

# TRAVERSO

HISTORICAL FLUTE NEWSLETTER

## The Quantz Flute

by Eberhard Dehne-Niemann

**T**HIS anniversary year of Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773) presents an opportunity to re-examine what we know of the flutes he made. We begin with a description of the Quantz flute, and a list of surviving examples. Actually, this list is broken into several parts (see Tables 1-5, p.2) because some instruments thought to be by Quantz are of doubtful authenticity or have gone missing.

Quantz himself described the special character of his flutes in his treatise *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin, 1752). They had:

- ✓ two keys, for Eb and D#
- ✓ a headjoint with tuning slide (“Aus- und Einschriebekopf”) and screw-cork (see Fig. 3)
- ✓ a wider bore, thicker walls, and a lower pitch than ordinary flutes of the time
- ✓ several upper middle joints for different pitches;

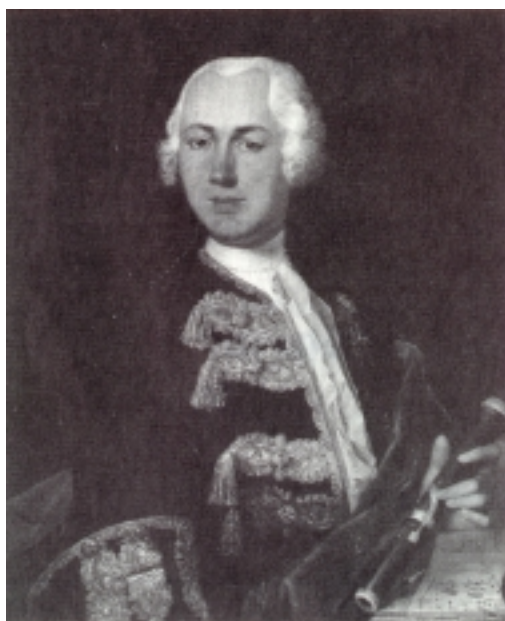


Fig. 2. Johann Friedrich Gerhard, portrait of J.J. Quantz (Schloß Eremitage, Bayreuth). The portrait must have been painted while Quantz was in Bayreuth, not in 1735 as is usually stated, but in May 1741. In a letter of that date to Frederick the Great, his sister Wilhemine provides the first confirmation that Quantz was making his own flutes, an activity he tells us he only began in 1739.

and the flutes were made from ebony with ivory mounts, because “ebony produces the finest and clearest tone.” (*Versuch*, I.18).

Fig. 1 shows a typical Quantz flute. The type was created about 1750, and surviving examples can all be traced back to the ownership of King Frederick the Great of Prussia (1712-1786). No earlier flutes by Quantz are

known for sure, though in his autobiography he mentioned that he had begun making flutes in 1739, and written accounts record that Frederick acquired at least six flutes from him between 1742 and 1750. Quantz certainly knew flutes made of ivory, but as he did not mention this material along with five different woods in his treatise, it seems he did not think particularly highly of it. Neither did he mention amber, but one of the lost Quantz flutes, No. 2.3, was of this material.



Fig. 1. Quantz flute QIII

to those listed in Table 1. Four years after Quantz’s death, Friedrich de Castillon described the features of the Quantz flute in the *Supplément à l’Encyclopédie* (1777), and showed the typical shape and construction of Quantz’s flutes (Fig. 3).

Quantz did not sign his instruments, either “for reasons of delicacy”, or “because as a non-member of the instrument-makers’ guild this would have been forbidden.”<sup>1</sup> However from about 1751 on he marked his flutes with roman numerals in the facings at the ends of the tenons, head- and footjoints. The marks were necessary to distinguish one instrument from another, since they are generally identical in shape, proportions and material. These marks were first noted by Dayton C. Miller in 1930, in the accession book of his great collection, now at the Library of Congress. Of a series of 18 numbered flutes by Quantz, about 45% have survived, in part if not complete: Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 13, 15, 17 and 18.

Probably the earliest depiction of a flute by Quantz dates from May 1741, when Quantz was painted in oils by J.F. Gerhard (Fig. 2). This portrait shows the lower end of a dark brown two-keyed flute with ivory ferrules, similar

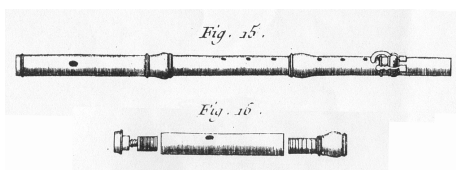


Fig. 3. Plates from *Supplément à l’Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné, Tome Troisième* (Amsterdam, 1777)

**TABLE 1. AUTHENTIC QUANTZ FLUTES**

No.	Q#	Y#	Location	Former Location	Keys	Heads	T/S	Corps	Mat
1.1	III		D-Karlsruhe: private collection	D-Baden-Baden: Margrave of Baden (1995)	2 Ag	2	✓	5	E
1.2	IV		D-Leipzig: Musikinstrumenten Museum 1236n	D-Berlin: Hohenzollern Mus. 3838 (1945)	[2] ?	1	✓	1 (#I?)	E
1.3	XIII	Y1	US-DC-Washington: DCM 916	D-Munich (1930)	2 Ag	1	✓	6 (5+1)	E
1.4	XV	Y4	J-Hamamatsu: City Mus.	US-NY-New York: Rosenbaum	2 Brass	2	✓	5	E
1.5	XVII	Y6?	D-Berlin: Kunstgewerbemuseum Hz 1289	D-Berlin: Hohenzollern Mus. 3837 or 3836 (1945)	2 Ag	1	✓	1 (#IV)	E
1.6	XVII	Y8?	D-Potsdam: Schloß Sanssouci V18	D-Berlin: Hohenzollern Mus. 3836 or 3837 (1945)	2 Ag	1	✓	1 (#I)	E
1.7	XVIII	Y2	D-Berlin: SIMF, PKB 5076	D-Munich (1969)	2 Ag	2	✓	5	E
1.8	?	Y7?	D-Hechingen: Burg Hohenzollern	D-Berlin: Prinz Carl (1876)	1 Ag	1	✓	4	E

**Parts numbered differently from rest of flute:**

III	One of 2 headjoints is not marked
IV	All except the footjoint is unmarked
XIII	Corps #VI is from Q II
XVII (No. 1.5)	Headjoint is not marked
XVII (No. 1.6)	Heartpiece is not marked; foot is from Q VI

Abbreviations			
Q#	Quantz number	T/S	Tuning slide
Y#	Young number	Mat	Material
Au	Gold	E	Ebony
Ag	Silver	A	Amber

**TABLE 2. MISSING QUANTZ FLUTES**

No.	Q#	? Location	Former Location	Keys	Heads	T/S	Corps	Mat	Missing
2.1	VI	? = 1.6	D-Berlin: Hohenzollern Mus. 3836	2 Ag	2	✓	5	E	2 Heads; 5 Corps
2.2	XVII	? = 1.4	D Berlin: Hohenzollern Mus. 3837	2 Ag	2	✓	5	E	3 Corps (##II, III, V)
2.3	?	lost since 1945	D-Berlin: Hohenzollern Mus. 3841	2 Au	1		3	A	Whole flute
2.4	?	lost since 1945	D-Potsdam: Schloß Sanssouci	2 Ag	?	✓	?	E	Whole flute

**TABLE 3. FLUTES ATTRIBUTED TO QUANTZ**

No.	Q#	Y#	Location	Former Location	Keys	Heads	T/S	Corps	Material
3.1	none	Y3	D-Berlin: SIMF, PKB 4229	D-Berlin: Schuchardt (1952) ex Lambsdorff (1922) ex Runnecker (1794)	1 Ag	1		2	Ivory
3.2	none	Y5	I-Milan: Guido Bizzi	D-Berlin, c. 1870	1 Ag	1	✓	1	Ivory
3.3	none		D-Halle: Handelhaus MS 577 (flauto d'amore)	D-Leipzig: Lange (1963)	2 Ag	1		1	Boxwood

**TABLE 4. MISSING FLUTES ATTRIBUTED TO QUANTZ**

No.	Q#	? Location	Former Location	Keys	Heads	T/S	Corps	Material	Missing
4.1			D-Berlin: Hohenzollern Mus. 3840 (until 1945)	1 Ag	1	?	1	Ivory	Whole flute

**TABLE 5. EARLY 20TH-CENTURY COPIES OF QUANTZ FLUTES**

5.1	D-Leipzig: Musikinstrumentenmuseum 1236a, by Julius Schetelig (1913) after an original in the Hohenzollern museum
5.2	B-Brussels: Instrumentenmuseum 3276, by Julius Schetelig (1913) after an original in the Hohenzollern museum
5.3	US-DC-Washington: DCM 429, by Eugène-Joseph Albert (1924), after 5.2

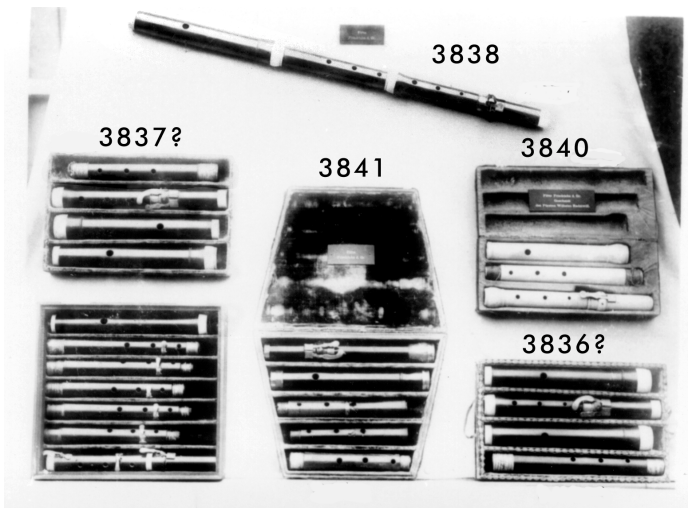


Fig. 4. Flutes in the Hohenzollern Museum, Berlin (Schloß Monbijou), c. 1930

Quantz delivered flutes to Frederick II starting in 1742, or perhaps in the previous year. In the *Versuch* Quantz stated that he had only just begun to make flutes with a tuning slide at that time, ten years after his first instruments for the king, and it seems that only this later type was marked with serial numbers. Flutes numbered I–IV may date from November 1751, as a receipt from that date is noted.<sup>2</sup> Sections of flutes which have no numbers (see note in Table 1) could be replacements by Quantz: he may have omitted to number them because he did not know which of the King's 18 or so Quantz flutes the replacement parts were meant for. A note in Frederick's account-book from August 1765 mentions, "To Quantz for headjoints: 275 Thaler."<sup>3</sup> This is equal to the sum (100 Ducats) Quantz was paid for a whole flute, so it seems possible he delivered about four heads on that occasion. Three of the extant heads bear no mark: 1.1, 1.2 and 1.5.

A collection of Quantz flutes was taken from the former Hohenzollern Museum at the end of the second World War. These instruments are shown on a photograph of c.1930, brought to my attention by Ardal Powell (Fig. 4). According to Herbert Heyde, two of the flutes (1.5 and 1.6) were given back in an incomplete state by the Soviet Union in 1958.<sup>4</sup> Before 1945 each flute had consisted of two headjoints, 5 middle joints, a heartpiece and a footjoint. The marks of these flutes had not been recorded and their cases are lost, so it is not possible to be sure which of Hohenzollern flutes 3836 and 3837 is 1.5 and 1.6. Worse, parts of Q XVII became divided up into two different flutes, so that only the the head and heartpiece of 1.6 belong to one flute, of which the other parts are now assembled into a separate instrument, No. 1.5. The Hohenzollern photograph makes it possible to identify 1.2, which came to the Leipzig Musikinstrumentenmuseum "before 1950": its upper middle joint is shortened at both ends and the keys have been replaced.

I have tried to show here that investigating the details of the flutes associated with Quantz can help us determine which of them—or even which parts of them—are really his work. This is obviously crucial before we can draw any conclusions about Quantz's musical ideas from these famous and fascinating instruments.

*Note on Young numbers:* No specifications are given by Young<sup>5</sup> for Y6, 7 and 8 beyond citing his information as "per Beaudin". Jean-François Beaudin studied and documented 1.5 in 1982, so Y6 probably refers to this flute. Likewise the identity of Y7 with 1.8 and Y8 with 1.6 can be presumed.

*Eberhard Dehne-Niemann is a teacher at a technical college in Karlsruhe, Germany, and a lifelong and enthusiastic amateur recorder and flute player. He has recently been collecting detailed information on Quantz's activities as a flute maker, and conducting a thorough study of both the documents and the instruments.*

#### NOTES:

1. Herbert Heyde, "Makers' Marks on Wind Instruments", in William Waterhouse, *The New Langwill Index* (London, 1993), xxvi; *New Langwill Index*, 315
2. J. Zimmerman, "Die Flötenmacher Friedrichs des Großen", *Zeitschrift für Instrumentenbau* 60.14, 160
3. Herbert Heyde, *Musikinstrumentenbau in Preußen* (Tutzing, 1994), 32
4. *Ibid.*, 39
5. Phillip T. Young, *4900 Historical Woodwind Instruments* (London, 1993), s.v. "Quantz".

**THE SECOND** triennial Baroque Flute Artist Competition will be held at the National Flute Association Convention in Phoenix, AZ, August 13-16 1998. Six semi-finalists will be selected to play in Phoenix on the basis of a taped preliminary round, and three of those will proceed to a final round later in the Convention. The closing date for entries is March 21, 1998, and the age limit is 35. For further information and entry forms write to Catherine E. Folkers, Coordinator, Baroque Flute Competition, 49 Rt 25, Hudson NY 12534-9508, or send e-mail to <cathy@baroqueflute.com>.

**ALREADY?** The next issue of this newsletter will mark *ATRAVERSO's 10th anniversary!* To celebrate the occasion, January 1998 will see a special commemorative edition. To help plan the next ten years, we would like to know what you have liked most and least in the past 40 issues. Send your comments, please, to <traverso@baroqueflute.com>, or to Ardal Powell, 49 Rt. 25, Hudson NY 12534-9508.

**FLUTE FEST**, marking the centennial of the Music Division at the Library of Congress in Washington DC, is set for February 1998. The event celebrates the Library's acquisition of the National Flute Association's archives, including a copy of Quantz's 1752 treatise, and the publication of a new catalog of the Dayton C. Miller Collection. **Jean-Pierre Rampal** (Feb. 24-25), **Konrad Hünteler** and **Edward R. Reilly** (Feb. 27) will be featured in free presentations in the newly reopened Coolidge Auditorium. Contact Ticketmaster (1-800 551-SEAT or <http://www.ticketmasterwb.com>) for tickets.



# TRAVERSO

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David Lasocki/ Eva Legène, "Wie man lernt, beim Verzieren von Händel-Sonaten mit dem Ohr des Komponisten zu hören" [rev. trans. of a series of articles in *The American Recorder*, Feb., Aug., and Nov. 1989], *Tibia* 3/97, 488-503

William Waterhouse, "Im Gespräch mit Tony Bingham", *Tibia* 3/97, 505-11

Rachel Brown, "Quantz, una rivalutazione" (trans. of an article from *Pan* 14.4 (Dec. 1996)), *Syrinx* 33 (Jul.-Sept. 1997)

Leornado Muzii, "Il Metodo di Corrette in una traduzione d'epoca" [a MS Italian translation of Corrette, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, 1090, Cl. VIII COD. 38], *Syrinx* 33 (Jul.-Sept. 1997)

Gianni Lazzari, "Una immagine inedita del flauto medievale", *Bolletino della Società Italiana del Flauto Traverso Storico* 2.1 (June 1997), 25-31

— "L'iconografia Italiana del flauto traverso", *Bolletino della Società Italiana del Flauto Traverso Storico* 2.1 (June 1997), 15-25

Luca Verzulli, "I flauti del Papa", *Bolletino della Società Italiana del Flauto Traverso Storico* 2.1 (June 1997), 10-14

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