

Here A Min, Theremin, Everywhere A...

If you use the Diamond Cut products, you are probably interested in old music. This normally means old records, but it doesn't have to be limited to that. This month, let's focus on an old musical instrument called the Theremin. I know that all of us have heard this instrument, but perhaps you don't know the whole story.

The Theremin was invented in Russia in 1919 by Leon Theremin. Basically, it's a very sensitive oscillator which makes an electronic sound. It's sensitive because the frequency of the oscillator is adjusted by moving your hands around its two antennas! Thus, you play music by moving your hands around in the air. You certainly heard the sound of the Theremin in old science fiction movies such as "The Day the Earth Stood Still". It adds just the right amount of creepiness to that film.

For younger folks, you may think you heard a Theremin in the Beach Boys "Good Vibrations", but it was not. That instrument sounded like a Theremin, but was called a Tannerin. It was used because it was easier to play, having a place with actual keys shown to help guide the hands. A real Theremin is played only by moving your hands in the air - unaided by anything to help you find the right note.

So you want a Theremin? RCA licensed the patent from Theremin in 1928 and released their unit in 1929. This was not good timing and it didn't sell well. Today, if you have one of these, let us know as we've got a crisp \$100 bill we'll pay for it. Actually, you'd get a bit more than that as evidenced here:

<http://tinyurl.com/2ok86m>

Want to hear a Theremin being played by a great musician, try this:

<http://tinyurl.com/32ulyp>

Many Theremin performances are available on LP and CD and you can even buy modern Theremins for not too much money.