

Seattle Pacific University

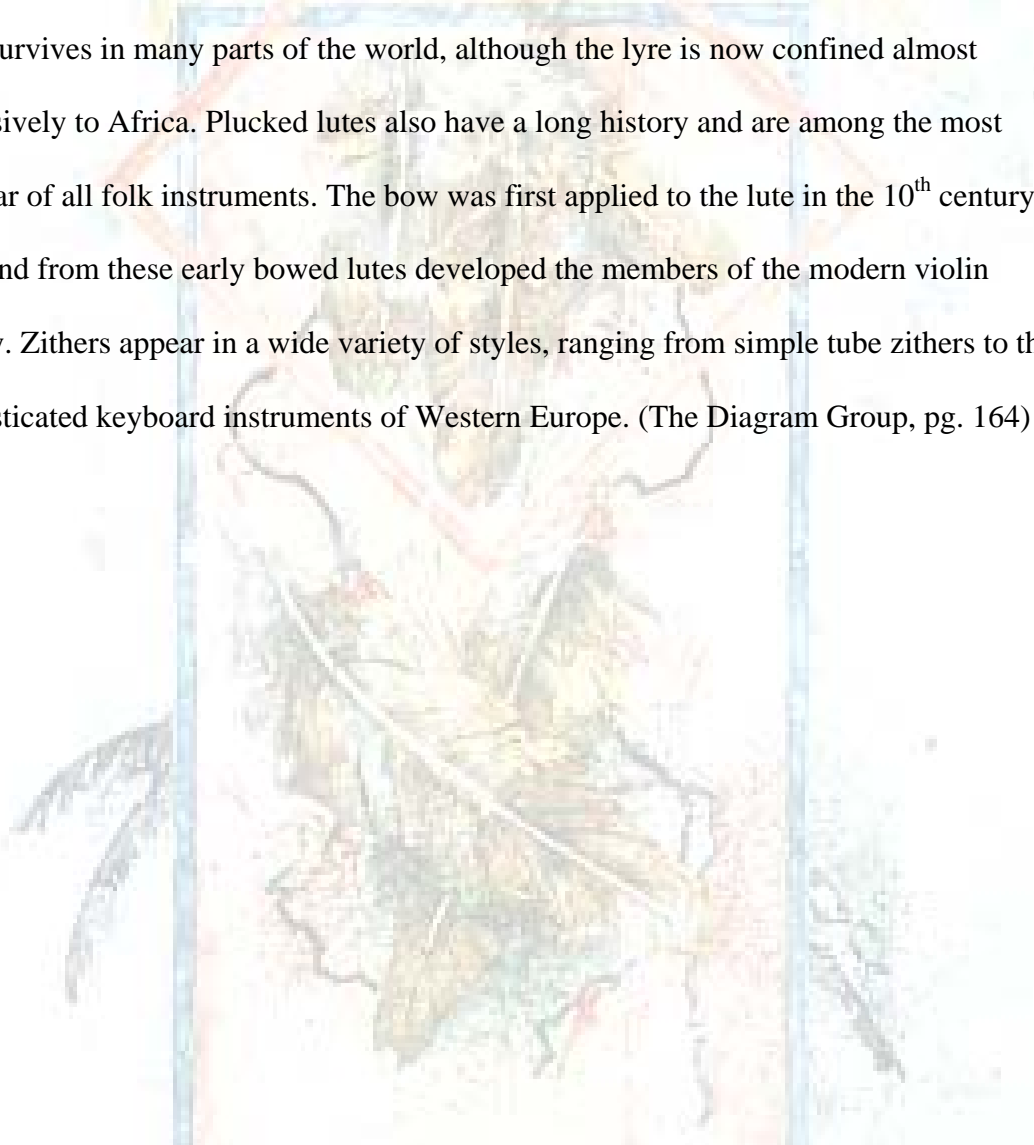


Ethnic Instruments Catalog

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Chordophones

Chordophones are instruments in which the sound is made by the vibration of strings. There are five basic types: bows, lyres, harps, lutes, and zithers. Of these, the oldest and simplest is the musical bow which is still common in Africa and the Americas. Harps and lyres both appeared about 5000 years ago in ancient Egypt and Sumeria. The harp survives in many parts of the world, although the lyre is now confined almost exclusively to Africa. Plucked lutes also have a long history and are among the most popular of all folk instruments. The bow was first applied to the lute in the 10th century AD, and from these early bowed lutes developed the members of the modern violin family. Zithers appear in a wide variety of styles, ranging from simple tube zithers to the sophisticated keyboard instruments of Western Europe. (The Diagram Group, pg. 164)



Erh-hu

This instrument is from China. It is basically a two-stringed violin but the bow is threaded between the two strings, unlike a typical violin.



Lute



Folk Lute

“All lutes comprise a resonating belly and a neck, and have strings that run from near the base of the belly along the full length of the neck. Plucked folk lutes are popular in many parts of the world

and are made in many different shapes and sizes. Important differences include the relative length of body and neck, the shape of the back, the number of strings, and whether there are frets.” (*MIOTW*, p. 178) This particular lute is a “long-necked” lute because the neck is longer than the body. It has a rounded back, and in this respect resembles the lutes of renaissance Europe. Also, this lute has no frets.

Kantele

“This instrument simplifies the playing of accompaniment. The chord zither has strings arranged so that the notes of chords occur in groups.” (*MIOTW*, p 225) The Kantele is found in Finland.



Toy Clavichord

“The clavichord was one of the most popular keyboard instruments of the baroque period.” (*MIOTW*, p. 228)

When a key is depressed, a metal blade strikes the string(s). If the key is held down, the pitch can be slightly modified by varying the amount of pressure applied to the key.



**Mountain Dulcimer –
United States**

It has an aptly descriptive name origin: 'dulcis' - sweet; 'melos' - song. Widely thought to have North American roots in the early 1800's Appalachian Mountains, the traditional mountain dulcimer is one of the most popular folk instruments in the U.S. today.



Mountain Dulcimers - http://www.craggytmtnmusic.com/mtn_dulcimers.html



Ukulele – Bora Bora, United States

The ukulele found a home on the Pacific islands, including Bora Bora, in the late 1800s when Portuguese workers and immigrants landed on the isles. Its low tuning and small body are what give the instrument its signature relaxed island sound.

The Ukulele.
<http://www.geocities.com/~ukulele/>



**Trough Zither –
Rwanda
Ennanga - Nanga**

It has eight strings with a wooden through. In zithers, the string run the entire length of the resonating body and are either plucked, hammered an are struck mechanically through keys.



Traditional instruments. www.music.ch/face/instrum/uganda_instrum.html



Short neck guitar –

Chordophone from Latin America. Very common in Latin music and is used for many solo lines throughout songs.

**5 string lute –
Africa**

It is built over a
wide bowl and
covered with skin.



Mandolin – United States



Mandolins evolved from the Lute family in Italy during the 17th - 18th centuries, and the deep bowled mandolin produced particularly in Naples became a common type in the 19th century. The original instrument was the mandola (mandorla is almond in Italian and describes the instrument body shape) and evolved in the 15th century from the lute.

The Mandolin Family of Instruments. <http://www.banjolin.supanet.com/family.htm>



Sitar

The Sitar is a North Indian instrument related to the vina, an Indian zither. Played strings run over arched metal frets to the peg-box. Sympathetic strings run under the frets in the troughed neck to lateral pegs. It falls into the Chordophone category because the sound is made by the vibration of strings.



Sarangi

India is full of many different stringed instruments that come in a variety of shapes and sizes. The Sarangi usually contains three or four bowed strings, together with a variable number of sympathetic strings. The pear-shaped fiddle is reminiscent of the medieval European rebec. It also falls into the Chordophone category because the sound is made by the vibration of strings.



Guitarrón

The six string Mexican guitarrón, also called the guitarrón de Toloche is characteristic of the state of Jalisco, and is the one most often seen in the Mariachi ensemble. It is often tuned A-D-G-C-E-A, but sometimes is tuned like a guitar but an octave lower. In Mariachi music, the guitarrón replaced the harp, which required an additional ensemble member simply to carry it through the streets while the harpist played. Since the vibrated strings create its sound, it is considered a Chordophone.



Berimbau

Of African origin, the berimbau is used extensively in candomblé and capoeira. It has an unusual timbre produced by striking a rod and a ring or coin on a metal string attached to a bow with a resonating dried gourd. It is played together with a caxixi which is shaken while striking the string. It is a Chordophone for all of these reasons.

(<http://www.brazilianpercussion.com/english/instrumentos/Tipos.asp?Tipo=55>)



Spike Fiddle

Spike fiddles from the Middle East. Thought to have originated in Persia, the spike fiddle is today found in a variety of forms throughout the Middle East. The more primitive one-stringed instruments are from Iraq and Syria. It is considered a chordophone.



Harp Lute

The West African instrument is classified as a harp lute because it is plucked with both hands and generally with the thumbs. The base of the instrument is a gourd that is covered with a membrane. All lutes comprise a resonating belly and a neck, and have strings that run from near the base of the belly along the full length of the neck. It also falls into the chordophone family.



Spike Fiddle

Fiddles are classified as bowed lutes. Folk fiddles of many shapes and sizes and are particularly popular in Africa, Asia, and Europe. There are two basic forms, spike fiddles, with long necks, and short-necked fiddles. Spike fiddles are common in the Middle East, Asia, and North America, but are rarely found elsewhere. It is considered a chordophone.



Bow Harp

This bow harp has a resonator reminiscent of primitive fiddles. Less elaborately decorated and easy to tune are these harps from Tanzania, Nigeria, and Chad. There are two sound holes in the resonator that is covered with a pelt. It is also a chordophone because it creates sound with the vibration of the strings.