

STRADIVARI STIFTUNG
HABISREUTINGER
HUGGLER CORAY

GEGRÜNDET 1964



Ant. Straziński

**»Decades of time can bring about an enhancement,
an increase of value in all its aspects,
that hardly anyone would have thought possible.
For this insight we are indebted to Rolf Habisreutinger.«**

Curdin Coray
President of the foundation



Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis
Faciobat Anno 1672



Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis
Faciobat Anno 1698



Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis
Faciobat Anno 1710



Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis
Faciobat Anno 1710



Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis
Faciobat Anno 1715



Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis
Faciobat Anno 1717



Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis
Faciobat Anno 1734



FRANCESCO GOFFRILLER
1730 - 1740



GIOVANNI BATTISTA GUADAGNINI
WOLLGANDT, 1755



STRADIVARI FOUNDATION

HABISREUTINGER
HUGGLER CORAY

FOUNDED 1964





Rolf Habisreutinger (1908–1991)

The Habisreutinger Foundation was founded on 3 December 1964. Rolf Habisreutinger, its initiator, was a textile industrialist by profession who had many interests, among which music predominated. A gifted musician, he had initially wanted to become a professional musician, but was persuaded by his father to join the family business. Nevertheless, he continued to pursue his enthusiasm for playing the cello.

As with most things in his life, seeking the best, he acquired a Stradivarius cello. This acquisition naturally aroused the envy of his fellow musician colleagues with whom he made music once a week. His reaction, without considering the cost, was to buy instruments for the whole group. A large number of these instruments were, in fact, Stradivari – probably eleven.

Later, in order to safeguard the valuable instruments from being sold off, he endowed six of them – all Stradivaris: 2 violins, 2 violas and 2 celli – to form the basis of a foundation. Habisreutinger's gift, however, came with the stipulation that the instruments be made available for loan to gifted musicians for regular use. For, it was his credo that the instruments be 'moved' in order not to atrophy – indeed his wish for mankind. Rolf Habisreutinger's legacy was twofold: firstly, a priceless collection of superb instruments – the summit of the luthier's art – and secondly, unforgettable auditory experiences provided by these instruments when played on by gifted musicians.



Curdin Coray (*1945)



Sylvia Huggler-Coray (1939–2022)

The siblings Curdin and Sylvia Coray were raised as offspring of a medical doctor's family, coming in contact from an early age with music and painting; these arts were a daily diversion. Sylvia Coray studied medicine and was, for many years, a successful specialist of rheumatism at a thermal clinic in Valens, Canton St Gallen. She married Professor Dr. Arnold Huggler, a well-known Swiss Orthopaedist.

Curdin Coray started to learn to play the cello at the precocious age of five. At twelve he intensified his studies under the tuition of Pierre Fournier. Engaged as a solo cellist with diverse orchestras, he became acquainted in 1972 with Rolf Habisreutinger, who generously lent him the famous Stradivari cello "Bonamy Dobrée – Suggia". In later years Curdin Coray devoted himself to technical questions regarding stringed instruments, becoming, in 2009, the director of a company manufacturing strings for musical instruments. Earlier, in 1991, he had been an advisory member of the Rolf Habisreutinger Foundation and is now, since 2019, its president.

Both siblings have devoted themselves to securing, either by the acquisition of instruments or through financial bequests, the future existence of the Rolf Habisreutinger Foundation.

GUSTAV MAHLER

Viola 1672

The “Gustav Mahler”, like the “Gibson” viola, is one of the most valuable instruments of the Stradivari Foundation. Even in its highest register, it possesses a range of tonal colours of exquisite beauty. It was the first of eleven, still extant, violas to have been made by Stradivari. What is remarkable about the “Gustav Mahler” is its size. It is a contralto, smaller than the then current tenor-alto – which makes it most suitable for playing nowadays. It seems to have predicted the way violas would be built in the future.

The original inner construction of this instrument, made in Stradivari’s home town of Cremona, is still visible. Curiously, the label in Latin has a misprint: ‘Antonins’ instead of ‘Antonius’ Stradivari.

The “Gustav Mahler” viola was once in the possession of the Birmingham industrialist, Joseph Gillott (1799–1872), part of his vast collection of musical instruments which after his death was auctioned off at Christie’s. After various stations, the instrument passed from P.R. Parera to John Hart, the founder of Hart and Sons, Violin Makers, London (established 1825). Hart bought the instrument when it was auctioned by Puttick & Simpson in 1877, after which it was purchased by the English collector Richard Bennett in 1885. He retained it until 1893. Then the violin maker William Ebsworth Hill bought it from Bennett’s heirs. Hill, the founder of Hill & Sons, a musical instrument company that is still in business today, is also the author of two standard works on Stradivari and Guarneri. In 1895 the London collector A.W. Young acquired the instrument; it was in his keeping until his death in 1930, whereupon his daughter inherited it. In 1950 the London-born Swiss violin maker/dealer,

Henry Werro, bought the instrument with the aim of completing a string quartet equipped entirely with Stradivarius instruments. Werro was forced to sell the instrument in 1960 to Hans Schicker, a Freiburg colleague, in order to cover the legal costs of the ‘Violin war’ he had triggered.

On 7 July 1960, the hundredth birthday of the composer Gustav Mahler, Rolf Habisreutinger acquired the viola. In honour of the composer, the viola was christened with his name.



Antonius Stradiuarius Cremonensis
Faciebat Anno 1672



GUSTAV MAHLER
1672



1644
* Antonio Stradivari

GOLDEN PERIOD

1737
† Antonio Stradivari

DE KERMADEC-BLÄSS

Violoncello 1698

Particular to this instrument is the choice of wood: both the back and the ribs are made of poplar. In all probability, this indicates Stradivari searching for new ways in the crafting of instruments: undoubtedly a reason for his success.

This exceptional cello belonged for over a century to the Breton military family De Kermadec. In 1850 it came into the possession of the Parcevaux family, also from the Bretagne.

Around 1900 the Parisian Solo cellist Francis Touche acquired the instrument. Then from 1909 until 1949 it belonged to an English amateur musician Robert Templer who bequeathed it to Hélène Richardson.

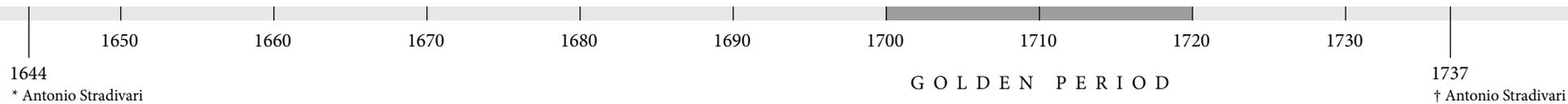
In 1957 the cello was acquired by Arnold Sprenger who had taken over his father's violin making workshop, in second generation, and who became a close advisor of Rolf Habisreutinger. The purchase of this cello for his foundation in 1958 initiated Habisreutinger's collecting activities. De Kermadec-Bläss was his own personal instrument that he also played in concert.

Antonius Stradiarius Cremonensis
Faciebat Anno 1698



DE KERMADEC-BLÄSS

1698



1644

* Antonio Stradivari

GOLDEN PERIOD

1737

† Antonio Stradivari

OMOBONO STRADIVARI

Violin 1710

Omobono was one of six children of Antonio Stradivari and his wife Francesca Feraboschi. Omobono and his brother Francesco, like their father, also became violin makers, while Omobono, even if he joined his father's workshop only at the age of twenty, is considered the more accomplished successor to his father.

This violin, made around 1710, furnishes ample evidence of the close collaboration between father and son – indeed proof of it. Most of the instruments made by Omobono and Francesco were signed after the death of their father in 1737. Undoubtedly, they were made with the best wood available in the workshop. According to an age test, the spruce tree wood of the top plate of the Omobono Stradivari is the same as that of three violins from his father's golden period.

The Omobono violin was once the showpiece of a collection owned by the Brazilian Industrialist Geraldo Modern (1913–2007). Geraldo, son of the Berlin violinist and conductor Max Modern, actually wanted to become a musician, and it could be said, in the end he partially fulfilled his dream by acquiring the violin. He went on to build up a collection of string instruments, which his daughter Renata later took over. It included the “Omobono Stradivari”.

Renata's husband, Rudolf Koekert, the famous violinist and concert master of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, gifted the instrument to his son Nicolas (born 1979). Nicolas, following in the footsteps of his father, also became a noted musician and concert master. Until 2018 he was professor at the private University for Music and Arts, Vienna. In 2018, the violin became part of our collection.



Omobonus Stradivarius. Jilus Antonij.
Cremonae Fecit Anno 1710



OMOBONO STRADIVARI
1710



1660

1670

1680

1690

1700

1710

1720

1730

1740

1679

* Omobono Stradivari

1742

† Omobono Stradivari

KING GEORGE

Violin 1710

The “King George” violin is named after the British King George III (1730–1820), a lover of fine arts who played the violin himself. It has not been recorded how the violin came to the royal court, though according to some sources, that King George I bought the instrument, or that he had commissioned it from Stradivari. In any case, his grandson George III, a dilettante of fine arts and music, enjoyed an extensive musical education under the tutorship of the violinist Johann Peter Solomon. In 1800 George III gifted the instrument to his loyal Scottish officer C. Laffin whereby it acquired the name “Scottish”.

On 18 June 1815, this officer fell in the Battle of Waterloo, and apparently the instrument was found undamaged at his side. His heirs thereupon gave it for sale to the violin maker Charles Maucotel (1807–1860). In 1852 the instrument found its way to Germany and came into the possession of Bernhardt Moliq (1802–1869). Moliq had studied with Ludwig Spohr (1784–1859) and Pietro Rovelli (1793–1838) and it was the latter who recommended him to a position at the Munich court.

However, in 1849, Moliq immigrated to London securing a position at the Royal Academy as professor of composition. In 1866 he returned to Germany where he died in 1869.

In that same year, Moliq’s student Baron Theodor von Dreyfus (1839–1899) acquired the violin. He was a passionate amateur musician and father-in-law of the conductor Felix Weingartner. It was in his possession until 1889.

The “King George” was then bought by the German violin maker August Riechers (1836–1893) who sold it to a sponsoring organization in London. This organization in turn gifted it to the German violinist in Berlin, Waldemar Meyer (1853–1940) who had been a student of Joseph Joachim.

In 1920, the Danish violinmaker company Hjorth in Copenhagen bought the “King George”, selling it in 1922 to the Danish violinist-pedagogue Gunna Breuning-Storm (1891–1966). She sent it to the London instrument dealer Hill for verification. It was verified as authentic.

In 1929 the Berlin violinmaker/instrument dealer Emil Herrmann bought the violin. Worldwide during the 20th century, his workshop was recognized as the most important and reputable of its kind. The company relocated completely to New York in 1925.

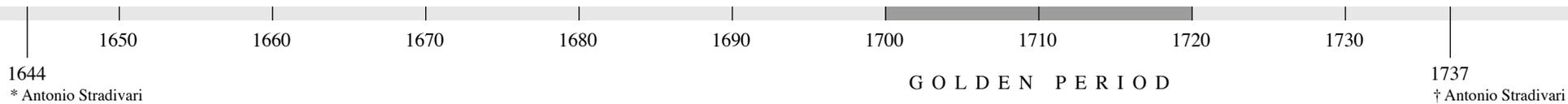
In 1929 the “King George” was sold to the mother of the Japanese ‘Wunderkind’ Koichi Kishi (1909–1937) who gifted it to her son. In all probability, the “King George” was the first Stradivarius in Japanese ownership. Koichi Kishi, who had studied with the composer Paul Hindemith and the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler also made a name for himself as a composer and conductor. In the latter capacity he conducted a concert of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 1935.

Emil Herrmann who, in his day, enjoyed exclusive trade in musical instrument with Japan, was able to re-purchase the “King George” from Kishi’s heirs. It thus returned to New York. Since the early 1960s this instrument has belonged to our foundation.

Antonius Stradiarius Cremonensis
Faciebat Anno 1710



KING GEORGE
1710



AUREA

Violin 1715

As the name of this violin indicates, it dates from Stradivari's golden period: 1700–1720. The perfection of the instrument's proportions proclaims it as an instrument crafted at the zenith of the great master's oeuvre. The "Aurea" is famous for its easy playability and unforgettable sonority.

The "Aurea's" known history can be traced back as far as the 19th century. It belonged to the German Baron von der Leyen of Krefeld (1801–1858) who bequeathed it to his son-in-law Rudolf von Beckerath (1838–1888), a friend of Johannes Brahms. Rudolf's son Willy, incidentally, made impressive portraits of Brahms and it is assumed that the "Aurea" was played in the presence of the composer.

Franziska Frise (1846–1910), a successful German violinist and chamber music soloist of some repute, having married the pianist Henri Völlmar, settled in Krefeld where she became acquainted with the Beckerath family. It is not known if she possessed the "Aurea" but it is certain that she played it between 1865 and 1873.

In 1873 the instrument was bought by Mark Maerklin, who kept it for only two years. It then came into the possession of the left-handed violinist Richard Barth who had it altered for his use, keeping it until 1909. Thereafter, from 1909 till 1928, it belonged to an unknown German before the New York instrument dealer Emil Herrmann purchased it.

Herrmann then sold the "Aurea" in 1930 to Ralph Hubbard Norton (1875–1953), a rich steel industrialist and art collector in Chicago. Norton is also known as the founder of an art school and a museum in Palm Beach which bears his name.

After Norton's death the "Aurea" was bequeathed to the Chicago Orchestral Association. There it was played by Victor Aitay (1921–2012), Hungarian-born concert master of the Budapest Opera and founder of the Aitay Quartet. Aitay, having fled the Nazis, immigrated to the United States where he became first concert master of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

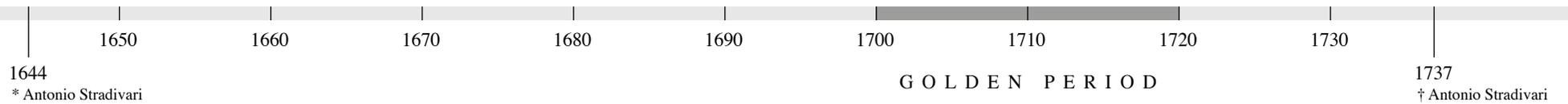
The "Aurea" became part of our collection in the early 1960s.



Antonius Stradiarius Cremonensis
Faciebat Anno 1715



AUREA
1715
↓



1644
* Antonio Stradivari

GOLDEN PERIOD

1737
† Antonio Stradivari

BONAMY DOBRÉE – SUGGIA

Violoncello 1717

The “Bonamy Dobrée – Suggia” from Stradivari’s golden period is an outstanding example of his work, embodying a culmination in the art of cello crafting.

The earliest record pertaining to this instrument is found in a notebook of the French violin maker Charles-Eugène Gand (1825–1892) in which he describes it and names the owner: an English gentleman, Bonamy Dobrée (1818–1907), son of the governor of the Bank of England of the same name. During this period the instrument was regularly played by the French cellist Jules-Bernard Lasserre (1838–1906) to whom Camille Saint-Saëns dedicated his first cello sonata.

In 1876, Lord Ernest Illingworth Holden (1856–1937) bought the instrument and lent it to Allan Hancock (1875–1965) a virtuoso of the time. Then, in 1902, the London lacquer company Hudson & Kearns acquired it, retaining it until 1919. Edward Hudson (1854–1936), a partner of the company and an enthusiastic amateur cello player, in admiration of the Portuguese musician Guilhermina Suggia (1885–1950), gifted it to her in 1919.

Suggia, a onetime lover of Pablo Casals (1876–1973) who had settled in London in 1914, is considered the first female cellist of international repute. The London Tate Gallery, Millbank possesses a portrait of her by Augustus John with this instrument. Suggia played it from then on until her death in 1950, bequeathing it to the Royal Academy of Music, London.

In 1951 the Royal Academy sold the instrument to the Russian-born virtuoso Edmund Kurtz (1908–2004). He had been trained by Pablo Casals, Julius Klengel (1859–1933) and Diran Alexanian (1881–1954) – the best cello virtuosi of the time.

Ten years later, in 1961, the American collector Samuel Crocker (1888–1963) acquired the instrument. It was in his possession for only a short time before it became part of our collection.

Antonius Stradiuarius Cremonensis
Faciebat Anno 1717



BONAMY DOBRÉE – SUGGIA
1717



1644
* Antonio Stradivari

GOLDEN PERIOD

1737
† Antonio Stradivari

GIBSON

Viola 1734

A whole long life's experience is mirrored in this contralto viola – possibly the last instrument of this type to have been made by Stradivari in his nineties. The superlative craftsmanship and its tonal beauty offer more than adequate proof of the creativity the master retained into old age.

The first owner of this viola was the steel spring manufacturer Joseph Gillott of Birmingham (1799–1872), a musical instrument collector, amateur musician and friend and patron of the English painter William Turner (1775–1851). After his death on 29 April 1872, Gillott's collection of 153 instruments was auctioned at Christies. At this sale, George Hart (1833–1897), a violin maker and dealer in musical instruments of the company Hart & Sons in third generation, won the bid for the Gibson viola.

In 1873 the viola was acquired by Edouard Maria Heincque, Marquis de Saint-Senoeh (1826–1885) for his Stradivari Quartet. The Marquis, an offspring of old aristocracy, possessor of a chateau in Varennes, had been a magistrate at the Court of Auditors and a member of the Legion of Honour. The quartet already possessed several Stradivarius instruments: the “Chant du Cygne”, a violin of 1737 – the last to have been made by the master, the “Saint Senoeh Murray”, a violin of 1698, as well as the “Saint Senoeh” cello also from the same year. After the death of the Marquis the quartet was disbanded and, on 15 May 1886, at an auction at Drouots, the French dealers Gand & Bernadel won the bid for the viola.

In 1891, when the instrument came up for sale at the London auction house Hill, the wealthy Bremen merchant of cotton, textiles and textile machinery, Johann Ludwig Baron von Knoop (1821–1894) bought it. Von Knoop, who had

been raised to the rank of baron by Tsar Alexander II, was one of the richest men of his time; his passion was collecting valuable violins.

On von Knoop's death George Alfred Gibson (1849–924) bought the viola, whereupon it was named after him. Gibson was also the possessor of several famous violins, one of which was played by the celebrated Bronislav Hubermann.

From Gibson's estate, the viola passed to a Scottish captain and amateur musician named Galashiels Murray who added it to his Stradivari string quartet. Murray kept the instrument for only two years after which the complete set of four instruments was sold to Rembert Wurlitzer (1904–1963). Wurlitzer, heir to a German dynasty of instrument makers dating back to the middle of the 19th century, was famous for founding the largest violin making house in history. Hundreds of Stradivaris and other prestigious instruments passed through his workshop.

In 1929 the German violin maker and musical instrument dealer Fridolin Hamma (1881–1969) from Stuttgart bought the “Gibson”. It is described in his book, *Masterpieces in the Art of Italian Violin Making* published in 1931.

The instrument was sold in 1936 to the collector Dr. Hans Kühne from Cologne, who kept it for two years before selling it in 1938, to the dealers Albert Caressa from Paris (1866–1939) and Emil Herrmann (1888–1968). They had transferred their business from Berlin to New York before the war. After Caressa's death, William Hymanson, a member of the New York Musical Art Quartet played the viola.

In 1945 Robert W. Bliss, an American collector, acquired the “Gibson”, selling it ten years later to Samuel L. Crocker (1888–1963) of Los Angeles. Crocker added it to his quartet which already possessed the violins “Villefranche” from 1729, the “Gabriel Starck” from 1717 as well as the “Suggia” cello from 1717. In 1964 the viola became part of our foundation. The “Gibson” together with the “Gustav Mahler” form a brilliant cornerstone of the foundation.



Antonius Stradiuarius Cremonensis
Faciebat Anno 1734



GIBSON
1734



FRANCESCO GOFFRILLER

Violoncello Udine 1730 – 1740

In the history of Venetian violin making the Goffriller family played an important role. Their celli especially, instruments of exceptional tonal quality, have been used by some of the world's best soloists, for example Jacqueline du Pré and Pablo Casals.

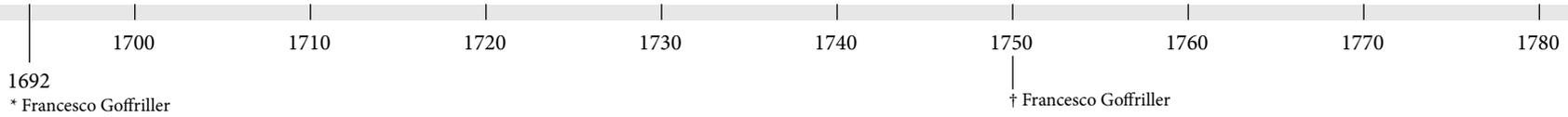
Francesco Goffriller (1692 – circa 1750) learnt his craft from the Venetian violin maker Matteo Goffriller (b. Brixen 1659–1742). The latter founded the Venetian violin making school, having settled there after his marriage to the daughter of the lute maker Martin Kaiser.

For some time, Francesco was believed to be the brother of Matteo Goffriller, but it has been ascertained that Matteo, in fact, was his father. Both worked closely together, however Francesco is considered to have been the master craftsman. In 1714 Francesco moved to Udine where he worked until 1737, dying sometime between 1740 and 1750.

This cello, made during Francesco Goffriller's time in Udine between 1730 and 1740, is a wonderful example of his craftsmanship. Apart from being in excellent condition, its beauty is further enhanced by a ruby-red lacquer, typical of Venetian instruments of that time. Our foundation acquired this instrument in 2023.



GOFFRILLER
1730-1740



1692
* Francesco Goffriller

† Francesco Goffriller

GIOVANNI BATTISTA GUADAGNINI

Violin WOLLGANDT Milan 1755

This superb violin was made in 1755 by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini (1711–1786), whose father is presumed to have been a pupil of Stradivari.

From 1900 to 1924 the violin served as Edgar Wollgandt's (1880–1949) concert instrument. Wollgandt, a pupil of Hugo Heermann (1844–1935), had been the concert-master of the Leipzig's Gewandhaus Orchestra and first violinist of the Gewandhaus Quartet. The violin was named after him.

In 1924 the instrument dealer Emil Herrmann bought the violin transferring it to New York. There, the soap manufacturer and patron of the arts, Samuel Fels, bought it in 1925, intending it as a gift for the violinist Isaak Briselli (1912–2005) whom he admired. Briselli, born in Odessa and wishing to complete his studies in the USA made the journey there via Germany. For Briselli, Fels commissioned a Violin Concerto (op. 14) from Samuel Barber in 1939. Briselli, in fact, never played it; the last movement did not please him.

The violin passed to the New York banker and collector Alfred O. Corbin (1874–1941) in 1932 in whose possession it remained until his death in 1935. Thereafter, John Paul Corigliano Sr. (1901–1975) bought the Wollgandt and it was this instrument which he played for 18 of his 23-year tenure as concert master of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. John Paul Corigliano Sr. was the father of the composer John Paul Corigliano Jr. (born 1938) whose composition, a Violin Concerto played by Joshua Bell, was used for the soundtrack of the film "The Red Violin". This film won the Oscar for Best Film Music in 2000.

Albert A. Mell, violinist and professor of music at Queens College, New York, acquired the instrument in 1953 keeping it until 2007. Professor Mell was the publisher and editor of the Journal of the Violin Society of America (VSA) from 1976 until 2005.

In 2007 the Swiss collector and instrument dealer Samuel Ferriz bought the violin keeping it until 2022. In the same year, the Huggler-Coray family made the purchase of the "Wollgandt" for our foundation possible.



WOLLGANDT
1755



1711
* Giovanni Battista Guadagnini

1786
† Giovanni Battista Guadagnini



Her Imperial Highness, Princess Takamado,
with Curdin Coray, President of our Foundation,
at the Stradivarius Festival in October 2018
in Tokyo. The “Bonamy Dobrée – Suggia” cello
from our collection is on display.

Ant. Stanjic

