

National Heritage Memorial Fund boost **Academy's Viotti appeal**

24 March 2004

The Royal Academy of Music is pleased to announce that it has been successful in its £250,000 application to the National Heritage Memorial Fund to buy the uniquely important 'Viotti' Stradivari Violin.

Image



'Viotti' Stradivari Violin

Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, Professor Curtis Price, said: "We are delighted by this wonderful grant from the National Heritage Memorial Fund. It is a huge vote of confidence in the Academy as the ideal home for the "Viotti" violin. Our fundraising campaign still has some way to go, but this grant gives us a tremendous boost in helping to save this remarkable instrument for the nation."

The Academy has secured some private donations towards the purchase, together with a major grant from the National Arts Collection Fund, but a significant shortfall remains.

Carole Souter, Director of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, said: "Helping to save this very special instrument is a great way to begin the Silver Jubilee celebrations for the NHMF. The Viotti Violin now joins over 1,200 other objects and places that have been rescued for the nation."

Notes to editors

About the instrument

The 'Viotti' violin, made by Stradivari in 1709, it is valued at £3.5million by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's Acceptance in Lieu Panel. The only other Stradivari violin of this quality and in so pristine a state of preservation is the 'Messie' at the Ashmolean Museum. Although on public display, the instrument cannot, under the terms of the bequest, be played.

If the Academy is successful in securing the funds to purchase the instrument, it will be maintained to the highest standards and played under controlled conditions by great artists.

The instrument was owned by one of Europe's most influential violinists and teachers, Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755–1824), whose teaching directly influenced the international outlook of the Royal Academy of Music through the work of Sainton, whose violin is also in the Academy's collection. Viotti was involved in the earliest discussions about the founding of the Academy and was even proposed as its first Principal.

Royal Academy of Music

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's recommendation that the instrument should go to the Academy recognises the outstanding facilities of the York Gate Collections, the Academy's museum and research centre, which is open to the public seven days a week. This 'living museum' includes an active programme of outreach and education events based around instruments and artefacts in the collection.

Further information

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