



THE COLOURS OF
ANTONIO
STRADIVARI

OLEG KASKIV
plays the Szigeti/Walter
from 1718

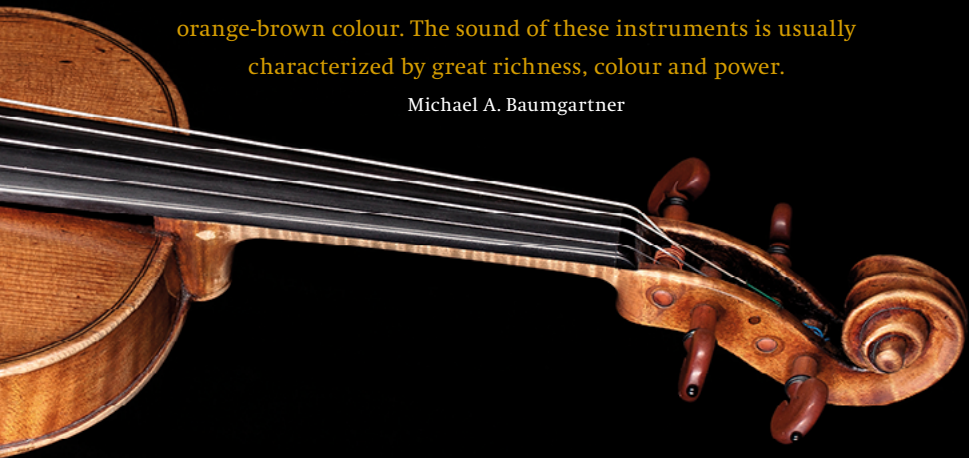
The ex-Deszö Szigeti/ex-Benno Walter Stradivari (1718)



ANTONIO STRADIVARI (1644–1737)

Antonio Stradivari is universally regarded as the greatest of all violin makers. The combination of tonal qualities, visual beauty and mastery of workmanship of his instruments has never been surpassed. The striking varnish that has a great influence on the quality and power of his violins is a secret to this day. The golden period of Antonio Stradivari (defined as from 1700–1720) led to the ultimate development of his ingenious work. The chosen tone woods are beautifully flamed maple backs in one or two pieces. The shape of the violins became broader and the varnish took on the well-known brilliant orange-brown colour. The sound of these instruments is usually characterized by great richness, colour and power.

Michael A. Baumgartner



“It was my intention to display the magnificent tonal qualities of this instrument, the golden period violin of 1718 from Antonio Stradivari, the ex-Deszö Szigeti/ex-Benno Walter. For this venture the violinist Oleg Kaskiv, Professor at the International Menuhin Music Academy, was chosen as he represents both the power and the sweetness of the Yehudi Menuhin heritage. It is my strong belief that the resulting combination portrays the violin at its best.” / **Walter Fischli**





EUGÈNE YSAÏE (1858–1931)

Sonata No. 1 in G minor, Op. 27, “To Joseph Szigeti”

- 1 Grave (Lento assai) 2 Fugato (Molto moderato)
- 3 Allegretto poco scherzoso (Amabile)
- 4 Finale con brio (Allegro fermo)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

Sonata No. 2 in A minor, BWV 1003

- 5 Grave 6 Fuga 7 Andante 8 Allegro

ERNEST BLOCH (1880–1959)

Suite No. 1, Op. 83 (1958), “To Yehudi Menuhin”

- 9 Prelude 10 Andante tranquillo 11 Allegro – Andante
- 12 Allegro energico

FRITZ KREISLER (1875–1962)

Recitativo and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6

“A Eugène Ysaÿe, le maître et l’ami”

- 13 Lento con espressione – Presto e brillante

STRADIVARI'S EX-DESZÖ SZIGETI/EX-BENNO WALTER VIOLIN (1718)

The violin presented on this CD is an extraordinary example of Stradivari's golden period creations. The back is one piece of attractively figured maple cut on the slab, which was a rather unusual choice during Stradivari's golden period. / The sides and scroll, with broad flames, are cut on the quarter. The table is made from two pieces of medium-grained spruce. The varnish, although obviously old, is of the very best recipe and of an extraordinary orange-brown colour on the glorious golden-brown Cremona ground. / The history of the ex-Deszö Szigeti/ex-Benno Walter – which bears its original label dated 1718 – is well-documented and goes far back in time. Having been in the possession of a Prince of Donau-Eschingen – whose family was amongst the earliest admirers of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – it was owned by the important German violinist Joseph Anton Bohrer (1783–1863), who is also recorded as owner of a c1731 Guarnerius del Gesù. / The next recorded owner was Baron Ludwig (Louis) von Eichthal (1837–1912), whose family was raised to nobility by the King of Bavaria in 1814. He bequeathed the instrument to the violinist Benno Walter (1847–1901) whose name is still attached to the instrument. In 1911, Benno Walter's son sold the violin to W.E. Hill & Sons, London, but it was returned to Germany after a very short period through a transaction from Alfred Hill to Hamma & Co. and Ernst Kessler, Berlin – it was sold to the German-born violinist Prof. Bernhard Sinsheimer (1870–1947) who, in due course, took it to the United States. Bernhard Sinsheimer is recorded as having owned at least five Stradivari instruments during his long career as well as (among others) violins by Bergonzi, Guadagnini, and a fine 1739 Guarnerius del Gesù. / In the United States, the violin was handled – among others – by Emil Herrmann and Oswald Schildbach, New York. It was Schildbach

who sold it to the late Herbert Limberg. The violin was subsequently passed on to the violinist Deszö Szigeti (1880–1963), an uncle of the famous violinist Joseph Szigeti, who died in 1973 in Lucerne. The instrument was undoubtedly also played by Joseph Szigeti. / The tonal qualities of the ex-Deszö Szigeti/ex-Benno Walter are simply as superb as an outstanding vintage can be: the sound is deep, sonorous, warm and robust. It is in all probability due to the slab-cut back that the G and D strings are somewhat darker than usual and the E and A strings may have a little more velvet. The instrument has an enormous range and depth of colour that is an inspiration to any artist.

Michael A. Baumgartner

ICONO- & BIBLIOGRAPHY

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VIOLINIST OLEG KASKIV

Oleg Kaskiv was born in 1978 into a family of musicians in the small Ukrainian village of Kremenezh. He started playing the violin at the age of seven under the guidance of his violinist parents and later entered the M. Lysenko National Academy of Music in Lviv. / In 1996, he won a scholarship to study in Switzerland at the famous International Menuhin Music Academy (IMMA), founded by Lord Yehudi Menuhin in 1977. At the Academy, Oleg's great mentor was Professor Alberto Lysy (educated directly by Lord Yehudi Menuhin and his only student), who passed on the great romantic violin playing to him. / Today, Oleg Kaskiv is a soloist and lead violin professor at the IMMA. He has also taught at the Conservatoire de Genève since 2007. / As a soloist, Oleg Kaskiv performs regularly with great success in his native country with the National Symphony of Ukraine, Odessa Philharmonic and Lviv Philharmonic Symphony Orchestras as well as worldwide with the Camerata Lysy, Camerata de Lausanne, Symphonisches Orchester Zürich, Orchestre National de Belgique, Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal and Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden. / He is a laureate of many prestigious violin competitions: Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition (Belgium), International Oistrakh Competition (Ukraine), International Kotorovych Violin Competition (Ukraine), International Spohr Competition (Germany), Montreal International Musical Competition (Canada), Premio Lipizer (Italy), International Niredgazi Violin Competition (Japan), International Dvarionas Competition (Lithuania) and International Molinari Competition (Switzerland).

OLEG KASKIV'S PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOLO PIECES

Eugène Ysaÿe – Sonata for Violin Solo No. 1, Op. 27, dedicated to Joseph Szigeti

When the invitation to make a recording on the instrument that Joseph Szigeti himself played was offered to me, I was absolutely thrilled and ecstatic to include this work, Sonata No. 1, dedicated to Joseph Szigeti, on the CD. / In 2001, I was preparing for the Queen Elizabeth Competition, and the Sonata No. 1 was a mandatory work in the second round. It was a great opportunity for me to learn this work with my teacher, Alberto Lysy, who gave me many valuable ideas for the work. Since then, the First Sonata has become one of my favorites among the Ysaÿe Solo Violin Sonatas.

Johann Sebastian Bach – Sonata for Violin Solo, BWV 1003 in A minor

Of all the Bach Sonatas and Partitas, I performed the Second Sonata in A minor most often, in concerts and competitions. At the L. Spohr (Germany) and Montreal (Canada) International Music Competitions, I won prizes for the best performance of Bach works. / For years I have dreamt of recording this piece on my first solo CD. I am delighted that I can finally share my love and interpretation of this work with the listener.



Ernest Bloch – Suite No. 1 for Violin Solo, dedicated to Yehudi Menuhin

I feel lucky to have studied at the International Menuhin Music Academy in Switzerland and to have met Yehudi Menuhin and Alberto Lysy. / The circumstances in which I had to learn this work were not ideal, but my encounter with this piece turned into a relationship I still cherish. / Two weeks prior to my concert at the Audi Festival in Germany, Alberto Lysy suggested that I learn the Bloch Suite No. 1. It was a most stressful time for me as I knew that Yehudi Menuhin was going to attend the performance. But how rewarding was it to hear those congratulatory words on my performance from Mr. Menuhin.

Fritz Kreisler – Recitativo and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6, dedicated to Eugène Ysaÿe

I have always admired the competency of Fritz Kreisler as a composer, one of the greatest violinists of the 20th century. Kreisler published his only composition for solo violin, the Recitativo and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6, in the year 1910 and dedicated the work to Eugène Ysaÿe. Recitativo and Scherzo-Caprice is a very effective encore piece, and I often include it in my recitals. / **Oleg Kaskiv**

Recorded: 15–17 August 2012, Volkshaus Studio, Basel / **Sound director and balance engineer:** Daniel Dettwiler / **Editing and assistant engineering:** Benjamin Gut / **Mixing, mastering and editing:** Idee und Klang Studio Basel / **Product Management:** David Klein / **Violin expert and care:** Michael Baumgartner, Basel / **Photos:** Jürg Isler, Basel; Martin Spiess, Liestal / **Design:** Sprenger Grafik Design, Basel / **Leaflet proof reading:** Billy Gilbert, Ettingen / **Producer:** Walter Fischli, Allschwil

