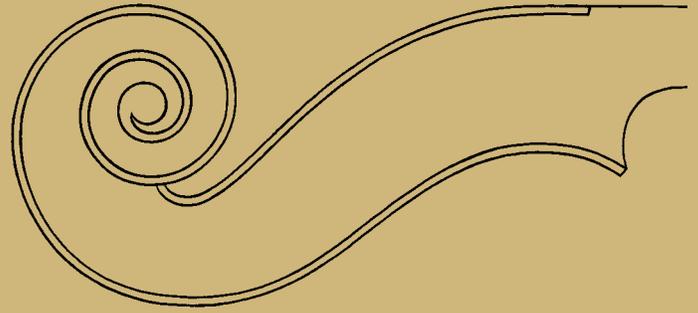


# LaVoce

of CLAIRE GIVENS VIOLINS, INC.

AUTUMN 2005

*LaVoce is the newsletter of Claire Givens Violins, Inc. It is part of a concerted and continuing commitment to keep our customers informed.*



} PAGE 05:

We are looking forward to the arrival of the 8th Annual Cremona Exhibition with at least 40 violins, violas and cellos from top-notch contemporary Cremonese makers. The exhibit instruments will be in our shop for three weeks this year starting Saturday, October 15th through Saturday, November 5th, during our standard business hours. Prices for violins range from \$4,800-\$16,000; violas from \$12,000-\$20,000; and cellos from \$23,000-\$28,000.

PAGE 04:

“Secrets, Lives and Violins of the Great Cremona Makers 1505-1744” was the name of the conference that Claire Givens and Andrew Dipper organized for the National Music Museum in July. It was a very successful historical gathering of violin professionals and enthusiasts. Many aspects of this period of violin making were clarified and some discoveries were made as well.

PAGE 02:

In this issue of LaVoce, Andrew Dipper gives us a tour of some of the violins that you might want to try out in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 price range. All of our instruments and bows are chosen by our staff of professionally trained master violinmakers. We follow a special process and apply the most demanding criteria to ensure quality, dependability and tone. In a sometimes perplexing and convoluted market place, our customers have come to rely on us to provide constancy, choice and competitive pricing.

## VIOLINS: \$5,000 - \$10,000

BY ANDREW DIPPER

### 20TH CENTURY MARKNEUKIRCHEN

Markneukirchen is a small town perched on the border between Germany and Czechoslovakia in the area called Upper Vogtland. Violin making has been a tradition there since at least 1596. Its history is replete with famous violin maker's family names like Hammig, Brückner, Ficker, Gläsel, Goetz, Gutter, Hamm, Heberlein, Kessler, Meinel, Nürnburger, Pffretzschner, Reichel, Roth, Schuster and Wurlitzer. The great fount of expertise in the town has led to a situation in which ordinary talent in violin making developed into the formation of formidable expertise. Givens Violins has been watching the market in early 20th century Markneukirchen violins over the last ten years, and whenever we see violins that fit our demanding standards we have tried to purchase them. Currently we have six instruments that represent the best that this school of making has to offer, these include violins by **Ernst Heinrich Roth** (1923, 1926 and 1956), **Eugene Meinel** (1920), **Heinrich Th. Heberlein** (1914) and **Heinrich Heberlein, Jr.** (1910).

The instruments are characterized by extremely precise workmanship, very high quality back, rib and scroll wood with deep flame and pretty figure. The best examples have even and regular growth in the wood of the bellies. They are certainly examples of Germany's finest design work. The recent improvements in string design have opened up new acoustic territory for these instruments and they yield a sound that is both complex and powerful with plenty of reserve for orchestral playing.

The Markneukirchen tradition is now being perfected further by the third generation of the Roth family. We have had the privilege of meeting and working directly with **Ernst Heinrich Roth, III** in Germany and currently have two of his violins and a viola for purchase.

Vogtland is also famous for its Christmas Stollen, a kind of cake made with flour, yeast, rum, almonds, lemon and spices which goes perfectly with coffee made from "Estate grown extra fancy Kona beans". We recommend all three together!

### GIOVANNI LONGIARU, NEW YORK, 1922

**Giovanni Longiaru** was born in Pozzale, near Pieve di Cadore, just north of Venice, Italy. In 1886, he had his debut as a Sculptor in Venice and then enrolled at the "B Marcello Venice Royal Conservatory" to study violin playing. On graduation he is reported to have studied violin making in Cremona. This is a very troubled period of Italian history and has been dealt with beautifully in film; particularly in Bernardo Bertolucci's 1976 film

Violin by Caressa and Français,  
Paris c. 1912 (workshop)



“1900” which is set in Cremona. In 1904, along with countless other Italians, Longiaru immigrated to New York, which then had an Italian population larger than Naples or Venice. Here, judging by various reports and the quality of his work, he worked with the Cremonese violin maker *Giugliamo V Pozzoni* (Brooklyn) and eventually surpassed his teacher to become the repairman of choice to the New York conservatoire and the various orchestras of the City. He also worked on the instruments of *Ysaye* and *Sarasate* when they were in town. His violin model is quite personal and has a New World character, similar in a way to the Italian makers who immigrated to Argentina. His varnish is quite malleable in the Italian style and he sometimes used Adirondack spruce for the bellies of his violins, the very same material that the Steinway Company was then using for its pianos. In fact, Leonard Bernstein’s piano sound typifies the kind of colorful, very powerful and even quality of sound that these great violins produce.

#### **PERRY DANIELS, MINNEAPOLIS, 2000**

**Perry Daniels** is a very fine violin maker from Minnesota and is featured in the book *Violin & Bow Makers of Minnesota*. Perry worked in Winchester, England with the well known English maker *Paul Bickle*. On his return to the U.S.A., Perry continued to hone his talents and has become one of the best makers in the state, gaining a gold medal at the Violin Society of America competition in 1996. He is known for the exacting precision of his work and the fine choice of materials. There is nothing lacking in the style or execution of his violins and they have a strong clean and clear sound. Perry is an expert in many things including native American birds and there is a natural and sweet quality to his instruments that comes, perhaps, from his love of nature.

#### **PAUL BISCH, MIRECOURT, 1927 (WORKSHOP)**

*Bisch* was born in Mirecourt in 1893. He was the pupil of *L. Mougenot* and worked in the shop of *Caressa and Français* in Paris. In 1919, he set up shop in his hometown and made violins based on the *Gand* model. He won a gold medal in the exhibition “Artisanal” in Paris in 1927 and another in the violin making section of the industrial exhibition in Nice in 1929. This was the year that the famous picture of *Albert Einstein* playing the violin was taken. There must have been some genius to spare that year. *Bisch*’s violins are made with all the subtlety and skill that long experience provides. The wood choice on our violin is superb and the instrument has none of the heavy quality normally associated with the commercial Mirecourt production. The varnish too is very high quality, a beautiful scintillating golden orange, quite

lightly and tastefully applied and these qualities are echoed in its sound as well with power to spare. The label designates this instrument as an *Amati* model and its proportions might suit a smaller hand.

#### **CARESSA AND FRANÇAIS, PARIS C. 1912(WORKSHOP)**

In 1901 *Felix Caressa* and *Henri Français* became successors to the highly regarded Parisian violin makers *Gand* and *Bernadel*. The instruments of *Caressa* and *Français* were made perfect in every way, nothing was left to chance. All the details, the choice of wood, the arching, the height of the ribs, thickness of the belly and back whose precision was often neglected in provincial work were executed with great accuracy. Their making process too was informed by the Parisian workshops of the period having a monopoly over the restoration of the greatest of the Cremonese instruments. This violin is in pristine condition, an atelier instrument, labeled “made under the guidance of *Caressa* and *Français*”. It has a sound that is rich, warm and sweet like hot cocoa. This violin mirrors the comfortable, refined and vivacious quality of pre-war Paris. Take it home and tuck it into bed!

#### **KAREL POPLSTEIN, LUBY, 2004**

The amazing events that have taken place in Eastern Europe in the last years, including the re-establishment of the Czech Republic, have resulted in new hope for the nation and a renaissance in the arts. Our violin, just purchased from this master maker of *Luby*, has a varnish and look that is indicative of this renaissance spirit. The back wood has all the glory of a sunrise with depth and promise in its complexly layered varnish. The work is executed with discipline and adherence to classic design principles and is the type of violin that will, with time, become an heirloom. It has a voice that is, even in its youth, powerful, deep and colorful with sweetness throughout the complete compass of its sound.





## 500<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY BASH CELEBRATING THE “FATHER OF THE MODERN VIOLIN”

This year the violin world celebrated the 500th anniversary of the birth of Andrea Amati, the inventor of the violin. In celebration of this event Claire Givens worked on the organization of a conference entitled, *“The Secrets, Lives and Violins of the Great Cremona Makers 1505-1744”*. This was held at **The National Music Museum**, in Vermillion, South Dakota. The Museum’s world class collection includes many decorated Amati instruments that were made as special commissions for the courts of Europe. Also displayed are several instruments by Antonio Stradivari including a violin, a viola da gamba, a guitar, and a bow. It was fitting therefore that the closing banquet on July 4th happened to coincide with what would have been Antonio Stradivari’s 338th wedding anniversary. It was the culmination of four days crammed with lectures, roundtables and performances focusing on the great Cremonese violinmakers.

Claire Givens and Dr. André Larson, Director of the National Music Museum, began discussing the importance of an event like the Conference ten years ago, and started planning it almost a year in advance. Claire made the arrangements for the keynote speakers, funding, publicity, production of the catalogue, and the banquet, among other things. The hard work and planning were well worth it, as the Conference proved to be a great success and was attended by many of the foremost violin makers in the U.S.

The four keynote speakers, Carlo Chiesa, Milan; John Dilworth, London; Andrew Dipper, Minneapolis; and Duane Rosengard, Philadelphia, are some of the most renowned archival researchers and scholars of the development of the Cremonese violin from its birth to the present. Each speaker’s lecture focused on different facets of the history of Cremonese violins and their makers. In addition to the lectures, there were several roundtable discussions comprised of the keynote speakers and other scholars of the instrument.

One of the conference highlights was the unique opportunity to hear some of the museum’s Cremonese instruments, such as the world’s oldest Andrea Amati cello named the “King”, violins made by Nicolo, Andrea and Girolamo Amati, a violin by Antonio

Stradivari and a viola by Nicola Bergonzi. The violins were played by Sergiu Luca, a well known early-music violinist, and the cellos by Joshua Koestenbaum, associate principal cellist with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. This is the only time that an opportunity has been found to hear the instruments played since they came to the museum in 1983. Givens Violins brought sound engineer and Givens staff member, Edward Estrin, along to record all of the performances and lectures. There are plans to work with the museum and issue audio CDs of all of the talks.

Even the final banquet was backed up by historical research. Claire researched fashionable 16th century desserts, and recipes for the seven course meal were translated by Andrew Dipper from a Cremonese cookbook dating back to the 1700’s. Claire and Andrew also contacted *Gli Amici Della Cucina Cremonese* (The Friends of Cremonese Cuisine) in Cremona for information about the way a typical banquet would be set up and which foods would be served.

This historic event has drawn international attention. Naomi Sadler, editor at *The Strad*, attended the conference and will be publishing an article in the October, 2005, edition of the magazine. British magazine, *The Economist*, published an article on the conference in their July 30, 2005 edition.

Although this historic event is over, catalogues from the Conference have excellent photos of 15 Cremonese instruments from the National Music Museum’s collections and can be purchased from the Museum for \$25. Visit their website [www.sdu.edu/smm](http://www.sdu.edu/smm) for more information.

ABOVE (left to right): Claire Givens, Jayson Dobney, NMM Associate Director and Dr. Margaret Downie Banks, NMM Curator of Musical Instruments, at the final banquet. Joshua Koestenbaum, associate principal cellist with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, plays “The King” cello by Andrea Amati, Cremona, after 1538. NMM 3351, Witten-Rawlins Collection, 1984. Conference keynote speakers Andrew Dipper, Minneapolis; Carlo Chiesa, Milan, Italy; and John Dilworth, London, pause for a photo.



Scroll by Francesco Toto,  
Cremona, 2004

## CREMONESE DELIGHTS: THE 8TH ANNUAL CREMONA EXHIBITION

You don't need to travel all the way to Italy to see the work of Cremona's contemporary masters, just visit Givens Violins during the **8th Annual Cremona Exhibition, Contemporary Violin Making: A Living Tradition**. Musafia North America has been producing the exhibit for the past eight years, and we have hosted it for the last five years. We have added an additional week on to the exhibit this year, which means our customers will have three weeks to visit the exhibit and play the instruments. The exhibition will take place in our showroom from **Saturday, October 15** through **Saturday, November 5** during our regular business hours, Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 5:30pm. On Saturday, October 15th, our Opening Day, we will be serving edible Cremonese delicacies.

During this event we will have over 40 violins, violas and cellos made by some of the most respected Cremonese makers. **Violins** range from **\$4,800 – \$16,000**, **violas** from **\$12,000 – \$20,000** and **cellos** from **\$23,000 – \$28,000**. Some of the makers represented in this year's exhibit are:

Stefano Conia, Jr. "Il Giovane"  
Luca Maria Gallo  
Marco Maria Gastaldi  
Stefano Gironi  
Marco Nolli  
Alessandra Pedota  
Barbara Piccinotti  
Francesco Toto  
Marcello Villa  
Vittorio Villa

Cremona has been known for the exceptional quality of the instruments made there for hundreds of years. The region has produced some of the most venerated makers of stringed instruments such as: The Amati Family, Antonio Stradivari and

Giuseppe Guarneri. The makers represented in this exhibit are the latest descendents of Cremona's tradition of excellence. In addition to the modern Cremonese exhibit we will be offering several fine historical Italian instruments. Some of the instruments to be displayed are:

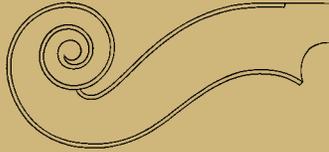
CA Testore Workshop, Milan, c.1750 (cello)  
Alessandro Gagliano, Naples, c. 1710  
Joseph Gagliano, Naples, c. 1770  
Giacomo Zanoli, Verona, c.1750  
Stefano Scarampella, Mantova, 1915  
Raphael & Antonio Gagliano, Naples, c.1810  
Carlo Giuseppe Oddone, Torino, 1908  
Riccardo Antoniazzi, Milan, 1900  
Leandro Bisiach, Milan, 1925  
Giulio Degani, Venezia, 1903  
Gaetano Gadda, Mantova, 1929  
Piero Parravicini, Milan, c. 1940  
Raphael Vaccari, Parma, 1946  
Petrus Gaggini, 1950  
Cesare Magiali, Carrara, 1952  
Iginius Sderci, Florence, 1958  
Silvio Verzi Paoletti, Firenze, c.1930  
Mario Gadda, Mantova, 1980

Each year we are excited to see the work of new makers who join the exhibit and are always pleased to see the work of makers that we have been introduced to over the five years that we've hosted the event. We believe that the instruments in this exhibit are an excellent value in the world marketplace and look forward to finding this year's treasures and sharing them with you. There will, as always, be special exhibition prices on the contemporary instruments and they will be available for limited trial periods. Please contact us with any questions, special requests or to set up an appointment.

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*LaVoce is edited by Julene Flink and published periodically.*



the  
8TH Annual Cremona  
Exhibition

Saturday, October 15th – Saturday, November 5th  
at Claire Givens Violins



NEWS :

Andrew Dipper’s article, “By Royal Appointment,” appeared in the June 2005 edition of *The Strad* magazine. The article explores the relationship between Andrea Amati’s development of the modern violin and the balls held by the French court.

We are very pleased that our building, the Arts and Handicrafts Building, is being restored. We realize that there will be some short-term inconvenience during the restoration process, but the end result will be well worth it. We will be maintaining our regular business hours and remain accessible to our customers throughout the project.

Givens Violins’ website is getting a makeover. Our new look will be debuting sometime this fall. Check it out at [www.givensviolins.com](http://www.givensviolins.com).

We look forward to seeing many of you at ASTA with NSOA’s National Conference in Kansas City this March. Stop by our booth to say hello.

See Our Inventory On-line Anytime. Looking for a new instrument or bow? Start the process from the comfort of your own home by visiting our on-line inventory listings at [www.givensviolins.com](http://www.givensviolins.com). We have violins starting at \$500, violas at \$700 and cellos at \$2,200. Our violin bows begin at \$125, viola bows at \$210 and cello bows at \$175.