Questions and answers about violin building

Bows

- My bow is losing hair!
- My bow can no longer be tightened!
- The hairs no longer properly grip the strings while playing!

Violins

- My Violin rattles!
- My varnish has become dull and gummy!
- Inexplicable scratches are occurring on the bottom of the violin cover!
- How must the bridge be positioned?
- The bridge is no longer straight after tightening the strings!
- Where must the sound post be positioned?
- Do I own a genuine Stradivarius?
- My pegs no longer hold properly. They slip and cant be turned!
- Problems in Winter
- String Studies
- Which string is recommended for my instrument?
- How did Stradivari build his intruments?

Answers

How did Stradivari build his intruments?

Differences between today's and Stradivari's working techniques

The workmanship of the wood in violin making does not differ in the slightest and in fact the interior of todays instruments are comparable to that of a Stradivarius. Almost all of the instruments made up to 1820 are not in their original condition. Most older violins were subjected to various alterations and modernization measures over the years and, without a doubt, they do not sound as they did during Stradivarius time. Stradivarius violins had a shorter neck that was not embedded in the upper block, but rather attached to it. To secure it further, it was fastened to the inside of the body with nails. Due to this situation one can deduce a further difference: As the neck was secured from the inside of the body, the neck therefore had to have been attached before the belly was glued on. Stradivarius and his contemporaries made the bass bar much more delicate than now. The bridge was lower and its height was determined alone by a wedge-formed fingerboard. The fingerboard and tailpiece were varnished, or in reality, a thin layer of hardwood was glued to a piece of true wood. An important difference was also that pure gut strings were the only type of string used. One can therefore say that in some areas, the order of the operational procedure has changed. These changes however are also found in the Stradivarus

instruments used in modern concert halls today. A Stradivarius differs from a modern instrument mainly in that it is older and more expensive.

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