FRETTED UKRAINIAN BANDURA


Filed: Aug. 31, 1970

Appl. No.: 68,240

U.S. Cl. ......................... 84/291, 84/293, 84/314
Int. Cl. .......................... G10d 3/00, G10d 3/06
Field of Search .................. 84/173, 263, 264, 265, 267, 84/268, 284, 285, 290, 291, 293, 269, 299-302, 314; D56/10

References Cited

UNITED STATES PATENTS

602,695 4/1898 Casolin ........................................... 84/299
1,684,467 9/1928 Booth ........................................... 84/267 X
3,392,618 7/1968 Pelensky ........................................... 84/267
D217,936 6/1970 Pelensky ........................................... D56/1

FOREIGN PATENTS OR APPLICATIONS

296,436 2/1917 Germany ........................................... 84/285

OTHER PUBLICATIONS


ABSTRACT

A Ukrainian bandura-type musical instrument with bass strings on a neck and multiple treble strings on a resonator or sounding box body, all strings having frets, most of them multiple frets preferably inclined to the strings on the neck and part of the body; and the body having a loop or ring tail portion, a complementary portion of which may be arranged to be movable from a first or extended position in alignment with the sounding box body and fixed part of the ring to a second position at an angle to the sounding box body and the fixed part of the ring to provide selective body or lap rest holding positions for the instrument.

8 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures
3,635,116

FRETTED UKRAINIAN BANDURA

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The typical present-day Ukrainian bandura has evolved largely from the lutenized psaltery. The proto-bandura in the wide form was derived from the genus of stringed musical instruments known as vertical hustle or winged-type psaltery. In the modern Ukrainian bandura the strings of the ancient psaltery have been applied to the expanded lute or tambur-type body to achieve added symmetry and grace. The smaller type of Ukrainian bandura or bandurka traditionally begins with approximately 12 unfretted strings and as size increases the number of strings, still unfretted, increases to 23, 34, 36, or even to 56 strings. The term bandurka or small bandura has later been applied to a Ukrainian-style guitar.

Historically, the Ukrainian bandura and Ukrainian kobza have not developed as completely independent genera of stringed musical instruments, although certain aspects can readily be distinguished. The long-necked Ukrainian kobza has traditionally been a semifretted tambur-type instrument with only the bass strings having multifretting on the neck fingerboard, the treble strings on the sounding body having only a single support string nut. The small Ukrainian kobza has in most cases had a complement of eight to 12 strings, usually with a four-to-four or four-to-four-dimension separation between bass and treble strings. The few treble strings of the Kobza were borrowed from the bandura, while the bandura achieved its graceful luten-tambur body form from the Ukrainian kobza while retaining the psaltery string arrangement.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the present invention, a Ukrainian bandura stringed instrument is provided which retains the typical salient features of the modern Ukrainian bandura having an asymmetrical neck-body relationship with the bass strings on the neck and a multiplicity of treble strings on the sounding body; but which provides multiple frets for the bass strings on the neck with the set of frets continued into the body for the treble strings to improve the diatonic-chromatic range. The frets are arranged in straight-to-curved lines on the sounding body, the fret lines generally paralleling the straight-to-curved outer edge of the sounding body and the curved portion being generally parallel except near their outer ends.

The inner tailpiece edge of the sounding body preferably has a curved concave shape and comprises a parting complementary element which completes a continuous ring shape, as a circle; and the complementary element is preferably hinged and secured so as to be movable from a first position in alignment with the tail piece and sounding body to a second position at an angle to the tailpiece and sounding body to provide selective portions for engagement with the body or lap of the user.

DRAWINGS

The objects of the invention as well as various features of novelty and advantages will be apparent from the following description of an exemplary embodiment, reference being made to the accompanying drawings thereof, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a front or top plan view of a stringed musical instrument of the Ukrainian bandura type embodying the invention;
FIG. 2 is a left side elevation of the instrument shown in FIG. 1;
FIG. 3 is a right side elevation of the same;
FIG. 4 is a sectional view taken on a line 4-4 of FIG. 1, the strings being omitted and the auxiliary complementary tailpiece rest element being shown in dotted lines in its second or shifted angular position.

SPECIFIC EMBODIMENT

The instrument comprises a resonator or sounding body or box B and an asymmetrically arranged neck C extending upward from one side of the body B, here the left side. The neck carries a peghead E with turning pegs P1 for a plurality (six here) of bass strings S1. Near the upper end the strings S1 are carried on a nut N1; and near the lower end they are carried on a bridge V1 and are anchored on fixed pins Z1 carried by a tailpiece A. The nut N1 and bridge V1 are parallel to include equal string lengths between them.

The sounding body B is of decreasing depth and width from the neck C to the lower end or apex of the instrument and carries a plurality (here 27) of treble strings S2. The treble strings S2 at their outer ends are anchored on fixed pins Z2 and at their inner ends are secured to tuning pegs P2.

Near their outer ends the treble strings S2 are carried on a curved nut piece N2 and near their inner ends they are carried on a bridge V2 which here is shown to have a concave curvature, specifically in the form of the arc of a circle matching the shape of the inner edge of the tailpiece A of the sounding body B.

The neck and bass strings thereon are provided with frets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; and the body and treble strings are provided with frets 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 which are generally for most of their length parallel with each other and with the outer edge of the sounding body. The fret 6 at the juncture of the neck and body extends in alignment with the upper end of the nut N2 of the body which in the upper generally straight portion forms an inclined angle (here about 120° on the open side) with the axis of the neck. All frets on the neck and portions adjacent thereto are arranged parallel with the inclined fret 6.

All frets from 1 through 9 extend across the neck or the extended neck zone of the bass strings and the frets 10 and 11 extend partly across the extended neck zone beneath some of the bass strings. Frets 7 through 13 extend across varying and decreasing distances around the sounding body, the longest 7 extending across all strings, bass and treble, except the shortest or last treble string, which needs no fret; the fret 8 extends across all strings, bass and treble, except the last three treble strings; the fret 9 extends across all strings, bass and treble, except the last five treble strings; the fret 10 extends across the outer four bass strings and all treble strings except the last seven; the fret 11 extends across the outer two bass strings and all treble strings except the last 10; the fret 12 extends across the first or longest 13 treble strings, leaving out the last or shortest 14 treble strings; and the fret 13 extends across the second through ninth longest treble strings.

Certain holes and shaded decorative designs are shown in FIG. 1 on the deck or top cover D of the body without reference designations.

The tailpiece proper A1 is preferably, for appearance and strength, extended around from the extremities of the body to form a complete annular structure or open ring, the closing complementary element or portion of the ring being designated as A2. This may be a rigid ring; but preferably the outer arcuate complementary portion A2 is hinged to the inner portion A1, as at aligned pivot points X1, X2, so as to be swingable, as shown in FIG. 4, from an aligned position, full lines, to an angular position, dotted lines, to provide convenient engaging contours for the body or lap of the user. The relatively movable parts may have friction or snap detents or both, in known manner for hinged parts, to hold them in aligned or angular position or at any place in between; or, as shown, pull latch pins Y1, Y2 may be provided for holding the parts in aligned position, captive spring-biased pull pins of known type being preferred to avoid loss.

The fret arrangement, with the set of frets on the neck being continued into frets for the body and treble strings, provides improved diatonic-chromatic range for the strings, especially the treble strings; the inclination of frets makes an improved appearance and more convenient access to the outermost, and the ring-shaped tailpiece adds strength, improved appearance, and aids in holding the instrument for playing, especially when part of the ring is hinged to swing down for better fit on the body of the user or player.
While one embodiment of the invention has been described for purposes of illustration, it is to be understood that there may be various embodiments and modifications within the general scope of the invention.

I claim:

1. A fretted Ukrainian bandura, comprising in combination, a sounding body having a neck extending upward therefrom, the body being approximately straight in the neck zone below the neck on the inner side and being convexly curved away from the neck zone on the outer side, a plurality of bass strings on the neck and neck zone of the sounding body, a plurality of treble strings on the sounding body radiating toward the said outer side, and a plurality of frets for the bass strings extending from the neck zone of the body into the portion of the body toward the convex side and providing multiple fretting on the body for the treble strings, the frets for the treble strings being arranged in general parallelism with the outer convex side of the sounding body.

2. A fretted Ukrainian bandura as set forth in claim 1, further characterized by the fact that the first frets on the neck and sounding body are inclined relative to the direction of the neck, neck zone, and bass strings thereon.

3. A fretted Ukrainian bandura as set forth in claim 3, further characterized by the fact that the angle of inclination of the frets in the neck and neck zone relative to the bass strings is about 120°.

4. A fretted Ukrainian bandura as set forth in claim 1, further characterized by the fact that the sounding body on its outer convex edge has an upper initially straight portion disposed at an obtuse angle to the neck and a lower portion curved convexly and turning back inward toward the inner neck zone side at the lower end, and that said frets on the body are generally aligned with the straight and curved portions of the sounding body, the frets on the neck and neck zone of the body being aligned parallel to the straight portion of the outer edge of the sounding body.

5. A fretted Ukrainian bandura, comprising in combination, a sounding body having a neck zone on the inner side and a neck extending upward from the neck zone side, said body having an outer side extending convexly from the side of the neck zone opposite the neck and neck zone side and an inner concave side extending from the neck zone side and meeting the outer convex side at an apex, and a complementary tail element having an interior concave side extending from the ends of said inner concave side of the body and forming with it a closed annular structure.

6. A fretted Ukrainian bandura as set forth in claim 5, in which said inner concave side of the body and the concave interior side of the complementary element from a circular ring opening.

7. A fretted Ukrainian bandura as set forth in claim 5, in which said complementary tail element is hinged at its ends to the ends of the inner side of the body so as to be swingable from an aligned position to an angular position relative thereto.

8. A fretted Ukrainian bandura as set forth in claim 7, in which means are provided for holding said complementary tail element in alignment with the inner side of the body.