

Music Gear Trumpeted at Trade Show

Valley manufacturers grab spotlight with product launches.

Lance Lerman decided to make a splash at this year's National Association of Music Merchants trade show with a new product from his guitar studio, **LSL Instruments**, in Santa Clarita.

The Arc wall hangars and floor stands are the first accessories made by LSL. The guitar holders were designed by Lerman's wife, **Lisa**, with no visible screws and a sliding panel that can be decorated with any type of material.

"This enhances your house or studio rather than something that detracts from it," Lerman said.

Lerman said there's money in accessories, more so than the hand-crafted guitars that LSL makes.

The company was among 60 or so music-related firms from the San Fernando, Conejo and Santa Clarita valleys to exhibit at the annual NAMM show, held at the Orange County Convention Center in Anaheim from Jan. 19 to 22.

Other guitar makers included **Michel Pinter** of **Pinter Instruments** in Valley



Comfy: Gig Strap from D&A Guitar relieves shoulder fatigue with acupuncture pad.

Village, and **Avi Shabat**, who handmakes custom guitars in West Hills. Drum maker **Remo Inc.**, sheet music seller **Alfred Music**, microphone makers **Blue Microphones** and **Royer Labs** also had booths. **Reliable Hardware Co.**, a North Hollywood company that makes parts used for guitar and drum cases, had a presence as well.

Ravi Sawhney was at the expo with his guitar accessories company, **D&A Guitar Gear**, an off-shoot of his Thousand Oaks product design firm **RKS**. Like Lerman, Sawhney had guitar stands for sale, but the newest addition to his product lineup was the Gig Strap, an acupuncture pad that fits over an existing guitar strap. It

employs a series of nubs that stimulate and relieve the pressure points on the shoulder.

"Guitar players, after playing for hours, are getting cramped up, getting muscle fatigue or getting all kinds of chronic problems," Sawhney said.

Marshall Blonstein made his first appearance at the show with his Camarillo company, **Rock 'n' Rolla**, a developer of vintage-looking turntables with modern features such as USB and Bluetooth connections.

Rock 'n' Rolla makes four models carrying a price between \$70 and \$150. The UFO model comes with a see-through plastic dome cover while the high-end XL model contains a CD player



Rock 'n' Rolla turntable

beneath the turntable.

Appearing at NAMM – the largest trade show in the industry – puts his company in front of retailers who might want to sell the turntables, Blonstein said.

"So far, we have picked up nine international distributors," he added. "I was knocked out by that."

– Mark R. Madler

Santa Clarita Hosts Dinner Night Club

Impresario behind Canyon Club opens in Valencia Town Center.

The Canyon Club is crossing valleys with its new location in Santa Clarita.

Lance Sterling, owner of club operator **Sterling Venue Ventures** in Agoura Hills, plans to open a 25,000-square-foot music club in Valencia, which will join his other venues the Canyon Club in Agoura Hills, the Saban Theatre in Beverly Hills and the Rose in Pasadena.

"We think (the market in) Santa Clarita is identical to Agoura and Pasadena," Sterling said. "Perhaps a little younger demographic, but we'll be able to book shows."

Sterling's venues typically host vintage acts like rock band **Gin Blossoms**, singer **Cyndi Lauper** and guitarist **Buddy Guy**, as well as comedians and cover bands. Sterling believes the more locations he has, the bigger the names he can attract.

His newest addition – Canyon Club Santa Clarita – will occupy a former **Red Robin** restaurant along with adjacent space from closing businesses, essentially taking over the backside of the Westfield Valencia Town Center. The 1,100-person venue will fea-

ture a state-of-the-art sound system, concert lighting, a bar lounge, full dinner service as well as a **CaliBurger**, a casual restaurant chain in which Sterling purchased the local franchising rights.

The **Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corp.** reached out to Sterling directly about opening the concert location as a booster to the local economy.

Originally, Sterling was considering vacant retail locations like former grocery store sites, similar to what the Canyon Club and Rose occupy. However, Santa Clarita didn't have the right real estate available, so Sterling and the SCVEDC group connected with Century City-based shopping center operator **Westfield Corp. Ltd.** to explore options at the local mall.

"The trend in mall-type properties is to not be just a shopping destination but an entertainment destination," said **Holly Schroeder**, chief executive at the SCVEDC.

"That's why we see so many more restaurants and event-type activities happening at malls, so having a permanent venue makes sense."

Last year, Sterling raked in just shy of \$20 million in revenue and hopes to increase that number with the new location. If all goes according to plan, it should open in September.

– Stephanie Henk

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