

Music Museum Plays a New Tune

For more than a decade, the Museum of Making Music has educated and inspired the Carlsbad community. Now the museum can fulfill its mission in even more dynamic ways, thanks to a large-scale renovation.

The museum was shut down for most of the summer to complete the project. When the doors reopened August 20, all five galleries were updated with interactive exhibits and a new special exhibition space was unveiled.

"It's pretty standard for a museum to renovate every 10 years," says Carolyn Grant, the museum's executive director. "I think in that time you can know what has worked over the years, what hasn't and what the real needs are going forward. We did it firstly because our technology was antiquated."

The project was spearheaded by design firm Academy Studios. Each gallery now showcases a breakthrough instrument from a particular era, including a Gibson Model F-4 flat back mandolin, a Ludwig drum pedal, a Rickenbacker frying pan, a Fender Telecaster guitar and a Yamaha DX7 synthesizer. Visitors can play modern versions of all of those instruments at interactive stations.

And for the first time there is a space devoted solely to special exhibitions, which the museum curates. The first show in the new space is "Roots of Reeds," which explores the history of reed instruments from around the world.

"We had outgrown our story," says Jillian Jepsen, the museum's education manager, who oversaw the renovation's educational component. "We needed to tell more and rethink the visitor experience."

That includes the Global Spotlight, a large touch-screen wall in the center of the new interactive room. It displays information,

compiled by museum staffers, about music from 15 countries; previously, exhibits focused solely on American music. The museum plans to update the Global Spotlight each year by adding new clips from around the world.

A contemporary logo design has also been created as part of the museum's face-lift.

"Over the past 10 years we have had several logos, brands and identities, but none had really showed what the museum is about," says BJ Morgan, marketing manager. "We were so many things to so many people, and before our logo was very literal. Now it's more abstract."

The Museum of Making Music prides itself on being the only music museum in the country that focuses on the process of making music rather than a genre, instrument or celebrity. And no other museum allows visitors to interact with instruments the way they can now. The museum also offers a variety of educational programs and classes for the community.

"I believe music creates better people," says Grant. "It gives you tools in life like listening, self-discipline, creativity, self-esteem and joy. One instance with music can define your life forever." ●

Museum of Making Music
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Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed Mondays. General admission is \$8, and free for children younger than 5; annual passes are \$25.



From left: The new Global Spotlight offers museum visitors information on music in 15 countries; Carolyn Grant, executive director; one of the redesigned galleries.

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