

Basic Detail Report



Viola

Date

1975

Primary Maker

Kurt Lothar Meisel

Description

Guarneri model; The bird on the label represents the family branch, known as the “Bird” Meisels. 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) 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) Top: two-piece, quarter-cut spruce: fine grain broadening then narrowing toward the flanks Back: two-piece, quarter-cut maple: prominent, medium curl

descending steeply from center joint; maple dowel through back into top block; two maple dowels through back into bottom block, one on each side of center joint, spaced 13 mm apart Ribs: quarter-cut maple: prominent, medium curl angled to right on bass side, angled to left on treble side; lower ribs divided by two purfling strip and one wide pernambuco strip; rib corners slightly rounded Head and neck: maple: prominent, medium curl; pegbox with shoulders; inside 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; note that Lothar Meisel

specifically requests light-colored rosewood fittings from Werner (Interview, 7/7/03) 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; inside edge stained black Linings:
basswood Corner blocks: basswood Top block: spruce Bottom block: basswood Other: spruce cleats along
inside of top center joint in upper and lower bouts; maple cleats along inside of back center joint in upper
and lower bouts; inside of body stained light brown

Dimensions

Total viola length: 672 mm Back length: 409 mm Upper bout width: 190 mm Center bout width: 126 mm
Lower bout width: 238 mm Neck length (bottom of nut to ribs): 151 mm Upper rib height: 37-39 mm Center
rib height: 38-39 mm Lower rib height: 38-40 mm Stop length: 221 mm Vibrating string length: 373 mm
Neck length (bottom of nut to ribs): 151 mm