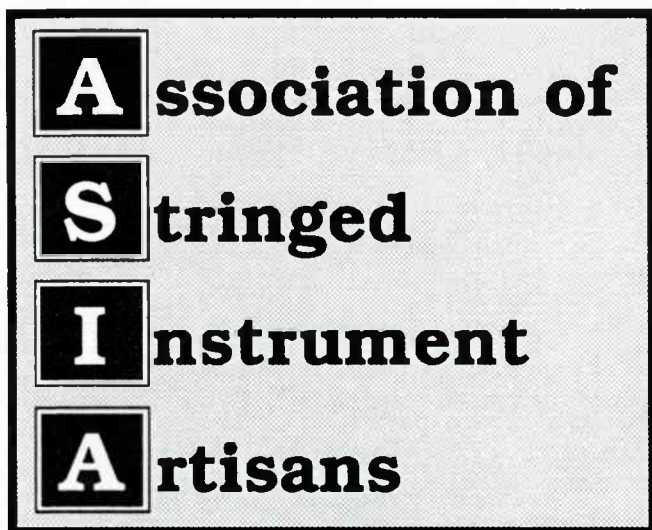


Association of
Stringed
Instrument
Artisans

Volume One; Number Five

December 1989



PURPOSE

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans is a non-profit trade organization established in 1988 to help provide a sense of community and professionalism to the field of stringed musical instrument making and repair. The goals of the association provide for but are not limited to: the establishment of a comprehensive database of resources, supplies, and technical information; a means of providing multi-level education within the profession, assistance in marketing and promotion, health and insurance packages at group rates, a repair or service certification, an advertiser's marketplace, and the publication of informative newsletters and journals.

Annual membership is \$50.00.

(Membership application on inside back cover)

A.S.I.A. Newsletter (Volume 1; Number 5) Copywrite © 1989 "A.S.I.A."

("Association of Stringed Instrument Artisans")

All rights including editorial are reserved.

No part of this journal may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher. All submissions will be juried. Although we encourage submissions from all members, we will not be responsible for loss or non-return of unsolicited photographs or manuscripts. Address all correspondence and subscriptions to:

Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans
14 South Broad Street
Nazareth, PA 18064

BOARD MEMBERS

If you have input, concerns or suggestions about the association, you are welcome to contact any of the board members to discuss your ideas:

Dick Boak; President

c/o Church Of Art, 14 South Broad Street

Nazareth, PA 18064

(215) 759-7100 home ; (215) 759-2837 work

James Rickard; Treasurer

600 Wildcat Hill Road

Harwinton, CT 06791

(203) 485-9809 shop

Duane Waterman; Membership Chairperson

1027 S. Sierra Madre

Colorado Springs, CO 80903

(719) 473-8444 shop

William Cumpiano; Secretary

c/o The Luthier's Collaborative

31 Campus Plaza Road

Hadley MA 01035

(413) 253-9574 work

William Laskin; Activities Chairperson

192 DuPont Street (rear)

Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M5R 2E6

(416) 923-5801 work

CREDITS

Layout Assistance by:

Jeff Pickering; Pickering Graphics

HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS

Lifetime Achievement Awards

James D'Aquisto

Mario Maccaferri

Manuel Velezquez

Awards for Excellence in the Field

John Monteleone

COVER:

This month's cover comes from the notorious Steve Klein of Sonoma, CA. Steve takes artistic risks with his instruments that are finally paying off. This beautiful guitar features a rosette that charts the galactic star system.

LETTERS

Cathy Currier Corresponds:

"My thoughts about Symposium 89 (for those who weren't there). Symposium 89 was not just an event for luthiers to meet each other and show off their instruments. It was a gathering of luthiers and repair people to share experiences, knowledge, music, and a love of their trade. I had a chance to meet and listen to people who are some of the best in the business. This was one of the most informative and stimulating events, concerning my career, I've ever attended.

Before next Symposium, every acquaintance I know that is a builder or repairer of musical instruments, will know what A.S.I.A. is, and what they can gain and give by being a member. Thanks to all for a fabulous Symposium 89."

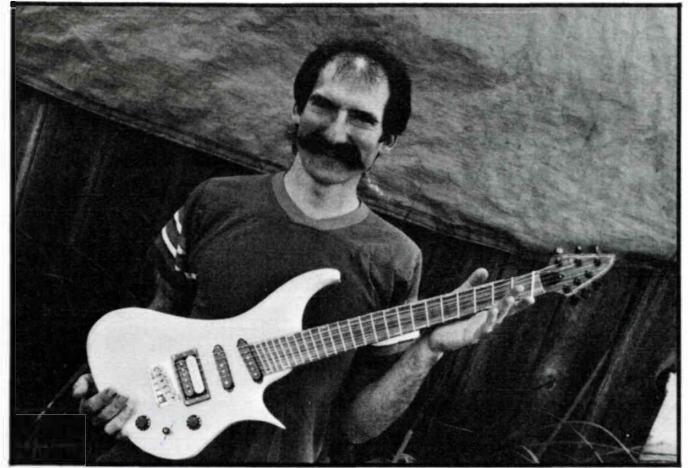
Catherine R. Currier c/o Currier's Music World
136 West Main Street (P.O.Box 825)
Richmond, KY 40475
(606) 623-6010

Ralph Novak of **San Leandro, CA** has developed a new patented design (U.S. PAT # 4,852,450) for fingerboards. Some may have read about his design in *Guitar Player Magazine/October 1989*. Ralph's idea allows for a different scale length for each string. To accomplish this, he slots his fingerboards so that the frets are no longer parallel, rather radially aimed at a point that seems to be projected several feet off of the treble side of the neck. This makes the bass strings about an inch longer in scale length than the treble strings, requiring a more severely angled saddle on an acoustic guitar or highly staggered compensation ability on an electric guitar.

Currently Ralph is building guitars and basses that incorporate his idea. His idea seems to be receiving some attention with some professional musicians. Ralph explains in the *Guitar Player* article that:

"Shorter scale instruments such as the Fender Mustang or Gibson SG, are favored for ease of bending treble strings. They also have sweeter trebles because of pronounced midrange harmonic sustain. However, those guitars suffer poor bass string definition, difficult tuning, and lack of articulation. On the other hand, longer scale guitars such as the Fender Stratocaster, offer crisp bass string response, more accurate intonation, and good definition, but the treble strings lack midrange harmonic sustain. They sound percussive and thin, feel stiff when bending, and are more prone to string breakage due to higher tension."

Ralph is seeking a licensing agreement with a large scaled manufacturer, believing that the concept has much greater potential that one luthier can address.



Ralph Novak's unique variable scale fingerboard design.

If you would like to communicate with Ralph Novak, you can reach him weekdays at work: **(415) 654-5676**.

Fran Ledoux of **Bay Fretted Instruments** has asked us to amend his phone number as listed in Vol. 1; No. 4. His new number is: **(508) 420-0183**.

Jeff Jewitt has asked us to correct his work phone listing in Vol. 1; Number 4 to **(216) 572-0465**. The number listed is obsolete.

Jeff also informed us of his participation in the 1st Annual Guitar Trade Show in Cleveland, Ohio held on October 22nd, 1989. Perhaps we can coax Jeff into writing a followup about the show. Jeff also has requested help or ideas as to how he can market his repair business and his line of handmade guitars. A.S.I.A. members with thoughts on this subject are urged to contact:

J. B. Jewitt Company
11017 Southwind Ct.
Strongsville, OH 44136

In response to Jeff's request, an article written by Ken Donnell that touches on several elements of Jeff's request, has been retrieved from the A.S.I.A. files and printed in the article section of this issue.

A.S.I.A. has received word from **Mario Baldoni** about **George Manno**. Many of you know about George through his many contributions to the *String Instrument Craftsman* and other publications, in addition to his extensive violin and stringed instrument experience. George had quite a bad accident last March that left him in pretty bad shape. He will be a long time in recovering, and apparently some of the damage will be permanent. It would be nice for those of you who know George, to drop him a line:

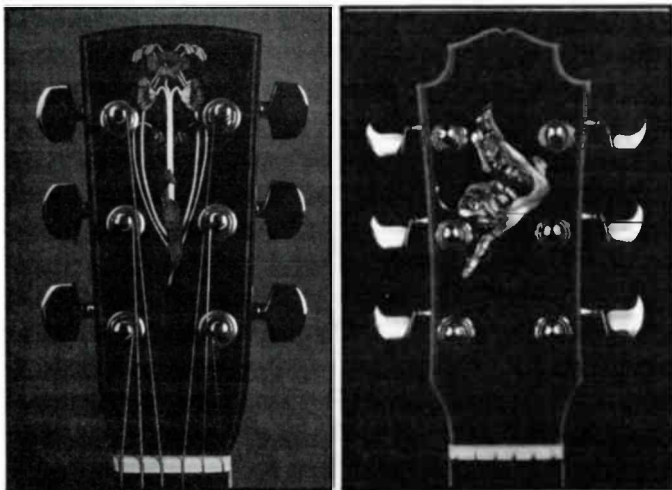
George Manno
117 East 23rd Street #2
Chicago Heights, IL 60411
(312) 755-3377

MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

It is our desire to spotlight luthiers on a regular basis in our newsletter. These first bio's serve as good examples of what we are looking for. Submissions written on word processors may be submitted on 5 1/4 floppy disks in MS-DOS text format, or ideally on Apple Macintosh Mini Diskettes in any format. Otherwise, hard copy is perfectly acceptable.

DAVID WREN

In 1973 I rode my bicycle from Toronto to Regina, Saskatchewan. My only reading material for the trip was Irving Sloane's **Classic Guitar Construction**. I read it over and over, and by the end of my trip it resembled a well worn comic more than a hard cover book. I was bitten. By the end of the year I had completed my first guitar at nights, while working as a commercial artist during the day.



Two of David Wren's intricate headplates.

In 1974, I got my big break when Jean-Claude Larrivee allowed me to hang around his shop. At that time Jean and his only apprentice Grit Laskin, worked from around noon until midnight (365 days a year). I worked my day job nine to five, and with Jean and Grit until midnight. Later that year Grit 'went out on his own' and I was asked to apprentice full time. Working in the Larrivee shop and living with Jean and his wife Wendy was an experience I wouldn't have missed for the world.

In 1977 I shared my own shop, and over the next twelve years my clientele grew to include people such as Bruce Cockburn (3 guitars), Joan Baez (2 guitars), and some of the better session and jazz players around Toronto. Currently I'm splitting my time between building custom electrics and acoustic steel string guitars, and repairing instruments for 'The Twelfth Fret' guitarists pro shop.

Wren Guitars
121 Oakcrest Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
CANADA M4C 1B4

CAT FOX

At the time of this correspondence, you luthiers were all at the Friday night doings at the Symposium having a great time no doubt, while I was stuck in my garret alone, listening to the rain pour down and feeling all left out with only myself to blame. Tiny violins were playing in the background..... such a sad lot is the life of a left out luthier.

You asked for an informal description of what I do, etc. I'll tell you, if I can. You said, "Be serious and don't be shy", but I am shy and I'm not serious, so here goes, eh hmmm.....

I've been a luthier full time since 1982, when I entered the stringed instrument repair class at Red Wing Vo-Tech, under the instruction of Dave Patterson. After graduating, I came to Massachusetts to apprentice with luthier/author Bill Cumpiano, and after my two year apprenticeship, continued working as part of the Stringfellow shop - a collection of luthiers. I build steel string guitars and mountain dulcimers, having about nine instruments to my credit. In my young and very foolish days I built bodhrans, Irish Drums, but that is a subject I'd rather forget! Perhaps someone else could show a profit on them, but they weren't kind to me.

At Stringfellow, I repaired guitars, both electric and acoustic, mandolins, banjos, autoharps, you name it. Anything that is, except customers broken G-strings! I was also the violin technician at Stringfellow, having learned the basics at Red Wing, and followed up with Hans Nebel's summer courses at the University of New Hampshire.

At present, I have recently moved to Seattle, Washington to start a shop of my own. I considered calling it "Cat's Alley Guitar Repair" or "Midnight Luthiery", but finally settled on "Sound Guitars". My new address information is:

Cat Fox
c/o Sound Guitars
Box 95454
Seattle, WA 98145
(206) 783-8075

CHRIS PILE

Chris "Max" Pile has been involved in guitar repair, custom work, and building for over 13 years and professionally employed for the last 10 years, the last six of which have involved service, repair, and modification of solid body electric guitars, with secondary emphasis on service and repair of acoustic instruments including guitars, banjos, and mandolins. Chris also does custom refinishing and assembly of made to order guitars, metal fabrication, modification of rack systems, drums, PA systems, and lighting systems.

Chris's specialties are vibrato bridge installation, traditional and experimental finishing, cyanoacrylate glue technology, alternative materials technology, and the

acoustic response to the increase of electronic instrument technology. He is an authorized service center for both Fender and Gibson Guitars, and an author for **String Instrument Craftsman**, **American Lutherie**, and local music newspapers. Chris served as a member of the steering committee for A.S.I.A., and is a charter member. He is also a member of the Wichita Independent Businessman's Association, and a member of the National Hotrod Association. He firmly believes that hotrods and guitars go together!

Chris's shop, Six String Fever, averages between 50 and 65 paid transactions per month. This may run the gamut from simple truss rod adjustments to major rebuilds. "There is room for about a dozen guitars on the wall, and each hook is usually full." This is in addition to walk-in customers for parts, estimates, and advice. Six String Fever is also responsible for maintaining the adjustments (and therefore the salability) of the hundred or so instruments on the floor of Miller Music, the store in which "SSF" is located. Thesis Audio takes care of the electronic repair in the store, and its owner Mike Metz, is Chris's partner. They promote themselves as "The Rock Doctors" service team. (Write for a T-Shirt!) Chris has trained 3 apprentices and is currently considering applicants to fill a recently vacated bench.

Chris spends his free time corresponding with over 30 luthiers scattered across North America. He also corresponds with suppliers, sales reps, and other industry people on a regular basis. His main intent is the gathering of information, and the distribution of same, in an effort to educate himself and those seeking to educate themselves.

As far as interests outside luthery and the music business, Chris maintains ties in the aircraft and metalworking industries situated in Wichita. He also loves to sportfish, travel often to auto races of all sorts, and visit air museums whenever he can. He finds the desert and its ecology fascinating and wonders why people live in ignorance of nature and its modus operandi. He is also known as "the heavy metal guy!" Chris can be reached at:

Six String Fever
4235 West Central
Wichita, KS 67212
(316) 942-7341 shop
(316) 682-1056 home (ans. machine)

CURT CARPENTER

My love for woodworking started when I was very young. My first real woodworking experience came in 1967 when I was hired part time by a custom (archery) bowmaker making recurve bows. I'll never forget the big planks of Brazilian rosewood we used to cut the handle riser sections out of. (I called him years later after I started making guitars, hoping that he'd still have some left. but of course, no such luck!)

I started playing guitar when I was 13 years old, a few years before I started my second love, martial arts. I had always done small repairs on my own guitars, and later started doing minor repairs and refinishing for friends. After I got out of the army in 1971, I started doing more involved repairs, and went professional in 1972, working for many music stores around my area. Later I became a service center for Gibson and I also did service work for Guild and OMI. Because I am a disabled veteran, I was able to get into some great schooling situations, one being a program set up through the VA when I got to go to California where I lived with "Doc" Kauffman for a short while in 1974. (I had met "Doc" through correspondence with him.) "Doc" and the VA set up a study apprentice program for me. I learned a lot about electrics and wound my first pickup under "Doc's" supervision. We had visits with Leo Fender who gave me some constructive criticism on an elaborate electric I was making at the time. "Doc" arranged a red carpet tour of CBS where we saw a lot and had quite a conference with Freddy Traveras and Harold Rhodes. Other visits included OMI (Dobro) where we turned them on to one of "Doc's" neck-straightening jigs. They returned the favor by showing us their factory and manufacturing processes. While there, Ed Doperya certified a 1936 "Regal" Dobro I'd brought out. We also visited Rickenbacker where a repairman who I had spent some time with worked. As a part of the program, I also got to go home with about two grand worth of "Doc's" special repair jigs.

Later in 1974 I started the first of two sessions (classical and steel) with "Earthworks" school of guitar construction, ran at that time by Charles Fox. During my ten full and part time years of college, taking anything and everything that would pertain to guitar making, the VA would set up special tutoring sessions for me. One of them was with my electronics professor, where the concentration was on guitar circuits and electronics. I was the first vet ever to have a course of study set up with lutherie as an occupational goal, and it really paid off. In the next few years I apprenticed three guitar-maker/repairman, two of which (Harry Eibert and Dan Dishaw) are still in the business and are quite successful.

I continued with repair and construction until 1979 when a high April wind blew over my shop chimney causing the furnace to flair up which burned my shop to the ground. I lost everything, as my insurance had lapsed a month before without my knowing it.

My rebuilding started immediately but was very slow because as we all know, luthiers are very seldom rich! I took on a job as a carpenter/cabinet maker for a nursing home where I've picked up a lot of great woodworking experience. It's not bad being the only one in an industrially equipped wood shop. I have heavy duty Rockwell machines including a 20" Rockwell bandsaw with about 12" of resaw capacity.

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

Also during my rebuilding years I went back to what I think gave me the discipline and concentration to do lutherie in the first place, martial arts. I earned black belts in two disciplines and taught for a few years. My shop in those years was in a gutted mobile home.

Life has continued to change in recent years. I became a single parent to my 12 year old daughter, Jessica, about three years ago, and a year later I married my wife, Denise, who is now expecting. A bright spot in this change, from a luthier's point of view, was a new 1520 square foot shop that I was able to design from the ground up in the basement of my new house. I hope to complete it before my new child is born in December.

I am well stocked with hard woods, as I harvested 1800 board feet from my 5 1/2 acres in 1985. I've also built up my stock of acoustic instrument woods. Since the fire, I've concentrated on mostly electrics, but since I once again have a good stock of acoustic woods, my concentration is now on acoustic steel strings. I've also been in the planning and tooling stage for archtops. I've kept my job at the nursing home so I wouldn't have to depend on repair for my living. It works out well as I can afford to keep my total concentration on building. Because of my situation with the fire, I've only built about 60 instruments which include classicals, steel strings, electric guitars and basses.

I also make custom furniture as well as custom knives. Here is my address:

Curt Carpenter
8414 Cooper Road
Weedsport, NY 13166
(315) 253-0604

MICHAEL McCLELLAND

My love and fascination with the guitar can be traced back to 1967, San Anselmo, Texas, where as a boy of 13, I fell under its spell as I listened to a girl named Melody play "House Of The Rising Sun". My family was visiting friends that we had made when we were stationed in Japan. My father, a pilot for the Air Force, had been transferred and years later we discovered that we lived only a few hours drive from the Feltons, so we drove over for a visit.

I built my first guitar that summer out of glued-up cardboard with toothpicks for frets and kite string for strings. It made no sound, of course, but I had fun playing along with the Monkees on TV. My sister had bought me one of those wide black belts with the circular metal buckle like they used to wear, and I knew I was cool. It was however, many years later and many states away before I found out what my life's love would be. I was always good with my hands and being from a musical family, I suppose it was inevitable that I would one day try my hand at building a guitar.

I bought my first real guitar in Boston in 1968. It was a twelve string no name with a beautiful butterfly on the

pickguard. I taught myself to play. A year later we moved again, this time to Alabama and during high school I played in a small band. We changed our name each time we played so as not to be confined by any undue bad press. In 1972, after graduation, I left home to go to school on the Gulf Coast, but my degree in Psychology was not my life's goal. I went to the University for lack of anything better to do and because it was what I was expected to do. The opportunity to realize my true calling came in the form of a job in a music store. I had met a man who was working for a music store in town while I was managing a small clothing shop in the mall. We would go to lunch and he would talk about opening his own shop. I told him that when he did, he should hire me. He did both. So for the last twelve years I have been in the music business.

I suppose that like many luthiers, my first serious effort toward building an instrument came from the fact that I could not afford to buy the one I really wanted. So with little real woodworking skills and no tools to speak of, I set out to build my first solid body guitar. With the help of a friend who was a professional woodworker and my position in the music store, I managed to acquire everything I needed to complete this again and again.

Looking back now over all the repair jobs and NAMM shows and books and articles, it's a wonder I ever succeeded in building my first instrument. I didn't realize then that I really didn't know what I was doing. It has been a long uphill struggle for me to reach the place I am at today. I have had to acquire the woodworking skills and the knowledge of machinery the hard way. My realization of my lack of knowledge spurred my study into the history of cordphones and the sensation of tone, the physics of music, and the art of lutherie.

I have relentlessly bought any book or article that I could find on lutherie or the history of guitars or musical instruments. I have developed a slide library of stringed musical instruments, from ancient skull harps to the present state of the art. It is my intention to teach a continuing education class entitled The Musical Design and Evolution of the Guitar. The class will be open to anyone interested and will touch on the guitar's historical developments, the physics of the guitar, it's place in today's market, its construction and maintenance, and its design and function.

One who designs with knowledge of the past, and builds in an ergonomic and sensitive manner, the instruments that become the tools of the artist trade, is an individual with a very special avocation. It is this avocation that I have chosen to pursue.

My work in the retail music business has given me the opportunity to develop my repair skills and provide me with the means to outfit my home for my chosen endeavors. My home has been called a studio with a bedroom attached. My shop inside is airconditioned and contains everything I need

to build guitars from resawing lumber to finishing.

I work on approximately 250 guitars each year for the store. I do everything from minor setup to the staple nut and bridge jobs, refinishing, refretting and custom conversions. I do enjoy fixing up the instruments that come through my shop, but what I am really working towards is the day I can sell my own instruments to provide my sole means of income. While I am not quite at this point, I am getting closer each day.



One of Michael's recent D-size acoustic guitars.

I have designed and built many successful solid body electric guitars, but my true love is the Acoustic. I started building solid body electrics only because I felt I needed to hone my skills in things like neck carving and inlaying. I also lacked all the tools and space necessary to become a serious Acoustic builder. I have just recently finished my latest project, a modified dreadnought acoustic, and the result is quite satisfying.

I have probably rambled on too long already but not told you everything you may have needed to know, so I give you the rest in condensed form. I am 35 years old and have been involved in the repair of guitars for approximately 12 years. I play acoustic guitar only when I get the chance. I love to listen to all types of music, but prefer acoustic sounds. You can reach me at:

Michael McClelland
4365 Fathbrook Lane
Mobile, AL 36693
(205) 666-2351 work

We'd love to know where you're coming from. Don't be shy! Send us a page (or two) with a good quality photo of one of your instruments to A.S.I.A. Bio's.

EDITORIALS

KEEP HOPE ALIVE!

by William R. Cumpiano

I suspect most instrument-making handbuilders have always been more than a bit jealous (and maybe even a bit resentful) at the way the large, established guitarmaking firms have always been able to command the lion's share of the guitar-buying market. For years, many of us have had to struggle for the fickle attentions of those few guitarists not easily impressed by the extraordinarily persuasive image-manipulation and artist-endorsement ploys spread about everywhere by the large factories.

The irony is, however, many of us builder-technicians have had to correct, on a daily basis, the consequences of the bad judgement, failed design and shoddy workmanship of the big-factory product, where it existed. We are dismayed at the customer's passive resignation when told that they must now pay for the downside of guitar mass production.

Indeed, this is because such resignation is rare whenever customers for our own hand-made guitars spot a tiny rub-through or a little dot of glue squeeze-out, or other such oversight, and then proceed to nail US to the wall for our sins.

That, perhaps, is as it should be, but it all seems so colossally unfair when we are nonetheless forced to peg our prices to the price-ceiling of the factory production lines, and not to that which we need to to survive, nay, to thrive—as we make these things at the slow, deliberate and careful pace that such strict standards require.

Perhaps customers find it easier to hold our feet to the fire because there we are, the actual makers, standing right in front of them as they prepare to shell out their hard-earned cash. The large factory instrument makers are more effectively shielded from their mistakes behind salespersons, store managers, the warranty restrictions, the factory warranty manager and a battery of lawyers on retainer. All these stand between the new-instrument buyer with the non-operative truss-rod, the mis-placed bridge, or the new guitar in need of a neck reset—and the individuals whose mistakes actually caused the problem.

Not for us, though.

But I digress. Rather than feel that we are a much abused, dying breed, we should take note of some heartening new developments in the market. A new book, published by a group of researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), reveals how the market is increasingly turning to small production handcraft and losing its unquestioning loyalty to large factory mass-production.

The book, "Made in America: Regaining the Productive Edge" resulted from a study of American manufacturing

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

trends. According to that study, the decline of American productivity and losses to foreign competitors is a reflection of "dinosaur strategies" such as the continued adoration of mass production.

Mass production has, until recently, insured the pre-eminence of American industry. Jobs became increasingly specialized and innovation in machinery was substituted for skilled workers. A hierarchy was created, putting great distance between the person who designed the product and the person who assembled it, and both of them from the buyer.

As it did during the Industrial Revolution, mass production wiped out all other forms of production, such as craft-type manufacturing. At present, we represent the struggling few who remain, trying to recall and relive a bygone past.

True, mass production insured that things could be made cheaper by less-skilled workers, but it resulted in a reduction of the quality and variety of products available in the marketplace. This system has worked fine, as long as store-bought meant status and people wanted precisely what their neighbor had. But things have apparently begun to change, and in a big way.

People now want products that suit their individual taste and self-image. We are poised, as a group, to best supply this new hunger for variety, and although the large firms are taking note and diversifying their lines, we are equipped to offer the unique and one-of-a-kind better than they. According to this study, the world is coming around to what we always kinda figured: if you put your heart into your work; put excellence foremost among your intentions; keep a close watch on your checkbook balance; and hang in there, the world will beat a path to your door.

So hang in there!

TIPS FROM OUR READERS

STICK IT AND SPREAD IT

by Tom Meyers

Here are a couple of products that can make your life easier. Did you ever get tired of fumbling around changing sandpaper on the regular rubber sanding blocks, or did you ever wish you had a way of making an odd sized or shaped block for a particular job? If so, a 3M product called "STIKIT" is for you. This is adhesive backed sandpaper 2 3/4" wide that comes on a roll dispenser just like scotch tape. You'll never see the stuff in hardware stores, but you can get it at most professional auto body supply companies. It is very handy and not much more expensive than sheet sandpaper. A good selection of grits is available.

If spreading a thin even layer of glue over a flat area like the bottom of a fingerboard has ever been a problem, cruise down to your friendly neighborhood hardware store

and pick up a couple of the small disposable paint rollers they use for painting trim. Just squeeze some Titebond out on a sheet of waxed paper, "butter up" the roller, and spread the most uniform layer of glue you've ever seen. If you are religious about rinsing the roller out, it can be re-used dozens of times. You get more uniform coverage and less squeeze out which translates to a lot less mess and aggravation, and probably better glue joints as well.

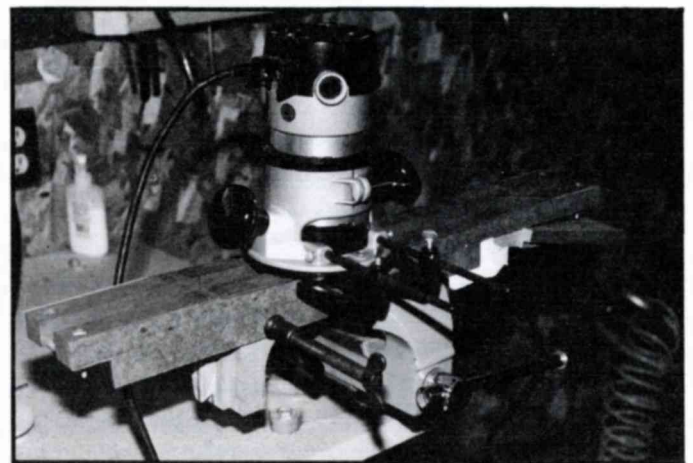
AN EASY TRUSS ROD JIG

by Tom Meyers

Here's a simple little jig that I have been using to cut the curved channel for a "Gibson Style" truss rod. You can make yours for less than \$10.

Start with a very good dry straight hardwood board at least 2 1/2" x 24" x 7/8" thick. Mark the curve that you want for your truss rod (I use a 25 foot radius) on the edge of the board. Set the board on edge on the bandsaw and cut the curve out "a little shy" of your line. Now lay the board down flat and smoothe your curve out with a sandblock or hand sander, being careful to maintain an even thickness from side to side. When you are satisfied that you have a nice smoothe even curve, rip the board into 2 strips about 1" wide.

Tack and glue a panel of 1/4" masonite to the outside edge of each strip so that you can clamp them to the sides of the rough neck blank. Attach the two strips to each other using bolts, wing nuts, and flat aluminum ties, so that you have a 1" gap between the two strips. Slot the aluminum ties so that the gap is adjustable.



Router fed through jig above neck to be slotted.

Take a rough neck blank and mark the centerline carefully. (I use a laminated neck, so my centerline is easy to find.) Slip your jig onto the blank and clamp the whole business firmly in a vise. Stick the bit of choice in your router (I use a 3/16" stainless steel rod and hence a 3/16" double fluted carbide bit), set your edge guide so that your cut follows the centerline and away you go. I cut my slots approximately .330" to .345" deep at the ends which gives me a depth of .440 in the middle, but suit yourself.

I wouldn't recommend going more than 1/2" deep in the middle, or the rod could come popping out the bottom of an unusually thin neck. (Always measure your depth of cut and jot it down so that you can refer to these dimensions when contouring the final neck thickness and shape.)

To complete the installation, you will need a maple or rosewood filler strip the same width as your channel, and a piece of scrap metal rod the same diameter as your truss rod. Mark the curve of your channel on the edge of your filler strip and cut it on the bandsaw. Then take the piece of scrap rod and give it several coats of wax so that it doesn't get hopelessly stuck when you glue in the filler strip. This is important!

Now lay the waxed rod in the channel, put glue in the channel above it, place the filler strip in place and clamp down firmly for 30 to 45 minutes. (and no longer, if using a Titebond type glue) To remove the metal rod, chuck one end in an electric drill. If it doesn't want to turn, grab the rod between the drill chuck and the neck with a pair of pliers or vise grips and use force! As soon as it starts to turn pull like !@#&! and pull it out. Once you have the rod out, set the neck aside to dry at least overnight. You now have a nice smooth even channel for your truss rod.

A few unrelated hints when using this style of truss rod. Always use a brass nut on a steel rod. That way, when some idiot tightens it up enough to strip the threads, the nut (easy to replace) will let go rather than damage the threads on the rod. Also, use a very heavy washer or two so that the washer doesn't "mushroom" the wood at the front of the channel. Finally, if you do enough of these to warrant the cost (about \$30), a 1/2" counterbore from your friendly machine tool supply company, does a quick and neat job of cutting the pocket for the adjusting nut at the front or headstock end.

Tom Meyers is a clever instrument builder who runs a small shop he calls "Homemade Acoustic Guitars" in lovely St. Paul, Minnesota.

If you would like to share some of your tips, send them in to A.S.I.A. Tips. If you are having technical problems perhaps we can help you. Address your questions to A.S.I.A. Q & A.

Q & A

Tom Bazzola has been experiencing the fairly common problem of lacquer chipping where the lacquered side of the neck meets the unlacquered playing surface of the fingerboard. Naturally, this problem becomes evident when masking tape is removed from the fingerboard after spraying has been completed. It is necessary to carefully cut the edge with a single edged razor, and then to carefully scrape the masking tape adhesive debris and excess lacquer from the fingerboard surface. Even with this tedious process, adhesion problems still arise.

Some of you may have devised special techniques to prevent problems in this area. Please help by passing your tips along to us for subsequent newsletters, or correspond directly with Tom Bazzola:

Tom Bazzola
RR1; Box 201
Lebanon, CT 06249
(203) 238-6109

NEWS

The recent earthquake in the bay area caused some concern about the well being of our friends and A.S.I.A. members in that area, particularly **Richard Hoover** and **Bruce Ross** of **Santa Cruz Guitar Co.** Dick Boak was finally able to get through. In spite of the fact that Santa Cruz Guitar Co. was within ten miles of the epi-center of the quake, there were no injuries and only nominal damage. Bruce explained with some embarrassment that he was playing tennis when he felt the earth begin to shake. It was over so quickly that he didn't give it much thought. Californians are used to an occasional tremor, but when he saw smoke from various local fires, he realized that it was serious.

Only one guitar body was damaged. It apparently fell from a table and shattered. Richard Hoover's home, apparently built before the more stringent earthquake codes, took a pretty severe beating. Richard's wife is a glass sculptor and she lost a large portion of her work.

The sad and humbling reality is that there are forces out there that are bigger than all of us.

RAINFOREST DESTRUCTION

Tom and Johanna Bazzola sent in an interesting yet distressing article from the July 22nd issue of **Science News** about the destruction of the tropical rainforests. There has been incredible media attention to this subject, to the extent that many of us are being deluged with questions from our customers about what effect (positive or negative) we are having upon this situation. No doubt most of us are confused and frustrated by this situation, especially since it will continue to cause problems in the supply of the woods that we prize for our instruments. Prices will surely be driven higher as well.

Scott Landis, a woodworker, writer and author, who has had a long standing relationship with Taunton Press's **Fine Woodworking Magazine**, organized a day long conference at the World Financial Center in New York City on September 10th, 1989. Dick Boak represented A.S.I.A. at the conference, which included about 20 key members of the woodworking community.

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

All aspects of the rainforest destruction problem were discussed. A number of conclusions were reached:

- 1. There is a great deal of misinformation going on, and a conference of greater scope should be organized by and for the woodworking community to spread accurate information, and to devise constructive ways to deal with the problems of rainforest destruction.*
- 2. Boycotting hardwoods from these endangered regions will not help save the rainforests. In fact, such boycotts by the American or world market would in fact force the residents of these regions into further slash and burn tactics in order to convert their forests for farming and grazing.*
- 3. The governments of these countries don't seem to care a great deal what we think!*
- 4. The United States has a lot of nerve trying to tell other countries what to do after we have effectively destroyed 95% of our domestic forests. Governmental policies are erratic and environmental legislation, especially during the Reagan administration, has suffered major setbacks.*
- 5. The primary technique necessary to stop this deforestation trend is to provide tangible incentives (for the people who live within the countries in question) to apply the science of timber management to their environment. If it is more economical for them to create grazing land by slashing and burning their timber resources, then that is what they will do.*

We invite your letters, comments, concerns and questions about this subject. We will keep you informed about further developments, and about the location and dates of conferences dealing with this issue.

REVIEWS

BOB TICE'S REFERENCE INDEX OF LUTHERIE PERIODICALS

This data base file contains a comprehensive index of articles, topics and key words from most of the magazines of interest to luthiers, particularly: American Lutherie (GAL), American Woodworker, Data Sheets (GAL), Frets, Fine Woodworking, Guild of American Luthiers Quarterly, Guitar Player, The Music Trades, String Instrument Craftsman, Strings, The National Music Trader & Woodshop News. As the file continues to grow, more periodicals will be added, including A.S.I.A., of course.

There are presently over 4,000 topics listed alphabetically on 60 pages, most of them cross-referenced under others terms to help make them as easy to locate as possible. Included in the listing is the publication, volume or

date, and page. Many of the topics include vital information right in the listing in order to speed up your research without having to find the magazine first.

The intention of this index is to make each luthier who uses it as knowledgeable and well educated as possible in the most efficient manner, and to put the potential of our magazines and their great wealth of information to the best use. Shelves of magazines will just become wood dust collectors if you can't remember where you saw that article, or whether or not a technique has ever been documented. Many magazines do already have their own indexes, but some are not arranged alphabetically, making them difficult if not impossible to use, or they list only the title, and not some of the different details discussed. A notable exception to this is Fine Woodworking's Index, which is excellently done, and available at a reasonable cost. I would highly recommend it as a supplement, since this Luthier's Index does not go into as many woodworking details that may not be related directly to lutherie.

The main advantage of this index is to be able to find everything in one list, rather than hunting through many different indexes. Other features of interest are all the vintage instruments listed, many including value appraisals, and a section indexing stolen instruments that have been notified.

Updated editions will be made at the end of each year in order to keep it current and inclusive, and presently costs \$15 plus \$1.50 postage, or \$18 plus \$2 postage if you want it with the data binder. If you prefer to use addendums at the end of each year, (which can be easily added to the binder), rather than replacing your whole file each time, these will also be available at a cost of \$4 per year plus \$1 postage. Just request what year or years you'd like, and if you'd like them combined. The complete edition is available through Elderly Instruments (517) 372-7890, and all are also available directly from the author, address given below. (Please include 6% sales tax if you live in Pennsylvania):

Robert Tice, Luthier
HCR #1, Box 465
Sciota, PA 18354
(717) 992-5695

**WOULDN'T YOUR
CALLING CARD
OR 1/8 PAGE AD
LOOK GOOD IN THIS SPOT?
CHECK PAGE 22
FOR THE NEW
A.S.I.A. AD RATES
AND SIZES.**

SOURCES

by Dick Boak

It's no wonder that I have somehow managed to be put on virtually every conceivable mailing list that has anything remotely to do with instrument making or woodworking. It occurred to me that some of these publications might be of interest to A.S.I.A. members.

Luthiers Merchantile was one of the first businesses to address the very specific needs of the instrument making community. They put out an impressive catalog of hard to find (or unique) tools and bookmatched woods, including occasional lots of brazilian rosewood and other rare sets. Of particular interest is their unique sidebending device which is simple yet effective. Todd Taggart, John Curtis, and Tom Ribbecke are among the crew to contact if you would like more information:

Luthiers Merchantile
412 Moore Lane; P.O. Box 774
Healdsburg, CA 95448
(707) 433-8579

The name **Gulab Gidwani** is certainly familiar to most instrument makers. As president and owner of **Exotic Woods Company**, Gulab has been supplying instrument woods and supplies to the guitarmaking community for many years. Having lived in India, he is familiar enough with the customs and language to have established himself as a major source for Indian exotics, and as those woods become more and more difficult to get, he has been traveling in search of other sources. Gulab and his wife Carol publish a price list that can be obtained through:

Exotic Wood Company
444 Erial-Williamstown Road
Sicklerville, NJ 08081
(609) 728-5555 or (800) GID-WANI

String Instrument Craftsman is a bi-monthly informative newsletter edited by **Jim Hatlo** of **Guitar Player Publications**. The 16 page newsletter is produced with a professional flair that is relatively unmatched in our field. With the recent sale of GPI however, there seemed to be some question as to whether String Instrument Craftsman (SIC) would survive the transition, since the pending GPI management decided to terminate **FRETS MAGAZINE**, SIC's "big brother" and apparent money drain to the company. Regardless of what happens at GPI (and nothing seems decided as of yet), Jim Hatlo remains committed to the newsletter, to the extent that if GPI decides to close SIC down, Jim hopes to keep it going himself. You can contact String Instrument Craftsman or Jim Hatlo either of these two addresses:

String Instrument Craftsman c/o GPI Publications
20085 Stevens Creek
Cupertino, CA 95014
(408) 446-1105

or

Jim Hatlo c/o Pen/Lens Press
142 North Milpitas Blvd., Suite 280
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 946-3282

Eric Kasner, President of Hood Products in Freehold, NJ has spent years developing a product called **Hydrocoat**, a water based lacquer. He spoke in some detail about his product at **Symposium 89**. Transcriptions of that talk will be featured in subsequent issues.

The implication is that as tighter restrictions on pollution come into play, solvent based finishes like nitrocellulose and acrylic based lacquers used in the guitar making trade, will be forced off of the market. Water based finishes like Hydrocoat may be the only ones capable of meeting the new standards. It is likely that manufacturers will be the first affected and forced to make the switch.

Eric forwarded me a booklet that explains Hydrocoat from A to Z. If you would like more information, request **Hydrocoat; A New Solution For Old Problems**, from:

Hood Products, Inc.
P.O. Box 163
Freehold, NJ 07728
(800) 223-0934, In NJ (210) 247-2177

Strings, The Magazine For Players And Makers Of Bowed Instruments is a relatively new and ambitious bi-monthly magazine aimed at and written by violin players, makers, and repairers. Strings is a rather slick production boasting 9,000 subscribers and 35,000 readers. Statistics show that 97% of the readership are instrumentalists (players). The magazine seems to be an attempt to capitalize on the rather large violin enthusiast audience by providing a quality format for articles and advertisements. For further information, contact:

David A. Lusterman; Publisher
Strings Magazine
Post Office Box 767
San Anselmo, CA 94960

John Bernunzio publishes a small computer listing of his current stock of Vintage Instruments. His major area of interest has always been old openback banjos, but he also lists tenor and plectrum banjos, mandolins, ukes, guitars, and other acquisitions as they occur. I find John's listing to be a unique and surprisingly complete source for these beautiful old relics, and the prices seemed to be competitive if not a bit low. You can subscribe to this modest quarterly listing by sending \$5.00 to: (See next page for address)

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

John Bernunzio Vintage Instruments
1738 Penfield Road
Penfield, N.Y. 14526
(716) 385-1800 or (716) 381-2958

I received an interesting flyer from "**Business Trend Analysts**" who claim to be the "world leaders in the preparation and publication of off-the-shelf industry studies." From the looks of their flyer, I tend to believe them. They have prepared an immense 415 page strategic marketing analysis and biennial review called "**THE MARKET FOR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**". The study deals with pianos, organs, brasswinds and woodwinds, electronic keyboards and synthesizers, guitars and stringed instruments, percussion instruments, plus a wide range of parts and accessories. The topics covered include market size, growth and forecast, imports and exports, advertising and promotion, pricing, consumer attitudes, retail distribution, new products, and specific company information.

Although this study would make fascinating reading for anyone in the music business, the vast scope of such a report seems tedious and mind-boggling. I wonder who could really benefit. Perhaps the marketing heads of the largest music monopolies. The report is also quite costly at the no-doubt fair price of \$595.00, but you can put it on your American Express Card ! If you're interested , call:

Dennis Macchio at (516) 462-5454 or write to:
Business Trend Analysts Publications Department
2171 Jerico Turnpike
Commack, N.Y. 11725

Several years ago, I was exhibiting my guitars and drawings at a small gallery when I ran into a fellow who belonged to the "**International Wood Collectors Society**". I had never heard of it. After a good conversation about various exotic and rare species, I gave him my card and asked that he send information about the organization, which is much like our association of instrument builders.

I have been getting their publication called "World Of Wood" for a few years now. It is a surprisingly professional small non-profit monthly publication, packed with useful information about the inexhaustible number of wood species from around the world. The "IWCS" is perfect for those who share a basic fever about wood, and desire to collect and trade samples with other members. Though there is a "mom and pop" homeliness to the publication, it is well worth the low price of \$19.00 for first year membership; \$15.00 for successive years. This fee covers the cost of the magazine as well. Inquiries should be sent to:

International Wood Collectors Society
P.O. Box 1102
Chautauqua, N.Y. 14722
(716) 753-7944

There is a very aggressive auction house in Fishkill, N.Y. that has a unique approach to specialized selling. They call themselves "**Doyle Auctioneers & Appraisers**". Their motto is "give it to Doyle and it's done". Once you are a subscriber to their service, they send notice of upcoming auctions usually pertaining to specific fields of interest, like "musical instruments", or antique furniture", etc. They take items on consignment, and after they have collected a huge pile of items, they take lots of photos and publish a quick catalog of what's available. Absentee bidding (by mail) is strongly encouraged, although you certainly can attend the auction in person.

Although I remain slightly confused as to how their entire process works, the scope of their catalogs is incredible. This seems to be a reasonable way to buy or sell old collectables. My most recent flyer advertises a Music Auction for which an extensive catalog is available. If you desire more information, write to:

Doyle Auctioneers & Appraisers
R. D. 3, Box 137; Osborne Hill Road
Fishkill, N.Y. 12524
(914) 896-9492

A.S.I.A. member **Steve Brown** is a very qualified luthier and has an instrument repair and restoration shop in upstate New York. There he has managed to collect a fairly extensive collection of older instruments and parts. Though his primary interest seems to be pre-1900 mandolins and guitars, he publishes a modest listing of assorted vintage and current acoustic and electric instruments and parts. He is also anxious to buy instruments and parts that are similar to the items on his list. I have found Steve to be reliable, honest, and professional.

His instrument list comes out every 4 to 10 weeks depending on the number on new additions. You can subscribe by sending \$5.00 for 4 consecutive lists, or \$10.00 for 12 lists. The parts listing is separate and costs \$2.00. Inquiries can be addressed to:

Steve Brown
Stringed Instrument Restoration & Repair
225 Stanford Avenue
Schenectady, New York 12304
(518) 370-2164

Erick Brand, Inc. is an outfit that specializes in the manufacture and distribution of repair supplies and musical specialties. They've been in business for nearly forty years and they put out an impressive 60 page catalogue listing thousands of items. A great deal of the tools that are offered are related to band instruments like flutes, saxophones, trumpets, clarinets, bassoons, etc. For someone repairing these instruments, I would think this catalogue a must. For those who make or repair stringed instruments the catalog

will be limited to the products that overlap both fields. Surprisingly there are quite a few of these. The prices are not cheap but many of these items are very hard to find. I recommend that you get this catalog and if nothing else, read it. It's an education in itself and you might just find that one specific item you've been searching for. I'm not sure whether there is a charge for the catalog, but you can find out by writing to:

Erick Brand, Inc.
1117 West Beardsley Avenue
Elkhart, Indiana 46514
(800) 348-7588 or (219) 293-6031

I have to be careful in telling you about the retail shop "Woodworker's Dream", because I founded this division of the Martin Guitar Company and I am, as a result, somewhat prejudiced. "Woodworker's Dream" is located in the old original Martin Guitar factory several blocks from the new plant. There you can find an large selection of exotic and domestic hardwoods from around the world, in the rough or sanded to thickness. There is also a very large selection of raw and in process guitar components; some of which are unique to Martin instruments, some of which are not. Martin Guitar production is very picky about quality, and as a result you can find an assortment of 2nd quality parts that might suit you just fine at greatly reduced prices. First quality sets are also available, as are various guitar kits, books, strings, accessories, and just about any type of acoustic or electric tuning machine or piece of hardware that you can conjur up. There are always specials and closeouts available, though many of these items may not be listed in the 24 page catalog. The Sawmill's Wholesale pricelist is also available upon request. The combined "1833 Shop/Woodworker's Dream" Catalog is available for \$2.00 by writing to:

The Martin Guitar Company
510 Sycamore Street
P. O. Box 329
Nazareth, PA 18064
(800) 247-6931 or (215) 759-2064

The Fretted Instrument Guild Of America (F.I.G.A.), is an organization founded in 1957 to "promote, foster, encourage, and stimulate interest in fretted musical instruments." It is primarily aimed at players of guitars, banjos, zithers, mandolins, and the total array of fretted instruments. Many instrument makers advertize in their magazine, appropriately called "FIGA", which has low ad rates.

The F.I.G.A. address is:

F.I.G.A.
2344 South Oakley Avenue
Chicago, IL 60608
(312) 376-1143

In the field of folk music, there are a few publications that have endured like **SING OUT MAGAZINE**. It is an impressively packed periodical overflowing with features about folk musicians and events, transcriptions of obscure folk songs, and advertisements from among other things, luthiers and companies that supply musical accessories. Naturally most of these ads are aimed specifically at folk enthusiasts and folk musicians. If you need to reach this sector, you might wish to contact:

Sing Out Magazine
Attn: Mark Moss (Editor)
125 East 3rd Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
(215) 865-5366

What Sing Out is to folk music, **Dulcimer Player's News** is to dulcimer playing. This specific branch of folk music is covered in great depth with transcriptions, sources, and spotlights. The people at DPN go out of their way to find out what musical events are happening, so that they can inform their readership. If you are making any dulcimers, whether they are the hammered or mountain variety, you will want to subscribe:

Dulcimer Player's News
Attn: Madeline MacNeil
P.O.Box 2164
Winchester, VA 22601
(703) 465-4955

Jerry Brown has been selling instrument building kits long enough to have developed a thriving little mail order business that is geared primarily toward the beginner. He offers guitars, dulcimers, violins, harps, psalteries, bagpipes, and an assortment of other related folk instruments and accessories. Prices seem fair, if not a bit low, but many of the kits are imports. Jerry's "Music Maker's Catalog" costs \$1.00 and is available from:

St. Croix Kits c/o Jerry Brown
423 South Main Street
Stillwater, MN 55082
(612) 439-9120 or (800) 328-6795 ext. 386

As a point of interest, I feel compelled to tell you about **Guitar Craft**. In the sixties and seventies there was a well known group called **King Crimson** headed up by the highly technical guitarist, **Robert Fripp**. After King Crimson, Fripp played with **David Bowie**, **Brian Eno**, and a host of others until he decided, I suppose through popular demand, to start a school of guitar instruction, which he calls **Guitar Craft**. I saw a local ad for a live concert featuring "Robert Fripp and Guitar Craft", so I attended out of curiosity. The stage had twenty-five chairs in a perfect semi-circle. Under each chair was a direct box. After the group was announced, they marched down the isle like soldiers in perfect unison,

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

carrying their guitars like rifles over their shoulders. They stood before their chairs, and when Fripp nodded, everyone sat down in unison, plugged in their instruments in unison, and with Fripp's prompt, began playing in unison. All of the guitars were identical (Ovation Shallow Body Cutaway, Model #1867), and no one's volume was allowed to be louder than any one else's, including Fripp's. It was a fascinating instrumental concert, somewhat new-age in flavor, highly regimented and disciplined with no room whatsoever for even one iota of ego.

Pamphlets about the Guitar Craft course, as well as literature related to Fripp's unique view of guitar playing were for sale after the concert. I shelled out the \$11 (it seemed a lot for the few pages I received), and after reading it, I realized that with Guitar Craft, Fripp was offering an apprenticeship of sorts. To say the least, Fripp's approach is "far-out." He is in fact offering a course in life, perhaps better labeled "Zen and the Art of Guitar Playing." He suggests seven levels to guitar nirvana, as summerized below:

Level one: To develop a flexible technique.

Level two: Setting the criteria for the repertoire. One is allowed to play along with the group if:

- a. You play in tune
- b. You play in time
- c. You play in "tone" (It sounds good)

If a, b, & c cannot be met, then:

- d. Be silent, or:
- e. Restrain yourself.

Level three: Enthusiasm vs. Boredom; Testing the musician's lifestyle.

Level four: Making an extended commitment to the musical lifestyle.

Level five: The student becomes apprenticed to Guitar Craft.

Level six: Working from your own initiative toward competence and performance.

Level seven: Presenting ourselves to the world.

(The League Of Crafty Guitarists)

As structured, disciplined, and rigid as Guitar Craft is, it does provide a unique way to realize excellence in a field that is often evasive to those that aspire to become great. For guitar makers who love to play guitar, you might find this interesting:

Guitar Craft Services
Route 1; Box 278-M
Charlestown, WV 25414

or

Guitar Craft Services
Red Lion House; 35, Salisbury Street
Cranbourne, Dorset
BH21 5PU England

Joe Pichkur has been active in the field of musical instrument making and repair for nearly twenty years. He has been involved in various music publications, most recently as a contributing writer with **The Music Paper**. This publication features interviews with popular musical personalities, chart information, reviews of equipment, and more importantly to us as an organization, Joe's column "**Luthier's Workbench**". Joe has always been supportive of upcoming events, as well as getting information about our association out to the readership. If you have "news" for Joe, you can correspond with him through:

The Music Paper

P.O. Box 304

Manhasset, NY 11030

(212) 614-0300 or (516) 883-6707

or contact:

Joe Pichkur's Guitar Center

2 Crest Avenue

Elmont, NY 11003

(516) 488-5343

I have been reading **Fine Woodworking Magazine** since its inception more than a decade ago. This publication exudes excellence. **Taunton Press**, the publisher, has developed a style with all of its publications that addresses the highest aspirations of people in the various crafts that their magazines target. Musical instrument making, being a subset of woodworking, is a topic that occasionally comes up in the magazine. Our own **Grit Laskin** wrote a lengthy three part article about guitar construction.

For those of you who read **Fine Woodworking**, I advise that you pay particular attention to the **Design Books** that are published every other year. These are compendiums of the finest new works in wood. They are beautiful books with high circulation. I mention this since I have been fortunate enough to have had my instruments accepted in two of the design books: *Design Book Three* and the pending color edition *Design Book Five*. I found the exposure from my inclusion in the **Design Books** to be invaluable.

The magazine will call for submissions for *Design Book Six* sometime in late 1990 or early 1991. I urge you to submit quality photos of your new work. Merely submitting may get you a free directory listing in the back of the book. Should you wish to correspond, contact:

Fine Woodworking c/o The Taunton Press

63 South Main Street

Newtown, CT 06470

(203) 426-8171

The Music Distributors Association (MDA) serves the needs of those who sell to the trade, and produces among other things, a **Dealer Advisory Board Report** on a quarterly basis. This report is a market survey that analyzes market conditions in the categories of Acoustic

Guitars, Electric Guitars, Amplification, Electronic Effects, Portable Keyboards, Synthesizers, Pianos & Organs, Band & Stringed Instruments, Percussion, Accessories, and Services. In each of these categories, the MDA survey rates Most Saleable Styles, Least Saleable Styles, Sales Trends (Rising), % Increase (Decrease) Compared To Last Year, What Customers Request Most, When To Run Promotions On What Products, and What Suppliers Can Do To Help The Dealers.

The recent MDA report rates \$200-\$300 steel string acoustics to be the most saleable, with learner classical models picking up. Small steel strings and expensive classics aren't selling well, and **handcrafted steel strings are too expensive.**

Most trends are rising, up an average of about 10% from last year. Customers are requesting Acoustic-electric cutaways in an affordable range, and many customers come into the stores, prompted by reading specific magazine articles and advertizing.

MDA will probably only benefit manufacturers, but in case you want membership information, contact:

The Music Distributors Association (MDA)
136 West 21st Street
New York, NY 10011-3212
(212) 924-9175 FAX (212) 675-3577

The **Music Industries Promotion Service** is a consultant to the music industry, specializing in providing specific targeted mailing lists to those trying to market their goods to music stores. Their current emphasis is on piano and organ dealerships, but they also have listings of U.S. and Canadian Retail Music Stores as well as Pawn Shops. For further information, contact:

L. J. Morton
Music Industries Promotion Service
342 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017
(212) 687-1910

The **Autoharp Quarterly** is a magazine catering to the ever growing group of autoharp players, makers and general enthusiasts. It includes transcriptions of songs, tablature, advertizing, spotlights about specific autoharp players, and articles about various autoharp brands, zithers and related accessories.

It is co-edited by Mary Lou Orthey (her husband Dr. George Orthey is a noted autoharp maker) and noted autoharpist, Ivan Stiles.

As of September 1989, annual subscriptions were \$15.00. For further information, contact:

Limberjack Productions
P.O. Box A
Newport, PA 17074
(717) 567-9469

Luthier/repairman **Don Alfieri** offers a small occasional newsletter and price list that features his own hand-built instruments and repair services, as well as vintage instruments that he has for sale. To date, Don has acquired roughly thirty instruments in assorted categories: classic and flamenco guitars, lutes, acoustic and electric guitars, jazz guitars, basses, amps, mandolins, banjos, and some limited guitar making supplies. Subscription costs \$4.00 for 4 issues, but is sent free to Don's clients and frequent buyers. Contact:

Alfieri Guitars
9 Oak Drive
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
(516) 437-1377

In the violin making field, The Violin Society Of America (VSA) is very well known and respected. The Society was founded in 1973 to advance the broad interests and concerns of violin making, including technique, history, performance, practice, repertory, design, repair, and maintenance. Their official publication **The Journal Of The Violin Society Of America** is supplied with membership which costs \$35 per annum. The Journal is a very substantial perfect-bound compendium of information gathered at the yearly convention of the Society. For further information about the Society, contact:

Edward C. Campbell c/o
Chimney's Violin Shop
614 Lerew Road
Boiling Springs, PA 17007
(717) 258-3203

In the next A.S.I.A. issue, we will review (among other things) the latest catalogs from **Stewart MacDonald Guitar Shop Supply, Elderly Instruments, and Daddy's Junky Mail.**

If you have a catalog or newsletter and didn't see it reviewed here, please don't be offended. We will get to you in a subsequent issue.

It is our intention to accumulate various sources, for example: spruce vendors, rosewood vendors, ebony vendors, tool vendors, fret wire suppliers, media listings, dealers that will assist luthiers in the sale of their instruments, etc. We intend to eventually publish a comprehensive source booklet and distribute it to our membership. This project, like all of our projects, will require occasional modest input from our membership.

If you have a newsletter or know of a publication that's pertinent to our field, please review it yourself or, if you don't trust your writing ability, send it in to us and we'll review it:

A.S.I.A. Reviews
14 South Broad Street
Nazareth, PA 18064

EDUCATION

A PROPOSAL FOR THE A.S.I.A. EDUCATION FUND

by Timothy Poling

The educational aspect of the luthier business is of paramount interest to me. I feel this facet of our business has been severely overlooked and I would like to propose a program that would further the education of luthiers. This program will include an application for a scholarship, a training period, a test to show satisfactory work, and finally a certificate of completion. I will also show how this program can be funded by the A.S.I.A. organization.

I suggest setting up a network of A.S.I.A. approved shops as teaching centers where qualified candidates can go to learn a desired skill. These shops would be a cohesive nucleus for which an overall director could be appointed by the board, or be a board member. This person would coordinate the overall program, working with the candidates and with the shop owners.

This might be a typical scenario: I have someone working in my shop who requires extra training in the installation of whammy bars. I could apply to the board to send that person to Chris Pile for this training. Chris, in turn, would be compensated for his training time as well as for any worksheets and/or handouts he may have prepared. At the end of the training, the candidate would be tested and upon satisfactorily completing the test, be certified by Chris, acting for A.S.I.A. Please note that A.S.I.A. would not be funding a candidate's expenses, but would be providing compensation for the shop owner's time and expertise.

While details of this proposal need to be worked out, my intention is for this program to be a method of continuing education for those already in the field rather than a complete training program for those with absolutely no experience. I believe this program would establish a system for training our own people and also raise the overall quality of participating shops.

A committee could be appointed to draw up specific areas of study, potential participating shops, length of study for each phase and all other mechanics of the operation. Of course, this must tie in to an accreditation policy which will make the A.S.I.A. certificate meaningful.

To make this program viable for shop owners, I submit the following proposition for funding. Beginning August 1st, 1989, I am committing 10% of my bow rehair revenue toward the A.S.I.A. Education Fund. At my current price of \$22.00, that translates to \$2.20 per rehair. This money will be sent to 20th Century Mutual Fund Family to be invested in their family of funds to accumulate interest until such time as a withdrawal is necessary. For anyone uninformed as to how a mutual fund works, the money sent to the fund

purchases shares at that days' value. These shares can be redeemed at any time for their current rate. The rate of return on a mutual fund, in almost all circumstances, is much better than a bank could offer. My personal savings fund with 20th Century is currently earning up to 17% for the year.

I encourage others to look for funds which could be earmarked for this endeavor. Checks could be sent to the treasurer, who in turn would write one check for deposit in the fund chosen. The reason for a mutual fund family is simple. At various times, depending on interest rates, the money can be rolled over into other funds with no penalty. If this requires further explanation, I would be happy to respond. I have spent several years studying investment strategies and feel I have gained valuable information.

This document (letter) is not meant to be a complete detailed proposal. It is meant, simply, to offer an idea I feel bears contemplation. If A.S.I.A. finds the idea to have merit, I would be willing to devote my time to its fruition. This is a program that would require only a small amount of investment on the part of shop owners, but one that could reap great dividends for the entire stringed musical instrument making and repair community.

Editors Note:

In response to the above proposal, the Board Of Directors has appointed an education committee comprised of Tim Poling, Bill Cumpiano, and David Sheppard to evaluate this and other educational proposals, as well as to consider the difficult issues surrounding accreditation in general.

Tim Poling has offered to chair this committee because of his intense interest in this subject. Bill Cumpiano has had extensive experience with apprenticeships as a result of his "Luthier's Cooperative", and several years ago, David Sheppard researched a small booklet listing schools that offered lutherie related courses. Perhaps some of you would be willing to offer your particular specialty in the form of a course, fashioned after the proposal that Tim has suggested. Perhaps some may wish to donate a small percentage of specific jobs similar to the bow rehairing account mentioned. There are many avenues that we can take as an organization to further our profession through education. These avenues are limited only by your ability to think of viable ideas, and our ability to impliment your ideas effectively.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions, we would like to hear them.

Please contact:

Tim Poling
c/o Poling Stringed Instruments
743 Magnolia Street
Slidell, LA 70460
(504) 834-3088

BASIC GUITARMAKING COURSE

MAKING AN ACOUSTIC GUITAR

AN 8-DAY INTENSIVE COURSE AT PETER'S VALLEY

DATES: Friday, August 24th, 1990 through
Saturday, September 1st, 1990

INSTRUCTOR: Dick Boak; Martin Guitar Co.
Current President; A.S.I.A.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course will deal with all of the critical elements of acoustic steel string guitarmaking. Materials will be high quality solid woods only, and the finest hardware will be supplied. Because of the obvious time limitations of the course, some prefabrication of parts will be necessary. Bent sides will be supplied to ensure a successful shape without waste from breakage. Sitka spruce tops will be supplied with the rosette rings installed since this process is time consuming and requires extensive tool setups. The neck blank will be cut with the traditional dovetail that will match the dovetail in the body, but precise fitting and shaping of the neck will be accomplished by the student. Necks will be advance routed for adjustable truss rods to prevent neck movement under string tension.

Students will learn the start to finish process of the craft and art of instrument construction, as well as the philosophy behind the more subtle manipulation of tonewood. When the course concludes, each student will have a full understanding of the process and will have completed their own hand crafted acoustic guitar that is strung and fully playable. The application of a protective finish will be discussed in depth, but will be the responsibility of each student due to the time restriction.

COURSE LIMIT: 10 Students

MATERIALS: \$350.00 (less finish; less options)

TUITION: Not Yet Announced

DEADLINE: July 15th, 1990

PREREQUISITES: Some basic knowledge and skill with hand and power tools is strongly urged. It is also recommended that potential students acquire and read: **Guitarmaking; Tradition & Technology** by William Cumpiano and Jon Natelson prior to the start of the course, as well as any other pertinent literature available at your local library.

For further information or registration contact:

Dick Boak c/o Church of Art

14 South Broad Street

Nazareth, PA 18064

(215) 759-7100 evenings

or

Jeanie Eberhardt; Executuve Director

The Peters Valley Craft Center

Layton, NJ 07851

(201) 948-5200

ARTICLES

NAMM - A LUTHIER'S VIEW

by Ken Donnell

There was once a time when I felt that my career was uninvolved with the rest of the music industry. The band instrument industry was just a bunch of kids in costumes who played at football games, home organs were for senior citizens, and so forth. If something didn't directly relate to stringed instruments, I simply wasn't interested. However, events have changed my outlook since that time, and I am now actively a part of the music industry at large and its representative organization, NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants).

The impetus for this change was the recent depression, as I found my business faltering. At the same time, my wife was newly pregnant and soon needing to quit her steady job which was then keeping us solvent. So, I was forced to take a critical look at my business and career, and in the process, I made many hard decisions which have since helped turn my career around.

It was at this same time that I began receiving a magazine titled "Musical Merchandise Review", which is one of several trade publications associated with the music industry. Others are "Music Trades", "Upbeat", "Music and Sound Retailers", and "Electronic Musician". They cover NAMM functions, contain ads for a variety of manufacturers and wholesalers, and present many valuable articles on music industry trends, good business practices, and similar subjects. These publications, and MMR in particular, have been well used tools during this period of rapid career growth.

The first thing MMR helped me to understand was that the economic woes of the early 80's affected the whole music industry, not just luthiers. We all faced similar, if not common problems. And after awhile, I began to realize that the solutions other music merchants were attempting (including those in home organ and band instruments) might also work for me.

The fact is..... they did. Perhaps in different ways, but the end result is that I am now able to do what I want to do and in the manner I want to do it. True, there have been unexpected problems, but despite my initial anxieties, the results of my efforts have almost all been positive.

The National Association of Music Merchants was founded in 1901, and is the trade organization for over 3,000 members involved in all phases of the music industry. This includes most of the large manufacturers right down to the "mom and pop" music store in Backwoods, U.S.A. NAMM offers a variety of services to its members, including printed literature on sales and retailing techniques, group insurance programs, etc. But its most important function is

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

the organization of the bi-annual trade shows which draw an attendance in excess of 20,000 people each.

The summer show is usually held in an eastern metropolitan area (Chicago has been a popular location), while the winter show is always held in Anaheim, California just south of Los Angeles. Any product remotely related to the music industry is likely to be represented at one or both of these shows. However, they are not open to the general public, and you must be a NAMM member or be affiliated with an established music business in order to attend.

Being located in California, I gravitate towards the Anaheim show, and my experiences at this event have been beneficial in many ways:

Effective marketing is the area where the trade shows have helped me the most. Observing how the giants and the giant killers of the industry go about selling their wares has been an education in itself. While often neglected, this is perhaps the most important part of an independent craftsman's career. It doesn't matter how good your product is if you can't sell it.

Effective buying has also been an area of my career where the trade shows have helped. Developing a wide range of sources has given me a greater ability to demand the services and prices I need. I've learned how to talk the language of the business, and in turn I have been treated as a serious businessman.

Recognizing new trends is another aspect of attending the shows. Knowing the directions that the industry is headed may help to avoid costly mistakes or give an important advantage over a competitor.

Finally, the shows are a great place to make and renew contacts within the industry. You can never tell when a casual encounter might lead to an unexpected breakthrough in your career. While this may sound like daydreaming, it does happen, and it is a part of the magic which makes me return to NAMM shows time and time again.

So, I recommend that any professional luthier consider participating in NAMM and reading the trade publications of the music industry. These are valuable tools that we should not neglect to use. And, I hope the effect on your career will be as positive as it has been for me.

You can correspond with NAMM or call:

National Association of Music Merchants
5140 Avenidas Encinas
Carlsbad, CA 92008
(619) 438-8001

Ken Donnell is a freelance writer, an occasional instrument builder and repairman, and a manufacturer of musical accessories:

Donnell Enterprises
672 Norlene
Grass Valley, CA 95949
(916) 273-9739 home
(916) 273-5704 shop

Future NAMM Dates:

Winter NAMM; Anaheim, CAJanuary 19-21, 1990
Frankfurt Show; West GermanyMarch 21-25, 1990
Summer NAMM; Chicago, ILJune 15-17, 1990
Winter NAMM; Anaheim, CAJanuary 18-20, 1991
Frankfurt Show; West GermanyJan. 31-Feb.3, 1991
Summer NAMM; Chicago, ILJune 14-16, 1991
Winter NAMM; Anaheim, CAJanuary 17-19, 1992
Frankfurt Show; West GermanyMarch 11-15, 1992
Summer NAMM; Chicago, ILJune 12-14, 1992

VIOLIN SETUP **A WORKSHOP WITH TIM POLING**

Tim Poling of Poling Stringed Instruments in Slidell, LA (full address and phone number are listed on Page 16) offered a workshop on one of his particular areas of expertise, violin setup, that was a big success this past summer at Symposium 89. The workshop was aimed at the guitar making and repair crowd, notorious for taking on violin setup and repair work without the necessary knowledge to do the job correctly. The session took place during exhibition time. Tim had brought with him printed matter as well as many inexpensive violins for hands on training in setup and adjustment. For those who missed the workshop or for those who attended and wish further documentation, Tim has supplied the following step by step summarization of that workshop:

I. ESTABLISH PROPER STRING LENGTH USING A STRADIVARIUS VIOLIN AS A MODEL

Measure the neck from the edge of the top to the nut. This distance should be 13cm, but whatever it is, divide by two and multiply by three. For example, $13 \div 2 = 6.5$, $3 \times 6.5 = 19.5$. This measurement gives the proper bridge placement. Ideally, this will be where the notch in the "F" hole lies. When this is done correctly and the neck angle is right, the string length will be 328mm. The important factor here is proper bridge placement, not following the "F" hole notch. Alter the neck length, when possible, by removing and resetting the fingerboard and/or by making a larger or smaller nut.

Once the string length has been established, the swing length can be adjusted. The swing length is the distance from the bridge to the tailpiece. The swing length for a violin is 1/6th of the vibrating string length. This is crucial for overall clarity, especially with the overtones. A tailpiece adjuster that utilizes two knurled knobs is perfect for this purpose. When using this formula, the swing length is 55mm for a violin with a string length of 328mm.

II. PLANING FINGERBOARDS

Fingerboards are planed for three basic reasons. While there are others, these are probably the most important. These are:

1. To remove the grooves caused by wear.
2. To correct the string angle over the bridge.
3. To correct the contour for comfort and playability.

When a straightedge is placed on the fingerboard, the distance from that line to the top of the instrument where the bridge sits should measure 26.5mm. This is far more important than the height at the end of the fingerboard, which ideally is 21.5mm for a Strad. What we are aiming for is to have a string angle of 158 degrees over the bridge.

To plane the fingerboard properly, first decide why it is necessary. This will enable a plan to be established. The arch of the fingerboard is based on a circle with a radius of 42mm. I have made a template for checking this. Also, lengthwise the fingerboard has a gradual concavity of 1/2mm on the "E" string side to 3/4mm on the "G" string side. Remove the nut using your favorite method. I wrap the violin in a diaper for obvious reasons and use my block plane for the initial shaping, constantly checking the contour widthwise and lengthwise. I also use the straightedge to check the height at the bridge area. No matter how bad the condition of the board, I use a small amount of blade rather than risk tearing out some of the wood. Remember, when the instrument is strung, the fingerboard will drop about 1mm.

When the basic shape is the way I want it, I use a sanding block and do what I call "running through the papers." I usually start with 150 grit sandpaper, then work my way up through 220, 280, 320, 400 and then finish by working in a few drops of light mineral oil with 600 grit sandpaper. This brings out the wonderful ebony shine. It is very important to follow through on the sanding strokes, actually going past each end. There is a tendency to stop short of each end, thus creating a hump which negates the entire job.

When sanding, use lengthwise and diagonal strokes, i.e. start at the "G" string side and end at the "E" string side. This will help insure overall evenness of the fingerboard. Properly accomplished, the fingerboard will feel the same no matter where it is played. Next, I lightly break the edges of the board with 600 grit so there are no sharp points and I then take my final measurements. The nut will either need to be replaced or lowered to accommodate the new thickness of the fingerboard. When complete planing and sanding are finished, the fingerboard should be wonderfully smooth. When sighting down from the scroll, the edges should be distinct and well defined.

This discussion has dealt with dressing an old fingerboard. It is not a discussion on the procedure of replacing a new fingerboard.

III. BRIDGES

Bridges are one of the most complex structures and one of the most important for a well set up instrument. I will discuss only the very basic steps. These are some of the things that work for me, but are by no means the "only" way to carve a bridge.

I try to match the wood of the bridge to what I want it to do on the instrument. Generally, I go for the oldest, hardest bridge I have. Using the preceding formula, I decide on the correct placement. I then hold the bridge in place while I sight down the fingerboard to place it laterally where I want it. If all is fine, that will be dead center of the fingerboard. However, it is more important to me that the bridge foot sit to the outside of the bass bar by at least 1mm. This is very important and this step alone can often make a tremendous difference in the sound. I use a soft pencil and mark where the foot sits. Then, I measure where the bass bar is to make sure it is placed for optimum sound.

I use non-acid treated Aubert bridges. If you are in doubt as to whether the bridge has been treated with acid, simply smell it and you will find out quickly. I use a knife to trim the feet, but I use one of good German steel. I know some use an exacto knife, but I find them too soft. I usually start by removing a large amount of wood. The feet start out way too thick and I want a low center of gravity. When I'm finished, I want the feet to be only 1mm thick and I prefer to remove most of the excess from the bottom. I have two reasons for doing this. First, it allows for more height above the "Mickey Mouse" ears to the crown of the bridge. Second, I find the taller the legs the mushier the sound. Sound travels faster and cleaner through the short sturdy leg as opposed to a tall wobbly one, so try to keep them as short as possible.

When I have the feet fit the way I want, I mark the string height. I accomplish this by using a thin straightedge which I place on the nut at one end while the other end rests against the bridge. With a small scale, I measure off the fingerboard 3.5mm at the "E" string side and 5mm at the "G" string side. This measurement is taken as near the end of the fingerboard as possible. I then use the corner of the straightedge to mark the bridge at the "E" and "G". Using a template, I simply connect the lines and I have my arch. Now I use my favorite bench knife and cut the arch to the line I just made and file it smooth.

With a block plane, I carve the chest in the front. This is pretty difficult to describe, but basically I want the crown to be 1.1mm thick and the bottom to be 4.2mm thick. After sanding this with 220 grit sandpaper, I want my 6" rule to roll uniformly from side to side and from top to bottom.

Opening up the lungs is probably the trickiest aspect of carving the bridge as far as sound is concerned. Experimentation is necessary, trying different styles for the same instrument. Within reason, removing wood from the

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

upper portion of the lung seems to open up the overall sound, accenting the highs. Removing wood from the lower edge of the lung will help the bass end. I aim for a center measurement of 17mm. Lastly, I trim the feet area, trying not to bring the connecting curve up too high to keep the line smooth all the way.

I space the string 11.5mm center to center and usually add a drop of super glue instead of adding a tedious ebony insert. I lubricate the notches in the bridge and nut with graphite from a lead pencil.

IV. SOUNDPOSTS

The soundpost is the heart and soul of the fiddle. It would be impossible to over emphasize the importance of this aspect of the set up

The soundpost is a piece of spruce about 6mm wide which is wedged inside the violin just behind the bridge. Its primary function is to transfer the sound vibrations from the top of the instrument to the back. Any support it may lend to the structure is secondary. When choosing a post, I usually look for the oldest piece I can find. However, I also want an even grain running through the wood. A perfect example of what not to do is included in every Chinese instrument I've seen!

I feel the soundpost should fit tightly enough to remain standing with no tension on the strings. However, I do want the post to fall with no trouble when it is touched with a soundpost setter. If the violin does not have strings or bridge on it when the post is first inserted, the "F" hole should raise about 1/2mm if the post is the proper length. If this is the first attempt to insert the soundpost, remember that patience is a virtue! Properly fit, the soundpost should be straight up and down and there should be no gap at the top or bottom.

For proper placement, I want the soundpost to be in the same position to the bridge that the bass bar is on the other side. For example, if the bass bar is inside the foot of the bridge 1mm, I want the soundpost 1mm inside the foot of the bridge and its own diameter behind (towards the endpin). This is simply to start the process. What I'm trying to do is to balance the sound; so at this point, I experiment. This process invariably leads to new ideas on the proper placement.

Earlier, I mentioned using the oldest wood possible. I don't always do this. For example, if the instrument is very loud and harsh sounding, I might use a softer soundpost as a cushion against the harshness. Again, I experiment a lot with the soundpost and I try to keep a large assortment of them on hand.

To determine the approximate height of the soundpost, I use a very crude method. I stick a needle file in the upper lobe of the "F" hole until it touches the back. I mark that length with my thumb on the file and measure. It is a crude

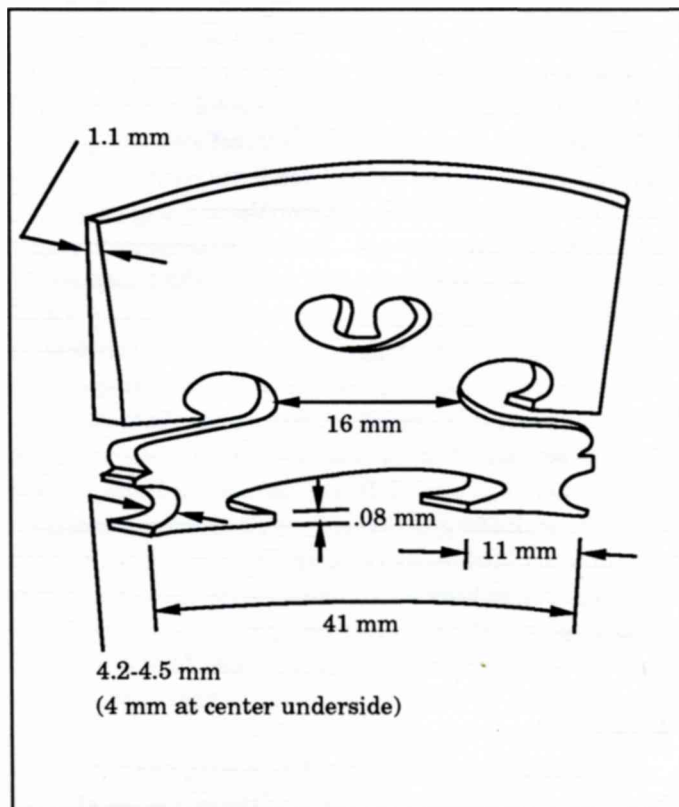
but effective method and I've used it for fifteen years. While I've seen it used, I have never utilized a soundpost gauge, which is probably a more effective method of measuring the height of the soundpost.

VOLIN BRIDGE SPECIFICATIONS

Width at feet	41mm
Thickness at center of feet	4.2 - 4.5mm
Thickness at center underside approx.....	4mm
Thickness across crown	1.1mm
Make thicker for student instruments	
Foot height08mm approx.
Foot length	11mm
Distance between the bridge hearts	16 - 17mm

All the above measurements, except the width at the feet, are indicative rather than absolute and may be varied somewhat according to the style of the maker, the properties of the bridge wood, and the tonal characteristics of the violin for which it is destined as well as the limitations of the blank available.

String spacing, overall (E to G).....	34mm
String spacing: Individual: Even, center to center, or by distance between strings.	
String height, E normal (measured to underside of strings)	3.2mm
String height, C normal	5mm



Tim Poling's violin bridge specifications.

FEATURE ARTICLES

INSTRUMENT MAKING AND THE COMPUTER

In the past five years, the computer has played an increasingly larger role in our everyday business and private lives. Some of you, intimidated or frightened by the technology, have held onto your humanism and bequeathed the computer to the next generation. Many others have succumbed, believing that the choice was either to get with it or be left in the dust.

We are most curious to find out from within our membership whether or not you own or use a computer. If you do, we would like to know what kind, how you put it to use, and whether you have a modem. It is conceivable that some members may wish to eventually network with others in the field.

The A.S.I.A. Board Members are all computer literate. **Dick Boak** uses a Macintosh SE30 to write and prepare most of the articles for various A.S.I.A. journals. He has an Apple Imagewriter (printer) as well as access to an Apple Laserwriter NT and is online with GE's Genie Service as well as the new MacNet Icon Based CONNECT Service. These online services allow individuals easy modem hookup via local phone numbers. Computer mail allows you to send letters, graphics, or complicated files quickly to other friends or associates (much like a Fax machine). Nominal charges (\$5-\$15/per hour) are automatically billed via Mastercard or Visa on a monthly basis. Dick has the ability to transfer MS-DOS (IBM PC Compatible) format to MacIntosh, so if you are writing on a PC, you can submit articles on 5 1/4" floppies (ASCII Text) to eliminate the need for re-typing. In addition, communications between Macintosh and MS DOS Machines is relatively easy over a modem.

Bill Cumpiano uses a Matrix IBM Clone which is related to IBM PC's in it's operating system, and an Atari 1040ST which has the same chip as a Macintosh. He uses them in his business, and in his writing.

Jim Rickard is what we call a "power user" in the industry. He is very well versed with both IBM's and Mac's to the extent that he represents **AutoCad**, a leader in cad cam software. Those who attended Symposium 89 will recall Jim's demonstration of a simpler less expensive cad program called **Autosketch**.

Jeff Pickering is a guitar designer, builder, repairman and enthusiast who has been assisting A.S.I.A. publishing and layout on an SE 40. Jeff has his own business called Pickering Graphics. After Dick Boak has compiled or composed all of the information for a particular newsletter, he enters and edits the text on the Macintosh. When the issue is "in the can" so to speak, Dick saves the text onto a 3 1/2" micro floppy disk and mails it off to Jeff in a jiffy bag. Jeff is extremely versatile on the Macintosh. He has

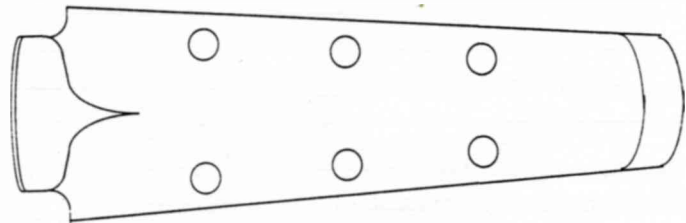
mastered **Aldus Pagemaker** and uses it in conjunction with MicroSoft products, PosterMaker, and Aldus Freehand. He is also good at computer graphics, in particular he finds the program "Cricket Draw" to be the most useful for quick production of graphic imagery with scanning flexibility.

Roger Sadowsky of Sadowsky Guitars in New York City has an Apple Macintosh that he uses extensively in his business. He has also developed a spreadsheet that is great for figuring out complicated fret scale calculations.

Bob Tice of Sciota, PA has an Apple 2c that he has upgraded several times. He has been working intently for many years on a comprehensive database or index of luthier related topics from many diverse sources. Bob's index is discussed in further detail separately in this issue.

Stewart MacDonald's Guitar Shop Supply produces their catalog with Aldus Pagemaker. They apparently have a full time employee dedicated to this ongoing process. GPI's **String Instrument Craftsman Newsletter** is done the same way. Pagemaker has a distinctive look; the borders are easily recognizable to anyone who is familiar with the program.

Steve Klein has been a Macintosh owner for many years. He was one of the first luthiers to attempt to use a computerized drafting or drawing program to design instruments. Steve became quite adept at the **MacDraw** program and developed many dozens of instrument related files that could actually be printed out on the image writer, full size, and glued directly to the wood to act as a production aid or template.



Reduced laserprint of Steve Klein's "MacDraw" headstock.

The electric guitar field has been highly influenced by computer technology. **C & C Router Equipment** (multi-dimensional programable tracers) are ideally suited for production of electric guitar bodies. Their use in acoustic production has not been efficient enough to warrant much experimentation to date.

Some work has been done with computerized **laser cutting of mother of pearl and abalone** as well as inlay cavity cutting in ebony and rosewood fingerboards, but these materials are dense enough to necessitate very powerful and expensive lasers. The relatively low volume of production work available makes this an inefficient prospect.

CALLING ALL COMPUTERS

If you own a computer and use it for applications that are in any way related to the instrument making/repair field, we would like to know about you:

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Do you know how to use a computer? _____

Do you own a computer? _____

If yes, what brand/model? _____

What uses do you apply to your computer?

(Circle or check appropriate items)

Business

Games

Advertising

Publications

Tax Computation

Inventory

Design/Drafting

C & C Applications

Letter Writing

Invoicing

Mailing Lists

Planning

Fret-Scale Calculation

Other; please explain:

Are there any other remarks you would like to make about computers that we have not provided a space for?

Please clip or photocopy your response and return to:

A.S.I.A. Computer Survey
14 South Broad Street
Nazareth, PA 18064

JOB LISTINGS

Medley Music is one of the largest and well equipped music stores on the east coast. It is certainly among the major dealers in the Philadelphia area. **Roger Sadowky** ran the repair department there for many years. The owner, **Harry Rosenbloom** is searching for a competent repairman to take much of the workload away from the current head of the repair department, **John Love**. A reasonable amount of experience is preferred, and salary will be commensurate with experience:

Harry Rosenbloom c/o
Medley Music
1041 Lancaster Avenue
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
(215) 527-3136

Michael Dresdner is looking for employees to fill positions at **Factory 875**, a shop that primarily manufactures solid body electric guitars and basses, as well as limited parts. Machine experience or training in lutherie is recommended. Contact Michael at:

Factory 875
217 South 5th Street
Perkasie, PA 18944
(215) 453-9875

The **Fender Custom Shop** is seeking qualified experienced repair technicians or guitar makers with knowledge of electric guitars and basses. If you are interested, contact:

Jay Black c/o
Fender Custom Shop
(714) 734-7739

FREE CLASSIFIED

We will accept limited free classified advertisements from members for products or supplies. This area is not however, intended for regular listings of in stock sales items. Address your listings to "ASIA Classified".

A.S.I.A. AD RATES

Ad rates and sizes for future A.S.I.A. newsletters have been established. Submit your artwork to "A.S.I.A. Ads".

Full Page: 7.25" x 9.75"	\$200.00
One/Half Page: 3.5" x 9.75" or 7.25" x 4.25"	\$105.00
One/Quarter Page: 3.5" x 4.75" vertical only	\$55.00
One/Eighth Page: 3.5" x 2.25" horizontal only	\$30.00

EVENTS

Member Ken Donnell has extended a formal invitation to all luthiers to participate in the 1st Annual Luthier's Faire to be held in conjunction with the 1990 Greater Southwest Guitar Show. The dates are **Saturday, March 31st & Sunday, April 1st, 1990**. The location is the **Dallas Convention Center** in Dallas, Texas. A.S.I.A. might participate in this event.

The **Lutherie Faire** is designed as a forum for the individual luthier or small company to display their work before a worldwide audience. Many major manufacturers and well-known dealers exhibit all types of guitars and other stringed instruments. Over 10,000 guitar enthusiasts attend this annual event, including distributors, retailers, importers, and many well-known guitarists. The event is also covered by guitar and music related media from around the world. All instruments exhibited at the Lutherie Faire will be juried with awards and prizes given to the winners. For further details, send your name, address and phone number, along with a written request for information to:

**Lutherie Faire c/o
Greater Southwest Guitar Show
11389 Harry Hines Boulevard
Dallas, Texas 75229**

EVENTS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED BUT SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FOR 1990

The **National Guitar Summer Workshop**, held annually in Lakeside, CT, provides an excellent opportunity for guitarists and musicians to enhance their skills and talents. It features classes, performances, jams, and direct instruction with master artists. This event has been around long enough to have developed into a very substantial ordeal. Beginning, intermediate, and advanced accredited classes are offered in Songwriting, Theory, Voice, Sight Reading, Improvisation, Composition, Ear Training, Rhythm, Music History, Harmonica, **Basic Guitar Repair**, Live Sound, and Performance in Rock, Blues, Fusion, Heavy Metal, Classical, Folk, Fingerstyle, and Jazz. This years festival takes place between July 8th and August 20th. Of special interest to A.S.I.A. members are the Lutherie courses being offered, among them: **Beginning Guitar Repair** with Steve Arenschiold & Richard Starkey, **Advanced Guitar Repair** with Joe Konkoly and Steve Arenschiold, and Dan Erlewine's **Guitar Repair Master Class**. There is great potential for collaboration with this event. If you have any ideas for 1990, or if you simply want to be put on the mailing list, contact Steve Arenschiold at:

**Hex Hollow Music
Box 369
Barto, PA 19504
(215) 845-2787 shop, or (203) 567-8529 N.G.S.W.**

In spite of the fact that this newsletter will reach you long after this event is over, we feel compelled to tell you about the **AMERICAN FINGERSTYLE GUITAR FESTIVAL** anyway. This is an annual event coordinated by John Stropes, President of the Milwaukee Foundation For Guitar Studies. John is a very committed guitar player, author, and music advocate. This particular event is one of the finest and most professional of its type. This year featured an open competition as well as workshops and live performances by players like Raymond Kane, Bob Brozman, Peter Lang, Tommy Jones, Benjamin Verdery, Guy Van Duser, John Renbourn, Roy Rogers, Tuck Andress, Pierre Bensusan, and John Stropes himself. Anyone interested in fingerstyle guitar playing should be aware of this pocket of excellence. You can contact John by corresponding or calling:

**American Finger-Style Guitar Festival
Wisconsin Conservatory Of Music
1584 North Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 276-4385**

Another event similar in nature to the one mentioned above is the **Mid-Atlantic Guitar Festival**. The first of these festivals was held in April of 1989 and featured workshops, lectures, and concerts all designed to assist and educate guitarists from all styles of play. The event was organized by Frank Bahun, and presented in conjunction with The American String Teachers Association, the Baltimore Classical Guitar Society, and The College of Notre Dame of Maryland. Events like this would provide members of A.S.I.A. with good settings to find interested buyers and to promote their instruments. For further information contact:

**ASTA; Maryland / C.C. Chapter
1101 Playford Lane
Silver Spring, MD 20901**

The **First Annual North Coast Guitar Show** was held in Cleveland, Ohio on October 22nd, 1989. The show was organized by Joseph Henisch, who has painstakingly tried to cover every aspect of guitar and stringed instrument. Dealers, luthiers, and collectors were urged to buy, sell or just show off their collections. Although the show is in its infancy this year, Joseph plans to expand it next year to two days. Tables will be reasonably priced at \$25.00 and the music media as well as local newspapers will be kept well informed about the show. If you would like to talk with Joseph about how this years show went, or about next years agenda:

**The North Coast Guitar Show
P. O. Box 29653
Parma, OH 44129
(216) 267-2942**

A.S.I.A. BUSINESS

FISCAL YEAREND FINANCIAL STATEMENT #1
ASSOCIATION OF STRINGED INSTRUMENT ARTISANS
(Startup)

INCOME

MEMBERS ANNUAL DUES DEPOSITED\$6645.00
SYMPOSIUM 88 AUCTION\$2751.50
SYMPOSIUM 89 AUCTION\$2860.50
TOTAL AUCTION PROCEEDS.....\$5612.00
TOTAL INCOME 6/30/88 thru 6/30/89\$12257.00

EXPENSES

PRINTING COSTS (NEWSLETTERS)\$560.66
MAILING COSTS (POSTAL CHARGES)\$125.00
BANKING CHARGES (CHECKS)\$30.94
PHONE BILLS (MIKE DRESDNER)\$160.86
TOTAL EXPENSES 6/30/88 thru 6/30/89\$877.46
CLOSING BALANCE AS OF 6/30/89\$11379.54

DIRECTORS UPDATE

The Board Secretary reports to the membership:

In the coming months, I (William Cumpiano) hope to be highlighting board activities to inform our members about the decisions made on their behalf. The complete and detailed minutes of all meetings and financial reports are, of course, available to interested persons upon request.

In the months that preceded Symposium 89, members of the board took the time to communicate their ideas and concerns about ASIA over the phone with each other both during work and at home.

Duane was concerned about membership development; Jim had been comparing the advantages of several group medical insurance packages; Bill and Grit had phoned several times from Massachusetts and Toronto with Dick in Nazareth to discuss ideas on the newsletter and journal. Most of the members seemed to be split on how (if at all) exclusive the organization should be, and whether we should tackle the issue of building the structures necessary for some kind of accreditation for members that requested it.

The first formal board meeting at Jim's home consisted of the three East Coast members of the board, with the West Coast and Canadian contingent joining us by teleconference hookup. It produced a number of decisions regarding such things as precisely which insurance package to offer the membership, and how to proceed to obtain the appropriate legal status for the organization.

At the end of that meeting, however, a split on the topic of exclusivity and accreditation emerged which soaked up a lot of our time and remained unresolved, since there had been such strong feelings pro and con. We resolved to chip away at that issue again during the upcoming meeting which we elected to hold just before Symposium 89 at Dick's in Nazareth.

BOARD MEETING OF 6/24/89

We all met at the Dick's Church of Art and quite amazingly found ourselves of one mind concerning exclusivity, and unanimously decided to recommend to the membership that we amend the by-laws to eliminate the category of "Non-Voting Member" (according to the by-laws, only professional instrument-tradespersons were to be given the vote). Evidently, we had each independently come to believe, between board meetings, that Non-Voting status might inhibit our effort to broaden our membership base—not to speak of the difficulty of accurately gauging the "professionalism" of each member and future applicant. There still, however, remained a strong conviction that the association's main focus should be on the needs of the professional instrumentmaker. Since the membership had indeed elected to the board professionals in the instrument trades, we presumed the mandate was towards this focus.

Accreditation still remained a confused issue, as well as whether the association should get involved in the jurying of member's work. Doubtlessly, the crux would be when it came to selecting who, among multiple applicants, would be recipients of our limited resources in the areas of marketing and publicity. We elected to request our members to enlighten and guide us, during the opportunity that Symposium offered us and additionally, in the forums of the journal and newsletter, before we decided how to vote on those issues.

We also feared that Dick might eventually burn out as board president, de-facto executive director of ASIA, de-facto editor of the newsletter, and manager/organizer of Symposia, so we elected to hire a clerical assistant for him. We also resolved to meet several times during Symposium 89 and work out an agenda for the public Business Meeting that we were going to hold at the end of the event, and to further brainstorm on marketing and publicity issues.

FIRST GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

At the end of Symposium 89 in Easton, the board held a general business meeting that was attended by perhaps fifty or sixty people. A lively interaction ensued between the board and those interested parties present.

Bill opened by reading the list of resolutions made during our last board meeting. Jim, as treasurer, read off a report on the financial status of the organization, which included the updated tally of the recent ASIA benefit auction, which netted the ASIA coffers \$2777.50. The

The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans

organization's total net worth stood at \$10,653.04

Michael Dresdner, who had drafted the by-laws in response to a widely circulated poll, explained the tabulated results of the poll.

After accepting input from the members present, the board voted to rescind the category of Non-Voting Member from the by-laws, and afford to every member a single and equal vote.

Jon Natelson, our pro-bono attorney, gave an update on his and Dick's efforts to formalize the organization's legal status with the State and Federal authorities.

The board also determined that ballots for the next board election would be due March 15, 1990.

Short-term priorities were discussed. The publication of a regular newsletter emerged as the desired principal focus of the organization, followed by a more formal and less frequent Journal. The audience recommended that the newsletters to follow should include impressions and photos of the Symposium, a membership directory, an auction donors list, letters, job listings, forestry issues, satire, communications from the board, satire, and a calendar of events. The Journal should include reports from our international correspondents (Leningrad, Puerto Rico, New Zealand, Australia and Canada), a regular tax column, reviews, Symposium transcriptions, technical bulletins, glamour photos of members' work, and feature articles.

Long-term priorities fell under three categories:

Marketing and Promotion, which included the organizing of a travelling "mini-NAAM" that would bring members work to market, a booth at the actual NAAM shows, a fancy book of glossy photos of selected work (presumably to be put up for sale to the public), show catalogs for future Symposia, and marketing assistance offered to members; Accreditation and ways to bequeath to the members a certificate that implied some sort of specifically recognized merit; Competitions, such as are common in other trades and professions; and Education in the trade for meriting apprentices and workshops for professionals.

Among these the longest discussions, if not the liveliest, were on accreditation and jurying of work. Just like on the board, controversy ensued around the topic among the members present. Among the salient points made:

- * Accreditation is absolutely critical for the survival, and advancement of the profession.

- * We should accord the whole issue of accreditation a low priority.

- * Customers should be polled as to their evaluation of the quality and integrity of the member, rather than some ASIA "official."

- * We should devote a special newsletter wholly to the issues surrounding accreditation and then have a special member's poll.

- * Any effort at accreditation should concern itself solely on the recognition of excellence, rather than on the

spotlighting of mediocrity.

- * Instead of accreditation we should just evolve a document such as a customer's Bill of Rights, or a formal set of ASIA ethical standards.

BOARD MEETING OF 10/15/89

The ASIA board met at Jim Rickard's home in Harwinton, Connecticut.

Dick noted the high cost to mail each newsletter, and his efforts to attain a bulk mail permit, which are ongoing. He also noted that the forms from the IRS related to the application for tax-exempt status have been filed.

Dick also informed us that Jim Hatlo is caught up in litigation regarding the fate of String Instrument Craftsman, and so any further discussion of fusion between us and it is still premature.

The board voted to cite Mario Maccaferri and Manuel Velazquez for Lifetime Achievement awards, and that these awards be hand-delivered by selected board members. The board also voted to appoint a committee consisting of Jim and Dick to determine guidelines for subsequent awards and draft a list of potential candidates in the future.

A committee was also formed, to consist of Bill, Dave Sheppard and Tim Poling, to consider and evaluate proposals for ASIA educational programs and to specify and clarify the issues surrounding accreditation to bring before the board.

Jim reported with deep dismay that the insurance company handling the ASIA member's health policy is not responding adequately to member's inquiries (of which there have been quite a number). Jim resolved to meet with the Capital Benefit Plan people to resolve this issue for once and for all.

By far, the topic that took up most of the meeting time concerned the board members' evaluation of the previous newsletter, issue #2. The appearance and content of that special Symposium newsletter was held to some pretty harsh criticism by some board members, while others voiced their disappointment somewhat less vehemently. All agreed, however, that on the whole, it appeared rather amateurish in tone and execution.

Dick noted there were time constraints that the board had put on the project, and that the technical quality of the work delivered by the printer had been disappointing. Membership response to the issue, however, was generally good.

The board voted to work with Dick much more energetically on all future issues of the (now) bi-monthly newsletter than in the past, and to hold its design, layout and content to a tighter, cleaner format.

We are now all working on a publication of which we can be proud, and hope that the current issues reflects this commitment. We encourage input from membership concerning layout and content of future issues.

BOOK REVIEW

GUITARS: THE TSUMURA COLLECTION

by Akira Tsumura

1987:Tokyo, Kodansha International/USA Ltd.

192 pages (dist. Harper & Row Inc., New York)

As I for the first time paged past the hundreds of virtually perfect vintage guitars depicted so magnificently in Akira Tsumura's book, my thoughts turned, curiously, to the Egyptian antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Here were displayed, like the gilded contents of Tutankhamen's tomb, the cream of a faded but once-great nation's cultural legacy, purchased in prodigious quantities and transferred en masse to a now richer nation far, far away.

I savored this somewhat facile irony for a while, until I had the chance to seriously sit down and contemplate the book, absorb its beauty, and think about why Akira Tsumura had gone to so much trouble and expense.

Reading the fine print, I learned that Mr. Tsumura happened to be the world's largest manufacturer of traditional Japanese herbal medicine. In Japan (as in China and many other Asiatic countries), this form of healing therapy is more prevalent than so-called Modern Western Medicine. Thus it was that he could bankroll his yen (!) for these finest examples of American musical craft-culture.

I thus learned that Mr. Tsumura is Japan's top Dixieland banjo player, who established his own Japanese Dixieland band, the Storyville Dandies, in 1961. He must have come down with quite a dose of American Culture playing in an Ann Arbor Dixieland band, the "Boll Weevils", while a business major at the University of Michigan during the late fifties.

Not your usual culture-thief!

Having myself studied about some of the major art collections in art school, I'd become aware that good collectors usually express a lot about their own personality in the focus and choices they make, and how they choose to display their collections. And by this standard, Akira Tsumura is a very fine collector, indeed. What emerges from "GUITARS: The Tsumura Collection" is a man with a deep, abiding love for guitars and a genuine passion for American popular culture.

This became obvious to me after I noticed several interesting things about this book. It depicts not only his vast and fabulous collection, but also the collections of several other Japanese and American collectors, each far smaller but of equally excellent quality and focus. Also, Tsumura's own collection spans the entire gamut from the Ridiculous to the Sublime: it is definitely not a show-off

hoard of the most stratospherically expensive specimens that could be purchased by Man. For sure, it does include at least a dozen of perhaps the most costly examples of American guitarmaking extant anywhere, in any collection.

The Tsumura collection is most notable, in my view, for predominantly consisting of instruments of special interest and cultural importance, rather than simply of instruments of great monetary value. This is evidenced by the inclusion (and by the displaying with a prominence equal to all those breathtaking D'Angelicos and Super 400's) of what would appear to be the world's most complete inventory of Hawaiian Ukeleles and Slide Guitars, each probably quite worthless in cash value, but each equally fascinating and beautiful, each more jewel-like and whimsical in form and conception.

In addition, we can see here a most remarkable parade of bizarre European impressions of the American Guitar Dream, as concocted by Levin and Hofner, each frosted more garishly with ice-textured pearloid than the last. Also, there's his definitive collection of obsolete Tenor and Plectrum guitars, some that can only be described as cheap old battle-axes, others exquisitely rare and unique.

Finally, your typical culture thief would likely stash all his Second Dynasty treasures in a vault, waiting for the prices to go up. Tsumura's treasure appears to perpetually surround him where he lives: his strung-up flowers spill all over the rooms in his house, indeed, all around his smiling family like bouquets of delicate and colorful petals.

William R. Cumpiano

THE LIGHTER SIDE

Some may recall the special **LOST AND FOUND** section of Vol 1; Number 4. **Joe Konkoly** of Elderly Instruments claimed the lost notebook, but no one seemed to have any further information about Steve Klein's trousers, until we received word from **Greg Swier** of **Jubal Guitars** in Cuba, New York, who is the first admitted eyewitness to portions of the now notorious goings on near the Lafayette leopard at approximately 3 am on the morning of June 25th, 1989. Greg confesses that Steve Klein's clothing was shipped home to his mother for a good wash and rinse after he had soiled them judging the Canadian Women's Downhill' (Mudslide). By the way, the flash headline of that event should have read: '*Canadian Women's Downhill Rolling Team Sweeps The Field While Sonoma, CA Ergonomics Master Sweeps Starting Line For Loose Change Dropped By Entrants, Film At 11:00.*' Greg has implicated Fred Marcuson in the ordeal, but we still are missing some key facts.

We solicit more detailed information from any other eyewitnesses. Actually we would love to hear from the infamous Canadian faction !

**THE ASSOCIATION OF STRINGED INSTRUMENT ARTISANS
14 SOUTH BROAD STREET NAZARETH, PA 18064**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Association of Stringed Instrument Artisans is a non-profit trade organization established in 1988 to help provide a sense of community and professionalism to the field of stringed musical instrument making and repair. The goals of the association are to provide for but are not limited to: the establishment of a comprehensive database of resources, supplies, and technical information; a means of providing multi-level education within the profession, assistance in marketing and promotion, health and insurance packages at group rates, a repair or service certification, an advertiser's marketplace, and the publication of informative newsletters and journals.

Annual membership is \$50.00. Please make checks payable to "A.S.I.A."

Please complete all the information below:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (Home) _____
Phone (Work) _____

Check all appropriate boxes below:

I am a:	<input type="checkbox"/> Builder	of:	<input type="checkbox"/> Acoustic Guitars
	<input type="checkbox"/> Repairer		<input type="checkbox"/> Electric Guitars
	<input type="checkbox"/> Designer		<input type="checkbox"/> Basses
	<input type="checkbox"/> Author		<input type="checkbox"/> Mandolins
	<input type="checkbox"/> Vendor		<input type="checkbox"/> Banjos
	<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturer		<input type="checkbox"/> Violins
	<input type="checkbox"/> Consultant		<input type="checkbox"/> Dulcimers
	<input type="checkbox"/> Musician		<input type="checkbox"/> Harps
	<input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiast		<input type="checkbox"/> Early Instruments
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

I am a: Full Time Artisan
 Part Time Artisan Deriving _____ % of my income in this field.
 Hobbieist

Other affiliations: _____

(List the names of partners, music stores, companies, etc. that you are or have been directly affiliated with)

Comments _____

this application may be copied

The Guitarist Tunes Up

*With what attentive courtesy he bent
Over his instrument;
Not as a lordly conquerer who could
Command both wire and wood,
But as a man with a loved woman might,
Inquiring with delight
What slight essential things she had to say
Before they started, he and she, to play.*

Frances Cornford (1886-1960)

**The Association Of Stringed Instrument Artisans
14 South Broad Street
Nazareth, PA 18064**

Address Correction Requested