

# MMR

## MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW



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Upfront Q&A: Reverb's David Mandelbrot



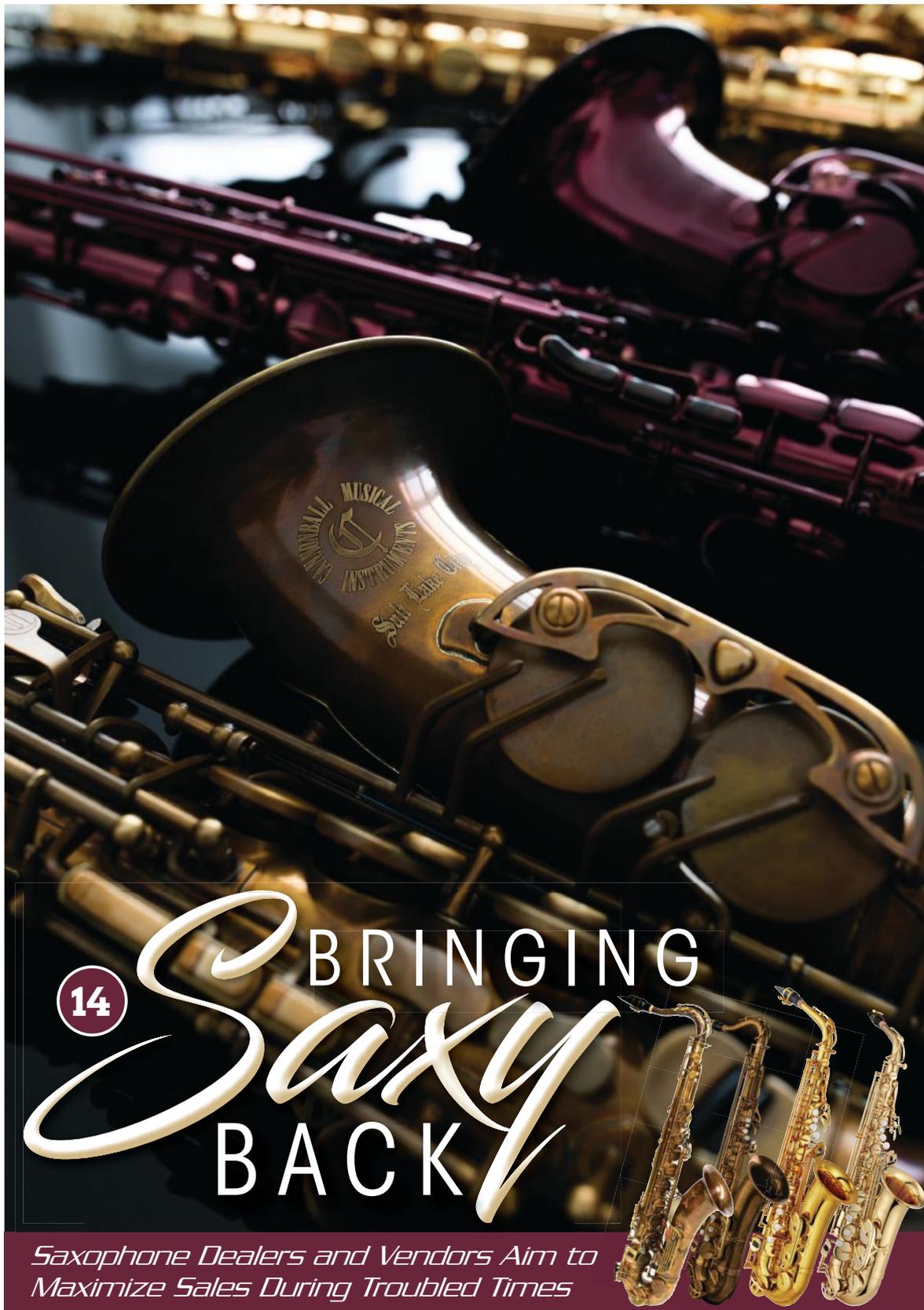
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# BRINGING Saxy BACK



*Saxophone Dealers and Vendors Aim to Maximize Sales During Troubled Times*



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Levi Osborn host of *Ambiance Podcast* with guests Tameeka Murphy, creator and designer of Alani Taylor, Tyler Niecole, model and Bebe Couri, stylist (call in).

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# C O N T E N T S

# MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

## FEATURES

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### Upfront Q&A

#### Reverb's David Mandelbrot 12



MMR recently sat down with Mandelbrot to discuss the very unique situation he stepped into this past January, and how Reverb is helping MI retailers connect with customers during the pandemic and beyond

### Roundtable

#### Bringing Saxy Back: Saxophone Dealers and Vendors Aim to Maximize Sales During Troubled Times 14

No segment of MI hasn't been hit – and hit hard – by the current and ongoing economic and health hardships and the saxophone market is no different. However, in speaking with reps from five of the major saxophone suppliers, we did learn of some bright spots (or at least hopes for eventual positive developments)

### Survey

#### Navigating Uncharted Waters: Back to School Sales and B&O Rentals During COVID-19 20

As the new school year approaches, MMR reached out to over 500 dealers to see what they're doing in 2020 to both reach out to potential customers and also assure students and their parents, alike, of safety precautions being taken

### Music Technology

#### At Home with ILIO: During Quarantine, ILIO's Offerings for Music Industry Workers are More Important than Ever 24

Founded in 1994 by Mark Hiskey and his wife Shelly, ILIO today stands as a major distributor of virtual instruments, sample libraries, and software. Put simply, ILIO offers the kind of tech that has kept – and continues to keep – artists active, even in isolation.

### Retail

#### 'More Than Just A Flute Shop:' A Chat with Flute Center of New York's Phil Unger 26



With a staggering selection of instruments across every brand imaginable (quite possibly the literal truth), accessories and sheet music, an extensive and massively successful rental program, one of the most respected repair teams in the industry, and a staff of experts to provide guidance and advice, Flute Center of New York is truly unique

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# Who's Deserving in 2020?

By Christian **Wissmuller**

For many of us, each and every day for the past many months is altogether too similar to the days that preceded it – a gloomy, goth re-boot of “Groudhog Day,” without the laughs, eventual uplifting moral epiphany, and “happily ever after” conclusion. However, as much as change would be welcome in most respects, when certain traditions that harken back to “the good old days” endure, it can be reassuring.

Along those lines, we will once again be presenting the *MMR Dealers' Choice Awards (DCAs)* to those suppliers that our readers deem to be the best of the best in 2020. The NAMM Show has been green-lit for 2021 and, as much as I can't currently imagine boarding a plane for a five-plus hour flight to California, a lot can change in six months (indeed, as we learned earlier this year, a lot can change in as little as six *days*) and, with a little luck, I'll be handing out trophies to the DCA winners in Anaheim, come January.

While only *MMR* subscribers are eligible to vote on the final ballot, the nomination process – in progress now – for the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Dealers' Choice Awards are open to everyone ([mmmagazine.com/vote](http://mmmagazine.com/vote)) and the time is now to let your voice be heard. I hope you participate!

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## NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN!



We'd like to invite you to participate in the voting for *MMR's 28th Annual Dealers' Choice Awards.*

PLEASE VISIT  
[www.mmmagazine.com/dca/nominate](http://www.mmmagazine.com/dca/nominate)  
to vote for all product categories relevant to your business.



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- RECORDING EQUIPMENT LINE OF THE YEAR • BAND & ORCHESTRA INSTRUMENT LINE OF THE YEAR
- ACOUSTIC PIANO LINE OF THE YEAR • PERCUSSION LINE OF THE YEAR
- HOME DIGITAL KEYBOARD OF THE YEAR • LIGHTING LINE OF THE YEAR
- PRO DIGITAL PIANO LINE OF THE YEAR • DJ LINE OF THE YEAR
- PRINT MUSIC PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR • ACCESSORY LINE OF THE YEAR

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# Industry News

## Christian Martin IV to Step Down as CEO/President of C.F. Martin & Co.

On July 16, C.F. Martin & Co. Inc. announced that Christian Martin IV has decided that, at the conclusion of his NAMM Chairmanship in July 2021, he will step into the role of executive chairman of C.F. Martin & Co., Inc. He will remain chairman of the board and family ownership of the company will continue.

"I've spent over 40 years in my family business and what a ride it's been," said Chris Martin, chairman and CEO of C.F. Martin. "Now I've reached the point where it's time for me to move into the role of executive chairman. I am confident in the current leadership team because I know they love the company as much as I do and I will be working closely with them through this transition."

Jacqueline Renner, president of C.F. Martin & Co. also announced her plans to retire on October 1, 2021. She feels with Chris' change, it is the right time for her to transition, as well. She is committed to working with Chris on a smooth executive transition process.

"I have truly enjoyed working with Chris and all our co-workers over the last five years to strengthen Martin Guitar. I look forward to continuing to do so through the executive transition process. I appreciate Chris' planned approach for a smooth transition for the company which benefits our customers, co-workers and ultimately the musicians that Martin Guitar seeks to inspire."

"I am very grateful for the support and leadership that Jackie has shown as president over these past five years," said Chris Martin.

Martin will be doing a search for a CEO/president who will embrace and augment the company's culture and continue to enhance the Martin brand around the world. Hudson Gain Corporation has been retained to conduct this search.

- Industry News
- People on the Move
- MMR Global
- Supplier Scene
- Trade Regrets

## Reverb Announces Plans to Change Selling Fee

Reverb has announced that it is revising its selling fee to support increased investments in the growth and long-term health of the marketplace. Reverb's first-ever selling fee change will enable Reverb to make substantial investments on behalf of its sellers in marketing, customer support, and seller tools to attract more buyers to the site and raise the visibility of sellers' inventory.

"Over the past seven years, our team has been dedicated to growing Reverb into a global online destination that music makers visit to discover the world's best music shops and sellers. As our community continues to expand and players of all levels increasingly shop for music gear online, we've heard our sellers loud and clear – they want even more opportunities to connect with more buyers on Reverb," said Reverb CEO David Mandelbrot. "As a crucial partner to our sellers, we recognize that now is the time to make further investments on behalf of our sellers."

Beginning on August 4, 2020, Reverb's 3.5% selling fee will increase to 5%. This revised selling fee will enable Reverb to invest more to sustain sell-

ers' continued growth. This year alone, Reverb plans to increase investments from 2019 by:

Investing over 30% more in marketing initiatives aimed at getting sellers' inventory in front of more buyers, such as making sellers' gear more findable on Google.

Expanding by more than 25% the capacity of its customer support team focused on assisting sellers and their buyers as Reverb grows. Increasing by more than 40% the capacity of Reverb's product team focused on creating and enhancing seller tools and services to increase the visibility of sellers' inventory.

"Dealers, gear makers, and more sell on Reverb because our marketplace gives them access to millions of knowledgeable, quality buyers and the support of customer engagement, marketing, and tech teams that are dedicated to connecting buyers and sellers," said Kevin Drost, Reverb's chief strategy officer. "Our revised selling fee will allow us to make crucial investments on behalf of our sellers while continuing to provide what we feel is the best value for our community."



## Midwest Clinic 2020 Cancelled

On June 25, the organizers of The Midwest Clinic sent out the following message:

*Dear Midwest Clinic Supporters,*

*We hope you are safe and healthy. After thoroughly considering all potential options, The Midwest Clinic has made the difficult decision to cancel its 2020 Annual Conference, originally scheduled for December 16-19 in Chicago. We deeply regret the disappointment caused by this decision, but it was our only choice when it became clear the safety of our attendees could not be guaranteed.*

*And while these unprecedented times will prevent us from gathering in-person, The Midwest Clinic refuses to allow the unfortunate circumstances to prevent us from sharing our passion for music education and the entire music industry. In the coming weeks, we plan to announce details for a virtual Midwest Clinic that re-imagines how we deliver the latest in music education trends, provide exclusive access to music and teaching icons, and present iconic concert performances.*

*We look forward to sharing more information soon and, thank you as always for your support.*



*Board of Directors and Staff  
The Midwest Clinic*

## ESP Guitars Donates \$30,000 to MusiCares COVID-19 Relief Fund

ESP Guitars has made a charitable donation of \$30,000 to the Recording Academy's MusiCares COVID-19 Relief Fund. The funds were raised via the sales of two artist-signed guitars, with the amount of each sale being matched by ESP. Additionally, ESP made the donation at a time when Spotify was generously matching contributions to the charity, so the total amount provided to MusiCares was \$60,000.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating to our community of musicians and other people who are part of the live and recorded music industry," says Matt Masciandaro, president and CEO of The ESP Guitar Company. "We are proud to be able to be in a position to provide a significant contribution to an organization that will offer support to the industry that has helped support ESP for the last 45 years."

ESP held two special sales in May and June, 2020, to raise funds for the char-



itable contribution. In May, ESP sold a guitar built by the ESP Custom Shop for longtime ESP endorsee Stephen Carpenter of Deftones, which raised \$5,000. In June, the company sold an ESP Kirk Hammett Signature Series KH-2 guitar that raised \$10,000. Both guitars had been signed by the artists, and the Kirk Hammett model was also etched with the artist's initials. ESP then matched the

\$15,000 fundraising effort with another \$15,000, which comprised the \$30,000 donation to MusiCares.

With artists unable to tour or perform at local live venues that have been closed due to the pandemic, COVID-19 has had a particularly catastrophic effect on the music industry. MusiCares, as the charitable fundraising and distribution arm of the Recording Academy, offers services and resources that cover a wide range of financial, medical and personal emergencies. The MusiCares COVID-19 Relief Fund is being supported by companies including Amazon Music, Spotify, Sirius XM, Universal Music Group, TIDAL, and many others, as well as through individual donations. They have prioritized support for those who are experiencing a medical, dental, mental health, insurance, substance abuse or eviction crisis. More information is available at [www.grammy.com/musicares/get-help/musicares-coronavirus-relief](http://www.grammy.com/musicares/get-help/musicares-coronavirus-relief).

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## Supplier Scene

### KRUTZ, Inc. Becomes dbL Bass Buggie Distributor

In a deal announced in late June, KRUTZ, Inc., the manufacturer of violins, violas, cellos, and basses in Kansas City, is now an official distributor of the dbL Bass Buggie from R.C. Williams Co.

"We're super excited to be able to add the dbL Bass Buggie to our current portfolio," said KRUTZ



national sales manager, Rich Hiner.

The dbL Bass Buggie is a two-wheeled device that straps onto an upright bass, making it incredibly easy to transport even for long distances. It can be used on a bass with or without a bag making it extremely versatile. "These things have already become incredibly popular, and we were actually getting calls for them before we ever had them in stock," Hiner continued.

The dbL Bass Buggie has been in production for over a decade, and in that time, thousands have been sold around the world. KRUTZ sees additional sales opportunities by offering them to their extensive National Dealer Network. Every unit is entirely made by hand at the R.C. Williams Company in Merriam Kansas, just outside of Kansas City. Owners Rick and Nancy Williams personally oversee production to make sure quality is extremely high and that customers will always be thrilled with their product. R.C. Williams Co. also makes a line of instrument stands for cellos, guitars, and upright basses that may be added to the KRUTZ distribution deal in the near future.

## Ashly Audio University Now Offering Private Courses



In response to high demand for additional training offerings, Ashly Audio is introducing next-level coursework through its Ashly University portal, including a new, private course option where students can request their own, custom topics.

"We said from the start of Ashly University that if we got a strong response to our webinars we would add more," said Noel Larson, vice president of Marketing and Business Development at Ashly Audio. "With our courses consistently hitting capacity, we've made the decision to open up summer school! We want to make sure we're providing the right content for the customer's needs, so we're focusing on personalized business-to-business training sessions in addition to topics that have previously had waitlists. This free service is just another way Ashly Audio is showing our

continuing commitment to training our dealers, representatives, and distributors."

Private courses, which can help organizations of all sizes become better versed in AV technologies and integration strategies, are available by contacting Bob Tamburri at [training@ashly.com](mailto:training@ashly.com)

The private curriculum allows Ashly Audio experts to custom tailor the program in a way that provides specific training for integrators, consultants, designers, and end users.

"We build the courses around the topics and times that work best for you," Larson said. "This is a unique program we started for our partners because we know how valuable dedicated training can be in driving overall knowledge."

## Buffet Crampon Announces Partnership with International Clarinet Association

Buffet Crampon has announced a partnership with the International Clarinet Association (ICA), the global community of clarinetists and clarinet enthusiasts.

This partnership, initiated during these difficult times, is a joint effort to offer new memberships to clarinetists worldwide.

Effective July 1, 2020, Buffet Crampon will include information in each clarinet purchase on free individual enrollment in the International Clarinet Association (a \$50 value). Any customer purchasing a

Buffet Crampon student, intermediate or professional clarinet will have the opportunity to become a member of the ICA for one-year, effective from the time of purchase and enrollment (offer extended to new members only).

Purchased clarinets during the promotion will have an enclosed card with activation/enrollment instructions. The promotion is effective on all new Buffet Crampon clarinets purchased before December 31, 2021.

## Eventide Releases Undulator Plug-In, Commits Proceeds to Social Justice Initiatives

Eventide Audio is releasing the plug-in version of the classic modulated tremolo effect Undulator and simultaneously making a commitment to social justice.

"Eventide Audio is committed to supporting the fight against systemic racism and violence," the company stated. "We hope that you will join us by listening, learning, and taking action. We embrace diversity and seek equality, justice, inclusion, and dignity for all. We stand in unity with the Black community and will take action by donating to organizations that support justice and social change. Eventide will be donating 100% of the proceeds of the Undulator desktop plug-in to the Equal Justice Initiative & NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund."

Undulator, a tremolo from Eventide's iconic H3000 Harmonizer effects processor, provides a unique rhythmic effect by combining ethereal feedback and detuned echoes which are fed through an AM / FM modulated tremolo. Whether used for manipulating samples or adding movement to strings, pads, guitars, and keys, Undulator is a muse for creative musicians. The plug-in is available for Mac, PC and iOS.

Undulator for Mac and PC supports VST, AAX, and AU plug-in protocols for compatibility with every DAW and is priced at an MSRP of \$19. The iOS version of Undulator, which works as a standalone app, AudioUnit v3 plug-in, or Inter-App Audio effect, is priced at \$7.99.

## Martin Audio WPC Deployed at Bendorf's Summer Long Festival

The German town of Bendorf, on the outskirts of Koblenz, has been staging its Summer In The City festival for many years – and even the COVID-19 pandemic was not going to stop proceedings this year. Operating as a weekend-only event for its first decade – in the Kirchplatz, a square in the center of town – this year it managed to get permission to run through until the end of August.

The sound system that will take it right through the summer season is a Martin Audio WPC, acquired by Michael Enchelmaier's rental company, Event & Veranstaltungstechnik Enchelmaier (EVE). Enchelmaier is also the president of Working Group Bendorf Rockfestival, who stage the event, and who have been promoting rock events and festivals in the town for the past 35 years.

Fielding eight-element WPC hangs per side, with a broadside cardioid array of 10 WS218X subs and a pair of W8LM front-fills, the system is being driven in 2-box resolution using four Martin Audio iK42 amplifiers, and a further pair for the subs and front fills. The quantity of subs will reduce (or vanish entirely) for the acoustic and theatre shows.

EVE's system tech Tim Gruber, programmed and optimized the system, using Hard Avoid to cut off the sound at the next building, situated 88 feet away, while the broadside cardioid set-up reduced SPL emission at the rear.

## Amsterdam's Doka Nightclub Opts for Danley Speakers and Subs

Doka nightclub in southeast Amsterdam, Netherlands recently hired pro audio distribution and integration company Firm4 to install four Danley SH50 full-range loudspeakers and two Danley TH118 subwoofers.

The new system at Doka centers on four of Danley's flagship SH50s. They are arranged two per side, close-packed. Danley's patented point-source designs couple perfectly, which means Doka gets a stereo field with perfect phase coherence on each side and stunning depth and detail of the stereo imaging. Two Danley TH118 subwoofers round out the low end with undistorted bass that has to be heard to be fully understood. Whereas other subwoofer manufacturers let a surprisingly large amount of distortion pass in order to boost volume, Danley's patented subwoofer designs break that tradeoff. Doka's TH118s are loud and honest. Bass notes play at their intended frequency, which makes the entire sonic picture coherent and stunning.

One four-channel MC2 Audio Delta DSP 80 powers the Danley SH50s, and one four-channel MC2 Audio Delta DSP 100 powers the Danley TH118s. The Delta DSP 80 provides the modest front-end processing and loudspeaker conditioning required for the system.

## Trade Regrets

On July 18 we received the following from NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino:

*Baldwin Piano's former director of design Joe Seawright passed away yesterday. He was 74 years old.*



*Joe was a piano designer and engineer for the Baldwin Piano factory in Greenwood, Mississippi, beginning in the early 1970s. Joe created several improvements to the workflow of the operations as well as designing new features to the piano line of products. When the Greenwood factory was producing Baldwin clocks, Joe took part in the design of those clocks as well as designing the workflow within the plant in terms of use of tooling and employees. As management changed in the mid 1990s, Joe noticed an impact on the product but stayed on as long as he could, hoping to ensure that the best possible product would be produced in Greenwood.*

## ON THE MOVE

On July 14, **Roland Corp.** announced changes to its U.S. and global executive management teams, effective immediately. **Jay Wanamaker**, formerly president and CEO, Roland Americas, now assumes the responsibility of executive vice president global sales for Roland Corp. Wanamaker's new role focuses on implementing strategies to continue sales growth for Roland while increasing sales productivity across all regions globally. **Tony Price**, formerly chief sales officer, Roland, is the new president and CEO of Roland Corp. U.S. Price's new responsibilities concentrate on developing sales and marketing strategies to deliver accelerated market share growth and increased profitability in the United States.

Wanamaker joined Roland in 2015 and has served as a senior executive with Yamaha Pro Audio & Combo Division, Yamaha Band & Orchestral Division, Guitar Center, Music & Arts, Fender's KMC Music, Alfred Publishing, and Amati USA. He was also a member of the music faculty at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. "As Roland continues to inspire the joy of making music around the world, I am thrilled to be leading the global sales team in optimizing existing core sales areas and in expanding into new regions of opportunity globally," said Wanamaker. "Roland is a consistent leader in the electronic musical products business, and in my new role, I will be able to bring Roland's spirit of cooperative enthusiasm across regions all around the world as we lead the industry in service and strategic sales processes."

Price joined Roland in 2017 after holding senior executive positions at Guitar Center, Bose, Bosch Security Systems, Ultimate Support Systems, Griffin International, and Fender Musical Instruments. "I am truly honored for the confidence Roland has placed in me to take on the role of president and CEO in the U.S.," said Price. "As a leader in musical instrument innovation since 1972, Roland has been designing the future of music for nearly 50 years now. I am extremely proud to lead such an amazing team of people while we work with the best retail partners in the U.S. to deliver the magic of Roland, BOSS, and V-MODA products to consumers in America. Exciting times are ahead as Roland continues to help shape the way we create music."



Tony Price



Jay Wanamaker

# Reverb

By Christian  
Wissmuller

**O**n January 28 of this year, Reverb – the largest online marketplace for purchasing and selling musical instruments and related gear – welcomed David Mandelbrot as the company's new CEO. And then... everything changed, for everyone.

We recently sat down with Mandelbrot to discuss the very unique situation he stepped into and how Reverb is helping MI retailers connect with customers during the pandemic and beyond..

**Can you briefly talk about your own background and how you wound up at Reverb?**

Reverb is truly my dream job, combining my passion for music gear with my experience growing marketplace businesses. I'm an avid acoustic guitar player and my wife and three kids all play instruments. I fell in love with Reverb long before I joined the team because it let me participate in a marketplace for musical instruments made up of people that shared my passions. During my first day, I felt almost star-struck as I met the people who had so thoughtfully created one of my favorite sites as well as the YouTube videos that I watched over and over to learn and expand my playing.

Prior to joining Reverb, I spent nearly six years as CEO of Indiegogo, which connects entrepreneurs and small businesses with consumers that help fund their ideas and bring them to life. Supporting business owners was one of my favorite parts about working at Indiegogo and I was excited for the opportunity to continue working with store owners and entrepreneurs at Reverb.

**It'd be an understatement say that your first few months at the company coincided with an extraordinarily unusual time. To what degree has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your tenure at Reverb?**

Over the past few years, musicians have been buying more and more gear online. The shift to online was already well underway, but the current situation has sped up that shift dramatically. Based on what we've seen on Reverb, more people are buying musical instruments online than ever before. Now that these consumers are comfortable with the idea of ordering a guitar, a synthesizer or a drum set online – and recognize the much greater variety of used and new instruments available online – we anticipate they'll continue to shop for gear online.

Joining the company during this time has only strengthened my commitment to ensuring that sellers can rely on Reverb now and in the future. We've seen an influx of first-time buyers and beginners on Reverb, which means it's our job to keep them en-



*David Mandelbrot*

gaged and coming back to our sellers. More people are buying instruments online, so it's our responsibility to make investments in marketing aimed at getting our sellers' gear in front of anyone who is looking for an instrument anywhere online so that our sellers can uniquely benefit from this influx of new buyers. Additionally, as our community grows and includes more first-time buyers, our customer support team needs to grow and evolve alongside it. The current situation has made it clear where we need to invest to be the best partner to our sellers.

**Related to the above: with many brick-and-mortar retail stores closed (or at least temporarily closed until recently), it seems that an avenue like Reverb is uniquely well positioned to offer sellers and end-users an alternative means of conducting business. Could you talk about what Reverb has been doing in recent months to reach out to and partner with more MI retailers?**

As the situation surrounding COVID-19 started to evolve, many of our sellers' first phone calls were to our team. In fact, one of our sellers called his Reverb account representative frantic because his state's regulations were very unclear and he wasn't sure what he was allowed to do. After calling that seller's governor's office to personally confirm if and how the retailer could stay open, this Reverb rep and another team member went on to research every single state's retail regulations so that our team could better support our sellers.

As our sellers shifted their businesses online, our team recorded questions and gathered info – like which shipping carriers were experiencing delays – and within 24 hours, we had an entirely new section of our Help Center dedicated to COVID-19. We also adjusted several of our policies, like giving sellers more time to ship, if needed, as long as they communicated with the buyer. When large retailers' distribution centers were experiencing delays, we worked closely with the sellers on Reverb to help ensure that they were still shipping on time.

Reverb's marketing team always works on behalf of sellers to attract buyers to their inventory and during this time, our team has found new ways to promote our sellers. We set up a dedicated email (geardeals@reverb.com) where sellers can let us know about unique gear and deals we can promote, and worked with brands like Orangewood Guitars and Focusrite to run dedicated promotions, helping increase their online sales significantly as buyers were buying more gear online. Importantly, we've worked hard to not only get sellers' gear in front of more buyers, but also to help those buyers feel confident about purchasing from our sellers during this time. As an example, we've added messaging beside each piece of gear for sale on the site that assures buyers that sellers are shipping gear in a timely manner.

**How does Reverb differentiate itself from other eCommerce sites – eBay, in particular – when it comes to partnering with MI dealers?**

Reverb was built from the ground-up to support music sellers and musicians. We never sold PEZ dispensers and we don't have a section of our site for automobiles. Reverb was built for the MI industry. We wake up each day focused on how to get sellers' musical instrument inventory in front of more musicians. We create incredible videos and articles to help buyers make music gear purchase decisions. Among others, there are three main reasons sellers choose to use Reverb.

First, Reverb provides sellers with access to millions of buyers – and it's not just the quantity of buyers that sellers love, it's the quality. I've talked to sellers who've told me that they rarely, if ever, have returns on Reverb because our buyers are knowledgeable, know what they're looking for, and come to Reverb specifically to buy music gear. Even as our marketplace grows and attracts more buyers, we have a team in place to help ensure that buyers can make informed purchases of gear they will love.

Second, our live customer support team full of musicians is unlike any other customer support team I've ever seen. Not only do buyers and sellers get access to knowledgeable gear experts if a question or issue arises, but our top sellers get support from a team whose job is to help them succeed on Reverb. Many of our retailers consider their Reverb rep as an extension of their own team.

Finally, Reverb was built for selling gear. Everything you experience on our site – from product demos to shipping tools – was built by and for people who love gear. That includes our marketing and tech teams, who come to work each day to create tools and run campaigns that make it easier for dealers to connect with buyers.

**What are your expectations – both for Reverb and the MI market in general – in the coming months?**

Online sales now account for more than half of all MI industry transactions – and that percentage is higher when you dig into specific categories, like recording products. As consumers remain cautious about shopping in stores and shops operate with limited capacity and restrictions, I anticipate that players will continue to buy gear online. Long-term, I expect that trend to continue now that consumers have experienced first-hand how easy it is

to purchase a guitar or synthesizer online and how exciting it is when that new gear arrives right at your door.

Based on what we've seen on Reverb, it appears that many people are picking up instruments for the first time or trying out new gear, which is encouraging. At Reverb, our mission is to make the world more musical. The trends we've seen online are exciting because we have an opportunity to engage with the beginners that

have been learning to play as well as the more experienced players who have been experimenting with new sounds. For our team, that means creating content and campaigns to help players stay inspired and feel informed ahead of their next purchase. For sellers, that means finding ways to take what makes them special – like vintage gear expertise or incredible customer service – and translate that to their online channels to build loyalty. 



For Rich Dynamic Sound  
Pros Play *Guy Hawkins*

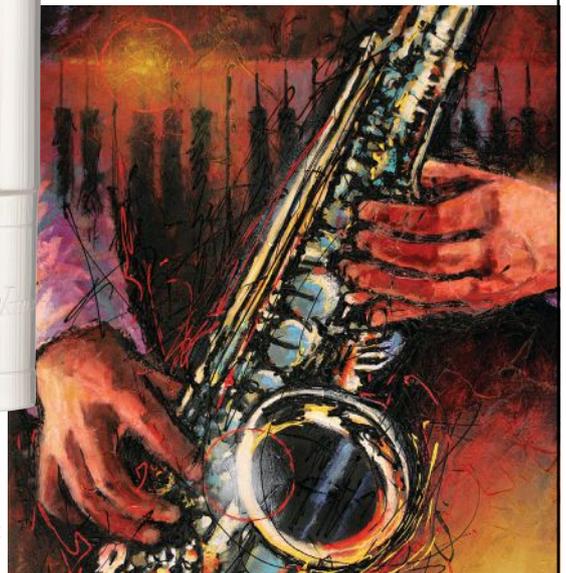
For years Guy Hawkins mouthpieces have been the choice of pros for their rich harmonic sound and unsurpassed playing response. Whether you prefer the handcrafted hard rubber or a forged metal model, the sound will be uniquely yours.

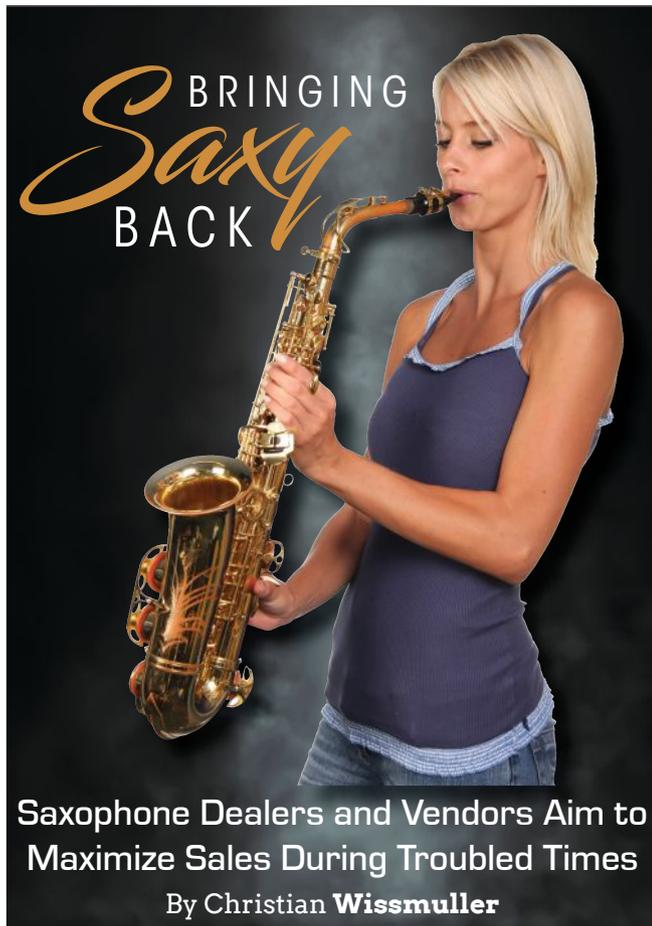


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MOUTHPIECES FOR ALL CLARINETS AND SAXOPHONES

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**N**o segment of MI hasn't been hit – and hit hard – by the current and ongoing economic and health hardships and the saxophone market is no different.

However, in speaking with reps from five of the major saxophone suppliers, we did learn of some bright spots (or at least hopes for eventual positive developments). Read on...

### What are your brand's top-selling saxophone models so far in 2020?

**Tevis Laukat:** Our Big Bell Stone Series Saxophones sell the best for us. We are humble and grateful that we could be the first creators of this exact size Big Bell in 2001. We hand-hammered different sizes of bells and chose this one to have the best sound.

**David Benedetto:** Our raw bronze models (SDA-XR-82 alto & SDT-XR-92 tenor) are still leading the way. The unique look and dynamic sound of these horns has made them very popular. Players can utilize these horns for a variety of styles from contemporary, to jazz, to rock.

**Ryan Richman:** The 52nd Street models continue to be our best sellers here at Eastman, but our student line is enjoying increased sales as well as our newly introduced Rue Saint Georges models of alto and tenor saxophone.

**Brian Petterson:** Yamaha features a strong lineup in the saxophone segment. Across all voices and from student to artist-level, it's almost impossible to single out a limited selection of top-selling models. The Custom model saxophones continue to be preferred by top saxophonists – or those aspiring to get to the top! The 62 alto and tenor saxophones have been perennial market-leading models due to their reliability and craftsmanship.

Even Yamaha step-up models, such as the 480 alto and tenor saxes, have incredible value and are as in-demand as ever.

**Michael Summers:** We always do extremely well with our ever-popular 700 series saxophones. They are educator-approved and are ideal for beginning saxophonists. Our JBS1000 baritone does well because it offers some unique features that make it popular, such as an adjustable floor peg and adjustable palm keys.

### Are there any significant trends you've been noticing within this market segment?

**DB:** More and more professional players are learning about our horns. Dakota Saxophones was not around when these artists first learned to play, so they grew up playing other models. Once they try our horns they are impressed by the feel and sound of the instrument. They feel the solid construction of the horn and that it can be used in multiple settings has made our saxophones versatile.

**MS:** Increased sales of our silver-plated 1100 series saxophones tell us that that players and educators, alike, recognize KHS as a viable and respectable manufacturer of high-quality saxophones. We've received several inquiries recently about expanding our saxophone models including requests for additional finishes.

**BP:** This year, the trends within the saxophone category have mirrored most of our other band instrument categories. Customers are facing difficult challenges right now; teachers are trying to inspire students to continue practicing, students are craving the opportunity to play music with friends in band class, and artists are stuck at home when they'd rather be touring. New dynamics have been added to the typical instrument search. Some customers are hesitant to buy used instruments and are seeking brand new/un-opened box products, while others are looking for value in high-quality, used instruments. The saxophone segment has always had a very strong re-sale market and Yamaha saxophones have very strong re-sale value.

**RR:** Because of the recent pandemic, I believe that the biggest trend in our industry is increased virtual interaction with our customers. Many are not traveling or visiting shops in person, but online sales seem to be growing. If a dealer or manufacturer can improve their presence online it will pay off in today's market. We've been hosting online educational sessions to assist sales people, technicians, and store owners that have been received very positively.

**TL:** Yes, we have noticed an increase in players practicing more and improving. They have had more time to create, write, develop, and promote their skills. It's been encouraging and positive to see Cannonball Artist "live-at-home" concerts and also clips and posts from players of all abilities – concerts, recordings, and posts have been from the USA and also from other countries.

### What are some effective promotion and display techniques you've observed successful dealers adopting?



Tevis Laukat, President, Cannonball Musical Instruments



David Benedetto,  
President, Dakota Sax

**MS:** When stay-at-home mandates began, we launched a promotion that included one month of free lessons with the

purchase of any step-up instrument. We've had some success with this program, and we look forward to continuing promotions like this.

**RR:** One technique shared by our dealers is direct outreach to their customers. This has worked especially well with rental conversions and step up sales. It is so encouraging when we hear that a dealer has had a record breaking month, especially during the shutdowns that have occurred. With the hurdles we have today to reach customers, another practice that is showing success is having a better online presence. Social media and other platforms that allow a company to deliver its message are more important than ever before. Product reviews, unboxing videos, and performance demonstrations are ways to reach people in their own homes.

**TL:** We see successful dealers with a continued commitment to school band programs. We also see success when dealers have a separate practice or lesson room for customers to test instruments. Having an inventory adequate to supply the needs of the customer is so helpful. It's easier to sell when the customer can hold the horn in their hands.

**BP:** The most impactful sales and promotional strategy we see Yamaha dealers using is creating exciting, can't-miss sales events. In the current environment, this means generating excitement remotely and utilizing an excellent web presence, complemented by strong customer service. A well-executed event (even a digital one) requires weeks of planning, developing leads, networking, and community outreach. We've been very impressed by the dealers who are doing their best to provide an excellent customer experience, whether that's through a one-on-one scheduled appointment, over the phone or in a simple email exchange. The most effective approach right now is to be solutions-oriented and have a "glass half-full" attitude!

**DB:** Dealers that have product in their store have been the most successful. When a customer comes into a store and can play the horn immediately this has a huge impact. Conducting special in-store events also continues to be very effective. Our cost to consumers is also very favorable and our dealers emphasize this. When a customer can save hundreds or thousands of dollars on a purchase and still get a quality professional-level horn, this becomes an important factor as well.



Ryan Richman, Vice President, Eastman Music Company

### Obviously the pandemic has impacted all retail. How have saxophone sales, specifically, been affected these past few months?

**BP:** The restrictions on physical retail activities and the premature closing of schools before the end of the school year have been important factors in limiting demand over the last few months. Spring is usually a very active season for step-up sales, as well as recruitment activity for the upcoming school year. Given the current situation Yamaha is currently putting even more resources than usual into advocating for music programs and supporting teachers. Demand for Yamaha saxophones is still high, and the segment continues to be a best-seller, but reinforcing the foundations of the market is where we're focused right now.

**DB:** The pandemic has certainly hit sales. Since mid-March the country has been almost at a standstill and music dealers have had to close temporarily. Buying a professional saxophone is something that you need to play first before deciding and without this ability, sales have naturally been hit. Business is starting to open up again. Retailers and consumers are adjusted to the new health and safety protocols in order to continue shopping. We are seeing those dealers focusing on online sales to have continued success.

**TL:** Almost all music stores were closed around the world at least for a time and this affected us greatly. However, there are players who had time, received stimulus checks, and were able to reach their dealer. Cannonball saxophones were still delivered during this time.

**"Of course you'll be able to keep playing your clarinet."**



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We're here for you.**

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**MS:** Previously during an economic downturn, we used to use the phrase, “flat is the new up.” Now the complication is calculating forecasts based on whether school will initiate 100 percent remote learning. Saxophone is widely used in all genres of music, and performing saxophonists worldwide now have the added concern of whether they will have places to play in the coming months.

**RR:** The biggest way that saxophone sales have been affected in the past few months was in our ability to ship to our dealers. Many of them were closed or operating in a reduced capacity, as were we, during the shutdown. This made a big impact on our sales simply because we couldn’t ship product. This has been a concern because the demand is still there, and has only grown, so we want to make sure everyone who wants an instrument during these challenging times has an outlet to purchase one.

### What are your expectations for the sax market in the coming months?

**TL:** People have been saving money during this pandemic and quarantine. In a positive way, they are looking for a musical outlet. We expect saxophones to be a part of that positive outlet. Playing music relieves stress and brings satisfaction and happiness.

**BP:** Expectations for the saxophone market for the next few months and beyond continue to be high. Even in a very challenging market, we see a strong saxophone community persevering and creating great music. The most important thing for us is to continue providing the saxophone community with valuable products and services that foster this creativity. The Yamaha saxophone line offers an option for every level of musician, at every price point, and we continue to invest in research and development projects, much like the ones that resulted in the completely revamped Yamaha baritone saxophone line. Despite the difficult economy, we are still striving to generate demand, grow dealer sales, and develop new and innovative products that will support the long-term health of the market.

**RR:** We have a lot of hope and encouragement from our dealer network. I really enjoy being contacted by customers letting us know how much they are enjoying their new saxophones, and seeing our artists adapt to the conditions that are in front of us. I know in my own family, we have young musicians who are not slowed down in their studies of music by what is going on. I truly believe there are so many of us that believe music education and what it provides is immeasur-



**Brian Petterson, Senior Marketing Manager, Winds & Strings, Yamaha Corporation of America**

able. We have seen and will continue to see music educators find new and creative ways to create and teach music during this period.

**DB:** Music is resilient and such a strong part of our culture. Speaking with dealers across the country, I’m hearing that many are using the change in shopping behavior as an opportunity to bring in customers for a specific buying opportunity. They can qualify the customer ahead to make sure they have what they are looking for and learn more about them to offer alternate suggestions. It takes additional prep time on the part of the dealer, but the results are promising. Overall, people are shopping, just differently, and providing a good product, backed by service with attractive savings never goes out of style.

**MS:** With all the uncertainty revolving around music in schools, it’s hard to predict what the next few months will bring. However, it is imperative that we continue to advocate for the arts. We look for ways to assist musicians, educators, and music stores in any fashion, even if that means teaching and learning remotely. If that turns into a few saxophone sales, that’s okay too. Music is essential – saxophones included. 



**Michael Summers, Wind Instrument Brand Manager, KHS America, Inc.**



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# Bridging the Gap Between Recorder and Band

## Why do Band Directors love Nuvo?



**Robert Sheldon**  
Composer, Author and Clinician

“Nuvo instruments provide an easy transition from playing recorder to being in the band. These well-designed instruments look and sound much like real band instruments, and the WindStars curriculum provides a terrific foundation for young music students, setting them up for success when they join band. Any band director would be thrilled to have a class of beginners who already have the basic reading, breathing and tone production experience that the Windstars program provides.”

## Nuvo Pre-Band Instruments - Lightweight, Durable, Easy to Clean



**Recorder**

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**Clarinéo**



**Student Flute**



**jSax**



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# When cleaning has never been more important...

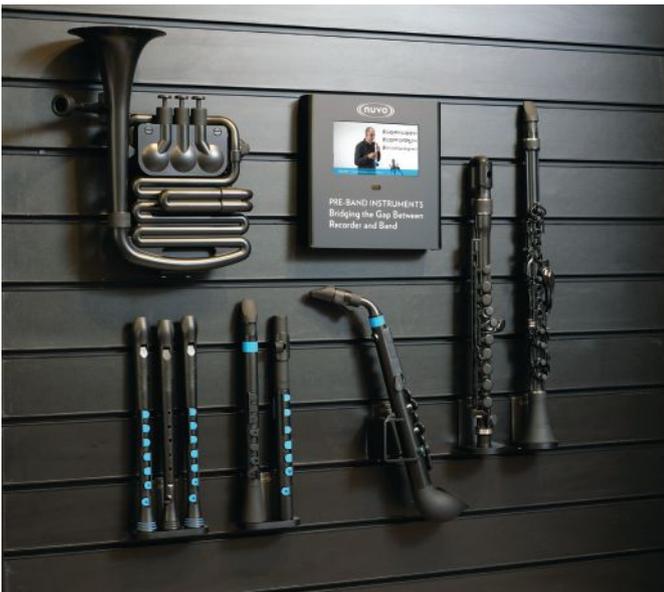


Scan to watch the video!

Nuvo instruments are extremely easy to clean. They are 100% waterproof so sanitizing the instruments can be as simple as submerging the entire instrument into hot soapy water or even into the dishwasher. You may also clean lip plates, mouthpieces and synthetic reeds separately with alcohol swabs or mouthpiece cleaning spray.

## Become a Nuvo Select Dealer Today!

If you are an established Band and Orchestra dealer and you are interested in opening up new markets, we'd love to talk to you. There are many benefits to being a Nuvo Select Dealer. From the start, there are no minimums, 30 days credit and quick delivery and expert support from our office in Boston, MA. Your store will also receive a complimentary set of instruments with display fixtures – choose either slat wall or desk stand. Your starter pack will also include product catalogs and WindStars brochures. You will also get your Select Dealer certificate and a listing on our Nuvo and WindStars website.



Slat Wall Hanger Set



Desk Stand

Ask us about our FREE online Nuvo info sessions!

Together we can bring more kids to band! Apply today, email [brittany@nuvo-instrumental.com](mailto:brittany@nuvo-instrumental.com).

# Navigating Uncharted Waters

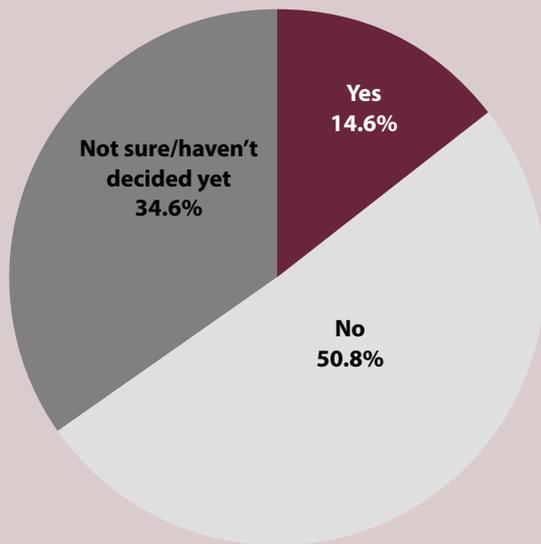
## Back to School Sales and B&O Rentals During COVID-19

By Christian **Wissmuller**

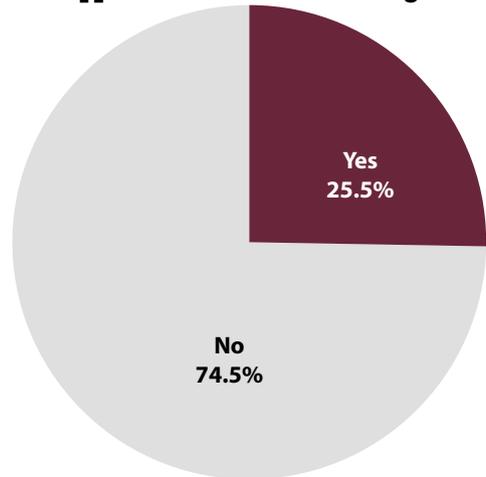
**"B**ack to School" has traditionally been one of the strongest sales seasons of the year for many MI retailers and rentals of band and orchestra instruments typically ramp up in the weeks and months leading up to the fall semester. However, as the world – in particular (unfortunately), the U.S. – struggles with an ongoing, crippling pandemic, old rules no longer necessarily apply. In fact, many school districts and individual institutions of learning are not necessarily even planning to reopen this September.

We reached out to over 500 dealers to see what they're doing in 2020 to both reach out to potential customers and also assure students and their parents, alike, of safety precautions being taken. *Note: as information and safety recommendations regarding COVID-19 are changing nearly on a week-to-week basis, it's a given that some of the responses below may have evolved since they were provided.*

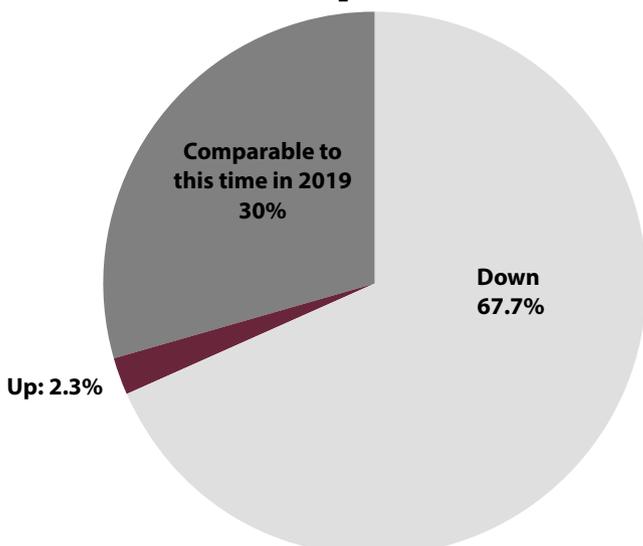
**Are you planning on having a "Back to School" sale this summer?**



**Are the school districts in your area planning to begin the fall semester at the "normal" date and under typical classroom arrangements?**



**For those with active rental programs, your business in this respect is...**



**If you have experience with "Back to School" sales, what types of events or approaches have you found to be most impactful?**

"August and September had replaced December as the biggest sales time of the year. But with the virus this year I don't expect our fall numbers to even reach a normal month's level."

**Steve Zampino**  
Jupiter Music  
Jupiter, Florida

"Try it, take it home to be sure. [Customers] may return, exchange for extended period. Now, stringent cleaning and prep needs communicated to customer."

**Ryan Smith**  
Beacock Music  
Vancouver, Washington

"A single low price that includes the first month rental and all accessories."

**Donovan Bankhead**  
Springfield Music, Inc.  
Springfield Missouri

**With COVID-19 impacting both the retail and academic landscapes, are you adopting new strategies when it comes to this year's promotions and, if so, what are you doing?**

"With beginning B&O programs on the chopping block, we're concerned about new rentals in the fall. We're trying to find ways to get people to start up, even if school doesn't support beginning music – perhaps connecting them with private teachers, group lesson online, et cetera."

**Spike Klein**  
**The Magic Flute**  
**San Rafael, California**

"We're playing it by ear, as things here in New Jersey seem to change every other day. We're just doing our best to make sure we capitalize in whatever fashion we can while trying to operate in today's climate."

**AJ DeLong**  
**The Music Den**  
**Randolph, New Jersey**

"Our back-to-school activity centers around instrument rental. Since in-school play testing didn't occur this spring, we will promote in-store play testing. We are also stepping up our instrument prep by wrapping mouthpieces and bagging instruments after

cleaning/sanitizing. We hope this will bring additional assurance to customers that the instruments are safe to rent."

**John Eicher**  
**Pfabe's Music**  
**Painesville, Ohio**

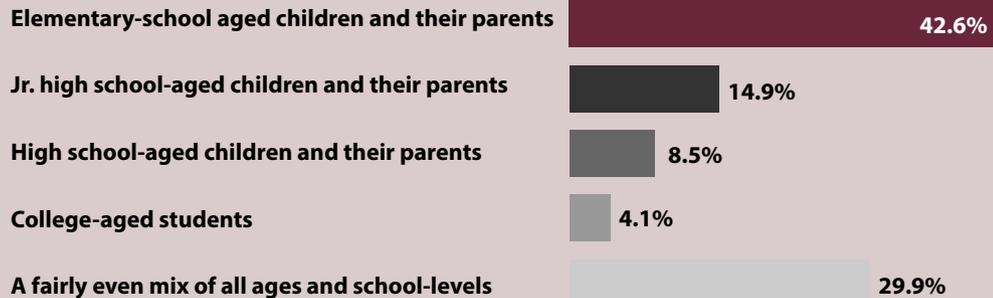
"We are as busy as ever, in part because so many stores are closed, so I don't see us doing anything different at this time. Our large ticket items (band instruments, guitars, keyboards, and amps) are always on sale at MAP, plus we have a rewards program."

**Don Jensen**  
**Jensen Guitars**  
**Longmont, Colorado**

"No promotions. We're only open part-time, and in Wales one still cannot travel more than five miles, so extra visitors are not to be encouraged."

**Joanne Julier**  
**Cerdd Ystwyth Music**  
**Aberystwyth, Wales**  
**United Kingdom**

**If you do plan to have, or if in the past had, "Back to School" promotions, your customers have typically been...**



**Figuring out how to clean hard, exterior surfaces of instruments is fairly straightforward, but how are you addressing the sterilization and sanitization of interior components of some rental instruments (e.g. the pads on saxes, clarinets, flutes, et cetera)?**

"Our techs are very adept in their sanitization procedures while remaining cognizant of moisture's effect on various pad exteriors. They use a variety of technics depending on the age and condition of the pads."

**Jerry Vesely**  
**Vesely Music**  
**Parowan, Utah**

"We don't touch them until they have aired out and dried completely for at least five days."

**Paul Winter**  
**A to G Music**  
**Osseo, Minnesota**

"We have a huge sonic cleaner that resembles the world's largest deep fat fryer to make sure the instruments are sterilized. It's pressed into service on every rental return."

"On the pads an alcohol wipe, and a swab with alcohol hold on clarinets, wooden ones get a follow up of oil."

**Tim Bascom**  
**Morgan Music**  
**Lebanon, Missouri**

"On the pads an alcohol wipe, and a swab with alcohol hold on clarinets, wooden ones get a follow up of oil."

**Mitchel Banks**  
**Don Banks Music**  
**Tampa, Florida**

"We let them sit for three days (from what we understand, the science of "soft surfaces" indicated that COVID can last up to three days) before touching them, then post-repair they should sit for three more days."

**Jen Burleigh-Bentz**  
**Brickhouse Music**  
**River Falls, Wisconsin**



## Note From Joel

ADVERTORIAL • AUGUST 2020 • NAMM.ORG

# Music Retail Is Back-to-School

**As a family-owned, full-service music dealer, the back-to-school season is critical for our core business.**

We pride ourselves on serving the needs of students, parents and educators, providing support and care to our school music programs. The goal for every child to learn and grow with music is also one of our best opportunities to advance our industry and achieve our vision of a more musical world.

I know that many of you have similar businesses, rooted in school music education as a matter of values and bottom line. Of course, the current global health-crisis poses unique challenges and opportunities for all of us music dealers. As community retailers, it is our duty to inform and assist throughout these trying times.

Luckily, we're not alone. Our global trade association, NAMM, has been working with governments, nonprofits and other industry leaders to advocate for school-music funding and provide resources to better serve our communities.

Likewise, as retail continues to evolve, NAMM U education is a valuable resource for our industry to go "back-to-school." In the time of COVID-19, we collectively believe that music programs are more vital than ever, given their ability to foster community and support the social and emotional well-being of students.

**Joel Menchey**

**NAMM Vice-Chair • CEO Menchey Music Service, Inc.**



### Fall 2020 Guidance for Music Education

The mission of the National Association for Music Education (NAME) is to advance music education by promoting the understanding and making of music by all. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) provides leadership for the administration of high-school based activities, emphasizing health and safety to develop leaders and increase opportunities for all. In the time of COVID-19, we collectively believe that music programs are more vital than ever, given their ability to support the social and emotional well-being of students and their ability to foster community.

This document provides practical guidance for PreK-12 schools as administrators and music educators seek to provide meaningful music instruction for students of all ages and grade levels during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this unique time, music educators are modifying their practices not only in teaching, but in classroom orientation, cleaning, spacing and management. It is understood that, as trained professionals, music educators want to offer the very best instruction so all students can learn and grow in their knowledge, understanding, and love of music. This guide asserts that music educators can still do that, but also acknowledges that, however deliver teaching may be different than in the past.

By maintaining access to safe and meaningful music-learning, music educators will continue to support the artistic, academic, social and emotional development of students, schools, and communities across the United States.

To that end, the two most important things to bear in mind about *Fall 2020 Guidance for Music Education*:

1. *The guide does not purport to replace or contradict the guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or your state or local public health departments regarding the zoning or protocols for how schools should operate in our new normal of education.*
2. *There is no expectation that all schools in all states and districts will or should follow every recommendation included here. Every state is handling the pandemic differently and those differences may even vary district to district. Perhaps your school will return to classes and you will be able to restart your music program in a very similar way as in the past. Conversely, you may initially be conducting your classes entirely through a virtual platform. Either way, this guide seeks to support you.*



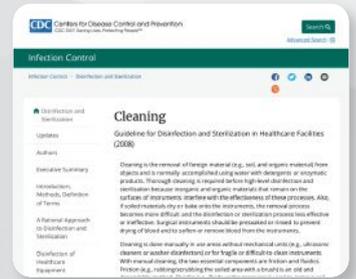
## Fall 2020 Guidance for Music Education

NAMM collaborated with NAfME and NFHS on a document, which provides practical guidance for administrators and music educators to provide meaningful music instruction for students of all grade levels during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Instrument Cleaning Guidelines

In guidance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and National Association for Music Education (NAfME), these guidelines help rental stores and school music programs effectively clean instruments.



## The NAMM Advocacy Summit

Held “virtually” for the first time in its history, the summit empowered our members to advocate at the state, local and federal levels for issues near and dear to our hearts and businesses.



## Scientific Research

Tracking the aerosol activity of COVID-19 within different instrument groups will increase our understanding of how to space out ensembles and give parents peace-of-mind, as they consider hybrid and digital back-to-school options.



## On-Demand Ideas

NAMM U continues to provide on-demand and live webinars, detailing methods for virtual lessons and ensembles, as well as critical retail strategies, ranging from marketing and sales to financial best practices.

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## During Quarantine, ILIO's Offerings for Music Industry Workers are More Important than Ever

By Victoria Wasylak

ILIO co-founder Mark Hiskey

**W**hen the COVID-19 pandemic began to wreak havoc on the entertainment industry in America, many companies found themselves scrambling to adapt to new, more isolated ways of music-making, all in the matter of weeks. But for ILIO, at-home content creation has been their bread and butter all along.

Founded in 1994 by Mark Hiskey and his wife Shelly, ILIO today stands as a major distributor of virtual instruments, sample libraries, and software. Put simply, ILIO offers the kind of tech that has kept – and continues to keep – artists active, even in isolation.

“The move to home recording appears to have been accelerated by the health crisis,” Hiskey explains. “Just as we’ve seen television production having to adjust to social distancing, music production has suddenly transitioned from predominantly live recording sessions to online collaborations with individuals working at home using their own equipment. Ask any MI retailer and they’ll tell you there’s been an explosion of demand for home recording gear, everything from mics to acoustic panels, and of course software. We’re learning new ways of working and as we feel our way out of this situation and gradually return to normalcy, I think we’ll see more professionals relying on their private studios to produce music, at least in part. That means increasing potential for music software sales.”

The company in southern California, when Mark and Shelly started producing and selling sample libraries on CDs and DVDs that musicians could use to produce music electronically. Business took off quickly from there, as the integration of tech in music creation continued to rise. Just a few of the brands that ILIO offers include Synthogy, Plugin Guru, Delta Sound Labs, Applied Acoustics Systems, Overloud, and Gig Performer.

“Soon after we attracted the attention of other producers in our space who wanted us to distribute them, and before we knew it, we were marketing and selling dozens of products in North America and throughout the world,” Hiskey says. “All these years later, we’re fortunate to be working with many of those same producers, who are still making industry-leading products. The products we represent have evolved over time, from simple sample libraries to advanced virtual instruments and plug-in processors used in music production. But while the technology has

advanced, we’re most focused on finding producers who are creating products that are fresh and inspiring, with amazing sounds that drive creativity.”

Folks who dabble in home production are the largest audience that ILIO serves, and that market has grown considerably over the past few months, as bands try to finish their projects outside of the studio and in the socially-distanced safety of their own homes. ILIO’s customers range from full-time professionals, to home recording enthusiasts who want to level up their production skills or put a DIY spin on their music.

One particularly popular virtual instrument that ILIO distributes is Omnisphere by Spectrasonics, “a powerhouse virtual synthesizer used extensively by Grammy and Oscar-winning musicians,” as Hiskey describes. “It’s hugely popular, not only because of its ease of use, but it comes with over 14,000 sounds, something for everyone. If you’re a serious sound designer, you can go as deep as you like into Omnisphere’s architecture. Spectrasonics is a legend in our industry, and we’re honored to be their exclusive distributor. Another amazing product is Spectrasonics’ Keyscape virtual instrument, which is a collection of classic, iconic keyboard instruments that have been lovingly restored and sampled to perfection.”

Still, there are some folks who are understandably intimidated by incorporating new technology into their music-making process, especially if they’re not super tech-savvy. But according to Hiskey, anyone who can work with simple recording-based applications and DAWs is already poised to master some new tech and level up their skillset.

“If you’re comfortable with using something like Garage Band, or Ableton Live, using our products is a no-brainer and they will up your game,” he says. “Of course, there was a time when professional musicians and producers resisted using digital technology to create music, but those days are gone and anyone getting into music production now needs to embrace software. There are so many advantages to using virtual instruments and processing plug-ins, such as superior sound quality and variety, the ability to save and recall countless presets and templates, and speedy workflow. Not to mention that the major studios and production houses have been software-driven for years.”

He adds: "Years ago there was a belief that virtual instruments and plug-in processors were poor emulations of the real thing, but I think we've moved past that now simply because software has evolved and improved so much in the past 20 years, to the point where the quality differences are minuscule compared with software's advantages. For example, what engineer wouldn't want to have immediate access to dozens of class-A compressors and EQs sitting in their studio racks? For most budgets, that's unrealistic, but plug-ins can deliver that flexibility and variety at a tiny fraction of the cost."

The applications of ILIO's products aren't strictly for audio engineers, though - Hiskey also reports that many of the items ILIO distributes have great applications for music education and distance learning, which many band directors and music teachers find themselves grappling with as the new school year approaches.

Both Synthogy and the Vienna Symphonic Library offer ample solutions for moving the process of learning a new instrument to a remote but effective setup.

"While all of the virtual instruments and processing plug-ins in our catalog are designed for professional producers, we have a number of products in use by teachers and students alike, including the Ivory virtual pianos from Synthogy," he notes. "These are beautiful instruments that bring the sound of impossibly expensive concert pianos into your laptop. Paired with a nice MIDI controller, you can't beat the sound and experience of learning and practicing on these instruments. The Vienna Symphonic Library is another product line that brings solo and ensemble orchestral instruments into customer's homes. If you've always wanted to try orchestration, this software lets you hear what you're doing. Short of hiring your own orchestra, there's no better way to learn."

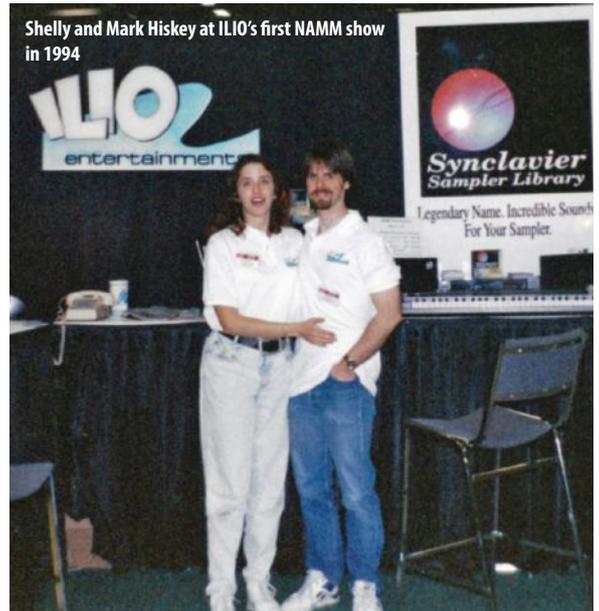
From a retail perspective, Hiskey says that MI stores have been increasingly selling music-related software, even before the COVID-19 pandemic began earlier this year. To assist MI shops with sales, ILIO offers an online B2B portal called Skuport.com, which allows retailers to deliver ILIO's digital products directly to their customers. This simplifies the process by nixing inventory costs and overhead for stores. "The best thing is that MI retailers don't have to lose customers to vendors selling direct," Hiskey adds.

ILIO also offers an online training pro-

gram - Club ILIO - for MI salespeople to learn more about the products that ILIO distributes and earn not-for-resale copies of the items they're working with. The site, Hiskey says, has produced thousands of more confident MI salespeople.

As stores slowly begin to reopen across the country - including MI shops - the retail world remains rickety and unpredictable, especially since it's uncertain as to when musicians and artists can return to their "normal" ways of life. In the meantime, though, ILIO will have modern solutions for all kinds of music-makers, from teachers and rock bands, to audio nerds and fledgling engineers.

"With live gigs and sessions on hold, so many musicians are struggling right now, so we're looking forward to a safe return to normalcy as soon as possible," Hiskey



concludes. "They are the heart and soul of the MI industry, so we need to get them back on their feet. Meanwhile, we'll keep working to unite MI retailers with musicians where they are, working and practicing at home." PHOTO: ILIO

## New from JodyJazz & Chedeville

During these unprecedented times we've stayed busy creating new mouthpieces. Including collaborations with 'Beatbox Sax' pioneer Derek Brown and acclaimed clarinet international soloist Milan Rericha, these exciting new models are sure to entice customers in to your store.



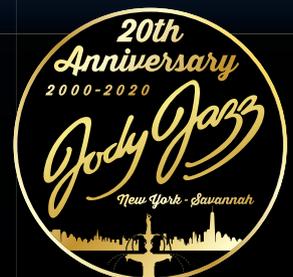
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**'More Than Just A**  
*Flute Shop'*  
**A Chat with Flute Center  
of New York's Phil Unger**  
By Christian **Wissmuller**



**"M**y start came through the repair end," explains Flute Center of New York's (FCNY) president and owner/master repair technician Phil Unger. "Never in a million years did I expect to end up owning the number-one flute specialty shop in the nation."

While Unger may never have expected to be in such a position, it'd be hard to argue against his business' stature. With a staggering selection of instruments across every brand imaginable (quite possibly the literal truth), accessories and sheet music, an extensive and massively successful rental program, one of the most respected repair teams in the industry, and a staff of experts to provide guidance and advice, Flute Center of New York is truly unique.

Unger continues the story of his own entry into the business: "It was my mother who said, 'You've always been good with your hands and love taking things apart, so how bout musical instrument repair?' It sounded good to me so I was accepted into Bob Getzen's Allied Instrument Repair program in Elkhorn Wisconsin in 1977. Turns out it was the best training to be had and after one year of daily 8-5 training, you really knew your stuff."

Unger then took a position at Colvert Music in Dallas, Texas and also became the woodwind repairman for the Dallas Independent School System. "On weekends I started my own business specializing in professional flutes and all woodwinds," he says. "Of course, repairing these flutes require an entirely different skill set. So I called the Powell flute company in Boston and was able to get the foreman of the shop on the phone. I said, 'I will pay you whatever you want if you will teach me professional flute repair.' This happened to be Jim Phelan, who eventually became the owner of the Powell company for a brief time and wrote the Bible on professional flute repair." Phelan agreed, giving Unger \$100 a day and a place to live.

### Building a Reputation

"Little by little I started doing much of the professional flute repairs in Texas and even throughout the nation," says Unger. "In 1983 Sir James Galway visited my shop which was the beginning of a lifetime friendship. Jean-Pierre Rampal also came whenever he was in town and became a friend. A natural outgrowth of repairing flutes was helping people to sell their flutes. I was perfectly positioned for this endeavor, as I was building a vast network of flute players from all over the world. I still remember selling my first gold flute! This was exciting. I was also the very first dealer for a major flute maker. This was Powell flutes. Before this, they would only sell directly to clients."

At the time, there were relatively few flute-centric businesses and the budding entrepreneur wanted his own to be more than "just" a flute shop. "I wanted to build personal relationships with the large circle of flutists I was meeting from the four corners of the planet," he says. "It is my belief that we are all born with some special talent or gift. I think many, if not most, never figure out their gifts, but I was acutely aware of my special talent, because it was evident at an early age. That gift was the ability to bring people together. This fits perfectly with what I do every day. As often as I could, I made it a point to not only service or sell a flute to a client, but to ask them to lunch or dinner. In this way, I have developed friendships across the globe. So for me, my business is very personal and intimate. It is not about just selling flutes. I don't think I could have it any other way."

### Next Stop: New York City

In 1994, Unger moved his family from Texas to New Jersey where the next chapter of his career evolved.

"I was approached by David Ginott, then the owner of Rayburn Music in Boston and another store in NYC," he recalls. "He asked



Sir James Galway  
during a recent visit  
to FCNY

me to come to Manhattan and partner with him in his store. This is how I got my start in NYC. Eventually I went out on my own right on Columbus Circle, the musical center of the universe. Rent was exorbitant, but I took big gamble and it paid off. I remember an article I read many years ago in *MMR*, when you listed the top retail music shops in the nation. There was one that was listed as doing \$4M that year and I knew the owner, having done many transactions with him in the past. I thought to myself, 'Man, if I ever reach that mark, I will consider myself a success!' Well, last year we topped \$7M."

While he's clearly the driving force behind the operation, Unger generously shares credit for Flute Center of New York's success. "I have surrounded myself with the greatest staff known in our business," he beams. "We have built a cohesive and dynamic team that has moved and promoted our brand on an international level. We have been first in how we have accessed social media to extend the FCNY name. Customer happiness, ease of navigating our website, and simple trial arrangements have all added to our success. Simply put, it all starts with the customer coming first and bending over backwards to see to it that any problems or dissatisfactions are dealt with head on and with total transparency.

"Every business has people who will walk away unhappy and any repairman or business who tells you otherwise are not being honest. This just comes with the territory, but if dealt with properly, you may end up with a customer who may never use you again, but you can work a solution where they know that you, as the owner have done everything in your power to remedy the situation. In this they can walk away satisfied that you were ethical and honest with them."

“I must say that I owe a great deal of our success to the FCNY team. We are lucky to have each other.”

– Phil Unger

#### Coping with COVID-19

As with most businesses, FCNY has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. "Luckily, [in May] we found out we were approved for the PPP federal program. FCNY is lucky to be the leader in our field and we continue to reach out through our social media arms to stay current and visible. In late April we ended a Virtual Flute Choir contest and had well over 500 flutists from across the globe enter. It was a tremendous amount of work on our end, but it was a wonderful way to bring our community together in a very creative way." In mid-May, the store ran another contest, in conjunction with the Haynes Flute Company where a Haynes alto flute was given away. Just two days after posting the event, FCNY already had over 250 flutists that had entered.

"So, we just keep moving forward with new and novel ideas," Unger says. "You must be able to adjust and re-invent yourself when something like a pandemic strikes. Within 24 hours of NYC saying that they were closing down, we

were able to move our entire operation to another location. Because of this, we can still offer trials to our customers and our sales are still strong. Of course, not as they were, but we feel enough to keep our entire staff on full salary. We forwarded the phone extensions at the store to everyone's personal phones. We quickly gave all employees access to their individual computers at work. And to help keep the bond between our workers, as we don't get to see each other anymore, each day each person tells what they did for the day and what their day was like. It is usually punctuated with humor and insight, as they continue to streamline our processes, even from home. This really helps to maintain a sense of still 'working together,' even though it is remotely. I must say that I owe a great deal of our success to the FCNY team. We are lucky to have each other."

#### Fruits of Hard Work, Dedication

Unger's journey in New York began in a 100 square-foot space with just himself and one other repairman, while the first

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Phil Unger at his work bench

“We can also boast being number-one in sales for just about every flute manufacturer in the U.S. and abroad.”

– Phil Unger

Flute Center of New York was housed in a 900 square-foot location. Today’s facility and staff speak to the great success and growth of the operation: 2,500 square-feet, eight full-time employees, two part-time, and three repairmen.

“We are also the largest consignment flute shop in the world, by far,” Unger says. “This costs us no real overhead and contributes a significant amount to our bottom line. We have become known as *the* place to go for previously owned instruments. As we represent almost every substantial maker as a dealer, we never push any specific brand. We always allow our customers the dignity to choose what they feel is right for them. If they ask our help, which is often the case in the shop, then we lend an unbiased ear. All of our staff has either a master’s or a doctor of flute performance degree. In this way, they are eminently qualified to assist every client. We can also boast being number-one in sales for just about every flute manufacturer in the U.S. and abroad.”

Phil Unger is a true standard-bearer for the passion and integrity that the best in MI bring to the table.

“I would like to point out that my specific industry, the flute industry is quite unique to all other instruments, I believe,” he says. “It is relatively small and this affords us the environment to be competitive amongst ourselves, but at the same time this is generally a friendly competitiveness. You can imagine that after 40 years of seeing my colleagues year after year, I have also made great friends within the industry. This is special and I always try to keep communication between even us open and transparent. It just makes for a better life!”

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# Meet Mr. Mike

## The Master of Student Retention



By Menzie Pittman

### Student Retention

**I** have written on student retention before, but what better time to revisit that topic than when everything in our industry is being reconsidered and revamped? I believe tomorrow's rules for retaining students will

be changed by our current realities, but the current rules for maintaining students are still fundamental, so let's revisit this topic and let's meet Mike Harrington, a master teacher and a master of student retention.

"Mr. Mike," as his students and their families call him, has mastered a few things that help him maintain an incredible retention rate. He has mastered music for starters, but not just one style of music. Mr. Mike's understanding of relevant song suggestions for his students gives them exposure to iconic classics that fit them like a glove.

Let us examine one of Mr. Mike's strategies – he always picks music that the student will love because he is completely invested in the student and he genuinely wants him or her to thrive. He never selects music based on what he, himself, wants to teach, or music that he personally prefers. He understands the one golden rule a teacher should never forget: everything is about the pupil and how the teacher can benefit the student.

If one of his students were a Billie Eilish fan and raved about seeing her singing "Sunny" on "One World: Together at Home," Mr. Mike would leverage that moment to introduce other iconic writings such as Glen Campbell's "Wichita Lineman." By doing this, he opens a discussion into the songs of Jimmy Webb.

Master teachers always find the "teachable moment" and when Mr. Mike has a few students that want to sing together, he's not afraid to introduce a catchy country classic like Eddie Rabbitt's "Drivin' my Life Away." At first, you might question a back-of-the-rack choice of that nature, but think about it performed with a Fleetwood Mack flavor, or sung by The Chicks and you will quickly come to understand what this teacher knows better than most: studying music should be fun, adventurous, and creative.

### Win the First Lesson

You have one chance to make a first impression and while some teachers believe the student should impress them, in truth, that is backwards. A great teacher realizes the student comes first. We work for the them! In the first lesson, it is a teacher's duty to earn the student's trust, and you have 30 minutes, or in some cases an hour to do that. Once you have earned that trust, only then can you guide the student on a path that will serve his best needs – and believe it or not, winning the first lesson is the road you will drive on.

### Teach to the Student's Interests

This simple idea seems obvious at first, but it's not. When most people read that statement, they think it means, "Let the student decide the curriculum." However, teaching to a student's interest simply means you, as the teacher, must be so invested in the student that you can depict the "pin action" and know the second-shot all while the student is taking the first one.

Our role as teachers is to win the long game. In truth you are not teaching music; you are teaching a person how to learn, and once you understand that, the music is your tool. You teach the person. Ultimately by teaching to the student's interest, you have the chance to accomplish the most important step in retaining a student and that is to...

### Carefully Build the Relationship

Another strategy that Mr. Mike uses is earning the trust and respect of his students. He continues to build on that trust, week in and week out, by using the tools of communication, respect, and the ability to motivate.

Mike also injects opportunities for curiosity to develop, and like all master teachers, Mike knows that without these tools you have nothing on which to build a learning platform. He also uses a few traditional time-tested approaches, such as paying attention to his students' energy, and keeping his energy high. He always communicates with the parents after a lesson as well. His parents know they have a special teacher in Mike Harrington. Therefore, they are in no hurry to leave.

### Practice the Golden Rule of Q

When Quincy Jones produced the song, "We Are the World," at the entrance door of the A&M recording studio he posted the words, "Check Your Egos at the Door." Q's message is also the golden rule of student retention. To be a great music teacher, as hard as this may be for some to hear, it is not about you – it is only about the student. Clearly, Mr. Mike lives by Q's golden rule.

At first glance this may sound like a paradox, but in Mike's world the student comes first, the student comes last, and the student comes in between. He understands the simple truth: to be a truly effective teacher you must shrink yourself in the room. Teachers that display chops during lessons should be doing something else because that is not teaching.

### There You Have it

Seems easy, right? I wish I could say it is, but it is not. It is not easy to be selfless, and it not easy to be both a great musician and a great teacher. It is not easy to be patient and it is not easy to be a qualified music historian. It is not always easy to be "on." However, if you follow this guideline like Mr. Mike, you will find the strangest thing will start to happen. Students will stay with you a long time, and you will be 90 percent full even in the slow season. You see, Mr. Mike knows a simple truth: when you are a great teacher, there is no slow season.

▣▣▣▣

*Menzie Pittman is the owner and director of education at Contemporary Music Center in Virginia (CMC). Following a performance and teaching career spanning more than 32 years, he founded CMC in 1989 and continues to perform, teach, and oversee daily operations. He has 50 years of musical experience as a drummer and drum instructor. Menzie is a frequent speaker at NAMM's Idea Center, and a freelance writer for MMR's "Small Business Matters".*



# MI Business Centennials Share Stories

By Jaimie Blackman

**T**he Lennon & McCartney song, “When I’m 64” is apropos to the current COVID environment. We are all trying to determine if our customers still need us, and will still feed us in this new world.

I thought I would check in with three leaders from two legendary music retailers. These organizations have weathered the test of time through, wars, depressions, recessions, and pandemics. No doubt you’ve heard the names below. After all, 100 years of business continuity is a long time.

- Chip Averwater, past president, Amro Music, Memphis (Established 1921)
- CJ Averwater, current president, Amro Music, Memphis (Established 1921)
- Joseph Fox, future president Fox Music House, Charleston (Established 1928)

After a five-year study by the *Harvard Business Review*, it turns out that businesses that have reached their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, called “centennials,” are all very similar to each other. The type of business was irrelevant to their conclusion. The common theme was behaving in ways that defy conventional wisdom.

Chip Averwater, representing the third generation and past president of Amro Music, wrote the book on “unconventional wisdom,” titled *Retail Truths*.

Unconventional wisdom often means fresh insights or out-of-the-box thinking. What makes this unconventional for Averwater is the belief that retailers do best when they directly learn practical insights and techniques on the frontline. He says: “Negotiating with suppliers, choosing among job applicants, setting profitable prices, resolving employee disputes, sending messages to competitors, designing motivational incentive plans, firing employees, attracting bankers. We learn to solve problems one-at-a-time, in the trenches, under-fire, and with considerable costs and consequences.”

Rather than focusing on growth, Centennials have learned to focus on getting better, not bigger. Perhaps the family work ethic comes into play. By design or by need, Centennials love to work with young family members early. Sometimes as early as six years old.

For example, Joseph Fox, fourth generation future president of Charleston’s Fox Music House told me, “I was folding blankets and straps on the truck and helping my great grandmother file and shred documents at 6 years old.”

CJ Averwater, the newly minted, fourth-generation president of Amro Music told me that by age 10 he was already being groomed. He remembers one of his first jobs was tagging merchandise with new price stickers, which he laughingly said was cheap labor for his family.

With humor and respect, CJ said that when his great grand-

father began, he was driving a Model T Ford over rabble roads to deliver his merchandise. By making incremental improvements, CJ is creating a culture that continues to improve and adapt.

The advantage of working in a family business at such a young age is the opportunity to develop one’s character that no MBA can teach, like punctuality, responsibility, and developing skills for working with others. Perhaps more importantly, it offers young adults the opportunity to develop purpose and mission. After all, how many of us go into college knowing what we want to do for the rest of our life? For me, I wanted to be a rock star and we all know how that turned out.

All three Centennials that I have spoken to have a strong sense of stewardship. They are deeply aware of the responsibility that has landed square on their shoulders. The successful continuation of their organization into the next generation is the imperative.

To that end, based on David Friedman’s *Culture by Design*, CJ Averwater has created a document called The AMRO Way, which consists of 23 fundamentals. “Our fundamentals are a shared belief system consisting of attitudes and behaviors that set us apart,” he writes. “These fundamentals will guide us daily to our mission of being recognizably the best.” The AMRO Way is a living breathing document that was signed by every member of the team. There is team ownership. There is team pride.

Centennials also have a strong commitment to sharing. Chip Averwater was not only the past president of Amro, but he was also the past NAMM chairman, a frequent keynote speaker on music education and retail, and author of *Retail Truths*. CJ is following the family tradition with his ongoing contributions to NAMM and as vice president NASMD.

At 30, Joseph Fox is the youngest of the Centennials. As his managers retire over the next 10-plus years, his focus is now on recruiting and training new managers.

Whether your business is first generation, family-owned and managed, or independently owned and managed, listening, honoring, and retelling the business history is an important way of keeping the flame alive. If the business is to remain relevant in a post-COVID world, learn from the Centennials: Think quality, train continuously, and adapt! 🎧🎧



Jaimie Blackman – a former music educator & retailer – is co-founder of BH Wealth Management. The organization offers financial advice, insurance, and succession planning services.

Jaimie hosts *The Sound of Money Live* presented by MMR. Discover how much risk is in your portfolio. Visit [bhwealth.com/riskvideo](http://bhwealth.com/riskvideo). Registered

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“Will you still need me? Will you still feed me?”  
– Lennon & McCartney

## Fretted

### Reverend Jetstream 390 Model

Reverend Guitars has released the Reverend Jetstream 390, dedicated to punk icon Ron Asheton, who played a Jetstream 390 during The Stooges reunion juggernaut. The Reverend Ron Asheton Signature Jetstream 390 is in Ashton's favorite Rock Orange and sports a lightning bolt trio decal on the upper horn. Like all Reverend Guitars, this guitar has a Korina body. A Boneite nut and locking tuners, Reverend's Bass Contour Control, and a dual-action truss rod are all included for maximum performance.



[www.reverendguitars.com](http://www.reverendguitars.com)

## Drums & Percussion

### New TAMA Snare Drums

The S.L.P. Sonic Stainless Steel snare drum features a 6.5"x14", 1.2mm, stainless steel shell which delivers brightness, projection, and a huge supply of cutting tone. The authoritative sound is supported by TAMA's new 3mm, 10-hole Steel Might Hoops, offering extremely solid tuning and ample amounts of focused attack. Overall, this new entry to the S.L.P. series delivers an assertive tonal voice, and its 6.5" depth affords it a wide tuning range, offering an array of stylistic applications.



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### Aston Microphones' Element Bundle

The Aston Element microphone features new "Ridyon" capsule technology for superior performance, as well as a high-quality chassis design, a magnetic pop filter and a backlit-LED logo 48V phantom power indicator. This model ships complete with a custom shock mount and pop shield. \$199 MRP.

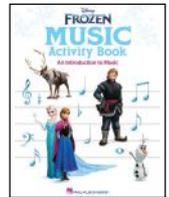


[www.astonmics.com](http://www.astonmics.com)

## Print & Digital

### Frozen Activity Book from Hal Leonard

Hal Leonard has expanded its Music Activity Book Series with a new edition featuring the songs and artwork from Disney's *Frozen* and *Frozen 2* movies. Designed as an introduction to music, these full-color activity books feature songs, games, puzzles, and other music activities designed to spark a lifelong interest in singing and making music. The songs are arranged in simple melody format with lyrics so it can be enjoyed for singing and/or playing on any C instruments, including piano and guitar. The *Frozen Music Activity Book* covers the basics of explaining the music staff and notes, as well as counting, rests, ties, dynamics, and much more – all done in age-appropriate ways.



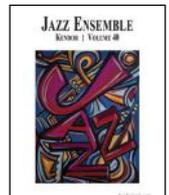
[www.halleonard.com](http://www.halleonard.com)

### New Books from Kendor Music

Kendor Music, Inc. has released *Volume 40 Jazz Ensemble and String Orchestra Music*. The *Volume 40 String Orchestra* music features 18 new pieces at the grade 1-4 level, many of which are available on SmartMusic. Recordings, full scores and descriptions can be accessed at [kendormusic.com](http://kendormusic.com).



The *Volume 40 Jazz Ensemble* music features 16 new charts from Kendor Music and 15 new charts from Doug Beach Music, many of which are also available on SmartMusic. Recordings, full scores, and descriptions as well as SoloMate recordings are all available at [kendormusic.com](http://kendormusic.com)



[www.kendormusic.com](http://www.kendormusic.com)

## Pro Audio

### JBL's Conceal Series Loudspeakers

The new JBL Conceal Series loudspeakers combine patented invisible loudspeaker innovations with JBL acoustic design. JBL Conceal Series are paintable and installed in-wall or in-ceiling to be seamless with drywall, enabling greater positioning freedom and eliminating wall/ceiling blemishes inherent with traditional architectural loudspeakers. The JBL Conceal Series offers three full-range loudspeakers and a subwoofer. The flagship C86 model features a dual panel, six-element design with a 1-inch HF transducer, 4 x 1.2-inch MF transducers, and an 8-inch woofer with 1.5-inch voice coil. The C83 is a three-element design that features a 1-inch HF transducer, a 1.2-inch MF transducer, and an 8-inch woofer with 1.5-inch voice coil. The smallest of the full-range models, the C62 two-element design loudspeaker includes a 1.2-inch HF transducer and 6.5-inch woofer with 1-inch voice coil. The C82W passive subwoofer is a single panel with 2 x 8-inch woofers with 1.5-inch voice coils.



[www.jbl.com](http://www.jbl.com)

## Accessories

### Zoom's V3 Vocal Processor

The Zoom V3 vocal processor packs professional vocal effects into a compact unit that's perfect for vocalists' performances. The V3 features a wide array of creative options like pitch correction, doubling, and other synthesized effects, and the parameter knob changes function for each effect, giving creators extra creative control over their sound. The powerful Harmonizer allows creators to craft 3-part harmonies, in real time, in both major and minor keys. Zoom's famous reverbs, delays, and compression feature independent controls for even more customization and control.



[www.zoom-na.com](http://www.zoom-na.com)

### Cntl Knob from EHX

Electro-Harmonix introduces the compact Cntl Knob, which lets a player set two preset values that represent two positions of a traditional expression pedal and toggle between them with its footswitch. The Cntl Knob's EXP 1 Knob selects the first expression setting and the EXP 2Knob the second. On both, fully CCW corresponds to the heel position while fully CW to the toe position. A TRS+/-Button matches the expression polarity of the Cntl Knob to the product being controlled and ensures maximum compatibility with pedals by all makers. LEDs indicate which knob is active and can be powered by a player's pedalboard power supply or an optional EHX's9.6DC200mAPSU. The Cntl Knob comes equipped with a 6 foot TRS (tip-ring-sleeve) cable. Street price: \$39.



[www.ehx.com](http://www.ehx.com)

### New Mouthpieces from JodyJazz

JodyJazz's new DV BEATBoX Tenor Saxophone mouthpiece is a new addition to their range designed with "Beatbox Sax" virtuoso Derek Brown. The new DV BEATBoX Tenor is a silver-plated customized DV mouthpiece in Derek's #5 tip opening. The new DV BEATBoX Tenor also features "DV BEATBoX" engraved on the side in the characteristic typeface used by Derek in all his projects in order to solidify the mouthpiece's association with him. MSRP: \$650.



In addition, the new HR\* Custom Dark Alto mouthpiece is the newest addition to JodyJazz's HR\* Custom Dark line of premium hard rubber mouthpieces. It offers the same beautiful, warm, dark, traditional, vintage sound characteristic of the HR\* Custom Dark series. It is available in 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 tip openings and features a heavy stylized ring on the shank of the mouthpiece. With significantly more mass on the shank of the mouthpiece, it enjoys a boost of body and increased harmonics. MSRP: \$350



[www.jodyjazz.com](http://www.jodyjazz.com)

### Godlyke's Maxon APEX808 Overdrive Pedal

Godlyke's Maxon APEX808 Overdrive pedal was designed by TubeScreamer creator and former Maxon head engineer Susumu Tamura. It was developed from meticulous analysis of more than 100 vintage and current-production TubeScreamer/OD808 variants over a period of three years. The APEX808's hand-selected IC offers the unique benefit of changing the overtone components of the signal based on input level. At low levels, the APEX808 generates primarily even-order harmonics. When the input level is increased, the APEX808 generates a blend of even- and odd-order harmonics, creating an overtone series that imitates the preamp and power sections of a tube amp with remarkable accuracy. Price: \$300.



[www.godlyke.com](http://www.godlyke.com)

### IK Multimedia's AXE I/O SOLO Compact Guitar Interface

IK Multimedia's AXE I/O SOLO is the latest addition to its range of AXE I/O guitar interfaces with advanced tone-shaping features. AXE I/O SOLO is a compact, bus-powered 2-in/3-out USB audio interface that features IK's high-end PURE microphone preamp, plus an instrument input with proprietary tone-shaping options, an exclusive Amp Out to incorporate real gear into a recording setup, and 24-bit, 192 kHz converters with a wide dynamic range. AXE I/O SOLO can also act as a controller for use with IK's included AmpliTube or other favorite guitar-friendly software, offering a complete, affordable solution for players who want the best possible tones.



[www.ikmultimedia.com](http://www.ikmultimedia.com)

### Orange Box Phase Shifter from Whirlwind

The Orange Box, part of the Whirlwind's Rochester Series Pedal line, is the phase shifter that can be heard on more hit records than any pedal in production today. The Orange Box features select resistors paired with hand-matched components to achieve the same smooth and warm modulation as the original. Features include: speed control that varies the speed of the phasing effect; status LED the illuminates whenever the effect is active; and a footswitch to turn the effect on and off. Whirlwind has also added an optional power supply (PS9V-EFX).



[www.whirlwindusa.com](http://www.whirlwindusa.com)

### Key Leaves' Spit Sponge Pad Dryers

Key Leaves' new Spit Sponge pad dryers remove moisture left behind on pads and tone holes that swabs miss, extending pad life and keeping instruments clean. The Spit Sponge is a unique, dual-texture pad dryer with an ultra-absorbent top to clean delicate pads, while the bottom has micro-texture grooves to trap and remove gunk that grows on tone holes. The universal woodwind size Spit Sponge can clean flutes, clarinets, oboes, bassoons or any woodwind instrument you play. The Spit Sponge for saxophones features an easy-fit shape to care for large sax pads and those hard-to-reach places like G# or between key guards.



[www.keyleaves.com](http://www.keyleaves.com)

## Accessories

### Fishman's Expanded Software Bundle for TriplePlay MIDI Guitar Products

Fishman Transducers, Inc. has launched a new and improved software bundle for both TriplePlay Wireless and TriplePlay Connect. As part of the re-launch, Fishman has vastly improved the software installation process and has created a new hardware installation video, as well as a comprehensive series of software tutorial videos for both the TriplePlay desktop software and the Connect iOS app. TriplePlay Wireless users now have complimentary access to the TriplePlay Connect iOS app, previously a \$20 value, the TriplePlay Software for Mac and PC, and more than 1,500 exclusive patches for use with professional virtual instruments from EastWest, Native Instruments and KV331 Audio.



[www.fishman.com](http://www.fishman.com)

## Cases & Stands

### Clear Shields from Manhasset Stands

Manhasset Stands' #2019 Clear Shields offers a barrier for schools, orchestras, and choirs. The large 24" x 24" polycarbonate clear shield provides a protective barrier, and features the Manhasset Symphony Base for maximum stability, as well as the Manhasset Symphony Shaft with Magic Finger Clutch to allow easy adjustment to the Clear Shield's height without having to secure a knob. \$539.95 for a three-pack.



[www.manhasset-specialty.com](http://www.manhasset-specialty.com)

### Desktop Stands from Gator Frameworks

Gator Frameworks' desk-mounted broadcast and podcast microphone boom stand allows you to capture vocal recordings quickly and easily. This item mounts to surfaces up to 2.17"/55mm thick and features an adjustment knob at the boom end for setting your favorite studio mic to the desired position. The stand rotates a full 360-degrees and is engineered specifically to produce minimal sound when being moved, which reduces the potential for noisy interruptions during sound-sensitive recordings. The spring-loaded articulating arm has a maximum weight capacity of 2.4 lbs./1.1kg and can extend up to 38.6"/980mm, allowing it to support the load of heavy broadcast mics regardless of the length of extension.



Featuring a 6" round base and fixed height of 9", the round-base desktop mic-stand packs powerful strength into a lightweight package. The no-slip, vibration-reducing base gasket features a threaded mount compatible for both U.S. and Euro mic clips. Keep clear of clutter with included cable management. A sleek, black powder coated finish brings boldness and professional style.

[www.gatorframeworks.com](http://www.gatorframeworks.com)



## Keyboard & Piano

### iRig Keys 2 Mini from IK Multimedia

IK Multimedia's compact iRig Keys 2 Mini features 25 mini keys for backpack portability or use in a small studio workplace, and is designed to inspire on-the-go creativity. The iRig Keys 2 Mini works directly out of the box with iPhone, iPad and Mac/PC, and is compatible with most Android devices. A unique headphone output can be used for silent practice or composition, especially while using newer iPhone models. The audio out can also be used to connect speakers for increased volume and audio quality that surpasses a mobile device's built-in speakers.



[www.ikmultimedia.com](http://www.ikmultimedia.com)

### Kawai's DG30 Digital Grand Piano

Kawai America's new DG30 digital grand piano combines Kawai's highly authentic Responsive Hammer III (RHIII) keyboard action with the Shigeru Kawai SK-EX concert grand piano sound, delivering an authentic grand piano playing experience. The DG30's attractive cabinet is finished in beautiful ebony polish, with silver hardware completing a modern, elegant look. Opening the instrument's grand style lid reveals a polished wooden soundboard with two upward-facing speakers. Long and short lid props are provided for either full or partial lid positions. The DG30 offers the touch of a grand piano with its class-leading Responsive Hammer III (RHIII) keyboard action. The RHIII action delivers an authentic piano touch through several elements, including springless design for smooth movement with a triple-sensor key detection system enhancing responsiveness, and structural reinforcements throughout for minimal noise and key wobble. The RHIII also features 88 graded hammers replicating the heavier bass and lighter treble hammers of an acoustic piano for key control that will satisfy even the most advanced pianists.

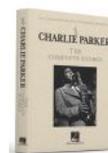


[www.kawaius.com](http://www.kawaius.com)

## Print & Digital

### Charlie Parker: The Complete Scores

Hal Leonard has published *Charlie Parker: The Complete Scores* boxed set, a quintessential collection features a hardcover book with forty note-for-note transcriptions for all the instruments that played on each iconic track. Published to coincide with the centennial of Parker's birth on August 29, 1920, the Hal Leonard editorial crew worked closely with Parker's Estate to ensure the highest quality transcriptions and production. The book features forty transcriptions from Parker's exemplary studio recordings of tracks including "Anthropology," "Billie's Bounce (Bill's Bounce)," "Blues for Alice," "Ornithology," and more. Transcriptions for saxophone, trumpet, piano, bass, and drums are included for each piece. \$60, available in September.



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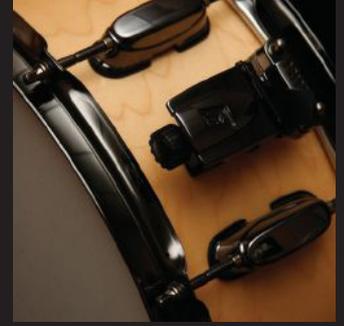
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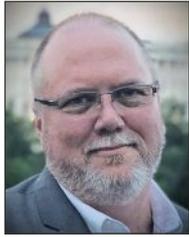
*Do you send road reps or operate retail stores in my area?*

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By Mike **Lawson**

## Selling Dreams from Home Base

**I** am a musician. I wear many hats, from editor to journalist, book publisher to performer, non-profit music technology executive director, songwriter to column writer. Everything is completely connected to music, and for nearly all of my working life, the connection has been that way. My musician fire was lit as a child at Leitz Music in Panama City, Florida, where I first went in at 10-years-old and looked around in awe of people coming and going who were playing music at clubs around town. Since my first gig with a band at 12, the middleman between my passion for music, and the performance of it, the recording of it, was my home base music retailer of choice, wherever I lived. I have always tended to adopt a “home base music retailer” where they not only carry the stuff I like and need, but where the staff understands my impetus, my dreams, takes it seriously, encourages me, gives me good deals, lets me know about products that will help me play and perform better, and more. These days I have a “home base” online and a local one.

What’s a working musician to do in these weird pandemic times? Make music. Musicians always love an audience. Live music, by and large, has come to a standstill, except in places where this virus, social distancing, and masks aren’t a concern to venue owners and patrons, for myriad exotic reasons, none of which make sense to me. I have not performed on Lower Broadway in Nashville since the last Monday in February. This after playing there for over five years every other week. The reality now is that live music for millions of musicians, your customers, is off the table for the foreseeable future. I miss the gigs. I’m even starting to miss the miserable load-in and out of my ridiculously heavy gear at Acme Feed & Seed, the (awesome) last bar complex next to the Cumberland River, as deep on Broadway as you can get.

Since the lockdown started, I’ve left the house and traveled two miles to go to the grocery store each week, and on two occasions went more than 25 miles each way. One was a trip to Costco when they started mandating masks, the other to the Gibson USA factory to pick up my 2003 Alpine White Les Paul Custom that had a couple of paint nicks that had to be factory repaired by Gibson Repair and Restoration. Gibson’s repair folks had me text from the parking lot, came out front to meet me (nobody who isn’t an employee passing through a rigorous entry portal gets into the factory now). Everyone masked up, myself included, he took my credit card, went back in, charged it, and brought out the lovely restored, massively-heavy tone beast, one of the last ones made in that factory before Gibson Custom

absconded with the model to make only “period accurate reissues” 17 years ago. But I digress... bottom line, in-person live gigs have stopped.

I’ve spoken to multiple retailers, both on the local and mega-national online level over the last six months. One constant I am hearing is that, though sales are down in many areas, home recording equipment areas are booming, and Internet sales and phone orders are way up. Some I spoke with say they have set records in that category this year-to-date. From instrument through the signal path to the final stereo WAV file, products are moving that fulfill the primal urge we have as musicians to make music.

Musicians keep making music. They are live streaming it over the Internet with webcams, audio interfaces, microphones, some going all out and setting up lit “sound stages” in a room in their house, or on their lawns. And they are writing songs, recording them, and releasing them. CD-Baby and similar digital release services are adding weeks to the release schedule because they are so backed up with new material. I released a new album May 1, and a couple of singles since then, too. I have a whole other album nearly done. I’ve had to hold back from releasing too much now. I’ve kept my nose pointed at my DAW since March. I’ve hired over 30 musicians who are working remotely through services like [airgigs.com](http://airgigs.com) to provide everything from bagpipes to lush string performances, keyboards, drums, background vocals, fiddle, mandolin – things I don’t excel at playing. I’ve ordered mics, cables, stands, audio devices, stomp boxes, plugins, upgraded my Mac Pro’s system, bought more guitars. That didn’t happen because of the pandemic, it happened because it is who I am. I am a musician, for better or worse.

From retail to end users like me, we have all had to reconfigure what we do, how we do it, but one thing is for certain: we keep doing it. And as long as we keep doing it, the need for connection with our “home base” music retailer is greater than ever. Your store is somebody’s home base, where musicians of all ages and skill levels and impetuses return to over and over to look, get advice, inspiration, and support. I think it has never been more important than now to understand that a music retailer doesn’t just sell equipment and instruments or give lessons, you are selling things that help shape your customers’ identities, professions, and side gigs. You sell magical tools that help customers escape from the madness outside just a bit. You sell dreams, fantasies, and roadmaps to stardom. There is no place like home for dreaming. 

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