STRINGED INSTRUMENT MAKER

HISTORICAL & MODERN STRINGED INSTRUMENTS
In 1975 I enrolled in the three-year course in early fretted instrument technology at the London College of Furniture. I had previously taken three years of part-time violin making classes there while pursuing a successful career as a book designer with a large London publishing house. I like to think of my design training, and my schooldays in an 18th century Palladian palace and among the "dreaming spires" of Oxford, as a kind of preparation for my new occupation of instrument building. Both books and instruments have a functional purpose, but also a form that is both essential to and an enhancement of that purpose. I try to create in my instruments first and foremost a tool which will perform to the most exacting requirements of the musician, but which will also please the eye as well as the ear.

*Front Cover*: Consort after John Rose.
CONTENTS

English Consort Viols......................... 2
Student Viols ...................................... 3
Seven-string Viols............................... 5
Italian Viols...................................... 6
Violone.................................................. 6
Baryton.................................................. 6
Lira da Braccio & Lirone .................... 8
Medieval Instruments ......................... 8
Violins, Violas & Cello....................... 9
Decoration.......................................... 10
Cases. Rows & Terms ....................... 12

After Henry Jaye
ENGLISH CONSORT VIOLS

The range of instruments offered here reflects my close affinity with a peculiarly rich aspect of my English heritage. The viols made in 16th and 17th century England were highly prized throughout Europe. I have examined many surviving examples and collected a vast amount of data, both technical and aesthetic, from which my own instruments derive more or less directly.

TREBLES
After JOHN ROSE, London c.1580   SL 36.5cm
A fine consort leader with a full, sweet tone and even response from top to bottom.

After JOHN HOSKIN, 1609    SL 40.0cm
Copy of a larger original formerly in my possession. Perfect for lower pitch work, especially with all-gut bass strings.

TENORS
After JOHN ROSE, London c.1580   SL 55.5cm
A well proportioned tenor excellent for consort or lyra way.

After HENRY JAYE, London c.1625    SL 45.5cm
Two instruments of this size by Jaye survive, so it must have had a function in English music making of the period. Tuned in A or C this is either a high pitch tenor or an alto.

SMALL BASSES
After JOHN ROSE, London 1598    SL 62.0cm
The catalog of the Ashmolean Museum, where the original instrument is preserved, describes it as a lyra viol. and it is certainly a good size for playing the lyra way.

After HENRY JAYE, London 1624    SL 68.5cm
The original, now in Paris, was converted to a seven-string, but it works much better with its original six!

After BARAK NORMAN, London 1696    SL 69.0cm
Norman made many instruments like this one, and so have I. It is my most popular all purpose bass.
MID-SIZE BASSES
After JOHN ROSE, London c.1580  SL 70.0cm
Only the body of this one survives, and as it is just a bit bigger than the Norman I give it a slightly longer string length.

After WILLIAM ADDISON, London 1670  SL 70.0cm
This is fine solo bass with plenty of sound. I make it like the original, with a carved belly.

CONSORT BASSES
After JOHN ROSE, London c.1580  SL 74.0cm
This is the model for both the treble and tenor above. The simple but elegant original has clearly been very much played upon - always a good testimony to its worth as an instrument.

After HENRY JAYE, London 1619  SL 76.0cm
Jaye actually worked in a part of London called Southwark, and so did I. I also owned the stunning original for a time, so I feel intimately connected to this one. It is not an instrument for the faint-hearted or the small-fingered!

STUDENT VIOLS
These instruments are built on the same models as my full price consort viols, so they look like real viols even though they are very plain. The sound is very good, and above all they are set up correctly so they are easy to play. They are great beginner's instruments, and at the very attractive price you can even have that missing size you thought you could not afford to own. Materials will vary according to what I have in stock at any time. No special extras on these please.

TREBLE VIOL John Rose model  SL 36.0cm
TENOR VIOL John Rose model  SL 55.5cm
BASS VIOL Barak Norman model  SL 69.0cm
Seven-string bass viol after Edward Lewis
SEVEN STRING & FRENCH VIOLS

Few basses were built in England after the French style with the added low A string, but there are numerous examples of English instruments converted by the addition of a new neck, fingerboard and tailpiece. Most of the original seven-stringer are French or German. Stradivari left drawings for a viol *ala francese* but no such instrument survives. It should also be remembered that there were French six-string basses too.

**SIX-STRING BASS**
After GUILLAUME BARBEY, Paris c.1690
SL 71.5cm
A very elegant fine example of the early French school.

**SMALL SOLO SEVEN-STRING BASS**
After F. RUGGIERI. Cremona 1697
SL 69.0cm
Italian viols from this time a very rare, but this one is a beauty. It is the smallest seven-string I know, but works.

**MID-SIZE SEVEN-STRING BASSES**
After EDWARD LEWIS. London c.1680
SL 71.5cm
I know of three almost identical basses by Lewis that survive with French necks, apparently all by different hands, so they must have had the qualities the French players wanted.

After PIERRE COLICHON. Paris 1691
SL 72.0cm
A slightly more robust instrument than the Lewis, and French to its very linings.

**CONTINUO SEVEN-STRING BASS**
After NICOLAS BERTRAND. Paris 1720
SL 74.0cm
With the French habit of placing the bridge low on the body, even some of the smaller-bodied basses clearly were played with what seem to us very long string-lengths. This one is just all around big, a real continuo workhorse.
ITALIAN VIOLS

From the end of the great Italian viol making period come these two very different, but in their own way uniquely interesting examples.

TREBLE VIOL
After GIOAN MARIA, Venice c.1580 SL 36.0cm
A simple but elegant example of a rare size for Italian viols.

BASS VIOL
After G.P. MAGGINI, Brescia c.1610 SL 76.0cm
Maggini, like his teacher Gasparo da Saló combined violin and viol making, but he made nothing finer than this bass.

VIOLONE

After G.P. MAGGINI, Brescia c.1610 SL 100.0cm
I have been making this as a 16' instrument in D, but with a shorter string length it would make a wonderful G bass too.

After THOMAS EDLINGER, Augsburg 1686 SL 100.0cm
I offer this as a six-string D bass or a five-stringer in F.

After ERNST BUSCH, Nuremberg c.1650 SL 87.5cm
This is a wonderful looking and great sounding G violone.

BARYTON

After MAGNUS FELDLEN, Vienna 1647 SL 70.0cm
An instrument for the musician who wants to unearth the repertoire that must have existed before Haydn.

After J.J. STADLMANN, Vienna c.1760 SL 70.0cm
This is not a copy of one instrument but an amalgam of what seemed the best features from several.
Baryton after Stadlmann: Violone after Busch
I am proud to say that I had a hand in the restoration of the lirone to its rightful place on the continuo platform in much early music, and I have been working to have the lira taken equally seriously.

**LIRA DA BRACCIO**

Four models available, from violin to very large viola size, after originals by Gioan Maria, F. Linarolo and Gasparo da Saló. All have five strings on the fingerboard and two drones.

**LIRONE**

After W.TIEFFENBRUCKER, Venice c.1560  
Festooned bode shape and eleven strings with optional two or four drones.

After ANONYMOUS, Italian raid 16th century  
Viol shaped body and parchment rose in belly. Nine or eleven strings, without drones.

**MEDIEVAL & RENAISSANCE INSTRUMENTS**

I make reconstructions of fiddles, vielles and rebeccs based on various examples from paintings and sculptures, and in one case from actual remains found on the wreck of the *Mary Rose* which sank in 1545. These are real musical instruments and not curios. Any serious project undertaken.
VIOLINS, VIOLAS & CELLOS

I offer a wide range of RENAISSANCE and BAROQUE instruments which provide perfect tools for performing 16th and 17th century music, and which are not widely available from other makers, as well as some exceptional CLASSICAL models.

VIOLINS
After ANDREA AMATI, Cremona 1564   Body 34.5cm
After A.& H. AMATI, Cremona 1623   Body 35.0cm
After NICOLO AMATI, Cremona 1649   Body 35.0cm
After JAKOB STAINER, Absam 1679   Body 35.2cm
After A. STRADIVARI, Cremona 1716   Body 35.6cm

VIOLAS
After ANDREA AMATI, Cremona 1574    Body 47.0cm
After GASPARO DA SALO, Brescia c.1580   Body 44.5cm
After ANDREA GUARNERI, Cremona 1676   Body 42.0cm
After D.A.STADLMANN, Vienna 1725   Body 41.5cm
After A.STRADIVARI, Cremona 1734   Body 44.5cm

CELLOS
After ANONYMOUS, Italian r.1650   Body 80.0cm
This is a great continuo instrument.
After A.STRADIVARI, Cremona 1720   Body 75.5cm
After BENJAMIN BANKS, Salisbury 1776   Body 74.0cm
After JAKO B STAINER, Absam c.1670   Body 59.0cm
This is a lovely five-string piccolo.

MODERN INSTRUMENTS
There is no question that for the modern performer the models of Stradivari have qualities that set them above the rest, so I offer the following instruments in modern set-up:

VIOLIN, Le Messie 1716   Body 35.6cm
VIOLA, The Gibson 1734   Body 41.0cm
CELLO, 1720   Body 75.5cm
While I do not always follow precisely the decoration of an original instrument, I do prefer to use only motifs that "belong" - no heads of Queen Elizabeth or customers! I have a range of male and female heads from the various schools, and lion heads, as well as decorated scrolls of various designs. I have done monograms in purfling on the back, in the style of Barak Norman.

All violin family instruments have single purfling on back and belly, normal scroll, and either maple fingerboard and tailpiece with a single line of purfling or plain ebony veneer included in the basic price. All viols. except student models, have double purfling on the belly, plain back, plain open scroll and fingerboards as for violins.

Other options include:

- Double purfling on violins, or on viol backs.
- Carved head, with or without decorated back and sides of pegbox.
- Purfled motif or ornamental rose on belly below end of fingerboard.
- Purfled or painted designs on ribs.
- Additional purfing lines or geometric patterns on fingerboard and tailpiece.
- Purfling around soundholes.

After William Addison
Great bass viol after Henry Jaye.
CASES

Custom fitted cases of various kinds can be supplied for your instrument and will be charged for at the price ruling at the time of delivery.

BOWS

Bows of any quality can be supplied with your instrument, but I advise against this, and suggest instead waiting to match a bow to your instrument, and your arm, after you have it. I can offer recommendations for sources.

TERMS

I ask for one quarter of the base price with your order, the balance due on delivery, or before delivery for overseas orders. Payment in US dollars or pounds sterling. All delivery and insurance costs to be paid by the customer.

In the event of cancellation of an order I reserve the right to retain a part of the deposit proportionate to the work already undertaken, with a minimum of $200.

Above: after John Rose.
HISTORICAL STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

by

John Pringle

From the LIRA and LIRONE to the VIOLA DA GAMBA and VIOLONE, and of course, the VIOLIN family, fine reproductions of superb Italian Baroque originals. Restorations of old instruments to Baroque specifications a specialty.