

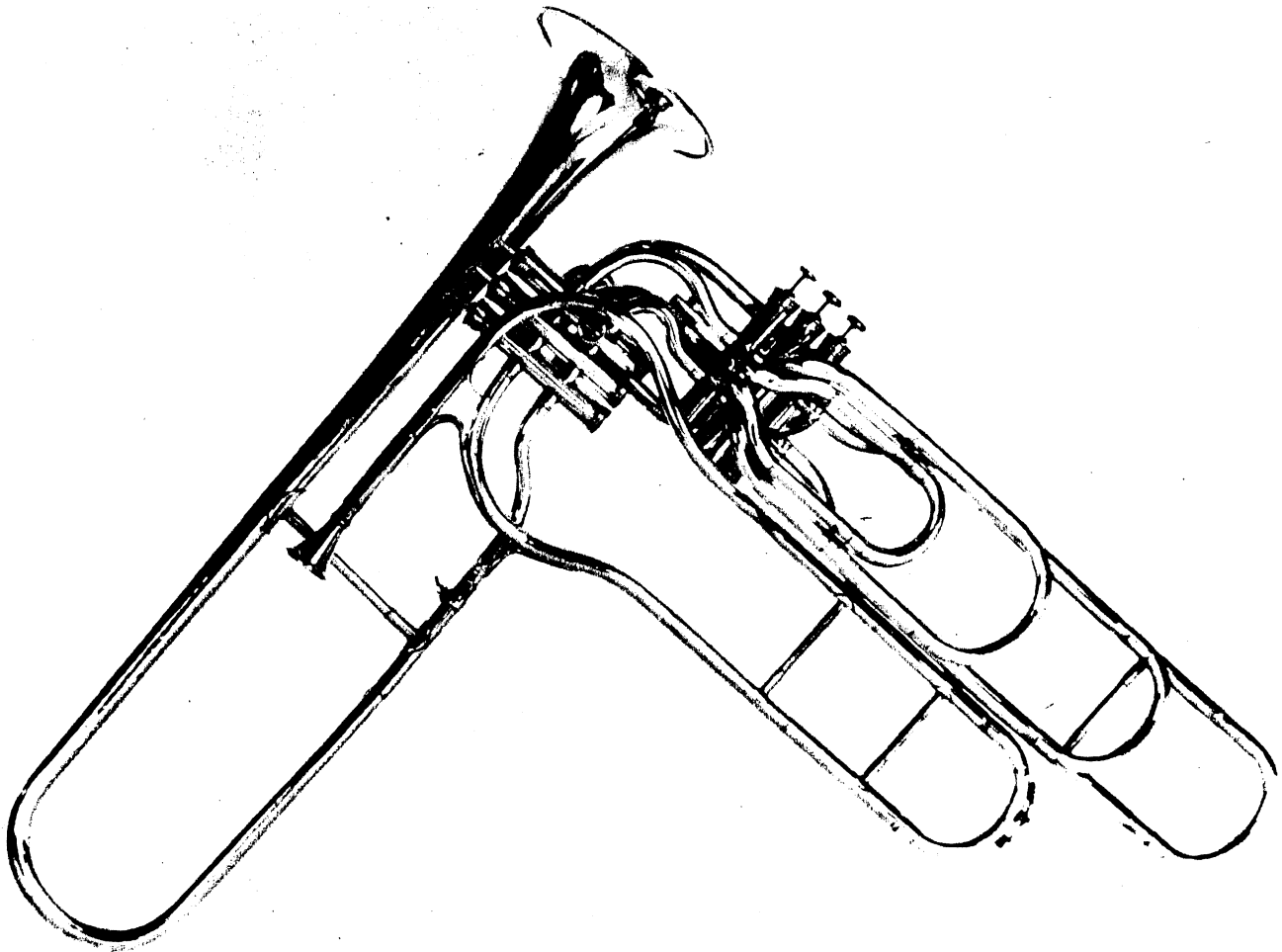
Newsletter

The Musical Instrument Society

VOLUME 1

FEBRUARY, 1972

NUMBER 2



THE COVER

The instrument illustrated on the cover of this Newsletter is a well-preserved example of an ascending six-valve independent system Sax trombone made by Gautrot Marquet, Paris, about 1865. The bell measures 16.0 cm in diameter; the instrument is 68.0 cm in length and 73.0 cm in height. This comes from the private collection of Dr. and Mrs. Robert M. Rosenbaum, Scarsdale, New York, (No. 71-29).

Antione Joseph (Adolf) Sax (1814-1894), Belgian inventor and musical instrument manufacturer, settled in Paris in 1842. Although best known for designing the saxophone family, Sax contributed to all areas of creation and construction of musical instruments. In 1852 he was awarded patent rights to a six-valve independent system of brass instruments which, together with the creation of the saxophone, probably represents his most original contribution. After experimenting with a number of designs, including seven and even thirteen valves and bells, (see Bruxelles Coll. catalogue No. 2467) he actually produced a small number of trombones as shown on the cover. Some examples also manufactured by the rival firm of Gautrot, which pirated the design.

In these instruments, the air column passes from the mouthpiece through all six pistons, around the long loop and back to the pistons and the bell. With all valves open the length of the tubing is equal to that of the ordinary tenor slide trombone in the seventh (fully extended) position. When any one valve is depressed, it cuts off all tubing beyond and substitutes a shorter length thereby raising the fundamental pitch. Thus each valve acts "independently" and the effect is "ascending" as far as the note played is concerned. The length of each loop is in a ratio to its fellow loops as are the positions on the slide trombone — no valve down equals position seven; sixth valve down equals position six, and so on. Further, each loop is tuned by its own slide thereby eliminating the need for compensation in production of the lowest fundamental. By this means the instrument can play the seven harmonic series in perfect tune.

Unfortunately for Sax, the instrument was not successful. It was costly to manufacture, heavy (with fifty-two feet of tubing), and quite fragile. For these reasons examples of this instrument are now quite rare. The instrument did find limited use in some works demanding rapid chromatic passages for the trombone. Notable works actually calling for six-valved trombones include the Saint-Saens' oratorio "Le Deluge" (1876) and the opera "Hamlet" of Ambrose Thomas (1866).

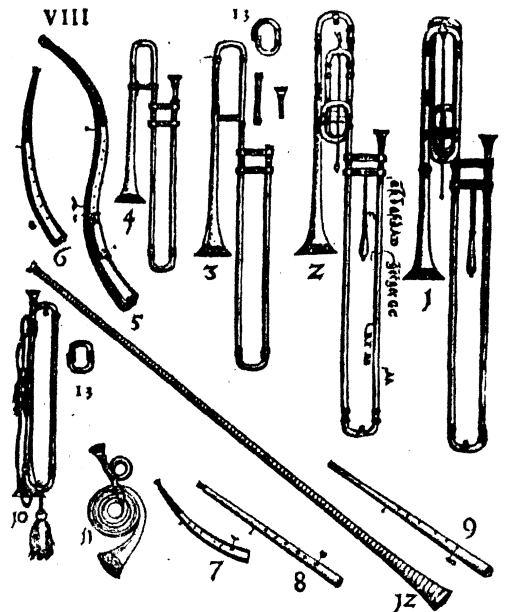
At the turn of the century, The Buxelles Opera utilized a set of seven-valved trombones

played by three specialists. The seventh valve combined a tenor-bass concept in a single instrument by lowering the basic pitch by a fourth. Some attempt was made to introduce these instruments into England by the conductor Henry Wood, but without success.



This photograph illustrates the use of one of these trombones at the Paris Opera about 1870.

—Robert M. Rosenbaum, MD



CALL FOR PAPERS

The Program Committee is issuing a call for papers relating to musical instruments, their history, construction, performance, and relation to music in general. It is not necessary to be a member of the Society to present a paper at this first national meeting. Those who wish to present a paper or demonstration are asked to fill out the registration form (extra copies can be obtained from Dr. Rosenbaum, address below). An abstract of each paper is requested for inclusion in a subsequent issue of the Newsletter. All papers and registration forms should be forwarded to Dr. Rosenbaum by MARCH 15, 1972.

Demonstration of instruments is always of interest to the membership. Those who can play an unusual or historical instrument or who wish simply to show and explain some interesting item should certainly bring along their "jewel" for this purpose. Many of us are collectors and are always eager to talk "shop" with fellow collectors. Those of us who do not collect are equally interested in seeing (holding, trying to play) any rare or unique musical instrument. Even if you do not wish to present a formal "paper" do not hesitate to participate in informal "show and tell" sessions with the others.

Members of the Program Committee are:

- Dr. Robert M. Rosenbaum, 154 South Morris Lane, Scarsdale, N. Y. 10583
Mrs. Cynthia Hoover, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.
Mr. William J. Maynard, 17 Lincoln, Massapequa Park, N. Y. 11762
Mr. Edwin M. Ripin, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N. Y.
Dr. Arnold Fromme, Jersey City State College, Jersey City, N. Y.
Dr. James M. Swain, 3929 Bayouwood Drive, Lake Charles, La. 70601

ABSTRACTS

For this first meeting the Program Committee will consider all papers, whether or not the author is a member of this Society. If you wish to present a paper, or demonstration, please fill out the enclosed Registration Form. If you wish to provide an abstract (suitable for future publication in the Newsletter), type this on a single page using this format:

- (Title)
(Your name, address and/or affiliation)
(Body of abstract)

Pictorial material to illustrate the abstracts will be most welcome and every effort will be made to include photographs and drawings which are suitable for reproduction.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOLLOW-UP

Further tabulation of the questionnaires originally mailed to those interested in musical instruments has been compiled. One hundred thirty four positive responses have been received from 120 men, 12 women, and one museum. Thirty-five states of the U. S. are represented with additional responses from Canada and Austria. The musical instrument collections represent the following categories:

All historical instruments-20; Mainly flute-38; Woodwinds-17; Strings-10; Mechanical-8.

Many specialized categories were reported which cannot be easily tabulated. Most of those who responded (66) are professional (or semi-professional) musicians; 28 claim amateur status and 27 are either "former" professionals, or did not indicate.

The most popular instrument played is the flute (42) followed closely by recorder (17), piano (15), clarinet (13), trumpet (11), and most indicate "woodwind" as their playing instrument (100). There are, of course, many who play more than one instrument.

As for occupations, music is the livelihood of the majority — either as performing musician (25), teacher (21), or "academic" music (26). Allied fields (music store, publishing, etc.) include 35.

Questionnaires will continue to be sent to all who indicate an interest in our activity and to all who wish to join. A further compilation will appear later.

—Linda Tauber

LANGWILL INDEX

The third edition of "An Index of Musical Wind-Instrument Makers" by Lyndesay G. Langwill is presently being published. Those who are fortunate enough to have one of the first two editions will know how valuable this reference has been in identifying musical instruments of the wind family. Mr. Langwill, a member of this Society writes to say that this labor of love will be available very shortly. Anyone wishing to secure a copy can write directly to:

Lyndesay G. Langwill
7 Dick Place
Edinburgh, EH 9 2 JS
Scotland

MERTENS GALLERIES

The first public announcement of the new Andre Mertens Galleries of Musical Instruments appeared in the New York Times on December 12, 1969. Emanuel Winternitz, curator of the Crosby Brown Collection, and Mrs. Andre Mertens, widow of the late concert impresario, are shown looking at an Oriental lute called a p'i p'a, and two bamboo wind instruments.

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MERTENS GALLERIES (Continued)

Attention is directed toward the scope of the collection, 4,000 items, and rare instruments such as three Stradivarius violins, a Cristofori piano, and exotic instruments from Africa and the Americas. It was to become the dream of the organologist.

On November 18, 1971 the Galleries opened to the public and to at least one visitor this dream has become a reality. There is something for everyone whether your interest be winds, brass, strings or keyboards. Displayed in closed cases, the instruments are viewed in their respective families with written descriptions about each group. Ease of viewing, comfort, good lighting and scholarship are all an important part of the Galleries. Not to be overlooked is the care in which temperature and moisture are carefully controlled in the cases.

As is fitting with the opening of a new gallery, the Metropolitan Museum of Art had a preview showing for invited guests on November 17th. Guests were literally "piped in" by a player on the bag pipes and further enjoyed some informal playing on a Kirkman harpsichord.

A symposium was held on November 26th and 27th at the Museum and guest speakers included members of the Museum staff, writers and collectors in the field, and interested scholars from other areas of the arts.

John Henry van der Meer was the first speaker and delivered a paper on the history of the viol family of stringed instruments. Arthur Mendel of Princeton University spoke next on the evolution of musical instruments and raised the question of whether this change was brought about because the styles of music had changed, or whether music had evolved due to improvements in instruments. One of his many points was that concert halls were getting larger and so players had to project their tones to fill these areas.

Mr. Anthony Baines, curator of the Bate collection at Oxford University, spoke out for the practice of playing the instruments in collections. He pointed out that it was standard practice that the Bate collection be played upon and even loaned out for such purposes. His colored slide presentation of the collection, mostly woodwinds and some brass, showed the instruments and their unique way of being displayed.

The afternoon session was titled FORGERIES, FAKES AND REPLICAS and Mr. Dario d'Attili of Rembert Wurlitzer talked about stringed instruments. Mr. Edwin M. Ripin of the Museum staff discussed keyboards and in particular the Zenti instruments of the 17th century. Friedrich von Huene closed the afternoon with a background of his work in studying old instruments before attempting to reproduce

them for modern use. Of particular interest was some color slides showing his measuring tools and the repair work he had done on a one-keyed flute made by Astor.

The Saturday afternoon session was devoted to INSTRUMENTS IN AN ART MUSEUM. Emanuel Winternitz, curator of the collection, was chairman and speakers were Janos Scholz, Siegmund Levarie, and Kurt Wegerer.

A visit to the Crosby Brown Collection at the Metropolitan is highly recommended. But plan to spend some time in the Galleries because there is much to see and enjoy.

—William J. Maynard

AMERICAN GALPINISTS

On January 7, 8, and 9, 1972, nearly fifty interested persons attended a meeting at Jersey City State College, Jersey City, New Jersey at the invitation of Dr. Arnold Fromme of that institution. It was the feeling of several American members of the Galpin Society that there might be some interest in forming an American branch of that organization. At this meeting a number of interesting papers were given, the titles and authors of which are listed below. Abstracts of these papers will appear in this Newsletter as they are received. A part of this meeting included a tour of the new Mertens Galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City (see report elsewhere in this Newsletter).

At the organizational meeting of this group several members of our own Society were present and it was the unanimous feeling of those present that the two groups had identical aims and goals. Some discussion centered around the use of the word "organology" in the By-Laws (see first issue of the Newsletter) and some felt that the word "Historical" in the proposed name might be restrictive. AD HOC committees were appointed as follows:

By-Laws Committee — William E. Maynard, Mordecai Rubin, Edwin M. Ripin, Frederick Selch, and Arnold Fromme.

Publication Committee — Cynthia Hoover (Chairwoman), Josef Marx, Mordecai Rubin, Robert M. Rosenbaum, and Alvin Fossner.

The Publication Committee will look into the feasibility of publishing a formal Journal to record the research of members of the Society, perhaps similar to the Galpin Journal. Funds may be available in the form of grants to support this activity.

It was agreed that all would meet in Washington, D. C. in April to make a formal organization, adopt by-laws, elect officers, and continue the present activities of the Society.

The Jersey City meeting was opened with an address by Mrs. Cynthia Hoover (of the Smithsonian Institution) who was introduced by Arnold Fromme. Mrs. Hoover discussed the

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AMERICAN GALPINISTS (Continued)

value of an organization such as this one, the role of museums in general and the Smithsonian in particular, and pointed out areas that need further work and research.

Papers read at this meeting included:

"The Double Bass - Viol or Violin?" — Irving H. Cohen

"Random Research in Woodwind Construction"
— Dr. Alvin K. Fossner

"The Trombone in Renaissance Art" — Lawrence Weed

"The Development of the Bass Clarinet" — David Kalina

"Problems of Authenticating Italian Harpsichords" — Edwin M. Ripin

"Some Unusual Wind Instruments of Adolf Sax"
— Robert M. Rosenbaum

"Performing and Reproducing Historical Woodwinds" — Frederick von Huene

"Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Brass Performance Techniques" — Arnold Fromme

"Willian Whitely of Utica, N.Y. - An American Instrument Maker" — Frederick Selch and Bernard Yellin.

A concert "Music for a While" was given by an ensemble with La Noue Davenport, Judith Davidoff, Sheila Schonbrun, and Christopher Williams. Medieval and Renaissance music was presented using instruments of the period.

PROBLEMS IN AUTHENTICATING ITALIAN HARPSICHORDS

(Abstract)

Although a very substantial number of Italian harpsichords, virginals and spinets, have survived from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, many have been subjected to alteration by forgers and unscrupulous dealers. Typical illustrative examples — a Viennese piano converted to a three-manual harpsichord and provided with an Italian maker's signature, a genuine harpsichord "married" to an equally genuine outer case originally made for another instrument, and an anonymous German spinet Italianized by providing it with a copy of the inscriptions from a genuine Italian one and putting it into a fake Italian-style case.

The only forger-dealer in this field whose name is known today was Leopoldo Franciolini, who worked in Florence between 1879 and about 1910, selling genuine, unaltered instruments; instruments "improved" with new or redecorated cases and false signatures; and wholly counterfeit examples. Sorting these out from one another is facilitated by the fact that Franciolini issued printed catalogs; by his use of two highly characteristic styles of decoration; and by his inaccurate rendering of Latin inscriptions.

The task of determining the authenticity of the surviving instruments bearing the name of Girolamo Zenti, the most famous of all 17th century Italian builders, exemplifies the

problems on this field. Of the five examples known to have survived into the 20th century, none is signed in quite the same way as any of those recorded in a Medici inventory of 1700, although they do bear dates and places corresponding to Zenti's whereabouts as known from archival sources. Furthermore, these instruments show no great similarity to one another, and one has a different date on its keyboard than appears on its inscribed jackrail. Thus, the question of whether Zenti actually made more than one or two — or, indeed, any — of these instruments remains moot.

—Edwin M. Ripin

PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE ON LIP-VIBRATED EUROPEAN A-T INSTRUMENTS DURING THE 17TH CENTURY

(Abstract)

Examination of, and experimentation upon historical instruments and their replicas, iconography, 17th century (and 16th and 18th) wind tutors, literary documents and extant music of the period, were the evidence described supporting the following conclusions:

General differences between 17th and 20th century brass technique are —

1. Greater vocalization of tone production then;
2. Greater use of a larger variety of complex multiple tonguings then;
3. The concept of embouchure was one of rigidity, strength, firmness and toughness of lips (except for the cornett) in the past. Today's emphasis is on a more relaxed, responsive and flexible embouchure;
4. A natural vibrato may have been used;
5. Greater virtuosity existed than heretofore suspected;
6. A better legato technique existed than heretofore suspected;
7. Volume was less;
8. There was less flexibility of range.

Trumpet technique included specialization of register, lip trills, mutes, occasional hand stopping, "lipped" notes, lip slurs, and a highly developed florid technique, that included a flute-like legato, in the fourth octave.

The trumpet's technique was applied directly to the early horn.

The trombone had much greater virtuosity than generally assumed. It was probably performed in a more vocal manner than today, with a smaller tone and a softer attack.

The cornett, a virtuoso solo instrument, depended more upon finger than upon lip technique, and was considered more a woodwind than a brass. It used a relatively relaxed embouchure that was possibly on the side of the mouth.

Unfortunately, evidence is scanty and traditions have been largely lost or changed. More work needs to be done.

—Arnold Fromme

NATIONAL MEETING

Definite plans for our first meeting have been set. The meeting will be held in Washington, D. C., on Saturday and Sunday, April 15-16, 1972. The following program has been proposed:

Saturday, April 15 —

10:00 AM - 10:30 AM — Introductions

10:30 AM - 12:00 Noon — Papers

Luncheon Break

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM — Business meeting

3:15 PM - 5:30 PM — Papers

Saturday Evening —

Dutch treat dinner and informal social evening at the Cosmos Club.

Sunday, April 16 —

10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon — Papers

Luncheon Break

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM — Tour of Smithsonian and facilities

3:30 PM - 5:30 PM — Concert and demonstrations.

A registration fee of \$3.00 per person is payable in advance and should accompany the registration form, a copy of which is enclosed with this Newsletter. Non-members are most welcome to join with us at this meeting.



EDITORIAL COMMENT

Material suitable for inclusion in these pages is always welcome. Articles on any subject pertaining to musical instruments and their relation to music are certainly suitable. Photographs, drawings, and other pictorial illustrations should also be submitted when available. If possible, photographs should be oriented in a vertical position for better framing either on the front cover or in the columns of the Newsletter. Unusual instruments from private collections (such as featured this issue) make attractive and educational articles. Send all material to:

James M. Swain, M. D.
3929 Bayouwood Drive
Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601

