



Kirsten Scott
Memorial Trust
Thank you Report

Alice Poppleton
Baroque Violin

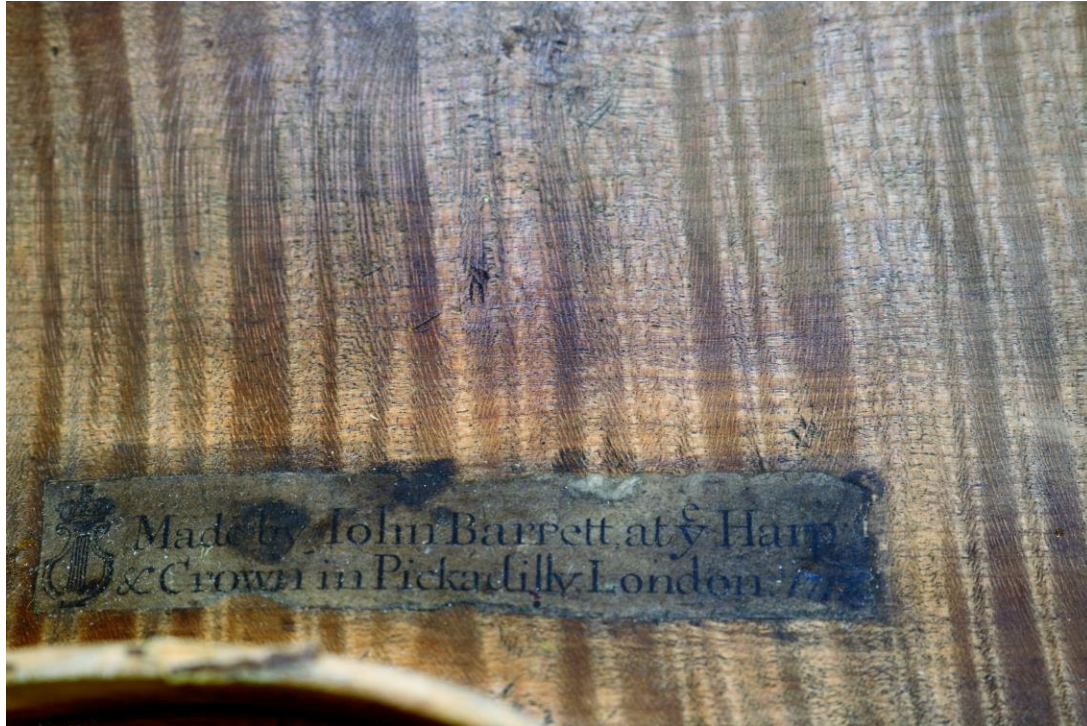
The Project...

- It was my ambition to find a violin which would enable me to make the most of the fantastic educational opportunities available to me whilst studying at RWCMD and as I begin my studies as the Purcell Historical Performance Scholar at RAM.
- Local luthier Geoff Denyer discovered the violin from 1717 by London-maker John Barrett at auction. This violin was ideal but required a significant amount of work to bring it back to life and repair it to its original condition.
- Your money has helped contribute to the restoration of this historical time-piece. I am incredibly grateful.

A brief history of the violin family

- The earliest violins were made in Italy during the early 16th century.
- It is believed the viol family are the predecessors of the violin family.
- The oldest known violin is dated from 1564 and is believed to have been made in Cremona by one of the greatest violin makers of all time – Andrea Amati.
- Andrea Amati, Guarneri del Gesù and Antonio Stradivari are the most prolific and famous violin makers of all time.

Background of John Barrett (c.1680 – 1743)



The label inside the violin:

‘Made by John Barrett at the Harp and Crown in Pickadilly, London 1717’

- John Barrett was one of the pioneer violin makers in London, based in Piccadilly. This group were highly prestigious and successful.
- His contemporary was Nathaniel Cross.
- A piccolo violin (tuned a 3rd and 4th higher than a normal violin) by John Barrett c.1725 is currently in the Becket Collection at the Royal Academy of Music.

Differences between Modern and Baroque Violins

- The violin has developed over the last 300 years:
 - The fingerboard has been made longer to play higher notes for later repertoire
 - The fingerboard and neck of the violin were tilted more to increase projection through tension across the violin
 - The bass bar (inside the violin for tone production) was made heavier
 - The violin gained a chin rest and often a shoulder rest

Its Restoration...

- With historical research, this Barrett violin has been transformed back to its state before these developments.
 - This allows me to perform repertoire from over 300 years ago on a violin in the original set up for which the music was composed.
 - This makes the violin a time-machine!!
- The changes include:
 - having repairs to cracks and holes across the violin
 - Revarnishing it sympathetically
 - Having a new baroque neck and fingerboard. These are shorter, fatter, and at a less acute angle reducing the tension across the violin. This allows it to perform well at baroque pitch which is lower than modern.
 - A flatter bridge and lighter bass bar have been fitted, again decreasing tension
 - Gut strings have been put on

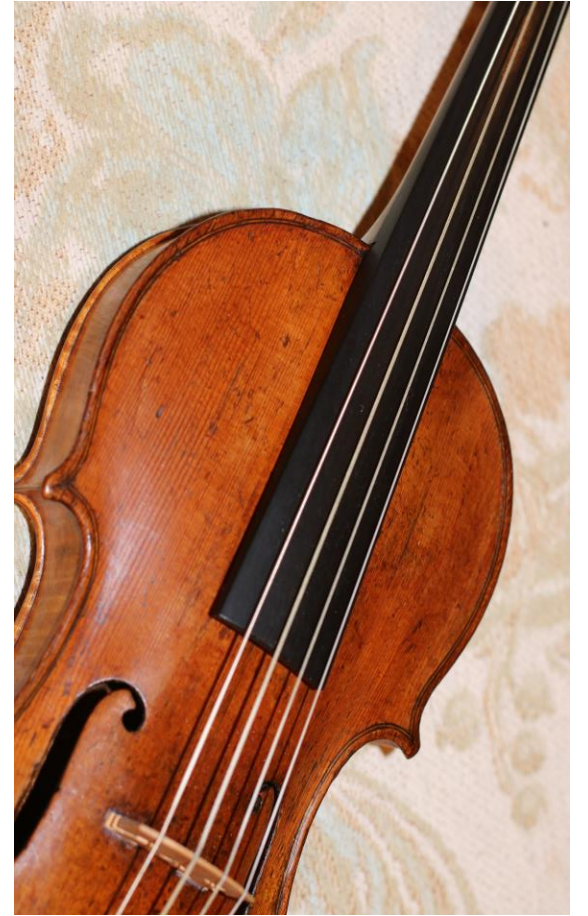
The Repairs



The front of the violin was removed in order to make several repairs. The light circular patch was actually where someone had made a bad repair in the past and made a dip in the violin. You can see several dark lines, cracks and patches which needed to be filled in. **The back of the violin** needed to be cleaned up, having been coated in a heavy, sticky, and historically incorrect varnish. The varnish can inhibit the sound of the violin so this was critical in order for the violin to be returned to its original condition. The **original scroll** was retained in the restoration.



The Results



The first picture shows the new, shorter **fingerboard and baroque neck** and the repairs which have been done to the **front** of the violin, including remedying the dip, cracks and holes. The second and third pictures show the **new varnish** which has been applied, giving the violin a healthier glow and better sound. The final picture shows the violin set up and ready to be played with a new, flatter **bridge and gut strings**.

Its Sound

This is a [recording](#) I made on the violin on the first day I received it. I am delighted with how it sounded. The process of restoration is quite traumatic for the violin and it will continue to improve as it settles and adjusts to its present condition. I am really excited to see how it develops.

My future career with this violin

- I am currently coming to the end of my time at RWCMD where I am studying Modern violin with Lesley Hatfield (leader of BBC NOW) and Baroque violin with Rachel Podger. I will be continuing my education at RAM as the Purcell Historical Performance Scholar. I am delighted, therefore, to have found this violin to continue my studies with at these world-class institutions.
- It is my ambition to build a career performing in the baroque music scene, including chamber, solo and orchestral performance. I am also keen to do outreach work and teaching to give others a chance to enjoy music.
- At a time when women are starting to emerge in the male-dominated classical music world, I am determined to be a powerful legacy to the important women who I have met through my education.

The violin's future

- I wish to thank the Kirsten Scott Memorial Trust very much for helping finance the restoration of this violin. I am delighted to be celebrating with the violin its 300th birthday. This is a great reminder that this violin has had an interesting past and now, having been restored with your help, it has a long and hopefully exciting future ahead.

- I think this is expressed best in a quote by Ivry Gitlis:

'I have a violin that was born in 1713. It was alive long before me, and I hope it lives long after me. I don't consider it as my violin. Rather, I am perhaps its violinist, I am passing through its life.'

The Art of Violin 2000