



## Janis Joplin's 1953 Gibson J-45

### Date

1953

### Primary Maker

Janis Joplin

### Medium

Wood; Metal; Plastic

### Description

Janis Joplin's 1953 Gibson J-45, serial number Y4897-18, in sunburst finish. The guitar features a spruce top with mahogany back and sides, a mahogany neck, and rosewood fretboard. In a hardshell case with several stickers and airline travel tags still present. This J-45 is one of the only guitars Janis Joplin is known to have played on stage. According to Bob Neuwirth, a folk singer, poet, and artist who was friends with Joplin, she had owned this guitar for "a couple of years" by 1969, when he first saw it at her apartment in New York City. Neuwirth

had just heard Kris Kristofferson's song "Me and Bobby McGee" for the first time and in a visit to Joplin's apartment taught her the tune. Joplin immediately learned the song using this guitar, and performed it soon after during a concert at the Nashville Fairgrounds Coliseum on December 6, 1969. Photographic evidence shows Joplin played this guitar during this concert. Her performance of the song was met with strong applause in the heart of country music and it soon became a part of her regular set. In August 1970, Neuwirth again collaborated with Joplin to help write her song "Mercedes Benz." Neuwirth later recalled the night in New York City when the song was born: "Michael McClure had a poem and Janis had nicked the first line, 'Oh Lord won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz.' And she'd been running around with it, humming in her head. And somehow, sitting at the bar, sitting at that table there we started pounding beer glasses on the table, and singing this song, like it was some kind of campfire song, and we just kept at it." Joplin and Neuwirth added two more verses that evening to complete the song. Both "Me and Bobby McGee" and "Mercedes Benz" appeared on Joplin's album *Pearl* (1971). Neuwirth later used this guitar to perform "Mercedes Benz" during Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue tour stop at Madison Square Garden on December 8, 1975. Janis Joplin (1943-1970) was an American singer and songwriter. Joplin began recording music in 1962 in her home state of Texas before moving to San Francisco. Joplin returned to Texas in the mid-1960s before being recruited by the psychedelic rock band Big Brother and the Holding Company to sing in 1966. The band's June 1967 performance at the Monterey Pop Festival brought national attention to the group and Joplin, led by her powerful voice and flamboyant stage presence. The

band's 1968 album *Cheap Thrills* reached number one on the Billboard 200 charts, led by the single "Piece of My Heart." Building on her popularity Joplin left Big Brother the following year to start a solo career. Joplin and her supporting band, the Kozmic Blues Band, appeared at the 1969 Woodstock festival before releasing her debut solo album *I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama!* later that year. Joplin recorded what became her most popular album *Pearl* throughout 1970, but prior to its release Joplin died of an accidental drug overdose on October 4, 1970. *Pearl* was released posthumously in 1971 and was an immediate success. As time has passed, Joplin's legacy has grown. She was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1995 and is often credited as one of the greatest singers of all time.

3D Model [Janis Joplin 1953 Gibson J-45](https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/janis-joplin-1953-gibson-j-45-d3f085298bdd4c989aa359288da53d7b?utm_medium=embed&utm_campaign=share-popup&utm_content=d3f085298bdd4c989aa359288da53d7b) by [Znyth](https://sketchfab.com/znyth?utm_medium=embed&utm_campaign=share-popup&utm_content=d3f085298bdd4c989aa359288da53d7b) on [Sketchfab](https://sketchfab.com?utm_medium=embed&utm_campaign=share-popup&utm_content=d3f085298bdd4c989aa359288da53d7b)