

The “Piccolo” Storioni violin gets a new lease of life with art, science and training



The “Piccolo” violin made by Lorenzo Storioni in 1793 is the subject of a complex and structured intervention with the acquisition, study, analysis, restoration and display to the public of a refined pearl of Cremona violin making, thanks to a partnership between Bracco Foundation, the municipality of Cremona and the Violin Museum as one of the activities co-ordinated by the Violin Making Cultural District.

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The “Piccolo” is a small violin, an authentic work in its entirety by Lorenzo Storioni (1744-1816), a leading figure in Cremona violin making. The instrument is a splendid example of the late 18th-century and in addition to having a significant value as an object of study and a typical example of the work of the craftsmen is of particular interest: Storioni is in fact a craftsmen of whose work Cremona, a centre of excellence of stringed instruments, has no examples.

The “Sound workshops – Storioni 1793 violin” project is multidisciplinary with art, science and training working closely together. It is in three phases:

1. STUDY: historical, organological and philological study of the instrument, with diagnostics to analyse the materials and the characteristic construction techniques. This phase will lead to the definition of the restoration project to preserve the instrument. (September 2018).

2. RESTORATION: the carrying out of the restoration of the instrument by famous master restorers. The researchers have defined the aim of the restoration the recovery of the form and not the function of the violin: the process will thus bring the instrument back to its ancient splendour, illustrating 18th-century construction techniques. (From November 2018 to February 2019).

3. PRESENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC RESULTS AND DISPLAY TO THE PUBLIC: the violin will form part of the permanent collection of the Cremona Violin Museum (April 2019).

The non-invasive scientific studies at the Arvedi laboratory of Pavia University (CISRIC - Università di Pavia) and the restoration itself, in addition to the cultural value of restoring an instrument that has the dignity of a work of art, also has value as training: it will be a valuable chance for the young students of the degree course in Conservation and Restoration of musical instruments at Pavia University, the only course of its kind in Italy. Bracco Foundation, whose mission includes the development of the cultural, historical and artistic heritage nationally and internationally, has a specific interest in promoting the combination of art and science, convinced that integration of different fields of knowledge offers a frequently unprecedented chance for learning.