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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

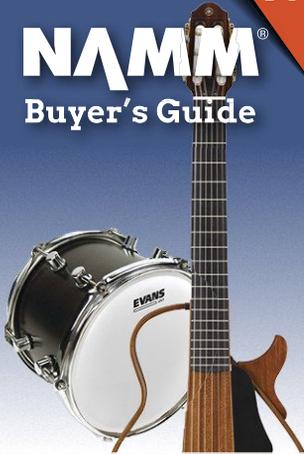


Upfront Q&A:
KMC's Mark
Terry

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NAMM
Buyer's Guide



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**Chapman
Guitars:**
Evolving the Future
of Guitar Design



2017
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JOHNSON**
Music Industry
Service Award
Recipients

56

**Susan and
Jonathan Lipp**

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Bob Weir

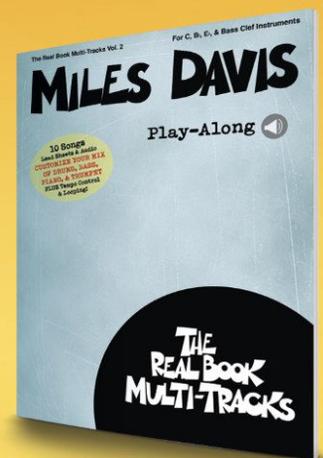
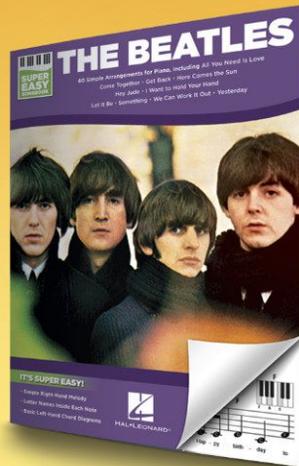
Co-designed with guitar legend Bob Weir, the Bob Weir Deluxe SS is an innovative masterwork featuring the Bigsby B-50 tremolo system, push/pull tone knobs for coil tapping, and a master volume knob.



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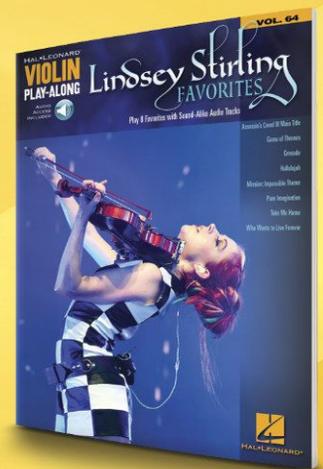
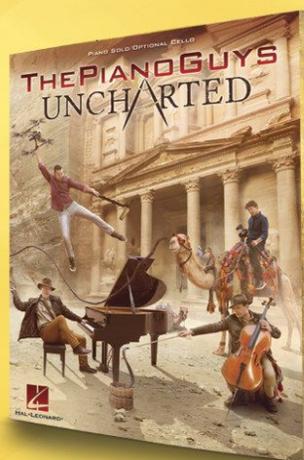
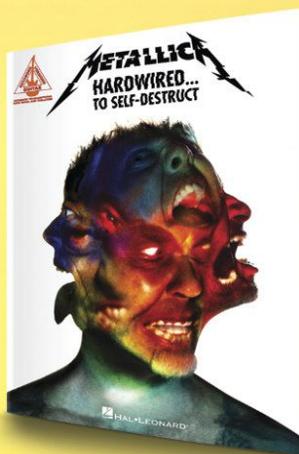
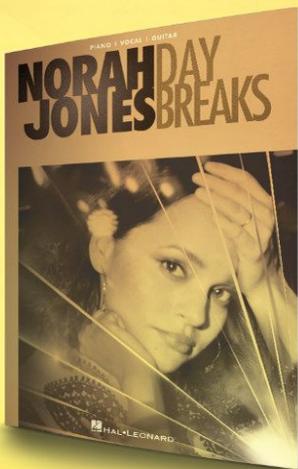
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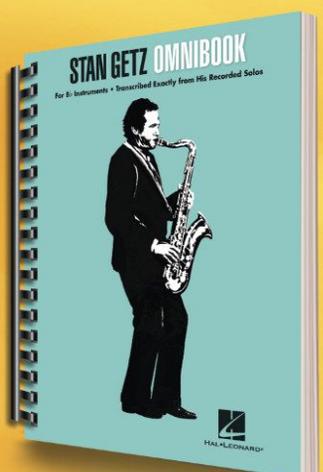
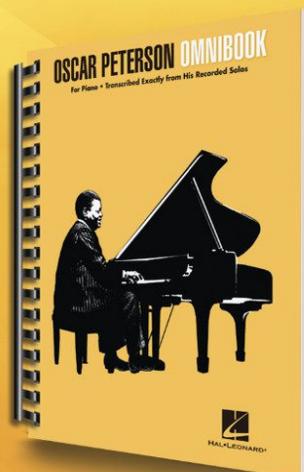
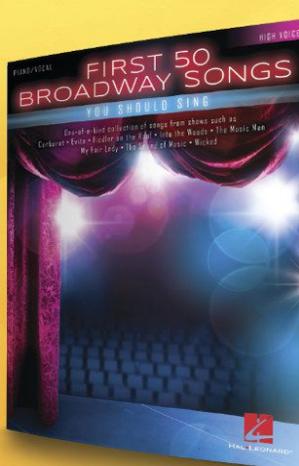
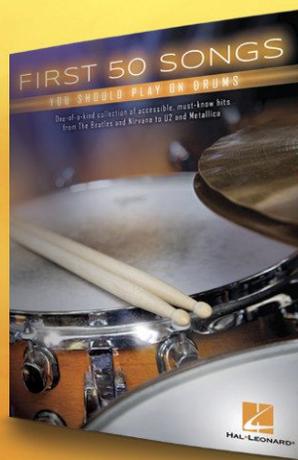


NEW SERIES!: 7 Super Easy Songbooks

NEW SERIES!: 5 Real Book Multi-Track Titles



Hot New Artist Releases



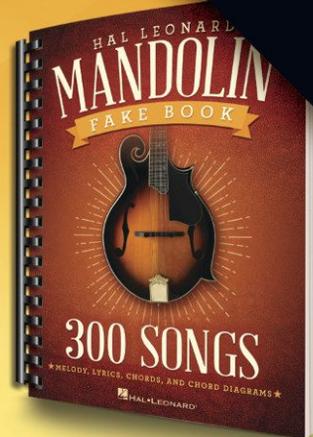
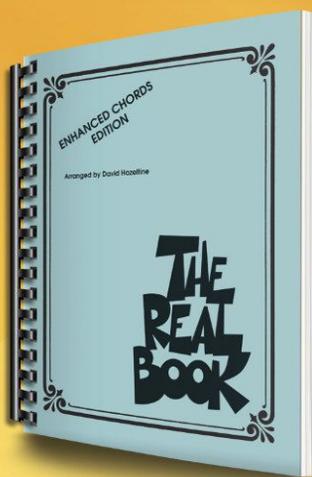
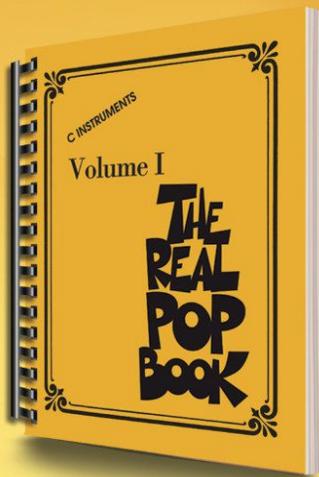
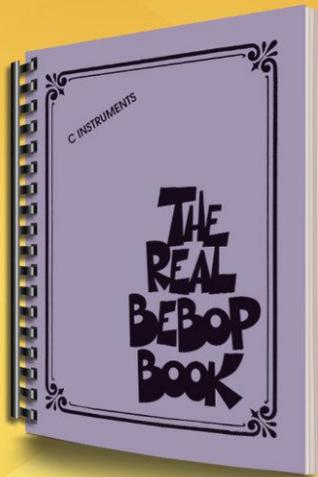
6 New First 50 Titles

New Omnibooks

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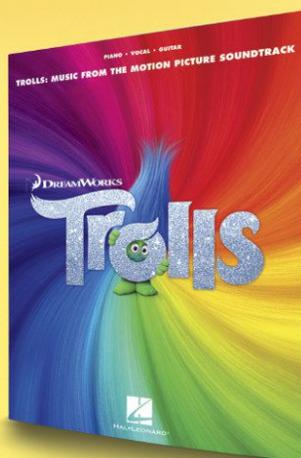
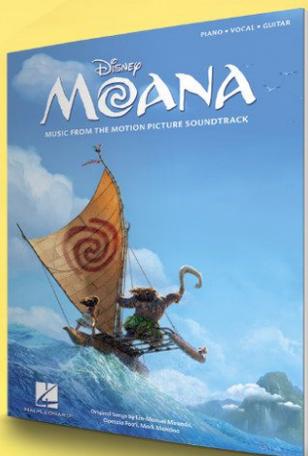
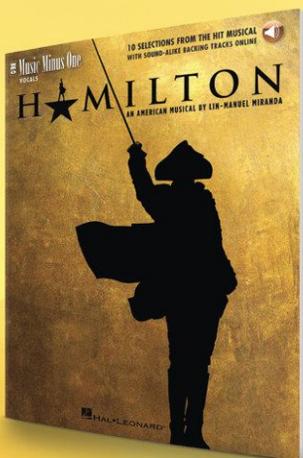
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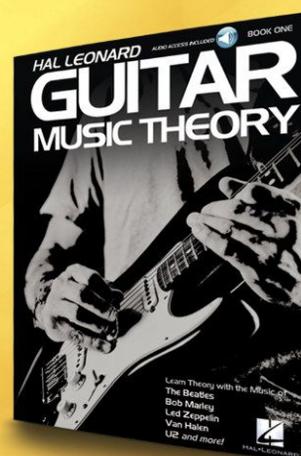
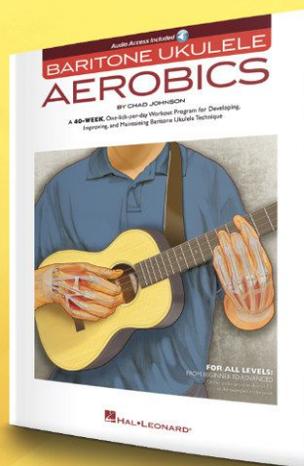
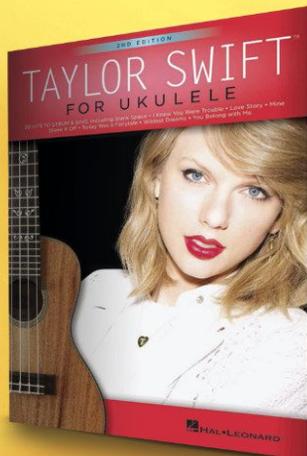
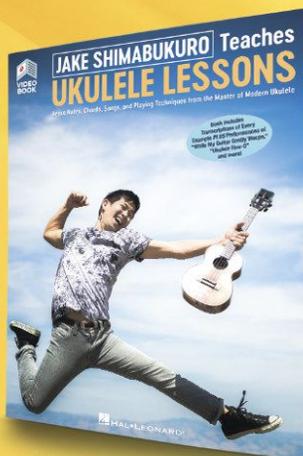
New Real Book Editions

Mandolin



New Music Minus One

Hit Movie Soundtracks

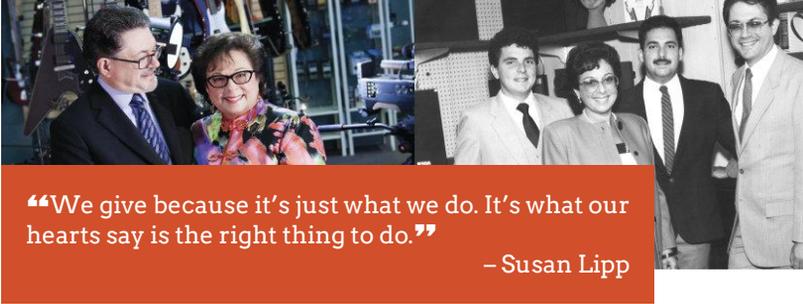


New Ukulele Releases

New Guitar Books

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Cover Photo: Chevy (JD) Dominguez

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Face-to-Face

“Email, conference calls, and Skype are all great, but there’s nothing like running into someone on a show floor for a little conversation about what’s really going on behind the scenes,” wrote *Forbes*’ Bobby Owsinski late last January in his article, “NAMM Shows Why Trade Shows Are Obsolete, And Why We Still Need Them.”

His piece covered the familiar-to-most pros and cons of these types of gatherings in today’s hyper-connected, digital world. The sheer volume of “stuff” available and the ready access to anyone with a reliable Internet connection can be overwhelmingly appealing – even insistently so. The awareness that so much data and knowledge is there for consumption is like having a friendly and excitable dog constantly urging you to take him for a walk. As the title suggests, Owsinski nonetheless asserts that despite the changing landscape for the dissemination and gathering of information and the ever-evolving manners in which people purchase, learn, watch, listen, and consume, conventions – however “quaint” and “dated” their origins – retain value.

While it’s just one of the enduring selling-points of these industry gatherings to Owsinski, for me the main appeal and by far the greatest reason to both exhibit and attend the NAMM Shows (yes, I’m including Summer NAMM) is the face-to-face interaction. Sure, plenty of business transactions will take place (hopefully, anyway), but writing orders and committing to gear purchases is far less of a significant component nowadays even than it was at my own first NAMM Show back in 2002 (so, wait: that makes this my... 16th Winter NAMM Show. Yikes!). For me – and for many friends and colleagues I’ve spoken with on the topic – the main draw of the Anaheim convention each year is the *people*.

If you’re reading this issue of *MMR* you’re very possibly someone I email or speak on the phone or Skype with on a somewhat regular basis, but

actually being able to bump into, shake hands with, and chat (however briefly), in real time and not via a screen, has an irreplaceable value. This is an industry populated with passionate, intelligent, creative... weirdos, and it’s not often that we have the opportunity to convene with so many like-minded individuals and geek out – in person – over the newest developments in gear, instrument design, and industry happenings.

When I first walk in the Convention Center to help set up *MMR*’s booth, first see some of the new guitars, cymbals, keyboards, and stands, and – most importantly – first speak to a colleague I haven’t occupied the same physical space as since the last NAMM Show, I’m every bit as excited as I was in ‘02 and just as eager to see what this year’s installment of the annual get-together will bring.

I realize I am mostly preaching to the converted here. Many of you are reading this column for the first time while at the NAMM Show, en route to it, or having just recently returned from it. But I also know that there are those who make the call that because of time, money, logistics, or due to the belief that most information collected or business conducted could just as easily be done online/at home/at the office, attending conventions isn’t worth it in this day and age.

In many ways, one *can* do nearly every essential act by “taking the online dog for a walk,” but while the pull of this digital leash is alluring, it’s important to not remain tethered. There is no substitute for the real thing.



by Christian Wissmuller

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Published Since 1979

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“ If I had a wish, it would be for electric guitar strings that **sound** and **feel** like my **favorite** strings but **last longer**. ”

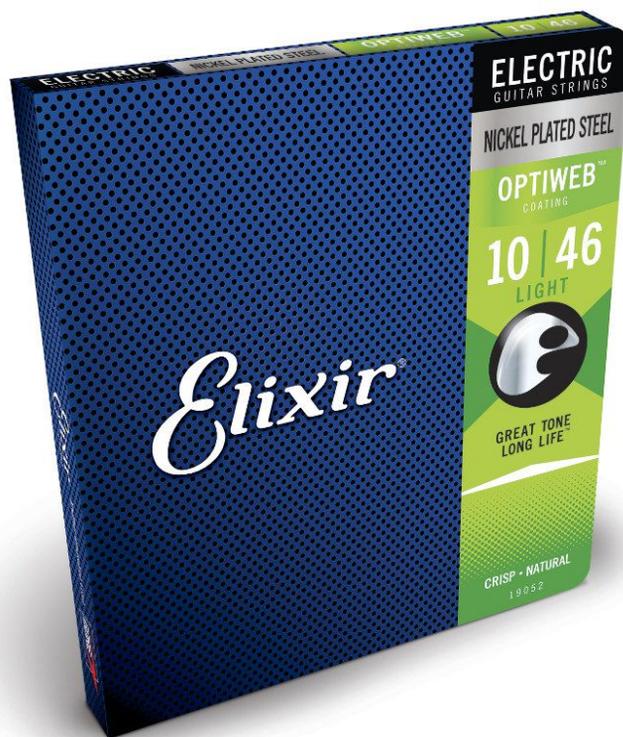
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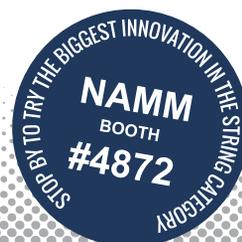
In extensive field research, players have told us that our OPTIWEB Coating offers a more natural, familiar feel than both NANOWEB® and POLYWEB® Coatings and sounds the same as uncoated strings.*

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Industry News

RBI Purchases Toca Percussion

Fort Worth Texas-based Rhythm Band Instruments (RBI) has purchased TOCA Percussion® from Drum Workshop, Inc.



For over 55 years, RBI has built a network of clinicians, educators, musicians, and customer support staff focused on bringing quality musical instruments and music education products to students, educators and classrooms around the world. RBI has long been a leader in the development and distribution of elementary musical instruments and related materials and will wholly own TOCA Percussion and its extensive line of hand percussion and accessories.

"TOCA Percussion is a terrific asset and fits perfectly into both our company's existing position as a leader in the music education space, and, our go-forward plans for RBI Music," said Rhythm Band Instruments president, Brad Kirkpatrick. "We're extremely enthusiastic about working with both entities' suppliers, customers and artists to continue to build upon the legacy of TOCA Percussion."

Rhythm Band is known for its brands of children's instruments including Kidsplay®, Chromaharp®, and Boomwhackers® tuned musical percussion tubes as well as for being the exclusive distributor of leading brands including Aulos®, Noteknacks® and pBuzz® among others. More recently, RBI has extended its strategic vision, becoming the exclusive North American distributor for a number of outstanding stringed and percussion brands of musical instruments.

"With an increasing demand for high-quality music education products, RBI is uniquely positioned to ensure that TOCA's wide range of hand percussion reaches the youth music education market," said Drum Workshop, Inc., president and CEO, Chris Lombardi.

➤ Industry News

➤ Supplier Scene

➤ People on the Move

➤ Trade Regrets

➤ MMR Global

Commercial Rosewood and Bubinga Import/Export Regulations Took Effect January 2

Note: U.S. domestic shipments will NOT require permits. Guidelines outlined for rosewood, bubingas and kosso import/export and use of in-stock wood.



Action protecting more than 250 species of rosewood (dalbergia), three species of bubinga (guibourtia) and kosso (*Pterocarpus erinaceus*) taken at the recent meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) will have broad implications on the international shipments of musical instruments containing these woods including guitars, marimbas and various types of woodwinds.

The CITES delegates at the September 2016 Conference of the Parties in South Africa elected to expand the protection afforded to these tonewoods by placing select species of bubinga (*Guibourtia demeusei*, *Guibourtia pellegriniana*, and *Guibourtia tessmannii*), kosso (*Pterocarpus erinaceus*) and 250 rosewood species on Appendix II. Only Brazilian rosewood, currently protected under a stricter Appendix I listing is excluded. The expanded listing comes with an annotation which makes the protection applicable to not only logs and sawn wood, but also what's called "all parts and derivatives," which means finished products like musical instruments.

The expanded listing, which took effect on January 2, 2017 is applicable worldwide

and will require all manufacturers and retailers of musical instruments containing one or more the aforementioned species (excluding Brazilian rosewood) to obtain a permit from the appropriate government regulatory agency (in the

United States, it is the Fish and Wildlife Service) if they wish to export one or more instruments outside of the country. Domestic shipments will not require a permit.

For specific information, please read this letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to U.S. timber importers and re-exporters.

U.S. Companies with questions about this new listing, please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Management Authority at:

managementauthority@fws.gov
Phone: 703-358-2095
Fax: 703-358-2298

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Permit Information and Instructions:

Non-U.S. companies seeking to import to the U.S. or export to other countries, contact the CITES Management Authority of your country of origin.

If you have specific questions about the designated U.S. ports for CITES-listed plants import, or other enforcement matters related to the CITES listings of Dalbergia and Guibourtia, contact John Veremis with APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine at: john.veremis@aphis.usda.gov

Alliance Entertainment Named U.S. Distributors for Floyd Rose Audio

Seca Group LLC has announced that Alliance Entertainment has been appointed Exclusive USA distributors of Floyd Rose branded Audio products.

The 2017 Product Collection includes headphones, earphones, speakers and home audio products that will be introduced throughout the year. The company notes that, "all products are custom designed for style, comfort, and superior sound quality, while being conscious of price points that are affordable by today's consumer."



Alliance will be taking NAMM Appointments in the Floyd Rose booth at NAMM 2017 – Booth 4862 Hall C, from January 19-22, 2017. For additional sales inquiries, contact Ken Glaser, vice president of sales at (954) 255-4458 or Ken.Glaser@aent.com



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Ernie Ball Adds KMC Music as U.S. Distribution Partner, Yorkville to Serve as Canadian Distributor

KMC Music has been appointed to serve as a United States distribution partner by Ernie Ball, Inc. According to KMC Music vice president of Merchandising Roger Hart, the appointment is effective immediately and includes the entire range of Ernie Ball® strings, pedals, picks, and accessories.

"Ernie Ball is a dominant force in the string market and remains a true innovator. We are thrilled to offer these strings together with Ernie Ball cables, pedals, picks, and accessories. They are going to be immediately available to the industry's largest network of MI retailers," Hart said. "We are honored to serve as a key value-added distribution partner with this iconic company. The appointment represents another major step forward in KMC Music's expanding commitment to the MI industry overall and its drive, in particular, to offer retailers the very best range of choices in every product category."

Ernie Ball has been making high-quality electric guitar and bass strings since 1962. World-class players like Paul McCartney, Keith Richards, Eric Clapton, Slash, Jimmy Page, and Buddy Guy have all played Ernie Ball strings to create their unique sound. The company uses the latest technologies and finest materials to continuously enhance the playing experience and provide an unparalleled palette of



expressive options for its customers.

"KMC Music has the scale, depth, and broad geographic coverage to help us reach more customers in more markets than ever before," said Ernie Ball, Inc. president Brian Ball. "Their executive leadership, field sales management, telephone sales force, customer support, and

product specialists will help in broadening our level of exposure and share of the shelf."

Ernie Ball electric guitar strings, pedals, picks, and accessories will be on display at the KMC booth at Winter NAMM 2017 (January 19-22, 2017) in Booth #5740 in the Anaheim Convention Center.

Additionally, the Ernie Ball String and Accessories catalog is a new addition to Yorkville Sound's catalog of distributed lines.

A core brand for any successful music retailer, the addition of the Ernie Ball line presents exciting opportunities for both Yorkville Sound and Yorkville Sound's extensive Canadian dealer network.

"It is with great pleasure that we add Ernie Ball Strings and Accessories to the Yorkville family of distributed brands," explains Jeff Cowling, Yorkville Sound's VP Sales and Marketing. "Brian Ball and Nathan Stiff (of EB) have been wonderful to work with as we lead up to our launch, and our large network of Canadian dealers should be thrilled about this valuable addition." *continued on page 12*

SELECTION.

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Ernie Ball Adds KMC Music as U.S. Distribution Partner, Yorkville to Serve as Canadian Distributor *continued from page 10*

We look forward to serving the hundreds of Ernie Ball dealers with precision and expediency."

The current Ernie Ball catalog includes virtually all essential guitar accessories including straps, tuners, slides, and an innovative pedal line in addition to the string lines that made them famous.

Yorkville Sound will begin shipping Ernie Ball strings and accessories on December 15th 2016. Retailers currently carrying the Ernie Ball line, or who are interested in becoming dealers for this brand are encouraged to contact Yorkville Sound at (905) 837-8777 for more information.

Yamaha Returns to Portalhaus Building at Musikmesse 2017

Musicians and professionals from the musical-instrument sector will once again be able to discover Yamaha's extensive portfolio of products at the coming Musikmesse. For the second time, the company will occupy the entire Portalhaus building of Frankfurt Fair and Exhibition Centre to present Yamaha instruments and the Yamaha brands, Bösendorfer, Line 6, and Steinberg.

Thus, the presentation will be located at the western entrance to the Exhibition Centre – and cover an area well in excess of 1,000 square meters.

"Yamaha and Musikmesse are a success story stretching back over more than three decades, and a magnet for all visitor target groups", says Stephan Kurzwaski, senior vice president, Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH. "With the move to the Portalhaus building, we have raised our partnership to a new level and are delighted that this key player of the musical-instrument sector will once again be showing its unrivalled product spectrum at the coming Musikmesse."

"We were very pleased with our new location in the Portalhaus building at the 2016 edition of the fair. The impressive architecture provides the optimum setting in which to present our products", says Thomas Schöpe, president of Yamaha Music Europe GmbH. "At Musikmesse, we reach not only dealers and distributors but also consumers interested in music. And our Yamaha musicians provide special musical experiences for visitors in the program of events."

Musikmesse will be held in the western sector of Frankfurt Fair and Exhibition Centre from April 5 to 8 2017 – on three days concurrently with Prolight + Sound, International Fair of Technologies and Services for Entertainment, Integrated Systems, and Creation (April 4 to 7).



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Mackie Named 2016 Parnelli Audio Innovator Award Winner



Greg Mackie, iconic innovator of countless professional audio products and founder of Mackie Designs, was recently honored as the recipient of this year's "Audio Innovator Award" at the 17th annual Parnelli Awards, produced by MMR's sister publications, *PLSN* and *FOH*.

After founding the TAPCO Company in 1970, Mackie would leave the organization to start Audio-

Control in 1976 and then, 12 years later, went on to found Mackie Designs. Mackie Designs achieved great success, tapping into the growing home studio and smaller professional studio markets with a number of groundbreaking products. After the majority acquisition of Mackie Designs by Sun Capital Partners, the company became the present-day LOUD Technologies, Inc.

In 2010 Greg Mackie formed M&W Pro Audio with Peter Watts and, that same year, partnered with QSC Audio Products. Mackie remains active in pro audio development.

Since 2001, the Parnelli Awards have shone the spotlight on creative and influential pioneers within the live event industry.

Martin Guitars Supports GITC

In a recent statement, Guitars in the Classroom (GITC) noted: "Guitars in the Classroom would like to thank and acknowledge Martin Guitar's Chairman and CEO Chris Martin IV and the Martin Foundation for their continuous support and generous donation of 50 LX-1 guitars and \$10,000 to our work.

This remarkable donation of guitars and program support will bring daily music making with songs for literacy and learning to GITC classrooms in five states in 2017, making a difference for 5,000 students each year!"



A group of GITC teachers with newly donated Martin LX-1 guitars

The background of the advertisement is a close-up, high-angle shot of a Zildjian cymbal. The wood grain of the cymbal is clearly visible, and the words 'Special Dry' and 'Custom Crash' are engraved on its surface. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture and curves of the instrument.

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NAMM Foundation Announces Eight TECnology Hall of Fame Inductees

The NAMM Foundation has announced that eight culturally significant musical inventions ranging from 1954 through 1998 will be inducted to its TECnology Hall of Fame, Saturday, January 21 at The NAMM Show in Anaheim, California.

The ceremony will be presented by The NAMM Museum of Making Music and

will be hosted by veteran pro-audio journalist George Petersen.

Founded in 2004 to honor and recognize audio products and innovations that have made a significant contribution to the advancement of audio technology, each entry must be at least 10 years or older to be considered for the honor.



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- RUBO-CE** bamboo wood, cutaway electric
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- RURW-CE** rosewood, cutaway electric

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From the cries of a wah-wah pedal that can be heard in recordings from artists as diverse as Eric Clapton and Isaac Hayes, to the earliest inductee, whose Decca Tree spaced microphone array technique is still a staple in classical music and film scoring, each of the inductees has demonstrated a staying power that has both influenced and transcended many generations of music-makers.

Congratulations to The 2017 TECnology Hall of Fame Inductees

1954

Decca Tree: The 1954 Decca Tree microphone redefined the approach to capturing stereo sound, in the concert hall and in the studio. Named after the studio (Decca Studios in London) and what its creators, Roy Wallace and Arthur Haddy, thought it looked like, a “tree”, the Decca tree microphone stand used three omni-directional microphones, oftentimes with left and right outriggers, and is used as a set-up today, by pros and hobbyists alike.

1960

Neumann U67 Condenser Microphone: The multi-directional condenser microphone was the first of its kind, compensating for proximity of studio musicians who preferred to sing directly into the microphone. Upon its release in 1960, the U67 would gain a reputation as a “workhorse” in major studios and its sound was forever defined for generations of studio musicians.

1966

The Wah-Wah Pedal: Discovered nearly by accident *continued on page 18*



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Congratulations to The 2017 TECnology Hall of Fame Inductees

continued from page 16

by Brad Plunkett of Warwick/Thomas Organ Company, the wah-wah pedal has defined some of the most notable guitar riffs over the past 50 years. Top hits from leading acts including Cream, Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, Guns 'n' Roses and many others can be attributed to its signature wax and wane effect.

1976

The TASCAM 80-8: This eight-track analog recorder expanded home recording possibilities in the late '70s. At its time, this ½" reel-to-reel format was the most popular multichannel recorder in the world and became the standard in small professional and home studios.

1978

The Wendel Drum Machine: In 1978, studio engineer Roger Nichols developed the Wendel to sample audio and drums, and in 1979, he put his machine to the test on "Hey Nineteen" on Steely Dan's album, *Gaucha*. His invention gave birth to a new class of musical technologies, and today he is considered the pioneer of digital drum replacement.

1985

API Audio Lunchbox 500-series: The modularity of the Lunchbox system allowed pro audio professionals the opportunity to customize their rig with API components and its convenient size, the ability to pick-up and go as needed. The company would then go on to offer variations of its popular 500 Series. Other companies later adopted the format which led to an entire new industry 500 series processors, including their own TEC Awards category in 2014.

1987

Neutrik Speakon connector: Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2017, the Neutrik Speakon has become the standard for professional live sound speakers. At their release, both the cable and chassis versions of the connector met international regulations, featured a solderless connection, and defined a streamlined signal chain experience.

1998

AEA R44-C ribbon microphone: Designed in the 1930s, the R44B was deemed the most multi-purpose microphone available for sound professionals and in 1998, Audio Engineering Associations brought the microphone back to the market with the R44-C.

continued on page 20

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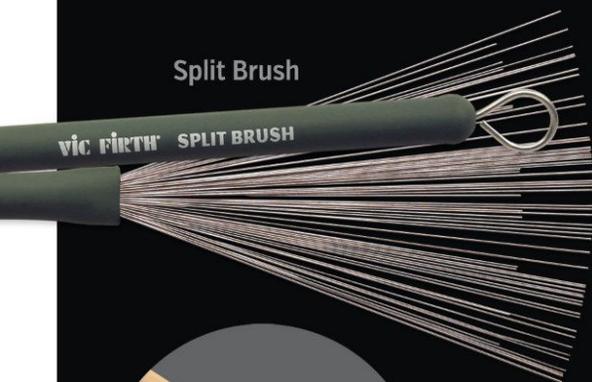
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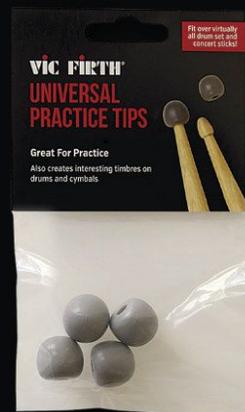


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Messe Frankfurt: 'Highest-grossing Organizer with its own Exhibition Grounds'

continued from page 20

and are using our sector expertise to expand the global trade fair map with new events, for example in Vietnam and Ethiopia." The international component on the Frankfurt exhibition grounds continued to increase, with three-quarters of all exhibitors and more than half of trade buyers at the company's events hailing from outside Germany.

Messe Frankfurt is very actively involved in events in topic clusters relating to Industry 4.0. Uwe Behm, member of the Executive Board of Messe Frankfurt, stressed: "SPS IPC Drives, which is held in Nuremberg, is the most important platform for the automation sector – the most powerful driving force behind the fourth industrial revolution. And Formnext powered by tct in Frankfurt will be showing the next generation of industrial production." After last year's successful debut, the event is well on the way to establishing itself as the flagship event for the international additive technology and 3-D printing sector.

Capacity utilisation at the Frankfurt exhibition grounds was healthy thanks to a high number of guest events, including 27 guest events and 160 congresses and conferences. New events, including Deutscher Marketing Tag (DMT) – the largest sector event in Germany for marketing decision-makers and professionals – will also be held in Frankfurt as of next year.

Construction work on Hall 12 is on schedule and on budget. Uwe Behm: "Here, we are investing in the construction of a building which, at a cost of €250 million, constitutes a significant financial burden for our company." Various sections of the construction have already been completed, as have the new, elegantly designed entrance portal for Hall

8 and the section of the Via Mobile moving walkway between Hall 8 and the Torhaus.

Sustainable growth through investments

As regards Messe Frankfurt's strategic direction, Wolfgang Marzin explained: "Our key growth areas are in good health and so are the factors that drive this growth – and we are tapping into new market share, in some cases by joining forces with other market players." For example, a strategic marketing partnership has been arranged with the U.S. Food Processing Suppliers Association (FPSA) with joint activities planned worldwide. Following the successful premiere of the Intersec Forum at Light + Building, the conference will be held next year parallel to ISH. No fewer than 13 events were scheduled to make their debut around the world in financial year, 2016.

Wolfgang Marzin: "Our broad international base makes us less susceptible to the influence of factors from individual regions... Our trade fairs are neutral communication and trading platforms where we cultivate longstanding relationships with our customers and partners." So far, the company has planned ten new events to be held by 2018. Speaking about Messe Frankfurt's future plans, Wolfgang Marzin emphasised: "We will continue to invest in line with our customers' expectations and have the necessary capital to fulfill the goals of Messe Frankfurt, both now and in the future. For financial year 2017, we have our sights set on surpassing the €650 million sales mark."

A video statement by Wolfgang Marzin on financial year 2016 can be found on YouTube <http://m-es.se/q4HB>

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NAMM Foundation and John Lennon Educational Tour Bus Announce Winners of Lennon Bus Recording Residency

The NAMM Foundation and The John Lennon Educational Tour Bus have announced three exceptional schools and their music programs as the winners of a recording residency on the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus: Scotts Valley High School (Scotts Valley, California), Country Club Hills

District 160 (Country Club Hills, Illinois) and Herricks UFSD (New Hype Park, New York).

The high schools were selected from a multitude applicants based on student and faculty submitted video entries that answered “What Makes Music Education Great in My School District?”

“We are so pleased to honor the three school districts for their commitment, enthusiasm and support for music education for all students,” shared Mary Luehrsen, executive director of The NAMM Foundation. “Through our relationship with the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus, we look forward to sharing an enriching musical experience with the students and their com-



munities that will inspire their musical journeys for years to come.”

“We extend our congratulations to the winners and look forward to another round of successful residencies, especially as we approach our 20th anniversary,” said Brian Rothschild, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Lennon Bus. “The NAMM Foundation has been an incredible partner and we anticipate another motivating and inspiring residency tour.”

During the 2017 school year, the music students will have the chance to showcase their talents over a period of two days on the Lennon Bus: a state-of-the art mobile recording and production studio. On the first day, the students will compose, record and produce an original song and music video. On the second day, the school and district will come together to demonstrate their support for music education with a SupportMusic Community Forum and rally. Led by The NAMM Foundation, the Forum will share the success and challenges in music education, and recognize the many accomplishments of music education within the district. The day will conclude with a community celebration and tours of the Lennon Bus.

Since 2013, The NAMM Foundation has hosted 13 Lennon Bus residencies in communities throughout the U.S. Past videos of district submissions, SupportMusic Community Forums and music videos of songs created from residencies can be viewed on The NAMM Foundation YouTube channel.

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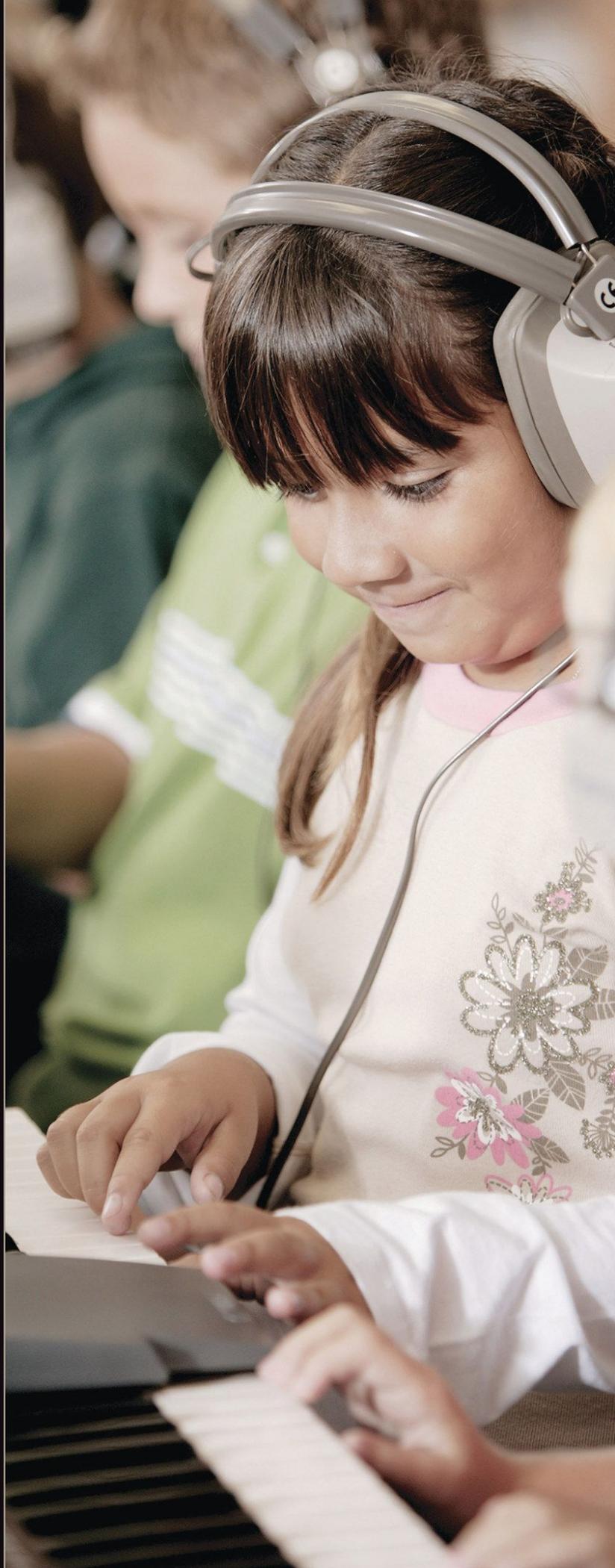
Music education is a cornerstone of the Yamaha philosophy. We advocate at national, state and local levels for every child's right to music education.

We also sponsor music education programs that inspire music participation from preschool through college. Because we know that music education doesn't just make someone a better musician, it makes them a better person.



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Supplier Scene

KHS America Launches Academic Alliance Program

KHS America has introduced the KHS America Academic Alliance, a program designed to support the Music Education Community by fostering the symbiotic relationship between school music programs, school music dealers, and the KHS portfolio of school music brands.

To facilitate this, KHS America has created a variety of Expansion Cooperatives that are designed to help dealers grow their business while providing valuable assistance to the school music programs that they serve. The Academic Alliance also includes a three-tiered benefit program for participating schools that is designed to increase engagement with KHS brands, while rewarding educators for their passion and commitment to improving the lives of students through music education.

“Supporting music education in every way possible is as important today as it has ever been, and it truly takes a community effort,” states Dr. Peter Boonshaft, director of education for KHS America. “I am thrilled to be part of an organization that has found a way to bring these members of the music education community together to support each other through the Academic Alliance program.”

academicalliance.com



Légère ‘PRO’ Program

Tim Elvy, VP of sales for Légère Reeds recently announced a brand new online training program for retailers and their associates. The new “Légère Pro Program” to be introduced at NAMM 2017 features Légère president Mark Kortschot in six short training videos discussing topics based on the most frequently asked questions from customers, retailers, and their associates.

Featured at the end of each of the six segments is a short, simple multiple choice quiz. Once correctly completed, the dealer will become a certified sales associate, and once the majority of the sales associates have been certified, the store will become a Légère Pro Dealer and will become part of the company’s preferred network of dealers.

Once the test is completed by the associate, within a few weeks each associate that takes the test online and successfully completes it receives a certificate and a Pro T-shirt. Once you are certified as a Légère Pro Retailer, a Légère door decal will be issued.

Kortschot, Elvy, and the rest of the Légère team will be on hand at NAMM 2017, Booth 3514 to answer questions about the new program. The link to this online test will be released at NAMM. Stop by Booth 3514 to pick up the link and additional information.



Gordon Goodwin’s Little Phat Band to Appear at VandoJam at NAMM



DANSR, inc. and Vandoren, Paris announced the scheduled appearance of Gordon Goodwin’s Little Phat Band at this year’s VandoJam at NAMM, Wednesday, January 18 at the Hilton. This is the tenth consecutive VandoJam at NAMM and begins the year-long celebration of Bernard Van Doren’s 50th year as president of his family’s business. “We are thrilled that Gordon and his group can participate in this event,” commented DANSR president, Mi-

chael Skinner. “Gordon has been part of the Vandoren family for quite some time and we’ve enjoyed working with him on clarinet commissions for Jon Manasse as well as his incredible big band. We think the house will be jumping with his latest project!”

This year’s VandoJam at NAMM will have a slightly different format. The first set will feature Eric Marienthal, Jerry Vivino, and Roxy Coss in a performance set. The middle two sets will be the standard jam session managed by Eric and Jerry and the 11 p.m. set will be Gordon and his Little Phat Band.

Gordon Goodwin’s Little Phat Band puts more emphasis on spontaneity and improvisation than The Big Phat Band, while covering a wide range of styles – from swing to funk to Latin to pop.

dansr.com
bigphatband.com

Inside Information

The biggest names in PA load their cabs with Celestion Pro Audio Drivers

You already know that Celestion is the voice of rock & roll when it comes to guitar speakers. But did you know that leading PA brands choose Celestion Pro Audio Drivers for their best-selling products?

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CELESTION

Washburn Celebrates 134 Years With Six New Guitars

Celebrating 134 years, Washburn Guitars adds six new up-market solid body and solid top guitars, and a renewed commitment to lead the retail MI industry with a broad line of guitar models..

“Washburn is proud to celebrate 134 years of authentic American originality at Winter NAMM 2017 with new additions to our line that reflect and reaffirm the values that have made Washburn the number-one choice of hard working players around the world,” Washburn vice president & general manager Gil Soucy said. “Every Washburn guitar delivers exceptional value, sound, playability, cosmetics, and, most importantly, durability. These are the values our customers look for in every Washburn guitar regardless of the collection or model.”

Director of design and development, Jonathan Lee, and his team have created a new line-up of solid body and solid top guitars being debuted within Washburn’s Heritage, Woodline, and Revival series of guitars.

“A total of six new models are being added to these iconic guitar series,” Lee said. “The Heritage Series is being updated with three new all solid models, the Woodline Series with two new all solid models, and the Revival with one all solid 1939 classic model. The refreshed line up is intended to offer a higher level of quality to our customers while remaining true to the core characteristics of each guitar series.”

According to Lee, “The heritage of this great company is to offer the broadest range of models for every type and level of player.

This tradition is part of our DNA and it remains the foundation of our plans for the future. We want to live up to the high standards defined by George Washburn Lyon and Patrick Joseph Healy all those many years ago. I believe the new models being introduced at this NAMM Show are a testament to our ability to do that.”

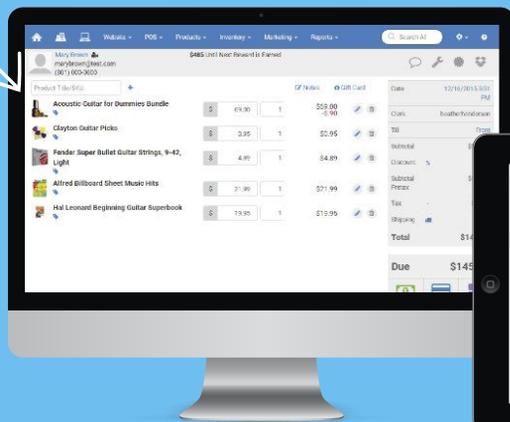
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*50 Golden Tickets are randomly hidden in the Ozzy Osbourne harmonicas. Find a ticket to win one Special Edition harmonica, signed and played by Ozzy.

New Rovner Products Cap Packaging

As of January 2017, Rovner replacement caps come in boxes instead of bags. This new packaging mimics Rovner's ligature box and will make it easier to stock, display, and choose a cap. Cap size is clearly identified on the front and top of each cap box. Sizing information indicating which Rovner ligature that particular cap size will fit is printed on the back of the box. A scannable QR code offers an expanded look at a complete cap chart for all ligature models and sizes. Like all Rovner products, Rovner caps are proudly made in the USA.

rovnerproducts.com



Eric Johnson Joins D'Addario Fretted Artist Roster

D'Addario welcomed Eric Johnson to their fretted artist roster. "I use D'Addario strings on both acoustic and electric to get the exact tone I want," Eric Johnson says. "Recently, I started using the Pure Nickel XLs and they have a great response. Playing a string that's built well and feels good is just more fun. That's why I play D'Addario strings."



It was in 1986 he was signed with Warner Brothers and released *Tones*. One of the album's instrumental songs, "Zap," was nominated for a Grammy Award. Johnson's next major release, 1990's *Ah Via Musicom*, became a crossover hit and reached platinum status, while the track "Cliffs of Dover" earned him the 1991 Grammy Award for "Best Rock Instrumental Performance." To this day, mastering this song is a rite-of-passage for budding guitarists.

daddario.com

'One Yamaha' on Display at Los Angeles Auto Show



David Jewell, Marketing Communications Manager, Yamaha Corporation of America and Bob Starr, national corporate communications manager, Yamaha Motor Corp., USA

Yamaha Motor Corp., USA, (YMUS) and Yamaha Corporation of America (YCA) brought together one of the most diverse displays of Yamaha products ever seen in one location for the 2016 Los Angeles Auto Show.

The "One Yamaha" display comprised of a widely diverse collection of Yamaha manufactured products.

Visitors to "The Garage" and GO Exhibit at the Los Angeles Auto Show witnessed the range of products in unique and interactive displays that allowed gear, gadget, motor-sports, and music enthusiasts to touch and feel the products and talk to Yamaha employees and product experts about the various models on display.

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Thibault Goes Rogue at Fillmore For Ookay NYE Show

Daniel Thibault of Life is Art Studios lit the Disco Donnie Presents NYE show headlined by dubstep star Ookay at the Fillmore Charlotte with Chauvet Professional Rogue fixtures in the house rig.

"The Fillmore did a lighting upgrade this past fall and added a lot of Rogues," he said. "They're flown on the mid-stage and upstage truss. The way they're positioned, they wash out evenly from both truss positions to give you a crazy number of cool looks. I didn't need to rely on help from any floor package; with these Rogues I could immerse the whole stage in light. Ookay and the supporting artist Warez throw down some bold, quick-moving looks, so the intensity and the speed of the Rogues was much appreciated."

Thibault used 20 Rogue R1 Wash and six Rogue R1 Beam fixtures for the NYE show. Working the fixtures tightly together he crossed the stage with sweeping washes and punctuated them with sharp beams for some songs -- then threw up intense walls of light that almost blocked out the stage for other tunes. "It was really impressive how the Rogue Beams and Washes work seamlessly together," he said. "My assistant Aaron Lenchek, who went above and beyond to make this show happen, helped us get some really cool looks by playing one fixture off the other."

Taking advantage of the Rogue R1 Wash fixture's wide zoom

range (11° to 48°), Thibault used it to vary looks throughout the evening. "The zoom made it so the fixtures could be used as a traditional wash to illuminate the stage and performers, and then focused into a tight beam to simulate an ACL type look. As for the Rogue R1 Beams, they were all on the upstage truss. I often used them to accent to the rest of the rig by putting them in a contrasting color and utilizing the overall brightness to punch through the big stage looks I had created with the rest of the rig."

There were four Chauvet DJ Geysers RGB high-output foggers that Thibault arranged directly behind the DJ booth.

chauvetlighting.com



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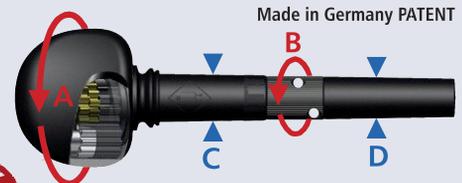
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Buffet Crampon and Julius Keilwerth Announce 2016 Saxophone Idol Winner

Buffet Crampon and Julius Keilwerth saxophones recently announced Howard Dietz of Denton, Texas as the winner of the 2016 Saxophone Idol competition, held on December 14, 2016 at Andy's Jazz Club in Chicago, Illinois. Dietz, along with finalists Luke Norris of Bethpage, New York, and Chris Oatts of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, were selected to perform live at the finals event from a pool of over 50 entries from 12 different countries. The three finalists performed to a sold-out house and were evaluated by an all-star panel of music industry judges, including headliner and Keilwerth Saxophone Artist Brad Leali (University of North Texas, Lyle Lovett Band), Keilwerth Saxophone Artist Mike Smith (Frank Sinatra Jr. Orchestra, Roosevelt University), Keilwerth Saxophone Artist Don Zentz (Jacksonville, Florida), Buffet Crampon USA president & CEO François Kloc, and *Downbeat* contributing editor Ed Enright.



Brad Leali, Howard Dietz, and François Kloc

As winner of the 2016 Saxophone Idol contest, Dietz was presented with a Julius Keilwerth MKX Saxophone from Julius Keilwerth product manager Al Maniscalco. Additional prizes included a year supply of D'Addario Reeds and a two-year subscription to *Downbeat* magazine, courtesy of contributing sponsors D'Addario and *Downbeat*.

Saxophone Idol sponsored by Buffet Crampon and Julius Keilwerth is an international competition that is open to

all saxophone players age 18 and over. Details on the 2017 Saxophone Idol competition will be announced in the spring. For more information on Saxophone Idol, visit www.saxidol.com

Award recipient and finalists to receive cash honoraria with generous support and resources provided by the Grammy Foundation's Education Champions: Converse, Disney Performing Arts, Ford Motor Company Fund, and Journeys

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John 'JR' Robinson Joins Soundbrenner at NAMM Exhibition



The most recorded drummer in history, John "JR" Robinson will be joining the Soundbrenner team at NAMM 2017. Robinson joined the Soundbrenner family earlier this year and is now in the studio and on the road with the award-winning Soundbrenner Pulse. Soundbrenner will be hosting a meet & greet for fans at NAMM on January 20 where the Grammy Award-winning drummer will be signing autographs and taking pictures with fans. Meet Robinson and the Soundbrenner team on January 20th at the Soundbrenner booth, Hall E – Booth No.1055.

Robinson played drums for the new Quincy Jones *Live at Montreux* and with David Foster and Friends on *Hitman*. Currently, he is the drummer for Quincy Jones and for Barbra Streisand.

soundbrenner.com

Yorkville Sound and WD Music Announce Exclusive Distribution for Canada

As of September 2016, Yorkville Sound and WD Music Products have forged an exclusive distribution agreement for all of Canada. With over 90 years of experience serving the Music Industry combined, all of Canada will now be able to count on having access to WD Music Products wide range of replacement pickguards and parts through Yorkville Sound. This includes WD pickguards, the iconic Kluson Manufacturing line up, Kent Armstrong pickups as well as many other great replacement parts and brand names. Jeremy Berger of Yorkville Sound commented "We are very excited to partner with WD in Canada. Their products and reputation is second to none and it is a perfect fit for our company!"

Both parties look forward in continuing with the spirit of great quality and excellent service for all of Canada's fine builders, repair shops and retail outlets.



yorkville.com
wdmusic.com



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MoneyCapsules Launches Sharing Groups for Music Retailers



MoneyCapsules announced the Q2 launch of MoneyCapsules Groups, which preserves the most beloved sharing group features; building trustful relationships with other non-competitor retailers, learning from each other's success and failures, and realizing that you're not alone. Participation in sharing groups not only holds the potential to improve your bottom line, it can also provide courage, support, and much needed inspiration.

"We are excited about the launch of MoneyCapsules Groups," said Jaimie Blackman, MoneyCapsules CEO and president of BH Wealth Management. "MoneyCapsules Groups will offer online forums to build trusting relationships, live gatherings for deep dive learning opportunities, and financial benchmarking with group members through a secure online portal. Monthly assignments will be given out and members will be held accountable by their peers."

Blackman said the sharing group will also help with transition-

ing ownership which culminates into a succession plan for all its members – a component you don't find in many sharing groups today. "That's important because two thirds of US public and private companies admit that they have no formal CEO succession plan in place," Blackman said. "Your exit strategy may very well be the most important financial transaction of your life."

Blackman holds an M.S.Ed. and is a certified wealth strategist. He has spoken at the NAMM Idea Center, and has participated in Yamaha's Succession Advantage workshop. In the 1980s Blackman owned a school music dealership and was a NAMM member.

"What's powerful about Jaimie's sharing group concept is two-fold: One accountability and two, support," said Chip Averwater, chairman of Amro Music, past NAMM chairman, and author of *Retail Truths*. "I've learned a lot from such groups and I believe it will help every musical instrument retailer who participates in it."

moneycapsules.com



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www.schaller.info

NAMM – Hall D #2036

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www.casiomusicgear.com/grandhybrid

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20th Anniversary of PRS Guitars Private Stock



2016 marked the 20th Anniversary of PRS Guitars Private Stock and to celebrate, PRS brought back: Guitars of the Month. Each month the Private Stock team created something new by using some of the most exotic and exquisite tonewoods and inlay materials available including African ribbon mahogany, Madagascar rosewood, highly-figured curly maple, green ripple abalone, zircote, and swamp ash. The cumulative result of the program is twelve collectible models, each crafted in very limited quantities and each bearing the Private Stock Eagle and engraved banner stating the commemorative month.

"Celebrating Private Stock's 20th Anniversary by revisiting the Guitars of the Month program gave the team the opportunity to showcase both innovation and specialization. These instruments are simultaneously art, musical instruments, and treasured possessions to joyfully spend time with," stated Paul Reed Smith.

prsguitars.com

Tagima Guitars Arrives in the USA

Tagima Guitars, based in Sao Paulo, Brazil, announce their arrival in the North American musical instrument market, with the official brand launch at the January 2017 NAMM show in Anaheim, California. To service these new territories and customers, the Tagima USA sales office is based in San Clemente, California.



With over 25 years of history and played by the finest musicians in Brazil, Tagima Guitars will now be available at retailers in the USA and Canada. Featuring designs by luthier Macio Zaganin, Tagima guitars Brazil Series instruments are known for their craftsmanship, quality, and playability. With familiar guitar platforms, they are made from boutique tone woods like Marupa, Marfim, Brazilian Cedar & Ivory, and Pau Ferro.

Tagima Guitars also offers high quality, highly affordable ranges of acoustic and electric instruments designed for music students to the seasoned player. Woodstock Series instruments are designed to bring versatile tones from classic designs. America Series acoustics have modern appointments with traditional good looks, and available in multiple tone woods such as the Mahogany Series and Walnut Series. Hawaii Series instruments are classic ukuleles.

tagima.com.br/en

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KMC Pro Audio Expands Galaxy Audio Product Line



KMC Pro Audio announces the expansion of its Galaxy Audio product offering,

which now includes the company's full line of amps, digital signal processing, speakers, media players, microphones, mixers, monitors, ear buds, portable PA, wireless microphones and monitors, and audio solutions.

"A relationship that began with the distribution of two SKUs has now expanded to include the entire line of high

performance Galaxy Audio products and solutions," said Roger Hart, KMC Pro Audio vice president of merchandising. "Our 6,500 dealers now know that we can serve as their one-stop source for every SKU in the Galaxy Audio product portfolio. Once again, KMC Pro Audio demonstrates its ability to offer more Pro Audio products from more brands than any other distributor."

According to Yule Jabara, CEO of Galaxy Audio, the expansion with KMC Pro Audio means that, "More consumers will be able to order what they want when they want it from their KMC authorized dealer. This expanded relationship will provide us with broader and deeper coverage of the entire country, with penetration into every size of market. We look forward to strengthening our already-successful relationship with KMC!"

kmcmusic.com
galaxyaudio.com

.....

SLM Marketplace Presents Special NAMM 2017 Union Station Promotion

St. Louis Music (SLM) is the owner and distributor of Union Station bags and has announced a special Union Station promotion, exclusive to the Winter NAMM show in Anaheim, California. For the duration of the show, any dealer that purchases 12 or more Union Station products will receive one product of their choosing for free.

Union Station bags are presented as a full range of highly constructed guitar cases, with gig bags made from high density and duo-foams. Wood shell cases feature a plush lined interior and plenty of accessory compartments for the modern guitarist's ever growing collection of tools.

The Union Station Promotion will be a baker's dozen special, meaning a twelve product minimum purchase is required to participate. Not only will all entrants receive a bonus product, but their names will also be entered into a drawing, the winner of which will win an Alvarez guitar, courtesy of St. Louis Music.

Dealers are encouraged to visit SLM's booth at winter NAMM 2017 to experience the Union Station line. For more information contact your St. Louis Music representative at (800) 727-5412 or email info@stlouismusic.com.

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It's All Right, but it Will be OK

The previous 12 months produced such a variety of genuine horror, a frightening global descent towards fascism (none of this "alt-right" nonsense. They're fascists) and of course all those unexpected celebrity deaths (that seemed to trouble us more than anything else), that it is easy to assume that the turn of the year somehow marks the end of all that and a return to normality - y'know, perpetual war, insecurity, debt, et cetera. Thank God for that.

I'm not sure that it does though. If anything, things are about to get a whole lot worse. Possibly even worse in a permanent we're-all-dead kind of way, which makes any discussion on what might trend in our little corner of the entertainment products market kind of inconsequential for sure.

But every mushroom cloud has a silver lining, right? And what the hell has any of this to do with selling bass amps?

Well. Sadly, unlike our fathers/grandfathers, we are no longer allowed to shoot fascists on sight, so it seems we have to find another way to tackle the problem, and I do believe in the power of music and the redeeming effect of a good haircut/pair of pants. I know that most songwriters produce some of their best work when their missus/mister has just walked out on them and I know that one great song can change the world. At least a bit. So it is to be hoped that our current travails might at least encourage some angry young 'uns to start calling it out to music. So they're going to need some equipment. And you're going to sell it to them.

Famously, the great minstrel of the dustbowl and documenter of the Great Depression Woody Guthrie, had "This Machine Kills Fascists" written on his guitar. He knew. All you fascists bound to lose. We've been waiting for a new generation of guitar heroes, right? This could be our moment. Every. Cloud. See?

What's that? Chumbawumba are reforming? Oh, for....

Lowden Produces UK's 'Most Expensive' Guitar

Lowden Guitars has turned out its 20,000th guitar – thought to be the most expensive ever produced in the UK – and is continuing to expand thanks in the main to its knack of securing local government investment.

In three years since receiving a significant loan from the Growth Loan Fund, which provides loans to established Northern Ireland SMEs seeking to access additional business finance, the company has created 13 jobs and expanded its workshop from two to nine units.

Founded by George Lowden in 1974, the firm now employs 29 workers producing handcrafted instruments that are sold throughout Europe, North America, Canada, Australia and the Far East. Lowden players include Snow Patrol's Gary Lightbody, Ed Sheeran, Eric Clapton and Foy Vance.

Speaking about his 20,000th guitar, its new Genesis model, George Lowden commented: "The Genesis guitar is the most unique piece we have ever created. We have been working on this project for over a year now and not only is it stunning to look at, but the sound it produces is also incredible. A piece of the guitar was sent to an artist in America and he has created a phenomenal piece of artwork, inlaid in to the wood itself. We've taken our time on this project because I wanted to create a truly spectacular piece to mark such a significant milestone for us. We've already sold the guitar to a local buyer and, while I can't tell you how much it went for, we believe it is the most



expensive guitar ever made in Ireland and possibly Great Britain."

The company has come a long way since it received funding from the Growth Loan Fund, which enabled the company to begin a five-year plan in response to a huge backlog of orders. The firm still has a year's worth of orders, says Lowden.

"We've expanded our premises in Downpatrick, created further employment in the local area and developed our production with new jigs and equipment. Business is about relationships and our partnership with WhiteRock and the Growth Loan Fund has been nothing but positive and an important part of the success over these last few years. We have a good reputation for building high quality guitars and that is something we would never want to compromise by growing too fast. Our goal is to continually improve our production methods through fine-tuning and innovation to ultimately increase output.

"Next month we will showcase The Genesis guitar and present our new range and designs at the 2017 NAMM show in Anaheim, California which has over 100,000 attendees. Throughout 2017 we will also continue to visit new markets."

New Aussie Partner for Washburn

Extending its global sales and marketing reach in preparation for its 2017 new model debut at Winter NAMM 2017, Washburn Guitars has appointed Musical Merchandisers as its new Australian distribution partner.

Established in 1960, Musical Merchandisers is one of Australia's longest established distributors of musical instruments and accessories, distributing over 2,000 products encompassing over 15 brands, catering to the needs of beginners through to professionals.

"Musical Merchandisers has the experience, dealer network and pro-



Matthew Golden, George Henderson, Graeme Wilson, and Craig Wilson

grams that will help us to significantly increase sales of Washburn in Australia," according to Washburn's international sales manager for Asia Matt Golden. "We are thrilled to have them part of our sales team."

ALFRED MUSIC STAFF PICKS

Mark Malone, Sales Rep

Years at Alfred Music: Twenty-one

Instruments: Trombone, baritone, tuba

Best Perk of Working at Alfred Music:
Working with musicians and print

Favorite Genre to Play: Brass music

Favorite Artist: Donald Fagen

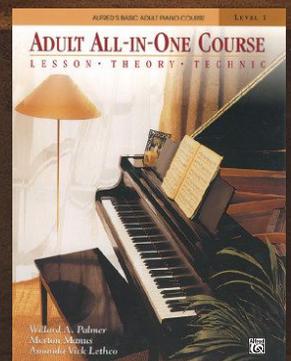
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Since 1994 Alfred's *Adult All-In-One Course* for the piano has been a nationwide phenomenon, bringing the joy of making music to a worldwide classroom! One book covers all the essentials—lesson, theory, and technique—everything you need to start playing piano now! With recognizable melodies to aid learning, and on a variety of platforms, this is still one of the best-selling books on the planet! So simple even a trombone player could understand it (if that were even possible)!



alfred.com



StompLight Launches Mobile Version

StompLight has added to its range of lighting effects pedals with a more mobile version – the DMX Pro lighting effect pedal.

It offers professional stage lighting with simple foot control in a single fully integrated lighting device. Designed for a quick set-up, it is aimed at the Wedding DJ, musicians and lighting professionals seeking easy to use professional quality.

It can be powered for hours with an optional external StompLight Lithium Ion battery pack and operates as a fully self-contained stage light or as a light/controller capable of cascading with the innovative StompLight Pal DMX slave light or other DMX lighting products.

The StompLight DMX Pro incorporates an integrated foot control system. No need for a separate DMX controller, back-of-fixture programming or easy misplaced remote control.

The unit is sound active, housing an internal microphone and



instrument input/output jacks, each channel with adjustable gain. An internal spectrum analyzer creates lighting tied to the ambient sound or audio input. Other lighting effects include a color organ, color wheel, and a strobe.

StompLight incorporates a collapsible CREE LED array with a diffuse light field lending itself to facade or under-table lighting. Traditional PAR lights are often too focused for these applications. The small foot sprint and the StompLight Lithium Ion battery pack

make StompLight easy to move about, position and break down.

StompLight president, Michael Ahern, offered: "The feedback from two consecutive NAMM shows, extensive product testing and the input from numerous industry professionals led us to where we are today. Ready to ship an improved and truly innovative product!"

StompLight will be at Winter NAMM at booth 1183 in Hall E.



Guitar Show Promises 'Biggest Ever' Event

The UK's biggest guitar event, The Guitar Show, will return to New Bingley Hall in Birmingham between 25th-26th February 2017 with a larger line-up of brands and more space than ever. The event expands into a new acoustic area for its third year, allowing acoustic players the chance to try some of the world's greatest acoustic instruments in suitably quiet surroundings.

The rock'n'roll elements of the show remain very much intact though, with exhibitors including Laney – which celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2017 – Marshall, Fender, PRS Guitars, Yamaha, Line6, Roland, Blackstar, Orange, Lag, Diezel, Vigier, and Dean among the brands set to appear.

On the Live Stage, *Guitar Magazine* editor Chris Vinnicombe is to present a series of Meet Your Maker interview and Q&A sessions over the weekend involving luminaries of the industry from the likes of Orange, Bare Knuckle Pickups, Patrick James Eggle and Thorpy FX.

Also on the Live Stage, Brit rock four-piece Joan of Arc will be appearing in support of their latest Gil Norton (Foo Fighters, Pixies)-produced album *Ride Of Your Life*. A complete Live Stage line-up will be confirmed in the coming weeks.

Tickets are priced at £12.50 (adults) and £7 (under 16) in advance (£15 adult and £10 under 16 on the door) and are available from www.theguitarshow.co.uk

Yamaha Poll Reveals Music Education Issues

Yamaha Music London, Yamaha's flagship music store in Wardour Street, Soho London, has conducted its first ever survey of over 1,000 adults across the UK to discover their views on learning to play a musical instrument.

Some 60 percent of adults say they want to learn and the start of the New Year is the perfect time to start but sadly the future doesn't look so rosy for children who want to learn to play.

The findings reveal that despite 85 per cent of those polled agreeing that children benefit from playing a musical instrument, a staggering 77 percent believe that there is a shocking lack of encouragement for children to learn to play.

Science has shown that students who have music lessons have an improved IQ, better memory and concentration skills. Much has been written about the health benefits and improved well-being that playing a musical instrument can bring to kids and adults but it seems that despite being surrounded by music 24-7 with sound at our fingertips from the moment we wake up, learning to play a musical instrument isn't a priority for children.

Learning to play a musical instrument is in danger of becoming a lost art without encouragement and support from parents and schools. 50 per cent of those polled verified that school was traditionally the place to learn to play a musical instrument.

Yamaha Music London store manager Nigel Hill explained: "We are recommending that you throw away apps, games and gizmos and pick up an instrument – it might just be the start of a life-long passion or career."

The good news is that anyone can learn to play at any age, however the Yamaha Music London survey found that the optimum age to learn to play is between 6-10 years of age and that the best starter instruments are piano and guitar.



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PLASA Beefs Up Focus Glasgow Seminars

PLASA has expanded its free-to-attend seminar program for the PLASA Focus Glasgow show, which returns to the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC) on 18th and 19th January 2017.

Production services supplier, Adlib, has partnered with two of its biggest brands, Martin Professional and L-Acoustics, to deliver both a video and audio seminar respectively. Martin Professional will demo the ease of setting up and mapping creative LED fixtures including using their VDO FACE 5, Scepton, and VC video ranges. On the audio side, L-Acoustics Application Engineer & Educator François Montignies will discuss how to get the best from your line array set-up in a session titled Variable Curvature Line Source & Soundvision.

Adlib's sales and business development manager, Barclay Dakers, commented: "We are delighted to contribute to the PLASA Glasgow seminar program, for what will be our second year running. PLASA's regional shows have always been very beneficial to us, we have recently opened new office and warehousing facilities in Glasgow, so this is a fantastic opportunity to showcase some of the world-class brands we work with to the Scottish region."

Other new highlights to the audio program include: Line sources, or should we consider other Points with d&b audiotechnik's Steve Jones. With the help of a few experiments, Jones will explore the benefits and drawbacks of line array and point source systems. And in a thought provoking seminar, James Bottrill from Ampetron-

ic will discuss The Importance of Assistive Listening when designing an audio system for a venue.

The UK Government's Department for International Trade will complete the program of content. A discussion panel will discuss The Experience Economy including what it is and how to use it to drive and win business. The panel will be hosted by Richard Parry, who leads the Department for International Trade's experience economy team.

Running alongside the show, The AV User Group regional meeting, lunch and networking drinks will take place at SECC Glasgow on Thursday 19th January 2017. While it is a member's event, all AV professionals A attend providing they sign up to the AV User Group.

"PLASA prides itself on being a thought leader for the industry" says PLASA's events director, Chris Toulmin, "we are delighted to welcome industry bellwethers such as Martin Professional and L-Acoustics to share their technical knowledge and encourage professional development in the industry."

"These new sessions accompany an already busy schedule, including sessions with the Association of Lighting Designers, Shure UK, and the Riggers' Forum, which always draws a good crowd" adds Chris, "I'm excited for what will be another fantastic show."

PLASA Focus Glasgow is a free-to-attend two-day exhibition showcasing the latest technology used in live events, concerts, tours, theatre productions, venue installations and leisure attractions.



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Trade Regrets

On December 2 of 2016, we received the following message from NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino:



*I'm sorry to report that **Victor Tibaldeo Sr.** passed away on Thursday at the age of 93. He started in the business in 1939 and became an icon in music retailing. He will be missed!*

Victor loved to talk about the accordion boom of the 1950s, an element that helped establish his music store. The Miami-based store also was one of the country's most successful organ retailers when that instrument hit its boom in the 1970s. Victor always said it helps to be in business at the right time, but "what is most critical is having employees who understand customer service." In 2008, after 60 years in the business, Victor retired. Victor Piano and Organs Inc. is still going strong and is now run by his daughter, Lisa Tibaldeo.

John McCrea passed away on November 25, 2016. A longtime clarinet player and music teacher, John and his wife ultimately opened McCrea Music in La Mesa, California. His son, Gentry, has taken over the family business and currently runs the store.



On December 31, Dan Del Fiorentino sent the following:

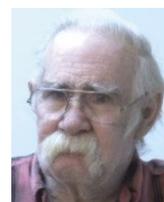
*Sad news as we close out the year, the passing of a well known composer and publisher, **John Edmondson.***

John Edmondson and Anne McGinty worked together at Charles Hansen Publishing where they met. Together they free-lanced as composers and arrangers until they decided to form their own firm,



which they called Queenwood Publications. They built a solid catalog within the company, which was well known for educational materials for band as well as individual instruments. After Queenwood was sold to the Neil A. Kjos Company, John continued to compose and arrange for a number of important projects including the "Discovery Band" series and "Jazz Warm-Ups", both published by Hal Leonard.

Larry Seaver, noted engineer of B&O instruments, parts, and tools, passed away on December 12, 2016. Over the course of his career, Seaver held positions at Getzen, Schilke Music Products, and Allied and West Side Machines.



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ON THE MOVE

Sweetwater has announced the retirement of **Marc Leveridge**, the company's chief financial officer since 1998, effective December 26, 2016.



Mr. Leveridge has been in the audio/music industry since joining Altec Lansing in Oklahoma City in 1979, which was under ownership by Altec Corporation, then Gulton Industries, and Mark IV Industries. He joined Harman International in 1996, and was hired by Sweetwater founder and president Chuck Surack in 1998.

During Leveridge's 18-year tenure, the company has experienced steady and substantial growth. Sweetwater is now the No. 1 online retailer of music instruments and audio gear in the U.S.

He plans to remain in Fort Wayne with his wife, Kristi, where their grandchildren reside, though they look forward to traveling and to more frequent and longer trips to the Florida panhandle.

Sweetwater has additionally announced that senior vice president of finance **Greg Clark** has been promoted to senior vice president of finance and chief financial officer, succeeding CFO Marc Leveridge.



Clark joined the Sweetwater Accounting and Finance team in 2014 and was promoted to the position of senior vice president of finance in 2015. He brings with him a diverse background in public and corporate accounting, and process development and improvement. He will be responsible for corporate financial planning, reporting, and analysis, treasury management, and risk management.

Clark is a Certified Public Accountant and a graduate of Indiana University's Kelley School of Business with Bachelors' Degrees in Accounting and Computer Information Systems. He began his career with KPMG LLP in Raleigh, NC. Prior to joining Sweetwater, he served as internal audit director for medical device manufacturer Symmetry Medical, Inc., in Warsaw, Indiana.

Aguilar Amplification has appointed **Jon Moody** to the position of OEM sales manager for Pickups and Preamps.



Moody brings an in-depth knowledge of stringed instruments to this role from his time as product development manager for GHS strings. During his tenure there he worked closely with many luthiers/builders on their private label string sets and was responsible for multiple GHS product designs including strings for bass, guitar, mandolin and ukulele.

"The addition of Jon Moody to our sales team is critical to our plans of growing the Pickup Department by servicing more luthiers all over the world. With his technical knowledge, music industry contacts and years of work as a bassist for musical theater productions, Jon is uniquely adapted for this position" says Aguilar president Dave Boonshoft.

Genelec announces two new key hires bolstering the company's U.S. sales force: **John Whitcore** has been named territory manager, and **Steffene Copley** has been added as Western Region – sales.



The announcement was made by Will Eggleston, Genelec Inc. marketing manager, and further underscores Genelec's national presence while reflecting the company's ongoing commitment to providing both professional and music markets with high-quality, up-to-date monitoring solutions. Both Whitcore and Copley will report to Lisa Kaufmann, Genelec Inc. managing director, and work closely with Paul Stewart, Genelec Inc. Eastern Territory sales manager, on new and ongoing sales initiatives.



A.K. Kist has been promoted to national sales manager of the Combo Division at **KHS America**.



A lifelong drummer, Kist has over 16 years of experience in a wide range of business roles. A.K. joined KHS in 2010 as a district manager in the Education Division. Prior to KHS he worked as the general manager for

Jim's Music Centers (Tustin, California) and the Assistant Manager at KYR Music (Chino, California). Kist holds a BS in Business Administration from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona and an MBA in Marketing from the University of Redlands.

Kist currently sits as president of the Southwest Music Education Association and has extensive involvement with the California State Band Championships and the Southwest Judges Network, which provide educational music performance opportunities for music programs throughout California.

In his new post, Kist will be responsible for strategic and tactical sales initiatives, and will participate in furthering the KHSA core principles focusing on music, integrity, ingenuity, respect and teamwork. His responsibilities will include developing strategic sales initiatives, conducting training / field assistance, and facilitating the success of dealers representing KHSA owned and distributed brands.

Allen & Heath has recently expanded the marketing team based at its USA distributor, American Music & Sound, with the appointment of **Mike Bangs** as live sound & touring expert, **James Duvall** as commercial solutions specialist, and **Maryam Larki-Bavi** as marketing manager.



The new team has a wealth of audio experience and will support customers across the live touring and installation spectrums in order to develop the Allen & Heath brand in these market areas, and to ensure continued success for Allen & Heath under the umbrella of American Music & Sound in the U.S.



Maryam Larki-Bavi joins Allen & Heath with an extensive background in the pro audio industry, previously holding marketing positions with Harman Industries and Sennheiser. In her new role Ms. Larki-Bavi will steer and oversee all aspects of marketing for the Allen & Heath brand in the U.S.



Mike Bangs comes to Allen & Heath as a veteran in the touring world with an all-encompassing sound engineering and production management experience from

many national and international tours, such as Katy Perry, Eric Clapton and Aerosmith. Mike is in charge of growing the Allen & Heath business in the touring market and supporting high profile events, artists, engineers and sound companies as the new Live Sound/Touring expert.

James Duvall brings hands-on audio engineering and systems design expertise to the team. In his new position as the Commercial Solution Specialist, Duvall will assist consultants and integrators in system design and product application for Allen & Heath products.

KMC Music has announced the appointment of industry veteran **Samantha Pink** to the position of director of Business Operations, reporting directly to KMC president Mark Terry.



Effective immediately, Pink assumes responsibility for ensuring the smooth operation and integration of all the various departments within KMC, including distribu-

tion, service, and MIS, as well as overseeing the flow of product from the vendors to the warehouse and out to the customer. In addition, Pink acts as a key interface with relevant departments in the JAM Industries corporate headquarters in Montreal, Canada, with responsibility for establishing and reporting on KPIs, tracking budgets, and troubleshooting various issues.

Samantha Pink brings an extensive MI and pro audio background to her new position at KMC. She held a number of increasingly strategic positions at Full Compass Systems, the leading national retailer of pro audio, pro video, AV, lighting and musical Instruments, over a 14 year period that culminated with her tenure as vice president of Procurement, Product, Merchandising, & Planning.

Greg Shade has been appointed as Western regional sales manager by **CAD Audio**.



In this new position, Shade will be responsible for all CAD, Astatic and AIMM dealers in

the Western U.S. in terms of MI, Pro Audio, and Installed Sound. He will oversee the company's independent rep firms and be the direct point of contact between CAD dealers in the region.

Shade started at CAD two years ago and has used his knowledge of music and audio technology and his people skills to become a successful inside sales representative.

Prior to joining CAD, he graduated with honors and a degree in Commercial Music Technology from Stark State College in North Canton, Ohio. An active musician since age five, Greg play drums and records in his home studio.

HW Products is celebrating its 40th year at NAMM and has welcomed **Jim Klingler** to their team as manager of direct sales.



Klingler has a long history in the music industry, formerly with American Way Marketing, and will now be heading up the direct sales department for HW Products, as well as attending various trade shows with the company.

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KMC
Music's
Mark Terry

By Christian Wissmuller

Both Mark Terry and KMC Music are names familiar to nearly all in MI. KMC is owner and distributor of a vast number of well-known brands, across virtually all significant categories, while Terry has been a key player in Pro Audio for more than three decades, leading to his current position as KMC president.

In recent months, KMC has embarked on new partnerships and developed new product that not only steps up their game in the Pro Audio segment, but also positions KMC Music as a valuable resource to help MI retailers better serve their customers – and turn significant profit!

We recently spoke with Mark Terry about KMC's increased commitment to both the Pro Audio side of the business, as well as helping retailers more quickly and effectively build their in-store Pro Audio departments.

Mark, for those few who may not know your own history, can you provide a bit of personal and professional background regarding your involvement over at KMC, your history at JBL and Harman Pro, et cetera?

I've been involved with the Pro Audio industry in one form another for more than 30 years. That may date me a little, but it reinforces the fact that my experience runs very deep into the roots of the industry and encompasses every aspect of the industry.

I've done everything from engineering at a major New York City recording studio (National Recording) to being worldwide head of sales and marketing for New England Digital Corporation, the company that introduced the world to digital audio with the groundbreaking Synclavier, to serving for 17 years at Harman International, first as president of JBL Professional and then as president of Harman's Professional Solutions Group. Most recently I have served as an executive vice president at Fender and, now, president of KMC Music. This experience has greatly increased my knowledge of the industry and introduced me to a wide range of customers around the world.

As a result of this experience, I believe I bring a wealth of insight into the long-term trends that are impacting and shaping every aspect of the Pro Audio industry, particularly as they can help MI dealers, who may or may not already be in the Pro Audio category, to make it an even bigger part of their revenue picture. Pro Audio in the form of sound reinforcement, DJ, and recording, represents the single largest category in MI retail today and I want to use my knowledge and experience, along with the resources of KMC, to help them grow that segment of their business. I believe that KMC has the portfolio of Pro Audio brands, the established vendor relationships, as well as the sales and credit programs to empower MI retailers to sell more of what their customers want, when their customers want it, from the same one-stop source they already use for their musical instrument and accessory business.

Can you talk a little about the recent partnership with Harman Pro? What was the catalyst behind the move to have KMC be their primary MI channel distributor?

The short answer to this question is that it's a partnership that works strategically for Harman and for KMC. Harman's objective is to reach every segment of the Pro Audio market in every part of the country. KMC has an unmatched network of more than 6,500 MI retailers across the country. These are retailers that Harman, through KMC, can reach effectively and in a sustained manner.

KMC has the ability to put together programs that can combine Harman's Pro Audio products with KMC's other Pro Audio and accessory brands, creating exciting new system solutions that will appeal to consumers who want to buy more Pro Audio brands from their local MI retailer. Harman now has a single point of contact that directly connects their Pro Audio brands to a whole new market of dealers who are already buying from KMC! My history and in depth knowledge of the Harman Pro products doesn't hurt either!

In September of 2016, KMC debuted two new Pro Audio bundles – KMC Studio and KMC Studio Performer. What benefits to these unique value-added bundles provide to MI retailers and how do you hope to provide dealers with more “consumer friendly” and profitable in-store Pro Audio departments?

KMC owns or represents a growing number of Pro Audio brands, in addition to those marketed by the Harman Professional Solutions Group. In fact, we will make some very exciting announcements about some very big brands at NAMM 2017. Our ability to sell the Harman brands, along with brands like Ashly, Audix, Ultimate Audio, PowerWerks, Samson, Focusrite, Audio Technica, Galaxy, MBT Lighting, Monster Cable, RCF, Sennheiser, and Shure, reinforces our corporate mission to serve as the one-stop source for all of our retailers' Pro Audio needs.

The Studio and Studio Performer bundles represent the beginning of what will become a steady year-long flow of uniquely configured system solutions that combine all three categories of products in creative package configurations. These packaged systems are absolutely going to generate increased return foot traffic to our dealers and increased year over year sales that weren't possible before. We're basically giving consumers a reason to constantly check back with their retailers to see what is new from KMC. Retailing in the MI industry is no different than in any other retail industry. You have to provide consumers with reasons to keep coming back to the store, the catalog, or the retailer's website – and we intend to provide consumers with a whole lot of reasons to keep coming back to our dealers for more!

What are some of the products, plans, and initiatives that will be introduced in Anaheim this January?

Winter NAMM is the most important event of the year for us, and our plans for the show reflect that. I don't want to give away too many details in advance of the show but I will tell that the 2017 NAMM Show will mark the first time that KMC showcases its three business segments on the main the show floor – musical instruments, Pro Audio, and Band & Orchestra. Each of these business segments overlap but have their own unique needs that need to be addressed independently. We have spent the last year investing a lot of time and resources into the development of each of these business segments and they are ready for their formal debut at NAMM 2017. Each area will feature major new products, system solutions, and business development programs.

In terms of our Pro Audio section at the NAMM show, dealers will be able to speak with our knowledgeable staff about the broad range of services and product we offer from such highly respected brands as AKG Acoustics, Ashly Audio, Audio-Technica, Audix, Crown, dbx, Focusrite, Galaxy, JBL Professional, MBT Lighting, Monster Cables, PowerWerks, Quiklok, RCF, Samson Technologies, Sennheiser, Soundcraft, Shure, Stageline, and Ultimate Acoustics. The entire food chain of Pro Audio will be represented.

What else is on the horizon for KMC's Pro Audio efforts that you'd like to share with MMR readers?

If there's one message I want to deliver to your readers it's this: In 2017 it's going to be easier than ever before to buy more Pro Audio brands across more product categories from the same one-stop source they've been doing business with for years. Every product category in the Pro Audio food chain is going to be available to them. They will be able, in turn, to offer their customers Pro Audio brands that they may not have been able to offer them in the past. They'll be able to offer their customers more system solutions than ever before. Most major manufacturers have minimum order requirements that many dealers can't meet. We can deliver those products to our dealers in whatever quantities they need, whenever they need them. We have the leverage that can make more brands available to them and we can do so with the same great credit terms they already enjoy with KMC.

What are your expectations for the Pro Audio market, in general, in the coming year?

We believe that Pro Audio is going to become an increasingly important part of an MI retailer's overall business mix. Our goal is to remove as many business impediments as possible that historically have prevented dealers from maximizing their Pro Audio sales and profits. By offering them more solutions from more brands in more categories, with terms and conditions that greatly facilitate transactions, we believe that 2017 is going to be the best year ever for Pro Audio sales in the MI channel. **MMR**

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Susan and Jonathan Lipp

“A Partnership of Generosity”

by Sharon Paquette Lose

CHEVY (JD) DOMINGUEZ

After spending most of 2016 barraged by polarizing politics and the sad news of music legend losses, you may find yourself hard-pressed to hear stories of inspiration. Look no further. *MMR* is ushering in 2017 by featuring the winners of The Don Johnson Industry Service Award (DJA), Susan and Jonathan Lipp, in a story of generous giving and all that is right with the MI world. Philanthropy IS the American dream for this married couple and co-founders of Full Compass Systems, Ltd. — retailers of pro audio, video, lighting, and musical instruments for 40 years. The Lipps’ altruistic efforts truly encompass the spirit of the DJA as they have sat on over a hundred boards of nonprofit organizations through the

“Susan has told people for many years that her motive for working as hard as she works is to be a philanthropist.” – Jonathan Lipp

years, advocated for music education on Capitol Hill, created an employee-run charitable contributions committee, hosted countless charity events in their on-site theatre, and received numerous awards for their efforts throughout the years.

MMR sat down with Susan and Jonathan to discuss the importance of music education and the arts in their lives, the heritage and people who’ve inspired them, the continuous success of their woman-owned business, their partnership, their habit of hiring artists, and their passionate commitment to generosity in their community and beyond.

What role did music and/or music education play in your life as a child?

Jonathan Lipp: I did take piano lessons from kindergarten to when I was 13, but unfortunately, I wasn’t very good at it. There was always music in our home — my mother played piano, guitar, and sang. We listened to and would sing folk music.

Both my parents and my extended family were very involved in musical theatre, which was a part of my life as a child and my perspective on the world. So, it was not a surprise that I got involved in the music business. Even though it was from the direction of being an engineer, working with musicians, both as a recording engineer and building equipment — it was not uncommon in the early ‘70s to design and build your own equipment.

How did you come to open a professional music studio?

JL: In 1971 I was visiting an old friend from high school who lived with another guy who was talking about building a recording studio. I told him I would do some research and see what’s involved. I visited a regional dealer for professional sound equipment and worked up the equipment list. As I was leaving I was approached in the parking lot by Mike Kuehl who said, “I heard you’re planning on building a recording studio, so are we.” It turned out my friend talked a big game but never did anything, but that’s how I met Mike, Will Elmendorf, and Rick Murphy and became partner number four at Full Compass Sound Studios. Like most things in life, that was not planned, it just happened. My involvement in electronics and building things ever since I was a young kid played into it very well. I understood the equipment immediately, and had been around enough music that I had an ear for it, even though I didn’t consider myself a musician.

In ‘73, I built a custom-built broadcast mixer for the local NBC television station, which was on the air for over 20 years. They returned it to us and it still functions!

What kind of things did you build as a child?

JL: Tinker Toys and Erector Sets and an old version of what we would now call Legos. When my parents would buy me a toy I’d play with it for ten minutes and then I’d take it apart to see how it worked. Eventually, I figured out how to put them back together again. When I was maybe twelve years old, my cousin needed another bedroom, and we ordered lumber, built the room, and I did all the wiring. I had never built anything

much with wood before, but we figured it out. (He chuckles) Nobody told me about wire nuts, and I soldered all the wiring like it was sound equipment. But the room's still there and it hasn't burned the house down after over 50 years.

Did you have any mentors professionally or in your family that ended up influencing you as you furthered your career?

JL: My mother was an MD. She influenced me and her mother, my grandmother, was a professional who worked. So, it did shape a lot of my personality, as far as how I regard women and how capable they are. It probably had a lot to do with meeting Susan and getting married, because she mirrored very much my role model of an assertive, accomplished female. And because of that, Madison Full Compass has been, over the years, dominated by female managers and other professionals who certainly have never experienced a glass ceiling here. I think it's been an advantage for us because we've offered opportunities that've traditionally been closed to women.

On the other hand, I certainly didn't learn anything from my father about using tools. I don't know if he knew which end of the screwdriver to use. I think, to quote Jackie Mason, "in our house, a universal tool was called a butter knife," and that would've been a screwdriver and a hammer.

A PARTNERSHIP FORMS

Tell the story of meeting Susan and how that affected your business?

JL: I had one foot in the recording studio and I had just started Full Compass Systems, focusing on selling equipment primarily to radio stations nationwide at that time. This is 1977, and radio broadcast was really the only national pro audio market. So, because a number of my partners were in the radio broadcasting business, I had come to know that end of the business very well. I met Susan in early '78...

Susan Lipp: January 26th. I remember the date only because of the opening night of the show that we were doing at the Madison Civic Repertory Theatre.

JL: Susan was running a professional theatre at that time. Almost immediately she started learning about my business. Her two teenage sons started working for the recording studio and the store, whether it was putting equipment away in the studio or soldering circuit cards. They got an early start at 12 and 13. And about six months later, Susan and I got married,

and six months after that, she quit her job as a headhunter and came to work with me full-time.

SL: As I was the first executive director of the Madison Civic Repertory Theatre, I would get everything done for free because I had to. At that time I had a budget of \$60,000 a year. I had to put on five shows, pay our artistic director, a tech director, and myself out of that same \$60,000, which was pretty slim. If the theatre needed a park bench, I would send our tech director out to the park to borrow one, and put it back after the show. We had to reuse gel (lighting) because we didn't have any money at the theatre to buy new gel so we got it from the university.

JL: To sum it up, she was very good at getting people to do stuff for free.

SL: I got Rick Murphy to do a public service announcement for the theatre at his studio and went down to pick it up. I'd never been in a studio before, so I went and played with the equipment for about a half an hour, and when I left, I had forgotten the PSA tape. When I got to the other side of town and realized I went there for one reason and didn't get it. I called Rick and said, "Do you know anybody coming out to the theatre tonight?" He said, "Yeah, my partner Jonathan will be there." And I said, "Who is Jonathan?" Rick said, "He was the guy running the equipment while you were playing with it at the studio." To which I replied, "Oh, the cute one with the mustache!" Rick told Jonathan that I thought he was cute. Jonathan got all dressed up and brought me the tape and asked me for a date. The rest was history, you know, it was unbelievable.

Six months later we were married. He had to make a living suddenly, too, because if he was going to be my husband he was also going to be surrogate father of my two children. He's a wonderful, wonderful father to my kids. Both of them are in the business and he taught them everything they know about the audio business.

Are your sons working in the business with you now?

SL: Our son, Jeff Lipp, is an audio and AV consultant in Chicago and does national work. Steve Cohan, our other son, has been in the business as a manufacturer for a very long time.

Your company has showed continuous success over failing economic times. What do you attribute that to?

JL: I've been asked the question a number of times. Since '77 we've been through four recessions and, of course, the most recent one in 2008 and 2009 is fresh in everybody's minds. It was



Susan and Jonathan with their sons, Steve Cohan (left) and Jeff Lipp, in the Full Compass office, 1981



Full Compass Sound Studios

Spotlight: Susan and Jonathan Lipp

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certainly one of the worst ones. But, in earlier recessions, we were growing rapidly and had to deal with things like 20 percent interest rates from banks, which is hard to imagine when we're paying less than three percent these days. In a recession it is normal, whether you're a manufacturer or merchant, to kind of hunker down. You try and reduce the amount of inventory you have, you schedule less advertising and promotion, you may lay people off, and try and ride it out, lower expenses. The fact is, let's say business is down 20 percent. That still means that 80 percent of the business is there. Once your competitors have sold off their inventory and stopped advertising, and laid some of their people off, there's an opportunity. The manufacturers are hungry for any sale, so we buy more stuff cheaper. There are people on the street who may have been laid off that would probably be looking for a job, who are high quality that we would hire. The trade publications are desperate for advertising, they'll make better deals, and their magazines might be a little skinnier, so your ads show up better.



The 2009 ribbon cutting of Full Compass' current (and 5th) building with Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk, Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton, and Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz

So we can buy advertising cheaper, we can get better deals on merchandise, and we would keep our inventory past the first couple of months of the recession when everybody else is dumping their inventory. All of a sudden we're the only ones with inventory. And with a strong sales staff, with more presence in our advertising, and typically what's happened in a recession is that sales are flat. That's what's worked for us.

Susan, were there influences in your childhood that encouraged you to become involved in philanthropy the way that you did?

SL: I started in art. I was a painting major. I went to college at Layton School of Art, but I had started at Layton when I was 11 years old. I was a painting major with a minor in printmaking and another minor in sculpture. And my mom, Marcela Schiewitz Wynn, who had been very much like Jonathan's mom, was a singer. When she was young, she sang on the radio, and she even had a stage name, Marcella Shay. She did a lot of theatre, and she wrote a lot of shows, she did a lot of musical theatre, and wrote parodies all the time. She was constantly writing. She was into poetry, and she was very, very clever. So, she was a force behind the arts and a lot of people in the Milwaukee community got to know her. She tried to talk to me about going into theatre, and telling me how much I'd like it.

Layton happened to be right next door to the Jewish Center in Milwaukee where they had a very good theatre department.

One day I walked in and the director said, "Would you like to act?" I said, "Well sure." I'd never acted in my life, but got into the first show as an actor, and found out that I really didn't like acting. I did set painting and then I became the set designer. I got married to my first husband and moved to Wausau. My ex-husband didn't think women should work, which is probably the worst thing that has ever happened to me in my life. The best thing that ever happened to me was divorcing him. I got involved, I mean truly involved in the community theatre there. With the first show I was involved with, "A Majority of One," they asked me if I could come in and do dialect coaching. I'd never been a dialogue coach before, but I understood the Jewish dialogue that they were looking for. I became a director and directed for a number of years and helped create the Wisconsin Community Theatre Association. I was on the board of the American Theatre Association, helped run conventions,



In 2013, Susan and Jonathan sponsored a trip to Circus World for the Madison chapter of Boys & Girls Club

and created a convention in Wisconsin. It was all, seat of your pants kind of stuff. I didn't do it for any other reason other than I needed something to do. I had two little kids and you can only be a mom for so long without some conversation with adults. I gained a lot of management experience, by being a director.

A friend of mine who had been on Weight Watchers was a major advocate and his wife was a VP at Weight Watchers of Wisconsin. She got me through the program in five months, I lost a ton of weight, looked like a whole new person – weighed 108, which is a little skinny for me, but I was very into being able to accomplish something. I got a phone call from the owner of Weight Watchers, and he asked if I would open Weight Watchers in Wausau. And I said, "Sure, but I've never been to a meeting." He said, "Oh, you'll be able to do it fine, don't worry about it." So I drove to Milwaukee, went to the only meeting that I'd ever been to, came back and on a Monday I opened Weight Watchers, Wausau. I had gone out and bought a scale, and bought chairs and tables and all the rest of the stuff that you need, and I pretty much faked it for the next year or so. I created a big company up there. I trained 27 lecturers and weighers and people to run seven counties of Weight Watchers. That was my main experience of managing people, managing a company, and being able to manage the money and figure out what to do with it and how to deal with it.

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Spotlight: Susan and Jonathan Lipp

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I think about myself as having more guts than brains. So, when I met Jonathan, I saw what he was doing in his little 500 square foot space, and he was running it like an old mom-and-pop, dusty little store. I came with my experience in theatre and of how to get the tushes in the seats.

Susan, you eventually became majority owner in the company, how did the company and your partnership evolve?

SL: I started advertising, by sending out mailings — knowing that you have to send out at least three to have your name in somebody's mind. Jonathan and I had gone to the library and gotten 150 names of engineers all over

talk somebody out of a sale, over-talking it, I would grab the phone and close. We've spent almost 39 years together and we've shared the same office. We still sit six feet away from each other. I don't even go out with the girls alone, drinks or dinner or anything, it's just uncomfortable to me to go somewhere without him, because he is my 100 percent partner.

We grew up pretty much the same, we both had mothers that were very, very involved in philanthropy. We made it by working together and what was always ingrained in our minds — how important it is to give to the less fortunate.

Susan, do you have any specific advice for women business owners?



A recent "gangster-themed" Full Compass Charitable Contributions event

the country at a radio stations. I went down to the post office and picked up a bulk permit. And I knew, because of my theatre experience, you had to send out 200. So, we sent 150 to the names we had and 50 back to ourselves, because it turned out to be cheaper. And when we would get the customers to talk to us. I would call them, the engineers, because I have a lot of guts, and I come from a sales background, my father had a menswear store, and I started working at 13 years old in the store, so I knew how to sell. I would get on the phone, call them, the engineers, and then as soon as they had any interest, I'd put Jonathan on the phone because he knew all about the stuff — I knew nothing. I'd listen to his conversation, and as soon as he sounded like he was going to

SL: Well, number one, hire smarter people than you are. They will always make you look good and smarter. That's the most important thing you can do in business. If you hire people who are not as smart as you are, you're making the biggest mistake. We test everybody that comes to work for us and it's not just a little nothing test, it's a heavy-duty test to determine IQ's. Right now, we've got 210 employees and the guy that was hired last in the warehouse had damn well better be smarter than Susan Lipp. I am a true believer that if you hire the right person in the right position, you can be successful.

JL: Susan wrote a speech she delivered a couple times called, "Hire Like a Casting Director."

SL: You can be successful, you can be

very successful. The other thing is, I wish women would stop seeing a glass ceiling. It shouldn't be there. Most women that are successful in business are pretty ballsy. Jonathan's always thought that women were smarter than men, which is a spectacular thing, because we've always thought that women should be in executive positions because they think differently than men. Our current top salespeople have consistently been women, dating all the way back to the mid-'80s.

JL: Part of the skill set, is that you have to learn to be deaf to "no."

SL: Women ask questions. How many men do you know that would get lost 20 minutes before asking anybody how to get somewhere? Wom-

JL: I think it's because of both of our parents, it was just the way that we grew up. I think that it's part of our Jewish heritage also. There was always something that's called a tzedakah box, which is like a little metal bank that you'd put your change in, and that money would always go to charity. Tzedakah means charity. When we were children and we went trick-or-treating, we'd have a UNICEF box. It was what our parents did. There's another Jewish philosophy which is called tikunolam. Loosely transliterated from Hebrew, it means, "healing the world."

We raise money for traditional charities, that help people in need, we raise money for the arts — to make life richer, and we also raise money for politics,



The Full Compass sales team enjoys a playful moment

en ask the questions and they listen and they remember what they're told, so that they can use it again. Also, understanding the fact that you, as a business owner, better be able to work around the clock. I think for at least 25 years of being in business, we did nothing else. I mean, we were parents of kids who were working in the store, we were became parents of our employees who were kids who were working in the store. But we have a number of people who have been with us for over 30 years.

On the Full Compass website it states, "Giving back to the community has always been a Lipp family tradition." Can you speak to that tradition and who influenced this spirit of generosity?

for politicians that show the same sort of tradition and caring for wanting to afford a rich life, broad in both the arts and in human caring, to society. It all dovetails together. Susan has told people for many years that her motive for working as hard as she works is to be a philanthropist.

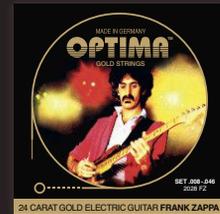
SL: When I met Jonathan, he was making \$3,000 a year, and I was making \$9,500 a year. And when I told him my goal in life was to become a philanthropist, I really meant it. It was so very important to me. It became just as important to him. We give because it's just what we do. It's what our hearts say is the right thing to do. And it's not just about school music and education, I sit on 13 boards, Jonathan is on three boards — a lot of them are arts boards

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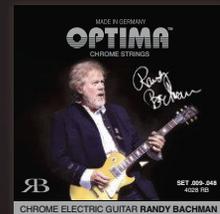
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The exterior of the Full Compass HQ

and extraordinarily meaningful.

JL: One of the most satisfying organizations that we've worked with is NAMM. Susan is a previous board member of NAMM, and she got me involved with their legislative committee with Mary Luehrsen, and was on the second NAMM Fly-in to Washington.

SL: I've been on all of them (the fly-ins) except for one when I was ill.

JL: Promoting music education is what we've been fighting with Congress for—to try and fix “No Child Left Behind,” so that it would be friendly to the arts. We have no idea if all the work we've done is going to collapse going into the next presidency because the future proposed Secretary of Education is very unfriendly to public education. These are people who would like to see the Department of Education go away. Whatever happens, it's been a very meaningful thing for us to go up on the Hill and promote the value of music and the arts.

SL: We were extraordinarily proud to be a part of the passing of the Every Student Succeeds Act and we were very, very excited about the fact that Tammy Baldwin who is Wisconsin's Democratic senator, was very involved with getting that passed.

JL: She worked across the aisle with Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and hammered out compromises to get what we've worked 12 years to get accomplished. It was wonderful lobbying and NAMM has done a superb job of convincing people that music education is a vitally important thing. I mean, to us, the aesthetic value of it is the only argument we need, but to everybody else, the side

effects; higher graduation rates, better grade points, less crime, more kids go to college, it teaches kids discipline and how to work together—the idea that it's traditionally been considered extracurricular is a mistake. If a musician comes to us looking for a job, we know here's somebody who knows how to work with other people.

SL: We've found that 79 percent of our employees are musicians and we also have a bunch of theatre people working for us.

JL: And a number of artists. Our vice president of operations has a degree in fine art. These are people who know how to think, accomplish, create, and solve problems.

SL: And people come here to work because they're artistic, and they really like to be able to have other people to talk to, who have something in common. When you think about the fact that we are more of a pro-audio business than MI — MI is a small part of what we do.

JL: MI is relatively a new thing for us, yet we've always had a very close affinity to the music business. This past four years in MI is about shifting opportunities. In the early '80s, home recording became a big thing. We moved into recording equipment, which of course I do well, and then we moved into education. Educators need audio equipment, but started asking for visual equipment also, so we became video dealers. Then we got into video production for theatrical productions. It was natural for us, we started selling lighting, intercoms, and rigging equipment for theatre, and of course the sound equipment we were

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The Lipp family in Israel



The University of Wisconsin had the first Spoken Word program in the U.S. Here are Susan and Jonathan, as scholarship sponsors, at a NY Knicks game with scholarship recipients

already selling worked in that venue. We began to address the entertainment industry, eventually the disco and dance club industry. And so we've changed tremendously based on changing opportunities. The variety of products we sell represents the multi-media world we are now in.

SL: Our name is Full Compass: We go the whole way around.

JL: Our name means that we do everything, which was a hand-me-down from the recording studio, which also did everything. We did commercials, albums, soundtracks, and training tapes. That's where the name came from

How do you feel your philanthropic

ic endeavors affect your company culture, and are your employees involved?

JL: Wonderful question. We like to try and mentor philanthropy to our employees. A lot of them are young when they come to us, so if there was any philanthropy in their family it was probably their parents doing the giving. It may or may not have been part of their culture. So we have many employee events and we have an employee committee that helps create these events to raise money.

SL: It's called the Charitable Contributions Committee.

JL: Susan and I typically match the funds that they raise. Also, we have a

very nice facility with a large studio space that can be used as a banquet or performance facility.

SL: It's a 4,500 square foot black box theatre. We built it as a black box theatre and video recording studio.

JL: We also have an on-site restaurant, which is primarily for our staff. We are able to self-cater charitable events, so we host about 10 a year for various different nonprofits to help them to raise money. And we subsidize it, so they're not paying a hotel for a ballroom and catering.

SL: We've got two coming up right now that I'm chairing, one in February and one in March, and they're only three weeks apart! They are both going to be a chef auction events, where we'll have a number of chefs bringing food and showing their wares and one is for Mardi Gras and the next is for St. Patrick's Day. The St. Patrick's Day event is going to be very interesting because that one is for the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, I sit on that board and have been involved with it for probably 17 or 18 years now. The Chamber Orchestra will play all kinds of music. It'll be everything from jazz to a solo violinist playing. It will be three hours of constant music, and a lot of food, costumes, and because it's on St. Patrick's Day, it'll be kind of a crazy party.

What is your proudest moment when you look back at 40 years of being in the industry?

JL: Well I think Susan's mentioned that NAMM gave her an award at one of the Fly-ins. What's it called?

SL: The SupportMusic.com Award (2007). Which, now they are only given to really important people. I got the second one ever, and it was a very proud moment. I think probably the most im-

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We give because it's just what we do. It's what our hearts say is the right thing to do.
— Susan Lipp

portant award that we've received in recent years was the AFP. **JL:** The Association of Fundraising Professionals does something called "Philanthropy Day" and in the local chapter gave us a lifetime achievement award.

SL: We've filled up rooms with plaques and awards. But the one that I keep in my office is the one from NAMM, and the one that we keep on a very prominent shelf at home is the one from AFP. To get a lifetime achievement award was pretty incredible

SL: We just got another lifetime achievement award from the MAMAs, which is the Madison-Area Music Association.

Full Compass has been named the third-largest woman-owned business in the state of Wisconsin, and recently the Milwaukee Business Journal named you number one — noting that "only businesses who submitted information were considered for inclusion on the list" — to what do you attribute your tremendous success?

SL: It's really weird because, when we were told about being first, it was like, "Yeah, right. I don't think so." But, neither one of us takes ourselves very seriously. We run our business by the

seat of our pants. Our managers would much prefer us to not be as impulsive as we are in running a business. But we take opportunities when they arise. You know, if you find somebody who is a fit, who is the right person for a job that hasn't been created yet, create the job around the person.

Again, congratulations on receiving this award, it has been an absolute pleasure speaking with the two of you. Is there anything else that you'd like to add, something I didn't ask you?

JL: You know, some of our best opportunities in life, whether it's finding a mate, or business opportunities, or anything else, those opportunities never come along on a convenient schedule. They come along on their own schedule and you have to be able to respond. Probably the biggest problem that some people have in business or in other endeavors is called paralysis-by-analysis. You can analyze something to death and you can plan it to the last dot and crossed "T," with pages and pages of projections in your business plan. You still have no control over future trends or the economy. There is so much you are still guessing about. You have to be responsive, because nothing ever comes out the way you plan it. Plans are only guidelines.

SL: Maybe a cake.

JL: Maybe a cake.

SL: You know, because you're following exact recipes on a cake. (She chuckles) I'm not that much of a baker, but I can bake because I know how to read. All it takes is to know how to read to do something.

JL: Well we have to know certain things, like the Three Stooges said, "The recipe didn't say anything about cracking the eggs!" **MMR**

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Madison Opera
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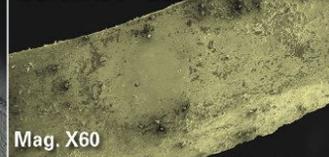


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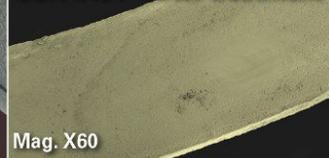
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Note From Joe

Thank You for Being Part of a Movement

Our industry's annual, global family reunion not only provides a platform for accomplishing business goals, but through NAMM's 'Circle of Benefits' business model also helps promote and bring music making to the world.

With each New Year comes new opportunities for personal and professional improvement, as well as the chance to make a positive impact on our local community and the world.

And while I'm sure you have many goals for the coming year, as a NAMM member, a NAMM Show attendee, and perhaps even a donor to the Believe in Music Fund, you've already made a positive impact on our industry. In fact, your support is the 'fuel' that powers our united movement to create a more musical world.

As the global music products and sound industry convenes in Southern California, we represent a multitude of nationalities, backgrounds, ideas, beliefs and unique business goals.

We like to think of The NAMM Show as our industry's crossroads, uniting a broad spectrum of music products professionals, music educators, pro audio, lighting and entertainment technology specialists to conduct the business of music and sound. With so many distinct groups converging at NAMM, the show becomes far more than the sum of its parts. It is a once-a-year opportunity to connect with professionals you may not be able to otherwise, share ideas, develop relationships, explore trends, garner a business vantage point and collectively drive our industry forward.

In a time when many choose to focus on our differences, uniting at The NAMM Show reminds us that we have so much in common—a shared passion for music, the certainty that it's a unifying force, and the belief that access to music improves lives.

Adhering to NAMM's Vision, Mission and five Objectives, the dedicated team at NAMM strive to serve our members by providing them with the resources necessary to succeed in business. And while The NAMM Show serves as a predictable and reliable platform for your business success, your participation at NAMM shows does something even more important. By contributing to our Circle of Benefits business model, by which we reinvest proceeds from the show back into growing our industry, you're part of a larger movement—one that supports The NAMM Foundation programs which help an untold number of people every year, representing all age demographics and walks of life. Your participation in the show also enables us to create more active music makers by giving people of all ages the opportunity to learn and grow with music.

Bottom line: your decision to support NAMM helps us in working toward and achieving our shared vision—a world in which the joy of making music is a precious element of daily living for everyone, a world in which every child has a deep desire to learn music and a recognized right to be taught, and in which every adult is a passionate champion and defender of that right.

We hope you achieve all of your goals in the year ahead and we thank you for being a champion of our movement—a champion of music, music education and music making around the world.

Joe Lamond
NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO



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The NAMM Foundation is a global leader in funding scientific research on the mental, physical, developmental and emotional benefits of music making. Research outcomes, following peer review publication and coordination with researchers, are broadly disseminated to inform the general public about the impact of music making. Research also informs public policy and advocacy.



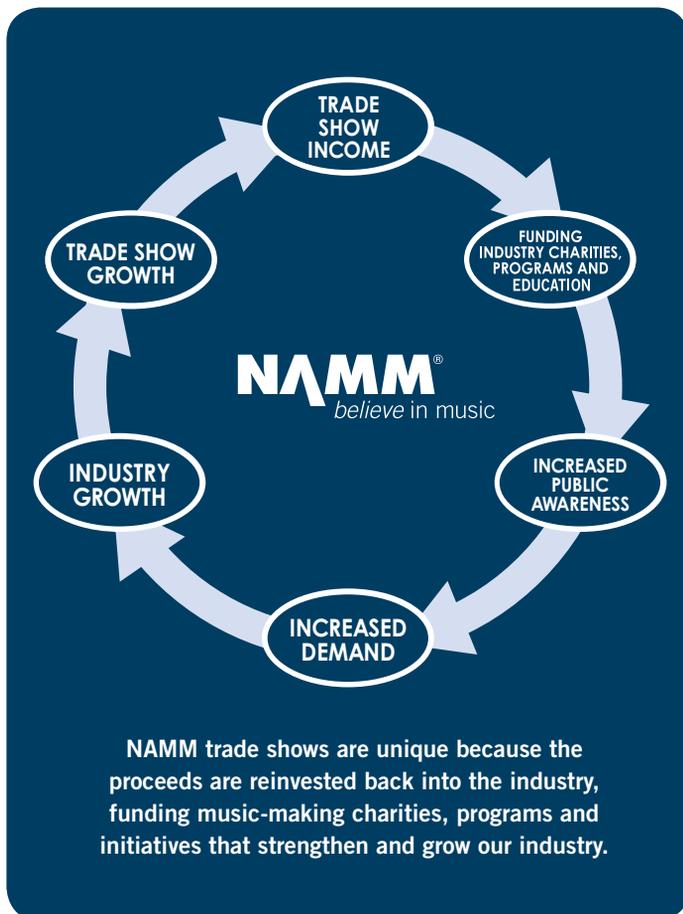
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Music and the arts are vital to every child's education. The NAMM Foundation offers tools and resources that celebrate and validate the importance of music in schools. The NAMM Foundation's Best Communities for Music Education, SupportMusic Coalition, Talking Up Music Education podcast, Music Education Days and GenNext are signature programs that celebrate music education and advance community support.



Lobbying

Year-round lobbying profoundly affects our members, from intellectual property rights to ensuring that the more than 50 million students in the U.S. receive music education as part of the ESEA reauthorization. Each May, NAMM conducts the annual Fly-In, uniting more than 100 members to meet directly with their state and national constituents to support music programs.



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Booth: 3010

GluBoost GluDry Accelerator

GluBoost GluDry Accelerator is now available with a new fragrance and packaging. GluDry is a non-blushing glue dry accelerator in the GluBoost family of products. GluDry is formulated to dry all CA glues instantly with a clear finish every time. Unlike other accelerators, build and repair work can be accomplished with no bubbling, pitting, hazing, blushing, or yellowing. GluDry speeds up your builds, fills and repairs by requiring less sanding time, thereby contributing to cleaner and safer workplace.



gluboot.com

Booth: 1630

LECTRICare Music Electronics

LECTRICare® Music Electronics is formulated to restore and condition amps, potentiometers, jacks, plugs, and other sound gear in order to eliminate noise. A micro-thin protective film coating remains to condition metal and hybrid conductive plastic surfaces. The included spray applicator makes it easy to reach the most hard-to-access areas. A lint-free cloth is recommended for wiping away the excess. Treated surfaces are dry to the touch in seconds. Will not harm plastics, cork, lacquer, wood, or vinyl finishes, and complies with all California "VOC" regulations.



soundsynergies.net

Booth: 2333

HW Products, Inc. Play-It-Safe Instrument Disinfecting System

HW Play-It-Safe™ instrument disinfecting system is formulated to reduce bacteria, viruses, mold, mildew, and yeast from your instrument. Simply apply a light mist of the non-toxic anti-microbial spray to the flexible microfiber applicator and pull it through any areas where saliva and germs collect. The HW Play-It-Safe comes in a re-sealable package and the applicator is washable.



hwproducts.com

Booth: 4806

StompLight DMX Pro

The StompLight International StompLight DMX Pro can work as a standalone stage light and offers sound responsive effects directed by the tap of a foot. It can also be powered with an optional rechargeable StompLight power bank. It houses an internal microphone and instrument input/output jacks, each with adjustable gain. A spectrum analyzer is included capable of producing lighting synched to the audio input or the ambient sound captured by the internal microphone. Effects include color organ, color wheel, and strobe. StompLight DMX Pro also offers DMX connectivity and connects to StompLight Pal or other 3-channel DMX lights. StompLight can be selected as a controller or used as a slave.



stomplight.com

Booth: 1183

Accessories

Jensen Tornado Stealth Speakers

The Jensen Tornado Stealth 100 is derived from the original Jensen Tornado used in Fender's GB Signature Twin Reverb with an added bell cover on the magnet assembly.

The Tornado Stealth 65 is designed to feature; warm low end, relaxed mids, and rounded highs; response to overdrive distortion with easy breakup and punch; and extended harmonics.

The Tornado Stealth 80 is designed as well-balanced from low to high end with powerful lows, firm mids, and sparkling highs. When presented with overdrive distortion, the Stealth 80 remains smooth with detailed note definition.



jensentone.com

Booth: 4893

Amplification

Traynor SB106 Bass Combo

The newest edition to the popular Small Block series is 9 by 12-inches and weighs in under 15 lbs. The 200-watt Traynor SB106 combo uses a studio monitor quality 6.5-inch speaker in its solid plywood and metal cabinet. Fully featured for professional bass players needing a small, lightweight but powerful amplifier solution, the SB106 offers both Passive and Active ¼-inch Instrument Inputs, selectable Pre or Post EQ XLR DI Output for direct connect to front-of-house mixer and an additional ¼-inch Speaker Output to drive an additional extension cabinet when necessary (4-ohm minimum). The rear mounted ¼-inch headphone jack defeats the internal speaker for private rehearsal. An 1/8th-inch TRS Auxiliary In jack, also on the rear of the amp, allows direct connection to any music source.



yorkville.com

Booth: 210B

Boss Katana Series Guitar Amps

The new BOSS Katana guitar amp series lineup consists of three combo amplifiers and an amplifier head. The 50-watt Katana-50 and 100-watt Katana-100 are each equipped with a custom 12-inch speaker.

The Katana-100/212 has 100 watts of power and is equipped with two custom 12-inch speakers. The 100-watt Katana-Head is designed for use with an external speaker cabinet such as the Waza Amp Cabinet 412, but includes a convenient integrated monitor speaker for tone preview and practice.



boss.info

Booth: 300A

Amplification

Fender Acoustasonic 40 Amplifier

The Acoustasonic 40 amplifier offers portable amplification for acoustic-electric guitars and microphones. The new amplifier is a simple, flexible "grab and go" solution for a variety of musical performances, public speaking occasions and as an onstage monitor, when combined with a PA system.

Other features include two channels, each with combination XLR and ¼" inputs, three-band equalizer controls, digital hall reverb, headphone output, auxiliary input, XLR line output for use with PA system or recording gear and vintage-style brown textured vinyl covering. Launching February 2017. Price: \$199.99



fender.com

Booth: 300E, 304

Pro Audio

Fishman SA Performance Audio System

Fishman's SA Performance Audio System consists of the SA330x wide dispersion modified line array speaker system, the SA Sub subwoofer and the SA Expand 4-channel expander/mixer.

The SA330x, alone or in conjunction with the SA Sub and SA Expand, is designed for solo acoustic performers, small combos, DJs, keyboardists, corporate presenters at trade shows or in conference rooms—any who need to be heard in small-to-medium sized space where a portable, practical and full-frequency amplification solution is required.



fishman.com

Booth: 4340

Yamaha TF-RACK

The TF-RACK is a compact rack-mount version of the Yamaha's TF Series digital mixing consoles. TF-RACK offers all of the features

found in TF Series desktop models released in 2015, and is intended for smaller or more portable venues, particularly when a proper mix position may not be available. The rack-mount edition carries the same core engine – Steinberg® Nuendo Live recording software, apps for mixing and expansion capabilities – as each of the other models. In addition, the TF Series rack-mount mixer will ship with firmware version 3.0 that adds full fader views on its touch screen, the ability to add an administrator password, and many other enhancements.

Yamaha TF Series Rack-Mount Mixer (MSRP: \$2,100) is currently shipping.



4wrd.it/tfrack

**Booth: 100,
Elite3, 102**

Pro Audio

RCF E Series Analog Mixing Consoles



Tradition redefined is how RCF is touting the new E Series of analog mixing desks. The console features specifically designed mix preamps, dynamic compressors on mic input channels, semi-parametric four-band EQ, stereo USB port for recording or playback, USB power port to feed external devices, foot switch input to control effects, long-throw faders, and onboard Z.Core DSP effects.

rcf-usa.com

Booth: 6780

Steinberg's Cubase Pro 9, Artist, and Elements Editions

Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH Cubase Pro, Artist, and Elements editions are each crafted to suit the different needs and levels of expertise in music recording and production. While Cubase Pro 9 is engineered to meet the standards of professional producers, composers, and mixing engineers, Cubase Artist 9 steps down a gear yet provides a comprehensive set of tools tailored to instrumentalists and songwriters. Cubase Elements 9 is the gateway to the world of Cubase, providing a straightforward way for recording high-quality audio.



steinberg.net

Booth: Elite3

Bourns PSP01 Motorized Master Slide Potentiometer

Bourns Pro Audio designed its Model PSP01 motorized master slide potentiometer with an extended cycle life of up to 1 million cycles. This 100mm slide potentiometer features a high-quality motor with direct drive belt design and a touch sense lever that offers superior quality, reliability, and improved smooth operation.



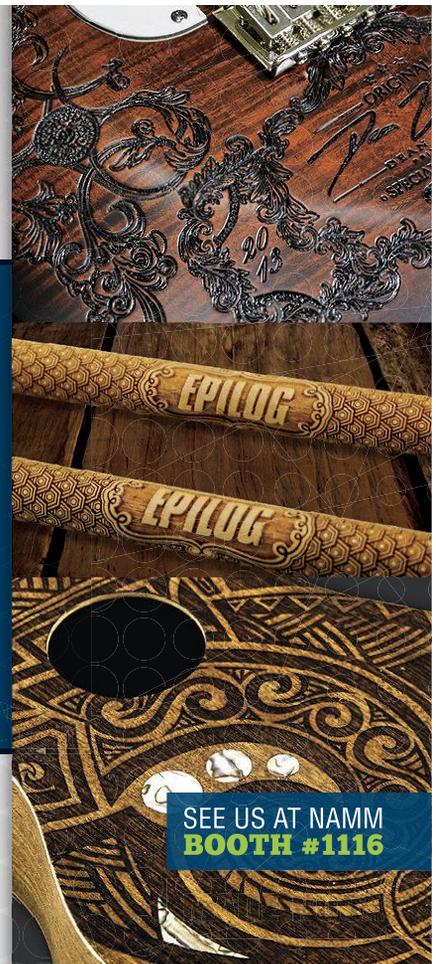
bourns.com

Booth: 6861

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Pro Audio

Artesia Recording Bundle

The Virgin Musical Instrument Company Artesia Recording Bundle is a complete recording package w/ interface, software, monitors, headphones and microphone. The bundle includes:



the Artesia A22xt Two bus-powered, 2-channel, USB/iPad audio/MIDI interface for Mac, Windows, and iPad; and Bitwig 8 Track DAW software for Mac and Windows. The Artesia recording Bundle enables the user to transfer songs direct to the Bitwig 8 track via iTunes between iPad and Mac or PC and to capture sound with the AMC-10 large-diaphragm condenser mic and monitor with M-200 active studio monitors or your AMH-122 monitor headphones.

virginmusicalinstrumentcompany.com **Booth: 6110**

VocoPro UDH-ULTRA Flexible Hybrid Wireless Systems

UDH-4-ULTRA and UDH-8-ULTRA, comes with 4 or 8 handheld, lapel and headset mics, body-pack transmitters, and instrument cables. This system allows users to mix and match any combination of wireless handheld, lapel, and headset mics or even wireless instrument bodypacks in either 4 or 8 channel models.



vocopro.com **Booth: 6010**

Fretted

Fender American Professional

Launching January 2017, Fender introduces its new, American-made flagship series of electric guitars and basses: American Professional. With new pickups, neck profiles, colors, and two new models—the Jazzmaster® and Jaguar® guitars—the American Professional series combines Fender's longstanding history of quality, handmade craftsmanship and industry innovation. Built for professional players, the series is comprised of contemporary versions of classic Fender



designs paired with modern playability. American Professional Series instruments are available in a variety of ash and alder body styles, including newly designed Stratocaster®, Telecaster®, Jazzmaster®, Jaguar®, Precision Bass® and Jazz Bass® models. Price Range: \$1,399.99-\$1,599.99

fender.com **Booth: 300E, 304**

Marquee 'Heaven' Electric Guitar

The Marquee "Heaven" Electric Guitar (MQG99) has a solid single cutaway style body with a set-in maple neck



and rosewood fingerboard. Two high output double-coil pickups provide a whole lotta tones and great sustain, and the die cast chrome machine heads and stop bar tail piece with adjustable tune-o-matic bridge provide solid tuning and issue-free intonation.

jhs.co.uk **Booth: 5279**

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Fretted

Fret King Country Squire Fluence

The Butterscotch finished Fret-King Country Squire 'Fluence' FKV2F-BS uses the same tone wood mix of Alder, Maple and Rosewood for the body, neck and fingerboard respectively, combined with a Wilkinson innovative WTB bridge that provides a traditional 3 saddle design for the very best sustain and tonal transfer. The Fishman Fluence PRF-TEL-003 pickup system and rechargeable battery pack again gives the player a choice of of the very best guitar sounds, combining the clear, warm presence of a standard single coil and then taking 'over the top' via the push/pull pot into a musical, hot Texas overdrive, without losing those precious highs.



jhs.co.uk

Booth: 5279

Godin Guitars La Patrie Arena Thinline Series



La Patrie Arena thinline series features a generous cutaway to allow the player to explore the entire radiused fingerboard of its Mahogany neck. These guitars feature intricate rosettes, custom polished finishes, and an innovative double-function truss rod system not generally found in traditional classical guitars. The four models in the series are offered in a choice of three tonewoods: Mahogany, Wild Cherry, or Flame Maple. All benefit from select pressure tested Spruce tops to ensure the highest levels of stiffness and rigidity along with maximum harmonic vibration. Offered with either Godin's Q1T electronics or L.R. Baggs Crescent II preamp. Hand-crafted in Canada

lapatrieguitars.com

Booth: 211AB

Seagull Guitars Coastline Momentum HG A/E Guitar

Seagull Guitars Coastline Momentum is a hand-crafted guitar featuring an thin high gloss custom polished finish to accentuate the wild cherry back and sides while allowing the solid Cedar top to vibrate freely. It also features a smooth satin hand-finished silver leaf maple neck, Adirondack spruce bracing, Seagull's new high ratio tuners, Fishman Sonitone electronics, Tusq® nut and saddle and rosewood fingerboard and bridge. Street price: \$499.



seagullguitars.com

Booth: 211AB

Godin Summit Classic Ltd Desert Blue

Godin Summit Classic Ltd Desert Blue features a vintage vibe with the playability of a premium modern guitar, this limited-run guitar is a classic single-cutaway. Each guitar is loaded with hand-wound Bare Knuckle Mule pickups designed to deliver clarity and punch whether played clean or overdriven. The High Gloss Desert Blue finish contains a hint of sparkle. Its ergonomically carved maple top is a mahogany body with 5 hollow chambers strategically placed throughout the guitar's body. Each is tap-tuned to a different note to ensure rich, musical tones and consistent note-to-note balance. This lightweight and resonant chambered guitar comes with special Godin hardshell case.



godinguitars.com

Booth: 211AB

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Fretted

KMC Music Reissues Hamer Guitars Import Series



KMC Music reissues six of Hamer Guitars best-selling Import Series guitars featuring 50% dealer margins.

The models include the Vector Flame (VECF-HB) which features a solid maple top with figured honey burst maple veneer, rosewood fingerboard, mahogany neck, Hamer-designed Humbucker pick-ups, and Master Volume/Dual Tone electronics. The Vector Flame carries a Manufacturer Advertised Price (MAP) of \$799.99.

The Standard Flame (STDF-CS) guitar that traces its roots to the original Hamer USA Standard guitar introduced in 1974. The reissued standard flame-top body model features a solid maple cap and figured cherry sunburst maple veneer, as well as a mahogany neck, rosewood fingerboard, Hamer-designed Humbucker pick-ups, Master Volume/Dual Tone electronics and a MAP of \$799.99.

The Sunburst Archtop Flame Top (SATFW-DCB) guitar has a solid maple top, figured maple veneer, dark cherry burst gloss finish, mahogany neck, rosewood fingerboard, Hamer-designed Humbucker pick-ups, and Master Volume/Dual Tone electronics. This same model is also available in a transparent black gloss finish (Model SATF-TBK). Model SATFW-DCB has a MAP of \$799.99 while Model SATF-TBK has a MAP of \$749.99.

The Hamer Special Junior (SPJ-NT) guitar is a slightly downsized version of the Sunburst guitar originally introduced by Hamer in 1980. It features a double cut-away body, mahogany body material and neck, rosewood fingerboard, single Dog-Ear P90 pick-up, and Single Volume/Single Tone electronics. It carries a MAP of \$599.99.

Monaco Flame (MONF-CS) single cut-away body guitar featuring a solid maple top, figured maple veneer, a cherry sunburst gloss finish, a rosewood fingerboard, Master Volume/Dual Tone electronics, and Hamer-designed Humbuckers. The Monaco Flame is available with a MAP of \$749.99.

Gig bags are available separately for the entire line, which will be available for delivery at the end of January 2017.

hamerguitars.com

Booth: 5740

D'Angelico Premier Series

The D'Angelico Premier Series is comprised of custom designs and performance-driven features. From a traditional jazz archtop to two all-new solid-bodies, the Premier Series offers remarkable variety.



Featuring custom pickups, and body designs built to maximize each model's organic tone, the Premier Series focuses on comfort, tone, and aesthetics.

dangelicoguitars.com

Booth: 212AB

Loog Guitars Loog Mini and Loog Pro



The Loog Mini is a new, smaller version of the Acoustic Loog Guitar. Designed for kids 3 and up, it comes in a wide color palette and has a suggested street price of \$79. Just like all Loog Guitars, the Loog Mini includes access to the Loog app

The Loog Pro is an upgraded version of the original Loog Guitar. It introduces a new pickup, a new all-maple neck, a new bridge, and other enhancements that improve its sound, intonation and playability. The Loog Pro line will have acoustic and electric models that will retail for \$179 and \$199, respectively.

Loog will be at Hal Leonard's booth at the NAMM Show.

loogguitars.com

Booth: 5720

VKnob



NAMM Booth 1777

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Fretted

Italia Guitars Imola Vario

The Italia Imola Vario is a redesign of the Imola 6 with a re-designed body cavity for better tone as well as weight reduction, and more tonal variation in the pickup configurations. Added features include; a five position rotary switch, a Wilkinson WV6 Vintage tremolo with Italia locking machines, with a graphite nut to keep things in tune. The chambered alder body with maple top are bolted to a rock maple neck with rosewood fingerboard and Italia's inverted headstock.



italiaguitarsusa.com

Booth: 5283

Ortega Guitars Horizon Series Ukuleles



Ortega Guitars Horizon Series ukuleles include three-in-line reversed headstocks, all satin finishes, and three different tone woods—bamboo (RUBO/RUBO-CE), mango (RUMG/RUMG-CE), and rosewood (RURW-CC-LTD/RURW-CE)—and two body shapes (non-cutaway or cutaway with built in MagusUke preamp system). All ukes of the series feature a concert size body, an okoume neck, rosewood fretboard and bridge, and golden die cast tuning machines and come strung with Aquila concert strings. A free deluxe gig bag is included with each model.

ortegaguitars.com

Booth: 1317

Oscar Schmidt Flag Guitar and The Quarter-Sized Guitar

Oscar Schmidt Flag Guitar and The Quarter-Sized Guitar

The Oscar Schmidt Flag Guitar is a concert-sized, cut-away guitar special edition model that features a graphic of the American flag. The acoustic/electric Flag Guitar includes Barcus Berry four-band EQ with a built-in tuner and black die-cast tuning machines. The guitar carries a suggested retail price of \$399.90.

The Oscar Schmidt Quarter-Sized steel string guitar is ideal for youngsters just starting out their musical journey. This new guitar model features an overall length of 30-inches and body dimensions of 14"L X 10-1/2"W at lower bout X 3-3/4"D. The model's nut width is 38mm. It features chrome die-cast tuners and a spruce top and mahogany back and sides. The new guitar features a suggested retail price of \$204.90.



oscarschmidt.com

Booth: 5740

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Fretted

Alvarez Armrest Models for Artist Series

Alvarez Armrest AG/AR Artist Series models are featured in two series, the 60 and 70. The 60s will feature a solid sitka spruce top with mahogany backs and sides, with a rosewood armrest. The 70s is delivered in solid sitka spruce with rosewood backs and sides, with an armrest made of flamed maple for a beautiful contrast. Visit Alvarez at the St. Louis Music booth.



alvarezguitars.com

Booth: 4000

Beard Guitars Belle Beard and Copper Mountain

Based on Paul Beard's original open body E-Model shape, the Belle Beard body design features a secondary hand spun aluminum passive radiator cone, which is suspended on a soundpost within the body. This sympathetic cone is designed to add clarity to the guitar's sonic range.



The Copper Mountain line takes an innovative approach to resonator construction. The composite back is designed to increase volume and projection, and produces a rich tone. The Finnish birch laminate top and solid maple neck with ebony fretboards are available in four distinctive mountainburst satin finishes. This line features Paul Beard's triple-spun Legend Cone™, Original #14™ Spider, and Bass reflex baffle.

In both models a Fishman Nashville series pickup is included.

beardguitars.com

Booth: 1408

D-Day Mandolin from Vintage

The 'D-Day Mandolin' has been reproduced by Vintage® as a reminder of the sacrifices made over 70 years ago by those remarkable servicemen and women, and the importance of musical instruments in raising morale during wartime conflict. Featuring a white ash body, with nyatoh neck and Indonesian rosewood fingerboard, including aged hardware and inscriptions as a 'nod' to the original, the D-Day Mandolin is tonally responsive and very easy to play. A message scratched onto the upper side (and replicated on the rear of the D-Day Mandolin) reads: "God helped us. USS LCT 639 hit (Omaha) beach off France on June 6 1944." Supplied with a zero gravity carry case, the D-Day Mandolin is endorsed by Gordon Giltrap.



jhs.co.uk

Booth: 5279



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Accessories

ISP Technologies THETA PRO DSP Guitar Preamp Processor



ISP Technologies limited edition, signature model of the THETA PRO DSP™ Guitar preamp processor was designed in collaboration with Michael Sweet, guitarist from Stryper. The MS version includes additional post distort parametric equalization and also includes ISP's new algorithms for both Rotary speaker and ping-pong delay. It is a floor controlled guitar system with a fully programmable digital Theta preamp, Vintage preamp, plus Studio quality effects processing. The new DSP platform uses 32 bit floating point processing and the latest generation of high quality audio converters.

isptechnologies.com

Booth: 5860

EMG Retro Active Series

With a brand new preamp and a classic open coil design, EMG has introduced the Retro Active humbucker pickup sets. Retro Active pickups are reminiscent of designs from the past, while utilizing the benefits of decades of technological advancement. The new Retro Active sets bring the best of both worlds to players with traditional bobbins, windings, and pole pieces designed to produce cleaner tone and removing the hum and noise traditionally associated with non-active humbuckers. Retail: \$279.99



emgpickups.com

Booth: 4784

WD Music Kluson 8-String Lap Steel Tuners



WD Music Kluson 8-String Lap Steel Tuners

Kluson has revived the four per plate tuners and the steel mounting tray used on the 8-string Fender "Stringmaster" lap steels. These are exact reproductions and will retrofit the user's original Stringmaster tuner tray. The tuners are made in the original nickel finish, and are also available in chrome and gold. Pricing for complete set of tuners plus tray in matching plating ranges from \$125.00 - \$155.00.

kluson.com wdmusic.com

Booth: 3091

Fuzzrocious Pedals Blast Furnace



Fuzzrocious Pedals lifts the curtain on its newest creation the Blast Furnace stomp box with art designed by Lehigh Mining & Navigation. Blast Furnace is designed to weave together fuzz and an ambient reverb to your sound.

fuzzrociouspedals.com

Booth: 1599

A promotional graphic for OMG Music. It features a woman with blonde hair and sunglasses, smiling. Surrounding her are various guitar accessories: guitar picks, guitar straps, guitar strings, and guitar stands. A starburst graphic at the bottom says 'NAMM HALL C #4850'. The text 'OMG Music' is prominently displayed.

omgmusic.com

1-800-675-2501

Accessories

Schaller M6 and M6 Mini

Schaller M6 and M6 Mini tuning machine series feature 18:1 Velvet-Tec™ and LX6-Lube™ for tuning precision and comfort. M6 is available in five different designs: M6 (double) Pin, M6 180°, M6 135°, M6 90°, M6 Mini. It also includes button options in large or small sizes: metal, perloid, ebony, galalith, polybone; six different stringposts — locking, toplocking, solid and slotted headstock, classical and classical deluxe ; and ten different colors — nickel, chrome, satin chrome, black chrome, gold, ruthenium, satinpearl, vintage copper, satin black, and satin gold.



schaller.info

Booth: 2036

D'Addario Accessories Beatles Straps and Picks

The D'Addario Accessories Beatles-licensed guitar straps and picks feature vegan straps (leather strap style adjuster) with designs from "Meet the Beatles," "Yellow Submarine," "Sgt. Pepper," and "Revolver." Additionally, there are four polyester straps being re-released that feature art from the "White Album" and variations of famous Beatles logos. The pick line features two pack-out styles: a blister daisy pick pack available in all gauges and a collectable pick tin (medium gauge only).



planetwaves.com

Booth: 4834

DUO

The AirTurn DUO wireless foot switch with rechargeable battery provides dozens of uses for musicians from scrolling lyrics and turning pages to triggering effects. Made in USA.



PED

The AirTurn PED provides a low cost solution for musicians for all their tablet control needs. Made in USA.



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goStand, the world's most portable mic and tablet stand. Accessories also available including Telescoping Boom and Side Mount Clamp for the MANOS or other mic threaded devices.

www.airturn.com

On-Stage Ukulele Strap

The On-Stage Ukulele Strap is designed for any ukulele with a standard sound hole. This all nylon, fully adjustable strap requires no button holes, providing the musician with comfort and convenience.



on-stage.com

Booth: 5940

Henry Heller Embroidered Balance Series

Henry Heller Balance embroidered series are custom guitar straps available in six woven cotton colors including: purple, fuchsia, green, sky, black, or blue. Handmade in the Noblesville, Indiana, USA facility. Available at the OMG Music booth.



henryhellermusic.com

Booth: 4850

Perri's Leathers Emoji Collection Guitar Straps & Picks

Perri's Leathers new range of licensed guitar straps and picks feature



iconic and popular emojis. The forty-six guitar strap designs are heat transfer printed on to both sides of 2.5" wide polyester web straps which are adjustable from 39" to 58". The designs are themed and include Beach Party, Party Time, Tuxedo, Monkey Santa, and many more. Made in Canada to rigorous quality standards, these licensed straps are finished with genuine leather ends.

perris.ca

Booth: 5276

Accessories

Levy's Leathers Vance and Ignite Guitar Straps

The MG317VAN (VANCE) features a soft garment leather top with suede backing and a decorative stitch. The strap is fully adjustable and available in black (BLK) and British tan (BTA).

The MC8IGN (IGNITE) is a 2" natural cotton guitar strap with suede ends and decorated with a trio of geometric glyphs. The strap features tri-glide adjustment and is available in patterns pictured from left to right 001; 002; 003.

See these and 28 other new for 2017 straps at Levy's NAMM Booth.



leavysleathers.com

Booth: 4656

Electrozinc Strings

More than fifty years ago, John D'Angelico and John D'Addario's chance meeting resulted in the invention of the modern round wound electric guitar string, the zinc-coated Bethanized™ Steel. Its sound was unrivaled in fullness, volume, and brightness. Today, their legendary innovation returns in the form of Electro-zinc.



dangelicoguitars.com

Booth: 212 AB

D'Addario Nickel Bronze Strings for Mandolin

Nickel Bronze is a result of the combination of phosphor bronze and nickel designed to produce a warm sound and reveal the unique tonal characteristics of a mandolin. They also include D'Addario-engineered NY Steel cores and plain steel strings designed to improve tuning stability and higher break resistance. These strings retail for \$18.50.



daddario.com

Booth: 4834

Elixir Strings Optiweb Coating

Elixir Strings Optiweb Coating is a lightweight coating designed to sound indistinguishable from uncoated strings, but with a long lasting tone life. The Optiweb Coating is a proprietary process that not only protects the string from the elements for longer tone life, but also allows the string to vibrate with less damping - for a crisp tone with a firm, natural grip, putting the user in control of bends, vibrato, and sustain.



elixirstrings.com

Booth: 4872

The Cavern Club Ukulele Outfits

The Cavern Club Ukulele outfits come in three different artwork designs - 'The Wall' (CVUK1) featuring the names of the many, many bands that have graced that hallowed stage in its seven decades, 'Fab Faces' (CVUK2) adorned by close-up illustrations of some band from Liverpool, and the simply named 'Cavern' (CVUK3) which shows iconic internal scenes and historic bill posters from one of the worlds most famous venues.



jhs.co.uk

Booth: 5279

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prenticepracticepads.com

Accessories

HeadRush Pedalboard

The HeadRush Pedalboard features a quad-core processor. Powered by its Eleven HD Expanded DSP software, the HeadRush Pedalboard is designed to deliver versatile, realistic-sounding and responsive amplifier, cabinet, microphone, and FX models. It is housed in a rugged, road-ready steel chassis and features twelve footswitches



with their own OLED displays that are easily viewable from all angles. The heart of the HeadRush Pedalboard is the 7-inch touch display and its guitarist-oriented user interface, enabling guitarists to touch, swipe, and drag-and-drop to instantly create and edit their rigs in an intuitive way. The large display also gives ultra-clear feedback when performing live especially when making slight changes to your tone using the 'Hands-Free Mode'. U.S. retail price is \$1,199.

headrushelectronics.com

Booth: 206B

Babicz Full Contact Hardware LX2 Twin-Locking Tailpiece

Babicz and AP International, distributors of Full Contact Hardware, unveil the newly-patented LX2 tailpiece. The LX2 features locking set screws combined with two stud nuts, firmly holding the tailpiece in place both laterally and vertically. This twin-locking design creates the most stable, rock-solid tailpiece available on the market today. The LX2 tailpiece is designed to fit Gibson-type Les Paul or SG model guitars and will be offered in chrome, black, and gold finishes. The product is expected to ship in the second quarter of 2017.



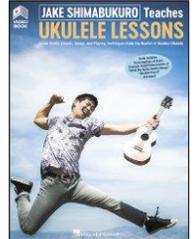
fullcontacthardware.com

Booth: 4862

Print & Digital

Hal Leonard
Jake Shimabukuro
Instructional Video Book

Jake Shimabukuro is a known as a virtuoso player and arranger of ukulele music, he's also a composer and advocate for music education.



Jake Shimabukuro Teaches Ukulele Lessons features Jake introducing notes, chords, songs, and playing techniques. The book includes instruction, transcriptions, and a full-length online video featuring Jake teaching and demonstrating all the skills and techniques from the book. The audio files include PLAYBACK+, a multi-functional audio player that allows players to slow down audio without changing pitch, set loop points, change keys, and pan left or right.

The book with online audio and video retails for \$19.99.

halleonard.com

Booth: 5720

Hal Leonard Piano
Super Easy



Hal Leonard *Super Easy Songbook* series features accessible arrangements for piano, with simple right-hand melody, letter names inside each note, and basic left-hand chord diagrams. Books also include lyrics, when applicable. The series will debut with seven volumes: The Beatles, Broadway Classics, Classical, Disney, Hit Songs, Hymns, and Kids' Songs. Each *Super Easy Songbook* includes sixty songs and retails for \$14.99.

halleonard.com

Booth: 5720

I'm totally digging the sound on stage; so much presence and no feedback problems at very loud volumes. I'm spreading the word on this great pickup.

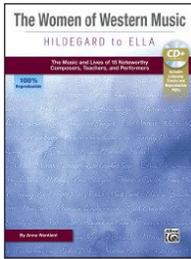
—Tony Garnier,
Bassist for Bob Dylan

RealistAcoustic.com

Print & Digital

Alfred Music
The Women of Western Music: Hildegard to Ella

Alfred Music *The Women of Western Music: Hildegard to Ella* is a classroom resource focusing on the lives of 18 female composers, musicians, and teachers. This long-awaited manual focuses exclusively on the female artists who haven't made it into most textbooks, such as Clara Schumann, Amy Beach, Marian Anderson, Ethel Merman, and Billie Holiday. The lesser known history about the women in this book truly exemplify their outstanding musical accomplishments and contributions. This reproducible book includes biographies, student assessments, and recordings making integration into curriculum simple. Recommended for grades five and up.



The Women of Western Music is available for \$34.99.

alfred.com

Booth: 4618

Alfred Music Sound Innovations for Concert Band: Ensemble Development for Young

Alfred Music *Sound Innovations for Concert Band: Ensemble Development for Young Concert Band* is a complete curriculum for beginning band students to help them grow as ensemble musicians. The series complements any band method and supplements any performance music. It contains 167 exercises, including more than 100 chorales. Various exercises at the grade ½, 1, and 1½ levels are grouped by key. The book is available for \$5.99 (instrument books), \$12.99 (piano), and \$39.99 (Conductor's Score).

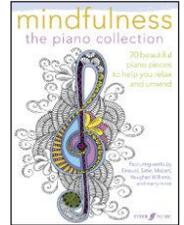


alfred.com

Booth: 4618

Alfred Music
Mindfulness: The Piano Collection available

Alfred Music *Mindfulness: The Piano Collection* contains 20 beautiful piano pieces, each one carefully chosen to help you relax and unwind. Each piece is preceded by a short paragraph recommending simple mindfulness approaches that can be integrated when learning and playing the music. With the help of well-known composers such as Chopin, Debussy, Beethoven, and Satie, as well as 6 full-page, music-themed images to color in. *Mindfulness: The Piano Collection* is available for \$15.95.



alfred.com

Booth: 4618

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2016 MMR DEALERS CHOICE AWARD Acoustic Guitar of the Year

www.RiversongGuitars.com

At Booth 4131C

Piano & Keyboard

Lowrey Rialto



The Lowrey Rialto model is based on the EY platform, and includes Rialto's collection of player features, and classic design.

A collection of dynamic setups; including standard, vintage, category, and (programmable) bank setups, gives the Rialto the Lowrey 'touch and play' ease of operation. In addition to these easy-to-access setups the Rialto offers substantial customizable capabilities for a variety of musical expression.

lowrey.com

Booth: 5313

Yamaha AvantGrand N3X

Yamaha AvantGrand N3X is a follow up to the company's N3, the AvantGrand N3X has been updated to include captured samples of the Yamaha CFX and Bösendorfer Imperial grand pianos. The N3X retains the exclusive features found in the N3, including sound sampling technology, a speaker system, and an array of actuators (Tactile Response System) that are designed to recreate the key vibrations intrinsic to a concert grand piano. The following upgrades: four-channel yamaha CFX grand piano sample, four-channel Bösendorfer Imperial Grand piano sample, bin-aurally sampled CFX sound source (for use with headphones), 10 voices, XLR jacks, balanced output (for stage & recording studio use), and USB audio recording.

The N3X is available now at authorized Yamaha piano retailers with an MSRP of \$22,199.

4wrd.it/avantgrand3X



Booth: 100, Elite3, 102

Bösendorfer 214VC Grand Piano

Yamaha introduces the Bösendorfer 214VC. With the introduction of the 214VC, musicians can now enjoy the distinctive Bösendorfer Vienna Concert sound in a smaller instrument. The seven foot size makes it a perfect option for playing in a more intimate setting. It is also available as a Conservatory Series (214VC CS) with a satin finish. The diverse range of tonal colors makes the 214VC versatile for a wide range of genres and styles including classical, jazz, contemporary, chamber music, and more. Bösendorfer 214VC (MSRP: \$154,999) will ship in January 2017.

4wrd.it



Booth: 100, Elite3, 102

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Roland JUNO-106 SYSTEM-8 PLUG-OUT Synthesizer

Roland SYSTEM-8 PLUG-OUT Synthesizer features the latest generation of Analog Circuit Behavior (ACB) technology. The SYSTEM-8 delivers a wide range of sounds inspired by over four decades of legendary Roland synths. To complement its internal sound engine, the SYSTEM-8 can host and control up to three Roland PLUG-OUT software synthesizers such as the included, downloadable JUPITER-8, and new JUNO-106 PLUG-OUT, which is also now included and available for download. The synth also includes a massive array of hands-on controls, as well as a polyphonic step sequencer, vocoder, CV/GATE outputs, arpeggiator, and other creative tools.

The SYSTEM-8 PLUG-OUT Synthesizer is offered at \$1,499 street.

roland.com



Booth: 300A

Band & Orchestra

E.K. Blessing BFH-1541 Flugelhorn

E.K. Blessing BFH-1541 is an ideal choice for a student up to professional player in need of a seamless transition between trumpet and flugelhorn during performance. The newly designed lead pipe and bell help balance the instrument's resistance while maintaining continuity in all registers and preserving the flugelhorn's signature sound. The Blessing 1541 Flugelhorn comes complete with the following models and specs: BFH-1541RT – rose brass bell in satin finish with a shiny inner bell finished in clear lacquer; BFH-1541RTS – rose brass bell in silver-plate satin finish shiny.



stlouismusic.com

Booth: 4000

XO Lightweight Bb Trumpet

KHS America announced the XO 1602S-LTR lightweight Bb Trumpet. The 1602S-LTR features a .460" medium-large bore size with nickel-silver mouthpiece receiver and reverse rose brass leadpipe, one-piece 5" yellow brass lightweight bell with a fast taper, yellow brass valve casings, balusters and tuning slides.



xobross.com

Booth: 3220, 3240

Yamaha SEVR Bb and A Clarinets

Yamaha's new Custom SEVR Bb and A clarinets are a product for the progressing clarinetist designed to provide the player with more expressive freedom. The keys have been redesigned with thicker silver-plating, allowing for more comfortable and ergonomic hand placement and a warm, dark sound. A new barrel design provides the player with more expressive freedom and durable leather pads provide a rich tone quality and an improved seal for easier response. (These new instruments replace YCL-SEV and YCL-SEVA.)

Yamaha YCL-SEVR and YCL-SEVRA (MSRP: Bb \$4,326; A \$5,356) will ship in January 2017.



4wr.d.it/avantgrand3X/yamahaclarinets

Booth: 100, Elite3, 102

Accessories

D'Addario Orchestral Helicore Set for Octave Violin

The Helicore Octave Violin set is designed to be played one octave below traditional violin tuning for a new world of tonal and stylistic possibilities. These strings allow a violin to play in the upper range of the cello, producing a lower tonal spectrum for the instrument. Helicore is often preferred by alternative-style and electric instrument players. Scaled to fit 4/4 size violin only, these medium tension strings are made in the USA and optimized to the needs of a majority of players. The Helicore Octave Violin Set is made with blue and gold spiral silking (ball end) and an additional blue band (peg end). The string set retails for \$130, with individual strings sold as well.



daddario.com

Booth: 4834

Hollywoodwinds Bravo Baritone Saxophone Reeds

Hollywoodwinds released a new Bravo Baritone Saxophone reed. Bravo Reeds are non-toxic synthetic reeds made to EU stringent standards. The new baritone reeds also come with a Legos-style reed case, which snaps together into blocks for easy storage in the instrument's case.

Hollywoodwinds also offers the Reed Booster, in sizes for soprano saxophone and clarinet, alto saxophone and clarinet, tenor saxophone and bass clarinet, and baritone saxophone. These adhesive-backed bumps are designed to improve a reed's sonic production, save reeds which would otherwise be discarded, and help the player to develop a unique sound.

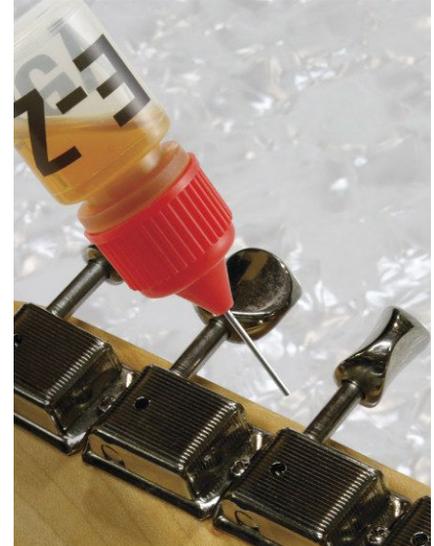


bravoreeds.net

Booth: 3524

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Cases & Stands

TKL Glacier White, Alumin-X Vectra, and Vectra Series Soft Cases



TKL expands its line of patented Vectra® molded hard cases with a new series of Vectra-shaped soft cases. The Vectra soft case shares the hard case shape in a durable yet lightweight proprietary, premium-grade T-Cord™ exterior. Vectra soft cases are available for electric and bass guitars, banjos, mandolins, and ukuleles.

TKL has also developed the new Alumin-X™ and Glacier White™ series of process-patented, molded cases. Alumin-X and Glacier White are designed to offer musicians a new form of expression and enhanced protection for their instruments.

tkl.com

Booth: 4448

SKB iSeries Waterproof 88-Note Keyboard Case



SKB's largest iSeries keyboard case, the 3i-5616-KBD, is a waterproof 88-note keyboard case designed to provide a lightweight, military-rated, and affordable solution for musicians who want a custom case without the custom price. The case has an interior measuring 53" x 15" x 6.5" overall, and also features twenty-four pieces of adhesive-backed foam that help to ensure a custom fit. Two pre-installed TSA-recognized and accepted locking latches, inline skate wheels, and a tow handle make airline transport easy and convenient. (MAP: \$349.99)

skbcasesusa.com

Booth: 4210

American Recorder Mounts and Accessories for Smart Bracket Line

American Recorder Technologies mounts and accessories for their Smart Bracket line of tablet



and phone mounts include a new pole mount clamp, articulating arm, and an adapter for mounting iPad Pro tablets. The all-metal pole clamp and 7-inch articulating arm are built for rugged durability and performance and can be used with both smart bracket phone or tablet mounts. The heavy duty pole clamp securely anchors the arm and mounts to any microphone or cymbal stand. The new iPad Pro Adapter Bracket attaches easily to the Smart Bracket Tablet Mount via four mounting screws.

americanrecorder.com

Booth: 3273

Drums & Percussion

Rhythm Tech Pro-Series Tambourine



Rhythm Tech Pro Series Tambourine features an over-molded GLS playing edge, a comfort handle, and more efficient jingle placement designed to provide more sound while reducing fatigue and stress on the player's wrist. The included Pro-mount fits any 3/8" rod, allowing the Pro-Series Tambourine to be played both on and off mount. Options include steel or brass jingles and frames with a choice of black, white or red.

rhythmttech.com

Booth: 5740, B5955

Yamaha Rydeen Drum Set

The Rydeen kit (Japanese for "God of Thunder") replaces its predecessor, the GigMaker, with a new kit featuring upgraded Yamaha hardware, including a two-hole vertical pipe clamp for the rack toms, with a ball mount system that allows infinite tom positioning. Other hardware highlights include a sturdy and smooth snare drum throw switch and low-mass lugs comparable to hardware found on more expensive models. The signature Art Deco wing bolts on the floor tom brackets and tom holders offer secure adjustment with a distinct Yamaha style. The series comes in 20" and 22" shell size configurations, each of which ships in one box for convenience. Rack and floor tom drum sizes were designed with player comfort and ease of reach in mind.



4wrd.it/yamaharydeen

Booth: 100, Elite3, 102

Drums & Percussion

Alesis Strike Electronic Drum Kits

Alesis Strike electronic drum kit family features all-new drum and cymbal design. The drums have larger dual-hoop pads with adjustable Alesis Mesh heads with their patented multi-sensor, multi-contact Enhanced Articulation System. Strike's premium Hybrid Birch wood shell drums come in standard acoustic drum sizes (8-10-12-14"). The new 3-zone Strike 16" ride cymbal, 14" crash, and 12" movable hi-hat cymbals are fully covered with a new thick rubber. The cymbals offer a larger bell area for enhanced playability, along with a hammered look. The all-new Strike Performance Module has a sound library with 100 custom kits made from over 1600 instruments. The module has onboard sampling capability, SD card storage, and USB/MIDI connectivity, which you can use in conjunction with your favorite music production software as well as the powerful new Strike Software Editor. With this editor you can assemble your own custom samples into multiple velocity layer and round robin instruments, piece together the perfect drum kit, and then transfer it onto the module via USB. The Strike Module also includes a 4.3-inch color LED screen, which displays all the player's settings and choices at a quick glance.



The Strike and Strike Pro kits will be available late winter/early spring 2017. U.S. pricing is \$1699 and \$2299 respectively

alesis.com

inmusicbrands.com

Booth: 206B

Mapex Black Panther Design Lab Concept Snare Drums



Mapex Black Panther Design Lab series snare drums have been engineered using the Design Lab's "Concept Hybrid" approach to sound design, shell composition and drum construction. The Equinox 14" Snare, The Heartbreaker 14" Snare, The Cherry Bomb 14" and 13" Snares. Each of the new Black Panther Design Lab Snares are built with the Mapex 10-lug hoops, Puresound premium snare wires, Cylinder-Drive Strainer, and SONIClear Bearing edges.

usa.mapexdrums.com

Booth: 3220, 3240

Accessories

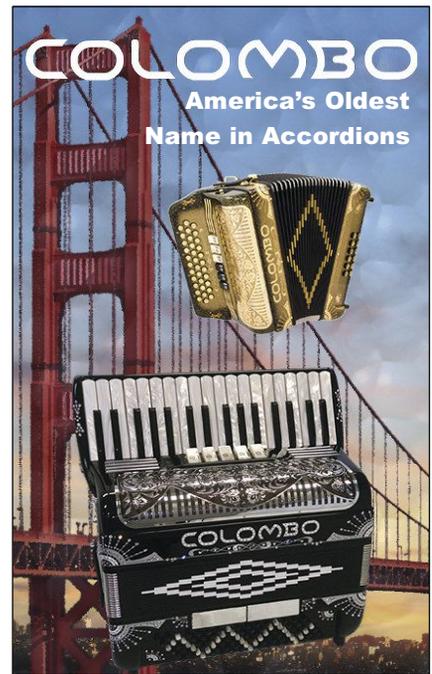
Promark by D'Addario Boutique Stick Bags

The Sliver Essentials Stick Bag and the Transport Deluxe Stick Bag are made from durable, weather-proof ballistic nylon and synthetic leather. Both bags feature metal hanging hooks which affix to the tension rods of a drum, keeping them secure while playing. The Sliver Essentials Stick Bag has enough room to fit four pairs of drumsticks comfortably and retails for \$32.99. The Transport Deluxe Stick Bag features magnetic secured, leather carrying handles, a large front-zippered pocket, a zippered interior pocket, metal hanging tom-mounts, a leather business card slot, a metal key leash, a pencil slot, a deluxe leather pocket for your wallet and cell phone, ample drumstick storage, and retails for \$62.99.



promark.com

Booth: 4834



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Drums & Percussion

Vic Firth Cajon Bru-Ilet and VKB4 (Cajon)



Vic Firth's Cajon Bru-Ilet marries elements of a brush and a mallet to translate both slap and bass tones to the cajon. It is made with a Hickory shaft and includes medium-stiff plastic bristles and a 1 1/2" mallet head made from XLPE foam. The VKB4 (Cajon) is a spherical foam rubber head designed to produce a warm, full bass tone.



vicfirth.com

Booth: 3040

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CruzTOOLS
www.cruztools.com

D'Addario's Evans Drumheads UV1 Drumhead Series

D'Addario's Evans Drumheads launches UV1, a brand-new series of drumheads that includes a newly patented UV-cured coating. Designed for durability and versatility, the UV1 also features a new 10mil film known for its warmer tonal characteristics while being more resistant to stretching and denting. Combined with Evans Level 360 Technology™, and debuting a new logo, the UV1 is versatile and durable. The UV1 series ranges from sizes 10-16" -14" heads will be available in stores August and September. The rest of the sizes will ship in October.



evansdrumheads.com

Booth: 4834

Dixon Limited Edition Motion Blue Kit

Dixon Limited Edition Motion Blue Burst 3-piece kit features 6-ply Mahogany shell, a 45 degree bearing edge, and the unique Limited Motion Blur wrap highlighted with black burst. The kit also features an 8 lug Bass drum, an 8 lug snare drum and black drum hardware. Comes complete with 9" x 12" Tom (no mount), 16" x 16" Floor Tom, and 14" x 24" Bass Drum.



3pc shell pack retail price: \$999.99.

Experience the Limited Edition Motion Blue at Winter NAMM by visiting the St Louis Music booth.

dixondrums.com

Booth: 4000

Zildjian Single Cymbals For L80 Low Volume Cymbal Series

The Avedis Zildjian Company expands the L80 range to include four individual add-on low-volume cymbals. The additions are a 20" ride; 10" splash; 16" crash and 18" crash ride. They are designed to integrate into an existing L80 cymbal set, or they can be used as stacker cymbals or even as HiHat components. They are ideal for practice rooms, drum lesson rooms, low volume gigs or any other situation where reduced volumes are required.



zildjian.com

Booth: 2940

Drums & Percussion

Vic Firth Modern Jazz Collection

Vic Firth Co. releases five prototype models; the MJC1, MJC2, MJC3, MJC4, and MJC5 branded

as the Modern Jazz Collection. Each model is designed with unique characteristics. Artists included in the collaborative designs were Jeff Ballard, Greg Hutchinson, Joe McCarthy, and Lewis Nash.



vicfirth.com

Booth: 3040

Three New Drumstick Models from Zildjian

The Avedis Zildjian Company announced three new drumstick models including two new Artist Series sticks reflecting the musical requirements of Josh Dun and Thomas Pridgen, and the 9 Gauge stick, an extension of the popular Gauge series.

The Josh Dun Artist Series stick features a beefed up 5A shaft with extra length for more reach and effortless velocity. Its medium taper keeps everything in balance and the oval tip creates a surface area ideal for punchy drums and bright cymbals. On this red stick is a reproduction of Josh's signature and Twenty One Pilots' Skeleton Clique "Alien Josh" logo.

The Thomas Pridgen Artist Series stick is bold and aggressive by design. Its extra length combined with a short taper pushes more weight to the front of the stick, allowing the diameter to stay in the sweet spot between the 5A and 5B. A large oval tip translates all that power into fat sound on the drums and plenty of volume from the cymbals. This natural color stick features Thomas' cartoon character logo.

The new 9 Gauge stick provides a center point to Zildjian's popular Gauge series. Clocking in at .563, the 9 Gauge sits in an ideal comfort zone for most drummers and is an extremely well-balanced stick, capable of producing an exceptional cymbal sound.



zildjian.com

Booth: 2940

Remo Symmetry Conga Drumheads

Remo Symmetry Conga drumhead line features a low collar height accommodating two major OEM brands; LP Compact Conga and Congas with the X Rims, and Pearl's Travel Congas and Congas with "EASYPLAY" Rims.



remo.com

Booth: 3440

Remo The Powerstroke 3 Felt Tone Bass Drumheads

The Powerstroke® 3 Felt Tone™ Bass Drumheads incorporate the traditional style of dampening a bass drum with a strip of felt. Featuring a free-floating dampening strip built into the drumhead without glues or adhesives makes this drumhead ideal for vintage and contemporary drum set applications. Available in either Hazy or Fiberskyn® film for a unique specialized appearance in sizes 18", 20", 22", 24", and 26".



remo.com

Booth: 3440

Zildjian K Custom Special Dry Collection



The Avedis Zildjian Company K Custom Special Dry collection features an innovative three step hammering process, distinctive shape and extra thin weight which give the cymbals a fast attack, while shutting down quickly with just enough sustain.

Each of the K Custom Special Dry cymbals were made from Zildjian's 80/20 bronze alloy at the only USA based cymbal factory in Norwell, MA.

zildjian.com

Booth: 2940

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DJ & Lighting

Yorkville Four-pod High Output LED Fixture



Yorkville introduces the LP-LED4X. The four pod all-in-one fixture can operate in standalone mode using its advanced onboard controls, as part of a small system with Yorkville's proprietary LP-C4 footswitch controller or LP-C12 desk controller, or scaled up with multiple LP-LED4X as part of a large theatre or touring system operated via integrated DMX I/O.

yorkville.com

Booth: 210B

Denon DJ SC5000 Prime DJ Media Player

Denon DJ SC5000 Prime DJ media player features a high definition, multi-touch display that enables gestures and swiping. The SC5000 analyzes music files on the fly, it has dual-layer decks with dedicated outputs, a multi-touch screen with easy and fast navigation, and an 8" rugged jogwheel with central display that shows current playing track or custom artwork. It includes the new Engine™ Prime software. Engine Prime is a music librarian and analysis system that lets the DJ organize, categorize and import music, either directly from iTunes® and Serato® DJ or via drag 'n drop from existing music folders. The SC5000 has eight multifunction trigger pads for cues, loops, slices and rolls. The lighting around the platter is customizable to various RGB colors, and the wheel is topped in aluminum.



The audio outputs themselves are 24-bit/96kHz. The SC5000 Prime plays all uncompressed audio formats, including FLAC, ALAC and WAV plus all popular compressed music file formats.

U.S. retail pricing for the SC5000 Prime is \$1899.

denondj.com

Booth: 206B

Akai Professional MPC Live



Akai Professional MPC Live features standalone functionality, a full-color 7-inch multi-touch screen and 16 velocity- and pressure-sensitive RGB pads, and a large, clickable master encoder knob. Featuring 2GB of RAM and 16GB of on-board storage, Live weighs in at 5.5 lbs., MPC Live is compact enough to easily transport from studio to stage. The portability is taken even further with this MPC's ability to run battery-powered via the internal, rechargeable lithium-ion battery.

U.S. retail is \$1199.

yorkville.com

Booth: 206B

Denon DJ VL12 Prime Direct-Drive Professional DJ Turntable



Denon DJ VL12 Prime direct-drive professional DJ turntable features heavy-duty all-metal construction and adjustable torque. Under the turntable are four special isolation feet, enabling the VL12 to resist vibration. Pitch is adjustable over a very wide range, from $\pm 8\%$ to $\pm 50\%$. Switchable low and high torque settings ensure the ideal start-up with any record, and the S-shaped tone arm tracks any record. The platter is ringed with RGB lighting including custom control of brightness and color.

U.S. retail pricing for the VL12 Prime is \$899.

denondj.com

Booth: 206B

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From the game changing B9 and C9 Organ Machines to the KEY9 Electric Piano Machine and MEL9 Tape Replay Machine, EHX gives you the sounds of enough legendary keyboards to fill a stage and then some!

Each polyphonic pedal provides a unique collection of classic sounds in a simple plug-in-and-play package. No modifications, special pickups or MIDI implementation is required, and tracking is impeccable.

Whether you want to cook up some hot Green Onions, lay down a cool Riders on the Storm style groove, take a trip to Strawberry Fields or spend some time at the House of the Rising Sun, EHX has the keys!

100 Years of the Condenser Microphone

By George Petersen

We recently marked an important milestone in audio history — the invention of the practical condenser microphone. While names like Edison bring up images of celebrated inventors, the name of Edward Charles (E.C.) Wenthe, who played a major role in developing the direction of professional audio, is almost completely unknown — even in his own industry.

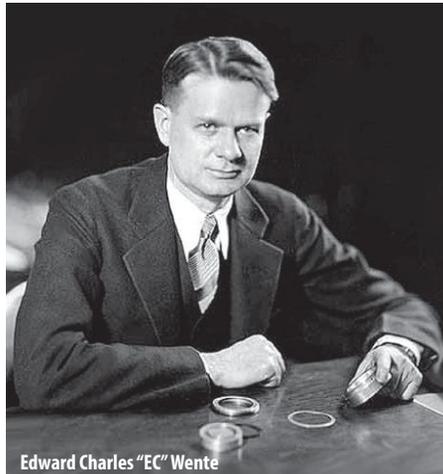
Born in 1889, Wenthe had a long and fruitful career during his tenure at Western Electric/Bell Labs from 1914 to 1954. One of the first assignments for the 25-year old Western Electric engineer was improving the quality of telephone audio. Wenthe's solution came in the form of patent #1,333,744 for a "Telephone Transmitter," filed on Dec 20, 1916, which we have since come to know as the condenser microphone.

Secrets from the Patent Archive

Wenthe described the core of the microphone capsule (shown in **Fig. 1**) in his patent: "...The diaphragm (#6) and the plate (#7) constitute the two plates of the transmitter. Sound waves, incident on the diaphragm, cause it to vibrate, thereby causing variations in the effective thickness of the dielectric between the plates and consequently giving rise to variations in the capacity of the condenser... the plate is separated from the diaphragm by a very thin film of air having a thickness on the order of 0.0005 of an inch."

Here, the "plate" refers to the familiar backplate of modern condenser microphone designs, and the diaphragm in this design was a piece of sheet steel stretched to its elastic limit of approximately 22 microns [0.00086-inch]. A piece of mica separated the plate and the diaphragm, held tightly in place as to create a seal air chamber between the two, so when sound waves push the diaphragm backwards, the compression of the air-space adds stiffness while increasing the elasticity of the diaphragm. And that 0.0005-inch airgap is less than 1/12th the thickness of a human hair, requiring some impressive manufacturing precision to create such a device in that era.

Judging from the schematic, the electronics circuitry in Wenthe's microphone is relatively simple, as shown in **Fig. 2**, with the signal from the "condenser trans-



Edward Charles "EC" Wenthe



Western Electric's 618A — the first dynamic microphone

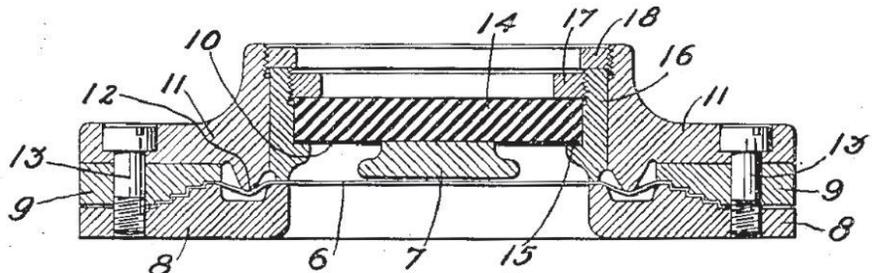


FIGURE 1 Wenthe's drawing for the first condenser microphone, in 1916

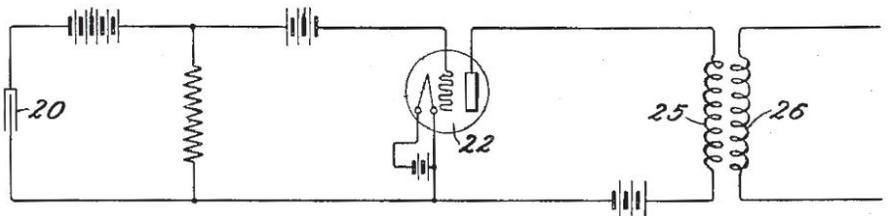


FIGURE 2 The mic's simple electronics used the then-new triode vacuum tube

mitter" capsule (#20) driven by a triode vacuum tube (#22), with a transformer (#25/26) output — all of which are still familiar elements in modern tube mic designs. The preamplifier section was not Wenthe's design, but had been created by electronics pioneer Ralph Hartley in 1915, employing using Lee De Forest's 1908 Audion (triode)—the first vacuum tube.

This first design was fairly crude, but provided remarkably flat performance compared to the carbon mics used at the time. A year later, Wenthe described a version in *The Physical Review*, which featured a large (1.9-inch diameter), 22-micron diaphragm and was capable of reproduction beyond 15 kHz — an astonishing accomplishment in a day when most 78-rpm acoustic recordings topped out around 3k Hz.

Over the years, Wenthe's condenser

mics continued improving, (such as using aluminum diaphragms, which greatly increased a mic's sensitivity), and his model 394 condenser microphone capsule fueled the impending revolutions in the electrical recording process and motion picture sound. Western Electric's condenser lineup expanded with well-known models such as the 7A/8A/9A/10A/47A/53A offering tabletop, floor stand and hanging variations for any application — all featuring Wenthe's model 394 "condenser transmitter."

Big Changes, But Later

Despite the obvious sonic advantages provided by condenser microphone technology, they were rarely used in early P.A. systems, mostly due to their cost, relative fragility and the bulk and hassle of lugging an external power supply to power

the tube electronics.

That would all change with the advent of low-power-draw transistor condenser microphones, a movement that leaped light years ahead in 1966 when Georg Neumann invented the concept of phantom power for his 48-volt KM 83/84/85 condenser mics — now the KM 183/184/185 line. The KM 80 Series mics were a hit, the 48-volt standard was eventually adopted throughout the industry and today, 48V phantom power makes life a little easier for audio engineers everywhere.

More Wente, Please

As a solution for improved (yet easy to employ) microphones that outperformed the carbon granule mics of the day, Wente worked with fellow Western/Electric/Bell engineer Albert Thuras to develop the first commercial dynamic microphone. Their 1928 patent improved on a low-fi moving coil microphone concept that was first patented in 1874 by Ernst Siemens. The Siemens mic never went into production, because at the time, carbon mics were adequate for telephone use and easy to manufacture.

The Thuras/Wente dynamic mic design was eventually released in 1931 as the Western Electric 618A Electrodynam-ic Transmitter (pictured above). With its thin duralumin diaphragm and new cobalt-steel alloy magnet, the omnidirectional 618A offered high output and a respectable 10 kHz bandwidth. With its ease of operation and tough, compact housing, the 681A remained in use for years among P.A., film and broadcast users. It was also the mic of choice for Franklin Delano Roosevelt's famous Fireside Chat radio addresses.

Beyond Microphones

Wente's contributions to sound reinforcement went well beyond microphones. There's no doubt that 1926 marked a busy era for audio technology. Electrical recording — the use of microphones and amplifier-driven cutterheads on record lathes (rather than the recording horns of the acoustical recording process) — was becoming a standard throughout the industry, and the development of talking motion pictures was underway.

Suddenly, the industry needed loudspeakers, with an emphasis on the word "loud." A year before, General Electric engineers (Chester Rice and Edward

Kellogg) unveiled the modern dynamic cone loudspeaker, an important step in the right direction. However, with the low-power amplifiers available at the time, any hope of providing high-output reproduction was pretty much out of the question.

Given that premise, Wente again teamed with Thuras and set out on a radical solution. Their 1926 patent application (#1,707,544) offered what they described as "an acoustical device employing an electrodynamic actuated vibrating element" using a "light piston-type diaphragm which is driven by a light rigid coil." The diaphragm/voice coil was set within a dense electromagnetic structure fed a signal from an amplifier and was designed to mount onto a horn.

The resulting product was the Western Electric Model 555-w "receiver," and the modern high frequency compression driver was born. It's surprising how close the 555-w came to modern designs and how little things have changed since then. The original Wente-Thuras design featured innovations, such as a lightweight 0.002-inch thin aluminum dome diaphragm with a corrugated surround offering strength, stiffness and flexibility; a phase plug; and a threaded horn mount that allowed the driver to be easily fitted on a variety of horns.

Old drawings show the 555-w mount-

ed on a Western Electric Model 12-A, a huge, exponentially tapered horn design that was 67 inches tall, with a 45x45-inch throat opening and an 11-foot overall pathway that provided a frequency response as low as 80 Hz. Although bulky, the driver/horn combination proved highly efficient, and could achieve high sound pressure levels from low-powered amplifiers and could be used alone or combined with cone woofers for extended low-frequency performance.

Gone, But Not Forgotten

Aside from his work on developing the condenser mic, the dynamic mic, the HF compression driver — those alone should qualify him for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame — Wente's innovations were many, including the multicellular horn, a "light valve" for translating audio impulses into variable density patterns for film soundtracks and numerous major contributions in the study of auditory perspective, anechoic room design and acoustical wall materials. In all, he was granted a total of 36 patents and awarded a Scientific and Engineering Academy Award in 1936 for his multicell horn design. Not bad for a guy you never heard of. **MMR**

This article previously appeared in the Oct. 2016 issue of MMR's sister publication, FRONT of HOUSE.

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Schimmel & Pearl River

A Partnership for 2017 and Beyond

By Christian **Wissmuller**

A celebrated German piano brand dating back to the 19th century, Schimmel Pianos has a storied history – and now a bright future.

In the early days of 2016, China's Pearl River Piano Group acquired over 90 percent of the company's shares, providing additional financial stability, and – as importantly – a greatly enhanced point of entry to the growing and profitable Chinese market.

We recently sat down with CEO Hannes Schimmel-Vogel to discuss the brand's rich history, the family's restructuring of the company in 2010, the recent partnership with Pearl River, and what he expects for the future...

To bring our readers up to speed, can you provide a brief background of Schimmel Pianos, from the founding by Wilhelm through the evolution to the mid 2000s?

Wilhelm Schimmel (1854-1946) founded the Schimmel Piano Company in 1885 in Leipzig under the name Wilhelm Schimmel Pianofortefabrik. Wilhelm was a well-trained and experienced carpenter and piano technician by profession and a technical genius and inventor by nature.

From the very beginning, Wilhelm followed his motto "Quality will prevail" and thanks to his very rigid quality policy the young company grew fast and became known for quality and design.

His efforts and success resulted in many awards and early export sales. Several royal families and nobilities soon appointed Schimmel and Schimmel won several medals at Trade Fairs and Exhibitions. At one such event a newspaper wrote, "It was this upright, the tone of which had first captured attention, and after testing the performance of the instrument, we must confess that, in its sonority as well as delicacy and beauty of tone, it is in no way inferior to the best uprights of the select few top-selling international 'name brands.'" In the meantime, Wilhelm's brother, Fridolin Schimmel, had started his own piano company in Faribault, Minnesota and was challenging his brother on the other side of the Atlantic. Being of the same nature, he was also a successful piano manufacturer and held patents for inventions in many other industries as well.

In 1927, at the age of 73, Wilhelm Schimmel retired from active management of the company, passing the mantle to his son Arno

Wilhelm Schimmel. This took place as the world economy was going through a difficult phase known as The Great Depression, culminating two years later in the stock market crash on Black Thursday.

Starting his generation's era with this immense challenge, Arno reacted quickly and actively by moving the company to Braunschweig, Germany where circumstances were more favorable than in Leipzig. This decision turned out to be a very fortunate one because 20 years later after World War II, Leipzig was part of East Germany whereas Braunschweig was in West Germany.

In addition, Arno showed his immense talent by developing several very successful designs, patents and instruments in his first few years at the helm. With their musical abilities and the modern designs, Arno's pianos were second to none and in 1958 Schimmel pianos became the world's best-selling instruments of German origin.

The masterpiece of Arno's era was in 1951 with the first clear Plexiglas grand ever built. Besides the sheer genius of engineering and designing this unique small grand piano, the impression of it was overwhelming, especially considering that at that time post-war Europe was in ruins and was an unpleasant environment.

In 1959, at the age of 25, Nikolaus Wilhelm Schimmel joined the company to learn from his father and slowly begin taking on the responsibilities of the company. Before he joined, he had spent many years in piano stores and factories in Europe and the United States learning all aspects of the piano business.

In 1961, Arno died suddenly and unexpectedly and Nikolaus had to assume responsibility for the company. Based on his clear vision Nikolaus continued and built on his father's achievements.

The *Wirtschaftswunder* (Economic Miracle) of West Germany was in full bloom and Schimmel once again had to expand its capacity and facilities. Over several years, Nikolaus built the most modern production facility in Germany and provided the additional capacity so desperately needed.

In his era, Nikolaus also created outstanding piano designs and, in cooperation with renowned artist and professor Luigi Colani, grands that were monuments of art like the Pegasus. In addition, modern



Hannes Schimmel-Vogel

technology and new thinking was introduced into production: Schimmel's CAPE-System (Computer-Assisted Piano Engineering) was the first-ever virtual device to design pianos. Being a marketing genius, Nikolaus made Schimmel not only the number-one-selling German piano but also the best-known German brand.

At the turn of this century, Nikolaus started to pass on responsibilities to the next generation and in 2003, Viola Schimmel and her husband Hannes Schimmel-Vogel took the mantle from Nikolaus, who still to this day regularly visits the factory. Viola Schimmel and Hannes Schimmel-Vogel's first moves were to expand the model portfolio through Schimmel's premium strategy that led to the Schimmel Konzert Series. At the same time, a new production facility in Kalisz (Poland) was opened in order to be able to offer competitive value instruments made in Europe. This soon resulted in a series of record sales years in North America.

In the following years, this brand and model strategy was continuously developed and is reflected in Schimmel's current family of brands: Schimmel Konzert and Schimmel Classic, (both made in Germany) and Wilhelm Schimmel (made in Europe.)

Since 2003, Schimmel has continued to register many patents and protections of registered designs. Aside from the musical aspects of the Schimmel model line-up, the focus has also been on the aesthetics of the instruments. Schimmel's instruments feature a unique combination of technical innovations and cabinet designs. These efforts have resulted in Schimmel being the most awarded piano brand from Germany.

Very thorough – That covers it! Can you discuss the restructuring and eventual full ownership by the Schimmel family post-2010?

Schimmel was heavily affected by the financial crisis and recession in the United States between 2007 and 2009. The strategy for success in the United States that they had built over several generations suddenly became a disadvantage: Business in the US almost came to a full stop after the Lehman Brothers crash. Aside from the precipitous drop in retail sales, the crisis of the inventory finance companies exiting the piano industry was burdening the industry's performance.

Schimmel went into a program similar to the United States Chapter 11 reorganization to restructure its financing and other equity positions. In addition, the company became 100 percent family-owned again, after 20 years with Yamaha having been a 24.9% shareholder.

While many other brands turned away from the American market, Schimmel stayed and supported its dealer network. With Schimmel's long history in North America and with Fridolin Schimmel's piano-making history in the United States this was a clear decision.



Last January, Pearl River acquired 90 percent of the shares of Schimmel. Can you talk about what brought about that move and how things have evolved over the past year?

Even as most markets in the western world never fully recovered from the drop after the "Great Recession" of 2007 to 2009 Schimmel managed to increase its sales volume in the years after 2010 by keeping its innovative approach and expanding its product lines. As just one example, Schimmel added an entry-level line called Fridolin Schimmel for the North-American market, a line that honors the founder's brother and that American family connection.

Still, when looking ahead at the decades to come with the foreseeable dramatic changes in the industry, the Schimmel family openly discussed several options to face these challenges. The goal was to find a strategic approach that allowed a proactive rather than re-active business model as well as long-term access to digital technology and to China, the largest and only expanding market in the piano industry.

Aside from the unimaginable difficulty of thinking about and discussing such options, the main aim was to make a decision that focused on the long-term benefit of Schimmel's dealers, their employees, and the Schimmel brand. The conclusion was that partnering with a strong company from China was the best solution. Pearl River, being the largest and strongest company in the piano industry with an unchallenged position and presence in the China market, was the logical partner. The financial resources and the long-term strategic orientation of Pearl River are not only ensuring the future of Schimmel's German and Polish facilities but, even more, the continuous growth of our brand as a synonym for innovation, quality, and craftsmanship.

Already, the first few months of this strategic alliance are confirming that a very solid foundation for the future has been laid and that it has been the right move for Schimmel.

What challenges are presented by being a brand so closely identified as a "German Instrument Supplier" yet now one which is part of a Chinese company?

From an objective point of view, the Pearl River alliance has no influence on Schimmel's German identity because Pearl River's aim is to continue and even strengthen the German production facility. Also, with the Schimmel family being involved and managing the company, the identity of Schimmel goes beyond being only a German supplier. A Schimmel family-run company with the Schimmel name on the pianos assures product integrity.

Of course, from a subjective point of view, there are challenges but this mainly has to do with competitor misinformation.



What's on the horizon for Schimmel in the coming months – new instrument introductions, et cetera?

The most important item on the horizon is continuity in production and products. Considering the above-mentioned competitor misinformation, the main task is to give confidence and continuous reassurance to our dealers.

The main change in Schimmel's product line this year will be the all new uprights and marketing concept for the Fridolin Schimmel brand. This brand, introduced in 2015, has been a cooperative effort with Young Chang North America who built and sold these instruments. At NAMM this month, Schimmel will present new uprights based on Schimmel-designed scales, marketed and sold by Schimmel. The instruments will be made by Pearl River according to Schimmel specifications and in cooperation with the Schimmel technical team.

The Fridolin Schimmel brand is part of our strategic plan to grow our business in the United States and Canada in the next years.

Finally, what are your predictions for the coming year?

We expect the market for acoustic pianos to continue to be challenging. Holding numbers or growing can only be done by taking market share from others. China seems to remain the only exception with a stable market and an increasing volume in the middle and premium segments.

Schimmel and Pearl River are well positioned for the future: In the western markets Schimmel will have an active position and increase its sales. In the Chinese market with all its special requirements, Pearl River will make Schimmel one of the first western brands to be truly successful in China. In the United States, we expect to widen our dealer network and re-open markets based on offering a new price-point with the Fridolin Schimmel line.

Any parting thoughts or comments for MMR readers?

Someone once said that we, as people, are defined less by *what* we do than by *how* we do it. Schimmel builds pianos with great care and attention to detail based on a wealth of experience for over 130 years. In an industry that is quite different from only 10 years ago, Schimmel is now in a position to help our dealers continue to be successful in this industry in the future.

For more information about Schimmel, and to see our exciting line of pianos, visit NAMM room 206A on the second floor.

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ONCE AGAIN, PEARL RIVER HAS BEEN NAMED MMR'S ACOUSTIC PIANO LINE OF THE YEAR.

That makes it two years in a row. MMR magazine readers have voted us the 2016 Acoustic Piano Line of the Year. We've dedicated our business to building pianos that are both high quality and an exceptional value. Thank you to everyone who voted for Pearl River. We are proud to be your favorite piano and look forward to seeing you at NAMM Booth 205A. To learn more, visit us at PearlRiverUSA.com.

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For more than 40 years, Vintage Instruments, Inc. in Philadelphia has occupied a unique space in the area's MI market. Currently located in a historic building on Broad Street in the City Center, the store has maintained an intimate, personalized approach to buying, selling, appraising and servicing high quality and vintage stringed instruments.

"We enjoy helping people," says Fred Oster, the store's founder and co-owner. He credits the establishment's longevity to a laser-like focus on providing both personalized service and expertise. And that expertise is considerable: Oster is an internationally recognized authority on stringed and fretted instruments, in demand with auction houses like Sotheby's and Christie's, and with over 20 appearances to his credit as an appraiser on PBS's "Antiques Roadshow."

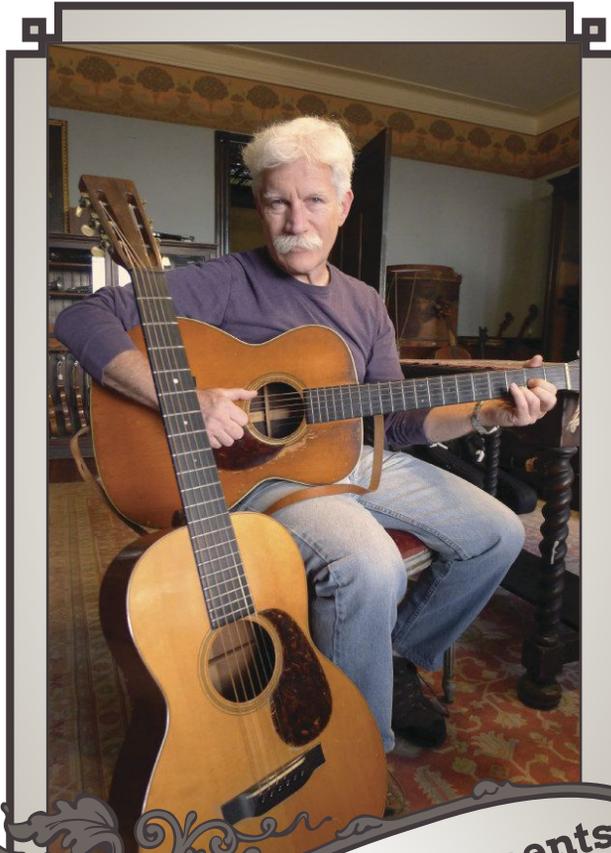
At Vintage Instruments, he makes the recipe for the store's ongoing success throughout changing eras in retail sound simple: "We all concentrate on improving what we do, and doing what we do well even better."

Growing up in the 1960s, it was assumed that Fred Oster was going to eventually become a lawyer. However, he began playing music at an early age and, while still in high school, started buying and selling guitars and banjos. Fascinated by "old-timey" guitar and banjo music, his initial foray into the musical instruments trade was motivated by his desire to upgrade the gear he was using himself. Eventually, he had the epiphany that his "hobby" could turn into something much bigger.

MMR: What prompted the founding of Vintage Instruments in 1974?

Fred Oster: My first guitar was a 1966 Guild F-30. In 1967 I bought my first Martin D-28, new, for \$289 (list \$400). I'm sure my parents were horrified, but they figured there was no real danger, assuming I'd end up going to law school. Little did they know!

I stayed involved in the folk scene during college, working as



A Lifelong Career Sparked by an Interest in 'Old-Timey' Instruments By Eliahu Sussman

one of the founders of a local folk music coffee house and a local folk festival. In the midst of filling out law school applications, I was struck by the realization that it was not what I wanted to do. At that point, my instrument hobby became an attractive option as a profession. That was 1974, and I started my first shop in the Chestnut Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia.

What are some of the important milestones in the store's history?

In 1978, I moved the shop from Chestnut Hill to a larger and more centrally located space on Walnut Street, which is in the city center of Philadelphia. Since I had so much more room, over time, a number of local instrument makers became installed in the shop. This led to a really creative scene in which we all fed off of one another for ideas.

We used to have weekly shop meetings where we'd sit and talk about issues we shared, such as working with clients, or issues in our own area of expertise such as restoration of old ivory, or different methods for fixing top cracks. This collective of craftspeople included flute maker Michael Copeland, guitar builders Michael Menkevich and Mark Hauser, Uilleann pipe maker Tim Britton, violin bow maker Elizabeth Shaak, and violinmakers Ben Ruth and Bob Childs. Not everyone was at the shop at the same time, but there were enough of us at any given time to make things pretty interesting. I don't think any of us really thought much about what we were doing as a business. We were doing it to support ourselves and for the luxury of working with the instruments and the music we really enjoyed.

In part through these associations, the shop inventory began to diversify to include historic wind instruments and all sorts of early string instruments. In 1981, I was hired by Christie's auction house as an appraiser, and I worked with them for over 20 years as a musical instruments consultant. My peers in the guitar business are sometimes surprised to see me in the New York suit-and-tie disguise I use as a violin expert.



We moved again in 1983 when I bought a Philadelphia brownstone on Pine Street that was built in 1860. It was a great place and we have incredible memories of the years in that terrific building.

How did you end up in your current location?

In 2007, we moved from the 1860 building we'd owned on Pine Street since 1983 to another historic building on Broad Street that was built in 1882. It's a big (over 12,000 square feet) old feast of Aesthetic Movement design created by architect George Pearson for John Dundas and Alice Potter Lippincott. The building attracts quite a bit of attention and we now have a nice blog post about it on our website.

We are still a small staff with a larger collective around us. Violinmakers Sam Payton and John Thorell handle all of the violin restoration in the shop, and Steve Salchow takes care of the bows. We also sell the instruments they make. We're really pleased to have Rachel Massey working as our assistant manager. In addition to being a talented violinist and budding guitar player, she's very smart, has a great sense of humor and is wonderfully capable of overseeing our other helpers. Otherwise, Catherine Jacobs and I, as the shop owners, wear dozens of hats.

What are the most significant lines you carry?

Our emphasis has always been vintage, whether in guitars, banjos, mandolins, ukes, violins or anything else. As you can well imagine, that influences our choices of new brands to carry. They have to have the same integrity in terms of design, materials and build that we treasure in vintage instruments. Among those we've chosen for the shop are C.F. Martin and National Resophonic Guitars, Kevin Enoch and Ome Banjos, and Kamaka ukes. We have other brands, and some less expensive brands. We only sell what we feel good about selling. The NAMM Show has been very important over the years for keeping abreast of new manufacturers and product lines, as well as accessories that are useful to musicians.

Do you offer in-store lessons?

Philadelphia has so many well-established studios devoted exclusively to teaching, and we are happy referring people to them. In addition, the

area has organizations such as the Philadelphia Folksong Society that can help connect people to teachers. There are also teachers we know who we recommend to our customers. So, we don't have a lesson service, but we do connect people to teachers all the time.

What's been your strategy in staying relevant throughout changing retail trends, including online sales, challenges from big box stores, and so on?

Frankly, we've always been dedicated to doing well what we do, and that's having expertise in the guitars, and really working one-on-one with people to help them find the instrument that gives them the greatest satisfaction for their needs and preferences. We enjoy helping people, which usually means getting to understand their needs, and helping them to know what options exist. This may sound simple, but it's different for every person. It may be one of things that we can do better than an algorithm. Sometimes this takes us away from other things, like upgrading our website to make it more hip – but we're working on that, too!

What's your assessment of the MI market today?

The biggest naysayers out there are the ones who've been in the business the longest. Understandably, experience can breed a certain amount of pessimism. That's probably some sort of genetic defense mechanism that aids in human survival.

The way we look at things, there are always ups and downs, but in the balance, all anyone can really say is that things just keep changing. That's not such a bad thing, especially if, in the process, we all concentrate on improving what we do and doing what we do well even better. **MMR**





Rob Chapman, front, and Lee Anderton

By Sharon Paquette Lose

Chapman Guitars (www.chapmanguitars.co.uk) embodies the evolving face of the music industry. In only 2009 Rob Chapman created his first collaboratively designed guitar based on online polls of his YouTube audience. The design, features, and specs of new models are all up for debate in this innovative and interactive conceptual process and the majority wins. Now with over 30 retailers in over 20 countries getting in on the customer-pleasing action, Chapman Guitars is evolving more rapidly than the Tuatara (“living dinosaur” and fastest evolving creature on the planet.)

Operating under a unique business model, this pioneering guitar design company is listening to its customers and responding to their feedback with flexibility and willingness. *MMR* recently sat down with Matt Hornby, the company’s managing director, to find out how Chapman Guitars began, where they are at now, and where they are going in the future.

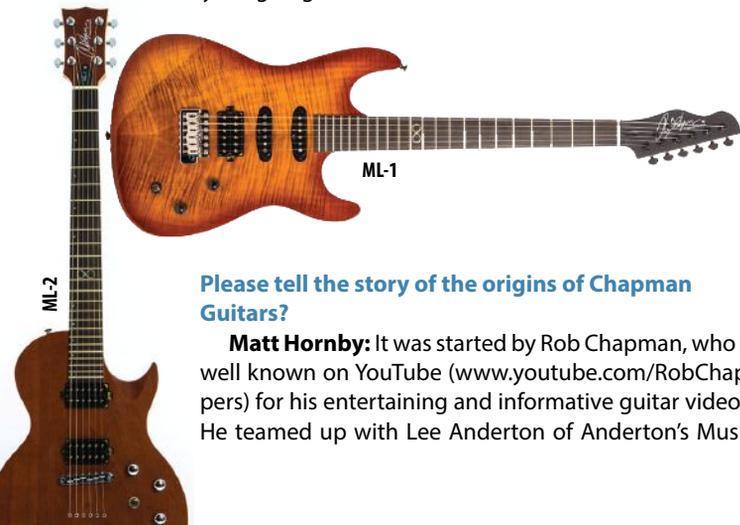
Store in Guildford in the U.K., and essentially brought out the first two customer created guitars in small batches, The ML-1 and the ML-2, as a bit of a trial run. Lee Anderton owns Anderton’s Music in Guildford, who are well known in their own right on YouTube and a have weekly series. Initially, Rob offered a signature guitar to his 30,000 subscribers on YouTube back in 2009. It was in his nature to ask people what they wanted to buy, rather than what he wanted.



ML1-Norseman

That’s a brilliant idea. What happened after those first two models came out?

MH: Yes, maybe a happy accident combined with some good intention on his part, the first few models sold out. And then up until about 2014, we only had about three or four models in the range, maybe a few more, and some limited runs, some special editions. 2014 was when we took Chapman Guitars to the NAMM Show in California and that’s when we really started evolving into a proper business. Up until 2014, we were selling guitars from Anderton’s in the U.K., and a little shop in Norway called Evenstad Musikk (www.evenstadmusikk.no), who we still are with today. We did the show in Anaheim in January 2014 just to see how we would do, and we came away with another 10 retailers, which was a nice start. Since then, the company has been growing and growing and we now have around 30-something retailers in 20-something countries around the world.



ML-1

Please tell the story of the origins of Chapman Guitars?

Matt Hornby: It was started by Rob Chapman, who is well known on YouTube (www.youtube.com/RobChappers) for his entertaining and informative guitar videos. He teamed up with Lee Anderton of Anderton’s Music

ML-2

I love the unique backstory of both companies, the Anderton company and the Chapman company coming up in the MI world from social media. Can you talk a little more about Anderton?

MH: Anderton is a family-owned business that started around 1964. Lee hired Rob around 2007 host guitar product demos with him on YouTube. As I said, Rob had a small following at the time. But the two of them have been involved in product demo guitar review videos for years now. First there was the store, then the relationship, and now the guitar company is another evolution of that partnership.

“Without YouTube and social media, we wouldn’t exist.”
— Matt Hornby

Who are the other key players in the company? How many employees are working for Chapman Guitars?

MH: Well, in the true sense of a new kind of tech-based company, we are very small. I am the only full-time employee of Chapman Guitars. But we employ some freelance staff, a designer and a web developer, and we have someone working on social media for us. We also employ, on a part-time basis, a guitar demonstrator, who does some video content with us. Rob does his YouTube videos and also plays in a band and Lee runs Anderton’s day-to-day.

Is there a facility located anywhere that is representative of Chapman Guitars exclusively?

MH: There is no Chapman Guitars headquarters at the moment. As part of our business model we have a very low overhead. But we also don’t work with distributors. It’s a retail-direct model. The guitars are made to order and they’re shipped directly from our factory in Korea to the retail stores. I guess that’s why the retailer itself is a very important relationship for us. The business model comes down to providing a great value guitar for more guitar players. The idea is that the distribution margin is taken off the top to give a better value to the end user. We offer a generous retail margin, as well, in return to our participating retail stores who are buying regularly and selling the guitars for us. It’s extra incentive for us to receive as much customer service and assistance that we can get from our retailers.

When I was researching your company I noticed that your website very prominently displays your customer voting process. How does that process work?

MH: We decide on the initial concept of a guitar. So we say, “Oh, would you like a bass?” We might decide the shape and then come up with maybe three shape variations, and people choose their favorite. We continue that voting process throughout the whole specification of the guitar; headstock shape, finishes, hardware, hardware finishes, what type of bridge, and all sorts of options. Basically, as much customization as we can possibly offer. We go with the majority vote. We put that down on paper and design the guitar, create a prototype, test it, and then that is sold to our retailers around the world, and bought by the people who designed it.

Can you talk about your testing process? Is it Rob that does quality control on all of the guitars?

MH: Yes, Rob does, and to be fair, we all do. Generally, every-

one will try them out. Rob, obviously being the Chapman name, will have to like it.

And just out of curiosity, have you ever created a flop?

MH: No. In the voting stages we have to be fairly smart about the options that we offer. We haven’t yet ended up with a Frankenstein!

Do you have any observations to share on the general electric guitar market?

MH: Yeah. I mean, it’s mixed. I think we’re in the middle of a change. The Internet and social media have definitely given the consumer access to much more knowledge. We have a smarter consumer, if that were a good phrase, than perhaps before. They’re quite informed, and they also have a lot more choice. I think the Internet has opened some newer and more innovative routes in the market. I coined this phrase to describe it – a “global cottage industry.”

Can you expound on the concept of this “global cottage industry?”

MH: Yes, it’s very British. The idea being you can now be successful with a niche guitar design. Whereas before the Internet, you might not be able to sell 10 guitars in your own town or village, so it’s not a viable business. However, that niche design spread around the world with the access that the Internet brings, and all of a sudden becomes a lot more of a proposition. I think there are lots of little guitar companies doing some really, cool, custom stuff. Without YouTube and social media, we wouldn’t exist.

Like pioneers, you seem to be figuring things out as you go.

MH: We have to be malleable and flexible. Given the model we have in terms of the voting element and the direct-to-retailer business model, we have a direct relationship with the people who buy the guitars from us. We also get direct and honest feedback on what we’re doing. We get a lot of criticism and we get a lot of praise. People are very honest. It’s a very, very cool thing to be able to ask the world what it wants to see and then bring that out. I think people can really get into it.

Do you have any new products that you want to talk about or promote right now?

MH: We have just brought out a pair of new signature guitars, with a very well known YouTube-based musician named Rob Scallon (www.youtube.com/robscallon), who is based in Chicago. He has around 650,000 subscribers. He puts out very imaginative and ingenious guitar-based videos and collaborates with a lot of different people doing similar things. We hooked up with him last year to design an eight-string guitar that he now plays. An eight-string is not something we’ve done before, this is our first. He plays it in a very specific way, which is one of the reasons that attracted us to him and to the partnership. It’s a unique way of doing things. We brought out an eight-string and then a six-string based on the same design, the ML1-8 RS and the ML-1 RS, which have just hit the stores over the last few months.



ML1-8 RS Rob Scallon 8-String Signature Model



Chapman Guitars is designing in collaboration with all of its customers. Do you have plans for any future specific collaborations?

MH: We not only have open voting to the public to design guitars, but we've also designed guitars with artists and that's something we will look forward to doing more of in the future. We've also done regional collaborations, where our retail stores in different areas can say, "Chapman Guitars, can we design a guitar with you?" And we do. Our retailer in Norway, who I mentioned before, designed a

guitar called The Norseman, and they've designed that with their local fans. One of our retailers in the U.S. called Riff City Guitar (www.riffcityguitar.com), co-designed a guitar specifically for them called the CAP10 America, which is the American version of a previous British designed model called the CAP10. That guitar was introduced at the NAMM Show in 2016, in January. It's yet another way of designing guitars collaboratively.

How are you doing in the American market compared to globally?

MH: We're doing well in the USA, however we're always looking for more great retailers to partner with. We realised very early on that with guitars, people like to



Some early Chapman Guitars concepts

try before they buy, so opening up that option in reasonably close proximity is something we'd like to do.

Within the last 2 years, we have also taken Chapman Guitars on two tours of the USA, both the East and West coasts, to give people the opportunity to try the guitars who hadn't the opportunity thus far. It was really successful, with around 200 people showing up to check the guitars out each night. We were blown away!

When we work with retailers, we understand what they're looking for. And we're not looking for "box shifters," we're hoping to offer the best value guitar for the guy buying it, and in a way that he can get involved in the design process, and we can offer a really flexible, close relationship with the retailers, so that they can sell something that's great quality and value, while they make a decent margin off it by working hard and helping to promote us, then we promote them in return. It's a lot of a lot of individual relationships and partnerships, which form the whole big picture. It's not necessarily all about selling a million guitars.

It seems like your success is really all about relationship and connections. On that note, do you have anything at all that you would like to add that I did not ask you?

MH: Well, on a personal note, it's really enjoyable and really fun to be part of something like this. We all play guitar and we all love guitar. There's nothing cooler than being able to design guitars with loads of people who share that passion, and then make them come to life, be able to play them, and then see guys around the world getting their hands on them and sending us photos of them with the final product. It's a really satisfying process. Personally, that's what keeps me going every day. It's a wonderful thing to be involved in. **MMA**

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MOURADIAN GUITAR CO

The Store Boston-based Guitarists Trust

Jim and Jon Mouradian in the store's main workshop

By Christian **Wissmuller**

If you're an electric guitarist in the Boston area and you need your go-to instrument repaired or modified, you take it to Mouradian Guitars.

It's just that simple.

Sure, there are other perfectly competent technicians and luthiers in the area and I don't mean to take anything away from any of them or their abilities, but for decades now pros and hobbyists, alike, have trusted Jim Mouradian and his son Jon with the care and maintenance of their most prized possessions.

I've had my own guitars fixed, tweaked, or otherwise tricked out by Jim and Jon since the late '80s (when I'm not making whatever – frequently ill-advised – modifications, myself...), as did my father. When I was working as an assistant engineer at Cambridge, Massachusetts' Fort Apache Studios in the late '90s, I was not at all surprised to learn that the likes of Juliana Hatfield, Tanya Donnelly, and members of the Mighty Mighty Bosstones also swore at the altar of Mouradian. A platinum album from Aerosmith hanging on the wall of Jim's office is yet another high-profile testimonial to the Mouradian team's abilities.

Jim's own history in the business goes back to at least the '70s, when his creativity and curiosity led him to first tinker with fretted instruments. "I used to design electric guitars and their components to entertain myself at night when my boys were babies," he

recalls. "I would draw and build all sorts of gizmos for fun – but, being in my twenties, I was very serious!"

YES, Please!

"I was, and still am, a deeply devoted fan of the band YES," says Jim. "My son, Jon, is named after Jon Anderson [*singer - Ed.*], if that indicates the depth of my devotion!"

Jim's fandom would evolve to become a personal and professional relationship with the RnR Hall of Fame inductee progressive rock group. "It's a whole other and long story of how I became friends with the band," he explains. "One night while dining with Chris Squire, I showed him a drawing of a bass guitar design which I felt had real merit since, while looking so unique, is also ergonomically very successful. He just said, 'Cool, make me one and paint it green and put my initials on it.' Well! While I never got past drawing any of my stuff, to have your *Idol* make a request was to face a real challenge. It took three months, but it came out so well that for the rest of his life he played it every show and it became his number-one recording instrument!"

The design of the Mouradian 'Chris Squire' bass is instantly recognizable to fans and even casual observers of YES and examples of the instrument now fetch top-dollar on eBay and other sites, but Jim's ideas were borne out of zero previous "luthier-ing" experience:

“ I think the real reason I've done well in the world of repair is I really do love guitars – and I mean all guitars. ”



Jim when I asked about the possibility of apprenticing with him. I've long since gotten over the momentary (though severe!) disappointment, and can also attest that his reason for turning me down – that he was already being assisted by his then-similarly-aged (and already *far* more accomplished and skilled) son, Jon – was unquestionably the correct move on Jim's part. In the years since, I've entrusted Jon with fairly advanced work on my 1969 Dan Armstrong, my 1963 Gibson Melody Maker, and my... um... 2007 lefty MIM Fender Strat (strung righty. Don't ask – it's a Joe Perry fanatic move...) and have never been less than thrilled with the work he's done. The dude is every bit his father's son – and his work on cars also makes me want to pull the trigger on that

"I did it in a void 'cause I had no former training, but all through my teens I built engines for drag racing and knew the importance of proper geometry and how physics dictates everything."

A True Love of Guitars

"I think the real reason I've done well in the world of repair is I really do love guitars – and I mean all guitars," Jim offers by way of explanation for his long and continued success. "I still study them now and read as much as I can to better understand what goes on inside them; what makes them sound the way they do. And, really, I love people, too. I hope to impress the owners of the guitars that I work on and show them just how much potential lies within them."

While I already name-dropped just a few of the many well-known artists who've turned to Mouradian Guitars when they're in need of assistance, Jim himself is far too humble to engage in such activity. "From the start I have avoided discussing the 'big names' that I've worked with," he says. "My experience is that they are, as a group, no more gifted or demanding than any other segment of the musical community. They'd say the same thing if you asked them. They were just at the right place at the right time and were good enough, smart enough, and in the right position to 'take off.'"

A Family Affair

In the summer between 10th and 11th grades in high school, I experienced the unique gut-punch of being turned down by

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1973 Plymouth Duster I've been eying (as with guitars, I'm confident that when I screw up on whatever automotive "fix" I'm attempting, Jon and Jim can "undo the damage").

"The most gifted and exacting craftsman I know happens to be my son, Jon," Jim observes now. "His work is a joy to behold and to this day when I'm doing a repair I ask myself if Jon would accept it. How wonderful is that? Since the age of nine he has been thoroughly immersed in this craft. Besides, unlike me, he's a sharp businessman. And a killer auto mechanic and a world class sharpshooter!"

Jim's praise is absolutely well-founded, as Jon's work has become as celebrated in the Boston area – and beyond – as his father's, and he's also proven to be a valuable business partner in the operation the two now share. "Between the two of us we can handle pretty much anything that comes in," says Jim. "The exception is painting. Jon has done great paint jobs in the past, but we have no spray booth and no desire to build one. There are a small handful of great finish guys out there so we ship stuff out to them."

New Digs, Expanded Service

Waaaaay back when (I do mean way back), I was first exposed to the good folks at Mouradian when they were the de facto "repair shop" for the much-missed (and former *MMR* cover subject) Cambridge Music Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts' Porter Square. Of course, when that mini-chain closed in the early aughts, Jim and Jon had to re-assess their situation. "We loved the guys at Cambridge Music and were sad to go, but Jon and I were sharing a 12'X12' room and he, being young, wanted to spread his wings," Jim recalls. "So we moved to Winchester. It's only less than 15 minutes away and our clientele loved the move. Now, besides repairing, we have almost 200 guitars and basses for sale on the wall. It's meaningful to witness this side of things too. We went from 250 sq. ft. to 2,200 sq. ft. in one jump. Since all our inventory is used it constitutes a bit of everything and it changes every day."

If there's a father-son team in guitar repair/design/MI retail with more hard-earned experience, skill, and passion for what they do, I've yet to see it. Whenever I have the time, I like nothing more than to make the trek to the new (well, still "new" to me) Mouradian Guitar over

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in Winchester, even if only to drool over some of the newly arrived vintage six-strings on the wall or to shoot the breeze with Jim and Jon.

"Each day when I walk in the shop, I thank God for granting me yet another day to serve the musical community and at the same time do what I love," says Jim when I ask him to sum up his feelings about the career he's pursued for so long. Speaking as just one small participant in the local musical community, I'll say that I (we) are immeasurably thankful for the role Jim and Jon continue to serve – hopefully for decades to come. **MMR**



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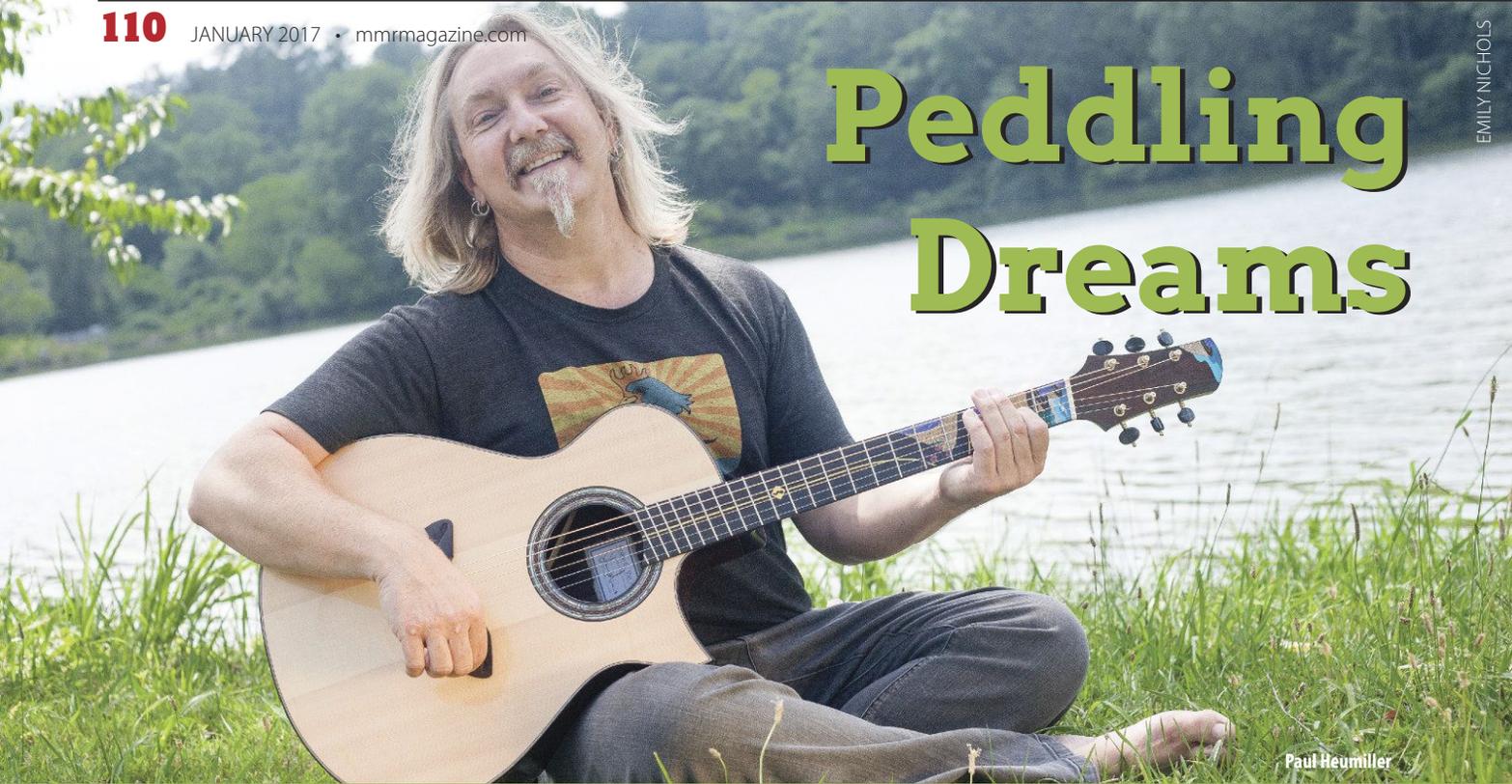
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Peddling Dreams



Paul Heumiller

Paul Heumiller of Dream Guitars has found success in a high-end niche

By Eliahu Sussman

You might say that Paul Heumiller of Dream Guitars is, well, living the dream. Following youthful visions of rock stardom and then a career as a computer programming consultant, Paul ditched the corporate world for the MI trade when he and veteran performer and clinician Martin Simpson teamed up to launch an online specialty guitar retail outfit and by-appointment-only brick-and-mortar showroom and repair shop nearly two decades ago. Today, the mission of Asheville, North Carolina-based Dream Guitars is straightforward: “To gather together the finest quality guitars in the world, and offer them in an honorable fashion – with real expertise and guidance.”

A love and respect for guitars, passion for building relationships, and a background in technology has proven to be a winning combination for Heumiller. And as an added bonus, it’s granted him the opportunity to see and play many of the “absolute best” guitars in the world, as he puts it, many of which are quite rare and carry with them some incredible stories. For instance, recent finds include a 1935 Larson Brothers Prairie State 15”, a 1938 Larson Euphonon Dreadnought, and an all-original 1930 Martin 000-45 – valued at \$135,000. “Only 21 were made in 1930 and much fewer than that exist today in this type of condition,” wrote Paul on the company blog in October 2016, noting that he was able to line up a buyer for that instrument in just a few days.

Beginnings

Originally founded in 1995 in New Jersey and reincorporated in 2004 in North Carolina, the Dream Guitar tale begins earlier, with an aspiring musician born into an American family of German descent. Paul Heumiller was one of nine siblings, five of whom played music. After an early childhood immersed in the abundant stash of records in his home, at age 10, Paul “borrowed” his sister’s

Yamaha nylon string and her Alfred books and taught himself the basics and how to read. At 13, an older brother lent him an electric guitar and he was hooked.

Paul describes himself as a ravenous student who studied seriously with many teachers throughout his teens and twenties. Although he was accepted to Berklee, at the advice of his teachers he went straight into performing instead. He spent his late teens and twenties playing music in the Jersey Shore clubs and trying get signed to a label.

“Like so many, I wanted to be a rock star,” Paul confesses. “I wrote and played original music. I was the lead guitarist and singer. Then in my thirties, I got back to serious woodshedding, this time focusing on fingerstyle guitar, by attending guitar workshops. Which is where I met Martin Simpson.”

Martin Simpson, a renowned, award-winning performer and clinician, is a big part of the Dream Guitars story. Heumiller met Simpson at weeklong guitar camp in New York City.

“I didn’t know who he was, but from the very first notes I heard him play, I recognized the sound I’d always wanted to make on the guitar,” Paul recalls. “His tone and his style are magical to me. By the end of the week we had become fast friends and began working together. I took over his website and helped organize his business operations and, in turn, he mentored me on guitar. After a while we started to offer masterclass workshops around the world.” Simpson was the primary teacher, but Heumiller would assist him.

During their travels, they spent a lot of time discussing the vast array of handmade guitars that their students had, while also making time to visit luthiers’ shops. “This was when my interest and knowledge of high-end guitars really exploded and the idea for Dream Guitars was born,” Paul says.

Simpson's business operations included selling handmade guitars by Stefan Sobell of England. The exposure to high-end and custom guitars had a profound impact on Paul. "As a lifelong player, I had never heard such inspiring tone or played instruments that allowed for such nuance and finesse. Martin and I spent many long hours playing guitars, discussing their attributes and character, their voices." At the time he had been working as a computer programming consultant and feeling increasingly burned out by the corporate world. So he and Martin started Dream Guitars, focusing on representing only the world's finest independent luthiers. Although, Martin Simpson has since left Dream Guitars to focus on his own teaching, performing, and recording career, Paul Heumiller has continued to grow the company by refining its digital and retail strategy, and building relationships with suppliers and consumers.

A Company Grows

The first big challenge after launching the company was gaining the respect of high-end luthiers. "Since they only make a few guitars per year, they are rightfully very selective about who represents their work," notes Paul. Dream Guitars' credibility was bolstered by winning several awards early on in the company's existence, notably from Acoustic Guitar Magazine. Another important early milestone was the relocation to the Asheville area in Western North Carolina in 2004.

"The move allowed me personally to slow down and appreciate life more, which, in turn, allowed me to focus more on our clients and to better serve them," Paul continues. "Also, the people here still valued live music, and acoustic music in particular, which was a welcome change of pace. So the energy of the local music scene runs through Dream Guitars."

Just prior to the recession of 2008, Dream Guitars embarked on a large-scale expansion, which included building new spaces and designing a completely new website. All of these costs came during what turned out to be trying financial times. However, the turbulence helped the company leapfrog a number of its competitors, who were battling the challenges of a difficult economic climate.

The competitive edge that sustains Dream Guitars, according to Heumiller, is an earnest connection with the builders that make the world's finest guitars, which facilitates a deep understanding of what they are trying to accomplish with their designs. "I've gotten to know many of them personally by visiting their shops and attending guitar shows around the world, spending time with them as friends so I'm better able to represent them, and their work, in an honorable way," he explains. "In addition, all of us that work here are players and we truly care about finding our clients the perfect instrument for them, not just any guitar. Our expertise allows us to really guide folks to their dream guitar among a wide array of great designs and voices."

Everything they sell is special and unique – instruments that the Dream Guitars team hopes will inspire a guitarist to make new and exciting music. They also recognize the importance of developing long-term relationships with their clients: "We appreciate and value every player that comes to us and we want them to be a client for 20 or 30 years, so we also tell them what guitars are wrong for them and help them avoid making costly mistakes."

At the same time, educating guitar players about independent guitar makers is an ongoing challenge, as many prospective clients know little or nothing about this relatively niche field. Paul has developed a 21st-century solution to educating his customers: "We spend a lot of time and energy making demonstration videos for our YouTube channel and our website. These run the gamut from builder interviews and pro player performances and lessons to our own demos of every single guitar we've sold or are selling. We also develop a lot of content across social media, maintain a blog, and we contribute to various magazines and release several newsletters per month. All of this pays off every time I see the smile on the face of a player who holds a custom-made guitar for the first time. They can't believe the tone and energy these makers can get from mere wood."

Keeping Pace with Changing Times

While useful for educating the Dream Guitars customer base, keeping pace with changing technology has been an ongoing challenge. As with many organizations in the MI industry, the company website is Paul and his team's biggest connection to the community



The newly restored Martin OM-45



Detail of the rosette on the recently repaired Martin OM-45

of players around the world – and they are invested in improving it. To that end, they have designed and built a completely revamped website, which debuted in January, that is mobile compatible and has a focus on video content. "The guitars speak for themselves, but we have to get them into the hands of the clients," Paul explains. "For that magic to happen, the web is one of our best tools."

This is particularly crucial for Dream Guitars because they do not operate a conventional brick-and-mortar shop: the storefront is open by appointment only to demonstrate over 200 of the world's finest guitars. While perhaps unconventional, this approach has proven effective for them, allowing the staff at Dream Guitars to provide more focused service and give their full attention to clients in the shop.

It also works because of the nature of their clientele: high-end consumers who want ultimate service and one-on-one consultation. "That's exactly what they get here," says Paul. In addition, while many guitar shops have been hurt by the tendency for people to want to trade or sell guitars before buying a new one – a trend which has increased since the recession of '08 – at Dream Guitars, they have managed to make it work. "We find clients who appreciate the opportunity to trade, allowing us to educate the community on realistic trade values," he says.

Perhaps the single biggest key to the success of Dream Guitars may be the balance in their business model of dovetailing personal relationship-building with the oftentimes-more-impersonal approach of digital marketing. "We have largely been an online shop since day one," says Paul. "It was completely by design and is still the way we sell the majority of our instruments. Early on we did actually have a retail shop, but it didn't take me long to realize that wasn't the kind of business I wanted to run. Especially with all of these high-end instruments, you

“Our expertise allows us to really guide folks to their dream guitar among a wide array of great designs and voices.”

really don't want every single guitar player off the street coming into the shop day in, day out.”

Dream Guitars uses digital tools to expand the company's reach. "We always reinforce our online presence by meeting clients and builders in person as often as we can. I'm very active in the community, and I attend many guitars shows around the world to meet new clients and maintain my relationship with long-term ones. As you'd expect, people love coming to our shop to visit, but for many of our clients that's not an option, and there's no shop near them that has the quality of instruments that we do, so the internet allows us to make connections with many players across the globe

who might otherwise remain isolated from fine guitars.”

He continues, "Having come from a computer background, I love that we've harnessed technology to become a shop which can serve anyone, anywhere in the world. We are one of the innovators for online guitar marketing; I'm pretty sure we were the first site to ever record a video of every guitar sold, and we've been doing that for years at this point.”

To that point, Dream Guitars has amassed an impressive digital library of guitar samples, which they have dubbed their "Listening Studio." With this free online tool, players can search by many criteria, including maker, body size, woods, and more. They can also create playlists and educate themselves about the kind of sound they want, and the types of instruments that can offer that for them.

Memorable Moments

While highly reverent of many of the incredible instruments that pass through the Dream Guitars operation, Paul Heumiller actually points to his repair shop as providing some of his most memorable moments over the past few decades. "Clients send us guitars from all over the country, and there have been numerous times when we've been able to restore a gem to its former glory," he says.

"Just recently we finished undoing some horrible repair work on a 1931 Martin OM-45, which was very fulfilling. On the day it arrived I played it and it was as dead as cardboard. I knew something was wrong, and we found a huge spruce patch had been glued to the inside of the guitar in an attempt to repair a top which was bellying up. We painstakingly removed all of that and built a new bridge plate. Now the guitar practically leaps off your lap when you play it, just like a good pre-war Martin should!"

It's not always the top-end instruments that make an impression for Paul and his crew. "Another unique repair – on a less valuable guitar – was for a sweet local man we're fortunate to call a client. He brought us a homemade guitar that his grandmother learned on and that he, in turn, learned with as a boy himself. By the time it came to us it was unplayable, had no finish on it at all, and appeared to have been made from barn wood. While the guitar has little monetary value, it had real deep meaning to him and he asked us to do all we could to bring it back to life. We did and the smile on his face when he played it for the first time in years will stay with me forever." **MMR**

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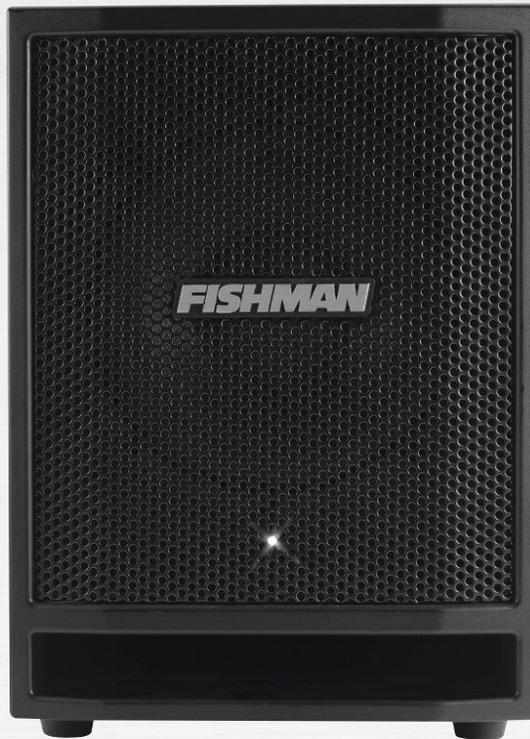
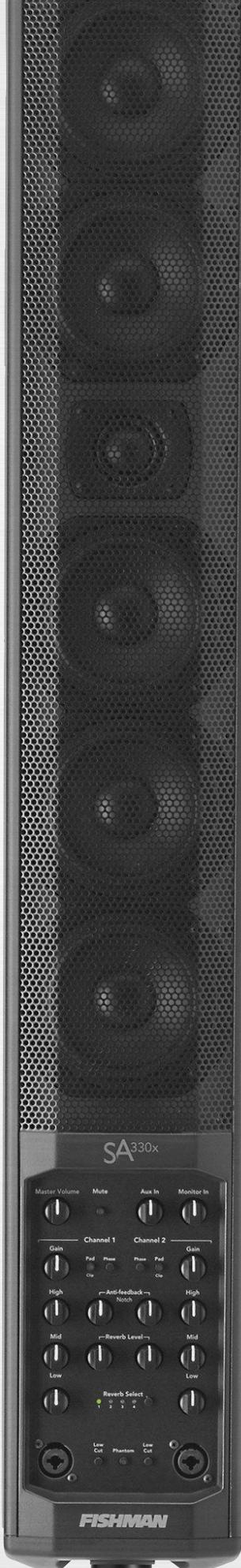
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Perfecting the Art of 'State of the Art'

By Christian Wissmuller

Long known for the employment of cutting edge techniques in the design and production of their acclaimed acoustic guitars, McPherson Guitars – easily and instantly recognizable thanks to the brand's distinctive Offset Soundhole Technology – are the go-to instruments for a number of high profile acts. Between the more “traditional” (though still very state of the art) wood models crafted by the brand's Custom Shop to the high tech carbon-fiber Kevin Michael models, McPherson has a wide range of meticulously assembled, quality instruments for the discerning musician.

MMR recently spoke with co-founder Matt McPherson about the company's history, mission, and future.

For any of our readers who may be unfamiliar, can you briefly outline the origins and evolution of McPherson Guitars? Who started the brand – where and when?

McPherson was started in 1979 by Mander and Matt McPherson in Edina, Minnesota. The original McPherson guitar used three soundholes around the edge of the top instead of one in the center of the soundboard allowed the top to resonate more freely.

Let's talk about the carbon-fiber Kevin Michael Guitars: What are some of the sonic, ecological, and other benefits to the design?

The tonal qualities of the McPherson carbon guitars are impressive. By engineering the guitars as we do, we have been able to bring out more rich tones, mids, and brightness. They sound more like a wooden acoustic guitar without the worries of heat and humidity. Also with no wood being used the guitars are Eco-Friendly and easy to travel with worldwide.

As it pertains to the traditional, wood-based McPherson Guitars, what's the current top seller?

Being that McPherson has become more of a custom shop it's hard to select just one model that would be considered a top seller. However the most popular wood combination is Indian Rosewood with a Redwood top. The combination of these two woods is the perfect blend of what most people look for in an acoustic guitar.

To your mind, what most makes McPherson acoustics unique compared to other, competing brands?

The one thing that sticks out to everyone is our Offset Soundhole Technology. It's easy to note a McPherson in someone's hand or on a store rack just by the appearance of the soundhole in the top. There are so many features that we are proud of on our guitars. We also have a Cantilever neck, which allows for a larger surface on the guitar top, our patented Overpass/Underpass brace system does an incredible job transferring energy throughout the guitar body, our carbon truss rod which keeps the neck from needing adjustments.

You have a fairly impressive roster of McPherson artists. How important are artist relations to the brand's image and promotion?

Artist endorsements are needed in this business for brand recognition. When you see one of our artists on TV or stage our product is instantly connected to them.

Currently you have a relatively small dealer network – for example, I'm in Boston and there's not a single authorized McPherson dealer in Massachusetts. Do you have any plans to expand your distribution model? Are you actively seeking new dealers and, if so, how would interested MI retailers go about partnering with McPherson?

McPherson wood guitars are hand crafted in Sparta, Wisconsin by a small group of master luthiers. Each guitar takes approximately six months to complete. Due to this fact, we have chosen to keep our quality as high as possible and create only a select amount of guitars per year. Many of our guitars are custom ordered directly from the consumer to our shop. We work with them is selecting the proper woods, model, inlay, et cetera for them. Due to the fact that many boutique guitars shops have gone out of business over the past years we are always looking to the one special dealer who understands our product and who has the demographics that will allow for the purchase of high end guitars. The McPherson carbon line is expanding rapidly and we are looking for new dealers aggressively. The product is more of a “Lifestyle” guitar that can be taken most anywhere without the fear of damaging your wooden guitar. Those interested in learning more about becoming a dealer for the carbon fiber line can contact Laurie Abshire at laurie.abshire@mcphersonguitars.com or call Laurie at 337-255-4890.

Any upcoming product introductions, events, et cetera that you'd like to share with our readers?

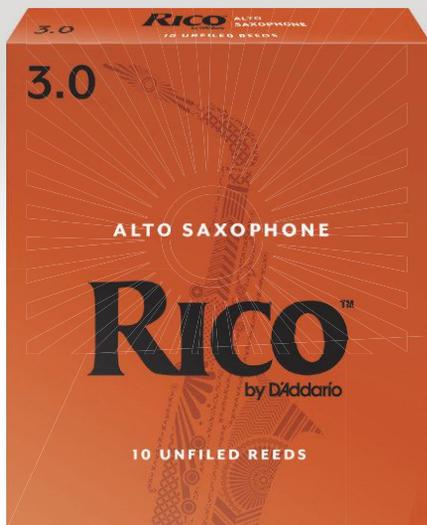
McPherson guitars will once again be attending the Winter NAMM show. Stop by and see us in Hall E Booth 1300.

Finally, what are your expectations – both for McPherson and the guitar industry as a whole – for the coming months?

McPherson guitars sales are consistent year to year and we expect that to stay the same. However the carbon market has been growing and with our new full size “Sable” that is now available we are expecting great sales for the remainder of this year and great growth into the future. **MMR**



Matt McPherson



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KPODJ

LIGHTING & DJ GEAR



The Gold Standard in Pro Audio Retail

By Mike Ryan

The California Gold Rush of 1848 seduced nearly a half million people to seek their fame and fortune. A handful of “49ers” did strike it rich, however, mining merchants like Levi Strauss made far more money than the miners did. Tom Capo of Hopatcong, New Jersey struck gold when this mobile DJ decided to “mine” the DJ industry at the young age of 14! He started an e-commerce store in 2002 and named it KPODJ, a play on his last name. Tom says starting KPODJ as a high school freshman was a huge advantage.

“My overhead was almost nothing,” he recalls. “I worked out of my parent’s garage and had no expenses other than my cell phone bill and web hosting. I didn’t even have an advertising budget. All sales were made thru word of mouth. I reinvested almost everything I made back into the business. I was lucky enough to start when online competition was quite low. I believed that online sales were the way of the future but I certainly didn’t anticipate or expect this type of success! I just tried to make my website like what I thought that I would want to shop at. Fortunately enough people out there had similar shopping expectations.

“Being in the trenches (as a DJ) myself I had the advantages of hearing firsthand the unedited opinions and experiences of hundreds of other DJs. (Plus) I always liked to try new gear. My DJ setup was constantly changing and I especially liked trying less known brands that I thought were better than the popular stuff.”

Tom’s father Joe, a retired Meineke dealership owner in northern New Jersey, wasn’t quite ready to retire so he decided to help out his son, a move that proved to be invaluable

“I was having trouble juggling college classes, booking DJ events, and running the e-commerce site, so my parents offered to help out,” says Capo. “Now, instead of running into the hallway to answer calls during classes, they were able to take care of customers and help grow the business dramatically. Within a few months, my father had a new full time job answering calls, doing accounting and taxes. I’m 100 percent

confident that the business would not be where it is now if he hadn’t joined. His phenomenal business sense made a huge difference. Not only did he help develop better relationships with our suppliers, but he is great with customers.”



Tom Capo

Joe remembers huge tractor trailers showing up in front of their house, located in a residential neighborhood, filling their home to capacity with Pro Audio products.

After graduating from engineering school Tom decided to continue building KPODJ. Along with his family’s support Tom says being a working DJ was another unique advantage over store owners who haven’t been in the trenches:

“Yes! Absolutely, all working DJs talk to each other so I have both the benefit of being in the trenches, myself, and the benefit of hearing firsthand the unedited opinions and experiences of hundreds of other DJs. I’ve found this to be very helpful in both purchasing inventory and recommending products to customers. It’s easy to say, would I buy this for my DJ rig before placing an order with a supplier. I can recommend a product because I’ve tried it and this is the one that I use. Fortunately, the products in this industry are ‘cool’ and I like playing with new toys. Putting together large trussing systems with audio and lighting is like high stakes Legos. I think that’s why we’re all in this industry. Most of us think its fun.”

KPODJ eventually moved into a “brick-and-mortar” location but Capo says it’s not a traditional store in a true retail sense.

“We don’t even have a sign out front,” he notes. “Our office looks more like a venue than a store and that’s how we use it when we have customer appreciation parties. Customers can schedule appointments for demos, pick up orders, and come by to chat... but we aren’t set up for a ton of foot traffic. At our main showroom (connected to our office), local customers come in to buy every day, but we don’t get many that wander in off the street. Almost all customers have already spoken to

a sales rep by phone and either want to demo something before buying or simply want to pick it up same day. The majority of our sales come from our online site and from local installs. Our sales team consists of DJs and musicians with no previous sales experience whatsoever. We just want guys that know the products.

We do have a second showroom, but it is more of a partnership with another pro audio store in northern New Jersey. They have a much more traditional showroom but since they weren't familiar with Pro Audio we created a small DJ/Lighting section inside their store and sell products that way.

"Fortunately we started slow and grew somewhat slowly. We've never rented, borrowed, or wasted much of anything. We own our office/warehouse and we pre-pay for every piece of equipment in our inventory. We've even paid off the mortgage on our property. Our overhead is way lower than any of our competitors. So we never have an issue with pricing."

True or false: customers visit retail brick and mortar to look at products up close and then search the internet for the best deal. How do you deal with this tire-kicking?

"We have found that to be very true. That's why we didn't try to make our main office into a traditional retail store. We want customers to research the best deal before they come to our store because we're confident that our pricing is the best they'll find. Then when they come in, we can talk about the best product for their needs instead of wasting time negotiating prices."

Being in business is tough on the best days. Other than time management Tom says their biggest hurdle has been credit card fraud.

"New retail stores are a prime target for fraudulent credit cards. Fraudsters know that most new e-commerce sites don't pay for the expensive fraud detection software. We were fortunate enough to catch the majority of them, but we had some potentially devastating close calls."

A 2016 the British Retail Consortium report that concluded "To be a success, stores must be accessible, authentic, diverse, and economically strong. They must be relevant and engaging, and most of all, they must be convenient."

"I agree. Convenience is very important. We are always trying to make the customer's buying experience easier and more convenient. We love customer feedback. Any customer that has given us a suggestion or recommendation will tell you that we take it very seriously. Requested features and changes

are often implemented within days of the suggestion. I believe that simplicity is an important part of the buying experience, so we try to keep that in mind when doing any type of update.

KPODJ carries the top selling brands. I know from my limited retail experiences to pick up lines like these often you have to prove you have a successful business. It can be the cart before the horse – without these brands it can be difficult to attract customers.

"It's a constant balancing act to avoid overwhelming customers with too many options. This is very tricky and we certainly haven't perfected it. But we are trying. As a shopper myself, I'd prefer to have the experts show me a "good", "better", and "best" option. Or in some instances, a "good", "a little better", "even better", "better than that", and "best" option. But

I don't want to see a couple hundred random products thrown on a page, and then try to pick one. That is why we are working towards a simpler buying experience. But at the same time, we'd love to be a one-stop-shop for any pro audio, DJ, or lighting gear. We're working on it.

"I'm personally starting to get in to the whole 'smart home'

trend. It's pretty cool what you can do with a router these days. I'm hoping that the pro audio industry starts doing more with "smart" technology. Maybe a way to tie in lighting affects, atmospheric effects, and video walls with audience member's cell phones?"

You started your mobile DJ business as a teenager... that's not that unusual these days but before you were an adult you had a thriving retail business going! So how and why did you go from mobile DJing to selling DJ products?

"Since I was constantly buying new gear for myself, I was always selling my old gear. I sold most to other local DJ's that I knew, but when they didn't need the gear I was selling, I started posting products online. Eventually, I traded someone two Numark turntables for the original KPODJ logo and basic framework of a very simple e-commerce website. It slowly grew from there."

I know a few former DJs who have branch off into other side jobs like operating a party donut business, running photo booths and even wedding officiating. Are we getting bored with DJing or is that just our nature of our personality?

"That's a good question. I'm not sure. Personally, I wouldn't say I was bored with DJing when my e-commerce business took over; I just went with what was working best. I think most

An outdoor performance in New Jersey last summer, put on with the help of KPODJ



DJs out there love music just as much as they love business. And if you're in business, you need to adapt and do what works."

"Fortunately, we started slow and grew somewhat slowly. We've never rented, borrowed, or wasted much of anything."

- Tom Capo

Other DJs may be envious of your transition from DJing into retail - do you agree with the statement that if you have to ask how to start a similar business then you probably won't be successful? The idea is

Now that you are successful in retail do you still DJ and why?

"Although our DJ services end of the business is much smaller than it used to be, we are still booking gigs regularly. I personally only do a couple per year, though. My favorite events to DJ are young weddings. Everyone comes to have fun and everyone has a lot of energy. They are usually enjoyable to DJ. Plus, using the gear helps dramatically on the retail side of the business."

You have a college degree in engineering, is that your backup plan? Are you interested in designing new DJ products?

"I went to school for mechanical engineering. I almost dropped out halfway thru to focus on KPODJ, but my parents and I thought it would be a good idea to have a backup in case things didn't work out. Plus, college was fun and some classes were related to the DJ world. I made a subwoofer in my acoustics class that rattled the whole building. I'd love to help design new DJ products today, but I know that side of the industry can be very tricky."

that you have to be a self starter?

"I disagree. I think there are many different ways people become successful in business. Many, including myself, accredit the bulk of it to luck and timing. But I've seen Shark Tank and when they get involved, they seem to do a great job teaching entrepreneurs how to be successful."

As someone who sells DJ products, without naming products - what is your opinion of quality of current Pro Audio products and the companies behind them? We have heard certain companies have been "racing to the bottom" with junk they sell.

"I'm not sure if this is a "DJ only" trait or a trait that all shoppers have, but many of our customers swear off an entire brand after just one or two bad experiences. I don't believe any of the manufacturers that compete in the 'race to the bottom' will succeed, especially in the professional entertainment business (where) reliability is extremely important. And DJs talk, so word spreads fast." MMR



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Overview and Reflections at 87

By James Darby,
Owner of Capitol Music, Montgomery, Ala.

I am now 87 years old and as an individual, according to the National Association of Music Merchants, I have been personally selling and servicing musical merchandise longer than any other individual person in the United States.

Looking back, I realize that I have touched a lot of lives and have left the world a better place than I found it, through music. Maybe being a little crazy is a prerequisite to being in the music business; and coming from a long line of crazy folks on my mother's side of the family, as I grew up my mother constantly preached, "Make something of yourself." Years ago it was much easier to make something of yourself than it is in today's economy and business world.

I am writing this thinking that I might share a few thoughts with others in the industry as to what has transpired over the years and where it looks like we might be headed.

I would give anything if I could have been born 30 or 50 years earlier so that I would not be completing my life in the era that we now find ourselves in. My life was carefully planned. I thought that I knew where I was going and I thought that I knew exactly how I was going to get there. If 20 or so years ago we could have known what was going to happen to retail, then changes could have possibly been made in time to salvage retail. Who would have envisioned that the whole world would embrace computers and destroy retail, as we have known it in the past?

Retail was where customers made their daily purchases. The retailers made a good profit margin on what they sold, enabling them to pay livable employee wages and still make a good profit return for the dealership. Today, traditional retail sales hardly exist because the public has been educated to buy everything online. For the longevity of our national economy, this must be changed! It is my understanding that in the past, retail sales represented over 80 percent of the nation's business; basically giving a livable income to our families... no more!

The current business climate has spawned the breakdown of manufacturer, jobber, distributor, and retailer relationships. One main concern is that many manufacturing companies now sell direct to the ultimate consumer and in many cases for less than that of traditional retail cost. In the past, our national economy was based on a profitable jobber, distributor, retailer relationship. How is the government going to make it now when retail purchases are being made even without tax in many cases?

The public is now buying online and many retail sales estab-



James Darby

ishments are being forced out of business. Remember that service after the sale is of key importance and retail stores are the home of service after the sale... not the Internet.

Drastic federal rule changes are going to have to be put in place if we are going to continue to successfully exist financially as a nation. Those drastic changes have to have rules. At this time, the nation's business is running without adequate rules. For success in anything, we must have a set of rules to live by and a set of rules to work by. In the future, there must be no more sales over the Internet. In today's world, I know that statement is likely to hit most people the wrong way because we have now made the use of the Internet a part of our daily lives. Think about it: Is buying something cheaper on the Internet worth enough to you to sacrifice our national economy and our nation?

"I have been personally selling and servicing musical merchandise longer than any other individual person in the United States."

Business sales must go through legitimate sources, and applicable taxes must be paid and records of transactions made and kept. If imports are coming into our country at unacceptable low prices, duties should be applied to where we could compete globally.

To restore manufacturing in our country, it may become necessary to lower manufacturing wages until circumstances are restored for the feasibility to balance cost for a reasonable profitability. It has taken some length of time for Washington to do all the foolish spending that has been perpetrated on the country, and it is probably going to take an even longer amount of time to work our way out of this dilemma. Our new president, Donald Trump, was elected primarily on the hope that he might be able to guide the country out of our current situation.

Now is the time our government must intervene and take action to salvage our national economy and our nation.

Over a period of time, I have developed the reputation of buying other music stores, and since opening in 1955, I have purchased the inventory of 35 other music stores. Since the downturn of the global retail economy, I have a huge supermarket-sized store packed with new and used inventory for sale... probably one of the largest inventories in the country.

After selling musical merchandise and servicing band instruments for all these years, the store is still profitable. However, due to my age, the time has come for me to consider selling the store so that I may have the time and resources to complete some other projects that could possibly change the national economy.

May I suggest that you consider purchasing Capitol Music, along with some other music stores to become the "Donald Trump" of the music industry in your locality?

There is an old adage that says, "There is a time to buy and a time to sell."

If you are comparatively young, you could consider this as possibly an ideal time to acquire several stores from dealers that feel discouraged with the current economy. Buying a number of stores increases your opportunity for larger quantity discounts and other profit incentives.

"Service after the sale is of key importance and retail stores are the home of service after the sale... not the Internet."

I have written a book designed as a road map of how to salvage our national and local economy. It is currently in the process of being finalized and published. The title of the book is *The Darby Plan*. I have been working on this book for years, and as I put the finishing touches on it, I see 94 million people out of work (that's one-third of our population), 53 million on food stamps, 43 million living in poverty, massive national debt, too much of our manufacturing base shipped overseas, small

businesses failing, and the remaining business owners attacked for exercising their God-given rights. We are on a solid track to becoming a third world country. At the same time, I believe that we can come back stronger than ever if our leaders can take the right steps. It can be done! My ultimate vision is that with Donald Trump as president, America would adopt the key points I have focused on in the book and utilize them to help reverse the direction our national economy is headed.

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In a Time of Industry Realignment, You Can Expect the Best from a NAMM Show

By Menzie Pittman

Repetition is the Mother of Skill:

As I reflect back on 2016, it was quite a year for Contemporary Music Center. You may or may not know, but CMC was graced with NAMM's top honor, Dealer of the Year, and while you would immediately think that winning DOY makes life easier, one peculiar aftermath and benefit also occurs. Your business falls under a wonderfully increased scrutiny. So, after your win, your task then becomes how do I turn this moment into a consistent propulsion for better opportunities? Well, the answer is easy – attend the 2017 NAMM show! Just like practicing an instrument, the more you engage, the better you play because repetition is indeed the mother of skill.

Innovative thinking and front-line feedback:

In the NFL it is often said that you are only as good as your last catch. So to stay at the top of your game in any professional environment, you must continually break new ground and stay relevant to your industry's ever changing ways along with the new innovations, and trends. I know of no better place to refresh stale thinking and examine new industry ideas than the NAMM show. You can get fresh insights from manufacturers, or better yet, get real time feedback from speakers at NAMM U, or the NAMM Idea Center and Tec Tracks. I always attend several sessions at every NAMM show because these are the best and brightest dealers and innovators sharing their insights. It's real front line feedback and worth its weight in gold.

Just like guitarists, the style of independent music dealers has changed:

Although it was an in vogue style in the late sixties and early seventies, guitarists no longer turn their backs to the audiences to hide their special licks. As a matter of fact, in today's world of shameless self-promotion, they make a video and sell fancy licks by the note.

In the same way music dealers have also changed (at least the smart ones), and they will gladly share their successes and struggles. I am in constant conversation with other dealers; as a matter of fact, my daughter works for another dealer, Carter Vintage Guitars in Nashville, and that is one of our best stories to share with our customers. Where else other than the NAMM show will you cross paths with the world's best retailers, musicians, and business leaders? Conversations about pain and gain happen abundantly at the NAMM show. Everyone knows it is the best networking resource available to anyone in the music business.

The Famous Hallway Chats:

Something that the most successful business people know is the value of conversations in elevators, conference center

aisles, and hallways. They can net you huge opportunities and even better, they can even be career changing. We all go into the NAMM show with an agenda, *but the magic of NAMM is in the impromptu, and the verve of the improv.* These are the magical moments that fall into your lap. To steal a quote from Bootsy Collins, "We are at The NAMM, baby!"

When the Industry is redefining itself and realigning, that's when you need NAMM the most, and that's when NAMM is at its best:

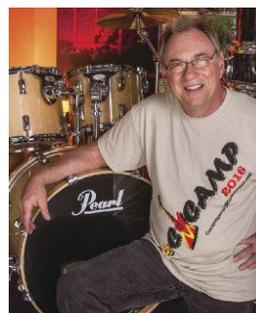
These are the moments when NAMM shines the brightest! Everyone at the show knows that the music industry, like all industries, is constantly redefining itself. The way we market, the mediums through which we communicate, the style of the end user and their preferences of consumption ... it's all changing by the hour and the participants who adapt, survive. It's that simple.

NAMM knows this, and its members know this. It's our job to remain relevant and up to speed on the everyday changes in our industry. It's no secret that if you don't adapt, you simply perish. So my advice is to take advantage of the industry's best resource: the NAMM Show.

In Closing:

If you have enjoyed this column, don't forget, if you see me in one of the aisles, stop me and say hello. I'm always up for intriguing and inspiring conversations with my colleagues. We are incredibly fortunate to do what we love as our vocation, and as Joe Lamond says, "The NAMM show is a moment where we all come together as a family and have our January reunion." It doesn't get any better than that! **MMM**

"My advice is to take advantage of the industry's best resource: the NAMM Show."



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" column.

He served on NAMM's Board of Directors from 2012 through 2015 and currently oversees the curriculum for CMC's performance venue @4410. In 2016 NAMM awarded Contemporary Music Center the "Dealer of the Year" award, the "Music Matters" award, and the "Best Sales and Promotion" award.

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ACCESSORIES

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Aquila Carbonblack Ukulele Strings sets are designed to give the user a strong, consistent sound. They aim to provide a more brilliant sound than fluorocarbon and be responsive through the entire range of the fretboard. Carbonblack also provides precise intonation and better tuning stability.



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DJ & LIGHTING

ADJ Focus Spot Two

ADJ recently released the Focus Spot Two, a spot fixture, with easy accessible GOBO replacement. Joining the smaller Focus Spot One and larger Focus Spot Three Z, this new fixture rounds out ADJ's Focus Series.



While the supplied GOBOs are suitable for a variety of applications, each one can also be replaced with a custom pattern. The Focus Spot Two is powered by a 75-Watt cool white LED light-source, with an operational life of approximately 50,000 hours. It is also equipped with a separate 3W UV LED, which is independently controllable. Motorized focus is another advanced feature offered by the Focus Spot Two – and all of the other fixtures in the Focus Series.

The Focus Spot Two is designed to be ideal for a wide variety of permanent installations, touring productions and one-off events. It is available now from ADJ USA and ADJ Europe.

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By Dan Daley

The Big Show Fits Itself into an Even Bigger Universe

Welcome to Anaheim, January 2017. The Winter NAMM Show floor may seem as busy and cacophonous as ever, but underneath that familiar buzz is a very changed world, one that is well reflected in the MI business and the show itself, if you look closely enough.

First, NAMM is much more diverse than it ever has been. Not diverse in the way that the recently ended political season might have used the word, but as they understand it in MBA programs. It's not just a musical instrument and retail-centric show anymore. That's evidenced by the conference activities that take place on the periphery of the show floor. The "Retail Boot Camp" and "Breakfast of Champions" are still fixtures on the agenda, but so are substantial nods to how musicians have now routinely become recordists. The TEC Tracks curriculum, which began in 2010 (then called the H.O.T. Zone), a year before the TEC Awards moved to Winter NAMM from their original perch at the AES Shows, underscores how recording music has become virtually tantamount to playing it, in the life and career of modern musicians. Show attendees will find more than 70 sessions intended to sharpen professional audio skills in the fields of recording, mic choice and placement, mixing and mastering.

What sets this year's show deeper into that groove is how the professional audio conference elements have now been regimented for the first time into categories on specific days. On Thursday, TEC Tracks will focus on live sound and lighting. While live performance has always been an element of being a musician, a tectonic shift in the larger music business has placed new emphasis on it as the primary means of making living for most musicians who choose the commercial artist path. The TEC Tracks at Winter NAMM offer a synergistic solution to a uniquely contemporary issue: audience expectations of live music performances have never been higher. Consumers expect to hear live music sound like a record, and the pro audio industry has responded with a growing array of technology solutions that can do just that, from stomp boxes that can make a single voice into a choir to synchronized backing tracks that can take what musicians make in the studio and integrate it into what they do on stage.

In fact, that melding of recorded and live music is part of what's propelling another new wrinkle in NAMM's technology agenda: networked audio. This year, on Thursday, a special "Introduction to Dante" session hosted by Dante's parent company Audinate will offer an opportunity to learn more about the networking, a technology that's been around a while but which has taken on vastly more importance in the last two years, as the number of tracks and channels in a typical production has swelled. Products like Focusrite's RedNet series of Dante interfaces have been scaled to accommodate the entire range of recording applications, from large commercial studios to home recordists with a laptop, and in the last year has extended

its applications deeper into live music, where the number of elements – live and prerecorded – has also continued to proliferate. In another first for NAMM, Audinate will host two days of the company's Dante Training and Certification program at the show. (The rapid shift towards networked audio has some musicians and pro audio professionals griping that music's starting to look like a career in IT. MI retailers may soon start feeling the same way.)

The Biz

Just as the TEC Tracks agenda has been integrating recorded and live music technology into the conference, it's also been paying more attention to the business side of being a musician today. Sunday will offer a line-up of speakers and panelists who will address the thickets of strategies and tactics putatively necessary for navigating the wilderness that the music industry has become.

It's this particular aspect of the conference where the ice is thinnest. It's not only laudable to acknowledge and address business and economic issues in a music context – it would be a serious omission to not do so these days. However, doing so also underscores what has become perhaps the only truly guaranteed method making money in music: run a music-business conference. These tend to be a mix of dry topics like copyright issues and how-to's on subjects like getting music placements in films and television shows, interspersed with marquee names whose celebrity is key to getting seats filled. Some of them, like last year's keynote by Nashville producer Tony Brown and this year's Saturday session with Jack Douglas, producer for Aerosmith and John Lennon, fill in needed gaps in music's historical narrative. Others can seem more like 30-minute infomercials. But between them, they function as a combination of meat and vegetables – enough of the stuff you want to eat and some of the stuff you're supposed to eat.

But at the end of the day, NAMM's embrace of these tangential aspects of music is welcome pragmatism at a time when MI retail – almost all retail, actually – remains challenged. Being a musician these days is complicated. NAMM is offering some tools that have neither frets nor valves, but do have a lot of potential value. Kudos to them for recognizing these changes in the culture of music.

Now let's hope that Anaheim's city fathers come to their senses about clamping down on AirBnB rentals there; back in July the city gave short-term rental operators 18 months to essentially get out of Dodge. A hospitality infrastructure geared almost exclusively as a resort acts as an annual travel budget squeeze that adds to the financial burden of a certain class of attendees – small shop owners, independent media, and boutique manufacturers among them. We get it: in Anaheim, The Mouse rules. But going back to that earlier comment about diversity, it's useful to remember: the more mice, the better.

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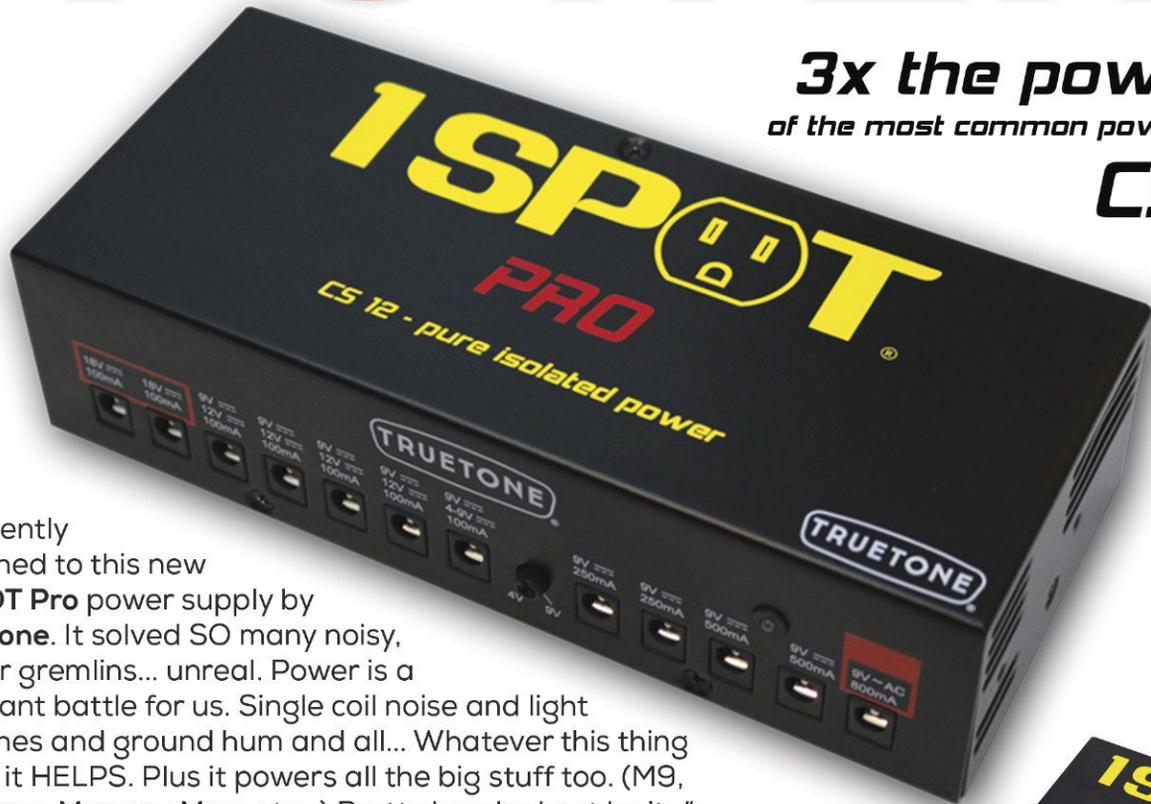
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