

## WZ Folk Gift Guide for the Swank

So you say your Lear Jet is in need of an aileron wax, your Steinway has a family of raccoons living under the bass octaves, and your moat is infested with Asian carp and zebra mussels. Your portcullis is rusty and the Bentley has glove compartment parasites.

And in the middle of this embarrassing pickle, to your mortification, you have heard that your nephew Bromley has decided on a career as a folk singer. To top it off, Christmas is coming, and you have no clue what gifts would be appropriate for this misguided boy, whom you would rather see in banking or munitions.

Grim as all that may be, you have a family obligation to buck up and knuckle down and have someone comb at least the internet in pursuit of information on what's available for the aspiring troubadour. This is where the **Whither Zither Folk Gift Guide for the Swank** comes in handy. Assuming you would be willing to part with a few shares of your dwindling blue chips, or can unload some property in the islands or something, here are suggestions:

The majority of folk singers play as their accompanying instrument the guitar. The ability to play many a quotidian folk standard can be learned on this device in a few evenings by the fire, if tutored by one of the best, and in folk music, one of the best is usually cheaper by the session than a barber.

A lower priced unit is to be avoided, for anything below the four thousand dollar plateau is inferior and might better be tossed in with the hickory to warm the music room by burning than by attempting it with hot licks. No, the only starter-guitar to be considered is the Martin D-45S Authentic 1936, available from **musiciansfriend.com** for the discounted price of \$47,999.00. The manufacturer's suggested retail

price is \$59,999, leaving you a few extra pennies to detail the jet.

This is somewhat lower than the more recent folk invention, the accordion, which has as its entry level price for the fledgling acoustic musician the figure of \$52,495, plus shipping and handling. This will obtain for your waiting nephew, from the shelves of **instrumentalsavings.com** of Anaheim CA, the Hohner Gola Series Premium Level Piano Accordion, Model 414. A fabulous price for this lovely and popular instrument.

As stocking stuffers for kum bye ya youngsters, harmonicas are ideal. But go for no less than the Suzuki SCT-128 professional 16-hole Tremolo Chromatic Harmonica, available from the same Anaheim outfit, for the rock bottom price of \$1,799.00, a full \$300 less than the manufacturer recommends, and this, believe it or not, includes shipping.

As long as we're on the subject, if the fellow's taste runs toward this machine of suck-and-blow, a more comprehensive idea would be the Hohner Bob Dylan Hand-Signed Natural Key 7-Piece Harmonica Set. This extremely limited edition consists of a complete set of seven Marine Band harmonicas in a lovely autographed box, signed by the folk superhero of yesteryear and recently listed at **musiciansfriend.com** for the round figure of \$25,000.

Another thought for the stuffing of the stocking is not an instrument in itself, but a tool used by every serious folk artist today: the microphone. And here you should go directly toward the Telefunken Elektroakustik ELA M 251 Tube Microphone, on special sale at **Front End Audio** for \$11,995. Be advised it is best to buy two of these, for stereo effects.

Everyone in this boy's position would benefit from inspiration driven by the possession of tokens from past masters, and toward this end I would suggest the Woody Guthrie manuscript listed on **eBay** by seller **historydirect** for the Buy-It-Now figure of \$45,000, said to have been reduced from \$50,000 for quick sale. As a companion piece, there is also an original letter from Leadbelly listed at

**liveauctioneers.com** with a starting bid price of \$1,200 and an estimated final range of 2,000 to 3,500.

Almost last but far from least, speaking of non-instrumental gifts, if your nephew is serious to the point of classic posture guitar stylings, he will need a footstool. There is no better in this area than the 110 pound solid gold stool, shown below, said to be up for immediate sale in China's Jiangsu province for 1.3 million dollars.



All this being said -- though we are reluctant to even envision such a scenario -- if you are seriously down to the nubbins and making soup of your last bean, if you are reduced to tying your own Windsor knot, if you are replacing your Pissaros with Kincaid prints, don't forget that old reliable standby, the Monarch Music Stand Pencil Clip (below). This treasure is available from music accessory dealers all across the World Wide Web for \$1.09, but please don't say you heard about it in the **Whither Zither Folk Gift Guide for the Swank**.

