ESEM

The European Seminar in Ethnomusicology

The Magpie in Ethnomusicology

Jeremy Montagu, Oxford

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171 Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 1EL, UK
jeremy.montagu@wadham.ox.ac.uk

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I am greatly honoured, Mr President, Mr Chairman, friends and colleagues, at being invited to give the John Blacking Memorial Lecture. John was always a great encourager, especially to the newcomer and to the beginner, and then, once he got to know you, he encouraged you still more by becoming a strong opponent – I well remember lecturing for him once in Belfast and having him reverse his arguments and his stance on almost every subject as we went along so as to disagree with me on every detail – he would take the opposite point of view just to make sure that you could justify your own opinion. These contradictions were his expressions of trust and agreement, something that some of his students found difficult to understand – I remember one all-but weeping on my shoulder over this for a whole afternoon – but this was as every really great teacher should be. I think that all who worked with him, whether as colleagues or as students, remember most his warmth and his support, which shone through every contradiction and every disagreement.

As many of you know, I am an organologist rather than an ethnomusicologist, but when I said this at the meeting in Belfast at which we launched ESEM and where we determined that our full membership, as distinct from students or associates, would be open only to professional ethnomusicologists, and so I suggested that I did not qualify, John demurred strongly – of course I was an ethnomusicologist – my interests were world-wide and anyway ethnomusicology was an attitude and an approach even more than it was a subject. I suppose that if such a word existed I might call myself an ethno-organologist; occasionally I do so – words do exist as soon as one uses them, even if they cost sixpence a time – although in fact I dislike the term 'ethno' and I wish that we could get rid of it. In most contexts it has a connotation of fake: ethnic food is usually uneatable; ethnic jewellery is incompetently made in someone's back room in your own city, and so on. Besides, we are all *ἐθνη*. One strong argument against the use of 'ethnomusicology' is that it is we, the members of ESEM and our colleagues in SEM and ICTM, who are the musicologists. Those characters down the hall-way who spend their time on Bach and Beethoven and on parsing fugues and counterpoint, they are endomusicologists. We have the whole world and all its music as our province, whereas they have just their own little bit of it! Though, as John said to me once, some of them were ethnomusicologists without knowing it, among them my late professor, Denis Arnold, Heather Pro-

fessor of Music in the University of Oxford from 1975 to 1986, whose approach to musicology John regarded as in many ways ethnomusicological.

We should also remember the impact of the word 'ethno' on our contacts, on those out in the field whose music is our subject for research, for study, for investigation, and, I would hope, for pleasure. What we think of as *ethno*music is, to them, their *music*. I encountered this first, and then quite forcefully, when the museum from which I recently retired, the Bate Collection in Oxford, was presented with a Central Javanese double gamelan. Four Javanese from the Indonesian Embassy walked in one day and said "Would you like a gamelan?" My immediate reaction was "Glug!" but I then asked them "Why us?" They replied that there was one in Cambridge and that they thought there ought to be one in Oxford, too. So I asked again "But why us, why the Bate Collection" – after all we were part of a Faculty of Music and there was a world-famous ethnographic museum just up the road, which was also part of the same University. Their reply was "We think it would be more likely to be played here", but what was very clearly underlying this reply was that 'ethnographic' implied savage artefacts and the funny noises of distant peoples, whereas their gamelan, to them – and to us, which was why I leapt at the chance to acquire it – was their music, and this was why it belonged in a Faculty of Music. It has recently been moved by my successor; it still belongs to Music Faculty but now it does live in the Pitt Rivers, in the University's Ethnographic Museum. And yes, it is played there, though I think by rather fewer music students than before. But do remember that to many people 'ethno' is a pejorative term and to many of those among whom we research it may be regarded as an insult when we speak of the study of their music as ethnomusicology.

It is not only in regard to this reaction to the word 'ethno' that I think it is a pity that Jaap Kunst ever managed to persuade us to change our name. Apart from all other considerations, most of us find it almost impossible to listen to any piece of music, from wherever in the world it may come, without comparing it with another. We compare tunings, which can sometimes indicate the presence, or the absence, of cultural links. We compare musical styles and instrumental usages. Even within our own culture we compare Haydn with Mozart, Bach with Handel, Stockhausen with – perhaps I'd better stop there. So why not *vergleichende Musikwissenschaft?* Ours is indeed the musicology that has the scope for comparison if ever, and whenever we wish to do so, for our musicology

is not limited to one culture, nor is it limited to one period – we have the whole world to play with, and all its music from the earliest we can find to the newest there is, and let's be honest, at least with each other – we can no more avoid comparing the next music we hear with the musics that we know already than we can avoid comparing the next violinist's performance of the Tschaikowsky *Concerto* with those by the great virtuosi we already have safely stored in our memories.

Of course, one of the risks of having a gamelan in a school or a Music Faculty is that people may use it as a toy. It may become something for children to sample as a part of 'World Music', something they can play on for an hour or so and then say "We know Javanese music; we've done that one." This is a danger at university level, too. Many of us know how difficult it is to teach any real knowledge of ethnomusicology within the constraints and time pattern of an undergraduate music or anthropology degree, especially where, as at Oxford and Cambridge, it is not compulsory to attend lectures. We know the difficulties of teaching any really wide knowledge or even appreciation of music from other cultures in all its details, or even a secure structure of theory and method, as against the comparative ease of constructing what is really a World Music course, giving the students a good sampling of music from everywhere, though with no real depth, and fooling them into believing that they have taken a course of ethnomusicology. We have all met the ex-student who says "I studied ethnomusicology" but who in fact knows no more of the subject than that.

More seriously, the presence of a gamelan may, as it has very frequently done in the United States, attract the local composers who decide to show how much better Javanese music would be if *they* had written it. This is fun for them, and it is often fun for the players, but it is implicitly insulting to the Javanese. What is a real danger, to the integrity of the gamelan itself, and especially of course from the museum and preservation point of view, is the composers who like the sonority of the gamelan but who want to use it for their sorts of music, saying "That's a nice noise", and then asking people to hit the instruments with the wrong beaters and in the wrong ways. It's very easy to damage instruments in that way. It's even surprisingly easy, surprisingly with instruments that look as solid and robust as do those of the gamelan, to throw them out of tune by hitting them in the wrong ways, and especially by hitting them too hard. Even in Balinese gamelan, which sounds so loud and so clattering to those of us who

are more accustomed to the suaver subtleties of Central Javanese court gamelan, one strikes the instruments with far less strong an action than one does in the wilder moments of many of our own composers. Similarly, raiding the gamelan for instruments to use in music by Messaien or other gong-ho composers can risk serious damage. Stravinsky, in his *Sacre du Printemps*, asks for a gong scraped with a triangle beater – not from my gamelan, please! In fact, like most professional percussion players, I do keep a cheap gong for just that sort of purpose and for dunking it in and out of baths of water while it vibrates, just as violinists keep a cheap bow for when some idiot decides to include Rossini's *Il Signor Bruschino Overture* in a concert programme.

The main effect, and the great advantage, of being an organologist is that one has a subject rather than a geographical or a cultural area. Of course some instruments fascinate me more than others, shawms for instance, of which I have over fifty from all over the world, conch trumpets, and mouthorgans and trumps, which are also known as jews harps (these two are fundamentally the same – mouthorgans have small free reeds that you blow, trumps have big ones that you pluck). Even so, and even if the mouthorgan is limited to South East Asia and the Far East, the other three of these – shawms, conches, and trumps – are found over wide geographical areas, and among many cultures and from many periods. In fact my main interests are across the board: all instruments, world wide, and from the Stone Age to the present day. As a result, I have my own collection of instruments of all types totalling something around two and a half thousand. Hence the magpie in my title. If it's shiny, a magpie will fly down and take it away – if it makes a noise, I will. But one learns this way – it was looking at the reeds of a South-East Asian mouthorgan and at a trump from the same area that showed me the similarity – if I'd not had them to look at, I'd never have realised it. More important, if I'd not been able to take a Thai mouthorgan apart so that I could see the reed, I'd never have recognised its similarity, in every respect save for size, to the Philippine trump that I'd bought in Seattle. Nor, if I'd not had a very dilapidated mouthorgan from Borneo, without its gourd windchest so that the reeds were visible, would I have recognised the similarity between that free reed and the characteristic Malayo-Indonesian trump.

Unless one has access to a very unusual museum, the only way in which one can acquire such knowledge is by building up one's own collection which, because it *is* one's own, one can treat in this way. I don't, in fact, know of any

museum which would allow people, either visiting researchers or members of its own staff, to take such instruments apart, nor do I know of any museum which makes a practice of displaying fragmentary instruments so that one can see their insides, especially not so close up that one could see details of the reed of a mouthorgan. Here, in this sort of research, it is very often the broken instrument, which one can then examine in intimate detail, that can be more useful and more informative than that perfect example which is too fragile or too valuable to touch. As a result, I have often been very happy to be able to buy a broken or damaged example, with the added advantage that one can often do so very cheaply. That Thai mouthorgan for example: the shop in Cleveland had two, one perfect and one not working, and I was able to buy both for little more than the cost of the good one, for what else could they do with the broken one?

An alternative, of course, and one which does often exist, though perhaps it needs to be encouraged more strongly, is a departmental collection within ethnomusicology departments in our universities, though this would really be useful only to those of us who work within a university. Even then, it probably would not be successful for this purpose, because there would be the struggle between amassing instruments in playable condition (the demands for World Music!) and acquiring others for detailed examination in the sort of ways I have mentioned. The one would lead to the other, of course, for the more the instruments were played by inexpert and over-enthusiastic beginners for World Music, the more damaged and broken instruments there would be, which could then be available for internal study! At least, though, establishing such a collection might increase the awareness of our students for instruments and their importance; too much of their attention is too closely focussed on analysis of the music, to the exclusion of why and how the music is made and the means with which it is created. There is a constant tendency to forget that music is not just dots on paper (a belief that is very prevalent among the endomusicologists of our Music Departments), or, in our case, that it is not just electro-magnetic impulses on reels of plastic tape, but that it is real sounds made on real instruments by real people.

Organology leads to many fascinating cross-cultural and inter-cultural discoveries. Many of us, as ethnomusicologists or anthropologists, have very de-

tailed knowledge of a certain people, but we are often confined to one, very limited, geographical or cultural area, and we never acquire the wider knowledge of material culture, especially of organology, which can allow one to recognise similarities in artefacts of all kinds, and of course especially similarities in instruments, with those of other peoples. Such similarities can be an indication of how peoples move and migrate, of how they interact with neighbouring peoples, of how they trade, of how they assimilate, and so on. Why, for example, does one find a very characteristic type of long trumpet in Central Asia, in Morocco, among the Hausa in Nigeria and neighbouring areas, in thirteenth-century Spain, and in the mud of the River Thames in London in an archæological stratum datable to the fourteenth century? The answer is revealed by a study of the migration of peoples, of mediæval iconography, and of the history and transmission of musical instruments in the European Middle Ages, and all of it, of course, is part of the normal study of organology. We know that there was a migration from North Africa down into the Niger country by a people who used shawms and long trumpets. We know from reports by the Crusaders and their chroniclers, and from illuminations in their and other manuscripts, that the armies of Saladin blew long trumpets. We know that the Moroccans called, and still call, their trumpet *al nafir* and we know, too, that the Spanish, now just across the Straits of Gibraltar, but who were then, in the thirteenth century, sharing Iberia with the Moors, called their trumpet *añafil*. We know that from the second half of the thirteenth century onwards we see many medieval manuscripts with long trumpets. We can see that these illustrations, at least on this scale, are indistinguishable from the *kakaki*, the long trumpet which is used in Hausa Nigeria to this day, and are also very similar to the Moroccan *al nafir*, both of which I have in my collection. It was only a few years ago that, when they were excavating the site of the old Billingsgate fish market in London, on the banks of the River Thames, a trumpet was found which was dated to the mid-fourteenth century, and which again was very similar to both the Nigerian and the Moroccan instruments. The assumptions which had been made by organologists from contemporary documents, from mediæval iconography, from comparative (yes, *vergleichende*) organology, and from comparative etymology, were thus confirmed by archæology.

To take another example. Why does one find a very important development of the shawm from the Caucasus to Morocco? Here the cause is more the

politics of empire and the economics of trade, but one only comes to see the connexion by knowing shawms from Turkey (regrettably I have nothing from the Caucasus – all that I know of those shawms are the pictures in the Vertkov *Atlas*) through the Balkans into North Africa, and possessing them so that one can take them apart which, as I have said already, is often unpopular with museum curators of instruments. If one knows the different instruments from the various areas, one can see the similarities and, through organological knowledge, recognise the vital acoustical and ergological importance of the fork in the head, which I have described in my article in the ICTM *Yearbook for Traditional Music* for 1997.

One is, I think, irresponsible if one holds such a collection and hides it away in secret. Still more, if nobody ever knows what the collection contains. Hence the inclusion of my collection in the CIMCIM lists of musical instrument museums on the Web, even if it is lightly camouflaged against potential burglars by listing it as 'a private collection in Oxford accessible through the Bate Collection.' There the numbers of each type of instrument are given, divided between 'european' art music ('european' in quotes because it is irrespective of whether the instrument was made in Europe, America, China, or Japan, so long as it was designed for the music of Bach, Beethoven, Berlin, Biederbeck, and Bartók, and their predecessors and successors, a style of music for which we have no word if one wishes to avoid the nonsensical term 'Western'), between the instruments for that music, those for European folk music, and those for the music of the rest of the world. However, just listing it on the Web is not sufficient, and it is far less sufficient for public museums. Every collection accessible to the public has the duty, in most cases neglected and ignored, to publish, at the very least, a comprehensive checklist which can be regularly updated as new acquisitions are accessioned (mine is available to anyone on computer by email), and to back this up with proper detailed catalogues.

Only too often in this area the best is the enemy of the good. It is not considered 'kulturny' to publish unless it can be done 'properly', well produced, well bound, every instrument photographed, half of them with X-radiographs, and so on, and, of course, costing a fortune. Few museums today have the necessary funding to publish like this, nor we the funds to buy the result even if they did, nor do they have the necessary staff time. Fair enough – if money is not there one has to cut one's coat according to one's cloth. What is not 'fair

enough' is then to give up, with the attitude that an inexpensive in-house desktop production is not consonant with their dignity. It is today perfectly possible to produce more than adequate handbooks, guides, checklists, and catalogues for peanuts, using one's own computer and printer and the office photocopier, as I did with dozens of them at the Bate Collection, or using the local copy-shop as I am doing with my own collection, and indeed as I have done with this very paper.

Similarly, my friends and colleagues, it is perfectly possible to publish one's own research and fieldwork, as I did with my own *Musical Instruments of the Bible*. It is no longer an acceptable excuse that one can't find a journal for it. It costs very little. One applies to one's local variant of 'Books in Print' for an ISBN, and there you are – a new book to list on your CV and, if you're lucky, most or even all of your money back from sales.

One less fortunate result of being an organologist, especially a general one, rather than one who specialises in the instruments of any one area or any one culture, is that one tends not to spend much time on fieldwork in the normal sense, though one could say that one is always in the field because one is always looking at instruments or looking for more instruments. I have really only carried out two pieces of field research, unless, as I think perhaps I can, one counts many years as an orchestral musician and the fact that I invented mediæval percussion – I was the first player to make reconstructions of mediæval percussion instruments, which I played with the well-known early-music ensemble, Musica Reservata. Before that time, while wind and string players had for many years been careful to obtain the right sort of recorder, the correct model of lute, viol, or rebec, there was a general feeling that percussion did not matter and that any old drum would do. I must confess that the first concert that I played with Musica Reservata was on much that basis, using jazz tomtoms, modern tambourine and triangle, and so on, but it felt to me wrong (the organologist coming out in triumph over the musician). So I looked at the illuminations in mediæval manuscripts and at carvings in churches, and all the other sources, and I built instruments which at least looked more or less right. I did have the enormous advantage over my colleagues on other instruments that no original mediæval percussion instruments survive, so that nobody could say that I was wrong! Perhaps the research for that, spent in libraries looking through mediæval manuscripts for illustrations of percussion instruments in their illuminations,

and in churches looking at carvings on the walls and in the roofs, combined with all the experience as a professional musician, which illuminated with practicality and hands-on knowledge all that I had found in the sources, could also be counted as fieldwork.

A more conventional field trip was in the far east of Holland, researching in the Twente District on the *midwinterhoorn*, of which I have more examples in my collection than any museum outside Holland, including one of the very rare examples made of *blik*, or stove-pipe metal, which was the true folk instrument in the twenties and thirties of this century and lasted until the folklorists killed it off after the War in the interests of "greater authenticity". I published a preliminary report on the *midwinterhoorn* in 1975 in *Galpin Society Journal* 28, but there is still much information unpublished, because all the interview material was in Twentsch, a Dutch dialect for which it is difficult to find an interpreter. Briefly, the original *midwinterhoorns* were made, like alphorns – they are in fact lowland alphorns, if one may use such a phrase – by splitting a tree trunk, hollowing it, reuniting it, and binding it in a few places to hold it together. It does not need to be closely covered with bark or with other material, because, being used in the lowlands with plentiful wells, ditches, and streams, it can be soaked in water to swell the wood to seal the seam and so prevent leakage down the sides. Hollowing out trees is hard and lengthy work. Any competent tinsmith or stove-pipe maker can produce a very similar result in half an hour, and once people realised this, of course the *blik* instrument became far more popular than the wooden one. However, it didn't look good once the folklorists got on the scene, and they persuaded people that the only 'genuine' *midwinterhoorn*, and certainly the only one that was going to win a prize at any of their folkloric festivals, was a 'proper' one, made in the 'traditional' way, by hollowing out a young tree. So the true instrument of the folk was abolished, and once again we have a nice-looking 'folkloric' instrument of wood.

I'll bet there are a good many more skeletons in our cupboard, if only we knew about them – instances where the ethnomusicologist, sometimes with the best will in the world, sometimes unconsciously, has altered the musical scene. In fact, I'm ashamed to say that I may have done so myself during that very field trip. I was taken to hear some *midwinterhoorn* blowers and was allowed to try an instrument myself. Rather naturally, as a horn player, which I was originally brought up to be, I not only tried to blow as they were blowing, but I

also tried the range of the instrument. In their tradition they blew the harmonic series from 3 up to 7 or 8, calls like 3-4-3-4-5-6-5-4-3-4. But I went on down 3-2-1 to see how it sounded. A few minutes later, I heard one of the younger members of the group trying the same notes, deep, low notes which he'd never heard before. Have I contaminated the tradition? I don't know – I've not been back to find out. But it taught me a lesson: when in the field, never do things on *their* instruments in *their* hearing that *they* don't do.

I know that many of us do like to show that we are musicians, too, and so we show what we can do, though we do it more often on our own instruments than on theirs. But is this one of the reasons that trump and guitar have replaced the musical bow in South Africa, the trump because for a few pence one can buy a pocket-sized instrument of iron which can play the same notes as a large wooden and gourd instrument that would take some hours to make, and the guitar because it has a much larger musical range? Or would this have happened anyway?

My other field trip was rather different because it was undertaken in my own community, on the blowing of the shofar, the ram's horn of the Bible, which is still used in the synagogues today. That, of course, is endomusicology, rather than ethnomusicology. I have spoken before at one of our Seminars on the growing trend in this direction among many ethnomusicologists. It has considerable advantages, especially in these days of ever-increasing financial stringency, when it is becoming more and more difficult for our students, and even for us established scholars, to get grants for fieldwork. It is very much easier financially; a tram or a local bus to one's 'field' is very much cheaper than an aeroplane. It is also very much easier mentally, for one seldom needs to learn a new language, nor does one need to learn and accept new *mores* and customs, and one seldom needs painful prophylactic inoculations and vaccinations. I doubt, though, when one is dealing with one's own people whether one can maintain the detachment and the objectivity that is a real necessity for successful anthropological research. But this is something that I talked about a year ago and therefore I won't repeat myself.

Certainly on the shofar I was inevitably comparing (*vergleichende Musikwissenschaft!*) what other people did with what I do myself, because I also blow the shofar within the ritual. My research is an example of the occasional necessity for artificial conditions. In the Ashkenazi communities, those of the Jews of

northern Europe, the shofar is blown only over the period of the New Year, and if one is, as I am, a regular shofar-blower, one can never hear any other blower: when they are blowing, so am I. So all my research was done by interview and by recording people blowing in their homes or wherever we had arranged to meet. These interviews revealed enormous differences between the calls used by different blowers, variations that are unknown to or ignored by all those who have written on this subject. The problem is that everyone, so far as I know, who has written on the shofar has been Jewish, and they, like me, go to the same synagogue every year, and therefore they hear the same blower. Or if not the same, they hear his successor who, himself, had heard or been taught by the same chap and therefore blows the same way. "This is the way I blow," so of course it's the right way to do it. There is even a Folkways LP which approaches the matter in precisely those terms – this is how to do it: "being examples," the sleeve says, "of the correctly rendered Shofar calls." In fact, there is no 'correct' way. Every community, every tradition, has its own, and my experience is that, with very few exceptions, no two blowers blow in the same way or even blow what any musicologist would recognise as the same calls. Whatever we, as listeners, might say, within the culture each is an equally valid version of the same call.

This investigation into what other people blow on the shofar has revealed interesting indications of migrations of different branches of the community, of quite unexpected mixtures of Sephardim, the southern and eastern Jews, among the Ashkenazim, in what was Czechoslovakia, for example, and this purely from the different traditions of the shofar calls. I have, of course, in my collection a dozen or so different shofarot which exemplify some of these different styles.

Another advantage of organology is that one never gets bored. If one line of research has been taking too much time, there's always another available and waiting. Get bored with the flutes – try the shawms – enough of those, do something on half-spike fiddles, those interesting hybrids between necked lutes and spike lutes, whose neck ends within the body instead of protruding through the bottom but which, like the spike lutes, have the strings attached to each end of the neck. I only know of them from Africa, from Ancient Egypt, through Morocco, and down through the Manding into Nigeria. Do they exist anywhere else?

With a collection of instruments like mine to play with, one is never short of subjects clamouring to be investigated, and this is true for all organologists whether they have their own collections or not. The world's museums are full to the gills with instruments which nobody has ever investigated, compared, or studied. If you're an organologist, the world is your oyster and you will never lack for material.

Finally, that word to which you have been looking forward so eagerly, so far I have spoken mainly of my own research and its possibilities. I would put in a plea here for more coöperation between us all. Many of us are doing research by ourselves which in other disciplines, archæology for example, would be done by a team – why can't we do the same? I've worked with colleagues occasionally – people have produced fieldwork and have asked me for help in some organological details, but this only happens very rarely. It would be inconceivable today for an archæologist to be expected to be equally expert on coins, pottery, flints, bones, and so on, but for some reason we ethnomusicologists are expected to be equally skilled at musicology, transcription, kinship-systems, general ethnography, organology, all other aspects of material culture, and so on and so forth. Let's be willing to admit that we have gaps in our knowledge. We all know of publications, both articles and full-length monographs which are wonderful in some respects but which, in others where perhaps we have some special expertise, have *lacunæ* or even errors. Let's accept that we are willing to help each other and to be helped in our turn. Let's accept that publications can have a main text and then appendices by other authors on special aspects of the subject. After all, that's how we learn, and that's why we learn – so that we can pass what we've learned on to others. For the day we stop learning we stop living, and the day we stop teaching, that too is the day we stop living. We are a worldwide team, we ethnomusicologists. Like the members of other teams, like the scholars in other scientific disciplines, let's make everything we publish as good as it can possibly be, let's help each other, and let's work together.

Jeremy Montagu

Jeremy Montagu is an ethno-organologist with a world-wide collection of some 2,500 instruments of all varieties from antiquity to the present day. He has been the Honorary Secretary of the Ethnomusicology Panel of the Royal Anthropological Institute, of the Galpin Society (of which he is now a Vice-President), and of the Fellowship of Makers & Researchers of Historical Instruments from its foundation until today. He was one of the initial members of the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology and recently served a term as its President. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, an Honorary Life Member of the National Early Music Association, and a member of many international organological and ethnomusicological societies.

He was Curator of the Bate Collection of Musical Instruments and Lecturer, in the Faculty of Music of the University of Oxford, and a Fellow (now Emeritus) of Wadham College.

He is the author of several books and innumerable articles and encyclopædia entries on musical instruments of all sorts, and has lectured and taught in numerous colleges and universities in many countries. He also acts as consultant on musical instruments to a number of museums and collections nationally and internationally.

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The Montagu Collection of Musical Instruments is open by appointment to interested visitors. A complete checklist of the Collection, with considerable detail, is available as attachment by email) and full catalogues are in preparation, with some already published in the form of general books on specific types of instruments.

jeremy.montagu@wadham.ox.ac.uk
www.jeremymontagu.co.uk

ESEM

The European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) was founded in 1981 in Belfast by the late John Blacking.

ESEM is a platform for professional scholars and students of ethnomusicology and membership is also available for scholars outside Europe. ESEM aims to facilitate and stimulate communication and discussion of research activities and ideas related to the field of Ethnomusicology, thereby contributing to the advancement of the discipline in its theoretical and practical aspects.

Members receive regular bulletins and are entitled to attend the annual seminars.

Application forms and more information about ESEM are available via the Internet