

Music China ends on a positive note with participants praising the fair for its quality

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The curtains have fallen on Music China which received tremendous acclaim from exhibitors and visitors alike for its show quality and unparalleled face-to-face meeting opportunities available from 28 – 31 October 2020. The overall atmosphere of the 2020 edition was brimming with positivity as business opportunities and music appreciation filled the halls of the Shanghai New International Expo Centre. Despite the pandemic and travel restrictions, the show drew 81,761 visitors to source from a total of 1,106 exhibitors across 11 halls in more than 100,000 sqm of exhibition space.

At the conclusion of the 19th edition, Ms Judy Cheung, Deputy General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, was pleased to see how Music China has helped industry players amid the pandemic, commenting: “It’s always exciting to see the show launched, particularly during this very unusual year. I feel immensely proud of the visitor and exhibitor attendance and their high level of show satisfaction. This edition marks another milestone that we’ve achieved. After many years of development and dedication to the MI industry, Music China has built up its reputation as a leading industry platform. The presence of many world renowned brands and highly relevant buyers are evidence of this. We will continue to provide an all-round trade fair in terms of cultivating business relationships, brand building, information exchange and education. I look forward to meeting our MI friends in 2021 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the show.”

As the last major trade fair of its kind this year, industry stakeholders were grateful that Music China provided a high quality business platform that enabled them to conduct business activities and gather updates on the latest technological advancements. The show attracted a strong presence from a number of international brand names who wanted to benefit from this effective platform. One such high profile brand was Yamaha, who brought a lot of new products to the show, especially in the field of electronic pianos and saxophones. Mr Yutaka Okada, Assistant General Manager, Marketing Division of Yamaha Music & Electronics (China) Co Ltd explained that, just like previous years, his booth had been very busy during the show. He said: “Music China has

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definitely helped us re-establish business connections for the second half of the year after the outbreak of the pandemic. It's an important event for us as we are able to showcase the charm of our brand and new products to trade visitors. As a manufacturer, the show offers us the best opportunity to demonstrate our brand and convey the value of our products."

Positioned as Asia's largest trade fair for musical instruments, C Bechstein, a top-notch German piano manufacturer, also agrees that Music China plays an essential role in bringing musical instrument enthusiasts, dealers and brands together in one place. At the show, they highlighted their grand piano global limited edition, which is a co-branded product between C Bechstein and the famous German silverware manufacturer, Robbe & Berking. Only two pieces are produced, and one of them was displayed on-site.

Mr Cai Na, Vice President of C Bechstein Trading (Shanghai) Co Ltd shared that the brand places great importance on the Asian market, especially China and that's why the company established a subsidiary in the country, aiming to focus more on the Chinese market. He said: "We hope that more Chinese people can become familiar with our products and our brand. Music China is an important annual event for MI industry peers. It's just like the Olympics for athletes. The fair brings together manufacturers and industry players from all over China and the world. Whether it be trade, product display, or information exchange, Music China has a highly positive influence on the industry and its development."

Despite the fact that many overseas exhibitors were unable to travel to Shanghai, their brands were represented at the fair by their local Chinese sales offices. Additionally, international pavilions representing the Czech Republic, Germany and North Korea were present. Visitors felt this year's show continued to provide excellent variety both in terms of products, and the quality of suppliers, with a wide selection from different countries and regions making it a worthwhile trip.

Some buyers travelled long distances to source products, including first time buyer, Mr Cao Fudong, Sales Manager of Xiangbaishu Musical Instrument Retailer, and the Head of Orchestra and Electroacoustic Band from Inner Mongolia: "I first heard about Music China a long time ago. After visiting the show this year, I feel that it was indeed worthy of a long trip. Despite the pandemic, the industry's major brands are all basically here. The product categories are broad and the quality is high. The overall flow of visitors and exhibitors is exceptional. I came mainly to purchase a batch of pianos for the students at our instrument retail shop and I have already placed an order with a famous Japanese brand. As an international platform, Music China provides a great deal of convenience for those of us who travel long distances to purchase instruments. It enables us to get in touch with the world's leading brands within a short period of time, which is very convenient."

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In addition to trade buyers, the show also attracted representatives from the education sector. Mr Song Ren, a teacher from the Shanghai Zhiyin

Art Academy, has visited the show almost every year since its debut. He noted: "Music China is the most well-known musical instrument event in China, so it's a must-attend event for us. As a teacher of the music academy, I have brought many students to visit the fair, especially the Violin Hall. I have placed orders for several violins at the show already. I found that the products' quality to cost performance is very high. The range of products is also very wide, allowing me to purchase instruments from both the upstream and the downstream. I can always find what I want, and will definitely come again next year."

Business leaders seize opportunities amid an economic crisis

Prospects for the Asian markets, including China look bright, with the region offering upbeat business growth resulting from rising demand for musical instruments and increasing purchasing power.

Reflecting on the relative strength of the Asian markets was Ms Joey Huang, Chief Brand Officer of Gioco Corporation: "The Southeast Asian market is now a very important segment of the entire musical instrument market. The Chinese market in particular, with its population and consumption power, is seeing an increasing appetite for cultural pursuits and high quality products. At the same time, buyers also value the spiritual aspects of music. Therefore, we are very optimistic about the Chinese market, which is our first priority. Then comes Southeast Asian markets such as Thailand, which is also seeing its cultural industry take off."

Compared with other product categories, the musical instruments segment seems to have demonstrated its resilience amid the economic downturn. Mr Hu Hongjie, Regional Sales Director of Pearl River Piano Art Studio explained: "The Asian and Chinese musical instrument markets still have a lot of room to grow because compared with Europe, the US and Japan, the possession rate of pianos across China is still relatively low. Other favourable conditions include the country's two-child policy, and the overall income level of Chinese parents, which is improving. Consumers are also more willing to invest in their children's musical ability. In addition, it's expected that music will become a compulsory exam subject across the country in 2022, which is good news for the entire musical instrument market. Overall, I think the market prospects are positive and its resistance is stronger than other industries. It is unlikely to be affected by the pandemic."

Fringe programme offers education and entertainment

Music China is well known for its fringe programme where participants come together for education and to enjoy unrivalled networking opportunities. This year's show offered a wide range of practical seminars and training courses catering for different product sectors and professional experience.

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Several noteworthy events highlighting Music China's core themes included the NAMM CMIA Industry Forum. Mr Wang Shicheng, President of the China Musical Instrument Association was one of the

highly-respected speakers. His forum themed “A breakthrough amid epidemic, boost confidence” was packed with audience members who wanted to gain more perspectives from industry leaders. He remarked: “Our forum is demand-oriented, integrating various issues facing the musical instrument industry and its development. Every year, we discuss the most pressing issues concerning consumers and musical instrument industry peers. Through giving updated industry information and data, I want to reflect the status of the Chinese musical instrument market and give a birds-eye overview to the audience. Under this same theme, our guest speakers from different industry occupations use practical examples and conduct deep industry analysis.”

Another distinguished event was the NAMM University Courses, where the seminar room was filled with audience members who wanted to hear about opportunities and strategies for music retailers amid the pandemic. Mr Zhao Enfeng, Deputy Secretary General of the Music Education Committee of the Guangdong Musicians Association showed his admiration for the course. He explained: “My main purpose of visiting Music China is to attend the forums and seminars. As the show is China’s largest trade fair for the industry and the industry’s trendsetter, it is appropriate that the fringe events are also hosted by industry heavyweights. This is a valuable learning opportunity for me.”

Running in parallel with the educational events was a choice of live outdoor performances encompassing a variety of different musical genres. Whether it be the live product demonstration at booths organised by the exhibitors, or the “Never-ending Music - Live shows” where a series of exciting performances took place at the outdoor stage, musical talent was on full display as musicians showcased their skills and entertained large crowds. This included a performance by the popular band “Shang High Voltage”, as well as two standalone performances organised by Yamaha: “Duo Impromptu” and “Guitar Shredding”. Throughout the four-day show, participants were in high spirits both inside and outside the exhibition halls, which were filled with music, joy and positive energy.

Additionally, participants were able to enjoy a safe and worry-free trade fair as additional hygiene measures were strictly implemented, including face recognition, entry checkpoints to verify health declaration codes and temperature scans. All participants are required to submit travel records and wear a face mask at all times.

The 20th anniversary edition of Music China will be held from 13 – 16 October 2021. The show is organised by Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, the China Musical Instruments Association and Shanghai Intex Exhibition Co Ltd.

For more details, visit www.musikmesse-china.com or email the show’s organisers at music@hongkong.messefrankfurt.com. More press information and photographic material can be found here: <https://music-china.hk.messefrankfurt.com/shanghai/en/press/press-releases.html>.

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Other shows under the Musikmesse brand include:

NAMM Musikmesse Russia

16 – 18 September 2021, Moscow

Musikmesse

22 – 24 October 2021, Frankfurt

Background information on Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. With about 2,600 employees at 29 locations, the company generates annual sales of around €736 million. We have close ties with our industry sectors and serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of the Group's key USPs is its closely knit global sales network, which extends throughout the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services. Headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent). For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com