

Basic Detail Report



Violin

Date

1976

Primary Maker

Kurt Lothar Meisel

Description

NMM 5877 is the second violin in a quartet of Meisel instruments at the Museum. The bird on the label represents the family branch, known as the “Bird” Meisels. Lothar Meisel confirmed that the linings, corner blocks, and bottom blocks on his violins are made from basswood, 5/03. The pernambuco strips between the lower ribs are from wood he found in a scrap pile near Reinhold Schnabl’s workshop in Bubenreuth, Germany. The wood of the back is from the Carpathian Mountains. (Telephone conversation 7/30/03) Lothar made different price levels of instruments when he starting his business in the U. S. A. (from ca. 1957). The lowest level was \$350, with one location pin, or dowel, through the back at the top block, and one at the bottom block. The middle grade was \$550, with one pin through the back into the top block, and two into the bottom block. The highest grade was \$800, and included the two upper and two lower pin configuration. Quality level was no longer tied to the pin

configuration after ca. 1967. (Interview with Lothar Meisel, 7/7/03 and 7/30/03) Top: two-piece, quarter-cut spruce: fine grain Back: two-piece maple cut off-the-quarter: prominent, medium curl descending steeply from center joint; small maple dowel through back into top block; small maple dowel through back into bottom block Ribs: quarter-cut maple: prominent, narrow curl angled to right on bass side, angled to left on treble side; lower ribs divided by purfling strip and two wide pernambuco strips; rib corners slightly rounded Head and neck: maple: broad curl; inside of pegbox stained black Edging: full, rounded edges Purfling: maple and pearwood, according to Lothar Meisel; wide center strip Varnish: medium orange; wood texture visible through varnish, resulting in a matte effect Fingerboard: ebony; made by Josef Klier, Bubenreuth, originally from Schönbach Nut: ebony Tailpiece: rosewood; beveled face; ivory saddle; made by Herfried Werner, Bubenreuth, originally from Ursprung, Czechoslovakia, near Schönbach Tailgut: black plastic Pegs: four rosewood with ivory pins; undercut heads; made by Emil Lorenz, Bubenreuth, originally from Schönbach Saddle: ebony Endpin: rosewood with ivory pin; made by Emil Lorenz, Bubenreuth,

originally from Schönbach F-holes: steeply pointed wings; lower wings channeled; slightly undercut; inside edges stained black Linings: basswood Corner blocks: basswood Top block: spruce Bottom block: basswood Other: spruce cleats along inside of top center joint; maple cleats along inside of back center joint; inside of body stained light brown

Dimensions

Total violin length: 592 mm Back length: 356 mm Upper bout width: 166 mm Center bout width: 110 mm Lower bout width: 208 mm Upper rib height: 29-30 mm Center rib height: 30 mm Lower rib height: 30-31 mm Stop length: 196 mm Vibrating string length: 329 mm Neck length (bottom of nut to ribs): 133 mm