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Information about the Mandolin in Brazil

IMAS member Michael Reichenbach has taken the initiative to compile interesting information about the mandolin in Brazil and shed light on the characteristics of *choro*, making his findings available on the website www.mandoisland.de. The site also features a collection of mandolin method books from various countries.

What does FEGIP stand for?

The Spanish Federation of Guitar and Plectrum Instrument Associations (FEGIP) is an organization founded 1997, by amateur and professional musicians specializing in the guitar and plectrum instruments — such as bandurrias, mandolins, and all instruments within that family.

It has 105 members, comprising 61 plectrum and guitar orchestras, 38 individual members, and 6 honorary members.

Among other activities, the organization is dedicated to preserving musical heritage through the publication of historical scores. It promotes events, concerts, and festivals. Furthermore, it publishes research papers and the journal *ALZAPÚA*, which covers history, pedagogy, research, performance practice, and information regarding plectrum instruments, classical guitar, and flamenco guitar.

It provides advice to its members and advocates for the implementation of specialized study programs for plucked string instruments at Spanish conservatories.

Du you know the Trio Philéas from France?



The Trio Philéas was founded by mandolinist Marine Moletto from Menton (France). It invites audiences to discover a unique soundscape through its unusual instrumentation — mandolin, harp, and guitar — showcasing the interplay of three distinct plucked instruments.

Born of a fusion between traditional and modern instruments, this innovative ensemble presents a program featuring primarily 21st-century works by composers inspired by the folk music of various regions around the world.

The program includes works by Johann Sebastian Bach, François Laurent, William Grosjean, Marcel Tournier, Miyagi Michio, Astor Piazzolla, Katsumi Nagaoka, and Raffaele Calace, among others. (www.marine-moletto.fr)

Who is familiar with the *Estudiantina* in Guanajuato, Mexico?

Guanajuato is a Mexican state located in north-central Mexico; officially named the "Free and Sovereign State of Guanajuato," it has a population of 6.17 million and covers an area of approximately 30,000 km². Its capital is the city of the same name, Guanajuato.

Anyone who has heard of the *Callejoneadas*—traditional performances held in the capital city of Guanajuato—knows that they are accompanied by the music of the University of Guanajuato's *Estudiantina*. The *Estudiantina* musical

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ensemble originated in 16th-century Spain, a time when students were categorized according to their social and economic status. Poorer students belonged to these musical groups; living in boarding houses due to their financial situation, they developed their artistic skills there. Later, they began entertaining audiences to earn some money. Eventually, they were hired for ceremonies, receiving food and drink in return.

Members of these student groups were known as *tunos*—a name derived from *tunantes* (rogues or vagabonds), reflecting their bohemian nature.



The current student band at the University of Guanajuato was founded in 1962. Today, groups of student musicians roam the alleyways of Guanajuato at night, singing popular songs and telling stories about the city. Members typically wear traditional Spanish university uniforms dating back to the 14th and 15th centuries, consisting of a doublet or jacket, trousers, a cape, stockings, buckled shoes, and a white shirt. Some also wear bicornes hats or top hats.

Lars Forslund – An unusually creative musician and manager from Denmark in the international mandolin scene

Lars Forslund lived in Kobe, Japan, for two years. He studied the mandolin under Yasuo Kuwahara, played in Kuwahara's orchestra „Filmusica“ and toured Japan with Kuwahara performing music for two mandolins and harpsichord; he also toured various locations across Japan with the Swedish ensemble Musica Festiva. Together with Kuwahara, Lars organized a contemporary music festival as part of a cultural exchange between Japan and Sweden. He supported himself by teaching English and also studied the Japanese language. Additionally, Lars organized concert tours to Sweden and Finland for many of the Japanese orchestras he had come to know during his time in Japan.

Lars has performed at over 2,000 concerts in Sweden and around 500 in Italy, mainly in Venice but also in Rome and elsewhere. Either as a soloist with various Italian chamber orchestras or with his mandolin ensembles Musica Festiva and Camerata Mandolino Classico. Lars has organized international mandolin festivals since 1982 annually in Sweden and since 1998 in Venice. A collaboration with Venetian chamber orchestras and Swedish choirs took place annually, except during the pandemic, between 2009-2022. In 2022, Lars started the Venice Mandolin Festival, which was a success in its first year with over 180 participants.

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Music that Lars has performed with ensembles is and has been primarily Italian baroque music, Vivaldi, Scarlatti, etc. but also Bach, Telemann and Handel, classical music by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, Renaissance music by the Venetian dancing masters and contemporary mandolin music by Olof Näslund, Lars Forslund and Yasuo Kuwahara. In choral collaborations, Lars has always performed a mandolin concerto with various chamber orchestras and played the first violin part on the mandolin in choral works such as Vivaldi's Gloria, Pergolesi's Stabat Mater and many other choral works. Through these collaborations, Lars has made the mandolin appreciated by singers and musicians who have never heard a classical mandolin before. This has also contributed to an enormous network of professional musicians, choirs and concert organizers who have booked Lars as a soloist or with ensembles over the years.

Lars is not a professional composer, he only writes music for his friends. The compositions are always tailored to the friends' wishes for what they want to play. Sometimes he writes completely in baroque style for a recorder player for example and then uses the pseudonym Lorenzo Cristiano = Lars Christer Forslund. Sometimes he writes for a virtuoso harpsichordist or pianist in modern or neo-baroque style. The mandolin part is always relatively easy to play and is composed for Lars' own hand or playing technique. Not for a difficult-to-play mandolin part, in other words.



Lars' first and greatest inspiration came from an LP record on Deutsche Grammophon with Takashi and Silvia Ochi playing Vivaldi's mandolin concertos. That was the start of his great interest in mandolin music. Lars had then studied violin for ten years with Elis Bergström, Stockholm, baroque seminars with Jaap ter Linden, violoncello, viola da gamba, youth orchestras, chamber music courses, and Lars played the viola in a professional string quartet, the Schein Quartet and the Vadstena Chamber Orchestra. Then followed seminars and studies with Keith Harris, Takashi Ochi and Yasuo Kuwahara.

Lars is an unusually creative entrepreneur in the world of music. Has taught mandolin and violin for a short time. Now he only leads various chamber music ensembles.

Lars has set up 4 complete operas by Vivaldi: Giustino, Fida Ninfa, Griselda and the oratory Juditha Triumphans and he arranged the music for a mandolin orchestra, recorder, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, harpsichord, chamber organ, opera singer and female choir. The ensemble Camerata Mando-lino Classico performed it about 40 times between 2003 - 2008 and about 35 times between 2016 - 2019. And still perform some of the opera arias in an arrangement for mezzo soprano, recorder, mandolin and cembalino. Sometimes with a digital scenery on a large-screen TV. You will find a lot more information on the website:

www.vivaldifestival.com

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The Mandolin in Japan -

A study by Takaaki Shibata on Michael Reichenbach's website

Takaaki Shibata prepared an analysis of the status of the mandolin in Japan for the 2008 Mandolin Symposium in Trossingen, Germany. He granted Michael Reichenbach permission to publish this material on his website. The analysis begins with a brief history of the mandolin in Japan, followed by information on competitions, sheet music publications, orchestras, and the relevant association—the Japan Mandolin Union (JMU). Particularly interesting are the statistics regarding the number of performances of the most popular works and the most popular composers in Japan during the period from 1980 to 1997, as well as earlier periods. The chart provided there displays the composers' lifespans alongside the number of performances of their works between 1980 and 1997.

See: https://mandoisland.de/japan/mandolin_in_japan.html

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For Inspiration - The Concert Project MANDOLENIUM

With MANDOLENIUM, musicians Katsia Prakopchyk (mandolin) and Jan Skryhan (guitar), together with sand artist Alexandra Konofalskaya, have realized a concert concept that delights both the ears and the eyes. During the concert, the audience is invited to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the past 400 years.



The original music for mandolin and guitar—performed on four different instruments of each type — features works by composers such as Antonio Vivaldi, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Raffaele Calace, Nicolò Paganini, and Radamés Gnattali. Combined with live sand art, the concert leaves a deeply emotional and musically unforgettable impression.

The fascinating technique and profound artistic expression of these two outstanding instrumentalists captivate the audience, while the flawless synchronization of music and sand art transports listeners—both young and old—into a fairytale world for 60 minutes. Music and sand art merge into the art of the fleeting moment; only here and now can one hear the sound and witness the stroke that transforms, in mere seconds, into a magnificent, unified work of art.

The following video offers a wonderful visual and acoustic impression: www.prakopchyk.de/mandolenium

