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Antique Flutes

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Louis Lot

Serial #746

Made June 12, 1863, per record books.



Louis Lot #746

Made 1863 for Simon Lauret (1808-1890)

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S1036

Louis Lot, Paris. Serial #746

Engraved on headjoint: L.L. / LOUIS-LOT / PARIS / 746 / BREVETÉ. Stamped on body: L.L. / LOUIS-LOT / PARIS / 746 . Footjoint unmarked.

No marks under keys.

Made June 12, 1863, per record books. This was the 145th model 5 flute made by Louis Lot. By this time Lot had made around 15 model 6 flutes (B foot), and 15 model 7 (maillachort C foot) flutes as well.

No hallmarks.

Made of silver with wooden cork screw, steel springs, and gold-plated pad washers. Guilloché lipplate of silver. This is the 10th flute made with guilloché lipplate.

This beautiful flute is Lot's model 5, silver flute with C foot. The G# is the Dorus key. The trill key is to the thumb for B-C. The lipplate is guilloché in a most beautiful pattern. The toneholes are only very slightly graduated, if at all. The high B tone hole is 13.6 mm, and the low C is 13.8 mm. This variation is within the realm of natural variation. The tube is 0.36 mm (.014"). The chimney is 5.23 mm (right side) and 5.06 (left side). The embouchure is 11.83 x 10.16, and is completely original. In short, this instrument is the



Louis Lot 746

This exquisite concert flute was made in 1863 for the flute professor at the Conservatoire de Marseille, Simon Lauret. Three similar flutes were ordered at the same time by Lauret, so we assume that they were for his students. This was among the most exquisite of flutes made at this time, and these have remained among the finest of flutes ever made.

Louis Lot 746 (photo at left)

The body stamp of flute 746 shows that Louis Lot would stamp his bodies, rather than have them engraved, as he did his headjoints. Note the two periods in L.L. and the hyphen in Lot's name; these changed over time in the Lot shop.

tried-and-true model, very desirable in Marseille in 1863, without curiosities such as the side (independent) G# or larger tone holes on the footjoint, yet with a thicker tube and larger embouchure than his earlier flutes.

Simon Lauret purchased three identical flutes between May 1st and June 30 in 1863, flutes #742, 746, and 752; his last major purchase before the end of Lot's first record book, which closes around flute #817.

Flute #742 passed through here in 2006 and is now in Tokyo.

Although this instrument is a stunning visual, our first comment has to be about the headjoint. Even before the rest of the instrument was restored, we knew that this was an outstanding instrument. This headjoint fits perfectly into the body of other Lot flutes here, and plays with every bit of the superior warmth, body, purity and depth that makes Louis Lot the undisputed master of flutemaking.

Louis Lot #746 was entered into the record book on June 12, 1863. It was made for Simon Lauret.

Leonardo De Lorenzo includes Simon Lauret in his biographies of flutists: Lauret, Simon: (1808-1890) French flutist born in Orleans and died in Marseilles.

The Histoire du Conservatoire Impérial de Musique et de Déclaration, Part 2, By Théodore Lassabathie, published in 1860, gives Lauret in his list of students at the Conservatoire à Paris as taking his Premier Prix in 1824. Lauret is given in the Histoire as being born in Orleans on 25 December, 1808, just a year after Louis Lot, and he died in Marseille on March 16, 1890, six years before Lot passed.

We have not been able to place Lauret in Marseille in any other capacity, yet we believe that he was a professor in the Conservatoire there, and sold many Louis Lot flutes to his students. This flute, #746, was clearly one of these.

Louis Lot 746 (lipplate, to the right)

The lipplate was cut with a guilloché machine, giving the even and steady swirl design. The clovers appear to have been stamped or cut, also with a machine for perfect placement.

The embouchure measures 11.84 x 10.23 mm. This is just about the same as Lot #742 here earlier, and is a bit different than the gold lipplate on headjoint #136, which is 11.71 x 9.98.



Louis Lot 746

The headjoint has been engraved with Lot's name, including the two periods in L.L. and the hyphen in Louis-Lot.

Made June 12, 1863, per record books. This was the 145th model 5 flute made by Louis Lot. By this time Lot had made around 15 model 6 flutes (B foot), and 15 model 7 (maillachort C foot) flutes as well.



Lauret passed his first prize at the Conservatoire of Paris in 1824. The flute professor at that time was Joseph Guillou (prof. 1816-1828). Guillou played and taught with keyed flutes by Clair Godfroy, aîné, thus Lauret began his career on the keyed flute. Louis Lot joined the firm of Godfroy around 1830, and became half owner (and husband of Godfroy's daughter) over the next few years. Since Lauret was probably a customer of this shop, one can assume that his relationship with Louis Lot began in the 1830's.

Lauret, one year younger than Lot, was a prolific supporter of Louis Lot. Lot's record book shows purchases by Lauret beginning with repairs to what must have been a cylinder flute from the old Godfroy-Lot days, on August 27, 1855, just six months after Lot started his own mark. This shows that Lauret was a leading-edge flutist, since the keyed flute continued to be supported by the Conservatoire of Paris throughout the 1850's.

Over the next decade (1855-1864), Lauret was one of the most active customers of Louis Lot. Flutes made for Lauret between 1855 and 1864 include:

4-Model 1 (wood, C foot, silver keys)

9-Model 5 (silver flute, C foot)

2-Model 6 (silver flute with B foot)

16-Model 11 (conical ring key, D foot, Maillechort keys)

1-Db piccolo

4-C piccolo

1-F flute

These 37 flutes cost FF 8743, of which Lauret paid FF 7941.95, leaving FF 801.05. Curiously this remainder is exactly two model 5 flutes and a coffee.

Even more curious is the huge group of conical ring keyed flutes with D feet, called System Boehm by Lot, Lauret apparently sold in Marseille. This is a sign of great cultural distance from Paris!

Louis Lot #227 (photo to right)

Louis Lot's model 11.

Simon Lauret purchased 11 of this model from Lot by 1864. We presume these were for his students in Marseille.



Clair Godfroy aîné, # 5638

Made c. 1837

D or C foot

This is the type of flute that Lauret would have used in his studies at the Conservatoire de Paris in 1823.





Louis Lot #746

Lot's fabulous footjoint.

The design of the footjoint touchpieces is another triumph of Lot and crew.

Every piece, curve, angle and spacer is designed and cut perfectly.

Above and below we see the exquisite solutions to the problem of managing the notes below D# using one line of steels and posts. This included another back clutch, seen in the bottom photo, which remained standard on Lot's flutes until

Villette invented the pinless foot shortly after Lot retired in 1876.



Louis Lot #746

Lot's fabulous footjoint.

Flutists today forget that their instrument had to have been invented, rather than appearing from Heaven fully built! Louis Lot and his crew, including Vincent Godfroy, Henri Villette, and the flutist Dorus designed and built this footjoint during the seminal early years from 1847 to 1851. Very little has changed to this day.



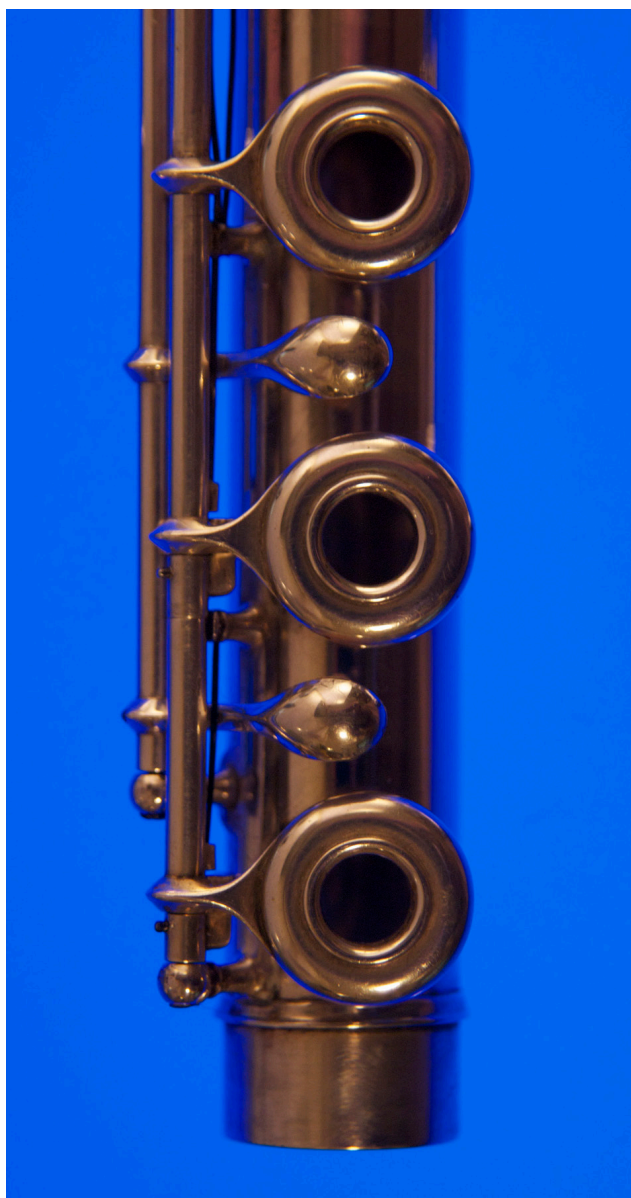
Louis Lot writes in his record book, as part of his long association with Lauret, payments on Lauret's behalf to the Association des Artistes throughout the years between 1857 and 1864. Louis Lot was clearly used to making payments for his favorite clients on matters far from flutemaking, including payments for his nephew Isidor for everything from subscriptions to the periodical *Echo du Commerce* to his bill at the gun shop. Briccialdi even had Lot buy for him a manual on photography; anyone knowing of Briccialdi's photo collection is welcome to contact us!

By 1863 the Louis Lot flute had reached a state approaching the transition to the "new Model". The side G# had been invented, although not yet fully adopted, the tube had thickened to .014", where it would stay, the embouchure had grown to it's full maturity, and the large footjoint tone holes were available.



Louis Lot #746

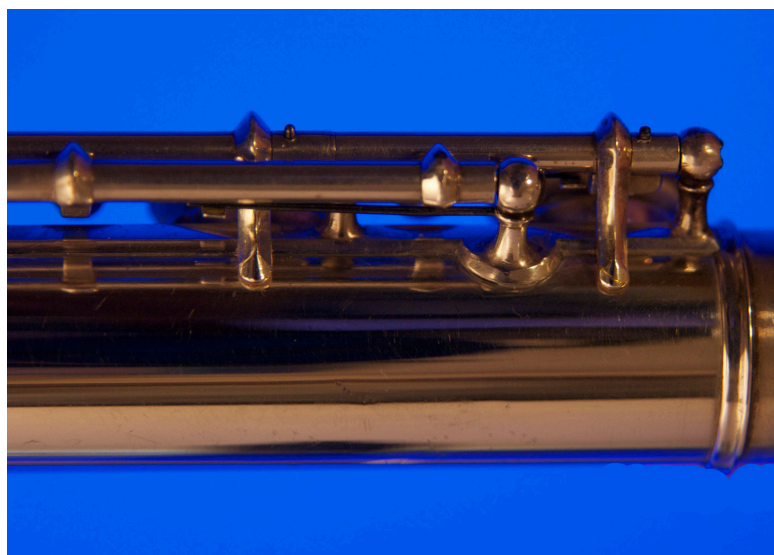
Here we have intimate views of the mechanism and workmanship that set the course for flutemakers ever since. Above we see the two shoulder clutches with pins that allowed the right hand to govern both the Fs and, with the backclutch, the Bb key around the kingpost. Below, the first photo shows the toneholes, including the two tone holes provided with thanks to Gary Lewis and Eldred Spell.



Louis Lot #746

The right hand mechanism.

Lot and crew invented the half-covered tonehole very shortly after Boehm's visit to Paris in 1847. Although this entire mechanism was invented and designed over just a few years, the Lot shop remains the finest makers of silver flutes ever!



Lauret choose the traditional model, yet with the new embouchure and wall, and new tube, all at the new pitch of A=435.

Louis Lot flute #746 surfaced recently through the descendants of Leopold Meixner, an Austrian flutist probably from the area near Eisenberg an der Pinka in the Burgenland area of Austria-Hungary. Leopold played this flute in Austria before the family emigrated to America in the 1920's. Leopold's grandson Larry Meixner has brought this flute to market.

The Meixner family played together in a polka and traditional music band in Pennsylvania as soon as they arrived, and are still active. Leopold's son Alfred, known as Skeeter, played in the family polka band, and brought in his son Al at age 4 in the 1950's. Al, in turn, brought in his own son Alex at age 6 in 1982. Alex is now the family star, and is a renowned trumpet and accordion player. The Meixner band can be heard here: <http://alexmeixner.com>.



Louis Lot #746 (above)

The great and gentle flutist Louis Dorus, whom everyone seemed to like and admire, invented this G# key back in 1837 or so. The A hole, governed by the G key, closes the G# key along with it when pressed. The beautiful touch seen here, complete with the exquisite little notch at the G arm, opens the G# key with an opposing spring. By 1863, when this flute was built, the side, independent G# had already been perfected by Lot and Godfroy independently, yet the new side G# was still a special order.



Louis Lot #746

The left hand mechanism remains virtually unchanged on most flutes today. This stunning and perfectly preserved example shows the artistry of form and function in perfect harmony.



Louis Lot #746

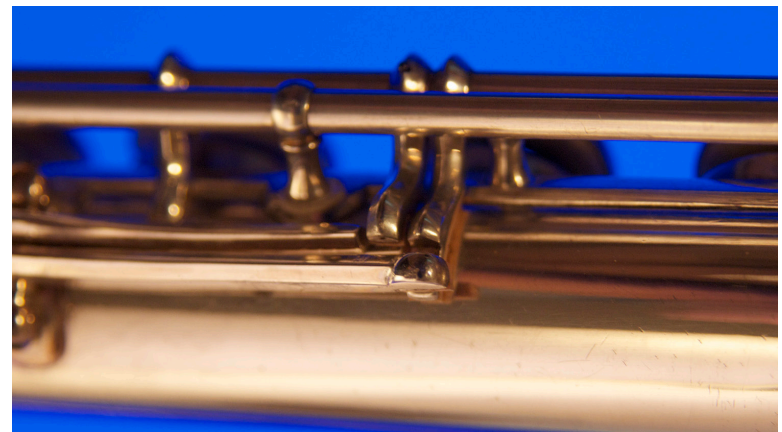
One of the favorite hidden moments for flutemakers is the underside of the C# touch. After Louis Lot retired, Villette changed this to a V shaped arm. Later Chambille, who bought the Lot business in 1904, would change it to a C shape. Here we see that Louis Lot simply curved the underside in a loving caress of the flute tube, which it would never touch, yet whose smooth curves the key reflects.

The Flute #746

The basic condition of this instrument is excellent. There are scant signs of use. The instrument needed a resoldering, and the two bottom tone holes on the body were missing. The thumb key strap had come unsoldered long ago, and the repairman who resoldered it also changed the pad washer on this key. All other pad washers are original. There are signs that the lower tenon has been expanded. Normal areas of wear are remarkably clean. The crown beads are perfect, the guilloché is unworn, and the backclutch is untouched. Although this flute needed a complete overhaul and resoldering, it is in a lovely state, and has emerged as a perfect flute.

Full overhaul and resoldering performed by Paul Rabinov, finishing just at the new year of 2013. Thanks to the wonderful advice and help from two other Louis Lot scholars, Gary Lewis in San Francisco and Eldred Spell in Cullowhee, North Carolina, we were able to locate two Louis Lot tone holes at the correct diameter to replace the missing two on the flute.

This instrument was made at New Pitch, or A=435. Gary Lewis points out that the Louis Lot 435 scale is sharp to 435, probably around 438.

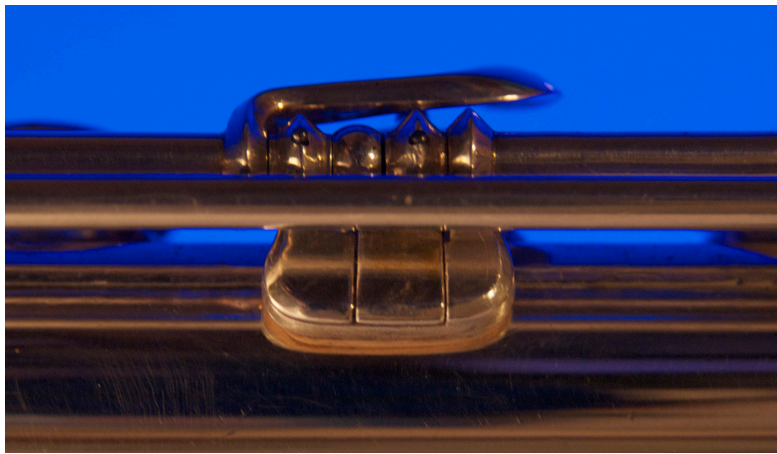


Louis Lot #746

Above we see the thumb key, which is also the only part of this flute to have been repaired in the past. The hinge tubing was bent, and was replaced by Paul Rabinov during the restoration. The posts and strap for the thumb were cleaned up by Mr. Rabinov as well.

The thumb Bb mechanism was attributed to G. Briccialdi by Rockstro in 1890, who says that Briccialdi had Rudall & Rose make the first one on a wooden cylindrical flute by Godfroy, in May or June of 1849.

As far as we can tell, this thumb key was probably first made in Paris by Godfroy and Lot, and was referred to by Boehm as the thumb of Lot. To the left we see the trill keys and the C# cup, with the extended strap or rib to accommodate them. Lot continued to make this rib in one piece, but Villette split the rib as part of his redesign in 1877 or so.



Louis Lot #746

Above we see the famous back clutch, invented by Lot and crew between 1847 and 1851. This back clutch forms the core of the modern flute system. In fact, the basic elements had been invented (and patented) by Buffet in 1837, but no one had configured the elements into a unified design that really worked until Godfroy, Lot, Villette and Dorus did their magic in the late 1840's. The back clutch shape changed over time, starting out here with broad and curvaceous hips, three sections (including in this way the F#), and gently beveled edges.



Sounding length 608 mm. The average Lot is 605 mm.

Body scale is 227 mm. This is the classic Lot 435 scale.

High C# to bottom is 370 mm. Emb to C# is 238 mm.

Embouchure is 11.84 x 10.23 mm. This is also classic Lot.

This flute weighs 364 g.

In probably the original case, which is separated at the hinge and shows substantial external wear. A new case has been made for this flute.

Fully resoldered and repadded by Paul Rabinov between the end of the world on 12-12-2012 and the beginning of the new world on 1-1-2013.

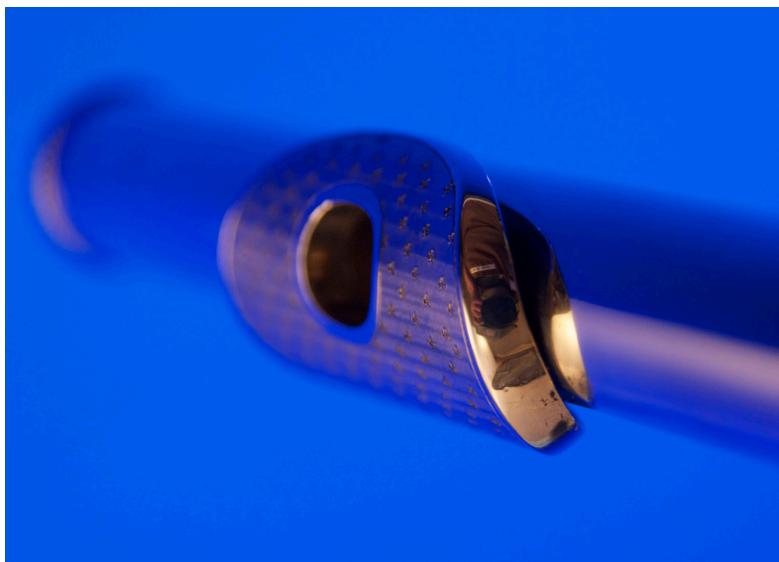
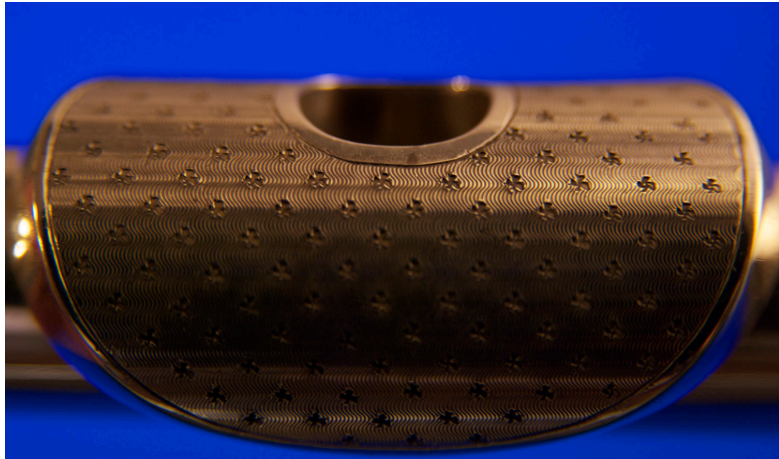
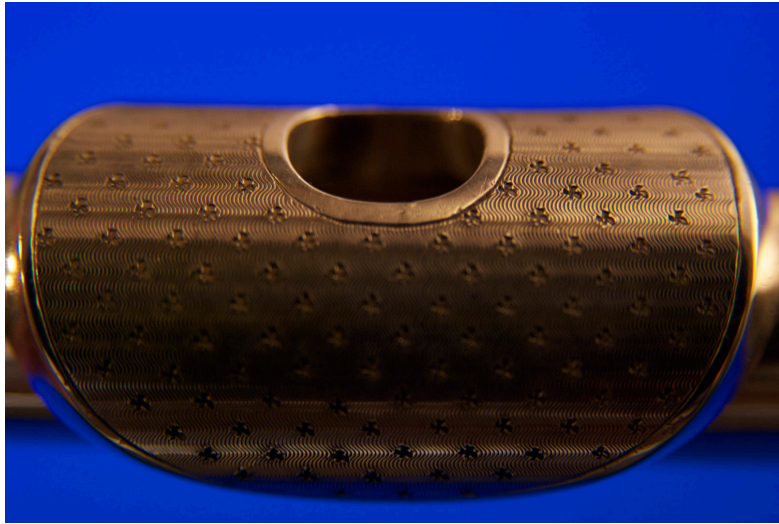
Price: \$40,000.00



Louis Lot #746
These two pages feature the headjoint, which is uncut and in perfect condition.
The crown (upper left) is perfectly preserved, with the beaded three row design
showing no wear.

The maker's mark is also in perfect condition.
The guilloché lipplate is perfect.
The edge of the lipplate follows the tube perfectly.
The tenon is uncut and in excellent condition.



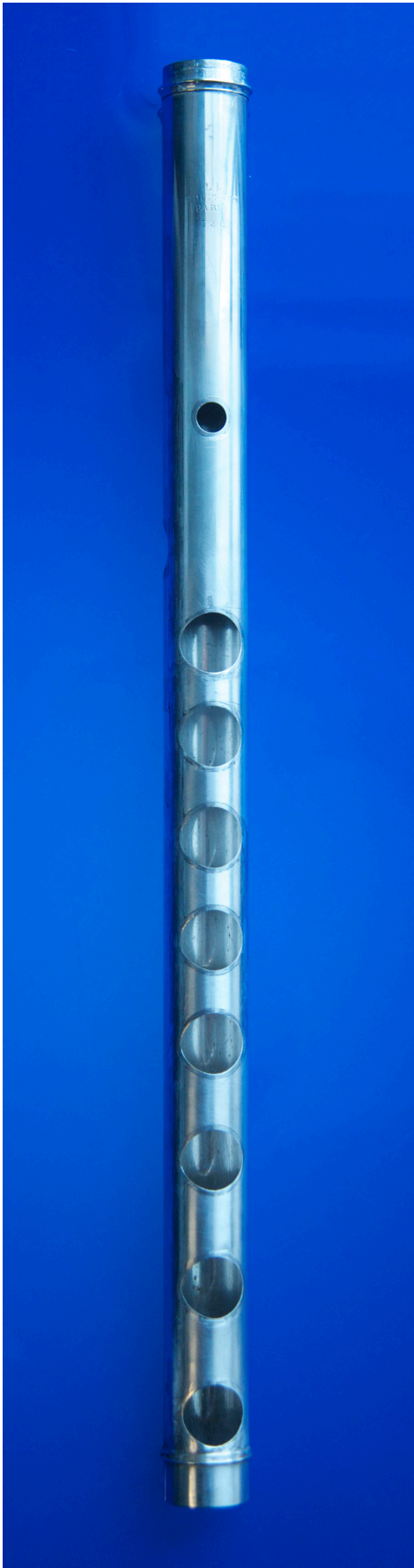


Louis Lot #746

Made July, 1863 for Simon Lauret of Marseille.

Complete restoration by Paul Rabinov, la Crescenta, CA, carried out December, 2012.

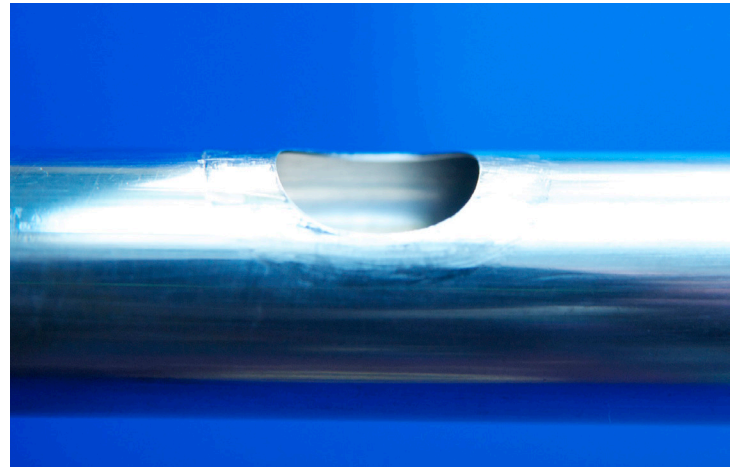
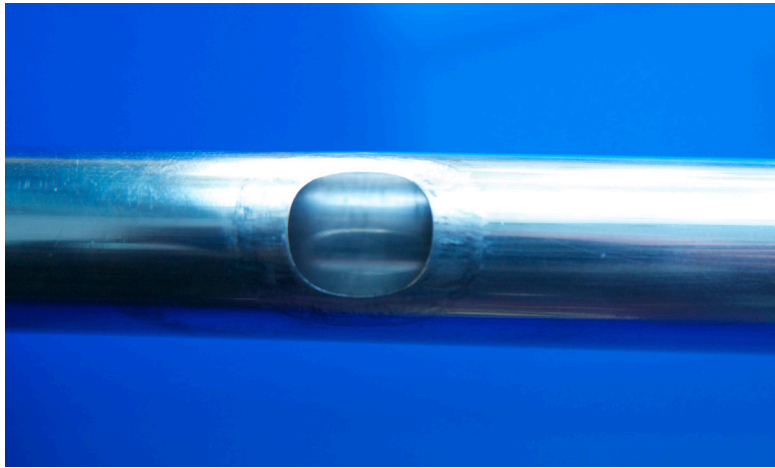
The original solder had deteriorated. All parts were unsoldered, cleaned and replaced.



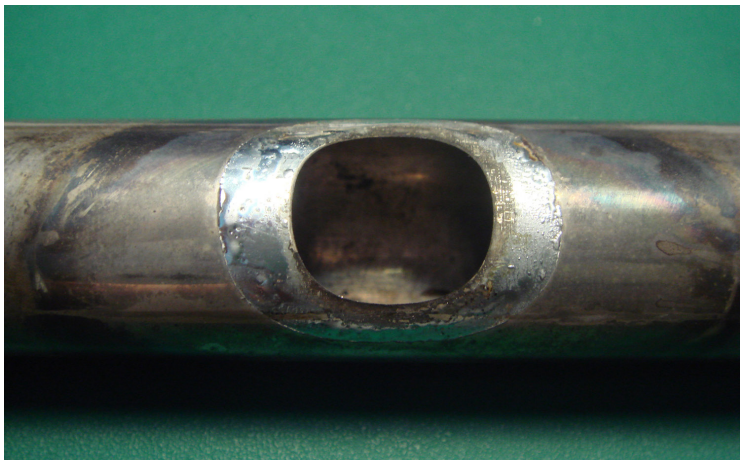


Louis Lot #746

Above we see the key mechanism of the Louis Lot flutes, and practically all flutes after. This highly sophisticated mechanical devise needed to be machined to very close tolerances in order for it to work, and continue to work for many years. In fact, with standard maintenance the Louis Lot mechanism still works today, and Louis Lot flutes are the most valuable flutes on the market today. Like Stradivarius and the violin, Louis Lot brought together ideas and history to create a unified work of art which expressed perfectly the thoughts, dreams, fantasies and fears of the human family, to create music that moved people around the world, and still does decades and even centuries later.



Louis Lot #746



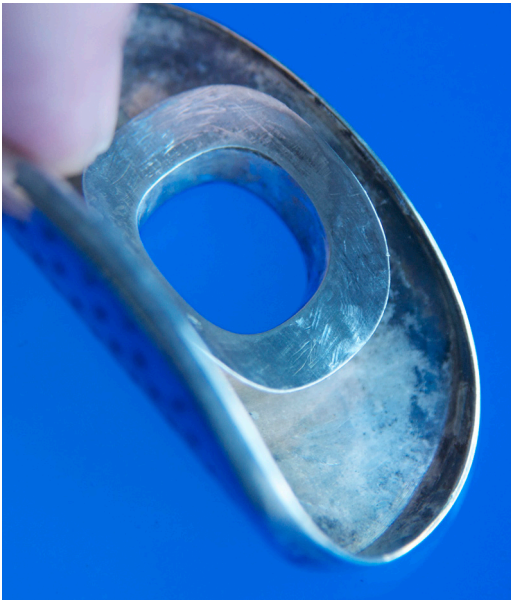
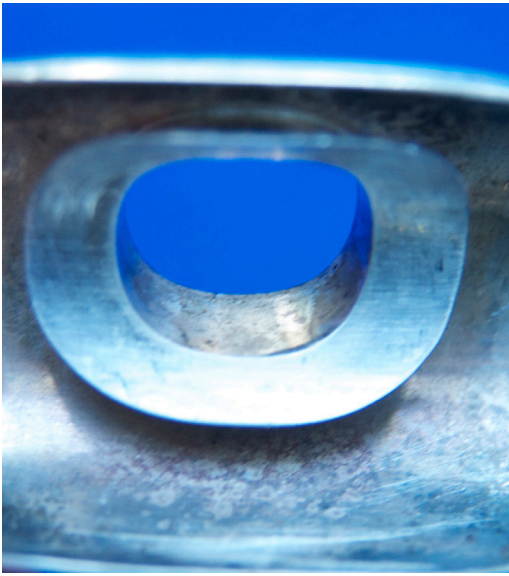
The embouchure and headjoint are the heart and soul of the flute, even if they need a beautiful body for perfect expression.

Here we see the perfect embouchure hole, exactly as Louis Lot cut it in 1863 (we are assuming that Lot, like his successors, personally finished the flutes especially by being the one who cut the embouchure holes).

The photo to the left shows that the original solder for the lipplate had deteriorated, as seen by the discoloration among the solder where the flange sits.

To the left we see the bottom of the lipplate, and especially the flange that joins the lipplate to the headjoint tube. This flange is soldered to the tube and to the chimney of the embouchure. With the bottom photo we can see the flange as it appeared after removing it from the headjoint tube, showing the discoloration of the original solder as it deteriorated over the past 150 years. The upper photos show the flange after cleaning by Paul Rabinov.

Directly below we see the rest of the flute body during the cleaning and preparation for re-soldering. There are also little circles in black ink around little dings in the tube which Paul Rabinov later removed.





Louis Lot #746

Finally, we see the state of deterioration confronted by Paul Rabinov as he removed the old solder. From the top left, we see the thumb key area, which had received some attention by repairmen earlier (not in Paris). Moving clockwise we see the top of the body tube where the barrel for the headjoint socket is attached, and below that we see the footjoint with the strap, or rib, removed and the solder deterioration very visible. The final portrait, to the left, is of Paul Rabinov testing Louis Lot flute #746 after all restoration had been completed.

		Juin 1863	
6	Avoir Brick chef de Musique 2 ^e Carabiniers Espèces Deux Cent francs	200	"
9	Avoir O. Chardard, à Boulogne esp. mes Espèces par Ch ^m de fer f ^{co}	124	"
11	Avoir E. Astruc, à Marseille, un billet de banque de 200 francs pour soldes.	200	"
12	Doit Lauret, à Marseille, Une flûte Cylindrique, en argent, Embouch. quillochée N ^o 746.	400	"
13	Doit Brossa, Une Flûte Cylindrique, corps et clés en Arg ^t . Embouchure en arg ^t . avec Boite et accessoires N ^o 740. Avoir, Espèces, Cent francs.	400 100	"
	Doit Duchemin, 56 rue d'Enghien Une flûte en bois de grenadille quinte et 8 clés en argent, avec boite et accessoires N ^o 749 J ^o 310. Es. 10% Net	279	"
18	Doit Laflorence. Une flûte Cylindrique corps et clés en argent Emb ^o d'arg ^t clés brille sur l'ut N ^o 748.	400	"

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*Louis Lot #746
Made 12 June, 1863 for Simon Lauret of Marseille.*