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R. J. FERRARA
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT
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FIG. 1

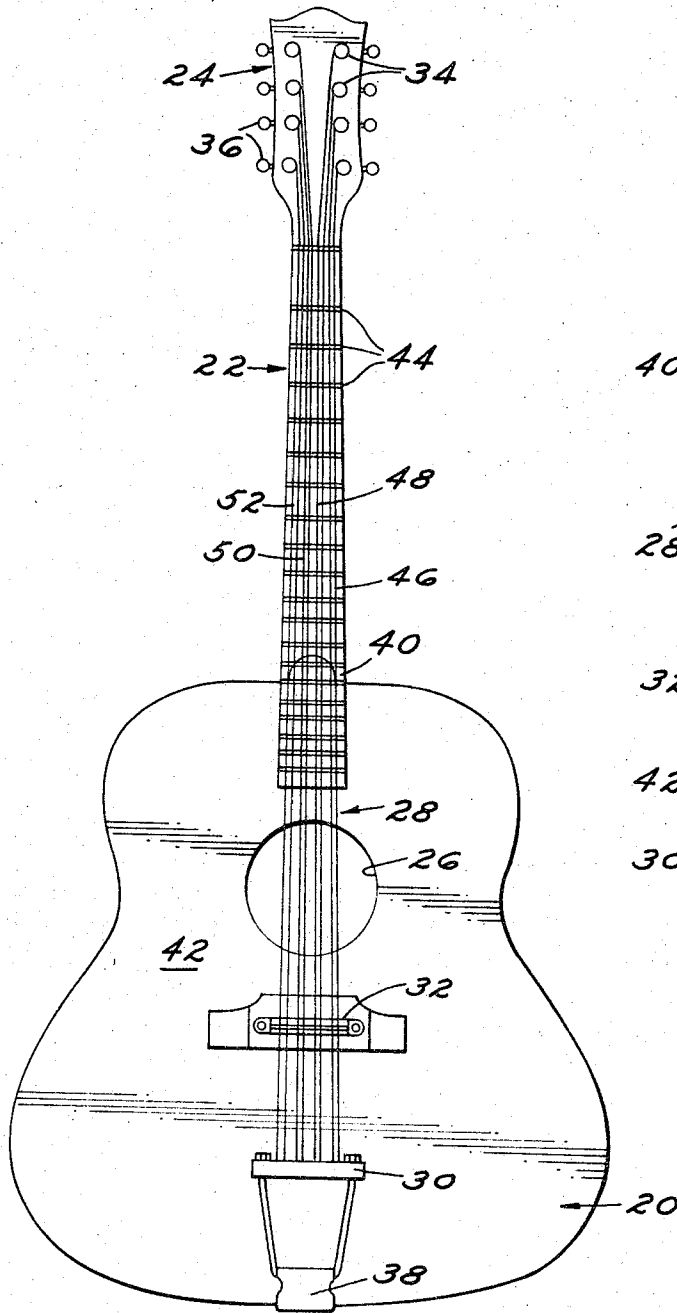
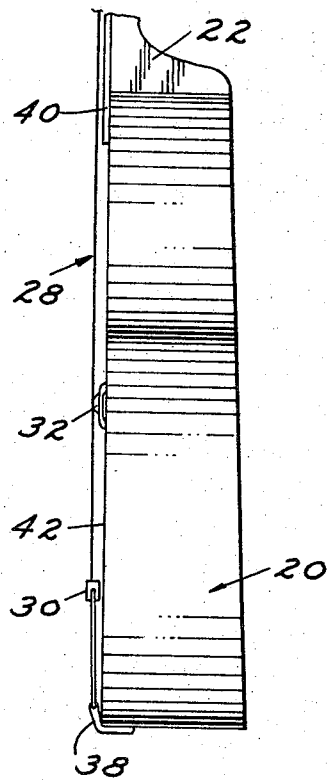


FIG. 2



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MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

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 3 Claims. (Cl. 84-267)

This invention relates to an improved string musical instrument. More particularly, this invention relates to an eight-string type musical instrument, tuned in fifths.

An object of this invention is to provide a musical instrument which combines the deep chordal tone qualities of a guitar, with the solo capabilities of a mandolin, tenor banjo, or tenor guitar. The musical instrument of this invention is capable of simultaneously producing a solo and a guitar type accompaniment, comparable to two or more guitars playing simultaneously.

Another object of this invention is to provide a plucked musical instrument which has the popular tone qualities of a guitar, but which can be played by one familiar with the fingering of a violin, mandolin, viola, tenor banjo, or tenor guitar, without having to learn the more difficult fingering and chordal system of a conventional six or twelve-string guitar. The musical instrument of this invention is tuned in fifths, similar to the instruments mentioned hereinabove, however the strings of this instrument are of the caliber range of a six or twelve-string guitar.

Another object of this invention is to provide a plucked musical instrument which can be used as a teaching aid in learning to play a solo stringed instrument intended primarily for an orchestra, such as a violin or viola. Because the instrument of this invention is tuned in fifths, the student of the violin or viola will learn, or reinforce his knowledge of his solo instrument, while producing the sound of the more popular guitar.

A further object of this invention is to provide a musical instrument which widens the capabilities of a six or twelve-string guitar, but which is more easily played. The instrument of this invention allows the player to make, without difficulty solo runs which would be difficult, if not impossible, on a standard guitar, and to play solo pieces requiring, for the same tonal effects two, or more guitars.

Basically, the instrument of this invention has a full conventional guitar sound box, a tenor guitar neck, and an eight-string mandolin type head or scroll. The instrument has four pairs of strings, tuned in fifths, of the caliber range of a six or twelve-string guitar. The first pair of strings are tuned to "E" above middle "C," the second pair of strings are tuned to "A" below middle "C," the third pair of strings are tuned to "D," and the fourth pair of strings are tuned to "G." For an exceptionally wide range of harmonic tones, the first string of the third pair of strings may be tuned to "D" below middle "C," and the second string of the third pair of strings may be tuned to "D" above middle "C." Similarly, the first string of the fourth pair of strings may be tuned to the second "G" below middle "C," and the second string of the fourth pair of strings may be tuned to the first "G" below middle "C." The references herein to "E" above middle "C," et cetera, refers to the first "E" above middle "C" unless the contrary is indicated. The heavier caliber strings of the third and fourth pair are preferably positioned on the inside, that is the first string of the pair, to insure that the lighter caliber string is vibrated when the pair is struck, however the reverse may be used if desired.

U.S. Patent No. 1,819,371 of Kordick discloses an eight-string musical instrument which is tuned in fifths, however the instrument disclosed could not be tuned according to the instrument of this invention, and therefore

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would not provide the deep guitar tonal qualities of this invention. Further, the range of the instrument of Kordick is not suitable for voice accompaniment, in contradistinction to the instrument of this invention. The instrument disclosed by Kordick has, to the best of my knowledge, never been commercialized.

The string musical instrument of this invention provides a versatility not present in any known instrument, and yet may be played by anyone familiar with a number of stringed instruments.

Other objects, advantages, and meritorious features of this invention will more fully appear from the following specifications, claims and accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a top view of one embodiment of the string musical instrument of this invention; and

FIGURE 2 is a partial side view of the instrument shown in FIGURE 1.

The string musical instrument illustrated in the drawings has a full guitar sound box 20, a tenor guitar neck 22, and an eight-string mandolin type scroll or head 24. The details of this instrument may be of any conventional form, and the use of the terms guitar, tenor guitar, mandolin, etc. herein is not intended to limit this invention to any specific configuration of these instruments, but is intended as a generic designation of the general type of construction.

The guitar sound box 20 is hollow, and is provided with a sound hole 26. The strings 28 are strung from an anchor plate 30 across a bridge 32 to tuning keys 34. The tuning keys are rotated for adjusting the tension of the strings by pegs 36, and the anchor plate 30 is secured to the sound box by a tailpiece 38. The neck of the instrument 22 is provided with a finger board 40 which extends over the belly of the sound box 42. The finger board may be provided with a series of spaced frets 44 which indicate finger positions.

The strings, which form an integral part of the instrument of this invention, are tuned in fifths, and are of the caliber range of a standard guitar. The first pair of strings 46 are tuned to "E" above middle "C," the second pair of strings 48 are tuned to "A" below middle "C," the third pair of strings 50 are tuned to "D," and the fourth pair of strings 52 are tuned to "G." For greater resonance, the third and fourth pair of strings may be tuned an octave apart, that is the first string of the third pair of strings 50 may be tuned to "D" below middle "C," and the second string of the third pair of strings may be tuned to "D" above middle "C." Similarly, the first string of the fourth pair of strings 52 may be tuned to the second "G" below middle "C," and the second string of the fourth pair of strings may be tuned to the first "G" below middle "C."

It will be understood by those skilled in the art that commercially available standard guitar strings may be satisfactorily used in the instrument of this invention, although the precise string desired will not be available until strings are specially made for this instrument.

For example, a guitar "G" or "B" strings may be used for the "A" of the second pair of strings 48. Similarly, a "B" string may be used for the "D" of the first string of the third pair of strings 50, et cetera. The guitar string is then tuned to provide the desired pitch described.

The first pair of strings, 46, has a very wide range when compared to a standard guitar which is tuned in thirds and fourths. The range of the first pair of strings is comparable to that of the human voice, and may be played alone for solo effect. The other three pair of strings may then be played, simultaneously, as an accompaniment giving the effect of to or more guitars playing simultaneously.

Further, the instrument of this invention covers two octaves in five fret positions on four pairs of strings, or a total of 20 fret positions, while five fret positions on six

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strings, or a total of 30 fret positions is required to cover two octaves on a standard guitar. The combination of these features facilitate fast runs and other combinations which are extremely difficult on a standard guitar.

The use of full standard guitar sound box, and guitar caliber strings provides the deep tonal qualities normally associated with a six or twelve-string guitar, while the use of four pair of strings tuned in fifths makes the instrument of this invention far more versatile than a standard guitar, and provides an instrument which can be played by anyone familiar with the fingering of a violin, viola, mandolin, tenor guitar, or tenor banjo, without special instruction. In effect, a new instrument has been created which can not properly be referred to as a guitar or similar designation.

What is claimed is:

1. A string musical instrument comprising: a body portion having a conventional guitar sound box, a tenor guitar neck, and an eight-string mandolin head, and four pair of vibratory strings strung on said body portion, said strings tuned in fifths and of the caliber range of a six-string guitar.

2. The string musical instrument defined in claim 1,

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characterized in that the first pair of strings are tuned to "E" above middle "C," the second pair of strings are tuned to "A" below middle "C," the third pair of strings are tuned to "D," and the fourth pair of strings are tuned to "G."

3. The string musical instrument defined in claim 2, characterized in that the first string of said third pair of strings is tuned to "D" below middle "C" and the second string of said third pair is tuned to "D" above middle "C," and the first string of said fourth pair of strings is tuned to the second "G" below middle "C" and the second string of said fourth pair of strings is tuned to the first "G" below middle "C."

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