

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## GUITAR CENTER CELEBRATES NEW TIMES SQUARE STORE WITH THE ROOTS LIVE IN CONCERT

Award-winning firm Eight Inc. hired to design GC's new flagship store location and redefine retail experience for NY consumers.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT HIGHLIGHTS:**

- *Flagship Times Square Store opens Thursday, August 7*
- *Unique state-of-the-art in-store elements include Guitar Center's The Platinum Club; a Fender custom shop where unique and high-end Fender guitars are featured; a full DJ experiential department; a boutique pedal selection in a stunning 360-degree display; and 28,000 square feet of guitars, drums, keys, DJ, recording, live sound and more*
- *The Roots to celebrate occasion with a special Times Square concert*
- *Grand Opening festivities continue through the weekend with exclusive savings, giveaways, a display featuring Eric Clapton's iconic "Blackie" Fender Stratocaster and more*

**Los Angeles, CA (July 23, 2014):** Guitar Center has announced the grand opening of the retailer's brand new store location in world-renowned Times Square, further cementing Guitar Center as the leading force in the industry. The new store is located at 218 W. 44<sup>th</sup> St. and opens its doors at 7 p.m. on Thursday, August 7, 2014. This opening coincides with another milestone for Guitar Center as the retailer celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

Standing as the 262<sup>nd</sup> store nationwide, Guitar Center Times Square location is housed in what was the original New York Times building, updated with a modern look by award-winning design firm Eight Inc. (Apple, Nike). True to all Guitar Center stores, the Times Square location will foster a hands-on environment in which customers are encouraged to interact with the wide selection of instruments and a dedicated staff of unparalleled experts.

To commemorate such a momentous occasion, Guitar Center will host a Grand Opening Weekend, kicking off on Thursday night with a performance by hip-hop icons and current *Tonight Show* house band The Roots, across the street from the new store at the Best Buy Theater. Tickets will be given away at New York-based Guitar Center locations in the days leading up to the event. Locations and times can be found at [www.guitarcenter.com/timesquare](http://www.guitarcenter.com/timesquare).

Guitar Center Times Square will feature a number of programs such as in-house lessons through [Guitar Center Lessons](#), free [Recording Made Easy](#) classes, an in-house rental department, a hands-on electronic music department, and onsite guitar repair service [GC Garage](#). Innovative features unique to this location include a Fender custom shop where unique and high-end Fender guitars are featured, a boutique pedal selection in a stunning 360-degree display, and The Platinum Club, which showcases top-of-the-line, high-end luxury guitars.

"Joining the caliber of retailers that have established a presence in Times Square over the years is a huge accomplishment and a statement as to how far the brand has come," says Mike Pratt, Guitar Center CEO. "By opening a Guitar Center in such a visible, high-traffic area as Times Square, we are able to open more eyes to the inherent joy that comes from playing an instrument. The store is amazing, and we can't wait to share it with our customers. It's a proud moment for all of us at Guitar Center."

"Guitar Center is one of the few brands out there working to inspire people to make music. They are able to survive in a culture that supports creativity and musicianship, just like us," says Questlove. "New York is where I reside and Times Square is the heartbeat of the city, so to have Guitar Center in the center of it all is an exciting moment for New York musicians."

Additionally, throughout the weekend the Times Square store will feature exclusive savings, gear giveaways and free events. Eric Clapton's "Blackie" Fender Stratocaster, purchased by Guitar Center for \$959,500 at a Christie's Auction to raise funds for Crossroads Centre Antigua, will be on display all weekend, and Dream Theater's John Petrucci will be greeting customers in the store on Saturday at 2 p.m.

**Store Address**

218 W. 44<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10036

**Store Hours**

Monday – Thursday 10:00am – 11:00pm  
Friday – Saturday 10:00am – Midnight  
Sunday 10:00am – 10pm

**About The Roots:**

Formed in 1987 in Philadelphia, PA, the legendary Roots Crew consists of Black Thought (MC), Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson (drums), Kamal Gray (electronic keyboards), F. Knuckles (percussion), Captain Kirk Douglas (electronic guitar), Damon Bryson (sousaphone) and James Poyser (electronic keyboard). Having previously released twelve projects, The Roots have become one of the best-known and most respected hip-hop acts in the business, winning four GRAMMYS, including "Best R&B Album" for *Wake Up!*, "Best Traditional R&B Vocal Performance" for "Hang in There" (with John Legend) and "Best Group or Duo R&B Vocal Performance" for "Shine." The ensemble was most recently nominated for "Best Rap Album" for the 2011 release of *undun*. This brings the band's GRAMMY nomination count to twelve. Additionally, The Roots have also become the faces of Philly's "Fourth of July Jam," an annual concert held during the Fourth of July with the biggest names in music, and "The Roots Picnic," a yearly star-studded mix of musicians that has become a celebrated institution during awards season. Recently The Roots were named one of the greatest live bands around by *Rolling Stone* and became the official house band on *The Tonight Show* starring Jimmy Fallon, where they currently perform every Monday-Friday. The Roots celebrated the release of their 11<sup>th</sup> album, *then you shoot your cousin*, in May 2014.

**About Guitar Center:**

Guitar Center is the world's largest retailer of guitars, amplifiers, drums, keyboards, recording, live sound, DJ, and lighting equipment, with more than 260 stores across the U.S. 2014 marks the milestone 50th anniversary of the Guitar Center Brand as we continue to help people make music from coast to coast. In addition, the Music & Arts division operates more than 120 stores specializing in band & orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors, and students since 1952. With an unrivaled in-store experience and passionate commitment to making gear easy-to-buy, Guitar Center is all about enabling musicians and non-musicians alike to experience the almost indescribable joy that comes from playing an instrument. All we sell is the greatest feeling on earth. For more information about Guitar Center, please visit [www.guitarcenter.com](http://www.guitarcenter.com).

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