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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

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A Mighty Wind

Student Flute Sales Surge in 2024

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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

FEATURES

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Dealer Survey

Standing Tall! – Trends in Music Stand Sales **11**

Seemingly amongst the least “sexy” of musical accessories (based on the... less than “effusive” responses to this month’s poll), music stands are nonetheless essential for many players – particularly of genres that require actual sheet-music and charts (garage band folks are exempt from this discussion). While very few of the 400-plus MI retailers we sent this survey to had much to say about these items, folks were very responsive when it came to naming their favorite brands and singling out stand types that speak to consumers.

Anniversary

‘We Are the Dreamers of Dreams’ – Applied Research Technology Celebrates 40 Years **12**

Applied Research and Technology, a division of Yorkville Sound, is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2024. We recently spoke with Steve Hendee, Export Manager at Yorkville Sound and one of ART’s original employees, and dig deep into ART’s evolution from 1984 through to the present day. “We set out to produce good, solid, reliable products,” he says. “No bells and whistles, just affordable, easy to use, and built to stand the test of time.”

Roundtable

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The fall semester is just around the corner. While you’re planning for “Back to School” sales and promotions, you’ll want to be sure to have plenty of one of the most popular B&O instruments, the flute, in stock. *MMR* recently connected with representatives from five of the biggest suppliers of student flutes to learn what features are being sought after by customers, what specific models are selling well in 2024, and how successful MI retailers go about marketing and displaying these instruments.

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Anniversary

Pittsburgh Guitars – A Love Story: Iconic MI Retailer Celebrates 45 Years **20**

Pittsburgh Guitars is celebrating 45 years of “Rocking the ‘Burgh” in 2024 and *MMR* recently sat down with former devoted customer and now owner John Bechtold to learn more of the store’s history.



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Off to the Races!

By
Christian
Wissmuller

Oh, boy – here we go... the 2024 *MMR* Dealers' Choice Awards (DCA) nomination form is now live! I give you: <https://rb.gy/1qdpjg>

Anyone in MI is eligible to suggest products, companies, and instruments for nomination in the 2024 DCA ballot. You can nominate your favorite guitars, mixers, cases, trumpets, audio interfaces, et cetera, whether you're an active *MMR* subscriber or not – although why on earth *wouldn't* you be? It's free to all qualified folks in the industry, after all! (head on over to www.mmrmagazine.com and click on the, get ready to be shocked, the "Subscribe to *MMR* Magazine!" tab) – and you can vote for your choices as often as you please! If you're an MI supplier and feel your new product or instrument is especially deserving of attention, get all your employees and your entire dealer network to nominate you!

In October, the actual DCA ballot will go live. During voting for the ultimate winners of this now 32-year old(!) annual celebration of the best in MI, only active subscribers to *MMR* are eligible to vote, but for the three-month-long nomination process, it's open season, so: let your voice be heard!

“The DCAs are real, honest, and ever-changing. You, reading this column in this issue of *MMR*, can help shape this year's results.”

The Dealers' Choice Awards are uniquely singular in the realm of "MI industry awards" because of the very concept of the honors. I have *nothing* to do with selecting the winners, publisher Mike Lawson doesn't fudge the numbers to favor favorite brands, and our sales staff doesn't influence any of the final decisions. As someone who's worked and written for plenty of other publications and sites, *trust me*: that is absolutely not the norm. Not trying to throw shade, but shade be thrown, man. Look through past years' winners (or this year's, once decided) – and, inevitably, some of the wins in the biggest categories go to folks who don't really have much (if any!) of a business/advertising relationship with this magazine. You all, the people who are actually driving the MI retail trade, decide what instruments, brands, and musical gear are the standouts for this calendar year. It's a lot of work to go through all of the input – *lots* of people participate (we love it!) in both the nomination and final voting process – but the Dealers' Choice Awards remain one of the most rewarding aspects of this gig for me. The DCAs are real, honest, and ever-changing. You, reading this column in this issue of *MMR*, can help shape this year's results. I said it a couple paragraphs above and I have no shame in repeating myself: LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

We look forward to announcing the official DCA nominees this fall!

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NAMM Foundation Welcomes Ron Manus to Board of Directors

The NAMM Foundation is honored to welcome Ron Manus to the organization's board of directors in the role of secretary-treasurer. As a member of the board, Manus will serve a three-year term to guide the work of the non-profit and fulfill its vision to create access to and advance participation in music-making across the lifespan of music making. Manus succeeds Susan Lipp, owner/chairman of Full Compass, as secretary-treasurer.

"Ron has served as a pillar to the music community for decades and we are honored to have him join the board. We look forward to seeing the profound impact he will have on The NAMM Foundation," said John Mlynczak, president and CEO of NAMM and president of The NAMM Foundation.

Manus shares, "I am beyond excited to join the NAMM Foundation Board of Directors. Music has always been the heartbeat of my life, and I can't wait to work with an organization that's dedicated to making music accessible and inspiring for everyone. Together, we'll amplify the power of music and support the next generation of musicians to unleash their inner rock stars!"

Ron Manus, chief business development officer, is the third generation of the Manus family, helping to lead educational music powerhouse Alfred Music into the future. He is a distinguished leader in music education, renowned for his dedication to enhancing the lives of aspiring mu-

sicians and educators. His career, spanning several decades, has profoundly impacted how music is taught and shared globally.

Manus' early training in clarinet, piano, and guitar laid the foundation for his diverse approach to music education. He joined Alfred Music in 1988, following the legacy of his grandfather, Sam Manus, and his father, Morty. Under his guidance, Alfred Music embraced technology, pioneering digital learning tools that revolutionized music education.

Committed to educational advocacy, Manus established numerous programs promoting music in schools and communities. His innovative efforts have earned him numerous accolades, cementing his legacy as a true maestro of music education. Manus continues to inspire musicians and educators, ensuring the joy of music is accessible to all.

With the appointment, Manus will join Chris White, chair of The NAMM Foundation and president/CEO of White House of Music, Inc.; Dinah Gretsch, vice chair of The NAMM Foundation and executive vice president/CFO of Gretsch Company. Victor Wooten, director of the NAMM Foundation and five-time Grammy Award recipient; and John Mlynczak, president of the NAMM Foundation and president and CEO of NAMM.

www.nammfoundation.org



Reverb Launches the Reverb Outlet

Reverb, the largest online marketplace dedicated to buying and selling musical instruments, has launched The Reverb Outlet. The new destination on Reverb will feature an always-changing collection of new and like-new music gear from top brands for at least 20% off retail prices.

"Outlet music gear is a fantastic value for music makers. Often, it's brand new overstock or clearance music gear that retailers or brands are simply looking to clear out. Other times, it's gear that's been opened, used for a demo, or simply doesn't have its original box, but is otherwise in like-new condition," said Jim Tuerk, Reverb's director of business development. "With the launch of the Reverb Outlet, we're making it easy to access your favorite brands for less."

The Reverb Outlet will feature high-quality discounted music gear from Reverb's community of authorized sellers, ranging from retailers like ProAudioStar and Alto Music to brands like Focusrite and Korg selling discounted items directly to music makers. All of the new and like-new music gear in The Reverb Outlet:

- Is at least 20% off retail prices, but often more
- Is sold by authorized retailers and brands
- Comes with free shipping
- Has a minimum 7-day return window

"With economic pressures making it harder for music makers to invest in music gear, it's more important than ever that the music-making community has access to affordable musical instruments. We launched the Reverb Outlet to make it easier for music makers to find the best deals on the instruments that will inspire them," said Reverb CEO David Mandelbrot. "Now that players can shop discounted outlet music gear alongside our huge range of affordable used music gear, it's easier than ever to find the perfect instrument for your budget."

Visit the Reverb Outlet today and check back often, as new deals will be added regularly. Please note that as of now, this is available to those in the U.S. only.

Légère Reeds Acquired by Music Center

Légère Reeds is joining the Music Center family. Légère Reeds Ltd. is now wholly owned by Music Centre S.r.l.

This change marks an exciting new chapter in Légère's storied history. Founded in 1998, the company began in the modest basement of Guy Légère's family home in Barrie, Canada. The first reeds were cut slowly, one at a time on a hand-built CNC machine. Today, Légère's 35 highly skilled staff work together to produce hundreds of thousands of reeds each year in our 10,000 sq. ft. state-of-the-art production facility.

While this decision is a significant milestone in our journey, we want to assure everyone that the essence of what makes Légère Reeds a trusted name remains unchanged. Our commitment to innovation



and delivering consistent, quality products to our customers remains our top priority.

So, why this change? Légère has been the fastest growing reed

brand in the industry for more than a decade. But we still have a long way to go to reach our goal of being the number one reed brand in the world. Joining hands with Music Center delivers the resources, network, and reach needed to take our growth to the next level.

Music Center shares our vision, and they believe in our mission. You can expect to see an even stronger emphasis on research and development, increased support for our artists and distributors, and enhanced customer engagement. We're also ramping up our capital expenditures to fuel these initiatives.

Vista Musical Instruments Acquires Manny's from Sam Ash

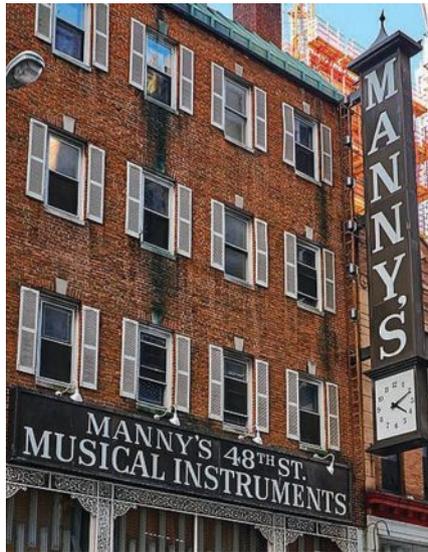
Vista Musical Instruments confirms that in January of this year the company acquired all trademarks of iconic Manhattan music store Manny's from Sam Ash Music Company.

Founded in NYC in 1935, Manny's became known as a go-to destination on "Music Row" on 48th Avenue and catered to high profile acts including Jimi Hendrix, The Ramones, and The Who. In 1999, the brand was sold to Sam Ash, which kept Manny's as a subsidiary before closing it in 2009.

Meng Ru Kuok, CEO of Vista Musical Instruments, says of its acquisition, "Manny's is an incredible brand with a rich storied history since it was founded on 48th Street, New York City in 1935. From supporting beginners buying their very first guitar to legends like Jimi Hendrix and Bob Marley, it's unquestionable the impact Manny's has made on the world of music. We're proud and grateful to have the opportunity to shape its next chapter to ensure its legacy remains meaningful to future generations of musicians."

David Ash, CEO & general counsel of Sam Ash Music Corporation, adds, "Vista Musical Instruments recognized the great value in the Manny's trademark and purchased it from us back in January. We are pleased that they will be able to maintain the world famous Manny's name into the future."

Sam Ash began shuttering all retail locations in early May. The retailer eventually filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy, and established the procedure for auctioning off its assets. A "stalking horse bidder" — a party that will purchase the business as a whole, unless the action leads to a stronger offer — was established, leaving the future of Sam Ash as an MI retail entity a possibility. Currently the auction is scheduled for late June.



Gonher Buys Sam Ash Assets

In late June, Sam Ash Music announced that the winning bidder in its bankruptcy auction is Mexican corporation Gonher. Gonher's \$15.2 purchase includes wholesaler Samson Technologies as well as select Sam Ash online assets.

All Sam Ash stores are still scheduled to close, but it's being reported that some Sam Ash employees may be transferred to similar positions within the Gonher business.

As previously reported in *MMR*, Sam Ash, the nation's second-largest MI retail chain, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of New Jersey in May of this year with plans to shutter all of its 42 retail outlets across 16 states. At the time, the company stated that it was exploring options that could include selling its ecommerce operations and related IP as well as its Samson wholesale business.

The Sam Ash stores that will be closed are in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, North Carolina, New Jersey, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

Fender Returns to NAMM Show in 2025

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) announced on June 25 that the company will be exhibiting at the NAMM Show in Anaheim this coming January — the first return to the annual industry gathering since the pandemic.



Fender CEO Andy Mooney and NAMM CEO John Mlynyczak

"We sadly missed actually having a physical presence at NAMM; that high-touch in-person long form interaction is vitally important for the industry," says Andy Mooney, Fender CEO. "Going forward, [Fender] will have more and exciting new products to intro at NAMM and then in the fall, we will revert back to our online dealer events... we're thrilled to be back, we missed being there, and I'm excited to see everyone again back in Anaheim."

Look for more on this significant industry development in the August issue of *MMR*.

Teufel and Fender Partner to Debut Rockster Speakers

Teufel, the German speaker manufacturer known for designing and engineering premium audio products since 1979, and Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC), the world's leading guitar manufacturer, have announced the launch of the new Rockster Series, a range of high-quality Bluetooth speakers made to turn everyday moments into unforgettable events.

Since 1946, Fender has cemented its footprint as a leader in sonic innovation. From its groundbreaking amplifiers and the lap steel guitar to the introduction of the iconic Telecaster and Stratocaster guitars, which celebrates its 70th anniversary this year, founder Leo Fender transformed the signal chain and forever altered the music landscape.

Berlin-based Teufel has been designing and engineering audio products since its founding in 1979, and has become an acclaimed consumer electronics brand, known worldwide

for its premium design and audio quality.

United by the rally of "Here to be Heard," the two iconic brands have joined forces to create speakers that both look and sound outstanding, melding Teufel's legendary German-engineered audio with the iconic Fender design and aesthetic that are loved by millions of musicians and artists globally.

"We're very proud to be introducing the Rockster Series in collaboration with Fender and to be offering our proven Bluetooth speaker technology in the United States for the first time," said Sascha Mallah, managing director, Teufel. "The Fender x Teufel Rockster series is designed for audio lovers, and we know the fans and customers will truly hear the difference in sound quality. Paired with Fender's innovation and design input, the Rockster Series really stands apart on the market."

Music China to Rock Back in October with 25 Percent More Exhibition Space

Following a near-record turnout of 122,000 visitors last year, the floor space for the upcoming 2024 edition of Music China is expanding to 150,000 sqm. The highly anticipated 21st edition, taking place from 10 – 13 October at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC), is projected to accommodate around 2,000 exhibitors, while a new Hall N1 has been introduced exclusively for audio recording equipment, electrical and electronic instruments. This dedicated sound-focused hall will provide exhibitors with opportunities to create an immersive experience for attendees through showcasing live performances and true sound demos. To ensure a tranquil environment, exhibitors are requested to utilize headphones and soundproof equipment.

With China's MI market revenue expected to reach approximately USD 10 billion in 2024[1], exhibitors continue to recognize the country's vibrant music education culture as a significant factor behind the market's resilience and impressive size. Alban Steingraeber of Steingraeber & Soehne KG expressed his excitement during the most recent edition, stating, "I just learned that there are more children learning piano in China than the entire population of Germany. China, along with the broader Asian market, has become one of our largest markets, and we are thrilled with the substantial number of visitors who possess extensive industry knowledge and are highly skilled piano players."

While the piano segment remains the largest product category at Music China, the 2023 edition showed that a significant contingent of visitors had interest in a broader range of instruments, accessories, and educational materials. Judy Cheung, deputy general manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, highlights this as the main reason for the 25% expansion in exhibition space, accommodating 14 product halls to provide a wider variety of sourcing options for buyers.

"Interest in the domestic market remains well balanced across all major product segments, including electronic, wind, string, and traditional Chinese instruments. This is particularly pleasing because after the hiatus caused by the pandemic, many exhibitors used the 2023 edition to gauge if Music China would still attract the same diverse range of visitors. The feedback received, along with early sign-ups for 2024, leaves no doubt about that. More than 60% of exhibition space has already been reserved for the upcoming October edition, with many renowned brands enquiring about larger booth sizes. We're looking forward to the biggest MI celebration of the year in Shanghai," explains Cheung.

Some of the major brands that are planning to return for 2024 include: Adams, Conn-Selmer, Cort, Cremona Violin, D'Addario, Despiau, Dixon Drums, Doerfler, Fender, Godin, JodyJazz, M-Audio, Miyazawa, Moog, Nikko, Paxman, Pearl, Petrof, RATstands, Sabien, Savarez, Samick, Seiko, Selmer, Tagima, Thomastik, Weissenberg, Yamaha, Yanagisawa. The excitement extends beyond individual brands as the show is expecting the presence of international pavilions representing the finest in musical innovation and heritage. Participating countries include the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the UK, creating a truly global celebration of musical culture.

In addition to the well-known brands and pavilions, the show will unveil the new Hall N1, a dedicated space for audio recording equipment, and electrical and electronic instruments. Both industry professionals and music enthusiasts will be captivated by this hall, which will host an impressive lineup of exhibitors. Apogee, Avantone Pro, AVID, Black Lion Audio, Earthworks Audio, Focusrite, MOTU, Nektar, Novation, RME, Shure, Sennheiser, Sonarworks, Sony, Soundking, Studiologic, Superlux, Tascam, and many others will be present to showcase their exceptional offerings.

Market resilience driven by online learning and digital retail trends

Finding new distribution channels and identifying consumption trends among end-users is a key focus of the Music China fringe program that will continue to be emphasized at the upcoming 2024 edition.

Ren Zijing, head of JD Musical Instruments Division at JD Group, highlighted some recent market changes during the recent 20th edition. "To attract a broader audience, many music schools and instrument brands have embraced platforms like TikTok and other social media channels to promote their products. This strategy aims to capture the attention of older music enthusiasts who constitute a significant customer base with considerable consumption potential. Interestingly, this demographic heavily relies on online training, distinguishing them from younger children who predominantly attend offline music schools. Major brands are increasingly recognizing this as a new driver of sales."

The educational and networking aspects of Music China 2024 will cover a wide range of trends, ranging from industry forums, courses, piano tuning seminars, master classes, music education programmed, and conferences. These events provide opportunities for learning, networking, and exploring the latest practices and technologies in the music industry. They cater to musicians, professionals, retailers, and music enthusiasts, promoting continuous learning and innovation in the field.

Hal Leonard MI Distribution Adds Three New Lines

Hal Leonard MI Products Distribution Division is pleased to announce the addition of three manufacturers to its catalog.

Kali Audio is a best-in-class audio product manufacturer. In only six years, it has become the hot new monitor and subwoofer line for the more discerning customer. Its line has also become the go-to choice for the Dolby Atmos market. With the audio industry moving to spatial experiences and immersive audio, Kali is positioned to meet that demand.

Precision mounting devices by Triad-Orbit are the perfect complement for Kali Audio. Along with other popular HL-distributed monitors from PreSonus, IK Multimedia, and Mackie, Precision has flexible and sturdy mounts for exact placements in recording, mixing, and post-production spaces. Precision has carved out this specialty market and is thriving in both pro and home studios.

Interstellar Audio Machines is a new guitar effect pedal company. Leading with the wildly popular Octonaut Hyperderive model, these affordable and widely expressive pedals are a welcomed addition in a competitive space. Other models include the Marsling, Fuzzsquatch, and Supernova. Add in the sci-fi graphics and endorsements from epic jam band Widespread Panic and "king of tone" Carlos Santana and you know these pedals have earned all the praise.

"Bringing in the Kali, Precision, and Interstellar lines is based on retailer requests and market demands," says Brad Smith, Hal Leonard VP MI Distribution Division. "Whether it's outfitting a room with the right Dolby Atmos gear to making an underground 'it' pedal available nationwide, Hal Leonard is here to get our dealers the right products at the right time. We are thrilled to add these lines to our catalog."

Focusrite Purchases Innovate Audio to Support Immersive Sound Strategy

Focusrite plc has announced the acquisition of UK-based Innovate Audio, the company behind the popular panLab spatial audio solutions. This follows the earlier acquisition of TiMax and builds upon Focusrite Group's commitment to immersive sound.

With the acquisition it has been agreed that panLab solutions will join the TiMax brand, meaning TiMax can now offer the most comprehensive range of immersive sound solutions on the market, with everything from entry-level panning software through to full delay-matrix spatial processors and performer stagetracking. Innovate Audio founder, Dan Higgott, will also join TiMax as a senior product developer.

Both panLab 3 and panLab Console have proved popular with sound de-

signers the world over with over 10,000 downloads achieved and the solutions being used in iconic venues from Sydney Opera House to the National Theatre. With panLab 3 users enjoy a spatial audio mixing solution, built to work seamless with QLab that is typically up and running in 5 minutes. With panLab Console, users can achieve an object-based audio workflow, whilst utilizing the console they already own. The macOS app adds spatial audio capabilities to a range of

digital mixing consoles with mixer Input and Output Channels becoming objects on the panner.

By extending the Focusrite Group's business into new products and markets, which complement its existing offerings within the Audio Reproduction business, the acquisition is strategically aligned with the Group's previously communicated aims of growing the core customer base, expanding into new markets, and increasing lifetime value for customers.

HILS America Launches with a Mission: High-Quality Guitars at Accessible Prices

HILS America, a new U.S. guitar brand, has debuted with a bold mission: to bring premium-quality instruments to players without the premium price tag.

"Like many guitarists, we became frustrated seeing endless price increases without the quality to match," said Ron Denoo, co-founder of HILS America. "We decided to step in and prove that you don't have to sacrifice your savings to own a great guitar."

HILS America has partnered with renowned Korean market leader and guitar manufacturer HEX Guitars to fulfill its promise. Their Indonesian-made instruments – which include the innovative NEXT headless series, a selection of all-solid-tone-wood acoustics, and classic solid-body designs – share HILS' dedication to quality and value.

Through this partnership, HILS is bringing these instruments to the USA, offering high-end appointments like stainless steel frets, roasted maple necks, and genuine bone nuts and saddles – far above the standard of guitars in a similar price range.

HILS takes the commitment even further by inspecting and professionally setting up every instrument at their Bluffton, Indiana, headquarters. This ensures players experience the guitars at their full potential.



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people on the move

C. F. Martin & Co. announces that **Eric Williams** has joined the company as its new senior director of IT. Williams brings a wealth of experience and creativity to Martin Guitar, having spent over 25 years in the information technology sector, including the last 12 years as senior director of Enterprise Applications and Analytics for Quaker Chemical in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania.



Williams' extensive career includes consulting in the enterprise performance management space, where he developed a proven track record of implementing finance, HR, and commercial-driven decision support for numerous Fortune 500 clients. His industry experience spans commercial banking and insurance, consumer products, telecommunications, manufacturing, entertainment, and commercial real estate.

Williams holds an M.S. in business analytics from Villanova University and a B.S. from Rutgers University. Reflecting on his new role, Williams shared, "I grew up in a musical family where my grandfather was a Juilliard graduate and musician who worked for Steinway Pianos, so I know firsthand the lasting pride that comes from being a part of something much greater than yourself.

"Having the opportunity to continue that tradition with such an iconic brand in Martin Guitar is incredibly fulfilling for me and my family. Thinking about Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, and Chris Cornell in my headphones all those years and knowing they were Martin players; it is just an incredible honor and privilege to be a part of this legacy of greatness that the Martin family has given to the world."

Excelcia Music Publishing is elated to announce the new full-time status of choral music editor **Jamey Ray**. A beloved composer of choral music as well as an accomplished singer, arranger, teacher, producer, and founder of the a cappella group Voctave, Ray has served Excelcia Music Publishing in a part-time capacity as choral music editor since 2018. The Excelcia Music Publishing choral music catalog, now in its sixth year of publication, boasts a stunning collection of music by an ever-growing roster of composers. The future



tal editor. He will be involved with the development and marketing of new publications. "We are excited to welcome Joe to the Hal Leonard family as instrumental editor," says Michael Sweeney, director of band publications. "He brings an extensive background as a music educator, professional musician, and composer/arranger. Additionally, with his experience in the publishing industry and retail, Joe is the perfect addition to our instrumental team."

Snyder graduated in 2000 from West Chester University of Pennsylvania with a B.S. in music education. After graduation, he served as a band director and general music teacher at the elementary, middle, and high school levels for 17 years in Pennsylvania and Florida. During his teaching years, he continued graduate studies in trombone performance and composition/arranging with Dr. Matt Niess, Dennis DiBlasio, and Dr. Quincy Hilliard. Also an accomplished musician, Snyder has shared a stage with artists including Pete Townshend, Alex Brightman, Donnie Kehr, Titus Burgess, KT Tunstall, Melissa Etheridge, Joey Fatone, and Chris Kirkpatrick of NSYNC, among many others.



As a published composer, arranger, and orchestrator, Snyder has written and orchestrated scholastic music as well as music for various touring shows and concerts. He has recently served as publications manager/editor for Winger-Jones Publications and instrumental editor for J.W. Pepper & Son.

Zach Moore joins the Hal Leonard team as a choral editor, responsible for reviewing and editing music for publication. Moore is a composer, conductor, and speaker. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and a master's degree in composition from Stephen F. Austin State University, where he studied composition with Dr. Stephen Lias. Zach has received an increasing number of commissions worldwide and has served as composer in residence to the Master Singers of Eau Claire, WI. His works have been performed at TMEA, ACDA, Carnegie Hall, Taipei National Concert Hall, and many more. His first feature-length film score premiered at the Caesar Forum in Las Vegas in 2022.



Originally from Clearwater, Florida, Ray served as a professor of music at Rollins College for 14 years. A well-known arranger and composer of choral music, his pieces have been top sellers and featured on many state festival lists. His contemporary arrangements have been performed by members of Pentatonix, Avalon, cast members on *30 Rock* and *The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, *American Idol* alumnae, and hundreds of Broadway performers. As a performer, Ray has worked with artists ranging from the London Symphony Orchestra to Disney's Voices of Liberty. In 2015, Ray formed the well-known a cappella group Voctave, which has multiple #1 songs and albums and has ranked in the top 25 of *Billboard Magazine's* charts. In addition to singing with Voctave, he produces and arranges its music. He grew up singing from a young age with the prestigious Florida Boychoir and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in music and computer science, specializing in voice and piano, from Rollins College and a masters in music technology from New York University.

is bright for the publisher, as there will be an increased emphasis on musical accessibility at different levels within the catalog and further meeting the needs of choral students and educators.

"I am thrilled to transition into a full-time role at Excelcia Music Publishing," Ray said. "After 14 wonderful years at Rollins College as a music professor, I am excited to dedicate myself fully to this new chapter. I look forward to ushering in new developments with the advent of my full-time position, as well as increasing the momentum we have been building in the choral department for the past seven years. The possibilities are endless when it comes to what our skilled team and imaginative composers can accomplish together."

"I am incredibly excited to have Jamey Ray with us full-time," says Larry Clark, president. "Jamey is already a star in the choral music field through his work as the founder and arranger of Voctave. With our renewed focus on choral music at Excelcia Music Publishing, Jamey will have an even bigger impact on educational choral music as our full-time editor and as a composer and arranger. I can assure you that Jamey will further elevate our expanded choral music catalog through his expertise."

Hal Leonard has announced the expansion of their instrumental and choral teams with the additions of **Joe Snyder** and **Zachary Moore**. Joe Snyder has been named instrumen-

tal editor. He will be involved with the development and marketing of new publications. "We are excited to welcome Joe to the Hal Leonard family as instrumental editor," says Michael Sweeney, director of band publications. "He brings an extensive background as a music educator, professional musician, and composer/arranger. Additionally, with his experience in the publishing industry and retail, Joe is the perfect addition to our instrumental team."

tal editor. He will be involved with the development and marketing of new publications.

Standing Tall!

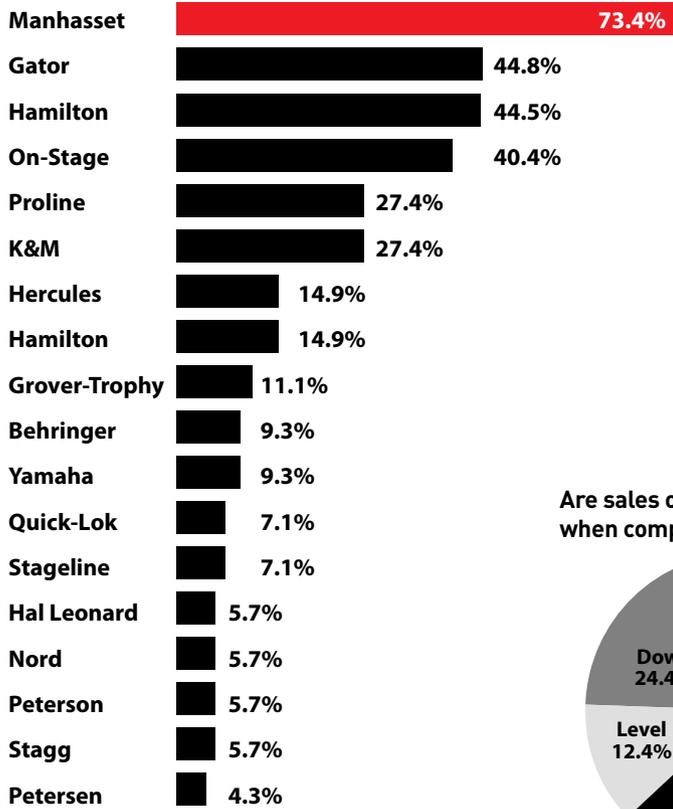
Trends in Music Stand Sales

By Christian **Wissmuller**

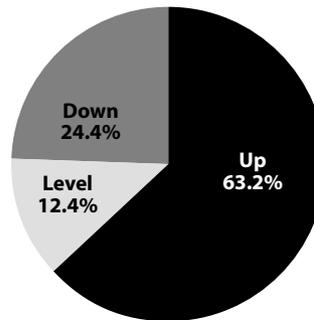
Seemingly amongst the least “sexy” of musical accessories (based on the... less than “effusive” responses to this month’s poll), music stands are nonetheless essential for many players – particularly of genres that require actual sheet-music and charts (garage band folks are exempt from this discussion).

While very few of the 400-plus MI retailers we sent this survey to had much to say about these items, folks were very responsive when it came to naming their favorite brands and singling out price-points that spoke to consumers. Post-pandemic life has sales of music stands on a definite upswing. Also – someone get Manhasset a trophy. In no prior MMR dealer survey has one brand absolutely dominated (73.4%) as they do when it comes to these stands.

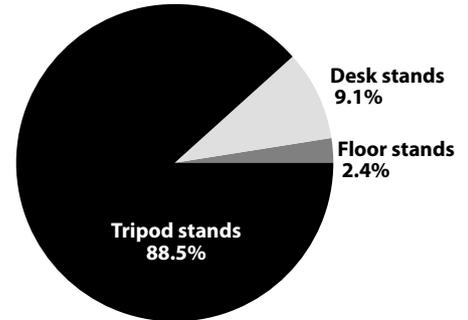
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Are sales of music stands up or down when compared to this time in 2023?



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■ anniversary



ART & Yorkville Sound export manager Steve Hendee at a recent NAMM Show

'we are the Dreamers of Dreams'



The ART SGE with the distinctive hot-pink graphics



Steve Hendee hard at work in the 1980s

Applied Research and Technology – ART Celebrates 40 Years

by Christian Wissmuller

Applied Research and Technology, a division of Yorkville Sound, is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2024. The company originally focused on the recording market, and the first ART products were digital reverbs. ART was founded in Rochester, New York by a team of engineers who first worked together at legendary pedal company MXR: Phil Betette, Tony Gambacurta, John Langlois, Richard Neutrour, and Terry Sherwood.

MMR recently spoke with Steve Hendee, export manager at Yorkville Sound and one of ART's original employees, and dug deep into ART's evolution from 1984 through to the present day. "We set out to produce good, solid, reliable products," he says. "No bells and whistles, just affordable, easy to use, and built to stand the test of time."

This design philosophy is exemplified by the product for which ART may be best known, the Tube MP. The compact tube microphone preamp was nominated for a TEC Award in 1996 for "Outstanding Technical Achievement" in the Mic Preamp Technology category. It remains in production and is considered by many to be the world's most popular external microphone preamp.

Yorkville Sound was an original distribution partner, and ART officially joined the Yorkville family in 1999. Manufacturing relationships have similar longevity: "We have been using the same manufacturer since the beginning," Hendee explains, "and treat each other as family."

On the importance of customer relationships, Hendee observes "ART users are almost like a secret society. Those who know, know. It's a great global community, with two-way dialogue about the gear, hacks, what's coming up, and what we should build next"

Today, ART product development is headquartered in Yorkville Sound's offices outside of Toronto, Canada, and the brand has grown to also serve the live sound and installed sound markets. At the 2024 Winter NAMM Show, ART announced the new Solo Series – a trio of all-analog 1U rackmount tube processors, priced to be accessible to any recording musician.

Jeff Cowling, Yorkville Sound's vice president of Sales & Marketing, says, "One digital reverb concept out of Rochester in 1984 spawned a movement of recording enthusiasts. ART products can now be found in project and professional studios, and on stages

around the world. For forty years, ART has inspired creativity and made music production more affordable and accessible."

More releases are planned throughout 2024, with ART looking to the 30th anniversary of the Tube MP in 2025.

Can you talk about the genesis of Applied Research and Technology back in 1984? Who were the principal figures/personnel and what was the catalyst behind launching the company?

Steve Hendee: ART, for short, came out of the ashes of MXR, along with Alesis. There were six original owners and six "founding" employees. The owners were senior management at MXR, including one of the owners of MXR. The five employees were from MXR's purchasing department, tech department, and three production people. Yours truly was production manager at MXR. In the beginning years I took care of receiving, audio test, packaging, and shipping.

MXR went out of business with very large backorders of a drum machine and a rack mount reverb unit. The owners of ART decided to go the direction of reverb units and rack mount processors. They purchased materials from the bank and the rest was history.

The original owners were Terry Sherwood, Phil Bette, Richard Neatrour, Tony Gambacurta, and Pete Beverage (sales manager who left the company early on).

In that first year, how many employees were there? Where was the HQ and how big was it?

MXR occupied a 140,000 sq. ft. building (40k rented out). So [we went] from 100,000 sq. ft. to a 5,000 sq. ft. building. ART rented a floor in an old manufacturing building in downtown Rochester NY. New employees were basically interviewed by everyone and on their first day they needed to bring a case of beer for the 5:01 club. There was a lot of comradery in ART that was birthed out of these early days. In the first year there were probably six people or so added. Many of those were previous MXR people.

What was the first big-break product for ART and why was it uniquely appealing to end-users?

The original reverb from MXR, the 01, although a noisy 16-bit reverb that had a dealer price of around \$1,300, did well. But I believe

what broke ART into mainstream reverbs was the original ProVerb in 1987. Alesis had their table-top MidiVerb and MidiFX that were selling like hotcakes. ART introduced an all-in-one product with both reverb and modulation effects [built] into a rack-mount unit. Sales went through the roof. This was pre-China days and ART went to its longtime Canadian distributor, Yorkville Sound, to assist with manufacturing. Yorkville Sound managed MXR distribution, so everyone was familiar with each other. The ProVerb was very cost effective and helped spawn many reverb units that ART was known for in the early years – besides being known for the color pink! [The ProVerb 200, SGE, and other ART units were notable for hot-pink graphics/copy on its faceplate – Ed.]

When did the connection with Yorkville come about and how did it evolve?

As mentioned previously, Yorkville Sound was MXR’s Canadian distributor. When ART started, Yorkville continued this relationship and distributed ART’s products. Then came above production help in assisting this fledgling company. Then, in November of 1999, with ART having financial issues, Yorkville Sound purchased ART and a new chapter began.

Looking back on the brand’s first four decades, what were some “turning point” moments for ART, in terms significant product introductions, high-profile usage, corporate developments?

The ‘80s and ‘90s were “the reverb era” for ART. From the original 01, ProVerb ,and their successors – 01 and ProVerb 200 – led to products like the MultiVerb (1, 2, and 3) and various off-shoots. But what really took the world by storm was the SGE. The SGE combined digital effects and analogue effects specifically for the guitar player. Sales were massive. ART had moved into a custom built building, employed auto insertion machines, and over 100 employees. The SGE led to the SGX2000 and SGXNightBass. These used a 12AX7 in their circuits, but, like the SGE, used both digital and analog effects. And the SGXNightBass targeted the forgotten bass players of the world.

The next 20 years were the recording/ tube preamp era. The TubeMP, arguably the number-one TubePre of all time, brought a tube preamp to the masses. The TubeMP has stood the test of time

What are some new or recent product introductions of note that ART is most excited about at the moment?

We’re in the process of revamping our PRO series: ProMPAll, ProVLAII, and ProChannel II. Updates will be shipping start-

ing this summer w/ the first one up being the ProChannel III. These “flagships” have had a long history and large following. They are very solid units that have stood the test of time. Also introduced this year were three single channel/1u products: SoloMPA, SoloVLA, and SoloStudio. Single channel versions of above models, but with additional features.

Flipping the second question on its head: how many ART employees are there in 2024 and how big is the HQ?

There are only three employees left from the ART days, including an engineer

and accounting person in our U.S. Yorkville facility in Niagara Falls, NY. The ART “HQ” is Yorkville Sound LTD in Pickering Ontario. All former ART offices, et cetera in the U.S. are a thing of the past.

Final thoughts/hopes for the next 40 years?

That’s a loaded question! Let’s say that I hope for continued interest and growth of our market, that making music is part of more and more people’s lives around the world – and, of course, that ART is part of that world. We are the music makers, we are the dreamers of dreams. 



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A Mighty Wind

Student Flute Sales Surge in 2024

by Christian **Wissmuller**

The fall semester is just around the corner. While you're planning for "Back to School" sales and promotions, you'll want to be sure to have plenty of one of the most popular B&O instruments, the flute, in stock. Student model flutes are designed to be approachable and easy to play for beginning musicians, durable enough to withstand the rough-and-tumble lifestyles of youngsters, and affordable enough to appeal to parents – particularly in today's economic climate defined by record-setting inflation, across the board.

MMR recently connected with representatives from five of the biggest suppliers of student flutes to learn what features are being sought after by customers, what specific models are selling well in 2024, and how successful MI retailers go about marketing and displaying these instruments.

For your brand, what models of student flutes are the top-sellers?

Antonio Ferranti: For Proel North America, the top-selling student flute is our Ida Maria Grassi GR SFL290 Flute in C (School Series), alpaca silver-plated. Designed to be durable, reliable, and approachable for beginners, the Grassi SFL290 school flute promotes excellent intonation and is easy-to-play across all registers. The included E-mechanism facilitates easier performance, while the G-offset is ideal for musicians with smaller hands. The Grassi SFL290 flute comes with all necessary accessories for beginners, including a protective carrying case, cleaning cloth and rod. Additionally, all Ida Maria Grassi instruments are backed by an industry-leading 4-year warranty, ensuring long-term reliability and peace of mind for new musicians (or their parents).

Michael Summers: Our Jupiter 700 series flutes are best sellers. The JFL700 has hidden adjustment screws, while the JFL710 has top adjusting screws.

Brian Petterson: Yamaha offers a strong lineup of student flutes, highlighted by the extremely reliable and well-crafted YFL-222 and open hole variations. Our continuous efforts in research and development ensure we'll remain current with market trends, and our designs have evolved over many years accordingly. Generations of Yamaha student models have been market leaders.

Korinne Smith: The Haynes Amadeus line of instruments is specifically designed for the beginner and intermediate student. Our best-selling models are the AF480 and AF680. The AF480 is geared for the beginner student. It comes with a silver-plated headjoint and sterling silver riser (a unique feature of this flute!), body and keys, plateau (closed hole) keys, French pointed arms, and a C footjoint. The AF680 was designed for the advancing student looking to "step-up" in their playing. In comparison to the AF480, the AF680 has a sterling silver headjoint, silver-plated body and keys, open-hole keys, French pointed arms, and a B footjoint.

Shawn Lafrenz: Our Belsona brand PF200 and P202 have been our most popular student line over the last two years since they were introduced.

The notion of a "student level" instrument is fairly subjective. In your mind, what constitutes a student flute?

MS: Student flutes are usually manufactured on a production line to help keep costs affordable, placing high importance on durability and ease of playability. Student flutes most often have nickel silver keys and hinge tubes, and a drawn nickel silver tube with drawn tone holes. Student flutes generally don't have precious metals which would drive the cost up.

KS: Yes, you're right, this question is very subjective. I think this is mostly because the term "student" doesn't always denote a young player. One beautiful aspect of music-making is that we can pick it up at any time in our lives. A flutist can truly be a "student" at any age or skill level. Personally, my hope is

that I will always be a student and that I will continue to hone my craft until I am no longer able to. But to answer your question, and it is a common one, would be that a "student flute" is determined by its playability and price point. A student flute is a flute that is approachable in terms of playability for the student and price for the parent/guardian, and one that, as the student grows and advances in their studies, could move up to the next level of instrument. The price point for student flutes ranges from \$500-\$2,000, intermediate flutes from \$2,000-\$4,000, pre-professional flutes from \$4,000-\$10,500 and professional flutes from \$11,000 and up.

BP: A "student level" flute allows a new musician to experience making music positively. Hopefully, this leads the player to develop a deeper relationship with their instrument over time and into a lifetime of music making. The specifications of their first flute could vary based on the individual's circumstances – physical, economic, and others – and the expert dealer salesperson's ability to qualify the student, be familiar with the local educators, and guide the beginning of this musical journey is critical.



SL: There are a couple of factors that we pay special attention to: First, very durable instrument design in terms of key-work and action as well as a very easy blowing head joint cut that students can be successful with in their early playing. Second, as most of these instruments are sold through dealer rental pools, we make sure that our case and accessory options are appropriate for that kind of environment including a stackable ABS case.

AF: Ida Maria Grassi instrument designers believe a "student-level" flute should not be regarded as an instrument of lesser quality, but rather an instrument designed specifically with the performance and budget limitations of beginners in mind. This typically means that "student-level" instruments need to be easier to approach and play than "step-up" or more professional models, while also being more durable, and more affordably priced. To achieve this, Grassi engineers select materials that are more fortified to withstand frequent handling by younger or less experienced players. Things to look for in a student level flute include a simplified key mechanism for ease of playing, reliable intonation, and a head-joint that helps produce a sound more easily for those who are still developing their embouchure.

Aside from price-point, what features are customers looking for when considering the purchase of a student flute?

SL: Durability in product design and service after the sale from a reputable and dependable manufacturer are always important factors in the student market.

BP: The traditional closed-hole, entry-level model YFL-222 is the starting point for most students, which is why Yamaha designed the flute to be durable yet responsive and with a pleasant tone quality. However, many educators are encouraging students to begin learning on an instrument with more



“A ‘student level’ flute allows a new musician to experience making music positively.”
— Brian Petterson, Director of Marketing, Winds & Strings, Yamaha Corporation of America



advanced specifications, like a sterling silver headjoint, a B foot joint and open hole keys (with plugs). The YFL-362H has become a very popular option for these educators.

AF: When selecting a student flute, several key factors are very important to ensure beginners have a successful experience. Durability is essential. Instruments must withstand the rigors of regular use and occasional mishandling. Ease of play is another important aspect, with flutes designed to allow beginners to produce sound easily and facilitate learning the fundamentals. Good intonation is critical, as instruments need to stay in tune to support proper musical development. Comfort and ergonomics are also important, with flutes that are comfortable to hold and play, featuring designs that can accommodate smaller hands. Lastly, care maintenance should be easy and straightforward, and include features that resist tarnishing and corrosion, to ensure consistent ease of play and instrument longevity. When beginners select an Ida Maria Grassi school series instrument, they are selecting all these features, designed by an expert Italian team of instrument specialists.

KS: When purchasing a student flute, customers are considering three main features: materials, mechanism, and headjoint. For materials, student flutes can be made of various amounts of silver-plated and sterling silver material. For example, the Haynes beginner student flute (AF480), like most beginner flutes, is made of nickel-silver alloy and is silver plated. However, the AF480 comes with a sterling silver riser instead of a nickel-silver material, which is a significant upgrade from that of its competitors. The more silver content in the instrument the more color, depth, and vibrance in the sound. As you ascend from there in the line, each model will incorporate more silver content. For example, the AF580 has a sterling silver riser and lip plate, the AF680 a sterling silver headjoint, the AF780 a sterling silver headjoint and body, and so on. For mechanism, options of closed holed (plateau keys) or open holes, Y-arms or French pointed arms, C footjoint or B footjoint, split E mechanism or G disc, C# trill or without are all options when purchasing a student flute. Lastly, when choosing

a flute, finding the right headjoint style is imperative. Most of the instrument’s sound comes from the headjoint and therefore it is important to find a headjoint that feels comfortable, produces the sound the customer is looking for, and ultimately enhances their playing experience.

MS: Customers often look for a student instrument with a good warranty and are educator approved. Features commonly sought after are offset G, closed holes, low C foot, and silver-plated throughout. Jupiter student flutes incorporate the most accurate scale, modeled after our professional Altus flutes. We’ve also spent a lot of time refining the embouchure hole on our student flutes, which is a very important feature when choosing any flute.

What promotional and display approaches have you observed to be especially successful for MI retailers when it comes to these types of wind instruments?

KS: From the start of their musical career, flutists are made aware that their instrument is made of precious metals and materials that are extremely fragile. As a result, these instruments are thought of much like fine jewelry and should be displayed as such. Making sure the flutes, whether they are solid silver or silver-plated, are continually wiped down to retain their luster is extremely important to the overall aesthetic. I have seen beautiful displays where the flutes are either on pegs and/or laying down on a plush material inside a glass case. This is a great way to display the flutes, however, it is important to wipe them down and put them away in their cases at the end of each day. If left out for a long period of time, the silver can begin to tarnish and what were new instruments begin to look old and used. This will ultimately affect their sell through of these instruments. No matter how you decide to display flutes, the most important aspect is the care and maintenance of them.

MS: We offer posters and banners that dealers can display in stores, and that educators can display in classrooms. We also offer a series of educational videos to assist educators and



“These instruments are thought of much like fine jewelry and should be displayed as such.” — Korinne Smith, DMA, Sales Manager, Wm. S. Haynes Company





“Customers often look for a student instrument with a good warranty and are educator approved.”

— Michael Summers, Wind Instrument Brand Manager, Altus | Azumi | Jupiter | XO



new players with their instruments.

SL: Robust rental and repair service programs at the dealer level are incredibly important, but most successful MI retailers to also respond to local needs and special requests for accessory packages at the individual teacher level as much as possible.

AF: At Proel North America, we try to partner with our retailers to help create visually appealing store displays that highlight the key features and benefits of Ida Maria Grassi wind instruments, along with complimentary full-color brochures, to help our dealers’ retail staff and their customers. We also offer to support educational workshops and events, where students, parents, and educators can learn about our instruments, as well as their proper care and maintenance. Additionally, we have partnered with internationally renowned fellow manufacturers to offer cooperative bundling packages that include essential wind instrument accessories to help make starter packages even more appealing. Additionally, we provide rich product metadata, along with clear and detailed instrument imagery and videos to support the increasingly important role of online rentals and sales.

BP: We have seen Yamaha dealers have success in the student flute market through efforts to develop meaningful connections with local educators. Establishing themselves as local partners for educators and expert guides for customers maintains and grows the business yearly. Accordingly, promotions supporting long-term growth and enjoyment are essential, so Yamaha now offers an exclusive partnership with the revolutionary Tomplay interactive sheet music service. Any student who purchases or rents a Yamaha student flute is eligible for an extended free trial with Tomplay.

Do you feel the current popularity of flutes among younger players is fairly consistent, on the upswing, or experiencing a lull?

AF: Although Ida Maria Grassi wind instruments (founded in Italy in 1945) is now 79 years old, this is only its first year being

imported to the USA and Canada, by Proel North America. Proel, and Italian company, has decades of experience and sales data with the European wind instrument marketplace, and the popularity of flutes among younger players has remained consistently strong and increasing internationally. Here in North America, the flute is always a perennial favorite in school band programs and is among the most played instruments due to its beautiful, melodious tone, approachable learning curve, and relatively lightweight and manageable size, particularly for younger beginners.

BP: The flute is one of the oldest wind instruments and will always have that fundamental appeal. The flute has also enjoyed a star turn over the past few years, with some global pop artists featuring the instrument. In the modern school music environment, recruiting new music makers to begin band is key, and that also means highlighting some of the many fun sides of playing flute: playing soaring melodies and creating new friendships with bandmates. Although the instrument can be challenging, the payoff is meaningful. There’s nothing better than seeing a student’s eyes light up when they start getting a consistent sound out!

SL: The percentage of flute players starting out is fairly consistent when compared with the total number of kids starting in band and orchestra programs. Learning to play the flute is always a popular choice for beginners.

MS: The popularity of all musical instruments is increasing, including the flute.

KS: The flute has always been a popular instrument since the beginning of time. The first instruments were in fact the drum and the flute! However, with the influence of Lizzo, Andre 3000, and other prominent artists of this century including the flute in various musical styles today, the instrument has grown in popularity. During COVID, we saw a significant increase in flute sales industry-wide. It was to the point where manufacturers couldn’t keep up with the demand and there was a significant shortage of student flutes. Dealers had to plan well in advance to make sure they had what they need-

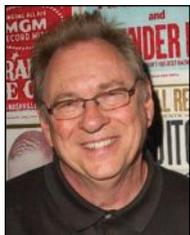


“Durability in product design and service after the sale from a reputable and dependable manufacturer are always important factors in the student market.”

— Shawn Lafrenz, Senior Marketing Manager, Pearl Corporation



When the Price is Right, Differentiation is the Closer



By
**Menzie
Pittman**

Inflation continues to wreak havoc on every faction of our industry, including educational services. Because of this, it is harder than ever to pinpoint the “true value” of a music store’s educational offerings. How do we know exactly what a music lesson is worth, and in a time when so much financial pressure is on families, what should a music camp cost?

What influence should someone’s individual reputation have on the pricing of the services? Do we take the humble

route and draw more students to us by keeping our pricing affordable and in-line with others, or do we instruct fewer people and fetch a higher rate? For the record, this is a real debate because great educators deserve respect; however, fundamental family needs out-rank everything and everyone. Honestly speaking, if you come from a “service mindset,” you know that the opportunity to teach music is a gift to both the teacher and the student.

I wrestle daily with the snake-like squeeze of inflation. One interesting note is that the Washington, D.C./Virginia, and Nashville areas are the two hottest boom spots in the country. I house my business in one location, and have family in the other, and the areas are booming all right – the only problem is that every family in these two regions is squeezed to an eye-bulging level by the python of inflation, not to mention the already-inflated cost of living expenses of the busy areas. This simply means fundamental expenses such as food, rent, and gas all stand in line ahead of services such as private education, music camps, or even weekend shows. The question then becomes: how do we defend our businesses and distinguish ourselves as a substantial value for consumers?

Let’s start by talking about protecting the sacred cow: music education. How do we protect our music programs, when people are hesitant to spend money on anything that is non-essential? Here is an even bigger question, do we dare raise fees on a non-essential product at a time when a dime is worth a nickel? Pricing properly during this period is an art form. It is a given that everyone’s costs are higher, but as important as private education is, it remains an option far from the top of a working family’s priority list.

The first step to counter this is protecting the quality of the services we offer. I know I have said that before but as inflation rises, our quality must rise as well. “Better quality” is also our best tool to distinguish ourselves and our stores from franchises, and other competitors.

The second critical concern is what to do about fees during

an inflationary period. The obvious debate lies in the question, “If everyone is raising prices, why shouldn’t I?” The answer to that is you can, but music lessons are not a necessity. If we raise the prices, we risk creating an environment where music lessons are only for the elite. If we price our services more conservatively, we are available to everyone. The key is finding the sweet spot, which is to offer quality service at practical prices.

Differentiation should be your strategy. The most important hedge against the challenges we currently face is for us to distinguish our business from others, just as recording artists do and have done for years. I have friends in the industry who have found unique ways to earn consistent trust from their customers, turning them into lifetime clients. Certain dealers achieve this through style and consistent excellence, others through excellent repair work, and others through their community involvement. Regardless, if your music store lacks soul, or there is no noticeable differentiation between your model and others, then you are generic, which diminishes your influence and trust.

In my business world, performance and music education have made the difference. I am constantly sharing with our customers my family’s story, and the tales and back stories of being a third-generation music family. Customers love to hear anecdotes that validate their trust in your business. I am sure there is a plethora of stories among the *MMR* readership that I would love to hear to share in the column. Share please!

As I close, I want to thank *MMR* for featuring my book *The New Musician, The Art of Entrepreneurship in Today’s Music Business* published by Rowman & Littlefield, in this month’s issue. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Larry Morton and the wonderful folks at Hal Leonard for distributing the book to music stores.

I weave various tales, a few with hilarity, throughout the interviews with notable world-class musicians and music industry leaders. I also reflect on important practices that hopefully will help promising musicians navigate the arduous challenges they will inevitably face. Make no mistake, there is a seat at the table for you! It is my hope you will join me and share in moving these important musical discussions forward. We are all a part of the story, and it is ours to share with tomorrow’s new musicians. 

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.”

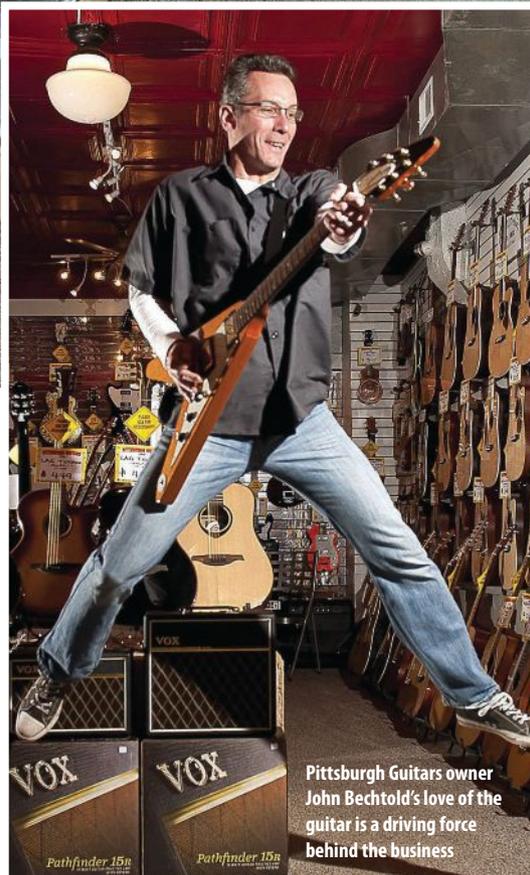
“How do we defend our businesses and distinguish ourselves as a substantial value for consumers?”

anniversary



Pittsburgh Guitars

A Love Story



Pittsburgh Guitars owner John Bechtold's love of the guitar is a driving force behind the business

Iconic MI Retailer Celebrates 45 Years

by ChristianWissmuller

Pittsburgh Guitars is celebrating 45 years of "Rocking the 'Burgh" in 2024 and we decided to sit down with former devoted customer and now owner John Bechtold to learn more of the store's history.

Founded by Carl Grefenstette in 1979, Pittsburgh Guitars has become *the* go-to destination for both local musicians and global superstars. Notable big-name visitors include members of The Cult, Cheap Trick, Social Distortion, The Who, Nirvana, The Replacements – the list is endless!

"I started this business because I love guitars," says Grefenstette. "I love looking at them. I love playing them. And I love studying their history. I feel grateful that over these many decades, Pittsburgh Guitars has inspired multiple generations of players. And I am equally grateful that John has carried that legacy forward."

For his part, being steward of such a beloved local institution is a dream come true for Bechtold: "I started shopping at Pittsburgh Guitars when the shop first opened. I was in 9th grade! I was always in awe of the guitars on the walls. Here I am 45 years later, now owner of the shop and still just love looking at guitars all day! I am honored to have been able to carry on the legacy of this shop and what Carl created. I love the community vibe that this shop has and really enjoy interacting with so many great friends and customers on a daily basis."

Pittsburgh Guitars will continue to celebrate the 45-year milestone throughout the year and looks well poised to remain a guitarist Mecca for many years to come!

Can you talk about the origins of Pittsburgh guitars? What led to Carl founding the business?

John Bechtold: Pittsburgh Guitars is a love story – a love of the guitar. Its distant origins can be traced back to February 9, 1964 when a young Carl Grefenstette saw The Beatles on *Ed Sullivan*. He was not only impressed by their new look and sound, he was captivated by their unusual guitars. By the 1970s he was old enough to buy his own guitars and this led to a search for Beatle-related gear. In 1975, when a friend of his, Mitch Weissman, auditioned for a Beatle tribute show, Carl met with the producers and sold them the Beatle instruments he owned. Throughout 1976 and 1977 Carl sold guitars and amps to the show, which eventually became "Beatlemania!" on Broadway. Searching through hundreds of pawn shops only increased Carl's love for the guitar. He started to buy more and more. Whenever he was in Manhattan his favorite stop was "We Buy Guitars" on 48th street. He decided to open a "used" guitar shop back in Pittsburgh. In May 1979 Pittsburgh Guitars was born.

Walk us through from the past to the present: At the original store location, how many full-time employees were there? How big was the joint?

JB: Pittsburgh Guitars started as a one-man operation. The store was 750 sq. ft. and located in the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Bloomfield. It became a fun place for local musicians to hang out. The first actual employee was added in 1981 and a repairman, Scott R. Johnson, joined in 1983. Scott still works at the store today!

In 1986 Pittsburgh Guitars moved to a different Pittsburgh neighborhood, the South Side. At the time, it was primarily bars, antique shops, and boarded up buildings. But it had lots of potential. The new 1400 sq. ft. building provided room for growth. For a very brief time keyboards were added to the inventory, but Carl soon realized the error of his ways and stuck with his one love: guitars.

Back in Bloomfield the primary focus was used guitars. The only New guitar line was Hondo II. In the South Side, the business grew and new guitars from Guild, Rickenbacker, Martin and Fender were added to the product lines. Meanwhile, "used" guitars became "vintage" guitars

By the turn of the century there were four full-time employees and four guitar teachers.

Current store: how many employees? How big?

JB: In 2006 Carl bought a three-story building one block from the previous

South Side address. The new place offered 1,600 sq. ft. of store front, plus two additional floors for repairs, lessons, inventory overflow, offices and shipping. In addition to me (John) we currently have three full-time employees, and our full-time repair person, Scott.

Can you talk about your own history with Pittsburgh Guitars? When did you come on board at the store? What have your roles been throughout the years?

JB: I started shopping here, well maybe it was more like dreaming, when the shop first opened in 1979. I was in 9th grade then and would visit the shop pretty frequently to gawk at the walls. When I was in 10th grade, I bought my first good guitar here and it was a 1976 Gibson Les Paul in a tobacco sunburst finish. As time went on, I started gigging out in bands and eventually bought more guitars and amps. This also became my go to shop for repairs and set-ups.

Move forward to 2002 when I was a sales manager for an industrial equipment company. I wore a tie and Dockers to work every day, worked in a cubicle and just could not do it anymore. It was a really great job but I was burned out from it and did not really have much interest in what I was doing there. I had to do something ca-

reer wise that I was passionate about and that was guitars and music!

Well, when one of the guys quit to go to school, that was my chance to work at my favorite guitar store. I interviewed with Carl and started right away. I had always read all of the guitar magazines, so I was up on all of the new gear that would come out. I quickly became comfortable with evaluating used instruments, taking in trades and buying used gear. As time went on, Carl gave me more and more responsibilities such as dealing with vendors, placing product orders and going to NAMM to meet with our sales reps. I was able to pick things up quickly due to my previous business background and I finally had a job that I could not wait to go to every day. Well, nine years later when Carl decided to retire, I worked out a deal with him to buy the shop. On November 1st 2011, I became the owner of Pittsburgh Guitars, my favorite guitar shop!

Currently, what new lines does Pittsburgh Guitars carry?

JB: We carry a lot of great new lines that really fit the vibe of our store and complements the mix of used gear. We are a dealer for Rickenbacker, Gretsch, Hofner, Martin, Danelectro, Yamaha, Vox, Marshall, Ampeg, Boss, EHX, MXR, and more! As far

New from JodyJazz & Chedeville

Tenor model now available in our popular DV HR Series, offering our patented DV design in hard rubber



DV HR Tenor

Innovative Hand-Hammered HH Tenor mouthpiece (patent pending) now available in 24kt Gold Plating



Hand-Hammered HH Tenor

An exclusive collaboration with legendary Hollywood studio Clarinetist and mouthpiece maker Jim Kanter



Chedeville Kanter Cinema Bb Clarinet



■ anniversary

as Hofner goes, we are actually a Hofner Premium dealer. There are only a little more than a handful of independently owned shops in The US that are premium dealers and can order the German instruments.

What would be the breakdown of the current inventory in terms of vintage vs. new?

JB: Our electric guitar inventory is always around 50% used and 50% new guitars. As far as acoustics go, we carry a lot more new instruments and that inventory is typically around 75% new vs. 25% used. We do get vintage instruments in from time to time and they typically sell pretty quickly in the shop or on Reverb when we list them. Also, used pedals move very well for us.

Can you talk about the other services offered – repairs, lessons?

JB: Our repair person Scott has been here longer than me. He is always busy and we have customers that drive long distances because of his reputation. We pride ourselves on having one of the best in the area. It is also great to have a guy like Scott here in case instruments need tweaking when they come in and before they get shipped out. When bands come to town, many contact us for emergency repairs. We do our best to accommodate them. A notable one was when Cheap Trick's tech brought in the famous 5-neck guitar for an emergency headstock repair.

As far as lessons go, we are still conducting them virtually. That is something that transpired during the pandemic. Both of our teachers moved away during the pandemic, but one of our teachers has continued with remote virtual lessons for us. He has been able to maintain a full schedule and it has worked well for him and the store. However, we are close to hiring an in-person teacher or two.

A whole host of notable names have shopped at Pittsburgh Guitars. How important are those high-profile clientele in building and maintaining the store's reputation?

JB: I keep a sheet of paper on the bulletin board in the hallway and we make notes on it when touring musicians stop in the shop.

The list is pretty long at this point. A partial list of the musicians that have stopped in the shop would include Kurt Cobain, Tommy Emmanuel, Adrian Belew, Dean & Robert of STP, Ace Frehley, Squeeze, The Fixx, Derek Trucks, Richie Havens, Ray Davies, John Entwistle, Jackson Browne, Peter Torke, G.E. Smith, Kathleen Edwards, Russell Crowe, and Woody Harrelson. The majority of musicians do the exact same thing that we do when traveling. I look up guitar shops and record stores in every city when traveling. That is what I am interested in checking out and so are they. It is very interesting to talk about their experiences with touring, recording, and what gear that they are using. Customers come in pretty frequently and ask about a famous musician that was in the shop. It is always fun to share the stories.

Any celebrations, sales, initiatives ongoing in 2024 to celebrate the 45th anniversary? I know the customer appreciation sale just happened recently.

JB: The actual anniversary date was in May and we did a lot of cool stuff that week. We had a customer appreciation sale, spin wheel to win a prize and we gave away a lot of cool gear. We also had a vintage Hofner collection on display that included over 20 instruments. We will be 45 for a full year so we will continue vintage instrument displays like that throughout the year and have more focused sales periodically.

Hopes for the future of Pittsburgh Guitars?

JB: My hope for Pittsburgh Guitars is that it continues to serve our local community as a hub for aspiring guitar players and local musicians. Our shop is a lot like the TV show *Cheers* for a lot of people. Friends come in to hang out and talk about music, gigs and guitars. I take great pride in helping customers find a solution to what they are looking for and I just love it when someone comes into the shop to get their very first guitar! We can take our time with the experience and even teach them a couple of chords by the time they walk out smiling with that gig bag on their shoulder. That's what it is about for me. 🎸

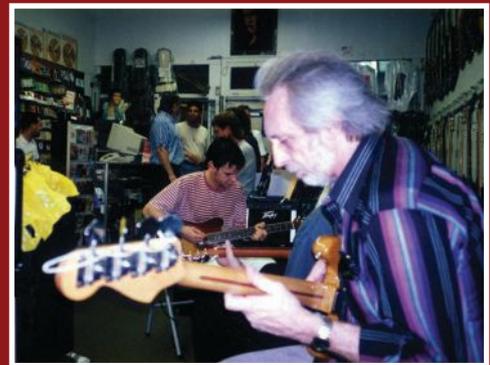


Stone Temple Pilots

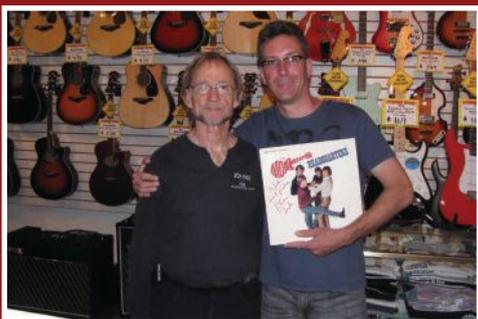
Celebs Flock to Pittsburgh Guitars



Cheap Trick's legendary 5-neck guitar underwent emergency surgery



The Who's John Entwistle



Peter Torke of the Monkees



Ray Davies of the Kinks

DRUMS & PERCUSSION

SABIAN Re-introduces the 22" HHX Tempest & AAX 18" Rocktagon

SABIAN is proud to announce the re-release of the 22" HHX Tempest Ride and the AAX 18" Rocktagon cymbals.

Originally released as part of SABIAN's Vault Drop program, both of these cymbals were only available for a limited time. But due to popular demand, both cymbals have now been added into the SABIAN catalog on a permanent basis.



"We are constantly listening to our customers," said Stacey Montgomery-Clark, SABIAN's VP of Sales & Marketing. "And these re-releases further enhance our reputation as the leading cymbal manufacturer for customer experience."

The 18" AAX Rocktagon has the same 8-sided shape as its predecessor from the 80's, but that's where the similarity ends. This version is a thin crash weight with a raw un-hammered bell and pinpoint lathing that combine with the 8-sided shape to produce an immediate nasty crash with quick decay. The thicker raw bell also allows for strong bell accents and added punch. An excellent effects cymbal with an unusual look and sound.

The 22" HHX Tempest is a multi-application cymbal with an incredible dynamic range. A specially modified HHX hammer peen brings a unique look, feel and sound to this cymbal. Its medium thin weight and aggressive HHX hammering, creates an instrument with a beautifully controlled swell when played either with stick, or mallets, making it ideal for both drum set and orchestral applications. The HHX Tempest offers tremendous light ride capabilities, delivering a warm dark undertone to the wash. It is even possible to see the gentle movement of the bow of this cymbal when it's being played.

www.sabian.com

FRETTED

Donner Adds New Guitars to its Seeker Series Electrics

Donner has introduced two new additions to its DST Seeker Series electric guitar lineup: the DST-600 and DST-700. By adding these two new models, Donner's time-tested Seeker Series has reached new heights with a balance of vintage and modern design, providing contemporary players with the ultimate playing experience and versatile tones, from warm blues or clean style to shred-heavy metal sounds.

The DST-600 has an alder body, C-shaped maple neck and comes in either SSS or HSS configurations with a maple or rosewood fretboard. The models featuring the rosewood fretboard come with 22 frets, while the maple fretboard version features 21 frets. Boasting special tuning on each pole piece, the vintage staggered SSS/HSS configured DST-600 gives an authentic '60s sound that is sparkly clean, while providing a rich and smooth tone when pushed with some overdrive. The DST-600, with a trio of alnico V single coils, marks Donner's faithful attempt for the vintage aesthetics while maintaining versatile play capabilities by providing an alternative HSS configured option.



DST-600 Key Features:

DESCRIPTION: 6-string double-cutaway electric guitar

BUILD: Alder body, bolt-on C-shaped maple neck with 9.5" radius, maple fretboard for 21 frets, rosewood fingerboard for the 22 frets

HARDWARE: Donner Lab vintage style tuners, 6 point bridge

ELECTRONICS: ToneDesign series Alnico V Pickups designed

by Donner Lab. Humbucker bridge (for Sunburst only), 3x ToneDesign single-coils (bridge, middle and neck, for finishes in red, black, green, pink and white), 5-way selector switch, Humbucker split (sunburst), 1x volume, 2x tone

SCALE LENGTH: 25-1/2"/648mm

NUT WIDTH: 42mm

NECK SHAPE: Morden C

FINISHES: Fiesta Red, Obsidian Black, Sunburst, Surf Green, Shell Pink

Gig bag included

Crafted with several differences from the original Seeker series, the DST-700 is Donner's bold offering for aggressive players. First, the DST-700 boasts a 5-piece neck made with roasted maple bolted on a basswood or mahogany body, offering supreme stability and aesthetics for shred guitarists. Second, new pickups designed by Donner Lab come in two configurations: HH and HSS with coil switch. These new Donner Lab pickups are designed, made, and tuned for high-output fatter tones, yet deliver tremendous dynamic range.

Finally, the fingerboard utilizes a compound radius of 10"-14" resulting in a neck that achieves an ideal ergonomic equilibrium, suitable for producing both clear melodies and chordal playing, as well as lightning-fast solos played on the higher frets.

Other features include an easily accessible truss rod adjuster that sits next to the neck pickup, allowing players to make adjustments without removing the neck, high-quality hardware, including steel medium frets, Donner 18:1 locking machines, 2-point synchronized tremolo with block saddles, and a steel plate.

DST-700 Key Features:

BUILD: Mahogany/Basswood body, mahogany/roasted maple neck, roasted maple/rosewood fretboard, 22 medium frets

SCALE LENGTH: 25-1/2" / 648mm

ELECTRONICS: Donner Lab designed high-output humbucking and single-coil pickups, 3-position pickup selector and 2 metal control knobs: Master volume and tone with coil split

HARDWARE: Corrosion-proof Donner steel hardware, 18:1 locking tuners, 2 point bridge

FINISH: Natural finish on the mahogany body, Matte finish with 4 colors on basswood body

Gig bag included

Here is a video of LA-based musician Ruben Wan using the DST-700 to perform in a Donner Live session.

The Donner DST-600 and DST-700 electric guitars carry suggested retail prices from \$429 to \$499, varying from models of different setups, and are available from donnermusic.com and selective retailers.

Four models, including DST-600 in fiesta red (SSS) pricing \$429, DST-600 in sunburst (HSS) pricing \$439, DST-700 in natural (HH) pricing \$499 and DST-700 in forest green (HSS) pricing \$499, are now available.

www.donnermusic.com

ESP Guitars Announces Six Guitars in New LTD 200DX Series

ESP Guitars, the respected high-performance instrument manufacturer founded in 1975, has announced the introduction of six guitars in a new LTD range called the DX Series. The LTD EC-200DX FM, M-200DX, and TE-200DX are each being made in two exciting finishes, and are available now at ESP dealers worldwide.

"The DX Series provides a solution for customers who want a high-quality, low-cost entry point to ESP features and playability," says Blue Wilding, ESP brand manager. "We want our guitars to be accessible to every level of player and at every budget, and the DX Series delivers way more than anyone would expect for their modest price."

newproducts

Available in blue burst and charcoal burst finishes, the LTD EC-200DX offers a flat-top single-cutaway Eclipse body with a beveled edge. It's built with bolt-on construction at 24.75" scale, featuring a very comfortable poplar body with a flamed maple top, and a roasted maple neck with a rosewood fingerboard. This guitar includes a TOM-style bridge and tailpiece, 24 extra-jumbo frets, dot inlays, and black chrome hardware. The EC-200DX includes a set of ESP's acclaimed LH-150 humbucking pickups with matching black chrome covers, providing punchy, great tone for all genres of music, along with the flexibility of single-coil tones controlled by a push-pull switch on the tone knob.



The LTD M-200DX is available in blue burst and purple burst finishes, offering the streamlined M shape with a great-looking burlled poplar top. Built with bolt-on construction at 25.5" scale, the M-200DX includes classy features like a roasted maple neck, rosewood fingerboard with 24 frets, black chrome hardware, a TOM-style bridge with string-thru-body design, body binding, offset dot inlays, and a reverse headstock. The M-200DX also features ESP LH-150 humbucking pickups with matching black chrome covers. Also available in blue burst and purple burst finishes, the LTD TE-200DX offers the classic LTD TE shape with features for contemporary guitarists. These include a lightweight and comfortable poplar body with a burlled poplar top, and a roasted maple neck with rosewood fingerboard and 24 frets. The TE-200DX also features a hardtail bridge, black chrome hardware, black body binding, a tiltback headstock, and a set of acclaimed ESP LH-150 humbucking pickups with matching black chrome covers.

www.espguitars.com

Fender Honors Susan Tedeschi With Signature Telecaster

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) announces the Susan Tedeschi Telecaster, honoring one of the most celebrated blues and American roots musicians with her first Fender signature guitar. Patterned after Tedeschi's instantly identifiable Caribbean Mist 1993 American Standard Tele, which is featured on the cover of her seminal album *Just Won't Burn* and has been her go-to guitar for over 30 years, The Susan Tedeschi Telecaster offers authentic tone, inspiring playability and simple sophistication.



A blues stalwart known for her powerful vocal performances and dynamic musicality, Tedeschi began her career in Boston in the early '90s, garnering a significant regional following for her soulful brand of guitar playing. Following the release of *Just Won't Burn*, Tedeschi found international acclaim, and since then her unyielding commitment to her craft – both as a solo artist and in Tedeschi Trucks Band – has earned her the adoration of audiences around the world, as well as a Grammy win for blues album of the year for *Revelator* (with Tedeschi Trucks Band) and an additional seven nominations including best new artist, best female rock vocal performance, best contemporary blues album (for *Wait For Me, Hope and Desire and Back To The River*) and best contemporary blues album.

"I'm so excited to unveil my new signature Telecaster," said Tedeschi. "Honestly it's a dream. I just wanted to be able to play the guitar, so to have my own signature model is a real honor. It's going to feel insane to see it in the hands of players. The guitar feels so comfortable and it plays so well, so I think lots of people are going to enjoy it."

Featuring a 9.5" rosewood fingerboard and 22 medium jumbo frets atop a 25.5"-scale maple neck with a slim Tedeschi "C" shaped profile, the Susan Tedeschi Telecaster offers the same easy playing comfort as Tedeschi's treasured original Tele. What's more, the alder body, Custom Susan Tedeschi Single-Coil Tele Pickups and Master TBX Tone Control deliver well-rounded tone, perfectly suited to blues and other genres. Elsewhere, the aged caribbean mist finish, 4-ply tortoiseshell pickguard and nickel and chrome hardware give the guitar a distinctive style.

"Susan Tedeschi is a major force in contemporary blues-based music, and it's so exciting to be honoring her with her very own signature guitar," said Justin Norvell, EVP Product at FMIC. "Fans of Tedeschi will be very familiar with her original 1993 American Standard Telecaster and its iconic Caribbean Mist finish, so it's great to be able to offer them such a faithful recreation. With its supremely comfortable slim "C" neck and incredible custom-voiced pickups, this model offers an exceptionally enjoyable playing experience."

www.fender.com

BAND & ORCHESTRA

NS Design Launches the Innovative CR Series Six-String Electric Violin



From award-winning instrument designer Ned Steinberger, the NSCR Series merges classic NS elegance, exceptional performance and player ergonomics. The CR six-string electric violin comes in both standard and fretted versions. Tuned in fifths (EADGCF), or even like a guitar, the six-string design is an exciting option for violinists and an inviting new adventure for guitarists exploring new sonic territory.

Crafted to the highest standards in the Czech Republic, the CR6 violins feature a solid maple body and neck with a flame maple face. Its ergonomic design includes a removable bout segment for traditional playing reference. NS Design's patented tuning system, located behind the bridge (rather than on the headstock), ensures precise, stable tuning and ergonomic comfort. The NS electric violins are compatible with any solid and stranded core violin strings; D'Addario NS Electric violin strings are standard.

The CR6 is equipped with state-of-the-art active electronics, with dual-mode preamp offering two distinct tonal qualities: a rich, modern electric violin sound and a balanced, traditional acoustic violin sound.

The NS Polar Pickup System captures string vibrations with exceptional sensitivity, offering brilliant sound for both bowed and pizzicato techniques. A three-way toggle switch, along with volume, bass EQ, and treble EQ controls, provide players with unparalleled control over their sound. The CR6 also offers a 1/8" headphone jack for in-ear monitoring and silent practice.

Custom hardshell case standard with bow holder, handle, strap, and accessories pouches; tool kit and owner's manual also included. Optional NS violin accessories include the Balanced Shoulder Rest for hand's-free play: the violin stays securely in place without the help from the hands or chin, but remains mobile and responsive to the player's movements. Additional accessories include violin bow, adjustable chin rest, violin caddy, and flight case.

MSRP: CR6 Violin Fretless \$5,130 CR6 Violin Fretted \$5,480

<https://thinkns.com>

PRINT & DIGITAL

The New Musician: The Art of Entrepreneurship in Today's Music Business Now Available

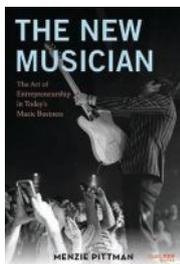
In today's rapidly changing music landscape, entrepreneurship is an art that is just as vital as creativity – one that all musicians must master for a successful and sustainable career.

In *The New Musician: The Art of Entrepreneurship in Today's Music Business*, award-winning industry veteran Menzie Pittman provides insights from world-class artists, music business leaders, educators, and professionals who share invaluable reflections on the successes and challenges of their careers, imparting advice to both aspiring and working musicians. Included are vital conversations about leadership and business with an impressive cast of people, including record executive Mike Curb, nine-time GRAMMY award-winning record producer Dave Cobb, and singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Sierra Hull.

By learning from others' experiences in this book, musicians will discover various creative solutions to frequently encountered problems to enhance their entrepreneurial skills. These success stories and cautionary tales will help illuminate a road map to success for all music makers, from those dreaming of starting a career in music to those who need to jumpstart a stalled gig.

Published by Rowman & Littlefield and distributed to the music trade by Hal Leonard, *The New Musician* is now available in both paperback (\$38) and hardback (\$99) editions.

www.halleonard.com



New Jazz Ensemble Releases: Blues, Ballads, and Beyond from Excelcia Music Publishing

Excelcia Music Publishing is proud to announce the release of its versatile new collection of jazz ensemble music for 2024–2025. Whether directors are introducing their students to the jazz idiom for the first time or seeking to expand and elevate their skills and knowledge, a full range of grade levels and a variety of styles are featured in the release. The new catalog includes a mix of straight-ahead swing, funk, rock, Latin, ballads, and holiday music, as well as cutting-edge charts that defy classic genres. Accompanying the music release are an assortment of free-to-use resources, such as professional recordings, ScoreVideos, and Composer Insights videos. Professional recordings of the new music are also streaming on all major platforms and the publisher's website.

"I am continually amazed at the depth of creativity and versatility that the composers possess," says instrumental and jazz editor Blair Bielawski. "Our goal is always to offer new music that respects the tradition and integrity of jazz while exploring a wide variety of styles and incorporating fresh sounds and techniques to engage, inspire, and challenge students. The composers in this year's Excelcia Music Publishing Jazz Ensemble Music catalog are among the top writers, educators, and players in jazz today. I am proud to work with them, and I truly believe that whether jazz directors have a beginning or seasoned ensemble, they will find music here that speaks to them, their students, and their audiences."

Excelcia Music Publishing's 2024–2025 jazz ensemble music release includes new pieces from beloved composers and arrangers Christopher Artau, Kris Berg, Peter Blair, Larry Clark, Michele Fernández, Steve Parsons, Jamie Roth, David Samuel, Peter Sciano, Carl Strommen, Anthony Susi, and Steve Wiest. New to the



Excelcia Music Publishing jazz roster is composer Drew Zaremba, who brings a fresh dynamic to the catalog with his music.

Each score and its accompanying parts are meticulously edited and beautifully set for ease of reading. Scores and parts include unique features to increase accessibility and help facilitate efficient rehearsal. Published in Excelcia Music Publishing's signature color-coded series, the jazz ensemble music follows a strict and consistent grading system: Odyssey (Grade 1), Exploration (Grade 1.5), Horizon (Grade 2 to 2.5), Voyage (Grade 3 to 3.5), and Zenith (Grade 4 and up).

www.excelciamusic.com

ACCESSORIES

Lac R' Shot! Cold Checking Gun Like Lacquer Spray

GluBoost releases another unique innovation: Lac R' Shot! Cold Checking Gun Like Lacquer Spray. Now get a vintage cracked look without a spray gun! And Lac R' Shot! Cold Checking Formula performance rivals spray gun lacquer! Lac R' Shot! provides "on the spot" finish checking for repairs, restorations, relic finish builds, and special effects! With an adjustable vertical / horizontal spray nozzle and tuned and balanced even flow formula, Lac R' Shot! guarantees the absolute best in class lacquer finish you have ever seen from a Lil' Rattler! Lac R' Shot! is as close to a spray booth as you can get without the artillery! With Lac R' Shot! cold checking formula, no restoration, repair, or relic build is out of reach in any size shop! MSRP: \$24



<https://gluboot.com>

Lizard King Bass Octave Fuzz from Electro-Harmonix

Electro-Harmonix is proud to present the new Lizard King, a bass-centric update to the popular Lizard Queen Octave Fuzz. Released in 2023, the EHX Lizard Queen was born out of JHS Pedals' Josh Scott and graphic artist Daniel Danger's love and admiration for 1970s Electro-Harmonix design. The original has a gnarly octave fuzz tone that musically interacts with your dynamics and features a blendable octave sound. Electro-Harmonix took this sound and has expanded and optimized the circuit with the bass player in mind.



The EHX Lizard King is a fixed-gain fuzz that is dynamically responsive. Adjustments to your instrument's volume affects the amount of fuzz. Lower instrument volumes create a clear, fuzzy overdrive, while full instrument volume sends the gain over the top for ripping riff and searing solo tones. The familiar VOLUME and OCTAVE knobs control overall output and octave blend volume respectively. New to the Lizard King, the BLEND knob sets the mix between your clean and fuzz tones to create the perfect balance of fuzz while retaining your bass's attack and low-end. The TONE knob is a low pass filter that rolls off the highs, while the SUN/SHADOW switch further enhances the tone of the octave fuzz and clean tones. SUN boosts the octave fuzz with a more driving midrange, and the clean tone accessed by the BLEND knob has more treble and bass frequencies. When the switch is set to SHADOW, the clean tone is unchanged, and fuzz tone is tighter.

The EHX Lizard King features True Bypass switching, can be powered by a standard 9V power adapter and comes equipped with a 9 volt battery. U.S. street price: \$129.

www.ehx.com

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