

[54] **STRINGED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**

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[22] **Filed:** June 16, 1972

[21] **Appl. No.:** 263,455

[52] **U.S. Cl.:** 84/173, 84/284, 84/290

[51] **Int. Cl.:** G10d 1/00

[58] **Field of Search:** 84/173, 284, 285, 84/290, 297, 307, 314

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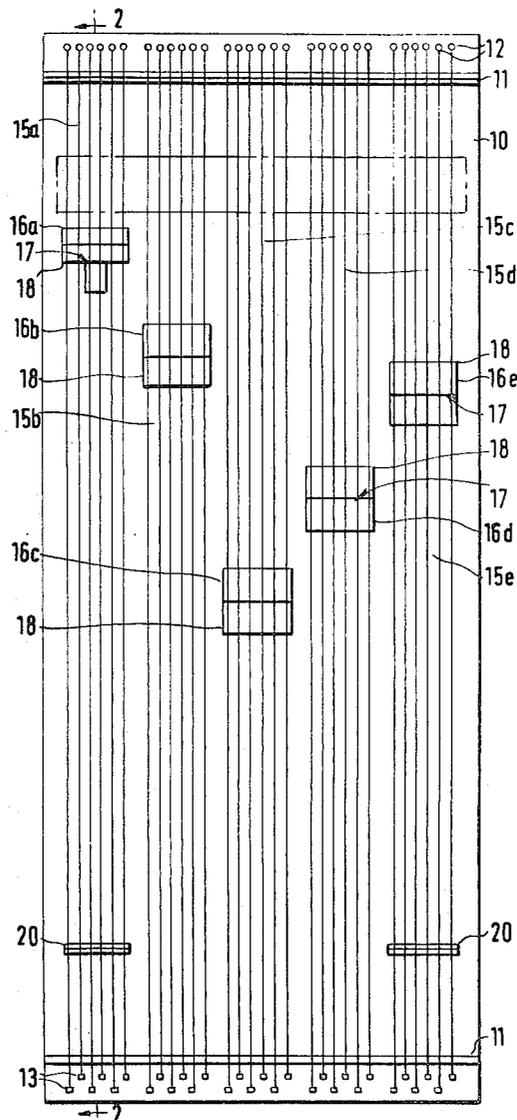
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A musical instrument, particularly suited to be played by plucking using one hand, has sets of strings extending over a sound board or table, each set having its own bridge, and each set of strings being tunable to sound a chord the pitch of which can be altered simply by sliding the associated bridge lengthwise of the strings.

3 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures



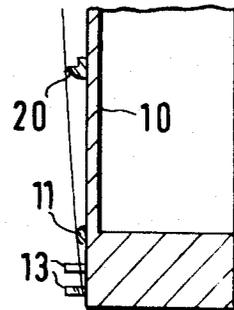
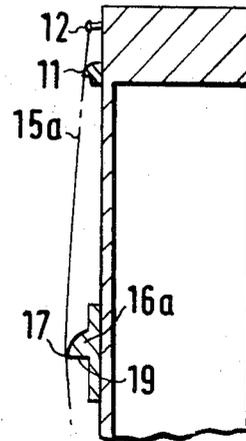
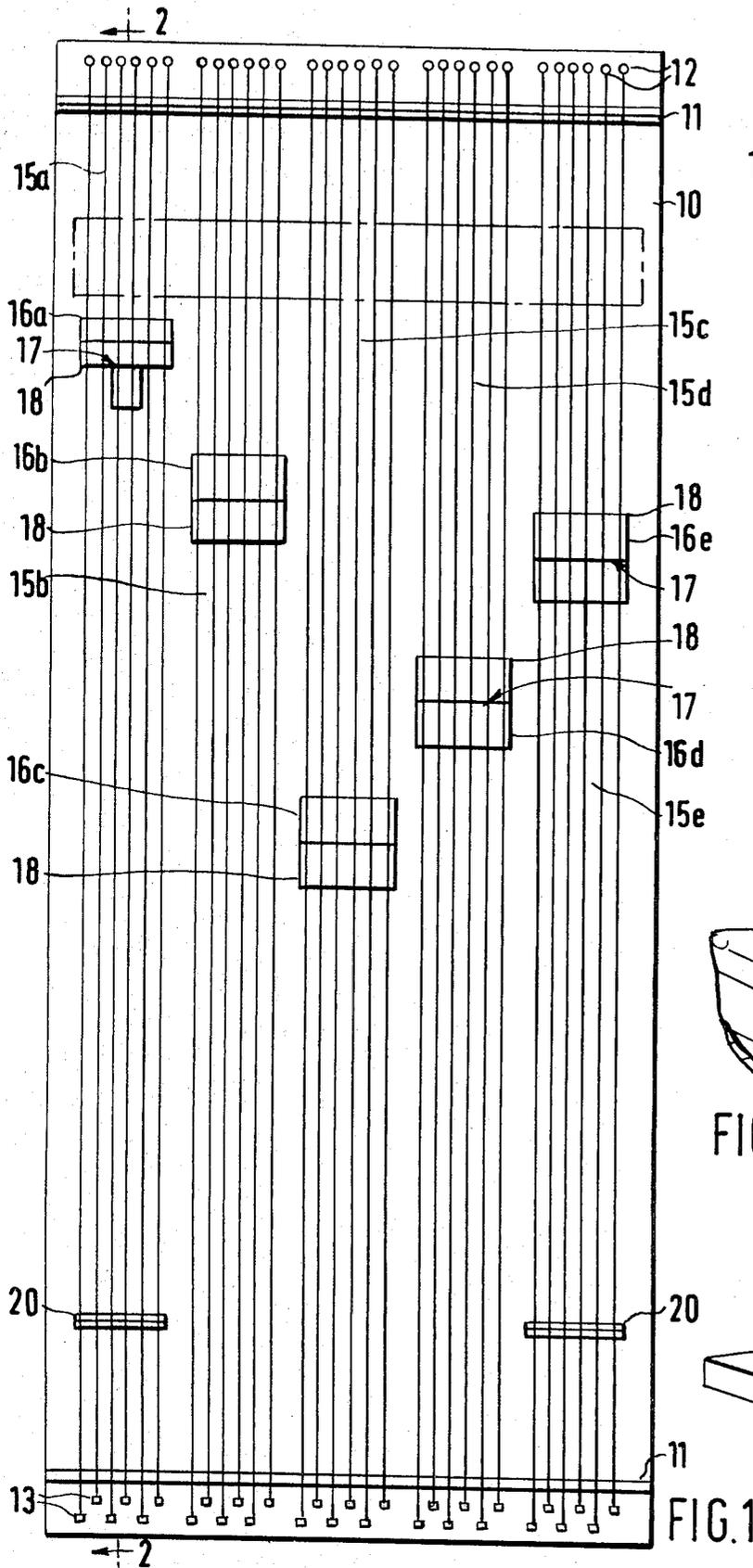


FIG. 2

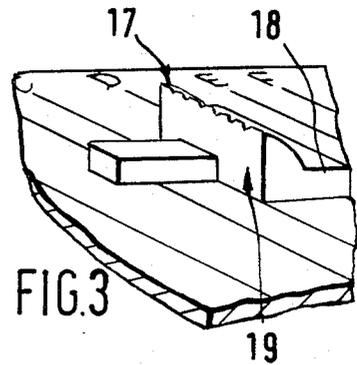


FIG. 3

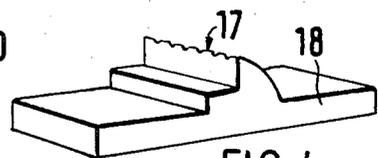


FIG. 4

FIG. 1

STRINGED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

DESCRIPTION

This invention relates to a stringed musical instrument of the kind capable of being played by plucking, and comprising a sound board or table and a plurality of sets of strings extending over the sound board or table.

According to the present invention, a musical instrument of the kind described has its strings arranged in sets, each tunable to sound a chord and has a separate bridge for each chordal set of strings, which bridge supports the associated strings between their ends clear of the sound board or table and is slidable over the sound board lengthwise of the strings simultaneously to adjust the effective lengths of all strings of its associated chordal set to change the pitch of the chord sounded.

The instrument can be played by plucking by hand or by a plectrum and using one hand only and may be plucked either side of the bridge so that each chordal set of strings may sound two different chords. Also the position of each bridge can be readily adjusted by one hand and the bridges are retained in position against the sound board or table by the tension in the strings. The instrument is thus especially suitable for handicapped persons.

One form of musical instrument of this invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of the instrument,

FIG. 2 is a diagrammatic section on the line 2—2 of FIG. 1, and

FIGS. 3 and 4 illustrate suitable forms of bridge.

The instrument as illustrated comprises a rectangular sound board 10, which may form the belly of a box-body or may be mounted on legs as a table, with attached strips 11 adjacent and parallel to the shorter sides of the board to provide the fixed nuts for the strings. Beyond one nut 11 there are fixed pegs 12 for the strings, and beyond the other nut there are pegs 13 by which the strings are tuned.

The strings are arranged in a number of sets, five sets 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d and 15e each of six strings in the illustrated instrument, and each set has an associated bridge, 16a, 16b, 16c, 16d and 16e respectively. Each bridge supports its associated strings clear of the sound board and has for this purpose a notched ridge 17 (FIGS. 2 to 4) upstanding from a base 18. The base 18 is slidable over the sound board 10 and has portions projecting from each side of the ridge 17 so that the

bridge does not tilt under the loads applied by the tensioned strings.

It will be clear that by sliding for example the bridge 16a lengthwise of the tuned set of strings 15a, the pitches of the two chords sounded by plucking on either side of the bridge 16a and as determined by the respective string lengths between the bridge 16a and the nuts 11, or between the bridge 16a and an auxiliary movable bridge 20, will be raised and lowered respectively.

Since the lengths of the strings of a set to one side of the bridge are always equal, moving the bridge only affects the pitch of the chord sounded.

The sound board 10 may have scale markings, as shown, indicating the positions of the bridge to give particular chords, and for example as shown in FIG. 3 the bridge may have a surface 19 leading vertically from the undersurface of the base 18 to the peak of the ridge 17 thereby to facilitate correct positioning of the bridge relatively to a scale mark.

The sound board may if desired be provided with a sound hole as indicated in broken lines in FIG. 1.

I claim:

1. A stringed musical instrument for playing as by strumming, said instrument comprising a sound board or table, and a plurality of sets of strings extending over the sound board or table, and a pair of spaced nuts contacted by the strings adjacent their ends, characterised by the features that the nuts are parallel, that the strings of each set are adjacent, are of the same length between the nuts and are tunable to sound respectively the different notes of a musical chord, that the sets of strings are tunable to sound different chords, and that a plurality of bridge members are provided corresponding in number to the number of sets of strings, each such bridge member supporting only the strings of its corresponding chordally-tuned set of strings and being slidable in contact with the sound board or table lengthwise of the strings simultaneously and proportionately to vary the vibration lengths of all the strings of the chordally tuned set thereby to select the key of the chord to be sounded.

2. A stringed musical instrument according to claim 1, the bridge having a ridge for engagement by the strings and a base projecting from each side of the ridge.

3. A stringed musical instrument according to claim 1, having one or more auxiliary slidable bridges each associated with a respective chordal set of strings.

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