

# Abstracts of Articles in GSJ Volume LXXIV (March 2021)

David García Freile: The Historical Iberian Hurdy-Gurdy: Its Form and Construction

Abstract: The Iberian hurdy-gurdy is a variant of this instrument that was used in Spain mainly during the nineteenth century, although its origins are earlier. Its distinctive characteristics include: a guitar-shaped body, a violin-style pegbox and scroll, a heavily built bridge, and a tailpiece attached with a hook. Previous publications have examined some of these features, but have not considered the construction process. This article presents an analysis of ten examples studied by the author, and draws on data concerning further examples provided by other researchers. Design, construction methods and alterations to these instruments are discussed.

David Hunter: The Jews-harp in British Politics 1780–83, and its Distribution in 'Presents for the Indians'

Abstract: Abstract: Jews-harps received mentions in speeches by two of the best-known political figures of 1780–83, Charles James Fox and William Petty, Earl of Shelburne. If this was not surprising enough, responses both refuting high spending on the most modest of musical instruments and mocking them appeared in the newspapers. While Jews-harps served their rhetorical purpose as synecdoches of a massive waste of public money, their mention provides us with an indication of the actual sums spent on them as part of the extensive 'Presents for the Indians'. No other musical instrument has enjoyed such prominence in national policy and ubiquity as part of gift exchange with Native Americans.

Douglas MacMillan: The Recorder in the Long Nineteenth Century: A Commentary and Checklist

Abstract: The nineteenth century could be described as the dark age of the recorder, and it is often assumed (incorrectly) that the instrument ceased to exist. However, recorders continued to be made throughout the long nineteenth century and fall into three categories. Firstly, there are recorders which continue the Baroque tradition, secondly, relatively inexpensive recorders for folk or amateur usage, and thirdly, instruments made during the early years of the recorder revival. The article attempts a more extensive classification of the instruments.

The checklists contain as much information on each instrument as is available from collection checklists, websites, communications from organologists, and from personal visits to museums. Of the 136 instruments listed, 81 are stamped with the name of the maker or the dealer, enabling a reasonably precise dating: 50 instruments are unstamped and the dating of these is inevitably less accurate. Sufficient data exists on five recorders which were lost in World War II to enable them to be included. Summary tables list the maker (where known), the type of recorder (soprano, alto, etc.), its location, and its classification (Baroque, revival, folk, etc). This article provides conclusive evidence that recorders continued to be made throughout the long nineteenth century.

Norman MacSween and Tim Harding: '95 Wardour Street, Corner of Edward Street, Soho': A Microcosm of 1790s Piano Making

Abstract: This article examines the careers of, and relationship between, the three makers George Garcka, Bates & Company, and James Henry Houston, who succeeded one another between 1792 and 1798 at 95 Wardour Street. Fresh evidence from parish records, newspaper advertisements and the surviving pianos demonstrates a significant degree of continuity in the approach and output of these three makers.

The adverse conditions they encountered included bankruptcy, which Garcka had already survived before manufacture started under his name at the address; a disastrous fire which coincided with the end of Bates' brief tenure of the premises, and Houston's bankruptcy following an ill-fated attempt to expand into music publishing in the short-lived firm of Lewis, Houston and Hyde. But despite this and the trading vicissitudes of the decade, the workshop produced a consistent stream of well-made pianos

which still attract collectors. An annexe to the article documents the serial numbers, many of which are newly identified, of surviving instruments.

#### Salvatore Morra: History, Construction and Features of the Tunisian 'ūd 'arbī

Abstract: This article examines various aspects of the Tunisian 'ūd 'arbī. It is based on examples preserved in museums in Brussels, Sidi Bou Said and London (MIM, CMAM, RCM) and private collections in Tunisia, together with historical sources and their contemporary interpretation. In combining techniques such as interviews, analysis of texts and artefacts, the article charts particular aspects of the instrument – length of the neck, number of strings, decorative styles, nomenclatures, geographical provenances – as well as local factors that enable its classification. It focuses on several examples, beginning with the oldest surviving 'ūd 'arbī (dated 1867), to consider a lineage between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in order to construct a history of the the 'ūd 'arbī in Tunisia.

#### Arnold Myers and Ignace De Keyser: Mahillon's Wagner Tubas Revisited

Abstract: Various practices were adopted in the 1880s and 1890s for the performance of the 'Tuba' parts in Richard Wagner's *Ring* cycle, including the use of instruments specially designed to be played by trombonists. Such tubas made by Mahillon were introduced at the Brussels Conservatoire following the ideas of Henri Séha. Mahillon Wagner tubas were most extensively used in London at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and at Henry Wood's Concerts; they were also supplied to Rome and Naples. The extant Mahillon tubas have been closely examined and it is shown that although they were made over a relatively short period, the Mahillon firm made significant design modifications. This article discusses the earlier and later designs, comparing them with saxhorns (which Wagner originally envisaged employing), trombones (since Mahillon Wagner tubas were played by trombonists) and modern Wagner tubas (their design becoming established around the time that Mahillon's tubas were introduced). This article gives a detailed account of the origins and characteristics of these instruments, extending the scope of the account given by John Webb in the 1996 *Galpin Society Journal*.

#### Maurizio Tarrini: The Depiction of Harpsichords in the Early Sixteenth-Century Choir Stalls of Savona and Genoa Cathedrals

Abstract: This article discusses three early sixteenth-century Italian representations of harpsichords in the choir stalls of Savona and Genoa cathedrals. These intarsias were made in the first quarter of the sixteenth century by several inlayers or marqueteurs of Piedmontese origin. Amongst them, Giovanni Michele Pantaleoni was the only one who brought together the skills of an inlayer, an organist and an organ builder but there is no evidence to suggest that only he was responsible for those intarsias with musical subjects and in particular those representing harpsichords. The two intarsia of Savona cathedral are chronologically the first while the one of Genoa is slightly later. It is likely that the three Ligurian intarsia represent a type of harpsichord that was built in Italy during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, of which no specimens survive.

#### Maria da Gloria Leitao Venceslau: Beyond Bartolomeo Cristofori: *Strumentai* in Florence During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Abstract: Florentine harpsichord making from the end of the seventeenth century to the first decades of the eighteenth century is somewhat overshadowed by the activities of Bartolomeo Cristofori (1655–1732). During this period, various keyboard instrument makers were described as *strumentai*. By investigating families of makers who, like Cristofori, were labelled *strumentai*, but whose work consisted of more than only keyboard instrument manufacture, this study sheds light on why and when this term was used. It also provides a new picture of musical instrument manufacture in Florence, bringing to the surface the role of the *strumentai* as a backdrop to Cristofori's more famous activities.

### Pierre Verbeek: Technological Aspects of the Urbino Clavichord

Abstract: The Ducal Palace of Urbino, built by Federico da Montefeltro (1422–1482), is a jewel of early Italian Renaissance architecture. In the innermost part of the palace, the Duke had a small extraordinary room, a *studiolo*, fitted out for himself. The lower parts of the walls are lined with intarsia (marquetry) entirely in *trompe l'œil*. In addition to the theological virtues and a picture of the Duke himself, numerous objects are represented in cupboards and on shelves, which reveal the eclecticism and cultural engagement of a great Renaissance patron of the arts. Great importance is given in the *studiolo* to music, with the representation of musical scores and of instruments, including a clavichord. The author reports on a research programme concerning this clavichord, in particular on the actual model used for its reproduction. The article explores concrete technical aspects and presents detailed measurements, drawings and photographs of the instrument, which is an archetype of later clavichords. The author lays out the paradox of this masterpiece: on the one hand, its creators have produced an extremely faithful work, giving us in 3-D information of immense value relating to a clavichord of their time, with exceptional precision; on the other hand, several peculiarities are there to remind us that this is a *representation* and not a photographic reproduction of reality.

### Simon Waters: An Indigenous London Flute-Making Practice in the Early Eighteenth Century: The Case of Patrick Urquhart

Abstract: This article considers the evidence for a significant indigenous London-based woodwind making practice, established by around 1689, which provided instruments for other 'makers' and resellers in significant volume. The workshop of Patrick Urquhart, son of eminent Westminster violin maker Thomas Urquhart, may well have produced the instruments sold by Pierre Jaillard (Bressan) following the latter's arrival in England, and contributed to the emergence of a characteristic 'London style' of transverse flute by the early 1720s which is widely associated with Thomas Stanesby Junior. The research considers similarities of style and manufacture noted between a number of surviving instruments bearing different stamps. It juxtaposes the inventories taken at Bressan's and Urquhart's deaths, placing the findings from these in the context of evidence of workshop continuities provided by a chain of apprenticeships linking Patrick Urquhart's 'master', Mary Wollstonecraft, through Urquhart himself to another flute maker, William Cotton. A continuity of allegiance to the Merchant Taylors Company also links their practice, and Cotton's workshop continues production into the 1820s through his son Robert and great-nephew John.