information for strings and tuning
Posted by walter - 2009/11/30 23:35

Hello everyone my name is Walter, I live in Venice Italy. I am an apprentice instrument maker, constructed by about 4 years. I'm more specialized in the construction of classical and acoustic guitars.
Please forgive me if English is bad, but use a translator, can not speak it unfortunately!!
Contact you to inquire about the altoguitar ....
I'd like to create a core of Pero to 11 strings, but with a tuning fork 60 cm. just to get familiar with the construction!
The drawing I made from the photographs downloaded from the network and readjusted my tuning fork and a form that I have a guitar for 3 / 4 ...
My doubt is given by which tuning is used as a standard altoguitar ... and if the strings low after MI are down as often or as you enter the eighth repetition or adding reference Mi6 °.....
the lowest frequency of 11 Hz which corresponds rope?? to simplify, if we as an idea C0 octave of a piano??
thanks until now:)
Greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by Sten - 2009/12/01 08:51

Hi Walter,

The 11 string Bolin altoguitar has a scale (string) length of 57 centimeters, and the standard tuning is:
g1 - d1 - a - f - c - G - F - E flat - D - C - B1 flat

Sometimes you tune up the third string half a note to "b flat" instead of "a". The tuning of the bass strings can be changed a little according to the demands of the music to be played.

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by walter - 2009/12/01 09:17

Thanks Sten, for the information, now the only drawback for me is to adapt the strings to my tuning fork 60cm .... but I can do that.
I'll have to calculate the overall draft of the strings which I think is around 90Kg!!
I'll see what I can achieve this for me is really a challenge.
How to copy something visible phases of the work place!
Greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by Sten - 2009/12/01 10:28

Hi again Walter,

It is not necessary to stick to 57 cm, nor to the standard tuning. Many other guitar builders than Bolin have other scale (string) lengths, even more that 60 cm. You could perhaps lower the tuning one note or so to reduce 90 kg to maybe 80 kg.
Auguri, e in bocca al lupo!

Greetings
Sten

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by walter - 2010/04/21 02:26

We ask once again to contact information as possible and show the point at which I arrived with my prototype altoguitars!

I would ask you if you have information about the mechanics for classical guitar singles. I have talked about mechanical made in Holland for example but I can not find information, you know nothing?
thanks Greetings Walter

Those are mechanical Dutch!
I am attaching also the state of completion at the time of my prototype.

http://img694.imageshack.us/img694/8376/mhcgv39.th.jpg

http://img704.imageshack.us/img704/391/dsc5123webb2.th.jpg
http://img169.imageshack.us/img169/1873/dsc5125webb.th.jpg
http://img405.imageshack.us/img405/7678/dsc5108web2.th.jpg

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Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by Bruma - 2010/04/21 09:47

Hi Walter

The luthier Roger Stromberg use Gilberts, Alesi, Fustero or Sloan. See the link:

http://www.rogerstromberg.se/

Your prototype looks fantastic. Of course we want to see more.

Good luck for your work.

Bruma

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by Sten - 2010/04/21 10:18

Hello Walter,

Your prototype looks very good!
Please let us see how it develops.

Sten

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by walter - 2010/04/21 11:05

Hello Bruma through the index and links.
regarding the child, are still far behind with work ... I realized a mistake I hope not too severe-level tuning of the soundboard, obviously now the case is closed, and I'm not going to open it again, I hope not to lose too many frequencies.
Will I have problems with the lateral propagation of sound! guitar, or rather altoguitars, and perhaps too small, the scale of the normal 60 pitch, but this was the only test to achieve a result with a most suitable materials and on a larger scale!
As I proceed with more pictures and post them all work.
now I have problems with the availability of ebony for the keyboard, I think I'll have to join two classic keyboards.
marks the keys fall like the classic in altoguitars?

Another problem is finding one who can play, in my part I found musicians who use them, I hope a lutenist could succeed, at least record a small audio file.

Greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/04/21 11:07

Hello Sten, the prototype was born to my curiosity about non-conventional tools, I'm not a good musician, maybe that's why I dedicate myself to the violin, but I like trying new sounds and possibilities of the acoustic altoguitars me back .... the lute, the idea of having greater harmony and a sound and durability with a parallel resonant chords of sympathy, but if the guitar is well tuned at the level of speaker!
The pine inclined to increase the capacity of preparation of the instrument, ie the attack and brilliance (it has a heavy load at the expense, and this is a problem to occur), but still take me with pliers is still a prototype, As I said earlier, unfortunately I made a mistake in the intonation of the soundboard!.
The holes behind, give greater extension of the shaking table make the most of its internal frequencies, increase the bass a little perhaps at the expense of acute, but the frequency of the instrument and its range should resolve this ..... in my case the case is still too small to generate 80 Hz or less bass in the first harmonic!
hoping to see complete tool does not explode!
Greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/04/21 11:24

Sorry for the double post, I do not understand why ... I have connection problems,
I apologize and if possible remove the duplication!
Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by tommyollie - 2010/04/24 21:33

Hi Walter,
I found Rubner tuners to be good quality and excellent value:
http://rubner-markneukirchen.de/onlineshop/index.php

I used 2 six string sets of their Hauser pattern and cut them to fit. Ramirez and many others including Bolin used to do this.

Bill

walter wrote:
We ask once again to contact information as possible and show the point at which I arrived with my prototype altoguitars!

I would ask you if you have information about the mechanics for classical guitar singles. I have talked about mechanical made in Holland for example but I can not find information, you know nothing?
thanks Greetings Walter

Those are mechanical Dutch!
I am attaching also the state of completion at the time of my prototype.

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http://img169.imageshack.us/img169/1873/dsc5125webb.th.jpg
http://img405.imageshack.us/img405/7678/dsc5108web2.th.jpg

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by walter - 2010/04/26 01:53

Thank you Bill straight, the good mechanical Rubner, use them in many of my parties are great for the price! Actually, however, hoped not to have to practice cuts ... I'm waiting for the Italian importer to give me individual prices for those ... I hoped to trace the source directly abroad!;)
greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by walter - 2010/07/14 19:56

Good day everyone, I finally managed to finish my altoguitars prototype.
I solved the issue with mechanics German, and painting is almost completed.
I must surely replace the frets in bone, but not a problem.
But now the problem remains the ropes ... strings that fit?? which have thicknesses??
At the moment I put the high voltage from normal classical guitar for the first 6, then I added 5 more equal low .... is this correct?? can fit?
the scale of my guitar is 60cm in the stretch for the 6 strings .....+ 15 cm for the lower B1flat to maximum extension.
Another problem is now who I will find a small recording or video evidence, I can not play if not so ridiculous!
The sound is powerful, must grow certainly is well balanced even if the treble is not too bright, but very direct front.
Listening front is distinctly different from the feeling of the musician, perhaps a problem?
See you soon if I will post photos and an audio file.
If you have tabs for easy easy for a beginner??
With greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by Sten - 2010/07/14 20:29

Hello Walter,

Congratulations to having finished building your alto guitar! I hope it will bring you much pleasure.

I am not an expert on strings, and the selection will depend on the pitch (how high tones you will want). But your choice of ordinary guitar strings for strings number 1 - 6 and number 6 strings (E strings) for strings number 7 - 11 is a good start, and may well be quite suitable.
Strings number 1 - 6 of my alto guitars are 57 cm long, and strings 7 - 11 are gradually longer, just as with your alto guitar. I use for strings 1 - 6 an ordinary set of Savarez Corum Alliance hard tension, and for strings 7 - 11 I use a special Hannabach alto guitar set, which is quite expensive. I think that ordinary #6 (E strings) would do nearly as well for strings 7 - 11.

You can find free scores with both tablature and notes for example at this site:
http://www.guitar168.com
This little branle by Jean-Baptiste Besard is short and not too difficult:
http://www.guitar168.com/Composers/Besard/Branle/Branle.pdf

Best regards,
Sten

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Re:information for strings and tuning
Posted by walter - 2010/07/14 21:37

Sten Thanks for your valuable information ... soon post photos.

I realize this tool very excited, now I will try to learn to play it!
Greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by tommyollie - 2010/07/14 21:41

Hi Walter,
Well done with the build - I look forward to seeing some images in the gallery.
Regarding the strings - if you are using hard tension strings and tuning to G minor on a 60cm scale length then the tension will be huge! As much as 9 to 10kg on the first string! On a 6 string guitar even extra hard tension is only around 7.5 kg. I used a very good online string tension calculator:
http://www.cs.helsinki.fi/u/wikla/mus/NewScalc/

I found this very useful to help me understand how string tension works on an Alto.

Regards

Bill

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/15 10:50

Thanks Bill, very helpful indeed, thanks for the straight.
I would indeed seek the thinner strings for the treble if possible ... I can now do the math!

By chance could you tell me the height of the rope to the 12th ribs and at the eleventh below?? now the setup is the most complicated thing.
photographs them pearls of hope in a day and then the place.

I put in this post should be added or where??

Greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by tenvec - 2010/07/15 12:37

Walter,
Firstly, congratulations on making your first alto guitar.
60 cm is longer than the usual alto scale length at 57, so, I agree with Bill in advising you not to use high tension strings.
Neglecting string extensional elasticity, the formula relating tension to lengths and frequencies is
T'/T = (l'/l)^2 X (f'/f)^2.
Changing from 65 to 60 and frequency from 329.6 c/s to 391.995 c/s, gives, T'/T = (60/65)^2 X (391.995/329.6)^2 = 1.208, i.e., just over 20% increase in tension! The effect of string elasticity can be calculated from a complicated formula, and gives a factor on this result of around .9, so, 1.2 becomes 1.08, i.e., an overall increase of approximately 8%.
I would recommend that you use low tension strings for the first six, and string number six for the lower five, assuming that the lengths of these strings is progressively increasing.
James.

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/15 14:29

Hello again Walter,

I agree with Bill and James that, if you want your first string to be as high as g1 (the usual pitch for string #1), then you should not choose high tension strings but rather medium/low tension strings.

Sten

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/15 17:15

Thanks James for advice, grandparents think I understood exactly what I suggest, but it is only a translation problem .. then I do not speak English and use a translator! I will try to give me a hand to a friend shod language and apply the formula that you provided me ...
I believe that you understand and should not be used for the first 6-string high tension but normal and the remaining from "I Grave" (a standard classical guitar) to get thick !!??? these high voltage? ?
greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/15 17:33

Sten follow the advice, what I notice is that the soundboard responds to the strong pull of the strings high tension ... I probably used too thick table top ... altoguitars being my first and then the plan is tilted to the keyboard I thought to pull a major bridge.
the stamp is good, growing wineries and strumming the agreement, I actually tends to decrease by about tuning 1 / 2 tone from the strings to fit G1proverò MV! what surprised me is just the stamp that is soft but snug, then I did not expect that the influence of the drone strings so they could enrich harmonic thinking tool box and then reduced to the form I used.
now I understand a altoguitars effective measures and make my plan to those measures, the experience was enriching for me and I can not wait to go with a second guitar for me ... this was the pretext for experience in one other news, such as holes and moved the handle and keyboard elevated to the soundboard ... I would say very interesting and powerful, now try to apply also to normal and classical guitars!
Certainly, I do not think many customers and the first since I can not even express a value, however this instrument is a plus and a charm all over.
I also hope the music in Italy could also open up these sounds I still little explored, although the culture of the lute Padua near Venice a historic home of violin making this tool is dead remain a niche interest ... I hope to be able to do little in a new wind in my part!
Greetings Walter

P.S. for luthiers I have no experience as you all about this tool I tried to follow my instinct and personal theories, the distance is great sin and the possibility of direct comparison impractical for me. are still contributing to the exchange of information on my research if you find interesting!

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by tommyollie - 2010/07/15 18:55

You asked about the action and set-up.
The first 7 strings should I think have an action like a normal classical guitar i.e. between say 3.5mm to 5mm. My guitar measures from 12th fret to underside of the string:

string 1 = 4mm
string 7 = 5mm

The remaining strings could have a higher action than this to prevent rattling.

It's a little more complicated with the remaining 4 strings because the reference fret changes. String 8 is fret 10, string 9 fret nine etc.

My guitar measures from highest point to the fret from around 5.5mm to 6mm at string 11.

Good luck

Bill

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/16 12:13

Thanks Bill, you are close enough with the first 6-string I think I might get a little on the 12th but I will go one step at a time ... hours change the strings with those less voltage!
I come from there is a firm that makes strings for bowed and plucked instruments, try to contact to see if I made a couple of sets of strings appropriate ... enough available previously followed me to harp some Celtic.
Greetings Walter

Now I try to post some pictures of the guitar fast
If not properly placed here So please move them to the appropriate or how and where to insert Notify
Thank you.

http://img804.imageshack.us/img804/1699/p1010082web.th.jpg

Uploaded with ImageShack.us
http://img713.imageshack.us/img713/3240/p1010091web.th.jpg

Uploaded with ImageShack.us

http://img39.imageshack.us/img39/7496/p1010092web.th.jpg

Uploaded with ImageShack.us

http://img411.imageshack.us/img411/8505/p1010098web.th.jpg

Uploaded with ImageShack.us

http://img714.imageshack.us/img714/8228/p1010083web.th.jpg

Uploaded with ImageShack.us

http://img819.imageshack.us/img819/3132/p1010090web.th.jpg

Uploaded with ImageShack.us

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/16 12:25

Walter,

Your alto guitar looks fine with creative, original design!

Sten

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/16 12:53

Thanks Sten, now I understand what this project really is, could be an important thing for me ... how to reopen the schools and conservatories of music go in the section of the lute to talk with teachers and hoping for a form of interest then that obviously is not philological tool!
now I hope to find a musician who could play well enough to make a recording or video.
For the design, I wanted to exploit the larger area of the soundboard because even on a normal-sized classical guitar is easy to get 82 -85 Hz the length of the first harmonic in the soundboard!
I would ask if you want to show me the possibilities and measures up to an instrument altoguitars, I have doubts about the length - the width of the house is not that high at the bottom and the handle .... and of course what I understood the pitch of the 6 string is 57cm!? This to resize my next project is to produce a closer and comparable to yours.
I do not think the market for these instruments but I enjoyed many achievements with firm satisfaction!
When I started this project I tried to prove three key things for me. measure of cash, soundboard finishing holes inclined moved as (a famous Italian violin maker Maestro Garrone uses it) and paint.
I would say great start because the draft was only a sketchy sketch from notes taken by your master luthiers! sin than it has ever seen by a neighbor altoguitars, but who knows in the future ....
Greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/16 14:14

_____

Hello Walter,

You asked about the measures of my alto guitars. I have two almost identical alto guitars, because I want to have string number three tuned differently. Both my alto guitars are constructed by Georg Bolin, and one of them is built by him, and the other is built by his apprentice Jörgen Hedman.

Here in my country cottage I have the Hedman alto guitar with me, and I have measured it for you with a folding rule, so there may be a measurement error of at least about + - 1 mm. These are the measures:

Total length of the whole instrument: 1000 mm

Body length: 465 mm

Body width:
- Bulge below "waist" : 364 mm
- "Waist": 241 mm
- Bulge above "waist": 274 mm

Body depth: 96 mm

Neck width:
- At first common "nut" fret: 97 mm
- At the end of the neck at the soundhole: 123 mm

Neck thickness: This was difficult to measure, so the result is uncertain, but at the first fret it was about 23 mm, and perhaps a little thicker nearer the body.

String lenghths:
- Strings 1 - 7: 570 mm
- String 8: 633 mm
- String 9: 677 mm
- String 10: 712 mm
- String 11: 759 mm

James (tenvec) often says that string number 8 should be of the same length as strings 1 - 7, and I agree that there is an advantage with that.

I also attach a picture of the Hedman alto guitar (the same one as I measured).

If you want to know more about my alto guitars, then please ask, and I will try to answer.

Best regards,

Sten http://altoguitar.com/images/fbfiles/files/IMG_8305_Ny_altgitarr_publ-5e3f72fa29577031456b09fc77b90605.jpg

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/16 19:18

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hanks Sten, very kind, measures will be very important to me and one mm + or - I do not think will change the instrument ...
I'd like to know your own guitar maker, also see and hear ... I must say I'm excited about this tool!
much better then the guitar you have, are important to the cutaway?? by something more instrument??
greetings Walter

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/16 21:50

Hello Walter,

The maker of my alto guitar, Jörgen Hedman, made only this instrument in 1992 as a qualifying peace of work for his examination from the Carl Malmsten guitar building school in Stockholm, Sweden. He said that "There was no market", and surely we had an economical crisis in Sweden in 1992. So Jörgen Hedman took another job. The Carl Malmsten guitar building school closed in 2006 and exists no more, unfortunately. But there are people in Sweden making alto guitars, like
- Roger Strömberg at Luleå http://hem.passagen.se/rogerst/ (he makes them first and sells them then, so the delivery time is short)
- Henrik Jansson in Stockholm http://www.handcraftedguitars.se/
- Lars Jönsson in Stockholm http://www.luthier.se/ (he has a long queue and builds also lutes and other instruments)
, and there are a few more who are ready to make them like
- Anders Uppström at Eksjö http://www.uppstromguitars.se/
- Joel Jedström at Näsviken www.musikteknik.com/ (this website does not seem to work right now)
I have talked to these people by telephone, but I do not know them personally.

Tomorrow I will make a short visit at home, and I hope to have time then to measure my other alto guitar made by Georg Bolin, and give you the results of the measurement. By the way, Roger Strömberg makes alto guitars with string lentgths 570 - 590 mm for strings #1 - #7, so the string length can be different with different instruments.

You asked about the importance of the cutaway. Well, I am not sure about that. I do not think that a cutaway is necessary, because I have not yet needed it. Perhaps other members of this web community have an opinion on this? Lars Jönsson has an own alto guitar model without cutaway.

Best regards,
Sten

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/17 02:27

Thanks Sten, you're very kind in your willingness to give me this valuable information, now I'm in love with this instrument and the more sound (even without knowledge of what's really playing arrangements or leave) the more I realize its freshness in a total innovation music scene like the present! certain that my fellow musicians have been denied saying that they can play!?
I do not pose problems, not a musician and I listen!

the fact that I ask is because it can economically apply a similar tool??
it is obvious that only the first, but the models that have played that value?
I'm a total autodidact who took books and the Internet as a source of study and then practice, but unfortunately no one has taught me more in my work to quantify.
for classical guitars I have some comparisons, but this altoguitars guitars as I have no idea because I have not seen your

love I come from.
thanks again availability.
Greetings Walte

==========

Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/17 15:19

_____

Hello Walter,

I am now home for a while, and I have measured my Bolin alto guitar from 1974 for you with a folding rule, so there may be a measurement error of at least about + - 1 mm. These are the measures:

Total length of the whole instrument: 995 mm

Body length: 467 mm

Body width:
- Bulge below "waist" : 365 mm
- "Waist": 230 mm
- Bulge above "waist": 265 mm

"Waist" distance from the lower edge of the body: approximately 275 mm

Body depth: 92 mm near the neck and 98 mm near the lower part of the body.

Soundhole diameter: 88 mm
Soundhole distance from the upper edge of the body: 100 mm

Neck width:
- At first common "nut" fret: 97 mm
- At the end of the neck at the soundhole: 120 mm

Neck thickness: This was difficult to measure, so the result is uncertain, but at the first fret it was about 23 mm, and perhaps a little thicker nearer the body.

String lenghths:
- Strings 1 - 7: 570 mm
- String 8: 640 mm
- String 9: 678 mm
- String 10: 720 mm
- String 11: 762 mm

James (tenvec) often says that string number 8 should be of the same length as strings 1 - 7, and I agree that there is an advantage with that.

I do not have a good picture of my Bolin alto guitar, so I attach an old picture of its soundhole, with dust :)

You wrote in an earlier message that you wanted to listen to alto guitars being played. This can be done via Youtube.com
Here are a couple of hits when I searched Youtube for "Söllscher altgitarr":
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kn0d0NEa740
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_a9irWZtxQ
Göran Söllscher is a Swedish guitar professor who has performed concerts and recorded CDs with a Bolin alto guitar.

If you want to know more about my alto guitars, then please ask, and I will try to answer.

Best regards,
Sten http://altoguitar.com/images/fbfiles/files/01_Dr_mmen_om_Bachfugan_1.jpg

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/17 16:29

Hello Walter,

There are more ways to listen to alto guitars being played, for instance via Spotify.

You can get free access to Spotify Open (20 hours listening per month, I think) via www.spotify.com, where you can create a free account and load the application to your computer. Then you can search Spotify for instance for "söllscher" or "alto guitar". You will get hits with 6 string guitar too, so you will need to examine which hits are with alto guitar.

The drawback is that there are a few advertisements now and then with Spotify Open.

Best regards,
Sten

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/18 16:25

Grazie Sten, infatti ho iniziato a conoscere questo tipo di chitarra grazie ad una registrazione di Göran Söllscher, interprete di alcune suite di Bach, e cercando in realtà chitarra arpa...
la aveva in laboratorio il mo maestro liutaio,Piero Testa, che mi ha insegnato a realizzare le prime chitarre classiche!!!!
Il fatto è che sono registrazioni professionali e pertanto credo abbastanza affinate nell'equalizzazione, certo che come riferimento sono ottimali, ma se mi confermi che il suono della tua chitarra ad esempio è come da disco di Göran Söllscher, allora lo prendo come assoluto riferimento!
Devo però avere un confronto da un musicista professionista nel suonarla per poter paragonarne le vere qualità rispetto il mio prototipo, che credo comunque non male, visto suona meglio di molte chitarre classiche che ho realizzato e sentito e che so confrontare...
grazie per le misure che mi hai indicato delle tue chitarre , ora le confronterò con il mio prototipo nel verificale e definirle in un disegno definitivo!
Vedo la fotografia della buca della tua altoguitar, molto bella e fine ottima rifinitura e qualità, Bolin è un grande maestro dal quale certamente mi ispirerò e terrò come riferimento....mi piacerebbe sinceramente comunicare con lui, ma immagino le difficoltà anche linguistiche!

se posso ti chiederei quale valore ha una chitarra altoguitar di alta liuteria e di media, così da capire se potrei entrare in un possibile mercato!
Grazie sinceramente della tua disponibilità Walter

P.S. ora mi iscrivo al programma per scaricare i brani e le registrazioni, grazie del link.

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/18 19:52

Ciao Walter,

Posso leggere italiano un pò, e credo che ho capito la maggior parte di la sua communicazione, realmente miglior che la traduizone automatica anteriore.

Now I switch to English, which is easier for me to write and possible for you and the other website members to understand.

I am glad that you have previously heard Göran Söllscher recordings, and that your interest in the alto guitar was thus inspired.

One of my alto guitars is made by Georg Bolin, and so is the alto guitar of Göran Söllscher. Bolin did not make different models with different quality, so both these alto guitars are "concert" standard. Mine is from 1974, which is fairly early for a Bolin instrument. Bolin certainly made some adjustments in his constructions from time to time, especially concerning the bracing.
My other alto guitar by Hedman is also made from Bolin's drawings, so its measures are also Bolin measures. The

Hedman alto guitar has Bolin's "fan type" bracing.

I think it is a good idea that you will let a professional musician play your alto guitar, so you can get a judgement from him.

Unfortunately Bolin died in 1993, so we cannot communicate with him any more. I met him a few times when he built a six string guitar for me. He was a kind, lively man, always busy.

You asked me about the values of alto guitars.
I think that it can actually vary between different countries, and that Sweden is fairly cheap.
New alto guitars by good makers like for instance Roger Strömberg and Henrik Jansson, are sold for about 3800 - 4000 euros, including a guitar case. The material is then not Rio jacaranda but rather East Indian or Honduras rosewood.
Some new makers like Anders Uppström may give you Rio jacaranda for that price, but that is unusual.
Old Bolin alto guitars are rare but have had a price dip in recent years, so amazingly they are sold for about 2500 euros, in that case often with some repairable damage. If they have unrepairable damage like small top cracks, the price may be lower, like 1800 - 2000 euros.
I have actully seen an advertisement for a Lars Jönssom alto guitar for 1800 euros, but that was a very low price.

Now I will go away for a few days without computer.
If you have more questions, I will try to answer them by next weekend.

Best regards,
Sten

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/19 00:05

Grazie sinceramente Sten, per il tempo che mi dedichi nel rispondermi ai post...
mi dispiace non parlare inglese, d'ora in poi posterò in italiano e sotto la versione tradotta...
buon fine settimana e grazie ancora di tutto.
Se riesco a mettere da parte denaro a sufficienza e trovassi un a buona occasione , penso proprio farei l'acquisto di una Bolin originale!!!
mi dispiace per la perdita di questo maestro liutaio, è per questo che non trovavo molto allora in rete... ora restano solo i suoi preziosi strumenti e la sua storia.
Buon fine settimana e grazie ancora di tutto.
Walter

Thanks Sten sincerely for the time I devote to respond to post ...
I regret not speak English, now in Italian and post them in the translated version ...
good weekend and thanks again for everything.
If I can put aside enough money and be a good opportunity to, I think I would buy a Bolin original!
I'm sorry for the loss of this master craftsman, which is why I could not find much time online ... now remain only his precious instrument and its history.
Good weekend and thanks again for everything.
Walter

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/22 15:33

Ciao Walter,

When you give both the Italian and the automatic English translation, then it is easiest to understand. Good idea!

I am glad if you are pleased with some information that I provided to you. It is a pleasure to try to help a little, and it would be great if more people started to make alto guitars, regardless of model.

Bolin was good, but surely there are other people in other countries who make fine instruments of their own model.

I hope that other members of this web community can provide prices of alto guitars in their respective country, so that

you will be able to see if you want to start as a maker. There is a recent post in this website about the sale of an 11 string alto guitar by Philip Woodfield for the price of 5500 euros:
http://altoguitar.com/index.php?option=com_fireboard&Itemid=31&func=view&id=1442&catid=6

Buon fine settimana!

Sten

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/22 19:41

Ciao Sten,
Grazie sei gentilissimo e le tue informazioni mi saranno molto utili.
Speriamo altri del forum possano darmi indicazioni sulle loro chitarre e sui prezzi che questo magnifico strumento ha su mercati internazionali...
Ho già iniziato ad apportare le modifiche al mio prototipo ed un bel set di palissandro è pronto per iniziare un nuovo strumento.
il sistema di sostegno della tavola armonica lo terrò, ed anche le buche spostate alle spalle ma certamente proverò a fare uno strumento sempre a scala 600cm ma con cassa acustica più grande per poter tenere meglio le tensioni!

Magari poter vendere a 5000€ strumento! per il momento mi accontenterei di farne per molto meno ma che io sia sicuro della loro piena efficienza.
Ora la chitarra la ho abbassata di accordatura la ho portata alla normale per chitarra classica ma con i bassi in rapporto a bella barocca (così la riesco a suonare) e suona ancora molto presente e pronta. nella prossima vorrei avere un po più cantini, ma sentendo le varie registrazioni delle altoguitars , ho notato che a mio parere restano sempre un poco chiusi ed aspri...forse dipende dalle registrazioni???

Un saluto Walter

p.s. molto bravi il gruppo Bubble Fauna, musica originalissima!!!!

Sten Hello,
With six very kind and your information will be very useful to me.
Hopefully other forum can give me information on their guitars and the prices that this magnificent instrument on international markets ...
I have already begun to make changes to my prototype and a nice set of rosewood is ready to begin a new instrument.
the support system of the soundboard the ground and also moved behind the hole but certainly try to do an increasingly scale 600cm but with larger speaker in order to better take tensions!

Maybe they can sell to 5000 € tool! for now I would settle for much less to make but I am sure of their full efficiency.
Now the guitar I got the tuning down of the normal range for classical guitar but the bass in relation to beautiful Baroque (so I can play) and still sounds very present and ready. the next I have a bit more treble, but hearing the different records altoguitars, I noticed that in my opinion are always closed and a little bitter ... maybe depends on recordings??

Greetings Walter
p.s. very good group Bubble Wildlife, original music!!

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/23 11:27

Hello Walter,

Good luck with the new alto guitar which you have begun to build!

With Google I found recordings on Myspace of the group that you mentioned, Bubble Fauna. Their music is very original and modern, and I suppose that it takes time to get used to it. But it is fascinating.

You mentioned that on the recordings of alto guitar which you have heard, the treble is not good? This interested me, so I did a systematic comparison of my two 6 string guitars and two alto guitars. The guitars involved in the test were the following:
- 6 string Ramirez 1A from 1984 with spruce top, de cámara
  model, 664 mm string length
- 6 string Bolin from 1978
- 11 string Bolin alto guitar from 1974
- 11 string Hedman alto guitar from 1992 (Bolin model)

The strings of all the instruments were fairly new. The alto guitars had Savarez Corum Alliance high tension strings and Hannabach special bass strings for strings 7-11. The 6 string guitars had Savarez Corum Alliance medium tension strings.

I put these four instruments on a cloth on a table. I played on one string at a time, with index finger apoyando (rest stroke) at the soundhole. I did not damp any other strings. I compared the sounds according to my own subjective opinion.

First I compared the two alto guitars with open strings. I found no significant difference. Both were very good. Before I had the opinion that the tone of the Bolin was clearer and that of the Hedman was warmer, but when I played them side by side like this, then I thought that they were quite equal.

Then I compared my two 6 string guitars, and my previous opinion was confirmed. The Ramirez has a little warmer tone, and the Bolin is slightly clearer. Both are very good.

Then I compared each alto guitar with both 6 string guitars, one at a time. I stopped the alto guitars on the first fret, and the 6 string guitars on the appropriate fret to attain the same tone. (At first I played the alto guitars with open strings, but then the comparison was unfair, because open strings give a much better sound than stopped strings.) I found no significant difference in tone quality between the alto guitars and the 6 string guitars. This surprised me, because previously I thought that the treble of alto guitars was thinner and sharper than the treble of 6 string guitars, but this proved not to be true with my instruments when they produced the same tone.

The only real quality difference that I found during these tests was that string #3 of the 6 string guitars was not as good as string #3 of the alto guitars. This is certainly due to the quality difference between high tension strings and medium tension strings. So now I am thinking about perhaps switching to high tension also with my 6 string guitars. I used to have high tension strings on them before, but medium tension is more comfortable to play, especially with 664 mm string length. But string #3 is so much better with high tension. :)

Best regards,
Sten

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/25 20:22

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Ciao Sten,
ho aspettato un attimo a risponderti per poter indagare meglio sulla ultima domanda che avevo posto a riguardo soprattutto delle corde acute delle altoguitars...
sono riuscito a trovare in effetti registrazioni migliori su youtube e myspace di diversi musicisti rispetto ad alcune poche e rare che all'inizio riuscivo a trovare.
Non riesco ancora bene a focalizzare, ma ancora percepisco delle differenze, forse date dal fatto che le corde a bordone oltre la sesta, suonando spesso libere hanno maggiore durata di suono e mi fanno percepire delle risonanze che mi ingannano...forse un'idea di decadimento degli acuti tale da ingannare il mio udito poco avvezzo all'ascolto di questi strumenti.
nfatti ho trovato questa sensazione spesso nell'ascolto di brani classici e non taento in musicisti che eseguono musica originale...

Non posseggo chitarre di liuteria come Ramirez o kohono, se non quelle realizzate come paragone dal mio maestro compaesano...
Devo dire che spesso ultimamente mi viene richiesto da utenti di altri forum di liutai, di eseguire dei test comparativi con microfoni (ma non ne possiedo di qualità al momento), per vedere i db di uscita dello strumento ed il decadimento di corde per corda, ed ascoltare il timbro stesso dello strumento
Quello che posso dire rispetto il mio prototipo e gli strumenti che posseggo o posso paragonare è, che esso ha maggiore sostegno in durata delle note (non contando ovviamente i bordoni) pure essendo di volume e misure di cassa ridotte.
Ora solo l'orecchio e la mano di un musicista capace potrebbe darmi maggiori informazioni ed aiutarmi a capire dettagli

importanti penso.
ho provato anch'io ad eseguire il procedimento di paragone che mi hai descritto nel tuo post, ed appunto emerge tutto questo!

Spero di riuscire ad avere del denaro per fine estate che pensavo di investire nell'acquisto di una altoguitar usata, anche da sistemare e riparare un poco, ma capace di darmi un buon paragone ed una buona base di confronto diretto con i miei prototipi.
per la sensazione che continuo ad avere devo dire che resto confuso, certo che percepisco diversità!

se riesco a fare una registrazione buona come desidererei la posterò certamente.
Allo stesso modo se riesco a recuperare un buon microfono (nel mio caso ne serviranno due) proverò a vedere non solo db di uscita ch personalmente mi interessano meno del timbro dello strumento, ma sostegno delle note e armoniche dello strumento.
Un saluto e come sempre grazie del confronto,
Walter.

Hello Sten,
I waited a moment to respond better to investigate the last question I asked about the strings especially acute altoguitars ...
I could actually find better recordings on youtube and myspace musicians than some few and rare that the top could find.
I still do not focus well, but still perceive the differences, perhaps given the fact that the strings to drone over the sixth, they're free to have longer life and make me feel the sound echoes that deceive me an idea ... maybe decay of acute as to deceive my ears unaccustomed to listening to these instruments.
n fact I found this feeling often listen to classical music and musicians in taento performing original music ...

Do not own guitars or stringed instruments as Ramirez kohono except those made by my teacher as compared with compatriot ...
I must say that lately I is often requested by users in other forums violin, perform comparative tests with microphones (but do not have any quality at the time) to see the db output of the instrument and the decay of ropes for rope, and listen to the timbre of the instrument itself
What can I say than my prototype instruments that possess or can I compare it, it has increased support in duration of notes (not counting of course the drones) as well as volume measures and reduced cash.
Now only the ear and hand of a capable musician might give me more information and help to understand important details I think.
I tried to execute the procedure of comparison that you described in your post, and just show it all!

I hope to have the money for the end of summer I was thinking of investing in a used altoguitar also be accommodated and a little repair, but capable of giving me a good comparison and a good basis for direct comparison with my prototypes.
to feel that I must say that I continue to have confused the rest, I perceive some diversity!

if I can make a record as good as I would like to post them for sure.
Similarly if I can retrieve a proper microphone (in my case they will both) try to see not only db output ch personally interest me less than the stamp tool, but support the notes and harmonics of the tool.
A greeting and thanks as always the comparison,
Walter.

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by Sten - 2010/07/26 10:15

Hello Walter,

I think that I understand your feelings about the sound of the treble strings. This could be due to resonances in the bass strings. It is well known that damping the bass strings is part of playing the alto guitar. Per-Olof Johnson mentions different damping techniques in his book "Altgitarren". Many players (for instance me) do not know these damping techniques very well, and then the sound of the treble strings gets somewhat blurred by unwanted resonances. Some players like Göran Söllscher master the alto guitar better, and then the trebles produce a clearer sound.

I think that it is a good idea to let a professional musician try your alto guitar. But this person, being new to the alto guitar, will probably not know how to damp the bass strings, so he/she can probably not be expected to play very well, which should be taken into account.

I am a little surprised that you want to buy a used alto guitar, and I do not quite see the use that you would have for it. There are three things with other alto guitars that I would expect you to be interested in: the sound, the measures, and the bracing (the pattern of the strips of wood on the back side of the guitar top):
- The sound of alto guitars you can hear on Internet (Youtube, Myspace etc), and perhaps from other alto guitars in your neighbourhood. By the way, Andreas Hess has recently made a fine recording of Silvius Leopold Weiss' ciacona in sol minor here on altoguitar.com:
http://altoguitar.com/index.php?option=com_fireboard&Itemid=31&func=view&catid=2&id=1525#1525
- The measures of alto guitars you can get from me and hopefully also from other members of altoguitar.com.
- The bracing is made differently by different makers. Some vary the bracing, for instance Bolin who used many types of bracing, and Roger Strömberg who among other types also has a "Fleta" type of bracing.
If you buy a used alto guitar, then you would get only one example of the various sounds, measures, and bracings which exist.

Now it is time to make coffee for my wife. :)

Kind regards,

Sten

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Re:information for strings and tuning

Posted by walter - 2010/07/26 11:14

Ciao Sten,
concordo a pieno con quanto mi suggerisci, ho notato in alcune fotografie non solo di chitarristi altoguitar ma di chitarre multicorde che spesso si cercano dei sistemi per stoppare o attutire le corde, sia con tecniche meccaniche che di esecuzione. ho visto usare anche con delle fettucce di stoffa o mettendo del materiale tipo lana sotto il ponticello a sfiorare le corde..

Per il fatto di possedere una altoguitar usata, non è solo per copiare misure o guardarla dentro.
spesso mi trovo a voler sentire per le mani uno strumenti di qualità e non solo osservarlo, ma vederne finiture, picchiettarlo e sentire come risponde acusticamente, per poi non parlare del fatto di avere uno strumento di valore comunque come riferimento!

Personalmente non ho potuto studiare chitarra ne violoncello come avrei desiderato per motivi familiari, ma grazie a tabulati e suonando lo strumento si cresce dentro come consapevolezza liutistica!
sono un autodidatta anche in questo forse per tale motivo potrai percepire le mi incertezze e leggerezze.
in pratica sono uno di quelli che vuole toccare e percepire sia dalla materia che usa grezze e prima, sia da oggetti finiti sensazioni e caratteristiche.
Non credo poi vi sia limite di tempo per mettersi a studiare musica ben sapendo i propri limiti e scopi...
I miei riferimenti di gusto spaziano molto nella musica sia contemporanea che classica, ma, sento la rinascita interiore della musica Barocca, grazie forse alla fortuna di avere una compagna musicologa.
Non so se condividi i miei punti di vista Sten, ma per me realizzare, ascoltare, percepire dal poter toccare strumenti di varia natura, usare materia da modellare è cercare il
senso della meraviglia è la possibilità di stupirmi ancora!
Al momento come liutaio non vendo sono ancore nella fase della ricerca.
Le misure che mi hai dato mi serviranno molto infatti.
Registrazioni ora riesco a trovarne maggiori anche grazie al forum...
Ho iniziato a provare a mettere mano su alcune tabulature dal link che mi hai indicato, anche se i miei limiti sono molti!!!
Per l'incatenatura, interessante il fatto di usare un modello Fleta.

Per il musicista professionista... a settembre provo con il conservatorio, spero lì di trovare una apertura ed un interesse.
Come sempre grazie di tutto Walter

Hello Sten,
I agree fully with what I suggest, I noticed in some pictures not only guitarists but altoguitar guitar multicorde often look for ways to stop or mitigate the ropes, both mechanical and technical execution. I have seen used with the straps of cloth or putting material such as wool jumper to touch the strings ..

For the fact of possessing a altoguitar used, not just to copy measures or look inside.
I often find myself wanting a feel for the hands as tools and not just observe, but see finishes tapping sound and feel like responding, and then not to mention the fact of having a valuable tool as a reference anyway!

Personally I could not study guitar cello as I wanted it for family reasons, but because of printouts and playing the instrument as one grows in awareness lute!
are self-taught in this perhaps for that reason I can perceive the uncertainties and lightness.
in practice, one that wants to touch and feel on both the source and uses that first, both finished objects feelings and characteristics.
Then I do not think there is time limit to start studying music knowing their limitations and purposes ...
My references ranging taste in music is very contemporary and classical, but I feel the inner rebirth of baroque music, perhaps due to the fortune of having a fellow musicologist.
I do not know if you share my views Sten, but for me to realize, hear, feel to touch the instruments, different types of material used to mold is to seek the
sense of wonder is the ability to amaze me again!
At the time as a luthier do not sell are still in the research phase.
The measures that have given me I will very fact.
Registrations now able to find even more thanks to the forum ...
I started trying to put its hands on some of tablature from the link I've shown above, although my limitations are many!
For bracing, interestingly, using a model Fleta.

For the professional musician ... I try to September with the conservatory, I hope here to find an opening and an interest.
As always thanks for everything Walter

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