

Abstracts of Articles in *GSJ* Volume LXXV (March 2022)

Brian Applegate: Quantifying the Important Physical Properties of Traditional and Alternative Wood Species for Guitar Bridges

Abstract: Woods historically selected for guitar bridges are at risk of being becoming unavailable for commercial use, forcing guitar makers to consider alternative species. Based on centuries of tradition and convention, luthiers and consumers fear these material substitutions will adversely affect the performance of concert-quality instruments. The objective of this research is to comprehensively define wood properties that affect the guitar bridge's performance as a soundboard component and to evaluate traditional and sustainable alternative woods for these properties. The results indicate there are non-threatened wood species that perform as well as rosewood and ebony based on the criteria established for a guitar bridge.

Núria Bonet: Mechanised Shawms: The Case of the Chinese *Suona*

Abstract: The *suona* is a Chinese shawm, which arrived in China through the Silk Road trade. During the twentieth century, a new 'national' music called *guoyue* developed as Chinese society sought to modernise and westernise its culture. The Chinese Orchestra ensemble emerged from this movement and required 'improved' instruments that could play together; characteristics of these include equal temperament, chromaticity, extended range, a blended sound and instrument families. The *suona* was modernised in the 1950s and 60s and became part of this ensemble. This study documents the construction of the soprano, alto, tenor and bass keyed *suonas*; it also charts the continued development of the instrument and related patents. Finally, it discusses the need for more organological research on improved instruments in Western languages.

Stewart Carter: The Side-blown *Abeng*: Symbol of Resistance and Power for the Maroons of Jamaica

Abstract: This essay examines how the side-blown *abeng* of the Maroons of Jamaica was used in their struggle to win and maintain their freedom during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, eventually becoming a symbol of cultural power and pride. These Maroons are descended from enslaved Africans who escaped from servitude and formed their own communities in the rugged interior of their island. Based on West-African models, the *abeng* is made from approximately eight or nine inches of the end of a cowhorn. The player blows into a hole approximately one inch long and one-half inch wide in the concave side of the instrument. A second hole, about the size of a pea, is cut in the small end of the instrument. By opening and closing the end-hole with the thumb, a player can alter the instrument's pitch by as much as a whole tone. This capacity for tonal variation renders the *abeng*, like the *abɛn* of the Ashanti people of present-day Ghana, capable of surrogate speech.

Amadeu Corbera: The Social History of Glass Trumpets in Mallorca

Abstract: In 1896, Mallorcan folklorist Antoni Noguera i Balaguer sent a collection of specially made instruments from the Balearic Islands to Victor-Charles Mahillon, curator of the Museum of Musical Instruments in Brussels, perhaps the most significant collection of sound objects at that time. The shipment included three glass trumpets, which are still part of the Collection. In this paper we review the history of these trumpets in Mallorca, as one of the last examples of Mallorcan *bousillage*, a popular form of resistance to capitalism, and the role these instruments had in the popular celebrations on the Eve of the Festival of the Magi (5 January).

Henry Johnson: Chee Kung Tong and Diasporic Sound in New Zealand: The Wellington Chinese Masonic Society's Collection of Musical Instruments

Abstract: This article identifies, classifies and describes the extant musical instruments that belonged to the Wellington Chinese Masonic Society in the early twentieth century. As artefacts of the Chee Kung Tong benevolent and transnational Chinese organization, and now housed in the National Library of New Zealand, a closer study of the instruments is significant for scholarship on Chinese organology in several distinct ways. Firstly, it is the largest collection of a single Chinese organization's instruments in New Zealand; and secondly, it offers material evidence of Chinese diaspora music making, especially in the 1920s, and the value given to music at that time. The collection also provides a frame of reference for historical cross-cultural organological scholarship. Building an initial body of knowledge about the instruments from a culturally informed viewpoint, the article focuses on instrument types, provenance and markings.

Margaret Kartomi: The Ancestral *Gamolan* Xylophone and its Recent Transformation in Indonesia's Lampung Province, Sumatra: 1980s–2000s

Abstract: The bamboo xylophone known as *gamolan* and its repertoire have been created, shaped and developed over the generations in Bumi Sekala Beghak, the ancestral heartland of the Indigenous people of Lampung, the southernmost province of Sumatra. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the *gamolan* remained a little-known instrument outside Sekala Beghak, but in the twenty-first century it was transformed when the provincial government decided to promote it as part of the culture and fortunes of the indigenous Ulun Lampung and to create a new, diatonically-tuned variant of the instrument which was formally designated the musical symbol of the province itself. After recounting the instrument's origin legends and examining its organology, repertoire, and social functions in the villages and palaces as I first encountered them in the 1980s, this article documents the musical and socio-political changes from the late 1990s that led to its organological transformation, decontextualization, and eventual revitalisation as a set of diatonically-tuned instruments that are played in ensembles throughout the province.

Douglas MacMillan: Francis William Galpin and the Recorder

Abstract: Francis William Galpin (1858–1945) was an Anglican priest, antiquarian, and pioneer organologist: he was a musical instrument collector (over 600 instruments), instrument maker, and player. His work on the recorder in the early days of its revival has not been previously detailed in the literature.

Galpin owned, at various times in his life, at least 17 recorders as well as making four copies of Renaissance style recorders: the latter instruments are now preserved in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, but the present locations of only nine of the 17 are known. The history of each recorder known to have been in Galpin's possession is traced in terms of its appearance in exhibitions and citations in musical texts between c1890 and the present day, and available organological data are presented on each the recorders.

Galpin was also active as recorder player, being the first man in England to perform on a quartet of recorders of his own making, preceding the seminal work of Arnold Dolmetsch by almost 20 years.

Finally, the work of Galpin and Dolmetsch is compared in order to present the substantial nature of Galpin's contribution to the revival of an historic musical instrument.

Arnold Myers: The Galpin Society Permanent Collection

Abstract: In 1967 the Galpin Society (the society for the study of musical instruments based in the U.K.) embarked on an ambitious project to establish a national collection of historic musical instruments in Edinburgh. This was proposed by Society member Graham Melville-Mason, who was appointed as the collection's honorary curator, and was provided with premises and facilities by the University of Edinburgh. Misunderstandings within the Society resulted in a failure to raise adequate funds to operate a research collection on the scale envisaged. A significant collection of instruments was nevertheless brought together, which the Society in 1980 passed to the University. This became the nucleus of the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, today displayed in St Cecilia's Hall Concert Room & Music Museum.

This article describes the disposition of historic instruments in Great Britain in the mid-1960s, and the Society's vision for a research collection. The protracted negotiations with the University and the conflicts within the Society are discussed, in particular the dispute over the ownership of the Geoffrey Rendall collection of woodwinds and its resolution.

Stewart Pollens: Dendrochronology and Violins: Some Caveats

Abstract: The technique of dendrochronology (which may be defined as the dating of wood) is now widely used by historians, museums, auction houses, dealers, and collectors to date and authenticate musical instruments. However, those who cite and depend upon the dates it provides are generally not well informed about this technique's underlying methodology, nor of its limitations and potential pitfalls. This study describes the technique, its statistical underpinnings, and questions the validity and way its findings are being interpreted and used.

Stewart Pollens: George Bernard Shaw and Early Music

Abstract: George Bernard Shaw became the music critic of *The Star* in 1889 and for *The World* in 1890. The 'early music revival' was coming into its own in the 1890s, and he attended lectures and performances by Arnold Dolmetsch, Alfred James Hipkins, John A. Fuller Maitland, and Barclay Squire. He became a staunch advocate of 'informed performance practice' and the use of copies of early instruments, such as the harpsichord, clavichord, lute, viol, and recorder, yet he remained a loyal follower of the music of his time: his socio-political guide to Wagner's Ring, *The Perfect Wagnerite* (first published in 1898) remains in print.

Edward Wright: William and Adam Leversidge, Virginal Makers: An Update from the Archives

Abstract: This article introduces new primary sources that expand the history of the Leversidge family of virginal makers. It combines new genealogical data with an emphasis on surviving probate records for both William Leversidge and his son Adam, the latter being the maker of the family's two surviving instruments. William Leversidge's Will proves that he was indeed a maker of virginals, which until now had only been assumed. It also illuminates the relationships he had with his four children. The Will and probate inventory of Adam Leversidge reveals the nature of his life and business, the tools of his trade, and the materials that are reflected in his two surviving virginals. Additionally, the impact of two major historical events on the family brings to light a story of unexpected grief and survival. These primary documents provide a new and deeper historical context for these two musical instruments, both of which remain the sole surviving material legacy of this family.