

# Tarisio

FINE INSTRUMENTS & BOWS

Highlight Brochure



Featuring a fine violin by Giovanni Francesco Pressenda

and other highlights by Dall'Aglio, D'Espine, Gagliano, Pedrazzini, Sartory, Testore, Tourte, Vuillaume, and more

MAY 2014 NEW YORK

Fine Instruments & Bows

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wo of the finest Italian violin makers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were Giovanni Francesco Pressenda and Alexandre D'Espine. While living as contemporaries and even as neighbors, they were quite distinct in their approaches to their crafts, and yet they developed similar styles and reputations in the violin world as a whole.

Pressenda, the son of an itinerant farm worker, was born in the countryside in 1777. He neither trained in Cremona nor was highly educated. He was, however, highly talented and shrewd about opportunities. He commenced violin making only after his arrival in Turin in the 1810s, working for Nicolas Lete-Pillement, a merchant entrepreneur with far-flung business ventures. When Lete-Pillement died in 1819, Pressenda, the only Italian on staff, stepped into the breach and took over the enterprise. His imagination and acumen made him, by 1829, the finest and most acclaimed luthier of his day.

D'Espine, on the other hand, was from an old Savoyard noble family. Born near Geneva in 1782, he trained as a dentist in Paris, coming to Turin



Pressenda

D'Espine

D'Espine, on the other hand, made up in technical skill what he lacked in experience, for he no doubt had little time for his hobby. As with other makers of few instruments, his art always defies exact categorization. His style never entirely convinces as he had probably never finalized his ideas. This experimentation has led to major misunderstandings about his work. They are always beautifully crafted and acoustically fine, but his variability has made his name a depository for many nameless Turin works.

A FINE AND RARE ITALIAN VIOLIN BY ALESSANDRO D'ESPINE, TURIN, 1822 Labeled, "A D'Espine Hieronymi

Guarnerii Josephi Nep., Cremonen Discipulus Taurini fecit, A. 1822 IHS."

\* Sold with a certificate from Rembert Wurlitzer, New York (March 24, 1959).

\$70,000-100,000

The 1843 Pressenda is an excellent example of the maker in his final decades. Its model, with its distinctive f-holes and black edging on corners and scroll, its scroll of relatively small proportions, its splendid and eye-catching woods, and its rich red varnish speak volumes about why players have gravitated towards his violins for almost two centuries.

D'Espine's 1823 violin, on the other hand, starts from a similar place but comes to very different ends. Impeccably neat and precise, it has a more rigid and rectangular style, notable in the broad pegbox with narrow volutes, the upright stance of both 'f's and scroll, and the broad upper bouts, which in lesser hands would be stiff and ordinary. He too used fine

# Turin

by Philip J. Kass

woods, and his varnish is a bit lighter and thinner in character – perhaps a sign that Gaetano Guadagnini II was still assisting him in varnishing.

Both makers used external forms, making pinning superfluous, but there is a big difference between the way they adopted this Cremonese technique. Pressenda's were large and inserted after the purfling was set; note how the purfling itself has bent around it. D'Espine's, on the other hand, are tiny, centered, and set well in from the purfling, an echo, rather than an expression, of Cremona's tradition. **T** 

# Two Makers of

around 1815. His fascination with violin making developed around that time. In 1823 D'Espine was appointed Surgeon Dentist to His Majesty, a title he retained until 1831. In 1829, still sporadically making violins, he entered an exposition, where he was described as a pupil of Pressenda. From this grew a legend of his having been one of the great figures, and from that grew a lot of misunderstanding about the nature of his work.

Pressenda developed his own patterns, based largely on the standard Mirecourt Stradivari model, but imbued them with his own personal touches in the f-holes, scroll, varnish, edging and purfling. His 'f's, a hybrid Stradivari—Guarneri style, are particularly inspired. He always made his work unique and instantly recognizable. His employees' own work almost always lacks that special Pressenda character.







Labeled, "Jean Baptiste Vuillaume à Paris, rue Croix des Petits Champs." LOB 35.6 cm \*Sold with a dendrochronology report from Peter Ratcliff (Apr 01, 2014) which dates the youngest ring of the top at 1750. Written report available for purchase upon request. \$120,000–180,000

AN ITALIAN VIOLIN BY NICOLO GAGLIANO, NAPLES, c. 1775

Labeled, "Nicolaus Gagliano Filius Alexandri fecit, Neap., 1785." LOB 35.7 cm

\* Sold with a dendrochronology report from Peter Ratcliff (Apr 01, 2014) which dates the youngest ring of bass and treble sides as respectively 1765 and 1762. Written report available for purchase upon request.

\$150,000-220,000



A GOOD ITALIAN VIOLIN BY GIUSEPPE DALL'AGLIO, MANTUA, c.1830 LOB 35.6 cm \$90,000-130,000

A GOOD AND RARE ITALIAN VIOLIN BY REYNALDO UNGARINI, FABRIANO, 1806 Labeled, "Raynaldus Ungarini, Fabrianensis Antonii filius de Stradivarii Schola perfecit, Anno 1806." LOB 35.4 cm

\$60,000-90,000





#### A FINE AND RARE FRENCH VIOLIN BOW BY CLAUDE CHARLES NICOLAS HUSSON

Unstamped. Round stick. Silver mounted. 60.0 grams

\* Sold with a certificate from Isaac Salchow, New York (February 07, 2014).

\$20,000-30,000

#### A FINE AND RARE ENGLISH VIOLIN BOW BY JAMES TUBBS, c. 1860

Unstamped. Ivory and engravedgold mounted. 56.0 grams

\* Sold with a certificate from Paul Childs, Montrose (October 14, 2013).

\$20,000-30,000

#### A GOOD FRENCH VIOLIN BOW BY EUGENE SARTORY

Stamped, "E. Sartory a Paris." Round stick. Silver mounted. 60.0 grams.

\* Sold with a certificate from Paul Childs, Montrose (October 29, 2009).

\$18,000-25,000

#### A FINE FRENCH VIOLIN BOW BY FRANÇOIS XAVIER TOURTE

Stamped inauthentically, "Jas Tubbs." Round stick. The silver mounted frog and button modern replacements in the style of Tourte. Sold with additional fittings in the style of Tubbs. 54.5 grams

\* Sold with a certificate from Isaac Salchow, New York (March 05, 2014) and Paul Childs, Montrose (February 26, 2014).

\$10,000-15,000

ex-Lillian Fuchs

#### A GOOD ENGLISH VIOLA BOW BY JOHN KEW DODD

Stamped, "Dodd." Round stick. Silver mounted. 70.0 grams

\* Sold with a letter certificate from Robert Ames (January 30, 2012).

\$10,000-15,000



#### A GOOD FRENCH VIOLA BOW BY EUGENE SARTORY

Stamped, "E. Sartory a Paris." Round stick. Silver mounted. 72.5 grams

\$30,000-50,000

#### A GOOD FRENCH CELLO BOW BY FRANÇOIS NICOLAS VOIRIN

Stamped, "Gand & Bernardel Fres." Round stick. Silver mounted. 79.5 grams

\$12,000-15,000

#### A GOOD FRENCH CELLO BOW BY CHARLES PECCATTE

Stamped to both sides of the stick, "Peccatte."

Round stick. Silver mounted. The button not original. 76.0 grams

\$20,000-30,000











### Curtin & Alf • Guarneri

n 1985, when Gregg Alf and I moved to Ann Arbor and established Curtin & Alf, Ruggiero Ricci was teaching violin at the University of Michigan. He lived with his wife, Julia, in a large home on the Huron River, and not long after we met, he invited us over for a visit. Somewhat in awe of one of the greatest players of the 20th century, we sat listening on the couch as he explained an idea for a bow with a moveable weight on its shaft. The he stopped and said with complete sincerity, "I hope I'm not taking too much of your time?" No. We would have listened all day. In truth, Ricci loved everything to do with violins, old and new. He was a positive force in the lives of many makers, and certainly helped Gregg and me in many ways over the years.

Ricci commissioned a copy of the 'Huberman' Guarneri that year, and later his Lorenzo Storioni. When in 1993 he asked for another violin, we suggested basing it on the 'Haddock' Guarneri 'del Gesù' of 1734. Made available by its then-owner, David Fulton, the 'Haddock' has compact dimensions (350mm body length), graceful f-holes and beautifully conceived archings. Studying the instrument was another education in classical violin making.

Though we later worked on two detailed copies of the 'Haddock', the instrument for Ricci was freely done. It adheres to the measurements of the original but features strongly flamed maple and somewhat widergrained spruce that we selected from a log with remarkable acoustical characteristics. Though there was no attempt at the visual fidelity of our 'Huberman' copy, we did feel we'd captured the tonal depth and brilliance of the original.

Joseph Curtin

A copy of the 'Haddock' Guarneri of c. 1734 made especially for Ruggiero Ricci

A FINE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN VIOLIN BY JOSEPH CURTIN & GREGG ALF, ANN ARBOR, 1994

\$30,000-50,000

## Zygmuntowicz • Amati

ome of the greatest old violas began as large tenore instruments, which were later reduced for easier playability; a very effective strategy to fit a big viola sound into a manageable instrument, and a design principle that I have followed in my own violas.

The model for this instrument came about when in the early 1990s the violist Walter Trampler asked me to make a copy of his c. 1566 Andrea Amati. I had long admired this handsome, decorated Amati, with its remarkable dark sonority, and been tempted to use it as a model. The original tenore proportions remain apparent in its generous sculptural curves, and it is a magnificent specimen, even recut to its current size of 17 7/16" (443mm). However, I felt that it would be difficult to make an effective exact copy. With Trampler's support, I decided instead to make a new interpretation with its own internal logic.

To do this I reduced the body length on my new design from 17 7/16" to 17" (432mm) and slightly reduced the bout width to increase clearance, especially on the upper bout, which I made more sloped to give easier access to the high positions. When the original Amati had been cut down, the upper and lower bouts had been reduced, leaving the middle bouts untouched. Shortening the middle bouts on the new model and moving the f-holes up a bit helped restore the proportions, with the additional benefit of a slightly shortened string length. I slightly redrew the outline curves to improve the unity of the overall design and I made an undistorted arch and channel in the style of Amati for the top and back.

Tonally this new viola was reminiscent of the original, with a full and expansive sound. While not as dark as the original, it gained considerable focus and ease of speaking. The reduction in proportion made the instrument much more playable, and it became Mr Trampler's principal instrument in his later years. In homage to the original Amati, this new viola was decorated with an inscription on the ribs in gold leaf.

The 1999 instrument presented here was built on the same model as the Trampler viola. Unlike Trampler's instrument it is not decorated, but it shares the same concept: part copy of the Amati as it is now, part restoration to Amati's original style, and part my idea of what a viola should be. The design experience led me to try other ideas and to combine familiar elements in new ways, and I have used a similar process in other instruments that I have designed. At its best Amodified copy of the

similar process in other instruments that I have designed. At its best, the informed emulation of classic style can focus, rather than inhibit, the maker's creativity.

Samuel Zygmuntowicz



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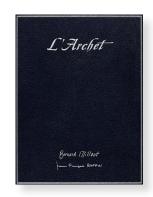
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