

news +++ Music China  
Shanghai, 11 – 14 October 2023

# music

## CHINA

### Over 122,000 visitors flock to Music China’s “we’re back!” celebration

**Shanghai, October 2023. With on-site orders rushing in, new connections being forged across 13 bustling exhibition areas, and a fairground alive with activity until the final second, this year's Music China will be remembered as the perfect comeback following the pandemic. Equalling its all-time visitor record, previously reached in 2019, and with more than 1,800 exhibitors spread over 120,000 sqm of exhibition space, the four-day fair attracted high praise from every sector of the Musical Instruments (MI) industry as it closed on 14 October. Among them was French violin bridge supplier Nicolas Despiau, who hailed it as “one of the most important fairs in the world,” – a sentiment that was supported by the attendance of trade visitors and end consumers from 92 countries and regions.**



Visitors explore the Italian and French pavilions in Hall W2 (bowed instruments)

“Across all the important metrics, the response to this 20<sup>th</sup> edition has exceeded our expectations,” says Ms Judy Cheung, Deputy General Manager, Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd. “After the pandemic hiatus, participants wanted to know if the magic is still here, and the feedback we’ve received from exhibitors and visitors has confirmed this is indeed the case. The sheer scale of the Chinese market, driven by a sustained focus on music education, ensures that leading players from around the world continue to view the fair as a ‘must-attend’. It was pleasing to hear from exhibitors that there was a strong flow of new, high-quality buyers visiting their booths throughout the show – with many reporting strong on-site sales orders. After the difficulties the MI industry has faced over the past few years, we are delighted to have truly moved the needle in terms of re-establishing business connections.”

But the true measure of success, as Ms Cheung puts it, was “the smiles on participants’ faces.” One such participant was Barend Van Mullem, VP Sales and Marketing, Henri Selmer Paris, an exhibitor in the woodwind and brass instrument halls, who was thrilled with the visitor flow, saying: “It’s very busy. We’ve seen people from all over the world. The Asian market currently accounts for more than 50% of our turnover, so this fair is pivotal for us. It enables us to connect not only with Chinese consumers but also with those from Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia and beyond.”

### **Piano sector and on-site business activity surpass expectations**

To meet the immense demand from the Chinese market, the piano halls E1 and E2 expanded their footprint by 20% this year. This expansion not only maintained their status as the largest piano halls worldwide but also featured international pavilions from Germany and the Czech Republic.

Occupying one of the largest booths at the fairground, Yamaha were introducing their 'Live up to the Love of Music' campaign in an effort to stimulate domestic music education, and promote widespread music culture in China. “As an international manufacturer for a comprehensive range of instruments, our products are meticulously crafted to meet the diverse needs of all music enthusiasts, from novices to professionals, and from solo performers to orchestras,” explained Daisuke Yamamuro, General Manager of the company’s Marketing (and Band & Orchestral) Division in China. “This year’s Music China is celebrating its 20th edition, and last year happened to be the 20th anniversary of Yamaha China. Our aim is to use this platform to continue creating new dynamics and cultures among music lovers.”

Seiler Samick, an exhibitor since the inaugural edition in 2002, continued to leverage the Piano Halls to connect with global dealers, distributors, and end users. “This year, we’ve seen orders for over a hundred pianos within just the first two days,” said Mr Lee Hyung Guk, Chairman of the Board at the company’s Shanghai office. “Reuniting after such a long pause has been quite emotional for us. Our presence here continues to be vital – it enhances our brand, strengthens our relationships, and serves as a convergence point for us to collectively strategise and understand industry trends.”

### **Guitar, bowed and string participants report strong market potential**

While numerous long-standing exhibitors celebrated two decades of growth at this year’s fair, a significant number of new participants were discovering the platform’s benefits for the first time.

Previously a visitor, but taking part as an exhibitor this year, Mr Ekachai Jearakul, the Founder of Fonzo Guitar, said: “We knew that there was a truly special atmosphere for business and music appreciation here. But as exhibitors we’ve felt this even more profoundly. We’ve welcomed agents and guitar enthusiasts from all corners of the globe, all showing keen interest in the Fonzo guitar. Many overseas guitar collectors have been so captivated by our offerings that they’ve even made on-the-spot purchases.”

Alongside French and Italian Pavilions in the Bowed Instrument Hall W2, Austrian exhibitor Thomastik-Infeld was using the occasion to launch their new Rondo Gold Orchestral Strings. “Starting from the CEO down, we’ve travelled as a delegation of 10 to this year’s fair because it is so important for us. Compared to fairs in Europe and the US,

the scale of this fair is huge. We see so much potential, so we are planning to invest more in the market,” explained Ms Ann-Kathrin Hitz, the company’s Marketing & Creative Director.

### **International exhibitor variety presents strong sourcing opportunities for all corners of the MI industry**

Some of the biggest names in the business exhibiting this year included Altamira, AXL, BAM, C. Bechstein, Central Music, Chairman, Conn-Selmer, D’Addario, Dun Huang, EUTERPE, Farida, Fazioli, Fender, Fengling, Gibson, GEWA, Hailun Piano, Hu Qiu, Jin Bao, Jin Yin, Kawai, KHS, Maderas Barber, Marigaux, Martin, Medeli, Parsons Music, Pearl River, People’s Music Publishing House, Pianodisc, Pioneer DJ, Rampone & Cazzani, Reliance, Rönisch, RSL, Samick, Saverez, Schimmel, Seiko, Seiler, Selmer, Shanghai Music Publishing House, Steinway, Strauss, Taylor, Tenon, Thomastik, Toyama, Yamaha, Yanagisawa, and Yue Hai.

This diversity was amplified by exhibitors from 23 countries and regions, including dedicated pavilions from China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Spain, attracting buyers from 92 countries and regions. Among these, the most represented countries and regions were China, Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, the USA, India, and Germany.

“It’s difficult to know where to begin because there is so much to see,” explained Mr Peter Garrity, Manager, Sydney Fine Violins. “I’m here the entire four days and I’ve got a huge list of exhibitors to meet. The suppliers here are very easy to do business with. On top of new suppliers, I’ve visited most of my old contacts, and I’ve connected with my American distributor friends here too.”

For domestic visitors, the opportunity to connect with global exhibitors was an opportunity that couldn’t be missed: “This fair is unparalleled in China as a gathering spot for overseas suppliers, including artisans from workshops in Italy and France,” said Mr Sun Wei Dong a Violin Teacher from an arts centre in Shan Dong. “This variety allows me to discern the tonal differences among violins from various countries and brands, and to understand the unique interpretations of violin making by different artisans.”

### **Education returns as MIDI 2.0 rollout captures attention**

Amidst a spectacular line-up of some 600 industry-leading forums, exhibitor events, hands-on training sessions, global product launches, and captivating live shows, this year’s fair brought together major industry figures, thought leaders, and enthusiasts from across the globe.

At the heart of the digital sphere this year was the transition from MIDI 1 to MIDI 2.0, a significant leap in music technology that may eventually be installed in almost every type of digital music machine. The new technology presents substantial enhancements in production and performance, offering bi-directional communication and auto-configuration capabilities, making it a game-changer for musicians, software developers, and hardware manufacturers.

“MIDI 1 was a monologue, MIDI 2.0 is a dialogue,” explained Mr Athan Billias, following his

forum presentation about the technology. Highlighting the pivotal role of Chinese technology companies in this shift, he added: “Domestic companies shouldn't just follow, they should be leading the rollout of MIDI 2.0. I lived in Japan from 1986 – 1994, when Japanese companies like Roland and Yamaha were getting very big in the world of synthesisers. I feel that same energy here in Shanghai today. Obviously, China has been great in a lot of OEM work, but many companies are now starting to become technology leaders as they establish their own brands – both domestically and overseas.”

Music China is organised by Messe Frankfurt, the China Musical Instrument Association and Shanghai Intex Exhibition Co Ltd. The next edition will take place from 10 – 13 October 2024.

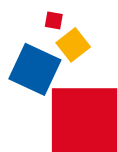
For more details, visit [www.musikmesse-china.com](http://www.musikmesse-china.com) or email the show's organisers at [music@hongkong.messefrankfurt.com](mailto:music@hongkong.messefrankfurt.com). More press information and photographic material can be found here: <https://music-china.hk.messefrankfurt.com/shanghai/en/press.html>.

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**Background information on Messe Frankfurt**

The Messe Frankfurt Group is one of the world's leading trade fair, congress and event organisers with their own exhibition grounds. With a workforce of some 2,160 people at its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main and in 28 subsidiaries, it organises events around the world. Group sales in financial year 2022 were around €454 million. We serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of Messe Frankfurt's key strengths is its

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