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duces unexpected results, but Jordà also points out that “if non-linearity is at first intuitively seen as a potential lack of control, it can also mean higher-order and more powerful control” (p. 105).

Jordà’s article is the most immediate entry point for the reader who has an interest in physical and gestural control. Subsequent articles—particularly Stefania Serafin’s “Computer Generation and Manipulation of Sounds,” Nick Collins’s “Musical Robots and Listening Machines,” and Amy Alexander and Nick Collins’s “Live Audiovisuals”—also touch upon issues of control, but the discussion takes a more holistic viewpoint by looking at the behavior and methodology of entire systems.

The Cambridge Companion to Electronic Music provides a robust view of electroacoustic practice in the early twenty-first century. One thought that seems intriguing: how might another set of writers elicit a different discovery of “personal tapestries?” As it stands, there’s not much to argue with over the editors’ choices, given their intent to provide the widest possible perspective of contemporary practice. Some of the finer aesthetic points that occasionally surface might be cause for debate, but the essential material is substantial and thoroughly covered. *The Cambridge Companion to Electronic Music* is a welcome addition to the literature, commendably serving to catalog a wealth of information that informs current thinking about the practice of electronic music.

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Jeffrey J. Noonan. *The Guitar in America: Victorian Era to Jazz Age.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008. viii, 239 pp: 40 black-and-white illus. ISBN: 978-1-934110-18-8. \$50.00 (cloth).

Recent years have witnessed increasing attention toward plucked string instruments such as the banjo, mandolin, guitar, and even ukulele. This attention has been manifest in publications, museum exhibitions, trade shows, and the auction house, where the most sought-after instruments can bring five- and six-figure prices. As the most popular and accessible instrument to players and collectors, the guitar holds a secure place in the number of publications devoted to it. And while a large number of these books are what might be termed “guitar porn”—works mostly filled with attractive pictures and relatively lightweight text—some very useful studies have appeared, including Noonan’s *The Guitar in America: Victorian Era to Jazz Age*.

Noonan's book is not an organological examination of the guitar, but rather a thorough analysis of its musical and social role in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Drawing on the plethora of magazines issued during this period that were devoted to the trio of so-called plectral instruments (the banjo, mandolin, and guitar), Noonan presents a fascinating look at not only the music and performers of the time, but also how the magazines themselves went about promoting the sales of instruments and the business of teaching, playing, and encouraging their use to the masses.

What is made clear in this book is that the guitar greatly struggled for respect during the period under examination. Although it is difficult for most to understand nowadays, from about 1880 to 1920 the banjo and mandolin were much more popular and respected instruments than the guitar. Employed in ensembles ranging from a trio to an entire orchestra composed of plectral instruments, the banjo and mandolin usually took the melody lines, while the guitar was typically restricted to a supporting role. The guitar's struggle is abundantly played out in the pages of magazines such as *Crescendo* and *Cadenza*, two of the better-known publications discussed by Noonan. Along with dozens of other magazines (many of them short-lived), they were devoted to promoting the banjo, mandolin, and guitar, and the acronym "BMG" is used throughout Noonan's study as a shorthand for the movement that popularized their use.

The other point that becomes obvious from the author's research is that however useful it is to examine these magazines as period sources of history about the guitar, mandolin, and banjo, one has to be aware of the biases that are present. The articles they included might extol the beauties of music making, but these publications were mostly what we might term "trade journals," existing primarily to promote the business of music. Articles and editorials frequently addressed the teaching of plectral instruments, and debated whether it made sense for an instructor to teach more than one instrument; many did, no doubt because it diversified their customer base. But selling instruments was another key aim of these magazines, and the earliest one, *S. S. Stewart's Banjo and Guitar Journal*, unabashedly promoted instruments and other musical merchandise sold by Stewart's own company in Philadelphia.

The journals nonetheless bear close witness to a number of significant issues that were debated by the BMG community. Regarding the guitar, four topics were repeatedly examined beginning as early as the 1880s: right-hand fingering techniques, how to support the guitar when play-

ing, the use of steel strings, and the creation of new, hybrid instruments. Readers of this JOURNAL may take particular interest in the last two of these issues, as they bear directly on the production of actual musical instruments. Another intriguing issue frequently examined by the contributors to these magazines is the guitar's musical pedigree and how its stature matched up (or did not) to that of the banjo and mandolin. On the one hand, the guitar was often linked historically to the lute, and portrayed as an instrument with great powers of expression and romance. As such, the writers often described it as well suited to female players and to men who were of "Latin" ethnicity (i.e., Spanish and Italian). But these same things somehow made the guitar suspect as a "serious" musical instrument. (The banjo was considered vastly more sophisticated in this period.) Race was sometimes brought into the fray as well, as the guitar (especially when played with steel rather than gut strings), was seen as an inferior instrument in the hands of African-American players. Yet another intriguing theme, showing that some things never change, is that playing one of the BMG instruments was promoted as a way for men to meet women. Although, in fairness, the instruments were likewise promoted as a way for women to meet men. All in all, this simply underscores the social benefits of belonging to a musical ensemble during the period, as the country was littered with BMG clubs of all sizes, many affiliated with colleges and universities.

Although the author is focused on the guitar as the main subject, there is ample discussion of the banjo and mandolin as well. This study holds very useful information for the scholar of any of these instruments, and for social historians, those involved in gender studies, and anyone who wants to learn more about the business of music in a period when some of the popular forms of the twentieth century were taking root. Combing through all of these magazines was surely a time-consuming process; it would be great if more of them could someday be digitized to make them more accessible to a wider group of researchers, including those not directly involved in the study of music history. (*S. S. Stewart's Banjo and Guitar Journal* is available in online facsimile at <https://urresearch.rochester.edu/handle/1802/2586>.)

Overall, this is a well-produced book. But its origins lie in Noonan's 2004 dissertation from Washington University in St. Louis, and the prose sometimes has the dry flavor of a dissertation rather than the more compelling story that might have been presented. It would have benefited from slightly tighter proofing and copyediting, as there is a fair amount

of repetition (in chapters 2 and 3, for example). As to statements that actually seem questionable, there are extremely few. Chief among these is Noonan's use of the term "New England" (pp. 29 and 33) to describe a region that apparently includes not only Boston, but also New York City and Philadelphia. This may have seemed permissible to the author when contrasting the East Coast to the Midwest, but it is a considerable stretch of this traditional geographical term. Also slightly troubling is Noonan's failure to make much more clear in the body of his text that up until about 1820 the term "guitar" in America nearly always referred to a type of cittern, familiarly known as a "guittar" or "English guitar." He eventually spells this out relatively clearly, but his indiscriminate use of the word guitar on pages 8 through 11 without better clarification could prove confusing to an uninformed reader. In any event, the cittern and its use in America would seem to have little bearing on what happened later with the normal or "Spanish" guitar, and this issue too could have been made clearer. One other unavoidable problem is that many of the book's illustrations, taken from the period magazines examined, are understandably grainy and striated.

One wonders if we will ever see a renewed interest in re-creating the sounds of the BMG ensembles that held such sway in America at the turn of the century. The instruments are certainly available (if sometimes pricey), as is the talent to play them. In all honesty, though, many of today's players of plectral instruments are somewhat unversed in reading musical scores and playing in the tight fashion required to make such ensembles musically viable. And then there's the music itself, which would likely sound rather staid and uninteresting to most modern ears. But should anyone wish to learn more about this important period in the development of BMG instruments, Noonan's book is an excellent starting place.

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Marie-Anne Sarda, editor. *Le Vieilleux: Métamorphoses d'une figure d'artiste du XVIIe au XIXe siècle.* Lyon: Fage éditions, 2008. 144 pp.: 147 color illus. ISBN: 978-2-84975-142-8. €25,00 (paper).

From July 5 to October 5, 2008, the Royal Monastery of Brou in the city of Bourg-en-Bresse in southeastern France, not far from Lyon, mounted an exhibit entitled *Le Vieilleux: Métamorphoses d'une figure d'artiste du XVIIe*