

ACO Instrument Fund acquire 430-year old Brothers Amati violin with investment from Media Super



“We are delighted to have added a fourth ‘Golden Age’ instrument to the ACO Instrument Fund’s collection”

– RICHARD EVANS,
ACO MANAGING DIRECTOR

The **Australian Chamber Orchestra’s (ACO) Instrument Fund** today announced the acquisition of its fourth ‘Golden Age’ string instrument: a violin made in 1590 by influential Italian instrument makers Antonio and Hieronymus Amati. The acquisition was funded by Australian industry super fund **Media Super**, who injected AU\$1 million into the Fund to enable the purchase of the instrument. The 1590 Brothers Amati violin will be played by ACO violinist Ike See.

This follows on from Media Super’s initial investment of AU\$1 million into the ACO Instrument Fund in 2017. The \$5.6 billion industry fund is the Instrument Fund’s only institutional investor with a unitholding of 29%.

The ACO established the Instrument Fund in 2011 to offer patrons and investors the rare opportunity to participate in the ownership of a bank of historic stringed instruments. An unlisted Australian unit trust available only to wholesale investors, its investment objective is to achieve long-term capital gains. The Instrument Fund currently has 45 unitholders comprising individuals, companies, family trusts and foundations, and self-managed super funds (SMSFs).

The ACO Instrument Fund currently holds four assets from the ‘Golden Age’ – instruments made between 1560 to 1740 in Cremona, Italy – of instrument-making. In addition to the 1590 Brothers Amati violin, the Fund also owns a 1728/29 Stradivarius violin, a 1714 Guarneri violin, and a 1616 Brothers Amati cello. These four rare instruments are played by the professional musicians of the ACO and are collectively worth approximately AU\$8 million.

Media Super, which covers the print, media and the creative arts industries, has a track record of making investments which its chief executive **Graeme Russell** said promotes a “strong cultural industry in Australia”. This has a flow on effect of generating jobs for its members and increasing their super contributions and account balances.

In the case of the ACO Instrument Fund, Russell said it was “appropriately structured” to allow for investment by super funds.

“The low volatility of the Fund, its track record of growth and potential for further capital growth were the main investment considerations. Our involvement has the intrinsic value of providing ACO musicians with access to high quality period instruments. The Fund has also been recognised as one of Australia’s significant ‘social impact’ investments,” said Russell.

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ACO Managing Director **Richard Evans** describes participation in the Fund as an opportunity for investors to make a viable financial investment with a strong philanthropic element.

"We are delighted to have added a fourth 'Golden Age' instrument to the ACO Instrument Fund's collection," said Evans. "The ACO has one of the finest instrument collections of any orchestra in the world, and the 1590 Brothers Amati violin, with its remarkable depth and warmth of tone, will compliment and contribute to the ACO's extraordinary sound, for which the Orchestra is renowned around the world.

"We are extremely grateful to Media Super for their investment in the Instrument Fund, which enabled the acquisition of this 430-year old instrument."

For more information on the ACO and the ACO Instrument Fund, please visit: www.aco.com.au

ABOUT THE 1590 BROTHERS AMATI VIOLIN

The famous Amati family chronologically precede and are considered as important as the Guarneri and Stradivari families in the Cremonese golden age of instrument making. The "brothers Amati", as Antonio and Hieronymus are commonly known, were renowned for their innovative design and developed the trade passed on to them by their father, Andrea Amati, and in turn their legacy was further established by Hieronymus' son, Niccolo Amati.

Known owners of the 1590 Brothers Amati violin include the English noblewoman and amateur violinist Lady Margaret Cecil and Hendrik Willem van Loon, the once celebrated author of 'The Story of Mankind'.

The 1590 Brothers Amati violin will be played by ACO violinist Ike See.



PHOTO: ZAN WIMBERLEY

“The Australian Chamber Orchestra is uniformly high-octane, arresting and never ordinary.”

– THE AUSTRALIAN

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The Australian Chamber Orchestra lives and breathes music, making waves around the world for their explosive performances and brave interpretations. Steeped in history but always looking to the future, ACO programs embrace celebrated classics alongside new commissions, and adventurous cross-artform collaborations.

Led by Artistic Director Richard Tognetti since 1990, the ACO performs more than 100 concerts each year. Whether performing in Manhattan, New York, or Wollongong, NSW, the ACO is unwavering in their commitment to creating transformative musical experiences.

The Orchestra regularly collaborates with artists and musicians who share their ideology: from Emmanuel Pahud, Steven Isserlis, Dawn Upshaw, Olli Mustonen, Brett Dean and Ivry Gitlis, to Neil Finn, Jonny Greenwood, Barry Humphries and Meow Meow; to visual artists and film makers such as Michael Leunig, Bill Henson, Shaun Tan, Jon Frank, and Jennifer Peedom, who have co-created unique, hybrid productions for which the ACO has become renowned.

Testament to their international reputation, the ACO were invited to commence a three-year residency as International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court in partnership with London’s Barbican Centre from the 2018/19 season. This residency at one of Europe’s most prestigious concert venues follows on from the success of ACO Artistic Director Richard Tognetti’s time as the Barbican’s first ever Artist-in-Residence at Milton Court Concert Hall.

In addition to their national and international touring schedule, the Orchestra has an active recording program across CD, vinyl and digital formats. Their recordings of Bach’s violin works won three consecutive ARIA Awards. Recent releases include *Water / Night Music*, the first Australian-produced classical vinyl for two decades, *Mozart’s Last Symphonies*, *Bach Beethoven: Fugue* and the soundtrack to the acclaimed cinematic collaboration, *Mountain*.

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