



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(43) Date of publication:
27.03.2002 Bulletin 2002/13

(51) Int Cl.7: **G10D 1/00**

(21) Application number: **01308193.0**

(22) Date of filing: **26.09.2001**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE TR
 Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

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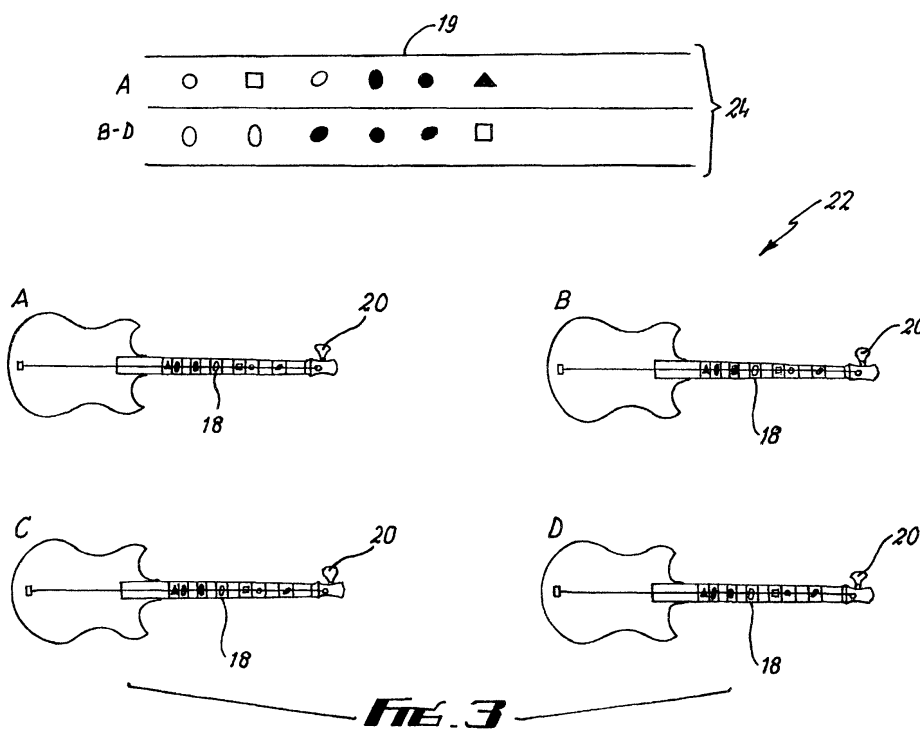
(30) Priority: **26.09.2000 GB 0023524**

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(54) **A string musical instrument and a system for playing music**

(57) A musical instrument (10) is disclosed which has a finger board (12) and up to three strings (16) extending along the finger board (12). Indicating means (18) is provided at a predetermined position on the finger board (12). The indicating means (18) is indicative of a note produced on playing the, each, or one string. A musical assembly is also disclosed which comprises a plurality of musical instruments (10) as described above.

At least some of the instruments (10) are tuned to differently to the others whereby corresponding indicating means (18) on different instruments (10) are indicative of different notes on playing one or more corresponding strings (16) whereby when the same indicating means (18) is selected on each instrument (10), and the respective string (16) is played, the combined sound emanating from the assembly is a chord.



Description

[0001] The present invention relates to musical instruments and musical assemblies, and particularly but not exclusively to musical assemblies or apparatus including musical instruments which may be stringed.

[0002] Stringed instruments such as guitars and violins are popular choices for people who wish to learn to play a musical instrument. However, learning to play these instruments can prove difficult.

[0003] According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a musical instrument having a finger board, up to three strings extending along the finger board, and indicating means provided at a predetermined position on the finger board, the indicating means being indicative of a note produced on playing the, each, or one, string.

[0004] Preferably the indicating means is indicative of a note produced when a string is pressed against the finger board at said indicating means and played.

[0005] Preferably the indicating means is a symbol which may be coloured and/or may be of a desired shape.

[0006] A plurality of indicating means may be provided at predetermined positions along the finger board, each indicating means being indicative of a different note. Preferably each indicating means is of a different colour or of a different shape.

[0007] Preferably the instrument comprises two strings or up to two strings and advantageously no more than one string.

[0008] The instrument is preferably a stringed instrument, desirably a guitar and it may be a bass guitar.

[0009] According to a second aspect of the present invention there is provided a musical assembly comprising a plurality of musical instruments having finger boards, each instrument comprising up to three strings extending along the finger board, and indicating means provided at a predetermined position on the finger board, the indicating means being indicative of a note produced on playing the, or one, string.

[0010] Preferably the indicating means is indicative of a note when a string is pressed against the finger board at said indicating means and played.

[0011] Preferably the indicating means is a symbol which may be coloured and/or may be of a desired shape.

[0012] A plurality of indicating means may be provided at predetermined positions along the finger board, each indicating means being indicative of a different note. Preferably each indicating means is of a different colour or of a different shape.

[0013] Preferably each instrument comprises two strings or up to two strings and advantageously no more than one string.

[0014] Each instrument is preferably a stringed instrument, desirably a guitar and it may be a bass guitar.

[0015] According to a third aspect of the present in-

vention there is provided a musical assembly comprising a plurality of string instruments, each instrument comprising up to three strings extending along the finger board, and indicating means provided at a predetermined position on the finger board, the indicating means being indicative of a note produced on playing the, each, or one, string, at least some of the instruments being tuned differently to the others whereby corresponding indicating means on different instruments are indicative of different notes produced on playing one or more corresponding strings, whereby when the same indicating means is selected on each instrument and the respective string played, the combined sound emanating from the assembly is a chord.

[0016] Preferably at least some of the instruments are tuned such that during simultaneous playing of said instruments a chord or the like can be played.

[0017] Preferably the indicating means is indicative of a note when the string is pressed thereagainst and played.

[0018] Preferably the indicating means on each instrument is a symbol which may be coloured and/or may be of a desired shape.

[0019] A plurality of indicating means may be provided at predetermined positions along the finger board of each instrument, each indicating means being indicative of a different note. Said different notes may be produced on playing the string, or one or more corresponding strings, on different instruments when the respective strings are pressed against the finger board at said corresponding indicating means. Preferably each indicating means is of a different colour or of a different shape.

[0020] Preferably each instrument comprises up to two strings and advantageously no more than one string.

[0021] Preferably, the instruments are stringed instruments, preferably guitars and they may be bass guitars.

[0022] Preferably the apparatus further comprises music display means including music notation corresponding to indicating means provided on the or each instrument.

[0023] The music notation is preferably in the form of a plurality of symbols or colours, each symbol or colour corresponding to an indicating means.

[0024] Preferably the music notation denotes a tune which may be played by one or more of said instruments.

[0025] According to the fourth aspect of the present invention there is provided a method of teaching the playing of musical instruments, the method comprising providing a plurality of musical instruments as described in any of paragraphs three to eight and music display means including notation corresponding to indicating means provided on the instrument, and directing a plurality of users to press the, each or one, string of each instrument against the respective finger board at the indicating means corresponding to the music display notation and playing said string.

[0026] Preferably, the method comprises the use of a musical assembly as described in paragraph 15 to 22 above. The musical notation may be as described in paragraphs 24 and 25 above.

[0027] The present invention will now be described by way of example only and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 1 is a plan view of a stringed instrument according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the instrument shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a schematic illustration of musical apparatus according to the present invention; and

Fig. 4 is a plan view of a further stringed instrument according to the present invention.

[0028] As can be seen in Figs. 1 to 3 of the drawings, there is shown (not necessarily to scale) a stringed instrument in the form of a guitar 10. The guitar 10 has a finger board 12 connected to a main body 14. A string 16 extends down the finger board 12 and is fixed in position in a conventional manner and can be tightened using the tuning key 20.

[0029] Indicating means in the form of a plurality of symbols 18 are provided along the finger board 12 at predetermined positions. Each symbol 18 is indicative of a note on playing the string 16 of the guitar 10 when the string 16 is pressed against the symbol 18.

[0030] For example, to play the note indicated by symbol 18A the person playing the guitar would press the string 16 against the symbol 18A and then pluck the string 16 on the body 14.

[0031] Fig. 3 illustrates how a number of instruments A-D can be used in combination to enable a tune or the like to be played. The instruments A-D as with the guitar 10 previously described, are provided with a number of symbols 18 on the finger boards 12 thereof. Each symbol 18 is indicative of a predetermined note on each guitar A-D. In this regard, the guitars B-D are tuned differently to one another by adjusting the tension in the string 16 using the tuning key 20. Each of the guitars B-D is tuned such that respective symbols 18 on each of the guitars B-D are indicative of different notes. Accordingly, when persons simultaneously press the respective strings against the same respective symbols 18 and play the strings 16, a chord or the like can result.

[0032] Turning to guitar A, this can be tuned such that when pressing the string 16 against the symbols 18 in a desired order and then plucking the string, a tune in the form of a melody can result.

[0033] In the example shown in Fig. 3, sheet of a music notation 24 is provided. This notation 24 comprises a sequence of symbols 19 corresponding to the symbols 18 upon which the strings of respective guitars A-D are

to be pressed before plucking them. A different sequence of symbols 19 is provided for guitar A to the set of guitars B-D. Therefore, in this example, the playing of guitars B-D would result in chords being played, whereas guitar A would play a melody.

[0034] Fig. 4 illustrates a further stringed instrument (not necessarily to scale) in the form of a bass guitar 100. The bass guitar 100 is similar to the guitar 10 described above and accordingly like reference numerals are used,

[0035] As with the guitar 10, a number of symbols 118 indicative of a note on playing the string 116 are provided along the finger board 112 of the bass guitar 100 at predetermined positions.

[0036] A predetermined note can be played using the bass guitar 100 in a similar manner to the guitar 10.

[0037] The bass guitar 100 can also be used with a number of other instruments for example the guitars A to D.

[0038] There is thus provided in the above described embodiments stringed instruments and musical apparatus comprising a number of stringed instruments which enables people to be taught how to play such instruments more quickly than they would by using conventional instruments. The instruments are each tuned differently such that pressing the respective strings against the finger boards at respective symbols and playing the strings results in a chord being played. Accordingly, people playing such instruments for the first time can be motivated to continue learning due to the ease of producing tunes by using instruments and the method as described in this specification. Different types of instruments can be played together in the same group, such as guitars and a bass guitar.

[0039] Various modifications may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention. For example, two or three strings may be used on each instrument instead of one and the instruments tuned accordingly. The symbols provided along the finger board of each instrument may be of different shape or alternatively they could be of different colours with the musical notation being adjusted accordingly.

[0040] The invention could be used with musical instruments other than guitars and bass guitars, for example violins or double basses.

[0041] Whilst endeavouring in the foregoing specification to draw attention to those features of the invention believed to be of particular importance it should be understood that the Applicant claims protection in respect of any patentable feature or combination of features hereinbefore referred to and/or shown in the drawings whether or not particular emphasis has been placed thereon.

Claims

1. A musical instrument having a finger board, up to

three strings extending along the finger board, and indicating means provided at a predetermined position on the finger board, the indicating means being indicative of a note produced on playing the, each, or one, string.

2. An instrument according to Claim 1 wherein the indicating means is indicative of a note when a string against the finger board at said indicating means and played.

3. An instrument according to Claim 1 or 2 wherein the indicating means is a symbol.

4. An instrument according to Claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the indicating means is of a preselected colour and/or of a preselected shape.

5. A musical instrument according to any preceding claim wherein a plurality of indicating means are provided at predetermined positions along the finger board, each indicating means being indicative of a different note.

6. A musical instrument according to Claim 5 wherein each indicating means is of a different preselected colour and/or of a different preselected shape.

7. A musical instrument according to any preceding claim which has up to two strings.

8. A musical instrument according to any preceding claim which has no more than one string.

9. A musical instrument according to any preceding claim which is in the form of a guitar.

10. Musical assembly comprising a plurality of musical instruments, each being as claimed in any preceding claim.

11. A musical assembly comprising a plurality of string instruments, each instrument comprising up to three strings extending along the finger board, and indicating means provided at a predetermined position on the finger board, the indicating means being indicative of a note produced on playing the, each, or one, string, at least some of the instruments being tuned differently to the others whereby corresponding indicating means on different instruments are indicative of different notes produced on playing one or more corresponding strings, whereby when the same indicating means is selected on each instrument and the respective string played, the combined sound emanating from the assembly is a chord.

12. A musical assembly according to Claim 11 wherein

the indicating means on each instrument is indicative of a note produced when the string is pressed against the finger board at said indicating means and played.

13. A musical assembly according to Claim 11 or 12 wherein the indicating means on each instrument is a symbol which is coloured and/or is of a desired shape.

14. A musical assembly according to Claim 11, 12 or 13 wherein a plurality of indicating means are provided at predetermined positions along the finger board of each instrument, each indicating means being indicative of a different one.

15. A musical assembly according to Claim 14 wherein each indicating means on each instrument is of a different colour or of a different shape.

16. A musical assembly according to any of Claims 11 to 15 wherein each instrument comprises up to two strings.

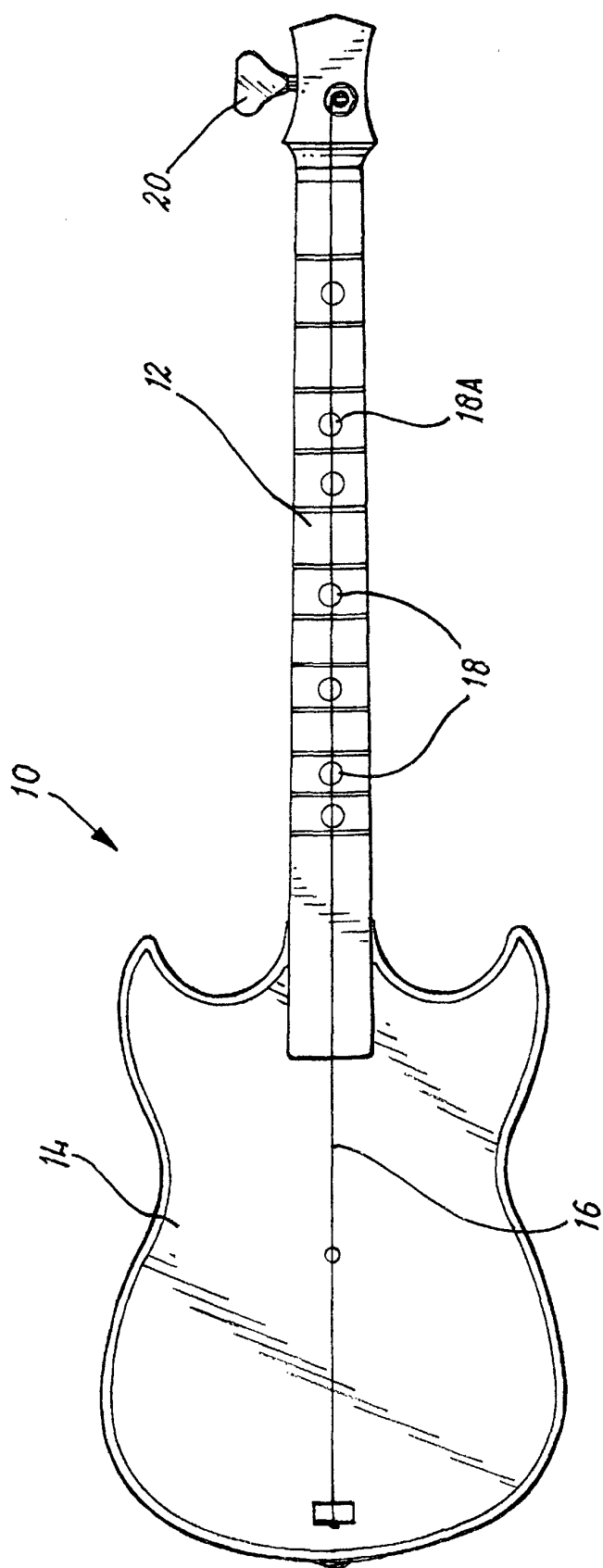
17. A musical assembly according to any of Claims 11 to 16 wherein each instrument comprises no more than one string.

18. A musical assembly according to any of Claims 11 to 17 wherein the instruments are guitars.

19. A musical assembly according to any of Claims 11 to 18 wherein the assembly further comprises a music display means including musical notation corresponding to indicating means provided on the or each instrument.

20. A musical assembly according to Claim 19 wherein the musical notation is in the form of a plurality of symbols or colours, each symbol or colour corresponding to one of the aforesaid indicating means.

21. A method of teaching the playing of musical instruments, the method comprising providing a plurality of musical instruments each being as claimed in any of claims 1 to 9 and musical display means including notation corresponding to indicating means provided on the instrument, and directing a plurality of users to press the, each, or one string of each instrument against the respective finger board at the indicating means corresponding to the music display notation and playing said string.



Fender

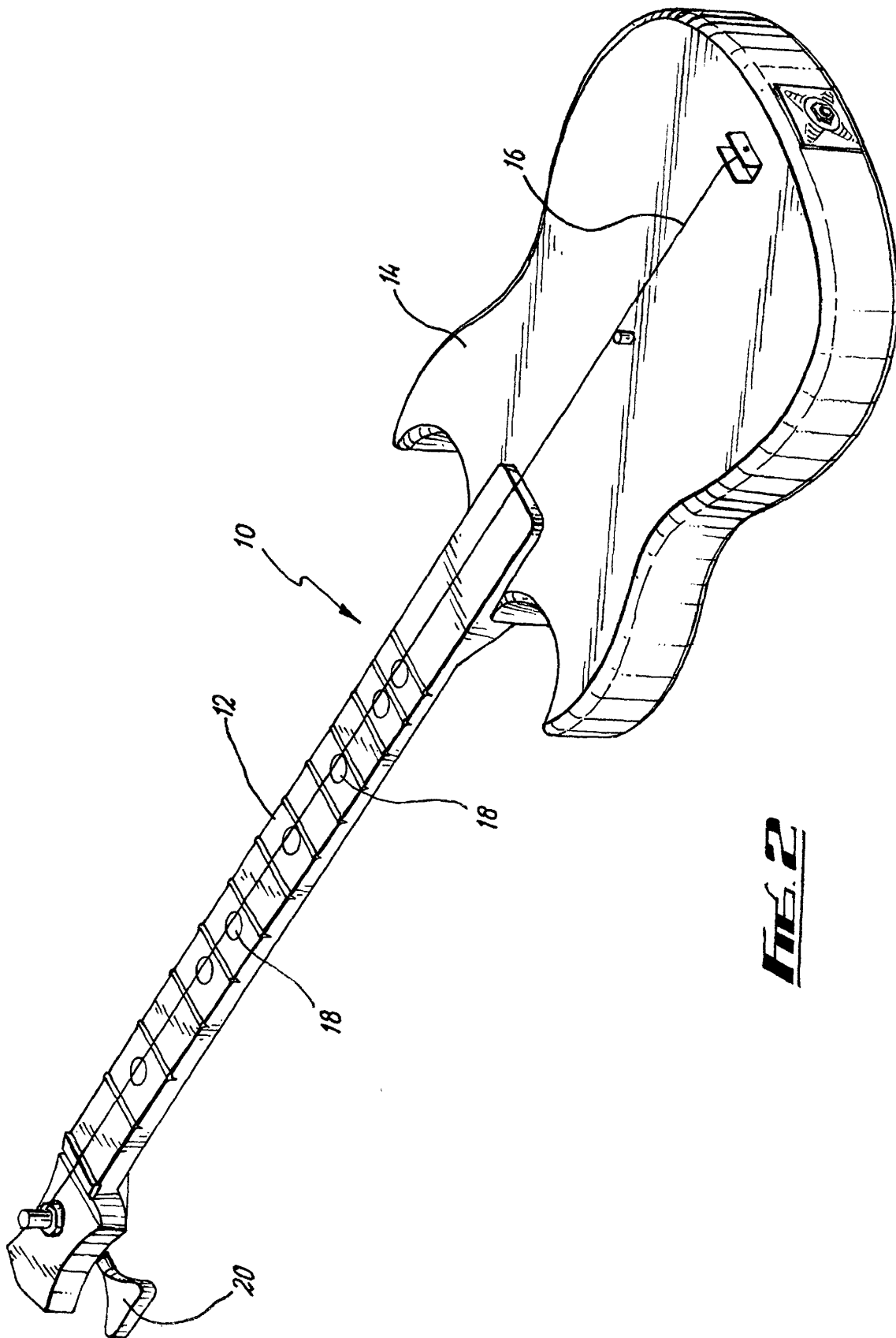
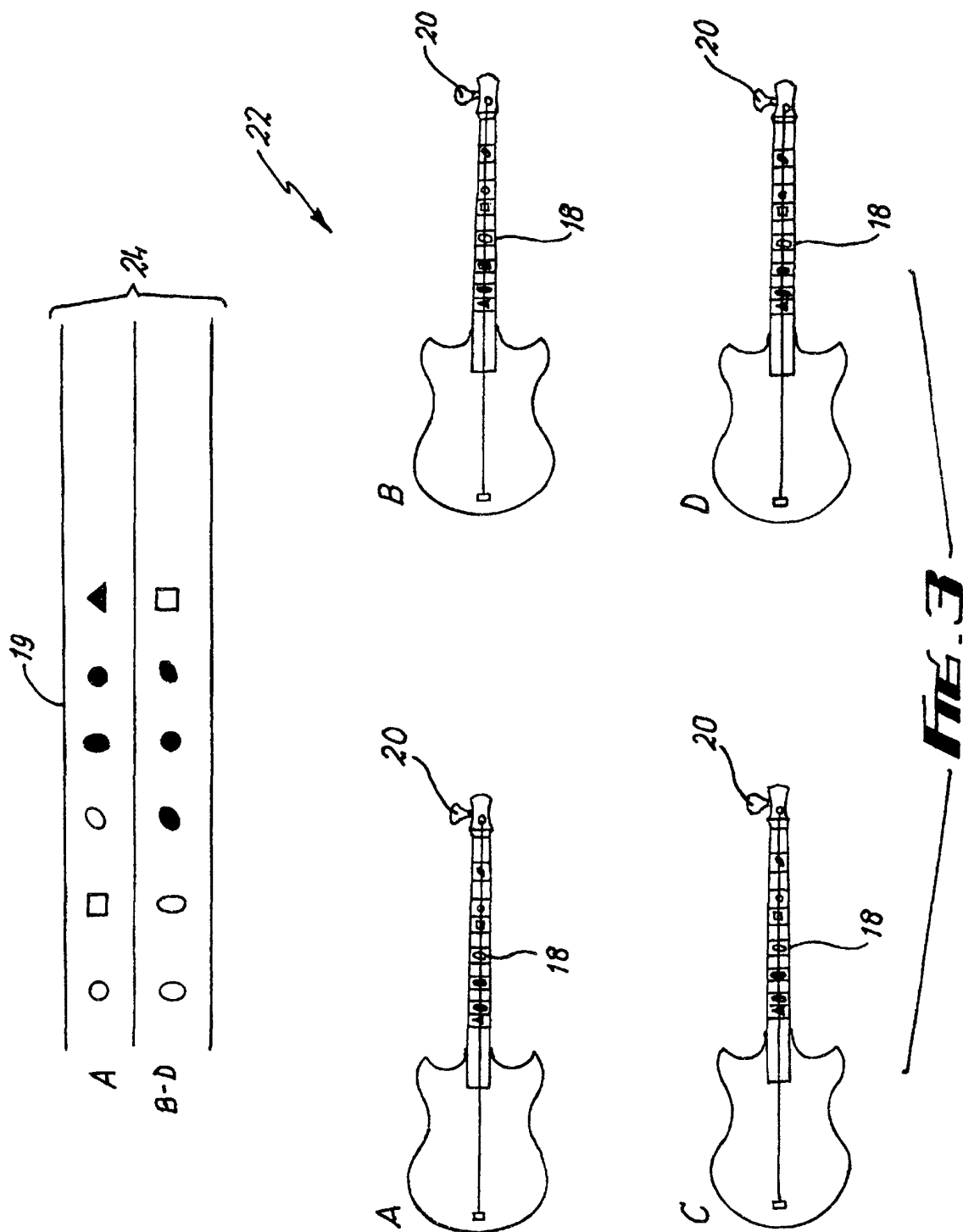


FIG. 2



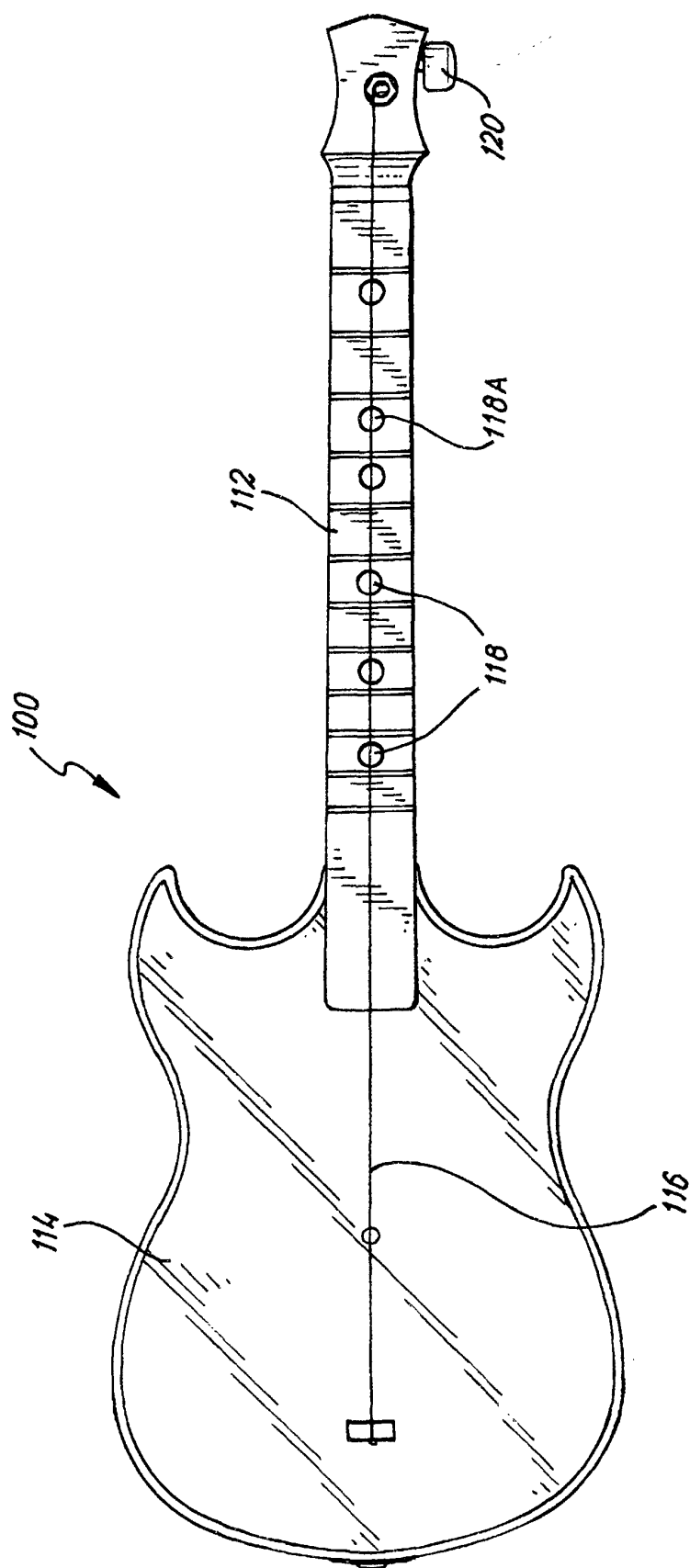


FIG. 4