



THE GALPIN SOCIETY

FOR THE STUDY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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Antoine Jean Bail, 'La Fanfare de Bois-le-Roi' (see Editorial)

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THE GALPIN SOCIETY

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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: Antoine Jean Bail, 'La Fanfare de Bois-le-Roi', Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon. *Photo: Jenny Nex*

NOTICE

Musical Museum Faces Existential Threat, Appeal for Urgent Support

The Musical Museum is on the brink of closure and has issued a desperate plea for financial assistance to secure its future. Established 60 years ago as a registered UK charity, the Musical Museum has been a beacon for both music and technology enthusiasts, attracting visitors with its remarkable collection spanning tiny music boxes from the 19th century, player-pianos and orchestrions from the 20th century, and the mighty Wurlitzer theatre organ. It also houses the national archive of more than 20,000 music rolls, vinyl, cylinders amongst other rare artefacts showcasing the history of sound production. These are extremely invaluable sources to music research needing greater attention.

Over the past 5 years, the Museum have experienced severe setbacks caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and huge increases in utility bills. The Museum has struggled valiantly to reduce expenses as far as possible: trustees and volunteers have always served without compensation, and core employees are at risk of redundancy. Sadly, without immediate financial assistance, closure looms as early as April 2024. The Museum Team has now launched a GoFundMe campaign www.gofundme.com/f/musicalmuseum. With a target to raise at least £60k, the fund will relieve the current situation while we implement a revised strategy to safeguard its collection for future generations.

For more information about the Musical Museum, please visit www.musicalmuseum.co.uk/

With hope,

Dr Joyce Tang (Trustee Head Archivist), Musical Museum Brentford

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first Galpin Newsletter of 2024. This issue contains the revised subscription rates for membership of the Society, as well as revised rates for advertisements published in the Journal. The same information is also listed on our website and for any queries do contact either Chris Goodwin (admin[at]galpinsociety.org) or Michael Fleming (journal[at]galpinsociety.org).

I am pleased to advertise four new books in this Newsletter: Erling Lomnäs' *Geometrical Proportions in Classical Violin Design: A Report on the Rules of the Old Masters*; Rachel Willson's *The Oud: An Illustrated History*; Damián Martín-Gil's *The Classical Guitar in Spain, Portugal, Italy & Germany. A General Approach to Its History*; and Michael Latcham's *Carlo Broschi Farinelli. A Manuscript Description of the Operas and Festivities at the Spanish Court 1747–1758*. There is also a notification of a new online saxophone museum launched by Dr Andreas van Zoelen, and two conference notices: one on the topic of Archaeo-Musicology and Archaeo-Luthiery at the University of Rome (scheduled for 28–31 August 2024); and one on The Pipe Organ as a Site for Musical and Technological Innovation at City, University of London, in collaboration with the Royal Musical Association (scheduled for 6 September 2024). Our own conference is being hosted by the Faculty of Music and the Bate Collection at the University of Oxford from 27 to 30 June 2024, on the theme of Materiality and the Meaning of Musical Instruments. The Annual General Meeting will be held in Oxford on Saturday 29 June at 3pm.

In our last Newsletter, Alasdair Mclean asked for help in identifying an instrument he had recently acquired, its possible age, maker and country of origin. Cary Karp has been able to identify the mystery object and has written a short summary for the Newsletter, and provided a link to his website, where readers can find a more detailed description of the instrument. Interestingly, the mystery instrument has proved to be useful for Cary's own research.

I would like to conclude by posing readers with another research question. On a family holiday to Lyon, a painting by Antoine Jean Bail (1830–1918) caught our attention in the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon. The work, entitled 'La Fanfare de Bois-le-Roi' (see p.1), dates from 1881 and appears to show the local town band or *fanfare* of Bois-le-Roi, a small town in the Seine-et-Marne department of France. If anyone can identify the firm(s) who may have supplied the band with their instruments, specific models, and perhaps even shed any light on the players themselves please do let me know and I will publish the findings in our next Newsletter.

We are all looking forward to receiving this year's Journal, and it is anticipated that it will be published in March. I would like to thank all the authors, readers for their contributions to the Journal, and especially Michael Fleming for his page setting.

Lance Whitehead

Subscription Rates — and a PDF copy of the *GSJ* on demand, from 1 April 2024

To meet rising postage costs, which for years have been running faster than inflation, the committee has determined that we need to increase subscription rates, with effect from 1 April 2024 (i.e. for the 2025 journal).

The new rates will be as follows:

Individual member UK £39 / overseas £49

Institution UK £62 / overseas £72

Student/under-25 UK £19.50 / overseas £24.50

Joint members UK £41 / overseas £51

On a more positive note, following the recent survey of members, it seems that four out of five subscribers would like the option of a PDF copy of the journal, at least as an optional add-on, so members in good standing will be able to ask for a PDF copy of the 2024 issue of the *GSJ* — just write to me at admin[at]galpinsociety.org to ask for your copy, after 1 April, if you want one.

Moreover, a motion will be put to the AGM on 29 June to establish the option of a PDF-only membership. If approved, a PDF version will be offered at a reduced subscription, presumably from the 2026 issue onwards.

Please adjust your standing order!

Well over 100 UK members pay their subscription by standing order, mostly in the first half of April. If you are one of those, please adjust your standing order in time; it needs to go up to £39 for an individual, or £41 for joint members. We really do need this to happen; postal inflation has been so steep that the Society will start to incur unsustainable losses without this 'course correction'.

Help! We need some journals back!

You may well have noticed, wherever you live in the world, that postal services are not what they used to be. This year so many copies of the *GSJ* were lost in the post that we have run out of replacement copies; all the extra copies we had printed have been used up. So, we need to buy back one or two journals to meet outstanding requests for copies which never arrived. Would you be prepared to exchange your physical copy for a PDF copy, for a small financial consideration? If so, please contact me at [admin\[at\]galpinsociety.org](mailto:admin[at]galpinsociety.org)

Christopher Goodwin, GS Administrator

New advertising rates for *The Galpin Society Journal*

The rates for advertising in the journal have not changed since 2015, so from the next volume, the cost will increase slightly. The new rates are as follows: Full page £150 / Half page £85 / Quarter page £58

New Online Saxophone Museum Launched

A new online saxophone museum has recently been launched by Dr Andreas van Zoelen. Andreas, whose PhD topic was 'A history of the Raschèr tradition with a link to the philosophy of Adolphe Sax', hopes it will be a platform for meeting, inspiration, communication, exchange of ideas and insights into the world of saxophones.

See: www.saxophonemuseum.online



Andreas van Zoelen with two saxophones: a Buescher Aristocrat I (1939), and an Adolphe Sax (1861), with original mouthpiece

Photo © Felix Broede



Saxophone by Adolphe Sax (1856).

Photo © Andreas van Zoelen

Mystery Objects and Autoharps

The unidentified object shown on p.10 of *GSN* 67 (see again, below) can, I believe, properly be labelled a 'keyboard autoharp'. (If that judgement is questioned, 'keyboard zither' is also fine.) Such instruments are seen in US and European patents beginning in 1888. They were developed into a distinctive form in Russia by the early twentieth century, where they retain a central position in traditional ensembles and are also used in classical contexts.

The primary functional difference between a conventional chord-bar autoharp and the keyboard form is that a chord bar acts to mute strings that lie outside the designated chord. In contrast, the action of a keyboard autoharp leaves strings belonging to the indicated pitch class free to vibrate and mutes all others. That is, the damping pads brought into motion by the C key permit all instances of the note C to sound, rather than muting all notes that are not part of a C chord. Playing a C major triad then requires the simultaneous action of the C, E, and G keys, and is eased by the presentation of the keytops to the player as a segment of a piano keyboard.

The mystery exemplar differs from other attested keyboard designs by the allocation of an individual damper bar to each string, rather than linking all instances of a given pitch class to a single key. This suggests the possibility of this instrument having

been intermediate in the branching off of the keyboard autoharp from the parent instrument, which was initially patented in 1882. There is also a divergence in scale and other structural detail toward the form seen in Russia, indicating the further possibility of it being a bridge between the Western and Eastern European manifestations.

I was unaware of the extent of present-day use of the keyboard autoharp when writing my article, 'Northern European Contributions to the Development of the Autoharp', in *GSJ* LXXVI (2023), pp.178–98. In consequence, although the statement of its scope remains applicable,

... bars that apply damping pads are now regarded as one of the definitive attributes of the autoharp. Bars with plucking or striking devices will therefore not be considered further.

the absence of any reference to the keyboard autoharp requires retrospective emendation. I have been doing this in a series of essays on my personal website, with added contextual information and musical illustrations. They include a more detailed description of the instrument that triggered this note.

This material can be seen as addenda to the journal article. A summarized listing is maintained at:

loopholes.blog/karp-gsj76-addenda

Cary Karp



CONFERENCE NOTICES

Conference on Archaeo-Musicology and Archaeo-Luthiery. Knowledge and Know-How Serving the Reactivation of Celtic and Medieval Music

28 to 31 August 2024

Sapienza University of Rome

Piazzale Aldo Moro 5, 00185 Roma (Italy)

Themes:

- Medieval instruments
- Celtic instruments
- Reverse engineering of musical instruments

See www.arkeotopia.org/en/

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The Pipe Organ as a Site for Musical and Technological Innovation

Friday 6 September 2024

City, University of London

Proposals are invited for a Royal Musical Association study day hosted by and in collaboration with City, University of London.

Successive generations of organ builders have developed the instrument's sound potential, and this has been capitalized on by organists and composers. Often, increasingly elaborate mechanisms were devised to achieve this, but innovation need not be synonymous with complexity, and simplification can also foster inventiveness. We welcome proposals that consider developments of the present century, particularly concerning hyperorgans, novel sound works that utilize the organ, and how these intersections are influencing pipe organ culture. We will also consider papers discussing how established aspects of pipe organ design and music were revolutionary when first introduced.

Please submit your proposal as a separate email attachment to [John.Forster.2\[at\]city.ac.uk](mailto:John.Forster.2@city.ac.uk), including the following information:

- Title of proposed paper
- Abstract (max. 300 words)
- Name as you would like it to appear on the conference programme
- Institutional affiliation (where relevant)
- Short biography (max. 250 words)

Final papers must not exceed 20 minutes. There will be no pipe organ in the conference space, but normal audiovisual presentation facilities will be available.

The submission deadline for proposals is Monday 1 April 2024.

All proposals will receive a decision by the beginning of May 2024.

Keynote speaker: Hans Fidom (Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam)

Organizing committee: John Forster (City, University of London) — conference organizer, Andrew McCrea (Royal College of Organists), Katharine Pardee (University of Oxford), Stephen Cottrell (City, University of London)

See: www.city.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/2024/september/the-pipe-organ-as-a-site-for-musical-and-technological-innovation

Publications

The Oud: An Illustrated History

Rachel Beckles Willson

Interlink Books (Northampton, Mass.), 256pp.
22.86 x 2.29 x 22.86cm; ISBN 9781623717520

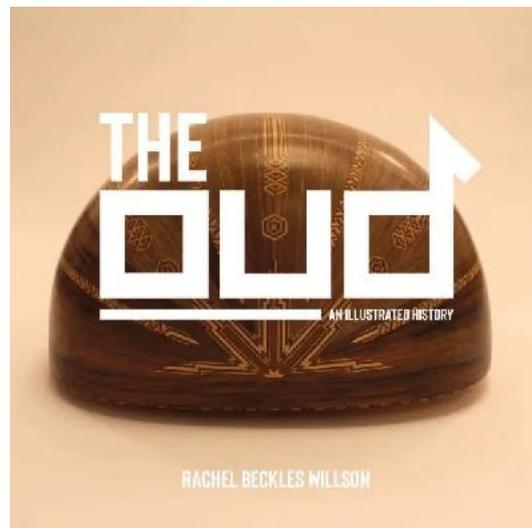
A beautifully-written illustrated history of one of the most important instruments in music cultures of the Middle East and North Africa.

According to a literary tradition of Iraq, the origin of the *oud* lies in the grief of Lamak, a descendent of Cain, son of Adam. When his 5-year-old son died, Lamak hung the boy's limp body on a tree, and as time passed, he resolved to build a musical instrument from the remaining bones. He then played it, wept, and sang the first lament; his daughter Sila became an instrument maker. So the *oud* is a beautiful pear-shaped box, with neck and strings, that makes music, but it can also be a link to the world of storytelling that brings new voices into life. Today the *oud* is one of the most important instruments in music cultures of the Middle East and North Africa, and while associated mainly with the Arab world, it is also played in Iran, Turkey and Greece. More recently it has spread into East Africa, numerous countries of Europe, Australia, the Americas, China and Japan. This book explores the *oud's* history and increasingly global lives today. It explores its varied construction over time and place, delves into its place in literature, and reveals its widespread repertoire and immensely diverse players.

Reviews excerpts: 'Beckles Willson is equal parts musician and scholar, which positions her perfectly to tell the complex story of the oud ... Beckles Willson's comprehensive history draws upon folklore, design, and politics ... In addition to tracing its movement across continents and its changing role in society, Beckles Willson explores in detail the construction, tuning, and fretting of the oud and maps its changing shape and sound up to the current moment. The book is lavishly illustrated with ancient and contemporary images that help tell the story of this fascinating instrument.' *Booklist*

'Extensively researched history with musical appeal, Rachel Beckles Willson's illustrated book is an ode to the decorated instrument's past ... The topics covered include how the instrument was built, the materials used for its construction, the variations in the types of ouds, its changing repertoires and the lives of past and present virtuosos, such as the Iraqi musician Munir Bashir and Syrian-Egyptian film star Farid El Atrash. The text is enriched with illustrations, such as ancient Gandharan friezes, a drawing of various types of ouds by Napoleon's team in Egypt and more generally ouds of various shapes and sizes. *The Oud: An Illustrated History* will appeal not only to aficionados of chordophones—instruments that use vibrating strings to make sound—but anyone with curiosity about the culture and history of the Middle East.' *The National*

'Musician Beckles Willson scrupulously traces the history of the oud—a short-necked, fretless stringed musical instrument—from its first written mention in ancient Persia to the present day ... Generously illustrated and embedded with QR codes that link to YouTube videos of oud players in action, this is both a rich cultural history and a thoughtful analysis of the shifting global dynamics that gave the oud its reach. Music lovers will be captivated.' *Publishers Weekly*



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Carlo Broschi Farinelli. A Manuscript Description of the Operas and Festivities at the Spanish Court 1747 – 1758

Michael Latcham

Musikwissenschaftliche Schriften, Band 57
Musicverlag Bernd Katzwichler (Unterwössen, 2023), 668pp., illus., full colour
210 x 297cm, hardcover; ISBN 9783873972995; €148

This book is devoted to a manuscript volume, in folio, written by Carlo Broschi Farinelli in Spanish and presented to the Spanish King, Fernando VI, in 1758 after 24 years of service to the crown, starting in 1737 under King Felipe V.

The first half of Farinelli's book starts with a description of the court opera: the singers' names, contracts and accommodation; the care taken of them and more – even the tantrums of two prima donnas. Lists of the operas and of serenatas Farinelli directed include their librettists and composers. The musicians are all named: at the opera, for the serenatas, on the vessels, in the gardens, the chorus singers from the Chapel Royal, those from the Royal Guard who played on stage. The rehearsals are described. The duties of the stage carpenter, the costume designer and the costume makers are given. Farinelli was director of all of this.

The second half of the *Descripción* presents the royal fleet, its maintenance, the accommodation and church made for the sailors, details of each expedition and of all the guests on board for each sailing. Farinelli was executive director of these events. *La Real* was a golden barge with the King, the Queen and Farinelli in or at the beautiful cabin towards the stern. At the prow was a small band of musicians. A little frigate also had a band of musicians. The trips took place in early summer evenings between 1754 and 1757. Each trip is minutely described. After taking shots at game from on board, the king and the queen would often accompany Farinelli: he sang solo arias. Once Farinelli sang inside the cabin, the windows closed against the cold except one, open so that all those on the river bank could hear.

After more than twenty years Farinelli thus finally sang again in public, not on stage, not at a royal or imperial court but in an open-air theatre he created; his musicians a king and a queen; his audience the public on the riverbank, the members of court on the vessels, their crews, all in beautiful costumes probably designed and made by Farinelli's costumiers; the lighting comprising tens of thousands of candles, organized and thought up by Farinelli along the riverbanks, at the landing stage and in huge pyramids on the way back to the palace. All this is told in the *Descripción*.

Following the introduction the present book gives a complete transcription of Farinelli's manuscript book, including the beautiful illustrations, with no additions. Then follows the same but divided into short passages, each with an English translation, commentary and extra illustrations. The third section comprises the complete English translation with no additions. Sixteen appendices include complete transcriptions of two letters from Farinelli to Sicinio Pepoli in Italian; a long description in Spanish from the *Gaceta de Madrid* of performances and other events directed by Farinelli; excerpts from the wills and inventories of Maria Bárbara and Farinelli; the original appointment given to Farinelli, and a contemporary description, in French, of the opera house; all these items with English translations. Essays on the keyboard instruments owned by Farinelli and the Queen, on Sacchi's 1785 biography of Farinelli, and on three paintings by Amiconi follow. Various tables and two indexes complete the work. This is a primary source book, not only for Farinelli's biography but also for musical life at the Spanish court.



Folio 4r (width 31cm) from Farinelli's manuscript showing him presenting the *Descripción* to King Fernando VI in May 1758.

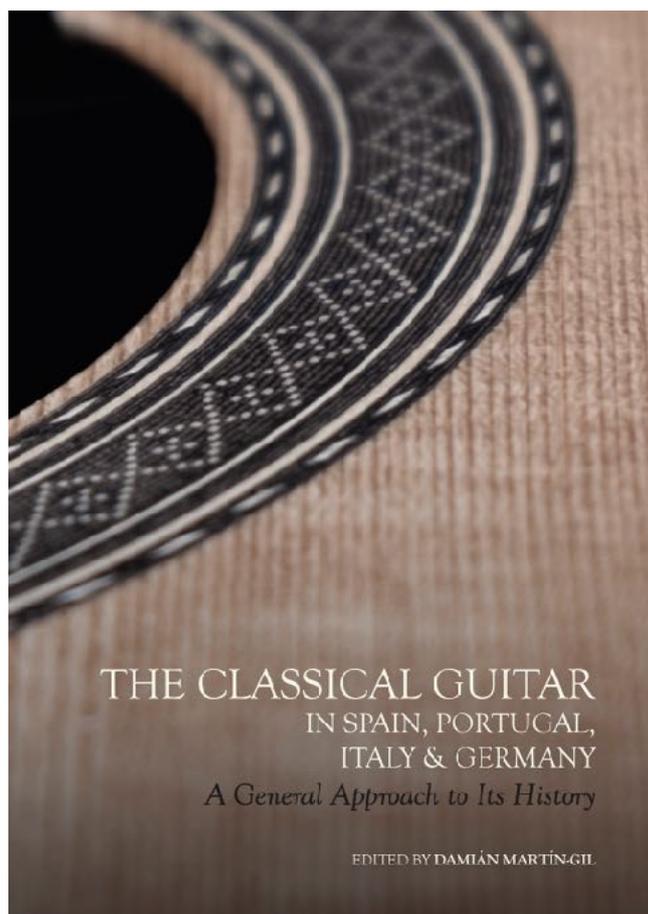
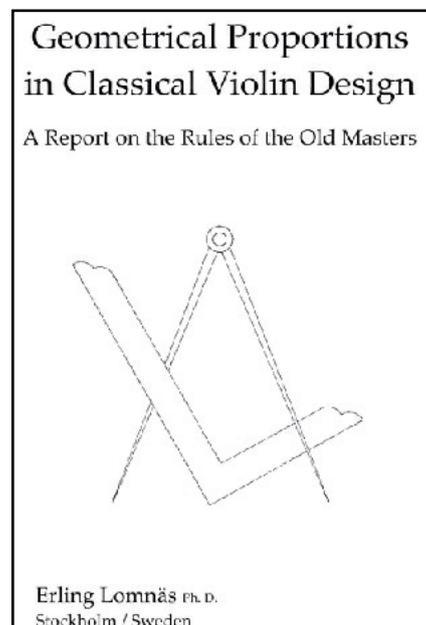
*Geometrical Proportions in Classical Violin Design:
A Report on the Rules of the Old Masters*

Erling Lomnäs

Free limited edition, with the support of *CAM-fonden*
(Stockholm, 2023), 80pp., 44 b/w figures & 84 diagrams
PDF; ISBN 9789152766240

By analyzing photos of more than 600 'classical' instruments, the author reveals that the application of a few, quite simple and time-saving old proportioning methods, using only a square (or ruler) and compasses, may 'explain' the main geometrical design of body, soundholes, scroll and pegbox. The complete text file (PDF) is available free of charge from Stiftelsen Musikkulturens främjande, Stockholm, at www.nydahcoll.se

For further information email: [smf\[at\]nydahcoll.se](mailto:smf[at]nydahcoll.se)



The Classical Guitar in Spain, Portugal, Italy & Germany. A General Approach to its History

Damián Martín-Gil

INAEM (Madrid, 2023), 293pp.
ISBN 9788490414835

As a result of the Erasmus+ project 'Let's Play Classical Guitar Together', this book offers an overview of the history of the guitar, an instrument deeply rooted in the culture of Western Europe, from the sixteenth century to the present day. Due to the limits of this project, this work is devoted to four countries: Spain, Portugal, Italy and Germany. However, on account of international influences, other countries will be in play throughout the different chapters.

Therefore, revisiting the most well-known names related to this instrument throughout history — as well as many forgotten figures — this book aims to provide a *symphony of names* that the reader may explore, while avoiding the excessive amount of information that we find in in-depth musicological studies. This provides a way to continually refresh the metaphorical internet browser or music provider to offer new aural experiences. Particular attention is given to the recent history of the guitar and the ways its teaching has been institutionalised in conservatories of the referred countries. Additionally, the latest trends in composition for this instrument are highlighted, as well as the place of the guitar in current education, significant institutions and new technologies applied to its service.

A brief synopsis of the book at the site of the INAEM (in Spanish) can be found here:

www.musicadanza.es/es/tematicos/la-guitarra-clasica-1

It can be downloaded directly here: www.musicadanza.es/contenidos/the-classical-guitar.pdf

The digital version of the book can be downloaded in the site of the Instituto Nacional de Artes Escénicas y de la Música (INAEM) following or on the webpage of the project:

www.musicadanza.es/es/tematicos/la-guitarra-clasica-1