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**Dave
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Report 2009:
Cool Things...**

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Jill Phillips • Buddy and Julie Miller
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Coda Art & Limitation • Nick DePartee of Kutless

Five Cool Things I Saw at NAMM

by Bruce Adolph

Every year we like to bring you some of the more interesting entries of new products released at the annual Winter NAMM Show in Anaheim. For the uninitiated, NAMM is one of the world's largest gatherings of musical equipment companies (1,500 exhibit booths under five large continuous exhibit halls) where manufacturers hope to reel in retail stores orders of new music gear. It is a four day long non-stop event that dazzles the musical senses while wearing out your feet (and sometimes your ears as well).

Like always I've asked some of our friends to give me their "Five Cool Things" list to add to mine. Over the course of the next several issues you may very well see many of these items end up in our more in-depth product review section of the magazine... there was no shortage of cool stuff this year.

This year for the first time at Winter NAMM we've also had an exhibit booth for Christian Musician magazine. We gave away both CM and our sister publication Worship Musician as well as tried to reel in some retail store buyers ourselves with our somewhat famous "Love One Woman... Many Guitars" t-shirts. The official name of our line of clothing for musicians is Musicians Threads. But I digress...

Here is my own personal "Five Cool Things I Saw at NAMM" list which roughly translated means "Here is the five cool things I saw that I'd like to own".

Rhodes

I walked by this exhibit booth and could not take my eyes off of the bright colored suitcase Rhodes keyboards. Wow! Just beautiful! I sat down and played a few chords and was blown away by the feel of those old

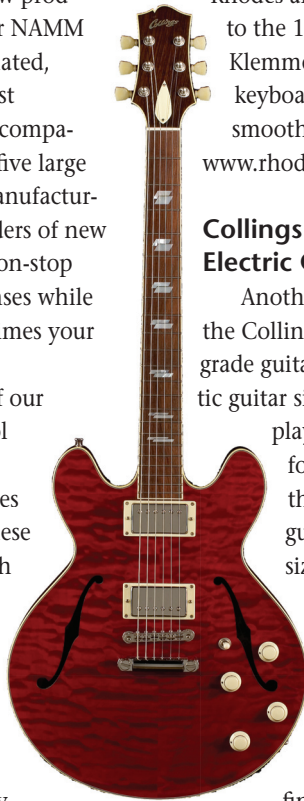


tines striking as you played. I had an original Fender Rhodes in college that my grandmother bought me to study music theory on. After I got out of school I sold it just 6 months be-

fore MIDI came out. Now of course the new Rhodes are full MIDI and full fun! Listen to the 1975 debut album Touch by John Klemmer for a lesson in what a Rhodes keyboard can do. It helped launch the smooth jazz movement. List \$3995, www.rhodespiano.com

Collings I-35 Semi-Hollow Electric Guitar

Another hi-light for me was sitting in the Collings booth playing their luthier grade guitars. You'll see an OM style acoustic guitar similar to the one Chris Tomlin plays in an upcoming review so for this report I'm sticking with the 335 style semi-hollow electric guitar (the slightly smaller body size just fit like a glove). Oh my gosh! The fretboard was a dream to play, the woods used and craftsmanship were gorgeous. Premium flamed maple fully carved top with mahogany body and a high gloss lacquer finish. It is equipped with custom



Jason Lollar humbucking pickups and a Tone-Pro bridge and tailpiece. It's amazing how the Lord has made our hands to feel such nuances on guitar necks. This one felt like a quality presentation through and through. Well done! Price \$6,200.00

Paul Reed Smith "Blue Sierra" Tube Amp

Well as long as you're going to plug in your electric guitar you might as well plug into to something that excites you. Paul Reed Smith (quite the well-known maker of fine guitars) has now given musicians a fine tube amp (with paisley tolex for style points to boot). This tube-laden beauty is for guitarist seeking classic British and American tones with some Texan attitude! This amp is dialed in for big bass and sweet highs. It has the vibe just looking at it. List \$3,500.00



Weber Octave Mandolin

Long maker of wonderful mandolins, our own exhibit booth was right next door to Weber (aka Sound to Earth Instruments). We have reviewed their mandos before. What got our attention here was their Octave Mandolin. This sports a larger mandolin body with a 20 inch scale length, longer and wider neck/fretboard that is tuned one octave below a regular mandolin. What you get from these 8 strings is a more guitar-ish friendly tone range but with lots of characteristics all its own. Haley Dykes (daughter of Doyle Dykes) stopped by our booth after picking up her new Octave Mando from Weber. She played us a short snippet on it and stated that she knew there was a new song waiting for her in this new instrument. She was going to re-arrange an old hymn just for the unique tones of this Weber Octave Mandolin. Way cool! Price \$3724

Voyage-Air VAOM-6 Songwriter Series Guitar

OK, here is where two worlds collide and you're better off for it. You get a full sized guitar with good sound and playability coupled with the fact that this guitar literally folds in half! This makes it morph into a killer travel guitar (it now fits into a portable back pack that even has room for your laptop computer!).



So with Voyage-Air you get a travel guitar with a real size fretboard and a big sound compared to most travel guitars (that don't fold in half) that compromise volume and room for your fingers on a smaller fretboard. This is a well thought out design that is really fun to fold back and forth. I would be traveling light this summer with one of these on my back! \$899