

Mr. Bernhard Hammig  
Am Schießrain 17  
D-77933 Lahr / Schw

Zurich, 03 May 2003

Dear Mr. Hammig,

As you will realise from my letter, I am greatly indebted to you for allowing me to discover – through your instruments – something that I believed to be Utopian, although I am conversant with the most renowned instruments on the market. Consequently I take renewed pleasure, day in, day out, in my first-class flutes, although I must say I feel the 9 carat instrument probably slightly excels in comparison to the silver one.

While becoming acquainted with the two instruments during periods of 8 and 4 months, my fascination for these flutes has constantly grown. I still feel as if I am on a voyage of discovery as your flute construction techniques permit a delightful wealth of musical possibilities. Both flutes possess a rare quality and, in my opinion, they symbolise a new generation of transverse flutes. It is very true that one can still recognise the tried-and-tested Hammig characteristics such as a powerful timbre, homogeneousness and resonance. But just as significant are the new developments directed at suppleness and lightness of the instrument and improved intonation. The elegant sound of the flutes mirrors a poised and balance beauty of which one can never tire and it also approaches the tone of the human voice. A particularly conspicuous feature is the clear, distinct middle range of the instruments, very flexible and mobile, and its contrast to the warm, earthy depths and the extensive, serene yet lustrous heights otherwise achieved by the flutes.

The way you construct your flutes enables amazing opposites and contrasts – in reality poles apart – to be reconciled in subtle harmony: the implementation of a relatively small amount of breath needed to create an astoundingly rich and full tone is very noticeable but this fullness never appears overpowering. Whether the music is played pianissimo or fortissimo, the quality remains unaltered. The basic, tranquil timbre can be injected with vitality in accordance with the flautist's wishes and moods. The flutes then react tensely, intensely but never appear empty or aggressive in their responses. I find it difficult to decide whether your instruments sound light or dark for both extremes are reflected in the music and either the one or the other can be heightened as a result of the manner of playing. The light response allows the rare meeting of softness and clearness when using the tongue to blow into the instrument. With such a tonal range, you offer the best possible, indeed exceptionally excellent, solution. I must also say that I find the key mechanisms and the shape of the embouchure plate veritable works of physiological perfection. This type of instrument, which has been well thought-out and perfectly developed, permits extensive stylistic differentiation and, thus, provides the right answer for the wealth of diverse requirements set by today's world of music, irrespective of whether we are looking at the needs of a soloist, an orchestra or those of flautists playing chamber music.

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