



Italian & French Violin Makers



Introduction

The encyclopaedia which is planned to comprise ten volumes, is being continued in the form of this second volume of “Italian & French Violin Makers”. The first volume was very positively received all over the world, which reinforced me to publish a further volume each year. My travels throughout Italy and France were very informative, especially as the violin makers I met imparted to me new stimuli and ideas by means of their knowledge and constructive criticism. I have been able to work some of these stimuli and ideas into this volume.

I am frequently asked why I have chosen this particular selection of instruments. The reply to this question has its roots in the intention that each individual volume is meant to present a summary of the last four centuries of violin making in Italy and France, and therefore each volume speaks for itself. Moreover, this composition brings with it the advantage of being able to place the various volumes of this encyclopaedia next to each other, so that instruments from the same period yet different schools, can be compared. Until now, the lack of a sufficient and qualitatively-relevant range of illustrations in original sizes has made this more or less impossible. The illustrated instruments are to be seen as a “snapshot” from the complete works of the master violin maker. I am not concerned with showing the “best” work of the particular master, which is impossible when you consider the subjective perception of each individual observer. Only a monograph about the one or the other violin maker can convey a fair and just overview of the complete works of a particular master.

This encyclopaedia is therefore confined to brief biographies which, following bibliographical research, summarise the latest state of information. They are available in the German original as well as English, French, Italian and Japanese translations. I would like to draw your attention to the bibliography in the appendix. This appendix contains a selection of interesting supplementary literature for extending your studies in Italian and French violin makers, should you be interested in doing so. For further information on the “Italian & French Violin Makers” encyclopaedia, please visit: www.italianandfrenchviolinmakers.com.

In addition to the illustrated instruments by famous masters, there are also those instruments from one or the other unknown violin maker. The interest shown in such instruments is great, and is what makes an encyclopaedia really attractive although the biographical data might be very rare. At this point, I would like to quote Monsieur Etienne Vatelot’s reaction to the first volume: “I find it so much more interesting to find French and Italian instruments of varying qualities and periods rather than keep on looking at the already much-published great Cremonese masters!”

On a visit to Lyons, I met Monsieur Jean-Frédéric Schmitt. Along with Etienne Vatelot, Bernard Millant and a few other master violin makers, he is without doubt one of the last “figureheads of the old guard”! His spontaneous and thrilling lecture on the dependency of violin making on political and religious developments over the past few centuries in Europe made such an outstanding impression on me that I asked Monsieur Schmitt to make this subject available in the form of an interview for this second volume. I would like to thank both him and my interview partner Igor Moroder, and hope that your interest in this complex subject has also been aroused. I hope that Jean-Frédéric Schmitt can soon present us with his own planned publication on this subject.

It was difficult to find the right instruments for the first volume. In contrast, I am now being bombarded with a plethora of instruments for documentation purposes. This fact does not make the decision any easier, however, yet it does increase the chance of presenting as interesting a selection as possible. The attribution of the particular instrument by internationally-acclaimed experts remained the utmost commandment. In this second volume, the creative talents of many a violin maker are represented by two or even three instruments. They are mainly one violin with one viola or a cello.

At the suggestion of many, you will discover in this volume several more body views taken both from the side and from a 3/4 profile. I have also inserted several additional sizes, yet continue to refrain from providing information regarding the thickness of the tables and backs. These are too frequently unsecured – since they have been touched up – and therefore, in my opinion, do not present the true value. If required, the dimensions taken with the slide calliper rule can be carried out by means of

your own measurements on the illustrations in original size. The demand for copies and imitations has increased greatly since not every musician can afford an antique Italian instrument although many of these musicians prefer an antique-looking instrument. There have been reproductions and imitations around since the 19th Century. Naturally, a large part of the individuality and personality of the violin maker is lost in these replicas even though these works undoubtedly frequently display excellent craftsmanship. However, for the violin lovers of today and the future, the characteristic models of contemporary violin makers are more interesting. These characteristic models allow conclusions to be drawn about both the personality of the violin maker and the “Zeitgeist”.

I have deliberately refrained from naming the owners of the instruments in favour of data protection and to avoid possible criminal consequences! Should any reader be particularly interested in one of the instruments, I am willing to establish contact to the owner of said instrument, provided the owner agrees to this.

All that is left for me to say is to wish you a pleasant read and a great deal of delight looking at the instruments!

Jost Thöne

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Nicolò Amati

* 1596 Cremona

† 1684 Cremona

Nicolò Amati, the son and pupil of Girolamo Amati, worked until about 1625 after his father's guidance. Yet his search for perfection regarding beauty and sound of the instruments made him develop his own model. He changed the arching and the thickness of wood of the model used until then. Nicolò Amati's instruments show very bold sound holes, and an elegant and rather small scroll. His supple varnish is of a yellow-brown or red-golden tinge and the wood was chosen with great care. Nicolò Amati is considered as the most important and gifted violin maker of his family. His pupils included Andrea Guarneri, Giacomo Gennaro and possibly, Jacob Stainer, Francesco Rugieri and Antonio Stradivarius. He built mainly violins, and especially the ones made after his bigger "Grand Pattern" are highly sought after. His violas are rare and the violoncellos are made after a relatively small pattern. Nicolò Amati had nine children, yet only his son Girolamo became violin maker.



Nicolò Amati, der Sohn und Schüler seines Vaters Girolamo Amati, arbeitete bis etwa 1625 nach dessen Anleitung. Jedoch führte ihn sein Streben nach Perfektion im Laufe seines Schaffens zu seinem eigenen Modell, wobei er Wölbung und Holzstärke der bis dato verwendeten Modelle veränderte. Die ff-Löcher sind sehr kühn und schwungvoll geschnitten, die Schnecke recht klein und überaus elegant gestochen, und der gelbbraune oder rotgoldene Lack ist von großer Geschmeidigkeit. Besondere Sorgfalt widmete er der Wahl des verwendeten Holzes. Nicolò Amati gilt als der bedeutendste und begabteste Geigenbauer seiner Familie. Zu seinen Schülern zählten Meister wie Andrea Guarneri, Giacomo Gennaro und möglicherweise Jacob Stainer, Francesco Rugieri und Antonio Stradivari. Nicolò Amatis Produktion umfasst hauptsächlich Violinen, von denen besonders die nach seinem größeren Modell gebauten Instrumente begehrt sind. Seine Bratschen und Celli fertigte er nach einem vergleichsweise kleinen Modell. Von Nicolòs neun Kindern wurde nur sein Sohn Girolamo Geigenbauer.



Nicola Amati, figlio e allievo di Girolamo Amati lavora fino circa il 1625 sotto la guida del padre. La sua personale ricerca sul suono lo porta a sviluppare un suo personale modello cambiando le bombature e gli spessori del legno nel modello usato fino a quel momento. Gli strumenti di Nicola Amati mostrano delle ff molto personali e una elegante ed una testa piuttosto piccola ma elegante. La sua vernice varia da giallo-marron a rosso-oro e la scelta del legno é sempre molto accurata. Nicola Amati é considerato il piú importante esponente della sua famiglia. Fra i suoi allievi troviamo: Andrea Guarneri, Giacomo Gennaro, forse Jacob Steiner, Francesco Rugeri e Antonio Stradivari. Costruí molti violini e specialmente un tipo fatto dopo il suo modello grande sono molto ricercati per il suono dolce e pieno. Le sue viole sono rare e i violoncelli sono fatti con modello relativamente piccolo. Nicola Amati ebbe nove figli e solamente Girolamo seguí le orme del padre.



Elève de son père Girolamo Amati, Nicolò travailla jusque vers 1625 d'après les indications de celui-ci. Cependant, son perfectionnisme concernant l'amélioration de la qualité sonore de l'instrument l'amena à créer son propre modèle en modifiant la voûte et l'épaisseur du bois des modèles employés jusqu'ici. La courbe des ouïes est très hardie, la volute est plutôt petite et très finement travaillée, et le vernis jaune doré ou brun rouge a une grande souplesse. Nicolò Amati attachait une attention particulière au choix du bois employé. Il est le luthier le plus important et le plus doué de sa famille. On compte au nombre de ses élèves des maîtres comme Andrea Guarneri, Giacomo Gennaro et, peut-être, Jacob Stainer, Francesco Rugieri et Antonio Stradivari. La production de Nicolò Amati englobe en premier lieu des violons ; parmi ceux-ci, ceux fabriqués d'après son modèle le plus grand sont appréciés. Ses altos et ses violoncelles sont construits selon un modèle comparativement plus petit. Des neuf enfants de Nicolò, seul son fils Girolamo devint lui-même luthier.



ニコロ・アマティはジローラモ・アマティの息子、弟子であり1625年頃までその父親の手本に従い製作していた。しかしながら、響きへの製作行程における完璧さへのひたむきさが、彼の創作のなかで自身のモデルへと衝き動かし、そのなかで湾曲と木の強度を今日でも用いられているモデルへと変えることになる。f字孔は勢いがあり大胆に刻まれ、スクロールは非常に小さく洗練され、そして黄褐色、もしくは赤味を帯びた金色のニスはしなやかさをもっている。かれは使用する木材に注意をはらっていた。ニコロ・アマティはその家系のなかで最も重要で才能あるヴァイオリン製作者とみられている。彼の弟子には名匠アンドレア・グアルネリ、ジャコモ・ジェンナーロ、そしておそらくヤコブ・シュタイナー、フランチェスコ・ルジェッリとアントニオ・ストラディヴァリが数えられる。ニコロ・アマティの製作は主にヴァイオリン、そのなかでも特に彼の大きめのモデルのヴァイオリンは当時も今日も切望されている。それと比較して彼のビオラやチェロは小さめのモデルにより作られている。ニコロの9人の子供のうちただひとり、ジローラモがヴァイオリン製作者になった。

violin 1641



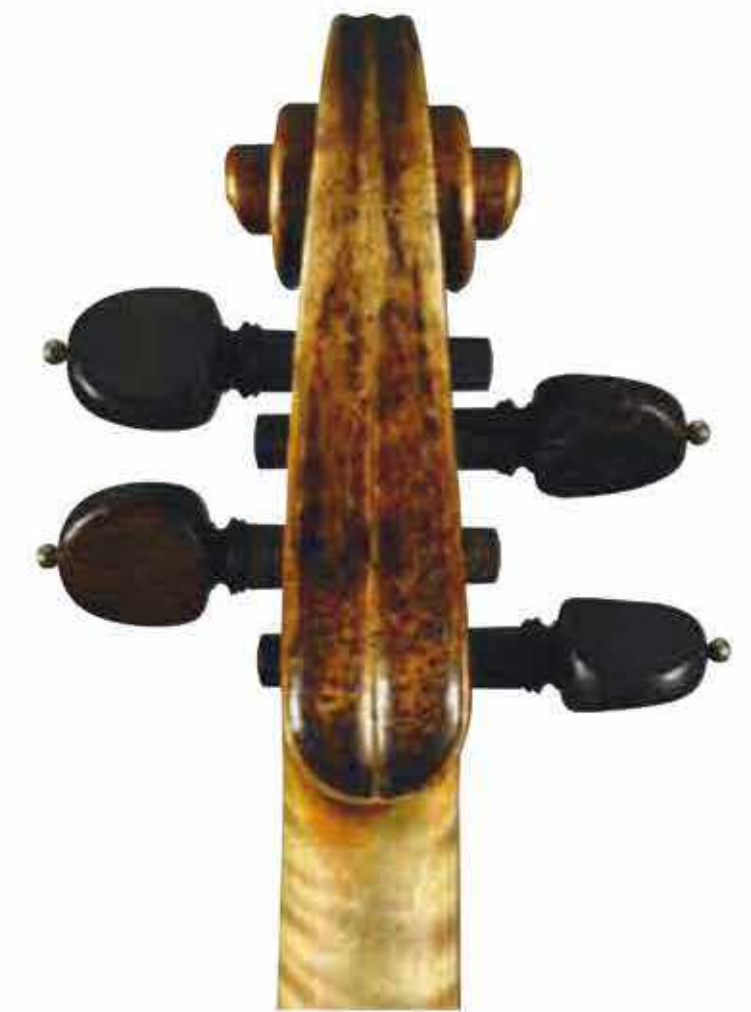
Nicolò Amati



violin 1641



Nicolò Amati



Dimensions of the Instruments

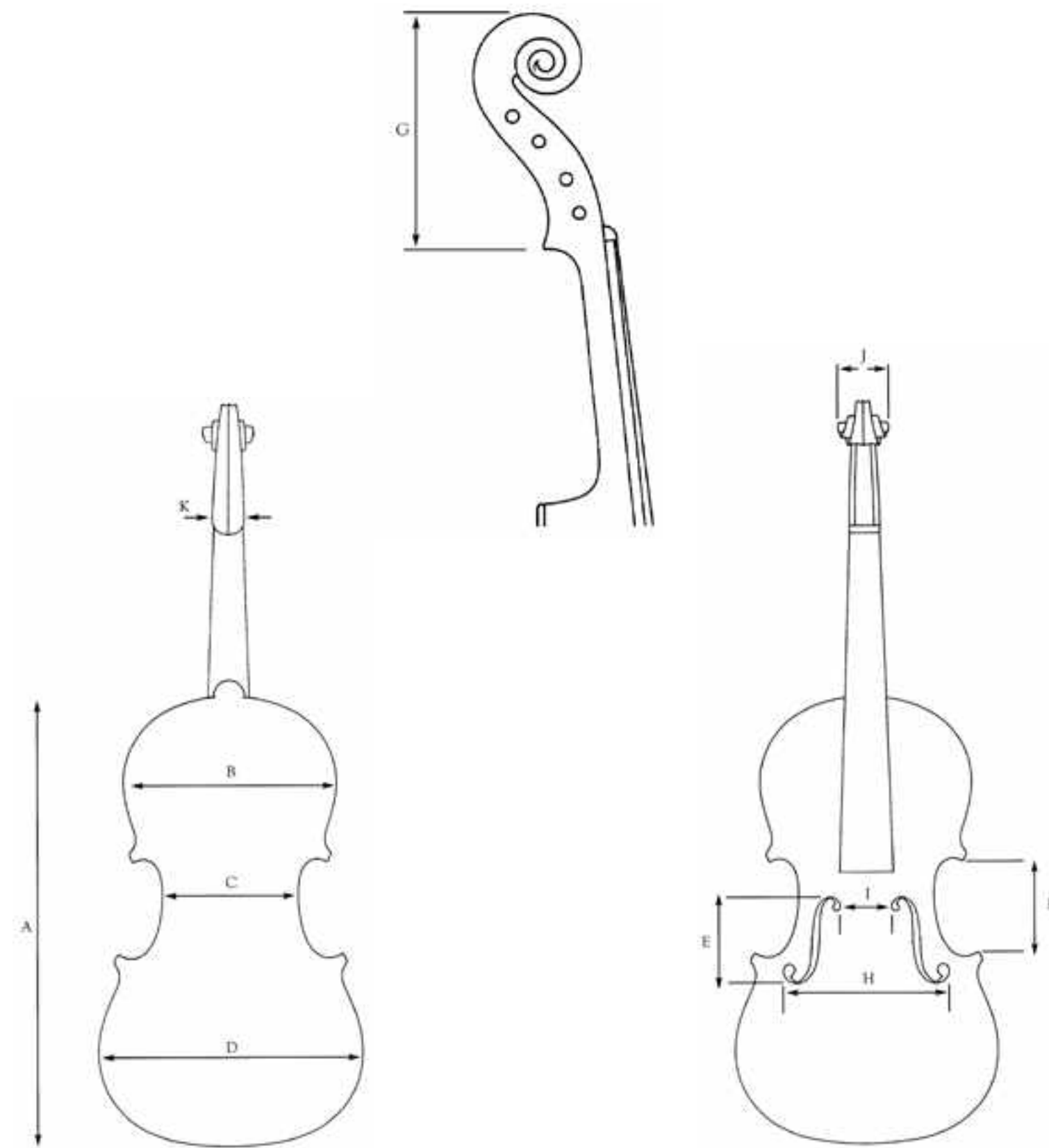


Table of the Measurements (in cm)*

| | | | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Gioffredo Cappa | 1700 | violin | 35,6 | 16,3 | 11,5 | 20,15 | 6,82 | 7,37 | 10,28 | 12,68 | 4 | 3,65 | 2,45 |
| Carlo Giuseppe Testore | 1703 | violin | 35,6 | 16,85 | 11,07 | 20,6 | 7,38 | 7,9 | 10,97 | 12,25 | 4,35 | 3,56 | 2,43 |
| Joannis (Giovanni) Tononi | 1705 c. | violin | 34,9 | 16,1 | 10,4 | 19,8 | 7 | 7,8 | 10,7 | 12,1 | 3,5 | 3,73 | 2,55 |
| Giuseppe Guarneri 'filius Andrea' | 1710 | violin | 35,3 | 16,8 | 11,2 | 20,5 | 7 | 8,8 | 10,4 | 13,2 | 4,2 | 4,2 | 2,7 |
| Giovanni Battista Grancino | 1710 c. | violoncello | 72,6 | 33,4 | 23,8 | 42,6 | 13,2 | 17,1 | 22 | 27,6 | 11,26 | 5,89 | 4,89 |
| Jacobus Horil | 1757 | violin | 35,2 | 16,2 | 10,2 | 20,2 | 6,95 | 8,2 | 10,3 | 13 | 4,45 | 3,9 | 2,65 |
| Angelo Molia | 1759 | violin | 35,2 | 16,1 | 10,7 | 20 | 8 | 8,5 | 10,2 | 12,8 | 4 | 4 | 2,6 |
| François Lejeune | 1780 c. | violin | 35,5 | 16 | 10,8 | 20,2 | 7,9 | 7,96 | 11,1 | 12,5 | 3,98 | 4,08 | 2,57 |
| Joseph Bassot | 1788 | viola | 39,7 | 19 | 12,9 | 22,8 | 7,6 | 9,3 | 11,85 | 14,51 | 4,84 | 4,05 | 2,6 |
| Joseph Bassot | 1790 c. | violin | 35,8 | 16,8 | 11,25 | 20,85 | 7,7 | 8,15 | 10,87 | 12,85 | 3,9 | 4,12 | 2,9 |
| Felix Mori Costa | 1825 | viola | 38,5 | 17,9 | 12 | 22,8 | 8,7 | 8,7 | 10,65 | 14,8 | 4,6 | 4,3 | 2,6 |
| Jacques-Pierre Thibout | 1837 | violin | 35,6 | 16,7 | 11 | 20,6 | 7 | 7,66 | 10,51 | 12,96 | 4,1 | 4,28 | 2,63 |
| Jean - Joseph - Honoré Derazey | 1850 c. | violin | 35,4 | 16,3 | 11 | 20,6 | 7,75 | 8,35 | 11,07 | 12,6 | 4,35 | 4 | 2,75 |
| Pierre Silvestre | 1856 | violin | 35,6 | 16,8 | 11 | 21,1 | 6,8 | 7,7 | 10,5 | 13,3 | 4,2 | 4,1 | 2,65 |
| Giuseppe Sgarbi | 1866 | violin | 35,6 | 16,2 | 11,2 | 20,7 | 7,35 | 7,71 | 10,88 | 13,29 | 4,05 | 3,82 | 2,7 |
| Giuseppe Sgarbi | 1882 | viola | 41,7 | 18,85 | 12,7 | 23,8 | 8,1 | 9,55 | 12 | 15,05 | 4,9 | 4,85 | 2,9 |
| Pierre - Charles Jacquot | 1888 | violin | 35,7 | 16,8 | 10,94 | 20,7 | 7,4 | 7,6 | 10,82 | 12,97 | 3,95 | 4,11 | 2,65 |
| Vincenzo Postiglione | 1891 | violin | 35,8 | 16,9 | 11,3 | 20,9 | 7,4 | 7,6 | 10,9 | 12,8 | 4 | 4,05 | 2,6 |
| Vincenzo Sannino | 1900 | violoncello | 75,4 | 34,7 | 24,3 | 43,4 | 14 | 15,7 | 21 | 26,15 | 9,9 | 8 | 5,25 |
| Stefano Scarampella | 1903 | violin | 35,65 | 16,8 | 11,4 | 20,85 | 7,23 | 7,93 | 11,14 | 12,6 | 4 | 4,24 | 2,7 |
| Giuseppe Leandro Bisiach | 1920 | violin | 35,5 | 16,5 | 11,1 | 20,5 | 7,2 | 7,8 | 10,4 | 12,9 | 4,05 | 4,1 | 2,55 |
| Giuseppe Omati | 1921 | viola | 41,6 | 19,9 | 12,7 | 24,35 | 8,5 | 8,85 | 12,5 | 15,75 | 5,05 | 4,9 | 3,2 |
| Giuseppe Omati | 1952 | violin | 35,4 | 16,7 | 11,5 | 20,9 | 7,03 | 7,61 | 10,6 | 13,51 | 4,48 | 4,23 | 2,7 |
| Iginio Sderci | 1924 | violin | 35,3 | 16,6 | 11,13 | 20,6 | 6,7 | 7,82 | 10,7 | 12,75 | 3,95 | 4 | 2,55 |
| Marko Dobretsovitch | 1925 | violin | 35,5 | 16,7 | 10,95 | 20,7 | 6,8 | 7,6 | 10,8 | 13,3 | 4,2 | 4,15 | 2,6 |
| Gaetano Gadda | 1928 | violin | 35,7 | 16,8 | 11,4 | 20,7 | 7,04 | 7,55 | 10,8 | 12,35 | 4,02 | 4,18 | 2,6 |
| Gaetano Gadda | 1934 | violin | 35,8 | 16,7 | 11,1 | 20,95 | 7,5 | 7,9 | 10,55 | 12,66 | 4,03 | 4,35 | 2,67 |
| Gaetano Gadda | 1949 | viola | 42,6 | 20,3 | 12,5 | 24,9 | 9 | 9 | 12,4 | 14,1 | 4,05 | 4,7 | 3,05 |
| Ferdinando Garimberti | 1928 | violin | 35,6 | 16,75 | 11,3 | 20,6 | 6,82 | 7,68 | 10,98 | 12,68 | 4,19 | 4,14 | 2,57 |
| Ferdinando Garimberti | 1929 | violin | 35,6 | 16,9 | 11 | 20,8 | 7 | 7,76 | 10,75 | 12,88 | 4,15 | 4,3 | 2,6 |
| Ferdinando Garimberti | 1967 | violin | 35,6 | 16,9 | 11,2 | 20,9 | 7,05 | 7,7 | 11 | 13,1 | 4,15 | 4,5 | 2,85 |
| Paolo de Barbieri | 1930 | violin | 35,7 | 17 | 11 | 21 | 7 | 7,65 | 10,75 | 13,3 | 4,1 | 4,15 | 2,6 |
| Gaetano Pareschi | 1938 | violin | 35,8 | 16,7 | 10,8 | 20,75 | 7,1 | 7,7 | 10,5 | 13 | 4,1 | 3,9 | 2,5 |
| Amedeo Simonazzi | 1951 | violin | 35,5 | 16,7 | 11,2 | 20,8 | 7 | 7,65 | 10,7 | 13,3 | 4,3 | 3,85 | 2,7 |
| Arnaldo Morano | 1957 | violin | 35,6 | 16,8 | 10,95 | 20,8 | 7,02 | 7,5 | 10,8 | 13,1 | 3,9 | 4,5 | 2,8 |
| Arturo Fracassi | 1962 | violin | 35,5 | 16,7 | 11,4 | 20,7 | 7,5 | 7,6 | 11 | 13,5 | 4,2 | 4,3 | 2,82 |
| Romolo Parmeggiani | 1963 | viola | 42 | 19,3 | 12,75 | 24,4 | 8,5 | 8,6 | 12,9 | 15,35 | 4,9 | 4,9 | 3,05 |
| Sesto Rocchi | 1975 | violin | 35,75 | 17,1 | 11,6 | 21,1 | 7 | 7,45 | 11 | 13,5 | 3,9 | 3,8 | 2,6 |
| Ernesto Pevere | 1988 | violin | 35,4 | 16,7 | 10,86 | 20,6 | 7,3 | 8 | 10,25 | 13,1 | 4,42 | 3,75 | 3,94 |
| Erminio Malagutti | 1991 | violin | 35,7 | 17 | 11,5 | 21 | 7,35 | 7,7 | 11,1 | 13,5 | 4,1 | 4,1 | 2,7 |