

MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Est. 1879



31st

2023



MMR
MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW
**DEALERS CHOICE
AWARD**

Winner

Annual

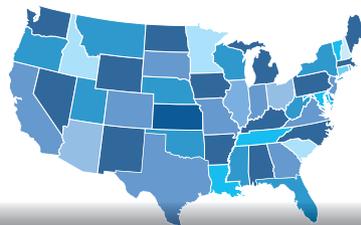


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 Avantis: Winner—2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
 SQ: Winner—2018, 2019

avantis **ALLEN & HEATH** **SQ**

INSIDE



42nd Annual
America's Top Chains



2023's Top Print Titles

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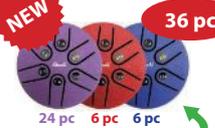
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**MAP:
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NEW

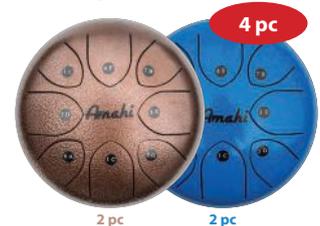


24 pc 6 pc 6 pc
**3" Drum MAP:
\$19.99 ea**



2 pc 2 pc
6" Drum

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2 pc 2 pc
8" Drum

**MAP:
\$1,231.64**

C O N T E N T S

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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

FEATURES

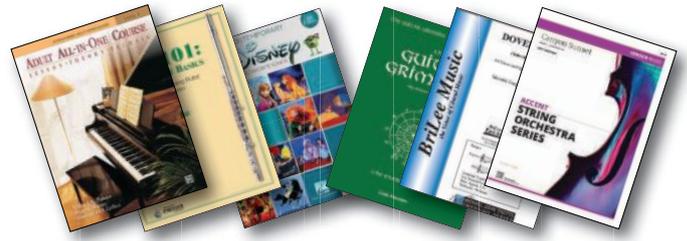
Vol.182 DECEMBER 2023 No. 12

42nd Annual America's Top Chains Report 8

Consolidation remains a significant factor in 2023, as a couple of previously independent MI retail chains merged with larger corporate entities, but overall store-count actually grew somewhat compared to last year.

MMR's 31st Annual Dealers' Choice Awards 14

Record-breaking voting totals and some surprise upsets defined the 2023 Dealers' Choice Awards, although plenty of the big names and "usual suspects" also came out on top in their respective categories. Check out the instruments and brands that MI dealers sent to the winner's circle for fielding the very best of the best this past calendar year.



2023's Top Print Music Titles 24

Enthusiasm for learning and advancing musical skills remains on an upwards trajectory that began during pandemic-related lockdowns. *MMR* spoke with eight of the most significant publishers in the market to learn what titles – from instructional booklets to pop folios – were flying off the shelves in the past calendar year.

Departments

Editorial	4
UpFront	6
Trade Regrets	6
People	6
New Products	26
Classifieds.....	27

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So How Was 2023 for Musical Instrument Dealers, Really?

By
Christian
Wissmuller

As is tradition at this point, I gratefully cede this space in our year-end issue to the folks who *truly* know what's going on in MI retail – the dealers, themselves:

Business continued to remain steady and strong for 2023 as schools continued their purchases and spent down their stimulus funds and in-person activities have returned back to the way it was before COVID. Repair technicians are in demand and we all need them to keep things humming along. Consumer discretionary income is coming under fire with the economy slowing down a bit and stimulus dollars wrapping up. The addition of student loan payments in October will further reduce discretionary spending, but education continues to remain strong. – Ryan West, West Music

The overall whole has been positive. Rentals are up, sales are up, but margins remain tight. "Supply chain" issues with the major manufacturers present an ongoing issue that requires now over a year of pre-planning orders in order to have inventory. The supply chain issues with some manufacturers/suppliers do not look to be improving, but actually are getting worse. Being able to forecast for inventory over a year in advance is going to be hard for most of the industry to adapt to. – Charles Kessler, Kessler & Sons Music

“With a continued shift to online rentals and e-commerce in general, we need to find alternative ways to differentiate ourselves from our competitors.”
– Jonathan Breen, The Music Shoppe, Inc.

Inflation and increased consumer pricing on everyday life items is constant and frustrating. – Chris White, White House of Music

Combo was down this year, B&O up, digital pianos flat, pianos down. Supply chain is still a mess for many suppliers. – Dave Krogan, Frank Rieman Music, Inc.

2023 has performed as expected – certain areas of our business are growing, other departments have leveled off. Overall, we're pleased with our results, both on the balance sheet and in our customer reviews and support. With a continued shift to online rentals and e-commerce in general, we need to find alternative ways to differentiate ourselves from our competitors. We've been successful in this differentiation in the past when meeting with customers face to face, but without that personal interaction, we are compelled to adopt new tactics and strategies to stay "top of mind" with our customers. – Jonathan Breen, The Music Shoppe, Inc.

We are having a solid year over the prior year, but down in certain areas. We have to stay engaged in our communities to educate about the importance of the value that music-making plays. Inflation is concerning. We must continue to develop our team members and recruit talent to support our customers and community. We are targeting for growth [in 2024]. – DeDe Heid, Heid Music

Overall 2023 sales were up some from 2022. Interest rates, poor customer/consumer credit, the 2024 election, supply chain still having problems, and constant dealer and consumer price increases [are all concerns]. It's the mid to late '70s all over again... I do expect an increase of sales in 2024. – Randy Collins, Collins Music Center

2023 was very robust, especially in the school band market. Many types of slow-downs cause "knee jerk reactions" that ignore the long-term. That concerns me the most. Direct vendor to consumer trends probably fall into this category. In 2024, we expect an increase in sales, overall, yes, but very slightly. – Paul Finke, Willis Music

"2022 was a very strong year with schools fully opening after the pandemic. 2023 is coming in very close to 2022. Rising interest rates are a concern." – Mathew Schirado, Eckroth Music Co.

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Hal Leonard Combines with Muse Group, Uniting Two Music-Content Leaders in a Shared Mission to Improve the Lives of Music Makers

Hal Leonard, the legendary sheet music and educational publisher, joins digital leader Muse Group, in a partnership set to revolutionize access to popular music and creator tools for musicians worldwide. As makers of the world's most popular online libraries, tools, and community spaces for audio creators – including MuseScore, Ultimate Guitar, and Audacity – this partnership further solidifies Muse Group's position as the industry leader in music content and creation. Both Muse Group and Hal Leonard will retain their respective HQs in the USA and Cyprus, and distinct operational expertise. Supported by growth investment

from Francisco Partners – a key investor in industry-leading music technology and content companies – this agreement marks the next step in a close, longstanding partnership between Muse Group and Hal Leonard.

Both companies share a vision to provide unparalleled access to the best content and resources for the passionate, global community of everyday music makers, educators, and learners. Along with its massive catalog of premier educational and classical music, Hal Leonard's licensed arrangements include the world's most iconic artists and scores, from Taylor Swift and The Beatles to John Williams and



Disney soundtracks. Combined with over 3 million expert and community-created tabs and compositions on Muse Group's Ultimate Guitar and MuseScore, the joint business now includes a content library of over 5.5 million scores, tabs, books, video courses, backing tracks, and presets.

Muse Group and Hal Leonard are thrilled to continue pioneering new solutions for creatives, music makers and learners as partners in the future.

Proel Collaborates with International Songwriting Competition

Proel North America is thrilled to announce a partnership with International Songwriting Competition (ISC), one of the world's premier platforms for songwriters. As part of this exciting collaboration, Proel North America will provide the Grand Prize winner of the annual International Songwriting Competition with a state-of-the-art Eikon Studio monitor bundle.

The ISC is known for its commitment to supporting and showcasing talented songwriters from around the globe. With a large and diverse community of artists and song enthusiasts, the competition has been a springboard for many aspiring musicians to gain recognition and opportunities in the music industry.

Proel North America, with a rich history of producing high-quality audio equipment and professional music gear, is proud to be a part of this initiative. The Eikon Studio monitor bundle offered as the grand prize is a testament to Proel's dedication to providing exceptional sound solutions for musicians, audio engineers, and producers.

Reverb Sponsors J Dilla Music Technology Grant

Reverb has announced its sponsorship of the Save The Music Foundation's J Dilla Music Technology Grant. The latest step in the five-year partnership between Reverb and the Save The Music Foundation (STM) has benefited South Atlanta High School, where students now have a variety of tech-focused music gear to bolster both their music education.

Launched in 2019, the Save The Music Foundation's J Dilla Technology Grant brings modern training techniques to local communities and school districts, fostering the inner creativity, talent, and confidence of students by teaching them the fundamentals of electronic music creation, recording, and production. Through Reverb's donation, South Atlanta High School's nearly 900 students now have an assortment of tech-focused music gear to use as they explore music as a means for expression.

For more information on Reverb's partnership with the Save The Music Foundation and the J Dilla Music Technology Grant, visit www.savethemusic.org/jdilla.



Excelcia Becomes Exclusive Distributor of Michael John Trotta's Sheet Music

Excelcia Music Publishing is pleased to announce that, starting January 1, 2024, it will be the exclusive distributor of the music of innovative and popular American choral composer, Michael John Trotta. In a newly-signed arrangement, Excelcia Music Publishing will distribute past, present and future works of Hampton Roads Music Group, publisher of Trotta's music, making all of it readily available to choir directors for purchase from music retailers around the world. With this new partnership, Hampton Road Music Group joins Choral music giants, Pinkzebra and Voctave, in entrusting Excelcia Music Publishing with their exclusive distribution.

traderegrets

It is with great sadness that Odyssey Innovative Designs announces the passing of industry veteran **Dave Lopez** after a hard-fought battle with cancer. In 1996, Lopez met Mario Montano and John Hsiao, who had just launched Odyssey Cases and they instantly hit it off. He joined the startup as one of its first employees, quickly excelling in business development and sales management. Lopez' love for people, the community, and the industry led him to spearheading Odyssey's growth for nearly three decades, earning him a lifetime achievement award from NAMM in 2020.



people on the move

Audix, the manufacturer of superior quality microphone products which is a part the Vindendum Media Solutions group, announces the appointment of **Glenn Roop** to the position of key account manager and consultant liaison. In his new position, Roop will oversee the cultivation of marketplace client relationships and drive brand expansion with a focus on product-oriented solutions.





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42nd Annual America's Top Music Chains

PO	Piano/Organ
P	Piano
DP	Digital Piano
BO	Band & Orchestra
PC	Percussion
FA	Fretted Instruments/ Amplification
SR	Sound Reinforcement/ Recording Equipment
EK	Electronic Keyboard
PM	Print Music
DJ	DJ Equipment
LT	Lighting
IN	Installation

As the dealers represented in this report are privately held, the data being presented in "America's Top Chains" was supplied by the companies, themselves. In other instances, MMR made estimates based on data available to our research team.

Guitar Center, Inc.

PO, P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
(Including Music & Arts)
Total Units 564
Opened '23 11
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) N/A
5795 Lindero Canyon Rd., Westlake Village,
Calif. 91362
(818) 735-8800 media@guitarcenter.com
www.guitarcenter.com
CEO: Gabriel Dalporto

Sam Ash Music Corp.

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
Total Units 44
Opened '23 0
Closed '23 1
Volume (est. '23) N/A
278 Duffy Drive, Hicksville, N.Y. 11802
(516) 932-6400 sales@samash.com
www.samash.com
CEO: Richard Ash

Music Go Round

PO, P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
Total Units 37
Opened '23 0
Closed '23 0

Volume (est. '23) N/A
605 Hwy 169 N #400, Minneapolis, Minn.
(715) 828-4047
emiller@winmarkcorporation.com
www.musicgoround.com
Director of Operations: Eric Miller

Steinway & Sons

P
Total Units 16
Opened '23 1
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) N/A
One Steinway Place, Astoria, N.Y. 11105
(718) 721-2600 info@steinway.com
www.steinway.com
CEO: Ben Steiner

Schmitt Music Co.

P, DP, BO, PM
Total Units 12
Opened '23 1
Closed '23 1
Volume (est. '23) \$40 MM
7800 Harmony Dr., Bloomington, Minn.
(651) 592-5158
peter.schmitt@schmittmusic.com
www.schmittmusic.com
CEO: Peter Schmitt

Brook Mays/H&H Music

BO, PC
Total Units 11
Opened '23 0
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) N/A
8605 John Carpenter Frwy., Dallas, Texas
75247
(214) 905-4950 billeveritt@brookmays.com
www.brookmays.com
CEO: Bill Everitt

Palen Music Center

PC, FA, SR, EK, PM
Total Units 10
Opened '23 2
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) N/A
1560 E. Raynell Pl., Springfield, Mo. 65804
(417) 882-7000 www.palenmusic.com
CEO: Brett Palen

Bertrand's Music

DP, BO, FA, EK, PM
Total Units 9
Opened '23 1
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) N/A

9906 Carmel Mountain Rd., Rancho Penasquitos, Calif. 92129
(888) 780-1812 www.bertrandmusic.com
CEO: John Bertrand, Sr.

Faust Harrison Pianos/Keyboard Concepts

P, DP
Total Units 9
Opened '23 0
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) N/A
1212 5th Street, Coralville, Iowa 52241
(800) 723-1570
www.faustharrisonpianos.com
CEO: Joshua Faust

Menchey Music Service

P, DP, BO, FA, EK, PM
Total Units 9
Opened '23 0
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) \$16 MM
9 Barnhart Drive, Hanover, Pa. 17331
(717) 637-2185
jmenchey@menchey.com
www.mencheymusic.com
President: Joel Menchey

Quinlan & Fabish Music

BO, PC, PM
Total Units 9
Opened '23 0
Closed '23 0
Volume (est. '23) N/A
6827 High Grove Blvd., Burr Ridge, Ill.
60527
(630) 654-4111 ggjr@qandf.com
www.qandf.com
CEO: George Quinlan, Jr.

Eckroth Music Co.

P, DP, BO, FA, PC
Total Units 8
Opened '23 0
Closed '23 1
Volume (est. '23) \$17 MM
1655 N. Grandview Lane, 102, Bismarck,
N.D. 58503
(701) 223-5320 eckroth@eckroth.com
www.eckroth.com
CEO: Jeffrey Eckroth

Piano Distributors

P, DP
Total Units 8
Opened '23 0



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Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 1475 12th St. E., Palmetto, Fla. 34221
 (941) 729-5047 f
 harvey@pianodistributors.com
 www.pianodistributors.com
 CEO: Sandy Boyce

Fletcher Music Centers PO
 Total Units 7
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 12717 59th Way N., Clearwater, Fla. 33760
 (727) 456-7134 Jrliley@fletchermusic.com
 www.fletchermusic.com
 CEO: John K. Riley

Marshall Music Co.
 PO, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
 Total Units 7
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 3240 E. Saginaw St., Lansing, Mich. 48912
 (517) 337-9700 info@marshallmusic.com
 www.marshallmusic.com
 CEO: Dan Marshall

Nick Rail Music
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 7
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 2291 Ventura Boulevard, Camarillo, Calif.
 (805) 309-5933 laura@nickrailmusic.com
 www.nickrailmusic.com
 CEO: Laura Penrose

Frank Rieman Music, Inc.
 P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 4420 E. Broadway, Des Moines, Iowa
 (515) 262-0365 davek@riemans.com
 www.riemanmusic.com
 CEO: Pam Donahue

George's Music Stores
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 650 W. Swedesford Rd., Berwyn, Pa. 19312
 (610) 993-3110 www.georgesmusic.com
 CEO: George Hines

Jacobs Music P, DP
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 1
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 1718 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103
 (215) 568-7800
 chris@jacobsmusiccompany.com
 www.jacobsmusic.com
 President: Chris Rinaldi

Rettig Music BO, PC, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 6323 Sawmill Rd., Dublin, Ohio 43017
 (614) 792-2100 www.rettigmusic.com

Saied Music P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 3259 S. Yale Ave., Tulsa, Okla. 74135
 (918) 742-5541 info@saiedmusic.com
 www.saiedmusic.com
 CEO: Bob Saied

Tarpley Music Co.
 P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 2420 Commerce, Amarillo, Texas 79109
 (806) 355-0795 john@tarpleymusic.com
 www.tarpleymusic.com
 CEOs: John Tarpley & David Tarpley

Ted Brown Music Co.
 BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT IN, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$18 MM
 6228 Tacoma Mall Blvd., Tacoma, Wash.
 (253) 272-3211
 stephanie@tedbrownmusic.com
 www.tedbrownmusic.com
 CEO: Whitney B. Grisaffi

Willis Music Co.
 P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$12.2 MM
 7380 Industrial Road, Florence, Ky. 41042
 (859) 283-2050 paulf@willismusic.com
 www.willismusic.com
 CEO: Kevin Cranley

Ernie Williamson, Inc.
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$10 MM
 1902 E. Meadowmere
 Springfield, Missouri 65804
 (417) 832-1665
 amanda@erniewilliamson.com
 https://erniewilliamson.com
 CEO: Donovan Bankhead

Heid Music P, DP, BO, FA, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$15 MM
 308 E. College Ave., Appleton, Wis. 54911
 (920) 734-1969
 dede.heid@heidmusic.com
 www.heidmusic.com
 CEO: Todd Heid

Music Exchange P, DP
 Total Units 5
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 1501 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, Calif.
 (925) 201-6959 www.muex.com

Portland Music Co.
 DP, BO, PC, FA, SR, EK, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 16610 SE McLoughlin Blvd., Milwaukie,
 Ore. 97267
 (503) 226-3719
 www.portlandmusiccompany.com
 President: Mark Taylor

Steinway Hall – Dallas P
 Total Units 5
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 5301 N. Central Expressway, Dallas, Texas
 75205
 (214) 526-1853
 showrooms@steinwaypianos.com
 www.steinwaypianos.com
 CEO: Danny Saliba

West Music Co.
 P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0

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Volume (est. '23) \$60 MM
 1212 5th Street, Coralville, Iowa 52241
 (319) 351-2000 rwest@westmusic.com
 www.westmusic.com
 CEO: Ryan West

C.A. House Music

P, DP, BO, FA, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 3700 Cavalier Cir., Parkersburg, W. Va.
 (304) 422-4676 www.cahousemusic.com
 General Manager: Steve Ceo

C&M Music Center

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 2515 Williams Blvd., Kenner, La. 70062
 (504) 468-8688 info@candmmusic.com
 www.candmmusic.com
 CEO: Chris Nail & Melvin Volz, Jr.

Collins Music Center

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$1.2 MM
 706 W. Jackson, El Campo, Texas 77437
 (979) 543-2928
 randy@collinsmusiccenter.com
 www.collinsmusiccenter.com
 CEO: Randy Collins

Dietze Music

P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$9 MM
 5555 S 48th St., Lincoln, Neb. 58516
 (402) 476-9730 tpratt@dietzemusic.com
 www.dietzemusic.com
 CEO: Tim Pratt

Jackson's Music

P, DP, BO, FA, PC, EK, SR
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 1
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 1409 S. Stratford Rd., Winston-Salem, N.C.
 (336) 760-9635 www.jacksonsmusic.com
 CEO: Douglas J. Dryden

Kennelly Keys

DP, PC, BO, FA, SR, EK, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 1
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 4918 196th St. SW, Lynwood, Wash. 98036
 (425) 771-7020
 contact@kennellykeysmusic.com
 www.kennellykeysmusic.com
 CEO: William J. Kennelly

N Tune Music & Sound

P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$7 MM
 1141 E. 42nd St., Odessa, Texas 79762
 (432) 362-1164 tjones@ntunemusic.com
 https://ntunemusic.com
 CEO: Tim Jones

Portman's Music

BO, PC, FA, SR, EK,
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 7650 Abercorn St., Savannah, Ga. 31406
 (912) 354-1500 www.portmansmusic.com
 CEO: Jerry Portman

Robert M. Sides Family Music Centre

PO, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 201 Mullberry St., Williamsport, Pa. 17701
 (570) 326-2094 psides@rmsides.com
 www.rmsides.com
 President: Peter Sides

White House of Music, Inc.

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 1
 Closed '23 2
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 2101 Springdale Rd., Waukesha, Wis.
 (262) 798-9700
 chris@whitehouseofmusic.com
 www.whitehouseofmusic.com
 CEO: Christopher White

Art's Music Shop, Inc.

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 3030 East Blvd., Montgomery, Ala. 36116
 (334) 271-2787 paulf@artsmusicshop.com
 www.artsmusicshop.com
 CEO: Paul Freehling

Evola Music Center

PO, P, DP, BO, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 2184 S. Telegraph Rd., Bloomfield Hills,
 Mich. 48302
 (248) 334-0566 www.evola.com
 CEO: Jim Evola

Dunkley Music

P, DP, BO, PC, FA, EK, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 3410 Eagle Rd., Ste. 150, Meridian, Idaho
 83646
 (208) 342-5549 info@dunkleymusic.com
 www.dunkleymusic.com
 CEO: Mark Dunkley

Gadsden Music

BO, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 607 Broad Street, PO Box 132, Gadsden,
 Ala. 35901
 (800) 264-7228 www.gadsdenmusic.com

Henderson Music Co.

P, DP
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 1
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 10869 Montgomery Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio
 (513) 477-2224
 brian@hendersonmusic.com
 www.hendersonmusic.com
 CEO: Brian Henderson

Hermes Music

BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN
 Total Units 4
 Opened '23 1
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 830 N. Cage Blvd., Pharr, Texas 78577
 (956) 904-4450 sales@hermes-music.com
 www.hermes-music.com
 CEO: Alberto Kreimerman

Kessler & Sons Music

BO, PC
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$5.5 MM
 3047 E. Charleston Blvd. #C, Las Vegas, NV
 (702) 385-2263
 dave.k@kesslerandsons.com
 www.kesslerandsons.com
 CEO: Charles Kessler

Meyer Music P, DP, BO, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 1512 W. Highway 40, Blue Springs, Mo.
 (816) 228-5656 www.meyermusic.com
 CEOs: Ted Meyer, Betty Meyer

Riverton Music, Inc.
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0

Volume (est. '23) N/A
 7742 S Campus View Dr., Ste. B-110, West
 Jordan, Utah 84120
 (801) 969-4358 www.rivertonmusic.com
 CEO: Kevin Rindlisbacher

The Music Mart DP, BO, FA, PC, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 1
 Volume (est. '23) \$4.1 MM
 1014 North Riverfront Drive, Mankato,
 Minn. 56001
 (507) 345-1399 joe@themusicmart.biz

http://themusicmart.biz
 CEO: Joe Meidl

The Music Shoppe, Inc.
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) \$10.5 MM
 1540 E. College Ave., Normal, Ill. 61761
 (309) 452-7436
 jonathon@themusicshoppe.com
 www.themusicshoppe.com
 CEO: Jonathon Breen

Piano Gallery PO, P, DP, EK, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 5478 South Green Street, Murray, Utah
 (801) 266-9550 www.pianogallery.com
 CEO: Stan Beagley

Playground Music Center
 BO, P, DP, BO, PC, FA, SR, EK
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 429 Mary Esther Cut-Off NW, Fort Walton
 Beach, Fla. 32548
 (850) 243-2514
 www.playgroundmusiccenter.com

Williamson Music 1st BO, PC, FA
 Total Units 3
 Opened '23 0
 Closed '23 0
 Volume (est. '23) N/A
 1301 K Ave., Plano, Texas 75074
 (972) 516-1331 www.wm1st.com
 CEO: Brian Henderson

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Allen & Heath Avantis V1.2

With this victory, Allen & Heath's line of mixers has now been voted "Product of the Year" for an impressive six consecutive years. It's not hard to understand the broad appeal of the Avantis, however – as noted last year, Firmware V1.2 improved upon an already superior

product and upped the ante in regards to versatility and function. There's a reason why so many tours, venues, and live sound mixing engineers gravitate to Allen & Heath's Avantis. Will any brand or product emerge in the coming months to unseat the champ in 2024? Only time will tell...

Product of the Year



31st

2023 saw record-breaking numbers in Dealers' Choice Awards (DCAs) voting, as well as some of the tightest races, per category, in the awards' 31-year history. In addition to some repeat winners, this year welcomes a handful of new victors – including a few upsets.



Annual

MMR thanks the thousands of subscribers who participated in the nomination and voting process this year and congratulates all of the 2023 Dealers' Choice Awards winners!

On-Stage

Year in and year out, "Accessory Line of the Year" is amongst the most competitive brackets in the DCAs, but as with 2022, On-Stage ultimately takes the victory lap. Be it windscreens, Bluetooth receivers, bell kits, pedal

boards, ukulele stands, or virtually any other music-related accessory, On-Stage has dealers and end-users covered with well-designed, high quality products.

Accessory Line of the Year



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ALLEN & HEATH



2023



Winner
MMR
MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW
**DEALERS' CHOICE
AWARD**

Product of the Year





Allen & Heath is honoured to be your choice as the MMR 'Product of the Year' for the last six years in a row. We couldn't do it without you – thank you for the support and the partnership along the way.



SQ

SQ

avantis

avantis

avantis

Percussion Line of the Year

DW

MI dealers like what DW is putting out there so much, they've now named the Oxnard, California supplier "Percussion Line of the Year" five years in a row! Could Don Lombardi have imagined that his small "Drum Workshop" studio back in 1972 would emerge to become one of the most

significant players in this market segment? Whether or not, facts are facts and it's hard to argue with a half-decade of consecutive DCA wins. Well done, once again, Drum Workshop team!



Acoustic Guitar of the Year

Martin D-28

Around since the 1930s and consistently in the running for this DCA category, Martin's D-28 is regarded by many as one of the finest production acoustics of all time. Today's D-28 leverages some of Martin's latest innovations to great effect: open-gear tuners, antique white accents, faux tortoise pickguard, and open-gear tuners lend the model a vintage appearance, while a modern neck profile provides improved comfort and playability and forward-shifted racking allows for greater vibration of the top. It's not surprising the D-28 – nicknamed "the tone cannon" by aficionados – eked out a win in this extremely competitive field.



Privia

PX-S7000



Style, Reimagined.

The new Privia PX-S7000 is simply the best-sounding, best-feeling, and best-looking Privia ever made. Its breathtaking 4-speaker sound system and Smart Hybrid Hammer Action Keyboard deliver a playing experience like no other instrument. With 400 Tones including three legendary grand pianos and 50 vintage electric pianos, inspiration is always at hand. Its luxurious design, in your choice of three finishes and with an included matching stand, breathes life into any room.



www.casio.com

CASIO

Dealers' Choice Awards

Acoustic Piano Line of the Year

Kawai

Nearly a century of advancements have made Kawai a favorite of professional players, institutions, venues, students, and teachers – and, once again, the “Acoustic Piano Line of the Year.” From upright piano to grands, and the top-of-the-line Shigeru Kawai grand, Kawai fields a number of excellent options across a variety of footprints and price-points that appeal to customers of all types. 2023 retailer-voters applauded the brand’s stellar reputation, value, build quality, and Kawai’s unrivalled customer service. There are no shortage of deserving suppliers in this segment, but once again Kawai stood apart!



B&O Line of the Year

Buffet Crampon

Always a tight race, “Band & Orchestra Line of the Year” is populated by numerous worthy contenders, but Buffet Crampon’s supportive dealer base stepped to the plate and delivered the company another well-deserved win. Aside from English horns, bassoons, oboes, saxophones, accessories – and of course world-class clarinets – Buffet Crampon also fields a number of globally regarded brands: Verne Q. Powell, Julius Kellwerth, Hans Hoyer, Besson, also W. Schreiber. The Buffet Crampon lineup is defined by consistency of build, excellence in design, superb reputation, and an extremely loyal customer base. Nicely done, Buffet Crampon!



Fender

Fender has found itself in the winner's circle for "Amplifier Line of the Year" once again – and for good reason! Whether drawn to the sweet tone and responsive dynamics of the hand-wired '57 Custom Twin-Amp, the compact potency of the feature-rich Mustang Micro, the might of the flagship 300-watt Super Bassman, or anything else in the exhaustive Fender lineup, players flock to the brand for addressing their amplification needs. Appreciative MI retailers value that strong connection with end-users, built up over decades of releasing innovative, reliable product that consistently delivers. 2023 offers further proof that, when it comes to guitar and bass amps, FMIC is tough to beat!



Fender American Ultra Jazz Bass V

Voting in this category is always very tight, with front-runners changing by the day, but in 2023 Fender emerged victorious. From FMIC's most advanced series of guitars and basses, the American Ultra Jazz Bass V features a unique "Modern D" neck profile facilitating hours of playing comfort, as well as a tapered neck heel that allows easy access to the highest frets. Vintage pickups and redesigned preamp provide a myriad of tonal options (without hum!), while the lightning-fast 10"-14" compound-radius fingerboard with 21 medium-jumbo frets equates to effortless action. Match all of those features with classic looks and a storied brand legacy and you've got a (literal) winner. Congratulations Fender!



Gibson Custom 1956 Les Paul Goldtop Reissue

One of the two closest DCA battles this year (more on that later...), during the time that voting was live it seemed like the front-runner for "Electric Guitar of the Year" changed, literally, by the hour. When the dust settled, however, MI retailers had crowned Gibson's Custom 1956 Les Paul Goldtop Reissue the champ. A true achievement of high-end guitar craftsmanship, this model celebrates the only full year in which the LP featured powerful P-90 pickups and the adjustable ABR-1 bridge setup – a pairing sought after by many for its ability to sustain and intonate at the highest level. Featuring all solid woods, vintage-appropriate gold paint, historic narrow/tall frets, authentic replica parts, and hot hide glue construction, the Custom 1956 Les Paul Goldtop Reissue looks as remarkable as it plays. Nicely done, Gibson!



Ukulele of the Year

Kala The Revelator

2022 was the inaugural year for the "Ukulele of the Year" category and in a crowded market segment Kala managed a win. In 2023, Kala's The Revelator once again puts the brand on top with DCA voters. The handcrafted slim line electro-acoustic boasts the full volume and acoustic tone of a full body uke alongside a stunningly beautiful appearance. From the top of the line Nautilus Limited Master Grade Koa Tenor to the Nautilus Premium Kornia Tenor, the Revelator line has eight distinctly appointed models at various price-points and finishes that check the boxes for nearly all serious ukulele players. In the early years of this still-new DCA field, Kala is (so far) edging out the competition to emerge as the victor!



Audio-Technica

From wired solutions for creators such as the AT2040USB-XP hypercardioid dynamic microphone and professional options like the AT5046 cardioid condenser to wireless options like the 3000 Series, Audio-Technica has a vast array of options that meet the needs of virtually any type of end-user. With a lineup that is sizable and a reputation as an industry-shaping legacy as impressive as that of A-T, it was tough for any other brand to win in 2023 (although plenty came close!).



Microphone Line of the Year

Lighting Line of the Year

Chauvet DJ

After 11 years of getting the nod in this category, it could be fairly said that Chauvet DJ has a lock on "Lighting Line of the Year." However... despite Chauvet DJ once again taking home the trophy, it's worth noting that there were two other contenders who kept this category neck-and-neck until the very last weeks of voting. Could it be that 2024 will see the company's now decade-plus reign come to an end? Time will tell, but when it comes to this year, ultimately, Chauvet DJ's innovative design and exhaustive product line – atmospherics, effects, blacklights, controllers, moving heads & scanners, lasers, spotlights, wash lights, strobes, and much more – once again couldn't be beat!



Allen & Heath

This year's "Product of the Year" honoree also shone brightly in this market segment, as Allen & Heath quickly rose above the other contenders in this year's voting. A robust lineup of analogue mixers, both large and compact digital mixers, controllers, personal monitoring systems, and the powerful family of Audio Matrix Processors means Allen & Heath addresses a number of sound reinforcement needs applicable in on-stage, corporate, educational, retail, house of worship, and hospitality settings. Hat's off to Allen & Heath.



Sound Reinforcement Line of the Year

Casio PX-S7000

Casio's PX-S series of Privia keyboards took the win in this category last year, with dealers and customers particularly drawn to the aesthetics, craftsmanship, and the brand's reputation. In 2023, voters were more specific, singling out the elegant and eye-catching PX-S7000 model. Every bit as much visual work of art as it is a powerful musical instrument, the PX-S7000 serves as a centerpiece for the home. Brilliant mid-century modern-influenced style meets unmatched sound and touch for a total package that's hard – and in 2023, anyway, impossible – to beat. Hat's off to the Casio team!



Nord

Another extremely crowded category (this is becoming the theme of the 2023 DCAs...), digital keyboards are such a hotly contested field because of their ubiquitous role in pop music. Be it dance, rock, Latin, jazz, or virtually any other type of popular music, odds are good you'll see a digital keyboard up on stage or in the recording studio. As in 2022, DCA voters saluted Nord, singling out the Swedish manufacturer's handmade distinctive red keyboards for innovative design and association with a wide array of notable artists. From the versatile Lead A1 to the standard-setting Stage 5, Nord offers models suitable to players of nearly all styles and ability levels.



Alfred Music

Ok, earlier it was noted that the "Electric Guitar of the Year" was one of two absurdly close races in this year's Dealers' Choice Awards. "Print Music Publisher of the Year" was THE most topsy-turvy horse-race of 2023 – the particularly surprising element being that those jockeying for position weren't only the two obvious candidates, but rather four publishers whose dealer-partners clearly rallied around them this year to show appreciation and support. The overall vote-count for this go-round of the DCAs was historically high, and in this category more than any other. When the smoke had cleared and the final tally was counted, Alfred Music emerged victorious. Long recognized as a global leader in music education, Alfred remains dominant in that realm, but their over 150,000 active titles also covers folios for music of the likes of Led Zeppelin and The Rolling Stones to brands such as Lord of the Rings and Harry Potter. A hotly contested category, to be sure. Congrats on a well-deserved win, Alfred Music!



Focusrite

Another repeat winner, Focusrite's dominance in this field won't come as a surprise to many recording enthusiasts, podcasters, and at-home creators. Boasting a popular lineup of iOS interfaces, USB interfaces, ADAT interfaces, mic pres, audio-over-IP interfaces, and Focusrite's RedNet Control utility software, the brand meets the needs of many. Significantly, the release of the new 4th generation Scarlett line of audio interfaces drew eager customers in droves in 2023. Impressive dynamic range, top-notch preamps, a re-engineered Air mode, and an impressive bundle of included software have made Scarlett the go-to for thousands of satisfied – and loyal – customers and, with continued innovation Focusrite is well positioned to be a market leader in this category for years to come!



2023 TOP PRINT TITLES

Happily for our industry as a whole, enthusiasm for learning music and advancing existing knowledge continues to soar. Whether a lingering byproduct of those who took to music as a means of escape during the pandemic, a return to in-class teach-

ing in the past couple of years, or both factors combined (or, who knows – other reasons entirely!) music scholarship was big business in 2023 and the trend looks to continue in the coming years. *MMR* spoke with eight of the most significant publishers in the market to learn what titles – from instructional booklets to pop folios – were flying off the shelves in the past calendar year.

1. **Done Made My Vow**
2. **Orchestral Excerpts for Flute**
3. **Orchestral Excerpts for Piccolo**
4. **Flute 101: Mastering The Basics**
5. **Orchestral Excerpts for Flute, Vol. 2**
6. **The Flute Scale Book - A Path To Artistry**
7. **Flute 102: Mastering The Basics**
8. **The Mazzanti Method**
9. **The Orchestral Trumpet**
10. **17 Daily Exercises**



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1. **17 Daily Exercises**
2. **Howdidow, deediddleumday**
3. **Bella Ciao**
4. **Storm**
5. **Who I Want to Be**
6. **Dover Beach**
7. **Dawn**
8. **Storm**
9. **Wishing Star**
10. **Heroes and Vagabonds**



BRILEE MUSIC

1. **The Complete Warm-Up for Band** by Carol Brittin Chambers & Tyler Arcari (Concert Band)
2. **The Adaptable Ensemble Series** by Matthew R. Putnam & Tyler Arcari (Solo/Ensemble- Winds/Strings/Percussion, Flexible)
3. **Byzantine Dances** by Carol Brittin Chambers (Concert Band)
4. **Zig Zag** by Sean O'Loughlin (Concert Band, String Orchestra)
5. **Aliens in the Attic** by Tyler Arcari (Concert Band, String Orchestra)
6. **Poor Wayfarin' Stranger** arr. Jamey Ray (Choral)
7. **Thundersnow!** by Katie O'Hara LaBrie (String Orchestra)
8. **Colors of Home** by Alan Lee Silva (String Orchestra)
9. **Groovin' up the Halls** arr. David Samuel (Jazz Ensemble)
10. **Brace for Impact** by Christina Huss (Concert Band)



EXCELCIA MUSIC

"2023 was an exciting year of continued growth for Excelcia Music Publishing. We expanded our publication offerings, and increased our reach to musicians around the world, setting us up for an even more successful 2024." – **Larry Clark, President, Excelcia Music Publishing**

1. **Taylor Swift Folklore**
2. **Taylor Swift Really Easy Piano**
3. **First 50 Songs You Should Play on Piano**
4. **Contemporary Disney**
5. **The Real Book**
6. **Queen Complete Scores**
7. **The Beatles Sheet Music Collection**
8. **Star Wars Piano Anthology**
9. **Metallica 72 Seasons**
10. **Daily Ukulele**



HAL LEONARD

"2023 has been the year of education. From general instrument method sales to school music instrumental ensembles and choral octavos, there is no doubt that the desire to make music remains strong. Combined with record sales in Pioneer DJ, AVID, and Noteflight Learn, it's easy to see that print media combined with technology will continue to be the wave of the future."

– **David Jahnke, Senior VP of North America, Hal Leonard**

1. **Adult All-In-One Book 1** by Willard A. Palmer, Morton Manus, and Amanda Vick Lethco
2. **Suzuki Violin School Book 1** by Shinichi Suzuki
3. **Sound Innovations String Orchestra Violin Book 1** by Bob Phillips, Peter Boonschaft, and Robert Sheldon
4. **Sound Innovations Concert Band Trumpet Book 1** by Robert Sheldon, Peter Boonschaft, Dave Black, and Bob Phillips
5. **Stick Control** by George Lawrence Stone
6. **Carry the Light** by Andy Beck
7. **Rolling Stone Easy Piano Sheet Music Classics, Volume 1** arr. Dan Coates
8. **Arabian Dances** by Roland Barrett
9. **Exhilaration** by Cooper Ford
10. **Paint it Black** by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards / arr. Mike Story



"With the help of our strong network of print music dealers, 2023 has been a successful year for Alfred Music. We saw a return to form in the academic markets with impressive sales of school performance music, including our new MakeMusic Publications imprint, while best-selling methods like Sound Innovations, Alfred's Basic Piano Library, and Suzuki continue to perform well. We've also seen success with our growing line of distribution partners, adding both The FJH Music Company and Tyler S. Grant Music Works to the fold." – **Derek Richard, VP Production & Operations, Alfred Music**

1. **Ad Astra (To the stars...)**
2. **Guitar Grimoire-Scales & Modes**
3. **The Exercise Book**
4. **Guitar Grimoire, The-Chords & V**
5. **Melodious Etudes for Tbn, Bk. 1**
6. **Arbans Tpt Method**
7. **Arbans Tpt Method – Spiral**
8. **Technical Studies – Cornet**
9. **Arban Trombone – new**
10. **Scale System**



1. **Inside the Score** by Rayburn Wright (Jazz Ensemble)
2. **The Jazz Commandments** by Jerry Tolson (Jazz Ensemble)
3. **Beyond the Thunder** by Deborah Bak-Monday (String Orchestra)
4. **Danse Estrangé** by Kirt N. Mosier (String Orchestra)
5. **Aeolian Rock** by Jeffrey Frizzi (String Orchestra)
6. **Canyon Sunset** by John Caponegro (String Orchestra)
7. **Hay Burner** by Sammy Nestico (Jazz Ensemble)
8. **Big Dipper** by Thad Jones (Jazz Ensemble)
9. **727 South Broad Street** by Lars Halle (Jazz Ensemble)
10. **The Neighbor from Naylor** by Bryan Carter (Jazz Ensemble)



1. **Axiom** by Larry Clark (Concert Band)
2. **Solo Performance Collection** by Larry Clark & Tyler Arcari (Solo/Ensemble Collection)
3. **Wintertide** by Randall D. Standridge (Concert Band)
4. **Aliens Landing** by John M. Prescott (Concert Band)
5. **Inverno** arr. Todd Parrish (String Orchestra)
6. **Legends of Glory** by Kathryn Griesinger (String Orchestra)
7. **Flexible Favorites (Classics)** arr. Kathryn Griesinger & Joe Snyder (Solo/Ensemble)
8. **Sight Reading series** by Jerry West (Concert Band, String Orchestra)
9. **Spy Rock** by Eric B. Davis (String Orchestra)
10. **United System for Winds and Percussion** by Peter Sciano (Concert Band)



newproducts

PRINT & DIGITAL

Hal Leonard Releases New Play-Along Series of Pop Hits for Instrumentalists

The best way to keep kids engaged with taking instrument lessons and putting in their practicing time is to make sure they get to play music they know and love. Hal Leonard has just released *11 Top Hits* that includes songs that today's young instrumentalists will love to play. In addition to playing the songs, the books come with professionally-recorded play-along backing tracks to make the players feel like they're playing in a real band.

Songs include: Anti-Hero (Taylor Swift) • As It Was (Harry Styles) • Easy on Me (Adele) • Flowers (Miley Cyrus) • Glimpse of Us (Joi) • Golden Hour (JVKE) • Hold My Hand (Lady Gaga) • I Ain't Worried (One Republic) • Lift Me Up (Rihanna) • Made You Look (Megan Trainor) • Until I Found You (Stephen Sanchez).

11 Top Hits is available for flute, clar-



inet, alto sax, tenor sax, trumpet, horn, trombone, violin, viola, and cello. The play-along tracks are accessed online using the unique code inside each book and can be streamed or downloaded. The audio files include PLAYBACK+, a multi-functional audio player that allows players to slow down audio without changing pitch, set loop points, change keys, and pan left or right.

11 Top Hits retails for \$14.99.

www.halleonard.com

ACCESSORIES

On-Stage's New MDT4 Drum Throne Keeps Drummers Comfortable

On-Stage, brand of The Music People, has released its new MDT4 Heavy-Duty Drum Throne, a drum kit seat that delivers long-lasting comfort for drummers. Springy yet firm, the cushion minimizes fatigue while its saddle-style contour leaves extra leg room for operating foot pedals. A raised ridge around the back and sides helps maintain



good posture during live performances, recording sessions and practices.

Adjustable height ensures a balanced combination of pedal control and stick reach on a wide range of drum kits. With no preset height settings, it's easy to precisely dial in an ideal playing position.

The rugged metal base features three braced legs for outstanding strength and weight support while rubber feet prevent drifting and sliding to keep the throne firmly in place.

www.On-Stage.com



FRETTED

Fender Celebrates 70 Years of the Iconic Stratocaster with All-New Models

2024 marks the 70th Anniversary of the introduction of Leo Fender's most iconic and innovative creation: the Fender Stratocaster guitar. In celebration of 70 years of musical excellence, Fender is releasing a collection of limited edition models and anniversary color options. These exceptional instruments encapsulate the essence of its storied history and relentless commitment to cutting-edge innovation. The 70th Anniversary Stratocaster guitars pay homage to the legacy of the iconic Stratocaster seamlessly blending the timeless essence of history with the spirit of the modern musician.

The 70th Anniversary celebration is planned to extend throughout 2024, with additional news and releases from Fender and the Fender Custom Shop. Stay tuned for ongoing updates and special releases that will continue to mark this significant milestone.

Just in time for the holidays, Fender is granting players early access to the celebration and introducing anniversary models:

- 70th Anniversary Player Stratocaster
- 70th Anniversary American Professional II Stratocaster
- Player Stratocaster NEW COLOR
- American Professional Stratocaster NEW COLOR

www.fender.com

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Sherman Irby
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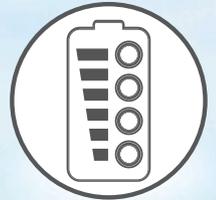




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