

Abstracts of Articles in GSJ Volume LXIV (March 2011)

A Harpsichord by Diego Fernández?: JOHN KOSTER

Abstract: A harpsichord at the Smithsonian Institution (cat. no. 315,749), previously regarded as of spurious nineteenth-century origin, is shown to be mid-eighteenth-century Spanish. Evidence for this includes the GG to g^3 compass, the use of *Cedrela* ('Spanish cedar') for various components, the joinery, and the geometrical keyfronts with triangles of ebony and bone. This harpsichord is the only known surviving Spanish example in the Ibero-Florentine style, in which (as also found in several mid-to-late eighteenth-century Portuguese examples) instruments were constructed in the native Iberian manner but with their form, scaling, and musical resources strongly influenced by the Florentine instruments of Bartolomeo Cristofori and his followers, which were present in Portuguese and Spanish circles of patronage associated with Domenico Scarlatti. Circumstantial evidence points to Diego Fernández, harpsichord maker to the Spanish royal family, as the maker of the Smithsonian instrument. Only about two *varas* long, it might (if further examination confirms that it has not been cut short) be one of Fernández's *claves cortos* (or *chicos*) mentioned in contemporary documents. Made about 1760, the Smithsonian harpsichord, with a single five-octave keyboard and two permanently engaged 8' stops, represents the type of instrument for which Scarlatti conceived his late sonatas.

A Comparison of Two Surviving Guitars by Zumpe and New Details Concerning the Involvement of Square Piano Makers in the Guittar Trade: PANAGIOTIS POULOPOULOS

Abstract: Although the work of John Zumpe as a square piano maker has been well documented in the relevant literature very little has been written so far in connection to his earlier career as a guittar maker. This article intends to highlight this relatively unknown period of Zumpe's career by presenting and comparing the two known surviving guitars by this maker. The first part provides a brief literature review that discusses the history of the two instruments focusing on issues of nomenclature and terminology. This is followed by a thorough technical analysis of the two guitars including details on the design, construction and decoration, as well as various observations on the condition of preservation and modifications. Moreover, in the second part several facts and figures concerning the transitional stage in Zumpe's work around the mid-1760s are reviewed and questioned in the light of new evidence. Finally, the third part investigates the involvement of other square piano makers, such as Beck, Lucas and Haxby in the guittar trade during the 1760s. The conclusions are supported by the examination of several extant instruments and archival sources.

Some Thoughts on the Tuning of the early Three-String Violin: STEWART POLLENS

Abstract: This paper challenges the widely published and generally accepted conclusion that the early three-string violin was tuned g, d^1, a^1 . Based upon a critical re-examination of the bowed-string instruments described in sixteenth-century texts by Agricola, Ganassi, Lanfranco, and Virdung, iconographic evidence, and descriptions and measurements of three-string violins made in the 1540s by Andrea Amati, the author proposes that the earliest violins made in northern Italy may have been tuned d^1, a^1, e^2 , and that the g string, rather than the e^2 string, was added around 1550.

Charles Nicholson and the London Flute Market in the Early Nineteenth Century: SIMON WATERS

Abstract: The flute occupied a privileged position in the musical life of London in the first decades of the nineteenth century, being simultaneously the gentleman's instrument of choice and the focus of technological innovation, and exemplifying the extent to which musical activity had become, in the sense we would currently understand, a market. This paper combines existing research and new evidence in order to attempt an evaluation of the claims made by and on behalf of Charles Nicholson, the pre-eminent virtuoso flautist of the 1820s and 30s, with respect to his 'Improved' model of flute, manufactured by Thomas Prowse *senior* and his successor, Thomas Prowse *junior*. Nicholson's influence is placed both within the context of competing claims for 'improvement' to the instrument which characterised this period of increasing demand, and of the realities of flute manufacture and marketing in London in the last decades of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century.

Nineteenth-Century French Oboe Making Revealed: a Translation and Analysis of the Triebert et Cie '1855' *Nouveau Prix-Courant*: ROBERT S. HOWE

Abstract: The Trieberts were the most important oboe makers in nineteenth-century France; their work has influenced all but a small fraction of the oboes made since 1900. Their *Nouveau Prix-Courant* demonstrates the extensive variety of oboes made by their firm, a wealth no longer seen. Although marked '1855', internal evidence demonstrates with a high probability that the document was printed in 1862. Treated superficially until now, the *Nouveau Prix-Courant* contains a wealth of data that clarify our understanding of the mid-nineteenth-century French oboe, bassoon and clarinet.

A Bassoon by Hirschstein: The Instrument and Its Possible use in the Military: DAVID RACHOR

Abstract: The focus of this article is a four-keyed bassoon with the faint but legible mark of Mathäus Hirschstein, a music dealer active in Leipzig in the second third of the eighteenth century. While the bassoon has some features not normally found on instruments of the period (including an unusual boot joint turn-around construction and uniquely-shaped key saddles) it exhibits enough typical eighteenth-century German characteristics, some specific to Leipzig, to speculate on a possible maker. Indeed, by comparing it with four other bassoons known to have been made in Leipzig, I propose that this instrument was made by a member of the Sattler family, several generations of who were active in the city during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The context in which the instrument was made – the *Verlag* (out-working) system employed by various Leipzig makers and the maintenance of a large army by Prussia and Saxony – is also discussed. Moreover, the Hirschstein bassoon's unusual bell crown and boot joint turn-around may point to the instrument being designed specifically for use outdoors by the military.

The Microtonal Tuba: ROBIN HAYWARD

Abstract: Though the tuba is generally regarded as having fairly limited microtonal potential, a study of the original tuba patent of 1835 reveals microtonal rather than 12-tone equal tempered tuning to be more idiomatic to the instrument. Considerable microtonal potential may be found on the contemporary six-valve F tuba by viewing it from this perspective. This instrument is currently most widely used in continental Europe, and its six valves make it more suitable for the exploration of microtonality than tubas equipped with fewer valves. The various microtonal tunings available on this standard instrument do however imply some severe practical limitations. In order to overcome these a fully microtonal valve system has recently been developed, in which every conceivable pitch within the instrument's five-octave range may be played by means of fingerings alone, without the need to draw on such techniques as half-valve combinations or bending pitches in tune with the lips, which have a significant influence on instrumental timbre. All tuning systems, both tempered and non-tempered, thus become readily available, and the tuba's timbral potential may now be explored independently of its microtonal potential. Because the new valve system is detachable it may be combined with the conventional valve system on the same instrument, giving the player time to learn the new system whilst retaining the option of using standard fingerings.

Innovative Neglect: Contextual Divergence and the Development of the Mey in Turkey: SONGUL KARAHASANOGLU & GABRIEL SKOOG

Abstract: Like the Azerbaijan balaban and the Armenian duduk, the Turkish mey consists of a short cylindrical body with seven or more finger holes and a thumb hole, which is played using a large double reed fitted with a bridle or tuning regulator. However, while the structure of these three instruments is very similar, their respective historical and cultural contexts have affected them very differently. In fact, the mey has been somewhat neglected by the Turkish state and, as a consequence, remains relatively unknown by the majority of Turkish nationals despite its widespread use. Following a general overview of the mey and its all important reed, there follows sections devoted to performance practice, to makers of the instrument and to attempts by Songül Karahasanoğlu to modify the instrument whilst retaining its unique tone quality.

The Jew's Harp Trade in Colonial America: MICHAEL WRIGHT

Abstract: Researchers studying the various commodities traded in Colonial America will, amongst the mass of items sold by city merchants and Indian traders, regularly encounter the Jew's harp appearing as archaeological finds in trading posts, village sites and forts, or mentioned in official documents and newspapers. This article looks at the traffic in Jew's harps as barter and trade goods during the Colonial American period up to 1783. It shows that, though generally considered to be a simple object of little value, the Jew's harp was stock-in-trade for settlers, traders and store-keepers throughout the colony. Jew's harps are also more sophisticated in form than has previously been recognised, and can be categorised into many types, thereby enabling documentary evidence of trade to be linked with archaeological finds.

'Keeper-of-the-Drum': Silent Objects and Musical Pasts of Pohnpei, Micronesia: BRIAN DIETRICH

Abstract. This article examines wooden drums called *aip* from the island of Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia in both historical and cultural contexts. Ethnomusicologists working with Pacific Island musics have explored many instrumental practices, but the literature reveals a general lack of discussion concerning instruments of Micronesian cultures. Despite a general dearth in available research, however, published works have characterized Micronesia as a Pacific region of historically few indigenous instruments, continuing a persistent representation of musical and instrumental deficiency. In this article I address organological research in a geographical area largely overlooked in the literature by examining the cultural and musical parameters that surrounded Pohnpeian drumming, as a possible indication of the larger cultural role for instrumental practices than has been previously documented. Despite their eventual disappearance, I contend that Pohnpeian drums once had significant sonic and cultural roles that have implications for understanding changes in instrumental practices on the island. Examining the *aip* affords insights into the musical heritage of Pohnpei, but also suggests the need to revisit the role of instruments in Micronesia and the musical changes that took place through time.

The French Court Musette to 1672: JAMES B. KOPP

Abstract. This article traces the history of the musette in use at courts of the Valois and Bourbon families of France during the sixteenth century. Between 1516 and 1612, four musette players employed in royal and other family courts are known by name. Though unknown in antiquity, the musette became an emblem of the pastoral role of French kings in neo-classical poems by Marot, Du Bellay, and Ronsard. Selected literary citations as early as 1467 noted the musette's sweet tone. A woodcut published in Claude Paradin's *Devises heroïques* (Lyons, 1551) showed a mouth-blown musette with shuttle drone, suggesting that at least some early musette players used similar instruments. This article supplements the author's 'Before Borjon: the French Court Musette to 1672', *GSJLVIII* (2005), pp.3–37.

The Tartini Violin Relics: ANTONINO AIRENTI, PAOLO DA COL, FEDERICO LOWENBERGER

Abstract. Several violin relics, which include bows and fittings such as bridges and tailpieces, are kept in the Conservatorio di Musica 'G. Tartini' in Trieste. They belonged to the important eponymous violinist and composer Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770) who was active during a period of transition when the violin developed from its 'Baroque' state towards the modern setup. Tartini was closely involved in these developments and the descriptions presented of these objects and their history help to illuminate the history of the violin.