

****Carbon Instruments – Answers to the Most Common Questions****

1. **Why Carbon?*

Carbon fiber has been increasingly used in the automotive and aerospace industries for many years, particularly in lightweight construction due to its outstanding properties in terms of strength, stability, and resistance to climate fluctuations. However, in the manufacture of musical instruments, carbon fiber still occupies a niche. The primary reason is likely that handling this material requires very specialized expertise, which a traditional instrument maker generally does not possess. Furthermore, the rules of traditional instrument making do not apply or are very limited, so initially, a great deal of pioneering work and financial investment is necessary before one can hope for good results.

The demands on musical instruments are growing, whether due to travel, outdoor events, or critical climatic conditions, increasingly also in concert halls. However, the development of string instruments has not kept pace with the expansion of demands – in fact, there has been little progress for 300 years, aside from details like strings or neck angles.

At this point, our carbon instruments come into play. We see them as an evolution of the traditional string instrument. Design, sound, and physical properties position them in the market as a complement, not a replacement.

2. **Design Concept**

The considerations behind the new design are simple yet consistent. A close imitation of the traditional violin model after Guarneri or Stradivari would only be possible with considerable effort, and even then only unsatisfactorily. At the same time, the new material offers a high incentive to experiment with new external forms and to realize alternative design concepts.

Our current models emphasize the omission of all superfluous elements. This includes the corners, under which the corner blocks hide in wooden instruments. We also forego the scroll, which traditionally represents a kind of artistic signature of the violin master and carries his individual and often distinctive features.

Many edges have been replaced by curves – the overall shape thus appears sleek, elegant, and modern.

Despite all radicalism in shaping, one thing remains untouchable, and those are the traditional dimensions and measurements. A violin is a violin, and anyone who can play this instrument should feel immediately at home on a carbon fiber violin.

3. **Key Benefits**

What applies to the material alone also applies to the musical instrument made from it. It is characterized by extraordinary stability. Cracks are virtually ruled out, and sensitivities to moisture or dryness do not exist. Whether it is played in an ice-cold church or in the tropical rainforest – a carbon instrument is always reliable. It is there when you need it, no matter where.

Carbon fiber consists essentially of the same basic substance as wood: carbon. However, there is a crucial difference in physical properties that makes carbon fiber ideal for musical instrument construction: It conducts sound about six times faster than wood. This results in an outstanding response of the instruments, which every experienced player notices surprisingly at the first tone played. There is no struggle for a beautiful sound; it is simply there, in every position, without any adjustment period. This allows the focus to be on the essentials: the music.

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The built-in fine-tuning pegs make tuning a breeze – even for inexperienced amateurs. And finally, since we avoid the often nickel-containing and thus allergenic chin rest locks, skin irritations on the musician's neck, including the so-called "violinist's mark," are a thing of the past.

4. **Key Prejudices**

"Wood has a soul, carbon does not."

"It sounds like plastic."

"Surely suitable for jazz and modern music, not for classical."

"Ewww..."

Admittedly, we rarely encounter the last statement personally, but it has been reported to us several times. However, the first three represent the thoughts of the conservatively inclined string brain upon first encountering our carbon instruments.

We counter these prejudices very clearly and decisively.

That carbon instruments can more than hold their own in terms of sound quality with much more expensive wooden instruments was clearly demonstrated by winning the German Musical Instrument Prize in 2015. Therefore, we let the sound speak for itself. Musicians who are able to judge the sound truly without prejudice will be convinced.

There will always be a clientele we cannot win over. However, we continuously work on convincing the skeptics.

5. **Additional Features**

For a traditional instrument maker, it would never be an option to drill holes in the top or rib or to apply bright colors to the finish.

Carbon instruments, however, can be individually designed and equipped according to the customer's wishes. Options include 5-string versions of all instruments, various finishes, and the very popular hybrid equipment.

This refers to an instrument that can be played both acoustically and electrically. Neither the acoustic sound nor the weight is affected by the pickup system – a decisive advantage over all instruments currently on the market. Moreover, when amplified electrically, a sound of naturalness and depth is achieved that no purely electric instrument can match.

A hybrid instrument is thus a "jack-of-all-trades" in sound perfection.

6. **Environmental Aspects**

We are very aware that traditional instrument making has been guilty of resource exploitation over the past decades. This particularly concerns the mass production of instruments in the Far East and the associated consumption of ebony. It is no coincidence that ebony was listed as an endangered wood in 2014.

We have already drastically reduced our ebony consumption by developing a new composite fingerboard and intend to completely phase out this now rare wood within 2 years. A small contribution to conservation – imitation is welcome.

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7. **Some Final Facts**

All carbon instruments are

- handcrafted
- 100% made in Germany
- made without any Far Eastern products

Each instrument carries a serial number according to our internal key and is delivered with a warranty certificate. The warranty period is 5 years.

The individual sound adjustment can, like any wooden instrument, be made by any violin maker. Bridge, sound post, and choice of strings are the adjustments that allow fine-tuning.

We already work very constructively with many violin makers and violin shops at home and abroad and will continue to do so in the future.

And to everyone who asks us if we want to compete with instrument makers, we say:

Carbon instruments are a sensible addition, not a replacement.