

# Ian Schneller

## The Royale Premiere

Artist and musician Ian Schneller began using Specimen Products as a name for his sculptures in 1981 while he was an undergraduate at the Memphis Academy of Art. "It was the anonymity of the words 'Specimen' and 'Products' that appealed to me," he laughs. "It also seemed a funny little ruse—pretending to be a company instead of myself." After Schneller moved on to graduate studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1984, Specimen Products expanded into a music- and instrument-making endeavor—first to fulfill his own personal needs, and then for his friends, band mates, and other musicians.

This recent Specimen guitar design is a unique take on the archtop tradition defined by luthiers like John D'Angelico and James D'Aquisto that has been brewing in Schneller's mind for many years. "The headstock and body are inspired by the sinewy horror of a praying mantis," he says, "while the pastels mimic natural color themes found somewhere between chlorophyll and entomology." The pickup ring, trapeze, and finial are handcrafted from solid billets of aluminum, and the bridge is carved from one piece of ebony. Both the D and G strings have banjo tuners that can be used for special drop-tuning effects. This particular Royale model also features a single neck pickup format, which lets the guitar resonate to its fullest extent. The pickup is a Lindy Fralin humbucker which Schneller says sounds "very good indeed—robust, full spectrum, and cooperative."

### SPECIFICATIONS

**BODY AND SIDE WOODS:** Linden  
**TOP WOOD:** Linden  
**BODY WIDTH, LOWER BOUT:** 15¾ inches (40 cm)  
**ELECTRONICS:** Volume, tone, Lindy Fralin humbucker  
**NECK WOOD:** Mahogany  
**FRETBOARD MATERIAL:** Ebony  
**FRETBOARD INLAY:** Mother-of-pearl with colored mastic  
**HEADSTOCK DECORATION:** Diver's helmet finial sculpted from aluminum billet  
**BRIDGE:** One-piece floating, ebony  
**NUT AND SADDLE:** Bone  
**TUNING MACHINES:** Four Grover Imperials and two Schaller banjo tuners  
**BINDING:** White/yellow/white  
**SCALE LENGTH:** 24.5 inches (62.2 cm)  
**NECK WIDTH AT NUT:** 1¾ inches (4.4 cm)  
**NUMBER OF FRETS:** 21  
**BRACING:** Internally carved from the body billets  
**FINISH:** Pale blue nitrocellulose  
**BODY DEPTH:** 3½ inches (8.9 cm)  
**BODY LENGTH:** 19 inches (48.3 cm)  
**OVERALL LENGTH:** 42 inches (106.7 cm)  
**U.S. SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** \$6,500

The Royale Premiere, 2001  
 Ian Schneller, Specimen Guitar Shop  
 Chicago, Illinois

