

GUITAR NEWS

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NAPOLEON'S GUITARS

FROM Sydney, Australia, comes news of a guitar which purports to have belonged to Napoleon. Documents with the guitar show that it was given to Napoleon by his sister Pauline, and that he used to play it on St. Helena to entertain one of his young friends, the little daughter of a British official, Mr. Balcombe.

When Napoleon died he bequeathed the guitar to little Miss Balcombe who eventually went to Australia as a teacher of music. The guitar changed owners several times until in 1927 it was presented to the late Dr. John Cappie Shand Snr., of North Sydney whose estate instructed its sale by auction.

It is inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl and lies in an ancient cedar case. The maker was probably Francois Fleury of Paris. But some vandal had put steel strings on it so that the guitar is now quite unplayable—warped neck, top caved in and several of the ivory frets missing.

The auction was brief; there were four bids of 50 guineas each and then a Melbourne collector of Napoleonic relics bid 100 guineas (Australian currency)—and the hammer fell.

The other guitar

I once played on—and almost bought—a guitar which also was claimed to have belonged to Napoleon at an earlier stage in his career. Documents showed that Napoleon had given it to one of his generals 'le Capitaine Bacheville', and that General Bacheville had given it to Ferdinand Pelzer (father of Madame Sidney Pratten, leading guitarist in England during Queen Victoria's reign). Another daughter, Giulia Pelzer, had it in her possession until 1938 when she died at the age of 99.

A London fretted-instrument dealer bought this and other guitars when her collection was sold. He offered it at £30. In spite of its great age it was in good playing condition having been properly kept and strung with gut and covered silk strings. The body was fairly wide but the waist was sharply pinched-in giving it the appearance of a buxom wench very tightly-laced. Did Napoleon serenade his Josephine with this guitar—I wonder!

W.M.A.

PREFACE TO 'TWELVE STUDIES BY VILLA-LOBOS'

By Andres Segovia

HERE are twelve studies lovingly fashioned for the guitar by the Brazilian genius, Heitor Villa-Lobos. They are surprisingly good for the development of the technique of both hands, and at the same time show unpedantic musical felicities which give them permanent value as concert pieces.

Few masters in the history of musical instruments have succeeded in uniting these qualities in their studies. The names of Scarlatti and Chopin come most immediately to mind. They both achieved the ends of didacticism without aridity or monotony, and if the careful pianist observes with gratitude the flexibility, vigour and independence that their pieces impart to his fingers the artist who interprets or hears them admires the nobility, genius, grace and poetic emotion which they so generously breathe.

Villa-Lobos has bestowed upon the history of the guitar the fruits of a talent as vigorous and rich as those of Scarlatti and Chopin. I did not wish to alter any of the instructions for fingering that Villa-Lobos gives in his pieces. He has a perfect knowledge of the guitar, and if he indicates this string or that finger to emphasize a certain turn of phrase we should do exactly as he wishes, even if greater technical effort is required of us.

I do not wish to end these brief notes without publicly thanking this great composer for the honour which he has done me in dedicating to me these 'Etudes'.

Translated by Mrs. A. Rodziszewska

'Douze Etudes pour Guitare' by H. Villa-Lobos is published by Editions Max Eschig, 48 Rue de Rome, Paris (8) and is obtainable (price 15/-) from Schott & Co. Ltd. (and agents) 48, Great Marlborough Street, London W.1.

JOSE YACOPI

Contemporary Guitar Maker

by J. Heidrich

GUITARISTS are always interested in really good instruments and already readers of "Guitar News" will have read about several of the best makers—English, Spanish, Italian etc. Requirements and tastes of individual guitarists differ considerably so it is desirable that there should be ample choice available in the selection of a good suitable guitar. Perhaps nowhere is there greater choice than in Argentina where good luthiers are very numerous.

Many Spaniards come to Argentina and find here their second country; such was the case with Domingo Prat, who brought the Tarrega technique to Argentina. So, also, Mr. Yacopi can now be considered as an Argentine luthier.

José Yacopi was born at Vitoria, Spain, in 1916 and began the art of guitar-making as a child under the guidance of his father, a well-known and highly reputed craftsman. His father was Italian born and had studied the guitar-makers' art in Italy, France, Spain and South America.

While living in Barcelona José Yacopi won First Prizes at the Exhibitions of Barcelona (1944), Madrid (1944), and in Barcelona 1947, in competition with numerous good Spanish luthiers. This enhanced his reputation as a maker of guitars, violins, bandurrias etc. In May 1949 he transferred his workshop to the Argentine capital, Buenos Aires, where, in a short time he has become well-known and admired by the Argentine guitarists as well as having gained the friendship of many famous artists of our instrument in Europe and America.

José Yacopi makes not only modern instruments but reproductions of

ancient instruments from the sixteenth century. On the instruction and drawings of Emilio Pujol he made various models of vihuelas which were purchased by the Conservatories of Barcelona and Lisbon and also by some private connoisseurs of ancient music. We enclose a picture showing an Exhibition model of a Vihuela and a wonderful Yacopi guitar in palisander wood.

Emilio Pujol expressed his appreciation in the following words: "The guitars and vihuelas made by the famous luthier José Yacopi which were bought by the Conservatorio Superior Municipal de Music of Barcelona and the Conservatorio Nacional de Lisbon together with others in the possession of professional artists and amateurs are worthy of my greatest admiration for they have the best qualities both from the technical and the artistic points of view". (Barcelona 1948).

Mr. Yacopi not only makes guitars but he is an excellent player of the instrument having studied under the incomparable guidance of Emilio Pujol. He plays in both classic and flamenco styles, but now his work takes up most of his time.

I asked Mr. Yacopi whether he thought the present form of the guitar has reached perfection and whether the sound of the modern guitar will be improved. Here are his replies: "My opinion is that the present form of the guitar corresponds to the acoustical and aesthetic necessities of the instrument. Throughout the centuries luthiers have experimented with various shapes—pear, shield, lyra etc. but we have come to the conclusion that there is no reason to change the actual classic figure of which the prototype is the guitar of Antonio Torres. My guitars are similar to the Torres-guitars, differing only in greater circumference in order to obtain greater volume.

To your question about the possibilities of improving the sound of the guitar I dare say "yes", for there are many things to attempt. In the past luthiers have experimented with a double bottom, an iron bar in the middle of the body, putting the inner bars at different distances (and with differing kinds of wood), thickness and shape—and with a sound peg as in violins. But even the greatest maker has not discovered an exact type which can always be copied. We could say that every guitar made differs in details.

I think there must be a certain rule by which we could make approximately the ideal instrument, but we ought always to try new ways. We have to try new woods, to make experiments with unequal thickness seeking the best sound of the soundboard. Now-a-days many scientists are experimenting with electrical instruments to measure and examine the vibration of the woods used. Thus did Ricardo Munoz in 1941 when he published his findings in his "Identificaciones Vibrometricas". In 1946 he examined numerous classic guitars with results which were published in his "Tecnologia de la Guitarra Argentina" (1952). (Reviewed in "Guitar News" No. 13).

In the year 1948 Italo Barducci in Rome was examining the vibrations of woods. Later, Prof. ing. Gioacchino Pasqualini of the Instituto Nazionale di Elettroacustica was applying tests to famous violins by means of very sensitive electrical instruments.

In Vienna, Joseph Dobrozemsky in 1952 made researches and affirmed that the secret of Stradivarius was neither in the varnish nor in the wood but

in the acoustic principles of the violin. So in many lands researches have begun and some vital knowledge may result. If so, as a result of these discoveries, we shall be able to make better guitars with stronger sounds so that they will be more suitable for the concert platform and the guitar will achieve a high position in its new golden age."

AT THE CHIGIANA ACADEMY

ON September 9th a concert was given by students of the Classic Guitar Course instituted by Andres Segovia and conducted this year by Emilio Pujol. Here is the programme:

PART I (Solos)

Alvaro Company (Argentina)	Minuetto en re Hommage à Debussy Study in A Major	Sor M. de Falla Coste
Gerassimos Miliaressis (Greece)	Study Sarabande Gigue	Sor J. S. Bach arr. Segovia S. L. Weiss arr. Segovia
Elena Padovani (Italy)	Minuetto, Sarabande e Bourée Preludio Allegretto in C	R. de Visée Manuel Ponce Sor
Raul Sanchez Uruguay)	Gallardas Nocturno Ráfaga	G. Sanz F. Moreno Torroba J. Turina
John Williams (England)	Preludio, Sarabanda, Gavotte, Minuetto Minuetto Studio	Kuhnau Haydn Villa-Lobos

PART II

Alvaro Company, (Argentina), Carlo Ernesto Salio (Italy) and Giuseppe Farrauto (Italy) played a Trio for three Guitars by Filippo Gragnani.

Maria Rosa Barbany (Soprano-Spain) accompanied by Raul Sanchez (Guitar-Uruguay) sang a group of 16th Century Spanish songs by Luis Milan, Vasquez-Pisador, Alonso Mudarra and Flecha-Fuenllana. Elena Padovani (Italy) and Gerassimos Miliaressis (Greece) played Emilio Pujol's transcriptions for two guitars of

Intermezzo de Goyescas	- -	M. de Falla
Tango Espanol	- -	Albeniz
Danse du Meunier	- -	Granados

Part III of the concert consisted of harpsichord solos of J. S. Bach and D. Scarlatti played by the French harpsichordists Huguette Dreyfus and Jacqueline Masson.

On September 13th Maestro Emilio Pujol gave a lecture on "The Italian Contribution to the Classic Guitar" with musical illustrations.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS

The talented boy-guitarist, John Williams, gave a successful recital of guitar solos at the City Literary Institute Hispanic Society, London, Oct. 19th.

He played Pavane (Luis Milan), Suite (Kuhnau), Etude (Sor), Granada (Albeniz arr. Segovia) and Etude (Villa-Lobos).

THE GUITAR IN BOHEMIA

by Stepan Urban

BEFORE I start to comply with your request, dear Mr. Editor, allow me to say a few introductory words to the readers: history is not my subject; the guitar, composition, and also to a certain extent literature keep me fully occupied. During the struggle for the recognition of the guitar in professional circles I have become acquainted with several other factors and at last it has become a witness to the artistic rebirth of my land.

Because of my direct participation in guitaristic musical life naturally my attitude would be subjective in perspective; but who would dare to assert complete objectivity? However, in order to avoid misunderstanding my short article for "Guitar News" I prefer to 'compose' in the form of a 'Suite'.
PRELUDE

The first records of instrumental music in Bohemia originate in the 13th Century. In the Royal Court in Prague there lived at that time the famous French troubadour Guillaume Machault together with many other eminent musicians. Historical documents allude to various plucked instruments but from their names alone it is difficult to be sure of their precise form. More informative are the documents of the 14th and 15th Centuries; to this day one can admire the musical instruments in the paintings at the one time Royal Fort of Carol IV. Those who know something of Czech history will realise best why there are no relics of ancient music. From the 15th Century religious wars raged.

The first clear document concerning the guitar is in the form of a letter of the year 1646 but references to lutes and quinternas are of even earlier date. The general history of music about 1800 notes the names of several composers for the guitar; among them the best known are V. Matiegka, J. Th. Held and Max Knjze (composer of several songs which are popular to the present day).

A very interesting contribution from this group of composers is "Three Canzonets with guitar accompaniment" by Held, which became of great importance to the Czech guitarists.

In general music historians have not given the guitar any special attention. In contrast to this the guitar has always found wide sympathy with the people. The chief representatives of the classic style, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven did not compose for the instrument and also the Romantic School has not contributed a great deal. One must always compare the abundant literature of other instruments. But the people, especially the young people, love the guitar; indeed many writers, poets and painters play the instrument. So it happened that even the most eminent Czech poet was a guitarist.

Like some European Conservatories the Prague Conservatory has not been too ready to accept the instrument and that gravely hindered the development of the guitar in my country. In spite of that one can say that it is a fatal error to think that amateurs have no influence on culture. On the contrary, how often have they recognised values better than the professionals; how frequently have they brought to light things of great importance.

Suddenly experts began to analyse in detail the technique of Paganini. This famous violinist had indeed borrowed the technical devices of the guitar which he was supposed to have played better than the violin—even if he did not actually prefer it.

'What is this instrument, this guitar . . . ?'

A great surprise was the discovery of the Canzonets of Held; he was an amateur musician but a very important person in cultural circles. These compositions were found by chance in a museum; nothing extraordinary would have happened if only . . . ! It was soon realised that there was no musician capable of playing the relatively complex guitar accompaniment. The Director of the Conservatory was furious: "Do I understand that nobody knows how to play this accompaniment? This concerns our own great writer, gentlemen; which of you plays the guitar?" There was a great silence—and this event finally set things going.

Now it is fitting that homage should be paid to my dear teacher, Maestro A. Modr, who was destined to take upon himself the burden of reviving the art of the guitar which had lain dormant for more than a century. Temporarily forsaking composition, after careful preparation, he commenced to teach the guitar in the year 1928. Conditions were not too favourable. Only those students who already had another chief instrument had the right to join the guitar Courses. Accordingly they were able to give only a limited time to the guitar. But no matter—the pioneers had already set out. After a lapse of possibly 120 years the first serious publication for the guitar was published—"Scales for Guitar" by Modr.

At that time I was still strolling the corridors of the High School meditating on how I could make practical use of the strategy of 'Bellum Gallicum' of Caesar, but time hurried by and I suddenly found myself in the midst of things guitaristic. The mandolin was responsible for this and partly also my father.

INTERMEZZO

At that time I was a student. One evening in nostalgic mood I picked up a mandolin. But I quite forgot that in the next room my father was in the throes of composition . . . ! With one blow he destroyed the unfortunate instrument. I woke from my dreams.

A day or two later I attempted to repair the mandolin with the help of a wooden box which took the place of the body. I had partly succeeded when again my father appeared. "What on earth have you here?" I showed the monstrosity. The soft heart of my father could not bear the sight of the terribly botched mandolin, so he relented, saying, "Hmmm, tomorrow we will visit the music shop. Bring the little fiddle and we will change it".

But in the shop something quite unexpected happened. I caught sight of a guitar. "Is this . . . ?" said my father and I nodded. I remember vividly that I was so excited that I could not even say "yes"! In addition I received a book of Easy Pieces for the Guitar; that same evening I presented with triumph "Siciliano" by Carulli . . .

The guitar developed my love of music to such an extent that after a while I decided to take an examination to enter the Conservatory. The years I spent there belong to my happiest memories. There I at last found the right road. I did everything to gain the confidence of the Professor of the guitar until he accepted me in his course. In spite of my diverse studies I eventually specialised more and more in the guitar. Almost from the first I also studied composition. But my plan was to finish the course of study with a public recital. Not one of my fellow students was so ambitious, but he who does not dare does not succeed; I dared!

FUGUE

In Prague recitals had been given by Emilio Pujol, Miguel Llobet, Louise Walker of Vienna; also Andres Segovia had given his third masterly concert. I had already realised that the guitar was my destiny. Professor Modr and his pupil approached the Director of the Conservatory. He consented, approved the programme and included my recital in the 'Closing Concerts'. (This Director was responsible for the discovery of the Canzonets of Held). It was a great risk for this was the first time since the founding of the Conservatory that the guitar had appeared on the platform in these famous 'Closing Concerts'. It was a long time since they had seen any fresh instrument. My playing would be judged severely, much depended on it. By chance the same salon was chosen for the concert as Segovia had played in so brilliantly.

The concert was a complete success and even the critics gave an exceptionally favourable verdict. All journals included reports and some showed considerable enthusiasm.

Now I commenced to prepare myself for professional concert playing. But fate led me into another direction. Meanwhile I completed an instruction book for the guitar and prepared several compositions for publication. Alas, heavy clouds appeared in the sky. The gentle tones of the guitar were overwhelmed by crude beatings of the drums and sharp sounds of the fifes and afterwards sirens and bomb explosions—the crisis of 1938!

* * * *

During the war there grew up around me a group of talented boys with whom I afterwards founded a special Course in the Conservatory. "In Central Europe one ceaselessly commences anew". It was an experimental enterprise and again the authorities had to be convinced of its cultural value. In the meantime war-time restrictions did not permit free development though I succeeded in having published a small history of the guitar, a series of compositions and a beautifully printed work on Advanced Technique—a sort of Progressive Course. These remarkably well-printed publications gave me a standing and proved most important for me in the face of opposition to the post-war introduction of the guitar into the State Conservatory. And before the end of the war I presented to the public several new compositions by Czech composers. The most significant of these was the great Sonata op.52 which Alois Hába had written for me. This composer, world-famous originator of the quarter tone notation and harmony system, has very effectively influenced musical circles in favour of the guitar and has given me incomparable moral support. Unfortunately his composition has not yet been published. It is composed in the normal system but there also exists another work for a special quarter tone guitar by this composer. It is especially interesting to note that not only are older composers beginning to take an interest in the instrument and several of them have dedicated compositions to me but also some of my own pupils have studied composition and they have made a considerable contribution to guitar literature. From the guitaristic point of view I consider that of special importance and moreover it delights me to know that some of them have achieved wider success (one has just composed an Opera, another has received a State Award for a Symphonic work).

From among the post-war students talented soloists have commenced to appear but this would be too big a subject to write about. Let it suffice to say that the guitar class is now progressing well.

The next step will be the complete independence of the guitar. It must be on an equal footing with those instruments which the Conservatory has taught for a century. One needs much time and very, very great patience. But the firm foundation for the guitar has already commenced to be laid. Its time will come. May it continue to progress.

Translated from Esperanto by W. and K. Appleby.

DANIEL FORTEA'S GUITARS

Daniel Fortea had many fine guitars by some of the most famous makers. There was one by Enrique Garcia which Tarrega bought in 1904 for his pupil and friend Fortea. There are several by the great Torres and others by Ramirez, Esteso and Santos. One of the latter is a veritable marvel of sound and construction. It was made specially for Daniel Fortea.

These guitars have been inherited by Fortea's nephew, who, we understand, is willing to dispose of them.

JOHN RUNGE—Tenor with Guitar

THE frequent broadcasts by John Runge are gaining wide appreciation for this fine singer with his musicianly guitar accompaniments. On October 24th he visited Cheltenham Classic Guitar Circle and the following report appeared in the "Gloucestershire Echo".

GUITAR—SONG RECITAL AT LOCAL CIRCLE

John Runge, tenor, one of the leading British exponents of the increasingly popular art of singing with guitar, was the guest of honour at the October meeting of Cheltenham Classic Guitar Circle on Saturday.

He was introduced by Mr. L. T. Bridell (president) and opened his recital with songs of the Elizabethan lutenists John Dowland, Tobias Hume, and Robert Jones, vital and exquisitely composed music which deserves to be heard more frequently.

"Sweet Kate", by Robert Jones was originally written for two voices and lute, but in John Runge's arrangement the guitar carried the second vocal line as well as the accompaniment. After a delightful song by the Italian lutenist Ciampi, three of Purcell's songs concluded the first part of the recital.

John Runge's clear, firm, tenor voice was heard to advantage especially in the rousing "Man is for the Woman Made".

After the interval the singer-guitarist opened with Bellini's "Finestra che lucevi," which demonstrated the running arpeggio accompaniment so much used by Bellini and Donizetti and so apt for the six strings of the guitar.

Traditional and folk songs which followed were from many lands and included Lord Rendal, Waly Waly and Geordie (British), a French 'bergerette', a Negro spiritual, Brazilian, Argentinian and Spanish songs, an amusing West Indian Calypso and finally the rollicking cumulative song "Barley Mow" as sung by a Devonshire farmer. He received an enthusiastic ovation.

All accompaniments were arranged by John Runge himself and the guitar, played not only with dexterity but with considerable beauty of tone, makes the ideal counterpart to his voice.

During the interval, guitar solos were played by two members of the Circle, Mr. E. J. Dance and Mr. C. E. Robins.

VIVE LA GUITARE CLASSIQUE!

HERE is a great wave of guitaristic activity and enthusiasm in Paris—both amateur and professional. In concerts, broadcasts, recitals and even in the cabarets the classic guitar is heard and listened to in silence and rapture.

Monsieur André Verdier, genial 'directeur' of "Les Amis de la Guitare" tells us that he has had many visitors during the year—guitarists from Italy, Denmark, U.S.A., England, Switzerland, India, Lebanon, Argentina (Abel Fleury), Morocco (J. Mathieu) and Egypt (M. Abloniz, who called en route to Italy after a visit to England).

A very distinguished visitor was Narciso Yepes whose October broadcast on Paris radio of a new Concerto for guitar and orchestra was heard (in part!) in England. Reception was not very good though there were periods when it was quite clear and most enjoyable; but for the most part the Welsh Orchestra on an adjacent wave-length became entangled with the French orchestra. Nevertheless, Yepes' guitar cut through both orchestras together!

Another distinguished visitor was Otto Schindler of Vienna who brought greetings from the veteran guitarist Prof. Jacob Ortner. Otto Schindler is the guitarist in the Austrian Trio—violin, viola and guitar—which came to Paris to broadcast.

We understand that Segovia and other recitalists have been booked for the 1953-54 Season.

The Parisian guitarists are also very active. A Flamenco recital was given by Alonso at the Salle Gaveau on October 3rd. Monsieur Alonso has made a profound study of Spanish folklore and flamenco. He possesses a magnificent collection of guitars by world-famous makers.

At the Le Catalan, 16 rue des Grands Augustins (meeting place of Les Amis de la Guitare) the young classic guitarist and singer, Christian Aubin, is regularly heard. At the 'Club Plein Vent' there is another classic guitarist and singer—Jean Borredon. At 'La Guitare', 3 rue de Hautefeuille, one can hear soloists and also flamenco players.

The famous cabaret 'Lapin Agile' in Montmartre has not only Marcel Nobla, an excellent guitarist and singer, but Ida Presti and her husband Alex Lagoya play classical duos with great success.

VICTORIA KINGSLEY

On September 29th Miss Kingsley gave a recital of songs with Guitar in the Recital Room of the Royal Festival Hall, London. The first group of songs was from the sixteenth century—three Spanish and three English (Campion). After some unaccompanied Gaelic songs, Miss Kingsley sang 'Un Souvenir' and 'L'Indecision' by Boieldieu (French, 1775-1834) and Two Tonadillas by Granados followed by some Spanish Flamenco (Tientos). The recital continued after the interval with a group of English and Scottish songs—'Fair are the Flowers in the Valley', 'The Little Turtle Dove' and 'The Lum Hat Wantin' a Croon'—and ended with Argentine songs Squeaking Cartwheels and Little Roadway of the Indians by Yupanqui and three traditional songs—Andean Indian Song, Parting (Vidala) and Carter's Song (Carretero).

TECHNICAL EXPOSÉ RELATING TO THE MANUFACTURE OF "SAVAREZ" NYLON GUITAR STRINGS

Just after the invention of nylon in 1939, technicians of the Société L'Industrie du Boyau (Babolat & Maillot strings) became aware of the possibilities of the uses of this material for making strings for the guitar and after two years' experiment, the first nylon guitar strings were marketed under the trade-name "Flamencita".

However, the I. du B. technicians were not satisfied. The type of nylon as then manufactured was, in fact, far from ideal for use on the guitar and it was only by gradual familiarisation with the material that means were found of treating it and adding the necessary qualities required in a good string.

But there remained a snag. During treatment (one imagines *thermo-forming* to give necessary toughness to the string) the filament of nylon became distorted in section and, although it happened by chance that some portion of the length retained its true roundness, the greater part presented in section an ovaloid or flattened form. Moreover, the treatment of the filament altered the gauge itself; exact roundness was not obtained at will and it was necessary to be content with an often quite wide approximation.

As may be imagined the oval or flat section was very difficult to measure: this section which so greatly affects the truth and harmonic balance of a string created for music.

To-day in the "Savarez" string, the I. du B. claim to have remedied this defect which, up to now, has offered serious obstacles to the making of the ideal guitar string. By a method of rectification they have overcome the aforesaid warping of the filament and at the same time are able to gauge its diameter at will and with considerable precision. The deviation of diameter of a rectified string never exceeds *one hundredth of a millimetre* and is often less than this. In unrectified strings is often found variations of as much as seven one-hundredths of a millimetre.

Thus having devised means of gauging the string accurately I. du B. have been able to classify with invariable precision three degrees of thickness for each of the strings G. B. and E. (the top three) which enables guitarists to choose strings exactly to suit their needs.

J. K. SUTCLIFFE

JAPANESE MUSIC FOR GUITAR

Two very interesting albums of guitar music by Japanese composers are before us.

The first contains 62 pages of melodious pieces bearing such titles as 'Town in the Snow', 'Walk in the Evening', 'White Flower', 'Song of the Pretty Shell', etc. This book is published by Sanritsu, Sendai.

The other volume bears the title (in Spanish and Japanese) *Musica Japonesa Moderna para Guitarra (Libro Primero)* and is published by Casa Guitarra, No. 1 Nakano-Ekimea Nakanoku, Tokio. This album contains ten compositions each by a different Japanese guitarist-composer. Particularly interesting is Theme and Variations, op. 22, by Jiro Nakano which consists of seven variations on a Korean motive.

ELTON HAYES AND 'UM-CHA'

THE popular singer-guitarist Elton Hayes, who will be long remembered for his delightful performance in the Disney film 'Robin Hood and His Merry Men', is reported by the 'Radio Times' to have said that his pet dislike is that particular type of accompaniment which consists of monotonously hitting out the same few chords with a plectrum—which he calls *the umcha style!*

We agree—surely this is reducing the guitar, even in its Tin Pan Alley form, to its lowest possible level in music.

LONDON RECITAL IN DECEMBER

ON Wednesday December 9th the famous Continental guitarist Adele Kramer will give a recital at the Cowdray Hall, London. The programme will include works by Bach, Sor, Tarrega, Uhl and Castelnuovo-Tedesco.

Adele Kramer has given recitals in many lands. She is a pupil of Miguel Llobet and is now established as a teacher of the classic guitar in London (see announcement).

RECITAL IN SPAIN

At the conclusion of a Literary Festival on October 18th organised by the Circle of Fine Arts in Lerida, Spain, a recital of guitar solos was given by Jose M. Sierra which included 'El Testament d'Amelia' and Canco de Lladre (Llobet), Zortzico (Pujol) and Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tarrega).

HARMONY FOR THE GUITAR

Richard Pick of Chicago has made a most valuable contribution to the study of the guitar in his newly-published book "Fundamental Fingerboard Harmony for Guitar" (Forster Music Publisher, Inc., 216 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 4, Illinois, U.S.A.). Here in 64 large pages, is a systematic and progressive presentation of the problems of harmony applied to the guitar.

The book has been prepared primarily as a supplementary book to the author's "First Lessons for Classic Guitar". It can be used as a progressive course of study or as a reference book. (Price \$2.50 in U.S.A.).

RECITAL UNDER DIFFICULTY

JULIAN BREAM'S recital at Wigmore Hall on October 14th was a triumph over the disability of a strained arm. In spite of this he gave a brilliant performance and won the admiration of the 'Times' critic for his fluency and 'sense of style'. A new Suite in three movements by Stephen Dodgson was to have been given its first performance, but under the circumstances it was necessary to leave this for a future recital. Julian Bream has been heard several times in broadcasts during the past few weeks.

GUITAR IN MONTEVERDI OPERA

'L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA' by Monteverdi was first performed in Venice in 1642, a year before the death at the age of 76 of its composer. Evidently the score was lost until the finding of a copy in 1888 and a second copy in 1930.

On November 2nd this scintillating opera was broadcast by the B.B.C. Among the several special instruments required for 'The Coronation of Poppea' were lute and guitar. These were played by Julian Bream in the broadcast.

MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Every member may have a 25 word notice inserted free in "Guitar News" for each annual subscription paid. Extra notices may be included at the following rates: up to 25 words 2/6; from 26 to 50 words (maximum) 5/-.

SPANISH GUITAR CENTRE: Tuition by Len Williams. Concert guitars: Esteso, Tatay, sometimes available. Also "Soria" concert guitars—wide finger-board, price £16 16s. 0d. Sole agents for the famous "Fantasia" nylon strings—used by Ida Presti. Price 19/6 set. New guitar works and transcriptions. Write price lists: 12/13 Little Newport Street, London, W.C.2.

DO YOU KNOW that the famous **UNIVERSAL EDITION** which is now readily available through any dealers, contains some interesting Guitar Music—ask for catalogues now.

"FANTASIA". Perfect nylon strings for guitar or lute in any desired gauge. R. Esenbel, Hoca hani cad. 1/10, Cagaloglu, Istanbul, Turkey.

FOR SALE: Martin Guitar (New York) excellent condition, beautiful tone. Cost £35.—no reasonable offer refused. Will send on approval. Apply: Mrs. M. Easton, 18 Elliotts Lane, Codsall, Wolverhampton, Staffs.

ADELE KRAMER (pupil of Miguel Llobet), well-known Continental Concert-guitarist, now living in London, gives guitar lessons—64 Belsize Park, London N.W.3. (Tel: Primrose 3370).

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THE JULIO KORN ALBUMS

The 1953 catalogue of published music includes three sections which are of interest to the guitarist. On page 29 there is a list of characteristic Argentine music by many composers, the best known of whom is Atahualpa Yupanqui.

On page 31 Methods by Carulli and Aguado are offered.

The Albums of guitar music (page 30) include the following: Tarrega (10 original compositions), Sor (34 minuets), Maria Luisa Anido (10 works for guitar), Schumann (Childhood Scenes, op. 15 arranged by Mario Parodi), Tarrega (30 Preludes), Chopin (Six Preludes arranged by Tarrega) etc.

The list can be obtained from Editorial Julio Korn, Moreno 2034, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

BRAZILIAN ACTIVITIES

Isaias Savio, Professor of the Guitar at the Conservatory of Sao Paulo, Brazil, gave a recital at Porto Alegre on July 29th the programme of which consisted mostly of his own compositions for guitar.

It opened with his suite—*Cenas Brasileiras* (Brazilian Scenes) in six movements each based on the folk-lore music of that country. This was followed by *Preludio Pintoresco* No. 6, *Valsa Scherzo*, *Two Estudos* and *Suite Descritiva* (on the theme of *Pierrot* and *Harlequin*). The programme ended with *Triste* by Luiz Alba, *Estilo* by Savio and *Three Cancoes Amazonicas* by Waldmar Henrique arr. Savio.

Professor Savio is a native of Uruguay who made a concert tour of Brazil in 1931. This tour proved so successful and the demands for his services as a teacher of the guitar became so great that he has remained in Brazil ever since, teaching first in Rio de Janeiro and then in Sao Paulo where he now lives. He has done an amazing amount of work for the guitar not only as recitalist, teacher and lecturer but as a composer and arranger of music for the instrument.

The *Associacao Brasileira de Imprensa* presented a Brazilian guitarist, Solon Ayala, in a recital on August 8th in an interesting and varied programme ranging from Bach, Beethoven, Sor and Aguado to Tarrega, Barrios, Albeniz, Granados, Vicente Gomez, etc.

Among the recordings presented in the recent broadcasts of Ronoel Simoes was the 'Concierto de Aranjuez' (Joaquin Rodrigo) with Regino Sainz de la Maza at the guitar and Ataulfo Argenta conducting.

The Cultural Association of the Guitar presented several of its members in its 34th and 35th concerts of guitar music in July and August.

Many articles about the guitar in the Brazilian press have appeared from the pen of Ronoel Simoes and we understand that he will soon commence a series for an important Uruguayan newspaper.

MARIA LUISA ANIDO IN ITALY

IN Milan on October 30th a recital was given by the celebrated Argentine guitarist Maria Luisa Anido at the Conservatorio di Musica. Her programme included *Gagliarda* (V. Galilei), *Pavana* (Sanz), *Minuetto* (Rameau), items by Sor, *Minuetto* (Mozart arr. Anido), *Impromptu* and *Cancion del Ladron* (Llobet), *Sueno* (Tarrega), *Danza No. 7* (Granados), *Asturias* (Albeniz), *Preludio No. 1*, *Choro* and *Study No. 11* (Villa-Lobos) and concluded with Argentine music by Cassinelli, Guastavino and Anido (*Aire Norteno*).

SEGOVIA AT BIRMINGHAM TOWN HALL

THE first concert of Segovia's visit to Britain, on October 25th, should have included the *Castelnuovo-Tedesco Concerto*, but to the disappointment of the large audience, the parts had failed to arrive from Italy. However, Segovia played two groups of solos which included works by Frescobaldi, Bach (*Gavotte*), Weiss, Moreno Torroba (*Sonatina*), Granados (*Danza No. 10*) and Albeniz (*Torre Bermeja*). The audience clamoured enthusiastically for more but owing to the lateness of the hour an encore could not be granted.

SOME ORIGINS OF THE GUITAR

by Wilfrid M. Appleby

IN EGYPT

GUITAR-LIKE instruments have been in use for something like six thousand years according to the evidence of bas-reliefs and sculptures in ancient Egypt and other lands at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. The Egyptian 'nefer' was a spade-shaped instrument with a long neck and usually two strings which were played with the fingers. Frets were not unknown; they can be seen distinctly on the instrument represented on a terracotta vase from ancient Egypt in the British Museum. The shape of the body of the nefer varied from oblong to oval, but one illustration in Champollion's book on "The Monuments of Egypt and Nubia" shows an example with slightly incurved sides and a round sound-hole—2500 B.C. The nefer was held in two different positions: (a) across the player's chest with the sound-box or body resting in the bend of the left arm, and (b) nearly upright, with the 'body' resting on the left thigh and the 'neck' projecting several inches above the left shoulder.

That the nefer was esteemed and beloved by the Egyptians is evident from the fact that it was used in their hieroglyphics to signify 'good' or 'pleasant', while a beautiful Egyptian Queen was named Nefer-titi (or 'the lady of the guitar').

The Aryans who spread throughout Europe and parts of Asia had their 'bards' who recited traditional legends, often to the accompaniment of a 'plucked-string' instrument. No doubt the Irish harp and the Welsh crwth were derived from the instruments brought by these Aryan Celts.

ANCIENT GREECE

Another branch of the Aryans settled in Greece where their best-known instruments were the Lyra and the Kithára. Ancient legends tell of Hermes or Orpheus who originated the Lyra and charmed all animals with its music. But the Kithára was a more highly developed instrument, with a substantial resonator of wood instead of the tortoiseshell of the Lyra. The Kithára was played by the professional and expert musicians and critically judged by great audiences as at the Delphic games. It was held upright, resting on the left thigh and played with the fingers of both hands. Its seven strings were attached to a cross-bar, the handle of which could be quickly turned to change the pitch of the instrument—all strings at once. Higher notes were played as harmonics, but there was no neck or fingerboard. However, the Greeks were acquainted with instruments even more like the guitar than the Kithára. At the Louvre (Paris) there is a statuette from Tanagra (Greece) dating from the third century B.C. which shows a demi-pear-shaped instrument held across the chest of the player just as the gittern was held in England about fifteen centuries later. The neck of the Tanagra instrument was not a separate part of the instrument but merely a tapering-away from the wide bulge of the body.

Also in the British Museum (The Townley Marbles) there is a representation on a Greek sarcophagus of an instrument in which the body is equal to one third of the neck. It has five strings and what appear to be tuning-pegs. Neither of these 'necked' instruments was developed from the Lyra or the Kithára. They probably originated in the East Mediterranean region, and

are as much the fore-runners of the guitar as of the lute and the mandolin. It may be claimed that the zither is a more direct descendant of the Lyra and the Kithára but lyra-guitars made during the last century show how striking the resemblance can be between the guitar and these Greek instruments.

Ptolemy, the Macedonian general who became King of Egypt, did important work for science and art in Alexandria under the influence of the Greek philosopher, Aristotle. Among other things he organised a great gathering of three hundred kitharists in 285 B.C.

THE ROMANS

The Romans evidently took their Cithara from the Greek Kithára. Orpheus charming the animals with his lyra was evidently a favourite subject for the Roman mosaic pavements. At least three which have been found in England had this design. At Cirencester Museum of Roman Antiquities there is an instrument-bridge made of ivory and artistically decorated which was evidently from a Roman Cithara. It is 9½ inches long and held about twenty-three strings. Holes were pierced diagonally upwards towards the 'playing' side of the bridge so that the knots of the strings would be at the back of the bridge, with the strings resting on notches or grooves at the top of the bridge. One of the 'Orpheus' pavements is also in this museum.

The Cithara is mentioned by Cicero, Horace, Terentius, Quintilian and other Latin authors. Citharists were often wealthy and important people in Rome. Mark Antony, Nero and Vespasian granted their Citharists high rewards and privileges. The Romans invaded Spain long before the Moslem invasion of 711 A.D. and no doubt they took their musical instruments with them. There is evidence of this in the references by such writers as the Arch-priest Hita (1283-1350) to a Roman guitar which he calls the 'Guitarra Latina'. Arch-priest Hita wrote:

"Then came the shrill Moorish guitar,
With its sharp rhythms and ungracious voice,
The large-bellied lute they play at merrymaking,
And mingling with them the Latin guitar".

Yet many writers say that the Moors (Moslems) brought the guitar to Spain. Certainly they brought an instrument which Hita calls the 'Guitarra Morisca'. But we know from an illustrated document, "The Cantigas" of the Spanish King Alfonso the Wise (1221-1284), that the Guitarra Morisca was oval-shaped like the Mandola and that the Guitarra Latina had the incurved sides of the Spanish guitar. In this document the instruments are shown held diagonally across the body from the left shoulder to the right thigh. Proof that the guitar was already known in Europe before the Moslem invasion of Spain is found in the fact that Gregory de Tours (538-594 A.D.) mentions the guitar in his *Historia Francorum*, more than a century before 711 A.D. There is a three-stringed guitar depicted in a German document of 1180 A.D., and a guitar with incurved sides was included in the instruments on the famous Gate of Glory of the Church of Santiago da Compostella in Spain 1188 A.D. A cast of this is in the South Kensington (London) museum.

In all probability the Phoenicians brought guitar-like instruments to Spain in the 15th century B.C. and it was from one of these instruments that the guitar as we know it was developed in that country.

(to be continued).

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