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namely, that the Granada makers have exported the Andalusian (mainly Torres) and the Madrid (mainly smaller versions of Ramirez and Barbero) designs, probably more than any other Spanish group of luthiers. Javier Molina completes (pp. 289–299) the group of essays with a survey of the makers, past and present in Baza.

The book would lead us to believe that the Granada makers are traditionalists. This, however, is not entirely correct given that there is some “double-top” experimentation and perhaps some carbon-fibre lattice-brace models. Looking through the catalogue, the designs of the *guitarreros* seem to be fairly independent of one another, still leaving me wondering what the defining characteristic(s) of the *escuela Granadina* are. Is it that their guitars, on average, are smaller than those of today?

The photography throughout is of consistent quality, although the printing is a little dark, and the diminutive catalogue representations leaves little to refer to. Despite my reservations, I commend the authors and wholly recommend their book; it is an excellent read. The various essays, although occasionally repetitive (excusable in a collaborative work like this) are sewn together in an excellent manner. I am left with the impression that the *Granadina guitarreros* are harmonious and happy to share their knowledge and experience, through their warmth and generosity. Perhaps that is what makes the Granada “school.”

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Whitney, Quincy. *American Luthier: Carleen Hutchins—the Art & Science of the Violin*. Lebanon, NH: ForeEdge Books, 2016. 312 pp., 16 illus. \$35.00 hardcover ISBN 978-1-61168-592-3; \$34.99 Ebook ISBN 978-1-61168-927-3.

Agree or disagree with her ideas, appreciate her instruments or think they are just interesting experiments, Carleen Hutchins (1911–2009) was a force to be reckoned with, and her work in violin acoustics and lutherie were important features of the twentieth-century violin world. Spurred on by a fascination with stories in which science and art overlap, Quincy Whitney documented the life story of Hutchins, the scientist-cum-chamber music aficionado caught in the June Cleaver world of mid-twentieth-century America. *American Luthier* is the result of nearly two decades of work for Whitney, a journalist who bravely took on the interdisciplinarity necessary in order to write about Hutchins. Carleen

Hutchins was a grade school science teacher who took up viola so she could play chamber music with fellow teachers, and there was not much chamber music written that included the instrument she already played—bugle. To occupy herself while pregnant with her first child, Hutchins built a viola. She was not satisfied with the sound and began exploring how to improve its tone and power. Led to the challenge of creating a set of violins that spanned the entire range of the piano, Hutchins taught herself physics, acoustics, and lutherie to finally build the first violin octet ranging from an eleven-inch treble violin to a seven-foot contrabass violin: the New Violin Family.

Any discussion of Carleen Hutchins requires exploration of physics, acoustics, wood and woodworking, musicology, and the larger violin world—performers, conductors, dealers, luthiers, curators, and conservators. This is surely a daunting task, and Whitney is to be congratulated for traversing terrain that ranges from intellectually complex to politically loaded with the finesse she has achieved. Not unexpectedly, Whitney is not always completely successful in managing the nuances of a given discipline. As a musicologist, I found myself wincing a number of times at musicological statements I would have told my students were in the “kind of, but not exactly” category of interpretation. For example, it is mildly misleading to say, “However, during the Dark Ages, musical practice remained distinctly separate from the idea of music. Under the auspices of Pope Gregory I...the only music in the early church was unaccompanied plainchant . . .” (p. 25) Well, yes, under Pope Gregory I this is true. But “Dark Ages” misnomer aside, medieval church music did, in fact, include early polyphony. Slightly more egregious while still being understandable is to use “minstrel” and “troubadour” synonymously (p. 26)—they were two distinct classes of musician—and to assign the demise of the troubadour solely to Church condemnation (p. 27) rather than recognize that the end of the troubadour likely had as much to do with the knightly classes that comprised the troubadours and trouvères being killed off in the Crusades as with being condemned by the Church. Further, to argue that Monteverdi’s *Orfeo* ensemble was a “model for all orchestras that followed” (p. 57) is just incorrect, gleaned—according to the citation—from a delightful, quasi-scholarly but non-musicological source. These are picky points related to contextual commentary and not to the central areas of concern; yet when one observes “kind of, but not exactly” information in one’s own discipline, one is more inclined to wonder if the same “kind of, but not exactly” also

applies in the other disciplines discussed. All of that said, however, this is the minefield of interdisciplinary research, and if these are the most serious misunderstandings, the general readership is still in marvelous shape and the scholar can shrug and move on.

This may, in fact, be the crux of the issue: Whitney's tome suffers a bit of an identity crisis through no real fault of its own. Is *American Luthier* a scholarly monograph or a popular book? A quick scan of sites like GoodReads and LibraryThing shows that it is certainly getting picked up by the general public—and that is likely the primary audience Whitney had in mind. On the other hand, because it is the first Hutchins biography and the first extensive writing about her work, scholars are picking it up, too. The scholars are looking for different things than the general public, though, and will need to manage either their expectations or their reading process—perhaps both. The book is a treasure trove of colorful characters, and many times one feels as though he is reading the libretto for a Mozart opera. It gets wildly difficult to keep track of who is who and to know which names to truly pay attention to because that character will soon be particularly noteworthy. I cannot count how many times I checked the index or flipped back page by page to find the first mention of names because I found myself realizing the significance of the people pages or chapters later and could no longer remember who they were or what they did. Instead of a family tree, a “network tree” or a graphically-organized table of connections would aid the reader looking to recognize and retain that massive network of connections that ran through Carleen Hutchins' life. Along the same lines, an opus list of her instruments with their current locations and a bibliography of her writing would be tremendously helpful to the scholar interested in following up on any of the myriad fascinating details Whitney describes about Hutchins and her work. Such tables and bibliographies would also help with a certain amount of confusion caused by the topical organization of the book. While organization by topic rather than by chronology makes perfect sense, the occasional need to mention something before it has actually been discussed sometimes requires the reader to hang on to confusion momentarily and know that all will become clear in due course. For example, in “Fiddles in the Conservatory” (p. 179), Whitney mentions the second concert of the Russian octet—when was the first concert? When did an octet go to Russia? Some forty pages later we arrive at the “Fiddles in the Palace” chapter and by page 217 read about the arrival of the octet in Russia and the subsequent concert series. On

page 212 in the “Fiddles on Exhibit” chapter, Whitney writes about signing the incorporation papers for the New Violin Family Association in the musical instrument storage room at the Metropolitan Museum of Art—but not until page 225 in the “Fiddling with Time” chapter do we find discussion of Hutchins’ separation from the Catgut Acoustical Society and formation of the New Violin Family Association.

Whitney is remarkably objective in her understanding of Hutchins’ professional greatness in relation to her personal weaknesses. She paints a clear picture of a woman venturing into male territories on multiple fronts—physics, lutherie, even any kind of a career at all—while first having acquiesced to societal expectations of a woman’s place in the home and family. Hutchins essentially abdicated the latter in favor of the former, and while she is rightly heralded as a pioneer among women in science and lutherie, she was in no way an Everywoman model for balancing the two lives. Whitney shows time and again how Hutchins was treated by male colleagues—including being forced to sneak in the back entrance in order to work with Sacconi at Wurlitzer’s—and how she managed being a female in a male’s domain (largely by refusing to recognize it as a male domain). Despite all this, Hutchins was the editor of two volumes of papers in violin acoustics, recipient of four grants from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, two Guggenheim Fellowships, and an Honorary Fellowship from the Acoustical Society of America in addition to four honorary doctorates. These are astounding accomplishments. Full stop. Yet the publisher’s headline at the top of the dust jacket back cover highlights “The *female* pioneer who revolutionized violin acoustics and built the first violin octet” [*italics mine*]*—as if her gender is somehow so important to these accomplishments that it needs to be mentioned in large font.* Whitney is clear that while Hutchins definitely struggled with gender role issues, her work stands on its own merit, gender aside.

A risk when one’s research requires substantial time to complete is that information may no longer be accurate by publication date. Indeed, a few details might have been updated prior to publication—such as noting the fact that the violins mentioned in Cremonese Collezione Civica in the Palazzo Comunale have been housed in the Museo del Violino for several years now, or noting whether or not Pio Montanari ever finished his violin octet that, as of 2004, was half complete.

Whitney’s book is an excellent opening salvo into Hutchins research, laying solid groundwork for future work. The lay reader will thoroughly

enjoy the colorful characters, the interlacing storylines, and the amazing serendipity that so often seemed to come to Hutchins—and that she grabbed with both hands. Scholars and luthiers will be fascinated with the tale of a lifetime's achievements in violin acoustics, and—it is hoped—their remaining scholarly and scientific questions will lead them into the next phase of research into the work of Carleen Hutchins, the pioneer who revolutionized violin acoustics and built the first violin octet.

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