

## **Toward a New Organology: Material Culture and the Study of Musical Instruments**

**Date** : November 21, 2007

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Organologists (those who study musical instruments) have generally focused on instrument design, classification, and the use of instruments in 'traditional' settings. In so doing, they have tended to take the relationship between humans and instruments for granted, rather than investigate the myriad ways in which this relationship is manifest in human – instrument encounters. This point of view lead Margaret Kartomi to assert that “musical instruments are fixed, static objects that cannot grow or adapt in themselves” (2001:305). In this overview, I adopt a point of view best expressed by Nicholas Thomas, that “objects are not what they were made to be, but what they have become” (1991:4).