

PRESS RELEASE

Association of the Music Instrument and
Music Equipment Industry

Singing from the treetops: Action day Germany Makes Music – Play Along! celebrates successful premiere and enters the second round in 2017

Berlin 21.06.2016 The first action day *Germany Makes Music – Play Along!* was a complete success. The initiators, participants and supporters draw an extremely positive balance: Music enthusiasts followed the initiative's call in the whole federal territory and celebrated large summer festivals in the shops of the retail trade, music schools and streets, all with a focus on the active music making. After this successful start, the initiators announce a continuation for 2017: Next year, the action day takes place on Saturday, June 17.

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In the big cities and small towns, the initiative *Germany Makes Music – Play Along!* praised the music making a whole Saturday long. With stage performances and live music, taster courses and workshops, street festivals and raffles, more than 100 event organizers in about 60 cities celebrated the first action day on the third weekend of June. Music was made on the streets, in the supermarket and at the hairdresser's. Piano bouncy castles and sausage stands ensured a folk festival atmosphere. Besides the two music mentors Gregor Meyle and Tom Gabel, the action day was supported at regional level by Berlin's Education Senator Sandra Scheeres and Bonn's cabaret artist, book author and musician Konrad Beikircher. The day was very welcomed by the visitors: Specialized music shops and music schools registered high visitor numbers and are satisfied with the outcome.

The makers of the initiative are pleased with its success. "Traditionally, all three associations actively advocate in various ways for the music making, but with *Germany Makes Music – Play Along!*, the industry, trade and music schools got around a table for the first time and pulled such an extensive, nationwide initiative together. The project has connected the sectors and we consider this a fantastic success", said Daniel Knöll, Initiator and Managing Director of the SOMM – Society Of Music Merchants, association of the musical instrument and music equipment industry. But also the Gesamtverband Deutscher Musikfachgeschäfte (GDM) draws a positive balance: "The action day was accepted really well in the music retail trade. We had exceedingly good visitor numbers and are highly pleased about how creatively the topic was put into action by the colleagues on site", said Arthur Knopp, President of the GDM. Mario Müller, Chairman of the Bundesverband Deutscher Privatmusikschulen (bdpm), complements: "The action day has established new synergies between the music schools and specialized shops on site. We have thus kicked off an important topic, because when music schools and specialized music shops work hand in hand, the quality is increased, and that ultimately benefits our customers."

After this successful start, the action day enters its second round next year. All music enthusiasts can already save the date: Saturday, June 17, 2017. Music stores and music schools will then open their doors wide once again to, together and with a lot of enthusiasm and creativity, awaken in all visitors the zest for an instrument.

Statements of participants and supporters of the action day *Germany Makes Music – Play Along!* (selection):

Kathrin Müller (Gebr. Alexander, Rhein. Musikinstrumentenfabrik GmbH): "Our Music Day was very successful. Although there were unfortunately not so many visitors as we had hoped for, the present ones often spent the whole day in our establishment and were thrilled by our program."

Andy Bernhard (Shop Direction, Rock Shop GmbH): "From our point of view, it was a complete success. Despite recurring rain showers, we consistently had a very high number of visitors. And not only 'visitors', but there were indeed more sales, compared for instance to last year. In conjunction with our specialist staff, our musical offspring, with the attendant music schools and music teachers, had a further decision aid in the search for the right instrument."

Susann Krieger (Westerlandschule): "For us, the team of the Westerlandschule, the action day '*Germany Makes Music – Play Along!*' was a great challenge. With excellent music, our bands and the big band of the Theresienschule created a good atmosphere on the open-air stage in the Upsala Club. It was a great social experience – for the young musicians and for the audience. Great emotional climax: 40 music pupils stood together with the band 'Prag' onstage."

Udo Tschira (Managing Director, session GmbH & Co. KG): "For us, the action day '*Germany Makes Music – Play Along!*' was a total success. At both locations, the visitor frequency as well as the sales were higher than in other Saturdays."

Volker Senft (Musikhaus Senft): "As you can see, the local press had great sympathy for the initiative '*Germany Makes Music – Play Along!*' and hence reached a lot of people. This offsets the fact that the frequency in my shop on the very day, also due to the mostly bad weather, was not so staggering. I found it regrettable that, despite intensive advertising in the press, in the municipal music school and among teachers and young musicians that I know, I could only motivate a few youngsters to take part in the action. Perhaps the campaign will linger and evolve in the next year. I will keep it up."

Ingrid Rotter (Municipality Nauheim, Special Service 3.1 – Culture, Public Relations and Economic Promotion): "The initiative in Nauheim had gratifyingly high popularity. Especially the unique chance of having a glimpse behind the scenes of the music business was very well accepted. Of course, also the further

framework program was luring, which was so extensive that you were kept on your toes if you wanted to attend all events. It was a lot of fun and we hope to be part of it again next year as well."

Mira Urbansky (Sound College): "WOW, what a wonderful action day '*Germany Makes Music – Play Along!*' in our music school Sound College on June 18, 2016 in the Mehrgenerationenhaus in Hennef. We say thank you to all pupils who musically accompanied our event with their wonderful songs and to all helpers who actively supported our framework program. It was fun to manufacture rhythm instruments with families and to hand kids participating in the music school tour a 'Sound Hero Certificate'. The participants of the drums workshop discovered different rhythms on percussion instruments and showed their musical skills to the public, which got stimulated to take part in the successful ensemble playing. Terrific! There was also enthusiastic prize wheel turning, and as final highlight, the winners of the raffle of different musical instruments (cooperation partner Musikhaus Risto in Siegburg) were announced. Through the action day, many visitors could get an insight into the instrumental and singing classes and learn about the diversity of making music together. We would be delighted to be able to contribute again next year to individually promote the musicality of different generations, with a varied and musical music school program within the German-wide action day (of the SOMM, GDM and bdpm)."

Background

The SOMM – Society Of Music Merchants – association of the musical instrument and music equipment industry has started the initiative *Germany Makes Music – Play Along!* in cooperation with the Bundesverband Deutscher Privatmusikschulen (bdpm) and the Gesamtverband Deutscher Musikfachgeschäfte (GDM). The goal is to promote the active music making. An action day took place for the first time on June 18, 2016 across Germany. The action day aims to facilitate the first contact to a musical instrument: On site, the specialized music trade and music schools open their doors even wider on this Saturday, offer advice to beginners and music-interested people, and mediate taster courses. With the action day, the MI industry wishes to raise awareness for the active music making in our society, thereby shifting the focus onto the specialized music trade and its advisory activities.

Official mentors and supporters of the campaign are the musicians **Gregor Meyle** and **Tom Gaebel**, known from the charts and television.

All information about the initiative can be found at www.deutschland-macht-musik.eu

About SOMM e. V.

The SOMM – Society Of Music Merchants e. V. – umbrella organization of the musical instruments and music equipment industry in Germany – represents the interests of about 60 companies from the areas of manufacturing, distribution, sales and media of the musical instrument industry,



standing for about two thirds of the German MI market. The association represents the cultural and economic interests of the musical instrument and music equipment industry at national and European levels, with the aim of strengthening the industry's competitiveness across all market sectors, helping shape governmental and legal policies in accordance with the industry's requirements, defining market standards and offering services to members, promoting an up-to-date advanced and continued training, as well as intensifying the active music making and musical skills in our society.