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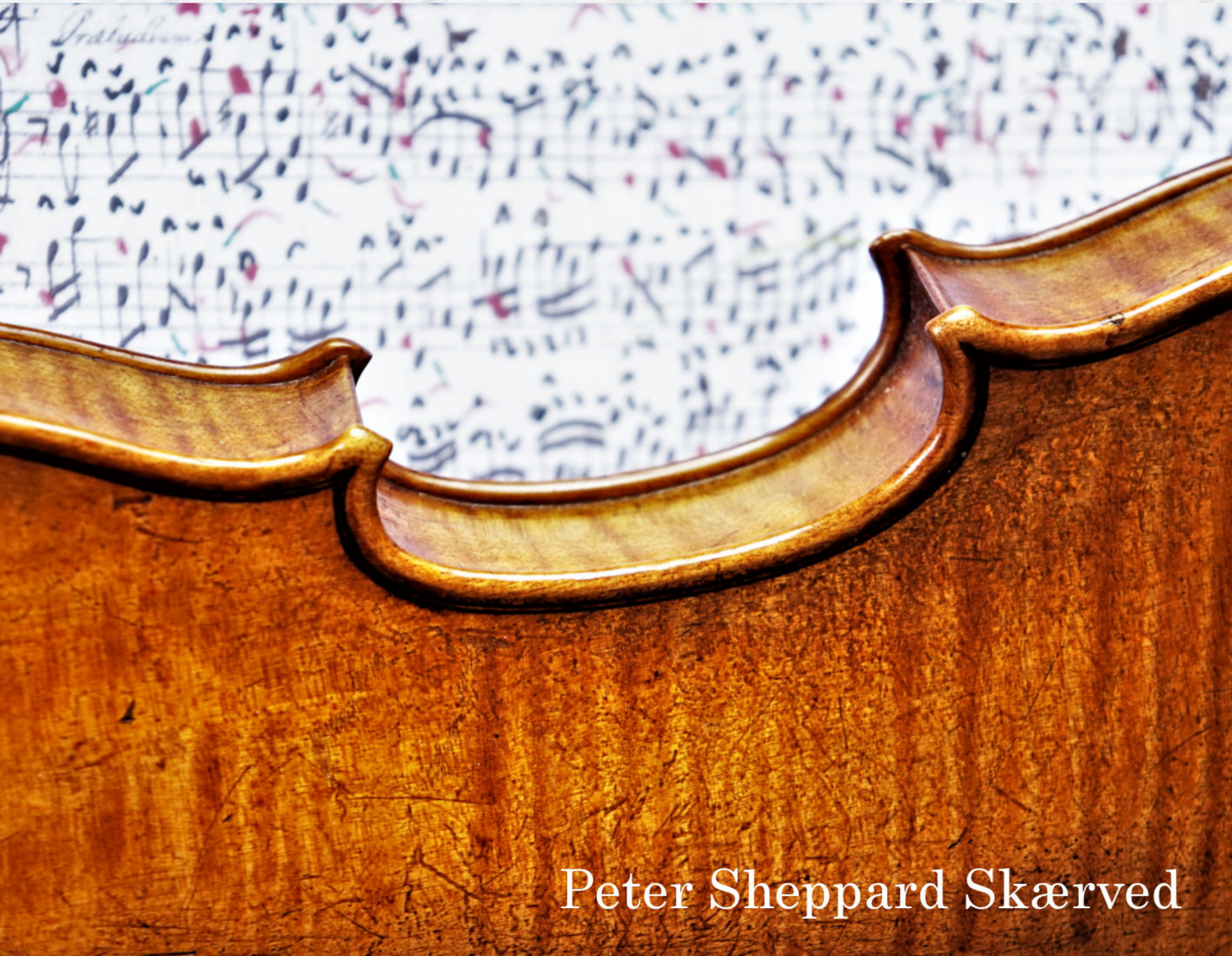
THE GREAT VIOLINS

volume 3: Antonio Stradivari, 1685

The Klagenfurt Manuscript



Peter Sheppard Skærved

The Great Violins — Volume 3

Solo works from The Klagenfurt Manuscript (anonymous, c. 1685)

Note: titles in quotemarks are written in the MS (sometimes abbreviated therein). Where none are given there, descriptions allocated by the soloist are shown here in square brackets. "Normal tuning" indicated if no scordatura settings printed.

Disc A **total duration 71:41**

1	'Præambulus'	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:09
2	[Allemande]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:03
3	[Minuetto]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:51
4	'Finale'	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:13
5	'Allamand'	G major		1:17
6	'Courent'	G major		1:32
7	'Sarabande'	G major		1:08
8	[Gigue]	A major	Scordatura AEae	2:21
9	[Præambulus]	G major	Scordatura GDad	1:16
10	[Courent]	G major	Scordatura GDad	1:33
11	'Sarabande'	G major	Scordatura GDad	1:17
12	'Gigue'	G major	Scordatura GDad	1:21
13	'Preludio'	G minor	Scordatura GDad	1:07
14	[Allemande]	G minor	Scordatura GDad	1:53
15	[Sarabande]	D minor	Scordatura AEad	1:43
16	[Allemande]	G minor	Scordatura GDad	1:42
17	[Minuetto]	G minor	Scordatura GDad	2:13
18	[Sarabande]	G minor	Scordatura GDad	2:10
19	[Gigue]	G major		1:53
20	[Minuetto]	E major		1:33
21	'Præludium'	D minor	Scordatura ADad	1:24
22	[Allemande]	D minor	Scordatura ADad	1:26
23	'Courrente'	D minor	Scordatura ADad	1:23
24	'Sarabande'	D major	Scordatura ADad	1:05
25	[Minuetto]	D minor	Scordatura ADad	1:08
26	'Sarabande'	D minor	Scordatura ADad	1:21
27	[Minuetto]	D major	Scordatura ADad	1:14
28	'Preambulus'	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:33
29	[Minuetto]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:55
30	[Gigue]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:22
31	[Allemande]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:50
32	[Passepied]	A major	Scordatura AEae	2:02
33	[Sarabande]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:24
34	[Courent]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:01
35	'Double'	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:11
36	[Double]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:47
37	[Minuetto]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:05
38	[Finale]	A major	Scordatura AEae	1:25
39	'Pfefferstossl'	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:01
40	[Sarabande]	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:14
41	[Præludium]	D major	Scordatura AEad	0:47
42	[Gigue]	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:20
43	[Marcia]	D minor	Scordatura DFad	0:36
44	[Minuetto]	D minor	Scordatura DFad	0:34
45	[Gigue]	D minor	Scordatura DFad	0:54
46	[Courent]	D minor	Scordatura DFad	0:47
47	'Aria'	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:05
48	'Courent'	D major	Scordatura AEad	0:52
49	'Sarabande'	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:20
50	'Sarabande'	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:19
51	[Gigue]	D major	Scordatura AEad	0:48
52	[Gigue]	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:46

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Manuscript from the collection of Landesmuseums Kärnten, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Austria
Violin (1685) by Antonio Stradivari

Length 454mm; Back 328mm; Width 150/101/187mm; ribs 27mm
Label: 'Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis / Faciebat Anno 1685'
Stamp on fingerboard: Messrs W. E. Hill 'M812'
From the Collection of Historical Musical Instruments, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, England (Principal: Professor Linda Merrick)

Disc B **total duration 70:29**

1	[Præludium]	D minor		1:32
2	[Minuetto]	D minor		1:20
3	[Courent]	D minor		1:47
4	[Double]	D minor	}	1:44
5	[Præludium]	D major	Scordatura AEad	2:14
6	'Allamande'	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:22
7	'Courent'	D major	Scordatura AEad	1:24
8	[Gigue]	G minor		1:05
9	[Sarabande]	G minor		1:21
10	[Double]	G minor		1:23
11	[Gigue]	G minor		1:13
12	[Minuetto]	G minor		0:47
13	[Double]	G minor		0:53
14	[Courent]	G minor		1:39
15	[Gigue]	G minor		1:29
16	'Gigue'	G major		1:43
17	'Gigue'	G major		1:12
18	[Præludium]	A major	Scordatura AEae	3:20
19	[Sarabande]	A minor		1:27
20	[Siciliana]	A minor		1:43
21	[Gigue]	A minor		1:32
22	[Præludium]	A major		1:27
23	[Gigue]	E minor		1:13
24	[Minuet]	G minor		1:26
25	[Gigue]	C major		1:45
26	[Gigue]	D minor		1:33
27	[Tema con variazioni]	A major		2:04
28	[Gigue]	A major		1:27
29	[Gigue]	D major		1:22
30	[Gigue]	G minor		1:26
31	[Gigue]	C minor		1:51
32	[Gigue]	D major		1:26
33	[Gigue]	D major		1:28
34	[Gigue]	A major		2:25
35	[Allemande]	G minor		2:19
36	[Allemande]	B minor		1:00
37	[Courent]	B minor		1:52
38	[Minuetto]	B minor		1:14
39	[Sarabande]	C minor		1:25
40	[Gigue]	G minor		2:06
41	[Gigue]	A minor		1:52
42	[Sarabande]	A minor		2:16
43	[Minuetto]	G minor		1:15
44	[Courent]	F major		1:48

The Klagenfurt Manuscript and a Violin by Antonio Stradivari – A personal journey.

Just over two years ago, I made first acquaintance with the collection of works for violin known as the 'Klagenfurt Manuscript'. It was not a discovery, but certainly became one for me. Noticing a reference to the manuscript in Greta Moens-Haenen's excellent work *17th Century German violin technique*, I chased down the library reference.[i] This led me to the 'Landesmuseums Kärnten', Klagenfurt. The helpful and enthusiastic staff, led by Alexandra Krug, let me have all the resources that I needed.

Soon, I was able to shut myself away with my facsimile of the MS at my work desk, with violin, bow, pens and pencils. There's always a thrill in 'sounding-out' a new work for the first time. The excitement is the same, whether it's by a living composer, or one no longer with us. I should explain what I mean. The unsexy truth about violin practice is that, like composing, it is a time-consuming, largely silent process. In my case, it never involves a 'read-through': I read music, like any musician, so I don't need to play a piece to hear what the notes are. And, all the notes in the right order are not music. Nothing is learnt until each gesture, small or large, is broken down, analysed, studied, and then assembled or re-assembled into a whole. This whole cannot be appreciated, until it is played, heard, shared, with an audience.

This process is slightly complicated with certain types of music, and this was the case here. There are two types of music manuscripts: those intended for the composer and those intended for someone else. In the first instance, the material will tend towards the quality of mnemonic, as it is created either for the composer to play from, or en-route to publication. Neither of these means that the notation will be, necessarily, untidy or hard to read, but more likely that there will be elements of what we might call shorthand, or that the material will be laid out freely on the page, as it does not need to be beautifully presented. In the second instance, of scores intended for people other than the composer, there's a crude division that can be observed between recipients, which is that they are either collaborators or strangers. In the latter case, what is most often observed is the creation of beautiful 'presentation' scores. In the former case, the collaborator might range from editors to players. It is fair to say that the composer will know that their collaborators will be comfortable with scores which are less neat, and, the more habitual the collaboration, veering closer to the quality of mnemonic mentioned above. A famous example of this is the appearance of the piano sonata scores which Beethoven sent to his long-serving

editor/engraver, who knew his handwriting, in the same way that pharmacists are able to decipher scrawling prescriptions brought over from a local doctor.

The Klagenfurt Manuscript is, for the most part written in a beautiful, economical, and, dare I say it, expressive hand. By this last, I mean that the handwriting betrays a sensitivity to the quality of the music which is being written out. A number of commentators have noted that this music has been copied out, but there are a number of factors which make this unlikely, in my opinion. Throughout the score there are a number of clues that this is a composer's material. Most of these pertain to errors, which are not those which I expect from a copyist, but made in the process of writing music down. These range from emendations, revisions of passages – including deletions and additions – to the text, through to what might be called 'creative mistakes'. I will explain.

What I call 'creative mistakes' result from what always seems like the composer being so caught up in their work, that (to give instances from this score) they forget which beat of a ¾ movement they are on, or, more dramatically 'go off reservation' in a set of divisions or variations, and abruptly embark on a variant which completely forgets how many bars there should be, and what the rhythmic structure is. One dramatic instance of this [Disc 2, track 27] invariably produces laughter from audiences, as the 'losing of one's way' is so overt.

It will be seen from this that I am sure, beyond any doubt, that the Klagenfurt Manuscript is not a copyist's work. There is one instance [Disc 1, track 39] of a movement which also exists in a variant by Johann Heinrich Schmelzer (c. 1620-1623–1680), but, in my opinion, this movement has been re-composed for the use of the maker of the Manuscript. Variants of eight or nine of the movements have been identified with three contemporaneous sources, to be found in Vienna, London and Brussels.

The second factor which affects the 'readability' of score, of any period, is how much the notation has the nature of 'tablature'. Tablature notion, whether by John Dowland or Helmut Lachenmann, tells you what to do, rather than what musical outcome to aim for. In the case of the hands of the violinist, it, in whatever manner is most convenient, tells you where to put the fingers and the bow at any given time. The music is what results from this activity. One result of a tablature notation is that such a score cannot be appreciated, heard, internally, in the way, for instance that it is relatively simple for a trained musician to read and play-through a Bach fugue in their head.

The music will only be 'heard' when the action is made, when it is played.

The element of 'tablature' notation found in the 'Klagenfurt Manuscript' is 'scordatura'. This Italian word has come to mean 'retuning', though of course, it clearly means 'tuning'. In its most common application to string instruments, it means that the strings are adjusted from the now (almost) universal GDAE (on the violin) to other combinations. I will talk more about the implications of this for these pieces later. There are two ways of notating when scordatura is used, and both were in common use in the 17th Century. The first method is to indicate the expected notes in the score or part, and the required tuning, and then let the player sort out where to put the fingers. This can be seen in, for instance, the *Sonate, symphonie, canzoni, Op.8* of Biagio Marini (1594–1663) of Venice. The other notational system is the 'tablature' method, which is to simply notate finger positions, and to allow the displaced tuning of the strings to effect the notes. This is the system used by Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1644–1704), and the author of the Klagenfurt Manuscript in the numerous scordatura movements found in the set.

The result of all this is that it was not possible for me to appreciate this score until I had spent hours at the desk with it, had puzzled out the scordaturas (there are some movements which require it, but where it has not been indicated), gradually moving to a 'sounding' version of this enormous cycle of movements. It was only as this work progressed that I began to realise the beauty in front of me. That dawning realisation, alone at my desk, with violin, bow, and pencil, was one of the most moving experiences of my artistic life.

The 'Klagenfurt Manuscript' is a book of about 80 leaves bound in a handsome vellum cover. The fore-edges are painted red, and there are slots cut in the binding enabling the volume to be laced shut. One of these slots still holds the remnants of the green ribbons which served this purpose. The style and condition of the binding makes is clear that it is contemporaneous to the paper, and the leading edge of the volume betrays that it has been used extensively in the past. The paper is of high quality; a problem familiar to anyone who works with 17th century manuscripts, of the ink working through the paper, is entirely absent. So the material is legible throughout, despite writing having been applied on both the recto and verso.

The pages are in landscape format (almost universally the case for music part books at this time), and have four printed staves. In the majority of cases, there is one movement per page.

Sometimes there are more, and in a few cases a movement starts on the verso and is finished on the recto page, ensuring that no page turns are necessary in these solo movements.

A small proportion of the movements bear titles, and the majority of these are to be found in the first 40 pages. A handful these have the effect of grouping the movements into 'partie' or suites, beginning with a 'Præambulus' or 'Præludium' and ending with 'Finale'. But these are the minority, and as the volume progresses, there is less attempt to rationalise the material thus.

The writing is clear throughout, and mostly appears to be in the same hand. There are about ten instances where the hand is looser, messier, but it's impossible to tell whether this is the result of writing in different circumstances or the work of a different person.

Seven different tunings are used in the Klagenfurt Manuscript. They are AEAE, GDAE ('standard tuning'), ADAE, GDAD, AEAD, ADAD, and DFAD. Care has been taken, in the majority of the 'scordatura' movements, to clearly indicate the tuning for the violin. The system used is that familiar from the work of Biber or Colombi: a four note chord is placed on the stave to the left of the clef (which, if you think about it, is counter-intuitive), indicating the pitches for each string. In a few cases, the scordatura changes within a group of works, but the composer has neglected to notate this. This resulted in a certain amount of work to puzzle out the correct tuning, reverse-engineering from the notation. The process was slightly complicated by the occasional error in the notation, which is found across the history of scordatura notation; it's inevitable.

I take a slightly different point of view on the position of scordatura from others. It is generally approached from the standpoint, which is an utterly reasonable one, that it enables the player to reach certain configurations, melodic or chordal, which are less convenient, or indeed, impossible, with what has become the standard tuning (GDAE) on the violin. The most obvious example of this in modern violin playing is to be found in Bluegrass or Mountain fiddling, where the tuning of AEAE is beloved because it enables instant octave transpositions with the same fingerings. There has also been, quite rightly, much written about the possible philosophical implications of certain tunings, as can be witnessed in Biber's *Rosary Sonatas*, which are more or less contemporary to the Klagenfurt Manuscript. However, in the months of performing, and discussing these works with audiences, another possibility has emerged, which has much to do with the choice of instrument for this recording.

The fascinating thing about tuning adjustments on an instrument as small and sensitive as a violin is the effect that it has on the architecture, and consequently the response time, of the instrument itself. The table of a violin, rarely more than 5mm thick at its thickest, is under considerable pressure from the strings bearing down on the bridge, which is around 25kg when the violin is at rest. The soundpost, inside the violin, does not support this pressure, but is lightly wedged in. Most of the tension is found on the treble (right hand) side of the table, on the E and A string side, which means that many violins have a propensity to collapse only on that side. Changing the intervals between strings not only increases or decreases the weight bearing down on the bridge, but more importantly how that weight is distributed through its two feet, onto either the bass or treble side of the instrument. By way of example, if the tuning is changed from DGAD, which is used a number of times in the Klagenfurt cycle, not only will the weight on the bridge be slightly less, but it will be slightly less on the treble side, whilst the weight on the bass side will be almost the same. The result is that the treble half of the table will lift slightly, vibrate a little looser, and the whole structure of the instrument will adjust to the newly distributed weight.

From a playing point of view, these changes result not only in different pitches, but in different timbres and colours. Audiences have given me useful analogies for these changes. It was suggested, for example, that the GDAD tuning gave the violin a fruitier sound, whereas AEAE, where the two strings on the bass side are tuned up, increases the 'paprika' in the sound (another audience suggestion). It is clear that 17th century composers who used such tunings were seeking these subtle, or dramatic timbral and colour adjustments.

The most extreme re-tunings found in the composers working in Northern Italy, Austria or northern Balkans at this time, seem to have been to tune the strings within one octave. Biber used the tuning E flat-G-B flat-E flat in the 'Crucifixion' Sonata of his Rosary cycle. Meanwhile, in Bologna, Giuseppe Colombi used a strikingly low re-tuning of GBDG. The first of these results in an anguished, appropriately 'painful' timbre. The second, with the violin comparatively loose, results in a boxy, hollow timbre.

Four movements [Disc 1, Tracks 43-46] of the Klagenfurt set use the tuning DFAD. This has a strikingly different result from the Eflat-G-Bflat-EFlat mentioned above. This D minor tuning gives the violin a brassy, trumpeting quality, and results in some excitingly jarring overtones and 'beats', very appropriate for the 'rustic' quality of this group of movements.

A violin for scordatura?

My first acquaintance with the Klagenfurt Manuscript, coincided, fortuitously, with my first meeting with the extraordinary Stradivari violin featured on this recording. Both instrument and manuscript date from the same decade of the 17th Century, the 1680s. As will be heard on this recording, this serendipity was more than just one of creation: instrument and music proved to be ideally suited for each other – the violin illuminated the manuscript, and the music illuminated the instrument.

This Antonio Stradivari violin is held in the extraordinary collection of the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. It is dated 1685, Stradivari's 41st year. I feel that it is important to note that, at this point, Stradivari was over two decades into a making career which would stretch to the mid-1730s, an extraordinarily long career by any standards.

The instrument is often referred to as a 'Violino Piccolo', the instrument that can be heard in J S Bach's *1st Brandenburg Concerto*. I would contend that this appellation is a product of history: throughout the 18th century, a creeping standardisation evolved, resulting from the change from a 'consort' style approach to ensemble playing to a the less variegated nature of the instrumental grouping which would eventually become the string section of the modern orchestra and the string quartet. This standardisation led to a body length of 350-350mm for violins becoming accepted as the norm, whereas the demands of music-making throughout most of the 17th century called for a greater variety of sizes of instruments from large to small (for the soprano 'end' of violin 'consorts' or 'concerti'), such as this one, which has a back length of 328mm.

The instrument has a two-piece maple back, and a two-piece spruce front. It clearly shows the influence of Nicola Amati (1596–1684), who died in the year before it was completed. On the day that I held the instrument in my hands for the first time, I also had with me the 1629 violin by Girolamo Amati (1561–1630), the father of Nicola. To my astonishment the two scrolls were clearly by a related, if not identical hand. In the past the great authority on the Cremonese violin, Charles Beare, has noted that the scroll appeared 'amatese' and maybe was made by one of the Amatis.[ii] It was clear to me, holding the two instruments side by side, that this is the case, and I would go further, and would say that the two scrolls were carved by the same artist. The

instrument has a rich gold varnish. The deep reds that are found in instruments made after ca.1700, are not to be found here.

The provenance of the violin can be traced back to 1855, when the great French maker and dealer, Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume (1798–1875) sold it to a Monsieur Zeiger, who sold it to the Lyon-based maker, Pierre Silvestre (1801–1859), who sold it to an English collector, H.B.Merton in 1876. From there it passed through the Chanot dealerships in London and Manchester, before joining the collection of a Richard Bennett, a Stockport-based 'cotton-spinner' who would build one of the greatest collections of Cremonese violins, which included the famous 'Messie' Strad. It was presented to the Manchester Public Libraries by James Chapman in 1946. [iii]

Like almost all of the Stradivari violins that survive, this instrument was converted to what is now referred to as a 'modern' set-up at some point in the 19th Century, perhaps when it passed through the hands of Vuillaume or Silvestre. At this point it was fitted with the tilted neck and bass bar. These changes, along with modern stringing, means that the violin does not immediately sound like it would have done when it was completed. However, fitting the instrument with uncovered gut strings, and playing with a design of bow appropriate for the time and place of its making, reveals much of the range of colour and subtleties of enunciation which Stradivari's composer/violinists would have demanded.

I was fascinated by the possibilities of this instrument, and intrigued as to how it would respond to different strings and tunings. I found that the instrument did not respond well, even at A415, to being tuned up the minor third which is required for Bach's *1st Brandenburg Concerto*. At this elevated pitch, all the delicacy and natural 'ring' evaporates from the instrument. I am fully aware, that, with the 'modern' setup, this may be a contestable judgement, but it was enough to make me look elsewhere for how the instrument might function best.

I began with works written in Northern Italy in the decades around the construction of this violin – solo preludes and suites by Torelli, Colombi, Vitali, Lonati, and more. At this time I was moving towards an understanding of the Klagenfurt Manuscript, most particularly the multiple 'scordatura' movements which I have discussed above. It was a concern to me that whatever instrument on which I played these various movements, the changes of relative tension and

pressures caused the tables of various types of 17th Century instruments, be they of Cremonese or Brescian design, to flex in a way which made it difficult to control the instruments after retuning.

It struck me that the smaller table of this violin might hold an answer to this question, and so I experimented with the Stradivari at the practice desk, in concert and in public research/salon-style events at the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music.

I learnt a number of things from these experiments. First of all, and most practically, the smaller size of the instrument and relatively low arching – almost flat on the top – has slightly more rigidity than most instruments with a full 350+mm back. This means that changes in relative tensions and weights applied to the belly of the instrument do not result in troublesome flexing of the instrument.

The second discovery was that different tunings resulted in striking changes in colour and timbre. The instrument is, especially strung with gut and played with a small late 17th Century style of bow, a jewel-box of colour possibilities. The array of colours increase exponentially when the instrument is retuned.

Concomitant with these realisations was perhaps the most exciting one, which was that the movements of the Klagenfurt Manuscript, with conventional tunings and not, work wonderfully well with this violin, and the small bow by the Genoese bowmaker, Antonino Airenti.[iv] It was clear to me that I had found the ideal instrument to reveal the colour and beauty of this large cycle of pieces for violin alone.

I would like to suggest, simply based on my experiences with this instrument, that it might be possible that one reason for making a smaller violin such as this one, as well as the conventional question of a higher pitch and lighter sound, was that it would respond well to the various tunings demanded by virtuosi of the time. I am happy to own that this suggestion is based on one thing only, which is my experience over 18 months with this music and this instrument. Other players and listeners might come to another conclusion.

The origin of the manuscript

The manuscript, which dates from the mid-1680s, was found in the Convent of St. Georgen am Längsee in Carinthia. The convent, founded in the 11th century, was severely reduced in size as a result of the Reformation, and by the middle of the 1500s consisted of the abbess Dorothea Rumpf and just two nuns. However, the community was rebuilt in the late 16th century, helped by Göss Abbey, By the time of the composition of these works, the convent had been rebuilt to a community of around 50 nuns and lay sisters, as well as the patients in the hospital, which could care for 500 in any year. The rebuilding had included renovations by the architect Pietro Francesco Carlone (1607–1681/82). Carlone converted the convent buildings into the fashionable baroque style.

We know nothing about the composition (or copying) of the manuscript, which bears no attribution. I have come to the conclusion that the composer/author was very likely to have been a nun, or a lay sister, working in the newly renovated buildings and chapel of the convent. This is only my speculation, but I am prepared to suggest that this was as likely to have been the case as not, and the anonymity of the source, sometimes referred to as a homogeneous sisterhood of similar minds, increases my confidence that that this is the case. Benedictine nuns in the 17th Century are nearly always anonymous: I have come to the conclusion that this manuscript is an extraordinary, even brilliant personal artistic work by one of these.

This recording consists of the movements for solo violin from the manuscript, which also includes a small number of contrapuntal pieces in four parts and some movements with basso continuo. I have presented the solo movements in almost the order that they appear in the source. I did decide to move the second group of pieces in A Major (pages 7-13 in my numbering) to a later position in Disc 1. From this it will be clear that the order of works in the manuscript is not structural, and, whilst there are clear key-based groupings of works, there are also many orphan movements, sometimes appearing in the middle of an apparent suite, and in one case, unplayable in situ, without a very awkward change of tuning (Page 28 lines 1-2).

The majority of movements are in recognisable dance forms, although many of them are unlabelled. They include allemandes, minuets, gigues, passepieds, courants, courrentes, sarabandes, sicilianas and a number of movements of which it might be said that they are suffering from an identity crisis! It is at these moments that I feel the composer most, and I feel that I see

her violin in hand, at her desk! The first two groupings of pieces include more ceremonial preludes and finales, which hover somewhere between the nature of 'overtures' or 'toccatas'.

There's very much a sense, throughout the pieces, of a relationship between the relatively new world of violin virtuosity and the expressivity of the gamba family, most particularly in the reaching across the 'arch' of the bridge from one extreme of the instrument to another, for emotional depth. In common with most of the music written for the violin at this period, there is very little high writing. The highest note required is the E one octave above the top string of the violin in GDAE turning. However, the scordatura tells us something interesting about the shifting practice of the author. On a number of occasions, when the top two strings of the instrument are tuned to AD as opposed to AE, the only way that the notation makes sense is for the player to leap quickly from the high position to low on one string (otherwise the notation would produce senseless results). This tells me that the author of this cycle of pieces was particularly agile about the fingerboard, and eschewed cross-string fingering in favour of athletic leaping.

One movement in the collection can be linked to a number of other sources and composers working across Europe in the late 17th century. A ¾ gigue [Disc 1, track 39] bears the title *Pfefferstossl*, and the instruction that this should be played with the tuning AEAD. Similar pieces, with the same tuning, can be found in a number of works extant at the time that the Klagenfurt Manuscript was created. These range from a movement by Schmelzer, *La Gallina,* which survives in manuscript form in the collection of the Uppsala University, through to a movement, this time with basso continuo, by N. Goor, *Peper Stooter* which can be found in the Leuven University Library.[v] This character-movement is clearly imitative, in all of its forms. The Schmelzer variant, to which our source is closest, is from the title imitating a chicken, bobbing and clucking. The Klagenfurt title refers to a 'Pepper Pestle', and may refer to either the grinding motion, or (my favourite idea) to the resulting sneezing! Of course, any mention of pestles in the bawdy world of 17th Century music and theatre may respond to something less delicate, memorialised in the title of Francis Beaumont's 1613 play, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*.

The gesture in common between these three sources is the bowing technique, known as 'bariolage', where fingered notes on one string alternate with the open string adjacent. This is most commonly used in the 17th and 18th century oscillating between the fingered 2nd string

(usually A) and 1st (usually A, but tuned to D in this case). It relies for its highly 'spicy' effect on the dissonances and clashes which emerge between the 'ring' of the 'open' top string, and the intensity of the fingered lower string, most famously heard in the virtuosic passages of J S Bach's *E Major Partita* which would be written a half century later.

Bowing such as this, and many of the other agile techniques found in the Klagenfurt Manuscript, demand that a very particular sort of instrument is chosen. There is no requirement for the bow to spring away from the string – there are almost no passages in the cycle which might be described as using what would come to be known as 'spiccato' techniques. So the bow chosen for this music needs to adhere to the string with great precision, and to enable playing of a great range of 'in string' articulation, whilst having the lightness to enable rapid movement across all four strings.

In recent years, it has been my privilege to work with the Genoa-based *archetier* Antonino Airenti. For this recording, I use a bow which he made for me, modelled on the bows in use in Italy and Austria in the mid-17th Century. The bow has a usable band of hair 53cm long (as compared to about 63cm on a 'modern' Tourte-model), and containing about 80hairs (as compared to about 300 strands on the modern bow). The bow is the ideal companion to the gut-strung Stradivari heard here, and has proved a wonderful guide to the eloquence of right-hand this music demands.

A Note on listening

As I have noted above, the Klagenfurt Manuscript is not laid out in a useful performing order. Looking at cycles of works, written on one stock of paper, it is usually possible to work out in which order materials have been created on the pages. For example, in the source for Tartini's *Piccole Sonate*, which I have recorded and studied for years, it is clear that the 109 pages of the manuscript were worked both in order and at the same time early spaces and margins of pages were filled in later in the course of the long composition of the cycle, as, primarily a waste-avoidance technique, using every available space of precious paper.

This is not the case with the Klagenfurt material. It is clear, that, whilst pages and leaves are not numbered, the paper stock was used sequentially, whether or not the paper was already bound whilst the writing process was in train (In my opinion, the volume was bound early on).

The Klagenfurt Manuscript

As I noted earlier, with a few exceptions, I made a decision to not seek a 'performing order' for the movements. This decision was taken in the light of my experience performing this set of works: I take great pleasure in the constant rediscovery of potential routes and selections from the set. Every single time that I play these works, I find new routes and combinations of the material, sometimes in 'real-time', on stage. Today we enjoy a new 'mix-tape' culture. Every listener is easily able to make, reorder, share and shuffle their own 'play-lists'. I would hope that anyone discovering this extraordinary music, will come up with their own 'programme', or just allow the 'random/shuffle' feature on whatever platform they are listening to create new playing orders. I think that players and listeners of the 17th century would love this freedom, and would have used it if it was easily available to them.

Peter Sheppard Skærved

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[i] *Deutsche Violintechnik im 17. Jahrhunderti*, Greta Moens-Haenen, Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, Graz, Austria 2006

[ii] RNCM book page 120

[iii] Ibid. page ix

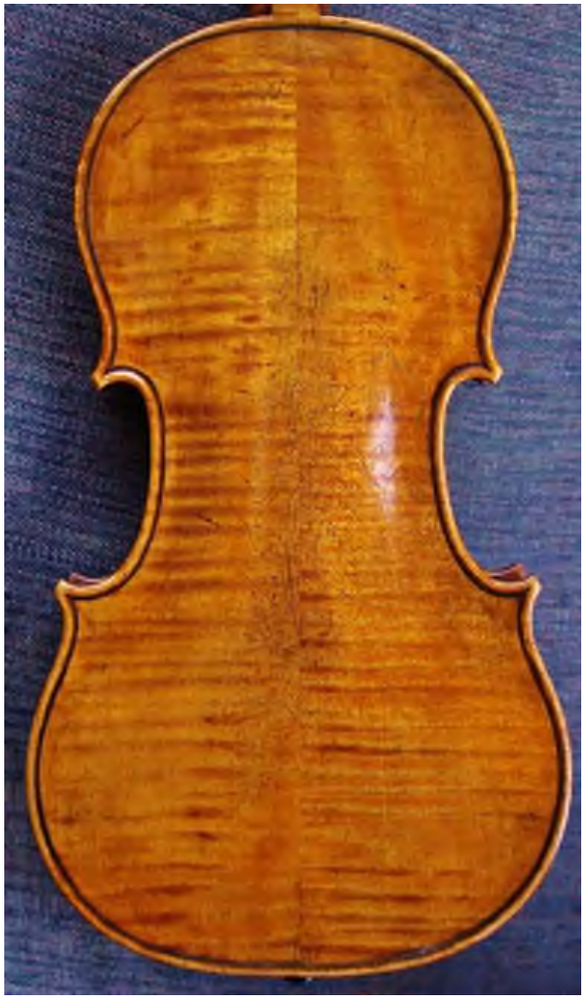
[iv] http://www.baroquebows.net/

[v] Moens-Haenen pages 179-80

Top: The 1685 Stradivari alongside a 1628 Girolamo Amati

Lower left: the back of the Stradivari

Lower right: The 1685 Stradivari (left) beside the 1570 Andrea Amati heard on Great Violins, volume 1



The Violinist

Peter Sheppard Skærved is known for his pioneering approach to the music of the past of our own time and the past. Over 400 works have been written for him, by composers Laurie Bamon, Judith Bingham, Nigel Clarke, Robert Saxton, Edward Cowie, Jeremy Dale Roberts, Peter Dickinson, Michael Finnissy, Elena Firsova, David Gorton, Naji Hakim, Sadie Harrison, Hans Werner Henze, Sıdıka Őzdil, Rosalind Page, George Rochberg, Michael Alec Rose, Poul Ruders, Volodmyr Runchak, Evis Sammoutis, Elliott Schwartz, Peter Sculthorpe, Howard Skempton, Dmitri Smirnov, Jeremy Thurlow, Mihailo Trandafilovski, Judith Weir, Jörg Widmann, Ian Wilson, John Woolrich and Douglas Young.

Peter's pioneering work on music for violin alone has resulted in research, performances and recordings of cycles by Bach, de Bériot, Tartini, Telemann, and, most recently, his project, 'Preludes and Vollenteries', which brings together 200 unknown works from the seventeenth century, from composers including Colombi, Lonati, Marini and Matteis, with the Wren and Hawksmoor churches in London's Square Mile.

His work with museums has resulted in long-term projects at institutions including the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, the Metropolitan Museum, New York City, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, Galeria Rufino Tamayo in Mexico City, and the exhibition 'Only Connect', which he curated at the National Portrait Gallery, London. Most recently his 'Tegner' commissioned by the Bergen International Festival, is a close collaboration with the major Norwegian abstract artist, Jan Groth, resulting in a set of solo Caprices, premiering at Kunsthallen, Bergen, and travelling to galleries in Denmark, the UK and even Svalbard/Spitzbergen. Peter is the only living violinist to have performed on the violins of Ole Bull, Joachim, Paganini and Viotti. As a writer, Peter has published a monograph on the Victorian artist/musician John Orlando Parry, many articles in journals worldwide, and most recently, *Practice: Walk*, for Routledge.

Peter is the founder and leader of the Kreutzer Quartet and the artistic director of the ensemble Longbow. Viotti Lecturer at the Royal Academy of Music, he was elected Fellow there in 2013. He is married to the Danish writer Malene Skærved and they live in Wapping.

www.peter-sheppard-skaerved.com

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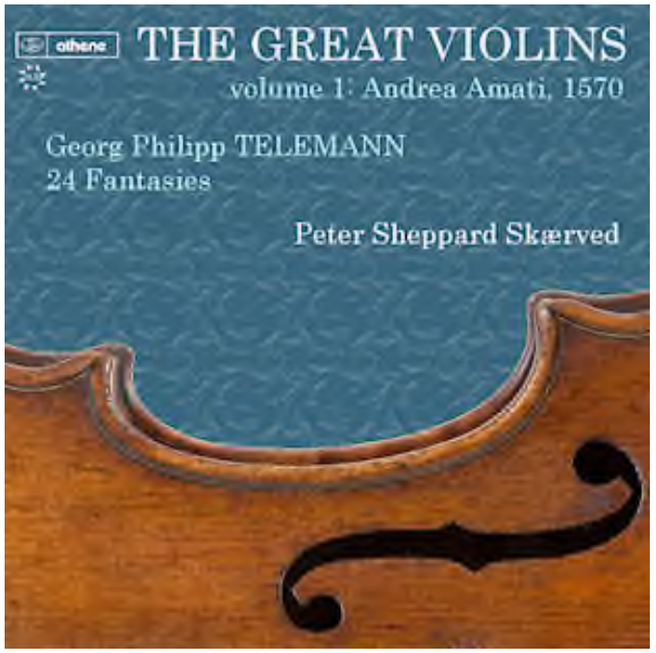

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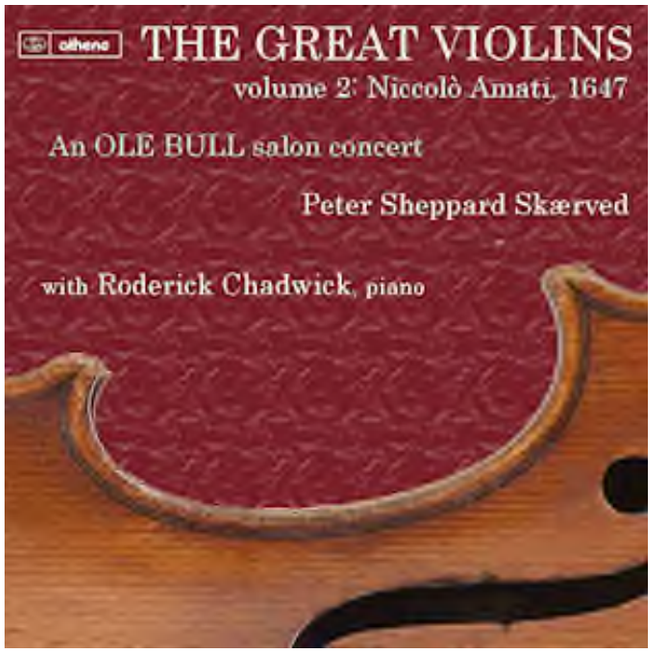

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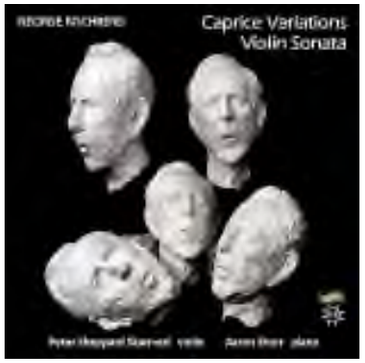

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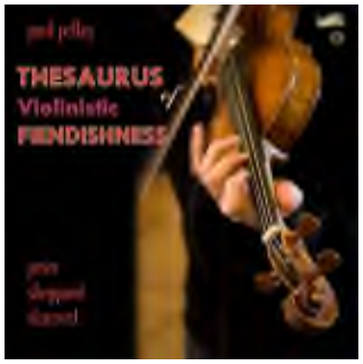

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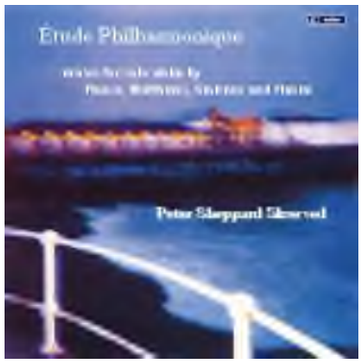

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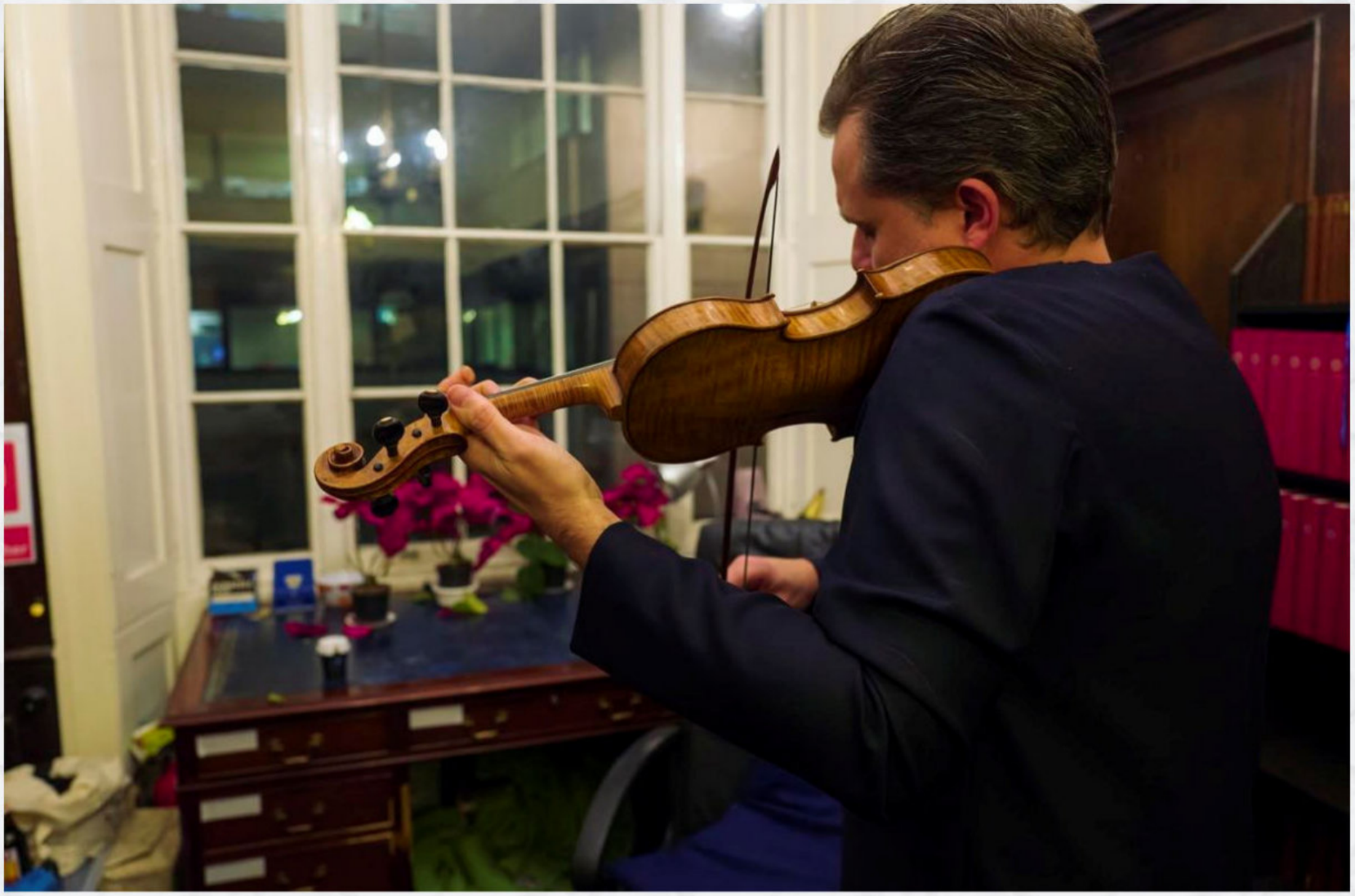

Peter Sheppard Skærved backstage with the violin

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