

Keyboardz on Ukrainian Musical Fair 2007

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The annual musical expo at Kyiv ExpoCenter – time for every keyboardist to stretch a bit and go watch the new stuff for yourself. So let's take a walk together.

Paid 5 UAH (\$1) to enter the ground we make the intrusion. And the first we see is the Yamaha booth from local Jazz-club. A lot of keys here, but we are looking for new ones. And we have one, right ahead there's a portable piano NP-30 . Wow! Get my hands on it. No chance for graded keyboard, but semi-weighted feeling is alright, nice and playable. The getting around the instrument is specific though – you have to use black and white keys to operate the patches and change the metronome speed. Takes a time to adjust to... The instrument weighs literally nothing - you can get a "bunch in one hand feeling" by trying to lift it up. OK for "over-the -shoulder" piano. Ah, but surely it misses two wheels (pitch bend and modulation of course) to make it a decent portable 76-key MIDI controller. Moving further – there's Yamaha MM6, one more newsmaker this year. The patches sound fresh, Yamaha-like. The keyboard gives a light feeling, but it has a large informative LCD, that's good. After a few minutes at Yamaha P-140 I give up. Not my type of action, and Enver Izmaylov playing his magic guitar right here makes me look aside. Tramping on. Roland booth from local Eurhythmics. Also a lot of keyboards. I jump to vacant Juno-G and try some patches though sustain pedal is missing :(Well, good enough for live use, provided the synthesizer is superlight. The housing painted in old-Roland way gives a mixed plastic feeling though. A couple minutes at Roland RD-700 SX digital piano – again no way. Maybe I'm getting old, need fresh air, walks and some fresh looks and keyboard opinions. But there's something new nearby – it's a digital piano Roland EP-880 – something that reminds Roland EP-76, but with 88 hammer action keys, speakers. Looks like a PRIVIA competitor has come? All the original Casio PRIVIAs are at the corresponding booth, no new models indexed x20 here. But there's a new brand on the market here. A bunch of interactive synthesizers and even one digital piano is marketed under Medeli. The name for piano is SP-1 and his blood brother I saw some time ago on the eBay.de. Internal speakers, 150 sounds, interesting screen displaying clefs and notes pressed, keyboard splits. The action is rather slow, no comparison to Casio, but the good is that it has even dynamics between the black and white keys (seems to be). Priced \$600 in Ukraine it will have good chances. OK, let's move to the next hall. No Korgs this year – Muztorg owns a closed booth for dealers. So the folks are fooling around wondering where's the blue suede shoe. Strange. Last year I had a good time trying TR and even the new SP-250 piano was there. Anyway, we go through Jam-Music stand with their CME keyboards, flapping one of those (nice action, that's where to look if we need to). And there comes an ecstasy – I see black and red instruments, Kurzweil logo (besides them Realmusic also sells Clavia's range in Ukraine). My feet bring me to the stand – and here I am trying K2661, wondering at SP88X (almost an oldie, but it's right in under my hands, what will you do…!). There are people trying KME, PC161, a bunch of Nord Leads, Electro, keyboards from Fatar - VMK series, - connected to various modules - almost a heaven. But we need more! OK, there's Nord C1 and Nord Stage 76. What a positive vibrations come from the fact you try somethin you wrote the news about! Indeed Clavia makes classy instruments, though expensive. Travelling through the hall I sat at Kawai MP8 from Odessa's Musical Lavka. Liked the action of this nice looking stage piano and controller. The sounds are also very good. Well, enough for one day walk. IMHO – there are three things for me – I still love Kurzweil, become a fan of certain action types, and oh boy! So much keyboards at one place - it's fantastic! I want it every month! Besides your humble servant there was Klerik tramping the expo halls. So we decided to say hello to everyone from KeyboardZ.net community. Wassssuuuuup, fellas! For all the fotos showing not actual keyboards but also some parts of keyboardists big thank you goes to Irene. (Ñ) 2007 Vladislav Gavrilchik, KeyboardZ.net