

## SHORT COURSE DETAILS

MI6858 MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MAKING  
– TRADITIONAL STRINGED AND KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

Tutors: GEOFF BOWERS AND ANDY BUTTERWORTH

Dates: 9 DAYS MONDAY 10 APRIL – WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL

West Dean College has run musical instrument making courses for more than 35 years. Alongside the full-time diploma in Making Stringed Musical Instruments, the nine-day and supplementary five-day courses are run in the Short Course Programme. These courses, for enthusiastic amateurs can provide a stepping stone to apply for study full-time.

### ABOUT YOUR COURSE:

On this course you select an instrument from the list given overleaf and instruction is given in the principles of making, assembling and finishing your chosen instrument. As many instruments take more than one course to complete, you may also bring an instrument in progress to continue or complete.

**For complete beginners** it gives the opportunity to experience the sense of satisfaction of making a musical instrument from scratch using traditional methods. Instruction is given in the principles of making, assembling and finishing your chosen instrument to a state where it can be strung and played. However, please note that depending on the instrument chosen, and your making experience and skills, it may be necessary to return to subsequent courses to complete your instrument – please ask your tutor about this. Prior wood working experience though not necessary, is an advantage.

Materials and techniques covered:

- The ability to choose woods suitable for musical instrument making.
- Gain skills in the use of basic woodworking and some specialist tools relevant to instrument making, in the types of joints and glues, and in working with thin sections of wood.
- Learn techniques of shaping wood by carving and bending and of adding simple decoration.
- Theory and practise of stringed instrument set up, bridge and fret positions.

**If you have previous experience** of instrument making, you will extend your skills in the making of musical instruments by traditional methods.

Materials and techniques covered:

- Using an extended choice of suitable woods you will increase your skills in the use of tools specific to lutherie.
- Cover thicknessing of wood down to one to two millimetres.
- Complex bending and jointing, carving and applying decoration to the instrument.
- Theory and practise of stringed instrument set-up including choice of strings, bridge and fret positions and adjustment of playing 'action'.

Teaching is generally on a one-to-one basis catering for the student's individual needs and dictated by ability, previous experience and knowledge. There are group demonstrations where appropriate. As the course takes place in a large workshop, adjacent to the other courses in this series, you also gain knowledge by interaction with fellow students and other tutors. Instrument drawings are provided by the tutors. Health and safety is dealt with as an integral part of the course.

Please note: HUMIDITY LEVELS in the workshop are variable to dry; whilst the College has addressed this, some factors are beyond our control, therefore instruments are brought and left in the workshop at your own risk.

## LEVELS:

### BEGINNERS INSTRUMENTS

First instruments or starting points. For those with little or no experience who want to go back to basics and would like a more structured introduction to a subject

### INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED INSTRUMENTS

For those who have taken a related course or have some existing skills, and for more experienced practitioners who want to expand skills. The focus is on working towards independent practice.

## ABOUT YOUR TUTORS:

Geoff Bowers is an experienced teacher who studied at the Newark School of Violin Making. He is now a maker and repairer of violins, violas and cellos.

Andy Butterworth is a restorer of antique horological and musical instruments. He also specialises in making percussion, plucked instruments and hurdygurdies.

## TIMETABLE:

### Arrival day: Monday 10 April

From 4.00pm	Arrival for residential students
6.45pm	Non-residential students please arrive by 6.45pm for welcome chat and dinner
7.00pm	Dinner
8.00pm – 9.00pm	<b>First teaching session – attendance is an essential part of the course.</b> You should bring all tools/materials to the workshop.

### Other days: Tuesday 11 April – Tuesday 18 April

9.15am	Morning classes start
10.30am	Coffee
11.00am	Morning classes continue
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Afternoon classes
3.30pm	Tea
4.00pm	Afternoon classes continue
5.00pm	Classes finish
From 6.30pm	Dinner
8.00pm	Evening working – workshops are open each evening to 10pm and you may work on with your instrument with the tutor's agreement. Tasks which involve higher risk activities, or those which require constant tutor supervision, may not be possible outside core teaching hours (9.15am–12.30am and 2pm–5pm).

#### Other optional evening activities:

Informal music making with tutors and other course participants is encouraged, as is participation in the highly enjoyable informal concert on the final evening – an opportunity for finished instruments to be played, alongside enjoying the wide ranging musical talents drawn from across the whole course. If you play a musical instrument please bring it with you!

Please note: Each tutor will take a half-day break, in rotation with the other tutors, to be decided during the week. They will discuss suitable work for that session with you if you wish to continue working.

### Departure day: Wednesday 19 April

(Residential students to vacate rooms by 10am)

9.15am	Morning classes start
10.30am	Coffee
11.00am	Morning classes continue
12.30pm	<b>Classes finish</b>

**Departure day continued:**

12.45pm	Lunch
2.00–3.30pm	Pack tools and work to vacate workshop by 3.30pm
3.30pm	Tea then departure

**REQUIRED PREPARATION:**

As soon as you receive confirmation of your place, please tell us which instrument you wish to work on, and if you are new to the course give details of your past experience in instrument making and woodworking. We will pass this information to the tutor who will contact you to discuss this and materials required. Please email [rosemary.marley@westdean.org.uk](mailto:rosemary.marley@westdean.org.uk) or return the form below with this information.

If you wish to use the band saw or fret saw you need to undergo training organized by Nick Benham, Head of Workshops, at the start of your course. Only trained users will be permitted to use this equipment and access will only be given while tutors are present in the workshop. **Please return the equipment training form** overleaf, if applicable to you.

**MATERIALS FOR YOUR COURSE:**

We have a craft shop, which opens daily from 8.30am–2pm.

**Additional Charge:** On this course the tutor will supply most of the materials to individual students; the costs of specific instruments are given as an approximate guide on the list below. Please check the costs with your tutor when discussing your instrument choice. This charge should be paid to the **tutor** before the end of the course, by cash or cheque.

Clavicytherium	(D)	£370–450
Hurdy gurdy : guitar shape (Lambert 1781)	(D)	£250–350
Hurdy gurdy : lute back (Decante & Cailhe 1865)	(D)	£250–350
Hurdy gurdy : type IV (16th C)	(D)	£250–350
Hurdy gurdy: (H Bosch)	(D)	£250–350
Steel strung folk guitar	(D)	£POA
Bouzouki (flat back)	(C)	£100–200
Rebec #	(B)	£100
Hammered dulcimer	(B)	£150
Appalachian dulcimer	(B)	£80–£100
Mandola, octave/tenor	(B)	£100–200
Celtic harp (clarsach, 31 string)#	(B)	£170–250
Mandolin #	(B)	£100–200

Level of Ability: (D) advanced (C) intermediate (B) beginner or first instruments

The approximate timber costs listed are to give a guide only and final costs will depend on individual choice of timber and other variables. Costs of strings, pegs, reeds and other accessories are not included. Please discuss this when the tutor contacts you about your requirements.

Instruments marked # are simpler to make and are suitable first instruments, while the aim is to complete these in one nine-day course, please be aware that this is not always possible and you may need to return to a subsequent course.

**PLEASE BRING:**

**TOOLS:** ALL PERSONAL TOOLS SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR NAME.

The following (on page 4) is a basic list. It is not definitive so you should bring as many tools as you think you will need. Please remember that if you don't have any specific tools on the list most basic tools can be borrowed at the College. Diamond sharpening 'stones' are also available for use throughout the course. Certain specialised tools may be borrowed from tutors, together with all necessary jigs, moulds and patterns.

### Tool list:

Pencils \*, white or yellow are useful if working with dark woods  
Rulers \*, all metal. Ideally 6", 12" flexible and 1 metre straight edge.  
Knives, marking out knife or violin makers knife, \* scalpel with assortment of blades\*.  
Wood chisels, 1/8" to 1"  
Wood gouges, 1/2" and 1"  
Block plane, (small, low cutting angle plane for end grain, etc).  
Smoothing plane, general purpose  
Wood rasps, selection of profiles  
Needle files\*, selection of profiles  
Cabinet scrapers, rectangular and swan neck  
Saws, dovetail, small tenon, cross cut. (Japanese double sided and backed saws are highly recommended).  
Fret saw with spare blades  
Piercing saw \*with spare blades  
Small G clamps, 1" to 6" capacity, as many as possible.  
Centre punch  
Abrasives Garnet, Al-oxide etc.  
Glue: Aliphatic resin (Titebond), \* Resin W PVA are all suitable.  
\*Animal (hot) glue may be used if preferred, but please let tutors know in advance.  
Artists brushes, \*for gluing etc.  
To provide an accurate flat surface for marking out, sound board planing and rib sanding, a piece of MDF (medium density fibreboard) of approximately 1/2" x 24" x 30" is extremely useful. This would be clamped to the bench top in use.

\* The College Shop may have a few of these items, but please don't rely on it.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY:

The tutor instructs students in health and safety issues relevant to this course. Students may work unsupervised on agreed projects once they have satisfied the tutor as to their competence. There may be restrictions on the equipment available to students in the tutor's absence. All Personal Protection Equipment, apart from footwear, is provided by the College.

**Please remember to bring clothing which is safe and suitable for the workshop, it is also ESSENTIAL that you wear stout covered footwear (not sandals).**

Any electrical equipment brought in must be PAT tested by one of the workshop technicians before it is used on the course.

### PLEASE NOTE:

If you wish to use the band saw, fret saw or lathe you will need to undergo training organized by Nick Benham, Head of Workshops, at the start of your course. – PLEASE REQUEST THIS TRAINING ON THE FORM BELOW. Only trained users will be permitted to use this equipment and access will only be given while tutors are present in the workshop.

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## COURSE REPLY FORM

Title: MI6858 MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MAKING  
– TRADITIONAL STRINGED AND KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

Tutors: GEOFF BOWERS AND ANDY BUTTERWORTH

Level: BEGINNERS AND INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED

Dates: 10 – 19 April 2017

Your NAME: .....

Your CONTACT EMAIL: .....

Your TELEPHONE NUMBERS: ..... ..

Your INSTRUMENT CHOICE: .....

GIVE BRIEF DETAILS OF YOUR RELEVANT INSTRUMENT MAKING/WOODWORKING EXPERIENCE

### EQUIPMENT TRAINING:

I wish to use the:      Band saw      [   ]  
                                 Fret saw      [   ]  
                                 Woodturning lathe      [   ]

I am attending course(s) on 8-13 November 2016 [   ] and/or 10–19 April 2017 [   ]

I am bringing electrical equipment [   ]

Please email this information to [rosemary.marley@westdean.org.uk](mailto:rosemary.marley@westdean.org.uk) or return to:  
Rosemary Marley, Senior Short Course Organiser, West Dean College, Chichester PO18 0QZ