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CZECH Musical Instruments

Supplement of Czech Business and Trade

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Rich Tradition of Musical Instrument Making in Bohemia

František Němeček, Acting Secretary of the Association of Musical Instrument Makers, e-mail: cks@hnn.cz, www.hnn.cz/avhn.htm



František Němeček

The manufacture of musical instruments has a rich tradition in the Czech Lands. This tradition dates back to the 16th and 17th centuries, mainly in places of concentrated musical culture, specifically in the royal city of Prague and in other centres. Here, in addition to the Italian violin making families of Amati, Guarneri, and Stradivari, the German violin making school began to develop, represented primarily by Jakob Steiner instruments. The greatest concentration of violin makers was in the Krušné hory (Ore Mountains) region, mainly in Kraslice and Luby near Cheb, where a violin making school was founded in 1873. This tradition was continued by other firms in Luby, such as Akord Kvint, s.r.o., and Ars Music, s.r.o., the manufacturers of concert and semi-master instruments and Europe's largest manufacturer of stringed and plucked instruments, STRUNAL s.r.o.

Violins Were Followed by Wind Instruments

The popularity of brass instruments goes back a long way in Bohemia, proof of which is provided by manuscripts and mural paintings. French horns first came to Bohemia after 1680, when they were imported from France by Count F. A. Sporck.

Shortly after that, workshops were set up in Bohemia to manufacture the instruments. In Prague, their production started in the latter half of the 18th century. The development and production of brass and woodwind instruments progressed concurrently with the needs of emerging compositions for classical orchestras. At the end of the 18th century, both brass and woodwind instruments were being manufactured in the country. The early 19th century saw the beginning of factory production, alongside family production and the making of master instruments. In 1864, a private school was founded in Kraslice, fostering future makers of tools needed in the manufacture of musical instruments. In 1882, it was turned into a school run by the state. Today's successor of this unique school is the Secondary Vocational School for Musical Instrument Makers. In the latter part of the 19th century, wind instrument making was influenced by two schools educating future mouthpiece instrument makers. The manufacture of instruments in Kraslice for export was based on the experience of both schools. The French school was represented by Adolphe Sax and the Austrian school by Václav František Červený. The centres of the historical manufacture of wind instruments in Bohemia and Moravia were Kraslice, Prague, Hradec Králové, and Brno. Today, the tradition of wind instrument making in Brno is upheld by the firm Josef Lidl, founded in 1892, which

became known primarily for its production of French horns and other brass instruments. At the beginning of the 20th century, in 1913, there were 9 factories in Kraslice, which, in total, employed 3 700 people in the manufacture of musical instruments, including home-made instruments. 90 % of output was exported.

Inventions in Musical Instrument Making in the Czech Lands

In 1844, V.F. Červený was granted the first imperial privilege for the realisation of his invention, the manufacture of a new type of horn, called the "cornon", intended primarily for mounted platoons. One year later he filed a patent application for a B-double bass, and another the following year for his best-known invention, the "Tonwechselfmaschine" horn, which was immediately copied by all brass instrument manufacturers. Every year, V.F. Červený introduced something new, and at world exhibitions, for example in New York, London, and Munich, he was awarded distinctions and gained new outlets. At these exhibitions, his new instruments, such as the "soundhorn", "baroxyton" and "descant horn", were especially valued by military bands. His other inventions and patents include the alto horn, army trombone, falcon horn, the bugle, and the primhorn, as well as the "walzenventile" patent. V. F. Červený created 24 new musical instruments. His inventions improved the sound and mechanical properties of wind instruments especially. His patents apply to percussion instruments also, for example today's shape of the triangle is also the result of his design. The followers of these traditions in the manufacture of wind instruments are AMATI-DENAK s.r.o. in Kraslice, together with the firm's factory in Hradec Králové, which makes the instruments under the V. F. Červený trademark. Another firm which upholds this tradition is the Moravian firm J. Lidl, s.r.o.

Piano Building Also Has a Tradition in Bohemia

Historically the first names of piano makers in Bohemia and Moravia from the early 19th century are those of Reiss, Rott, Zelenka, Kolb, and Buchta of Brno.

In the latter half of the 19th century, in addition to Prague's Ulrich and Jiříkovský, there were piano making firms in Hradec Králové, namely Petrof and Lhota. In 1864, Antonín Petrof built his first piano in his father's joinery workshop, and in 1874 he started his own production on the outskirts of the town. This is where his first piano with



Unique violins deposited in the Czech Museum of Music

Photo: Archives of the Czech Museum of Music

English action was made in 1875, the year when factory production was introduced there. In 1898, Antonín Petrof was honoured with the title of "Imperial and Royal Piano Manufacturer". At the beginning of the 20th century the firm had 250 workers and had accomplished great technical and business success. Petrof took over the factories of A. H. Lhota and Vanický in Hradec Králové, Kalles in Litomyšl, and also his uncle's firm Heitzmann & Sohn in Vienna. Proof of the commercial success of A. Petrof were the gold medals awarded to the at exhibitions in Linz, Graz, Timisoara, Vienna, and on many other occasions.

After the First World War, the business further expanded under the management of the founder's sons, Jan, Antonín, and Vladimír. PETROF established a position for itself on markets all over Europe, in America, Africa, China, Egypt, Japan, and Australia.

The company tradition has been taken up by the third Petrof generation – the sons Dimitri, Edward, and Eugene.

After 1989, following the complicated

economic and political development, the firm became a state corporation, and later, following privatisation, it turned into a joint stock company, and finally into a limited liability company. It is headed by a representative of the fifth generation of Petrofs.

Czech Music Museum

The tradition of musical instrument manufacture in Bohemia is illustrated by unique instrument collections on display in the Czech Music Museum, which houses some 2 800 pieces. Among its gems are, for example, a bass recorder and a hunter's oboe dating from around 1820. A rare collection comprises a set of famous late Renaissance instruments of the so-called Rožmberk band acquired in 1862. It comprises five pommers and five unique shawms, which, like other pieces, are hard to find anywhere else in the world. Other valuable historical instruments displayed in the museum include a hammer piano dating from the end of the 18th century, a pedal harp made around the year 1900, and many other valuable pieces.

For more, see:

www.nm.cz/ceske-muzeum-hudby/hudebni-nastroje.php

A High Musical Culture – Reflecting the Traditional Manufacture of Musical Instruments in the Czech Republic

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Musical instruments are among the traditional and successful sectors of the Czech manufacturing industry. Although the volume of their production and their economic importance for the industry are small, musical instruments take much credit for the high standard of the people's musical culture and they contribute significantly to promoting the Czech Republic in the world.

Czech professional performing artists and orchestras, such as the Czech Philharmonic (www.philharmonic.cz), are looked upon as being among the world's best orchestras and many of their members are playing Czech-made musical instruments.

Representation of the Sector in the Czech Republic

Practically all types of musical instruments are made in the CR, such as string and keyboard instruments, keyboard pipe organs, including reed organs, accordions and mouth organs, wind and percussion instruments, including electronic instruments, music boxes, signalling musical instruments, metronomes, tuning forks, strings, and parts for these musical instruments.

According to the latest statistics, there are in the CR 57 musical instrument manufacturers with fewer than 20 employees, 15 small and medium-sized enterprises with 20 to 249 employees and 6 large enterprises with 250 and more employees. Organisationally this sector is

included in group 36.3 of the NACE statistical classification of economic activities.

Most of the Output Goes for Export

Exports comprise all three main groups of musical instruments, i.e. keyboard instruments (pianos and upright pianos), wind instruments (saxophones, clarinets, trumpets, etc.) and stringed and plucked instruments (violins, violas, double basses, guitars, etc.). The instruments are exported to European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the Ukraine), to the American continent (the USA, Canada, Mexico), Asia (Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand), and to Australia and New Zealand.

In 2005, 21 leading Czech manufacturers of musical instruments attended the "MUSIKMESSE" international fair of musical instruments in Frankfurt a/Main, where they signed a number of business contracts and made new contacts to strengthen foreign cooperation. From January to September 2005, trade in musical instruments



The education of young musical instrument makers is important for the development of the branch

Photo: Secondary School and Secondary Apprenticeship Training Centre for Musical Instrument Makers, Hradec Králové

included in SCP group 36.3 scored a turnover of EUR 43.8 million, of which exports were worth EUR 32.7 million.

World competition on the musical instruments market is tremendous, in particular due to the untiring pressure of Asian manufacturers and their effort to assert themselves in Europe, an effort which has been persistent, and even successful. The quality and technical standard of their products, however, is often mediocre and even below standard, the same as their prices, which they use to force their way onto the market. To this, Czech manufacturers respond with high quality workmanship, design and service. This above-average quality is a prerequisite for maintaining their competitiveness and good sales in coming years.

Prospects of the Sector

Maintaining and further improving the position of Czech manufacturers of musical instruments on domestic and foreign markets will require great innovative efforts, with emphasis on top-quality design, technical construction, and aesthetic appearance. As regards sales, the expected gradual rising of the living standard and purchasing power of the population is hoped to stimulate an interest in purchasing musical instruments.

Situation in the musical instruments sector (NACE 36.3)

Sales of own products and services, in current prices, between 2000 and 2004					
(million EUR)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
*NACE 36.3	77.7	78.8	78.2	69.7	62.4
Number of persons employed, between 2000 and 2004					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
*NACE 36.3	3 965	4 644	4 188	3 923	3 533
Development of trade in products, in current prices, between 2000 and 2004					
Export total (million EUR)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
SCP ** 36.3	66.3	67.1	62.8	56.1	50.3

* NACE – Statistical classification of economic activities

** SCP – Standard classification of products

Source: Czech Statistical Office

The Association of Musical Instrument Makers Supports Not Only Czech Manufacturers

František Němeček, Acting Secretary of the Association of Musical Instrument Makers of the Czech Republic, e-mail: cks@hnn.cz, www.hnn.cz/avhn.htm

The Association of Musical Instrument Makers (AVHN) came into being in 1998, in response to the need for bringing Czech musical instrument makers together and associating them in domestic and international organisations.

The firms that founded the Association have a long tradition and rank among the largest European and world manufacturers of musical instruments. Among others, they include PETROF, s.r.o., AMATI-DENAK, s.r.o., and STRUNAL, s.r.o. The purpose of the association is to protect, support, and realise the common interests of its members as regards their economic and business plans and their technical problems. It strives to inspire in them a feeling of togetherness and the awareness of the sector's mission in the area of musical culture. Last but not least, it represents and defends the common interests of its members in relation to state bodies and authorities, foreign associations, and organisations. AVHN is also a member of the Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic and the Confederation of the European Music Industries (CAFIM).

AVHN - an Active Member of European Organisations

As a member of CAFIM, the Association supports international co-operation in the framework of the EU and important institutions worldwide, such as the National Association of Music Merchants

(NAMM) in the USA. In September 2005, Zuzana Ceralová-Petrofová, President of AVHN CR, was elected President of CAFIM for a term of two years.

Some members of AVHN CR are also members of the EUROPIANO Europe-wide union of piano associations. The union brings together piano associations from fourteen European countries, including the Czech Pianomakers' Association. The union came into being in 1997, on the initiative of the firms PETROF, BOHEMIA PIANO, KLIMA PIANO, PIANA Týniště, J. PORKERT and other makers of upright and grand pianos and the components thereof. The Secondary Vocational School and Secondary Apprentice Training Centre for Musical Instrument Makers in Hradec Králové are also associated within the Pianomakers' Association.

The Association also co-operates with various professional and technical institutes and organisations so as to gain special knowledge from them to the benefit of the entire sector.

Bohemia – the Conservatory of Europe

Another activity of the AVHN is its support of music playing and the promotion of musical education at all school levels. Currently, it is working on a project entitled "Bohemia – the Conservatory of Europe". The purpose of this project is to create conditions for the development of active music playing. It should begin in

nursery schools and continue in elementary and secondary schools and at universities. Older people are also to be involved, as music has a favourable influence on them, keeping them mentally and physically fit as they grow old.

This project relies on co-operation with existing institutions, such as the Academy of Performing Arts, pedagogical faculties and conservatories, and the involvement of existing societies, such as the Orff Society, music societies, music lover associations, etc.

One of the aims of the project is to enter into co-operation with the German "Akademie für Musikpädagogik" in Wiesbaden and to set up an institute for EU states that would create a rational concept, whilst maintaining the specific national features of amateur orchestra playing. At the same time it would like to co-operate with leading music teachers and professional artists in organising international seminars and performance courses in EU member states. Furthermore, it aims to create conditions for sparking the interest of young people by organising national and international presentations and competitions of school orchestras and music bands.

Separately, it wants to include in the project the promotion and broadening of programmes for educating new specialists in the area of musical instrument manufacture.

The Association of Musical Instrument Makers of the CR associates the following firms:

Firm	Address	e-mail	www
AKORD KVINT s.r.o.	Chebská 378, CZ 351 37 Luby	akord@ch.bon.cz	www.akordkvint.com
AMATI-DENAK s.r.o.	Dukelská 44, CZ 358 01 Kraslice	amati@amati.cz	www.amati.cz
ARS MUSIC s.r.o.	Chebská 5, CZ 351 37 Luby	akordkvint@akordkvint.com	www.akordkvint.com
BOHEMIA PIANO s.r.o.	U dlouhé stěny 9, CZ 586 01 Jihlava	bohemiapiano@pmi.cz	www.bohemiapiano.cz
DETOA s.r.o.	Jiřetín pod Bukovou 6, CZ 468 43 Albrechtice v J.h.	sales@detoa.cz	www.detoa.cz
HARMONIKAS s.r.o.	Poděbradova 2506, CZ 440 01 Louny	harmonikas@lounsko.cz	www.harmonikas.cz
JOSEF LÍDL s.r.o.	Zelný trh 10, CZ 602 00 Brno	romans@lidlmusic.cz	www.lidlmusic.cz/josef
RESONANČNÍ PILA a.s.	B. Němcové 170, CZ 503 51 Chlumec nad Cidlinou	reson.pila@worldonline.cz	www.sweb.cz/respila
STRUNAL s.r.o.	Petra Bezruč 730, CZ 351 37 Luby	info@strunal.com	www.strunal.cz
ŠIBA s.r.o.	Jánského 953, CZ 252 28 Černošice	siba@email.cz	www.siba.cz
PETROF s.r.o.	Brněnská 207, CZ 500 06 Hradec Králové 6	z.c.p.@petrof.com	www.petrof.cz
PIANO TÝNIŠTĚ a.s.	Mostecká 424, CZ 517 21 Týniště nad Orlicí	vesely@piana-as.cz	www.piana-as.cz
TEVESO s.r.o.	Škroupova 441, CZ 500 02 Hradec Králové	teveso@mbox.vol	

Churches in Many Countries Resound to Music Played on Czech-made Organs

Jana Kypúsová, Director, Secondary Art School for Organ Makers, o.p.s., Krnov, e-mail: varhany.skola@post.cz, www.varhanyous.cz

The Sound of Organ Music Arouses in People the Feeling of Something Extraordinary

Excellent organ-builders used to practice their art on the territory of the present-day Czech Republic, and several valuable historic instruments have been preserved to this day. For example, a unique organ can be found in the Church of St. Maurice in Olomouc, built by the Silesian master Michael Engler, Jr. Other well-preserved organs of substantial value, built by Hans Heinrich Mundt and Abraham Starck, are installed in the Church of Our Lady of Týn in Prague and in Zlatá Koruna, south Bohemia, respectively. The organ in the monastery at Teplá, by Antonín Gartner, is also historically valuable.

After the Second World War, organ building was concentrated especially in the Rieger-Kloss works in Krnov (www.rieger-kloss.cz), which was part of the Československé hudební nástroje enterprise making musical instruments in Hradec Králové. At that time, many Czech-made organs were exported to the former Soviet Union, while in this country they were used mainly as concert instruments.

After 1989, organ building, repair, and



Organ in Savannah, the USA

Photo: Rieger-Kloss archives

reconstruction underwent massive development. More firms came into being, which concern themselves not only with the repair and reconstruction of the instruments, but also the building of new organs all over the world. Many of them have taken up a tradition of organ building from their ancestors.

Current Boom of the Sector

More than 100 organ-building firms are currently registered in the Czech Republic, employing from 1 to 50 people. Among the best known are Vladimír Šlajch, who specialises in the restoration of historic instruments (Plasy, Osek, Zlatá Koruna), and the firm Organa s.r.o. Kutná Hora (www.organa.cz) devoting itself to the building and restoration of organs, for example in the Great Hall of Prague's Carolinum. Other organ building firms are like that of Jan Stavinoha, who builds small new instruments, does overhauls and reconstructions; for example in the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Kroměříž, and the All Saints' Church in Rožnov.

The Kánský-Brachtl company of Krnov has restored the valuable organ in St. Vitus cathedral in Prague and built a new organ for the cathedral in Banská Bystrica. Another important firm is Rieger-Kloss Varhany s.r.o. Krnov, making new organs for export; for example to the USA, to the Independent Presbyterian Church – Savannah; Madison Street United Methodist Church – Clarksville; Presbyterian Church, Seoul; South Korea – Chong Kyo Methodist Church and Sung Rak Church; France – Ste. Maxime Church; and Slovakia – St. Parich Church. Other manufacturers make various organ components and parts.

Organ building has its history and tradition in this country, and good care must be given to existing instruments. That is why the Secondary Organ-building School, o.p.s. has been established in Krnov to educate followers of the builders of this royal instrument.



Organ in St. Clemens Church, Hradec Králové

Photo: Kánský-Brachtl archives

Czech Schools for Musical Instrument Makers

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140 Years of the School for Musical Instrument Makers in Kraslice

The first makers of musical instruments probably settled in the Kraslice area as early as the latter half of the 16th century. In the middle of the 19th century, there were already several well-established businesses in Kraslice making musical instruments. The manufactories and later factories, which developed from previous workshops, saw the need for expert help in making musical instruments. That is when the idea was conceived to found a special school for the future makers of musical instruments and combine it with music teaching. The founder of the school was Baron Richard von Dotzauer, a highly educated man living in Kraslice and a deputy to the Imperial Reichstag in Vienna.

a Sunday school, and later, with the introduction of special subjects, it became a daily school.

The present name of the school is Secondary Vocational School and Secondary Apprentice Training Centre for Musical Instrument Makers, providing education in the following branches of study and apprentice training:

Manufacture of musical instruments

– a four-year course that focuses on the manufacture, repair, and restoration of all musical instrument Makers. Studies are completed with the secondary school-leaving examination.

Wind instrument technician – three-year apprentice training course aimed at the manufacture of wind

apprentice training course teaching the technology of wind instrument making. Studies are completed with the secondary school-leaving examination.

For the entire duration of its existence, the school's activities have been linked to music, be it organising the Kraslice Music Spring Festival or holding various competitions and brass band concerts of orchestras composed of school pupils. The school's mixed choir founded thirty years ago by teacher Karel Malíšek, who leads it to this day, also enjoys great popularity.

During its existence, the school has educated hundreds of specialists, who work in a number of branches, not only in the Czech Republic, but also in many other countries worldwide.

The Czech Organ Making School

The development of organ making has called for special education, as the organ represents the combination of artisanship with knowledge of material processing and music. To meet this requirement, a Secondary Organ Making School was founded in Krnov in 1992, and developed into a beneficiary corporation educating the makers of this royal instrument. Its graduates may obtain the IES certificate allowing them to work in EU states. The study duration is four years and is completed by a secondary school-leaving examination in artistic organ building. In recent years, students from neighbouring countries, e.g. Slovakia, came to Krnov to study organ making. One of the first graduates is Tomáš Fafílek, who after completing his studies went to work with the German firm Gb. Oberlinger in Windesheim for a year to gain practice. Since 2000, he has worked with Rieger-Kloss as an intoner, with assignments in South Korea, China, Taiwan, Bulgaria, Russia, and the USA. In addition to his art of tuning and intoning, he also plays the organ himself. In 2003 he took part in a concert tour of the USA. Another successful graduate of the school is Robert Ponča, who has founded the company Robert Ponča Varhany (www.ponca-organs.com). He takes credit, for example, for the restoration



Photo: Archives of SVS and SATC for Musical Instrument Makers in Kraslice

The school in Kraslice has brought up hundreds of accomplished makers of musical instruments, working in many countries the world over

During its 140-year-long existence, the school underwent a complicated development. At the time of its founding it focused on the artisan production of musical instruments and active music teaching. At first it was

instruments. Training is completed by the final exam and a certificate of apprenticeship.

Art and handicraft manufacture of musical instruments – a four-year

and reconstruction of organs in Brač, Croatia, and Zurich, Switzerland, and the reconstruction of the organ in Ludgeřovice, CR.

Organ building has its history. Expert care must be given to existing instruments, while old instruments must be repaired and restored, and possibilities offered by new technologies must be taken advantage of. The graduates of the organ school, which is unique in Central Europe, are making a contribution to all this.

School of Piano and Furniture Making

As in the past, the Secondary Vocational School and Secondary Apprentice Training Centre for Musical Instrument and Furniture Makers in Hradec Králové continues today in its cooperation with PETROF s.r.o., the largest piano manufacturer in Europe. With some exaggeration it can be said that the piano is a marvellous solitary piece of furniture which, in addition, can be used to play music. That is why this school, in addition to training future piano makers, also teaches handicraft production with a specialisation in woodworking, and furniture making especially. Besides preparing pupils in day courses, the secondary school for musical instruments and furniture runs qualification courses for piano builders, and during the holidays it holds woodcarving seminars, surface finishing and woodworking courses.

The school co-operates with important specialists and institutions and is a member of the Czech Piano Makers' Association, with which it organises specialised seminars for the other members.




Woodcarving is an inseparable part of organ building

For further education, the school is preparing master piano-building courses and exams. Teachers and specialists of the Czech Piano Makers' Association are convinced that the

exams will contribute towards the further development and improvement of the piano-making craft.

Photo: Archives of the Secondary Art School for Organ Makers in Křmlov


ČESKÉ HUDEBNÍ NÁSTROJE
Brand-name acoustic musical instruments and accessories
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www.chn.cz

The "Clusters" Programme Will Strengthen the Competitiveness of Musical Instrument Manufacturers

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The Programme 1.4 Clusters of the Operational Programme Industry and Enterprise is a programme in progress in the Czech Republic since 2004 for the support of the development of clusters with the help of finance from EU Structural Funds. Clusters are geographically concentrated groups of companies operating in the same line of business linked in a production chain that generates added value as well as associated institutions. Owing to co-operation in selected areas, businesses within the cluster can resolve their common problems, overcome various limitations, and gain a competitive advantage, something that can hardly be imitated. Two types of projects are supported under the Clusters Programme, which is implemented by Government-run CzechInvest, the Investment and Business Development Agency: a project aimed at mapping the potential for creating clusters and at outlining common strategies, and a follow-up project for the creation and development of the cluster.

One of the projects implemented under the framework of this programme is the creation of a cluster of musical instrument makers in the Karlovy Vary Region. A total of 1.13 % of the economically active population is currently employed in the manufacture of musical instruments in the Karlovy Vary Region. 14 businesses from this branch are currently involved in this programme.

Co-operation Amongst Firms Will Increase Their Competitiveness

Association in a cluster and the development of common marketing and innovation strategies are a suitable way for Czech exporters of musical instruments to challenge competition from Asian countries that compete with traditional manufacturers primarily with their low production costs.

In 2006, the cluster will provide services to its members in selected areas, for which individual firms would otherwise either have to pay more than



Varnishing the saxophone body

Photo: Amati archives

members of the association or they would lose too much time ensuring individually the activities needed for their development. The mission of the cluster is above all to improve the marketing activities of the member businesses, to identify and fill the gaps in the supplier/buyer chains, to strengthen their share of the market influenced by cheap products from Asian countries, including China, and to conquer new markets. Common marketing projects include, for instance, the creation of common web sites, common participation in important trade fairs, or common advertising to attract important customers in the CR. Besides common advertising, which is the most important area for co-operation, these musical instrument makers will join in other common activities. They will, for instance, co-operate in areas such as education, common trade, and common research and development. By introducing new technologies into production in co-operation with the University of West Bohemia in Plzeň

(www.zcu.cz), and potentially with other development workplaces, the cluster firms can significantly improve the quality of their products and strengthen the position of Czech firms on the market, especially within its certain segments.

The Cluster Will Increase Its Share of the World Market

One of the opportunities that the cluster will bring on international markets is the expected increase in demand for good-quality musical instruments from traditional exporting countries, such as the Czech Republic, on the part of demanding customers, who are dissatisfied with the quality of Asian production. Potentially promising markets for traditional Czech musical instruments are countries such as Australia, Canada, Japan, and Great Britain, which have recently increased their import of certain musical instruments manufactured by firms associated in the cluster. An important opportunity for the cluster is the supply

of high-quality instruments made up into complete sets for customers with high demands on quality and reliability. If the cluster makes a comprehensive offer covering a broad product range, it will have a better chance of selling and

a greater potential to penetrate new markets. A common offer will make it possible for the cluster to react more flexibly in innovating production, as businesses will have a better chance to respond to market demand than if

a large number of firms were to act individually. In the final analysis, a common offer of products will address more buyers simultaneously, and it will also attract larger customers. ■

List of members associated in the Music Industry Cluster

Firm	e-mail	Activity
Amati-Denak s.r.o.	stipek@amati.cz	Manufacture of wind instruments
Bauer Oldřich	olda.bauer@post.cz olda.bauer@email.cz	Repair and manufacture of string instruments. Unconventional and historical instruments
Berdych Daniel	daniel.berdych@seznam.cz	Repair and sale of musical instruments
Dvořák Štěpán	houslardvorak@centrum.cz	Violin making
G + W výroba hudebních nástrojů	info@gwcheb.cz	Manufacture and sale of children's musical instruments
H @ K Music	hkmusic@cbox.cz	Sale of musical instruments
Jaša Daniel	saxofon.servis@worldonline.cz	Repair and sale of saxophones
Jelínek Jaromír Ing.	info@baroqueviolin.net	Violin making
Organa s.r.o.	organa.kh@tiscali.cz	Organ building and restoring
PETROF s.r.o.	pianosalon@petrof.com projektv@petrof.com	Musical instruments, Petrof, Weinbach, Rösler, Scholze grand and upright pianos
PIANA Týniště, a.s.	info@piana-as.cz	Upright and grand piano cases and other wooden piano parts
Pötzl Jan	potzl@centrum.cz	Violin making
Schneider Jan		Guitar making
Zlesák Roman	bachmusic@seznam.cz	Manufacture of woodwind instruments



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470 53 Jiříkov, Czech Republic, **Tomáš Franěk** (Chief Executive), e-mail: franek@hsbf.cz
Tomáš Daňhel (Sales Manager), Phone: +420 602 128 120, e-mail: danhel@hsbf.cz, www.hsbf.cz

Garage Guitars Conquer World Markets



František Furch

The first musical instruments signed by Furch were made in 1981. Originally a bluegrass player, František Furch has become the successful owner of a business that manufactures high-quality guitars and mandolins. The current volume of the firm's production is approximately 3 500 instruments a year, 90 per cent of which is exported. Instruments with the Furch trademark are played by professionals both in the Czech Republic and in other countries, for example in Scandinavia, Germany, Japan, and Great Britain.

You made your first banjo for yourself. What exactly prompted your decision to start a business in musical instrument making?

I made the first banjo for myself and then several guitars for my friends and colleague musicians. The stimulus was the acute shortage of instruments on the market and the inability to provide them. I mean instruments for high-quality performance of music that allow the musician to make progress. I was not the only one who chose self-aid production, there were several names and addresses circulating among musicians of the then Czechoslovakia where one could obtain a good instrument. Nevertheless, I was one of a few to have tried to make a very modern and attractive "roundback" guitar at that time – the so-called Ovation. These models were the first to bear the Furch trademark.

Can you say briefly what development your company has undergone from the time of your first instruments up until your broad co-operation with foreign partners today?

Until 1989 I made single pieces, my workshop was in the garage of my house, and I went to work. Officially I founded the firm in 1990. For the first few years I was learning, looking for suppliers, and trying to overcome the "teething troubles" of the guitars themselves and the technology I used, as the production of musical instruments is a non-standard process in terms of technical equipment, materials, the parameters of glues, varnishes etc. For instance, the development of production technology is in fact a never-ending process. When I got a foot in the door of my

first foreign market, Germany, I had to face the problems of the next stage, which involved comparing with rivals and building a position. In the end we saw that our products compared well with renowned trademarks. This again accelerated the development of the tools and technologies. A breakthrough came in 2000, when I visited the factory of an important rival in the USA. That was a great impetus for me, and an inspiration. I decided to change the entire production technology, and focused on problems which until then appeared insolvable.

Which materials and parts do you use in production? What, in your opinion, is the most important key to making a high-quality instrument?

The material range is relatively broad and is based, to a considerable extent, on well tried and tested models. Past centuries and decades have put to the test various combinations of woods and materials, which prove that a good-quality instrument must fit within the established limits. We use conventional materials, i.e. resonance spruce and cedar for the upper resonance boards, mahogany, rosewood, and maple for the sides and the back resonance boards, rosewood and ebony for the bridges, fingerboards, etc. In the past we have occasionally made instruments from African padouk and ziricote in small series. We are also considering the use of alternative woods of European origin and the testing of their sound properties and overall usability in our category of instruments.

The high quality of the material, painstaking preparation, and excellent workmanship are important in order to achieve good results. All this requires profound interest in the work as such.

A problem in recent years has been the boom of Asian, specifically Chinese, products, imported to Europe under various fictitious or



Guitar from the Furch workshop

Photo: Furch archives

real trademarks. Those engaged in this practice are not the manufacturers, but marketing entities, sheer businessmen with no feeling for the product, people only concerned with charts, red and black figures, the purses of amateur musicians and their own bank accounts. The customer is not a partner for them, but prey. This is not a way to be followed. Quality would die out, people would not understand what quality is, they would not want it, because they would forget that it ever existed and how to distinguish it.

Which of your instruments are most in demand in foreign countries?

This differs by the market. There is no unequivocal answer, but in terms of the number of instruments sold, the greatest demand is for the Durango series. Favourite models in Japan include Furch Millennium, Furch Vintage Bluegrass, a new item which gained immediate popularity. The German market prefers smaller guitars. This is due to the popularity of individual music styles, which require specific playing and sound properties depending, among other things, on the size of the body of the guitar.

The Czech market, on the other hand, demands guitars with larger bodies, as in the CR there is a broad bluegrass scene and bluegrass is the music of powerful basses.

Do you also engage in development? Could you tell us about any new or rare items from your production?

Perhaps the greatest rarity and, at the same time, a new item is the Durango series mentioned above. Its special feature is its unusually strong back resonant board without ribs, slightly compressed, about the same as in jazz guitars. This construction lends the instrument great compression and a characteristic powerful sound. Although the basic model of the Durango series belongs to the low-end category, it is popular even with professionals, purely for its raw powerful sound. Another item we plan to place on the market in 2006 is the Anniversary model to mark the 25th anniversary of the firm's founding.



Completing the body of a Furch guitar

Photo: Furch archives

Do you co-operate with foreign companies?

If what you have in mind is production in our company for other firms, then yes, we do. We co-operate with a relatively well-known trademark that approached us with a project for the transfer of a part of its production to the Furch factory.

Sometimes we are asked why we produce under another trademark, specifically under Stanford. It is a trademark which came into being in co-operation with our German partner as far back as in 1997 and is intended primarily for German-speaking markets. The point is that the German market demanded guitars of "American" design, and our partner wanted us to adjust existing models to suit his markets. This would make our offer rather non-transparent, and so we chose the option to build a parallel collection with an adjusted design and named it Stanford.

The interview was led by Naďa Vávrová




PRODUCTION:

- **PROFESSIONAL GUITARS** - Spanish and Jumbo - handcrafted, made to order
- **MANDOLINS** - especially 4 types for country & bluegrass - handcrafted, made to order
- **CARILLONS, 9 TYPES** (soprano/alto), with colour stones for children and black-and-white stones for advanced players
- **JEW'S HARPS AND KAZOOS** - simple instruments for jazz and folk music, and for children

■ **ACCESSORIES FOR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** capodasters, plectrums, plectrum holders, mouth organ holders, various rhythmic and Orff instruments

Publisher and distributor of music literature, especially textbooks and songbooks (for the Czech Republic and Slovakia).



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Blue Violin by a Czech Violin Maker

Jan Baptista Špidlen is a member of the fourth generation of a famous Czech violin making family. His great-grandfather was a violin maker of the imperial conservatory in Moscow and was considered the best violin maker in Russia. Today, Jan B. Špidlen makes violins for Czech and foreign master violinists. He is a holder of several foreign awards and is a member of a prestigious international organization associating violin makers and other specialists in the branch.

Since his early childhood, Jan Baptista Špidlen was surrounded by music, at first in his father's workshop, where he came into contact with stringed instruments and wood. He himself started playing the violin at five. After completing elementary school, he studied woodcarving at a Secondary Art School in Prague. He learned the rudiments of violin making at the International Violin Making School in Mittelwald, Germany, and later continued learning the craft with his father, master violin maker Přemysl O. Špidlen.

In 1989 he went to London, where he spent a year at the prestigious J. & A. Beare restorer company. In 1988 he became a member of Cycle of Artistic Violin Makers, and in the same year made a copy of the inlaid "Hellier" 1679 Stradivari violin. In 2003 he was admitted to the Entente Internationale Maitres Luthiers et Archetiers d'Art, a prestigious

international organisation associating violin makers and other specialists in the branch. He is the holder of many awards, for instance in 2003, at the 10th international violin makers' competition in Cremona in Italy, he won the 1st and 2nd prizes and another two prizes for the highest number of points gained in the competition for sound and workmanship, and a special prize of the Polish Violin Makers' Union for the best-sounding violin.

The Art of Violin Making Remains

More than a hundred years have passed since Jan B. Špidlen's great-grandfather made his first violin. Much has changed in the musical world during that time, but, as Jan B. Špidlen says, the art of violin making remains unchanged: "Although in comparison with the past, the community of classical music fans has declined to 10 % of the total number of lovers of all music genres, of which there is a much larger number than before, the quality of violins and the volume of violin making have not declined. On the contrary, music today is much closer to the people and, consequently, the number of violinists is ten times higher, so there are good opportunities for them to perform their art." The demand for good violins is high. Evidence thereof is the fact that a violinist must wait up to two years to get a Špidlen violin. Špidlen works exclusively to order and makes



Jan B. Špidlen

Photo: J. B. Špidlen archives

four to five violins a year. Violins from his workshop, built according to Stradivari or Guarneri, go to leading Czech and foreign violinists. At present, the master is working on an order for the Vienna Philharmonic.

Špidlen obtains his many orders mainly on various recommendations. "Of course, one must be backed by results that prove the quality. Orders for violins are obtained primarily on the basis of personal contact, in that someone recommends you," Špidlen adds.

Owner of Violin Making Recipes

There is more than just one Špidlen family violin making recipe, but of course the master will not disclose any of them. "What I can say is that I make violins from maple wood and spruce, and the maple wood I use comes from Bosnia, a well-known traditional area, where trees used for these purposes have been felled since Stradivari's times. The accessories I use come from a foreign manufacturer," says Špidlen. While working with conventional materials according to well-tried and tested recipes, Špidlen does not avoid experimenting. "I am currently working on a vanguard violin project, a result of my innovation developed at the Amiata Summit international conference of violin makers held in Italy in 2004. Nine violin makers from different countries met at the conference. The main item on the agenda was the question of whether it is possible and whether there is any sense in building violins other than those made to the 300-year old Stradivari model," Špidlen explains. The outcome of his efforts will be a violin that will draw attention not only by its vanguard design and its blue colour, but primarily thanks to its better sound. The instrument is intended for the young Czech virtuoso Pavel Šporcl.



Head of a violin from the workshop of J. B. Špidlen

Photo: J. B. Špidlen archives

Prepared by **Nada Vávrová**

PETROF – Grand and Upright Pianos of World Quality

Zuzana Ceralová-Petrofová, Acting Secretary, PETROF s.r.o., e-mail: z.c.p@petrof.com, www.petrof.cz

Today, at the beginning of the third millennium, millions of people all over the world know Czech-made PETROF grand and upright pianos. Czech musical instruments bearing this trademark resound in prestigious concert halls, recording studios, and art schools. They can be heard, among other places, in Milan's La Scala, in the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, and in the opera house in Sydney. They were played or owned, for example, by Paul McCartney, Richard Clydermann, Count Basie, Oscar Peterson, Herbie Hancock, and many other renowned pianists.

History of the Family Business

During the 140 years of its existence, the firm has made more than 600 000 grand and upright pianos. The road it has travelled has, however, been a winding one.

In the early days, after 1864, the founder, Antonín Petrof, had to start literally from scratch. Satisfaction came in 1898, when he was awarded the title of "imperial and royal" piano supplier for the then Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Thus, the foundations were laid for the firm's further development. It started immediately after the First World War in 1918. In the period between the two wars, PETROF pianos delighted pianists and music-lovers in remote countries such as South Africa, India, Egypt, Japan, and Australia. The management of the business was handed over smoothly from generation to generation until 1948, when this continuous process was interrupted for several decades. Finding the torn threads and tying them together again was a most uneasy task for the fourth and fifth generations of the Petrof family, as the whole firm had to be rebuilt into a modern, dynamically developing trade company. This is the only way for the PETROF trademark to remain a family name in the field of piano-building art, and for the PETROF instruments to carry on the tradition of the firm's founder.

Petrof Holds a Leading Position in Piano Building

Despite the current stagnation on the musical instruments market, PETROF,

with its production of 6 000 upright pianos and 1 300 grand pianos a year, has maintained its high share on the world conventional keyboard instrument market. In its efforts, the firm not only draws on assets created in the past, such as tradition, the workmanship of the piano makers, its business representation in over 60 countries worldwide, but it also takes advantage of other supporting factors. Its attention is focused primarily on the continuous modernisation of its production facilities and surface finishing technology. It concentrates on the quality of the resonant wood it uses and the optimisation of technologies in its processing. Equal emphasis is placed on the organisation of production. The firm's production base is supported by its applied research workshop, which specialises in acoustics, its design and development workshops, and the service department, which uses a carefully planned system of training service technicians from all over the world.

Training New Specialists

The training of new specialists is provided by the Secondary Vocational School and Secondary Apprentice Training Centre for Musical Instrument and Furniture Makers in Hradec Králové (www.hnn.cz). Co-operation with this apprentice training centre does not end here, but continues with the employee training and education system. The system guarantees that there will be new people to whom the mastery, piano-building skill, and artisan creativity will be passed on to, so that the tradition of the firm is maintained. That is why the firm has the ability to both innovate its products by means of technical and material improvements, and to launch new instruments, designs, and technologies, on the market. The latest important event has been the filing of a patent application for magnetically accelerated mechanics. ■



Jubilee PETROF model

Photo: PETROF archives

Europe's Largest Manufacturer of Stringed Instruments Is Building on a Rich Tradition

Zdeněk Pernica, Managing Director, Strunal, spol. s r.o., e-mail: pernica@strunal.cz, www.strunal.cz

The company Strunal, spol. s r.o. is a traditional and currently the largest manufacturer of stringed instruments in Europe. Situated in the picturesque town of Luby near Cheb in the westernmost part of the Czech Republic, it is continuing the rich tradition of musical instrument manufacture in that region, dating back to the latter half of the 16th century. The production of musical instruments in Luby took on its industrial character between the two World Wars. In its present form the works, which is being continually modernised, has existed since the late 1960s.

A Modern and Prospering Firm

Today, Strunal is maximising on the skill of its violin and guitar makers and combining it with modern and environmentally friendly technologies. Emphasis is placed on the painstaking choice of high-quality resonance material and its meticulous processing. The plant is fitted with equipment for the full technological cycle of production, from trunk cutting to dimension timber storage, drying kilns, workshops for making parts of musical instruments and assembling



Antonio Stradivarius model



Strunal shop

Photo: Strunal archives

them, to the surface finishing of the instruments and their final outfit and tuning. All the workshops are kept so as to meet environmental requirements, and their condition is continuously monitored, which also applies to surface finishing. All these aspects are a guarantee of the outstanding sound properties and quality of the instruments, based on traditional European craftsmanship.

The Volume of Production Does Not Affect the Quality of the Instruments

Strunal's annual output is approximately 50 000 guitars of all shapes and sizes; more than 6 000 violins; nearly 1 000 violas; up to 2 000 cellos and the same number of double-basses; 3 500 bows; more than 500 mandolins and banjos; cases, covers, and other accessories. All instruments are made in several versions, from cheaper school instruments to top quality concert models. Customers will also appreciate the great variety of sizes, from full-size instruments to reduced sizes, from 7/8, 3/4, 1/2, and 1/4 to 1/8. The quality of these reduced-size instruments is equally as high as that of the full-size instruments, both as regards the sound and workmanship, enabling

adequate tuition to children from the age of four.

Strunal Is an Important Exporter

A major part of the company's output (around 90 per cent) is intended for customers in other countries. Its most important export territories are the USA, Canada, Germany, France, Sweden, Spain, Mexico, and Japan, and in the past few years also Russia. Other outlets include territories, such as Iran, Oman, Lebanon, and Sudan. Strunal exports its products to 52 countries the world over.

References from Renowned Artists

The traditional artisanship of highly skilled specialists is the reason for the continuously growing confidence in Czech musical instruments. Guitars made by the company are recommended to students by professor Jiří Jirmal; its violins by concert virtuoso Jaroslav Svěcený. Besides ordinary production, the company presents and offers the highlight of its programme – master instruments from the workshops of the Luby master craftsmen. These instruments are played by renowned Czech and foreign artists, such as Jakub Trásák and Václav Hudeček

More about the company, its activities, products, and distribution channels as well as the hottest news items can be found at www.strunal.cz.

Drums of Unique Appearance and Sound

Erik Hanuš, Hanuš & Heřt, e-mail: drums@hanushert.com, www.hanushert.com

The firm Hanuš & Heřt Drums was established in 1989 by a group of joiners specialising in demanding solid wood furniture making. Their drum programme was launched in 1997. They have a conventional manual workshop, where they make a limited number of "snare-drums" known for exquisite workmanship, which they prefer to increasing their production and catering for the market.

Hand-made Originals

The firm currently concentrates on the manufacture of "snare-drums" made of solid wood. Its main concern is to create unique top-quality instruments. Every instrument leaving the workshop is a real hand-made original.

The most frequent materials used for the production of wooden drum shells are maple, oak, cherry, jarrah and rosewood. All instruments are fitted with lugs and strainer designed and made by the workshop itself. The snare hardware is made exclusively for instruments of the firm Hanuš & Heřt Drums. Each instrument leaving the workshop is provided with information about the size, material used, and date of production. Naturally, each instrument is signed. A special feature is wooden hoops, which come in two versions – light (made of maple) and auburn (made of bubinga). This lends the instruments an original, richly wooden sound in rimshot and crosstick playing.

Technology of Production

All the instruments made by the firm Hanuš & Heřt Drums are glued together from vertical blocks of solid wood, unlike most drums sold on the market, which are made of plywood. coiling. Solid wood and the minimum quantity of glue used enhance the real "musical properties" of the material. After thorough manual finishing and grinding, the instrument is saturated with special oil and stained to the required shade. The surface finishing is absolutely unique, as all instruments are treated exclusively by natural material, specifically the highest quality Thai shellac.

On the outer side, the shellac is applied by the traditional, but very demanding, method of French polishing. During this process, the instrument is ground many times with special abrasive oil and

pumice. By this technology, several hundred very thin layers of resin are applied to the surface of the instrument. The perfect shellac polish on the outside and inside of the instrument lends it a unique look and sound. Before the last layer of polish, the instrument is bored to accommodate the lugs.

All instruments are fitted with wooden hoops. To ensure high resistance, the hoops are made by gluing together fifteen layers of plywood and one massive amaranth band under high pressure.

The Firm's Production and Philosophy

The firm makes dozens of snare drums a year. It produces a limited number (of approximately four complete drum sets of solid wood) to order. Both snare drums and sets are made for drummers of symphonic orchestras and rock bands, in such places as Australia, California, Greece, Spain, and Norway. The philosophy of the firm Hanuš & Heřt Drums has always been to make really



Photo: Hanuš & Heřt archives

Small drums made from palisander, maple, and rosewood

original instruments of unique appearance and sound. Professional musicians in other countries and especially in the Czech Republic appreciate the appearance and sound properties of this make of drum, its sensitivity, excellent projection, and beautiful and unusual sound in crosstick and rimshot playing. ■



Photo: Hanuš & Heřt archives

Drums made from palisander and maple wood

Even Bill Clinton Plays an AMATI Saxophone

Ladislava Vázlerová, AMATI-Denak s.r.o., e-mail: vazlerova@amati.cz, www.amati.cz

The long tradition of woodwind music in the Czech Republic has been linked for centuries with the manufacture of wind instruments.

The manufacture of wind instruments at AMATI-Denak is concentrated in Kraslice and Hradec Králové. This production has had a very long tradition in both towns following, however, a completely different historical development in each. While in the case of Kraslice (located near the German border) the determining factor has been the German influence and today's factory came into being after the Second World War by the merger of what remained of the former small mostly German firms. The current production in Hradec Králové is the direct continuation of the firm V. F. Červený, which to this day draws on the heritage of its brilliant founder, Czech inventor Václav František Červený.

Rich Production Programme

In range of production, AMATI-Denak is the largest European manufacturer of wind instruments. The range of rotary valve instruments from the V. F. Červený factory, too, is unique. In terms of the volume of production, AMATI-Denak is one of three largest manufacturers in Europe.

In the category of woodwind instruments, the AMATI Kraslice trademark includes clarinets of both the French and German systems, double-reed instruments, such as the bassoon and contrabassoon, saxophones (soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone), flutes and the full range of piston valve brass instruments from the cornet to the sousaphone. Made in Kraslice under V. F. Červený trademark are rotary valve trumpets, flugelhorn, and French horns. All the instruments are made from top-quality materials, using modern technologies and are marked for excellent workmanship.

The accessories programme, too, is rich. It includes, for example, a full range of cases, stands for wind and stringed instruments, cymbals, mouthpieces, and sheet holders.

Several New Items Each Year

Each year, AMATI launches several new items on the market. In 2004, it was a new master trumpet developed by the well-known trumpet designer Tomomi



Photo: AMATI archives

Output control of flutes in the AMATI workshop

Kato. The characteristic features of this new model are the completely new design of the bell and the unconventional design of the whole trumpet. This year, a professional model "Amati B trumpet", was developed in co-operation with the renowned jazz trumpet player Laco Deczi.

The range of medium background piston valve instruments was enlarged with the addition of a new series of orchestra models with a large number of new sound and technical improvements, for example a more compact structure of the mechanism allowing for the free passage of air, valves made of stainless steel alloy and, last but not least, a new modern design of many parts.

Flutes and saxophones, too, underwent thorough technical, sound, and design innovations. The instruments are the result of wide-ranging development aimed at introducing medium sized band instruments that stand between student and master models.

Foreign Trade

Most of the output of AMATI-Denak goes for export. The firm exports approximately 86 per cent of its

production, which is sold to more than 50 countries of all continents. We have no shops of our own abroad, so we co-operate with wholesale companies, which represent us in all these states. An exception is the USA, where we have our own branch (Amati USA, Inc.). Before 1990, our sales to foreign countries were realized centrally by Musicexport, a company that handled the export of products for all Czech manufacturers of musical instruments. After 1989, this company was dissolved and today AMATI-Denak exports its products through its own export department.

Saxophone for Bill Clinton

One of the famous personalities owning a musical instrument with the AMATI trademark is the former US president Bill Clinton, who received a tenor saxophone from the former Czech president Václav Havel as a gift during his visit to the Czech Republic. Bill Clinton, who is an ardent saxophone player, played it impromptu and afterwards praised the quality of the trademark AMATI.

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From the Tones of Organ Pipes to the Sound of Stradivarius Violins

Václav Syrový, Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts, e-mail: vaclav.syrovy@hamu.cz, www.hamu.cz

In the Czech Republic, the research of musical instruments has a tradition going back to the early 20th century, when physicist Čeněk Strouhal described what is called "edge tones" in organ pipes. The modern history of this research is linked with three workplaces, whose different orientation and at the same time close co-operation made possible efficient concentration of important activities in this area.

Research Workplaces and the Centre of Music Acoustics

The oldest workplace for the research of musical instruments is the Basic Research Department of the firm Petrof a.s. (www.petrof.cz) in Hradec Králové. Another workplace is the Sound Studio of the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (www.hamu.cz/zvuk). The third workplace used to be the Laboratory of Musical Acoustics and Psychoacoustics of the Sound and Picture Research Institute. When this institute had been closed down, the laboratory's research workers went over to the Sound Studio, whose Musical Acoustics Research Centre (www.hamu.cz/marc) is currently working on a five-year grant project. This project is focusing on the research of the timbre and quality of the sound of conventional musical instruments. Its partners are the firms Soning Praha a.s. (www.soning.cz), a prestigious firm in the area of room acoustics, Rudolph Fiedler s.r.o. (www.rudolphfiedler.com), a successful manufacturer and exporter of stringed instruments, and Organa Kutná Hora s.r.o. (www.organa.cz), a firm with a long tradition of manufacturing pipe organs.

Research and Its Aims

Methodologically, the research is based on two completely different types of instruments. The first is the violin, whose nature allows the player to influence the character of the tone to the maximum degree. At the same time it is an instrument with a defined sound ideal – the Stradivarius violin. The other instrument is the organ, where the player's part in creating the tone in the pipe is minimal, but which allows a broad variation of the timbre of the resulting sound reflecting the acoustic properties of the space. Unlike the violin, the sound ideal of the organ has undergone considerable changes depending on concrete cultural, technical, and social conditions. The research project of musical instruments has two aims. The first is establishing the general laws of creating the timbre of the sound from the point of view of its generation, transfer, and perception, and finding an unequivocally valid relationship between the measured objective parameters and their subjective reflection. The other aim is ascertaining the influence of the material, design, and production technology used in making the instrument, on their sound quality and finding possibilities of innovation.

Technical Support of Research

The research of musical instruments requires special equipment, for example for the artificial excitation of the tone of string and wind instruments and for measuring the properties of their parts, especially their frequency characteristics. An original method, later patented, was developed in the Sound Studio in 1987 to test the quality of clarinet mouthpieces, based on the correlation of the resonance frequency of the mouthpiece and its subjective evaluation. In the case of violins, the frequency characteristics, together with interferograms, i.e. pictures "visualising" the shape of the vibrations of the violin plates and corpus on

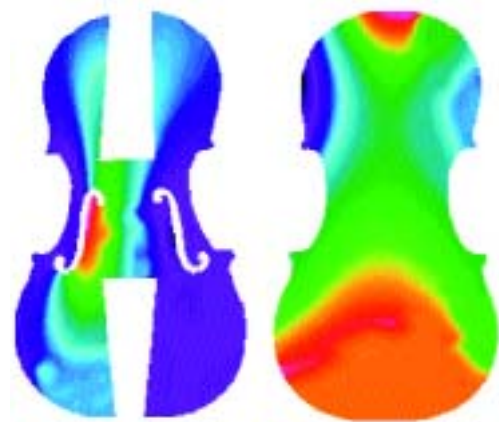


Photo: The author's archives

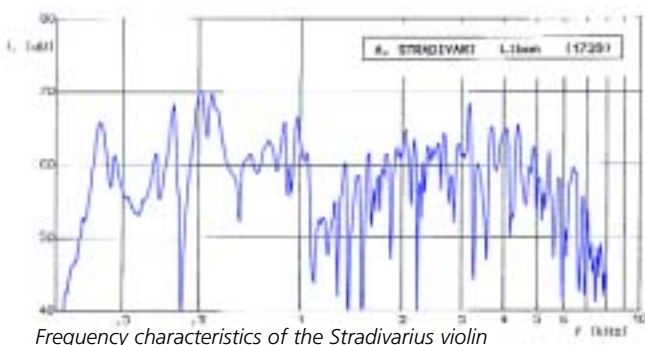
Interferographs of the vibrations of the top and bottom violin boards

certain resonance frequencies, describe the influence of the material and design of the instrument. For the purpose of visualising and analysing the vibration of musical instruments, the Sound Studio of the Music Faculty is fitted with unique laser equipment.

Practical Application of Research Results

The research workers of the Sound Studio have developed an original method of organ sound documentation, which they have used in practice on a number of rare historic instruments. They used it, for example, to evaluate the restoration of the famous Mundt organ in Prague's Church of Our Lady of Týn. The subjective assessment of the quality of the sound is based on listening tests, which are carried out in defined conditions and the results of which are processed by special statistical methods. The studio researchers also worked out a subjective method of organ pipe sound evaluation for 11 European organ-building firms within the framework of an EU project. The research of musical instruments is not only intended for manufacturers and restorers, but it also provides objective documentation of instruments, for example to museums, while bringing valuable information to music recording firms and the musicians themselves.

Photo: The author's archives



Frequency characteristics of the Stradivarius violin

Fifty Years of PETROF Piano Development Department

Otakar Friedrischek, PETROF Advertising Department, e-mail: propagace@petrof.cz, www.petrof.cz

Musical instruments as we know them today have undergone a centuries-long development. Every generation of musical instrument makers has sought ways of improving them. The development of grand and upright pianos and of the people surrounding them, too, has gone the way of change from manual work to industrial production.

Fifty years of research and development at PETROF represent only a short time in the history of these efforts, and yet it is a period which should not escape attention.

In the early days, at the very beginning of artisan production, the founder of the firm, Antonín Petrof, realised his own technical ideas in order to solve problems concerning the design of PETROF pianos. There followed a period when all changes and latest ideas in the branch were introduced by him or with the help of his assistants. The artisans' technical skill was passed from generation to another; an important change came after nationalisation, when this natural process was severed. All piano manufacturers in the then Czechoslovakia were merged, and the situation and need arose to deal with the change from manual work to industrial production and to unify design and technologies so as to allow higher production volumes that would meet the great demand after the Second World War. At the same time it was necessary to classify construction and design elements to suit the range of different trademarks in use.

The Beginning of the Independent Development Centre

The "Piano Factory", a National Corporation at that time, decided to establish a development department, which was opened in Hradec Králové in 1954. Its task after 1954 was to create a range of new grand and upright piano models of the PETROF, WEINBACH, FÖRSTER, RÖSLER, and SCHOLZE trademarks.

The first task was to build a department where designers and highly skilled workers would ensure that instruments to be made would have outstanding acoustic properties, an



Piano from the PETROF workshop

Photo: PETROF archives

improved design, and better tone qualities.

New Instrument Prototypes

Since its founding, the Development Department has made approx. 250 grand and upright piano prototypes. Currently the department is working on the construction of prototypes of new instruments. They are for example completing the model of piano P VI, and are preparing the P 210 prototype for the NAMM show 2006. A new technical item is the magnetically accelerated

action (MAA) for pianos (a patent application has been filed). Other novel features are the production of unique instruments, such as the Jubilee Piano with its unusual design, the Pianobar with illumination and seats for nine persons, the tree-shaped multicoloured piano for children, the assembly of electronic add-ons for grand and upright pianos, and the construction of master concert instruments, such as the P I Mistral.

Survey of Important Firms Producing Musical Instruments

Akord Kvint, spol. s r.o.

Chebská 378, 351 37 Luby u Chebu, phone: +420 354 560 093, fax: +420 354 596 195, e-mail: akordkvint@akordkvint.com, www.akordkvint.com

Turnover: CZK 10 million – approx. EUR 313 479
 Number of employees: 10
 Contact person: Mr Josef Holíš, e-mail: akordkvint@akordkvint.cz
 Export: 96 %, e.g. Japan, Netherlands, China, Canada, USA, Spain, Sweden, New Zealand, Belgium, Russia, Thailand, Estonia, Ireland

Akord Kvint, s.r.o. is a private Czech company, a manufacturer of exceptional concert and master violins, violas, and cellos. The company was founded in 1991 in Luby, a small town with a violin-making tradition that dates back to the middle of the 16th century. The owners of the company, recognized specialists in the branch, have been successful in attracting both renowned and young talented violin makers, most of them real masters, and in creating the most professional team in the Czech Republic. All violins, violas, and cellos manufactured in Akord Kvint workshops are suitable for professional players, as well as for those with music as a hobby, who wish to own an outstanding, high-quality, and valuable instrument. The master violin makers manufacture violins and violas in seven series of different quality and cellos in five different quality series. Each instrument comes in all the different sizes and in the Stradivari and Guarneri model category.

Your musical instruments are marked for their excellent sound properties. What materials, parts and complements are they made from? How are they certified and protected against plagiarism?

All the materials, parts, and complements come from renowned sources in Germany, Austria, and France. The materials we use include high-quality resonant spruce, Bosnia maple with deep grain, ebony, rosewood and boxtree parts, top-quality Thomastik and Larsen strings, etc. In addition to the material and parts, we use our own natural spirit varnishes, which, together with the workmanship of our violinmakers, are the key to the firm's success. The master and concert instruments from our workshops pass a tonal test carried out by a jury composed of the professors of the Prague conservatory, the members of the Dvořák Quartet. Our violins, violas, and cellos then go to the customer with a certificate that guarantees the quality of the tone, tuning and finishing, certified by the signature of the above-mentioned experts and the violin maker.



Violin maker Josef Holpuch

Photo: Akord Kvint archives

Ars Music is a part of the company. Why was it founded?

In 1997, when Akord Kvint had become a successful and well-established company on a world scale, its owners decided to take advantage of their good knowledge and free resources, leading to the founding of Ars Music. The philosophy of this firm is that school instruments need not necessarily have to be made in mass to be affordable to all. Ars Music manufactures and sells school instruments that combine exceptional sound qualities with perfect tuning. The secret of Ars Music does not lie in the use of new technologies, but rather in reverting to the old ones. The instruments are made by small groups of violin makers under the guidance of masters. Unlike mass production, this makes it possible to slow down the manufacturing process and attend to every detail.

AMISTAR, spol. s r.o.

U Jizby 17, 143 00 Prague 4, phone: +420 244 402 457, fax: +420 244 402 457, e-mail: amistar@amistar.cz, www.amistar.cz, www.resophonic-association.com, www.amistarguitars.com

Turnover: approx. CZK 4 million – approx. EUR 125 391
 Number of employees: 10
 Contact person: Mr František Javůrek, e-mail: amistar@amistar.cz
 Export: 100 %, almost worldwide, e.g. USA, Japan, European states, Republic of South Africa, New Zealand

Since 1992, AMISTAR has ranked among leading world manufacturers of all-metal and wooden resophonic guitars and guitar accessories. It exports its products worldwide and displays its musical instruments regularly at world exhibitions of musical instruments, such as the NAMM SHOW (Los

Angeles/Anaheim, California, USA) and the MusikMesse (Frankfurt, Germany), as well as at regional exhibitions, festivals, and workshops in Europe.

A special feature of your instruments is their interesting design. Is this a way to distinguish them from other makes?

The design and general appearance of our instruments is based on the original invention of Jan Dopjera (DOBRO). Amistar is continuously developing new models and innovating their design and sound properties. The design of the instruments is not only linked to the quality of the sound, but also to the character of the sound of all-metal resonophonic guitars.

Practically all your products are exported. Could you mention your most important orders and name any renowned musicians that own AMISTAR instruments?

All our orders are important. What we value most are, for instance, orders for important exhibitions and festivals. In October 2005 it was the King Biscuit Blues Festival in Memphis (USA) with AMISTAR as one of the festival's main sponsors, and the exhibition, tour of guitarist Woody Mann (New York, USA) in Japan in November 2005, and so on.

Renowned players that play AMISTAR guitars include Keith



Photo: AMISTAR

"Single Cone" and "Tricone Vintage" models

Richards (Rolling Stones, USA), Woody Mann (NYC, USA), Tokio Uschida (Japan), Papa George (Great Britain), Claus Boesser-Ferrari (Germany), and many others.

BOHEMIA PIANO, s.r.o.

U dlouhé stěny 9, 586 01 Jihlava, phone: +420 567 910 896, fax: +420 567 310 898, e-mail: info@bohemiapiano.cz, www.bohemiapiano.cz

Turnover: CZK 145 million – approx. EUR 4.5 million (for the year 2004)

Number of employees: 130

Contact person: Ms Martina Bočanová,

e-mail: info@bohemiapiano.cz

Export: 60 % Europe, 15 % North America, 12 % Asia, 8 % other countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, and Turkey

BOHEMIA PIANO, s.r.o. is a manufacturer of acoustic upright pianos and grand pianos, building on a tradition that dates back to 1871. Its production volume (approx. 3 500 upright pianos and 350 grand pianos a year) ranks it among the leading European manufacturers. "BOHEMIA PIANO" instruments find customers both in the Czech Republic and in other countries of nearly every continent. The company supplies a full range of instruments, from upright pianos for beginners to grand pianos for concert halls. The experience of the firm's master piano builders, the use of first-class material, and traditional hand manufacture all serve as a guarantee of the high quality of "BOHEMIA" instruments. The firm also supplies piano accessories, stools, electronic piano systems, and digital pianos.

Your instruments are exported practically worldwide. Is there no danger that they may be affected by differences in climate? How do you offset the risk?

The instruments suffer most if they are exposed to high humidity, heat, or frost.

To protect pianos against humidity, their wooden parts must be "tropicated", i.e. their unvarnished edges, untreated mechanics parts, etc., must be chemically treated with special materials. This is done if the pianos are to be exported to countries such as Southeast Asia, e.g. Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

Frost must be avoided. The dispatch of the instruments to countries such as Canada, North America, and Russia must be planned so that delivery is made in months when there is no danger of extreme frost. If it is, nevertheless, necessary to deliver the instrument during the winter months, it must be placed in a "thermo-container" and delivery must be direct without undue unloading or preferably by air. Customers from

countries with extreme humidity or drought are recommended to have special driers or humidifiers fitted permanently in the instrument.

Which special instruments can be found in your production range? Which new items did you launch on the market in 2005 and what have you prepared for 2006?

The method of piano construction is in itself something special. Each master piano-maker is personally responsible for



Empire model

Photo: BOHEMIA PIANO archives

a particular instrument and carries out all the important work on the piano, i.e. fitting the keyboard, the mechanics, the hammers, and the dampers. Then comes the intoner and the tuner, both experienced craftsmen. With the final touches the instrument suddenly becomes an author's work, for the quality of which only two specialists are personally responsible. Model 185 Empire has a very interesting design. It is 185 cm long and

has rounded legs and an ornamental music stand. The new 225-Smetana concert piano is a great hit. The 122R – Romance is a very interesting model among upright pianos with attractively "twisted" legs and a decorative oval on the upper frame.

The new item for the year 2006 is the upright 121 Rhapsody piano, which has a very modern design.

HARMONIKAS, s.r.o.

Poděbradova 2506, 440 01 Louny, phone: +420 415 627 588, fax: +420 415 652 453, e-mail: harmonikas@harmonikas.cz, www.harmonikas.cz

Turnover: CZK 29.3 million – approx. EUR 918 495
 Number of employees: 54
 Contact person: Mr Ladislav Titlbach,
 e-mail: forstova@harmonikas.cz
 Export: 86 % – EU states, USA, China, India, Russia

The company's chief programme is the manufacture of reeds and bellows for accordions and concertinas. 10-15 % of the turnover is accounted for by pressing instruments and other metalworking fixtures.

Your production concentrates on components for accordions of world makes. How do you obtain orders? What volume of accordion components goes to customers?

Our customers are leading manufacturers of all kinds of accordions and concertinas. With its consistent marketing policy, high quality, prompt response to the requirements of manufacturers of master and professional instruments on the one hand and its prompt reaction to technical and price requirements for lower price category instruments on the other, HARMONIKAS attracts a growing number of customers through personal contact directly in the firm or at music fairs.

What is the effect for your company of the Czech Republic's joining the EU? Has it brought you any advantages?

As about 60 % of our turnover is generated by trade with EU



HARMONIKAS – production of accordion components

Photo: HARMONIKAS archives

states, accession to the EC has improved our ability to react promptly to customer requirements and we have seen a reduction in export-related paperwork.

Josef Lídl, spol. s r.o.

Zelný trh 10, 602 00 Brno, phone: +420 543 254 720, fax: +420 542 216 358, e-mail: romans@joseflidl.cz, www.lidlmusic.cz/josef

Turnover: approx. CZK 18 million – approx. EUR 564 263
 Number of employees: 28
 Contact person: Mr Roman Sotolář, e-mail: romans@joseflidl.cz
 or Ms Martina Jánková, e-mail: martina.janska@joseflidl.cz
 Export: 80 % to the EU, USA, Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia

The company of Josef Lídl, s.r.o. was established in 1992, in continuation of the century-long tradition of the firm Josef Lídl, founded in 1892. The firm has always specialised in the manufacture of brasswind instruments, mainly trumpets, flugelhorns, and French horns, which later made up its primary programme for export to countries worldwide. All Lídl products are marked for their quality and professional workmanship. Since the very beginning, the firm has laid emphasis on hand manufacture and this tradition has survived until today. Manual

lead lining and the knocking-out of tin considerably influences the sound of the instrument and its durability. The pride of the company is the great skill of its employees.

Your trademark has a tradition of more than one hundred years. Instruments manufactured in your workshops were known, for example, in Siberia. What achievements can you pride yourselves on today?

Today, Josef Lídl, spol. s r.o. specialises in the production of brasswind instruments, especially French horns, flugelhorns, trumpets, and tubas. These instruments are exported practically worldwide. In the past two years, the firm has launched more new items of world interest in its "compact" model series – a small F/B double French horn model with four valves, a small B tuba model with four valves weighing only 6 kg, and a B flugelhorn with a broad body. Instruments made by

Josef Lidl are popular among professional musicians – members of various symphony orchestras all over the world, such as the Vienna Philharmonic, the London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Barcelona, Boston, Chicago, Oslo, Tokyo, Toronto, and BBC philharmonic orchestras. Each year, the instruments are presented to the broad musical public all over the world at the most prestigious international exhibitions in the USA and Germany.

What, in your opinion, is the current situation of musical instrument manufacturers?

At present, all Czech manufacturers of musical instruments must face growing competition from Asian, and especially Chinese, manufacturers. In the past we were accustomed to catering for a market segment of customers searching for instruments by price, not by quality. Today, this segment has become "occupied" permanently by Chinese manufacturers, so that Czech producers are left with no other choice but to concentrate on better quality and to seek clients among professional musicians who demand high quality. As in recent years, our manufacturers have invested into improving and modernising their technologies. I believe they stand a good chance of succeeding, especially with customers looking for high quality at a reasonable price.



French horn from the Josef Lidl workshop

Photo: Josef Lidl archives

PIANA Týniště, a.s.

Mostecká ul. 24, 517 21 Týniště nad Orlicí, phone: 420 494 377 150, fax: +420 494 371 512, e-mail: info@piana-as.cz, www.piana-as.cz

Turnover: CZK 139 million – approx. EUR 4.3 million (for the year 2004)
 Number of employees: 300
 Contact person: Mr Milan Veselý, e-mail: vesely@piana-as.cz
 Export: 28 %, e.g. to Germany, Poland, France, and Italy

PIANA Týniště, a.s. is one of Europe's largest manufacturers of upright and grand piano cases. It manufactures music furniture and other wooden upright and grand piano components to order from high-quality solid wood. As a supplementary range, the company produces luxury high-gloss furniture. The owners of the company are prominent Czech manufacturers of upright and grand pianos (shares are held by the managers of PETROF s.r.o. and BOHEMIA PIANO s.r.o.).

The guaranteed quality of piano cases makes it possible for you to co-operate with most global piano manufacturers. Who are they? What is the co-operation based on?



Grand piano models

Among Czech customers, PIANA Týniště manufactures upright piano cases for PETROF, spol. s r.o., upright and grand piano cases for Bohemia Piano s.r.o. and upright piano cases for German upright piano manufacturers SEILER, SCHIMMEL, C. BECHSTEIN, PLEYEL of France, ROLAND of Italy, and several other smaller businesses. For certain foreign customers, PIANA Týniště, a.s. provides



Production of a piano case from the PIANA Týniště workshop

Photo: PIANA Týniště archives

demanding surface finishing of their own semi-finished products. Today, leading European upright and grand piano manufacturers are beginning to specialise in the assembly of instruments and prefer to have cases made by a specialised supplier. It is this principle that co-operation is based on, as PIANA Týniště has many years of experience in the application of polyester varnish, and the quality of its work fully satisfies its customers.

What is your annual output? Are you planning to expand?

In 2006 we are planning to increase our production capacity to 9 000 – 10 000 upright piano cases and to approximately 500 grand piano cases, an increase of approximately 20 % in comparison to 2005.

Exhibitions and Trade Fairs in the Czech Republic in 2006

Music Fair Prague 2006

Exhibition of musical instruments and accessories, stage and studio equipment

21–24 Sept. 2006 – Trade Fair Palace, Prague

AC Expo, MUZIKUS, e-mail: pragrova@acexpo.cz, www.huvel.cz

Official Participation of the Czech Republic in International Fairs and Exhibitions in Other Countries

MUSIKMESSE

International fair of musical instruments, music software, sheet music and accessories

31 March–3 April 2006 – Frankfurt a/M., Germany

K + M Expo, s.r.o. (agency Messe Frankfurt)

e-mail: messefrankfurt@mbox.vol.cz, www.musikmesse.com

Prague Music Fair Attracts Manufacturers from Many Countries

A fair of musical instruments and accessories has been held in Prague annually since 1992, and from the very beginning, one of the co-organisers of the event has been the Muzikus Publishing House – keeper of a long tradition. Since 2003, the fair has taken place in the reconstructed Trade Fair Palace in Prague belonging to the National Art Gallery. And so, each



Photo: Muzikus archives

The music fair attracts hundreds of visitors each year

September, the Palace premises, with their beautiful architecture, form the background for music and musical instruments, in the same neighbourhood as collections of some of the country's visual art treasures. The vast and diversified exhibition area makes it possible not only to divide the fair according to nomenclature and separate the different sections from each other acoustically, but also to give concerts and organise workshops and seminars in the adjoining rooms, attracting musicians and music experts.

Success of the 2005 Event

In 2005, the accompanying programme of the Music Fair took place in six concert stages and two workshop rooms simultaneously. Altogether 926 performers participated in the event's 105 concerts and 54 workshops.

The core of the fair, however, is the exhibition of conventional and electronic musical instruments, installation, recording and sound systems, lighting equipment, stage systems, presentations of music publishers and, last but not least, DJ equipment. Altogether 451 trade marks of musical instruments from all over the world were presented in 91 expositions. Besides the Czech Republic, there were exhibitors from Poland, Hungary, Austria, Germany, and France. The 2005 fair was the largest in the history of the event in terms of the exhibition area and visitors, whose number totalled 12 659. Representatives of renowned firms, not only from Europe, but also from the USA and other countries, arrived to present their products. One of them was Mr Jim Marshall, the legendary British manufacturer of guitar amplifiers, who patiently signed posters and instruments for the musicians, just as he had at Musikmesse in Frankfurt and at the NAMM Show in Anaheim, USA.

For the last three years, the Music Fair has been organised by the Muzikus Publishing House, which issues, among other publications, Muzikus magazine for musicians and Harmonie magazine on classical music, together with the AC Expo exhibition organisation.

More information can be obtained at www.hudebniveletrh.cz, www.huvel.cz, and www.muzikus.cz.

Important Contacts

MINISTRIES		
Ministry of Industry and Trade of the CR	www.mpo.cz	mpo@mpo.cz
Ministry of Culture of the CR	www.mkcr.cz	posta@mkcr.cz
ASSOCIATIONS AND UNIONS		
Association of Musical Instrument Makers	www.hnn.cz/avhn.htm	avhn@hnn.cz
Czech Pianomakers' Association	www.hnn.cz/cks.htm	cks@hnn.cz
*Association of Musicians and Scientists	www.ahuv.cz	ahuv@seznam.cz
*Czech Association of Violin Makers	www.jmc.cz/stan/vlno/	
Czech Musicological Society	www.ff.cuni.cz	cerny@ff.cuni.cz
RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTES		
Sound Studio of the Music Faculty		
Academy of Performing Arts, Prague	www.hamu.cz	syrovny@hamu.cz
Basic Research Department, Petrof a.s.	www.petrof.cz	petrof@petrof.com
SECONDARY ART SCHOOLS AND APPRENTICE TRAINING CENTRES – MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MANUFACTURE		
*Secondary school and Secondary apprentice training centre for musical instruments and furniture	www.hnn.cz	hnn@hnn.cz
*Secondary vocational school and Secondary apprentice training centre for musical instruments	www.volweb.cz/spskraslice	spskraslice@mbox.vol.cz
*Secondary school for organ building	www.varhanyous.cz	varhany.skola@post.cz
Violin Workshop – Pavel Cely, s.r.o.	www.cely.cz	cely@cely.cz
OTHER		
* Muzikus Internet portal	www.muzikus.cz	info@muzikus.cz
Violin and Music Internet portal	www.housele.cz	
* Internet portal with all on music	www.instrumento.cz	

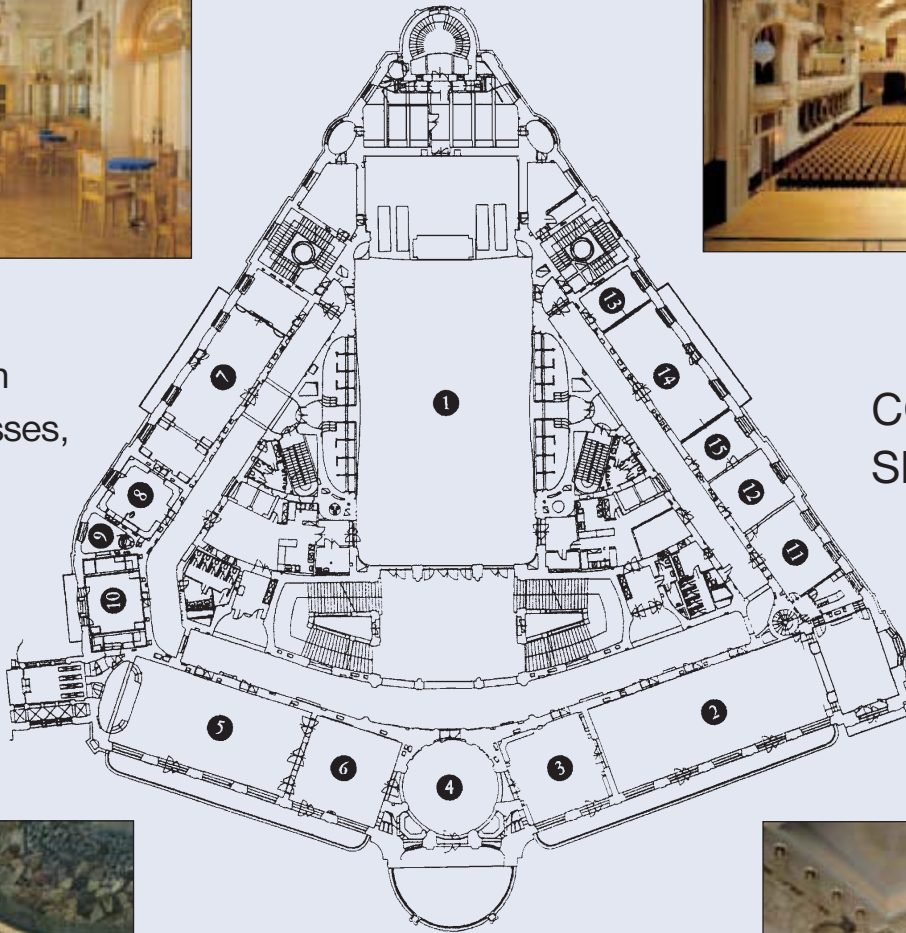
* The sites are only in Czech



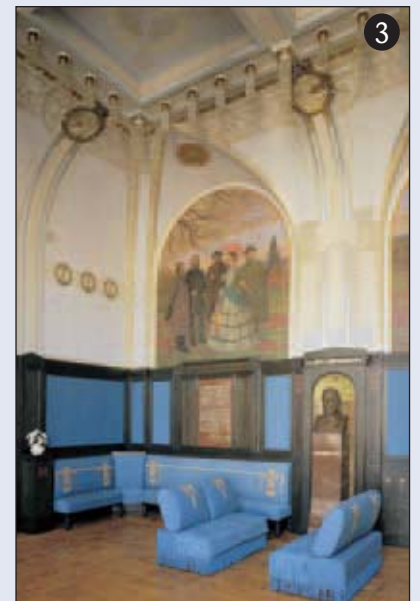
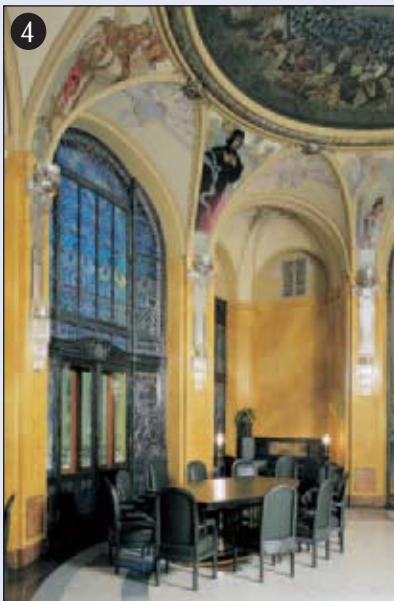
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Representation premises, 1st floor

- ① Smetana Hall
- ② Sladkovský Hall
- ③ Rieger Hall
- ④ Mayor's Hall
- ⑤ Grégr Hall
- ⑥ Palacký Hall
- ⑦ Patisserie
- ⑧ Moravian Slovak Salon
- ⑨ Božena Němcová Salon
- ⑩ Oriental Salon
- ⑪ Salon No. 1
- ⑫ Salon No. 2
- ⑬ Dining Room No.1
- ⑭ Dining Room No.2
- ⑮ Dining Room No.3



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PIANOS SINCE 1864

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