

B4U PUBLISHING

THE STORIES OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

ŠTĚPÁNKA SEKANINOVÁ & JAKUB CENKL



SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

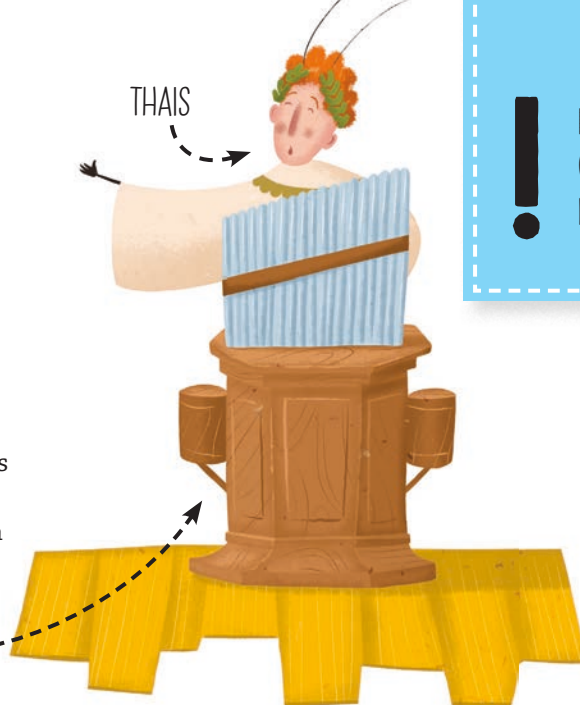
An orchestra is a relatively large group of players of string, percussion, woodwind and brass instruments led by a conductor. An ancestor of the orchestra is the small chamber ensemble, which became widespread in the 18th century.



WATER OR AIR?

The organ has a long history. The very first one was built in 240 BCE by a man named Ctesibius. As he was very fond of his wife Thais, he taught her how to play the new instrument. So, now you know the name of the world's first woman organist, too. All this took place in ancient Greece. The organ of that time was much smaller than today's instrument, and the air was blown into it by a water pump. It is known as a hydraulis (water organ).

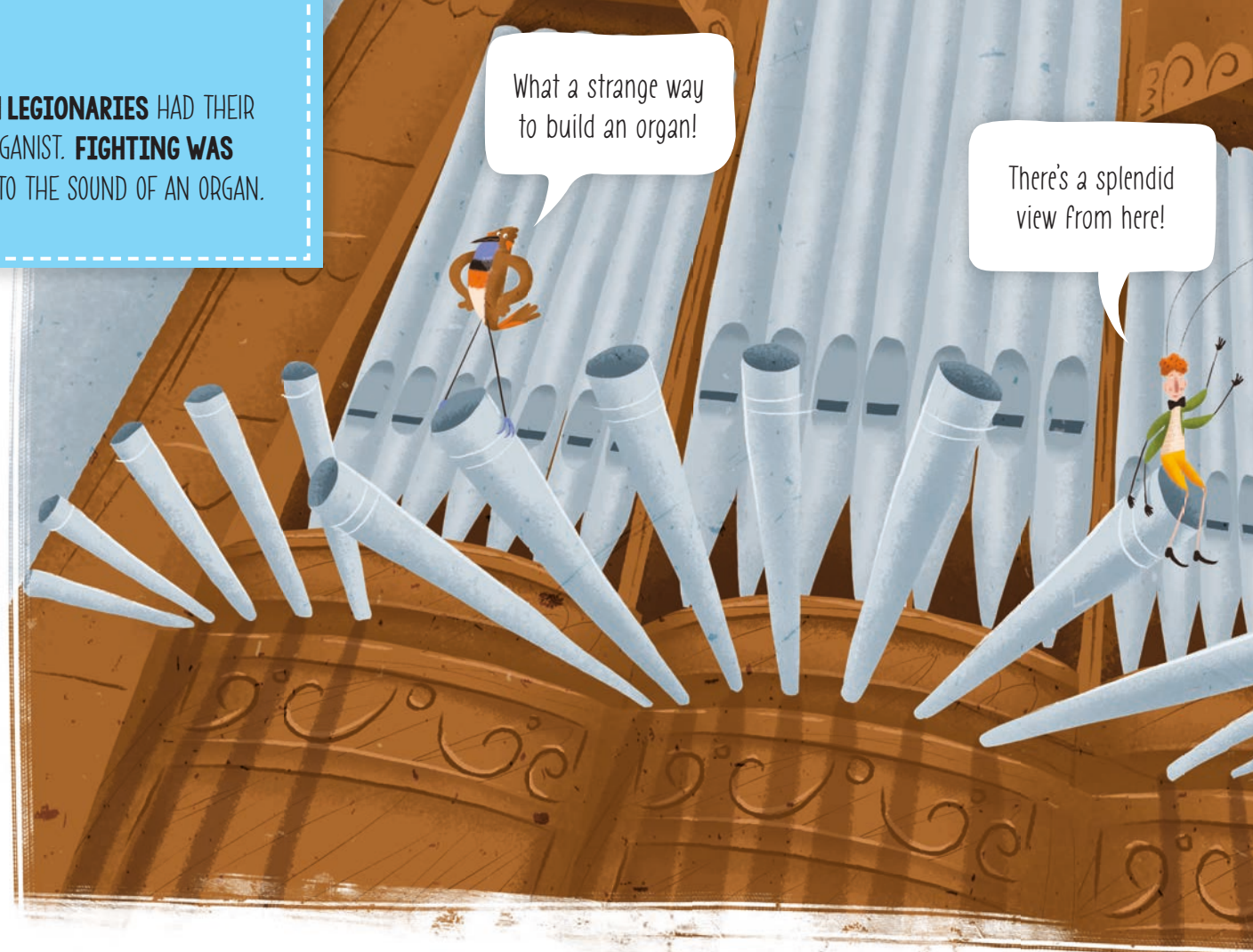
WATER ORGAN



! ROMAN LEGIONARIES HAD THEIR OWN ORGANIST. **FIGHTING WAS EASIER TO THE SOUND OF AN ORGAN.**

What a strange way to build an organ!

There's a splendid view from here!



COME ON YOU GLADIATORS!

In ancient Rome, palace banquets were held to the sound of organ music. It was also heard at the theatre, the Roman circus, chariot races and even during notorious gladiator fights. Emperor Nero may be known for his cruelty, but he was also an enthusiastic organist. It is said that one night Nero had all his senators brought from their beds so that he could show them how well he played.

SMALL, LARGE, TINY

No doubt you know that organs in the naves of cathedrals were magnificent in terms of both sound and size. There was no question of their crouching shyly in a corner. But both antiquity and the Middle Ages had portable organs known as portatives. The portative would hang from the performer's shoulder. He would play it with one hand and use the other to blow air to the pipes.

PORTATIVE



MIDDLE AGES

In the Middle Ages, organ music accompanied secular pleasures. Today, however, we associate it with religious worship. How did this change happen, bearing in mind that the church at first looked down its nose at the organ? Well, only an organ could project its sound throughout the vast space of a Romanesque basilica or a Gothic cathedral.

DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

As the Middle Ages progressed, organs developed characteristics typical of where they were built. In Spain, for instance, some organ pipes reached out joyously into space. In England, this king of the instruments had no pedals.

! IN THE BAROQUE ERA, THE ORGAN CAME INTO ITS OWN. HUGE CONCERTS WERE HELD WITH **THE ORGAN AS THE MAIN INSTRUMENT**. IN THE ROMANTIC ERA, ORGANS WERE BUILT IN CONCERT HALLS TOO, **MAKING THEM EVEN MORE POPULAR.**

ORGAN RECORDS



LARGEST CHURCH ORGAN

The largest church organ is in St Stephen's Cathedral in Passau. I'm sure you will agree that 17,974 pipes are more than enough! This organ is also the largest in Europe and the fifth largest in the world. Not only is it beautiful to look at, it is still playable, allowing leading organists to coax heavenly music from it.

LARGEST ORGAN

The world's largest organ is in the Atlantic City Convention Hall. It has an incredible 33,112 pipes.

OLDEST ORGAN

It is thought that the organ in the church of Notre Dame de Valere in Sion, Switzerland is the oldest playable organ in the world. This musical granny was born in the early 15th century.



OLDEST ORGAN

EMPEROR NERO





JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

On hearing the word ‘organ’, many of us think first of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750). Bach was a virtuoso organist, a leading expert on what the organ could do and a brilliant composer of organ music. He played the king of the instruments from a very young age, and he loved to show off his skills in concert. According to many contemporary eyewitnesses, he had flawless keyboard technique and was able to play from practically any notation put in front of him. It is said that Bach was able to play with his feet what many a proficient pianist could not even play with his hands. As he was such a lover of the organ, it will perhaps come as no surprise to learn that in the course of his life Bach composed hundreds of works for the organ to the glory of God. He was also a master musician on other instruments, notably the violin.



FRANZ LISZT

FRANZ LISZT

Franz Liszt (1811 – 1886), who was active in Austria-Hungary, was a true virtuoso of the piano. From the piano, it is but a small step to the organ – an instrument he admired from the bottom of his gentle soul. Although the organ was very much associated with church music, Liszt wished for it to be played to express emotional experience, not only to the glory of God. It was the same with his compositions for the piano.

ACCORDION

“What’s playing that beautiful, plaintive music?” Dalibor wanted to know. It was an accordion, of course! Although it may not look like one, the accordion is a wind instrument. It is also polyphonic. Air is blown into the accordion not from the mouth but by the expanding and compressing of a special bellows and the pressing of buttons or keys. Some accordions have keyboards, others buttons.



CAMERON CARPENTER

CAMERON CARPENTER

Further proof that the organ belongs outside of church, too, is provided by young American organist Cameron Carpenter, whose portable organ goes all over the world with him. Not only does Carpenter perform the music of the old masters, he plays his own compositions. This gifted young man has played on the king of the instruments since he was four years old. Thanks to this combination of talent and hard work, he has grown up to be an organ superstar.

BABY OF THE FAMILY

The accordion is a very young instrument. A forerunner of the accordion, known as the Handäoline, was made in 1822 by Berliner Friedrich Buschmann. The true accordion was patented in 1829 by Viennese instrument maker Cyrill Demian; it was indeed called the accordion, and it had several buttons. Now the new-born instrument began to grow and play. Today the accordion is sometimes referred to as the squeezebox.



PARTS OF THE ACCORDION

KEYBOARD

Static, melody-playing part is played with the right hand.

BELLWS

Middle part called bellows is for the pumping of air.

BASS PART

Accompanying bass part is played with the left hand.



! IN FINLAND, THE **ACCORDION** IS CONSIDERED A NATIONAL INSTRUMENT. JUST IMAGINE!

HELLO WORLD!

The accordion immediately established itself in most places in Europe. It became so popular in urban surroundings that it was soon an integral part of urban folklore. Once the accordion’s pleasing tones had conquered Europe, the instrument ventured across the great pond to North America.



GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER OF THE ACCORDION

Although the accordion is a baby among musical instruments, it can boast a great-great-grandfather. This is the sheng, which originated in China in the middle of the 1st millennium BCE. The sheng was composed of a bundle of seventeen bamboo pipes of different lengths and a body with a mouthpiece for the player to blow into.



SHENG

ROCK BAND

A rock band is a group of musicians who play rock music. In the 1980s and 1990s, rock bands played to sell-out crowds in stadia. No rock band worth its salt can be without an electric guitar, an electric bass guitar, drums and keyboards including a Hammond organ and synthesizers.



GUITAR & LUTE

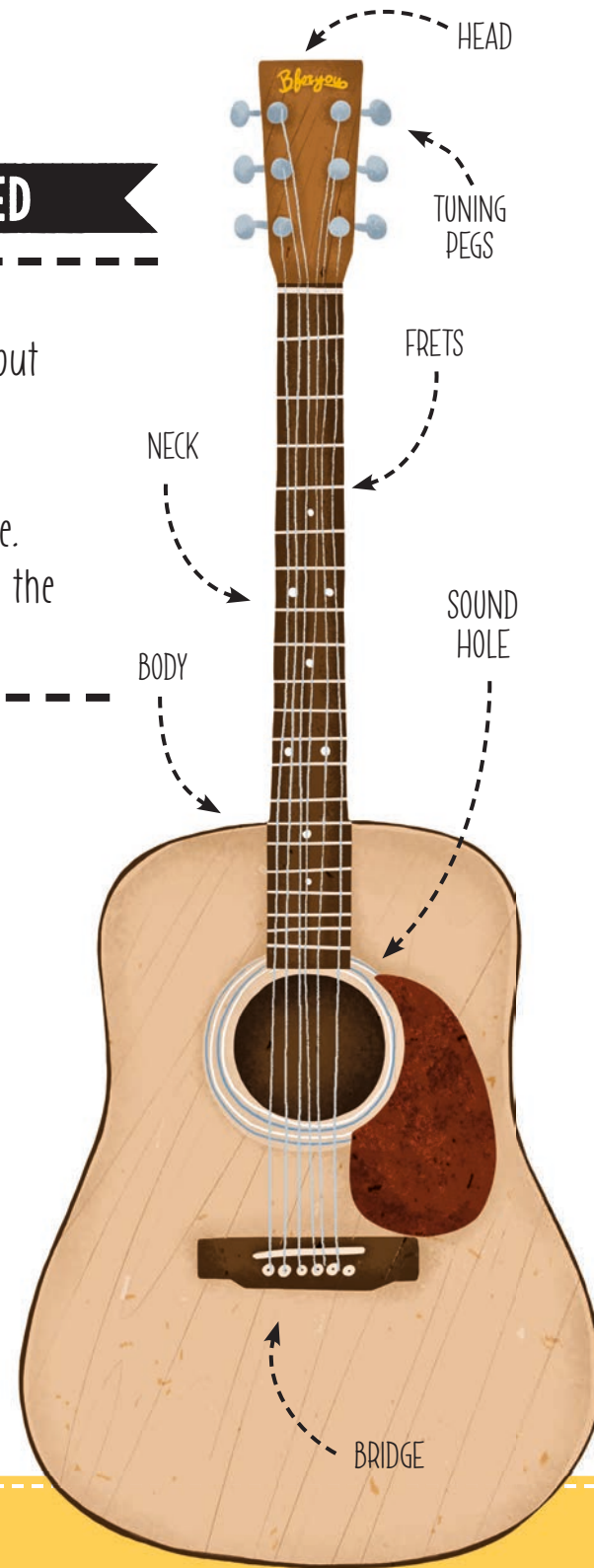
PLUCKED INSTRUMENTS

PLUCKED

Strummed and plucked notes from a guitar could be heard all along the street. Eyes closed, brow puckered, fingers racing about the fretboard, this guy was playing as if his life depended on it. As one chord followed another, the catchy melody pleased the musical ears of eight-legged Dalibor and two-legged Charlie. "I couldn't do without the guitar," says Dalibor, as he danced to the rhythm and set out in search of another instrument.

WHAT IS A GUITAR?

A guitar is a stringed instrument for plucking and strumming. These days, most guitars have six strings. The guitar produces notes and chords on the principle of resonance, like a piano. The strings are played by vibrating the fingernails or a plectrum against them to achieve the desired sound. Vibration characteristics depend on the material of the body of the guitar.



PARTS OF A GUITAR

HEAD

Place where the strings are attached to the tuning pegs.

TUNING PEGS

Used for tuning the strings. Turning a peg

either loosens or tightens the string, so giving it a lower or higher note

NECK

The fretboard forms part of the neck, the frets form the fretboard.

FRETS

Metal strips which divide fretboard to semitone intervals.

BODY

This basic part determines sound of guitar.

BRIDGE

Holds strings fast to the instrument.

SOUND HOLE

In the very centre of the guitar.



THE VERY OLDEST

Like the piano, the guitar has developed into what it is today over many years. In quest of its origins, Dalibor and Charlie went all the way back to ancient times and 2500 BCE, where they found themselves in Western Asia. On a clay tablet, an artist from the Sumerian city of Nippur produced an image of a musician playing an instrument that looks like a square guitar. Called a kinnor, it is one of the very first plucked instruments and is mentioned in the Bible.

HITTITE GUITAR

A step closer to the guitar we know today, this long-necked, fretted instrument has a flat body and many sound holes. It was a favourite instrument of the Hittites, an ancient people from Asia Minor. Around 1600 BCE, the Hittites invaded Egypt, and soon their stringed instrument became popular in the mighty empire by the Nile; it was known as the Egyptian lute.



MUSIC ON THREE STRINGS

The ancient Greeks enjoyed playing a stringed instrument called a cithara. Although this word is very like the modern 'guitar', the two instruments are rather different. The cithara of the ancients was more like a lyre than a guitar.

ROMANCE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Thank goodness for those valiant, chivalrous medieval heroes known as knights! A knight would delight the lady of his heart with a song of love. And if his pleasing voice was accompanied by the melody of quavering strings, the lady might even fall at his feet. In the 12th century, the popularity of the guitar spread to many corners of the world along with troubadours, Minnesänger and bards.



THE LATIN GUITAR AT LAST

All these stringed forefathers and -mothers took inspiration from each other. The next few centuries saw the emergence of the beautiful guitarra latina (Latin guitar), whose figure-eight shape made it very like the guitar of today. It was used for accompanying singers and as a solo instrument.



'LUTE' WAS USED UNTIL THE 15TH CENTURY AS A GENERAL TERM FOR A WIDE RANGE OF STRINGED, PLUCKED INSTRUMENTS.

BASIC GUITAR TYPES

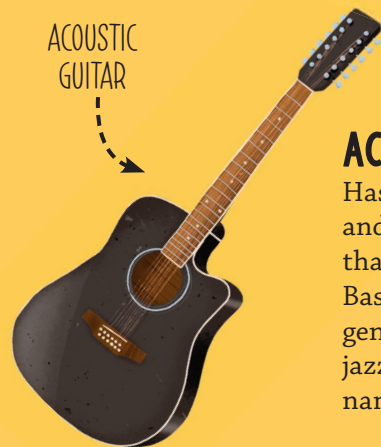
CLASSICAL (SPANISH)

The oldest type in use, usually for the playing of classical music. These days, it also used in the playing of jazz, country, folk and popular music.

CLASSICAL GUITAR



ACOUSTIC GUITAR



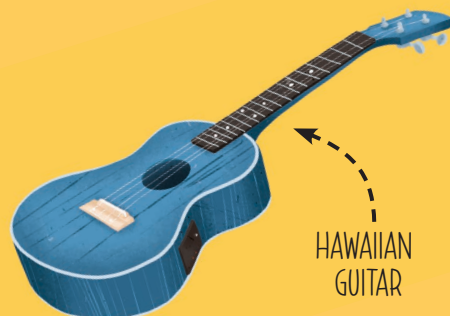
ACOUSTIC

Has a narrower fretboard and more powerful sound than the classical guitar. Basically, it is used in all genres of music – pop, rock, jazz, swing, country, folk, you name it!

HAWAIIAN

You won't find metal frets on its fretboard, which is smooth.

HAWAIIAN GUITAR



SEMI-ACOUSTIC GUITAR



SEMI-ACOUSTIC

Special guitar with pick-ups and hollow body with F-shaped sound holes, like a violin.

ELECTRIC

As it does not have a hollow body, the sound of the strings is read by a pick-up connected to an amplifier. A staple in heavy metal, rock and rock 'n' roll, the electric guitar has real zest.

ELECTRIC GUITAR



SPAIN AND THE GUITAR

Although Spain is not the birthplace of the guitar, it is in this land on the Iberian Peninsula that its thousand-year evolution reached its zenith. Spain was first the home of an instrument called the vihuela, played with the fingers, a plectrum or a bow. In Italy, the vihuela was known as the viola. And because the guitar and its like are often connected with merrymaking, it was described as the instrument of Italian commedia performers.

SPANISH GUITAR



FOUR, FIVE OR SIX?

Vihuelas had doubled strings known as paired courses. While the Renaissance was partial to four paired courses, the Baroque preferred five. From the second half of the 18th century, six paired courses became popular.

PAIRED STRINGS



ARE WE COOL?

What's more, in the 18th century the guitar became very fashionable. Young people liked to play it, men and women alike. As happens with fashions, the guitar would later lose its popularity for a while, although in good old Spain it would remain as popular as ever. "All these guitars are making my head spin. What on earth can we call an 'ordinary guitar'?" One thing's for sure, though – I must have a guitar in my little orchestra! I'll get myself one and start practising really hard. I'd love to play like..."



FERNANDO SOR

FERNANDO SOR

Fernando Sor was a Spanish composer and guitarist who lived in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He was considered the Beethoven of the guitar. Study of his works – of which there are over sixty – is today indispensable in the basic education of young, beginning guitarists.



MAURO GIULIANI

MAURO GIULIANI

Another composer and guitarist of the late 18th and early 19th century, this time from Italy. Mauro Giuliani went on a grand tour, delighting concert-goers all over Europe with his virtuoso playing. Not for nothing was he invited into Austrian aristocratic circles; not for nothing did he appear and work alongside Ludwig van Beethoven at important concerts in Vienna.

JIMI HENDRIX

Let us return to the more recent past – to the America of the second half of the 20th century. The hugely talented Afro-American Jimi Hendrix used his guitar to write rock history. He knew nothing of musical notation or music theory, yet he played like a god. From the age of fifteen he forever had first a battered Spanish guitar and then a very cheap electric guitar in his hands. He learned to play by listening to records played on the radio. Although a left-hander, he played an instrument strung for right-handers. He was only 27 when he died, but his immortal guitar solos will always gladden the hearts of lovers of rock music.



JIMI HENDRIX

STRUGGLING DALIBOR



MORE ABOUT JIMI

Just imagine, children – not only has Dalibor the cricket played a guitar that once belonged to John Lennon, one of the famous Beatles, he has even clawed at the strings of Jimi Hendrix's instrument. He was so inspired by the experience that he spent the rest of that day trying to get his fingers around the chords. What about Charlie? He sang his heart out until the sun went down.



ANDRÉS SEGOVIA

ANDRÉS SEGOVIA

Spain's Andrés Segovia was one of the most phenomenal guitarists of the 20th century. Besides, in bringing the guitar to concert halls, he was a pioneer. By his amazing playing, he demonstrated the full distinctive sound of the guitar and its technical potential. Before Segovia, the guitar was considered an instrument that greatly improved the atmosphere in cafés. It is amazing to think that Andrés Segovia's brilliant guitar-playing was achieved without a teacher, through his own hard work, talent and intuition. He was still playing concerts in his nineties.

