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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ernie Ball Music Man Announces the *Valentine*: New Guitar Designed In Collaboration with Maroon 5’s James Valentine**

*This release follows the launch of acclaimed St. Vincent- and John Petrucci-designed models*

**(Coachella, CA – May 16, 2016) –** Ernie Ball Music Man, one of the world’s premier guitar, bass and amplifier manufacturers, announces today that the *Valentine*, a brand new guitar designed by celebrated guitarist James Valentine (*Maroon 5*), will be available for pre-order on June 1, 2016.

Watch James discuss and highlight the guitar here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owAwFYio3O0>.

“Ernie Ball is such a legendary brand, and I am thrilled to be working with them on creating what I imagine is the perfect guitar,” said Valentine. “In the creation I had two main goals: design a guitar I could play throughout an entire set and make something completely new that still looked classic. They took what I had in mind and helped bring it to life. This entire experience working with the Ernie Ball family has been truly great.”

Crafted in Ernie Ball Music Man’s San Luis Obispo, California factory with support from the award-winning engineering team at Ernie Ball Music Man, the *Valentine* was created using the company’s unique design process, which provides artists unrestricted access to the factory and engineering teams to realize truly original designs from the ground up. The goal of all signature models at Ernie Ball Music Man is to produce instruments that perfectly fit the artist’s form, playing style and personal tastes.

The *Valentine,* a mix of classic design aesthetics and innovative modern-day engineering, delivers unparalleled playability and performance, features a slab ash-body, two Ernie Ball Music Man designed pickups (1-humbucker/1-single coil) with active preamp, silent circuit and 3-way custom wired lever switch, coil tap with +20db boost, hardtail bridge with vintage bent steel saddles, 25.5-inch scale, oil- and wax-rubbed roasted maple neck with 10-inch radius fingerboard, 22 stainless steel frets, and an oversized 4-over-2 headstock with compensated nut, designed for superior tuning stability. The guitar also boasts an innovative tapered design that narrows the body of the guitar towards the top of the player, lightening the guitar without sacrificing tone and also improving playability by hugging the player more closely.

“We take great pride in creating true signature instruments,” says Sterling Ball, CEO of Ernie Ball. “We partner with artists from the beginning to come up with a design that is 100% unique to their vision. Our entire process from first sketch to final production is substantially different from the commonly practiced approach of an artist simply tweaking an existing brand’s guitar model.”

The Ernie Ball *Valentine* will be available July 1, 2016, and is available for pre-sale on June 1 at a U.S. MSRP of $2,009.

Photo file 1: MM\_Valentine\_Black.JPG

Photo caption 1: Ernie Ball Music Man James Valentine *Valentine* Artist Series guitar in Black

Photo file 2: MM\_Valentine\_Buttermilk.JPG

Photo caption 2: Ernie Ball Music Man James Valentine *Valentine* Artist Series guitar in Buttermilk

Photo file 3: MM\_Valentine\_Maroon.JPG

Photo caption 3: Ernie Ball Music Man James Valentine *Valentine* Artist Series guitar in Maroon

Photo file 4: MM\_Valentine\_Natural.JPG

Photo caption 4: Ernie Ball Music Man James Valentine *Valentine* Artist Series guitar in Natural

Photo file 5: MM\_JamesValentine.JPG

Photo caption 5: James Valentine, pictured with the Ernie Ball Music Man *Valentine* Artist Series guitar

**About Maroon 5:**

Maroon 5, born and bred in Los Angeles, with their catchy hooks, soaring vocals, and signature sound, have solidified their position as one of pop music’s most enduring artists. The band captured their first of three GRAMMY® Awards as “Best New Artist” of 2005 and have gone on to sell more than 17 million albums worldwide. Maroon 5’s releases have also gone gold and platinum in over 35 countries. Maroon 5’s current album, *V*, debuted at #1 on Billboard’s Top 200chart and features the hit singles “Maps,” “Animals” and “Sugar,” all of which hit #1 on the Top 40 chart. *Rolling Stone* said of the album, “The 11 songs here are precision-tuned and lustrously polished, jammed with hooks and choruses that build a man cave in your brain.” The music video for the band’s chart topping and GRAMMY-nominated single "Sugar" has logged one billion views to date.

**About Ernie Ball:**

In 1962, veteran player and guitar teacher Ernie Ball created Slinkys®, the innovative light gauge electric guitar strings widely revered by thousands of iconic players including Eric Clapton, Keith Richards, Jimmy Page, Paul McCartney, Metallica, Brad Paisley, Slash, John Petrucci, Angus Young and John Mayer. The strings are all crafted in Coachella, CA. Ernie Ball also offers state-of-the-art instrument accessories that are carried in more than 6,000 stores in the U.S. and 120 countries worldwide.

Officially purchasing the Music Man® company in 1984, Sterling, joined later by his sons Scott and Brian, has built a team of dedicated professionals based in San Luis Obispo, CA who collectively share a common goal: crafting the highest level of hand-crafted instruments available. Originally founded by Tom Walker, Forrest White and Leo Fender in 1974, Music Man built its name leading an industry revolution, introducing active electronics on its production instruments. As part of the team during the 70’s, Sterling Ball played an important role on the design and development of the iconic StingRay basses.

The family-run company maintains its founder's dedication to preserving the musician's playing experience and delivering superior sound quality through the development of new products, such as Cobalt Slinkys, M-Steel, Earthwood and the revolutionary Element Shield Packaging, which hermetically seals guitar strings to keep each set as fresh as the day they were made. The company also fosters artist development through musician-focused programs such as the world's largest and longest running unsigned artist programs, where bands compete each year for the chance to play live on national tours, festivals and events. Visit them online at www.ernieball.com and www.music-man.com.

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