

# Robert Dahlqvist

## The guitars and gear of a Swedish rock icon



*Robert, här 40 år gammal, i aktion i Cirkus Prütz med ES335:an.*

*Robert, here 40 years of age, in action with blues rock band Circus Prütz, playing his Gibson ES335.*

The most adequate name for the musical equipment Robert owned as professional rock guitarist was maybe *working tools*. He cared much for his instruments and gear – it must of course be real good quality stuff, enduring a harsh working and touring life. But he was also rather sentimentally attached to his instruments – not the least he missed his *Kent Kroon Les Paul 1976 Reissue* after being stolen...

On the other hand, he never saw his instruments as collecting objects or status symbols.

# Robert Dahlqvist's guitars

Robert's first guitar:

## **Marina Mark 31**

This guitar made in Taiwan was the very first which Robert got from his mom Bibi. It was in 1986 when Robert was ten years old. The guitar is still in the family's possession.



Robert's first electrical guitar:

## **Ibanez RG**

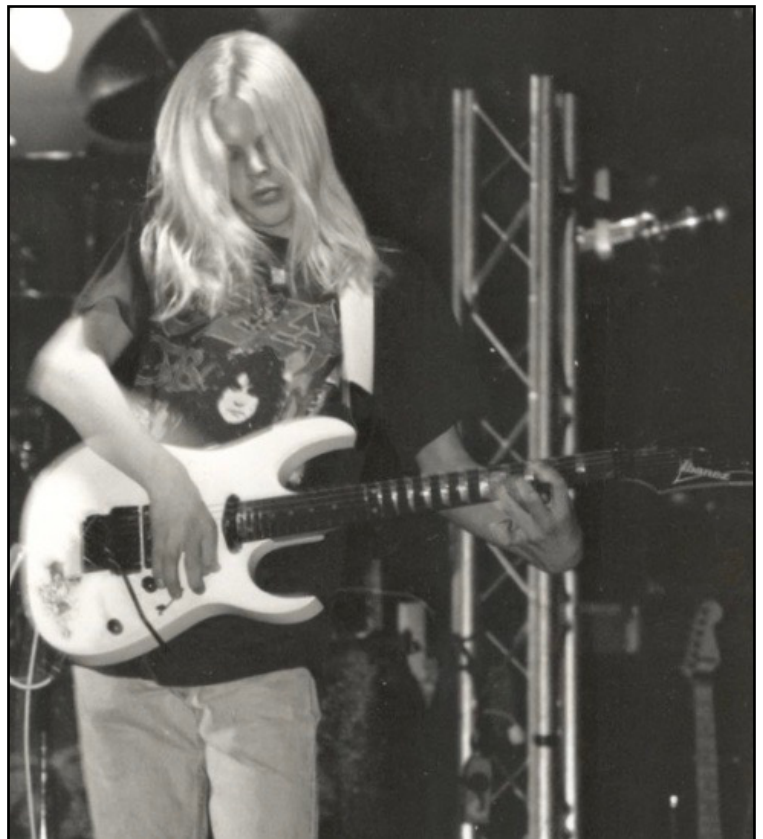
Robert's first electric was also given to him by his mother Bibi when he turned 15 in 1991 – a white Ibanez RG (**R**ock **G**uitar).

Which specific model of the RG line it was we unfortunately don't know.

With this guitar he had great success at the Ramneröd school show the same year, amazing the audience with his already advanced playing technique. It was by the way the first time one could actually imagine what a guitarist he would become a few years later.

After having acquired a Fender Stratocaster in 1992, the Ibanez guitar was left for anyone to borrow at Tureborg Youth Center in Robert's hometown.

Unfortunately, the instrument is presently not in the family's possession.



## Fender Stratocaster 1976

Robert acquired this Strat at a musical store in Gothenburg in 1992. The serial number is 7668478, and it appears on the cover of the *High Visibility* album, recorded in 2000.

We have not been able to find it in any data base, but it is definitely a 1976 year model – Robert’s year of birth.

Robert played this guitar frequently during the rest of the decade. Not very often however during the years in The Hellacopters, but now and then during his entire career.

Robert - 40 years old at the time – i.e. used his Strat at the recording of his last album *”Rock på Svenska”* in January 2017.

The guitar is still in the family’s possession.



## Gibson Les Paul Junior

This guitar was most likely a so called *reissue*, i.e. a new edition of an old, classical guitar model, Robert’s first of the Les Paul model.

Unfortunately, it is unclear when and where he acquired it.

According to Kristoffer Ekberg, Robert might possibly have traded it with his red Gibson Flying V (see next page) since it “disappeared” around that period of time.

The guitar Robert owned was so called “TV yellow”, meaning that it appeared more clearly in mono-chrome TV. This is however not the instrument shown here. Actually, we have not been able to find any photo at all showing Robert with this guitar.

Robert’s above mentioned Fender Stratocaster and this Gibson Les Paul Junior were most likely the two guitars that he used during the nineties, and these were also the two instruments he brought with him when moving to Stockholm in the summer of 1996.

As appears from above, this instrument is not in the family’s possession.

## Gibson Flying V 1996



This red-coloured guitar which Robert acquired around 1997/98 was the one he mainly played after joining The Hellcopters rock band in february/march 1999.

It was also the instrument that he intentionally broke into pieces at the very last concert with the band in october 2008, i.e. almost ten years after.

A few years later, Robert sold the seriously damaged guitar to a german customer, whereafter the owner of TILT Recording Studios in Strömstad - Jon Dahlby – acquired it in the end of 2016.

Presently it is exposed in its parts in a showcase in the studio. Most likely, it will never be restored.



*Mr Jon Dahlby and Bibi.*





## Epiphone Flying V Korina, 1998

This Flying V Robert bought during the first year with The Hellcopters (1999) to use as backup for his red Gibson Flying V. As far as we know however, he did not use the Korina guitar very much.

He sold it after a relatively short period of time – say about 2000/2001 – to his friend Kristoffer Ekberg, who some time later traded it in Jansson´s Musical Store in Uddevalla. The store was by that time run by *Ola Rosenqvist*.

When we in August this year (2023) met Ola in the store by coincidence (the store is now run by others) he told us that he had owned the guitar for some 20 years. Certainly, there had been interest from different parties to buy the guitar from Ola- but given its owner history he wished to avoid a situation where the guitar would possibly become just a commercial object. Now Ola offered to donate the guitar to Strängens-sällskapet, which was of course accepted with great pride and gratitude.

The photo was taken at the occasion when the guitar was handedover at Ola´s place in August 2023.

So consequently, the guitar is now in the family´s possession.



Robert´s mother Birgitta Dahlqvist with the guitar, flanked by Cecilia Ahlsén and Stefan Brännwik.

## Gibson Firebird Bi-Centennial Sunburst Limited Edition, 1976

This guitar was acquired in the beginning of Robert's time with The Hellcopters. The year of manufacture is again the same as Robert's year of birth, 1976, and the serial number 0024828. He used this guitar frequently at different occasions, and also at the recording of his last album *Rock på Svenska* in January 2017. However, even this guitar we have not been able to find in any data base.

The guitar was acquired during a Europe tour which Hellcopters did together with *Foo Fighters* October - December 1999. Robert also had the Firebird logo on the pickguard tattooed on his left forearm.

*Dave Grohl i Foo Fighters personally gave each Hellcopters band member about SEK 10 000 as he thought that they were not properly paid. The Firebird was bought with this money, as was probably also the Epiphone Flying V Korina.*

The guitar is still in the family's possession.



Överstående foto är från ett framträdande i Kristinehamn med Edward Sensier, Jenny Pettersson, Alexander Blom, Robert Dahlqvist själv, samt Pontus Blom. Foto: Tonzig Emertille Sundberg

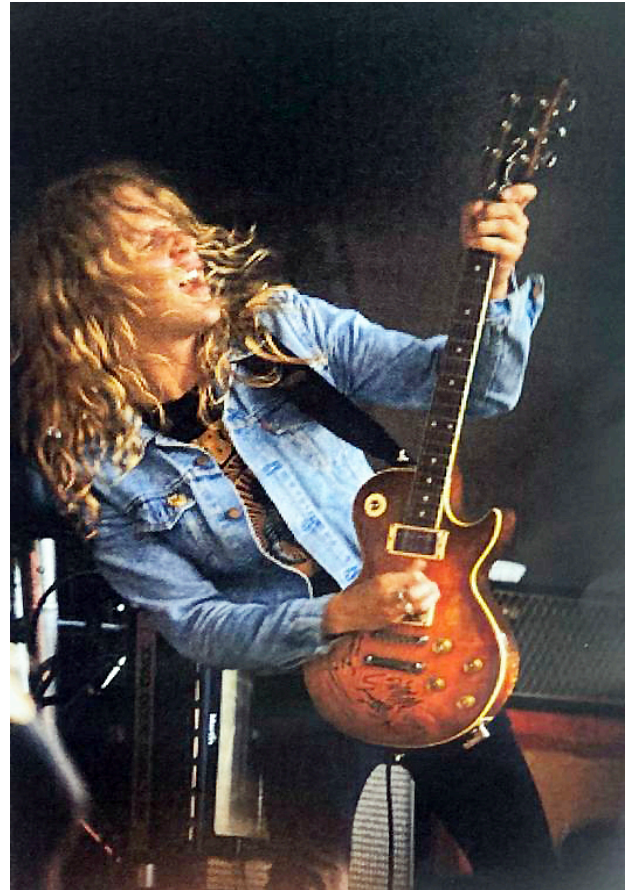
## Kent Kroon Les Paul 1976 Reissue

This one was Robert's second guitar of the Gibson Les Paul model, specially built in Sweden by jazz guitarist *Kent Kroon*. Therefore, it had no logo on its headstock.

This guitar Robert loved and played much ever since he found it in year 2000 and under the remaining period of his time with The Hellcopters, and also during the first period with his own band Dundertåget.

Regrettably, the guitar was stolen in Robert's and Kristina's apartment in Stockholm in April 2010, together with two other guitars. Of the three stolen guitars, this one he missed most badly.

Accordingly, this rare guitar is not in the family's possession.





## **Epiphone Crestwood, red 1964**

## **Epiphone Crestwood Deluxe, white 1965**

The first (red) one was called *Cherry*, and besides this 1964 model, Robert bought a white 1965, both probably aquired around year 2002. Why he got himself two more or less identical instruments we don't know, but possibly he wished to have one main and one backup guitar.

He liked the Crestwoods as they did not weigh very much and also looked cool.

Robert played both guitars frequently during his career.

The white one was sold in 2013 after some 11 years of service, and the red one in 2015.

Consequently, none of the two Crestwood guitars are now in the family's possession.



## **Ibanez Iceman**

Nicke Andersson and Robert himself each bought a guitar of this model prior to the farewell tour with The Hellacopters in 2008, Nicke a black one and Robert a white.

Paul Stanley of KISS owned one, and having the same model was more or less just a gimmic.

As far as we know, Robert's "Iceman" was not much used, and rather soon after sold.



## Gibson Les Paul Gold Top, 2008

This guitar became a true favorite which Robert played frequently ever since he got it. The serial number is 009280486, manufactured April 1<sup>st</sup> 2008.

The Gold Top is still in the family's possession.



When it was announced that The Hellacopters would end as a band in 2008 the Gibson general agent in Stockholm, Luthmans, decided to donate two guitars free of choice to each Robert and Nicke Andersson. Robert chose a Gold Top Les Paul and a white ES 335.



The Hellacopters rock band 1999 - 2008



## Gibson ES 335 Diamond, 2008

The ES 335, Gibson's famous semi-acoustic model - this copy with the special diamond-shaped F-holes - was one of only two guitars of semi-acoustic type Robert ever owned (the other was his Epiphone Riviera Custom P93, see page 14). This one was however by far the most important for him.

The serial number is 00708715, telling us that the guitar was manufactured on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2008.

It soon became Robert's main guitar which he played frequently throughout all years after delivery from Luthmans in 2008.

The ES 335 is still in the family's possession.



Robert with his main instrument from year 2008, the white Gibson ES 335 Diamond  
The guitars, and not the least guitar cases Robert owned became with time a bit "road worn".





## Epiphone Jorma Kaukonen Riviera Custom P93

This is basically an Epiphone ES335 however not with two humbucker pickups but three Gibson P90 single coil pickups, and a Bigsby vibrato. This was the second of three guitars stolen from Robert's och Kristina's apartment in Stockholm in April 2010. This incident presumably happened not very long after the guitar was aquired, and therefore not very much played by Robert. The guitar was never found after the theft.



The only known photography of Robert with his Riviera.  
Here with Stefan Sundström's band.



Epiphone Riviera Custom P93 (however this is not Robert's own copy)

## Yamaha SG 1000, 2005

This is a heavy, solid, high quality guitar which however Robert for some reason did not play very much, maybe because it is not specifically seen as a designated rock'n'roll guitar.

This one was the third of the three guitars that were stolen from Robert's and Kristina's apartment in Stockholm 2010. It was however the only one of the three that was actually found and brought back again, though we do not have any specific details regarding this.

Consequently, the SG 1000 is now in the family's possession.



## Ibanez SG



This guitar has serial number L763958 telling us that it was manufactured at the Terada factory, Nagoya, Japan - one of the production facilities that Ibanez used.

The guitar was manufactured in Dec. 1976 (again Robert's year of birth). When and where this guitar was purchased is not clear to us, however most likely in a rather early stage.

This Ibanez is hardly a top instrument, and Robert did never play it at any public performance. Due to the fact that the string height is adjusted relatively high, Robert might have used it as a slide guitar.

The Ibanez SG is still in the family's possession.

## Robert's acoustic guitars



### Regal

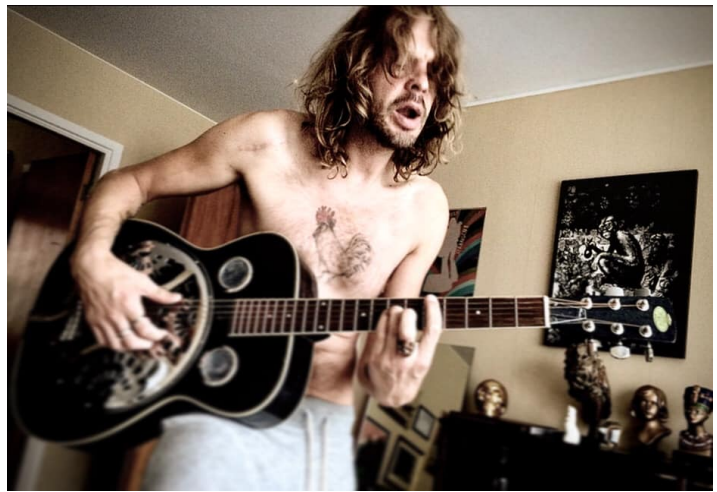
Robert owned a black *Regal* so called resonator guitar, made in San Francisco, USA.

We have not been able to find a serial number or model designation on the instrument, which Robert primarily used as a slide guitar.

On some occasion Robert happened to break the guitar neck completely off, which led to a somewhat complicated repair.

The repair – by the way done by Ola Rosenqvist - however turned-out successful, and the guitar is still in the hands of the family.

*Stockholm year 2016*



### Gibson Hummingbird -2009

This acoustic guitar is in the family's possession too, has serial number 00179076, and was made on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2009. It was aquired by Robert - or possibly donated to him - by Gibson's general agency Luthmans.







*Robert with his six stringed Yamaha in his apartment in Årsta, Stockholm.  
Not clear when this guitar was aquired, but however still in the family's possession.*



Robert owned a few more acoustic guitars, both six and 12 stringed models.  
Among others, this 12 string **Levin** which he loved, and which he primarily used when writing his music.  
Even this one is still in the family's possession.



Robert's pedal board used during all his tours in Europe, USA, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Japan etc. Robert by the way got the phaser pedal to the right as a birthday gift from a close friend on April 16<sup>th</sup> 1994.

Robert's rather cool Gibson T20 tube amplifier with 14W power output which we assume was manufactured sometime during the mid 1950<sup>th</sup>. It was actually used during one or two album recordings...





A part of Robert's gear. Somewhat road worn but nevertheless in good working condition...

# Strängen

ROBERT DAHLQVIST 1976-2017

Den 1 februari gick Robert »Strängen» Dahlqvist bort. Han var i full färd med att spela in ett soloalbum med producenten Chips Kiesbye, som även hade en hand med i samtliga skivor som Strängen gjorde med Hellacopters.

- Mitt första intryck när vi skulle göra »High visibility» (2000) var att det var väldigt mycket 70-tal över honom, minns Chips. Både i hur han såg ut och hur han spelade. Det var som att man tagit en tidskapsel och hämtat honom direkt från det decenniet. Strängen hade ingen punkbakgrund alls vilket var ganska ovanligt i våra kretsar. Han hade lyssnat mer på snubbar som Johnny Winter (1944-2014). Strängen tillförde ett nytt sound samtidigt som Hellacopters ville gå åt ett nytt håll. Det var bra tajming.

- Det hände väldigt mycket mellan 1999 och 2001, säger Hellacopters trummis Robban Eriksson. Vi började botanisera friskt i både soulmusik och sydstatsrock. Där hade Strängen betydligt mer koll än vad vi andra hade. När det var snack om Allman Brothers Band eller Lynyrd Skynyrd ägde han redan de där skivorna medan vi andra upptäckte dem där och då.

Gitarristen blev snabbt en sparring-partner till Nicke Andersson. Robban beskriver hur det kakofoniska blev mer uppstyrt. Strängen var ändå väldigt spontan i sitt spel.

- Nicke gjorde melodiska solon som han spelade mer eller mindre likadant varje gig. Strängen lirade däremot ett nästan helt nytt solo varje gång. Han kunde börja på ett helt annat ställe på gitarrhalsen än vad han gjort kvällen innan. Han var mer impulsiv i sitt spel vilket gjorde att alla fick vara på hugget.

Chips berättar att även om låtarna var ordentligt genomgångna innan bandet kom till studion lämnades platsen för gitarrsolon öppet för spontani-

tet. Han minns också hur noga både Strängen och Nicke inledningsvis var med att det inte fick klippas i några solon.

- Det gjordes väldigt många omtagningar tills de blev nöjda, skrattar han. Jag tyckte inte att det spelade någon roll om man klippte mitt i ett solo så länge det inte märktes. Det var prestige i att det skulle sättas i en enda tagning. Jag tror också att Strängen ville visa vad han gick för, det var lite upp till bevis, eftersom det var hans första platta. Ibland gick jag därifrån och sa: »Ni får trycka på 'rec' själva och tala om när ni är nöjda.»

Robban beskriver sin före detta bandkamrat som högenersgisk.

- Under handmöten hade så klart alla sitt eget tyck och tänk om hur man skulle göra saker. Jag brukade vara peppad på det mesta, men Strängen var ännu mer peppad. Han var alltid med på nästan allt. Det var sällan han som ställde sig tveksam till något.

Samtidigt beskriver Chips honom som en skör person.

- Han var ofta osäker i studion, vilket gjorde att han pressade sig själv väldigt hårt. Det gav musiken en viss nerv, men mycket av mitt jobb gick ut på att uppmuntra honom och få honom att känna att det inte var något att vara nervös över: »Du kan det här. Vi håller på tills det blir bra.» Han blev dock lite tryggare på de sista skivorna.

I sociala medier var Strängen öppen med sitt alkoholmissbruk och sin depression.

Chips menar att han ibland var lite för öppen.

- Vi pratade om det där. »Ta det lite lugnt»,

sa jag. »Lägg inte ut saker på Facebook så snabbt.»

Men det var sådan han var. Han hade både hjärta och nerver på utsidan. Både på gott och ont.

- Han var oftast jävligt glad under turnéerna, säger Robban. Det började gå utför efter att vi lämnade bandet 2008. Han kände kanske att en liten bit av hans identitet försvann. Sådant kan vara tufft för vem som helst.



ROBERT DAHLQVIST