

# Zither Newsletter

## OF U.S.A.

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Winter 1989

## Zithermusiktage '88 in Augsburg

### A Personal Account

**PRELUDE:** Four years ago we had been subscribing to the Saitenspiel, the newsletter/magazine of the German Zither Society for a year or so. Our German was worse than it is now, and we did a lot of interpretation by looking at the pictures and picking up fragments of words here and there. We had been able to discern that there were things happening in the zither world of Europe worth noting: a youth competition was held annually, many seminars and concerts were held. One day the magazine arrived with glossy color photographs announcing ZITHERMUSIKTAGE '84 (Literal translation Zither Music Days, 1984) to be held in Regensburg, West Germany. A three day celebration of zither music and convening of zitherists? Unbelievable! Our hearts trembled at the thought! We spoke with Rudy Wacek, another local zither player, about going, and went through one of those "If-you-go-we'll-go" things which never materialized. End of prelude.

But lady luck had other plans for us. In January 1985 we won two round trip airfares to Vienna at the American Friends of Austria ball. As we shaped our plans we consulted the Saitenspiel to find one of those "seminars" we had been reading about. We found one sponsored by the Society of Austrian Musical Workers (VAMO) being held in Grossrussbach, about one hour outside Vienna in May, 1985. Meantime, our stars crossed with Johannes Popp of the Popp/Lägel Zither Trio of Munich here in America, and he helped us make our reservations for VAMO Seminar and invited us to a Bavarian folk music seminar in Regen (not Regensburg) the following week. A previous arti-

cle described this trip in detail. Suffice to say, our interest in zither music was revitalized. Much activity has taken place since then: American zither seminars, this newsletter begun, FIGA convention attended by international group of zitherists, video instruction tapes developed.

Now comes 1988 and we learn that Zithermusiktage is a quadrennial event. We are not going to miss this one. The plans are made for a group of us American zither players, now acquainted after the FIGA Baltimore '88 Convention, and some of us will perform in one of the concerts as a representation of American zither players. We've come a long way, baby! **John Beyer, Herman Belz, Jane Curtis and Maria Klaus-Skowronek** from the east, and **Marianne Martynowycz, Lou Stessl** and yours truly from Chicago are going. Our itineraries are varied, but we will meet in Augsburg on Friday, October 28. Some of us will meet earlier in Munich to attend the Pasing-Munich Zither Orchestra concert on Tuesday, October 25.

**OVERTURE:** We arrive in Munich on Monday. We are staying at Pension Thalmair in the Grosshadern neighborhood of Munich, near the Popp family home. John and Maria arrive the next day. Somehow we have been coerced into performing at this concert also Lou and I, assisted by Johannes and Robert Popp play a medley of Stephen Foster songs, a selection which evoked a comment in the Munich Merkur newspaper account about "cowboy music being played on a traditional Bavarian instrument". We also participated in a n interview on Bavarian Radio with Fritz Mayr on his folk music program. The Augsburg Allgemeine newspaper did a three column and photo article about us and zither playing in the USA. We were beginning to feel celebrity-esque.

We often notice the small size of the zither world. Here in the United States we have perhaps 200-300 zitherists. In Europe there are probably 2,500-3,000. As a result of these small numbers, its easy to know each other. When we walked into

editorial page editorial page editorial

*This issue is dominated by our report of our trip to Zithermusikstage '88. We apologize if its not your cup of tea. We felt it is such a unique experience for American zither players, that we wanted to share it with you as much as we can on the printed page. We also apologize, if we are making these newsletters look like a clipping file for the Stessl's. We feel it convey's some of the excitement that happened for us. And we apologize that the clipping in this issue are in German. We know that many of you read German, and we also know that many of you do not. So please indulge us on this one. And now three apologies are enough!!*

*We have been gathering in your information on zither tables, and we are coming up with some very interesting photos, diagrams, etc. Once again we are pressing the limits of our paper size, but we'll have an issue devoted to tables this spring or summer. Those of you who would still like to add to this compendium of table building information, are welcome to do so. We just had a table of one design built, and we are going to try another design shortly. It's a very interesting subject! Gut klang!*

### VIDEO EXCHANGE INVITED

THE CHICAGO ZITHER QUARTETT IS INVITING ANY INTERESTED ENSEMBLES OR SOLOISTS TO EXCHANGE VIDEO TAPES. ALL OF YOU ZITHER PLAYERS WHO HAVE A VIDCAM, OR CAN BORROW ONE FOR A PLAYING SESSION, CAN PARTICIPATE. THE TAPES DO NOT HAVE TO BE "PERFECT". IT'S JUST A WAY OF COMMUNICATING AND SENDING "PICTURE" LETTERS BACK AND FORTH. SEND TAPES TO NEWSLETTER OFFICE.

The Zither Newsletter of the USA is published and edited by Janet Stessl as a service and information link for zither players in the USA, Canada, Japan, United Kingdom, Netherlands, West Germany, and anywhere else you would like us to send it. Your comments, articles, listing of events, classified ads are welcome. Advertising rates on request. Annual subscription rates are \$8.00 domestic and \$14.00 foreign air mail. Newsletter is published quarterly, on or about February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1. Copy requested six weeks prior. Mailing address 6173 N. McClellan Ave., Chicago, IL. 60646. Telephone 312-631-2854. Back issues available \$2.00 each.

### FIGA CONVENTION IN TORONTO

This year's FIGA convention will be held in Toronto, Canada on July 11 to 15 at the Toronto Airport Hilton International. Hotel and convention reservation forms are available from this newsletter office. You do not have to be a FIGA member to attend, but the registration for convention is less expensive if you are a member. See Fall '88 issue of newsletter for membership forms.

We are not certain at this point if we will have instructors from Europe or not. In any event, we will have organized zither activities in addition to the regularly scheduled events of the FIGA convention, itself. We cordially invite you to join us there. Those of us who attended last year enjoyed making new zither acquaintances, and improved our musical knowledge a little. Write or call here for information and reservation forms.

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## CHICAGO ZITHER CLUB



The Chicago Zither Club held its Diamond Jubilee 75th Anniversary Concert on Sunday, November 13, 1988. The festive program was dedicated to the memory of Carl A. Kandlbinder, their conductor of 20 years, who passed away shortly before the club's Spring concert. The program began with a Memorial to Carl delivered by Father Della Penta. The assistant conductor, Fred Fischer, is ably taking over the job of conductor for the club. The musical selections began with Bayrische Brüder, Der Weg zum Herzen and Jalousie played by the full club. A zither quartett of Ruth Valentino, Betty Meindl, Charlotte Gieb and Janet Stessl played a medley of French songs. The Chicago Zither Quartett played a medley of Chicago songs: Chicago, On the South Side of Chicago, and My Kind of Town. Die Juliska aus Budapest was sung by soprano, Joan Culler, and If Ever I would Leave You, from Camelo, was sung by tenor Cal Metts. The last two pieces were arranged by Carl A. Kandlbinder for the orchestra: Wiener Walzerklänge and selections from Im Weissen Rössl.

Ernestine M. Kandlbinder, President of the club, and Carl's wife of 52 years, continues on in her important role as head of the organization. "Erna" is responsible for the large attendance at the club's concerts. This concert, as a memorial to Carl, was even better attended as nearly 750 people attended. Both Carl and Erna have devoted many hours of their valuable time to the Chicago Zither Club, and the members appreciate their hard work on their behalf.



Fred Fischer  
Conductor

Ernestine M. Kandlbinder  
President

The next concert of the Chicago Zither Club will be held on Sunday, April 23, 1989. You are cordially invited to attend. Information and tickets may be obtained from Mrs. Kandlbinder. 1601 Greendale, Park Ridge, IL. 60068, Tele: 312-825-5166.

## HOLLANDER CONTRIBUTES MUSIC

### ZAHABERGER DIES

Karl Zahaberger, zither player from Innsbruck died last summer. Born in 1921 he played zither and other instruments since a young child of seven, and he played with many musical groups til 1940. After the Second World War he again played actively, playing for two Austrian cultural films and he began composing for his instrument. From 1953-57 he was a member of an "Austrian Good Will Tour" group throughout the world. From 1958 - 1965 he lived in Chicago playing at the Golden Ox Restaurant. When he returned to Innsbruck he continued his work as a zither soloist, composer and arranger. He wrote more than 70 compositions for zither, and five music books of collected pieces.

Karl's music continues his legacy to the zither world and is still available from his wife, Mrs. Elfriede Zahaberger, Josef Schrafflstr. 17, 6020 Innsbruck, Tirol, Austria. Send for a listing of the available single pieces of sheet music. The books are \$10.00 each and are titled: Marsch Album für Zither (12 marches, including Egerländer Marsch, Radetzky Marsch, Wien bleibt Wien), Operetten Album für Zither (Lehár, Strauss, Zeller), Romantisches Album für Zither (Brahmes, Lullaby, La Golondrina, Romanca d'Espagna, Dark Eyes, and ten more songs), Lieder & Evergreens für Zither (Im Prater Blüh'n wieder die Bäume, Das muss ein Stück vom Himmel sein and nine more), and Zitherklänge aus dem Alpenland (four folk music style pieces by Zahaberger).

We are reprinting one of his original folk music style pieces in this issue of the newsletter. "Hoamatfried'n" is a Ländler-Fantasie and we hope you will enjoy playing it.

The second piece of music in this issue, "Menuett from Lower Austria" [Menuett uit Niederösterreich], has been sent to us by Joop de Jongh of the Twentse Cither Vereniging of the Netherlands. It is taken from a German peasant mass, circa 1800 of anonymous origin. We met Joop, and also L. C. H. van Beek, editor of the Cithernieuws for the Nederlandse Cither Bond while we were in Augsburg. Joop is editor of his organization's newsletter the Resonance. There are two zither organizations in the Netherlands - one which is for zither players only and one which admits passive members.

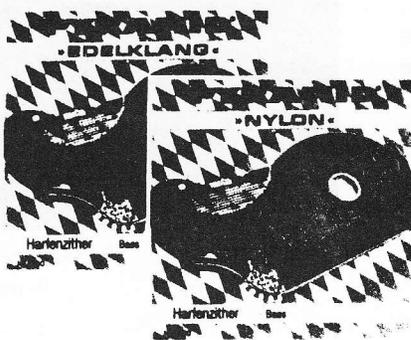
Joop de Jongh has been the source of much zither information: music, history, and building zithers. Our USA newsletter will benefit from his generosity in future issues again.

(translation of advertisement)

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# Wenn in Chicago die Zither erklingt

Janet und Louis Stessl machen Stimmung für ein „typisch deutsches Instrument“

Von unserem Chefreporter Karl Pflugmacher

AUGSBURG. „Der Klang war so einschmeichelnd schön, daß mit der Musik mein Wunsch wuchs, selber einmal dieses Instrument spielen zu können. So kaufte ich mir schließlich eine Zither, und diese veränderte mein Leben“, erzählt Janet Stessl aus Chicago. Jetzt, 25 Jahre nach diesem Kauf, tritt die 55jährige Hausfrau aus Amerika zusammen mit ihrem Ehemann Louis und drei Freunden ihres Chicagoer Ensembles beim Festkonzert der Augsburger Zithermusiktage am Sonntag im Barbarasaal (20 Uhr) mit Melodien aus Übersee an die Öffentlichkeit. „Das wird für mich ein unbeschreiblich tiefes Erlebnis“, schwärmt die blonde Amerikanerin. Aus lauter Begeisterung für die Musik und ihr Instrument aus Deutschland hat sie sogar Deutsch gelernt.

Als sich im fernen Chicago die junge Janet Stessl für die Zither zu begeistern begann, da waren die großen Tage dieses Instruments in den USA längst vorbei. Dort hatte bei Kriegsende die Deutschfeindlichkeit ihren Höhepunkt erreicht, und dabei geriet die Zither als „typisches deutsches Instrument“ in den starken Sog der allgemeinen Antipathie. Hatte es zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen in den USA sogar eigene Zitherfabriken, spezielle Notenverlage und noch über 100 Zithervereine mit 10 000 aktiven Spielern gegeben, so blieben davon bis heute nur noch je ein Verein in Chicago und Philadelphia übrig. Unter den 230 Millionen Amerikanern gibt es jetzt gerade noch 200 Zitherspieler.

Die Amerikaner — in Washington/Missouri wurde in der ehemaligen Fabrik eines aus Österreich zugewanderten Instrumentenbauers ein Zithermuseum eingerichtet — sprechen von einem aussterbenden Instrument. Nicht einmal Anton Karas mit seinen aufwühlenden Zithermelodien in dem Erfolgsfilm „Der dritte Mann“ konnte Amerika neu für die Zither begeistern. Das gelang dem Wiener nur in Europa, vor allem in Süddeutschland und Österreich, wo sich im Aufwind der Filmmusik alte Zithervereine neu formieren konnten.

In Chicago dagegen tat sich Janet Stessl schwer. Sie mußte sich das Zitherspielen anfangs selber beibringen, bis es ihrem Mann gelang, einen der allerletzten Zitherlehrer in den USA ausfindig zu machen. Ihn fand der jetzt 61jährige Zahnarzt Louis Stessl im Bekanntenkreis seines aus Graz eingewanderten Vaters. Janets Verfahren aus Norwegen und England dagegen kannten die Zither nicht.

Mal solo, mal im Duett spielen inzwischen Janet und Louis Stessl in der Woche oft an vier bis fünf Abenden. Um Stim-

mung für die Zithermusik zu machen, tritt die blonde Janet häufig auch im Dirndl in einem sogenannten Schwarzwaldhaus für die Gäste auf. Auf einer Party in Chicago lernte das volksmusikbegeisterte Ehepaar den Münchner Zitherspieler Johannes Popp kennen. Der junge Vertriebsingenieur war mit seinem Bruder Robert und dem Augsburger Jurastudenten Lothar Lägél als Zithertrio Popp/Lägél von der Deutschen Gesellschaft von Pennsylvania eingeladen worden, die musikalische Gestaltung der 300-Jahr-Feier der deutschen Einwanderung zu übernehmen. Ihr Präsident, Dr. George Beichl, ein bekannter Chemiker und begeisterter Zitherspieler, hatte das Trio bei einem Besuch in Bayern kennen- und schätzensgelernt und für die Jahrhundertfeier 1985 bei Ministerpräsident Strauß angefordert.

Jedes Jahr zieht es seitdem das Trio vom Lech und der Isar über den großen Teich. Es leitet dort Zither-Fortbildungseminare in Chicago und Philadelphia, spielt an Gymnasien und Musikhochschulen sowie bei Radio- und Fernsehshows. Als mehrfache Bundessieger des Wettbewerbes „Jugend musiziert“ sind die drei längst hochgeschätzte Zitherspieler, deren Bemühen in Amerika es aber auch ist, dort das „krachlederne Hofbräuhaus-Image“ abzubauen, das für manche Amerikaner leider immer noch zur Zithermusik gehört wie die oft schaurig brüllenden Jodler.

Immer zur Seite stehen den drei Zitherbajuwaren dabei Janet Stessl und ihr Mann. Sie haben ihrerseits in den letzten Jahren viele Urlaubswochen in Bayern verbracht, um an Seminaren und Zithertagen teilzunehmen. Janet berichtet darüber stets in der von ihr redigierten *Zither Newsletter of USA*. In ihrem Blatt spürt sie dabei den Wurzeln der Zithermusik nach, die deutsche Einwanderer in ihrer neuen Heimat gesetzt haben. In jeder Ausgabe druckt sie auch Noten und Texte eines deutschen Volksstückes ab. Je nach Anlaß ist es der „Tölzer Schützenmarsch“, der „Josefinen-Ländler“ oder das Weihnachtslied „Leise rieselt der Schnee“.



Treten am Sonntag in Augsburg auf: Janet und Louis Stessl aus Chicago. Rechts im Bild der Münchner Zitherspieler Johannes Popp. AZ-Bild: Pflugmacher

Pasing-Munich Zither Orchestra concert, someone said, "There's someone here to see you." It was Sepp Schäffler who had lived in Chicago in 1963 and played with the Chicago Zither Club while there. Old friends meet. Likewise, throughout our visit, we found friends we have made at Grossrussbach and other German seminars we have attended. The zither family is very cosy.

Next morning Marianne, who has been up north in Germany visiting relatives, picks us up in Munich and we drive to Regensburg for a two day visit with her friends. Even though we were four years late, and the zither assembly was not there, we enjoyed this fascinating medieval city. Under the guidance and hospitality of "Anni" we toured this city as only its residents know its wonderful nooks and crannies. In the evening we pulled out our zithers for a song or two and found our hosts wanted to hear USA country and western music. At home

(continued from page 5)

we play Bavarian folk music and in Germany we play American folk music. I think it makes sense, but I'm not sure.

On to Augsburg, we arrive Friday afternoon at the SVG Hotel, in the neighborhood of the Lägel family home. Herman Belz was there waiting for us. Jane Curtis arrived shortly from other regions of Germany. John and Maria are staying in a downtown hotel, having made earlier reservations. As we partake of a little supper to fortify ourselves for the evening concert, and enjoying a friendly exchange with other guests in the hotel, we become aware that we are staying in same hotel with zither players from DDR (Deutsche Demokratik Republic, usually known as East Germany to Americans). As we converse, another member of their group walks in. "Grüss Gott, ich bin Adolf Meinel." [Hello, I am Adolf Meinel.] We were highly impressed. Meinel zithers are the Stradivarius' of the zither world, and here was the last zither-making member of this famous family from Markneikirchen standing in front of us. (Adolf's daughter makes guitars, but not zithers.) Few zithers are being exported from this famous town, although several builders are still active, because of East German trade restrictions. And so it was that many times we shared taxi and trolley rides with Herr Meinel as we traveled about Augusburg to the many concerts of the ZMT '88.

**THE MAIN EVENT:** The first concert was listed as "Historical Concert" and was held in Barbara Hall. The concert opened with the Zurich Zither Club, directed by Frau Jenny Kosa playing "Fest Overture" (Smetak 1878-1955). The feature of the first half of the program was a presentation by Fritz Wilhelm playing six different historical instruments: 16 string schlag zither built in 1843 by Anton Kiendl, a 28 string schlag zither built by Georg Tiefenbrunner in 1865, a 21 string schlag zither built in 1860 by Kiendl, a 43 string harp zither built by Johann Haslwanger in 1880, a 44 string harp zither with seven fretboard strings built in 1880 by Kiendl, and a 42 string perfekta zither, builder unknown, but owned by Eduard Hoenes til 1939. "Concertino in F Major" (Simon Schneider 1886-1971) performed by the Kin-sau Zither Quartett and the Zurich Zither Club closed the program half with "Eine Kahnfahrt" by Josef Hausteine (1849-1926).

Second half of the program began with the Bayernland Zither Ensemble playing "Im Schönen Isartal" (Simon Schneider 1886-1971) and "Heiter" by Arnulf Preiter 1891-1975. Next Lothar Lägel performed solo, that fiery, gypsy number "Puszta Träume" (Ferdinand Kollmanek 1871-1941). Many of us have heard Lothar play this piece here, and we find it

# Cowboys „zithern“ zu Tönen vom Weißwurst-Äquator

## Gut besuchtes Zither-Konzert im Rathaus Pasing

**Pasing (js)** Wenn sie auftreten ist ihnen Publikum gewiß: Die Gebrüder Popp, mehrfache Jugendmusikpreisträger im Fach Zither- und Saitenmusik, gehören sogar schon jenseits des großen Teichs zu den bekanntesten Interpreten volkstümlicher Musik aus dem Alpenland. Am Dienstagabend spielten sie (diesmal ohne ihren Trio-Partner aus Augsburg) in den Reihen der Zitherfreunde Pasing, vor fast ausverkauftem Rathaussaal. Als besondere Attraktion hatte sich das Pasinger Zitherorchester, das ebenfalls schon als Preisträger verschiedenster Musikwettbewerbe hervorgegangen ist, Freunde aus Amerika eingeladen. Die Musik der Cowboys hörte sich auf dem bayerischen Tra-

ditionsinstrument durchaus familiär an. Zudem durfte man ja die meisten Melodien auch am Weißwurstäquator als bekannt voraussetzen. Gertrud Wiegele, Vorsitzende des musikalischen Zitherorchesters freute sich, daß das Ehepaar Stessl aus Chicago den langen Weg nach Pasing gefunden hatte. Auf dem Programm stand Klassisches vor der Pause und Beschwingtes nach der Pause. Das Medley der Stephen-Foster-Melodien aus dem Land der unbegrenzten Möglichkeiten fand dabei besonderen Applaus. „Im Publikum saßen sogar Leute vom Fachverband für Zithermusik. Es muß ihnen gefallen haben“, freuten sich die Gastgeber.



Janet Stessl Jane Curtis Adolf Meinel

quite exciting. The concert closed with our dear friends the Popp/Lägel Zither Trio playing Rondino (Simon Schneider 1886-1971) and appropriately for an historical concert, the "Hubertus Quadrille" (Duke Maximilian of Bavaria 1808-1888) the patron of Bavarian zither and folk music.

The concerts were held in various locations around Augsburg. Each concert was filled to overflowing, the size of the hall controlling the number of people attending, but they ranged from 400-700. All concerts were performed acoustically. Our modern ears are jaded by amplification, so it was interesting to see and hear well concerts performed under "natural" conditions. The halls were all acoustically excellent, so there really was no need for further amplification even for our "soft" little instruments. Professionally recorded tapes of each concert, or set of five, are available. See order form in this issue.

Saturday's events were centered in the Augustanahaus in Annahof in central Augsburg. Exhibitions of music publishers, zither builders instrument models, a display of 50 historical zithers from the collection of Ernst Volkman and the two concerts of the day were all there. The 10:30 AM concert included greetings by the Chairman of the German Zither Society, Ulrich Oesterle, and other dignitaries. Awards honoring length of service and dedication to the organization were made, but probably nothing surpassed the efforts of Michael Brandlmeier as coordinator of AMT '88. An undertaking of this nature requires the cooperation of many members, but surely Herr Brandlmeier carried a big portion of the responsibility. He is Editor of the Saitenspiel and proprietor of Richard Grünwald Publishing Company. One is surprised to learn that these many zither activities are extra curricular for Michael who is a school teacher by profession.



Michael Brandlmeier

The music of the morning concert, "Bauernmarsch" (Duke Maximilian of Bavaria 1808-1888), "Sonatine in F Major" (B. Campagnoli 1751-1827) and "Sonatine Nr. 2 in C Major" (Frank Schwab b. 1926) was interspersed with a discussion of "The Development of Zither Music During the 25 Years of the German Zither Society" held by Peter Hoch, Director of the Bundesakademy for Youths Musical Development of Trossingen, West Germany, and Prof. Anton Gösswein, Director of Youth Activities for the Society. While acknowledging that great strides have been made in those years, notably the Youth Competition, the participation of zitherists in "New Music" (see Cetra Nova concert) indicating the organization has not let zither music stagnate, but has thrust it into new areas, both discussants have new goals for zither music; additional compositions in various styles of music and continued expansion to new people.

The afternoon concert featured youth groups and orchestras. An ensemble from the '78 St. Ingbert Plucking Orchestra opened with "Kleine Suite" by Fackler (b. 1940), "Ballade" (Günter Andrich b. 1961), "Destre amoureux" and "Tant que vivray" (Pierre Attaignant c. 1528) were played by Schulz/Vanneste Zither Duo. The Youth Orchestra of the Regensburg Zither Club closed the first half of the concert with "Concerto in D Major" (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756-1791). The second half began with "Serenade" (Willi Schäffler b. 1926) performed by the Youth Group of the Püttingen Zither Club, followed by soloist Birgit Gessler playing "Sonate in C Major" (Johannes Pugh 1851-1939). Zither Trio Bochum-Langendreer performed "Divertimento" (Carl Ditter von Dittersdorf 1739-1799) and the afternoon closed with "Sinfonia in F Major" (Giovanni Battista Sammartini (1700-1774) played by the Yopuith Ensemble of the Ossweil Zither Club. What a thrill it was for us to see so many young people performing so well on the zither. Maybe someday it will happen in America, too.

Saturday evening was a Hoagart'n. You may not know what that is, and neither did we til we went, but it is essentially a gathering of folk musicians, usually in small inns or restaurants where the music is a spontaneous affair - similar to an American "jam session". For the purposes of this weekend, four restaurants in central Augsburg were designated, and the idea was to progress from place to place to hear all the groups. Folk music groups were there from Schwaben, Bavaria, Austria and South Tirol (Italy). Not only zithers, but steirisch harmonikas, folk harps, hackbrets, raffele and streigh zithers, mouth harp, and guitars were there, and of course singing groups of various size and a folk poetry orator. Attention would ripple around the room as each group took its turn to display their talents. We started at the Zeughausstuben, but never made it to the other three locations. We stayed late. We had a good time.



Folk Musicians at Hoagart'n. Zithers, guitars and wooden hackbrett.

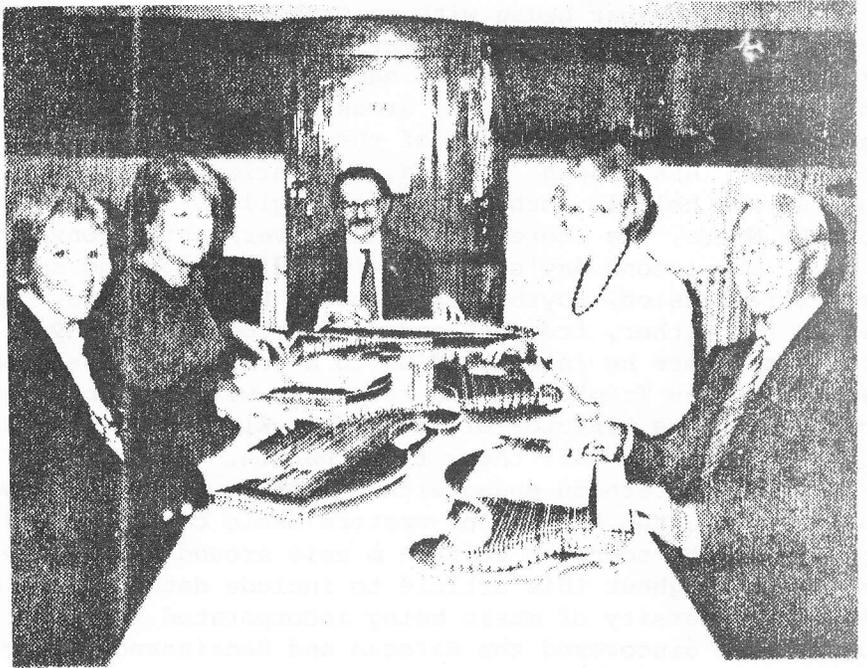
The Sunday morning concert was in the Kleiner Goldener Saal, Jesuitengasse, near the Dom [Small Golden Hall, on Jesuit St. near the cathedral.] This hall was a church 300 years ago. The ornately carved and frescoed room provided a feast for the eyes while the music delighted the ears. Listed as a Chamber music concert (Kammermusikmatinée) beginning at 10:30 AM, this was the largest audience. Incidentally, this Sunday morning slot is a popular time for concerts in Europe. The Zither Quartett of Tirol began with "Cetramontana" (Köper b. 1927) followed by that stellar father/daughter combo of Sabine Gösswein-Haas

and Toni Gösswein performing "Duo" (Pleyel 1757-1831) on alt-zither and bass zither, which would compare to a viola and cello playing together. "Pastorale" (Molter 1696-1765) by Ensemble of the City Music School of Ludwigshafen, "Suite Nr. 3 from Branchetto Musicale in A Minor" (Schein 1586-1630) were next. The soloist of the morning, Georg Glasl, student of Lili Grünwald-Brandlmeier, performed Bach (1685-1750) "Suite Nr. 3 BWV 1009 and brought the house down. The final number was performed by an ensemble from the Richard Strauss Conservatorium of Munich comprised of three zithers, flute and a soprano: "Kleine Lieder" (Beckrath 1901-1978).

The Sunday afternoon concert, back at Augustanasaal, Im Annahof, at 3:00PM was called the Cetra Nova Concert, and it was something new! New Music, as a category, needs a listener with an open mind. Our curiosity was aroused as we noticed Rudi Knabl sitting in the front row of this audience, and we wondered what he thought of it. In addition to what you might expect of modern music, nondiatonic whole tone scales, etc. they are using music with nonpitch sounds: glissandos of glass bottle necks, tweeks of strings between bridge and tuning pegs, thumps on instrument body, to mention only a few of the sounds heard during this concert. What's more, the music is not necessarily notated in the customary way, but with characters and graphlike lines, time durations (3 min. 20 sec.) instead of time signatures. However, this aural art can be just as exciting as tonal harmonic music. "Cetrestra III (Gernot Sauter b. 1947) by the Bochum-Langendreer 1894 Zither Club, followed by "Quadri" (Fackler, b. 1940) performed by Theis/Wezel, Woll/Woll Zither Quartett. Soloist Sabine Gösswein-Haas played "Klangbilder for Zither" (Schuster b. 1937) and the Quantz Quartett followed with "Quartett" op. 43 (Andreae 1879-1962). After the intermission the Zither Quartett of Vienna played "Funf Miniaturen" (Hollfelder b. 1924). The Guest Ensemble of the German Society of Plucked Orchestras played "Die Vier Temperamente" (Stefan Meier b. 1962). This ensemble was two mandolins, a mandola and guitar. The First Psalter Zither Quartett played "Klangbilder nach Joan Miró (N.J. Schneider b.1950) and the last number featured the Baden-Württemberg Zither Orchestra playing "Der Schöne Traum" (Gunter Andrich b. 1960).

Suddenly we were jarred by the reality that we had to perform in the evening concert. We are playing the Stephen Fopster medley again, but with Marianne Martynowycz, Jane Curtis and Herman Belz. Johannes and Robert Popp will once again support us by playing alt-zither and bass zither with us. We practiced in Baltimore at the FIGA convention in July with Jane and Herman. We practiced in Chicago with Marianne. We practiced in Munich with Hannes and Robert. We all practiced Friday night in Augsburg for one-half hour. The jitters set

in. We are instructed to be at Barbara Hall two hours before concert. We are directed to a prep room in the basement which we are sharing with Vienna Harmonie Zither Club Ensemble. We are trying desparately to practice a little more, but without Popp's as they are busy with concert arrangements elsewhere. We're not on stage til the second half, so we slip upstairs to the back of the hall (SRO) to hear the concert. The Bavaria Zither Club of Augsburg begins with "Concerto in D Major" (de Boismortier 1691-1755). Our dear friend Lothar Lägel takes the solo spotlight again playing two numbers: "präludium in G Minor and Fugue in D Minor" (J.S. Bach 1685-1750) and "Sonatine IV in B Major (Grünwald 1877-19-63). The Telemann Consort, Lägel/Popp with a recorder, play "Sonata Prima" (Veracini 1690-1768) and the Pasing-



Munich Zither Orchestra plays "Concerto in E" (Rosetti 1746-1792) with Robert Popp, soloist. Intermission. Back downstairs we prepare to enter from stage right. We are preceded by the Merchweiler Zither Club performing "Festliche Musik" (Händel 1685-1759). Our turn comes, together at last, all seven of us. Even though we are listed in the program as the Chicago Zither Ensemble we have Jane Curtis from Virginia and Herman Belz from Pennsylvania. We strain to remember to watch Hannes as our designated leader, so we have clean beginning and endings, and happily the selection goes quite well. We are WARMLY received by the audience. We have sensed throughout our visit here at ZMT '88 that we are most cordially welcomed, if even that people are a little surprised at our interest in zither music. The Stephen Foster medley was chosen as a representative piece of Americana. It had been arranged for the Chicago Ziother Club by our teacher, Mali Mackh in 1972. Mali is no longer with us, but she would have enjoyed having her arrangement and her students playing it in Augusburg and Munich.

Herman Belz  
Jane Curtis, Janet Stessl, Lou Stessl, Marianne Martynowycz,

The concert continued with our dressing roommates from Vienna playing "Simple Symphony, Second Part, 'Playful Pizzicato'" (Benjamin Britten 1913-1976) and "Two Liesenger Minuettes" (Anonymous). The program closed with "2. Orchestra Quartett" (Stamitz 1745-1801) performed by the Bochum Langendreer 1894 Zither Club.

Monday morning was the Breakfast with Zither Builders. Austria, East Germany and West Germany were represented: Manfred Althaus, Rudolf Bitterer, Helmut Buchsteiner, Gabriel Gruber, Kurt Hartwig, Adolf Meinel, Benedikt Mürnseer, Walter Sandner, Reiner Schrumpf, Horst Teller, Ernst Volkmann, Herbert Volkmann, Horst Wünsche. And that was the end of ZMT '88. A one hour sightseeing tour of the city was offered. Lou went on the trip, and I went shopping for a new dirndl. Typical woman! And that was the end of ZMT '88.

POSTLUDE: But it wasn't the end of the trip. We climbed on a bus to be transported to Violau, a small village about 45 minutes outside Augsburg for an International Seminar sponsored by the German Zither Society at the Bruder Klaus Home Conference Center. Originally a monastery, this facility has been enlarged eight times and is now an old/modern structure which is an excellent facility for musical retreats. They can handle three groups of 50 participants at the same time by "nesting" them in a way that each has meeting rooms, small concert halls, dining room and sleeping rooms without crossing paths. If we have similar facilities here in the USA, I'd like to find out about them. Another major point regarding this, and other seminars we have attended, is that the German government subsidizes and they are, therefore, very reasonable.

The seminar began with an orchestra session, late afternoon, just after arrival. German's tend, I think, to be very efficient with their time. Frau Jenny Kosa, director of the Zurich Zither Orchestra had us play Two Dances by Emil Holz, a Divertimenti by Mozart, and Old English Contradances, arranged by Frau Kosa among other pieces. In the evening we had a round table discussion of the current situation of zither music in our respective countries: USA, Japan, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, Norway and Germany. Discussion was held in both German and English. The president of the Japan Zither Society, Toshiko Naito, was there and we had several nice conversations.

The second day's schedule was divided among small groups, individual lessons, another orchestra session, rhythm exercises. Freddy Golden, composer of popular entertainment pieces for zither, from Holland, conducted the rhythm class and also directed the seminar orchestra where he introduced us to a new little piece he composed especially for the seminar called "Violau Trio". We understand it will be published by Grünwald Publishing Co. later this year. The Director of the Bruder-Klaus Home was thrilled, and declared that the music would hang on the wall there from then on.

The afternoon ended with a lecture by Toni Gösswein on the Development of Zither Music. While the history of western music can be traced for many centuries, zither music appears on the scene as written music around 1840. One of the reasons we have gone to the trouble throughout this article to include dates of all composers, is that we were fascinated with the diversity of music being incorporated into the zither repertoire. Zitherists in Europe have discovered the Baroque and Renaissance music of earlier times and how well it transcribes to zither. Originally written for lute, harpsichord, baroque guitar, they work on the zither as we are also a plucked instrument.

In the evening we enjoyed a Studio Concert performed in one of the small concert halls attended by about 100 people, seminar participants and guests. Performers included Popp/Lägel and Sabine Frank who was one of the coordinators of the seminar. The next morning, a half-day session included small groups, lessons, and one more orchestra session.

After a delicious lunch, nine of us climbed into the Home's Volkswagen van to be driven to railway station in Augsburg. The "free speed" policy of the German autobahn is an experience for Americans. John Beyer gasped as we cruised into Augsburg around 110 MPH. He said he was "scared to death". There our American group split and went back to our various journeys: Marianne had gone back to Munich earlier to visit an elderly aunt. John and Maria headed for Nuremberg to visit Maria's brother-in-law. Herman went to Bodensee. Jane traveled north to Wuppertal. Lou and I went to Munich for one more day of Bavarian hospitality and friendship. And this was really the end! That is, until four years hence when we again cross the ocean for Zithermusiktage '92. We'll be there.

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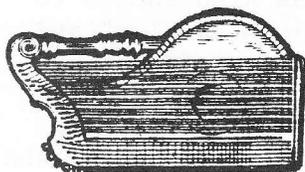
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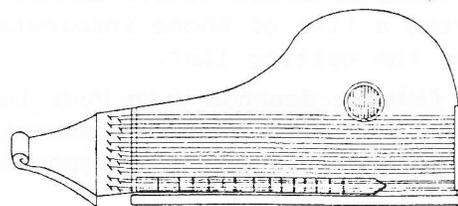
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## NOTES HEARD HERE AND THERE

**John Beyer** played a program for the Associated Music Clubs of Baltimore in January. His numbers included "Serenade" by Emil Holz and "Blues in Adventure" by Freddy Golden, among other pieces. **Jack Bourdess** played in December for the Omaha Toastmaster Club. **Leonard Zapf** and his son **Lenny** played on October 29 for the annual banquet of the Vereinigung Erzgebirge and on December 18 they played a Christmas program for the same club called "Lichtl Abend". In Chicago, during the Christmas Around the World events at the Museum of Science and Industry, a zither ensemble comprised of **Charlotte Geib, Joe Suba, Cathy Lauber, Helga Conrad, Art Anderson, Lou and Janet Stessl** played as part of the Austrian program. They played Three Ländler by Mozart, a Menuett by Franz Schubert, traditional Steirische Contra Dances, and a Viennese Waltz Medley, following a line of Austrian composers as a theme for the program. The same group plans to give a chamber music concert at the Edgebrook Club House on Sunday afternoon, May 21. In Columbus, Ohio **John Roeder** played for the Germania Gesangverein Singers Banquet. He successfully connected his sound system into the club's PA speakers in their dining rooms and barrooms. The sound quality drew many compliments. The **Japan Zither Society** is making plans for **Rudi Knabl's** concert tour in May, 1989 and for their Sixth Zitherfest on September 9, 1989. **Janet Stessl** played the zither solos from "Tales of Vienna Woods by Strauss on November 5 with the Buffalo Grove High School Orchestra and will perform them again with the Fox Valley Symphony at the Paramount Theater in Aurora, Illinois on Sunday, April 16. **Berniece C. Agnew** of Albuquerque, N.M. was kind enough to send us two of Franz Schwarzer's compositions. We had seen the "Josephinen Ländler" and reprinted it here in the Newsletter, but we were delighted to receive copy of "Greetings from Missouri". The cover has a wonderful ink drawing of the Missouri River with an old passenger riverboat pictured. It is our understanding that Franz Schwarzer wrote three published pieces of music. Now if we could only find the third - - -. Bernice wishes she could find a zither friend in Albuquerque, or near by.

Good news from **Michael Brandlmeier** of the Richard Grünwald Publishing Co. He is having the famous Grünwald zither method translated into English for the American market. We have started a list of those interested in first copies - please let us know if you would like to be on the waiting list.

This feature depends upon your input. Keep your news items coming in to the newsletter office. We are busy and cannot necessarily respond to every item individually, but please rest assured we appreciate your telephone calls and notes.



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