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Roundtable: All the Small Things

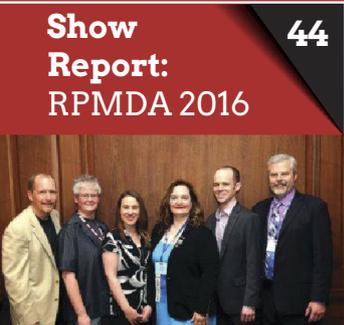
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Remo Belli
1927-2016



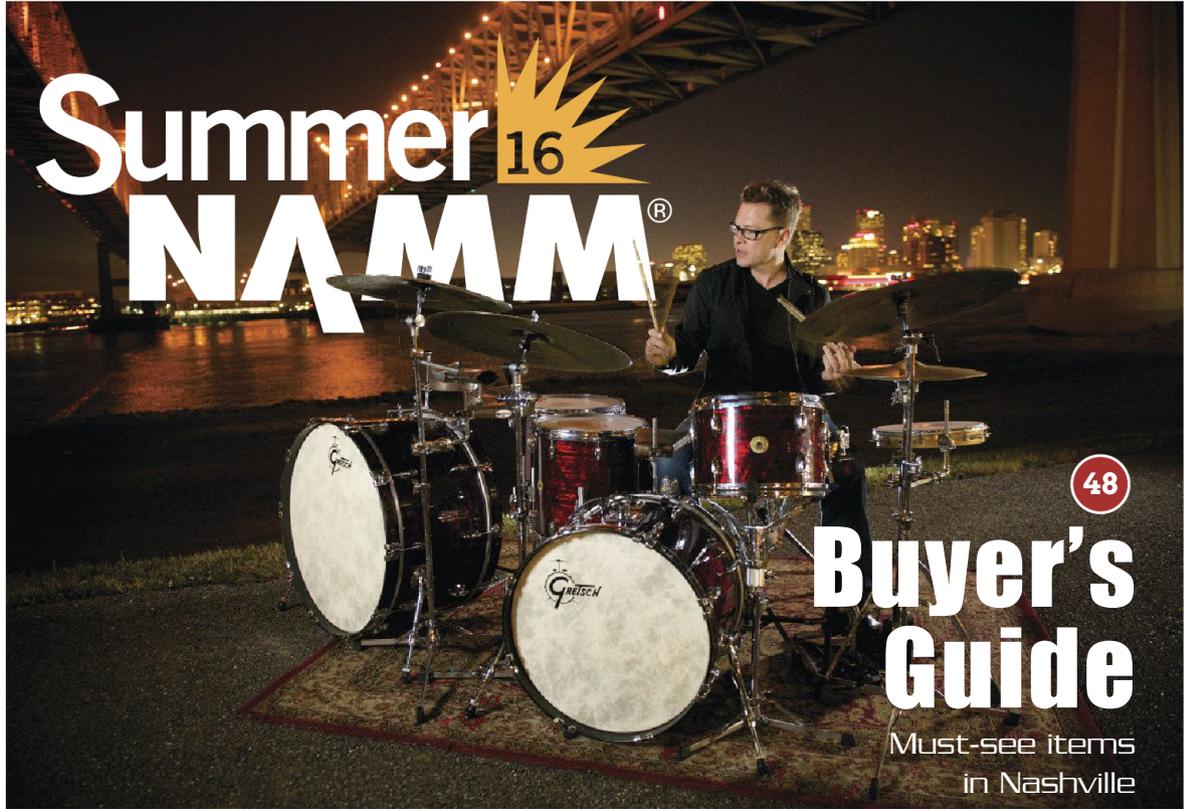
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Buyer's Guide

Must-see items
in Nashville



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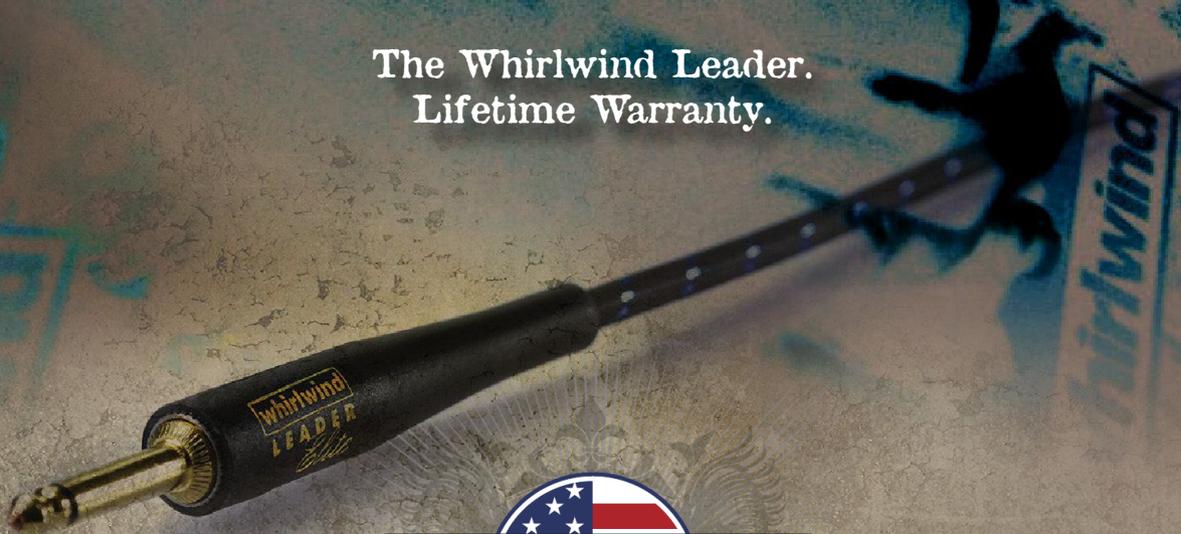


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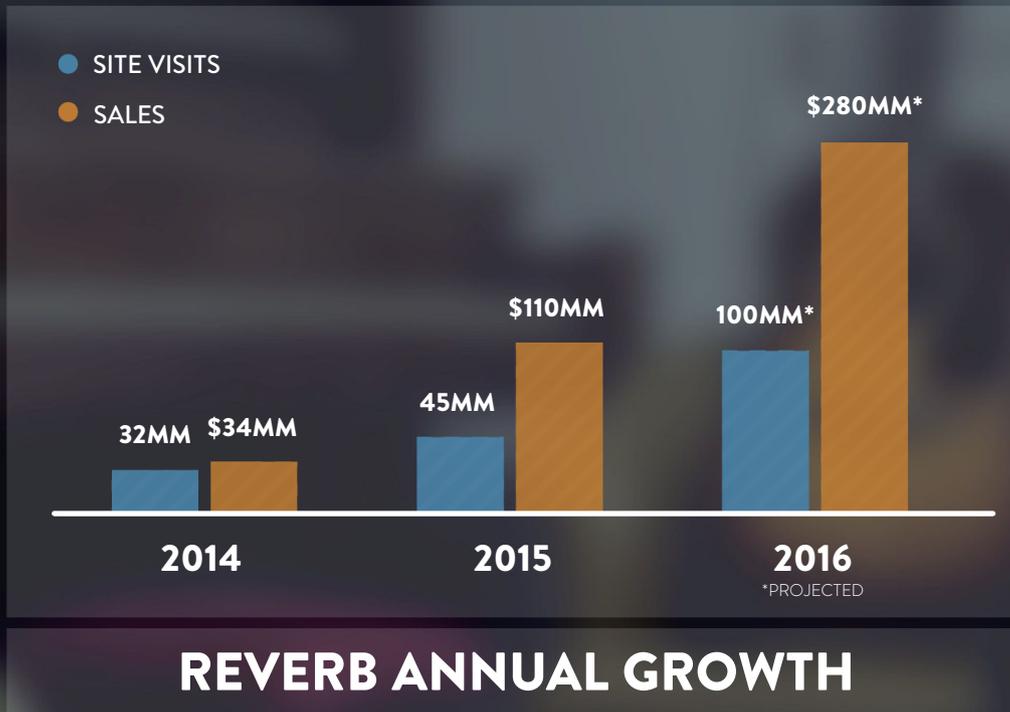


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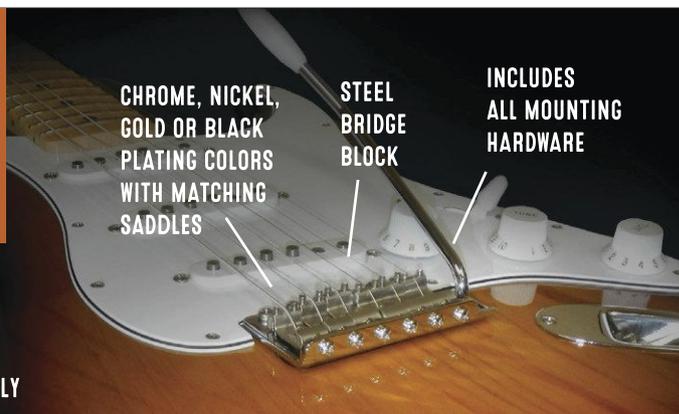
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Protest Song

Wherever there is political agitation, you'll find music reflecting and reacting to that fact. Be it Pussy Riot, Green Day, Bob Marley, Woody Guthrie, or Billy Bragg, musicians of all varieties express their thoughts on the issues of the day. Heck, Verdi and Beethoven wrote "political" pieces and it's a safe bet that as long as there has been music, there have been songs mirroring the human condition.

But it's not just a song's lyrical and musical content which can serve as a social statement – the refusal to let a movement or individual associate themselves with a piece of music can be equally impactful.

Ever since I was old enough to be at least somewhat aware of significant political campaigns in America, I've watched as artists have pushed back against candidates using their music as themes or as entrance or exit music at rallies – it's become something of a predictable sideshow: Who's going to "forbid" use of their song in this election year?

Bruce Springsteen objected to Ronald Reagan's appropriation of the then-brand-new "Born in the U.S.A." for the latter's 1984 re-election campaign (though Reagan still referenced the rocker in stump speeches, prompting The Boss to publically speak out against the President). Four years later, a cappella musician and noted earworm-creator Bobby McFerrin asked George H. Bush to stop using "Don't Worry, Be Happy" as his presidential campaign theme. Since then, the likes of Isaac Hayes, Sting, Boston, Jackson Browne, Foo Fighters, Tom Petty, and many others have all had similar run-ins with politicians.

An interesting – though perhaps predictable – side-note: the only instance that I can recall of a major Democratic candidate being asked to cease use of a song as part of campaign appearances was when Sam Moore objected to Barack

Obama playing "Hold On, I'm Comin'" at rallies. (If MMR readers are aware of any other examples, please write in!)

As anyone with eyes, ears, and some type of connection to the outside world is aware, we're in the middle of yet another – and quite possibly the strangest, ever – presidential election cycle and, once again, popular music is playing a high profile role.

Last summer, Neil Young took issue with Donald Trump playing "Rockin' in the Free World" at the kickoff event for the Trump campaign. "I do not trust politicians... I trust people," explained the veteran rocker. But just as hardly any (if, indeed, any) of the traditionally in-place rules hold for any aspect of the Trump campaign, that wasn't the end of it. No fewer than five additional (as of this writing) major artists have told "The Donald" to stop playing their songs – The Rolling Stones, Adele, Twisted Sister, Steven Tyler/Aerosmith, and R.E.M.

None of the above is meant to assert a preference for any political ideology or any specific candidate, past or present. That politicians want so badly to associate themselves with specific songs, and that certain artists care so passionately about what campaigns their art is, or is not, connected to is just another indicator of how powerful music can be.

Whether you make, sell, or service musical instruments and related gear, you're putting essential tools into the hands of men and women who create the soundtrack to our societal narrative. Whatever your own political affiliation, that's pretty cool!



Christian Wissmuller
cwissmuller@timelesscom.com



by Christian Wissmuller



MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Published Since 1979

PRESIDENT

Terry Lowetlowe@timelesscom.com

GROUP PUBLISHER

John Pledger.....jpledger@timelesscom.com

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Christian Wissmuller..... cwissmuller@timelesscom.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sharon Paquette Losesharon@timelesscom.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Mike Lawson.....mlawson@timelesscom.com

AUDIO / MI ADVISOR

George Petersengeorge@timelesscom.com

LIGHTING / STAGING ADVISOR

Nook Schoefeld.....nook@timelesscom.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR / DIGITAL MEDIA ADVISOR

Jacob Coakleyjcoakley@timelesscom.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Dan Daley.....dandaley@timelesscom.com

WEB DESIGNER

Josh Harris.....jharris@timelesscom.com

ADVERTISING / MARKETING DIRECTORS

Matt King.....mking@timelesscom.com

Dave Jeans.....djeans@timelesscom.com

Matt Hubermh@timelesscom.com

GREATER CHINA

Judy Wang, Worldwide Focus Media
C: 0086-13810325171 E: judy@timelesscom.com

ART DIRECTOR

Garret Petrov.....gpetrov@timelesscom.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Mike Street.....mstreet@timelesscom.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Angela Marlett.....amarlett@timelesscom.com

VICE PRESIDENT

William Hamilton Vanyo.....wvanyo@timelesscom.com

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR / CIRCULATION

Naomi Crewsncrews@timelesscom.com

Timeless Communications, Corp.

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Industry News

Hal Leonard Purchases Music Minus One

Hal Leonard Corporation has purchased Music Minus One. The joint announcement was made by Keith Mardak, CEO of Hal Leonard, and Irv Kratka, owner and founder of Music Minus One.

The Music Minus One company was founded in 1950 and their sing-along and play-along records quickly became an industry standard. Over the years the library has grown to over 1,100 titles, all of which will now be exclusively available from Hal Leonard. In addition, Hal Leonard announced that effective immediately they have lowered the prices on all available editions.



"We've been happy to distribute Music Minus One products for almost ten years now and we're proud that Irv is entrusting us to continue caring for and developing this iconic brand that really set the standard for play-alongs in our industry," said Keith Mardak. "We are sad to see Irv retire but he deserves a rest after working so hard on this great series for so long."

MMO owner Irv Kratka stated, "I'm 90 years old and after 66 years in this business, I thought it was time to hang up my spurs. I'm confident that Keith and his crew at Hal Leonard will take good care of this catalog and nurture it into even more modern products for the next generation of musicians."

Since Hal Leonard was already distributing MMO products, current retailers won't see any disruption in distribution. Any other parties interested in becoming a distributor should contact the Hal Leonard E-Z Order Line at (800) 554-0626 to set up an account.

➤ Industry News

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➤ Supplier Scene

➤ Trade Regrets

➤ People on the Move ➤ MMR Global



NAMM Members Advocate for Music Education in Washington, D.C.

NAMM, along with 91 music industry leaders and artists, made up a delegation of advocates furthering the case that all children deserve quality, comprehensive school music education programs during the NAMM Music Education Advocacy D.C. Fly-In (May 23-26, 2016). The delegation participated in various events to reinforce the importance of music being listed as part of a well-rounded education for all children.

The advocacy week began on Monday, May 23 with a Day of Service. Members from the group, including New York Yankee-turned Latin Grammy-nominated guitarist Bernie Williams, donated musical instruments and accessories and provided three hours of music education taught by master teachers on drum, ukulele and guitar lessons to 75 students at D.C.'s Friendship Technology Preparatory Academy. Located in the D.C. suburb of Anacostia, the school has seen participation numbers steadily rise since the inception of the band program in 2015. That same evening, The NAMM Foundation awarded the SupportMusic Champion Award to Senator Lamar Alexander (Tennessee). The award was given in recognition of the Senator's long history in music education advocacy and comes on the heels of the historic passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a bill introduced by Senator Alexander and signed into law by President Obama in 2015. The passage of ESSA is the first federal law to provide a framework for access to music and arts education for every student.

On Tuesday, the delegation prepared for its efforts on Capitol Hill by participating in advocacy training at Nelson Mullins, during which the music industry leaders were apprised of current issues facing public school

music programs and briefed on ESSA. The delegates were also trained on developing state-level advocacy efforts for music and arts education to put into practice in their respective states.

That evening, a special reception was held for the Turnaround Arts, a program under the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. During the reception, a variety of artists were honored, including Citizen Cope, Carla Dirlikov, Paula Fuga, Keb' Mo', Tim Robbins, Bernie Williams, Alfre Woodard, John Lloyd Young, among others, for their work in arts education advocacy, of which, music education is a core topic. Each artist was recognized with a SupportMusic Award from The NAMM Foundation for his or her support of this effort. An impromptu jam session featured the likes of Hawaiian soul singer, Paula Fuga, Keb' Mo', Bernie Williams, Citizen Cope and many NAMM members on a variety of instruments to serve as the house band.

On Wednesday, the delegation took to Capitol Hill for over 150 meetings with members of Congress and/or staff about the importance of music education and the support needed to insure that each student has the opportunity to learn music in school. Later that evening, a reception was held in the U.S. Capitol.

The week was closed out by two SupportMusic calls, including one featuring the newly appointed Secretary of Education, John B. King. On Thursday, Secretary King joined NAMM executive director of public affairs, Mary Luehssen for the SupportMusic Coalition webinar. The live call included a discussion about the new federal education law, ESSA and its goals for all children to receive a well-rounded education.

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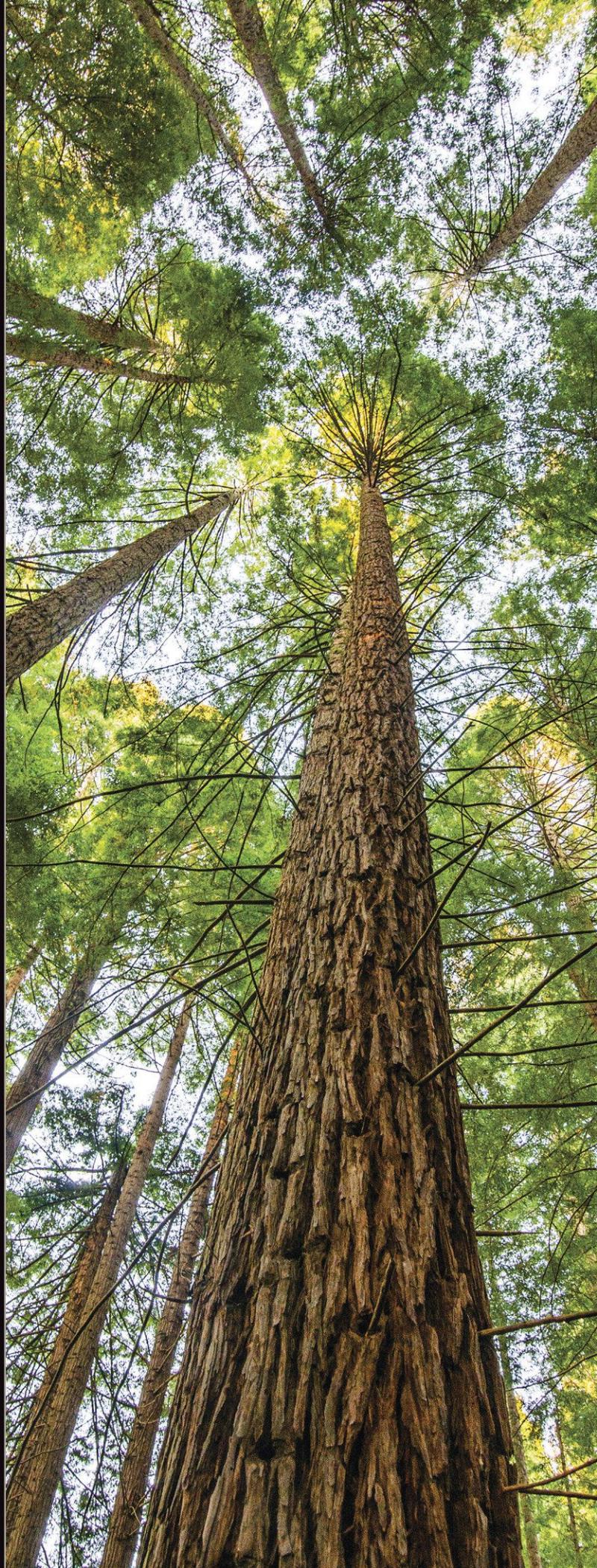


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Whirlwind Expands New York Factory

Whirlwind, a leading interface manufacturer for the live event, audio installations, effects pedals, and theater industries, announced that they are completing a 13,000-square-foot expansion of their New York factory to handle the rapid growth the 41-year-old company has been experiencing.

When completed, the total size will be 60,000 square feet.

"We're growing in every category, and every direction, so we needed our facilities to grow too," says Will Young, marketing director/artist relations. "This expansion is going to allow us to increase our ability to serve our customers and shorten turnaround time considerably, among other things." The "other things" include accommodate their power distribution Power Link division, which he says is especially seeing strong sales.

Whirlwind was founded in 1975 by Michael Laiacona, who has built a company that, in the words of Young, is "the company who connects everything – speaker cables, concert line arrays, consoles, and beyond." They are consistently spec'd on the largest custom installs including places like the Yankee and Cowboy stadiums and even the White House. "One thing that is consistent across all product lines is that we over-build, whether it be for installations, theaters, live events, concert touring, or players looking for a good guitar cable," Young adds. "Everything we do is developed and built right here at our plant, and we're able to make sure the reliability factor is extraordinarily high." The addition will also call for adding more people to their already 140-person roster.



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The Music Link Named U.S. Distributor for Klotz AIS Cables

The Music Link Corp. has taken over over all sales and distribution operations for Klotz AIS Germany's MI product range to the MI retail sector in the U.S.

Catering to increased demand for Klotz Cables on the U.S. market, The Music Link Corp. and Klotz AIS GmbH have signed an agreement over USA-wide sales and distribution of the Klotz MI cable range. The Music Link serves the MI retail sector in the USA from two locations (Hayward, California and Knoxville, Tennessee) and delivers to MI customers throughout the country within three days or less.

The Music Link will initially carry 50 best-selling products from the Instrument, Guitar, Pedal Patch, Microphone, Speaker, and Keyboard cable ranges, as well as supplying signature products including the T.M. Stevens FunkMaster range of guitar and bass cables and the guitar cable of #1 Billboard Blues Star Joe Bonamassa.

Klotz Cables will shortly be available

from both Music Link depots and will be presented to the specialist retail industry and the general public at Summer NAMM 2016 in Nashville – The Music Link Corp. booth #1223 (Hall D).

Frederic Kromberg, Klotz AIS director of international sales, comments, "We have noticed a significant spike in demand for Klotz Cables from the US MI retail industry for some time. Much of this demand stems from the communities around our #klotzfamily artists and bands, who tour and perform concerts using our cables on a daily basis. In response, last fall we opened a dedicated Klotz U.S. Sales Office in the Boston area, headed by Bruce Bartone. We are now happy to announce our partnership with The Music Link, a leading U.S. distributor for the MI industry throughout the USA."

Bruce Bartone, Klotz U.S. sales manager: "I've been familiar with The Music Link for many years as an outstanding leader in MI distribution for the US market. The Music Link's product range generates



powerful synergy effects for KLOTZ Cables, spanning electric guitars, classical acoustic guitars, mandolins, banjos, guitar amps, effect pedals and an enormous array of accessories. The perfect match for Klotz Cables! I'm excited about our *continued on page 15*

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Butera and NAFME Part Ways

On Wednesday, May 11th, after a tumultuous few days which had set the blogosphere/social media a-flutter (due to comments made by NAFME leader Michael



National Association
for Music Education

Butera in April that many deemed to suggest racial bias), the organization released the following statement:

After a thorough review process, the National Executive Board of the National Association for Music Education (NAFME) and Michael Butera have agreed that he will not be returning to the association. We wish him well and thank him for his service to our purpose and mission.

Additionally, we are announcing that Michael Blakeslee will serve as the new Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer for NAFME, effective immediately. Mr. Blakeslee's vast experience and knowledge of our orga-

nization, fostered over nearly 30 years of dedicated service to NAFME and the music education profession, best position us to move forward and advocate for and provide opportunities to students and teachers.

These last few days highlight the need for real, substantive conversation about what must be done to provide access and opportunity to all students no matter where they live. This is an ongoing journey and we are ready to play an increasingly important role in convening and facilitating a dialogue and prompting action around how all of us can increase diversity, inclusion, and equity in music and the arts.

AES Announces Dates for L.A. Convention

The Audio Engineering Society (AES) has begun to set the stage for the 141st International Convention which will return to the Los Angeles Convention Center, Thursday, September 29 – Sunday, October 2, 2016, with the Exhibition running Thursday, September 29 – Saturday, October 1.

Additionally, Convention co-chairs Michael MacDonald and Valerie Tyler have announced committee members for the content-focused Tracks and other popular aspects of AES Conventions, including Tech Tours, Student Events, and more, for the 141st Convention. The AES's previous L.A. Convention brought attendees both an extensive Tech Program and Exhibition area, setting West Coast attendance records and drawing acclaim from attendees, exhibitors and presenters, alike.

Visit the AES 141st International Convention webpage for the latest information, and find about more about becoming a part of the Audio Engineering Society at aes.org.

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Taking JodyJazz to Cuba

Jody Espina, founder and president of JodyJazz Inc., recently had the opportunity to visit Cuba and spread the word about JodyJazz saxophone mouthpieces among some of the country's leading saxophone players.

Espina was able to take advantage of the new relaxed travel regulations between Cuba and the US in order to make his first visit to the country. Guided by his friend and former Cuba resident Yves Prager, Espina was able to gain an introduction to the musician community there.

Espina's first visit was to the home of world famous saxophonist Cesar Lopez, currently regarded as Cuba's premier saxophone artist. Lopez is best known for his work as a former member of Cuba's most famous band, the legendary super-group "Irakere." Here Jody was warmly welcomed with a feast of traditional Cuban food and rum, followed by some of the finest Cuban cigars. After the meal they set about testing mouthpieces with Cesar Lopez quickly falling in love with the JodyJazz HR* series Alto 7M model, about which he said "It was as if you made it just for me."

They were then joined by Michel Herrera, a great young up-and-coming saxophonist who is currently setting the Cuban music scene alight. It was love at first sight for Michel Herrera also as he immediately fell in love with the JodyJazz JET series Alto 8 model. The three then spent the rest of the afternoon jamming and having a good time with these two tremendous Cuban saxophonists en-

joying their new JodyJazz mouthpieces. During his trip Espina was also able to sit in with a number of great Cuban bands at some of Havana's most famous Jazz clubs including Cesar Lopez's group at the Jazz Cafe and Michel Herrera's group at La Zorra.

Of his visit Espina said, "The warmth of the Cuban people, and especially the musicians, is all the reason anyone would need to go there. And the level of musicianship is astounding. But this is still a very poor country with many restrictions placed on its residents," said Espina. "Meeting, playing and hanging with the great saxophonist Cesar Lopez was an experience I shall never forget, and meeting and playing with several of the other astounding saxophonists like Michel Herrera was also a big highlight of my trip," he continued.

Though it might be some time before Cuba represents any sort of viable market for American instrument manufacturers, the influence of Afro-Cuban music and its leading practitioners like Cesar Lopez and Michel Herrera continues to cast a long shadow across the globe.



Jody Espina with Cesar Lopez (left) and Michel Herrera (middle).

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Fred Gretsch Receives Honorary Degree From Elmhurst College

Fred W. Gretsch was presented with an honorary Doctor of Music degree from Elmhurst College at the school's Spring Commencement on May 28, 2016.

Gretsch, who is an Elmhurst alumnus, is president of the Gretsch Company, which was founded by Fred's great-grandfather in 1883. Today the company makes guitars and drums for musicians who appreciate "That Great Gretsch Sound," top-quality craftsmanship, and classic style.

Elmhurst College confers honorary degrees on individuals whose commitments and achievements embody the college's mission, vision, and core values. Gretsch was recognized for his ongoing contributions to the music industry, as well as to his and his family's stated mission, which is "to enrich people's lives through participation in music."

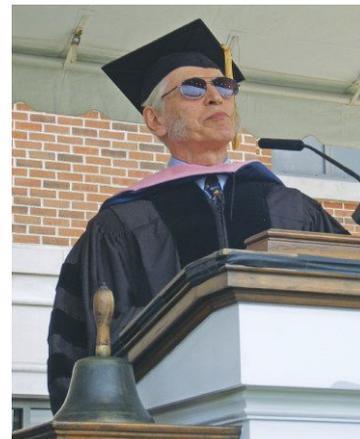
Fred, his wife and business partner Dinah, his family company, and the Gretsch Foundation have been generous supporters of Elmhurst College and its department of music. That support has funded a variety of scholarships, as well as the state-of-the-art Sylvia and William Gretsch Recording Studio (established in 1987 to honor Fred's parents). In 1993, the Gretsch Electric Guitar Ensemble became a regular element of the music program, and in 2015, arrangements were made for the music department's ensembles to perform exclusively on Gretsch drum kits. Gretsch has also been a major supporter of the annual Elmhurst College High School Invitational Jazz Festival.

Speaking on behalf of Elmhurst College, Music Business Program director Tim Hays comments, "Fred Gretsch's support has helped us develop one of the top music business programs in the

country, from the Gretsch Music Business Student Scholarship fund to his multiple gifts that have allowed us to build and continually upgrade our state-of-the-art Gretsch Recording Studio. The College, the Music Department, and generations of students have benefited from his vision and generosity."

Vice president for Development and Alumni Relations Joseph Emmick adds, "We're pleased to honor Fred Gretsch. Who better to receive an honorary degree than someone who has distinguished himself in his service to the musical community? Fred and Dinah together form one of the music industry's most formidable teams, and their international success enhances Elmhurst College's reputation across the globe."

After receiving his honorary degree Gretsch said, "I'm grateful and I'm honored. When it comes to enriching people's lives through music around the country and around the world, I recognize that Elmhurst is a great place to start. I look forward to working with the college to create more music-makers in the generations ahead."



Fred Gretsch receiving his honorary degree.

The Music Link Named U.S. Distributor for Klotz AIS Cables

continued from page 10

partnership and look forward to our successful collaboration with The Music Link."

Chris Lekas, VP of Sales, The Music Link Corp.: "All of us at The Music Link are excited about this partnership with Klotz. It has long been our goal to provide a one-stop-shopping experience for our dealers, and the addition of industry-leading Klotz cable products to our portfolio offers great opportunity for our customers. We're very excited to help grow the Klotz brand in the U.S. and to become part of the Klotz Family.



Letters

Hi Chris,

I found your May editorial very timely and informative. Nice work!!

Best regards,

Neil Lilien

Meisel Accessories, LLC

NAMM Announces Music Industry Day June 25 in Nashville

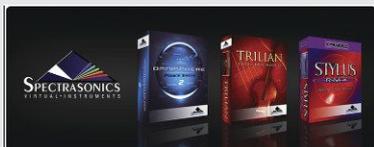
NAMM invites musicians, songwriters, sound and recording professionals, music educators and students to experience Summer NAMM during Music Industry Day.

Held on Saturday, June 25 at Nashville's Music City Center, Music Industry Day will open the doors to NAMM's members-only tradeshow to learn and connect at professional workshops, see the latest in new gear from leading musical instrument manufacturers, and to enjoy a multitude of artist performances and events.

To explore Music Industry Day events further, visit www.namm.org/summer/2016

Supplier Scene

Omnisphere 2 'Wow Moment' Captured



Omnisphere 2, Trilian, and Stylus RMX

When customer and music producer Avli Avliav recently purchased three Spectrasonics virtual instruments, ILIO surprised him by hand-delivering Omnisphere 2, Trilian, and Stylus RMX to him at his studio.

In exchange for the visit, Avli allowed ILIO's Michael Babbitt and Daniel Hange to capture video of his reaction to Spectrasonics' new packaging, which includes their sleek new USB installation drive.

Watch the video here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bs3f4QtmMyc

Upon opening the Omnisphere 2 package and seeing the USB installation drive for the first time, Avli can be heard saying, "I love it! Wow, this is really smart." He summed up the experience after installing Omnisphere 2: "I love the design. I love how simple this is, just easy to install and it's great that you have a backup even with USB, way better than DVDs."

ILIO's Daniel Hange explains, "We've begun to realize that while many people know about the USB installation drives that come free in the Omnisphere 2, Trilian, and Stylus RMX boxes, few people understand how cool and useful they are until they see them. Once they bring the product home and open it up, they get it immediately, so we thought capturing that realization in a spontaneous "unboxing" video like this would give viewers a sense of it."

ILIO.com

Adoro Worship Drums Available in the United States

Adoro worship drum sets now available in the United States after recently opening a branch office in Kansas City, Missouri.

Drum manufacturer Adoro, located in Hamburg, Germany, has produced unique, award winning drum sets since 2008. Adoro, Spanish for "I adore", describes the purpose of the instrument design - for adoration - drums for worship bands and small audiences where drums are not fully amplified, and a professional, low volume sound is necessary. Adoro might be the only drum manufacturer that is focused on building more reserved drums for bright sounding locations like church buildings. The drums

are designed for a sensible response with a full, rich sound, even when played softly. One of the first worship leaders to embrace Adoro Drums is renowned Canadian worship artist Brian Doerksen.

Earlier this year we introduced our worship drums at the NAMM show in Los Angeles and will also be at the NAMM summer show in Nashville.

Adoro drums are designed specifically to benefit houses of worship. The minimum volume level a musical event can be set to, can be dominated by loud drums, thus many churches use acrylic screens or even e-drums to get the sound under control. The acoustic sound of the drums from stage need to be overpowered by the PA system. Adoro worship drums intend to allow events to be run at up to 80 percent less volume, giving the sound engineer full control over the levels without having to work with e-drums or acrylic screens anymore.

"My Adoro drums have quickly become the most requested set-up for both recording sessions and live events," said Calum Rees, Brian Doerksen's live and studio drummer.

"They have a focused tone with an extremely broad range of tuning capabilities resulting in a very flexible instrument. Live engineers will love the control of the source sound at their disposal, enabling them to present a big open roomy sound or a more focused processed sound, with flexibility all

created for
worship
Perfect volume control

- designed for churches
- 80% less loud events possible!
- no drum screens needed
- real acoustic drums
- warm, intimate acoustic sound
- Improve stage sound

"I love everything about Adoro Drums... the vision, the way they look, and most of all the way they sound."

Brian Doerksen, Worship Leader & Songwriter



the way between. I've yet to find a musical situation where these drums do not excel. Churches should also look into investing into these drums before shutting their drummers away behind that dreaded perspex screen. The drum construction enables a full tone without the need for heavy hitting, and your drummers will be thankful for an instrument that can convey every nuance in their playing. If they are lacking somewhat in the nuance department then these drums will help them find it. Playing an Adoro set of drums inspires me to further my ability and discover more of the drummer I could be... I heartily recommend Adoro to anyone who is looking for a top quality instrument that will both inspire and produce fantastic results."

Find Adoro Worship drums at Summer NAMM booth #116

worship-drums.com

Inside Information

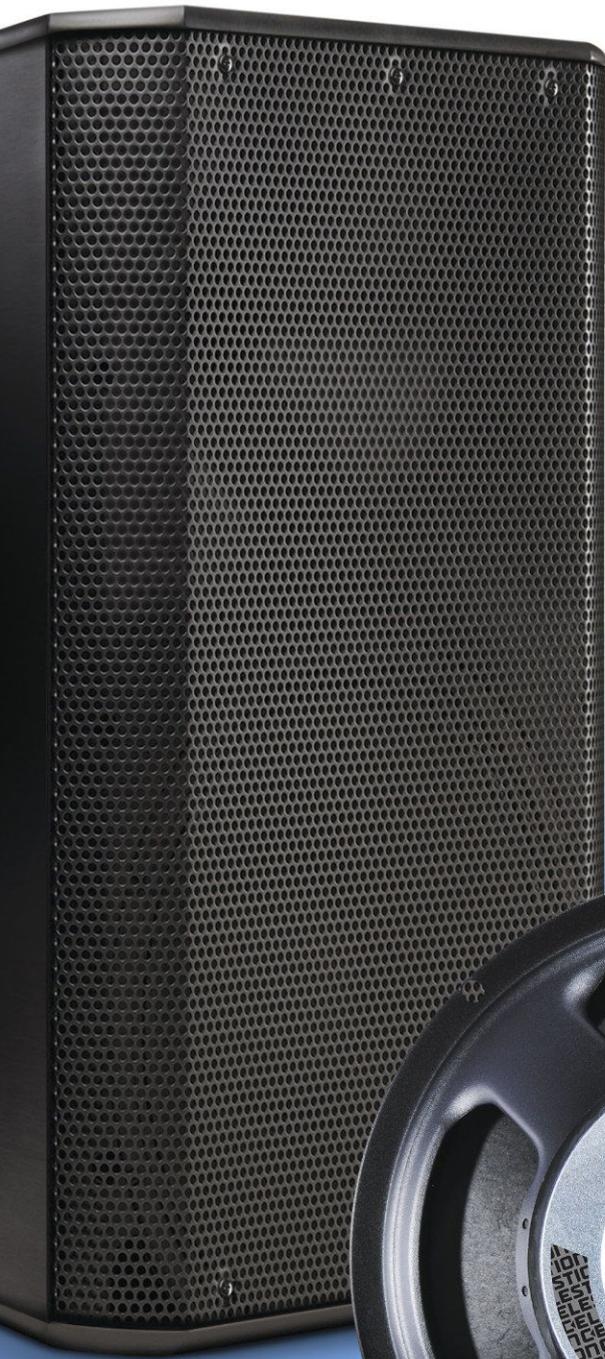
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celestion.com

CELESTION

Ernie Ball Introduces "String Theory": A New Artist Web Series

Ernie Ball announced the introduction of a new artist web series, Ernie Ball String Theory, as the cornerstone of its revamped website.

"Ernie Ball String Theory" features a selection of the company's most innovative and influential brand ambassadors as they talk about the sonic origins of their tone and playing styles. Episodes currently on the site include Paul Gilbert (Racer X, Mr. Big), Josh Carter (Phantogram), Steve Stevens (Billy Idol), Dustin Kensrue (Thrice), Bobb Bruno (Best Coast), Joe Don Rooney (Rascal Flatts) and Ilan Rubin (Nine Inch Nails, Angels & Airwaves, Paramore), among others. Created and produced by Ernie Ball, the series is filmed in the intimate, familiar surroundings of home studios where artists can pick up their guitars and demonstrate skills and tricks they've learned on their lifelong exploration of the guitar. New episodes featuring artists across multiple genres, including Joe Bonamassa, Steve Vai, The White Buffalo, Butch Walker, 311 and Kenny Wayne Shepherd,

are currently in the works.

The site upgrades underscore the family-owned company's well-established position of making quality electric guitar and bass strings since 1962. Ernie Ball pioneered the famous "Slinky" rock and roll custom string gauges that virtually all string manufacturers now use, setting an industry standard for over 50 years.

In addition to String Theory, the updated site features Our Family of Artists, an extensive photo gallery of guitar players who play Ernie Ball strings (including Keith Richards, Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Pete Townshend, Joe Walsh, St. Vincent, Elvis Costello and more); Play Warped, a re-branding of the iconic Ernie Ball Battle of the Bands platform which is celebrating its 20th year and gives bands a chance to win a slot to perform at the Warped



Tour mainstage; the Ernie Ball blog, which provides updates on current Ernie Ball artist news, as well as string buying guides and more; and links to episodes of Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone, the singular documentary series created and produced in-house which airs on AT&T Audience Network.

Other features on the site include: tone profiles; string comparison charts; product content; a new, streamlined shopping experience, which supports local dealers via a Shopatron integration; and 3D animated string renderings showcasing ball end, core and wrap wire technologies.

ernieball.com

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On-Stage Artists Gain Exposure

The Alternate Routes Song "Nothing More" Now Featured in a New National TV Commercial for TOMS Shoes

TOMS sought out the band after hearing their song. The uplifting mood and message of the song perfectly fit the sentiment behind the shoe company's dedication to helping those in need around the world.

Tim Warren of The Alternate Routes says of his band's use of On-Stage products, "The professional-grade line is tough, and we've put it through the wringer recording some of our live shows, and working in a couple different rehearsal spaces over a span of a few months. The computer stands and the iPad holders have changed the writing pro-



cess for me, and it's easier to capture ideas in real time on your phone or iPad if those things have a place to live in rehearsal where they won't be stepped on or dropped."

The Alternate Routes derived their name from the idea that no matter what obstacles lay ahead of them, they were going to make music. The result is several years on the road, traveling the U.S. and many parts of Europe. The song "Nothing More" was written to accompany the message of Newtown Kindness.

Every year, the NEMA nominating committee, made up of music industry experts, nominates over 100 artists in various categories and genres.

Jason Spooner of The Jason Spooner Band says, "Personally, my favorite piece of gear is the Pro Tilt-back Amplifier Stand. I had been looking for a solution to the problem of positioning my amps at the correct angle for years. I'm a guitar player and there's no better sound than that of the electric guitar coming directly out of a good amp. I had tried various stand configurations, but they were always poorly made and a drag to set up... and I'd generally worry that the amp wasn't secure. The Pro Tilt-back Amplifier Stand is BURLY and strong. The clutch on the stand is bulletproof, and there's zero doubt that the amp is perfectly safe on it. The stand allows the exact angle that you desire to be dialed in down to the millimeter, and you have the added bonus of the amp being elevated a bit which makes it more audible and accessible."

The Jason Spooner Band has a signature sound that combines a variety of musical genres into an energetic blend of Roots Rock, Americana, blues, folk and groove-oriented jazz with elements of reggae and soul.

On-Stage.com



The Jason Spooner Band NEMA Live Act of the Year Award

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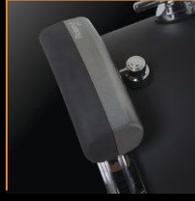
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Indy 500 Concerts with CHAUVET Professional

The "Greatest Spectacle in Racing" celebrated its 100th anniversary in dramatic fashion as rookie driver Alexander Rossi coasted to a victory after his car ran out of gas near the end of the race.

Using a collection of COLORado fixtures from CHAUVET Professional, Collyns Stenzel drenched the stage in rich bold colors for the Carb Day concert by Journey. On Saturday he reconfigured his truss, but used the same fixtures to colorize the Legend Day concert stage for Blake Shelton. On Sunday he moved to a different spot on the Indianapolis 500 grounds to light the Snake Pit EDM fest featuring Shrillex, Zeds Dead, Martin Garrix and DJ Mustard.

Aside from providing deeply saturated colors for the EDM stage, the COLORado fixtures' selectable dimming curves provided smooth fades at the bottom end for transitioning be-



tween sets. Stenzel was also impressed with the long throws that resulted from the dual 15° and 30° optics of the COLORado Batten 144 Tour.

For colorizing the Carb Day and Legends Day stage, Stenzel relied on 30 COLORado 1-Tri IP par style fixtures flown on downstage straight line truss. In addition to rendering vivid colors, the rugged IP66 RGB washes provided the LD with a form of insurance against the elements.

Chauvetprofessional.com

Riversong Guitars at the ACM Awards in Las Vegas

Riversong Guitars was backstage at the 2016 American Country Music Awards in Las Vegas. Mike Miltimore made sure the performers tried out our Wooden Riversong Guitar picks and got a chance to play the newest Riversong guitar creations. Many new friendships and endorsements were forged over the weekend.

"It was an honor to be amongst the world's top guitar techs, players, and movers in the music industry. I am confident that many of the players will be joining our Riversong family." Riversong.com



Mike Miltimore (Riversong Guitar founder) at tech station.

"TUSQ picks are really special. They really affect my tone in a positive way that I can hear and feel."

Adam Zimmon, Guitarist / Composer

"I use TUSQ picks for the incredible range of tone they offer! An amazing advancement in flat-pick technology."

*Rock Clouser
Independent live, pit and session - string multi-instrumentalist*

"I never thought a pick could be so determinant to my tone. It really improves the way I hit and feel the strings."

Juan Cruz Masotta

"The harmonics sparkle!"

Dallas Sutherland

"Best pick for acoustics I have ever used!"

James Brill

"All I can say is WOW! They help deliver a clear, clean and vibrant tone that is hard to describe....Thanks!!!!!!!"

Jim White

"I have to say I am in love!"

Chris Sheriff

"Graph Tech hit a home run here with their TUSQ Picks"

*Chris Buono
TrueFire Artist, Hal Leonard/Cengage Learning PTR Author*

"I really like these picks and the articulation I get from them."

Joe Pinnaiva

"The material is lighter, harder, and comes off of the string faster so the sound just pops. They have their own tone and it is simply just amazing!"

Bobby Keller (Meka Nism)

"TUSQ Picks are very useful especially when I double my acoustic guitar track using different TUSQ Picks."

Takeishi Akimoto (Ziggy Marley Band)

"I finally have the sound I was looking for and [TUSQ Picks] will be all I use from here on out. Thanks so much!!"

Michael Flynn

"It's one of the best picks I have ever used! It may be the perfect pick."

Kim Young

"They are superior to my old picks in every way...tone, feel, and a new sense of authority against the string. Thanks!"

Stephen Kramer

"Harmonics out the ass and overall helped tone and feel."

Clayton Mark

"I'm extremely impressed by the harmonics...they're the best sounding and best playing picks I've tried."

Julien Bitoun

"These picks really impressed me and have become my favorite. Great tone, excellent attack and articulation."

YouTube User JPulido421



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I Saw Her Standing There
Kind of a Drag
Leaving on a Jet Plane
Let's Spend the Night Together
The Letter
Marrakesh Express
Mustang Sally
Our House
Pinball Wizard
(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction
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Sabian Education Network Hosts Event at Vic's Drum Shop in Chicago

On May 3, 2016, the SABIAN Education Network hosted its latest panel discussion event for drum teachers at Vic's Drum Shop in the Music Garage in Chicago, IL.

With SEN director Joe Bergamini moderating, the teacher attendees listened to Victor Salazar (owner of Vic's Drum Shop) discuss promotion and marketing your teaching business, Rich Stitzel (Chicago drummer and educator) focus on finding purpose as a teacher, and Meg Thomas (Chicago percussionist, drummer and educator) explain how to customize lessons for each student.

A highlight of this event was having drum legend Billy Cobham on the panel. Billy discussed his upcoming Art of the Rhythm Section Retreat (coming up in August in Mesa, AZ), and various aspects of performing and teaching. After the event, as the educators networked, Cobham mingled with the attendees, posing for pictures and answering questions.

"The Sabian Education Network (SEN) is doing great things. If you are a drum

educator this is definitely an organization you should be a part of. With master educator and killer musician Joe Bergamini at the helm you know you are going to have access to high-quality educational material covering a full spectrum of topics," said panelist Rich Stitzel. "It was a pleasure to be on the panel alongside Joe, Meg Thomas, Vic from Vic's Drum Shop, and Billy Cobham. Some deep, heavy, and relevant information was shared and the attendees seemed very inspired. I am honored to be part of an organization that is truly dedicated to evolving and expanding the methods of drumset education"

Drum teacher Scott Paeth of Chicago won the giveaway prize, an AAX 21" Stage Ride, and once again the feedback was positive from the grateful and inspired educators who attended, including Kelli Rae Tubbs who made the trip from the Minneapolis area.

sabian.com



SEN Panel & Attendees



SEN Panel – Meg Thomas, Rich Stitzel, Victor Salazar, Billy Cobham, Joe Bergamini

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ISP Technologies Installed in New Minor League Baseball Field



Jimmy John's Field

ISP Technologies is proud to be part of the new Jimmy John's Minor League Baseball Field located in Utica, Michigan.

The \$15-million ballpark is the brain child of Andy Appleby, founder and CEO of General Sports and Entertainment, who wanted to create the most technologically advanced, well-appointed, family friendly venue, period. "We wanted to create something that

was one of the top facilities in the country," said Andy Appleby, the man behind the development and construction of Jimmy John's Field in Utica.

With a total capacity of 4,500 fans, the ballpark will also have 22 suites and cabana suites, picnic areas, and a grass berm seating area. ISP Technologies Pro Audio and HDDS gear was chosen by General Sports and Entertainment to be installed exclusively throughout the complex.

ISP Technologies not only designed the system to be installed, they also custom designed new speaker cabinets for the parameter of the field. The weatherproof CX110i and CX114i are designed to provide fidelity, clarity and mid-range, as well as, an accurate dispersion pattern. This is accomplished by the use of a high performance coaxial design. The patented High Definition Distributed System consists of ceiling mount and wall mount speakers, with subwoofers and five MC1000 master control units for separate zone control of all areas of the venue.

Bluewater Technologies, based in Southfield Michigan, was the integrator of choice for the installation and service of the entire audio, video and lighting of the ballpark. As Appleby is using The Jimmy John's field as his prototype for more to follow, he wanted to work with a company that had ample installation experience in other states as well.

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The Rolling Stones Tour Coordinator Will Smyth presenting RS Berkeley instruments to students from the Amadeo Roldan Conservatorio in La Habana, Cuba.



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Vandoren Sponsors Summer Music Camps

Continuing their commitment to educational outreach, Vandoren is sponsoring a variety of music camps for the summer of 2016. Through the following camps, guest Vandoren Artists will offer their guidance and musical expertise to hundreds of students while exposing them to Vandoren's vast array of reeds, mouthpieces, and accessories along the way.

The Lone Star Clarinet Camp, created four years ago by Vandoren Regional Artist Gina Scheer, will be held in Round Rock, TX from June 13-17, and Coppell, TX from June 20-24. The Round Rock camp will feature guest artist Paula Corley, while Mitchell Estrin will be the special guest at the Coppell camp. The camps offer young clarinetists an unforgettable week together playing in a clarinet choir, broadening their understanding of music, advancing their technique, and con-

necting with other people through a shared love for music.

The 37th Annual Vienna Band Camp will take place in Falls Church, VA from June 28 – July 21. Vandoren Regional Artist Betty Bley will be on site offering her expertise on clarinet technique and directing the clarinet program of the camp. Vandoren Artist Paula Corley will also be a featured guest artist this summer. With four classes a day for four weeks.

The Vienna Band Camp offers 4th - 9th grade students a fun environment to learn and make music during the summer months.

Clarinet Intensive Study Program is a two-week immersion camp for advanced conservatory and high school clarinetists held in conjunction with MasterWorks Festival at Cedarville University in Cedarville, Ohio. Directed by Vandoren Artist Diana Haskell of

the St. Louis Symphony, the camp will run the first two weeks of July with a number of special guests.

Sax Pro Workshops Camps will take place in Austin, San Antonio, and Brownsville, TX. Under the direction of Vandoren Regional Artist Sunil Gadgil, students in grades 7-12 will get the chance to work with fun-loving college professors of saxophone in a 4-day intensive workshop.

George Mason Summer Clarinet Academy occurs July 25 – 29 at the Performing Arts building of the Mason Fairfax Campus. The camp's renowned faculty will lead passionate high school clarinet students through a week full of rehearsals, masterclasses, chamber music and the opportunity to play in a clarinet choir.

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Betty Bley



Sunil Gadgil



Paula Corley



Gina Scheer



Mitch Estrin

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by Ronnie Dungan

Gear4Music Operating Profits More than Doubles

Gear4music's adjusted operating profits rose by 138 percent to £895,000 in the year to the end of February, with revenue also up.

Revenue rose by 46 percent to £35.5m and adjusted EBITDA was up 100 percent at £1.7m. Pre-tax profits were only £6,000 but show huge progress against losses of £797,000 a year ago.



Andrew Wass

Chief executive Andrew Wass, said: "In our first set of annual results as a listed company, it's very pleasing to be reporting a record year with strong growth across our core UK business and excellent progress into European markets, which has led to increased revenues and profits.

"We have achieved this growth by investing into our website platform, infrastructure and product ranges, strengthening our customer offer, and establishing ourselves as the go-to online destination for musical instruments and equipment. With over 10m visitors to our websites during the year, improved conversion and an increasing number of active customers, our investment strategies are delivering the growth we anticipated, and following strong sales momentum in both the UK and internationally during the first two months of the new financial year, we remain optimistic for the year ahead."

Musikmesse Confirms 2017 Dates



Musikmesse WILL take place next year and will be held from April 5th to 8th, 2017.

The show will open for three days in parallel to Prolight + Sound, which will continue to have the same sequence of days (from Tuesday to Friday, April 4th to 7th 2017). And the organizers are also adjusting the opening times to fit in with the feedback from the sector. Next year, both trade fairs will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on all four days.

Despite a number of well-received changes, visitor numbers on Sunday this year, which had been introduced in consultation with the sector, produced a perceptibly smaller numbers of visitors. The opening times too, had been changed at the request of the industry. Whilst the lat-

er start was positively received, the hour from 6pm to 7pm was not a success.

"As an international trade-fair company, with a commitment to the sustainable long term, we see the ongoing development of our events as an integral part of our work. The new concept for Musikmesse is part of a dynamic process. We have listened to what people are telling us and we shall continue to listen, in order to adapt to the requirements and expectations of the industry," said Stephan Kurzwaski, senior vice president of Messe Frankfurt Exhibition.

"Against this background, we shall also be investing in Musikmesse in the future and continue to build up the successful *continued on page 34*

Larrivée Adds Laurel Models

Larrivée Guitars and U.K. distributor Sound Technology have added a limited line of East Indian Laurel acoustics.

East Indian Laurel has the look and feel to that of East Indian Rosewood and American and English Walnut. Known for its exceptional tap tone quality, Laurel offers up rich overtones and highs that produce an overall lively and vibrant presence. It's sound is often compared to that of Brazilian Rosewood.

A Laurel leaf headstock inlay design by Wendy Larrivée is in keeping with the wood used. Each is hand inlaid consisting of 15 individually cut pieces.

The East Indian Laurel Limited Editions arrive in the U.K. in July priced at £1,499 for OM, Dreadnought, and Larrivée shape models, and £1,299 for the Parlour model.



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Future Buys Blaze Publishing

Future Publishing has acquired Blaze Publishing and with it, its portfolio of music titles and events, including the London Drum Show. The deal includes Blaze titles *Acoustic*, *Bass Guitar*, *Drummer*, and *iDrum*, plus accompanying events The London Drum Show and The London Bass Guitar Show and London Acoustic Guitar Show.

The main attraction of Blaze to Future was not the music properties, but its shooting titles, including *Sporting Rifle*, *Clay Shooting*, *Airgun Shooter*, *Bow International*, *Gun Trade News* and *iShoot*.

Future has also taken an option on ambitious shooting, hunting and fishing event UK Game Fair, which is the brainchild of former Blaze owner/MD, Wes Stanton, who is financing it with money from the sale.

Future CEO Zillah Byng-Thorne said: "The acquisition of Blaze's assets presents mutually beneficial opportunities in print, online and in events for both businesses. We'll gain from their team's specialist knowledge and insight, and the deal will further strengthen Future's portfolio as we work towards fulfilling our long-term ambitions."

U.K. commercial director Clare Dove added: "This substantial investment in growing our music business demonstrates just how critical this sector is to Future Publishing and underlines our commitment to delivering the broadest possible range of advertising solutions to our valued commercial partners."

Future's music portfolio includes *Guitarist*, *Rhythm*, *Total Guitar*, *FutureMusic*, *MusicRadar*, and *Computer Music*.

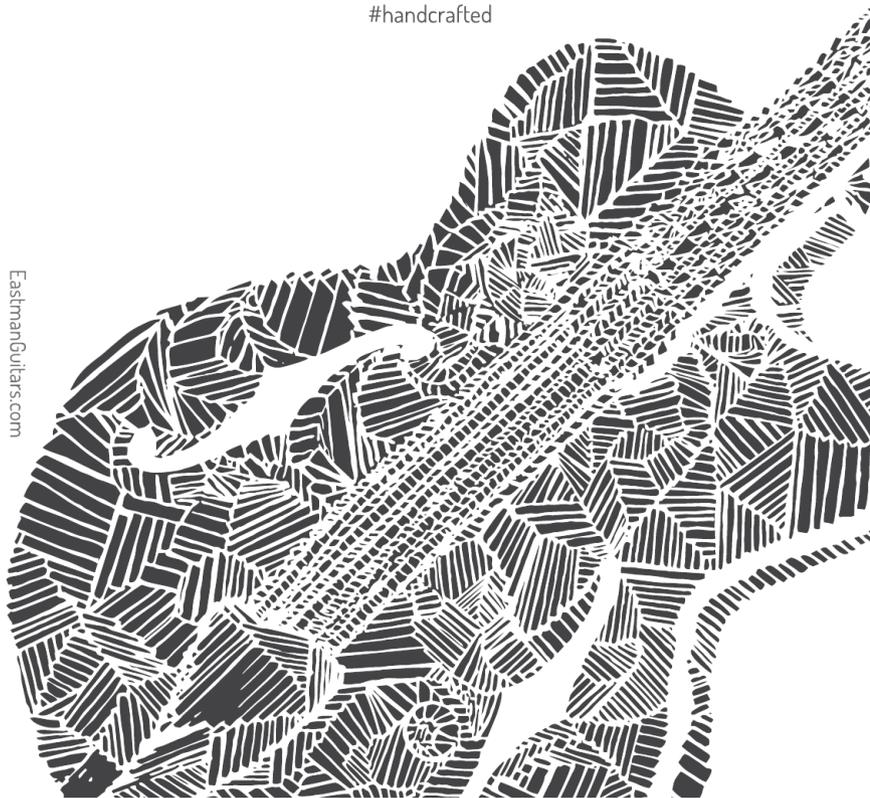


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Natal Launches Meta Snares

Marshall's Natal drum brand has expanded with the addition of its new Meta Series of alloy snare drums. The new line is a selection of 13" and 14" diameter alloy snare drums in depths of 5.5" to 8". It includes hand hammered, beaded hand hammered or flat shell in a variety of classic alloys and finishes including: steel, chrome, black nickel, copper, brass, aged bronze and



aluminum – all with brushed nickel hardware fittings.

The drums have been designed to offer drummers of all levels either as a main kit snare drum or as a second snare. All feature brushed nickel Originals Series hardware fittings: Sun lugs, Tri-Throw snare mechanism, Tru-Tune tension rods, triple flanged hoops and Evans heads.

Musikmesse Confirms 2017 Dates

continued from page 30

elements of the event. At the same time, we shall, of course, make such adjustments as are wanted by the majority of the companies and visitor groups involved. We thank everyone in the sector for the constructive feedback that we have received before, during and after the show."

German trade body, the Society of Music

Merchants (SOMM), is in favor of the overlap of the two shows: "With the new concept for the event, the organizers have shown their willingness to change; they have picked up on suggestions and created new formats. This is necessary to develop Musikmesse as the most important European platform for the sector. In April, the sector was able

to see for itself, that many of the changes worked well," said Daniel Knöll, managing director of SOMM.

"We see it as the right decision to bring Musikmesse and Prolight + Sound closer together. And the fine tuning of the opening times is also very much in line with our thinking".



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U.K. Tannoy Factory Set to Close

More British jobs are heading out to China, as Music (formerly Music Group) proposes to lay off around 70 staff at its Tannoy manufacturing and office facility in Coatbridge, Scotland.

The company is about to enter into a process of collective consultation with all affected employees, but in the event that the redundancies are confirmed following consultation, the Coatbridge facility would cease operations completely. In this event, Tannoy loudspeaker production would be transferred to the firm's new three million square-foot manufacturing plant in Zhongshan, China, with its research and development and marketing activities being relocated to Music's

Innovation center in Manchester, U.K.

The announcement was made to employees by SVP, Lifestyle & Home, Peter Sommer: "Following an extensive evaluation of our operational and financial structure, we have taken the difficult decision to propose that the staff in our Tannoy manufacturing and office facility in Coatbridge are dismissed as redundant, which, if confirmed would see the facility closed. Whilst this is a challenging time, I would like to thank our Tannoy employees for their immense dedication and loyalty over the years, which I feel confident, will not be diminished even as we approach the forthcoming period of collective consultation."

Headstock Backs Drummers with Lesson Giveaway

In association with the Academy of Contemporary Music, Zildjian Cymbals, and Tama Drums, Headstock Distribution has developed a series of ten instructional drum lessons to giveaway free with all beginner level drum kits and cymbal sets.

Featuring Joe Yoshida, one of ACM's top tutors and a Tama Drums endorser, the lessons give a basic introduction to drumming, drawing attention to the fundamentals of drumming including posture, how to hold your sticks, how to set up your kit and the basic rudiments, the basis for playing the drums. They progress at a rate that keeps the student engaged, with a feeling of success at seeing results lesson on lesson.

Numbers up for PLASA Focus

PLASA Focus Leeds saw a nine per cent increase in visitor numbers from 2015, according to the organizer.

The launch of the new Pavilion enabled the event to attract more new technology products to the show floor and saw more than 2,600 visitors through the doors.

Christopher Toulmin, director of PLASA Events commented: "The feedback from the show so far has been extremely positive, with a large emphasis on the quantity of business achieved. PLASA Focus Leeds had £425million worth of visitor spending power registered to the show, cementing its importance as a must-attend event for the region."

More than 600 attendees took advantage of free seminars and professional training including sessions from High End

Systems HOG4 training, Ambersphere's MA Lighting dot2 consoles training and the Riggers' Forum. Highlights from the seminar programme included the ALD discussing diversity in technical theatre; Justin Grealy from Soulsound presenting the interactive session, 'A Sound Engineer's Guide to Guitars and Guitarists'; and Steve Jones from d&b audiotechnik on 'Why size matters? - How Loud Speaker size affects its whole performance.'

Toulmin added: "We are looking forward to following on from this success at the re-focused PLASA Show in London Olympia on 18-20 September. With the move back in the heart of the West End, the change of dates and the new interactive offering, PLASA is striving towards positive change and a renewed event."



The lessons are included with every single Tama Rhythm Mate and Silverstar kit or Zildjian Planet Z, ZBT, and S-Line cymbal set sold by a participating dealer.

Customers simply scan the QR or follow the link that appears on the promotional sticker on the box, which will take them to an online form to fill out to receive the logins for lessons.



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Trade Regrets

On May 25th, NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino contacted us with the following sad news:

*Today I learned of the passing of our friend **Dick Knaub**. His son informed me that Dick passed away on April 1.*



Dick served as president of the Rico Reed Corp. during the 1970s. He oversaw the reed manufacturer's expansion into magazine advertisements and the company's return to industry events such as the NAMM show. Dick was a proud supporter of the American Music Conference and served as president of the board in the 1990s when the NAMM Board agreed to oversee the main operation of AMC.

Industry veteran **Frank Fendorf** passed away on June 3.

A former band director, Fendorf joined Wingert-Jones, a print music retailer, in 1965, eventually becoming president of the operation.



He eventually collaborated with other print music dealers to form The Retail Print Music Dealers Association (RPMDDA), a group that aimed to gather annually and discuss challenges facing the industry and share solutions and ideas.

RPMDDA now exists as one of the premier organizations with one of the major yearly conventions within MI.



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ON THE MOVE

Elation Professional has announced that industry professional **Jean Lariviere** has joined the company's sales team as rental and production market manager.



Lariviere will work to build on the success Elation has gained in working with top lighting designers and exposing them to the Elation product line.

Lariviere will work closely with lighting designers as well as Elation's extensive network of rental company partners to add to the continued growth of the Elation brand. He will be continuing the efforts John Dunn started when he joined Elation a few years ago in the same role. John Dunn moved into the role of national sales manager for Elation's U.S. market earlier this year.

Lariviere brings a wealth of industry experience and knowledge to Elation, having worked for six years for High End Systems in R&D and product support, as well as Regional Sales Manager. More recently he worked for SHS Global. Jean, who is based in Austin, Texas, started in the position on June 1st.

Shure Incorporated has announced that **Jamie Griffin** joined the company as its vice president of operations.



Griffin comes to Shure from Lenovo, where he was director of operations, in its Global Supply Chain organization. Before joining Lenovo, Jamie worked at Pentamaster, a material handling and automation solutions provider, launching and managing three sales and service operations in Europe and the U.S. Previously, he spent ten years at Dell Computer, holding senior positions in Operations and Engineering. He designed and launched all of Dell's manufacturing facilities in China, Malaysia, and Brazil.

As vice president of the Operations Division, he will be responsible for all of Shure's global manufacturing and plants around the world; Global Supply Chain;

Operations Program Management; and Process, Tool, and Automated Test Engineering.

David Magagna, CEO of Cobble Hill International, will be joining the team at **Riversong Guitars** as director of international sales, Riversong CEO Mike Miltimore has announced.



Magagna has over 40 years of international sales and strategy experience plus powerhouse relationships with music industry leaders throughout the world.

Previously Magagna held senior management positions in international sales and marketing with leading guitar companies including C.F. Martin, Lowden, Guild, Taylor, and PRS.

Renkus-Heinz has announced the appointment of **Joe Fustolo** to the position of application engineer.



An experienced engineer with roots in Live and Installed Sound, Fustolo has worked extensively with loudspeaker technology, including more than a decade providing Applications Support for Eastern Acoustic Works. His resume also includes technical positions with loudspeaker manufacturers FBT and Outline, as well as production roles with major concert and theatrical companies and landmark live venues.

Fustolo will work from his offices in Massachusetts, offering support to Renkus-Heinz clients east of the Mississippi.

The Music People (TMP) welcomed **Autumn Marshall** as senior VIP sales account manager, as of May 2.



Working out of the company headquarters in Berlin, Connecticut, she will manage all of TMP's VIP accounts. Marshall will be focused on increasing sales and providing value added customer service for the top MI retailers in the country. "Autumn joins TMP at an exciting time, and we are all happy for her to be on our team. We searched for a long time for the right candidate to represent the On-Stage brand, and Autumn will undoubtedly rep-

resent it at the highest level," said Tom Tedesco, VP of sales & business development.

Noteflight and **Hal Leonard** have announced an expansion of the Noteflight leadership team.

Rick Guardia, Noteflight's VP of operations, will now assume responsibility for internal management and all day-to-day operations at Noteflight.



John Mlynczak will assume the new title of VP of sales and marketing. John's role will be to oversee Noteflight's customer and partner relationships, expand sales and marketing initiatives, and grow Noteflight's business overall.



Founder and president **Joe Berkovitz** will concentrate his focus on innovating products and technologies within the company and continuing his work with standards organizations such as W3C.

Larry Morton, president of parent company Hal Leonard Corporation, said, "We're excited about reaching this next level with Noteflight and are looking forward to all the innovations and development this veteran team of experts will bring to the music industry."


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Remo Belli 1927-2016

The passing of Remo Belli, founder and CEO of Remo, Inc., on April 25th of this year was met with reactions befitting his stature and character. Tributes and fond remembrances appeared in print, on social media, and online.

MMR heard from a number of Remo's friends and industry colleagues and we share some of their thoughts below...

I am sad to say that a dear friend of Sam Ash Music, the Ash Family, and the Music Industry has lost one of its best, a true original. Remo Belli was the inventor of the plastic/synthetic drumhead and changed the drum industry forever. I remember my father tucking kip hide into hoops in my bathtub. It was hard work, it really stunk up the house, but we didn't have to take a bath that day! Remo took all of that away, for the better. Without his drum heads even George Martin couldn't get a good drum sound out of the Beatles. Besides his inventing and his drumming, he was an art lover, a vintner, and a philanthropist. He and Bernice and Jerry had a real friendship – the type that Jerry really liked. They never talked about the business, just the characters and personalities within it.

He will be truly missed.

Sammy Ash, Sam Ash Music

Remo Belli was a music visionary, realizing early on that music education through drumming improves wellness. He was also a cherished life-long friend and mentor to me. Remo's contributions have made the world a much better and more musical place to live. He will never be forgotten. Thanks, Remo! RIP.

Jay Wanamaker, Roland Corporation

The Gretsch family joins everyone in the drum and percussion industry in mourning the passing of Remo Belli on April 25. As a veteran of that industry myself, I had the pleasure of knowing Remo for many years on a personal and professional basis. My wife Dinah and I shared visits with him at trade shows and other drumming events, and we always enjoyed our time together.

But Remo's connection to the Gretsch family goes back much further. My uncle, Fred Gretsch Jr., was a little more than twenty years older than Remo. When Remo was touring as the drummer for Anita O'Day and bandleader Billy May in the 1950s, Uncle Fred was running the Gretsch business. He welcomed Remo into the fold as a Gretsch drum artist. In fact, Remo's smiling face graces the cover of the 1954 Gretsch drum catalog – right next to Louie Bellson, and in the company of other drum greats like Art Blakey, Jo Jones, and Shelley Manne.

Just a few years later, when Remo went into business himself, Uncle Fred supported his efforts by becoming a major



customer for his Weather King synthetic drumheads. Remo heads are still factory-installed on Gretsch drums today.

Fast-forward to when I entered the drum business fifty years ago. Returning the favor that my uncle had done for him, Remo (who was a little less than twenty years older than I am) served as a mentor to me, offering sound business tips and valuable personal advice. Over the ensuing years I came to cherish his friendship, his guidance, and his unparalleled professional example. I will miss those things – and Remo himself – tremendously.

Fred W. Gretsch, The Gretsch Company

There is an old expression about not knowing how big a mountain is when you're standing near it, only at a distance can you appreciate its enormity. Perhaps this was true of Remo. When you were around him, he made you feel like family, that you were in the circle. But standing back one sees the enormous impact of a life well lived and the countless lives made better by his contributions. With a list of accomplishments that seem impossible for one lifetime and the rare gift of moving freely in such diverse universes as music, farming, and medicine, Remo has left an indelible mark on us all. His impact on NAMM is immeasurable; Remo has been a compass point guiding our Market Development efforts for over three decades, including our work in music education, music brain research, music and wellness and recreational music making.

I went to visit Remo last month and little did anyone know that it would be our last meeting. Touring the factory floor and seeing the depth of Remo's connection to his hundreds of staffers, calling most by their first name, was a lesson in what true leadership was all about. And, surprising for someone nearing their 89th birthday, we spent the day with his team talking not about the past but rather about the future and celebrating the progress that had been made in bringing recreational music making and drumming to the classroom, to the medical community, and all the way to Capitol Hill and the White House.

They say, "We only get so many trips around the sun and to make the most of each one." Boy, did he ever.

Joe Lamond, NAMM

Three years ago, Remo invited Vic Firth and me to visit with him in California. Remo really rolled out the red carpet, which included a car and driver at our disposal. After touring the Remo plant in Valencia, we headed off to Remo's vineyard where the fun really began.

Neither Vic nor I were surprised to see how hands-on Remo was in managing the vineyard. Clearly this was more than just a hobby. It was a passion and he wanted to share his passion with us.

I had known Remo for many years as he had long been affiliated with the Zildjian family – first, as a Zildjian Artist and then as the largest Zildjian dealer on the West Coast. But, during our visit to California, I had the opportunity to see beyond Remo the musician and entrepreneur.

We had some great conversations about what was truly important in life to Remo. Remo told Vic and me that he wanted everyone to play music. He said, "I want to give people permission to play badly just as long as they enjoy the experience." (Vic, who had been head of Percussion at New England Conservatory, sort of cringed with the thought of people playing badly.) There was lots of conversation about music therapy helping Autistic children. And, it was quite moving to hear Remo talk about stroke victims who had lost the ability to talk, but could sing. It intrigued Remo that the brain was so hard wired for music. This set him on a quest to dedicate years and years of his life to health and wellness.

Looking back at that trip to Remo's vineyard, I feel privileged to have spent so much time with percussion's most important visionary, the man who always had been ahead of his time whether that meant popularizing the synthetic drum head or paving the way for music therapy.

I'm sad to think that when I go to the next PAS or NAMM Show, Remo won't be there and Vic won't be there. But, both these giants of percussion have so profoundly influenced my thinking that I still feel their presence. And, I will always treasure those memories from the trip to California.

Craigie Zildjian, The Avedis Zildjian Company

What Xerox is to copying machines and Kleenex is to tissue, Remo is to drumheads: a trademark that has become virtually synonymous with an entire product category. Remo Belli, the man behind the product, did more than anyone else to introduce the world to synthetic drumheads. With his passing, the industry has lost one of the few individuals deserving of the much-overused phrase "icon". Not only did he revolutionize a products, he built a world-class company and spent an entire career promoting the benefits of drumming with an unmatched zeal.

While the origins of rock 'n' roll remain the subject of debate, it's safe to say the genre would never have gotten as far as it did without Remo's synthetic head. Previously, drumheads were laboriously made by wrapping calfskin around a wooden hoop. As rock 'n' roll gained traction in the early 1960s, driving demand for drumkits, the makers of calfskin heads were simply unable to keep up. Remo's Mylar solution, dubbed the "Weather King" because it was impervious to cli-

mate, saved the day, providing drum makers with enough heads to fill their growing order books.

The story behind Remo and his drumhead is a classic entrepreneurial tale. Born in Mishawaka, Indiana, Remo developed his interest in drums at an early age, watching his uncle's polka band at the local Italian Club. His father urged him to take up the accordion, but he was determined to play drums. Remo, who often said the market for musical instruments was made up of "compulsive" musicians who had no choice but to play and "impulsive" musicians had only a passing interest, placed himself squarely in the "compulsive" category.

By the time he entered high school, World War II had broken out and all the local drummers had been drafted. As one of the few drummers left in Northern Indiana, he soon had more gigs than he could handle. The varied performance experience honed his skills, and when he enlisted in the Navy at 18, he was immediately assigned to the Navy band.

After receiving his discharge, he moved to Los Angeles and began his career as a professional drummer. Starting in saloons, he quickly graduated to touring with singers Anita O'Day, Betty Hutton, and a host of other notables. When he was off the road, he was a first-call studio drummer.

Although Los Angeles had five drum shops at the time, Remo didn't think any of them were serving the market properly. In 1950, with \$2,300 borrowed from his parents, he rented a small space on Santa Monica Boulevard and opened Drum City. It quickly became a destination for top West Coast drummers.

Drum manufacturers began actively courting Remo, not just because Drum City was a growing customer, but also because his proximity to leading players gave him unique insights into the market. On a visit to the Slingerland Drum



Craigie Zildjian and Remo Belli

Company in Chicago, owner Bud Slingerland asked for his opinion about a new head, made from Mylar, Dupont's revolutionary new plastic film. Remo was impressed with the material, but immediately realized that a new technique was needed to attach it to the rim; tacks just didn't work.

Upon returning to Los Angeles, Remo's accountant put him in contact with a chemist named Sam Muchnick, who devised an innovative solution: punching holes around the edge of the Mylar head and using a fast-setting liquid resin to bond it to a U-shaped aluminum hoop. The unique bonding system was patented in 1957, and Remo immediately began head production in a 500-square-foot space adjacent to Drum City.

As with any new invention, Remo's synthetic head initially drew criticism from purists who argued that it "wasn't the same as calfskin." He responded by marshaling an all-star list of endorsers including Louie Bellson, Buddy Rich, and Gene Krupa to vouch for the musical quality of Mylar heads. As demand for drumkits soared, manufacturers and retailers enthusiastically embraced the new head, and by the time the Beatles made their U.S. debut in 1964, the Remo Weather King had become the undisputed head of choice.

In the early 1980s, Remo developed a "Pre-Tuned" head, which involved tensioning Mylar film on a hoop without the use of any hardware. This invention led to the devel-

opment of a broad line of world percussion instruments. It also dovetailed with Remo's personal interest in drumming as a tool for enhancing human well-being. He explained, "Drums can be used by anyone for relaxation and enjoyment. They can be used for helping people with Autism or Alzheimer's, or for someone just showing up at a recreation center on a Tuesday night having a ball." With his wife Ami, an MD practicing alternative medicine, he partnered with neurologists and education experts to develop wellness-based programs using rhythm.

Remo committed himself and his company to providing drummers, the world over with quality products and programs while striving to expand the acceptance of rhythm and in particular drumming as an integral component of an individual's wellbeing. Through his ongoing efforts, the professional, the enthusiast, children, the elderly, those at risk and those faced with both emotional and physical challenges have been brought to the joy of drumming.

Remo Belli made the world a better place by giving drummers better tools, by pioneering the concept of music as a means of enhancing health, and by creating a valuable enterprise that employs hundreds. His name, emblazoned on millions of drumheads worldwide, is a fitting and perpetual epitaph.

The Belli Family

New From

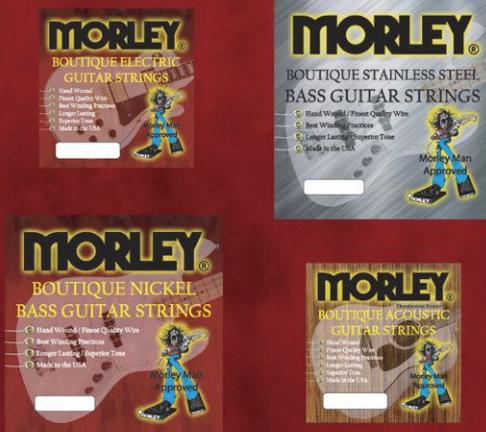
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2016 RPMDA Convention

Celebrating 40 Years and Looking to the Future

By Christian **Wissmuller**

Going strictly by the numbers, the 2016 40th Anniversary Convention, held in St. Louis April 27-30, might seem to have been something of a mixed bag. The total number of attendees was up – 190, compared to 161 in 2015 – but total exhibiting companies was somewhat down – 35 in 2016, 50 last year. There were 31 first-time attendees, though, and overall the mood seemed decidedly upbeat.

Oren Teicher of the American Booksellers Association delivered the opening address with a session on the state of independent bookstores – which seems to be quite healthy, to the (pleasant) surprise of some.

Aside from the standard educational sessions providing convention-goers with valuable insight and strategies to maximize business potential, there was plenty of “fun” to be had, as well: a tour of the St. Louis City Museum, a Trivial Pursuit Scavenger Hunt, and the annual awards banquet, among other things.

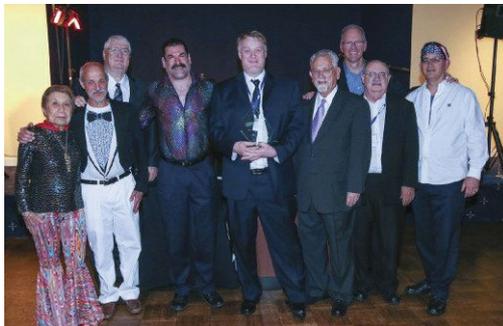
This year’s recipient of the prestigious Dorothy Award – the highest honor bestowed by RPMDA – was Eric Strouse of Stanton’s Sheet Music. Additionally, Senseney Music’s Lori Supinie was honored with the 2016 Sandy Feldstein Service Award.

The gathering drew to a close with a panel discussion moderated by Denny Senseney – “A History of RPMDA” – which covered the organizations first four decades while also looking towards the future.

The 2017 RPMDA Convention will take place in Atlanta, Georgia from April 26-29.



Vice President Program: David Jahnke, **Hal Leonard Music**; Dealer Member at Large: Amy Larkin, **West Music Co.**; Commercial Member at Large: Jenny VanPelt, **Lorenz Music**; Past President: Christie Smith, **Alfred Music**; Vice President Secretary/Treasurer: Mike Watson, **Remenyi Music**; President, Don Langlie, **Poppler’s Music**.



Eric Strouse of **Stanton’s Sheet Music** (center) accepts the 2016 Dorothy Award from prior award winners. Left to right: Iris Manus, **Alfred Music**; Brush Bush, **Hal Leonard**; Denny Senseney, **Senseney Music**; Bob Kohl, **Long & McQuade**; Eric Strouse, **Stanton’s**; Jim Strouse, **Stanton’s**; Kevin Cranley, **Willis Music**; Don Eubanks, **Hutchins & Rhea**; and Richard Gore, **Pender’s Music**.



Carol Wilbur, **Pender’s Music** (right), receives the President’s Choice Award from Christie Smith.



Danny Smolenski (left), **Alfred Music**, accepts the Don Eubanks Publisher Representative Award presented by Don Eubanks.



Lori Supinie (left) accepts the Sandy Feldstein Service Award from RPMDA Past President, Carol Wilbur.

Voices from the Show Floor

RPMDA was a great opportunity for us to meet face-to-face with many of our dealer friends, to learn about the state of our industry, and also to spend meaningful time with other print music publishers. This is a small industry and thank goodness we all seem to get along pretty well.

I was particularly interested in the address from the head of the American Booksellers Association, the trade group representing independent book stores. The fact that independent book stores are seeing a resurgence in the face of competition from Amazon, which doesn’t pay significant rent or support local communities, is very encouraging for all of us. For music stores, I am convinced that with great customer service, in-depth knowledge and mix of items, and the unique personality of each store will keep customers coming back.

As a publisher, we need to communicate as best we can with our dealers... PMDA is a great way for that to happen.

Alec Harris, GIA Publications

Overall, I felt this year’s RPMDA convention was extremely productive. The location was great, the vibe was positive, and dealers and publishers are working closer now than ever before. Last year’s show was terrific, but having this show in a different area each year allows local music retailers to attend that haven’t attended before. We definitely saw that this year.

One of many highlights was having the CEO of the American Booksellers Association, Oren Teicher, discuss the state of the independent bookstore. Although not specific to print music, it was very insightful to see that print in general is strong across the board.

I left the convention feeling optimistic about the future of print. It’s great being able to connect with our retailers to help better understand challenges they are seeing as well as feedback on product development.

Ron Manus, Alfred Music



Perry Pinto of Aim Gifts



Craig Cornwall of Kendor Music, Inc.



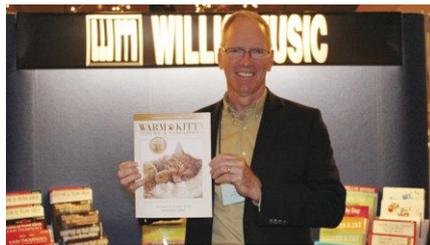
Pam Cunningham of Concordia Publishing House.



Kjos Music's Karl Kjos.



Ron Manus of Alfred Music with Gear Fisher of Peakware.



Willis Music's Kevin Cranley.



Chris Klinkhardt of Hal Leonard Corporation.

For me, personally, after spending my career to date (roughly 38 years) in the print music industry, it was great to see a number of old friends that I would not run into as a general matter of course. Because Kendor Music is (almost) solely servicing school instrumental music programs with student level performance works for a variety of ensembles, most of the dealer attendees are not in a position to stock and promote for us in the way that they used to. So, I now have a great respect and appreciation for those "educational specialists" that continue to support Kendor Music in a way that they are able. I used to take it for granted that all retail print music dealers "needed" to stock our editions, but that certainly is no longer the case. I would say that in the past few years I have been sadly skeptical that RPMDA would survive, but was encouraged to see that in St. Louis there were a significant number of first-

time attendees, and such positive energy from the board as well as all in attendance. I love the format of the convention and that we are able to spend so much time together as a group throughout. I believe that music and arts programs have suffered greatly during the years of All Children Left Behind (aka No Child Left Behind), but am hopeful that the new initiative of Every Student Succeeds Act will be a positive step. This should allow for better funding for music programs and generate better educational print sales. Our task is to make sure that our intellectual content is available in any way that the end user wishes to receive the data. So we do see an increase in downloadable print sales, but in no way see an end to physical editions. Print music will continue to be challenging and I plan on fighting the good fight for market share every day as I have.

Craig Cornwall, Kendor Music



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~ Rich Galassini, Cunningham Piano Company

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~ Bob Rosenthal, Dallas Piano Gallery

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~ Blake Cooper, Owner Cooper Piano, Atlanta, GA



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GP-300

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*~ Brendan Alviani, Family Piano,
Waukegan, IL*

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*~ Bobby Edwards, Senseney Music,
Wichita, Kansas*

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Summer 16 NAMM® Buyer's Guide

Michael Kelly Guitars Patriot Striped Ebony

An addition to the Custom Collection, the Patriot Striped Ebony features a distinctive striped ebony top and mahogany body with five-ply white-black binding, as well as a mahogany set neck with single-ply white binding and a double-adjustable truss rod. The rosewood fretboard has 22 medium jumbo frets with pearl bone inlays, a 24.75" scale length, 12" radius, and 1-11/16" synthetic graphite nut.

The Patriot Striped Ebony features a Great 8 boutique wiring mod, three-way switch, and MK-PAF-Plus pickups. The wiring mod is a double push/pull coil-tap that allows for a two-volume, two-push/pull tone configuration. The string-thru body and tune-o-matic style bridge with additional chrome hardware finishes add to the guitar's look. Production is limited, with slight variations to each guitar. The retail price is \$499.95.

michaelkellyguitars.com • Booth #1622

Yamaha TransAcoustic Guitar

Yamaha TransAcoustic Guitar is an entirely new concept in acoustic guitar technology that recreates the experience of playing in a rich, live room without needing any external amplification or effects.

TransAcoustic technology designed to expand the capabilities, versatility and the sound of traditional musical instruments and is now available in the Yamaha LL-TA hand-crafted dreadnought and LS-TA concert acoustic guitar. The technology allows the player to add both reverb and chorus to the natural sound of the instrument – emanating from the guitar itself, without having to plug in external effects or amplification. It accomplishes this through the incorporation of an actuator inside the guitar. When the player performs, the strings cause the actuator to vibrate, which is then conveyed to the guitar body and to the air around the guitar, resulting in stunningly authentic reverb and chorus effects. Three knobs located on the side of the guitar provide easy adjustment of the level of the effect, as well as a line out volume level and an on/off control.

The two models are available in Vintage Tint and Brown Sunburst finishes, with clear pick guards and ebony fingerboards. They each feature a solid Engelmann spruce top that has been aged with Yamaha A.R.E. technology, as well as rosewood backs and sides. Five-ply mahogany and rosewood necks are climate resistant, and they intonate and stay intonated over time. The edge of the neck and the frets are rounded, making it smooth all the way across the instrument. An SRT piezo pickup provides the guitar's plugged-in tones. In addition, a redesigned battery box is integrated with the guitar's endpin, reducing acoustic sound loss.

usa.yamaha.com • Booth #643



Michael Kelly Guitars
Patriot Striped Ebony

Yamaha TransAcoustic

Guild Guitars
S-200 T-Bird and the Bluesbird

Riversong Guitars Silhouette

Cordoba Mini SM-CE

FRETTED

Guild Guitars Reissues the S-200 T-Bird and the Bluesbird

S-200 T-Bird is a replica of the original versions produced between 1964 and 1968, featuring an asymmetrical all mahogany body. Its unique controls create the widest variety of tones offered on any Guild instrument, drawing on its dual Guild LB-1 Little Bucker pickups to achieve color. The LB-1s are replicas of Guild's original humbuckers, switching capabilities include rhythm or lead modes, pickup on/off, and standard volume and tone controls. When engaged, an optional tone capacitor creates single-coil tones while maintaining the hum-free reliability of the LB-1s. The T-Bird also features a Hagstrom Vintage Tremar, a reissue of the vibrato system featured on many of Guild's solid body electric models from the 1960s. The Tremar's fully adjustable spring allows everything from smooth bends and vibratos to a more stable hard-tail feel. The T-Bird has a vintage C shape set mahogany neck and bound rosewood fingerboard with mother-of-pearl block inlays. Other period-correct details include Grover Sta-Tite open gear tuning machines, and famed asymmetrical headstock adorned with Guild's logo and mother-of-pearl Thunderbird icon. The S-200 T-Bird is available in Antique Burst or Black, and includes Guild's deluxe padded gig bag. Street Price: \$799.

The Bluesbird was subject to a few design changes over the decades. Today's reissue features a carved maple top and maintains many of the aesthetic traits of the M-75 Bluesbird of the late '60s. Its lightweight chambered mahogany body allows for improved resonance and comfort, making this guitar one of the lightest in its class. The Bluesbird features a 24 3/4" scale, and fast-playing vintage C shaped neck. While many of the Bluesbird's specifications remain faithful to the original model, today's updated version comes equipped with Seymour Duncan pickups, as well as a TunePros locking tune-o-matic bridge and stopbar tailpiece. Grover Sta-Tite tuning machines and Guild's deluxe padded gig bag round out this ultimate package. Bluesbird Iced Tea Burst Street Price: \$999 Bluesbird Jet Black Street Price: \$939

guildguitars.com • Booth #909

Riversong Guitars Silhouette and Silhouette DLX

Silhouette features a west coast Sitka spruce top, Chilkawian maple back and sides, and a walnut fret board. It is made of 100 percent Canadian wood, representing the hometown of the Riversong factory, in Kamloops, B.C., Canada. The easy playing composite neck and new version of the Riversong neck system make this beautiful looking guitar sound exceptional as well. The Silhouette is pick-up ready, finished with a gloss ebony top, satin black back and sides, and a satin finish neck. The Silhouette Deluxe (DLX) includes an integrated pickup system, ready for the stage or studio.

riversongguitars.com • Booth #313

Cordoba Mini SM-CE

Cordoba introduced the latest addition to the Cordoba Mini Series: the Mini SM-CE. The Mini SM-CE features a solid cedar top, spalted maple back and sides, and a padauk rosette and binding. The solid cedar top provides a warm tone that's nicely complemented by the brightness of the spalted maple, resulting in an instrument that really projects its voice. For those who want to plug and play, the Cordoba Mini SM-CE features a soft cutaway and Cordoba 2Band pickup. The hallmark of Cordoba's Mini guitars is the comfortable feel and string spacing of a full size guitar. The Mini SM-CE also includes a thin U-shaped neck outlined with padauk binding, 50mm (1.96") nut width, and 510mm (20") scale length. The Mini SM-CE comes with custom Aquila strings tuned to A, and a standard E tuning string set is also available. It includes a Cordoba gig bag, making it the ideal companion for road trips, vacations, and hanging out at home. The Mini SM-CE has a street price of \$329.99.

cordobaguitars.com • Booth #909



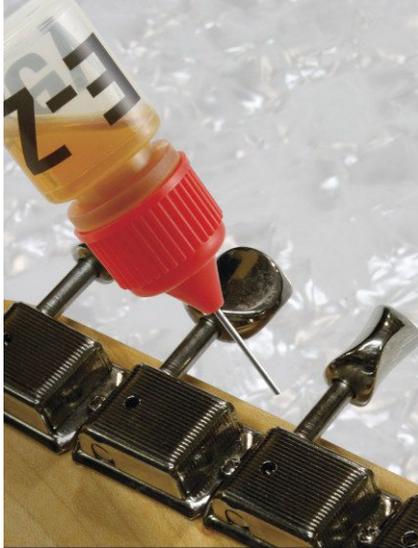
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NAMM Buyer's Guide

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Deering Tony Trischka Signature Model Banjos

Tony Trischka has partnered with Deering Banjos. The two new signature model 5-string banjos are named the Golden Clipper and the Silver Clipper; retailing respectively for \$17,299 and \$4,799. Unique to the Golden Clipper are the Tony Trischka designed fingerboard inlays crafted in a brilliant green/blue DiChrome and surrounded in white for contrast against the ebony fingerboard. This material is designed to capture and reflect the stage lights during a performance. The Paramount peghead shape is enhanced with a custom inlay made of the same reflective material enhanced with 24K gold planetary tuners. The Golden Clipper pot assembly has 24K gold plating with an ornately engraved tension hoop plated in black nickel. The resonator is crafted of AAA grade quilted maple, stained in a honey amber, finished to a high gloss, and has colorful natural abalone and Ivoroid binding. The Deering 06 tone ring which is noted for its rich, full, balanced tone and violin grade maple rim allows for greater resonance and gives both the Golden Clipper and Silver Clipper a superior tone. The extended 24 fret fingerboard on both banjos is achieved by floating the fingerboard over the banjo head giving the player 2 full octaves without moving the bridge bringing the banjo a classic banjo brightness. The Silver Clipper has the same inlay pattern as the Golden Clipper but rendered in a detailed white outline on the ebony fingerboard. Featuring a neck made of tight grained mahogany like the Golden Clipper, the resonator of this banjo is crafted from highly figured curly maple and stained a honey amber and features Ivoroid binding.



deeringbanjos.com • Booth #1100

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Ernie Ball Music Man The Valentine

Ernie Ball Music Man announced that the Valentine, a brand new guitar designed by celebrated guitarist James Valentine (Maroon 5), will be available for pre-order on June 1, 2016.

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

The Valentine, a mix of classic design aesthetics and innovative modern-day engineering, delivers unparalleled playability and performance, features a slab ash-body, two Ernie Ball Music Man designed pickups (1-humbucker/1-single coil) with active preamp, silent circuit and 3-way custom wired lever switch, coil tap with +20db boost, hardtail bridge with vintage bent steel saddles, 25.5-inch scale, oil- and wax-rubbed roasted maple neck with 10-inch radius fingerboard, 22 stainless steel frets, and an oversized 4-over-2 headstock with compensated nut, designed for superior tuning stability. The guitar also boasts an innovative tapered design that narrows the body of the guitar towards the top of the player, lightening the guitar without sacrificing tone and also improving playability by hugging the player more closely. MSRP of \$2,009.



ernieball.com • Booth #1122

ACCESSORIES

Perri's New Retro Hootenanny Guitar Straps

Perri's are delighted to introduce their new Hootenanny Guitar Straps. These retro straps have been created with the high degree of attention to artistic design, detail, and comfort that has come to be expected from the company.



Hootenanny is a Scottish word meaning celebration or party that has become a colloquialism in the Appalachian region of the U.S. where many of the settlers were originally Scots. These days it commonly refers to an open mic folk music party where the audience often joins in. The abstract patterns of these funky woven guitar straps have a distinct traditional feel with beautiful color combinations that are reminiscent of the '60s and '70s.

The straps are 2" wide and fully adjustable from 39" to 58". The striking, ethnic, geometric patterns of the jacquard woven fabric used in the straps come in ten different color ways. The fabric's high tread count makes for hard wearing whilst its soft texture makes it extremely comfortable to use. The 5 oz. premium belt leather ends provide a safe and secure fit to most guitars.

perris.ca • Booth #1422

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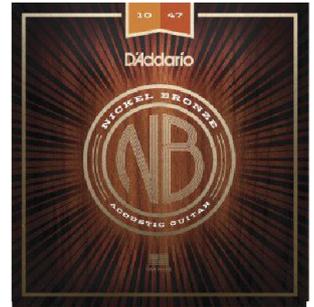
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www.imstechnologies.net

D'Addario Nickel Bronze Acoustic Guitar Strings

D'Addario is set to expand their acoustic string line, announcing the brand new uncoated Nickel Bronze series.

Nickel Bronze strings feature a combination of nickel-plated phosphor bronze wrapped around a high carbon NY steel core, engineered to bring out the unique tonal characteristics of any guitar and allow its natural voice to shine.

The nickel-plated wrap wire is designed to give a guitar clarity, resonance, and projection, and harmonically rich overtones. Players can also expect improved tuning stability and higher break resistance, thanks to the NY Steel core, which was also featured in D'Addario's NYXL electric guitar strings.



D'Addario NS Micro Soundhole Tuner

Planet Waves by D'Addario has announced their new NS Micro Soundhole Tuner. Designed specifically for guitar, ukulele, and other acoustic instruments, the chromatic tuner remains concealed within the instrument's soundhole. The highly sensitive piezo transducer senses vibrations directly from the soundboard for fast and accurate tuning response while the bright, multi-color display allows easy viewing.



daddario.com • Booth #1001

Henry Heller Embroidered Sugar Skulls Guitar Straps

Henry Heller introduces the new Sugar Skull embroidered series. These beautiful custom guitar straps are handmade and available in five woven cotton colors – black, brown, fuchsia, red, or sky blue.



omgmusic.com • Booth #1415

IMS Technologies BLOWiT Fans and Character Tuners

BLOWiT Fans are low-profile and can clamp onto drum hardware or microphone stands, one model includes a built-in drum stick holder. BLOWiT Fans inventor/president James Abell stated, "The time and opportunity were right. I'm impressed with IMS Technologies business model of bringing innovative products at great values to market and that they are focused on raising funds to directly help cancer patients - a subject that is dear to me."

IMS Technologies is proud to introduce the latest additions to the Character family: the new skull, bulldog and cat clip-on instrument tuners. Each have presets for chromatic (virtually any instrument), guitar, bass, violin, and ukulele, and work great with fretted, string, woodwind, and brass instruments. MSRP of \$19.99. As with all IMS products, a portion of the proceeds will directly help cancer patients and their families.



imstechnologies.net • Booth #32

ACCESSORIES

KMC Music DigiTech TRIO Band Creator and Looper Pedals

KMC Music is shipping DigiTech TRIO Band Creator and TRIO+BandCreator+Looper pedals to dealers nationwide. The TRIO Band Creator Pedal actually listens to what is being played and automatically generates bass and drum parts that match chord progressions and rhythmic feel. Users simply plug their guitar into TRIO, press the footswitch to teach TRIO the chords and rhythm, and press the footswitch again to start playing with a customized personal band.



DigiTech TRIO provides seven musical genres and learns up to three songparts. The Trio+ includes a looper, 12 genres and learns five parts.

kcmusic.com • Booth #1143

Electro-Harmonix Mel9 Tape Replay

EHX's new MEL9 Tape Replay Machine emulates classic Mellotronsounds including: orchestra, cello, strings, flute, clarinet, saxophone, brass, low choir and high choir. The MEL9 was designed to work on guitar without any modifications. A rotary switch allows the user to select the sound of their choice while the pedal controls independent effect and dry volume. An attack control sets the volume swell speed. As it's turned clockwise, the volume swell time increases and notes fade in gradually. The sustain control adjusts the release time after a sound is stopped. MSRP of \$295.10.



ehx.com •Booth #1035

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BAND & ORCHESTRA

Players Music New Distributor for Cool Wind Horns

Players Music has been appointed exclusive U.S. distributor for Cool Wind ABS Horns, the next generation of plastic wind instruments. These high-performance instruments offer all-metal high-precision valves, surprising tonal fidelity and excellent reliability at highly competitive price points. Cool Wind instruments will initially be available in five different models, including a trombone with F attachment (F trigger), trumpet, euphonium, tuba and piccolo trumpet. Each model is available in five different colors.



playersmusic.com • Booths # 410, 708

On-Stage Band & Orchestra Care Accessories

On-Stage a new line of band & orchestra care accessories assortment includes everything from brass/woodwind swabs, brushes and cleaning kits; to cork grease and valve oil. The accessory line adds 38 new products in total. So now, along with the popular On-Stage sheet music stands, you can select and bundle all of your go-to care accessories from one source.



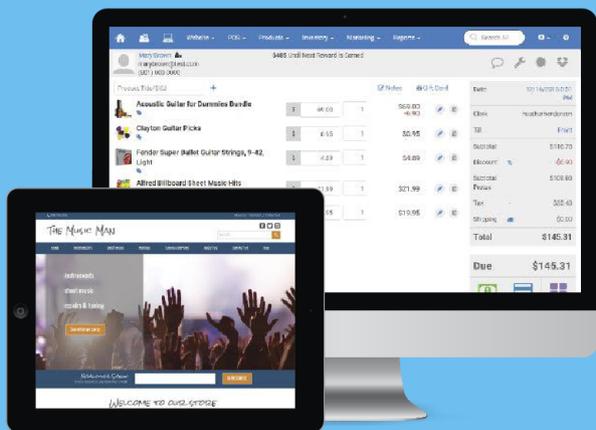
Brasswind/Woodwind Brushes & Swabs: Twelve cleaning tools for brasswind and woodwind instruments.

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sabian.com • Booth #215

PRINT & DIGITAL

Loog Guitars App and Educators' Guide

The app, dubbed Loog Academy, packs a complete set of tools to get kids playing songs: a tuner, video lessons by Grammy award winner Tim Kubart, chord charts, and songs by The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Taylor Swift, Bruno Mars and more. Children play to the official video of the songs or record their own version and share it with friends. The Loog Educators' Guide is helping music teachers incorporate Loog Guitars into their curriculum. Loog Guitars are a line of small, 3-string guitars designed to make it fun and easy for children to play music. They come unassembled for kids and parents to build together and, in that way, bond with the instrument (and with each other) on a deeper level.



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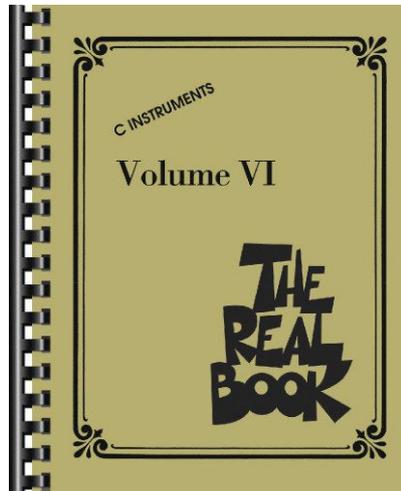
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PRINT & DIGITAL

Hal Leonard Sixth Volume of Real Book

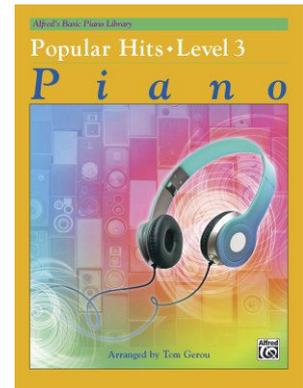
Hal Leonard Corporation is proud to unveil a new volume in the songbook series for jazz musicians in the world: *The Real Book Volume 6*. This volume includes a brand new collection of 400 jazz tunes and jazzy arrangements of pop and show standards with no duplication of titles in earlier volumes.

Volume 6 (C Edition, HL00240534, \$39.99) continues the *Real Book* formula with professionally notated and edited music for accuracy in melody, harmony and rhythm with attention paid to form within each tune, including both phrases and larger sections, clearly delineated and placed in obvious visual arrangement. A variety of recordings and alternate editions were consulted to create the most accurate and user-friendly representations of the tunes, whether used in a combo setting or as a solo artist. In addition to the immediately-recognizable "jazz" font, all two-page tunes open to face one another for ease of use during playing; most standard-type tunes remain true to their original harmonies with little or no reharmonization with a few exceptions for jazzy interpretations of popular songs and Broadway show tunes, as well as some modifications using modern notation and variation among turnarounds.



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Alfred Music Basic Piano Library: Popular Hits



Alfred Music release new levels of the already-existing series *Alfred's Basic Piano Library: Popular Hits*. New levels being released include Level 1A, Level 3, Complete Level 1 (1A/1B), and Complete Levels 2 & 3.

Each arrangement includes a teacher duet. Not only do the duets add harmony and rhythmic structure to the solos, but they also teach students the "give and take" of working together in a collaborative performance. The book is correlated page-by-page with lesson book 1A of Alfred's Basic Piano Library; pieces should be assigned based on the instructions in the upper-right corner of each title page of *Popular Hits*. Songs include "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," "Cool Kids," "Do You Want to Build a Snowman?," "I'll Stand by You," "Iron Man," "Jeepers Creepers," "Just the Way You Are (Amazing)," "Minecraft," "The Quidditch World Cup," "Theme from Superman," and "Wreck It, Wreck-It Ralph."

Alfred's Basic Piano Library Popular Hits 3 correlates page-by-page with lesson book 3 of Alfred's Basic Piano Library. Titles include "Yellow Flicker Beat," and "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile."

Alfred's Basic Piano Library Popular Hits Complete Level 1 is a compilation of Level 1A and Level 1B of Alfred's Basic Piano Library Popular Hits. *Alfred's Basic Piano Library Popular Hits Complete Levels 2 & 3* is a compilation of Level 2 and Level 3 of Alfred's Basic Piano Library Popular Hits.

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PIANOS & KEYBOARDS

Yamaha Arius Digital Piano Models



Yamaha introduced the YDP-143 and YDP-163, the latest additions to the company's popular Arius line of console digital pianos. Designed to appeal to the hobbyist, returning or aspiring player, and to both students and their parents, these cost-effective Arius models retain the elegant cabinetry and sound associated with class Yamaha acoustic pianos. The Digital Piano Controller app for Apple iOS devices allows users to interact with their YDP-143 or YDP-163 via a colorful, intuitive, touch screen graphic interface while choosing sounds, activating the recorder, and accessing other functions. The YDP-163 is the first Arius piano to use the Yamaha GH3 Graded Hammer action. A third sensor has been added that allows for faster note repetition in rapidly played passages, and the natural keys are finished with a premium synthetic ivory surface. GH3 is great for intermediate and advanced players, but also gives the beginner something to grow into. Natural Damper Resonance provides added sonic realism while pedaling. Both models include a matching wood piano bench. Black walnut and rosewood finishes are available. Yamaha YDP-143 (MSRP: \$1,499) and YDP-163 (MSRP: \$1,999)

usa.yamaha.com • Booth #643

NS DESIGN

Michael Thurber
The Late Show with Stephen Colbert featuring the NS RADIUS Bass

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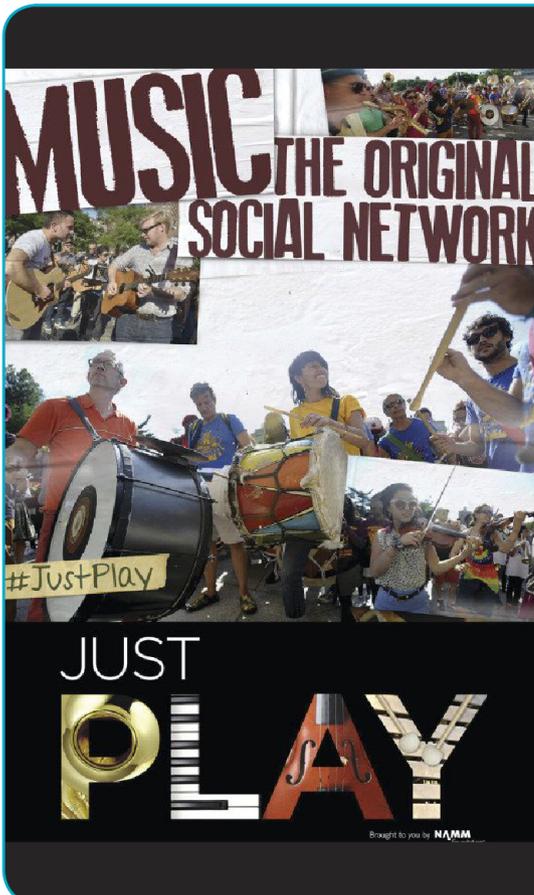
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Note From Mary
Creating a World of More Music Makers

ADVERTORIAL • JUNE 2016 • NAMM.ORG

As we head into summer, The NAMM Foundation is spearheading a variety of initiatives to inspire more people to make music, more often. We also offer a number of programs to help you engage with your own community, to not only strengthen your business but also help us create a more musical world.



Just PLAY PSA

One major way we encourage more people to make music, and fewer to quit, is through The NAMM Foundation's successful PSA campaign, Just PLAY, which has earned more than \$40 million in free airtime, played hundreds of thousands of times on TV and radio stations, and appeared on billboards nationwide.

Last year, Found Sound Nation and The NAMM Foundation connected with hundreds of people by setting up 12 street recording studios across New York's five boroughs and offering an impromptu opportunity to make music. Then, using the sounds that people across the city made that day, producers Lorna Dune and Keith Sweaty created an original track for The NAMM Foundation's 2016 PSA. The unscripted words and authentic reactions of the people in this piece convey the message that truly anyone can experience the power of making music if they...Just PLAY.

NAMM offers a variety of ways to utilize our PSA to promote music making in your community, as well as on your social media platforms.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED: Use the PSA to help entice more people in your community to try a musical instrument and become a customer of your store. To download the PSA and get step-by-step ideas for using it as a marketing tool in your business, visit namm.org/just-play.

Make Music Day

The NAMM Foundation's 2016 PSA was filmed on music's big day—Make Music Day—which uses music to spread joy to their communities.

Make Music Day seeks to encourage all people, young and old, amateur or professional, to experience the pleasure of making music. Held annually on June 21 to coincide with the summer solstice, this celebration is part of the international Fête de la Musique, taking place in 700 cities across 120 countries. The daylong, musical free-for-all commemorates music in all its forms, encouraging people to band together and play. This year, 35 U.S. cities, and the entire state of Vermont, are organizing Make Music events, resulting in thousands of music-making opportunities nationwide.

With the support of The NAMM Foundation, the Make Music Alliance has developed as a strong city-to-city, nonprofit network of organizers for music-making events. More than 1,000 unique music-making activities are planned for New York City alone. The Make Music Alliance is also working with many NAMM member companies who are supporting regional and/or instrument-specific events.



**MAKE
MUSIC**
JUNE 21

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED: Attract more customers into your store by creating a Make Music Day celebration of your own or offering to help with your city's events. View a list of planned Make Music Day activities at makemusicday.org or download the free marketing kit at makemusicday.org/participate.



2016 Summer NAMM

Shortly after Make Music Day, 2016 Summer NAMM will convene the industry for our midyear gathering in Nashville, Tennessee, June 23–25. Summer NAMM offers business strategies for music dealers across four educational tracks: the daylong Retail Boot Camp; the high-level NAMM U Breakfast Sessions; the business-building ideas offered in the NAMM Idea Center, and the sessions available for sound, studio and stage pros at TEC Tracks.

The NAMM Foundation will also host activities such as the SupportMusic Coalition on Coalitions, designed to help NAMM members develop their state and local advocacy skills, as well as recreational music-making events, from drums to ukulele. In addition, during Saturday's Music Industry Day, the American Eagle Awards, presented by the National Music Council, will present a musical salute to Emmylou Harris, Vince Gill and the Grand Ole Opry. Anyone with a NAMM badge may attend.

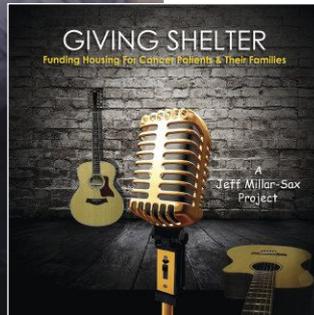
Thanks for all you do every day to realize our shared vision of a world filled with music makers.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED: Join us at Summer NAMM in Nashville to take advantage of all the great gear, free education and networking opportunities available to members at the industry's popular midyear gathering. Register and book your hotel now at namm.org/summer/2016.

Giving Shelter



Jeff Millar-Sax at the IMS Technologies and Giving Shelter NAMM Booth



Two of the things she “ordered” me to do were; “get back into music because it is my oxygen,” and “to do things that make me happy, as life is too short to do otherwise.”

One of the primary things that makes me happiest is helping others.

During Janine’s battle we spent over six months living in hotels near the hospital because our home was 100 miles away in Southern California traffic. Even with the discounted rate the hotel provided to patients of that particular hospital, it became expensive. I also had to hire in-home care to help me in her final 10 days at home and for a few days in the hotel so that I would be able to take care of Janine and attend to our dogs, as well as continue working at my job.

When I made inquiries to some major charities about help with these costs, I was rather shocked when told they had nothing to offer. Although our health insurance said they would pay for the in-home help, they did not. So I had another large out of pocket expense.

An idea surfaced to make this recording a meaningful tribute to Janine and to raise money to help others in our situation. Sadly, cancer

touches just about everyone – a family member, friend, co-worker, or themselves. Therefore, everyone can relate to what I’m trying to accomplish from his or her own particular perspective and journey.

With Giving Shelter, I’m able to take what I love to do and put it to good use: record an album and sell it to raise money for housing, in-home care and other critical needs that cancer patients and their families encounter.

My initial goal was to do a trilogy of albums: *Giving Shelter* being the first, *Help at Home* being the second (to help raise money, focus, and the awareness about in-home care that insurance doesn’t cover), and then the last one, *Giving Hope* (for help with prescription expenses and/or alternative care.)

Giving Shelter has a simple charter: People need to put their energy into healing, not into worrying about the expenses incurred because of cancer. I want to help.

Who were the musicians that stepped up to aid in completing this meaningful project?

The musicians involved are: myself, my amazing producer/drummer/friend Joshua Eagan, singers Bernard Fowler, Bobby Kimball, Michelle Wolf, Bob Reynolds and Nate Tao. Guitarists Michael Landau, John Jorgenson, James Zota Baker, Alan Friedman and Jeff Richman. Bassists Neil Stubenhaus, Jimmy Haslip and Alfonso Johnson. Percussionist Walfredo Reyes Jr. Keyboardists Jeff Babko & Deron Johnson. Horns were arranged and performed by Doug Webb and Lee Thornburg. De Autry Jones played accordion. It was mixed by Lee Bench, and engineered by Ken Eisenagel, John Cranfield, & Michael McDonald, and mastered by Sam Maddill. All of these pros were truly wonderful in their support of the project.

If you were to ask IMS Technologies’ Jeff Millar-Sax what makes him the happiest, he would tell you, “Helping others and making music.” Through the creation of his album, *Giving Shelter* and a fundraiser sharing the same name, Jeff plans to do both.

By Sharon Paquette Lose

In a conversation with *MMR*, Jeff discusses: some of the trials he and his beloved wife, Janine, endured in her battle with cancer; the talented musicians featured on the album; his struggle to get the funds into the hands of those who need it most; and his plans for the future of Giving Shelter, his fundraiser that finances housing for cancer patients and their families.

Jeff Millar-Sax is a Hartt School of Music graduate who has worked as a touring and recording musician. He is also the founder of IMS Technologies, a company that sells products through music industry retailers and donates a significant portion of the proceeds to the cause.

First of all, I listened to your album *Giving Shelter* this morning. I was very impressed with the quality of musicianship and the heartfelt sincerity of the music. Could you tell me about the original impetus for the creation of the songs?

In 2011, after a one-year battle with lung cancer, my wife closed her eyes for the final time. In the later months of the fight, as she began to realize that she was probably not going to get better, Janine started to talk about what she’d like for my future.

What has been the response to Giving Shelter? How does a family receive help?

At this point, my primary goals are to raise awareness, to continue selling CDs and the other products IMS Technologies brings to market in order to grow the fund, and most importantly to develop a relationship with an already established charity that will distribute the funds I raise. It's not practical to form my own 501C3 nonprofit organization, because I do not have the wherewithal to do everything involved on my own.

The immediate need for this venture to succeed is to secure a relationship where I become a fundraiser/donor to an established charity or foundation that will manage and distribute all this money that I am raising. I need the help of a nonprofit that has an infrastructure already established to put the money into the hands of those who desperately need help. Ironically, from my experience so far, it's easier to get a record deal than it is to form a relationship with a cancer charity that will give some of their attention to Giving Shelter's objectives.

This summer (NAMM) show will mark the start of our third year in existence. I'm extremely blessed and proud of the fact that I have not taken a penny earned from tuner or album sales so far, not even to recoup my recording costs or startup expenses for the company. I've essentially spent everything I had in savings and virtually everything I earn from other sources on planting the seeds for Giving Shelter to succeed.



Janine Millar-Sax

I financed the record myself on my own label, my own publishing. The CDs are sold only at gigs, on the givingshelter.net website, or in discounted bundles to music products retailers. I'm doing this in a very unconventional way – not going through traditional recorded music retail/e-tail outlets or working with an established record label. The money I'm raising goes right into a dedicated account. Between the tuners

and the album, over \$8,000 is just sitting in the bank right now, wanting to grow and be put to work helping people.

Ultimately, the goal is to give money directly to those who need it, not to support a big infrastructure.

There is the Ronald McDonald House for families with children who have cancer, but we don't have anything on a similar national scale to help adult cancer patients. As someone who has both survived cancer and been a full-time caregiver to a cancer patient, I know firsthand how devastating cancer is physically, emotionally and financially.

What is the next step for Giving Shelter?

I've got six new songs written (two that were left-over from the first recording sessions), three more partially written, and my goal is to have ten for the next album. Once a relationship with an existing organization is established, I plan to aggressively tour and showcase the music in order to generate more awareness, sales and action for the fund.

I also have IMS technologies. We sell the tuners through music products retailers (but I would welcome OEM opportunities with instrument companies as well), we also sell our American-made Christopher Referencing Speakers, and we are now helping to distribute BLOWiT® stage fans, in addition to Giving Shelter. More products are in development.

Musicians are some of the most charitable people on the planet. Farm Aid, Live Aid, The Concert for Bangladesh, and more. Music is often a huge part of fundraising and building awareness for an important cause. Music products retailers are also an important, active and charitable part of their community, and as a result see firsthand how music really does help.

There is even a philanthropy award given out at the Top 100 Dealers event every year at the NAMM Show. That's why I chose to work with the music products community for this cause. I know that our constituency "gets it" and understands both what a struggle it is to start up a venture and the joy of helping others. **MMA**

For more information or to contact Jeff Millar-Sax, visit www.givingshelter.net.



Standing L-R: Ken Eisennagel, engineer; Lee Bench, owner of The Steakhouse Recording Studio and mixer for the album; Joshua Eagan, producer & drummer; and Bernard Fowler, vocalist & harmony arranger.



American-made Christopher Referencing Speakers



Roland: All Access(ories) 2016

has seen the Roland Corporation dive into the accessories market with new lines being fielded by both the Roland and BOSS brands. *MMR* recently spoke with the company's general manager of global accessories, Niko Spanos, about what was behind the move into the wide world of cables, picks, straps, and more, as well as Roland's plans for the future in this area.

by Christian Wissmuller

Roland and BOSS introduced quite a few accessories – Roland at NAMM in January and, more recently, BOSS at Musikmesse. Can you talk about the company's entry into this market segment?

Ultimately, our customers were the catalyst for the new accessory line. They had been asking for these items to complement our products for some time, and we really wanted the overall customer experience to be the best it could be by creating a complete solution. So the inspiration for our new accessories was really born from the idea of enhancing the experience of our core products.

Was there any trepidation going into a part of the market which may seem to some to already be well served, with a number of well known and respected makers of stands, bags, cables, straps, and the like already established?

No trepidation at all, really, because Roland and BOSS themselves are well known and respected brands that have a proven track record. We just knew we had to create high quality products with unique feature sets, be competitively priced and complement our core products. It required a lot of homework but in the end, the customers know our reputation. We're carefully weighing the benefits versus any possible barriers in the marketplace for each new accessory product, and if it doesn't pass the test, we won't launch it. We're also enhancing our "lifestyle" accessories in the form of new t-shirts and barstools, which are getting a lot of attention!

Both BOSS and Roland are now offering cables. Aside from branding, are there significant differences between the two?

The main difference is that they are designed for different applications and have different recipes internally to achieve this. Our Roland cable line is engineered more for the studio and uses a low capacitance design to ensure high fidelity reproduction and wide spectral range. The BOSS cable is more of a live performance cable that caters to guitar and bass players and is super quiet and really durable. Of course both have lifetime guarantees and are available in a multitude of sizes and configurations.

So far, what accessories are selling best for both Roland and BOSS?

Most every Roland dealer is supporting our new accessory line to some degree, and we have been extremely pleased with our cable lines and the support they have received already. They both have won some awards since we launched at NAMM 2016 and received high praise from many of the professionals we work with. We did extensive research on them to make sure we were filling a need and understood



Niko Spanos

“The accessory market continues to be healthy as it remains the simplest and least expensive way for musicians to enhance their rig.” – Niko Spanos

the market. We fine-tuned the pricing and features to be extremely competitive, and made sure our retail partners would support this project in every way.

Will either – or both – of the new lines be expanding in the near future? Any product introductions on the horizon?

Our accessory products were designed to support the core products Roland and BOSS bring to market, so our plan is to also expand the accessories line in a way that complements new core products that are brought to market as well.

What’s your assessment of the overall accessory market at this point in time and what are your expectations for the remainder of 2016?

The accessory market continues to be healthy as it remains the simplest and least expensive way for musicians to enhance their rig. It is one of the most recession-proof areas in MI. It can also bring in a large percentage of your profit! So there is no reason to stop expanding the accessory market, in my opinion. **MMR**



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Booth #833 - Hall C**

Getting Connected

MI & Pro Audio Cable Sales

By Christian **Wissmuller**

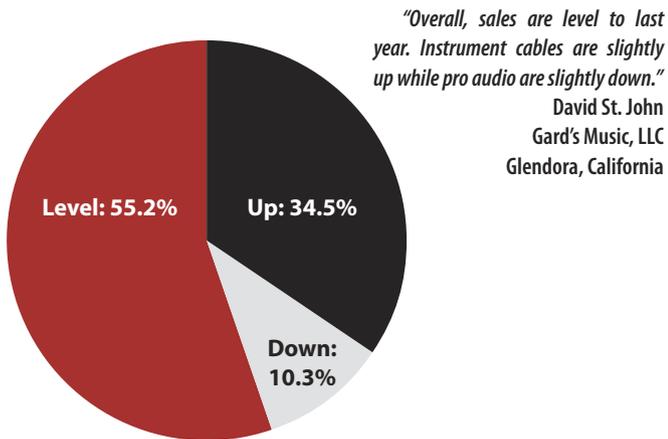
In this survey of over 200 MI retailers, *MMR* aims to get a sense for what trends are driving cable sales in 2016.

With nearly 90 percent reporting sales that are either level with, or greater than, numbers from this time in 2015, pro audio and MI cables seem to be an exceptionally robust subset within the market. And the news gets better, as nearly 78 percent noted that customers are opting for higher-cost options.

"Customers are starting to buy better quality cables as apposed to cheap imports that are price driven," notes Dan Patterson of Roger's Music in Fort Payne, Alabama

David St. John of Glendora, California's Gard's Music can see why end-users would be tempted to pony up those extra bucks: "Cable quality has gotten better over the years. Lower noise level, sturdier jackets." **MMR**

Compared to Spring 2015, sales of MI and pro audio cables in your store are:

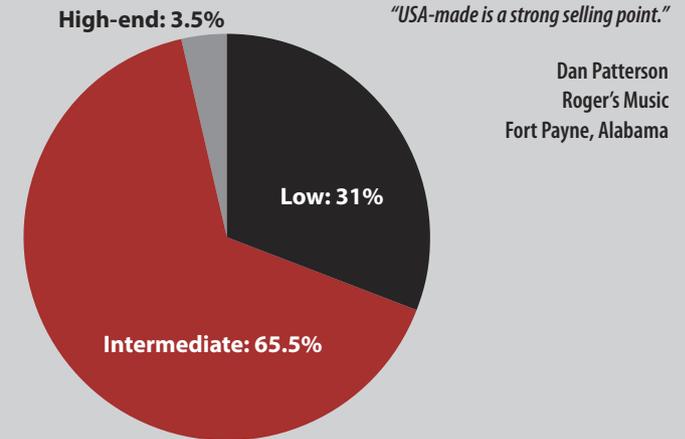


"Overall, sales are level to last year. Instrument cables are slightly up while pro audio are slightly down."
 David St. John
 Gard's Music, LLC
 Glendora, California

"Cables are the most profitable part of my store. When it comes to cables, there is no such thing as market saturation. We dominate this space in our local market, customers don't even think of shopping anywhere else!"

Anthony Mantova
 Mantova's Two Street Music
 Eureka, California

With respect to cables, what price points are doing best for your store?

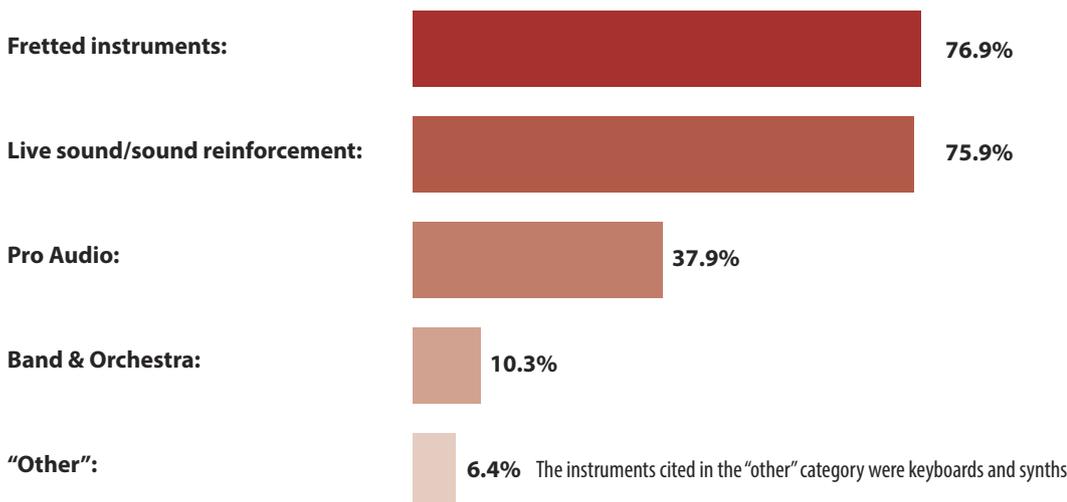


"USA-made is a strong selling point."
 Dan Patterson
 Roger's Music
 Fort Payne, Alabama

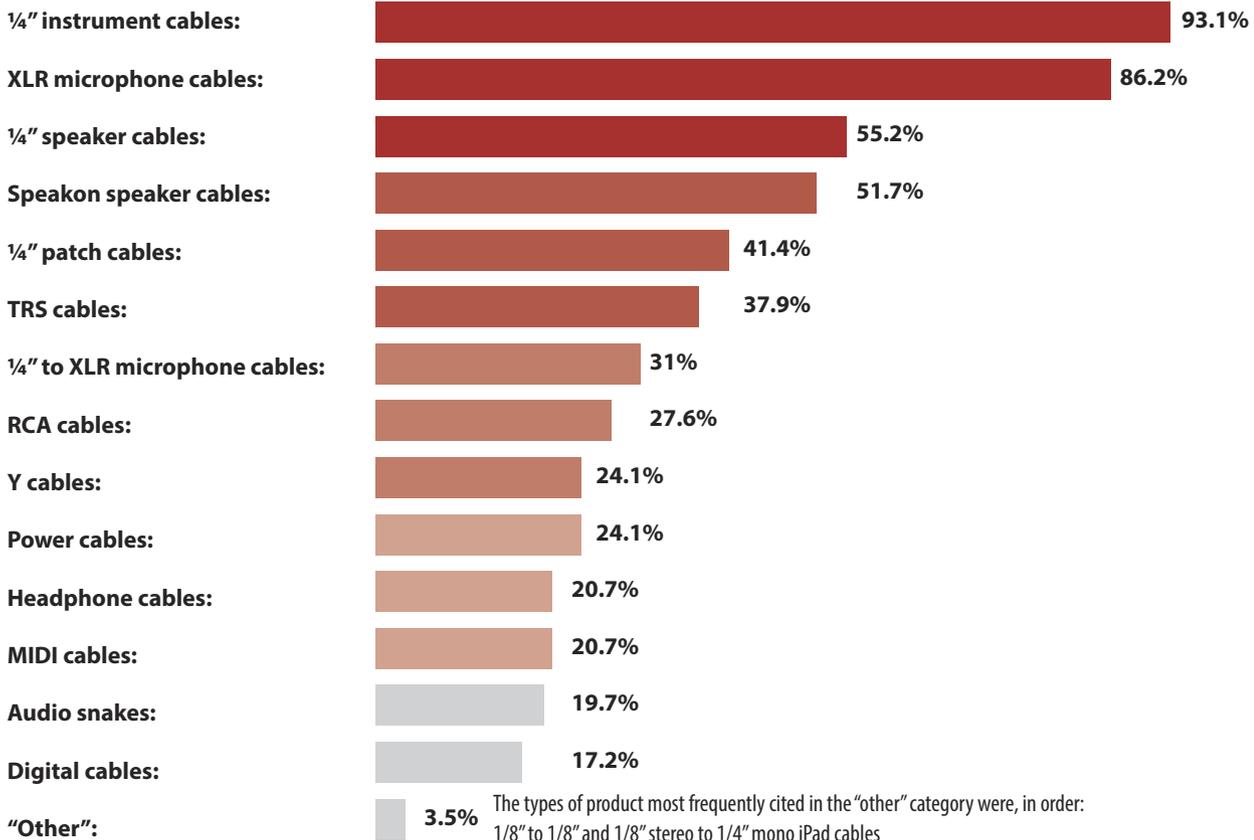
"Most people come in when their previous cable no longer works, and they realize that a little more money now should result in greater reliability and life."

Jeff Simons
 Watermelon Music
 Davis, California

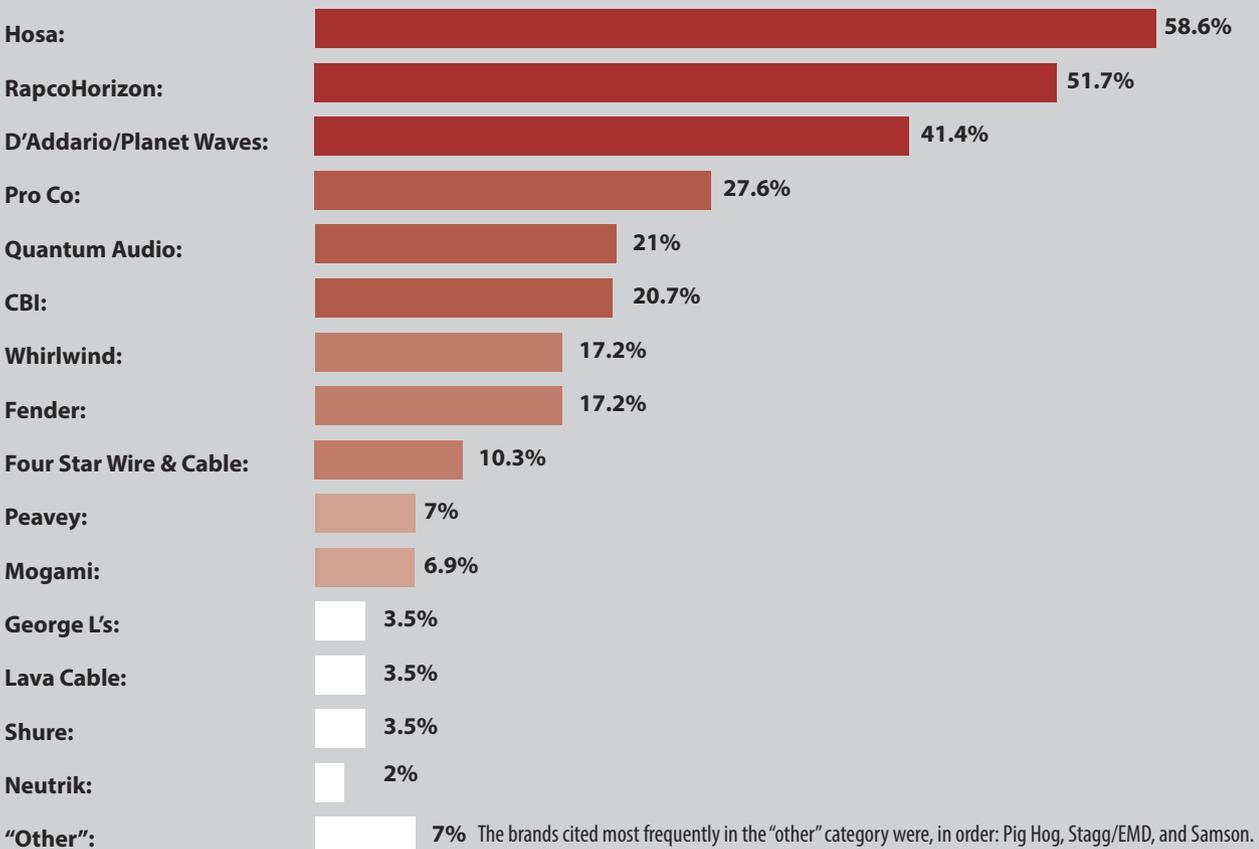
For what types of instruments or gear do you sell the most product in this category?



The bulk of these types of products sold in your store are:



What brands of cables are doing best for your store in 2016?



What larger trends have you been noticing with respect to instrument and pro audio cables?

"Most are going wireless."

Greg Bay
Center Stage Music
Humboldt, SK
Canada

"Higher end cables are sought after by guitarists who have played for many years and are tired of cables going out on them."

Edward Intagliata
Cassell's Music
San Fernando, California

"Trend towards digital cable. Firewire is going away, but others are up."

Kevin Kuptz
Ignited Light and Sound
Clinton Township, Michigan

"With small pedals, custom pedals, a pedalboards making a comeback, sales of 6" L-tip patch cables are on the rise."

Paul Rodriguez
Suburban Music
Wheaton, Illinois

"More customers prefer a right angle on at least one end of their cable."

Patrick Durhman
Brickhouse Music
River Falls, Wisconsin

"Chinese import quality is up if you pick the brand carefully. [I] see a lot of copper/manganese on low-cost cables."

Don Williams
Q Systems Music & Sound
Hobbs, New Mexico



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All the Small Things

Guitar & Bass Accessory Suppliers Chime in on Market Trends

by Christian **Wissmuller**

Accessory sales tend to do well even when other product is moving slowly — largely because of price.

Can't pull the trigger on a new guitar? Odds are you can afford a few sets of strings for your old one, though. Or a strap, or a cable — maybe one of each! Heck, grab some picks and a clip-on tuner while you're at it.

Significantly, these types of sales do drive *other* purchases, which keeps that register ringing. That customer who just

walked in your store may have done so because she needed to buy some new strings, but seeing that guitar polish and capo on the counter display made her realize she could use that stuff, too, and that it's within her budget — go figure!

We recently spoke with representatives from some of the biggest names in guitar & bass accessories to get a read on how this very important market segment is faring in 2016.

What's your take on the overall "health" of the bass & guitar accessories market?

Peter D'Addario: Great question. The accessories market has been a bit soft to start out 2016, after a pretty strong fourth quarter of 2015. We have seen this in all of our sales channels and our data shows us that the fretted instrument strings market has declined in total over the last year. However, we have been very fortunate. Bringing our core wire manufacturing in-house and creating NY Steel has enabled us to release a series of ground breaking new products over the last three years: NYXL Guitar Strings, Nickel Bronze Acoustic Guitar Strings and NYXL Bass Strings. These lines have helped us grow our string business in the U.S. and our market share at a time when the market as a whole has not grown.

Brian Ball: The health of the accessory and string market is strong, so long as you have unique and compelling products to market and launch with retailers to customers. It's been a big priority of ours to expand our product offering, but we just didn't want to do another capo, delrin picks, or something that wasn't uniquely ours. Retailers love having a story to tell, and to me it's always easier to tell a story when it's something that nobody else offers. Our new Pick Buddy adhesive-free pick holder, and CradleTune (neck cradle with built in tuner) are great examples of that. Products that people say, "Why hasn't that been done before." I think many of the pedal, string, and accessory companies are responding to that, as there's a ton of new and innovative products that have launched recently. Sales are up mainly through new product offerings, and our marketing efforts have helped grow sales online and at retail.

Max Lintner: The market seems quite healthy from our perspective. Our sales are up, our distributors' business is up, and our customers are happy. Regardless of whether more NEW guitars and basses are sold, or more USED guitars and basses are sold, folks are always going to want/need new accessories. There were significant changes occurring last year in terms of our distributorship. This year, business seems to be more predictable while also growing.

Mark Blasko: Sales are up. We seem to have a lot more momentum going into summer than usual. Where sales trends were more "spikey" last year, this year we're seeing more consistency in growth among segments.

Anthony Perri: Here at Perri's Leathers we have definitely found this year tougher than 2015, business is pretty much level in comparison. This year has required more assertive promotions and greater effort to make new sales. We continue to work very hard, to be creative and supply customers with what they need through these challenging times.

Have you noticed any trends in the market in terms new products, materials being used, demographic of players purchasing these items, price points, et cetera?

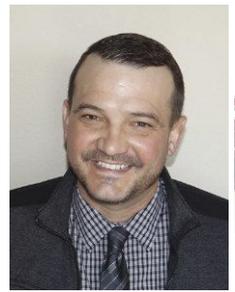
AP: In 2016 we have noticed an increased interest in garment leather, suede and woven guitar straps. Plus, our licensed straps and picks sold very strongly in Q1 2016 and we have found that the \$29.99 to \$39.99 price point is definitely up this year. Here at Perri's we believe we are experiencing the greatest increase in sales with 25 to 50 year-old males, playing acoustic guitar.



Peter D'Addario, **D'Addario**



Brian Ball, **Ernie Ball**



Max Lintner, **Kyser Musical Products**



MB: More sales in the mid to higher price points. The Internet is flooded with product that competes solely on price. While price will always be important, we see successful dealers purchasing based on total value for their customers in order to differentiate themselves. Uniqueness, quality, selection, and design, as well as price all play a part in the customer experience. Successful dealers are parlaying this strategy into not only capturing the initial sale, but as part of an overall plan to build a long-lasting customer relationship.

BB: Trends in the marketplace have continued to shift a little more online. While that's happened we've made a concerted effort to reinvest in brick and mortar stores even more. We have a new road rep sales team that's been extremely active and successful at creating new opportunities that help brick and mortar drive traffic, and most importantly create an experience that you can't get shopping online. It's tougher for brick and mortar stores to compete on convenience but they can through experience, exclusives, and physical merchandising. We've definitely seen a market reaction to some of the new material advancements Ernie Ball has launched with strings, and the price point on new strings have continued to trend up. I think its great that string and accessory companies are bringing new opportunities to the market that allow retailers to profit more, and accumulate more gross margin dollars. In addition, and most importantly - the customer gets a new playing experience whether its tone, feel, durability, or tuning stability.

PD: I am continually studying U.S. market trends, not only in the MI industry; I love to study other industries to see how it's done on a larger scale. Innovations in guitar accessories has definitely accelerated, there are more new products than ever. We have new product launches nearly every quarter now.

We have spent a lot of time studying price point and we have been one of the first to roll out a pricing policy on our new premium lines of strings, as well as a few other accessories. Pricing studies have shown that consumers are willing to spend more for quality products that fit their lifestyle.

ML: One trend we continue to notice is that customers prefer options, especially when it comes to accessories. We feel that the more options we have for a particular product, the better. Customers want accessories that speak to their unique taste and we try to accommodate that trend by always having something new and cool. This can be as simple as a different color of our Quick-Change capo (like rosewood or tie-dye).

Another continuing accessory trend is the customer's desire to have the latest and greatest. By striving to innovate and branch out within this market, we keep things exciting and fresh (like with our brand new portable care product cleaning wipes).

What's selling best for your brand, specifically?

ML: So far this year, our new rosewood Quick-Change capo is really taking off. Capos have always been hot, and now, since we've made our Quick-Change look as classy as polished rosewood, big things are happening.

AP: Perri's Italian Garment Leather Guitar Straps are selling very well. They come in several different colors in the brown/tan family, which we find work well for acoustic players. The straps are backed with super soft natural color suede and are finished with a contrast stitch to add a touch of class. Retailing from \$29.99 they are very affordable for all level of players.

PD: The aforementioned NYXL and Nickel Bronze lines have been hot since we introduced them and the sell through has been really strong in all sales channels. The NS Micro Soundhole Tuner that we introduced at Winter NAMM has been an instant hit, the reviews have been fantastic. And the entire line of D'Addario Planet Waves Capos has really taken off; we have some really innovative capo designs on the market today.

MB: Bullet Cables were just re-released, and we can't keep them in stock. The new vintage line of Henry Heller straps is doing very well. Also, Rotosound just had its best U.S. sales year in the past five years, and that's after growing the previous four. To my earlier point, there are many alternative items in the marketplace that cost less. However, if you look at overall value for the consumer, these products are hard to beat. Considering overall margin is much higher on a value sale as opposed to one based on price alone. It makes sense why these products are doing well with successful dealers.

BB: On the string side, Cobalt Slinkys, Aluminum Bronze, M-Steel, and Earthwood have all grown the last three years, which really supports the benchmark Slinky line. Slinky market share has to continued to hold a dominant position, but the other products really compliment the line and give retailers the opportunity to present a good, better, best strategy. On the accessory side the feedback on our new Expression Effects pedal series has been overwhelmingly positive. We haven't started shipping to stores but we're looking at selling out of the inventory we had pre-ordered. The Pick Buddy,



Mark Blasko, **OMG Music**



Anthony Perri, **Perri's Leathers**



Polylock, FlexTune, Cradletune, and new Slinky Cable line are also generating a lot of excitement.

Finally, what's your expectation for this market segment in the coming months?

BB: It's definitely not an easy market to compete in or grow in now, but I'm bullish on the future of where string and accessory companies can go. I really like how many advancements have been made on the pedal side of things, and overall I think accessories, strings, and pedals are the key drivers for retailers moving forward. Especially at a time where driving traffic is at such a premium. On the product side, we've collaborated with CAP technologies to develop NeverRust technology, the world's first rust proof string technology. We believe so strongly in the technology, that NeverRust will launch on many of our core string offerings and be available in stores this summer. On the marketing side, we've been very proactive in revamping our strategy, and believe it's our role to not just create innovative products but also develop marketing and content efforts to support sell through at retail. We've recently launched a new nationally broadcasted television series with our partners at DirecTV and AT&T, new immersive websites, and online content programming to help differentiate the brand. It's a cluttered and noisy environment, but we think we have some unique stories to tell to help drive traffic and sales with our retail partners.

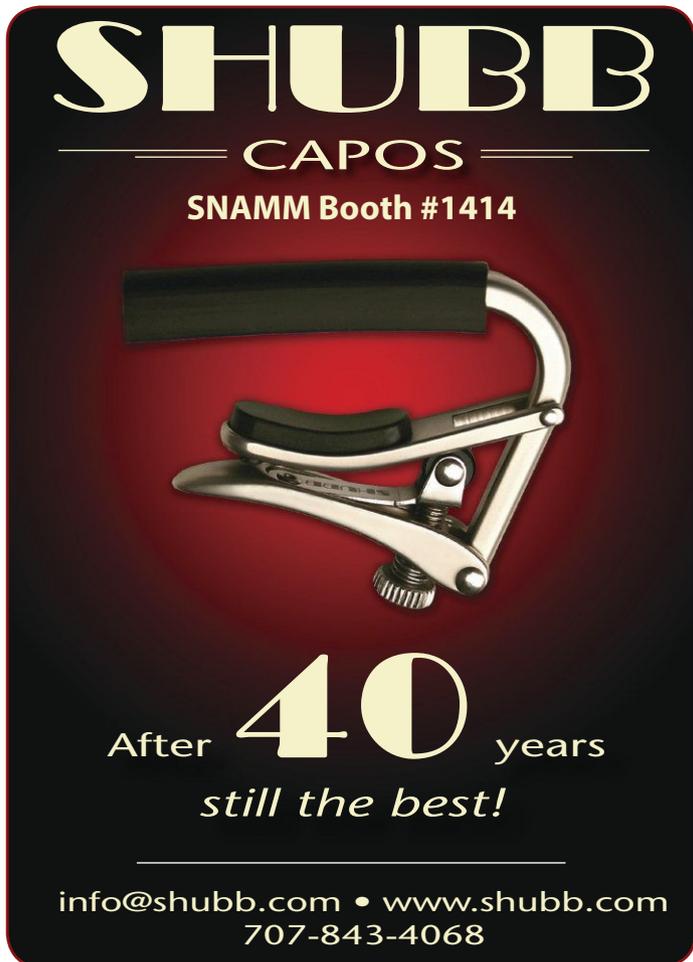
ML: We expect the rest of 2016 to continue as is has to date. It could get better exponentially considering the products we have in line for the future. Accessory manufacturers are in the midst of a unique time. Expanding options, tapping in to new technology or just addressing needs based on other technologies, can boost our market to new levels.

MB: 2016 is shaping up to be a year of solid growth for us. We're expanding our Noblesville, Indiana facility and will continue to invest in what we feel will be a very important and profitable category for dealers both short and long term.

AP: We expect to see growth in Q3 and Q4 of 2016 and to finish the year ahead of 2015. We will achieve this by continuing to be unique and understanding our customer's specific needs.

PD: My crystal ball tells me that 2016 will improve after a slow first quarter. We have seen our sales in the U.S. grow more seasonal each year, with Back to School and the November/December Holiday period growing several years in a row.

I do worry about the guitar industry and music products industry in the long term. People will always make music, it's in our fabric as human beings. How that music is made continues to evolve, as does this industry. Change is constant and fascinating to be a part of. We are looking to the future every day at D'Addario. It's great to be a part of such a forward thinking organization. **MMR**



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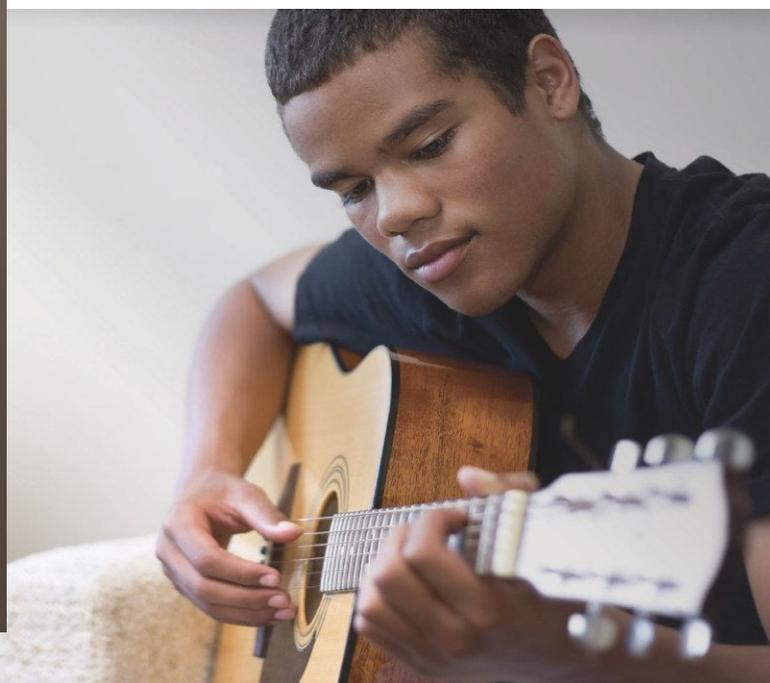
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Manuel Rodríguez Guitars

‘Brand Spain’

by Christian Wissmuller

that. “I have gypsy blood – my great grandfather was a gypsy and he had a flamenco group in the late 1800s,” Rodríguez explains during a brief follow-up meeting at this year’s Musikmesse gathering.

Before joining the family business, Rodríguez’ own father spent time working at the Ramírez workshop and, later, for himself. The family moved to the Los Angeles area in the mid-’50s – among other reasons, to take advantage of the wide-open U.S. nylon string guitar market – where they stayed before returning to Madrid in 1973 and setting up a new shop.

Only a few short years after this was when Manuel Rodríguez III, still just a teenager, started working full-time alongside his father.

“We have built three workshops throughout our history,” says Rodríguez. “Our last and current workshop, located in Esquivas, Toledo, employs 50 luthiers.

The facility (factory tours are available for individuals and school groups) is unique and ambitious, melding high-tech advancements with old-school methodology. It’s also one of a growing number of examples within the guitar world of suppliers embracing “green” practices.

“Our Nature Models are sustainable guitars, with ecologically sound varnishes,” Rodríguez explains. “We also have one model with recycled wood, and we built all the guitars with solar power.”

Current Manuel Rodríguez sales break down to roughly 80 percent classical and 20 percent flamenco – but what about the whole “Spanish guitars must be made in Spain!” declaration?

After a number of years during which some guitars were produced in China, in 2015 the company made the decision to move everything back to Spain. Now production is at the same levels as before with roughly 15,000 guitars shipping per year.

“China was getting very difficult,” Rodríguez told *MMR*. “For 13 years we had a workshop there but now salaries are going up, labor laws are getting more difficult. The stock market in China is very volatile. Another reason was the currency, but now it’s a lot more even. With the cost climbing up in China and the cost in Spain stable, it’s worth building everything in Spain. Since we started say-



Manuel Rodríguez chats with a luthier at the company’s factory in Spain

“Spanish guitars must be built in Spain,” enthused Manuel Rodríguez III, CEO of Manuel Rodríguez Guitars, while speaking to *MMR* from the company’s factory in Toledo, Spain earlier this spring. Other, non-Spain-based producers of similarly styled guitars would likely take issue with Rodríguez’ assertion, but it’s hard to argue with the man’s passion and joy.

Founded back in 1905 when Manuel Rodríguez Perez began crafting guitars in San Fernando, Cadiz, Manuel Rodríguez Guitars takes pride in being “the second oldest nylon string guitar brand” in the world. “In the past 111 years, we’ve endured two World Wars and one Civil War, exporting guitars to, at this point, over 120 countries,” observes Rodríguez.

But family history relating to the guitar goes further back than



An impromptu jam session at the Manuel Rodríguez booth, Musikmesse 2016



Assembling the sides and bracing of a guitar in the Manuel Rodríguez factory

ing we were [100 percent] made in Spain we've seen that people want to buy Spanish guitars, not Chinese, and we've seen a 20 percent increase in sales."

Can't argue with success and since January of this year, it's been easier than ever for American dealers to get in on the action – Manuel Rodríguez Guitars appointed KMC Music as exclusive U.S. distributor for its product.

To help support the launch of its expanded United States sales and marketing program through KMC Music, the company Guitars produced a six-minute video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5ZC3fBqksg) that takes the viewer through the entire production process of a guitar line known around the world as "Brand Spain."

"We felt it was important to show our distributors, dealers, and, most importantly, our customers where and how we design and make our unique line of instruments," says Rodríguez. "Our Spanish roots, the cradle of the classical and flamenco guitar, are key for the quality and beauty of our products. This new video vividly showcases the passion, care, and commitment to quality that goes into the production of our guitars — a commitment that goes back to 1905."

What would Manuel most want dealers to understand about his company and their product?

"Spread the message that 'Made in Spain' matters to players, solid tops and bone saddles and quality construction matter, and 111 years, rich in sound, history, and beauty all help us to create some of the finest instruments in the world." **MMA**



Manuel Rodríguez



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Plugged In – Part II

Electric Guitar Suppliers Discuss the 2016 Market

By Christian **Wissmuller**



Legator Guitars' Ninja 300 Pro

We pick up our conversation with electric guitar suppliers that began in the May 2016 issue of *MMR*...

Have you noticed any other trends with respect to electric guitars – demographics of end-users, popular price-points, certain styles or types of electrics either gaining or losing popularity?

Ken Youmans: Our electric guitar manager Masahiko Murata, says the developing trend that he observes is toward instruments with a very clear sense of purpose or identity are gaining people's interest. We're also starting to see more female players.

At the high end of our market are limited edition instruments like the Universe anniversary models we introduced this year at NAMM. These sorts of offerings are extremely limited and will only be developed occasionally. Though we see that there are other brands that do well with high-end models that collectors buy as investments, we identify as a player's brand, rather than a collector's brand.

Brian Ball: I think you're starting to see offset instruments continue to gain in popularity. There's still a massive pool of consumers that want traditional shapes and design elements, but I think with Djent Metal, Indie Rock, and Alternative being popular guitar players are more open-minded than they have been in a while. That's a great thing for Ernie Ball Music Man, where virtually all of our models are fairly unique shapes and designs.

Silvan Küng: The market we see today won't be tomorrow's market, for sure. But one thing will never change: musicians want to be inspired. Not only through effect possibilities – it's more than that. They want to feel what they play, they want to be connected to the "instrument" – that it results more into a relationship with each other. We try to build those bridges between player and guitar.

Pirmin and I developed over five years and part time jobs a new "bridge" solution. We ended up with

Jane three years ago and now with our new model, Mary, this summer. As you asked me for gaining brands in popularity, I will say Relish did well lately, but as a small fish in the ocean I see custom and private stock lines as tomorrow's future.

Armando Vega: Guitars seem to be all over the place at the moment, with the exception of the aggressive, pointy (for lack of a better term) designs that seem to be really struggling in the current musical climate. The same could be said about crazy, over-the-top flashy graphics and colors.

Adam Romine: Listening and interacting with the player community is key in developing Legator guitars. Engaging this community has led Legator to develop and expand our Extended Range Section of our Guitar catalog. From Multi-Scale (Fanned Fret) to 9-string guitars, a large portion of Legator's Ninja line was developed by the demand of this player base determined on exploring the extended range or their guitars.

What model is currently the hottest seller for your brand?

BB: The newest models we've released have caught on like wildfire. It's been a tremendous start to the year for Ernie Ball Music Man, and there are a few key instruments that are driving the business. Our new St. Vincent Signature model has been one of the hottest new guitars we've launched in years. John Petrucci continues to innovate and design new instruments that have really helped to keep us relevant and drive the business as a whole. The 40th Anniversary of the Sting-Ray (Old Smoothie) has been a very popular bass as well.

AV: Yamaha spent years perfecting our new Revstar lineup of



Brian Ball of Ernie Ball/Music Man



Armando Vega of Yamaha Corporation of America



Jon Donais, Adam Romine, and Joshua Travis of Legator Guitars



Silvan Küng and Pirmin Giger of Relish Guitars



Ken Youmans of Hoshino USA/Ibanez



Ibanez Artcore Vintage AFV10

solid-body electric guitars. There are seven models in the line, each delivering the great sound, styling and value associated with Yamaha guitars. Revstar represents a totally new design inspired by the Cafe Racer custom bikes of the '60s featuring industrial inspired finishes, stage-ready hardware, custom wound pickups and ultra-playable neck profiles. Stripped down, tuned up and ready to play. They are meticulously crafted to sound as good as they look.

AR: The Ninja 7-String Guitar (300-PRO & 100-PE Series), the Ninja 300-PRO, and the Opus Tradition 300-PRO 7-String

SK: Jane is doing great with back-orders through mid-year. Also, for Mary we already have orders, even if the final serial model has not been published yet.

KY: Iron Core RGD, RGA, have been our big hits this past quarter. We're also doing well with Artcore Vintage, which are distressed hollow bodies... those have also garnered that odd polarized reaction we see with some of our guitars: Strong sales contrasted by curmudgeonly criticism.

Expectations for the coming months?

AR: Summer always brings growth for Legator, from our engagement and the widespread visibility of our product on major festivals and tours to our involvement with the Summer NAMM Show. After a successful 2015 Summer NAMM show, Legator looks to debut a new line of guitars in Nashville this June and hopes to interact with a different breed of dealers and distributors that attend the show.

KY: Based on what's already been said, there are going to be new products for the second half of the year. This is our lot as Ibanez... to continually introduce new items and keep things moving.

BB: I'm very encouraged by the recent resurgence in the electric guitar, and am confident that the trend will continue. I think acoustic guitars will remain strong, but maybe not at the growth rate we've seen over the last handful of years. As pedals advance, and string and accessory brands continue to develop new products, I think there are plenty of opportunities on the horizon for retailers to capitalize on with the electric guitar.

AV: This year marks the 50th anniversary for Yamaha guitars. Our "Never Standing Still" approach continues to drive the Yamaha legacy into the future, and we definitely intend on staying on that very path. From research and development, design and manufacturing to sales and support, Yamaha goes to great lengths to deliver timeless instruments that go above and beyond "the norm." Our greatest strengths as a guitar maker are clearly reflected in the sound, playability, and overall quality of every guitar that bears our name. There will be a lot of exciting launches in months and years to come. Stay tuned for more.

SK: It's such a blessing that all delivered guitars inspire guitarists in such a new way, that they create new music. This is for what we work for – nothing else matters. **MMA**

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KAWAI

Setting the STANDARDS

by Bryan Reesman

The people at Kawai certainly possess a passion for pianos. After all, it's been their stock and trade for nearly 90 years, and beyond steady sales and customer appreciation they have been lauded for their work. Founder Koichi Kawai was the first piano industry figure to receive Japan's prestigious Blue Ribbon Medal in 1953, an award that was also bestowed upon his son Shigeru Kawai 41 years later. The company, whose president and CEO is now Shigeru's son Hirotaka Kawai, also achieved an industry first when all three of its factories received ISO 14001 certification for excellence in environmental management. The company, whose president and CEO is now Shigeru's son Hirotaka Kawai, achieved an industry first after all one (and then ultimately all three) of their factories received the ISO 14001 certification for excellence in environmental management. Still, like any long-term business, they have had their ups and downs and lately have been riding some choppy waves, but they retain a positive outlook that keeps espousing future innovation.

"Personally, I think we're overdue for a renaissance in which the piano regains its popularity in the culture," believes Brian Chung, senior vice president of Kawai America Corporation. "Growing up, people like Billy Joel, Elton John, Keith Emerson, Carole King, and Neil Sedaka were my piano heroes. That was the pop heyday of the piano during the last half of the 20th century – and it was good for the piano industry. A generation later, we got a slight uptick with players like Alicia Keys, Vanessa Carlton and Norah Jones, but it never really took off. I'm hoping that, before my career ends, the piano will get another season in the sun. Great things always come around again – and we're certainly due."

Chung has noted that the piano market has certainly improved since the crippling recession of 2008, but even so not nearly as much as many people in the business would have wished. He acknowledges that it's been "a long, slow crawl upward. There have been seasons when it seemed as though we were approaching a breakthrough, but then the momentum would just stop. The volatility has been frustrating, to say the least."

"As an industry, we're somewhat envious of other product categories like band instruments that have an embedded infrastructure that feeds their business," continues Chung. "School band programs across this country help ensure that customers are buying and upgrading instruments each year. Unfortunately, pianos don't have that predictable flow. When economic times are tough, customers tend to buy smaller instruments or used ones – or postpone their purchases altogether."



Model GL40

Even with the topsy-turvy nature of the marketplace, Chung and his compatriots remain hopeful. He feels there are many "avid piano people" who realize that new pianos are superior to vintage used models, and an increasing amount of those older instruments are ready to hit the junk heap, "which bodes well for business," notes Chung. "Also, I'm encouraged that more and more teachers are reaching out to adults and other generations of people who always wanted to play the piano, but never thought they could. The Recreation Music Making movement has been slow to germinate, but it's steadily gaining traction and will eventually bring good things to our industry."



Brian Chung

One area of solid growth for Kawai is digital pianos, and Chung reports that players across all generations have embraced them for their versatility, wide range of colors, ability to layer sounds and split the keyboard, and to record music. An added bonus is a pianist's ability to use headphones and not disturb people while they practice, further, and there is no tuning required. However, he says that many customers feel they have to make a choice between either a traditional acoustic piano or a modern digital model, but he believes there is a better way to look at the issue. "Our industry needs to preach again and again that these are two different categories of instruments with different strengths," Chung clarifies of the matter. "A discerning musical family should have both."

Given their global reach, Kawai must cope with differing demands from continent to continent. With distribution of their instruments hitting "virtually every major market in the world," they must cope with the fact that musical tastes vary from region to region. "For example, many European countries tend to prefer a brighter piano tone than North Americans who gravitate toward a richer, fuller sound," explains Chung. "On the digital

“I’m hoping that, before my career ends, the piano will get another season in the sun. Great things always come around again – and we’re certainly due.” – Brian Chung

side, there are sounds that we might include in a digital piano destined for India that might not be part of the North American instruments. Common sense marketing always dictates that you build what your customers want rather than what you want to give them. For cost reasons, it’s not possible to adapt production processes to meet the specific needs of each individual market – but we do the best we can.”

Kawai has been bringing forth new products every year, and Chung says that their digital pianos are always improving, with highlights including their top-end hybrids and entry-level models that are consistently popular. “Acoustic pianos aren’t known for frequent change, but we’ve actually launched four new lines of acoustic instruments in the past four years,” he says. “The latest was our new GL Series grand piano line launched last September. Our goal with that line was to bring higher-end piano features into more affordable price points. This must be resonating with customers because, so far, the response has been terrific.” The company began making hybrid pianos in 2007 when they introduced the CA91, which “featured an acoustic-style wooden soundboard in a digital instrument,” says Chung. “Customers loved the rich, full-bodied tone that the wooden soundboard provided. Plus, the responsiveness of our real-wood keys offered a great combination of tone and touch. Since then, our hybrids have really done well. We recently looked back at our awards list and realized that, over the years, our various hybrid models have won 11 major awards internationally, which probably makes them the most award-winning hybrid pianos in the industry. We must be doing something right.”

While Kawai did get into the synthesizer business in the early 1980s, they do not have plans to bring them back under their banner. Chung says that about two decades ago the company made a corporate decision to focus on what they do best – specifically, acoustic and digital pianos. He adds that the accolades they have accrued since then offer the best evidence that they made the right decision.

Last year, Kawai won a handful of awards that have continued a hot streak for the company, including *MMR*’s Legacy Award for the CA95 Hybrid Piano. In 2014, they were showered with seven awards, including two Dealers’ Choice Awards from *MMR* for Home Digital Keyboard Line of the Year (the CN Series Digital Pianos) and Pro Digital Piano Line of the Year (the MP Series Pro Digital Pianos). Such positive reinforcement keeps their spirits high.

“We’re exhilarated by all the awards we’ve received,” declares Chung. “The four in 2015 brought our total to 43 major international awards for excellence in the past 17 years. We keep thanking our dealers and industry colleagues for recognizing the effort we’ve put into our products and branding and for saying, ‘Well done!’ through these awards. Each one is like a badge of honor that inspires us to work harder to be worthy of more in the years ahead.” *MMR*



Model CA97B



Model CN35M

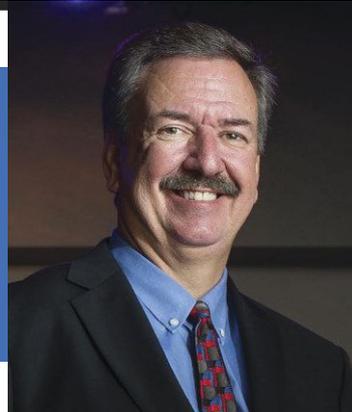


Model K300ATX

Chuck Surack

The Founder of Sweetwater Sound Gives Back to the Community That Nurtured Him

By Charlene Arsenault



If, at 14 years old, Chuck Surack hadn't met his first girlfriend, he probably would have made Eagle Scout. He was one pesky badge shy from achieving the rank. But Surack says being a dedicated Scout as a youngster was one of the most influential factors in shaping his character.

Entrepreneur, musician, businessman, recording engineer, philanthropist, city shaker – Surack is all of these things (plus a helicopter pilot and a car collector), perhaps equal parts, and has managed to lump these skills and traits into a dynamite force. It's a force that propelled his company to the top in its category, helps many people and organizations, and influences the city of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Surack, founder and president of Sweetwater Sound, started as a musician, which led to a recording business that evolved into an audio and retail company, and he is now one of the most influential and involved business leaders in his community of Fort Wayne. He is known for integrating electronic music instrument technology, computers, and traditional music. He has also designed recording studios and provided sound design for the likes of Dolly Parton, Aerosmith, and Stevie Wonder.

One of the largest music retailers in the United States, Sweetwater has given millions to nonprofits, and Surack sits on many influential boards.

Surack's Stadium

His latest? Chuck wants a 4,000- to 6,000-seat arena to be built in Fort Wayne. He's corralled others to make it happen; a group of enthusiastic business leaders, politicians, and residents.

"Last spring, the mayor of our city asked me to research if an arena would make it here," says Surack. "Another 18 people also researched it, and [last month] recommended that we should do it."

The unanimous nod to move forward with plans for the arena did not come easily, explains Surack. Still controversial, even members of the 19-member committee (which included board members from the other arenas in the city) weren't all originally in favor of the idea.

"About a third of the people who are just go-getters said we should just build it," says Surack. "A third said we needed to research it and find out what it means, and another third was against it. By the time we got done with the ten-month process, when we voted, it ended up

being unanimous."

A driving factor toward the decision was the clear win with the Parkview Field baseball park, which became home of the Fort Wayne TinCaps. In 2006, "virtually everyone was against it," Surack arguing that it wasn't "just about a ballpark." Built in 2009, the park has since been voted the best minor league park in the country, hosts events, and spawned a whole bunch of hotels and other businesses.

"We think an arena would do the same thing," says Surack. "I was an early supporter. I'm a strong local business leader and believed in it. Young people are looking for things to do."

Those against the idea of building a new arena argue that the money could be better spent on homelessness, the riverfront or a variety of other city enhancements.

"There are a lot of things to spend money on," says Surack. "You have to have a strong, healthy community to support everything else you do, and it adds to the quality of life. It won't necessarily make money, but brings five times that amount in private investments such as hotels, restaurants and all sorts of other businesses."

The board is working to raise the funds to hire a firm that would create an architectural drawing of the proposed arena.

"We're discussing the best way to fund it," says Surack. "We have several different ideas. One thing we didn't want to do is increase property taxes. It could be an income tax or slight sales tax. There are food and beverage taxes at hotels and restaurants. Or maybe a ticket tax."

The Seeds to Sweetwater Sound and Beyond

Surack toured extensively in the '70s, playing keys and saxophone in bands all over the country. He didn't make much money, and always enjoyed the recording side of playing a bit more. So Surack took what he had – a Volkswagen bus – and in 1979 turned it into a recording studio, which officially launched his company Sweetwater Sound.

"I'd go on location and record the local choir, speakers or bands," says Surack. "I'd take the bus and pull it aside the building, mic up everything and sit in the bus with my headphones."

When Surack spotted the prototype Kurzweil K250 programmable keyboard at a NAMM show in 1984, it piqued his interest further. As soon as it was available on the market, he bought one, and started programming sounds for



it. He became well-known in the music community for the K250's sound library, as well as his programming skills. Originally a Kurzweil dealer, he expanded Sweetwater as a music retailer. In 1990, he had six employees and moved from Surack's home to a commercial building.

Sweetwater now employs more than 1,000 people, and is one of the largest musical equipment dealers in the country, supplying musicians, recording studios, churches, sound companies, schools, and broadcasters. The company sells pro audio equipment that ranges from pianos and keyboards to microphones to mixers to guitars and drums.

"The biggest part of the business is retail," says Surack, "but the studio has nice credibility. We have many artists who use it."

So many products are selling well for Sweetwater Sound that Surack was hard-pressed to name specifics, but said that digital mixers, electronic drums, Thunderbolt audio interfaces, keyboard controllers and studio monitors all continue to top sales year after year. Last year, the company sold more than 100,000 microphones. Recently, the company added a number of drum brands, including Meinl, Ludwig, and Humes & Berg cases. Also added were Strymon pedals and T-Rex, both of which are doing very well, according to Surack.

"I think [customers] are drawn to the same things that you and I are drawn to," says Surack, "and that's good quality gear, and someone they can talk to who is very knowledgeable and really cares about the customer, and gives great advice. That's what Sweetwater is all about."

In addition to Sweetwater Sound, Surack owns eight other businesses: SweetCars; Sweet Aviation; All Pro Sound; Indiana Helicopters; Longe Optical; Touch Controls; Corporate Aviation Insurance Group; and Helimotion.

Success Means Giving Back

Ever the philanthropist, Surack and his company are well known for his charitable actions. Voted the "Citizen of the Year" in 2015 by the *Journal Gazette*, in 2014 alone, he and his companies donated \$2 million to nonprofit organizations and private organizations. This year alone, he's donated to 220 charities so far, and he and his wife contribute to some 500 organizations each year.

"My wife Lisa and I talk about our giving priorities all the time," says Surack. "We are most interested in supporting music programs in the schools and through arts organizations. We also have a real passion for organizations dealing with disabilities, such as Easter Seals Arc. Economic development and organizations which bring people to Fort Wayne, such as the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, are also priorities. Both Lisa and I grew up in Fort Wayne. The city has been great to us personally and to Sweetwater, helping us to grow and prosper. As a consequence, we feel an obligation, but also a sense of joy, in being able to give back to the community that nurtured us."

It would seem Surack wouldn't have time to sleep. But ever the Boy Scout, he is dedicated, successful, and prepared.

"We're just really fortunate in how successful we've been," says Surack. "I see all the turmoil around, and see competitors struggling... but we have a model that really works. We're not like Guitar Center or Sam Ash and we're not like Amazon – we're in between."

And the artist Surack thinks should open that new arena in Fort Wayne? "John Mellencamp," he says without hesitation. "We are a conservative town, with lots of manufacturing here. It's taken our community a lot to figure out how to grow. But if you stand still, you either get better or worse. I didn't want Fort Wayne to be a city that is getting worse." **MMA**

"I see all the turmoil around, and see competitors struggling... but we have a model that really works."



The Mall Of Fame

The growing number of music museums all have a retail component. Is there a connection?



By Dan Daley

The event commemorating the opening of the new Grammy Gallery at Nashville's Musicians Hall of Fame & Museum started very un-musicianlike – that is to say, exactly on time. Perhaps not so surprising, given the painstaking precision with which the Recording Academy, the Grammy Awards' parent organization, manages that annual television extravaganza. But the MHOF&M, as it's awkwardly acronymized, is a surprisingly organized place, chronicling various eras and geographies of music's most legendary soloists and session teams, including The Memphis Boys, Muscle Shoals' Swampers, Detroit's Funk Brothers, and L.A.'s Wrecking Crew with palpably passionate curation, even if it's missing an annotation or two here and there.

What the Recording Academy has moved into the MHOF&M, which is housed in the Nashville Municipal Auditorium, is a scaled-down version of the Grammy Museum, one of the glitzy hubs in the LA Live complex in Los Angeles' revitalized downtown. Where Grammy's institution celebrates the artists, the MHOF&M enshrines music's trench dwellers, who labored largely anonymously, a condition only made worse with the demise of even the minimal real estate that the CD jewel box offered as a place to display recording credits. And where the Grammy repository in Los Angeles is in the middle of a multi-billion-dollar architectural gem, the MHOF&M has led as peripatetic a life as the musicians it memorializes. It opened in 2006 in the midst of warehouses and homeless shelters in what had been disparagingly referred to as the Gulch, then one of Nashville's urban boondocks. But by 2010 it had been displaced, shoehorned out by eminent domain as the neighborhood underwent rapid gentrification and *The Gulch* suddenly became a desirable address. The MHOF&M landed at the Municipal Auditorium in 2012, tucked away on the city's less-hip north side amidst government buildings and lunch places that close by 4 p.m., and had teetered along, often powered more than anything by founder Joe Chambers' sheer force of will. (Its economic foundation was bolstered last year when it became a **501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable corporation**. This change in status allowed it to enter into a formal partnership with the Grammy Museum, another nonprofit organization. The Mike Curb Family Foundation also provided an anchor gift of \$100,000 to fund a special Curb Gallery there, and other fund-raising efforts have begun in earnest.)

Walk This Way

What both museums have in common, though, are the retail appendages that any self-respecting museum sports today: the gift shop, through which all visitors must pass and – hopefully – spend. The Grammy Museum Store in L.A. is brightly lit and sleekly stocked, and at almost a thousand square feet could reasonably hold its own against the MOMA's or the Broad's emporiums. The one at the MHOF&M, at 520 square feet, is simpler and plainer, some stark theatrical lighting suggesting a bit of drama, and it quickly gets down to brass tacks: logoed t-shirts, baseball caps, coffee mugs and shot glasses make up the bulk of the inventory. The single best-selling item: guitar picks bearing the MHOF&M imprint. At one dollar each, they have the best margin in the shop.

(In fact, Chambers' own background is rooted in retail. He's had several iterations of Chambers' Guitars stores, the last one of which, in the suburb of Murfreesboro, closed two years ago, or "two years too late," as Chambers archly puts it. He cites online sales and the cost of overhead as the reasons for getting out of retail.)

The museum store is the connection between the proliferation of music-themed museums and the MI retail community. While the number of MI retail stores declined 10 percent, from a high of 8,530 in 1999 to 7,678 last year (as per *MMR*'s own data), music museums have virtually exploded. There are complex, interactive ones, such as the EMP Museum, formerly the Experience Music Project Museum, in Seattle, nominally focused on the legacy of Jimi Hendrix and which uses interactive technology to engage over 511,000 visitors a year, and the putative granddaddy of them all, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, which attracts 477,000 museumgoers annually. Others are focused on genres, like the National Blues Museum in St. Louis or the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City. Some venerate the musician, such as venues dedicated to Johnny Cash, Abba, Elvis, the Ramones and the Allman Brothers; others curate their instruments, be it the comprehensive Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix or the surprisingly serious Kazoo Museum in Beaufort, South Carolina. What they all have in common, aside from a musical theme, is a gift store.

Museum shops occupy a critical spot in any museum's ledger – after admissions, institutional and government grants, and private contributions, a museum's retail appendage is of-

“Grammy Museums carrying a limited line of MI-type merchandise – picks, straps, string or even an entry-level guitar or drum kit – isn’t a cause for concern for the MI retail business.”

ten it’s last chance to bolster its bottom line on a daily basis. But as importantly, it’s also one more opportunity to create a relationship with the customer.

“You want people to leave with a memory, a good memory of the museum, and leaving with shot glass or a mug they’re taking a token, a piece of us,” observes Rachel South, museum front manager at the MHOFF&M. She believes the inclusion of Grammy-themed merchandise in the store – something Amy Holm, the MHOFF&M’s director of public relations, says is planned for – will encourage that effect. The musicians’ museum had already expanded its brandable items – it sells t-shirts that represent some of those subjects on display in the museums itself, such as Led Zeppelin, and carries t-shirts and branded merch from Sun Studios in



Memphis (a hybrid venue that’s a museum by day and working studio by night – and it has its own gift shop). Laurie Patton-Smith, who manages the MHOFF&M’s museum store, says they’ve also been trying to find less quotidian items for sale, to attach a sense of collectability – a useful emotion for a museum. They’ve recently commissioned a numbered, limited-edition run of MHOFF&M posters, made by Nashville’s highly regarded Hatch Show Print shop, that convey a sense of esthetic exclusivity. Patton-Smith, who shares a background in retail with Chambers, says they’ve tried selling very musician-centric products in the gift shop, including strings and guitar straps (neither of which bear MHOFF&M logos, incidentally) as an experiment.

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The Next Step

While Chambers is cautious about this – he says he doesn't want the museum or its store to become "a glorified Guitar Center," and that the history will always be the primary focus, the music-museum's gift store may be ready to cross a line in the future. Bob Santelli, executive director of the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles, was on hand for the opening of the Grammy Gallery, seated on the dais with Peter Frampton, Brenda Lee and Nashville Mayor Megan Barry. He suggests that the proliferation of music-themed museums is a collective way of "coming to terms with the great musical traditions that we have," he says, standing inside an installation in the Gallery where visitors can "co-write" a song with Desmond Child, who penned "Livin' On A Prayer" and other mega-hits. "This is not a history museum, not like the ones you or your parents know about. It's a museum about unraveling the mysteries of the creative process, and along the way telling great stories about the artists and the regions."

There may be room within that ambitious vision for musical instruments to actually carried by and sold through Grammy Museum shops in the future. Santelli says the idea has been discussed. "A kid comes in and picks up a guitar [in the shop] and says, 'This is fun! What's the next step?'" he asks, suggesting that the enthusiasm engendered by the museum visit followed by being able to actually hold a guitar in the shop might translate not just into a sale but also a lifelong passion.

Santelli says neither the Grammy Museum nor its Museum Shop, which he estimated brought in "a couple million dollars a year" in revenues, would consider endorsing any particular vendors, but Roland has developed a relationship with the Grammy Museum, creating accessible installations there that "already puts instruments in kids' hands," he explains. The company outfits three areas in the Los Angeles flagship museum – Stage, Studio and Electronic Music – with its electronic drum kits, keyboards, BOSS-powered electric guitars and BOSS effects pedals, and Roland/AIRA dance and

DJ gear. Santelli further stated that other brands have been helpful in outfitting the Grammy Museum, including Fender and Martin, and would be among the first invited if the decision were made to include MI products in the museum-shop inventory mix. (When asked if there were any Roland products planned for the MHOF&M, Rachel South laughed and said, "Not yet.")

Santelli emphasized that this is an embryonic idea at this stage. However, if the Recording Academy decides to move forward it could scale significantly: the Grammy Gallery at the MHOF&M is the museum's third outpost, after the main one and another blues-themed location opened March 5 in Cleveland, Mississippi; the Grammy Museum also has three affiliates – the Bob Marley Museum in Kingston, Jamaica; the Woody Guthrie Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma; and the Beatles Story in Liverpool, England. All have gift shops stocking Grammy-themed merchandise. Santelli says more domestic editions of the Grammy Museum are planned, with one or two to be chosen from a short list of six by the time of the next Grammy Awards show, which takes place in early 2017.

Santelli hopes to see music fans visit each location of the Grammy Museum and leave with a fitting memento. "Years ago, when the Hard Rock Cafés began, people collected Hard Rock t-shirts from London, Beijing, Singapore," he says. "We hope people feel the same way about all the Grammy Museums."

Grammy Museums carrying a limited line of MI-type merchandise – picks, straps, string or even an entry-level guitar or drum kit – isn't a cause for concern for the MI retail business. Collectively, their inventory would still be less than even the smallest rural MI retail store, and most visitors still have to pay an admission to the museum before they can access the museum store. It could, however, create a perceptual connection between the retail environment and the music industry's best-known flagship property. That kind of perceptual collaboration could be worth losing the sale of a Squire Strat or two.



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4 Ways to be Working on Your Business and Not in It

By Menzie Pitman

We are entering the summer season, nearing the mid-point of the year and turning the corner into fall. What better time to rejuvenate and refresh the way we are approaching our music businesses?

The good news is the Summer NAMM show is here, so my suggestion (to steal a lyric from Sir Paul McCartney) is: "Do me a favor, open the door, and let 'em in."

1. Let's start with new products:

When you get out of your own business and onto the NAMM showroom floor, the first thing you may notice is the way merchandise is displayed. When we are in the same environment day in and day out, we become almost unaware of our own surroundings. Worse yet, we become stale in our own preferences, and we overlook how uniquely instruments may be displayed. No one knows better than the manufacturers the way to display products and make them pop and stand out. I will never forget the year Roland dressed everyone in white lab coats, reinforcing the idea that Roland is always a leader in experimenting with new technologies and applications for their products.

2. TEC Tracks in Nashville is a must:

Attending a TEC Tracks session brings us a better understanding of how hot new products are being used by today's pros. Where else but at a Summer NAMM show can you interact with leaders in the Nashville recording community, and with tech products and production? We all know the pace is fast and ever-changing. So here is your chance to spend personal time with those in the know. "Hot Producers Hit Rewind" is the perfect example of how special these sessions are. Industry legends Lawrence "Boo" Mitchell, Jimmy Johnson, and Matt Ross Spang are the panelists for this unique Tec Tracks double session. The topic is how retro sounds are once again in super-hot demand and who better than Mitchell ("Uptown Funk") to speak on this topic?

3. Want a fresh perspective on marketing, music education, or YouTube? NAMM's Idea Center is right for you.

These may well be refresher courses from which you can benefit. If so, you should consider attending a session at NAMM's Idea Center. Mike Ross (Sweetwater) will speak Friday at 12 p.m. on "Mindful Marketing," and I believe it's fair to say that when Mike speaks, we would all be wise to listen. "Strategies for Keeping Your Lesson Program Relevant" is a session that I will host on Friday at 11:30 a.m. addressing the changing landscape in music education. I think it's accurate to assert that this is not your father's Oldsmobile. Need tips on YouTube? Christie and Walter Carter (Carter Vintage Guitars) host "Essential Tips for Successful YouTube Videos" Thursday at 11 a.m. There are very few dealers who incorporate YouTube as well Carter Vintage Guitars. All of these sessions refresh our thinking and give us new and better perspectives, and serve any owner or manager or sales staff well.



4. Here's one unique way to reinvigorate yourself and be inspired, while at the same time working on your business.

This is my best kept secret, but I guess it's time to let the cat out of the bag. Working on your business means looking into the eyes of tomorrow. It means finding inspiration at every possible turn. It means seeing the unique where others may see the ordinary. My secret is simple: find time to see the new musicians at NAMM's Nissan stage,

and catch as many performances as possible while in Nashville. It serves us well to remember why we do what we do and what makes our industry so special. The Summer NAMM show brings a chance to look at what we do in our businesses with fresh eyes and difference perspectives.

In Closing

Working on your business is just as important as working in it. If the owner isn't fresh, then there is no way he or she can be at his or her creative best. To stay unique, you must be inspired. If not, the cost is creative expression, and in the music business that's an unproductive place to be. See you at the show! **MME**

“Working on your business means looking into the eyes of tomorrow. It means finding inspiration at every possible turn.”

Making the Case for Nylon-Strung Guitars

By Richard Hannemann

After almost eight years of reading *MMR*, I admit to feeling somewhat left out.

There is such a thing as a “nylon-strung” guitar, traditionally (and erroneously) referred to as a “classical,” but you would never know it by reading the trades.

Granted, *MMR* is the trade mag of MI and granted the majority of guitar sales are hard-body electrics and steel string flat-tops – (and erroneously) referred to as “acoustics” – hence the emphasis on these guitars. But as the trade mag for MI, I’d hope *MMR* would give nylon-strung guitars some coverage.

Let us be clear here. A nylon-strung guitar is just as much an acoustic as a steel stringer. Tone-wood issues and the Lacey Act are just as important – and, as a matter of design, construction, and sound, probably more important as with steel stringers. The essential, and substantial, difference in tension between nylon and steel strings dictates the differences in architecture and construction which, in turn, will make for substantial differences in tone-wood use and tone-wood response; thus the difference between using mahogany vs. rosewood on a nylon strung is far more significant than on a steel stringer.

But, though the issue of “green” guitars has been reasonably well covered in *MMR*, there has been nary a word regarding nylon-strung guitars.

The dealer reading this will by now be thinking, “But I can’t sell nylon strung guitars.” Well, have you tried? Or does your store simply have a wide array of steel stringers on prominent display and a couple of nylons sitting in a back corner collecting dust? Yes, many customers come into a store knowing exactly what it is they think they want, but many are new to the instrument and look to the dealer for guidance and knowledge before they make a purchase. For these latter, do you show them a nylon strung, explaining and demonstrating its advantages, or do



you just shove a name brand steel stringer in their hand and say, “This is what you want.”

And do you make the mistake of going with the nomenclature flow referring to the nylon strung as a “classical” and the steel stringer as an “acoustic”? Therein lies your first marketing problem – by referencing the nylon as a “classical” you implicitly, and complicitly, re-enforce the misperception that a nylon is for “classical” music only. Which is simply not true.

It’s a guitar. It has six strings. It plays music. It plays all kinds of music. It plays any kind of music that can be played on a steel stringer. You can play jazz, blues, rock, folk, classical, flamenco, and just about anything else one might want to play. And, being as objective as I can about this: it plays that music better than a steel stringer.

Unamplified and all other things – finger-style, flat-picking, tone-woods, price range, et cetera being equal – a nylon strung has a more complex sound and better projection, which means greater dynamic range than a steel stringer. In other words – a nylon strung has better acoustics than “acoustics.” I’m certain that luthiers who specialize in nylon strung guitars can describe the why of that – and I hope they will, with articles on construction, tension, and bracing differences.

I am constantly amazed by the people who don’t get this, who say, “Well, you can’t (fill in the blank).” One guy who used to work in a guitar store told me, “Well, you can’t play harmonics on it.” Yes, you can – I had to actually show him this. And, yes, you can bend notes as well.

When the customer says, “Isn’t that a classical?” you say, “Used



Hanneman surrounded by some of his “tools of the trade.”



Richard performing at White Rock, New Mexico restaurant, The Pig ‘n Fig, in 2015

to be, but many of the younger generation of concert guitarists are playing a much wider variety of music" – then lay down a sweet little blues lick. When the customer says, "Well, what about an acoustic?" you say, "This is an acoustic." A little education can go a long way to making the sale.

Potential customers are constantly amazed when I take out a nylon strung and play all the things that they think can't be played. That can become a selling point.

Other selling points:

- Nylon is easier on the fingers than steel – for new guitar players, of any age, this is a plus.
- The slightly wider neck makes fingerings easier and more forgiving.
- Most importantly, the slightly smaller body makes it easier to hold – actually, most of my 9 year-old students can wrap themselves around a full-size classical. I once met a young woman – early 20s, who was about 4'6" – struggling to play her grandfather's dreadnought. Very sad. But, not knowing any better, parents will buy their kid a monster steel stringer – and far too many dealers will go along with this in order to get a sale.

Of course, it helps the marketing of these guitars if the dealer knows how to play one well and has a personal appreciation for the instrument.

And it would help the marketing of these guitars if MMR were to apply their solid writing to articles specific to the nylon-strung. I look forward to reading such! [Very good points – we'll get to work on it! Check out the article on page 72 of this issue and keep an eye out for our August 2016 issue – Ed.]

Richard Hannemann
Hannemann Music
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BAND & ORCHESTRA

Légère Orchestral Grade Synthetic Oboe Reed

After many months of delays and streamlining production Légère has launch the first orchestral grade synthetic oboe reed.

After 10 years of research and design went into this product it takes only 20 minutes on a CNC machine to produce plus many other very unique steps such as welding and O ring application.

The reeds are designed as stable through all registers while producing tones that rival great cane reeds. Players who have been using the reeds over the past couple years are finding 6-12 month lifespans with proper care, making them economical even at the very high price of \$150. As with all Légère reeds, oboe reeds are produced to be playable right out of the box, unaffected by weather and altitude, highly durable compared to cane, and very consistent.



legere.com

ACCESSORIES

Hornberg hb1 MIDI Breath Station

Ilio's hb1 MIDI Breath Station from Hornberg Research is designed to allow the user to add natural expression to any electronic instrument or peripheral device with MIDI or USB. Breath controllers have long been used to add critical nuance and detail to standard keyboard performances, but after spending a few minutes with the hb1, you'll understand why this goes beyond a typical breath controller. The hb1 features a wooden mouthpiece, a precision sensor, a MIDI-merger, an integrated MIDI-interface, and innovative parameters.



ilio.com

AIM Music Gifts

AIM Gifts continues to add new music gift accessories that offer retailers high profit margins and rapid impulse sales. The assorted mood/color changing pens, notes ruler, and adhesive bookmarks with 25 sheet pads will keep your customers coming back for more.



aimgifts.com

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For the VENTIS range, quality and flexibility are the watchwords. Based on a powerful combination of B&C compression drivers and FBT's own custom, long excursion woofers, the 115, 112 and 110 models are two-way, bass reflex designs housed in 15mm birch plywood. A full-grille design backed by specially treated acoustic cloth delivers the characteristic style for which FBT is known, while fully rotatable constant directivity horns ensure accurate coverage.

The three enclosures are as suitable for fixed installation as they are for use on the stage. M10 points are included as standard while an optional U-bracket can be used for wall-mounting. For use on the road, the VENTIS models include aluminum handles with rubber inserts, a 35mm polemount socket, and a 45° sloped profile for unobtrusive placement on-stage as a monitor.

fbt.it

GTC Sound Innovations Wireless Touchpad Technology for Guitars

After a year of extensively developing new algorithms and hardware enhancements, GTC Sound Innovations is pleased to launch the game-changing REVPAD.



This patented TouchFX technology, is the first wireless touchpad-controlled, multi-effects guitar processor, creating a completely new dimension of sounds that will make any guitar player sound unique in his or her expression. All this can happen up to 150 feet away from the base station, while maintaining the true sound of the guitar.

The REVPAD touch controller is a small, ergonomically designed device, that can be easily attached to any amplified guitar - electric, acoustic or bass. The REVPAD transmits expression control wirelessly to a sound processing base unit that contains high-end digital FXs along with traditional ANALOG distortion and overdrive. The REVPAD's FX library consists of 32 effects, which can be placed into eight FX blocks with multiple routing options. There is also an additional external FX loop for existing pedals.

gticsound.com

Universal Audio Fender '55 Tweed Deluxe Amplifier Plug-In

Universal Audio has announced the release of UAD Software v8.6, featuring the Fender '55 Tweed Deluxe for Apollo interfaces and UAD-2 hardware.



UA undertook extensive research and development, capturing every single component of two "golden unit" 1955 Fender Deluxe amps.

The result is the UAD Fender '55 Tweed Deluxe plug-in, Universal Audio's first guitar amplifier emulation and a groundbreaking development in guitar amp modeling.

Featuring an assortment of meticulously-placed microphone combinations, as well as three different classic speaker types, the Fender '55 Tweed Deluxe plug-in includes Universal Audio's Unison technology; Apollo users' guitar pickups will see the exact impedance load as if plugging into a vintage 1955 Fender Deluxe — a feature found only on Apollo audio interfaces. MSRP: \$199

uaudio.com

DJ & LIGHTING

CHAUVET Professional Maverick MK2 Spot

Chauvet Professional debuts the new Maverick series of moving fixtures with the Maverick MK2 Spot. Bright, fast and loaded with performance features, the new LED spot is already making waves in the marketplace.



Powered by a 440-watt LED engine, the Maverick MK2 Spot has an impressively bright output, producing an illuminance of 2,518 to 18,079 lux at 5 meters, depending on the zoom angle. The new fixture, which has a seven-position plus white color wheel, also produces a wide range of rich, realistic hues, thanks to its CMY and variable CTO color mixing system.

Among the features cited by Chauvet are a precision engineered optical system, dual 6-position rotating slot and lock gobo wheels, variable frost, a 3-facet prism, 13° to 37° zoom range and 16-bit dimming for the smooth control of fades. The user-friendly Maverick MK2 Spot also offers a wide variety of control options, including DMX, WDMX, SACN and ArtNet.

chauvetprofessional.com

Blizzard Lighting Stiletto Glo19

The Stiletto Glo19 is Blizzard Lighting's unique 11° to 58° zoomable wash moving head with under-the-lens "Glo" effects.

This moving head fixture boasts 19x 15-Watt OSRAM 4-in-1 RGBW LEDs with RGB color mixing "Glo" control on a secondary LED array underneath the lens plate, designed to create a background glow effect.

The fixture features 1000 to 2500 Color Temperature Control (CTC), color macro effects, and linear smooth dimming. Stiletto Glo 19 is designed to be a user friendly fixture featuring an easy-to-use 5 button LCD menu.



Equipped with an industry standard PowerCON compatible power input, 3-pin and 5-pin DMX In/Out jacks, and dual quarter-turn "Omega" quick connect type clamp brackets, for secure mounting.

Stiletto Glo19 fixtures have 3-phase stepper motors, and internal, 2-setting fan cooling (auto/high).

Retail price of the Stiletto Glo19: \$1,999.99

blizzardlighting.com

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By Dan **Daley**

Music Takes a Stand on a Difficult Topic

The connection between music and non-traditional gender identities, aka LGBT, goes back decades, if not centuries. The arts in general have been havens for a much broader spectrum of self-identification, but music has long taken a lead in mainstreaming what was once viewed (at best) as unconventional. “Music is just a little ahead of everyone else in some ways,” *Billboard* senior editor Alex Gale told *USA Today* earlier this year.

A lot of people take this personally, and that’s where it’s been largely left, with a spectrum of opinion and emotions that rarely crossed into transactional territory. At least, until very recently, when a spate of legislative actions in a growing number of states has made gender identification a blatantly economic issue. And that puts it squarely in the nexus occupied by MI retail, at the crossroads of music and commerce.

Music has been good to the LGBT cohort, providing a community offering safety and acceptance. But the LGBT world has more than reciprocated, offering the music industry an avid and often lucrative marketplace, as well as a conduit to broader lifestyle revenues. Starting with the disco revolution of the late 1970s, an LGBT demi-monde evolved into a legitimate sales & marketing silo. When record producers and A&R lizards want to gauge the market possibilities of an upcoming single, they’ll send mixes out into the clubs, including specifically gay clubs, relying on that audience as an esthetic barometer. Katy Perry, Britney Spears, Jennifer Lopez, Mariah Carey, Janet Jackson, the Backstreet Boys, Lady Gaga, Nicki Minaj, and Kylie Minogue are among the pop acts who’ve appeared or performed at gay clubs in the United States in recent years, underscoring the mainstream influence of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community to “Gay & R,” as it’s been called.

But that infrastructure is being challenged, by a series of recently passed laws that are clearly a pushback against the legislative headway that LGBT has made in areas such as same-sex mar-

riage. There are more than 100 active bills, across 22 states, which seek to limit the rights of the LGBT community. For instance, a new law in Mississippi lets any person or business deny services to same-sex couples because of religious objections. In North Carolina, the governor signed a law banning cities from passing LGBT anti-discrimination ordinances and barring transgender people from using bathrooms that match their gender identity. Tennessee also has a “bathroom bill,” plus a bill that allows mental health professionals to refuse to treat LGBT patients. A pair of bills in Nevada would

allow individuals and businesses to use religion to challenge or opt out of certain laws, including laws that protect LGBT people from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. Similar legislation was also recently introduced in Montana and is still pending in Arkansas, Georgia, Missouri, Texas, and elsewhere.

But the North Carolina legislative action is the one with the most economic heft, and perhaps not coincidentally the one with the most significant music pushback. Bruce Springsteen and Ringo Starr both cancelled shows in the state over the new ordinances there, while Cyndi Lauper, Brandy Carlile, Jimmy Buffett, and other artists said their shows would go on, but revenues would be contributed to LGBT causes. MoogFest, which took place in May in Durham, North Carolina joined in, saying in a prepared statement ahead of the show that they would be, “standing our ground in North Carolina, and will use every opportunity to protest this law – on the stage, in the streets, and on social media.”

Music artists were joined by a growing number of large corporate entities, including Disney, the NBA, the NCAA, Apple, and Google, which have all weighed in and opposed the new law. But it was the music artists who drew the most notice. It’s a reminder that whether you see the controversy through lenses tinted by philosophy or economics, MI retail has a role to play in this particular act of American history. And June – Gay Pride Month – is the perfect time to consider yours. **MMR**

“Starting with the disco revolution of the late 1970s, an LGBT demi-monde evolved into a legitimate sales & marketing silo.”





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