United States Patent

Larrison

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[54] MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **84/1.16,** 84/293

[51] **Int. Cl.** **G10h 3/00**

[58] **Field of Search** 84/1.16, 267, 274, 275, 290–293, 84/314, 327, 1.01, 1.14, 1.15

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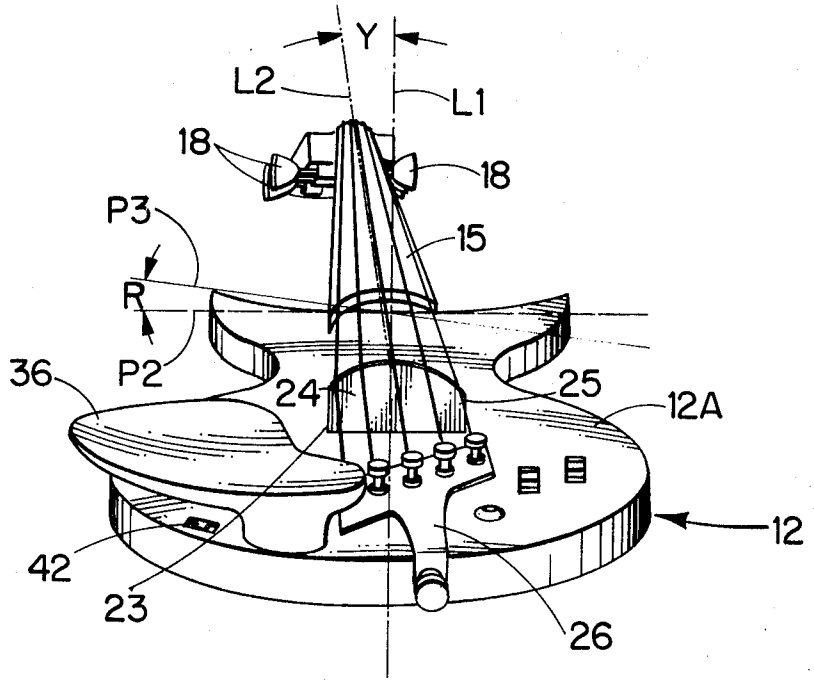
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A stringed musical instrument, which is preferably adapted to be bowed, including a solid body and an elongated neck member attached to and extending from the body. Conventional means may be provided for securing a set of strings at one end to the body and at the other end to a head which forms part of the neck member at the end of the neck member remote from the body. In a conventional instrument a centerline may be defined for both the body and neck wherein these centerlines are either in line or parallel to each other. However, in the present invention an angle is formed between the defined centerline of the body and the defined centerline of the neck, thereby making the instrument more comfortable to play. Also, in a conventional instrument, a plane may be generally defined for a top surface of both the body and neck wherein these planes are either in line or parallel to each other. However, in the present invention an angle is formed between the defined planes of said body and neck member respectively, which also increases player comfort. Novel electronic pickup means is also provided including separate pickup devices for each string and separate means for adjusting the volume output from each string.

20 Claims, 10 Drawing Figures



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SHEET 1 OF 2

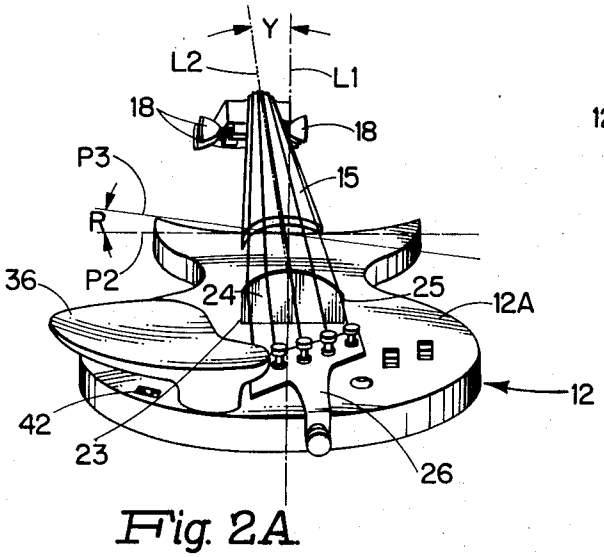


Fig. 2A.

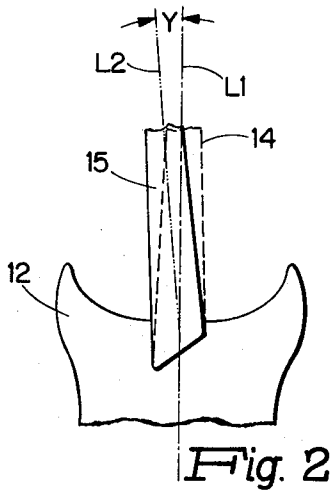


Fig. 2B.

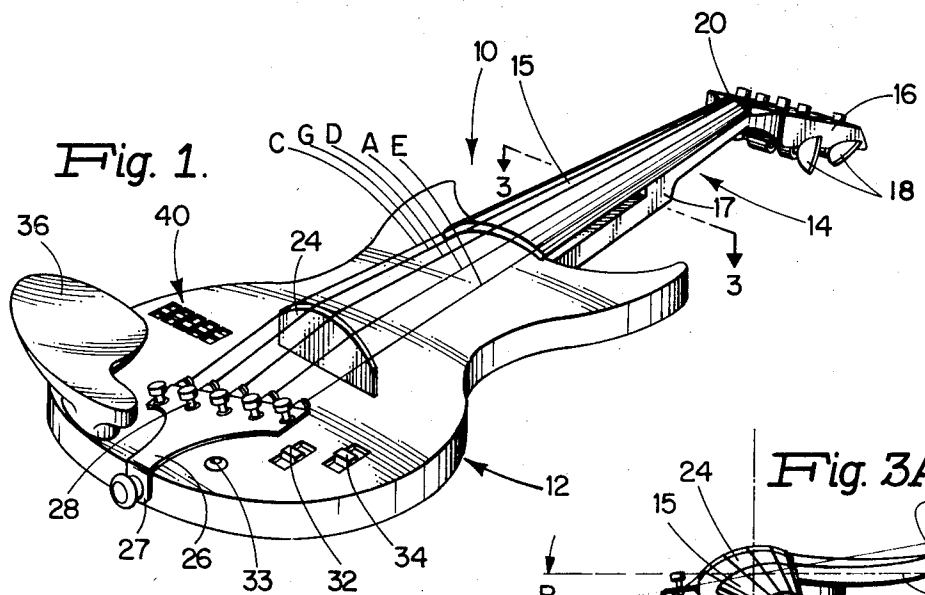


Fig. 1.

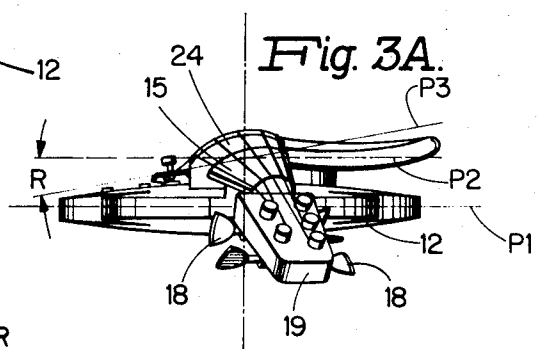


Fig. 3A.

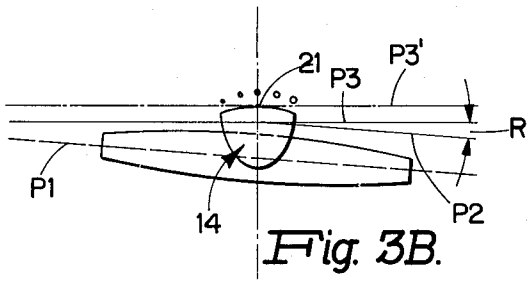


Fig. 3B.

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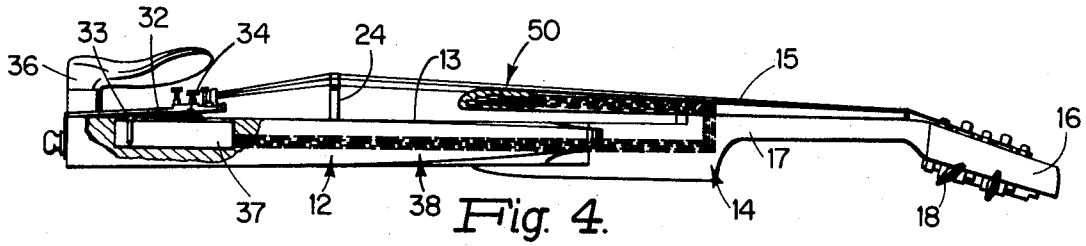


Fig. 4.

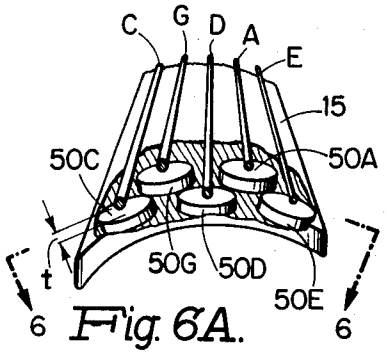


Fig. 6A.

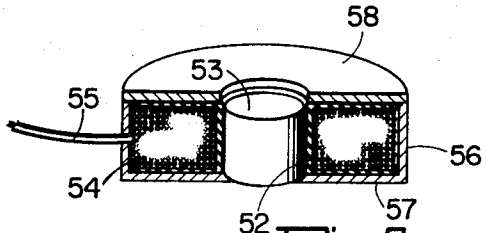


Fig. 5.

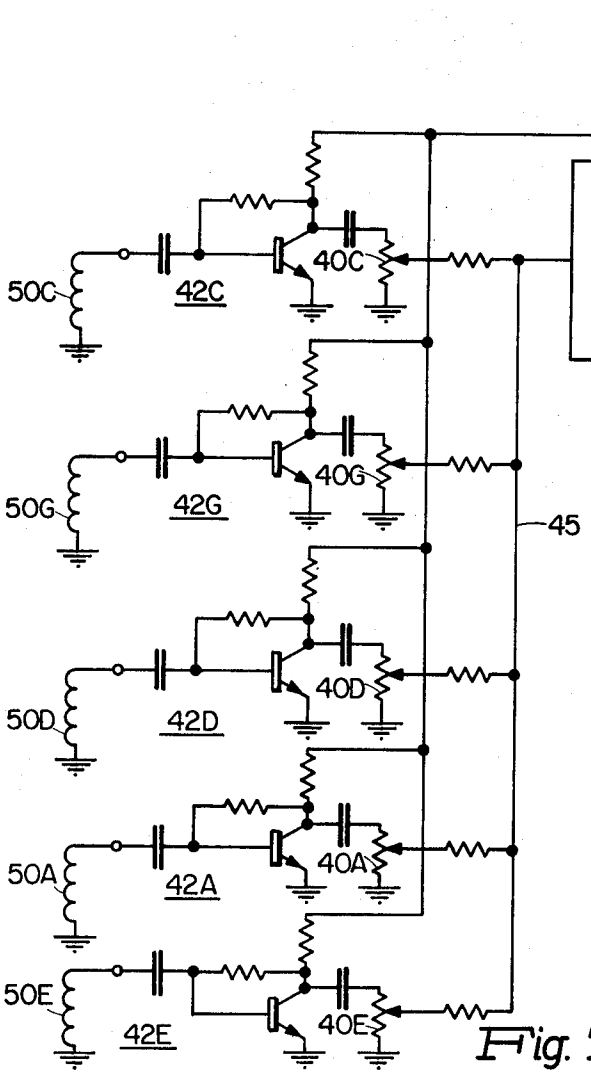


Fig. 7.

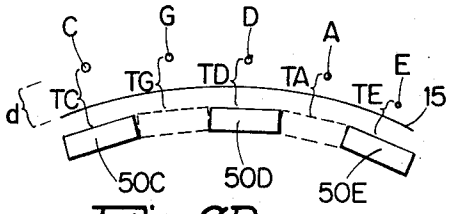


Fig. 6B.

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MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates in general to the stringed musical instrument art. More particularly, the invention is concerned with a stringed musical instrument preferably of the bowed variety having a novel structure primarily designed to make the instrument more comfortable to play, and that can be fabricated to predictable standards of sound and playing characteristics.

Stringed musical instruments such as the viola and the violin have been used for many centuries. Most of these bowed string instruments have been of the classical type, and were produced by skilled craftsmen who labored many hours to complete an instrument. As a result, these instruments were quite expensive and very delicate. Also, only an extremely skilled individual who had practiced many hours with the device could master it. This was due at least in part to the at best abnormal and unnatural position with which the musician had to hold the instrument in order to play it correctly.

In more recent years some stringed musical instruments particularly of the plucked variety have been provided with electronic pickup means and tone amplifying means. Usually the electronic pickup was positioned adjacent the strings and was adapted to detect the vibrations from the entire set of strings. Because the strings may have different signal responses one from the other, the pickup could not always be accurately placed to detect the vibrations from all strings equally. Also, these instruments did not provide separate electronic pickup and adjusting means for each string so that the output detected from each string could be adjusted in volume or tone.

Accordingly, it is one important object of the present invention to provide a stringed musical instrument, preferably of the bowed variety that is more comfortable to play than known stringed instruments.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a stringed musical instrument according to the preceding object and having a substantially solid body and neck member which may be integrally formed and which may be fabricated by a plastic mold technique.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a stringed musical instrument that is primarily solid which may be manufactured easily, quickly and yet accurately, and which is less delicate than known acoustic resonant chamber instruments.

Another object of the invention is to provide a musical instrument of consistent, predictable, and excellent performance qualities.

Still a further object of the present invention is to provide a stringed musical instrument, preferably of the bowed variety, that comprises novel electronic pickup means including separate pickup means for each string and respective separate means for adjusting the output from the vibrations of each string.

Still a more specific object of the present invention is to provide a stringed musical instrument according to the preceding object wherein the separate pickup means each includes a pickup device imbedded in the fingerboard of the instrument below its respective string.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

To accomplish these and other objects the stringed musical instrument of this invention comprises a body which is preferably symmetrically-shaped having means defining a centerline of the body, and an elongated neck member attached to and extending from the body and having means defining a centerline of the neck member. Means are provided for securing a set of strings at one end to the body and at the other end to a head which forms part of the neck member at the end of the neck member remote from the body. According to one aspect of the invention an angle is formed between the defined centerlines of the body and neck, respectively, thereby making the instrument more comfortable to play.

In another embodiment of the invention the body includes means defining a plane of the body passing parallel to at least a part of a surface of the body, and the neck member includes means defining a plane of the neck member passing parallel to at least a part of a surface of the neck member. With this embodiment the instrument is fabricated so that an angle is formed between the defined planes of the body and neck member, respectively, thereby making the instrument more comfortable to play. With this arrangement the neck member is rotated slightly clockwise as viewed from the tailpiece along its length with reference to the body thereby eliminating the need for the musician to curl his arm, wrist and fingers about the neck member as severely as is the case with known instruments. This aspect of the invention makes the instrument easier to play.

According to the present invention, electronic pickup means may also be provided with the stringed musical instrument. This means comprises separate pickup means which each preferably include a pickup device imbedded in the fingerboard below the playing surface and positioned below its respective string, and separate means for adjusting the output from the vibrations of each string detected by each pickup coil. This adjusting means may include a set of manually operated potentiometers which are preferably imbedded in the body of the instrument proximate to the strings. One or more cavities may also be provided in the body of the instrument for containing batteries, amplifying means, and interconnecting wires, for example.

Numerous other objects and features of the invention along with its incident advantages will be better understood and appreciated from the following detailed description of some embodiments of the invention, selected for purposes of illustration and shown in the accompanying drawings, in which:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a stringed musical instrument constructed in accordance with the principles of the present invention;

FIG. 2A is a perspective end view of a stringed musical instrument viewed from the body and showing the yaw angle Y defined between imaginary centerlines L1 and L2 of the body and neck, respectively;

FIG. 2B is a fragmentary plan view of the musical instrument of FIG. 2A indicating defined angle Y;

FIG. 3A is a perspective end view of a stringed musical instrument viewed from the neck and showing the role angle R defined between imaginary planes P2 and P3 of the body and neck respectively;

FIG. 3B is a partial cross-sectional view taken along line 3—3 of FIG. 1 indicating angle R;

FIG. 4 is a side perspective view of a stringed musical instrument according to the invention and partially cutaway to show some of the electronic pickup means;

FIG. 5 is a partial cross-sectional perspective view of a pickup device including a coil and container;

FIG. 6A is a fragmentary perspective view of the fingerboard and string placement with the fingerboard partially cut away to expose the pickup devices;

FIG. 6B is a cross-sectional view taken along line 6—6 of FIG. 6A for a preferred arrangement of strings and pickup devices;

FIG. 7 is a circuit diagram partially in block form of pickup and amplifying circuitry used with the stringed instrument of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In the following description like reference numerals refer to corresponding like parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

Referring now to the drawings and in particular to FIG. 1, there is shown a musical instrument **10** constructed according to the invention, and including a substantially solid body **12**, and an elongated neck member **14** attached to and extending from body **12**. Body **12** and neck member **14** may either be fabricated separately by a plastic molding technique, for example, or may be molded as an integral unit.

Body **12** has a tailpiece **26** which may be of conventional design secured to its top surface **13**. Tailpiece **26** includes conventional downwardly extending tab **27** that prevents longitudinal movement of the tailpiece when the strings are in tension. Conventional studs **28** may be provided on tailpiece **26** for securing one end of each of the strings to tailpiece **26** and in turn to body **12**. In FIG. 1 a five stringed instrument is shown with the strings conventionally labelled as C, G, D, A, and E. Stringed instruments with fewer or more strings could also be used and are contemplated as falling within the scope of the present invention.

Musical instrument **10** also includes a chinrest **36** which may be of conventional design and is suitably affixed to body **12** adjacent to tailpiece **26**, as shown. A bridge **24** is positioned between tailpiece **26** and the end of body **12** from which neck member **14** extends. Bridge **24** is provided with five recesses for holding the strings C, G, D, A, and E and keeping them separated.

The neck **14** comprises an elongated support portion **17** to which fingerboard **15** is attached.

Portion **17** and fingerboard **15** may be integrally fabricated. Fingerboard **15** is preferably made of a harder plastic, has an arcuate top surface and extends a short distance over body **12**. A nut **20** having five recesses for holding and separating the strings is suitably affixed to one end of neck member **14** against fingerboard **15**. Nut **20** and bridge **24** cooperatively position the strings C, G, D, A, and E at an appropriate distance above fingerboard **15**. Head **16** extends downwardly at an angle from portion **17** and forms one end of neck member **14**. Head **16** includes five machines **18** which may all be of conventional design. Each string is connected in a conventional manner to one of the machines **18** by passing the string through a hole in the top part of the machine. Each machine also includes a typical adjusting screw for varying string tensions to correctly tune the instrument.

FIG. 1 also illustrates a preferred placement for the electronic adjusting means, discussed in more detail hereinafter. These adjustment means include volume control array **40**, volume control potentiometer **34** and tone control potentiometer **32**. Socket **33** is provided to accommodate a standard jack (not shown) which can couple an external amplifier or other device to the electronics contained within musical instrument **10**. Because the instrument itself contains amplifying means, a speaker may be directly coupled to socket **33** when the musician wants to practice privately. Volume control array **40** further includes individual volume control potentiometers **40C**, **40G**, **40D**, **40A** and **40E** which are provided so that the volume output of each string can be adjusted and balanced with the output from the other strings.

Referring now to FIG. 2A, there is illustrated a perspective end view of the instrument **10** shown in FIG. 1 viewed from body **12** of the instrument and showing yaw angle Y defined between centerlines L1 and L2 of the body and neck, respectively. As viewed in FIG. 2A, fingerboard **15** extends angularly toward the left or, in other words, centerline L2 is shifted counterclockwise from centerline L1. FIG. 2A also shown a preferred location for ON-OFF switch **42** under chinrest **36**. Switch **42** is shown schematically in FIG. 7.

Bridge **24** is illustrated as including five recesses for accommodating strings C, G, D, A, and E separately spaced along the top curved edge of bridge **24**. It is noted that lefthand side **23** is higher than righthand side **25** of bridge **24**. This is a typical arrangement which is provided so that the C string is elevated slightly higher over the fingerboard than the rest of the strings. Actually each string starting with the C string becomes progressively closer to the fingerboard. The reason for placing the C string further away is that it is the heaviest string and lowest tension string and thus has to be separated farther from the fingerboard than its adjacent string, for example, to prevent it from buzzing against the fingerboard **15**. Alternatively, the highest or E string vibrates in a path that is considerably narrower than the path of vibration of the C string, for example, because it is under higher tension and is generally smaller in diameter. Also, because of the novel role angle R between the planes P2 and P3, the side **23** of bridge **24** may be made even higher than with conventional instruments or, alternatively, side **25** may be made lower.

As previously mentioned, an instrument constructed according to the present invention may be fabricated by an injection molding technique. By using this technique each instrument will have a similarity of performance of high quality at a fraction of the cost of classical instruments. With a plastic mold technique like instruments are easily produced. This is not necessarily so with a wood instrument.

FIG. 2B shows a fragmentary plan view of the musical instrument of FIG. 2A. The yaw angle Y is clearly shown and is defined as in FIG. 2A, as the angle

between centerlines L1 and L2 of the body and neck, respectively. In a typical instrument constructed in accordance with the present invention, the angle Y may have a range on the order of 1°–10°.

Referring now to FIG. 3A, there is depicted a perspective end view of a stringed musical instrument viewed from neck **14** and showing the role angle R defined between imaginary planes **P2** and **P3** of the body and neck, respectively. A plane **P1** is shown and may be defined as a substantially horizontal plane when the instrument **10** is lying horizontally. Plane **P2** is parallel to plane **P1** and represents another horizontal plane as viewed in FIG. 3A. The plane **P3'** represents an imaginary plane that is tangent to the midpoint of fingerboard **15**. This midpoint is shown in FIG. 3B at **21**.

FIG. 3B is a partial cross-sectional view taken along line 3—3 of FIG. 1. The role angle R is clearly shown and is defined, as in FIG. 3A, as the angle between planes **P2** and **P3**. Planes **P1** and **P2** are also indicated as being horizontal in FIG. 3B, while planes **P3** and **P3'** are parallel to each other. In a typical instrument constructed in accordance with the present invention the angle R may have a range on the order of 1°–10°.

One feature of the present invention, as illustrated in FIG. 3A, is that bottom edge **19** of head **16** is substantially horizontal even though the rest of neck member **14** including fingerboard **15** is pitched at an angle. That is a convenience feature that enables the instrument to lie flat with body **12** touching a resting surface (not shown) at one of the instrument and edge **19** at the other end.

Part of the electronic pickup means is shown in FIG. **4**, which is a side perspective view of a stringed musical instrument according to the invention. The substantially solid body **12** is shown partially cut away in the vicinity of one of the cavities provided in body **12**. This cut away portion shows an amplifying means **37**. One means **37** is shown in circuit detail in FIG. **7** and is discussed in more detail hereafter. In FIG. **4**, however, volume control potentiomer **34**, tone control potentiometer **32** and socket **33** are depicted as extending from means **37** through the top surface **13** of body **12**.

The end of fingerboard **15** is also shown cut away in FIG. **4** thereby exposing audio pickup array **50** which comprises pickup devices **50C**, **50G**, **50D**, **50A**, and **50E**. Separate pickup wires indicated at **38** and including at least one return wire are shown partially in dotted fashion and extend from the pickup device of array **50** to amplifier means **37**. Pickup array **50** is imbedded in fingerboard **15**, as are the pickup wires which run along the fingerboard, down to the support portion **17**, and run back through body **12** to amplifier means **37**. A suitable passage may be provided for these wires **38** or, preferably, they can be molded in position when the instrument is fabricated.

In FIG. **5** one of the pickup devices is shown in a partial cross-sectional perspective view along with its container. The wire **54** shown in cross-section is wound about a bobbin **52** which is preferably made of hard plastic. In one embodiment 4,000 turns of No. 50 AWG wire is used. A magnet **53** is placed in the hollow center portion of bobbin **52**, and may be glued to hold it in place. In one instance an ALNICO 5 magnet was used. Once the wire **54** has been wound on bobbin **52**, the assembly can be inserted in shield can **56**. Can **56** includes lower cup portion **57** which has a hole therein at one side for accommodating wire pair **55**. Wire pair **55** may be a small diameter coax, for example, with a center conductor and a shield that tie respectively, to either end of wound wire **54**. Shield can **56** also includes a top cover portion **58** which fits over portion **57** and provides an enclosed container for the bobbin assembly. The entire shield can **56** can be fabricated of mu metal. The bobbin assembly, in one embodiment, is seven-sixteenth inch in diameter while the can **56** is one-half inch in diameter.

Referring now to FIGS. **6A** and **6B** there are shown separate views of the fingerboard **15** indicating string placement for a preferred embodiment. In FIG. **6A** each of the pickup devices **50C**, **50G**, **50D**, **50A**, and **50E** are embedded in fingerboard **15** the same distance below the top surface of the fingerboard, such as one thirty-second inch, for example. Strings C, G, D, A, and E are each spaced progressively closer to the top surface of their respective coils **50C**, **50G**, **50D**, **50A** and **50E** and closer to the top surface of fingerboard **15**. In FIG. **6A** the spacing t between string C and coil **50C**, and the spacings between all other strings and coils are not the same, but vary from the maximum at string C to a minimum for string E. With the embodiment of FIG. **6A** the top surface of the fingerboard **15** is curved and the plane of the strings C, G, D, A, and E that are over the fingerboard are also curved. The strings are placed in a curved plane in order that the bow may pick out one string at a time if desired.

In one embodiment according to the invention the sensitivity of the pickup coils is effective only up to a maximum distance of one-half inch away from the vibrating string. Also the pickup devices are staggered in order that they can be properly positioned below their respective string because the diameter of each pickup device is greater than the spacing between strings.

As previously indicated it is usually more desirable to elevate the C string a higher distance above fingerboard **15** than the remaining strings. FIG. **6B** shows a cross-sectional view of fingerboard **15** with a preferred placement of the pickup devices and strings. The dimensions shown in FIG. **6B** are necessary in order to keep; (1) string to pickup distance TC, TG, TD, TA, TE each within their optimim operating range and; (2) string to fingerboard distance *d* varying from a minimum for string E, progressively, to a maximum for string C. The progressive loss of signal strength between pickups **50E** to **50C**, because of the progressive increase in distance between these pickups and their respective strings, is readily compensated for by adjusting the individual potentiometers of array **40**. In FIG. **6B** only pickup coils **50C**, **50D** and **50E** are shown. The other two coils **50G** and **50A** are behind those three coils and directly below the G and A strings, respectively.

In an alternative embodiment the string to pickup distance for all strings may be kept constant. For this embodiment the pickup devices would have to be kept at progressively different distances below the top surface of fingerboard **15**.

Referring now to FIG. **7** there is shown a circuit diagram partially in block form of pickup and amplifying

circuitry used with the stringed instrument of the invention. The pickup coils **50C**, **50G**, **50D**, **50A**, and **50E** are physically imbedded in fingerboard **15** while the rest of the circuitry is located in one or more cavities in body **12**. Each of these pickup devices are coupled to separate preamplifier stages **42C**, **42G**, **42D**, **42A** and **42E**, respectively, which include separate volume control potentiometers **40C**, **40G**, **40D**, **40A**, and **40E**, respectively. The design of each of the preamplifier stages shown in FIG. **7** is conventional and includes an input coupling capacitor, NPN transistor, and output connection. The output of each stage indicated at **45** is tied in common to the input of mixer amplifier **44** which may also be of conventional design. FIG. **7** also shows ON-OFF switch **42** which couples from the B+ battery supply to amplifier **44** and each preamplifier stage. The output of amplifier **44** is coupled to output connector or socket **33**, which is also shown in FIG. **1**.

With the electronic pickup means shown in FIGS. **4–7** a musician can individually adjust each of the potentiometers **40C**, **40G**, **40D**, **40A**, and **40E** so that the volume output from their respective strings are balanced. By imbedding the pickup coils in the fingerboard their positioning from the strings is held relatively fixed. This arrangement is also aesthetically more pleasing than when the pickup is visible.

Having described certain features of the present invention, it should be obvious that an instrument may be fabricated according to the invention for either a righthanded or lefthanded musician. The embodiment disclosed is for a righthanded musician. In fabricating an instrument for a lefthanded musician the yaw angle Y would extend in an opposite direction. Centerline L2 would be rotated clockwise of centerline L1. Also, the role angle R, would be defined in an opposite direction, so that the neck member was twisted counterclockwise with reference to the body when viewed from the body.

In the drawings, the instruments are substantially symmetrical in shape. However, other somewhat odd-shaped instruments may also fall with the scope of the present invention. For example, the body of the instrument could have a round or elliptical notch in the fatter part of the body. The defined centerline of the body would still substantially medially divide the top flattest surface of the instrument. Thus, the medial line of the body may be defined as a line defined by a locus of points equidistant from major portions of opposite edges of a surface of the body. The medial line need not be equidistant at every point along the line from opposite edges. In FIG. **1** top surface **12A** is medially divided by centerline L1.

Having described certain embodiment of the invention, other embodiments and variations and modifications thereof should now become obvious to one skilled in the art all of which are contemplated as falling within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A stringed musical instrument of the bowed type comprising;

a symmetrically shaped body having an edge wall, means defining a centerline of said body and a top surface, at least segments of the junction line of said top surface and said edge wall defining a plane of said body,

an elongated neck member fixedly attached to and extending from said body, having means defining a centerline of said neck member, having a side wall and having a top surface, at least segments of the junction line of said top surface and said side wall defining a plane of said neck member,

a chinrest,

means for securing said strings at each end to said body and neck member respectively,

means for securing said chinrest to said top surface near but to one side of the centerline of said body and adjacent an end of said body remote from said neck member,

wherein an angle of an order of magnitude of about 1° to 10° is formed between the centerline of said body and the centerline of said neck member, and an angle of an order of magnitude of about 1° to 10° is formed between the plane of said body and the plane of said neck member,

a plurality of detectors with one detector being associated with each string of the instrument, wherein said neck member includes an arcuate playing surface and each detector is imbedded in said neck member below said arcuate surface, wherein each detector detects vibrations from primarily only its associated string,

and a plurality of means for varying the output signal from each detector with one means for varying being associated with each detector for separately adjusting the output signal from each detector.

2. An instrument as set forth in claim **1** which is of the violin type.

3. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim **1** wherein said playing surface extends in part over said body and wherein said detecting means are located in said part extending over said body.

4. An instrument as set forth in claim **1** wherein each said detecting means includes a preamplifier and pickup coil.

5. A stringed instrument of the violin or cello type comprising a body including a top surface and having an axis defined by a line pass lengthwise of said body and medially dividing the top surface thereof, and an elongated neck member fixedly attached to and extending from said body including a top surface and having an axis defined by a line passing lengthwise of said neck member and medially dividing the top surface thereof, wherein an angle of an order of magnitude of about 1° to 10° is formed between the defined axis of said body and the defined axis of said neck member, said body having a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of the top surface of said body, and said neck member having a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of said top surface of the neck member, wherein an angle of an order of magnitude of 1° to 10° is formed between the defined plane of said body and the defined plane of said neck member.

6. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim **5** further comprising means for securing said strings at each end to said body and neck member, respectively, and wherein said neck member includes an arcuate playing surface over which said strings are positioned.

7. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim **5** further comprising electronic pickup means including a plurality of means connected to said neck member

each positioned below one of said strings for detecting vibrations from each string, respectively, and means coupled to each of said detecting means for varying the output signal from each of said detecting means.

8. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 7 wherein said neck member includes an arcuate playing surface and each said detecting means includes a pickup coil imbedded in said neck member below said arcuate playing surface.

9. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 5 wherein said body and neck member are integrally formed of a plastic.

10. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 5 wherein said symmetrically-shaped body is at least partially solid.

11. A stringed musical instrument comprising a body including a top surface defining at least in part a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of the top surface of said body, and an elongated neck member attached to and extending from said body including a top surface defining at least in part a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of the top surface of said neck member, wherein an angle of an order of magnitude of about 1° to 10° is formed between the defined plane of said body and the defined plane of said neck member, said body having an axis defined by a line passing lengthwise of said body and medially dividing the top surface thereof, and said neck member having an axis defined by a line passing lengthwise of said neck member, wherein an angle of an order of magnitude of about 1° to 10° is formed between the axis of said body and the axis of said neck member.

12. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 11 further comprising means for securing said strings at each end to said body and neck member, respectively, and wherein said neck member includes an arcuate playing surface over which said strings are positioned.

13. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 11 further comprising electronic pickup means including a plurality of means connected to said neck member each positioned below one of said strings for detecting vibrations from each string, respectively, and means coupled to each of said detecting means for varying the output signal from each of said detecting means.

14. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 13 wherein said neck member includes an arcuate playing surface and each said detecting means includes a pickup coil imbedded in said neck member below said arcuate playing surface.

15. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 11 wherein said body and neck member are integrally formed of a plastic.

16. A stringed musical instrument as set forth in claim 11 wherein said symmetrically-shaped body is at least partially solid.

17. A stringed musical instrument of the bowed type for playing by a right handed musician comprising a body including a top surface defining at least in part a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of the top surface of said body, and an elongated neck member attached to and extending from said body including a top surface defining at least in part a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of the top surface of said neck member, wherein an angle on the order of 1° to 10° is formed between the defined plane of said body and the defined plane of said neck member, said plane of said neck member extending downwardly to the right in relation to the plane of said body when said body is horizontally positioned and as viewed from the body end of the instrument, said body having an axis defined by a line passing lengthwise of said body and medially dividing the top surface thereof, and said neck member having an axis defined by a line passing lengthwise of said neck member, wherein an angle of an order of magnitude of about 1° to 10° is formed between the axis of said body and the axis of said neck member.

18. An instrument as set forth in claim 17 for playing by a left handed musician wherein the plane of said neck member extends downwardly to the left in relation to the plane of said body.

19. An instrument as set forth in claim 18 wherein said chinrest is disposed to the left of the centerline of said body as viewed from the body end of the instrument.

20. A stringed musical instrument comprising a body including a top surface and having an axis defined by a line passing lengthwise of said body and medially dividing the top surface thereof, said body also defining a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of the top surface of said body, and an elongated neck member fixedly attached to and extending from said body including a top surface and having an axis defined by a line passing lengthwise of said neck member and medially dividing the top surface thereof, said neck member also defining a plane passing parallel to at least a portion of the top surface of said neck member, wherein an angle is formed between the defined axis of said body and the defined axis of said neck member, and wherein an angle is formed between the defined plane of said body and the defined plane of said neck member.

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