

Pat Bordman

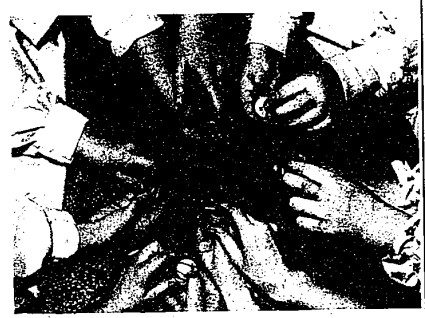
Ping! go the strings on this simple toy

By PAT BORDMAN

"It's music to my ears," we say. Or we talk of music to soothe the savage breast. We sing "I've got rhythm," and we refer to "looney tunes."

In nearly every culture and every society, music holds a central role. Whether for religious purposes, relaxation or to impart social mores, music has been and is an essential ingredient in transmitting society's happenings and personal feelings.

Children are right in there when it comes to being music-minded. And of course they love the littlest pocket-sized versions of the adult world. So with an ear ping they can carry their musical inclination with them wherever they go. A soda bottle top, the kind that comes off with a can opener, and a small rubber band are the only equipment needed



to make this stringed instrument. Simply wrap the rubber band around the grooves of the bottle top several times. When you hold the ping to the ear with one hand you can strum the rubber band with the other for your own brand of music.

What would Yehudi Menuhin say? Will the rest of the symphony accept this pint-sized soundmaker? Does it rate a solo, or will an entire section of ear pings be singled out?

Who cares? The fun is in the smallest of secret sounds that will delight the inner rhythm of childhood.

PAT Bordman has taught elementary school and conducted workshops and lectures on education. While attending Oakland University graduate school she became interested in photography. She and her husband have two daughters and live in Farmington Hills.)

Hawaiian quilts — native treasures

Old Hawaiian quilts look very different from old Michigan quilts. They're curving, dramatic and very much in demand these days. Here's how to recognize one and understand what it's all about.

The quilts display one, large, central appliqued design. This dramatic and intricately cut figure is usually based on the shape of a plant or flower growing in the islands.

The design looks much as if the quilter had taken a piece of paper, folded it as a child would to cut a paper snowflake, and then cut out a pineapple, plant, or other bit of Hawaiian flora. When the paper was unfolded, an intricate, repeating design emerged.

Before the missionaries came to Hawaii in the early 19th century, the islanders wore and slept beneath coverings made from pounded mulberry bark called "tapa."

The old islanders didn't quilt or, for that matter, have any need for quilts. The weather was mild, tapa was sufficient and weaving never developed.

BUT WHEN New England missionaries and their wives arrived, they brought along measles, cloth, and the Calvinist doctrine of "sin." Worried over quilt and sin never really took hold in the islands, but measles almost wiped out the whole population. Cloth might be said to be one of the few blessings Americans brought to the Sandwich Isles.

While male missionaries were pounding away at Hawaiian souls and morals, their wives were teaching homemaking arts to women and children. Back home in Boston this was the great period of American quilt making. The fun of stitching and quilting instantly appealed to the playful wahines.


But after they learned to quilt, no pointy little stars or repetitive squares for them. Hawaii's women were off and running on a track that was strictly their own.

THE BEAUTY of the islands was a vital part of the old Hawaiian culture and religion. Wave patterns, foliage shapes and the forms and designs of the islands themselves influenced the women's quilting. Their old religion had been based on nature and nowhere is this better illustrated than on the quilts made after the "new" religion had supposedly swept all the old away.

Most of the quilts are worked on only two colors; that of the background and that of the pattern applied to it.

Hawaiian quilting itself looks different. There are no straight lines of stitches. The lines of quilting follow the outline of the design in continually curving patterns that interestingly approach and retreat as lines of surf do at the water's edge.

Keep your eyes open for these quilts. They're not very common, but they're well worth tracking down.



the lively needle

Mary Kay Davis

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How about those nitrites in beer?

I gave up hot dogs because of nitrites but refuse to give up my occasional beer. What is being done about the nitrites in my favorite brew?

James K. Redford.

consumer mailbag

The domestic beer industry hurt by the publicity about cancer-causing nitrosamines in beer have told the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that all beer distributed after the first of the year (presumably this month) would be substantially free of nitrosamines. The FDA has announced that it would start checking the nitrosamine content of beer in January 1980. To find out if they do what they say, write to: Food and Drug Administration, Office of Consumer Inquiries, PA-10, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

and injection for livestock went into effect on last Nov. 1.

We hear so much about "junk food" today. Just what is "junk food?"

Carla D. Birmingham

To put it as simply as possible, "junk food" is any food that gives you too many calories for too few nutrients.

Do breeders still put DES in cattle feed?

M.T. Troy

The ban on the use of the cancer-promoting growth stimulant, DES, in feed

Consumer Mailbag answers your questions on consumer and environmental issues. Write to Concern, Inc., Detroit, 1 Northfield Plaza, Troy 48098.

Grace R. Glushko
Executive Director

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