

HAVE YOU HEARD...

ANONYMOUS BENEFACTOR PURCHASES RARE 'CARRODUS' VIOLIN FOR RICHARD TOGNETTI

by Julia Gross

The Australian Chamber Orchestra recently announced that an anonymous Australian private benefactor has acquired one of the world's rarest violins, valued at AUD\$10,000,000, for the use of the ACO's Artistic Director, Richard Tognetti.

The violin, created by Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù in 1743 and known as the 'Carroodus', is one of the very finest in existence. The best violins in the world were made in the 18th century in Northern Italy and Antonio Stradivari and Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù were the undisputed kings of this golden epoch of violin making. There are 600 Stradivari violins but only 100 del Gesù violins in the world

MARTIN JARVIS RECOGNISED IN AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Compiled by John Reynolds

Darwin Symphony Orchestra Artistic Director and regular *Stringendo* contributor Martin Jarvis has been recognised in the 2007 Australia Day Awards.

Associate Professor Jarvis, who also serves as Chair of the Orchestras Australia Board, received the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for service to the arts as founder, artistic director and conductor of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra, and to music education in general.

This year's award is the latest in a string of prestigious acknowledgements for his work in strings and students.

today. Guarneri del Gesù has been the maker of choice for the greatest violinists of the 19th and 20th centuries – Paganini, Wieniawski, Ernst, Heifetz, Menuhin, Stern and Kreisler.

"I am overwhelmed by the generosity and the vision of the owners of this extraordinary instrument. This is believed to be the first time an instrument of such quality will be owned in Australia. It is a supreme honour to have the custodianship of such an instrument. A violin is to a violinist as a voicebox is to a singer. This is the ultimate voicebox and it will enable the ACO to reveal new dimensions in music, only attainable with an instrument of this calibre," said Richard Tognetti. Since 1996, Tognetti has performed on a 1759 J.B. Guadagnini violin, generously lent to him by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

"Since the voice of the Guadagnini became an integral part of the ACO, it has been evident that the Orchestra's enhanced reputation has been inextricably connected to the Commonwealth Bank's enlightened acquisition, and I am immensely grateful to the Bank," said Richard Tognetti.

The Commonwealth Bank has generously agreed to allow the Guadagnini violin to remain with the ACO, to be played by Helena Rathbone, the Orchestra's

In 1989 he was awarded Darwin *Citizen of the Year* and *Territorian of the Year in 1999*, and in 2001 was made Fellow of the Institute of Music Teachers for services to music education.

The same year he received the inaugural Orchestras Australia Award (formerly TOAN) for fostering "excellence, innovation and creativity in an orchestra in a regional area". In 2003 he was the recipient of a Centenary Medal for services to Australian society through music.

Originally from Wales, Prof Jarvis studied violin at the Welsh College of Music, Cardiff, and won a place at the Royal Academy of Music, London. He worked with a large number of prestigious artists in Britain before coming to Australia in 1977 to join the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

In 1983 he left to become Musical Director of the Priory Concertante of London and founded the Kent Youth String Orchestra,



PHOTO BY PAUL HENDERSON-KELLY

renowned Principal 2nd Violin.

Audiences around Australia will have the opportunity to hear both the del Gesù and the Guadagnini when the ACO embarks on its second national concert tour of 2007 with Finnish pianist Olli Mustonen from 15-26 March. In April 2007, the Orchestra will tour North America with acclaimed cellist Pieter Wispelwey. The tour features notable returns to Sante Fe, Boston and New York, and an exciting first visit to Puerto Rico. For full details visit the ACO website www.aco.com.au



where his exciting vision of youth music was used to great effect.

Returning to Australia for a position with the Northern Territory University (now Charles Darwin University) in 1988, he created an orchestra that took musicians away from the comfortable concert hall to perform against the drama and colour of the Territory backdrop.

Look out for more articles from Martin in future editions of Stringendo.