

Basic Detail Report



Cittern

Date

1538 ca.

Primary Maker

Rafaello a Urbino

Description

A small number of Renaissance citterns made in Urbino survive, the earliest of which is dated 1530. Little is known about this Urbino tradition, though one of its masterpieces is this ornate instrument that appears to date from the first half of the 16th century. It bears a signature, Rafaello a Urbino, and perhaps a very faint date, 1538. It is made in a largely medieval manner, with the body and neck carved from a single piece of wood. Stringing: 10 brass strings Soundboard: two-piece, quarter-cut spruce or pine: wide grain Back: one-piece maple, carved from one piece and integral with ribs Ribs: one-piece maple, carved from one piece and integral with back Head: maple; open-carved stroll, the scroll itself

later; carved grotesque face, hook, incised foliate decoration, and incised lines in imitation of purfling on back Neck: maple; carved grotesque lion's head with extended tongue at neck heel incised lines on thinner part of neck, in imitation of purfling; integral with head Fretboard: maple; brass frets secured to fretboard with ebony inserts inset behind frets (similar to the example by A. Rossi, Urbino, photos in file) Nut: bone Bridge: black-stained maple; made by Gary Stewart Pegs: brown-stained maple; made by Gary Stewart based the Virchi Cittern at the KHM; two additional peg holes on bass side of head, and one on treble side of head, with string wear on head suggesting historical use of pegs at these locations Rosette: carved hardwood, probably a fruitwood, backed with parchment; foliate design Varnish: reddish amber varnish. Linings: unknown Neck block: unknown End block: unknown Top bracing: a softwood lateral brace under the soundhole extends into notches through ribs, such that its triangular ends are visible from the outside of the instrument

Dimensions

Total length: 972.5 mm Back length: 432 mm Upper point width, back: 183 mm Waist width, back: 160 mm Lower point width, back: 258 mm Lower bout width, back: 286 mm Top length: 457 mm Upper point width, top: 197 mm Waist width, top: 162 mm Lower point width, top: 275 mm Lower bout width, top: 308 mm Rib height at heel: 63.5 mm/ 63.7 mm Rib height, at waist: 62.8 mm/ 59.6 mm Rib height, at endpin: 44 mm Head length: 280 mm Head width, top: 20 mm Head width, bottom: 54.6 mm Neck length (nut to

ribs): 307.5 mm Neck width, nut: 56.2 mm Neck width, heel: 50.9 mm Soundhole diameter: 92.5 Vibrating string length (nut to bridge edge): 615.6