EARLY MUSIC

Jean-Philippe Rameau and his world

Geerten Verberkmoes

Made in Amsterdam: a 1771 cittern by Benoit Joseph Boussu

Since 2009 I have been engaged in research into the life, instruments and working methods of the 18th-century violin-maker Benoit Joseph Boussu (1703–73). So far, these efforts have resulted in a comprehensive elucidation of Boussu's biography, demonstrating his unusual midlife career change from notary to luthier and also his seemingly restless pattern of domicile, which saw him relocate from the area of his birth in Hainaut, northern France, around the Low Countries respectively to Liège, Etterbeek, Brussels and, finally, Amsterdam.[1] Furthermore, around 45 surviving instruments of this maker have been identified and a number of these have been thoroughly studied, using both traditional organological methods and more contemporary techniques such as CT-scanning and digital endoscopy.[2] These analyses have provided new insights into the construction of the instruments in question, and into the working methods by which they were manufactured.

Until recently, only instruments of the violin family had been encountered during this study, though a cittern by Boussu, built in Amsterdam in 1771, had in fact been cited in various written sources of the past few decades. Despite repeated enquiries with several experts, the whereabouts of this mysterious instrument remained unknown—until the end of 2015. On Saturday 5 December of that year, I received a message from fellow instrument-maker Ben De Wulf, mentioning that a Boussu cittern would come up for auction in the United Kingdom the following Tuesday.[3] Minutes later, and still reeling from this exciting news, the decision was quickly made to arrange a trip from the Netherlands to Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex, where the auction would take place. In hindsight, that message proved to be the best *Sinterklaas* present in years:[4] the auction for the cittern was won after some nerve-racking back-and-forth bidding, and the instrument became the subject of the present article.

Cittern-family instruments in Britain and continental Europe in the second half of the 18th century

From the middle of the 18th century into the early 19th century, cittern-family instruments gained renewed popularity throughout Western Europe. This kind of instrument, along with other newly introduced, 'uncommon' instruments, was particularly fashionable during this period in the British Isles,[5] hence the designation 'English guittar' or simply 'guittar'.[6] A large number of these guittars by makers such as Preston, Hintz, Rauche and others have survived to the present day,[7] together with methods and sheet music,[8] providing us with good information about the instrument and its music in this distinct geographical and chronological sphere.

These British instruments typically have scale lengths between 410 and 440mm, though shorter and longer scale lengths are also found.[9] In general, ten metal strings were used, divided between four double upper courses and two single lower courses; the treble strings would be plain wire while the bass strings were overwound. In addition to this common configuration, guittars with nine, eleven or twelve strings have survived,[10] and also smaller or larger instruments.[11] Open major chord tunings, such as *c*–*e*–*g*–*c*′–*e*′–*g*′,[12] allowed novice players readily to produce pleasant-sounding solos and song

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accompaniments. More advanced repertory became available too, consisting of pieces written specifically for the instrument as well as adaptations of popular compositions.[13] Facilities for transposition extended the possibilities of the instrument even further.[14] The ease with which the guittar could be played, its elegant looks and portability quickly made it popular amongst amateur musicians, especially women of the middle and upper classes.[15]

From a decorative point of view, various kinds of ornamentation were applied—for example on soundhole rosette, headstock finial, fingerboard and edge binding—providing these instruments with a charming and desirable appearance. Soundbox shapes are diverse, and include teardrop-, almond-, egg- and pear-shaped bodies, together with more elaborate variations on these basic designs. For tuning, initially wooden pegs were employed, until the watch-key or Preston mechanism became widely used from the 1760s.[16] Frets, usually twelve in number and made from brass,[17] were inserted into presawn slots in the fingerboard, which for its part often featured a series of holes between adjacent frets, drilled all the way through the fingerboard and neck, designed to accommodate the bolt for attaching a capotasto. The bridge was not fixed to the soundbox, but held in place instead by the pressure of the strings, while the strings were attached to the bottom of the instrument by means of a series of small endpins of ivory or bone.

Whereas cittern-family instruments had been made and used in the British Isles since the Renaissance,[18] Lorenz Mühlemann and Andreas Schlegel argue, with Panagiotis Poulopoulos, that the English guittar's closest ancestor was the Moravian *zister*, and that this instrument was introduced to England from Germany, probably in the middle of the 18th century, by German-born makers such as Frederick Hintz.[19]

While a comparable strong local heritage of wire-strung, plucked cittern-family instruments existed in many countries across the European mainland, dating back to the 16th century, the popularity of the guittar in Britain may have contributed to the fashionable status of this type of instrument and its associated music in several countries on the Continent in the late 18th century.[20] Alternatively, some scholars have maintained that the direct precursor of the English guittar was actually developed and popularized on the Continent, more specifically in France, before it appeared in the British Isles.[21] Either way, numerous instruments from the period are extant by makers from France, such as Cousineau, Renault and others from Paris, Deleplanque (Lille) and Le Blond (Dunkirk/Rouen).[22] Citterns (or *cistres* in French) by these makers, preserved in the instrument collections of museums in Paris, Brussels, The Hague and Leipzig, typically feature pear- or oval-shaped, flat-backed soundboxes with half-herringbone edge bindings. Rosettes and further elaborate decorations were often made in ivory, mother-of-pearl or tortoiseshell. French citterns usually have eleven strings arranged in seven courses and were tuned differently from the (English) guittar, most commonly in an A major variant.[23] For tuning, both pegs and watch-key mechanisms were employed.

Thanks to Jelma van Amersfoort's detailed study of historical newspaper adverts, iconography, printed music and fictional literature, we now have a better understanding of the use of cittern-type instruments in Enlightenment Holland.[24] Such instruments apparently also enjoyed popularity in the northern Netherlands in the last decades of the 18th century, and were played both at homes and in public concerts. This is demonstrated by the four printed volumes of tunes and pieces for 'sixtre ou guitarre angloise' by the Amsterdam music tutor and publisher David Leonardus van Dijk, issued between *c.*1772 and *c.*1776, and by drawings and engravings from Dutch artists depicting individuals playing citterns (see, for example, illus.1). Nevertheless, only about a dozen known surviving instruments from Dutch makers bear witness to this practice, more specifically those scarce extant examples by Johannes Theodorus Cuypers from The Hague[25] and Johann Swarts (alternatively spelled Swartz) from Amsterdam.[26]

Benoit Joseph Boussu

As a result of extensive research in the past few years, much more is now known of the remarkable life of Benoit Joseph Boussu.[27] Born in 1703 to a family of notaries in Fourmies, a small village in northern France, Boussu himself worked as a notary between 1729 and 1748 in nearby Avesnes-sur-Helpe. In his mid-40s, he must have made some drastic decisions, since in 1749 he and his family suddenly

1 'Lady with a guitar', drawing by Amsterdam artist Jacques Kuyper (1761–1808) (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-00-1674)

surface in Liège, where the former notary builds his currently first-known instrument, a cello. In a notary act from that year, he is referred to as 'maitre luthier demeurant presentement en la ville de Liege' ('master-luthier presently resident in the town of Liège'). In short, this change of profession could well be characterized as the 18th-century equivalent of the present-day midlife career change.

Apparently still looking for a good environment within which to practise and commercialize his new occupation, around early 1751 Boussu and his household moved to the Brussels region: first to the suburb of Etterbeek, and from 1753 inside the city walls. Numerous surviving violin-family instruments, and the dates and serial numbers on their labels, provide evidence of a period of prolific production in a highly individual and recognizable style, while archive documents and contemporary newspaper advertisements suggest a clientele consisting of church officials, professional musicians and amateurs. From around 1760–61, however, following the deaths of his second wife and three of his children, Boussu's output seems to have dried up. Evidently these difficult personal circumstances caused him to reflect upon his position and that of his remaining children, prompting him in the end to relocate again in the early to mid-1760s. Indeed, no archival evidence has so far been found for the violin-maker's presence in Brussels after 1762. It seems, instead, that the family must have moved to Leiden: several sources mention a violin by Boussu labelled 'Leiden 176...',[28] and this information is supported by archive material only discovered very recently. A boy named 'Bennoit Boussu' was registered as 'famulus studiosi' (servant to another student) at the University of Leiden on 20 March 1765.[29] It is very likely that this boy was a son of Boussu the violin-maker, since no other Boussu family is known to have lived in Leiden around the same time; furthermore, a son named 'Benoit Joseph' has been previously identified.[30] Surprisingly, no yearly re-enrolments can be found for this 'Bennoit Boussu' at the University of Leiden after 1765.[31]

The situation becomes somewhat clearer from the later 1760s. Various previously unknown archival records from between 1767 and 1773 indisputably show that Boussu and at least three of his children were living in Amsterdam during those years. Some of these records are legal documents from the region of Avesnes-sur-Helpe, back in France, where Boussu maintained financial interests throughout his later life; in these documents he is described in terms such as 'marchand luthier demeurant [a] Amsterdam' ('purveyor and manufacturer of stringed instruments resident in Amsterdam').[32] Two of his daughters married in the Dutch city on the same day in May 1771, and the violin-maker acted as a witness on that occasion.[33]

In contrast with the relatively large number of surviving instruments from the Brussels period, the cittern described in this article is the only currently known remnant of Boussu's Amsterdam workshop. This suggests that his dealings with musical instruments in Holland were probably mainly of a commercial nature: although he may have built the occasional instrument now and then, the emphasis must have been more on the trading of bought-in instruments and accessories as well as on performing repairs.

At some time in 1773 Boussu permanently returned to the region of his birth, where he died in Avesnes in September of that year. According to his will,[34] all items related to instrument-making were left to his eldest daughter, who was to remain in Amsterdam for the rest of her life.

Provenance of the cittern

Several written sources from the middle of the 20th century onwards make mention of a cittern (or simply 'instrument') supposedly constructed by Boussu in Amsterdam in 1771. In February 1955 an auction was held at the Galerie Georges Giroux in Brussels, including a large number of musical instruments assembled by Jean Auguste Stellfeld (1881–1952), a prominent Belgian musicologist and collector of antique scores and musical instruments.[35] Among the auctioned instruments, lot number 1122 consisted of a 'cistre anglais; incrustations de nacre et d'ébène; marqué Boussu, à Amsterdam, 1771' ('English cittern, inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ebony; marked Boussu, at Amsterdam, 1771').[36] It is not known whether this instrument was sold at the auction or, if it was, to whom.

Several decades later, in 1980, Paul Raspé mentioned the existence of an 'instrument portant l'étiquette Boussu à Amsterdam 1771' ('instrument bearing the label Boussu at Amsterdam 1771'), but he did not specify that the instrument concerned was a cittern.[37] Then, in June 1983, a 'cittern by Boussu' was

sold as lot 16 at an auction at Christie's in London, to an unknown buyer.[38] The auction catalogue does not include a photograph of the instrument, but the following, rather detailed description is provided:

A CITTERN by *Boussu* branded *Boussu à/ Amsterdam/ 1771*; the one piece back of plain wood, the ribs of small curl, the two piece table with inset carved rose with ebony and mother-of-pearl star, the neck pierced by 6 capo tasto positions, watch-key tuning, the head terminated in a square finial decorated with an ebony and mother-of-pearl star, length 28½in. (72.4cm.)

This same 1983 catalogue entry was the source of information for Poulopoulos, who mentions a Boussu cittern in 2011.[39]

Finally, as described above, the instrument featured in the present article was sold at Sworders auctioneers in Stansted Mountfitchet (Essex, United Kingdom) in December 2015. The auction catalogue describes it as follows:

Lot 101: A cittern, 18th century, inscribed inside and on the rear 'Boussu a Amsterdam 1771' with two sets of six strings, arranged in pairs, watch key tuning, the rose and finial with inlaid ebonised and mother-of-pearl stars, 74cm long[40]

The condition report on the Sworders website merely added that the instrument has 'prominent splits to back'.[41]

2 Cittern signed 'BOUSSU, à / Amsterdam / 1771.': (a) front view; (b) side view; (c) back view

Table 1 Essential measurements of the cittern

Dimension	Measurement (mm)
Total length	719
Scale length (twice distance from top nut to twelfth fret)	450
Body length	363
Maximum width of body	300
Soundbox depth at neck	67
Soundbox depth at bottom	77
Soundhole diameter	68
Maximum bridge height	25
Width of fingerboard at top nut	45.5
Width of fingerboard at body joint	54
Fingerboard length	241
Neck angle (in degrees)	89°
Top plate thickness[43] (centre / periphery)	max. 3.0 / min. *c*.2.2
Back plate thickness (centre / periphery)	max. 3.0 / min. *c*.1.8
Side thickness	*c*.1.8

Given the recurring descriptions of a Boussu cittern or 'instrument' built in Amsterdam in 1771, and since there is currently no other known instrument attributed to this maker from 1771, I strongly believe that all of the above sources are referring to one and the same instrument: the cittern under discussion here.

Description of the cittern

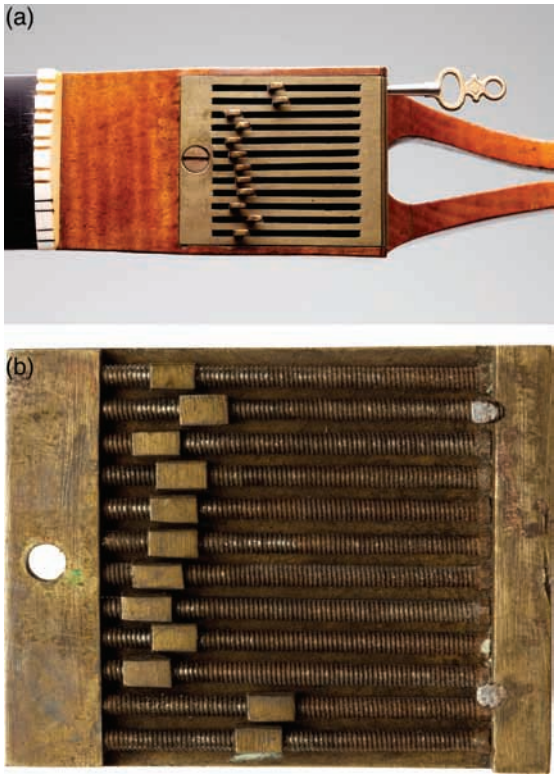
The cittern purchased by the author at the December 2015 Sworders auction is depicted in front, side and back views in illustration 2;[42] essential measurements are given in Table 1.

The instrument is signed twice (illus.3): internally on the back plate, opposite the soundhole, and externally on the back plate below the button of the neck root. In both signatures the name 'BOUSSU' is applied with a branding iron, a mark also seen on several other Boussu instruments from *c*.1759 onwards; the remainder of the text is handwritten directly onto the surface in black ink.

As can be seen in illustration 2, the instrument has a pear-shaped body akin to examples by the French makers Deleplanque[44] and Le Blond,[45] as well as to certain English guittars[46] and an extant specimen by the Amsterdam maker Johann Swarts.[47] Like Boussu's violin-family instruments, the cittern is skilfully and accurately built, with well-executed details that show considerable finesse of performance.

3 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', signatures: (a) external; (b) internal

The instrument accommodates twelve strings arranged in six double courses, and this must have been the original configuration since the brass watch-key tuning mechanism also allows for the use of twelve strings (see illus.4). In this respect the instrument under discussion differs from most English guittars, in which the two lowest courses were typically single-strung,[48] and also from French citterns, which usually had eleven strings arranged in seven courses.[49] For this reason the stringing arrangement on the present cittern is unusual, though Poulopoulos does mention two English guittars with twelve strings divided over six double courses.[50] Neither the tuning mechanism nor any other part of the cittern exhibits an applied marking (such as an engraved instruction) to indicate the intended tuning of the strings. The scale length of the instrument is 450mm, which suggests a lower tuning rather than the more common open C tuning.[51]



4 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', watch-key tuning mechanism: (a) front-side view, with (presumably non-original) no.4 tuning key; (b) back-side view

At the bottom side of the soundbox, an ivory or bone saddle is present for the strings to pass over, on the way to a small ivory pin for each individual string (see illus.5). The arrangement of these twelve endpins confirms the configuration of six double courses. Also on the bottom side, matching that on the back of the headstock, is an ivory button for the attachment of a carrying ribbon.

The fingerboard, made of solid ebony, has a radiused upper side and ends in a decorative accolade-like shape. The transition between fingerboard and maple neck is not continuous on either side of the neck; instead, a shallow groove is present. The instrument was built with twelve frets inserted into grooves in the fingerboard, though it seems unlikely that the present frets are original. Several of the existing bar-type frets (without top crowns) have become partially or completely detached from their slots, making the instrument unplayable in its current condition. These frets are made from a nickel-coloured alloy, while originally they would have been more likely to be made of brass. Another clue to a past fret replacement is that the current frets have barely any indentations caused by string wear.

Behind the first six frets, holes with a diameter of 3.5mm have been drilled all the way through the middle of the fingerboard and neck in order to permit the use of a capotasto. Illustration 6(a) shows this device, including its bolt and wing nut for attachment; the wooden part may be a replacement for the original component. These kinds of holes through the neck are seen on the majority of English

5 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', bottom side of soundbox (showing saddle, twelve endpins and ribbon button)

guittars too.[52] In the case of the present cittern, to prevent the capotasto from tilting, the initial section of each hole at the underside of the neck is finished in a square shape, to allow it to receive the square section of the attachment bolt. The movable bridge, shown in illustration 6(b), is made from ebony with an ivory insert, and may be either original or a later replacement.

As in most English guittars and continental citterns with watch-key tuning mechanisms, the cittern in question has a sickle-shaped head (illus.7). At the back of the head a central marking line is left, a feature likewise present on the back spine of many peg boxes on Boussu's violin-family instruments, which bears silent witness to the systematic and precise working habits of the maker. A teardrop-shaped opening is cut out of the central part of the head, a detail also found on another Amsterdam-made cittern, by Swarts (1792).[53] The terminal segment of the head must have been completely snapped off in the past, since a visible glue-line remains. The head terminates in a rectangular finial, inlaid with a decorative eight-pointed star. This detail is very similar (for example) to that on an early London-made instrument by Liessem (1756);[54] its compass-like design could conceivably have been a popular emblem in a harbour city like Amsterdam.

6 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', detachable parts: (a) capotasto; (b) bridge

The two-part top plate of the soundbox is made of very finely grown spruce, though the growth ring lines do not run completely straight in certain areas. Inside the perimeter of the plate, at a distance of 3mm from the edge, a wooden purfling is inserted; this consists of a light-coloured centre strip bordered on either side by two thinner, dark-coloured strips, identical to the purfling generally found on violins. Another influence from the domain of violin-making is the slight fluting applied continuously to the periphery of the top plate, which gives the impression of a subtle arching. This fluting may have been created for aesthetic as well as for acoustic purposes. In the centre of the plate a circular soundhole is present, including an inset rosette decorated with a twelve-pointed star made from ebony

7 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', headstock

and mother-of-pearl, and swirly patterns from a brown-coloured wood (illus.8). The style of this ornament is very similar to that of the rosettes on certain English guittars,[55] suggesting that this particular component was probably purchased from a specialized manufacturer or wholesaler. Around the soundhole are two concentric circles of purfling inlay, flanked by small embellishments made using punch and ink.

A single piece of maple was used for the back plate. As on the top, violin-like purfling and edge fluting are present. Curiously, on the entire back, the figure pattern of the maple is accentuated by ink lines so as to imitate spalted maple (see illus.2(c) and illus.3(a) above). These lines appear to have been inscribed between varnish coats, suggesting that they were drawn by the cittern's maker. This kind of decoration has not been identified on any previously studied instruments by Boussu.

The sides of the cittern are made from maple with a narrow 'curl' figure; the two parts of the rib structure meet at the bottom side, where a thin strip of dark wood is inserted at the joint. A similar filler strip, though usually wider, is present in many bowed-stringed instruments by Boussu.

The cittern is finished with an amber-brown varnish as seen also on Boussu's violins and cellos. This varnish coating, probably of shellac, is applied thinly and evenly. On the ribs, adjacent to the back plate, the original varnish has been removed during an earlier repair job, and a more orange-coloured retouching varnish is now present there. Varnish wear on two distinct areas on the bass side of the neck (illus.9) suggests that the cittern must have been played rather intensively both in the open position and with a capotasto between the second and third frets. This observation could imply an open A tuning, since with such a tuning the popular open C tuning is obtained when the capotasto is placed behind the third fret.

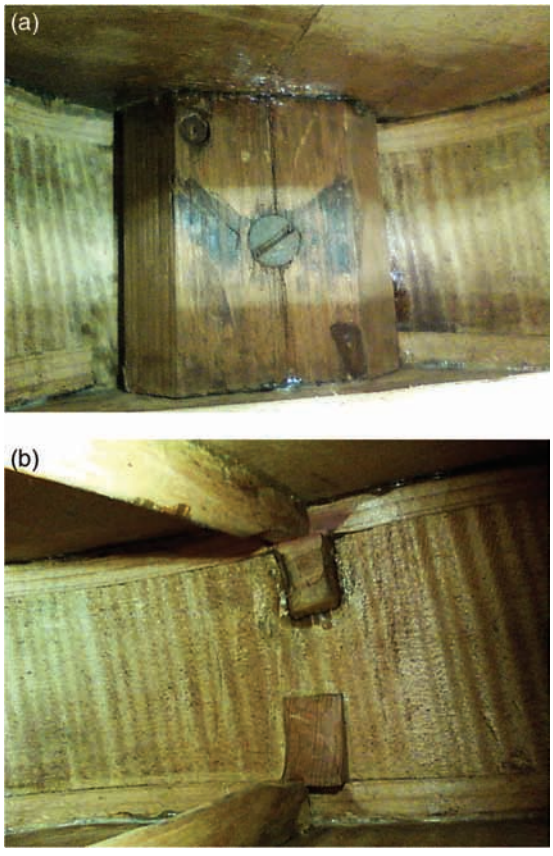
8 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', soundhole with rosette

Endoscopy and CT-scanning

In order to get a better idea of the internal construction of the cittern, the instrument was also examined using digital endoscopy[56] and X-ray computed tomography (CT) scanning.[57] Illustration 10(a), an endoscopic capture of the upper block area, shows that a metal screw is applied through the block to secure the neck. It is interesting to note that a separate upper block was used in this instrument, since all of Boussu's violin-family instruments, without exception, were constructed using the so-called 'through neck' method, according to which the neck and upper block were made from one continuous piece of maple. Endoscopy also demonstrates that spruce reinforcement linings are present at both sides of the cittern's ribs. The internal transverse braces on the top and back plates are secured by small support blocks glued to the ribs (illus.10(b)). Some of those supporting the top-plate braces appear to have been renewed.

9 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', varnish wear on bass side of neck

A lengthwise cross-section of the cittern reconstructed from the axial CT-slices (illus.11) provides information on the height of the transverse braces and again shows the screw reinforcing the connection between neck and soundbox. A longitudinal arching can be seen in the back plate and, to a somewhat lesser extent, in the top. To avoid excessive streak artefacts resulting from the presence of metallic parts, the tuning mechanism and strings were removed prior to the CT-scan. (Some such artefacts, caused by the frets, still remain visible.) Illustration 12, a cross-section of the neck and fingerboard, shows the fingerboard radius, the neck profile and a hole for the bolt of the capotasto. Furthermore, it is clear from this image that the fingerboard is made from solid ebony and is hollowed out at the underside. The slight grooves on either side of the neck are noticeable at the transition between neck and fingerboard.



10 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', endoscopic captures of interior: (a) upper block area; (b) braces on top and back plates

The orientation of the internal softwood braces can be seen in the digitally reconstructed 3D volume renderings of CT-data shown in illustration 13. Four horizontal braces are internally applied at each plate, equally spaced for both top and back. This kind of bracing is quite common for pear-shaped English guittars and French citterns.[58] The cloud-like structures in the top plate are caused by *haselfichte* figures in the spruce. Two large cracks in the lower treble side of the back are discernible, one having been partly filled with glue during a previous repair. Illustration 14, a 3D volume rendering of the upper section of the soundbox, shows the upper block with screw, and also one top-plate brace and two back-plate braces. The top-plate brace is still fully glued to the soundboard, firmly reinforced by a support block on either side where the brace meets the rib. As can be seen, the support blocks for the back-plate braces no longer fit properly onto the braces, probably due to past removal and subsequent improper regluing of the back, together with modification of the brace ends. Even more so, one block (at the front right of the

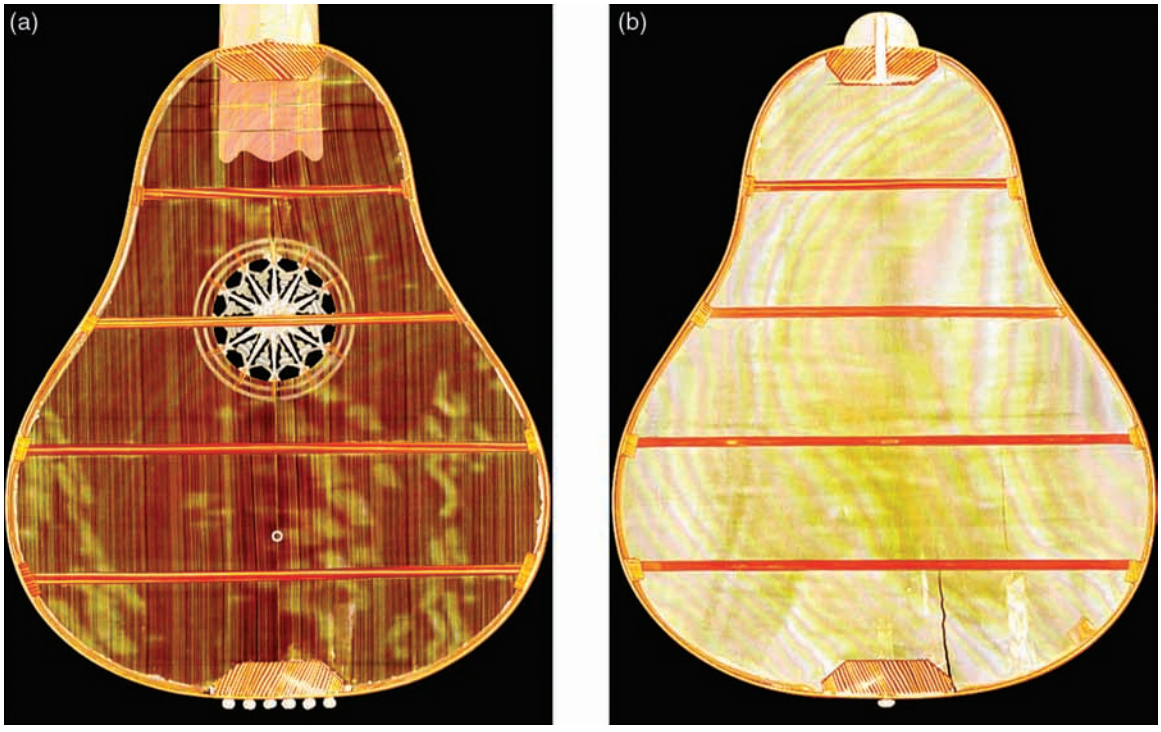
11 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', CT-scan: longitudinal cross-section along centre line

image) is entirely missing. As a result, both depicted back-plate braces have become partially unglued.

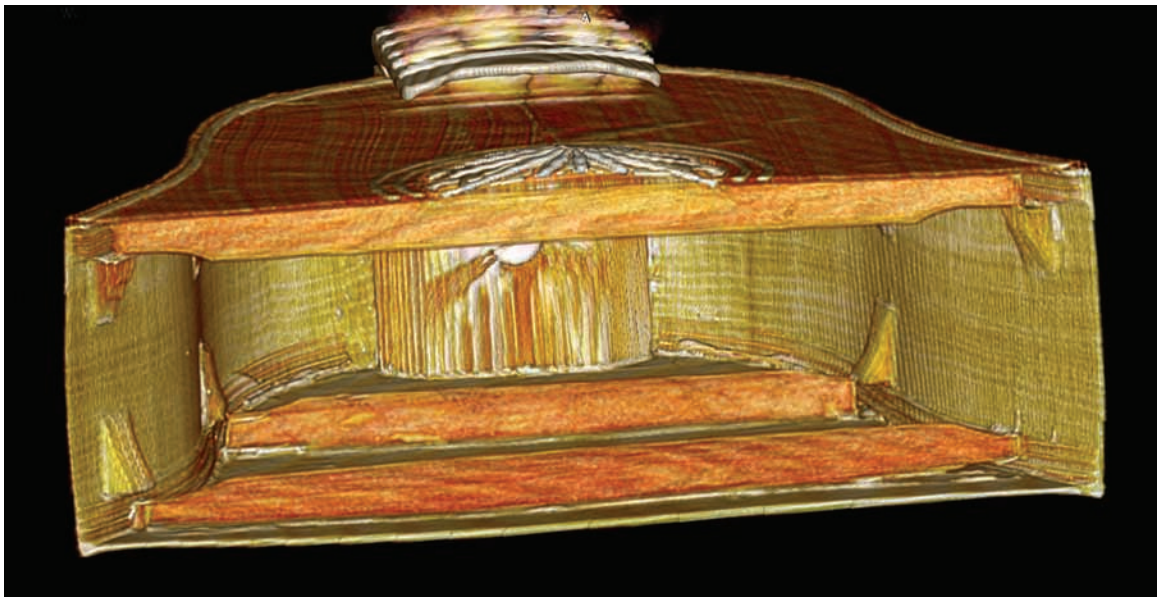
Made in Amsterdam?

The cittern presented here is currently the only musical instrument associated with Boussu's period of residence in Amsterdam. As we have seen, various archival documents show that Boussu was involved with musical instruments in Amsterdam, but probably more as a trader in instruments—and possibly their accessories—than as an actual maker. The question thus arises as to whether Boussu made the instrument under discussion himself or, alternatively, purchased it from a specialized manufacturer for resale. When examining the instrument, however, several clues point towards the former scenario. First of all, there are two identical signatures on the instrument, one on the outside and, more importantly, a second on the inside of the soundbox. To apply this latter marking to an already completed instrument, the soundbox would have had to have been opened—an uncommon operation in the case of a newly made instrument. The date of the signature, the year 1771, coincides with the dates of very recently discovered archival documents that reveal the presence of Boussu in Amsterdam between at least 1767 and 1773. Furthermore, several characteristics of the cittern, such as the careful workmanship and amber-brown

12 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', CT-scan: axial cross-section of neck and fingerboard, between fifth and sixth frets



13 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', 3D reconstructions of CT-scan data: (a) interior of top plate (symbol ○ indicates bridge position); (b) interior of back plate



14 Cittern branded 'BOUSSU', 3D reconstruction of CT-scan data showing inside of upper half of soundbox

shellac varnish, are consistent with those found on numerous extant violin-family instruments by this maker. Finally, the cittern clearly shows the influence of violin-making. The use of three inlayed wooden strips for the edge purfling of the top and back plates, in contrast to the usual inked purfling of English guittars[59] and the half-herringbone purfling of French citterns,[60] along with the application of a (slight) fluting channel around the perimeter of the top and back plates, implies that the originator of the cittern probably had a background in violin construction.

All of these arguments strongly suggest that the cittern was indeed personally built by Boussu. That said, several components of the instrument, such as the rosette, finial inlay and tuning mechanism, may have been purchased as prefabricated parts from external suppliers, since they bear great resemblance to corresponding parts on other contemporary citterns and guittars. The tuning mechanism, meanwhile, may have had another origin: one of Boussu's sons-in-law, Johannes Rousseau, was a gun-maker in Amsterdam.[61] He would most likely have had the skills to manufacture such a delicate piece of brass work.

The existence of this cittern, combined with the conviction that Boussu was its creator, now provides us with tangible and sound evidence that this maker was indeed involved in the trade of musical-instrument manufacture in Amsterdam, having previously made instruments in Liège, Etterbeek and Brussels. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note in this respect that no printed paper label was used to sign the instrument; this seems to be another indication of Boussu's limited instrument construction activities in the Dutch city.

By making this cittern at an advanced age, having previously constructed mostly (or even solely) violin-family instruments, the notary-turned-luthier shows himself to have been prepared to anticipate evolving musical fashions during the later years of his life. From the characteristics of the instrument, it is evident that he was well familiar with examples from abroad. Apparently, he based his design, and especially its decoration, on examples from the British Isles more than on those from the north of France, thereby ultimately realizing an instrument that could easily rival the constructional quality and visual appearance of the foreign models. The early use of an innovative watch-key tuning mechanism demonstrates that Boussu was aware of advancing technologies in the field of musical-instrument production.

In the light of the considerable popularity of cittern-type instruments in certain circles of Dutch society—as described by van Amersfoort[62]—in the latter part of the 18th century, Boussu might have built the instrument for a dilettante, or even for a professional musician or music teacher; perhaps someone like the above-mentioned David Leonardus van Dijk. Alternatively, the original owner of the instrument might have been someone much closer to the maker. As noted earlier, Boussu's two daughters both married on the same day in May 1771, and it is not unthinkable that the cittern, a rare creation of Boussu's later life, could have been made as a wedding present for one of them—particularly considering that this kind of instrument was often played by young women at the time. This attractive, albeit speculative idea would only gain in plausibility should a second, similar instrument from the same year emerge someday.

With the rediscovery of the Boussu cittern, a further example is added to a small surviving group of Dutch-made instruments of this kind. Moreover, besides the two currently known examples by Swarts, one of which is dated 1792, this instrument from 1771 appears to be the only remaining cittern made in Amsterdam during the period under consideration, which makes it a rare and early representative of late 18th-century cittern-making in that city.

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1 G. Verberkmoes, 'Benoit Joseph Boussu (1703–1773): violin maker and notary', *Galpin Society Journal*, lxvi (2013), pp.117–38; G. Verberkmoes, 'Benoît Joseph Boussu: la carrière singulière d'un notaire hainuyer devenu luthier', in *Le Hainaut et la musique: XVII^e–XVIII^e siècle*, ed. B. Van Wymeersch and F. Thoraval (in preparation for publication in 2017).

2 G. Verberkmoes, A.-E. Ceulemans, D. Balériaux and B. Stoel, 'An inside look at four historical violins by Brussels makers', *Galpin Society Journal*, lxix (2016), pp.109–36.

3 I am grateful to Ben De Wulf for notifying me about the auction.

4 *Sinterklaas* is the traditional Dutch feast in celebration of St Nicholas's Eve (5 December), at which children and adults receive presents.

5 P. Poulopoulos and R. Durkin, '"A very mistaken identification": the "sultana" or "cither viol" and its links to the bowed psaltery, viola d'amore and guittar', *Early Music*, xliv/2 (2016), pp.307–31, at pp.309–10.

6 The earliest currently known surviving English guittars are two instruments by Liessem, both dated 1756; see P. Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles, 1750–1810' (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2011), p.82.

7 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.226–31.

8 P. Coggin, '"This easy and agreable instrument": a history of the English guittar', *Early Music*, xv/2 (1987), pp.204–18, at pp.209–17; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.135–49; J. van Amersfoort, 'Miss Sara Burgerhart's English guittar: the "guitarre Angloise" in Enlightenment Holland', *Tijdschrift van de koninklijke vereniging voor Nederlandse muziekgeschiedenis*, lxiv (2014), pp.76–102, at p.77.

9 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.293. The scale-length is defined as twice the distance from the top nut to the twelfth fret.

10 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.13 and 357–61.

11 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.294–7.

12 R. Spencer and I. Harwood, 'English guitar', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (accessed 30 September 2016), www.oxfordmusiconline.com; Coggin, '"This easy and agreable instrument"', p.205; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.133.

13 Coggin, '"This easy and agreable instrument"', pp.209–10 and 216–17; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.135–49; van Amersfoort, 'Miss Sara Burgerhart's English guittar', p.77.

14 Spencer and Harwood, 'English guitar'; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.335–7.

15 Coggin, '"This easy and agreable instrument"', pp.205–7; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.96–127.

16 Spencer and Harwood, 'English guitar'; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.562.

17 Spencer and Harwood, 'English guitar'; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.333.

18 P. Forrester, 'The cittern family to 1700', in *Die Laute in Europa 2*, ed. A. Schlegel and J. Lüdtke (Menziken, 2011), pp.144–58, at p.150.

19 L. Mühlemann and A. Schlegel, 'The cittern from the 18th century to our days', in *Die Laute in Europa 2*, ed. A. Schlegel and J. Lüdtke, pp.158–66, at p.160; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.61–2 and 553; Poulopoulos and Durkin, '"A very mistaken identification"', p.311.

20 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.188.

21 J. Montagu, *The world of Baroque & Classical musical instruments* (Newton Abbot, 1979), pp.116–17; E. Segerman, 'A short history of the cittern', *Galpin Society Journal*, lii (1999), pp.77–107, at p.99.

22 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.203–4.

23 Spencer and Harwood, 'English guitar'; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.202. Both authors mention the *E–A–d–e–a–c♯′–e′* tuning. The non-chord tone *d* could have been added to allow for open-string playing of the bass note of the subdominant chord.

24 Van Amersfoort, 'Miss Sara Burgerhart's English guittar', pp.76–102.

25 Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-NM-11430-17; The Hague, Municipal Museum, inv. nos. EC 110-X-1952, EC 7-1958 and EC 36-1983; Brussels, Musical Instruments Museum, inv. nos. 0259, 0551 and 2917; Barcelona, Music Museum of Barcelona, inv. no. MDMB 459; C. van Leeuwen Boomkamp and J. H. van der Meer, *The Carel van Leeuwen Boomkamp collection of musical instruments* (Amsterdam, 1971), inv. nos. 56 and 57, pp.89–90 and 111–12.

26 A cittern, 'Dutch school circa 1780, branded Johann Swartz', was auctioned on 6 October 2010 at Bonhams auctioneers in London; see www.bonhams.com/auctions/17856/lot/11 (consulted 29 July 2016). This instrument is now in the collection of Jelma van Amersfoort in Amsterdam. Another, from 1792 and attributed to 'Swartson', is owned by Taro Takeuchi; see http://tarolute.crane.gr.jp/englishoriginalinstts.htm (consulted 29 July 2016).

27 Verberkmoes, 'Benoit Joseph Boussu (1703–1773)'; Verberkmoes, 'Benoît Joseph Boussu: la carrière singulière'.

28 F. Lindeman and S. Stam, 'Well-known Dutch violin makers', in *400 jaar vioolbouwkunst in Nederland*, ed. J. Bolink, A. Steinhauer, J. Giskes and E. Hooijen (Amsterdam, 1999), pp.169–225, at p.179; liner notes to the CD *Joseph-Hector Fiocco—Petits motets*, Scherzi Musicali, Musique en Wallonie, MEW 1054 (2010), p.8. According to the last known owner of this violin, the instrument was sold to an Asian foundation around 2010. Unfortunately, I was not able to examine the instrument before it was sold, and its current location is unknown.

29 Leiden University Archives, inv. no. ASF 15: 'Volumen inscriptionum 9 (1755–1808)'. This information was found with the aid of an online database established by M. Zoeteman-van Pelt, now incorporated into the website www.stamboomnederland.nl.

30 According to the *Volumen inscriptionum*, the enrolled Bennoit Boussu was twelve years old (on 20 March 1765) and had been born in Paris. My earlier research has identified a son named Benoit Joseph, born in Etterbeek on 1 February 1751; see Verberkmoes, 'Benoit Joseph Boussu (1703–1773)', p.129. The differences in age and place of birth may seem to imply that two different persons are being referred to, though Zoeteman-van Pelt does stress that age and place of origin or birth in the (18th-century) enrolment registers of the University of Leiden can be unreliable or at least ambiguous; see M. Zoeteman-van Pelt, 'De studentenpopulatie van de Leidse universiteit 1575–1812' (PhD diss., University of Leiden, 2011), pp.107–10 and 121–2.

31 Leiden University Archives, inv. nos. ASF 137–40: 'Recensielijsten 1766–1769'.

32 For example: Lille, Archives départementales du Nord, inv. no. 8 B 2 / 564: decision of the *Parlement de Flandre* dated 20 June 1771; Lille, Archives départementales du Nord, inv. no. 2 E 39 / 210: 'Transaction entre les mayeur et echevins de Fourmies et le Sr. Boussûs' dated 20 May 1773, notary A. Lebeau, Avesnes-sur-Helpe.

33 Amsterdam City Archives, archive 5001, inv. no. 334: 'Regitre des Mariages faits à L'Eglise Catholique Romaine Francoise D'Amsterdam', marriage registrations dated 5 May 1771.

34 Lille, Archives départementales du Nord, inv. no. 2 E 39 / 168: 'Testament du Sr. Benoit Joseph Boussu' dated 13 September 1773, notary J. B. Cornet, Avesnes-sur-Helpe.

35 H. Baeck-Schilders, 'The bibliotheca Stellfeldiana', *Revue belge de musicologie*, lviii (2004), pp.203–23, at pp.219–23.

36 Baeck-Schilders, 'The bibliotheca Stellfeldiana', p.223.

37 P. Raspé, 'La lutherie', in *La musique en Wallonie et à Bruxelles*, ed. R. Wangermée and P. Mercier (Brussels, 1980), i, pp.275–84, at pp.278 and 280.

38 *Fine musical instruments*, catalogue for an auction at Christie's auctioneers on 21 June 1983 in London, p.6.

39 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.206.

40 *The winter country house sale*, catalogue for an auction at Sworders auctioneers on 8 December 2015 in Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex, p.35.

41 www.sworder.co.uk (consulted 8 December 2015; since removed from the website).

42 I thank Wim De Temmerman for arranging, and Jan Stragier and Patrick Alliët for carrying out the photographic documentation of the instrument at the School of Arts, Ghent, Belgium.

43 Plate and side thicknesses were measured using a magnetic thickness gauge (Hacklinger, type B, Germany).

44 Brussels, Musical Instruments Museum, inv. nos. 1523 and 2921; Paris, Museum of Music, inv. nos. E.2080 and

E.980.3.1; Leipzig, Museum of Musical Instruments of Leipzig University, inv. no. 620.

45 The Hague, Municipal Museum, inv. no. EC 116-X-1952.

46 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.283–4 and 287.

47 This is the first instrument mentioned in n.26.

48 Spencer and Harwood, 'English guitar'; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.53.

49 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.202.

50 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.360.

51 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.293. Footnote 532 therein refers to D. Rossi: 'Guittars with an average scaling between 410 mm and 440 mm were normally pitched at C. Larger instruments with a longer scaling ranging from 450 mm to 530 mm would have been pitched at G or A.' The original article by Rossi, entitled 'A brief overview of the cittern', is no longer online, but could be found in August 2016 on the archive.org website at https://web.archive.org/web/20111002201136/http://cetrapublishing.com/artists/rossi/.

52 Spencer and Harwood, 'English guitar'; Coggin, '"This easy and agreable instrument"', p.205; Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.336.

53 This is the second instrument mentioned in n.26.

54 London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. no. 230-1882.

55 See, for example, Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.43, 83 and 302. Relevant examples are a guittar by Liessem (1756, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. no. 230-1882) and a guittar by Preston (*c.*1770, London, Royal Academy of Music, inv. no. 2006.2962).

56 Endoscopy was performed with a Discovery digital violin endoscope (Microtex, Italy).

57 CT-scanning was performed at Ghent University Hospital on 27 January 2016 by Prof. Tom Van Hoof, using a Somatom Definition Flash scanner (Siemens, Germany). Settings: 120kVp, exposure: 300mAs, pixel spacing: 0.715mm, slice thickness: 0.6mm (increment: 0.6mm), kernel: I70h\4. Image reconstruction was performed with the Osirix Lite DICOM viewer software (Pixmeo, Switzerland). I thank Prof. Van Hoof for allowing and performing the scanning of the instrument.

58 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.310.

59 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', pp.13, 278 and 343.

60 Poulopoulos, 'The guittar in the British Isles', p.202.

61 Amsterdam City Archives, archive 5033, inv. no.29: 'Poortersboek 1773–1777'. On 28 February 1775, one Joh. (Johannes) Rousseau, gun-maker from Liège, is registered as *poorter* (freeman). This same Rousseau married Boussu's eldest daughter in Amsterdam in May 1771 (see n.33 above). The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam preserves several flintlock arms made by Rousseau (inv. nos. NG-2002-23-53-1, NG-2002-23-73-A, NG-2002-23-73-B and NG-2002-23-74).

62 Van Amersfoort, 'Miss Sara Burgerhart's English guittar', p.102.