

# Basic Detail Report

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## Soprano ukulele

### Date

1951

### Primary Maker

French American Reeds Manufacturing Company

### Description

The Islander Uke was the first of Mario Maccaferri's Styron (plastic) stringed instruments. This example was purchased new by Arne B. Larson (who lived in Brookings, South Dakota, at that time) from Grossman Music Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio, and shipped directly from the factory in 1951, two years after the model was introduced. The Islander Uke was sold individually or as part of an Islander Uke Combination that included the Chord Master (a device attached to the neck with rubber bands, which automatically stopped chords with the press of a button). The Islander Uke received an early boost from Arthur Godfrey, a radio and television star who

sometimes played ukulele on his shows. Godfrey referred to the Islander as a "very good instrument that costs only \$5.95," causing demand for the instrument to flourish, particularly among amateurs who wanted to participate in the craze for Hawaiian music with a minimal investment of money and practice time. In 1953, Maccaferri followed up on the simply made Islander with more sophisticated Styron guitars that he intended to be high quality, affordable substitutes for wooden instruments. Mint condition with all original parts and sales ephemera. Purchased new by Arne B. Larson. This Islander Uke was sold to Arne B. Larson for \$3.30, plus \$.39 shipping, in 1951 by Grossman Music Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio, shipped direct from the factory. The original invoice is in the Larson Music files. The motto "SUMMUS PERSTO" means "I endure/persevere/last/persist as the greatest/best/developed to the highest degree/ perfect/most distinguished for excellence/ foremost of its kind" The Islander Uke is covered by U. S. Patents 2,597,154, filed March 15, 1950, awarded May 20, 1952; 2,614,448 filed May 15, 1952, awarded October 21, 1952; 2,649,828 filed July 3, 1950, awarded August 25, 1953. The Chord Master is covered by U. S. Patent 2,669,151, filed April 10, 1951, awarded February 16, 1954. See file of SA-306. The company name was changed to Mastro Industries in 1964. Stringing: four nylon strings Soundboard: ivory Styron Back: dark red and black marbled (Rosewood) Styron Ribs: dark red and black marbled (Rosewood) Styron; integral with back Head: dark red and black marbled (Rosewood) Styron with ivory Styron face Neck: dark red and black marbled (Rosewood) Styron; integral with head and body Heel cap: none; injection molding mark on back of neck heel Binding: none Fingerboard: white, dark red, and black marbled

(Rosewood) Styron; 13 silver Styron frets (including one at nut); silver Styron dots behind 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, and 12th frets, gradually smaller toward high end of fingerboard Nut: white, dark red, and black marbled (Rosewood) Styron Bridge: dark red and black marbled Styron with ivory (Rosewood) Styron saddle; string balls fit into recesses at end of bridge Tuners: four nickel-plated steel tension tuners with ivory Styron heads Rosette: black Styron ring Lacquer: none Linings: none Neck block: none End block: none Top bracing: 8 spruce fan braces integral with top

### **Dimensions**

Total ukulele length: 532 mm (20-15/16") Back length: 235 mm (9-1/4") Upper bout width: 124 mm (4-7/8")  
Waist width: 96 mm (3-25/32") Lower bout width: 160 mm (6-5/16") Rib height (including edging) at heel:  
51 mm (2") Rib height, at waist: 51 mm (2") Rib height, at end block: 51 mm (2") Head length: 119 mm (4-11/16")  
Head width, top: 62 mm (2-7/16") Head width, bottom: 45 mm (1-25/32") Neck length (nut to ribs):  
177 mm (6-31/32") Neck width, nut: 35 mm (1-3/8") Neck width, heel: 46 mm (1-13/16") Soundhole length:  
42 mm (1-21/32") Vibrating string length (nut to bridge edge): 350 mm (13-25/32")