



NEWSLETTER

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THE BRUSSELS COURT ENSEMBLE: RECONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS

Mirte Maes

What did the string ensemble look like at the Brussels court in the 17th and 18th century? This is an easy question to ask, but a difficult one to answer. However, one particular instrument might provide vital clues: a large viola made in 1692 by the maker Gaspar Borbon (c. 1635-1710). In order to shed light on this interesting question, a major research project was started by the Musical Instruments Museum, Brussels (MIM-Brussels). Instrumental to this investigation is the reconstruction of the Borbon viola—in order to obtain a playable copy—which was carried out at the School of Arts (KASK) in Ghent. The reconstruction is part of the author’s Master in Musical Instrument Making studies.

The Library of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels houses the Saint-Gudula collection. This is a collection of sheet music that was performed at Saint-Gudula Cathedral between 1675 and 1800. A big question immediately arises: for what instruments was this music written? In the case of the string instruments, we encounter a peculiarity. Apart from the instruments we know today: the violin, the viola and the cello, other terminology (such as *tenore viola*, *taille*, *alto viola* and *grosse basse*) also emerges (Figure 1). What instruments should we exactly imagine? This was the question asked by Dr. Anne-Emmanuelle Ceulemans, curator of European stringed instruments at the MIM-Brussels. She started a research project to look at the string ensembles of the Brussels music institutions, including the court chapel, and put together a team of investigators to examine material and evidence. Among them is Manon Fauconnier (UCLouvain), who is working on a PhD in which she analyzes the music of the Saint Gudula collection.



Figure 2. “Viola” of Gaspar Borbon - MIM Brussels inv. no. 2836. (Photo: ©MIM)

(Continued on page 3)

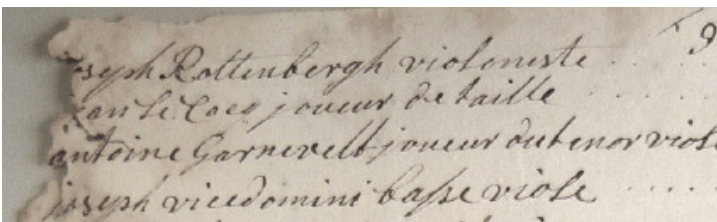


Figure 1. The terms *violoniste*, *joueur de taille*, *joueur du tenor viole*, and *basse viole* can be seen listed in a payment of 1729. Brussels, National Archives of Belgium, Conseil des finances, 2063A.

In addition to scores, some instruments from that period have been preserved. These can of course contribute to a better understanding of the ensemble and its instruments.

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Nuria Bonet Filella, Assistant Editor

Albert Rice, Reviews Editor

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Contributions to the Newsletter and correspondence concerning its content should be sent to:

amisnewsletter@gmail.com

Address changes, dues payments, requests for back issues of AMIS publications, and requests for information on membership should be sent to:

American Musical Instrument Society
6704 SE 20th Avenue
Portland, OR 97202
Phone: (971) 930-7524
j2kopp@aol.com

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT
A Year Like No Other

This has been a very challenging year for everyone and I hope that this note finds you all staying healthy and well. The global Covid-19 pandemic has upended plans across the globe and as I write this many institutions are going into a second round of closures. After making the decision to cancel our AMIS annual meeting in Calgary last summer, I had great hopes that we would find a way to have some sort of in-gathering person in 2021. Alas, even with the recent positive news about vaccine development and distribution, the AMIS Board of Governors has decided that things are too uncertain to plan for an in-person gathering in 2021 and since we would usually have announced a call for papers by the end of the year, we have voted to hold a conference virtually instead. We are currently exploring how that can look and what platforms provide the greatest success. We will communicate those details when we have made more concrete plans.

In the meantime, AMIS is beginning celebrations around our 50th anniversary. The very first planning meetings that led to the organization of AMIS took place in 1971 and if not for the cancellation of our annual conference, we would have been celebrating our 50th gathering this coming year. There will be many opportunities to celebrate in the years ahead. After the pandemic, we will have an awful lot to celebrate. In the meantime, please stay healthy and have a good start to 2021.

 Jayson Kerr Dobney
President

News from the Editor's Desk

What a year! As 2020 comes to an end, there are many things to reflect upon in this year that seemed to last a lifetime. Although we were not able to gather as a group at our annual meeting, AMIS members have found ways to stay connected, whether through social media, our List-Serve, and through good old fashioned mail. These connections continue to allow our organization to thrive in these difficult times.

Although we were not able to hear the variety of papers usually presented at the annual meeting, this issue contains two examples of the types of scholarship that would have otherwise been shared. Mirte Maes, a Gribbon awardee, informs us about an exciting reconstruction project she is undertaking as part of her master's studies and James Mooney challenges our membership to look towards the mid-twentieth century to discover pioneers of electronic musical instrument making and possibly areas of collecting.

Included in this issue are highlights of instruments recently collected by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, announcements of the JAMIS publication grant, and a remembrance of Rebecca Apodaca.

As always, we welcome short submissions (maximum 500 words) as well as short articles. Email all submissions and suggestions to:

amisnewsletter@gmail.com.

 Sarah Deters
Editor

The author is examining and reconstructing some of the appropriate instruments as a project investigator, such as the aforementioned Borbon viola.

Gaspar Borbon was a luthier at the court in Brussels and came from a family of violin makers. We find him in payment lists of the court from 1664 and 1673. The large viola, which is preserved in the MIM Collection, is so exceptional because it is in nearly unaltered condition.

Unfortunately playing the original instrument is not an option. It is very fragile and badly affected by woodworm. That is why a copy of this instrument is being made. In order to be able to make an accurate copy, a CT scan was made of the instrument at the Cliniques universitaires Saint-Luc in Brussels. This scan allows us to not only have very precise measurements of the instrument, but also to look at the interior. The inside reveals a lot about the construction methods used by the maker.

What immediately catches the eye in case of Borbon's instruments is that the sides are inserted into grooves in the back-plate. This suggests that Borbon did not use a mold, but first made the back and built the rest of the instrument on it. This is also confirmed by the fact that the back of the viola, which Borbon started with, is symmetrical, but the top is not. This deviation was probably caused by the fact that the sides of the viola were not placed completely perpendicular to the back of the viola. The contour of the top seems to have been drawn around those sides, which are slanted in some places, causing an asymmetry. Another striking element in the viola is that the top block and neck are made from one single piece of wood, having the sides inserted into slots at each side of the neck. This can all be seen on the scan, and therefore can be copied quite exactly.

Although the neck and fingerboard are original, the strings, the sound post, and the bridge are not. The

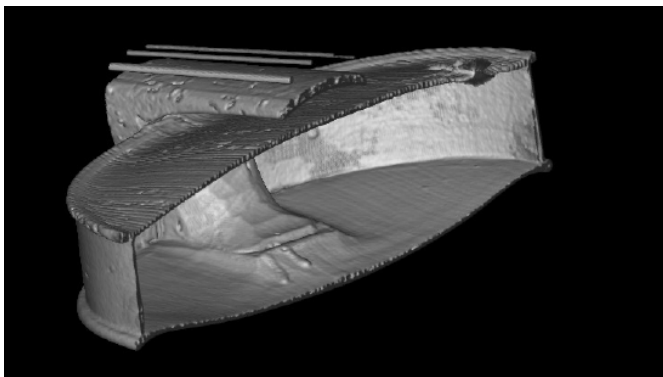


Figure 3. CT image of the Borbon instrument - the foot of the neck is clearly visible



Figure 4. Copy under construction of the Borbon instrument by Mirte Maes

finished copy of the instrument will allow us to experiment on those aspects.

For the reconstruction of these items, the investigation made use of iconography and UV-fluorescence, among other things. Many paintings from the Low Countries from that period have been handed down to us, and here too we see instruments of similar proportions. *Ball on a Terrace of a Palace* by Hieronymus Janssens (1658), preserved in the Musée des Beaux-Arts,



Figure 5. Detail showing group of musicians. *Ball on a Terrace of a Palace* by Hieronymus Janssens (1658). Wikimedia Commons.

Lille, is one of the best depictions of comparable instruments, and helps us to come up with possible set-ups.

Research concerning string lengths, bridge placement, etc. is currently in progress, and decisions are expected soon. The UV-light, for example, made wear on the fingerboard visible. This gives more clarity about the playing technique. Furthermore, it shows us that the bridge was not only placed lower, but also higher than the normal position for a period of time. Regarding strings, we have to take into account the pitch at that moment, in the court chapel.

Once the copy has been finished, we will of course test and judge all of these options in detail, by playing the repertoire from the Saint-Gudula collection. Not only this viola will be involved, but other stringed instruments from the Brussels court ensemble are being

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MID-CENTURY ELECTRONIC MUSIC: WHERE ARE THE INSTRUMENT COLLECTIONS?

James Mooney

Associate Professor of Musicology and Music Technology
School of Music, University of Leeds, UK

This article was originally going to be a presentation at the AMIS conference in Calgary, which was cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak. In it, I present work in progress and test the water with a few provocations. I do not attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of collections; rather, I mention just a few that I have visited recently. I would be happy to receive comments, questions, or suggestions—including answers to the question in my title—via email: j.r.mooney@leeds.ac.uk.

In the mid-twentieth century, developments in electronics facilitated new approaches to musical instrument making, as Second World War technologies were transferred to civilian use. Before commercial electronic musical instruments like synthesizers became more widely adopted after the mid-1960s, musically inclined engineers transformed magnetic tape recorders and digital computers into musical instruments. These were installed, bricolage-style, alongside other custom-made or modified electronic devices to create a new category of composite instrument, the electronic music studio. By 1967, there were around 560 such studios worldwide.¹ So ubiquitous was the off-stage, studio-based approach to electronic music creation, in fact, that a new generation of experimental musicians began to counter this trend by inventing new, live-performance instruments in a bid to return electronic music to the concert stage. The electronic instruments of the interbellum—the Theremins, the Ondes Martenots, the Hammond Organs—were by this time regarded as *passé* by a new electronic avant-garde whose proponents wanted to advance the modernist aesthetics and sound-worlds of *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik*.²

In what sorts of instrument collections are the above developments represented? And what forms of instruments constitute those collections? What are the stories of these instruments and their makers? This article briefly represents some of my first steps towards answering those questions—steps that took me into the galleries and storerooms of science and technology museums as well as those of more traditional musical instrument museums.

The Canada Science and Technology Museum (CSTM) possesses a collection of instruments designed

by engineering physicist Hugh Le Caine (1914–1977). In the 1940s, Le Caine worked as a radar engineer for the Canadian National Research Council (NRC), where he later initiated a programme of electronic music research. His best-known instrument, the Electronic Sackbut (1945–8), is on display at the CSTM, along with a sequencer and polyphonic synthesizer. The collection also includes four Special-Purpose Tape Recorders made between 1955 and 1964³ (one of which is on display at the National Music Centre in Calgary), an Oscillator Bank for composing with sine tones, and other studio instruments.

In the 1950s, the primary medium for electronic music was magnetic tape. Sounds would be recorded on to tape, transformed in various ways by manipulating the tape—playing it backwards or at different speeds, for example—and assembled into compositions by cutting sections of tape with a razor blade and sticking the fragments together with splicing tape. This was labour-intensive and time-consuming: a composition could take weeks or months to complete. Commercial tape recorders were not designed with these kinds of operations in mind. Le Caine’s Special Purpose Tape Recorders were (Figure 1). They allowed the composer to record, transpose, and combine sounds from multiple tapes in real time by playing a keyboard, touch-sensitive plate, and fader-bank. Special high-speed, low-inertia tape transports were used, so that vibrato and rapid changes in pitch (i.e. tape speed) could be applied. The keyboard was touch-sensitive to allow expressive inflections of dynamics, and the controls were ergonomically laid out to facilitate ease of playing.⁴ Le Caine’s composition, *Dripsody* (1955), was created to test the new instrument’s capabilities, and in 1961, he presented both the Tape Recorder and the composition to the Institute of Radio Engineers in a talk entitled “The Tape Recorder as a Musical Instrument.”⁵ One of

1. Hugh Davies, *Répertoire International Des Musiques Electroacoustiques/International Electronic Music Catalog* (Paris; Trumansburg, NY: Groupe de Recherches Musicales de l’ORTF; Independent Electronic Music Center; MIT Press, 1968).

2. *Musique concrète* refers to avant-garde music of the late 1940s onwards created by collecting, transforming, and montaging recorded sounds, whereas *elektronische Musik* refers to music constructed from electronically-generated sine tones, extending serialist principles. Both were studio-based practices.

3. Gayle Young, *The Sackbut Blues: Hugh Le Caine, Pioneer in Electronic Music*, 2nd edition (Ottawa: National Museum of Science and Technology, 1990), pp. 194–98.

4. Hugh Le Caine, ‘A Tape Recorder for Use in Electronic Music Studios and Related Equipment’, *National Research Council of Canada Technical Report*, NRC 7467 (1963).

5. Hugh Le Caine, “The Tape Recorder as a Tool in the Electronic Music Studio / The tape Recorder as a Musical Instrument,” 1961, Hugh Le Caine

Le Caine's Tape Recorders was installed at the University of Toronto's Electronic Music Studio (UTEMS), another in composer Joseph Tal's studio in Jerusalem.⁶



Figure 1. Special Purpose Tape Recorder (1964) by Hugh Le Caine. Canada Science and Technology Museum, Ottawa, artifact no. 1987.0022. (Ancillary touch-sensitive plate not pictured.)

In 1955—the year Le Caine completed his first Tape Recorder—MIT engineering graduate Max Mathews (1926–2011) began work as a technical assistant at Bell Telephone Laboratories designing electronic circuits for compressed speech transmission.⁷ Making hardware prototypes was time-consuming and expensive. When the Labs acquired an IBM 704 computer in 1958, it became possible—and economically advantageous—to simulate prototypes digitally. To this end, Mathews was involved in designing the speech-to-digital converter, nicknamed Tapex, that allowed speech sounds to be transferred into the computer, processed to emulate the behaviour of the speech-transmission circuit, and transferred out again so the results could be heard and evaluated.⁸ A keen musician and amateur violinist, Mathews immediately recognised that Tapex should theoretically enable the computer to generate musical sounds as well as process speech. He and his team, which included the brilliant programmer Joan Miller, spent the next 10 years writing and refining the

software that made this possible—a suite of programs that came to be known as MUSIC. In 1963, Mathews announced this work to the world in his landmark *Science* article, “The Digital Computer as a Musical Instrument.”⁹

Like practically all computer programs of the early 1960s, MUSIC operated in “batch mode,” so called because the user had to prepare a batch of punched cards containing note data and hand these to the computer operator, who would run the program and eventually return the output to the user—in this case in the form of a digital tape that could be played back in the Lab via Tapex. Having a computer play music in real time, that is, with the sounds playing directly out of the computer itself, was a different matter entirely—one that was taken up by another electronic engineering student from MIT.

In 1958—not long after Mathews completed the first rudimentary version of MUSIC—Peter Samson (b. 1941) began his studies at MIT. That year, a new computer arrived at Samson's department. The TX-0—short for “transistorised experimental computer zero”—was developed at MIT's Lincoln Laboratory before being moved to Samson's department for research use. Real-time interactive computing was one of the first new areas to be explored. Samson, a music-lover, was challenged by his supervisor to program the TX-0 to play music—presumably because this would stress-test the system's memory access and real-time output capabilities. He connected a flip-flop—a basic switching circuit that can either be “on” or “off”—to one of the TX-0's output modules. He then wrote a program that would open and close the flip-flop at the frequencies required to play a melody via a connected amplifier and loudspeaker. Unlike MUSIC, the sounds from Samson's program played directly out of the computer itself while the program was running. Samson added additional voices, achieving polyphony, and in 1961 rewrote his program for the Digital Equipment Corporation PDP-1, a commercial computer based on the TX-0 and designed by former TX-0 engineers. He also wrote an additional program, the Harmony Compiler, that allowed the user to compose a piece in four-part counterpoint using a simple text-based language.¹⁰

What remains of the material culture of this chapter in computer music's history? At this point I do not know if the Tapex machine—the analogue-digital converter that made Mathews' computer music work possible—still exists. Enquiries are ongoing. It is improbable that any of the specific computers and peripherals that Mathews worked with at Bell Labs will have survived.

9. Max V. Mathews, “The Digital Computer as a Musical Instrument,” *Science*, 142.3592 (1963), 553–57. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1712380>.

10. Peter Samson, interview with the author, Computer History Museum, 27 February 2020.

Collection, Vol. 4, Writings By Le Caine, Lecture Notes, Conferences 1954–66; Lectures, Papers, Conferences, 1960.

6. Young, p. 121.

7. H. Kramer and M. V. Mathews, “A Linear Coding for Transmitting a Set of Correlated Signals,” *IRE Transactions on Information Theory*, 2.3 (1956), 41–46. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TIT.1956.1056808>.

8. E. E. David, M. V. Mathews, and H. S. McDonald, “Description and Results of Experiments with Speech Using Digital Computer Simulation,” in *Proceedings of 1958 National Electronics Conference*, 1958, pp. 766–75; C. C. Cutler and A. N. Netravali, “Picture Communication Research,” in *A History of Engineering and Science in the Bell System: Communications Sciences (1925–1980)*, ed. by S. Millman (Indianapolis, IN: AT&T Bell Laboratories, 1984), pp. 141–68 (p. 150).

However, the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, California, possesses some of the last surviving IBM 7-series mainframes,¹¹ which are similar to those that Mathews and his team transformed into musical instruments (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Console control unit for IBM 7094. A system of this kind was placed in service at Bell Labs in 1964, superseding the IBM 704 and 7090 systems. Mathews and his team had to rewrite the MUSIC programs for each new system. Computer History Museum, Mountain View, CA. Paul Pierce Collection, lot no. X7021.2014.

It also possesses a restored and fully functional DEC PDP-1, on which Samson—now a docent at the Museum—regularly demonstrates his music software (Figure 3).¹²



Figure 3. Peter Samson demonstrating his music software. The PDP-1 computer is at the Computer History Museum, Mountain View, CA. Lot no. X99.82.

11. Dag Spicer, senior curator, personal communication with the author, 14 June 2020. This includes a “nearly complete IBM 709—very likely the most complete such system in the world.”

12. A video may be found here: <https://www.computerhistory.org/pdp-1/c2fe43674d2a056ac1ec655b449cbf0c/>. Accessed 3 July 2020.

Paper tapes of Samson’s programs and data are in the CHM archives. The TX-0 survives at the MIT Museum. In general, however, the material culture of computer music is not very well represented in musical instrument collections, perhaps because most of the hardware was not designed exclusively (or even primarily) for musical use. Some bespoke computer music installations have been saved—such as the IRCAM 4X system now at the *Musée de la musique* in Paris—but much important hardware and software has presumably been lost forever.

While Mathews’ and Samson’s work was innovative, developments in computer music remained largely confined to R&D labs until the mid-1960s, and digital computers did not start to become common fixtures in electronic music studios until the late 1970s (and in many cases later). The Musical Instrument Museum in Brussels possesses a collection that is more representative of the kinds of devices that might typically have been found in an electronic music studio of the 1960s through 70s—instruments formerly installed in the studio of the Institute for Psychoacoustics and Electroacoustic Music (IPEM) in Ghent.¹³

IPEM was established in 1962 as a collaboration between the Applied Low-Voltage Laboratory of the State University of Ghent and national broadcaster Belgian Radio and Television (BRT).¹⁴ Thus, its remit was twofold: to explore acoustical applications of electronics—a programme of research befitting a state university—and to provide music, jingles, and sound effects for broadcasts. Hubert Vuylsteke (1904–1964), head of the Low-Voltage Lab, became IPEM’s founding director, while one of the Lab’s engineers, Walter Landrieu (1927–2005), became technical director. BRT’s former musical director, the aesthetically adventurous composer Louis De Meester (1904–1987), became IPEM’s first artistic director, adding an avant-garde dimension to the Institute’s musical agenda, and was soon joined by his student, Lucien Goethals (1931–2006).

Like many contemporaneous studios, IPEM’s inventory included a combination of commercial broadcast and audio engineering instruments—tape recorders by Telefunken, microphones by Neumann, tone generators by Bruel and Kjaër, filters by Klein and Hummel, amplifiers by Geloso, etc.—and instruments built in house, in this case by Landrieu, to service specific local needs. (Recall that off-the-shelf electronic musical instruments like synthesizers were not yet available.) As

13. Another significant collection is at the Museum of Musical Instruments in Milan, which houses a complete reconstruction of the studio formerly installed at *Radiotelevisione italiana* (Rai).

14. Micheline Lesaffre, “50 Years of the Institute for Psychoacoustics and Electronic Music,” in *Institute for Psychoacoustics and Electronic Music: 50 Years of Electronic and Electroacoustic Music at the Ghent University*, ed. by Greg Jacobs, Jos Moers, and van Luijk Timo, trans. by Art’Anna Language Services (Heusden-Zolder: Metaphon, 2013), pp. 23–25.

well as simple devices like ring modulators, examples of in-house instruments include the “Standard Generator,” a tone generator designed by Vuylsteke, which could produce up to 98 frequencies simultaneously,¹⁵ and a pair of sequencers—one electro-mechanical, built in the 60s, another voltage-controlled, built in the early 70s (Figure 4)—that were designed to expedite the tedious process of constructing electronic music “bit-by-bit” on magnetic tape.¹⁶ In 1966, IPEM moved from Applied Science to the university’s Musicology department, a development that soon motivated the design of instruments for musicological as well as compositional purposes.¹⁷ These in-house instruments were generally the result of collaboration between an engineer (Landrieu) and a composer or musicologist; for example, Landrieu and Goethals worked together on the analogue sequencer, and Goethals composed *Study VII* to test and demonstrate the new instrument’s capabilities.¹⁸

It is the combination of commercial and self-built (or modified) instruments, shifting over time according to local needs and technological trends, that defines the mid-century electronic music studio as a dynamic composite instrument—and creates challenges for musical instrument museums. The components of such studios changed over time: new components were added; old components were removed or recycled as parts of newer constructions. Indeed, many institutional studios like IPEM were reconfigured regularly to suit the needs of the various composers who visited them,¹⁹

15. Walter Landrieu, “Inventory/Inventaris van de Apparatuur,” *Publikaties van Het Seminarie Voor Musicologie van de Rijksuniversiteit Te Gent*, Nr. 1 (1966), 10–11.

16. W. G. Landrieu and L. Goethals, “Electronic Programming of Electro-acoustical Music,” *Interface*, 2.1 (1973), 71–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09298217308570171>.

17. Micheline Lesaffre, interview with the author, IPEM, 28 January 2020. An example that survives in the MIM collection is the Melowriter, a keyboard instrument for creating and auditioning scores, which was intended as “a universal input output device for musicological studies.” See Hans Janssens and Walter Landrieu, “Melowriter, a Digital Music Coding Machine,” *Interface: Journal of New Music Research*, 5.4 (1976), 225–47.

18. Landrieu and Goethals.

19. Ivan Schepers, interview with author, IPEM, 29 January 2020.

such that it is often impossible to say, in retrospect, what the “definitive” setup was.

By the mid-1960s, the electronic music studio had become firmly established as the standard instrumentation for avant-garde electronic music creation, and while the studio-as-instrument approach afforded an extended sonic palette and increased compositional control, it also tended to diminish the role of live performance: when a composition is fixed on tape, there is rather little left to do on stage. Some composers were happy to bid the vagaries of performer interpretation good riddance, but others sought to counter this trend by inventing new, live-performance instruments in an attempt to return electronic music to the concert stage.

The Science Museum in London possesses a collection of instruments owned by one such individual, English experimental musician Hugh Davies (1943–2005).²⁰ In the mid-1960s, Davies worked in West Germany as personal assistant to the avant-garde composer Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928–2007), who at the time was exploring the possibilities of “live elec-

tronic music”—so called because it sought to transfer the extended sound-world of the electronic music studio into live performance. When Davies returned to London, he was keen to pursue live electronic music in his own practice, but since he no longer had access to Stockhausen’s equipment, nor funds to purchase expensive apparatus of his own, a frugal, resourceful approach was required. Inspired by a performance by John Cage and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Davies began to attach contact-microphones to every-day objects—plastic combs, glass lightbulbs, metal springs, etc.—in order to electronically amplify the sounds they produced when manipulated with the

20. For a fuller account see James Mooney, “The Hugh Davies Collection: Live Electronic Music and Self-Built Electro-Acoustic Musical Instruments, 1967–1975,” *Science Museum Group Journal*, 7 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.15180/170705>.



Figure 4. Analogue sequencer by Landrieu and Goethals. Musical Instruments Museum, Brussels, inventory no. D1999.002-03.

hands or with small implements. This soon became the basis for a distinctive instrument-building practice. Shozyg I, Davies's best-known instrument, comprises fretsaw blades, springs, a furniture castor, and contact microphones, mounted inside a book cover (Figure 5), while his Springboards, eleven variants all told, comprise metal springs mounted on block-board and amplified via magnetic pickups. The Science Museum's collection also includes commercial instruments, some modified by Davies, that he used both in live performance and in the Electronic Music Workshop that he established at Goldsmiths College—a “workshop,” not a “studio,” Davies insisted, as it was kitted out for live as well as tape-based electronic music.



Figure 5. Shozyg I (1968) by Hugh Davies. Science Museum, London, object no. 2007-135.

In this article I have attempted to show what the instrumentation of mid-century electronic music looked like. Clearly, tape recorders, digital computers, studios, and Heath Robinson assemblages of every-day objects challenge conventional understandings of what a musical instrument is. Tape recorders and digital computers were not designed exclusively to serve musical purposes, and some might argue that these are machines that one “operates,” not instruments that one “plays.” (As promotional material for the Tekniskmuseum’s “Music

Machines” exhibition asks, “Where do you draw the line between a musical instrument and a machine?” Well, quite.²¹) Others may have difficulty with the idea of the studio as a composite instrument, perhaps arguing that an “instrument” ought to be a single object, or at least present the player with a single consistent interface. Obviously instruments like Davies’s neither look nor sound like (say) a violin or clarinet, which may trouble those who prefer to adhere to more classical definitions of musical instrumentality.²² Others may object to the use of the term “instruments” to describe what they would more readily identify as “devices,” “equipment,” “apparatus,” or “technology.” The encroachment (as some might see it) of new technology into the domain of musical instruments has often stirred controversy,²³ and there will be other, equally valid, objections, I am sure.

Nonetheless, I argue that these de facto were the kinds of instruments that were used to create electronic music in the mid-twentieth century, and the concerns noted above might help to explain why they seem (with a few exceptions) to be better represented in the collections of science and technology museums than in musical instrument collections. I am going to conclude, then, with some suggestions for the curators of musical instrument collections. If unadulterated tape recorders and digital computers seem too general-purpose to be considered musical instruments in and of themselves, consider acquiring modified (Figure 6) or custom-built examples that more clearly display their music-instrumental status—but don’t forget that many studios, particularly amateur ones, used standard domestic units that gained their status as musical instruments through usage rather than by design. If a signal generator, loudspeaker, or mixing desk, seems not to qualify as a musical instrument, consider that it may have been part of a composite instrument, that is, an electronic music studio. Be aware that an unidentified box with lights and switches, or an idiosyncratic assemblage of nick-nacks and wires, could be a self-built electronic musical instrument that predates the availability of more familiar commercial instruments.

21. See <https://www.tekniskmuseum.no/oslo-vitensenters-installasjoner/94-music-machines>. Accessed 3 July 2020.

22. Settimio Fiorenzo Palermo, “Instrumental Trouble: A Queer Organology of Hugh Davies’s Found Instruments,” *Interalia: A Journal of Queer Studies*, 13 (2018). http://interalia.org.pl/en/artykuly/on_a_rolling_basis.htm?fbclid=IwAR0sPd5ijdWPD4H_dx0fA7azYeDfUpmlL6ReQ-DdM0b-GvpfIhiyvm8gNKY0 [accessed 13 August 2019].

23. Trevor J. Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld, “‘Should One Applaud?’ Breaches and Boundaries in the Reception of New Technology in Music,” *Technology and Culture*, 44.3 (2003), 536–59.



Figure 6. Revox A77 tape recorder modified by Hugh Davies. The vari-speed modification is a clue that this example was used creatively, as part of an electronic music studio or live on stage. Science Museum, London, object no. 2007-136.

And if you have the (increasingly rare) opportunity to intervene before yet another significant piece of electronic music's mid-century instrumentation is consigned to the scrapheap, please take it!

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reconstructed as well. Among them is a small cello—albeit “cello” might not be the historically correct term, since this term only appears in the archives later on—by Marcus Snoeck from 1718 (Brussels MIM inv. 1373). Marcus Snoeck was also a violin maker at the court in Brussels, working a little later than Borbon. There are no instruments by Snoeck that retain an original neck, so the challenge here lies in coming up with a neck that is as close as possible to what was likely there originally. A hypothetical neck is being reconstructed with the help of iconography, other remaining instruments, and traces in the sound box of the original neck. As a part of this research, we did an endoscopic examination of eight bass instruments by Snoeck and Borbon. Thus, we have an idea of the bass bar and neck foot that would have originally been in this Snoeck instrument of 1718. The neck slipper heels provide us with information about the width of the neck for example, and bass bars provide evidence about the width of the bridge, and that in turn may tell us more about the number of strings. On the basis of the reconstruction of the cello, it will also be possible to empirically investigate what the ‘cello’ was in 1718 in Brussels, and what playing techniques were used at that time. It is known that there were some Italian musicians in the court ensemble, who possibly knew the Italian ‘violoncello’ and its more virtuoso playing technique, but the impact of their influences is not entirely clear to us yet.

In the near future we will have an ensemble at our disposal with which we will be able to test the repertoire extensively, with varying set-ups. This way, the first notes of an important part of the Saint-Gudula Cathedral collection will soon sound. Hopefully, all this will eventually make clear to us what the real use and contemporary designation of the large viola of Borbon is, and whether we can rightly call the instrument by Snoeck a “cello.”



MUSEUM MINUTE

150TH ANNIVERSARY GIFTS TO THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Jayson Kerr Dobney

The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met) was founded in New York City in 1870 by a group of civic leaders, business people, and artists. The founding idea was that the city needed an institution of art that would educate its citizens and was the equal to similar institutions in Europe. One hundred and fifty years later, The Met houses more than 1.5 million works of art spanning five thousand years of human history and cultures from around the globe.

Although greatly disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, The Met celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2020 with a variety of activities including a major exhibition entitled “Making The Met,” which explored the institution’s history. In honor of this milestone anniversary, a number of significant new donations were made to the museum that have been designated as 150th Anniversary gifts. The Department of Musical Instruments is pleased to announce the gifts of five important instruments that were so designated by the donors and that are featured in a special anniversary publication. The following gifts are presented chronologically by the date that they were made.

Harpsichord by Jakob Kirkman, London, 1744.

This double manual harpsichord is the earliest surviving work by this famed builder. The exterior of the case is veneered with cross-banded burr walnut and lighter wood stringing. On the interior of the case and keywell is a reverse color scheme with profuse walnut marquetry on a lighter wood background. The two manuals have ivory-topped naturals and ebony accidentals. The lower keyboard has two eight foot stops and one four foot stop. The upper keyboard has a four foot set of strings and a lute stop. A “dog-leg” coupler allows the upper keyboard to be activated when the lower manual is played. According to Charles Mould and Elizabeth Wells, the instrument was a part of the Taphouse collection and was used at a program performed by the eminent musicologist A. J. Hipkins for the Oxford University Musical Club in 1890. The harpsichord is a promised gift from the Estate of Rose L. Augustine.

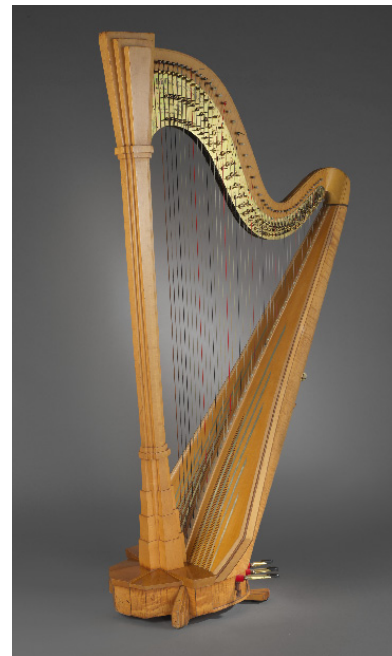


Guitar by Christian Frederick Martin, New York, ca. 1837.

The guitar maker C. F. Martin spent his first five years in the United States building guitars and selling instruments in New York City, before moving to Nazareth, Pennsylvania where the company bearing his name has been located ever since. This extraordinary example is built according to the design of Viennese guitars by Johann Georg Stauffer. Among Martin’s work from this period are a handful of decorated guitars such as this example, which has an ivory fingerboard and bridge. It is also decorated with half-circles of mother-of-pearl and abalone placed around the edge of the soundboard. The guitar is a gift of to the museum from Peter Szego.

“Salzedo Model” pedal harp by Lyon & Healy, Chicago, early 1940s.

The preeminent virtuoso harpist Carlos Salzedo teamed up with the artist Witold Gordon to design an art deco style harp for Lyon & Healy. The model was first introduced in 1928 and has been built ever since. This particular harp was a gift to Cynthia Otis from her parents after she won the New York Philharmonic Young Artists Competition at the age of 16 in the early 1940s. It was chosen for her by her teacher, Carlos Salzedo himself. The instrument was her main playing harp throughout her career, including playing for many decades in the New York City Ballet. The harp is a gift of Cynthia Otis.



“Les Paul TV Special” electric guitar by the Gibson Company, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1961.

In order to appear white on black and white television, the Gibson Company introduced a “Les Paul TV Special” guitar in 1955 that was painted a pale-yellow. This guitar from 1961 originally belonged to the guitarist Leslie West who was a member of the band Mountain. Around 1967 or 68, West gave the instrument to Steve Miller of the Steve Miller Band. Due to its rather unattractive color, Miller asked the surfboard artist Bob Cantrell to decorate the instrument. The fantastical psychedelic painting stands among a handful of custom painted guitars of the era made for legendary musicians such as Eric Clapton and Jimi Hendrix. Miller used the instrument in some of his most important concerts from the 1970s, including a national television broadcasts such as “The Midnight Special” in 1974 and “Don Kirshner’s Rock Concert” in 1973, where he premiered an early version of his hit song “Fly Like an Eagle.” This guitar is a promised gift to the Museum from Steve Miller.

“Les Paul Recording Model” electric guitar by the Gibson Company, Kalamazoo, 1982.

Les Paul is known for his extraordinary innovations to the design of the solid body electric guitar. Since 1952, his name has been synonymous with one of the most influential models produced by the Gibson company. In 1982, the Gibson Company built this custom guitar according to specifications about the electronics that were made by Paul. This one-of-a-kind guitar was the instrument that he played most often during the second half of his career. It was most notably used by him in weekly performances at Fat Tuesday’s and the Iridium in New York City until weeks before his death in 2009. The guitar is a gift of Perry A. Margouleff.



PUBLICATION GRANTS FUND RESEARCH INTO A GHANAIAN XYLOPHONE AND WIND INSTRUMENTS IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRESDEN

JAMIS Publication Grants for 2019 and 2020 will support research into the *gyil*, a Ghanaian xylophone, and the work of Johann Müller, a wind-instrument maker of eighteenth-century Dresden. The grants, created in 2011, help to defray the costs of preparing an article appropriate for publication in the *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*.

Colin Harte, recipient of the 2019 grant, will investigate the *gyil*, a Ghanaian xylophone; he will study and perform on the instrument in Ghana and interview several key instrument makers. The 2020 grant, made to Jóhannes



Colin Harte

Ágústsson and Kjartan Óskarsson, will support Ágústsson's travel to Dresden, where he will study the estate inventory of Johann Müller (ca.1664–1735), an oboist and maker of woodwind and brasswind instruments.

Harte earned his PhD in ethnomusicology at the University of Florida's School of Music, where he founded and performed with the UF Irish Traditional Music Ensemble. He earned an MS in Educational Leadership from Hunter College, City University of New York, and an MA in Ethnomusicology from the University of Limerick, Ireland. As a New York City teaching fellow, he received a MS in Education from Lehman College, City University of New York, while teaching band, general music, and percussion ensemble at a public middle school in the Bronx. He currently teaches a world music curriculum at KAPPA High School in the north Bronx, where he directs a fifty-student West-African percussion ensemble, keyboard lab, world music courses, and music technology courses with the school recording studio.

As a pianist and bodhrán percussionist, he is also active in the New York jazz, Latin, and Irish traditional music communities. Harte wrote *The Bodhrán: Experi-*

mentation, Innovation, and the Traditional Irish Frame Drum, published in May 2020 by the University of Tennessee Press. He has published articles in *The Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, *ICTM-Ethnomusicology Ireland*, *SAGE Encyclopedia of Ethnomusicology*, *New Hibernia Review*, *Folk Music Journal*, and *Chasqui: Revista de Literatura Latinoamericana*.

Ágústsson and Óskarsson will examine the life and activities of the oboist Johann Müller, a successful instrument maker in Dresden. The unpublished inventory of his estate offers the reader a walk-in virtual visit to Müller's large house and workshop in Dresden-Neustadt, recording in minute detail all the tools and raw materials he used as a craftsman, as well as listing (with prices) spare parts and the woodwind and brasswind instruments under construction.

Jóhannes Ágústsson, an independent scholar from Reykjavík, Iceland, has published studies on Antonio Vivaldi, Jan Dismas Zelenka, Giovanni Alberto Ristori, and the Dresden *Hofkapelle* in journals such as *Studi vivaldiani*, *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, *Pergolesi-Studies*, *Händel-Jahrbuch*, *Clavibus Unitis*, *Hudební věda*, *Muzyka*, and *Musicology Australia*. He works almost exclusively with primary and unpublished archival sources.

Kjartan Óskarsson, currently rector of Reykjavík College of Music, studied clarinet at the Reykjavík College of Music and completed a teacher's and soloist degrees in 1976. He continued his studies at the Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Vienna, graduating with distinction in 1981. He worked as a clarinet and bass clarinet player in the Iceland Symphony, and also as a teacher, conductor, and chamber musician. His article "Zelenka and the Chalumeau" was recently published by the Czech journal *Clavibus Unitis*.



Kjartan Óskarsson



BOOK REVIEW

Stiftelsen Musikkulturens Främjande 1920-2020, Jubileumsboken [Foundation for Musical Research 1920-2020, Commemorative book]. Ed., Edward Klingspor. Stockholm: Stiftelsen Musikkulturens Främjande, 2020, 203 pp. Numerous color photos and black-and-white drawings. ISBN: 978-91-519-3358-0. 540 SEK (Swedish Krona) (\$58). Available from the publisher using the website link: <https://nydahllcoll.se/forskare-2/publikationer-2/>.

This folio-size coffee-table book is full of illustrations and information about an outstanding Swedish museum of musical instruments, its collection of manuscripts, books, letters, and art. Although the text is in Swedish, the many color photos reveal the depth and importance of this museum collection.

The Stiftelsen Musikkulturens Främjande (Foundation for Musical Research, also known as the Nydahl Collection) was founded in 1920 by Rudolf Nydahl (1882-1973). At the beginning of the twentieth century, Nydahl studied music at the Paris Conservatory, returning to Sweden to manage a wine shop founded by his father. In 1919, Sweden took control of the distribution and sale of alcohol and expropriated Nydahl's wine shop. Nydahl used the income to further his interest in music by founding a music foundation in 1920. His objective was to establish an institution based on the Paris Conservatory, to provide education and research

facilities. The institute was tasked to collect and maintain an archive of music manuscripts, scores, letters and other music-related material. It would later acquire and preserve historic musical instruments.

Nydahl opened his museum in Stockholm in 1967 moving in 1979 to its present location at Riddargatan 37. In addition to its archives, the museum holds a collection of about 550 musical instruments, of which 75 are keyboard instruments includ-



ing harpsichords, clavichords, pianos, and organs dating from the 16th century to the 1940s, woodwinds, brasses, percussion, and folk instruments. A PDF checklist of all the musical instruments may be accessed from the website, <https://nydahllcoll.se/>.

On the pull-down menu click on Verksamhet (Operation), Museet (Museum), and Checklist över instrument: Instrumentchlist (Checklist of instruments: instrument list). Two hundred of these instruments are on permanent display in six rooms, of which three are furnished in period style. The Museum occasionally arranges concerts and lectures and provides access to manuscript collections of works by Beethoven, Chopin, Donizetti, Mozart, Rossini, Schubert, and Schumann, as well as Swedish and Scandinavian composers. The collection of letters and documents by and to composers, musicians, and publishers contains 6,172 items. Iconographic material includes drawings, paintings and photos, a library of scores (including many first editions), and a collection of music literature formerly belonging to the late Professor Ingmar Bengtsson. Museum curators are Göran Grahn and Edward Klingspor.

The book has seven chapters: the passionate collector, a biography of Rudolf Nydahl (pp. 15-40); life in the museum (41-54); music and people (55-82); instruments tell (83-165); archives – manuscripts, letters, and pictures (165-188); impact of a 100-year history (189-200); and 100 more – a free space in time (201). The fourth chapter presents color photos and descriptions of 41 musical instruments that exhibit a high level of craftsmanship, many of which are highly decorated and rarely found. Most photos are large and clear with

clear details of the instruments such as inlay, gilding, labels, and stamps. Paintings of similar instruments are included some of which are being played. The instruments are presented chronologically in the following categories:

Renaissance and Baroque (84-95): harpsichord attributed to Dominicus PISAURENSIS, Venice, 1543; chitarrone attributed to Magnus Tieffenbrucker the younger, Venice, about 1610; positive organ, unsigned, 17th century; natural trumpet, Jacob Schmidt, Nuremberg, 17th century; and bass viola da gamba by Joachim Tielke, Hamburg, 1696.

Rocco and Classical (96-125): alto trombone, Johann Joseph Schmied, Pfaffendorf, 1785; clavichord, Hieronimus Albrecht Hass, Hamburg, 1740; harpsichord, Joseph Johannes Couchet and Pascal Taskin, 1680s; oboe, Thomas Cahusac, London, late 18th century; vielle à roue, Mercier, Moulins, ca. 1800; flute, Goulding & Co., early 19th century; pardessus de viole, Louis Guersan, Paris, 1754; pochette, Jacques Regnault, Paris, 1682, part of a collection of 18 pochettes in an exhibit case; guitar, Giovanni Battista Fabricatore, Naples, 1792; Swedish lute, Mathias Petter Kraft, Stockholm, 1805; flute clock, Pehr Strand, Stockholm, 1795; two pedal harps, Georges and Jacques-Georges Cousineau, 18th century; clavichord, Pehr Lindholm & Söderstrom, Stockholm, 1808; and basset horn, Gottfried Schuster, Neukirchen; ca. 1820.

Romantic (126-133): grand piano, Johann Fritz, early 19th century; crystal flute, J. D. Breton, Paris, 1848; crystal flute, Claude Laurent, 1806, with cut glass key heads; octave bassoon, Bonaccorsi, Barga, ca. 1815; contrabassoon, Franz Schölnast, Pressburg (Bratislava), 1820s; grand piano, Pleyel & Cie, ca. 1844; serpent, keyless, ca. 1800; alto cornophone, F. Besson, Paris, ca. 1890;

bass ophicleide, Gautrot ainé, Paris, ca 1860; grand piano, Steinway, Hamburg, 1880.

Folk instrument (144-145): Hardanger fiddle, Erik Johnsen, Heland, Norway, 1859.

Overseas Instruments: yueqin, China; sistrum, ancient Egypt; rag dung, Tibet; Zither instrument; bell, China; sarangi, India, 19th century; dan bau, Vietnam; tar, Iran, 19th century, ornately carved and inlaid.

Counterfeit instrument (159-160): harpsichord, Leopold Franciolini, Florence.

Curiosities (160-163): Cittern, Franciolini, Florence; Ammonia- phone, Carter Moffat, chemistry professor, Glasgow. By inhaling a mixture of hydrogen peroxide and ammonia to reproduce the air quality of Italy, the inventor proposed to improve singers' voice quality after inhaling this mixture.

The fifth chapter (165-188) describes the archival collection and reproduces music manuscripts by composers, including Mozart, Donizetti, Franck, Chopin, Beethoven, and Schumann; letters by Bizet, Mozart, Schumann, Berwald; and portraits of famous singers. The sixth chapter on the impact of its 100-year history (189-197) mentions several gifts and bequests given to the collection, and provides a list of concerts given at the Museum from 1976 to 2019 primarily by Swedish musicians and musicians from various countries of the world.

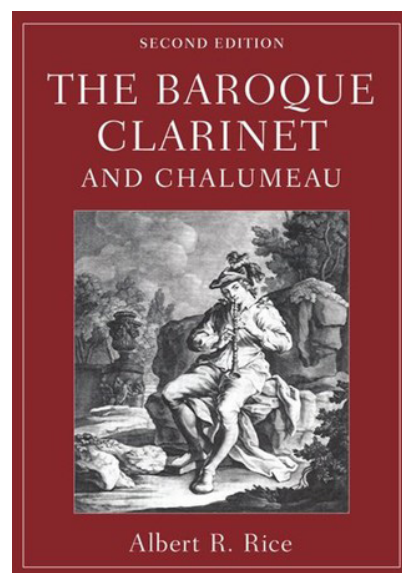
Albert R. Rice
Claremont, California



**NEW PUBLICATION BY
 ALBERT R. RICE**

***The Baroque Clarinet and Chalumeau*, 2nd edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2020, 299 pages.**

A completely revised edition of this authoritative text on the European clarinet during the first half of the eighteenth century. This edition includes six chapters, two of which are new on chalumeau and clarinet music; newly found instruments; newly found archival documents indicating the dissemination of the chalumeau and its music from Vienna to Barcelona in 1710; an appendix of over 337 works for chalumeau from 1694 to 1780 by 66 composers, and an appendix of 90 works for clarinet from 1715 to 1760 by 23 composers. The new information is based on several articles and books that discuss the chalumeau and clarinet since the publication of the first edition in 1992.



IN MEMORIAM

JEREMY MONTAGU

DECEMBER 27, 1927 – SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

Jeremy Montagu's passing has left an enormous hole in the musical instrument community, the size of which it is impossible to overstate. Having been awarded the AMIS Curt Sachs Award in 2010, he will be remembered as a collector, researcher, curator, musician, and friend. He worked and wrote until shortly before his passing and remained as passionate and curious about music and instruments as he had been since his early years.

Jeremy was born in London but was evacuated to Connecticut during WWII. Here, he learned to play the horn, which he continued to study once the family was able to return to the UK. At the Guildhall School in London, he also took up conducting and percussion, supposedly because of the surplus of horns and lack of percussionists. As a professional orchestral percussionist, he became the first musician to conduct in the newly built Royal Festival Hall in 1951. Jeremy founded and conducted the Montagu String Orchestra in the early 1950's; the ensemble was pioneering in its historically informed performances until its last concert in 1956. The beginning of his instrumental collection is attributed to his time in Egypt (1947-48) where he served his national service in the Education Corps.



In addition to his work as a percussionist, Jeremy became involved in museum and academic work in the 1960's and 70's. He curated and lectured for institutions such as the Horniman Museum, Kings College, Goldsmiths College (all London), Queen's University of Belfast, Sheffield University and Durham University. He also became involved with Galpin Society during this time and served as secretary and eventually president for the society. In 1981, he was appointed as curator of the Bate Collection of Musical Instruments and lecturer at Oxford University, where he remained until 1995. After his retirement, he became Emeritus Fellow at Wadham College, Oxford University.

Jeremy's writings cover an extraordinary range of topics relating to instruments (most notably, percussion instruments, but also reed instruments, biblical instruments, etc.); they also include fiction and autobiographical writing. Much of his output is available on his website (<https://jeremymontagu.co.uk/index.html>) and offers an insight into Jeremy's passions. He acknowledged the immense help that his beloved late wife Gwen brought to these endeavours. Jeremy and his wife met at a concert in 1955 and married soon after. They were active members of the West Central Synagogue where he played the Shofar, and later the Oxford Jewish Congregation. Gwen sadly passed away in 2003.

Jeremy was always keen to invite interested parties to visit his 2,500-instrument collection. I received an invitation after he read my review of his last book, *Shawms Around the World*; unfortunately, I was unable to take him up on it. Many AMIS members will have treasured memories of Jeremy, who regularly attended the Annual Meetings. His enthusiasm for musical instruments will hopefully continue to inspire aspiring scholars for a long time.

Jeremy is survived by his children Rachel, Sarah and Simon, by 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, and by his sister Jennifer.

Nuria Bonet Filella



IN MEMORIAM

REBECCA APODACA

OCTOBER 9, 1953 - SEPTEMBER 25, 2020

Rebecca Apodaca will be remembered by the AMIS community for her energy, enthusiasm, and joyful spirit.

Rebecca grew up in Orange County, California. She attended Tustin High School and moved to Santa Cruz, graduating from Cabrillo College with a degree in music.

She had a number of jobs before finding her niche working with musical instruments as a female repair technician in a male-dominated profession. She was employed by several music stores before establishing A & D Music, Inc. with her husband in 1976.

In 1984, after becoming a single mother, she transitioned to a home-based business that catered to thousands of students in the Orange County area by providing rentals, repairs, and sales of musical instruments. She enjoyed working with children and would often go out to schools to educate students about musical instruments.

When she was in her 50s, she switched her focus to musical instrument appraisals, going back to college at UC Irvine where she became a USPAP IRS certified appraiser. She was a member of the American Society of Appraisers, the American Musical Instrument Society, the National Association of Professional Band Instrument Technicians (NAPBIRT) and the International Association of Music Merchants (NAMM).

Additionally, Rebecca was an artist who made musical instrument artworks, as well as a writer of cookbooks and songs. She spent time performing in a group called Mariachi for All, in which she performed with Los Camperos, marking an achievement in her life.

She was active in her Laguna Beach community, volunteering for Sally's Fund and many other organisations, many of which focused on the musical life in Laguna Beach. This resulted in Rebecca being nominated for "Artist of the Year" for the local Patriot's Day Parade in honor of a lifetime of the contributing music to the community.

She is survived by her daughter, Micaela, her grandson, Renin, and her son-in-law Matthew.

Sarah Deters



CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS



The Historic Brass Society will be hosting a Virtual Symposium, "Pond Life: Crosscurrents over the Atlantic" from May 24-26, 2021, focusing on the exchange and cross-pollination of ideas between Britain (including continental Europe by way of Britain, and the British Empire) and the Americas. Presentations and discussion sessions will be held online along with livestreamed performances.

We invite proposals, due by Friday February 19, 2021 (date stamped), for presentations of up to 20 minutes, including papers, lecture recitals, musical performances, instrument demonstrations and shorter presentations (please indicate timing) on:

- ancient sound tools, modern instruments and sound exchanges
- chamber music and brass ensembles
- British jazz and American influences
- 19th Century performance practices
- repertoire, composers and performers
- brass instrument design and development
- publishing and manufacturing

Proposals should include an abstract of 250 words, a 75-word biography of each presenter (or an ensemble biography) and email contact information for a response, which will be forthcoming by 19 March 2021.

To avoid technical issues during the Symposium, we anticipate using pre-recorded presentations with live discussion sessions to follow immediately.

Please send proposals as email attachments (PDF preferred) to Sandy Coffin at scoffintpt@gmail.com.

Additional information at: www.historicbrass.org

