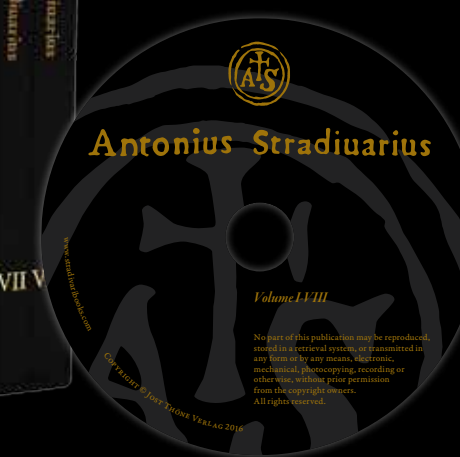
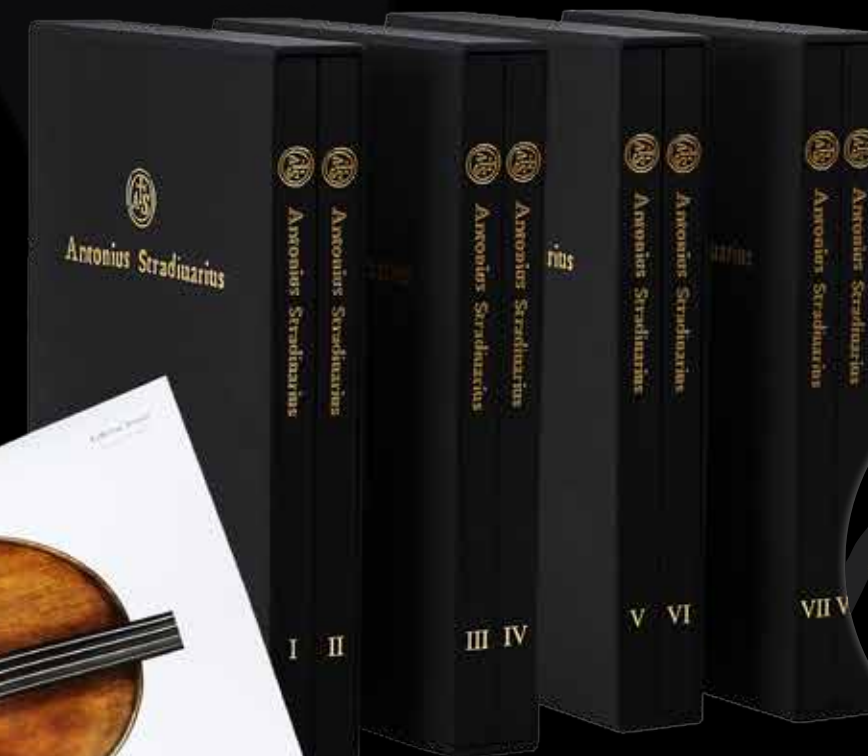




Antonius Stradiuarius

Book Samples

DVD Samples



Violin 1667 Jenkins'

In the year 1667, having just married Francesca Feraboschi, Stradivari set up an atelier in the Casa Nuziale in Cremona. The present violin bears a label from this very year and is thus among the earliest instruments to have been produced by the young luthier in his first independent workshop.¹

As one would expect, the influence of Amati can be clearly seen in this violin. Interestingly, Stradivari has used a traditional, smaller model that was also used alongside the larger model by other Cremonese violin makers of the Amati school in the mid-17th century. With a corpus length of 34.8 cm, it is half a centimetre shorter than another, very similar, Stradivari violin of the same year: the 'Dubois'.² The choice of wood for the one-piece back also seems traditional; it has been cut on the slab and has lively, broad flames that are occasionally interrupted by small areas of discolouration or knots. The broadly and variably flamed maple of the scroll and ribs is well matched to the back wood. On the treble side of the ribs, one can see an arrangement that is untypical for Stradivari: the flames in the C-bout run parallel to the neck and scroll, but in the opposite direction to the upper and lower bouts. The violin still has its original neck; however, this has been reset and re-cut. As a result of this alteration, the holes for the three nails that originally held the neck on the body are now visible, although they have since been filled in. The belly, made of hazel spruce, is of choice quality, and the overall craftsmanship is of an extremely high level. The 'Jenkins' was originally covered in a light, golden varnish, which has been somewhat preserved in the C-bouts of the back and in the inaccessible recesses of the scroll and ribs. The early violin has been known among experts since the Hill brothers' publication of 1902; it is listed in Goodkind and is illustrated in the 1999 supplement to Doring. The history of the instrument can be traced back to the turn of the 20th century: the earliest known owner was probably Count Cesare Nicheola of Verona, who owned the violin in 1899. It was in that year that the instrument came into the hands of the London dealership William E. Hill & Sons, who sold it in 1902 to a J. Younger. The violin remained in Younger's family until 1947, when it was once more offered for sale at William E. Hill & Sons. It was purchased just a year later by the English violin virtuoso Tom William Jenkins (1910–1957). Jenkins, one of the most noted violinists of his time, had been a pupil of Edward Maude (1880–1967) and performed regularly at the BBC from 1936 onwards. In 1948, on the BBC's request, he took over as leader of the Palm Court Orchestra following the death of Albert Sandler (1906–1948). From then on, the Stradivari was his preferred concert instrument, and it is now accordingly named after him. In 1953 and 1954, at the pinnacle of his career, Jenkins won the National Radio Award for the Most Popular Musical Entertainer. Just few years later, however, the successful musician died unexpectedly in his 46th year. The violin passed to his wife, the flautist Michelle Jenkins, to whom he had been married since 1953. In the subsequent decades, the instrument was kept in a bank vault, and it was not until 1995 that Michelle Jenkins decided to sell the violin through Sotheby's.³ The instrument was accordingly auctioned in London on 20 June 1995, and the highest bidder at £375,000 was an Elisabeth Thomas from Germany, who purchased the violin for her 10-year-old daughter Christina Thomas. Michelle Jenkins donated the proceeds of the sale to the Tom Jenkins Trust, which supports young musicians financially.

By 2008, the violin was once more up for sale, this time at the London dealership John & Arthur Beare. It was purchased in that year by Roger and Huguette Dubois of Drummondville, Canada, who in 2001 had founded the Canimex Foundation, a charitable organisation that provides financial support for musicians and funds concerts. The wealthy couple finally gave the violin over to the Foundation, in whose collection it has remained to this day. The 'Jenkins' is accompanied by certificates from William E. Hill & Sons (1948) and John & Arthur Beare (2008).

¹ Hill, W. Henry / Hill, Arthur F. / Hill, Alfred E., *Antonio Stradivari—His Life and Work (1644–1737)*, Dover Publications, New York, 1902, reprint 1963, p. 35; Doring, Ernest N., *How Many Strads? Our Heritage from the Master*, Bein & Fushi, Chicago, 1945, reprint 1999, p. 369 (ill.); Goodkind, Herbert K., *Violin Iconography of Antonio Stradivari 1644–1737*, Larchmont, New York, 1972, p. 725; Pigaillem, Henri, *Stradivarius—Sa vie—Ses instruments*, Zurich, Bourg-la-Reine, 2000, p. 135.

² Interestingly, both violins were at one time simultaneously in the possession of Roger and Huguette Dubois in Canada.

³ Sotheby's Musical Instruments Auction Catalogue, 20 June 1995, Sotheby's, London, 1995, Lot 34.

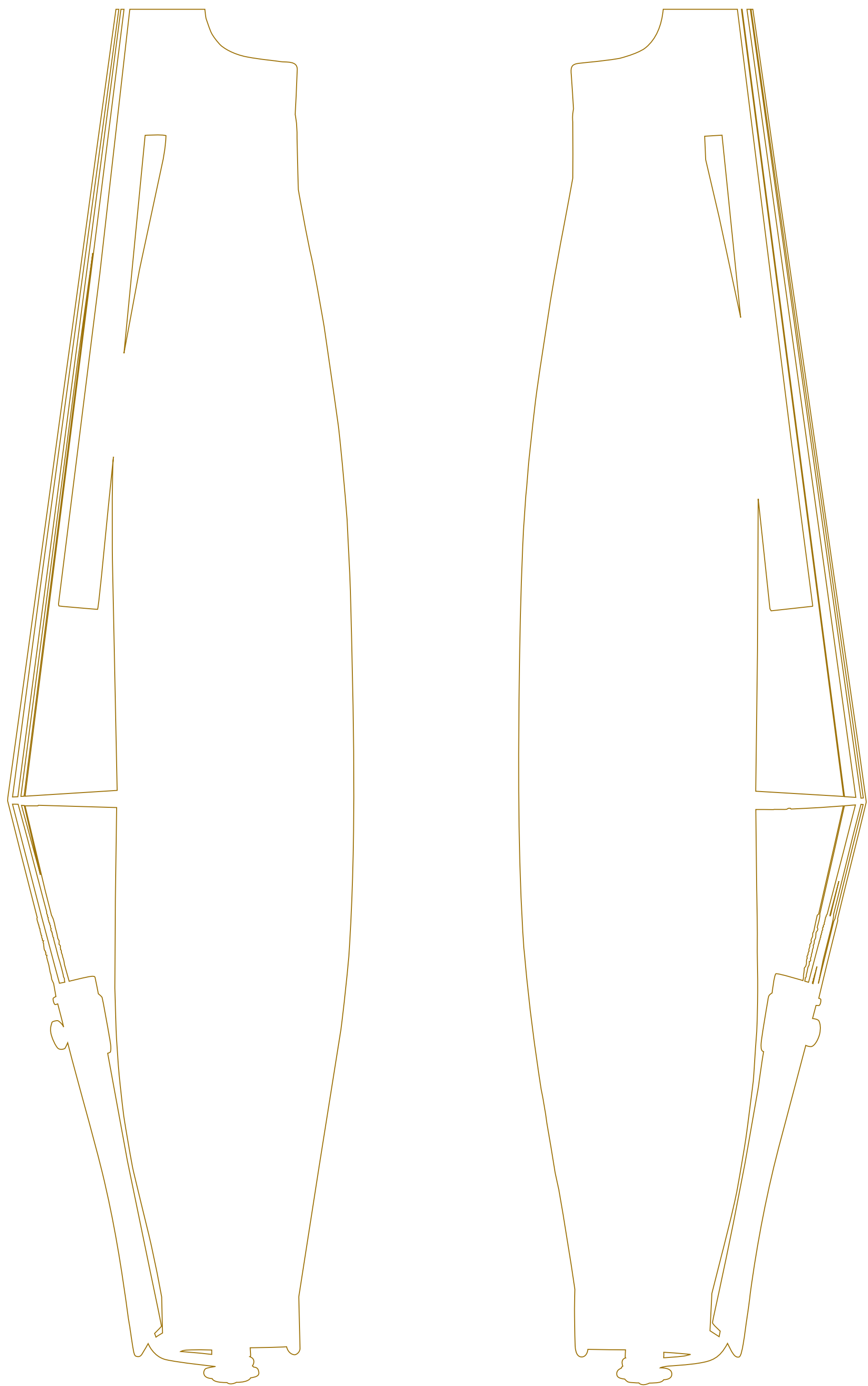








Violin 1667 Jenkins'



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