



Backstory of the Guadagnini

Carmel Hakendorf was a virtuoso violinist, who in the early 1950s was invited by Sir John Barbirolli to give her debut in London. Unfortunately the excitement of the invitation was overshadowed by the poor quality of her violin. Determined to ensure that this young artist had an instrument worthy of her considerable talent, the Music Committee of South Australia launched a public subscription, which with the help of several performances by Carmel, raised 1,750 pounds. With this considerable sum they purchased a magnificent violin crafted by J B Guadagnini in 1751 from A.E Smith in Sydney with a Certificate of authenticity issued by Emile Francasis Succr and dated Paris 7 March 1952.

In August 1955 the South Australian Guadagnini Violin Trust was established to preserve the violin for future generations. Miss Hakendorf held the violin for many years and was a member of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. Following her retirement, the violin was lent to a number of well-known violinists including William Hennessy, Jane Peters and Sophie Rowell.

Now almost 60 years later, the violin is valued at close to one million dollars. However like all instruments it needs ongoing care and maintenance and given the increase in its value the insurance premiums have been steadily rising. Unfortunately once the violin was purchased no additional funds were raised to cover these ongoing costs and the violin was at risk of falling into disrepair. Ngeringa Arts became aware of this through its involvement with the Australian String Quartet. Given its interest in providing outstanding musicians with fine instruments, Ngeringa Arts approached the Trust and suggested an amalgamation.

Although the legal process took some time, due to the value of instrument, Ngeringa Arts was appointed Trustee of the instrument by the Supreme Court of South Australia on 17 May 2013.

We are all absolutely delighted with this outcome and to celebrate we are planning a special concert in the 2014 series to showcase this rare and precious instrument. The violin is currently on loan to Sophie Rowell.

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