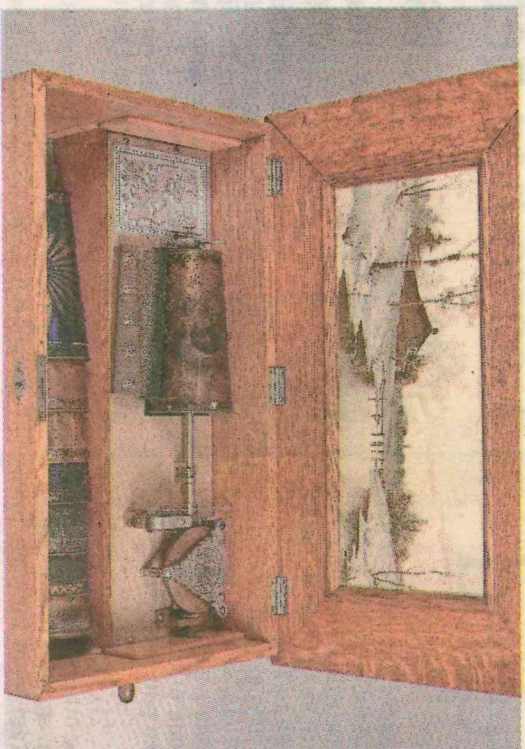


the arts

ABOUT ART

COURTESY OF
THE MORRIS
MUSEUM
Reginaphone,
Style 171,
manufactured
in 1908 by the
Regina Music
Box Company
in Rahway.



COURTESY
OF THE
MORRIS
MUSEUM
Capital
Music
Box,
Style C,
made by
F.G. Otto
& Sons
of Jersey
City in
the
period
between
1895 and
1897.

Making music

Exhibit explores
early musical
machine industry
in New Jersey

RALPH J. BELLANTONI
CORRESPONDENT

In 2003, the Morris Museum acquired the Murrough D. Guinness collection, a nearly bottomless resource of vintage mechanical music players and automata, complete with the programmed media they run on. The museum constructed a handsome, interactive exhibition space for the permanent display of portions of the collection.

The rich fund of over 750 feats of mechanized music-making ingenuity offers extensive potential for fruitful investigative explorations. The latest offering, "Musically, Made in New Jersey," examines the prominent role of Garden State manufacturers in early music-machine production.

"Through this exhibit, the museum will be the first institution to ever shine a spotlight on the mechanical music

industry that made New Jersey its 'home' from the late 1800s into the early 20th century," said Jeremie Ryder, conservator of the Guinness Collection.

In 1885, New Jersey dominated the music box market in the United States and beyond. Six major production factories operated in Rahway, Jersey City, Hoboken and Bradley Beach, employing hundreds of tradesmen who manufactured instruments by the hundreds of thousands, and innovated ceaseless advances in audio technology.

"Virtually nowhere else in the U.S. was there such a tremendous pool of talented engineers, machinists, musicians and craftsmen, who with entrepreneurial spirit, supplied the masses with music from around the world," said Ryder.

The exhibit features mechanized musical marvels from the workshops of the Aeolian Company of Garwood, the Symphonion Manufacturing Company of Bradley Beach, the American Music Box Company based in both Hoboken and New York, and many others. Items from the Guinness

MUSICALLY, MADE IN NEW JERSEY

WHERE: The Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown

WHEN: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays to Saturdays, noon to 5 p.m. Sundays, through Oct. 18

ADMISSION: \$10, \$7 children, students & seniors
INFO: 973-971-3700,
www.morrismuseum.org

Collection have been supplemented by selections on loan from the Museum of the Musical Box Society International, the Altenburg Piano House, and several private collectors.

Highlights include a 1908 Reginaphone made in the Rahway plant of the Regina Music Box Company, a hybrid machine capable of playing the traditional punched metal discs, and also 78 rpm records — a "newfangled" technology at the time.

An unusual item, called a Capital Cuff music box, made by F.G. Otto & Sons of Jersey City, played tunes off perforated metal cones mounted on a rotating mandrel.

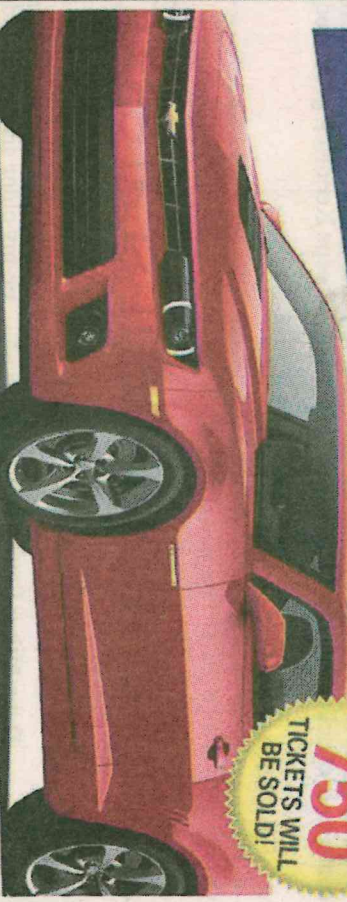
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