boost
1 9-volt batter power supply in edge compartment

Note: There's a trim pot on the pre-amp board to balance acoustic volume with mag volume.



The output jack is stereo, with a power switch to the battery. The pre-amp detects if a stereo plug is used and then splits the acoustic and magnetic signals, so they can be amplified separately. Remember to unplug the guitar to extend battery life.
If the battery is dead only the mag pickups will still work, at reduced volume.

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Battery Compartment

The battery compartment is located on the edge of the guitar above the bottom strap stud. The battery is held by and connected by the cover: a cross-laminated block of cherry wood with the battery terminals screwed to it on top of sheet copper, which makes the connection from the battery to the 2 coiled wires inside the guitar. That way, there are no wires to pull out, stuff back in, or break off.

Removal is with a single thumb screw with a slot for coins, if needed. However, the screw needn't be too tight; it should be turnable with a thumbnail and finger friction. Once the screw protudes enough, and you feel it release, simply pull the entire unit straight out by the screw. When replacing, push the cover into position and tighten the screw until it stays flush with the body. There is a small block of low density foam rubber at the bottom of the cavity to apply a slight pressure outward on the battery. This ensures a good connection on the terminals as well as a rattle-free ride. This bit of foam may need to be replaced now and then .

If the battery terminals ever start to lose their grip, try squeezing the sectional terminal with pliers. Or, they can be easily replaced. Just take a 1/8" drill bit and carefully drill the terminals off an old battery. Remove the screws holding the terminals on the holder, (you'll need a small slot screwdriver) and replace them with the new ones. Make sure you get the polarity right! The red (positive) wire is exposed in the guitar for easy reference: it gets the large sectional connector.

Tuning Machines

The tuners from Gotoh are robust and smooth, and should last an age with no trouble. You might try a tiny drop of sewing machine type oil down at the base of the string pegs every year or so. The

buttons can work a little loose over time, in which case you can just tighten the small screws on the button ends. Don't overtighten them, it'll make them too stiff to turn, and wear them prematurely; try to make them all the same tension. Wipe with a soft cloth to clean, and shine.

Bridge

A 'Strat' bridge made from 7mm thick satinwood, inlaid flush to the guitar deck. It consists of 2 pieces: the baseplate, and the tailpiece, which holds the saddles. The tailpiece is held in by friction and string tension. There are slots under each saddle to accommodate the pickup wires. When changing the strings, the piezo saddles will be free to move around due to the lack of springs, and the tailpiece may come loose. Make sure that each saddle is in the right position, with its height screws straddling the pickup

wire slot and aligned straight as you tighten the string. Once string tension is re-applied they will stay put, as will the tailpiece. Note that all the original saddle screws have been replaced with longer black ones. IMPORTANT: When adjusting height or position of the saddles, please slack off the string tension first!

Truss Rod

The truss rod in this guitar consists of a flat 3/4" wide by 1/8" thick aluminum bar and a 3/16" steel pull rod that is attached to the bar at the first fret. A bullet nut at the other end pulls the rod tight and the bar, which is stopped in the wood of the heel, is forced to bend, bulging upward in the middle against the fingerboard and bending the neck backwards, countering the forward pull of the strings. A little bit of pull-up is essential for a neck to play properly and clearly, but it should be quite subtle as you sight down the neck. If there's too much (very obvious) pull-up, and the action becomes too high or buzzy, especially in the 2nd octave, the truss rod should be tightened to straighten this out. Conversely, if the neck is too straight or slightly convex, and it's buzzy at the lowest frets, the rod should be loosened. Necks can change with humidity changes as the neck wood or fingerboard shrinks and expands differently from the other, causing bending along the length. If the wood is well seasoned and sturdy, this should not be too much of a problem, but slight seasonal adjustments may be needed. You may also need to adjust the neck if you change your string guage.

I tighten the truss rod slightly before sanding the fingerboard to its final straightness, and sand out the resulting back bow. This allows the neck to pull up more if the rod is loosened. On this guitar, the natural pull-up from the string tension has been surprisingly minimal, so I had to loosen the truss rod to facilitate some pull-up.

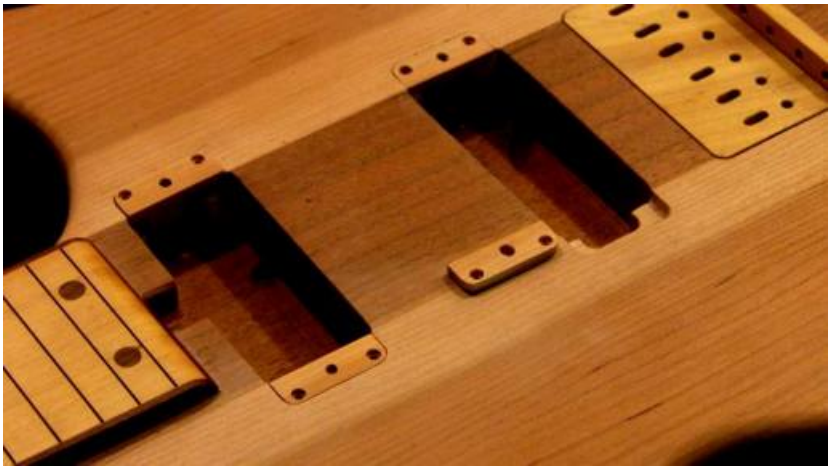
A very short allen key is used to adjust the bullet nut. If you need to shorten one, just put it in a vise and smash the excess off with a hammer; they're very brittle.

String Nut

The string nut is made of a single piece of ebony, and sits on a ledge, rather than in a slot, and is not glued. This makes removal for doing fretboard work much easier and less potentially damaging. A single screw at a slight downward angle holds it against the fretboard. IMPORTANT: Don't over-tighten this screw; the bevel head may split the nut if it's overly tight. Barely snug is perfect; the strings will do the rest.

Pickup Mounts

The pickup mounts are cross-laminated cherry, and attach with 2 screws. The center (machine) screw adjusts pickup height, and runs a bit deeper than the pickup cavity, so the pickups will bottom out before reaching the end of the screw. Don't adjust the pickups too close to the strings! Bad harmonics and double notes can result. There should be at least 3-4 mm between them with the string at its closest, on the 24th fret.



To remove the pickups, the mounts must be unscrewed from the guitar. NOTE: The mounts are made to fit their specific positions. Because of slight variations in the routing, (no CNC machines here!) to get a snug fit they are not interchangeable, and their positions are marked on the underside, in case they get mixed up..

String Anchor

The string anchor block is aluminum with a satinwood cover. Two screws secure them both, and clamp the block down onto a bare wire lying in a groove. This wire connects the strings to the ground circuit, since the entire bridge is non-conductive. There's no reason to ever remove these parts unless the ground connection becomes faulty.

General Maintenance

This guitar doesn't require much maintenance; cleaning is the main thing. The finish on the body, head, and fingerboard is Mohawk classic instrument lacquer, which is hand-sanded and hand polished. A soft cloth dampened with guitar or fine furniture cleaner/polish will help get gunk off and buff up the shine. If it's necessary to repolish the lacquer you should use a fine rubbing compound (like Turtle Wax white) on a soft cloth.

VERY IMPORTANT! Don't use light coloured or wet rubbing compound on the bare neck! To re-polish the bare walnut neck use extra fine steel wool. (000 or finer) If you want it extra slick, use a cloth with blackened rubbing compound dried onto it to avoid getting white compound into the pores. (You'll never get it out!) Mix some india ink or black pigment into the compound to blacken it, rub a good patch into a soft cloth, and let it dry before use.

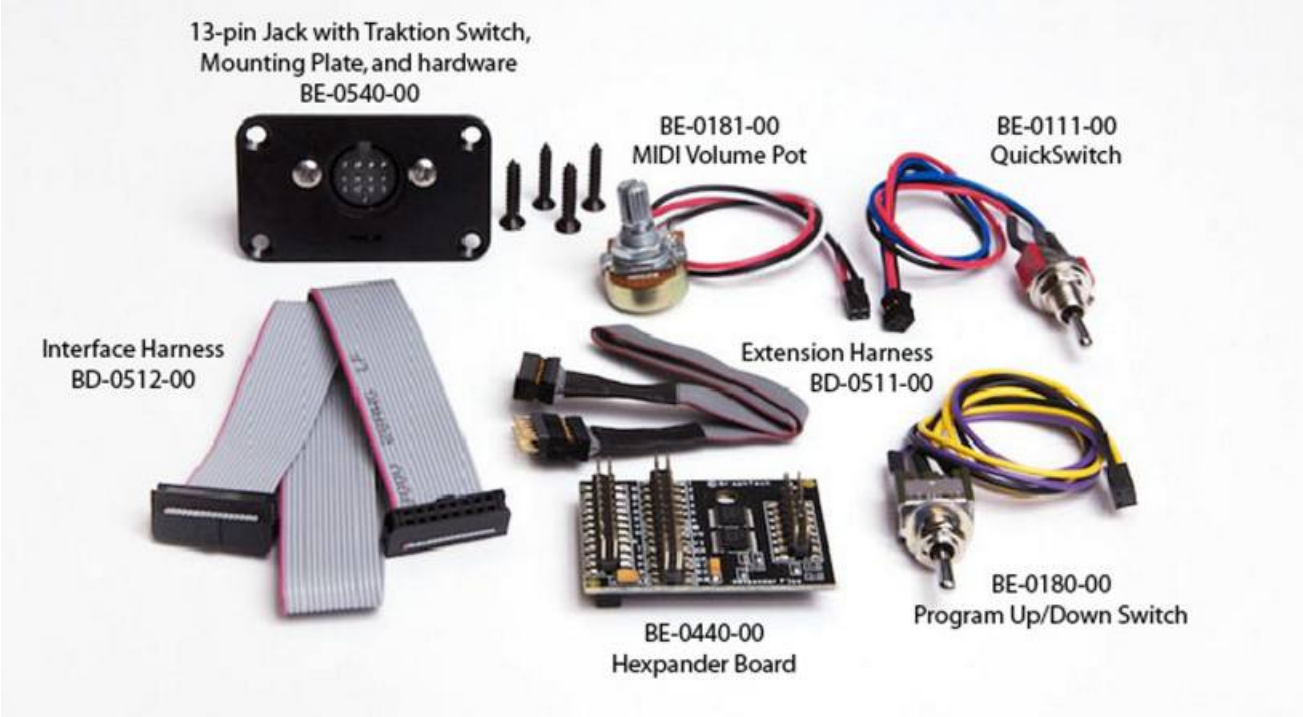
I haven't put anything on the neck, not even oil, which I fear will get gummy with heat and sweat. I would suggest if you put oil on it, wipe it off the surface thoroughly.

The battery will need to be changed from time to time, on average about 1-2 times per year, if you don't leave the cord plugged in overnight too often. Remember to pull the plug out of the guitar to save the battery life, and to remove the battery for extended periods of rest.

MIDI Interface Option

With MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) connectivity, you can use the guitar to play a synthesizer or record your performance on a computer as MIDI events as well as the audio. This opens up a whole world of sounds and instrument voices limited only by your equipment's library.

The Graph Tech MIDI interface system consists of all the items pictured, some of which are optional conveniences and aren't installed. In order to keep the guitar deck as uncluttered as possible, I haven't accomodated any of the MIDI controls. (2 switches & a volume) However any or all of these can be added.



The core of the system is the Hexpander board and the 13-pin jack, with a ribbon cable connecting them. The Hexpander piggybacks on the Acoustiphonic board, so no extra space is needed. On the jack is a switch to select the MIDI converter system you are using. The system is also capable of passing through either the mag or acoustic signal from the pre-amp on pin 7, so that way the standard guitar cord isn't needed in addition to the MIDI cord.

Note: The guitar does not interface directly with other MIDI instruments or computers; a MIDI interpreter, or "pitch-to-MIDI-converter" is required to translate the 6 signals coming from the interface into MIDI data.

Note: The guitar has been pre-routed for the MIDI option; if it has not been installed, it can be easily added by either myself or another qualified technician.

Lifetime Warranty

All my guitars are permanently warranted to be free of defects in workmanship and materials. This warranty is attached to the instrument, not the owner, so it remains in effect if the instrument changes hands. It expires upon my demise, unless someone agrees to take over.

Claims on this warranty will be satisfied by either repair or replacement of the instrument, depending on the nature and severity of the problem and the practicality of repair, and will be guided by whichever results in a more satisfactory instrument for the owner within a satisfactory time frame.

This warranty is not limitless, applying only to significant functional flaws or failures, and excludes minor and cosmetic defects such as anomalies in the wood, small blemishes in the finish, or repairs I've already made and deemed insignificant. It also excludes the obvious failures, warpage, or breakage due to neglect, abuse, mishandling, extreme conditions, accidents, electrical surges, etc. etc.; any negative results of 3rd party servicing or modification, and normal wear and tear (as opposed to early failure).

The spirit of this warranty is to support my work and clients the best I can to have long-lasting reliable instruments, and to build them in such a way as to never have a claim. (only one so far.. a broken truss rod nut) My aim is to build the best guitars possible; that sound great, are a joy to play, and last basically forever with no problems. I would like to be first to know of any issues, learn from them, correct them myself, and keep you wanting to play my guitars. Most small parts I can gladly replace free or at cost, (switches & pots don't last that long) however the installation may need to be done by you or someone else, if it isn't practical or too costly to get the guitar to my shop. Also, this warranty will only cover one-way transportation or shipping costs.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would 'activate' this warranty by registering your purchase with me for my database of owners, and keep your contact info current. Just drop me an email or visit the website. Thank-you, and thank-you again for purchasing my 41st guitar.

About...

I'm a one-man shop, on 20 acres of forest with small inexpensive power tools, and no automation of any kind. Although I'm going to upgrade my tools continually as funds permit, I'll never automate or become a 'factory.' So far, all my guitars are a bit different from each other; even 2 of the same model, and they're going to get progressively more unique as I use my own wood and other materials, like stone and deer antler, from my property in north Muskoka.

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Certificate of Authenticity

This document certifies and authenticates that the guitar (pictured here) with serial number i-041-040311, hand-written and signed, is entirely conceived and hand-crafted by me, Imre de Jonge, in Ontario, Canada.

Model: "i" Guitar number: 41
Date of signing: Apr. 3, 2011

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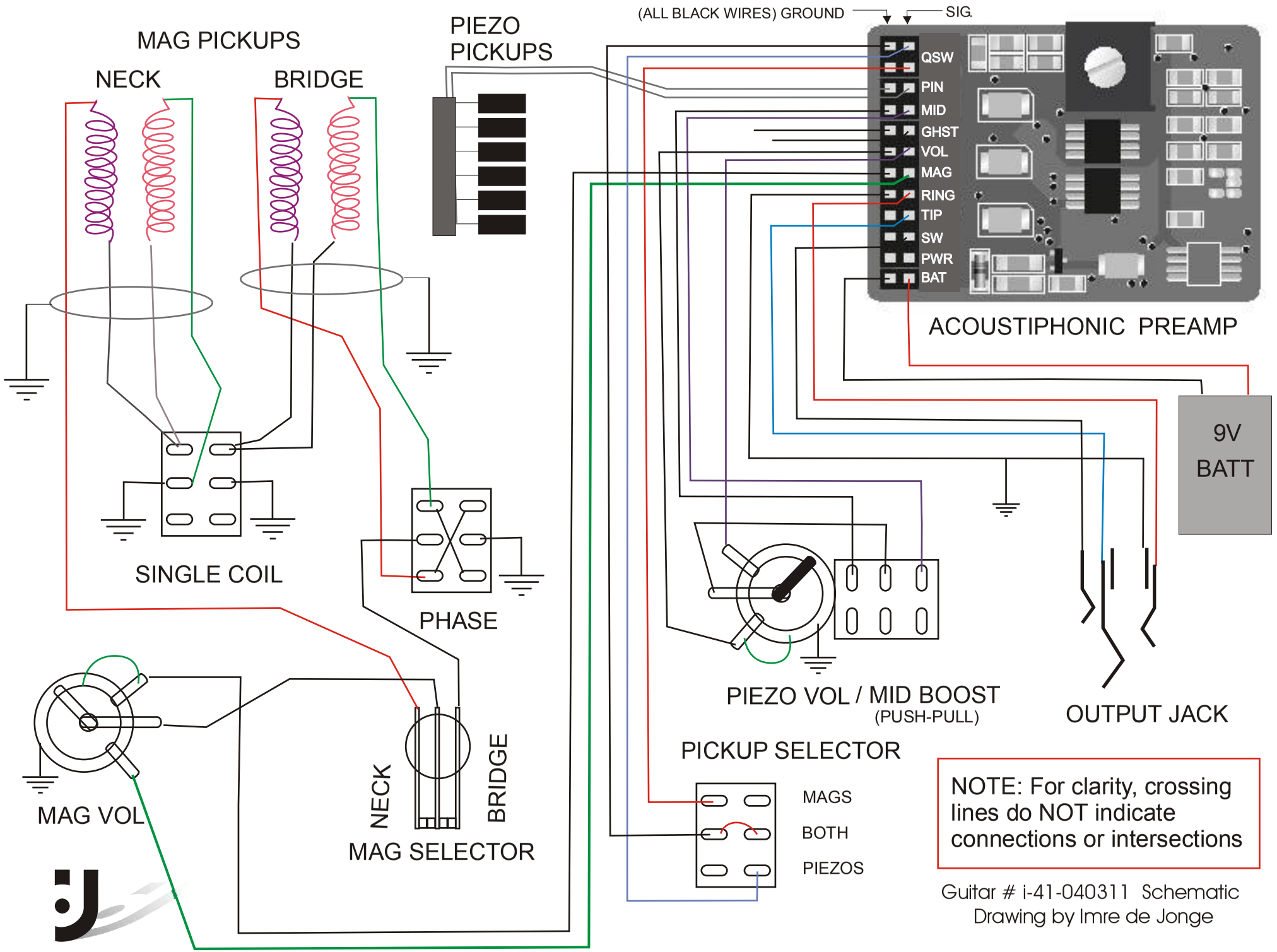
Notes

Please jot down any servicing, modifications, problems or observations here.


MAG PICKUPS
NECK
BRIDGE
PIEZO PICKUPS
(ALL BLACK WIRES) GROUND
SIG.
QSW
PIN
MID
GHST
VOL
MAG
RING
TIP
SW
PWR
BAT
ACOUSTIPHONIC PREAMP
9V BATT
SINGLE COIL
PHASE
PIEZO VOL / MID BOOST
(PUSH-PULL)
OUTPUT JACK
PICKUP SELECTOR
MAGS
BOTH
PIEZOS
MAG VOL
NECK
BRIDGE
MAG SELECTOR
NOTE: For clarity, crossing lines do NOT indicate connections or intersections
Guitar # i-41-040311 Schematic
Drawing by Imre de Jonge

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