

CLAIRE GIVENS VIOLINS, INC.
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LaVoce

of CLAIRE GIVENS VIOLINS, INC.



SUMMER 2006

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

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10:00 am – 5:30 pm

*LaVoce is edited by Julene Flink and published periodically.
All photos are by Andrew Dipper except for the show room photo (pg 2) and employee photo (pg 4) by Kayoko Wakabayashi.*



Givens Violins staff: Front row (l to r): Inez Hopkins, Annie Poshek, Andrew Dipper, Claire Givens, and Heather Hoff. Back row (l to r): Charlotte Holmes, Theodora Wynhoff, Frank Davis, Julene Flink, John Vierow, and Doug Lay. Not pictured: Edward Estrin and Brian Kubin.

BEAUTIFUL BAROQUE BOOKLET

Andrew Dipper has compiled a color booklet highlighting some of his fine Baroque instruments and bows including a **violin** by **John Betts** with its **original case** and a **Betts violin bow**; an Italian school **viola d'amore, c. 1770**; and **several bows**. If you would like to be added to our Baroque mailing list, or if you would like us to send you a copy of the booklet, please e-mail us at cgivens@givensviolins.com or call 800.279.4323.

CELLIST'S CORNER

New research in endpin design allows cellists to enhance the sound characteristics of their instrument. There are two new endpins that we feel are important additions to the available options.

Klaus Bender, cellist and engineer, has designed an endpin and socket combination. The **Bender** endpins have a conical socket with a fine thread that screws into the bottom block of the cello. The contact which is established with the threading in the block allows impeccable contact between the plug and the instrument allowing complete vibration of the cello. This innovative socket also utilizes a collet to tighten the endpin. Unlike a tightening screw which makes contact at only one point, the collet tightens around the entire endpin allowing the vibrations to continue in a fluid manner. Along with the new socket, Bender offers a variety of interchangeable rods which can be experimented with for optimal sound enhancement. They currently come in carbon fiber, hollow aluminum, hollow titanium and solid titanium. If your cello currently has a socket with a 3/8" hole, it is possible to simply purchase one of the endpin rods alone to change your sound.

The other endpin we have found to be noteworthy is the **Bell Cast Steel** endpins. It has been our experience that this endpin can help cellos produce a clearer, focused, resonant sound with more overtones.



Cello by Louis Guersan,
Paris 1766

EXCEPTIONAL INSTRUMENTS: PAGE 02

Givens Violins is committed to offering our customers fine instruments that possess the combination of exceptional playability, quality, beauty and value. We are pleased to share some of our favorites with you.

NEWS

All String Prices Slashed by *at least 40%* Givens Violins is now offering all strings at prices competitive with internet retailers. Our prices are discounted by at least 40% and all of our strings are in stock for immediate shipment. The Givens Violins staff is knowledgeable regarding the attributes of the various strings and we would be very happy to assist you with your purchases.

Convenient New Parking Space

We now have a parking space available behind our building. The space can be accessed from Marquette Avenue by turning into a small alley way on the south end of our building. The space is #18 and it is marked by a Givens Violins sign.

Claire and Andrew are heading down to Tucson this June to appraise musical instruments for PBS's *Antiques Roadshow*. If they find any treasures, you may be able to catch them on an episode during the 2007 season. They have been appraisers for the *Roadshow* since 1998.

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Andrea Alberti violin

EXCEPTIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND BOWS

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VIOLINS: \$37,000 – \$55,000

Hippolyte Chretien Silvestre, Lyon 1872
H.C. Silvestre (1843-1913) was the nephew and student of the celebrated Silvestre brothers, Pierre and Hippolyte. He became the successor to their business in 1865 and moved it to Paris in 1884. This violin is from the period when his work is the most pure. It shows his highly regarded varnish of Italian suppleness and transparency. It is in exceptional condition, is even and very responsive and has a colorful voice that is incisive and powerful.

Giulio Degani, Venice 1903

Giulio Degani (1875-1955) was the son and pupil of Eugenio Degani. He was working in Venice in the very distinctive style of his father at the time this violin was made. This violin is in pristine condition and has a strong, rich and colorful voice. With narrow upper bouts, it is a very comfortable violin to play.

George Gemunder, Astoria 1879

Gemunder who worked for J.B. Vuillaume in Paris, moved to New York in 1847. He came to be known as "America's Greatest Violinmaker." He continues to be considered a maker of great integrity for his high and exacting standards in craftsmanship, acoustics and varnish. This violin has a voice that is both bold and sophisticated with a response that is smooth and easy.

CELLOS: \$30,000 – \$75,000

Giorgio Grisales, Cremona 2005

Grisales graduated from the International School of Violin Making in 1988. The ribs and back of this mature sounding cello are made from a stunning selection of quilted Lombardy poplar. This cello has tremendous depth and richness with an ease of response.

Prémysl Otakar Spidlen, Prague 1961

Spidlen (b. 1921) is the third generation of his highly esteemed violin making family. He received many honors from his government including Merited Artist of Czechoslovakia (1980). In 1961 he won first place at the Liege Violinmaking Competition. This cello exemplifies the beautiful aged wood and richly colored classical Italian varnish that he was known for. It has a big, even, colorful sound that is clear with an immediate response.

Joseph Nicolas LeClerc, Paris 1770

LeClerc worked in Paris from 1760 to 1778 and belonged to the "Quinze Vingt" along with Francois Tourte and other great makers of the period. His work is among the first in France to be inspired by Stradivari. His style shows refinement and an accomplished hand. This cello has a voice that is deep with warm colors and an ease of response.

Louis Guersan, Paris 1766

Guersan, student and successor to Claude Pierray, was considered to be the greatest maker of his time and his work continues to be highly sought after. The original scroll has the handsome addition of the fine carving of a flower petal at the eye position and a shell at the chin of the peg box. It has a classy sound that is sweet and malleable in the upper register with a deep resonant low end.

VIOLA: EXCEPTIONAL

16 3/8", William Gilkes, London 1859

William Gilkes, born in 1811, studied with his father who worked for William Forster. This was an active period in the history of English violinmaking particularly in London where there was tremendous competition. Gilkes was a prolific maker who drew inspiration from the classical Italian makers. This viola is a rarity because of its age, excellent condition, size and rich viola sound.

EXCEPTIONAL BOWS

VIOLIN BOWS: F.N. Voirin, Alfred Lamy, James Tubbs for W.E. Hill & Sons, Nicolas Maire, Emile F. Ouchard

VIOLA BOWS: Emile A. Ouchard, George E. Ury, Louis Morizot

CELLO BOWS: James Tubbs



Many of our finest instruments are on display at the Givens Violins showroom.

NEW PRODUCTS

We are pleased to announce a new line of student level violins!

For years, we have been looking for a violin which meets our uncompromised high standards of violin making while being affordable for students and families. It is with much excitement that we are now able to offer two new violins which accomplish this. Our new **Andrea Alberti** model costs only **\$500** and our **Bruno Bertini** model is **\$750**. (Alberti model pictured above)

We believe a young musician has their best chance at success with an instrument that has a high quality of sound, is even across all strings, and responds easily and quickly. These qualities are achieved with a professional set-up which includes: a seasoned Bosnian Maple bridge individually carved for the violin, fitting the soundpost, fitting the pegs, planing the fingerboard, high quality strings, and a tail piece with integral tuners. Throughout the set-up process, our violins receive individual attention from our workshop which adheres to the highest standards.

All instruments sold by Givens Violins are backed by continuous support from our workshop with bi-annual check-ups and our 100% trade-in policy.

Stringing Along

Thomastik-Infeld, best known for its **Dominant** strings, has developed a line of **Vision** strings for violin. There are three different kinds of strings under the Vision label: **Vision**, **Vision Titanium** and **Vision Titanium Orchestra**. All of these strings are very stable with a quick break-in time.

Vision strings have a warm, clear, focused and open sound with a very quick response. These strings also come in **fractional sizes** and we currently have them as small as 1/8-size. In addition to the Vision violin strings, Thomastik-Infeld will launch the **Vision viola strings** in the next month.

The **Vision Titanium** and **Vision Titanium Orchestra**, named after the Titanium-coated E-string, are more brilliant than the **Vision** strings. Their vibrant sound is accomplished, in part, with the polishing of the core before the winding is adhered. In addition, the light weight Titanal ball ends, made of an aluminum-alloy, allow the tailpiece and bridge to vibrate freely making the instrument's natural brilliance apparent. **Vision Titanium** strings have a pure focused tone with a lot of volume. The **Vision Titanium Orchestra** strings have a quick response with a pure tone and were developed to replace gut strings.

The Vision Titanium E-string is made with atomized titanium shot over a steel core. The result is an E-string with a stunningly silky sound with tremendous carrying power.

Coming soon... Pirastro is launching a new line of strings for violin called **Wondertone Solo**. The set is supposed to have a focused, direct and powerful sound. Watch for this newcomer to the Pirastro line!

NEWS

Saint Paul String Quartet Competition

Givens Violins is a proud sponsor of the **Saint Paul String Quartet Competition** created by the **Artaria String Quartet**. We applaud Artaria's commitment to fostering excellence for young players in chamber music. The competition is open to high school age string quartets grades 9 through 12 from across the United States. The top three quartets will be awarded cash prizes totaling \$2,000. The final competition, judged by members of **The Maia String Quartet**, will take place in Sundin Music Hall at Hamline University on April 30, 2006 at 1:00pm.

Suzuki Association of the America's 12th Biennial Conference

We will have a booth at this year's Suzuki Conference. Please stop by our booth or the shop to say hello. If you are interested in trying any particular instruments or bows feel free to contact a member of our sales staff. We would be happy to schedule a showing for you during the weekend of the conference.

Cremonese Dinner Celebrating Andrea Amati's Birth

Last fall, during our annual **Modern Cremonese Instrument Exhibit**, Givens Violins hosted an Italian Renaissance dinner in honor of **Andrea Amati's** birthday and to show our appreciation to the people who keep our string community vibrant and alive. Over one hundred teachers and professional musicians gathered at **Hell's Kitchen** for the seven course dinner created by restaurant owner **Mitch Omer** from numerous period cookbooks. It was a memorable evening filled with wonderful food, camaraderie and fine instruments.

Congratulations MNSOTA, YPSCA & MN Sinfonia Competition Winners

Nate Tramm, violin student of **Mark Bjork** won the Givens Award at the **51st YPSCA Competition**. **Chad Hoopes**, student of **Sally O'Reilly** was the grand prize winner at the recent **MNSOTA Competition**; this prize is funded by **Givens Violins** as are the prizes won by **Alexandra Hoopes**, **Anna Savelsberg** and **Nathanael Tramm** students of **Sally O'Reilly** and **Mark Bjork**. Givens Violins also donated the Senior Division prize, won by **Amy Fetherolf**, for the **MN Sinfonia's Young Artist Competition**.



F.N. Voirin bow