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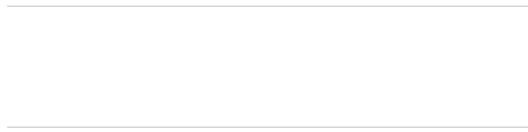
ANTONIO STRADIVARI

'BRAGA'

CREMONA C.1726-28

*John
& Arthur
Beare*

Published in London



*John
& Arthur
Beare*



Close up of the back
Antonio Stradivari
c.1726-28 'Braga'

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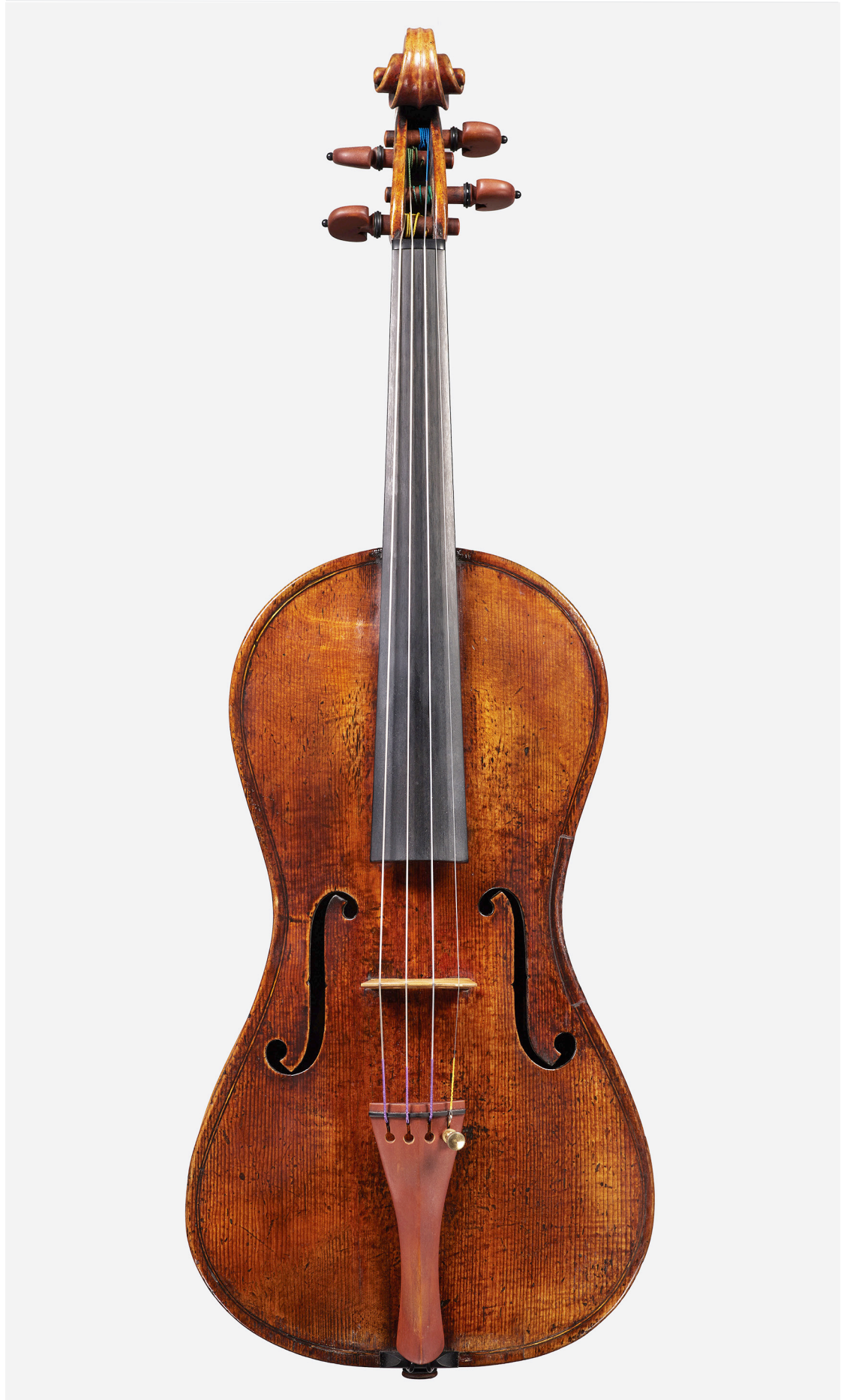
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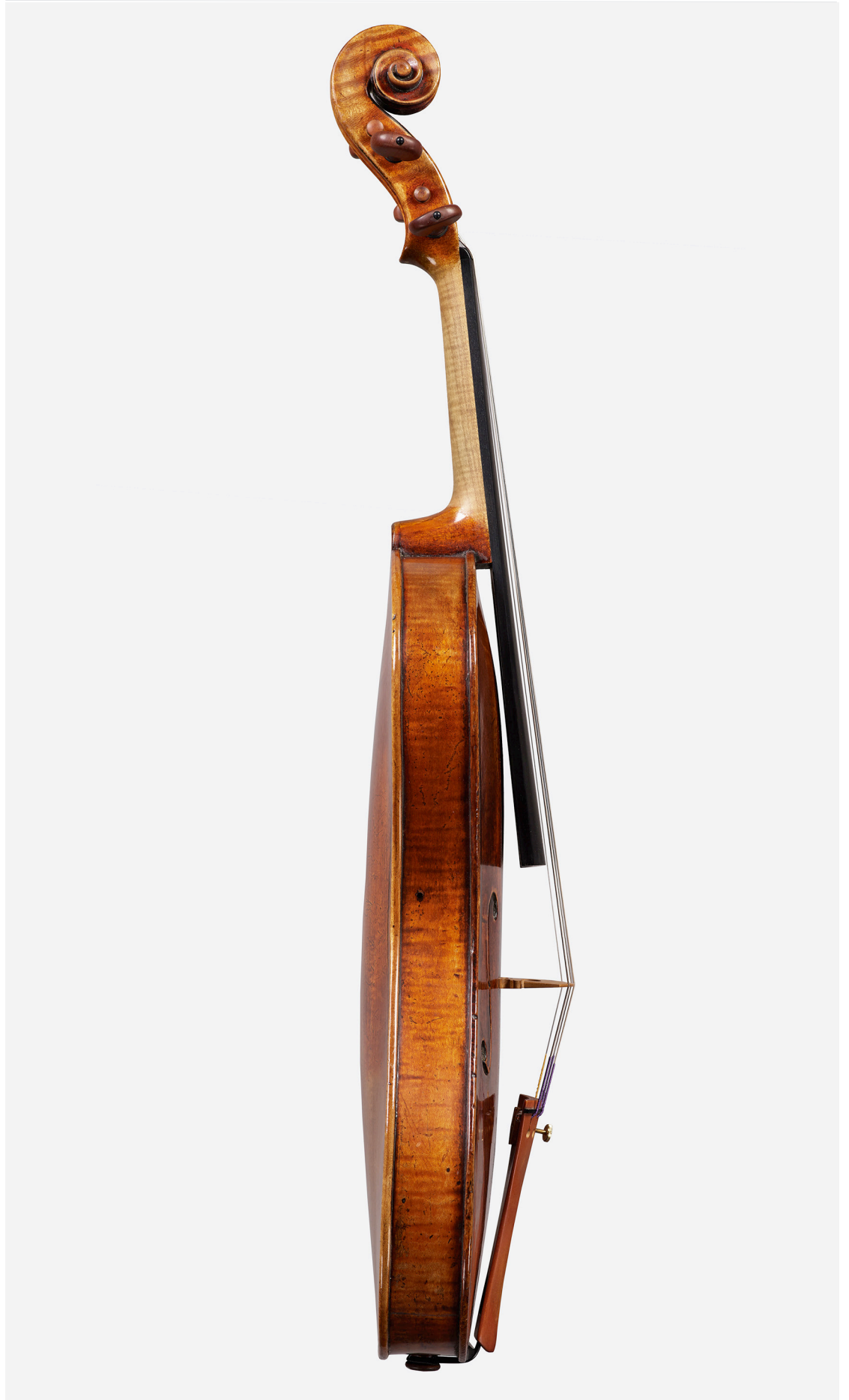
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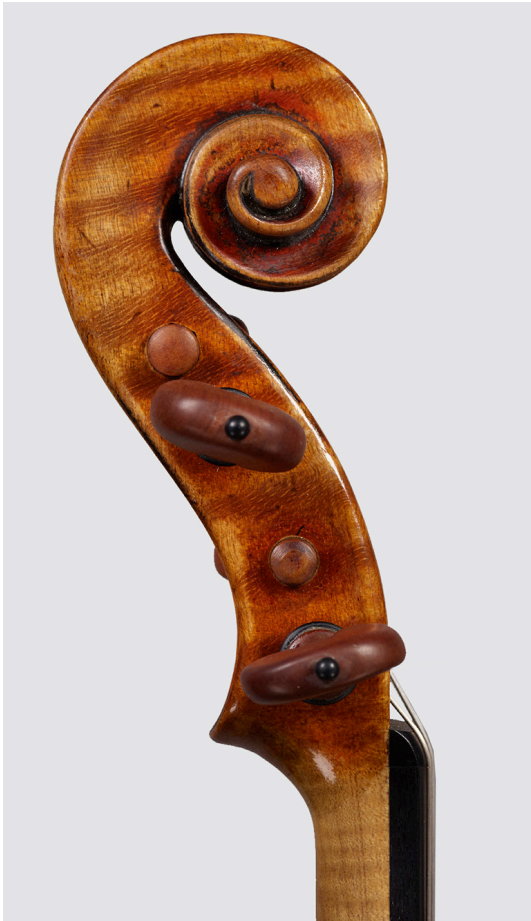
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ANTONIO STRADIVARI

1644-1737

BY CARLO CHIESA &
JOHN DILWORTH

2011

Antonio Stradivari is the most celebrated and influential violin maker in the history of the instrument. His long and productive life was the high-water mark of the classical age of Cremonese violin making and his instruments remain among the most sought-after by players and collectors alike. His achievement was built upon the foundations of the tradition of instrument making in Cremona established by Andrea Amati and his descendants. Stradivari worked consistently to the high standards of craftsmanship laid down by the Amati, while developing new ideas of sound and appearance.

His origins have not yet been definitely traced. It is fairly certain that he was born in Cremona in 1644/5, but his training and early life remain a mystery. The assumption until fairly recently was that he was apprenticed to, or otherwise associated with, Nicolò Amati based on the circumstantial evidence that Nicolò's violin shop was then the most important in Cremona, and the earliest surviving Stradivari label dated 1666 claims that he was '*Alumnus Nicolai Amati*' ('a pupil of Nicolò Amati').

The evidence against the Amati apprenticeship is almost entirely negative, but has become increasingly persuasive. Nicolò did indeed take on many apprentices from outside his immediate family, an innovation in the normally family-centred business of violin making. The names of several pupils are recorded in census returns. Many of these names have since become famous in their own right, but Stradivari is not among them. It is also significant that Stradivari's '*Alumnus Amati*' label is unique – he never used this wording again. Perhaps Nicolò heard of it, and forbade him to use it as he had not in fact ever been his '*alumnus*'. It seems that claiming a connection to Amati was a good way of establishing a reputation. One piece of corroborating evidence is a detail of constructional technique: all the makers of the Amati family and, as far as it can be traced, all those trained by them, placed a

small puncture mark at the centre of the interior of the backplate. This seems to have played an important part in laying out the graduation of thickness of the back. Rugeri, Stradivari, and their follower Carlo Bergonzi, were apparently the only Cremonese makers who did not use this technique.

Stradivari's earliest violins show very individual character. It is only slightly later in his career, around 1680, that his instruments present the fully-fledged Amatisé appearance that led to the apprenticeship speculation. It is possible that the gifted young Stradivari was able to learn from Amati during a short period in the workshop that could not legitimately be described as an apprenticeship or formal pupillage. It is also possible that Francesco Rugeri was the maker who had the stronger influence on the young Stradivari, and that both of them remained outside Amati's immediate circle.

In his early period Stradivari made a range of instruments, including mandolins, guitars and at least one harp. Some of them have elaborately carved and inlaid decoration. There is little precedent for this style of work in Cremona, which suggests that Stradivari may have spent his apprenticeship with a woodcarver or decorative inlayer. He was undoubtedly an exceptional craftsman whose technical skill remained undiminished through his long life.

His first-known appearance in archival documents relates to his marriage to Francesca Ferraboschi in 1667. Francesca was the widow of Giovanni Capra, the son of a famous architect. Following his marriage Stradivari moved to his wife's parish of Santa Agata, and it is possible that his landlord, a man called Pescaroli, was a woodcarver. In 1680 Stradivari was able to buy a larger house with workshop on the Piazza San Domenico, just a few metres from the Amati and Guarneri workshops. This was to remain the Stradivari family home into the early nineteenth century. In 1698 Francesca died; within a few months Antonio married Antonia Maria Zambelli, who bore him five children.

Stradivari soon established his as the dominant violin business in Cremona, overtaking the Amati workshop. His success proved damaging to Nicolò's son Girolamo, and to the Guarneri family. Yet it took some time for his instruments to become the first choice for players throughout the rest of Europe. The Stainer model persisted as the ideal violin for many musicians outside Cremona until the early nineteenth century; Stradivari's early ornate work apparently brought orders from the royal and aristocratic houses and aristocrats rather than from professional musicians.

He was diligent and disciplined workman. Many of his careful drawings and templates have survived, now kept in the Museo Stradivariano, Cremona, and help to trace the evolution of his designs and working methods. The wooden forms around which he built his instruments are also preserved. Some of them bear a date, the earliest being 1689, but one or two were obviously made earlier, matching instruments with labels prior to that date. We know very few instruments from the very first period of Stradivari's career, but by 1683 he had developed a fully Amatisé model, gracefully constructed

and emulating Nicolò Amati on almost all points. Though his personal tastes toward a heavier and more assertive model were beginning to appear – broader wings to the soundholes, broader edges, and wider corners – the decade c. 1680-90 is commonly referred to as his Amatisé period.

In 1691 he made the first radical change to his violin design with a form marked 'SL', dated 9 November. For the next decade his violins became longer and distinctively different from Amati's designs; the new model is known as the 'long pattern'. His aim may well have been to provide a darker sound with a stronger G string, inspired by the large-pattern violins made in Brescia earlier in the century, but nowadays these instruments are not so highly prized by players who are used to the more compact dimensions of the conventional violin. Stradivari's determination to develop and move on marks him out from his peers who remained more faithful to the Amati's tradition. (In the previous 130 years of violin making in Cremona perhaps only three different patterns had been used; two were the small and large models of Andrea Amati, the third the wider 'grand pattern' developed by Nicolò Amati.)

The Stradivari workshop now concentrated its efforts on the violin family; other instruments and the special decorated commissions become much rarer. As with most makers, his violas and cellos are less common than violins. With one exception, his violas are on the 42-cm back length contralto model. This design was very different to previous large tenor Cremonese models, demonstrating Stradivari's original cast of mind. The cellos also were individual in conception while at that time still retaining the traditional large pattern with a back length measuring c. 79 cm, compared to the modern standard of c. 76 cm.

Stradivari's eldest son, Francesco, born in 1671, was of an age to assist his father in the workshop by the end of the seventeenth century. He remained as his father's closest support throughout his life, and much of the drive to develop and improve the workshop's later output may be his.

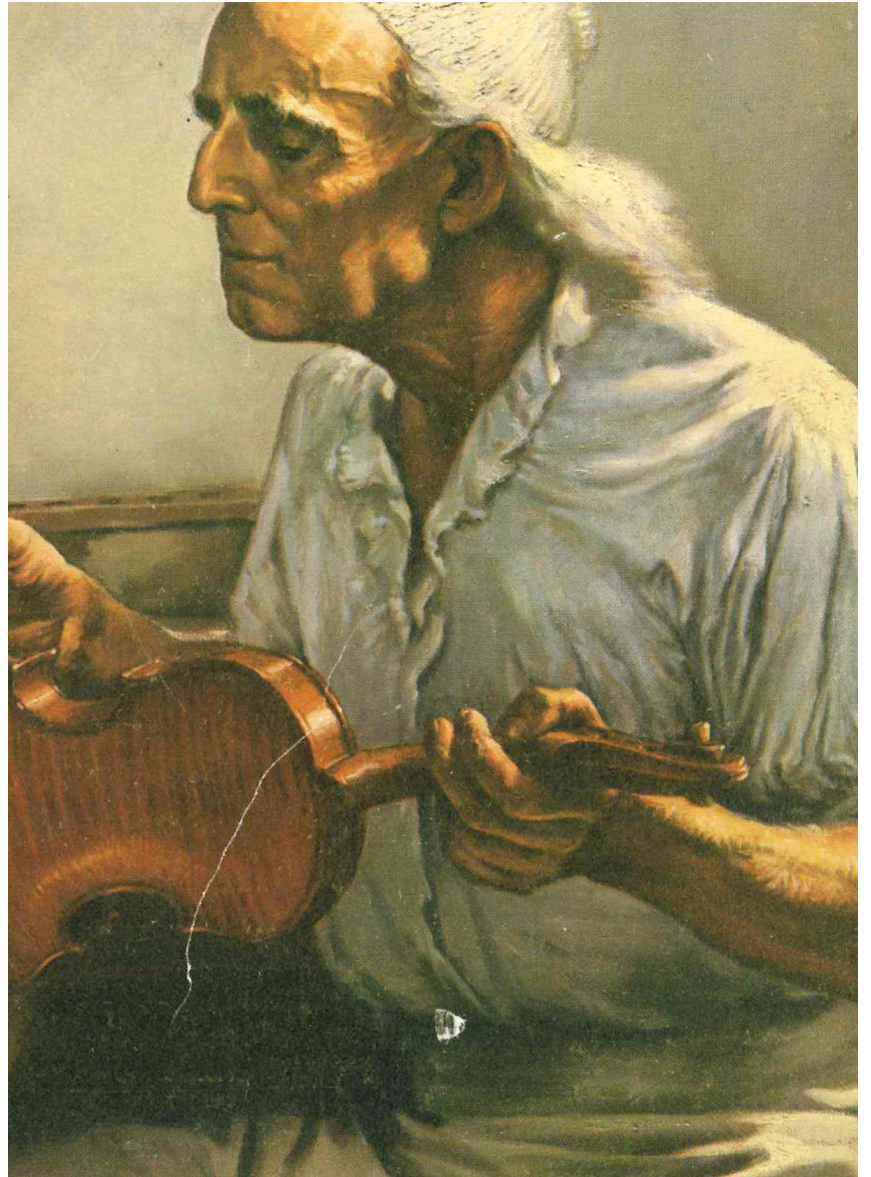
By 1700 the Stradivari violin had developed a greater power and tonal authority. Stradivari abandoned his 'long pattern' experiment and concentrated on a wider outline, with straighter, stronger middle curves, and a flat, powerful arching. Two new forms were produced, marked 'P' and 'G' and dated 1705 and 1708. Along with a slightly earlier form, the 'PG' from 1689, these three served as moulds of all violins made in the remaining years. Every part of the instrument shows an increased strength; the scroll gained a black edge, emphasising the perfectly turned spiral of the head; the varnish took on a deep red tint. The years from c. 1700 to 1718 are considered the 'Golden Period' of the Stradivari workshop. Antonio's fourth son Omobono, born in 1679, was also in the workshop, but his influence was probably less than Francesco's. Antonio, Francesco, and Omobono may have been joined briefly by another member of the family, Giovanni Battista Martino, who was born to Antonio's second wife Antonia in 1703. He would have been old enough to start his apprenticeship with his father and brothers in 1716, but he died in 1727.

Around 1709 a major step forward was made in the design of the cello. Antonio himself was by now in his mid-sixties. The new cello pattern follows some of the principles as the 'P' and 'G' violin models, and the back length is reduced to c. 75 cm. Compared to the unwieldy instruments of the previous century, this was a streamlined, compact instrument using the low arching developed on violins. It would become the expressive vehicle for virtuoso players in successive centuries. The new cello form was called the *forma B* and is one of Stradivari's greatest achievements.

By 1718 the energy of the shop seems to have diminished. Orders were perhaps harder to come by. Instruments of this mature period are less flamboyant in the choice of wood, the soundholes become slightly closed, the arch develops increased mass at the edges, and the tonal quality seems darker. From 1728 until Antonio's death in 1737, the instruments progressively acquire more bulk and broader arching and the standard of workmanship seems sometimes to deteriorate slightly. While Francesco's influence seems to get stronger, there are examples of Antonio's characteristic workmanship evident right until the last year of his life. Many instruments from that late period are particularly fine concert instruments with a dark sonority that, according to many famous soloists, eclipses the smooth power of the Golden Period.

Experimentation still continued, with two remarkable new cello models introduced around 1726. One was called the *B Piccola*, and is essentially the 'B' form cello narrowed and slightly shortened. The half dozen existing cellos built on this model represent some of the best work of this period. Another model is shorter still (c. 74 cm), although not so narrow, of which four or five examples are known. Neither challenged the 'B' form as the now accepted ideal cello model.

Antonio Stradivari died in 1737, aged around 93. The family workshop was carried on briefly by his sons, but Omobono died in 1742 and Francesco, named as sole heir to the workshop in Antonio's will, died in 1743. Their youngest brother, Paolo, by profession a cloth merchant, moved out and rented the house and workshop to another important luthier, Carlo Bergonzi. In the storage room of the shop Paolo found a substantial stock of finished instruments and in the following years he undertook their sale. There were so many that nearly thirty years later he was selling the final items to an Italian nobleman and collector, Count Cozio di Salabue, who through Paolo became the first owner of the 'Messie'. Cozio also bought the last tools, patterns, moulds, and various items remaining in the Stradivari workshop; these now form the main core of the Museo Stradivariano in Cremona.



PROVENANCE

-	John Avery Turner
1859	Captain Francis Taylor
1890	Mrs Griffith
1907	Miss Taylor
1945	Lilian Cooper
1945	Mr Pugh
1964	John V. Braga
1964	George Whitman
1968	Rembert Wurlitzer
1968	Dr. Stephen Donald
1987	Joshua Bell
2004	Timothy Baker
-	Private Owner

Extract from

HOW MANY STRADS?
Our Heritage from the Master

Ernest N. Doring

1945

SPECIAL STRADIVARI INSTRUMENTS

- 1680 ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM (G) Guitar
(Appears in Goodkind as "1688")
La Casa Nuziale
Catalogue of the Hill Collection of Musical Instruments in the Ashmolean Museum
- 1681 NAPLES CONSERVATORY Harp
Antonio Stradivari - The Cremona Exhibition of 1987
Capolavori di Antonio Stradivari
L'Esposizione di Liuteria Antica a Cremona nel 1937
Mostra di Antonio Stradivari
- 1700 KRASNER, RAWLINS (G) Guitar
Antonio Stradivari - The Cremona Exhibition of 1987
Bein & Fushi Calendar, 1987
Capolavori di Antonio Stradivari
Guitares/Chefs-d'Oeuvre des Collections de France
The Loan Exhibition of Stringed Instruments and Bows: Simone Fernando Sacconi 70th Birthday
The Shrine to Music Museum
- 1712 FOUNTAINE Quarter-Size Violin
Antonio Stradivari - The Cremona Exhibition of 1987
Capolavori di Antonio Stradivari
Kleine Geigen - Grosse Meister
- 1717 CLAPISSON, PARIS CONSERVATORY Pochette
Antonio Stradivari - The Cremona Exhibition of 1987
Capolavori di Antonio Stradivari
The Dance Master's Kit
L'Esposizione di Liuteria Antica a Cremona nel 1937
- 1720 GILLOTT Quarter-Size Violin
Antonio Stradivari - The Cremona Exhibition of 1987
Capolavori di Antonio Stradivari
The Schambach-Kaston Collection of Musical Instruments
- 1726 WURLITZER, BEARE (G) Viola d'Amore
(Appears in Goodkind as "1728")
Antonio Stradivari - The Cremona Exhibition of 1987
Capolavori di Antonio Stradivari
- 1726 CHANOT, CHARDON (G) Guitar-Shaped Violin
(Appears in Goodkind as "1681")
The Strad, Dec 1964
- ◆1730 FRUH Gamba
- 1734 L'AIGLON Quarter-Size Violin (D,G)
The Loan Exhibition of Stringed Instruments and Bows: Simone Fernando Sacconi 70th Birthday
The Secrets of Stradivari
A Thousand Mornings of Music
Violins and Violinists, Dec 1942
- 1736 BELLE SKINNER (G) Three-Quarter-Size Violin
The Belle Skinner Collection of Old Musical Instruments
Violins and Violinists, Feb 1943
- ND BEARE Mandolin
Antonio Stradivari - The Cremona Exhibition of 1987
Capolavori di Antonio Stradivari

FRANCESCO STRADIVARI VIOLINS

- 1740 HUMSER (G)
- 1742 LE BESQUE (D,G)
(Labelled as "1734," appears in Doring as "1734")
- 1742 SALABUE (G)
The Henry Hottinger Collection
The Stradivari Legacy

OMOBONO STRADIVARI VIOLINS

- 1700 BLAGOVE (G)
- ◆1724 KAZARIAN
The Strad, Oct 1953
Violins and Violinists, Jan/Feb 1955
- 1732 HAMMA (G)
Meister Italienscher Geigenbaukunst
- 1735 DUSHKIN (G)
- 1737 RAWLINS
Bein & Fushi Calendar, 1990
Bein & Fushi Magazine, Winter 1993
The Miracle Makers: Stradivari, Guarneri, Oliveira
The Stradivari Legacy
- 1738 TANOCKY (G)
- 1740 FREICHE (D,G)
The Stradivari Legacy
- 1740 GULINO (G)
- 1740 HAMMA, QUID (G)
Meister Italienscher Geigenbaukunst
- 1740 SOLOVIEFF (D,G)
- 1740 SORANTIN (D,G)
Bein & Fushi Calendar, 1980
- 1740 WEINER (G)
Meister Italienscher Geigenbaukunst

Copy of letter

W. E. Hill & Sons

to Mr Braga

1951



TRADE MARK
The Sign of
Joseph Hill in 1762

AGENTS PHILLIPS HILL,
PAUL ENSWORTH HILL,
DESMOND D'ARNEY LTD.

TELEGRAMS -- STRADIVARI, LONDON.
TELEPHONE -- 0-474 MAYFAIR.

William E. Hill & Sons.
Violin Makers, Repairers & Experts.
140 New Bond Street.
London, W. 1 20th December 1951

Mr. John V. Braga,
c/o The Light & Power Company Limited,
Argyla Street, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

Dear Mr. Braga,

I have obtained a few facts concerning the previous owners of your Stradivari violin dated 1718, which we attribute to the period 1728.

The earliest record we have of this instrument is when it was in the possession of Captain Francis Taylor in 1859. I am sending you a document signed by a Mr. Turner, certifying the authenticity of the violin. We think this Mr. Turner was the gentleman of that name who owned a large music business, and imported a great number of instruments from abroad.

From correspondence in our possession this violin appears to have passed into the hands of a Mrs. Griffith in 1890, but it would seem that it was sold back to the Taylor family, as in 1907 Miss Taylor wrote to George Hart about it.

It later passed into the hands of Mrs. Lillian Cooper who sold it to Mr. Pugh of Barford, Warwick, in 1945, and it is from this gentleman that the violin now passes into your possession.

Yours sincerely,

W.E. Hill & Sons

Copy of letter (archive)

W. E. Hill & Sons

1951

OB18/

20th December, 1951. 26

Mr. John V. Braga,
c/o The China Light & Power Co., Ltd.,
Argyle Street, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

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Yours sincerely,

A. Phillips Hill.

Facsimile of certificate (archive)

W. E. Hill & Sons

1951

OBS/18.

16th August, 1951.

95

WE CERTIFY, that the violin sold by us to John V. Braga of Hong Kong, was made by Antonio Stradivari of Cremona and bears a label dated 1718. We attribute this instrument to the period 1728.

DESCRIPTION. The back, in two pieces is of plain wood; that of the sides cut on the slab, is marked by a faint small curl. The table is of even and rather open grain, the varnish of a light brown colour.

This instrument which is of viol shape without coners, has been somewhat modified in form. It is in an excellent state of preservation and measures 14.1/16 inches in length of body.

OB18/701.

- 2 -

94 con

I know that you will take great care of it and pass it on in the same perfect condition as it is today".

Yours very truly.

Facsimile of certificate

W. E. Hill & Sons

1951

SOLE GOLD MEDAL SOCIETY OF ARTS, 1885. GOLD MEDAL INVENTIONS EXHIBITION, 1885.
GOLD MEDAL PARIS UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION, 1889.
DIPLOME D'HONNEUR, BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, 1897.



The above illustration represents the house in the Haymarket known by the sign of the "Harp and Flute," in which Joseph Hill carried on business as a Violin Maker, afterwards in partnership with his sons. It was next door to the Opera House, and was destroyed with the latter by fire, June 27, 1789.

W. E. HILL & SONS,
140 NEW BOND STREET,
LONDON, W.1.

Wm. EBSWORTH HILL, 1817-1895.
W. HENRY HILL, 1857-1927.
ARTHUR F. HILL, 1860-1939.
ALFRED E. HILL, 1862-1940.

A. PHILLIPS HILL.
DESMOND D'A. HILL.
ANDREW P. HILL.



TRADE MARK
The Sign of Joseph Hill.

Workshops: LONDON & HANWELL.

Address for Telegrams:
STRADIVARI, LONDON.



28 Regent Street. In this house Montzoni and Hill carried on their business.

16th August 1951

We certify that the violin sold by us to

John V. Braga Hongkong

was made by Antonio Stradivari of Cremona and bears a label dated 1718.

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This instrument, which is of viol shape without corners, has been somewhat reduced in size. It is in an excellent state of preservation and measures 14.1/16 inches in length of body.

W. Hill & Sons.

Letter from

J & A Beare

1968

S-190
**John &
 Arthur
 Beare**
J. & A. BEARE LTD
 Violin Dealers, Makers,
 Repairers, etc.
 Tel. 1449 Gerard.

179 Wardour Street,
 London, W.1.

8th October 1968

Dear Mr. Duffy,

I am sending herewith the Hill certificate of August 16th, 1951, which accompanies the guitar-shaped Stradivari violin. There is also a letter from Mr. Phillips Hill dated December 20th, 1951, in which its history is traced back to 1859.

This most interesting instrument is in quite a pure state, in spite of its shape having been altered. We presume that Chanot carried out this modification. Just in case you do not yourself have records of it, there is a viol by Lorenzo Storioni in existence, made from the same mould and patterns as the "ex Braga", and in untouched condition. This belongs to the Museum of the Paris Conservatory of Music.

All of us here hope that the new owner will be very pleased with his acquisition.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Beare

H. Duffy Esq.,
 c/o Rembert Wurlitzer Inc.,
 120 West 42nd Street,
 New York,
 N.Y. 10036,
 U.S.A.

CB/KRC

Iconography

VIOLIN ICONOGRAPHY OF
ANTONIO STRADIVARI

Herbert K. Goodkind

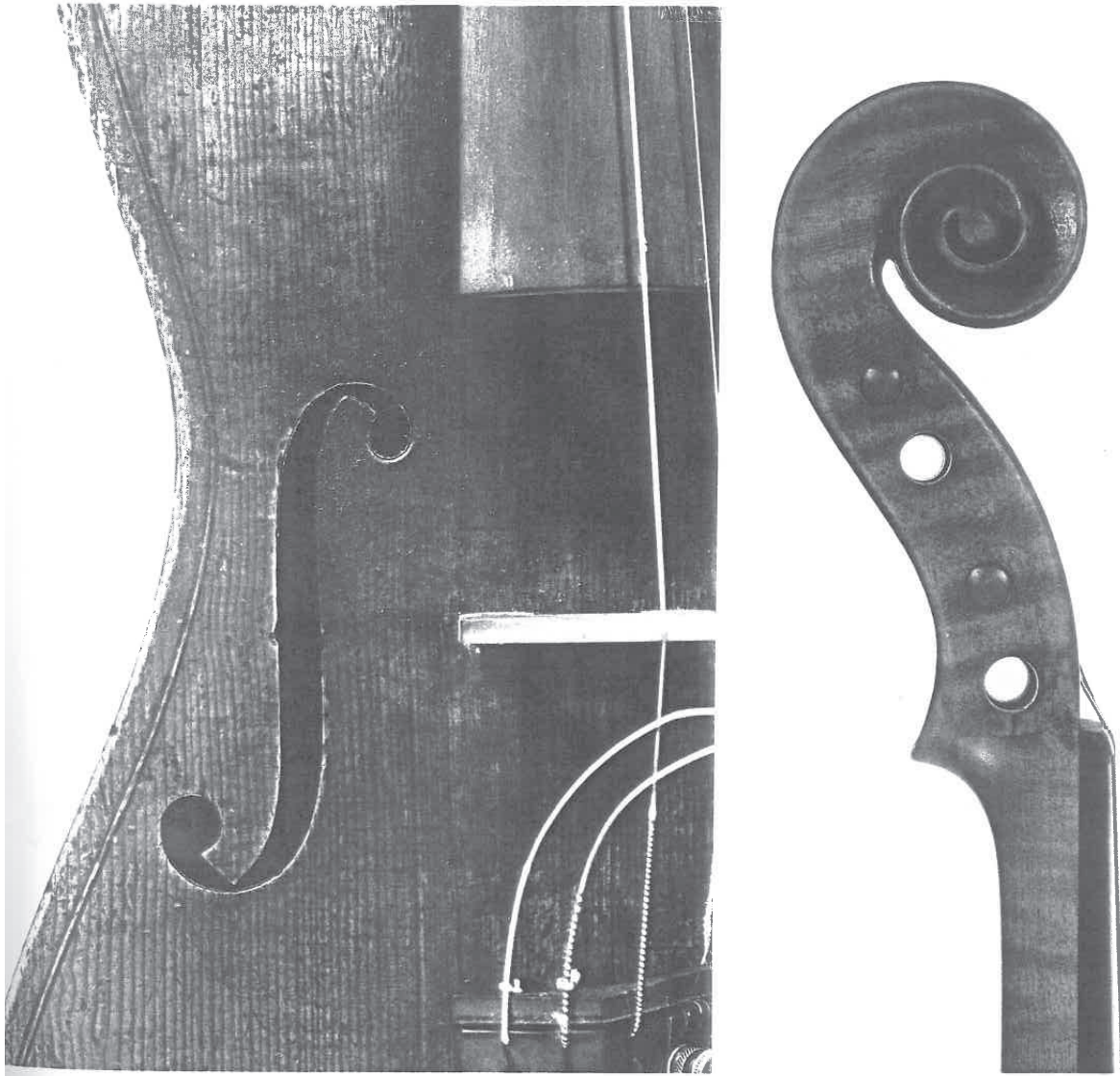
1972



81 Chanot-Chardon (label 1718) (guitar-shape)

Continuation from

p. 37



81 Chanot-Chardon (label 1718) (guitar-shape)

Analysis of form

THE VIOLIN FORMS OF ANTONIO
STRADIVARI

Stewart Pollens

1992

him, and Girolamo's son Nicolò continued the family tradition. Mid-seventeenth-century census returns reveal that numerous assistants or apprentices lived in Nicolò's household, among them Andrea Guarneri, Giacomo Gennaro, Leopoldi Todesca, Francesco Mola, Giorgio Staiber, Girolamo Segher, Bartolomeo Cristofori, and Giuseppe Stanza.¹³ From notations on labels placed in violins we learn that other makers apprenticed with Nicolò Amati as well, including Giovanni Battista Rogeri. Several of Amati's apprentices, such as Andrea Guarneri and Giacomo Gennaro, became master violin makers in Cremona, while G. B. Rogeri settled in Brescia. As for Stradivari, the only evidence concerning his training appears to be a printed label reading: "Antonius Stradiuarius Cremonensis Alumnus/Nicolaij Amati, Faciebat Anno 1666" (Antonio Stradivari of Cremona student of Nicolò Amati/Made in the year 1666).¹⁴ Another label was reported in 1816 as reading "Antonius Stradiuarius Cremonensis Alumnus Nicolai Amati Faciebat Anno 1665," though this may have been a misreading of the label above.¹⁵ Many searches through the spotty parish census returns of Cremona

have failed to verify Stradivari's association with Nicolò Amati. It may only be coincidental that in 1680 he bought and occupied a house around the corner from the aging master. The violin historian E. M. W. Paul is alleged to have discovered proof of Stradivari's apprenticeship with Francesco Ruggieri (1620–ca. 1695), however this has not been confirmed.¹⁶ Antonio Stradivari died in December of 1737 at the age of ninety-four; his last instruments, still exhibiting remarkable craftsmanship, were made in that year.

Today, approximately seven hundred drawings, patterns, forms, and templates by Stradivari are preserved in the Museo Stradivariano in Cremona. These were used to construct instruments of the violin family, as well as *viola da gamba*, *viola d'amore*, *violini pomposi*, *pochettes*, guitars, *mandole*, *mandolini*, and harps. In addition, there are numerous designs for bows, fittings, decorative inlays, and coats of arms. The existence of patterns for hinges, locks, and other case hardware indicates that Stradivari carefully attended to even the most mundane aspects of his trade.

STRADIVARI'S FORMS: DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THEIR DESIGN

A violin form is a shaped plank of wood upon which the rib structure of a violin is constructed.¹⁷ While a form is not required to make a violin (an accurate rib structure can in fact be built "in the air," using the violin back as a guide), it provides an efficient method of replicating a given shape if a series of instruments is to be made.¹⁸ Two types can be used: an inner form and an outer mold. Many nineteenth-century French copyists insisted that the outer mold provided greater accuracy, and some modern-day copyists continue to rely upon the precision that it affords.

It is not known where Stradivari learned to use the inner form. Most violin historians concur that Stradivari apprenticed with Nicolò Amati, and if so, it would be logical to conclude that Stradivari learned to use the form from that maker. While there is no concrete evidence that Nicolò Amati used an inner form, the remarkable dimensional uniformity observed in many of his instruments would suggest that he did. Count Ignazio Alessandro Cozio di Salabue, the individual who purchased Antonio Stradivari's workshop materials in the eighteenth century, wrote in 1823 that objects from the Amati shop were added to his collection of Stradivari's artifacts, though he does not identify them or their source. (See text of Count Cozio's inventory on p. 26.) The historian Vincenzo Lancetti went so far as to contend that Stradivari inherited all of Nicolò Amati's workshop tools, including his violin-making forms.¹⁹ and Andrew Dipper, the English translator and editor of Simone F. Sacconi's *I "Segreti, di Stradivari"* maintains that Stradivari's violin form marked "MB" (MS no. 1) originated in the Amati workshop.²⁰ Although a number of Nicolò Amati's violins could have been made on a form having an outline similar to the MB form, the assertion that this form was made and used by Nicolò Amati cannot be substantiated. (Nicolò Amati's "grand pattern" violins having body lengths of 351–52mm were clearly made on a larger form.)

It is indeed possible that the earliest Cremonese makers used the inner form. Inspiration for its use may have derived from the highly refined craft of lute making, which required a form and accurate templates for constructing staved pyriform bodies. Unlike the versatile *luthiers* of cities such as Venice, Padua, Bologna, Milan, and Rome, the early Cremonese makers are not recognized for having produced plucked-string instruments, though they were apparently familiar with the techniques of their construction. A few references to lute or guitar making in Cremona include an early notarial record of 1556 that mentions one "Magistro Antoni che fa i liuti" (Master Antoni who made lutes)²¹ and the will of Pietro Guarneri (b. 1655, Cremona; d. 1720, Mantua), which lists theorbos, guitars, lutes, violins, and gambas.²² Stradivari's knowledge of lute and guitar making is attested to by his paper patterns and templates for lute, *mandola*, *mandolino*, and guitar, as well as by a few surviving guitars and a *mandolino*. If Stradivari did not learn to use the inner form from Nicolò Amati or some other maker in

Cremona, his familiarity with (and perhaps formal training in) guitar or lute making may have provided him with the stimulus for employing this technique in the construction of violins.

Twenty-three wood forms used by Antonio Stradivari to construct his instruments are extant: seventeen for violins, violas, and *pochettes* are in the Museo Stradivariano in Cremona and six for cellos, *viola da gamba*, and small guitars are in the collection of the Musée Instrumental du Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. These were the master patterns used to construct the rib structures of his instruments. The surviving forms, marked with identifying letters, are listed below by museum and accession number. (Additional inscriptions on some of these forms are discussed on pp. 29–30.)

MUSEO STRADIVARIANO (MS)

- MS no. 1. violin form, marked "MB"
- MS no. 2. violin form, marked "S"
- MS no. 6. violin form, marked "P/B"
- MS no. 11. violin form, marked "T"
- MS no. 16. violin form, marked "Q"
- MS no. 21. violin form, marked "PG," dated June 4, 1689
- MS no. 28. violin form, marked "SL," dated November 9, 1691
- MS no. 33. violin form, marked "B," dated June 3, 1692
- MS no. 38. violin form, marked "B," dated December 6, 1692
- MS no. 39. violin form, marked "S," dated September 20, 1703
- MS no. 44. violin form, marked "P," dated February 25, 1705
- MS no. 49. violin form, marked "G," possible date 1708
- MS no. 54. *violino piccolo* form, ca. 1734
- MS no. 55. contralto viola form
- MS no. 153. *pochette* form
- MS no. 205. contralto viola form, marked "CV," dated 1690
- MS no. 229. tenor viola form, marked "TV," dated 1690

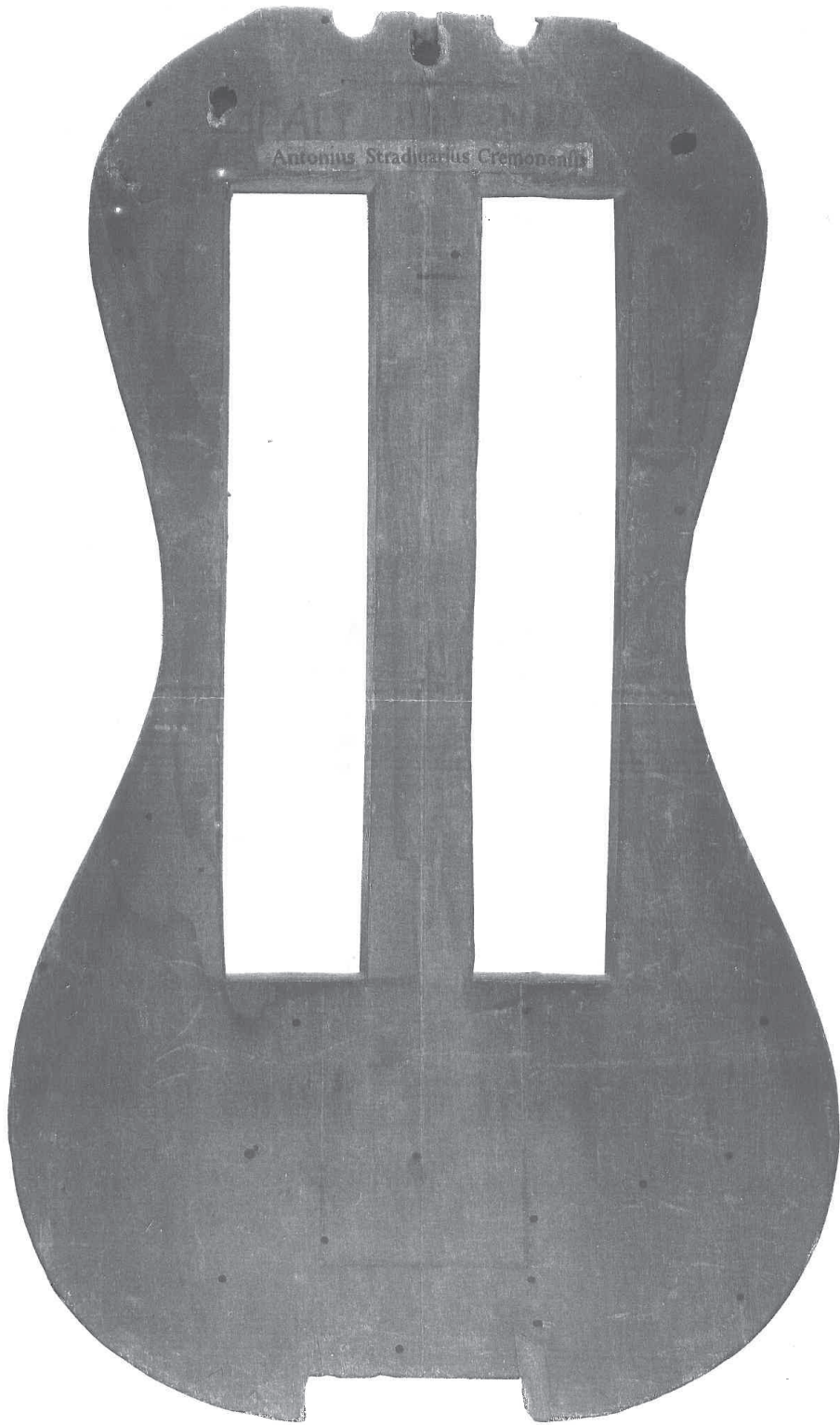
MUSÉE INSTRUMENTAL DU CONSERVATOIRE NATIONAL SUPÉRIOR DE MUSIQUE (MI)*

- MI no. E.901a. *viola da gamba* form, dated June 26, 1737
- MI no. E.901b. *violoncello piccolo* form, marked "V[]G"
- MI no. E.901c. cello form
- MI no. E.901d. guitar form, marked "G"
- MI no. E.901e. cornerless *viola d'amore*, converted from guitar form
- MI no. E.901f. guitar form

* This group of forms was originally given the accession number 196 in the 1884 Catalog of the Musée Instrumental. The letters added after the current accession number E.901 have been assigned here for clarity.

Continuation from

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Notable recordings

Joshua Bell



Facsimile of certificate

J & A Beare

London

2019

**John
& Arthur
Beare**

C E R T I F I C A T E
O F A U T H E N T I C I T Y

Violin dealers, makers, repairers 30 Queen Anne Street, London W1G 8HX Established in 1892

JAB 6732

We Certify that the violin purchased from us by, is, in our judgement, a fine old Italian instrument, the work of the celebrated Antonio Stradivari of Cremona, as indicated by the label it bears. It dates from c. 1726-28.

Description The back in two pieces of maple cut between the slab and the quarter, with some flames of narrow width ascending slightly from the centre joint; the sides of similar wood; the scroll, a very fine copy probably made by George Chanot, with broader flame; the table in two pieces of spruce with medium grain at the centre, broadening towards the flanks; the varnish of an orange-brown colour on a golden ground. The front's interior bears a "W.E. Hill" stamp in the upper block.

This violin, of viol shape without corners and somehow modified in form, is known as "Braga". It is a fine and unique example of the maker's work and is in an excellent state of preservation. It measures 35.7 cm in length of body, with widths of 16.4 cm and 20.0 cm.

ABOUT JOHN & ARTHUR BEARE

Fine Violins Since 1892

Over the last 125 years, J & A Beare has built a deserved reputation as the world's most respected violin dealer, expert and restorer. They dedicate themselves to the most important task of all: preserving our shared heritage of fine instruments for generations to come.

Buying and selling violins, violas, cellos and bows of the highest quality, their expertise in fine instruments and restoration earned Beare's the Queen's Award for Enterprise, making them the only fine art business ever to receive the award. J & A Beare offers a particular specialisation in instruments from the pre-eminent Italian schools of the 17th and 18th centuries, including those by Amati, Bergonzi, Guarneri del Gesù and of course, Stradivari.

Their unrivalled team of specialists is trusted by musicians, collectors and investors around the world, with many of the world's leading performers, both past and present, having been customers of Beare's. Among them are: Joshua Bell, Janine Jansen, Kyung Wha Chung, Vadim Repin, Julia Fischer, Nigel Kennedy, Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Mischa Elman, Yehudi Menuhin, Nathan Milstein, Isaac Stern, Lynn Harrell, Steven Isserlis, Ralph Kirshbaum, Yo-Yo Ma, Heinrich Schiff, Pierre Fournier, Jacqueline du Pré and Mstislav Rostropovich.

As well as being Honorary Advisors to the Royal Society of Musicians, Beare's has a partnership with the Kronberg Academy and is the official valuer of the Royal Academy of Music's instrument collection. In 2013 the company sponsored the Ashmolean Museum's Stradivari Exhibition and in 2016 it was a principal sponsor of the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition in London. Beare's is also partners with the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra and through their loans of the greatest works of Stradivari and Guarneri, Beare's hopes to bring joy to audiences by joining the three elements of superlative compositions, the most talented players and the work of the greatest craftsmen who ever lived.

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"I love entering the old-world atmosphere of Beare's, and especially visiting the workshops upstairs, with their feeling of craftsmen painstakingly breathing new life into old instruments. I have been frequently in the shop since I was a teenager (so for a few years at least) and continue to bother them on a regular basis. It's always a pleasure (for me)!" — Steven Isserlis



"I have called J & A Beare my 'violin doctor' for many years now and I am so grateful for everything they have done to make my 'vocal cords' one of a kind. I am proud to be a friend of this established firm. Thank you to Simon, Steven and everyone at Beare's!" — Vadim Repin

"About 3 years ago I came into Beare's shop for the very first time. It was very inspiring and a beginning of a wonderful journey. I have tried some wonderful instruments here. It actually opened my eyes." — Janine Jansen

"I love this place, it's my violin home in London. I owe this shop a lot for matchmaking me with the Strad." — Joshua Bell

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