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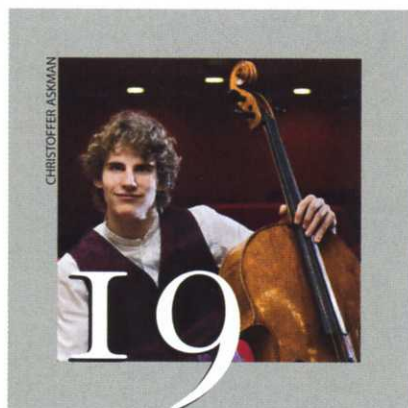


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Text and photographs by Benoit Rolland

PECCATTE

Materials Everything in this c.1850 Peccatte bow conspires to create perfection. The branch of the tree from which Peccatte obtained the wood for the bow had been exactly quarter-sawn, or 'quartier parfait' in French. The layered grain lines wrapped around the head strengthen it while exposing a visually attractive pattern brushed by a few flames that run further along the bow. The wood design also indicates that the stick was cut in the board along a curved line.

Form Peccatte sculpted the head in a free-flowing style, balancing rounded shapes typical of 19th-century Mirecourt makers with the swan neck design that he himself usually favoured. The asymmetrical head's deviating ridge is often attributed to bad lighting over Peccatte's bench, but I believe it was intentional: it minimises the head volume when viewed from the player's side. The frog, closely matching the head,



is typical of Peccatte – an audacious throat softened by harmonious curves. The overall feel is powerful. Peccatte tended to overlook minute craftsmanship, but created classical elegance.

Condition All the parts of this bow are original, including the screw and eyelet – a rare feature nowadays. The slight wear marks pay testament to the amount that the bow has been used.

Sound The cellist who currently owns the bow called it 'magical'. He also commented: 'It is all about sound. This bow has assertiveness.' Aside from the current heavy lapping, the stick itself is also heavy and dense, which is unexpected in a bow made

from flamed wood. The strength and harmony inherent in the construction of the bow power its sound potential. It is capable of arousing the harmonics and overtones of a cello, and its warm sonority develops a rich and complex vibration. As the current owner testifies, this Peccatte enchants musicians. ■

MAKER **DOMINIQUE PECCATTE**
 NATIONALITY **FRENCH**
 BORN **MIRECOURT, 1810**
 DIED **MIRECOURT, 1874**
 BOW **CELLO**
 DATE **C.1850**

