

THE OTHER TALENTS OF THE ULMA GROUP

Employees and partners of the Group make their professional career compatible with very demanding hobbies where they show that all obstacles can be overcome with talent and hard work.

Bringing Rock-n-Roll Treasures Back to Life

Raúl Illaro, ULMA Conveyor Components

Raúl Illaro, from ULMA Conveyor Components combines his professional responsibilities with his passion for restoring electric guitars.

Rupture, transgression, art, creativity, protest, passion, brashness, rebelliousness, intimacy, dreams, madness. A cry of freedom, a call to life. Is that what we hear when we listen to Jimi Hendrix? What scenes do the sounds of Jimmy Page bring to our mind? Where do Eric Clapton's chords take us?

Again and again we fail whenever we try to decipher the universal message of rock. It goes beyond labels, it doesn't fit a single interpretation. That's why it's so hard to put a name on the unstoppable urge to play the electric guitar felt by Raúl Illaro, member of ULMA Conveyor Components management.

Raúl's weakness for the guitar goes back to his teenage years and it's led him to form friendships with musical icons like Fito Cabrales of Fito y los Fitipaldis and Iñaki 'Uoho' Antón, guitarist of Extremoduro.

It all started in 1987 when, immersed in his college studies, Illaro begged for a new electric guitar. However, a lack of income made it so a second hand guitar was what fell into his hands. It was an 81 Gibson Les Paul Custom that alleviated his need to play but required him make some repairs.

Raúl repaired his first electric guitar paying close attention to the instrument's characteristics. He decided to not change any of the original parts and instead of simply rebuilding the instrument, he

restored it. And as a result, the guitar became more valuable.

Raúl had to work hard and travel to central European countries to get hard to find guitar parts that matched the originals. He made contacts with the few guitar restoration enthusiasts who were around in those days. He had to read and learn a lot with the very little information about the subject that was available at the time. Downloading a musical instrument repair tutorial wasn't an option yet. It was work that required a special effort, but that would open the way to a hobby that's brought him many rich rewards.

"What I do isn't the same as a luthier. I don't repair, I restore. A luthier works in a more effective way. What I do is restore guitars and tweak them and make them comfortable, while making sure they don't lose a drop of their essence." says Raúl.

A lot of real treasures have passed through his hands. Electric guitars from the 50's and 60's are hard to see and even harder to obtain nowadays, either because very few were ever made or because of the value and quality of their parts.

Among his treasures are: a '58 Gibson Les Paul Custom, four Fender Stratocasters from '63, '64 and '65 (of the two he has from '65, one is bright Candy Apple Red), a '57 Fender telecaster, an electric bass and a couple of old amplifiers, a Spanish

exclusive '60 Bassman and a '64 Fender Deluxe.

"Guitar restoration also moves into other areas. Amplifiers, for example, are something else to take into account." he says.

In his relentless searches, Raúl has had help from his father who, despite not knowing anything about electric guitars, offered his extensive knowledge about restoring vintage cars. His experience taking cars apart piece by piece and then putting all the parts back where they belong has given Raúl's father the opportunity to offer help to his son with the numerous questions arising in restoration.

The electric guitars Illaro has had led him to form interesting friendships. Fito Cabrales is relying on Raúl to restore his latest acquisition and 'Uoho', of Extremoduro has already been able to play his guitars.



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I restore guitars, bring them back to life, make the sounds of the past come out of them again, project them into the symphonies of the future and make it so others can keep enjoying this unclassifiable music.

Long live Rock-n-Roll!