



KNOBLOCH
STRINGS

I go back a long way with Knobloch Strings. When I became part of the Munich guitar scene in 1989 - that is when I started my apprenticeship as a guitar maker - Jiří Knobloch's shop was its hub: The place to find otherwise untraceable scores, to buy strings and student instruments, or even - in those days exotic - instruments like lutes and viola da gamba. When Jiří noticed that I had a rudimentary understanding of the physics of strings, he honoured me by sometimes discussing his latest developments with me - and there was always something new. He had a quiet, deep passion and determination, and in the 1990s, after 20 years of development, his *Actives* were considered by many players to be the bench mark in classical guitar strings.

In 2006 - I had left Munich by then - Jiří called me one day and asked me about prices for tone woods and then if I wanted to buy his wood. I didn't even know he had any. He had bought it between 1978 and 1980 with the plan to start his own production of guitars. I have seen only one he made, and it was a fine instrument. During my next visit to Munich, I visited Jiří and Renate, his wife, and we negotiated a price for the whole stock. Soon after, I drove to Munich again to pick it up. It was the last time I saw Jiří.

I had heard that someone had bought Knobloch Strings, but I didn't bother to follow up on what was happening with the company. For me, it was a closed story. How wrong I was.

Some day, one of my customers came to my workshop with a guitar I had made in the early 2000s. I played a few notes and immediately asked "what strings are these?" He told me "these are the new Knobloch strings". The same day, I tracked down the nearest distributor and bought 12 sets. Since this day, Knobloch Strings have been my default strings on my own guitars.

Enthusiastic about the discovery of these "new" strings I wrote an e-mail to Gilles Baudu, the new proprietor of Knobloch Strings, to congratulate on his achievements, and that I thought Jiří would have been very happy about how he continued his work. He replied very kindly and we agreed to meet in a video call. Testing more Knobloch sets, I realised what understanding, sensitivity and ingenuity Gilles possessed, not only in making strings, but also in combining them into harmonious sets.

This was the start of a fruitful cooperation. You may expect exciting news soon!