

COMMUNICATIONS

BRASS INSTRUMENTS WITH PAINTED BELLS

The fashion for applying elaborate gold or polychrome decoration, often on a dark red ground color, to the inner surface of some brass instrument bells belongs essentially to the first half of the nineteenth century and is associated principally, though not exclusively, with horns. Horns of both orchestral and *cor-solo* type, as well as experimental omnitonic and valved models, occur with painted bells. The horn, having the largest “canvas,” shows the greatest variety of style and detail and today examples are located throughout the world in public and private collections.

Although by far the greatest number of such instruments are of Parisian manufacture—notably names such as Courtois and Raoux, but also Dujariez, Dupont, Gambar, Gautrot, Goudot, Guichar, Halari, Jahn, Labbaye, Riedlocker, and lesser-known makers—or dealers—such as Bax, Darce, Harteman, Louis et Münchs—examples are found by makers in other French towns: Tabard and Dubois & Couturier in Lyon, Kretschmann in Strassbourg, Estrivier in Nîmes. In other countries we find Sax in Brussels, van Engelen in Lier (Belgium), Embach in Amsterdam, and España in Barcelona. In Britain a horn by Pace is thought possibly to have been decorated in France, and the decoration on one by Goodison bears a strong resemblance to that on an Embach horn. Some of these makers are represented also by instruments other than horns (such as cornet, circular trumpet, trombone, bass horn).

The principal styles of bell painting are represented by neo-classical, floral, or chinoiserie designs, but within these categories there is a wide range of individual motifs arranged in continuous, symmetrical, or repeating patterns. These motifs draw, it seems, upon the decorative vocabulary of contemporary or earlier periods and often recall motifs found elsewhere: on keyboard instruments, on items of furniture, porcelain, wall decoration, painting, engravings, and may be gathered in manuals or pattern books of ornamental detail.

The complete preservation of detail and color on some horns is remarkable; on others the wear caused by fingers and knuckles on one side of the throat, and by the heel of the hand on the other has exposed areas of metal, while leaving the main part of the design in good order. Some designs have undergone a general discoloration, while others remain in only fragmentary condition.

The instruments, often of exceptional workmanship and musical response, together with their complex and finely executed designs, though in a spot exposed to moisture, tarnish, and wear, are much prized by their owners. Yet there are many questions that remain unanswered about their contemporary popularity and the processes, both manufacturing and marketing, that led to such a visually striking concealment of bare brass.

The writer hopes to develop this theme in order to describe the circumstances in which players or patrons acquired the taste, particularly in the years around 1815-1850, for purchasing, or commissioning, instruments with decorated bells, to identify the stages

in applying the designs, and to relate the designs at different periods to their particular sources of inspiration.

Readers are invited to communicate with the writer on the subject of brass instruments with painted bells, and references to instruments or to published or unpublished material will be gratefully received. Any identification of relevant documentation or literature relating to, for example, manufacture, advertising, commissions, sales, accounts, pattern books, artists, and workshops, as well as to the technical aspects of painting on metal, will be welcome. All communications will be acknowledged, original material returned, and ownership of material respected.

Martin J. Prowse
30 Abercromby Road
Castle Douglas
DH7 1BA Scotland/GB
Tel. +44 (0)1556 502860
e-mail: mjprorowse@raoux.in2home.co.uk

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The Historic Brass Society invites submissions of articles for its annual *HBS Newsletter* and annual *HBS Journal*.

1. The HBS publishes articles based on research into any aspect of brass instruments of the past. They may range chronologically from Antiquity and the Biblical period through the nineteenth century. The Journal also publishes English translations of important articles, treatises, methods, in-depth bibliographies, and reviews of material on early brass subjects. Articles submitted to the Journal will be read by at least two expert referees who will help decide whether the material is appropriate for publication. Contributors should aim for a concise, fluid, and easily readable style of writing and presentation. The HBS stands strongly behind the goal of clear, concise writing and reserves the right to edit submissions in order to achieve it.

2. The *HBS Newsletter* seeks material of a more informal and practical nature, but the HBS holds the same goal of clear, concise, writing for its *Newsletter* as it does for its *Journal*. Material appropriate for the Newsletter includes: interviews with leading people in the field, instrument collections, instrument making, performance techniques, organizing ensembles, reports on early brass instrument makers, news of the early brass field such as symposia, workshops, concerts, recordings, instrument collections, teaching activities, and reviews of early brass books, music publications, and recordings.

3. Authors submitting Journal articles should submit six copies of their article along with a 3.5 inch floppy disk in Microsoft Word® for Macintosh®, DOS, or Windows®, or in ASCII format. Authors submitting material for the HBS Newsletter should include three copies of their article along with a 3.5 inch floppy disk in IBM PC Microsoft Word® or in ASCII. Authors from countries in which access to reproduction facilities is severely limited may submit a single copy.

4. Accompanying graphics such as photographs, line drawings, etc. must be submitted as camera-ready artwork or graphic files on disks. Musical examples must be either computer-typeset, engraved, or submitted as Finale® files on a 3.5 inch Macintosh or IBM-compatible disk. The number and size of graphics will be limited by our space requirements.

5. Material should be double spaced on 8.5" X 11" paper. Authors are requested to place only one character space after every sentence and punctuation mark. Endnotes and bibliographic formats should conform to the guidelines given in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

6. Musical pitch names and designations should conform to the system given in the *New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 640.
7. Upon acceptance of the article, authors will be assigned an editor who may suggest revisions based in part on the referee's reports and in part on consideration of style. All revisions and changes should result from the ensuing dialogue between author and editor. When they have reached agreement on all revisions, the editor will send the author a revised version of the article. At this time any last-minute corrections should be made in consultation with the editor. Later the author will receive proofs in type, but the only changes allowable at this point will be corrections of any mistakes made during the typesetting process itself.
8. The HBS Newsletter is published in July and submissions are due March 1. The *HBS Journal* is published in December and submissions are due April 1.
9. Material should be sent to: The Historic Brass Society, 148 West 23rd Street #2A, New York, NY 10011 USA. FAX/TEL (212)627-3820, E-mail: president@historicbrass.org