



# THE GALPIN SOCIETY

FOR THE STUDY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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## Double-manual harpsichord by Burkat Shudi, London, 1766 (see p.9)

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# THE GALPIN SOCIETY

Registered Charity no. 306012

[www.galpinsociety.org](http://www.galpinsociety.org)

President: Arnold Myers

a.myers@ed.ac.uk

Vice-presidents: Margaret Birley, Charles Mould, Graham Wells,

The Master of the Worshipful Company of Musicians

Chairman of the trustees: Graham Wells

grahamwhwells@aol.com

Vice-chairman, editor & newsletter editor: Lance Whitehead

editor@galpinsociety.org

Journal editor & advertisement manager: Michael Fleming

journal@galpinsociety.org

Administrator: Maggie Kilbey

administrator@galpinsociety.org

Reviews editor (UK): Mimi Waitzman

mwaitzman@horniman.ac.uk

Reviews editor (USA): Bradley Strauchen-Sherer

bradley.strauchen-scherer@metmuseum.org

Archivist: Diana Wells

dianaswells@aol.com

Other committee members: Marie Kent, Douglas MacMillan, Arnold Myers, Gabriele Rossi-Rognoni

The *Galpin Society Newsletter* is edited by Lance Whitehead and copy-edited by Maggie Kilbey. Opinions expressed by authors in this newsletter are not specifically endorsed by The Galpin Society.

Page 1. Double-manual harpsichord by Burkat Shudi, London, 1766, MIMEd 4341 [*photo: Dominic Ibbotson © University of Edinburgh*]

## NOTICES

### Terence Pamplin Award for Organology

Applicants are invited to enter for this award worth £1200. It is managed by the Musicians' Company of London. Full details can be found on their website. The closing date is 7 July 2021. The award is made for excellence in research in organology and musicology as it relates to acoustic music instrument technology and is open to final year students and postgraduate student within 5 years of completing their degree.

[www.wcom.org.uk/award/terence-pamplin-award](http://www.wcom.org.uk/award/terence-pamplin-award)

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### Information request concerning the organ builder J. Hamilton

Maurizio Tarrini is looking for information concerning a certain J. Hamilton, who operated in Bristol (11 Brunswick Street, City Road) c1877–78. Hamilton sent to Genoa a radiating and concave pedalboard, which was copied and introduced for the first time in an Italian organ. His printed flyer, 'Instructions for attaching the pedals to a pianoforte' provides us simply with his name and address. Please do contact Maurizio directly if you are able to assist: mautarri@gmail.com

# EDITORIAL

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact on all of our lives, I hope that the current *Newsletter* and forthcoming *Journal* may provide some welcome relief. I am pleased to include notices of a significant number of new publications. These include volumes published in the Netherlands and Germany, as well as Britain: Mike Baldwin, *Harp Making in Late-Georgian London*, Friedemann and Barbara Hellwig, *Joachim Tielke. Neue Funde zu Werk und Wirkung / New Finds on his Œuvre and Impact*, and Douglas MacMillan *The Flageolet in England, 1660–1914*. There are two new works on Erard: Robert Adelson, *Erard A Passion for the Piano*; and Amities Frits Janmaat, *Sébastien Erard – the greatest harp and piano builder of all time*. The current *Newsletter* also includes two interesting articles by authors who both highlight the importance of questioning secondary material. Looking at ‘The Metal Bows of Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume’, Andrew Hooker provides some illuminating insights into their means of manufacture, while Jenny Nex – in her paper ‘Unpicking the myths and hearsay surrounding the double-manual harpsichord by Burkat Shudi, MIMEd 4341’ – is unrelenting in her bid to determine whether this particular instrument was played by Mozart or owned by Lady Catherine Hamilton (1738–83).

I would also like to extend my congratulations to Peter Bavington as the 2020 recipient of the Baines Prize. Peter, who is well known to many of us as a maker of various types of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century style clavichords, has also written various essays and articles, which are well worth reading. His writings are included in *De Clavicordio* volumes III (1998), IV (2000), V (2002) and VII (2006), as well as FoMRHI and the *British Clavichord Society Newsletter*. An indispensable volume for all clavichord owners is his book, *Clavichord Tuning and Maintenance* (2007). On a personal note, I should also mention that Peter was always most welcoming and hospitable when I visited his workshop, then shared with Miles Hellon, to study a certain Hass clavichord at that time in their care.

It is anticipated that this year’s *Journal* will be published and distributed according to the planned cover date of March 2021. This would be an excellent time to pay your subscription if you haven’t already done so, as there is a limited print run. Two complementary articles – by Maurizio Tarrini and Pierre Verbeek – highlight the skills of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century *marqueteurs* in producing highly realistic images of harpsichords and clavichords. Several authors have chosen the difficult task of identifying patterns of design and construction from a heterogeneous sample of surviving instruments: David García Freile, ‘The Historical Iberian Hurdy-Gurdy: Its Form and Construction’; Salvatore Morra, ‘History, Construction and Features of the Tunisian ‘*Ud ‘Arbī*’; and Stefaan Verdegem and Marcel Ponsele, ‘Fourteen Leipzig Oboes from the time of J. S. Bach’. Douglas MacMillan provides a relatively large data set of 130 instruments to challenge the myth that the long-nineteenth century was devoid of the recorder, while Arnold Myers and Ignace De Keyser provide some important new material on the Wagner tubas produced by the firm of Mahillon during the period 1893–1913. Largely based on archival investigations, the papers of Maria da Gloria Leitao Venceslau, Norman MacSween, David Hunter and Simon Waters cover such topics as keyboard instrument making in Florence, the use of jews-harps as presents for native Americans and some revelatory documentation concerning flute making in early eighteenth-century London.

Due to the uncertainty surrounding gatherings, we plan to have the next AGM as a Zoom meeting rather than in Birmingham as originally planned. The AGM is scheduled to take place on 26 June 2021, and in addition to the usual business matters, we hope to include several pre-recorded musical items and one or two short papers. The Edinburgh Conference has been postponed until the summer of 2022. We plan to issue a call for papers this autumn and for the conference itself to take place from 23 to 25 June 2022.

**Lance Whitehead**  
editor@galpinsociety.org

## The metal bows of Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume

There's a certain intellectual laziness in modern writing on the subject of the metal bows of Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume (1798–1875). As usual with violin research, everybody seems to have copied what has been published earlier, without due consideration for its accuracy. It seems that nobody has the skills, or the inclination, to make steel bows any more. Now the prices of old wooden French bows are higher than ever before, and the metal bows are judged increasingly unfairly. And yet Paganini raved about them. This is perhaps the ultimate endorsement: a letter from Paganini to the musicologist François-Joseph Fétis, dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 1834:

Permit me to bring to your attention my opinion about the steel bows invented by M. Vuillaume, which your journal has already mentioned. I must say, in the interest of musical art, these new bows are infinitely preferable and much superior to those of wood, as they combine firmness with a uniform resistance throughout their entire length which I haven't found in other bows; they have a suppleness which makes it easy to produce all the tonal qualities.<sup>1</sup>

Surviving bows by Vuillaume are rare. In my time at Sotheby's (1977–1991) we sold only 25, compared with, for example, 191 by Sartory. The metal bows are even rarer: of the 25 by Vuillaume, just *four* were made of steel. It's easy to see why, though. They're as delicate – possibly *more* delicate – than wooden bows, but effectively not repairable. Well, could your bow specialist mend a broken steel bow?

The history of these bows is shrouded in mystery, not the least of which is the identity of the unknown workman (probably a man) who made them. The names of Vuillaume's other famous bowmakers are well-known. It's also puzzling that they were not patented.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1850 Vuillaume wrote to his London agent Robert Cocks:

[...] the worker doesn't want to make any more unless there's a great quantity. As there is little demand now, I have to give it up.<sup>2</sup>

Twenty-five years later Vuillaume wrote, in a letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> January 1875 to the Director of the Paris Conservatoire, Gustave Chouquet,

[...] I made the steel bow in 1834. I had managed to give it all the qualities sought after in the best wood bows. De Bériot, Artot and other great artists have played them in public and I have sold 5,560 of them. Unfortunately I could not temper them, the great undertaking affected their curve. I therefore had to resort to wood bows again [...]<sup>3</sup>

Despite coming from the horse's mouth, it is not necessarily accurate. Anybody who has read *Reminiscences of a Fiddle Dealer* by David Laurie will know that Vuillaume could be playful with the truth. His assertion that *he* could not temper them is interesting: one of his employees had already tempered 5,560 of them. Or had he? That's a huge number, and, frankly, might be an exaggeration, even if the maker had not fashioned the frogs and screw adjusters.

References are few. One would have expected George Dubourg, *The Violin* (London, 1837), to have mentioned them, but no. Dubourg generally kept pretty much up to speed, and the greatly enlarged fourth edition of 1852 includes information about contemporary virtuosi absent from the earlier edition – Vieuxtemps, Artot, and several others. This 1852 edition does now mention the self-rehairing bows, but, surprisingly, not the metal ones.

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<sup>1</sup> Roger Millant, *J. B. Vuillaume, Sa Vie et son Oeuvre* (London: W.E. Hill & Sons, 1972), plate 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Violins, Vuillaume 1798–1875: A great French violin maker of the 19<sup>th</sup> century* (Paris: Cité de la musique/Musée de la musique, 23 October 1998–31 January 1999), catalogue no. 55, p.213.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, catalogue no. 65, p.220.

The second reference, however, confirms the reason why no more steel bows were made after 1850. In 1876, just 26 years after production ceased, and possibly from first-hand knowledge, Antoine Vidal wrote

For more than ten years about five hundred of these bows left [Vuillaume's] workshops per year, and had among the artists and amateurs a success which did not cease until the day when the worker he had trained and who worked under his direction left him.<sup>4</sup>

Apart from the quantity of bows produced (Vidal would have taken Vuillaume's word for it) it's probably accurate. It makes sense. There was just one worker capable of making these wonderful bows. Vidal adds that De Bériot and Artot amongst others used Vuillaume's metal bows.

The next reference is vague. Peter Davidson, in *The Violin: Its construction theoretically and practically treated*<sup>5</sup> says (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1880, p.187) 'steel is now used in the formation of bows, but wood will always have the preference over metals in the construction of such an article as a violin bow.' Later (p.187) he says 'The price of Vuillaume's bows, made either of wood or steel, with movable hair, and mounted in silver, are 30s each.' (Incidentally, Davidson also mentions the American Johnson's invention of steel bow *hair*. This really didn't stand the test of time.)

In 1883, James Fleming (*Old Violins and their Makers*) states that Vuillaume began to make steel bows in 1834, 'and continued to do so until he lost the workman who fabricated them. They were made of hollow steel tubes, and sold at 25 francs, like his wooden ones. De Bériot and Artot are named as performers, who, among others, played with these bows. He made a great many of them, and they were in favour at one time [...]'<sup>6</sup>

However, every writer since then has been increasingly dismissive of these metal bows.

Joseph Roda (1959) stated that the metal bows date from 1834, and were made for 'about ten years.' There is general agreement about the starting date because of Vuillaume's letter. Roger Millant (1972) said the metal bows were made from 1834 until 1850. At least, that's what his French manuscript said, and that's what Walter Hamma's translation into German said. However, curiously, Desmond Hill's translation into English includes the words '[It] was made for six years up until 1850', which is just poor proofreading.

Could they have been made a few years earlier? The late Bernard Millant, at the Paris 'Vuillaume' symposium in 1998/1999 said

[...] Then, around 1831–2, he started making steel or even nickel silver bows. He mounted the frogs, which was quite normal. Why steel bows? Simply because he thought that wood which is arched will alter with time; it will, with use, become muffled. Steel does not move. But it is very difficult to bend steel and in the end he abandoned the idea.

A little fact-checking can do no harm. Nickel silver? This is wrong. Nickel silver is actually an alloy of mostly copper, about 20% nickel and about 20% zinc. The proportions can vary considerably. Note, no actual silver. Technically it's a kind of brass, but it has no colour. However, it can take a high polish and is used in other musical instruments – flutes and brasswind mostly, for keywork and mounts. It isn't remotely strong or supple enough for the shaft of a violin bow. Note that there is nothing ferrous in it: it cannot be magnetised. Steel, on the other hand, contains iron, and is therefore magnetic. The last three metal bows I've examined were all strongly magnetic. (Sadly, in my ignorance, I did not think to test the two metal bows I'd seen earlier.) Arched wood? If arched wood alters with time, then alas for every old violin. Wood is one of the very few materials known which does not fatigue. This is actually an excellent argument for using pernambuco, of course, but my intention is to sift out the truth here.

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<sup>4</sup> Antoine Vidal, *Les instruments à archet* (Paris, 1876), vol.1, p.278.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Davidson, *The Violin: Its construction theoretically and practically treated* (London, Glasgow and Edinburgh, 1871).

<sup>6</sup> James Fleming, *Old Violins and their Makers* (London, 1883), p.242.



Figure 1. Steel violin bow by Vuillaume. The head, side view. The joint can just be seen about an inch from the head [*photo: Andrew Hooker*]



Figure 2. The same from above. The longitudinal joint is visible [*photo: Andrew Hooker*]

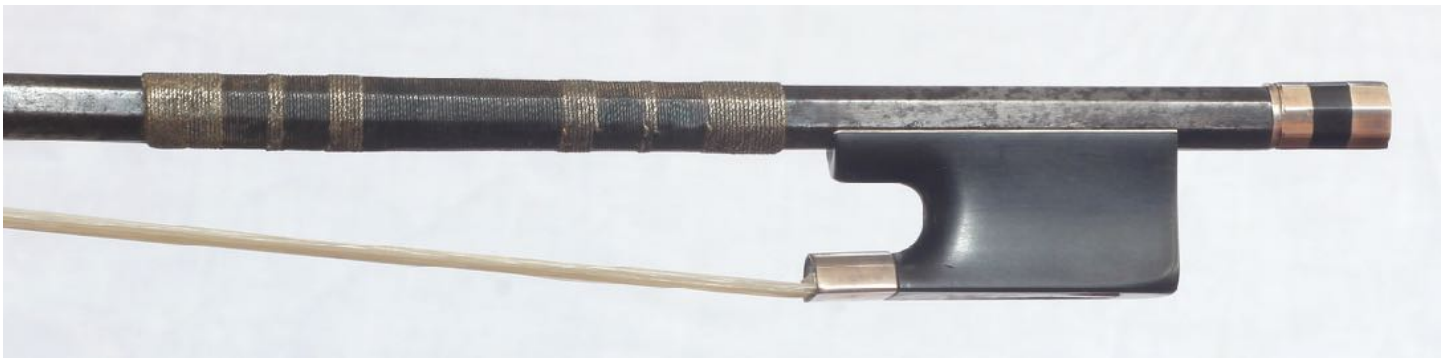


Figure 3. The octagonal section, with the maker's original frog and lapping [*photo: Andrew Hooker*]

The trend to chip away at the reputation of these bows has continued and culminated in the view that Vuillaume stopped making them because they weren't good enough, thus consigning them to one of history's dead ends.

Most recently the four esteemed authors of *L'Archet* (Paris, 2000), (Bernard Millant, Jean-François Raffin, Bernard Gaudfroy and Loïc Le Canu), write

He [Vuillaume] was the inventor, around 1834, of the metal bow (steel or nickel-silver) which he had made by specialised workers [...] These bows were appreciated by certain performers, like Charles de Bériot or Paganini, but after a period of enthusiasm, they realised that these bows did not have the qualities of pernambuco wood, and that the camber and balance could not be modified at will. Production was probably stopped due to insufficient demand, rather than because of technical problems. The ageing of the metal, and the problem of rust, was probably another factor. In the long term, the artist's instincts are always right; wood remains alive, while metal is static.<sup>7</sup>

*Specialised workers.* Who? More than one? The authors have repeated the nonsense about nickel silver, and have offered no references at all for their 'after a period of enthusiasm, they realised that these bows did not have the qualities of pernambuco'. Finally, they state '[...] the artist's instincts are always right; wood remains alive, while metal is static.' Shame on them. This is no more than a silly soundbite. Was Paganini not an artist? Anyway, a spring is not static – indeed it is one of the most perfect ways of storing energy ever conceived.

I have to add here, that these men know more about bows than I do. I hold them in great respect. Their view is not surprising, and is forgivable. The authors are *wooden* bow experts. They know nothing of metallurgy. One can hardly expect them to be fair in a discussion about the merits of metal versus pernambuco bows ... or, come to that, carbon fibre bows. But that's another matter: I'm not going there.

The most recent, and fair, comment I can find is this one:

Controversy has swirled around the question of the steel bow. However, no one who has expressed an opinion on the subject seemed to actually take the time to try it out. As soon as one does, the reason for Paganini's approval of Vuillaume's work is obvious. It is indeed, possessed of suppleness *avec tout le longeur* and more often has the added benefit of ricocheting longer, and slightly slower, than the Tourte model. (Peter Sheppard Skaerved, December 26, 2009).

Hooray for players.

So, now. Let's look at a steel bow by Vuillaume. Remember Paganini's enthusiasm. This one is illustrated in *L'Archet* (Volume 2, page 77, No. 6). It's also visible in the famous photograph of Bernard Millant with 12 of his personal collection of bows. Millant is seated, and none of the bows can be identified, because they're too small ... except for this one. This, with its distinctive swan head, is easy to see, being one of the two on his lap.

The hollow stick is tapered according to the well-known Vuillaume formula. Instead of being planed and sanded into shape, it was made from a single flat sheet of steel. This was a regular tapering triangular section, which was heated and bent round a tapering mould, the long sides of which were then welded together. Welded; not brazed. There is no filler. These long sides were accurately chamfered first, to avoid the V-shaped trench that would have resulted when the edges met. The long weld was then polished until it was unobtrusive. After this was done the central inner mould was extracted from the thick end. The head was added afterwards.

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<sup>7</sup> Bernard Millant, Jean-François Raffin, Bernard Gaudfroy and Loïc Le Canu, *L'Archet* (Paris, 2000), p.66.

There is no joint between the round stick and the octagonal section. This is the area covered by lapping, and, as the lapping on this example is original, it has not been removed. I am grateful to Michael Taylor, one of the few people alive to have worked on Vuillaume's metal bows, for telling me that there is no joint underneath. The octagonal section is not tapered and is not completely hollow. At first glance there seems to be a normal amount of material around the mortice, and around the hole for the screw. And there is, because a closer look shows that this section of the shaft is in fact wooden, with only a thin covering of steel on the outside. The wood acts as a bearing for the screw. There is another solid section beyond the reach of the screw, 48.9mm from the end. Without destroying the shaft there's no way to tell how far this solid plug extends, for X-rays, so useful for researching old musical instruments normally, cannot penetrate steel. I suppose this plug is to strengthen the area between the hollow round section and the octagonal mortise area.

The head, however, is made separately and added to the end of the shaft. It's joined to the 'stick' a little less than an inch along the shaft. I am sure that there must be a solid bit here too, because joining a hollow head to a hollow – and slender – stick at this load-bearing point would be almost impossible otherwise. In all cases the joints are well polished: you wouldn't notice them unless you were looking for them.

There has been some puzzlement that the heads of the metal bows are of the swan-neck variety. By 1834 these were distinctly old-fashioned. Why, then, revert to this type? Well, consider its construction. A carved head can accommodate the sharp curve: being in one piece it is generally strong enough for the job, but only just: this is by far the weakest part of the bow. The metal head, though, is not solid but is made from two symmetrical halves, welded together. There is an almost invisible seam along the front and at the back. If the metal bow followed the more modern hatchet shape there would be far less area available to weld. A swan head, in two halves, has a far larger joint, making it easier to produce and intrinsically stronger than a hatchet-shape.

Finally, the hollow steel shafts must have been re-heated to a lesser extent, that is, *annealed* in order to curve the stick. The fittings – the screw adjuster and the frog – were, I expect, made by someone else in Vuillaume's workshop. The fittings of these steel bows vary considerably in quality, from having half-mounted plain ebony frogs, to having frogs fitted with the intricate lens and transparency arrangement: a Vuillaume speciality. There is even an example with the self-rehairing apparatus. This, of course, requires a cylindrical aperture in the head. In the metal bows so fitted the head remains of the swan-necked variety.

Who was the maker? Somebody who could work strong steel to a very high degree of accuracy. A gunsmith, perhaps? A swordsmith? A loriner? The finish of Vuillaume's steel bows is very similar to the virtuoso metalwork of the early nineteenth century found on upmarket horse equipment. Before one could buy an expensive car, the horse, its trappings and the carriages it pulled were the most visible evidence of the wealth of the traveller. By 1834 the first railways had appeared in France, and the end was in sight for the craft of lorinery. Or again, perhaps a jeweller. There was a large production of cut steel jewellery in France around 1820. It was fashionable. There were sumptuary laws against the wearing of precious metals and gems. But fashions are transient: our man (*probably* a man) might have been a former jeweller.

**Andrew Hooker**  
andrew.hooker@aviolin.com



# Unpicking the myths and hearsay surrounding the double-manual harpsichord by Burkat Shudi, MIMEd 4341

One of the late eighteenth-century London-made harpsichords in the Musical Instrument Collection at the University of Edinburgh is a double-manual instrument by Burkat Shudi (i) (1702–73). One of the central narratives associated with this harpsichord is the possibility that it was once played by Mozart (1756–91).<sup>8</sup> Many visitors to the Museum like to believe such stories as it gives artefacts additional meanings and enables people to find connections to unfamiliar objects which would otherwise be elusive. However, museum professionals and academic researchers have a duty to unpick such stories to discover if they are plausible. To this end, the evidence associating the Shudi harpsichord MIMEd 4341 with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart has been examined and reassessed.

There are two ways in which this instrument is reported to have been touched by Mozart. The first has so far been traced back to a statement made in *The Scotsman* newspaper in 1947. At this date, the instrument belonged to the Hodge family. In ‘An Appreciation’ for the late Mr Harry Hodge, the writer states that ‘His harpsichord [is] reputed to be one of the finest extant and [was] used by Mozart in his visit to London’.<sup>9</sup> It is presumed that the author of the notice was given this information, perhaps by Harry or another family member, but the original source has not been established. According to Boalch, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, p.174, ‘Mozart played the 2-manual harpsichord [...] (numbered 496), which Shudi presented to Frederick the Great the following year.’ More to the point, though, can it be true? The short answer is ‘no’. Leopold took his children to London in April 1764 and stayed there until July 1765.<sup>10</sup> The Shudi harpsichord under scrutiny is dated 1766 and numbered 529, so, assuming that the date is legitimate – certainly the serial number and date

correlate with similar data found on other Shudi instruments – could not have been played by the Mozarts in the previous year. Mozart never returned to the British capital, so the statement as a whole is untrue.

The second possibility is more complex and harder to untangle, but relates to owners of Shudi harpsichords with the surname Hamilton. The case appears to rest on three written statements:

- Leopold Mozart reports in a letter of 19 May 1770 that the first Lady Hamilton had a ‘valuable instrument made in England by Burkat Tschudi, with 2 manuals and pedal stops that can be uncoupled by means of the foot.’<sup>11</sup>
- Charles Burney, in *The Present State of Music in France and Italy* (London, 1771), p.289, also reports that the ‘Hon Mrs Hamilton’ owns a harpsichord by Shudi, but offers no further details.
- A. J. Hipkins, in *A Description and History of the Pianoforte and of the Older Keyboard Stringed Instruments* (London & New York: Novello, Ewer & Co, 1896), p.90 states in a footnote that ‘Mr. H. Vivian Hamilton owns a Shudi harpsichord with a Venetian swell, dated 1766’.

These statements have apparently been conflated, based partly on the assumption that H Vivian Hamilton is a descendant of Sir William, and applied to the instrument in the Edinburgh collection. Two related questions arise: was MIMEd 4341 owned by either of these Hamiltons and is it the same harpsichord?

Sir William Hamilton (1730–1803) was the special envoy to the Kingdom of Naples from 1764 until 1798, and, as a vulcanologist, took the opportunity to study the eruptions of Vesuvius while he was there. He is possibly best remembered for his second wife, Emma, who became Lord Nelson’s lover.<sup>12</sup> We can turn to portraiture to gain some

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, the datasheet produced in 1998: ‘There is an oral tradition that this harpsichord was the one owned by Sir William Hamilton, who was the English ambassador in Naples at the time when the Mozart’s visited the Hamiltons there. If so then it is likely that, as this oral tradition would have it, it was played by Mozart during his visit in May of 1770.’

<sup>9</sup> *The Scotsman*, Edinburgh, 16 December 1947.

<sup>10</sup> Grove Music ([oxfordmusiconline.com](http://oxfordmusiconline.com)), entry for Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, by Cliff Eisen and Stanley Sadie.

<sup>11</sup> Mozart & Material Culture website, <https://mmc.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/entities/person/hamilton-catherine-1738-1782/>

<sup>12</sup> Flora Fraser, *Beloved Emma* (London: Papermac, 1999).

idea of the keyboard instruments to which the Hamiltons had access. Firstly, a portrait by the Scottish painter David Allan (1744–96) of Sir William and Lady Catherine (née Barlow, 1758–82) places them in their villa near Naples in 1770.<sup>13</sup> Sir William’s violin is on the table behind him, while Lady Hamilton plays a compact square piano. There is no sign of a harpsichord.

The second painting is in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh and includes Sir William playing his violin. The setting for this is the Neapolitan apartment of Lord Fortrose in 1771 and includes a group of men playing chamber music.<sup>14</sup> It has been proposed that the two keyboard players are Leopold and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but neither is seated at a large British harpsichord: the harpsichord, probably being played by Leopold, has the slender outline of instruments made in Naples, while the smaller instrument, probably under the fingers of Wolfgang, is a small spinet.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, Lady Hamilton is not present and the location is not one of the Hamilton residences.

No further iconographical sources have been traced, so we must instead return to the written sources. Leopold’s description indicates that Lady Hamilton’s harpsichord was a ‘valuable instrument made in England by Burkat Tschudi, with 2 manuals and pedal stops that can be uncoupled by means of the foot’. These pedal stops presumably relate to what is commonly called the ‘machine’, whereby players can move the registers to engage or disengage sets of strings without needing to use the hand stops. This enables changes in registration to be performed without

interrupting the flow of the music. Although some surviving instruments, including Shudi MIMEd 4341, have just one pedal dedicated to the machine, there are also examples where two pedals are used, such as the harpsichord by Robert Falkener, MIMEd 4316. What is notable, however, is that Leopold does not refer to a swell mechanism. Since the Venetian swell was a new feature at that date, it would have been noteworthy, particularly for a musician such as Leopold. His failure to mention it arises suspicions that this is not the same instrument.<sup>16</sup> Leopold also does not mention the date of Lady Hamilton’s harpsichord, so theoretically it could have been any instrument made before their visit in May 1770, potentially one of around 600 instruments.<sup>17</sup>

Taking another route and given that Lady Hamilton did have a Shudi harpsichord, is it possible to establish what happened to it? Catherine Hamilton died in 1782 having bequeathed all of her possessions to her husband.<sup>18</sup> There is no specific mention of the instrument in her will. Sir William remarried, the second Lady Hamilton becoming famous, if not notorious, in her own right. Emma is said to have been musical, but no references indicating the makers of any of her instruments have been found. However, it is possible that Emma played Catherine’s Shudi in Naples. What happened to the instrument next is not known. However, Emma did write that in supporting the Neapolitan royal family to leave Naples somewhat abruptly in 1798, Sir William and she were forced to ‘abandon [their] houses and all [their] valuables as they stood’.<sup>19</sup> This could have included their keyboard instruments.

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<sup>13</sup> This is now in the Compton Verney Collection, <https://www.comptonverney.org.uk/>, oil on copper, 45cm x 57cm.

<sup>14</sup> Pietro Fabris, 1771, oil on canvas, 35.5cm x 47.6cm, PG 2611.

<sup>15</sup> For further discussion of this painting and of Neapolitan harpsichords, see Dr Grant O’Brien’s thoughts at [www.claviantica.com](http://www.claviantica.com)

<sup>16</sup> Another more remote possibility is that MIMEd 4341 did not originally have a swell mechanism and it was added after 1769 when Shudi was granted his patent (No 947, 18 December 1769). See B. Woodcroft (1871), *Patents for Inventions: Abridgements of Specifications relating to Music and Musical Instruments, 1694–1866*, second edition (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode), facsimile printed by Tony Bingham, London, 1984, p.6.

<sup>17</sup> From a survey of known Shudi instruments and their serial numbers listed in Boalch made between 1740 and 1771 it appears that the firm was producing between 15 and 20 instruments per year. See Donald H. Boalch, *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord 1440–1840*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, edited by Charles Mould (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp.613–9.

<sup>18</sup> TNA PROB 11/1107/335, signed on 4 September 1772, proved on 23 August 1783.

<sup>19</sup> Fraser (1999), p.356.

Neither Lady Hamilton produced a male heir, so there is no next generation of Hamiltons. Even Sir William's brothers had girls, so it's very unlikely that the instrument passed down the family and remained in the hands of a Hamilton. Indeed, Emma was in such dire financial straits at the end of her life that she died in severely reduced circumstances in France.<sup>20</sup> By this time, a harpsichord would not have been a priority for her. Based on current information, it is therefore not possible to establish who the next owners of Catherine's Shudi were, or even if it ever returned to Britain.

Next, we can try starting in the present and travelling backwards in time to explore the history of the 1766 instrument, serial number 529. This harpsichord joined the Collection at the University of Edinburgh in 1991, from the descendants of Mr William Thomas (d.1989) who reportedly obtained it from Harry Hodge. It has been assumed that this is the same instrument referred to by A. J. Hipkins in 1896. In a section of his *Description and History of the Pianoforte*, a footnote supporting the description of Shudi's Venetian Swell states that 'Mr. H. Vivian Hamilton owns a Shudi harpsichord with a Venetian swell, dated 1766'.<sup>21</sup> This at least has two facts that match with the Edinburgh instrument: the swell and the date. But what of H. Vivian Hamilton and any links with Sir William?

H. Vivian Hamilton appears only a few times in digitised archives. He seems to have been a school friend of the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) at Charterhouse, where they played music together.<sup>22</sup> Hamilton went on to be a professional pianist of some note, although reviews in the newspapers were mixed.<sup>23</sup> We find from war records at The National Archives that Hamilton's first name was Herbert and that he served in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserves from 1 January 1917. He was born on 8 June 1872 and, although reportedly was 'Inexperienced and somewhat slow to learn' as a Sub Lieutenant undertaking ground

duties, he was also an 'Extremely G[ood] Musician'.<sup>24</sup> The information contained here – the first name and date of birth – enabled a search of family records to be undertaken and a proposed line of descent on the paternal side constructed.

From the website [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org), we know that Herbert Vivian Hamilton, born on 8 June 1872, was the son of Walter Robert and Frances Rachel Hamilton and was born in Mozuferpore, Bengal, India. Walter Robert Hamilton (b. 18 October 1841, Agra, West Bengal) and Frances Rachel née Abercrombie married when Walter was 29 in 1871, in Patna, Bengal. Walter was the son of George William Hamilton, christened on 6 February 1827 in Benares, Bengal, and his wife Charlotte. This takes Vivian Hamilton's family back to 1827 in the Bengal area of India. There is no indication at all that there is any connection with Sir William and Lady Catherine or their families.

Overall then, there is no evidence that Shudi number 529 had any contact with the Mozart family or even with Lady Catherine Hamilton. Although the perceived value of an instrument can be inflated through an association, even tenuous, with a famous individual, it is dangerous to build narratives based on flimsy coincidences. As Mark Twain may have said, but probably didn't, 'Never let the facts get in the way of a good story'. However, perhaps we should instead write good stories about musical instruments that are based on what we do know or can demonstrate. Although the Shudi harpsichord in the University of Edinburgh collection was probably never touched by Mozart, it stands as evidence of the skill of Burkat Shudi and his workers and is a splendid example of a late eighteenth-century British harpsichord. A more important question might be: is this the earliest surviving example of Shudi's Venetian Swell, which was patented in 1769, three years after this harpsichord was made?

**Jenny Nex**

Jenny.Nex@ed.ac.uk

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<sup>20</sup> Fraser (1999), pp.366–71.

<sup>21</sup> A. J. Hipkins, *A Description and History of the Pianoforte* (London & New York: Novello Ewer & Co. 1896), footnote p.90.

<sup>22</sup> Billy Joe Edmonds, *Harmony in the Symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, MMus thesis, North Texas State College, 1958. [https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc663320/m2/1/high\\_res\\_d/1002774410-Edmonds.pdf](https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc663320/m2/1/high_res_d/1002774410-Edmonds.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, *Hastings and St Leonards Observer*, Saturday 10 October 1903, issue 2391.

<sup>24</sup> TNA ADM 273/14/36.

## 2020 Anthony Baines Memorial Prize

The Galpin Society confers the twenty-second  
Anthony Baines Memorial Prize on  
**Peter Bavington**

In recognition of his outstanding work in early keyboard instrument making and research, and for his particular contribution to the study of, and revival of interest in, historical clavichords. Over the decades, Peter has produced outstanding clavichords which have inspired countless performers as well as other builders. His practical work is complemented by technical drawings, research documents and numerous articles, including those on Arnold Dolmetsch's earliest clavichords, all of which have become benchmark references in the field. His practical manual, *Clavichord Tuning and Maintenance*, recently released in a third and expanded edition, remains a touchstone for early keyboard owners, restorers and scholars alike. Peter's reconstruction of a clavichord based principally on the description and drawing in Marin Mersenne's *Harmonie Universelle* (1636) deserves special note for its insights into building practices of the time and its pleasing musical qualities. Peter was a founding member of the British Clavichord Society and served as its first chairman. He was also a mainstay of the annual Clavichord Symposiums held in Magnano, Italy, since their inception in 1993, and from which so much excellent research has issued. Peter's openness in sharing his research and knowledge, both through his website and in person, has been appreciated widely by colleagues, museum curators and aspiring early keyboard specialists.



Peter trying the tuning of one of his clavichords in Studio No. 1 at Abbey Road in 2007  
[photo: ?Guy Sigsworth]

# NOTICES

## *Brussels Trio Sonatas*

### **Project Boussu**

Ann Cnop (violin), Shiho Ono (violin) and Mathilde Wolfs (cello)

Etcetera Records (released 4 October 2020)

KTC 1679; 8711801016795

€21.50

This CD features Trio Sonatas by three composers active in eighteenth-century Brussels: Henri-Jacques De Croes (1705–1786), Pieter Van Maldere (1729–1768) and Eugène Godecharle (1742–1798). These rarely heard works are played on instruments all made by Geerten Verberkmoes after originals by the Brussels-based luthier Benoit Joseph Boussu (1703–1773). The original instruments are preserved in the Brussels Musical Instrument Museum.

<https://www.etcetera-records.com/album/743/brussels-trio-sonatas>



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## **Historic Brass Society Symposium**

24–26 May 2021

The Historic Brass Society will host a Virtual Symposium on ‘Pond Life: Crosscurrents over the Atlantic’, with online presentations and discussion sessions, along with performances livestreamed from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the University of St Andrews. Currently scheduled sessions and events:

- a panel discussion on the *Development of the Brass Quintet and Brass Chamber Music*, moderated by John Miller with former members of the New York Brass Quintet, Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, American Brass Quintet, and Fine Arts Brass Ensemble
- *The History and Development of British Dance Bands*, a presentation by Prof. James Nott (Professor of History at St. Andrews) and a live performance of dance band repertoire from 1920–1960 by the Fife Youth Jazz Orchestra with Richard Michael (jazz educator)
- *Highlights of the Webb Collection* and brass archives at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, led by Arnold Myers
- a Finale Concert by The Wallace Collection, performing original 19th-century small brass ensemble music using instruments from the Webb Collection and private sources.

Other topics will include: ancient sound tools, modern instruments and sound exchanges; 19<sup>th</sup>-century performance practices; repertoire, composers and performers; brass instrument design and development; publishing and manufacturing.

To avoid technical issues, we anticipate using pre-recorded presentations with live discussion sessions to follow immediately. We welcome presentations of up to 20 minutes, shorter presentations (please indicate timing), musical performances, and instrument demonstrations; we encourage using the full range of possibilities when creating a recorded presentation. We hope to make papers available in some format in advance to facilitate participant involvement and discussion on an optional basis for participants. All sessions will be scheduled to allow at least 10 minutes for questions and comments after each presentation.

The full Call for Presentations (due 19 February 2021), as well as additional information and updates about the Symposium can be found at [www.historicbrass.org](http://www.historicbrass.org) Contact: Sandy Coffin [scoffintpt@gmail.com](mailto:scoffintpt@gmail.com)

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

### *Erard, A Passion for the Piano*

**Robert Adelson**

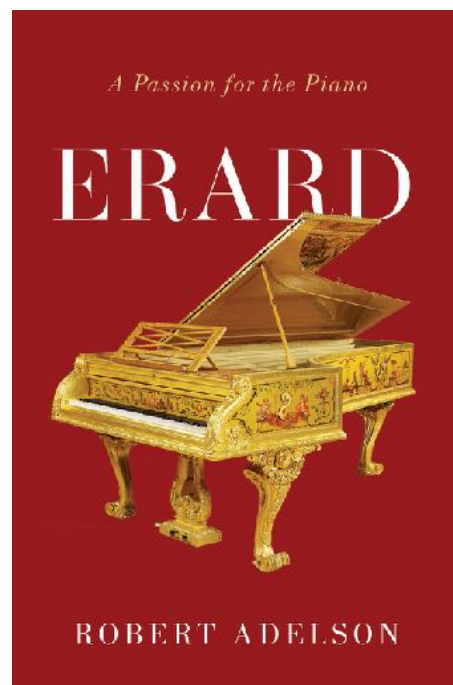
Oxford University Press (5 March 2021)

264 pages, 23.5x15.6cm, hardback; £47.99; ISBN 9780197565315

Sébastien Erard's (1752–1831) inventions have had an enormous impact on instruments and musical life and are still at the foundation of piano building today. Drawing on an unusually rich set of archives from both the Erard firm and the Erard family, author Robert Adelson shows how the Erard piano played an important and often leading role in the history of the instrument, beginning in the late eighteenth century and continuing into the final decades of the nineteenth.

The Erards were the first piano builders in France to prioritise the more sonorous grand piano, sending gifts of their new model to both Haydn and Beethoven. Erard's famous double-escapement action, which improved the instrument's response while at the same time producing a more powerful tone, revolutionised both piano construction and repertoire. Thanks to these inventions, the Erard firm developed close relationships with the greatest pianist composers of the nineteenth century, including Hummel, Liszt, Moscheles and Mendelssohn. The book also presents new evidence concerning Pierre Erard's homosexuality, which helps us to understand his reluctance to found a family to carry on the Erard tradition, a reluctance that would spell the end of the golden era of the firm and lead to its eventual demise. The book closes with the story of Pierre's widow Camille, who directed the firm from 1855 until 1889. Her influential position in the male-dominated world of instrument building was unique for a woman of her time.

<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/erard-9780197565315?q=erard%20passion&lang=en&cc=us>



### *Harp Making in Late-Georgian London*

**Mike Baldwin**

Bright Light Books (2020)

413 pages, 145 illustrations, 28.5x21.1cm, hardback

£60.00; ISBN 9781527265110

At the end of the eighteenth century, after the French Revolution, the centre of pedal-harp making moved from Paris to London. There, building on the work of its Bavarian originators and Parisian developers, mainly immigrant makers elevated the instrument to new musical, technical, and decorative heights, and placed it in the hands and salons of the British upper classes and aristocracy. Until recently, the story of harp making in England has been dominated by the Erard family who built about 7,000 of an estimated 22,000 harps made in London during the nineteenth century; some 20 other makers have been all but forgotten. This book, the story of harp making in late-Georgian England, assesses the role and consumption of the harp in society whilst describing its decorative and technical development. Forgotten makers and their innovations are identified. Through the lens of newly

discovered documents and the reinterpretation of others, Jacob Erat's manufactories are reconstructed. His working methods, illustrative of those used in the wider industry, are rediscovered, and employees and suppliers are revealed anew.

<https://www.mike-baldwin.net>

*Joachim Tielke. Neue Funde zu Werk und Wirkung / New Finds on his Œuvre and Impact*  
**Friedemann and Barbara Hellwig**

Deutscher Kunstverlag (June 2020)  
80 pages, 28.6x21.5cm, hardback  
€29.95, ISBN 9783422982116

Five instruments from the Tielke workshop have recently come to light, two lutes, an angélique, a pochette and a baryton – sufficient reason to produce a small volume supplementing our comprehensive publication of 2011. The newly found instruments raise the number of works from the famous Hamburg instrument maker's shop from 169 to 174. The new publication deals with aspects and open questions of Tielke's work and his impact on later instrument making, in addition there are remarks on instruments already described in the 2011 volume. Also included are three slightly modified contributions to the *Festschrift für Friedemann Hellwig* on the dendrochronological examination of instruments by Joachim Tielke (by Micha Beuting and Peter Klein), on the technique of making a Tielke guitar (by Sebastian Kirsch) and on Richard Weissgerber's 'Tielke-Model' and the 19<sup>th</sup>-century historicising guitar making (by Andreas Michel). A complete and updated list of all works by Joachim Tielke complete this volume.

[http://www.tielke-hamburg.de/htm\\_english/ergaenzungsband.htm](http://www.tielke-hamburg.de/htm_english/ergaenzungsband.htm)



*Sébastien Erard – the greatest harp and piano builder of all time*

**Amities Frits Janmaat**

Maison Erard, Frits Janmaat (Dutch: 2019, English: 2020, French: March 2021)  
488 pages, 28.5x24.0cm, hardback; €165 including shipment,  
ISBN 9789083041315

The Amsterdam master restorer Frits Janmaat (1956), specialist in Erard pianos, describes the eventful life of the man who invented one of the most important piano and harp brands in the world. The book by Frits Janmaat, owner of Mansion Erard in Enkhuizen, is not only a tribute to the ingenuity of Sébastien Erard, but also gives the reader an insight into the musical life of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The volume includes a compilation of 2,500 letters written between members of the Erard family during the first half of the nineteenth century.

<https://erard.nl/order-book/>

## *The Flageolet in England, 1660-1914*

**Douglas MacMillan**

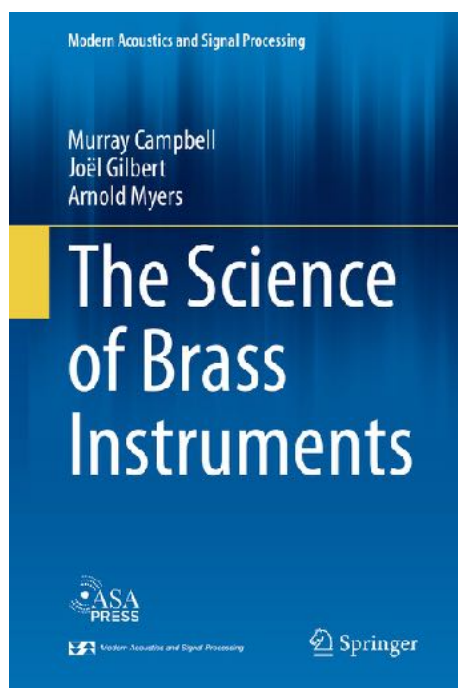
Boydell Press (August 2020)

217 pages, 23.4x15.6cm, hardback

£65.00, ISBN 9781783275489

The flageolet occupies a unique niche in musical history, and this book traces its history from its beginnings to its peak of popularity in the nineteenth century. The flageolet is a recorder-like instrument whose history may be traced back to the seventeenth century. Predominantly an instrument of the amateur, the flageolet seldom featured in the orchestra but nevertheless occupied a small but unique niche in musical history. MacMillan traces the history of the instrument from its origin through to its heyday in England in the nineteenth century. The book is centred on an organological study of the flageolet, coupled with discussion of its repertoire, pedagogy, and place in musical society. It will be of interest to woodwind organologists, players of the flute and recorder, and to those who study the integration of musical instruments and their repertoire in relation to societal aspects of musical practice.

<https://boydellandbrewer.com/9781783275489/the-flageolet-in-england-1660-1914/>



## *The Science of Brass Instruments*

**Murray Campbell, Joël Gilbert, Arnold Myers**

Springer (ebook 19 January 2021; hardback 20 February 2021)

443 pages

Online £79.50, ISBN 9783030556860

Print £99.99, ISBN 9783030556846

This book provides an in-depth account of the fascinating but far from simple actions and processes that take place when a brass instrument is played. Written by three leading researchers in brass instrument acoustics who are also experienced brass players, it draws together the many recent advances in our understanding of the subtly interrelated factors shaping the musician's control of the instrument's sound. The reader is introduced to models of sound generation, propagation and radiation. In particular, the current understanding of the behaviour of the player's lips, the modes of vibration of the air column inside the instrument, and the radiation of sound from a brass instrument bell are explained. The functions of the mouthpiece and of mutes are discussed. Spectral enrichment arising from nonlinear propagation of the internal sound wave in loud playing is shown to be an important influence on the timbre of many types of brass

instrument. The characteristics of brass instruments in contemporary use (including cornets, trumpets, french horns, trombones and tubas) are identified, and related to those of the great variety of instruments at earlier stages in the evolution of the brass family. This copiously illustrated book concludes with case studies of the recreation of ancient instruments and some of the current applications of electronics and information technology to brass instrument performance. While most of the material presented is accessible by a general readership, the topic of musical instrument modelling is developed at a mathematical level which makes it a useful academic resource for advanced teaching and research.

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-55686-0>



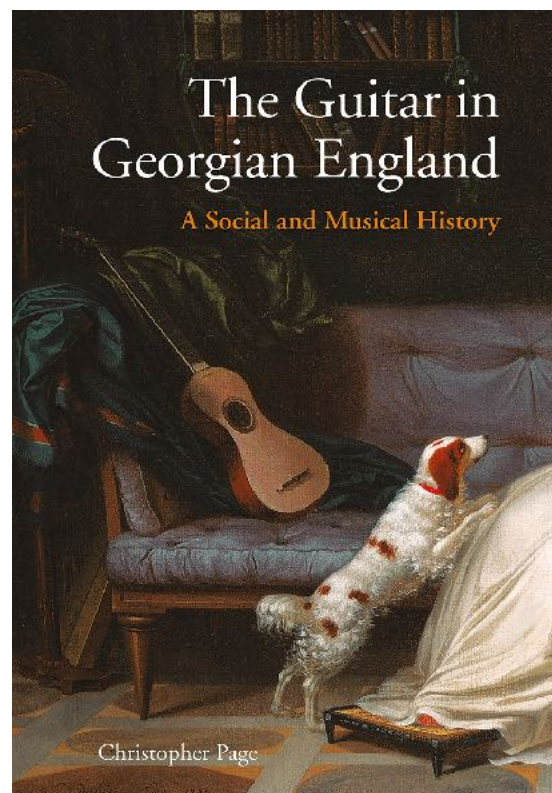
*The Guitar in Georgian England:  
A Social and Musical History*  
**Christopher Page**

Yale University Press (13 October 2020)  
304 pages, 20 colour + 30 b-w illustrations, 229x152mm,  
hardback  
£30.00, ISBN 9780300212471

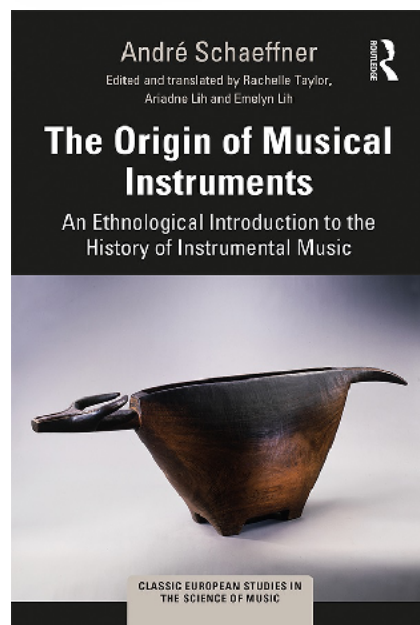
A fascinating social history of the guitar, reasserting its long-forgotten importance in Romantic England.

This book is the first to explore the popularity and novelty of the guitar in Georgian England, noting its impact on the social, cultural, and musical history of the period. The instrument possessed an imagery as rich as its uses were varied; it emerged as a potent symbol of Romanticism and was incorporated into poetry, portraiture, and drama. In addition, British and Irish soldiers returning from war in Spain and Portugal brought with them knowledge of the Spanish guitar and its connotations of stylish masculinity. Christopher Page presents entirely new scholarship in order to place the guitar within a multifaceted context, drawing from recently digitized original source material. *The Guitar in Georgian England* champions an instrument whose importance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is often overlooked.

<https://yalebooks.co.uk/display.asp?k=9780300212471>



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*The Origin of Musical Instruments, An Ethnological  
Introduction to the History of Instrumental Music*  
**André Schaeffner**

Edited and translated by Rachelle Taylor, Ariadne Lih and Emelyn Lih  
Routledge (February 2020)  
418 pages, 103 black and white illustrations  
eBook £40.49, hardback £130.00, ISBN 9781472463999

The work of French musicologist, ethnologist and critic Andre Schaeffner (1895–1980) grew out of his first organological studies of the history of Western classical instruments in the late 1920s and encapsulated in his wide-ranging *Origine des instruments de musique*, which captures his studies in Paris between 1931 and 1936.

Almost 80 years after its first publication, the scientific relevance and influence of Schaeffner's primary hypothesis—that the origins of music can be traced to the human body through gesture, dance and the movements in the use of musical instruments and their ancestor tools—remains pertinent in

fields which have returned to informed speculative and empirical research on the origins of music.

This first English edition is accompanied by editorial footnotes and introductory texts, and the influence of Schaeffner's thought on several generations of musicologists makes his work an essential piece of reading for ethnomusicologists, music psychologists, organologists and musicologists interested in the history of their field.

<https://www.routledge.com/The-Origin-of-Musical-Instruments-An-Ethnological-Introduction-to-the-History/Schaeffner-Taylor/p/book/9781472463999>