

NEWSLETTER

Of The

American Musical Instrument Society

VOL. VIII, No. 3

October 1979



Among the recent acquisitions of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, is this quartet of 18th-century bowed strings, from the left, a violin by Ferdinand Gagliano, Naples, ca. 1780; a viola by Gennaro Gagliano, Naples, ca. 1762; a violoncello by Johannes Baptista de Tononis, Bologna, ca. 1740; and a violin by Antonio Gragnani, Livorno, ca. 1783 (gift of Laurence Witten).

SMITHSONIAN ACQUIRES IMPORTANT BOWED STRINGS IN 1978-79

(In an attempt to keep the membership informed of the location of instruments which might be of interest for research purposes, the Newsletter will regularly publish information about recent acquisitions at major institutions. Those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York for 1977 were listed in the March 1978 issue.

Those of the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan, for 1977, and the Stearns Collection at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, for 1975-77, were published in June 1978. Acquisitions at The Shrine to Music Museum at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, will be included in the March 1980 issue. Other museums, as well as private collectors, are urged to contribute similar information. -Ed.)

The most significant acquisitions

during the past year at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, according to Cynthia Adams Hoover, Curator, Division of Musical Instruments, were bowed strings. With support from a newly-created collections acquisitions trust fund, the Division was able to purchase three 18th-century Italian instruments from the Laurence Witten Collection: a violin by Ferdinando Gagliano, Naples, ca. 1780; a viola by Gennaro Gagliano, (continued on page 2)

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AMERICAN MUSICAL
INSTRUMENT SOCIETY

André P. Larson, Editor

The Newsletter is published in March, June, and October for the members of the American Musical Instrument Society (AMIS). News items, photos, reviews, and short monographs are invited, as well as any other information of interest to AMIS members. Address all correspondence to the Editor, AMIS Newsletter, USD Box 194, Vermillion, SD 57069. Requests for back issues and all correspondence regarding membership (\$18.00 per year) should be directed to the Membership Office, American Musical Instrument Society, USD Box 194, Vermillion, SD 57069.

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Naples, ca. 1762; and a violoncello by Johannes Baptista de Tononis, Bologna, ca. 1740. In addition, Mr. Witten donated a violin by Antonio Gragnani, Livorno, ca. 1783.

The quartet is of special interest because the instruments have several of their original 18th-century features. The Gragnani violin, for instance, has its original short neck and bass bar, and the Gagliano viola, an especially fine instrument, has its original neck, block, and linings. These instruments have been used during the past year, beginning with an introductory concert on October 11, 1978, in performances given by the Smithsonian Chamber Players in the Hall of Musical Instruments and in a recording, to be released by the Smithsonian, of Handel's *Concerti Grossi*, Opus 3.

Another large group of bowed strings, 14 violins and 33 bows, came as part gift, part loan from an anonymous collector. The collection, which concentrates upon the finest Italian violin makers of the 17th and 18th centuries, includes superb instruments by the Amati family (Antonio, Hieronymous, and Nicolo), Antonio Stradivarius (including the famous "Hellier" Strad of 1679), Joseph Guarneri del Jesu (the "Jarnowich" violin), and many others. The bows represent the outstanding work of such leading makers as Torte, Tubbs, Dodd, and Lamy. The violins, altered in the 19th-century or later to meet the requirements of changing musical tastes, will be used in chamber concerts of 19th- and 20th-century music, as well as in a proposed special exhibition of bowed strings.

Other important and unusual acquisitions included a fine example of a 5-string violoncello or American bass



American Church Bass, 19th century, Smithsonian Institution.

viol thought to have been made in New England in the 19th-century. Mr. Witten donated, in addition to the Gragnani violin, four other instruments: a violin by John Friedrich, New York, 1903; a violin by Andrew Hyde, Northampton, Massachusetts, 1893; a viola, probably English, 18th century; and a guitar by Gaetano Vinaccia, Naples, 1821. Another donor, Alfredo Halegua, presented a violin by Antonio Mariani,

Pesaro, Italy, mid-17th-century.

Charles Kaman, president of the Kaman Corporation, donated two Adamas guitars which he and his firm, Ovation Guitars, designed and manufactured; the guitars, made of fiberglass, represent a 20th-century use of materials and technology in an attempt to achieve a more even sound and an instrument well-suited for am-

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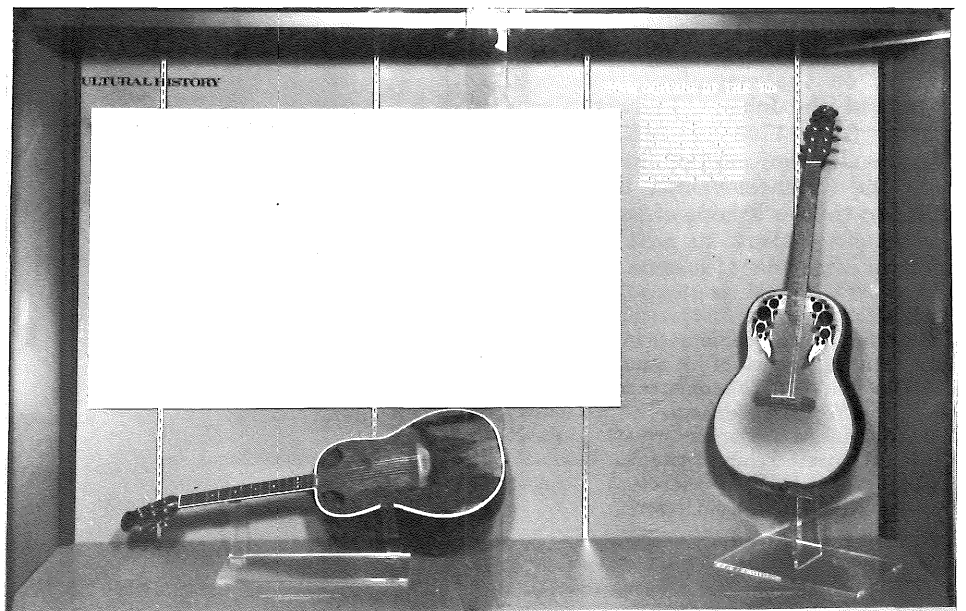


Side, front, and back views of the uniquely-decorated violin by Antonio Stradivarius (Cremona, 1679) known as the "Hellier," which is on loan to the Division of Musical Instruments of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.

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plication. Mr. & Mrs. Walter Schnormeier from Minnesota gave a dulcitone, a small keyboard instrument on which the sound is produced by hammers striking tuning forks, used by the early American stage actress, Minnie Maddern Fiske. A contestant on the Major Bowes talent show in the 1930's donated his ocarina which he helped to design. And the Prosperi family of Washington and Maryland donated the ledger books of John F. Prosperi, a Washington musician of the late 19th century whose notations show involvement in performances ranging from inauguration concerts and theater productions to early recording sessions (1891) and moonlight cruises.

As this listing of major recent acquisitions demonstrates, the Smithsonian has a continuing interest in material ranging from the most sophisticated examples of instruments representing the main stream musical traditions of Western Europe and America to the simple and commonplace instruments from everyday life in America.



An Adamas guitar, right, and its prototype are exhibited, along with a drawing of the instrument's design and construction, at the Smithsonian's Museum of History and Technology.

CIMCIM MEETS IN EAST GERMANY

The Comité International des Musées et Collections d'Instruments de Musique (CIMCIM), an international committee of professional personnel from musical instrument collections and museums, held a major conference at the Musical Instrument Museum of Karl Marx University in Leipzig, East Germany, August 20-26, 1979.

Americans invited to read papers were Dr. André P. Larson, Director of the Shrine to Music Museum at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion; Stewart Pollens, Senior Restorer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; and Phillip T. Young, Professor of Music at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. Also attending were Dr. Robert E. Eliason, Curator of Musical Instruments at the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan; his wife, Ellen; and Barbara Lambert, Keeper of Musical Instruments at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The conference, which was devoted to the development of instruments of both art and folk music during the 18th century, was held in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the installation of the Heyer collection. The Musical Instrument Museum, now under the direction of Dr. Hubert Henkel, was open to CIMCIM members throughout the week, and conference participants were given every opportunity to view its treasures. In addition, some of the Museum's instruments were played during several special concerts.

In addition to the opportunity to visit the Museum and the other cultural and historic sights in Leipzig, excursions were taken to the Händel-Haus in Halle; the Schlosskirche in Altenburg for a concert on the magnificently-restored organ which Johann Ludwig Krebs played from 1756 to 1780; and to Markneukirchen, nestled in the hills near the Czechoslovakian border, for visits to the workshops of several local instrument makers, as well as to the Musical Instrument Museum.

The next CIMCIM meeting will be held in Mexico City, October 25-November 4, 1980, during the triennial conference of ICOM, the International Council of Museums, of which CIMCIM is a part. The conference theme will be "The World's Heritage-The Museum's Responsibilities." For information about CIMCIM membership, write to Peter A. Kjeldsberg, CIMCIM secretary; Ringve Museum; 7000 Trondheim; Norway.



The Thomaskirche, where Johann Sebastian Bach worked from 1723 to 1750 and is now buried, was visited by many of those attending the CIMCIM conference in Leipzig, August 20-26, 1979.



Dr. Hans Gruss conducts the Capella Fidicina in a performance of his arrangement of a suite by August Normiger (1560-1613) in the Bachsaal of the Musical Instrument Museum in Leipzig, East Germany, August 22, 1979.

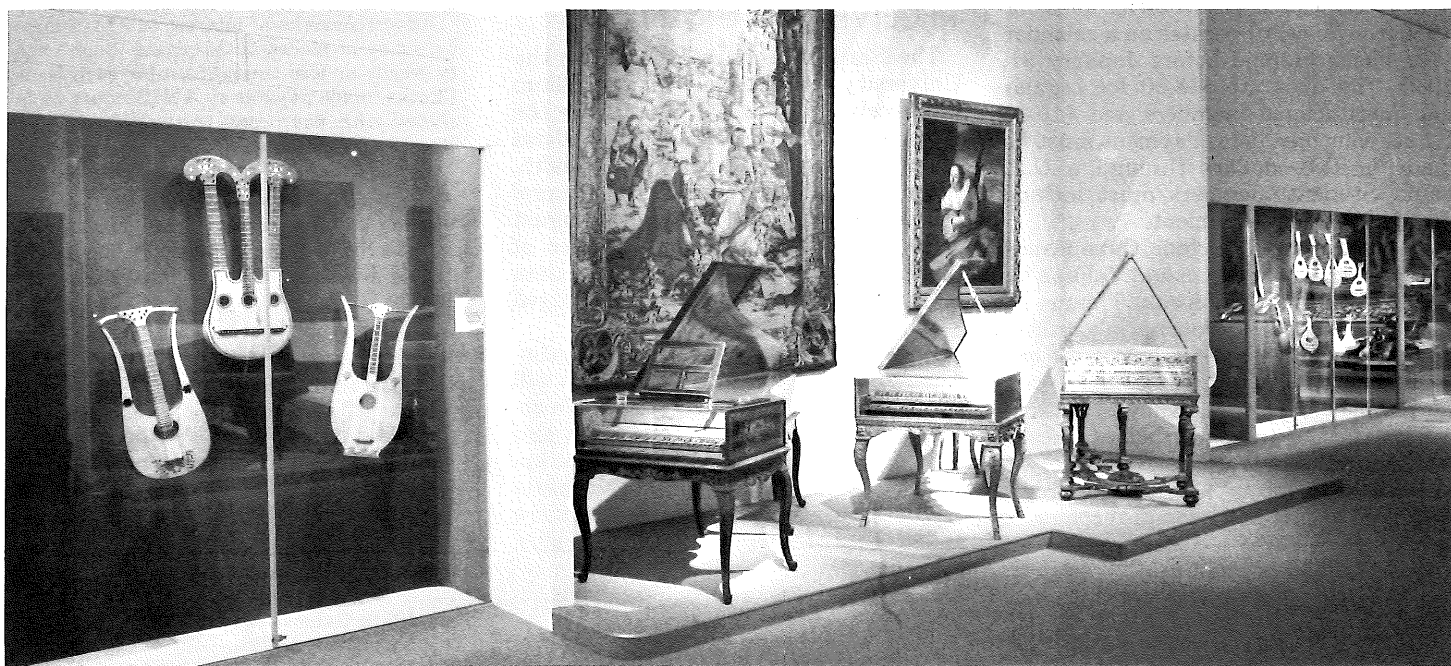


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METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART WILL HOST AMIS MAY 9-11, 1980



The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, which will host the American Musical Instrument Society's 1980 meeting, May 9-11, holds one of the world's major collections, numbering some 4,000 European, American, and non-Western instruments. Much of this collection is permanently displayed in the André Mertens Galleries, which AMIS members will have a special opportunity to visit. New exhibits are being prepared for the meeting, and the opening of the Museum's American wing on May 12 will add a note of excitement to the scheduled events. The galleries are equipped with a sophisticated audio system that allows visitors to hear many of the instruments on display. Others may be heard in concerts and recordings sponsored by the Museum, whose Department of Musical Instruments has produced a nationally-broadcast series of radio programs devoted to its collection.

The Department's staff of six is regularly supplemented by visiting scholars supported through grants and fellowships. For the past several years the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities have been funding an intensive cataloging project to update the collection's original catalog of 1902-04. Checklists of newly-reexamined portions are now in print. The Department also offers technical drawings, photos, and other information relative to its holdings.

The first instrument, a church bell, entered the Metropolitan in 1884, 14 years after the Museum's founding. Beginning in 1889 the collection grew rapidly thanks to gifts from Joseph W. Drexel and Mary Crosby Brown. Mrs. Brown formed the nucleus of the present collec-

tion over a period of 25 years, relying on advice from F. W. Galpin, A. J. Hipkins, and other experts who contributed essays to the first catalog. The collection also incorporates large contributions from Alice Getty, Murtoth Guinness, Rajah Sourindro, Mohon Tagore, the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and other collectors. Many private, institutional, and corporate donors have enriched the collection, and frequent purchases have helped fill gaps in certain areas. In order to maintain its focus on fine craftsmanship and musical significance, the Department pursues a highly-selective acquisitions policy, seeking to refine its holdings rather than greatly to expand their scope.

Among the scholars associated closely with the collection during its long history have been, besides Galpin and Hipkins, Edwin Ripin, Curt Sachs, and Emanuel Winternitz, the first curator. Through their research the collection became known internationally for its extensive representation of European instruments from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. Notable keyboards include the earliest extant piano, made in 1720 by Bartolomeo Cristofori at the Medici court; a Venetian virginal of 1540 made for the Duchess of Urbino; the Hans Ruckers double virginal of 1581, found in Peru; and harpsichords, pianos, and organs from the aristocracy of four centuries. The collection also preserves important Renaissance and Baroque woodwinds and strings, including Baroque violins by Stradivari and Amati; a wide range of brasses illustrating the development of classical and modern forms; traditional folk instruments, with special concentration on Eastern

Europe and the United States; and novelties such as miniature jeweled music boxes.

Rare instruments of Mediterranean and Asian antiquity also appear in the Museum's encyclopedic collection. Fully half of the Mertens Galleries are devoted to instruments of ethnographic interest from ancient and modern cultures on six continents. The non-Western galleries feature elaborately-decorated ritual implements, some in animal forms or made from human bones, as well as signaling devices and instruments of professional and folk musicians. Among recent acquisitions have been collections of African drums and whistles, and a Javanese gamelan since placed on loan to Cornell University for teaching and performance.

The Metropolitan's Department of Musical Instruments often holds lecture-demonstrations, musical programs, and meetings of professional societies in its galleries; staff members also lecture widely and teach in conjunction with local universities. An active restoration program makes possible the use of instruments in performance, and carefully-controlled climate and security conditions keep the collection intact while it remains accessible for advanced research. Valuable support for the Department's activities is provided by a visiting committee, chaired by Miss Alice Tully, which includes among its members Dr. Robert Rosenbaum and Frederick R. Selch, both prominent AMIS personalities.

The Department extends a warm welcome to AMIS, and will try to make its facilities fully available to this distinguished Society.

1980 AMIS DUES REQUESTED

It is requested that AMIS dues for 1980 (the Society operates on a calendar year basis) be paid before January 31, 1980. The dues are \$18.00 for regular and institutional members and \$10.00 for student members. Payment must be made in U.S. dollars through a U.S. bank. Student members must include proof of current enrollment.

Membership will include three issues of the **AMIS Newsletter** and Volume VI (1980) of the **AMIS Journal**. Volume IV (1978) of the **AMIS Journal** is expected to reach the membership before the end of the current year; Volume V (1979) will be published early in 1980 and Volume VI is expected to appear before the end of the year.

Because printing and mailing costs continue to escalate, prompt response to this call for 1980 dues will be appreciated. A pre-addressed dues envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

YALE COLLECTION ANNOUNCES CONCERTS

The Yale University Collection of Musical Instruments has announced its series of concerts for 1979-80. All of the performances will take place at 8:00 pm in the gallery of keyboard instruments at the Collection, 15 Hillhouse Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut.

September 30. The Pernucio Ensemble. Carol Lieberman, violin; Scott-Martin Kosofsky, recorder; Mark Kroll, harpsichord.

October 28. Neva Pilgrim, soprano; Edward Smith, harpsichord.

December 2. William Tim Read, harpsichord.

February 3. Richard Rephann, harpsichord.

March 2. The Chinese Music Ensemble of New York City.

April 27. Judith Davidoff, viola da gamba; Edward Smith, harpsichord.

SHRINE TO MUSIC MUSEUM RECEIVES IMS GRANT

The Shrine to Music Museum at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, has received a \$22,799 grant from the Institute of Museum Services, a Federal agency in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, for general operating support through August 1980. The Music Museum was one of 403 museums selected from more than 1,700 institutions which submitted proposals to the Institute.

According to Dr. André P. Larson, Director of the Museum, the grant will be used to strengthen the Museum's activities in cataloging, conservation, and public access to the Museum. Grant applications were judged on such criteria as the quality of a museum's service, the importance of the museum's collections, and the quality of the museum's financial management and long-range planning.

INSTRUMENTS STOLEN

Three musical instruments were stolen recently from a private home in Shipman, Virginia. They were a Hausmann cello, 1953, Mittenwald, in chipboard case with two bows; a 5-keyed boxwood clarinet with ivory rings by Klemm, Philadelphia, with modern case and mouthpiece; and a simple-system flute, black wood, cracked head joint. Please address any information about these instruments to Donna Shaunesey, Rt. 1, Box 307, Shipman, VA 22971.

ARE YOU MOVING?

Are you moving? If so, please be certain that you notify the Society of your new address, as soon as possible. Write to the AMIS Membership Office, USD Box 194, Vermillion, SD 57069 USA.

CLASSIFIED COLUMN

Advertisements of interest to AMIS members may be placed in this space. Each twenty words or less costs \$5.00 for each issue. Checks, made payable to AMIS, must be included with your copy to the Editor (USD Box 194, Vermillion, SD 57069 USA).

FOR SALE: Musical instruments from the estate of George Rubicam. Send self-addressed, stamped envelope for a list. Sylvia Rubicam, 216 Foster Avenue, Cambridge, OH 43725.

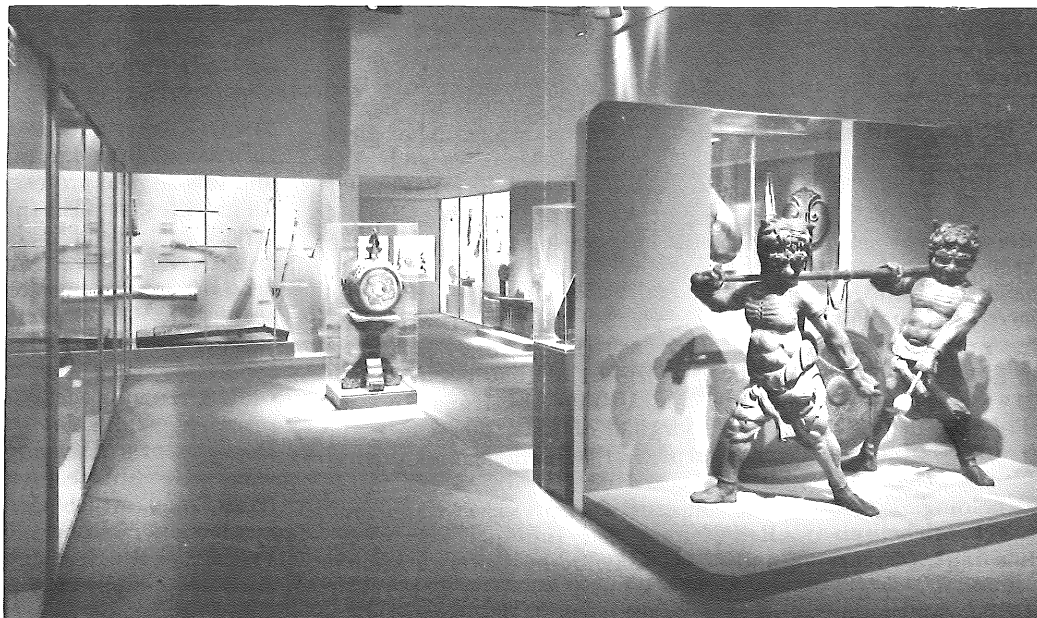
THE TUNING OF MY HARPSICHORD by Dr. Herbert A. Kellner. Practical instructions, including Bach's unequal temperament reconstructed. To be published, following the 2nd German edition, early 1980 at "Das Musikinstrument, E. Bochinsky," Klüberstrasse 9, Frankfurt/M, Germany.

WANTED: Instruction book for concert zither (5 melody, 26 accompaniment strings) similar to Baines, **Musical Instruments**, No. 354. Douglas Moore, Music Department, Williams College, Williamstown, MA 01267.

FOR SALE: C clarinet, Firth and Pond, New York. Eleven silver keys, block mounted. Rosewood. Original mouthpiece. Good condition. Best offer. (419) 668-9779.

ANTIQUE HARPS: Pair made by modern harp inventor Sebastian Erard in 1811 for royal family. Restoration near complete. Both playable. Write or call, Larry J. Moench, Ward Star Route, Jamestown, CO 80455; (303) 442-1166.

FOR SALE: Rosewood piano. Ignace Pleyel & Company (Paris, 1855). Fine upright. Best offer. Graves, 1015 Lynn, Clarksdale, MS 38614.



AMIS members attending the Annual Meeting, May 9-11, 1980, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, will have a special opportunity to visit the André Mertens Galleries which include one of America's major exhibits of non-Western musical instruments. A sophisticated audio system makes it possible to hear many of the instruments, as well as to see them.