

# Tariso

Fine Instrument & Bow Highlights



*The 'Berkova'*  
Guadagnini of 1755

APRIL 2013 NEW YORK

Fine instruments & bows

[tarisio.com](http://tarisio.com)





## *The 'Berkova'* Guadagnini of 1755

**More than any other violinmaker of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Giovanni**

**Battista Guadagnini led an itinerant career.** Over a span of nearly fifty years his labels place him in Piacenza, Milan, Cremona, Parma and finally Turin. During each of these periods his work has a unique and distinct style and the progression from one city to the next tells a colorful tale of one of the most talented and most prolific makers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The city of Milan was by far the largest and most cosmopolitan of the cities in which Guadagnini worked. Since the mid 17th century there had been an active community of violinmakers led first by the Grancino family and later by the Testores, Lavazzas and others. By the time Guadagnini arrived in Milan in the autumn of 1749, however, the Milanese violinmaking tradition appears to have entered a precipitous decline. The Grancino workshop was no longer active; the two Testore brothers Carlo Antonio and Paolo Antonio were making mostly commercial instruments, often from cheaper materials and without purfling and linings; Ferdinando Alberti appears to have ceased making instruments altogether; and Giovanni Francesco Leonporri had recently left for Rome and l'Aquila. The only work of some quality that was being done in Milan was by Carlo Ferdinando Landolfi, who had arrived from Baveno in Piedmont at around the same time as Guadagnini.

In comparison to Milanese instruments from the years preceding 1749, Guadagnini's work was very different: his model was wider, his wood selection finer and his varnish more colorful and lustrous. It's notable that Guadagnini's instruments during this period were highly individual and neither conformed to the local Milanese standards nor adapted to the Cremonese paradigm. Details now essential to the character of Guadagnini's work,



*Sale of the Gillott collection, April 1872*

like the distinctive shape and placement of soundholes, must have seemed unusual and yet highly alluring to the local Milanese.

Over one hundred violins and about half a dozen cellos are attributed to Guadagnini's Milan period. It's likely that Guadagnini enjoyed patronage from local musical circles, thanks in part to the endorsement of the brothers Carlo and Paolo Ferrari, his patrons from Piacenza who were now highly influential in the Milanese musical establishment. But even with the backing of prominent musicians his apparent success as a new arrival in a large city must in large part be attributed to the quality and freshness of his making.

The 'Berkova' is a typical example of Guadagnini's fine Milanese work. Its broad model, low arch and flat edges and corners are perfect for a powerful tone. The wood for the back, ribs and head is of fine even grained spruce. The elegant and characteristic styling of the wide-set soundholes with almond-shaped lower lobes is typical of this period and the plentiful evidence of scribelines and compass points shows a brisk, purposeful and unfussy working style. The varnish

of the 'Berkova' is a beautiful and deep, yet transparent, reddish-brown and survives largely undisturbed on this well-preserved violin.

Through violins such as this it is easy to see why successive generations of makers, collectors and players have prized so highly the work of Guadagnini and made them among the most sought-after by soloists of yesterday and today.

### **Provenance**

The first known owner of the 'Berkova' Guadagnini was Joseph Gillott, who made his fortune producing steel pen nibs in Birmingham in the early 19th century. As Gillott's business expanded in the 1830s, his attentions turned first to art, famously purchasing the entire contents of J. M. W. Turner's studio on one visit to London. Following an exchange with the poet Edwin Atherstone in 1848, he began collecting old violins, despite a complete lack of musical knowledge or skills.

Gillott bought old violins wherever and however he could, often through trades rather than by exchanging cash. In 1849 he swapped sixty paintings to acquire nine violins from the London dealer John Hart, and at other times he used diamonds and other precious stones to seal a deal.

When Gillott died in 1872, George Hart, the son of John, was sent to Birmingham to catalogue Gillott's collection of violins. Throughout Gillott's pen-making factory he found room after room piled high with instruments of all types. Of his collection, 140 lots were brought to London where they formed arguably the most important auction of the 19th

century, lasting four days and earning a total of £4,195.

The 'Berkova', bought at the sale by George Hart, wasn't seen again for nearly twenty years, but in 1889 Hart sold the violin to Albert Mitchell. The transaction involved the exchange of "a Nicholas Lupot (large model), a fine Grancino, and a sum of money, I have forgotten how much", the records providing a small glimpse of the esteem that the market already held for Guadagnini's work by the end of the 19th century. Eventually the 'Berkova' reached America where in 1919 it was sold by the Boston violinmaker, Walter S. Goss, to the collector-dealer Nathan Posner of The Bronx.

Posner later sold the violin to Hilda Berkowitz for the use of her daughter Frances, a child-prodigy in Los Angeles. Born in 1906, Frances Berkowitz would later change her name to Frances Berkova, following a fashion for Russian names amongst rising musical stars. She studied with Leopold Auer and Carl Flesch, before embarking - Guadagnini



in hand - on concert tours of Europe and America in which she established her reputation as a soloist. After her New York debut on November 24, 1926 she was praised by the Herald Tribune as "the most promising violinist of a decade."

After a concert in California in 1928, Berkova had a chance encounter with a young fan that would have a special significance nearly half a century later. After playing the Conus Concerto with the Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles, Berkova signed a photograph for a thirteen year old girl named Davida Jackson, "To little Davida, wishing her much success." Nearly half a century later, in 1972 this same Davida Jackson bought Berkova's 1755 Guadagnini violin. It has remained in her family ever since and is now being sold by her heirs.

### **Bidding**

Bidding is conducted online at [tarisio.com](https://tarisio.com) on May 2, 2013. Phone bidding is encouraged at +1.212.307.7224. Preregistration is required 24 hours before the sale.

*Please contact Carlos Tome at [ctome@tarisio.com](mailto:ctome@tarisio.com) or +1.800.814.4188 to inquire about viewing appointments. We welcome your inquiries.*

*“To little Davida, wishing her much success.’ Decades later the violin became hers when she bought it from Berkova.”*

*Frances Berkova*





**A FINE ITALIAN VIOLIN BY GIOVANNI BATTISTA GUADAGNINI, MILAN, 1755**

Labeled, "Johannes Baptista Guadagnini, centinus fecit Mediolani, 1755." LOB 35.5 cm

*\* Sold with an original duplicate-certificate and a guarantee from Hart & Son, London (April 9, 1889).*

**\$500,000-800,000**

**A FINE ITALIAN VIOLIN BY CARLO FERDINANDO LANDOLFI, MILAN, 1772**

Labeled, "Carlo Ferdinando Landolfi, nella Contrada di Santa Margarita, al Segno della Sirena, Milano 1772." LOB 35.5 cm

*\* Sold with photocopy certificates from W.E. Hill & Sons, London (June 1, 1955) and William Moennig & Son, Philadelphia (February 5, 1988).*

**\$220,000-350,000**

**A FINE FRENCH VIOLIN BY JEAN BAPTISTE VUILLAUME, PARIS, 1856**

Labeled, "Jean Baptiste Vuillaume à Paris, Rue Croix des Petits Champs." Inscribed to the center inside back, and below the upper block "2188." Also bearing the maker's signature to the upper treble inside back. LOB 35.8 cm

*\* Sold with a certificate from Bernard Millant, Paris (April 19, 1996).*

**\$140,000-200,000**

**A GOOD ITALIAN VIOLIN BY GIOFREDO CAPPÀ, SALUZZO, c. 1680**

Labeled, "Amati..." LOB 35.3 cm

**\$80,000-120,000**





A GOOD ITALIAN CELLO BY MARINO CAPICCHIONI, RIMINI, 1971  
Labeled, "Marinus Capicchioni, Fecit Arimini, A.D 1971." LOB 75.7 cm  
\$55,000-85,000



A FINE ENGLISH CELLO BY THOMAS DODD, LONDON, c. 1790  
Labeled, "T. Dodd, New Street, Covent Garden." LOB 74.5 cm  
*\* Sold with a certificate and correspondence from William Moennig & Son, Philadelphia (November 18, 1960).*  
\$50,000-80,000



A FINE AND INTERESTING CELLO, c. 1800  
Labeled, "Vincenzo Ruger detto il Per, in Cremona, 169.." LOB 76.3 cm  
\$40,000-60,000



A GOOD FRENCH VIOLA BY LEOPOLD RENAUDIN, PARIS, 1778  
Labeled, "Aux Amateurs Renaudin Luthier, fait toutes sortes d'Instruments rue St. Honoré près l'Opera Paris 1778." Branded to the back, "RENAUDIN A PARIS."  
*\* Sold with a certificate from Jean-Jacques Rampal, Paris.*  
\$25,000-40,000





A GOOD FRENCH VIOLIN BOW  
BY NICOLAS MALINE

Stamped, "Vuillaume a Paris."  
Silver mounted. 61.5 grams

*\* Sold with a certificate from  
Paul Childs, Montrose.*

\$25,000-40,000

A GOOD FRENCH VIOLIN BOW  
BY CHARLES PECCATTE

Stamped, "Peccatte."  
Silver mounted. 58.5 grams

*\* Sold with a certificate from Kenneth Warren  
& Son, Chicago (December 23, 2009). Also  
pictured as bow #137 in "The Bowmakers  
of the Peccatte Family" by Paul Childs, 1996,  
pg. 216-217*

\$20,000-30,000

A GOOD FRENCH VIOLIN BOW  
BY EUGENE SARTORY

Stamped, "E. Sartory a Paris."  
Silver mounted. 58.0 grams

*\* Sold with a certificate from  
Paul Childs, Montrose.*

\$15,000-22,000

A GOOD FRENCH VIOLIN BOW  
BY EMILE AUGUSTE OUCHARD

Stamped, "Emile Ouchard."  
Silver mounted. 62.5 grams

*\* Sold with a certificate from  
Isaac Salchow, New York.*

\$10,000-15,000

A GOOD FRENCH VIOLIN BOW  
BY JEAN JOSEPH MARTIN

Stamped, "J. Guarini".  
Silver mounted. 60.0 grams

\$12,000-18,000

A GOOD ENGLISH VIOLA BOW  
BY JAMES TUBBS

Faintly stamped.  
Silver mounted. 67.0 grams

\$10,000-15,000

A GOOD FRENCH VIOLA BOW  
BY LOUIS GILLET

Stamped, "E. Sartory a Paris."  
Silver mounted. 74.0 grams

*\* Sold with a certificate from  
Yung Chin, New York.*

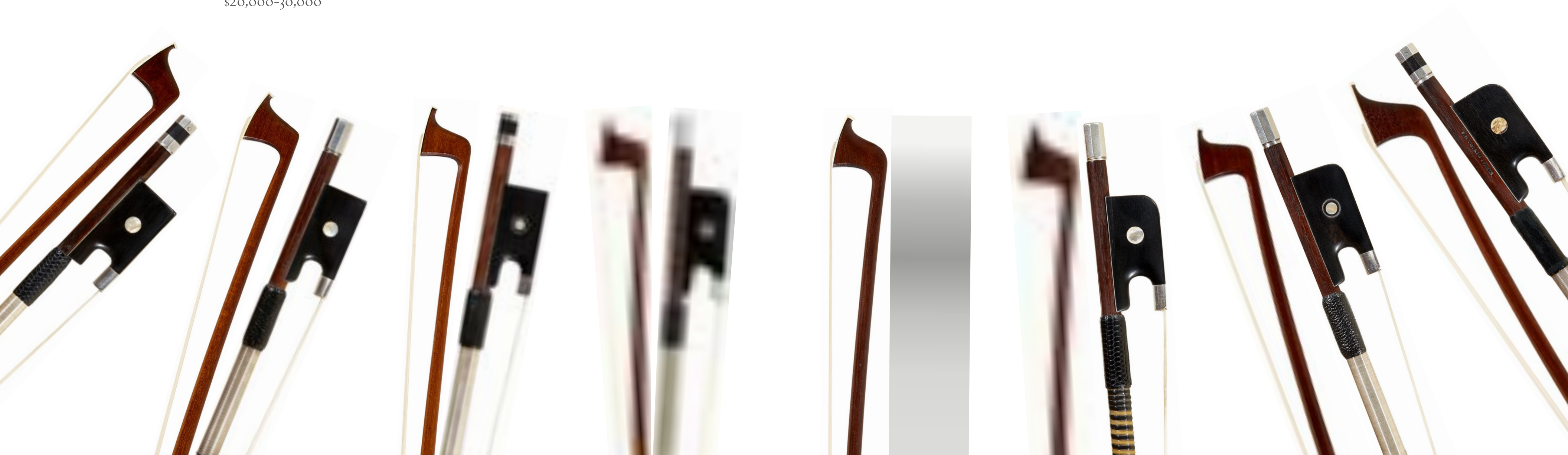
\$8,000-12,000

A GOOD FRENCH CELLO BOW  
BY FRANÇOIS NICOLAS VOIRIN

Stamped, "F. N. Voirin à Paris."  
Silver mounted. 75.0 grams

*\* Sold with a certificate from  
Isaac Salchow, New York.*

\$6,000-9,000







A GOOD ITALIAN  
VIOLIN BY VINCENZO  
POSTIGLIONE,  
NAPLES, 1903  
\$30,000-50,000



A GOOD CONTEMPORARY  
AMERICAN VIOLIN BY  
SAMUEL ZYGMUNTOWICZ,  
NEW YORK, 2006  
\$35,000-55,000



A FINE BELGIAN VIOLIN  
BY JEAN HYACINTHE  
ROTTENBURGH,  
BRUSSELS, 1751  
\$15,000-22,000



A FINE ITALIAN VIOLIN  
BY CARLO FERDINANDO  
LANDOLFI, MILAN, 1753  
\$100,000-150,000

A GOOD ITALIAN VIOLIN FROM  
THE WORKSHOP OF LEANDRO  
BISIACH, MILAN, 1925  
\$20,000-30,000



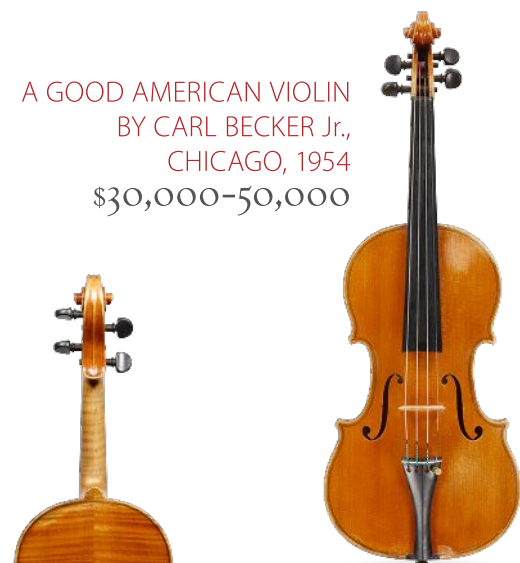
AN ITALIAN VIOLIN  
BY IGINIO SDERCI,  
FLORENCE, 1941  
\$15,000-\$22,000



A GOOD FRENCH VIOLIN  
BY PAUL BAILLY,  
LONDON, c. 1890  
\$18,000-25,000



A GOOD ENGLISH VIOLIN  
BY THE VOLLER BROTHERS,  
LONDON, 1897  
\$30,000-50,000



A GOOD AMERICAN VIOLIN  
BY CARL BECKER Jr.,  
CHICAGO, 1954  
\$30,000-50,000



A FINE AMERICAN VIOLIN  
BY CARL BECKER Sr.,  
CHICAGO, 1925  
\$35,000-55,000



AN ITALIAN VIOLIN  
BY LORENZO STORIONI,  
CREMONA, c. 1790  
\$60,000-90,000



A GOOD ITALIAN VIOLIN  
BY VITTORIO BELLAROSA,  
NAPLES, 1935  
\$30,000-50,000



A GOOD VIOLIN  
MADE FOR THE FIRM  
OF W.E. HILL & SONS,  
LONDON, 1928  
\$10,000-15,000





# April 2013 New York

Fine Instruments & Bows

Online April 1  
Sale Ends May 1&2



## Full catalog

April 1–May 2 New York • Public Viewing  
Tarisio  
244 West 54<sup>th</sup> Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Weekdays 10am–6pm

## Highlights • select lots only

April 25 & 26 Los Angeles • The Colburn School, Mayman Hall  
200 South Grand Avenue  
Thursday 9am–4pm  
Friday 9am–3pm

April 27 Boston • The Four Seasons  
200 Boylston Street  
Saturday 10am–4pm  
*\*NB new venue*

Download a complete PDF catalog at  
✦ [tarisio.com/catalogs/tarisio\\_april\\_2013\\_new\\_york.pdf](http://tarisio.com/catalogs/tarisio_april_2013_new_york.pdf)

Find us on   

For more information, please call 1.800.814.4188  
or email [info.newyork@tarisio.com](mailto:info.newyork@tarisio.com)

