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Monday Music Memo 13 – 19 June 2023

Artists & Instruments

Today female artists play the violin.

A short write up about my top three female violin players follows:

Anne-Sophie Mutter started playing the violin at age 5. She was supported early in her career by Herbert von Karajan and made her orchestral debut with the Berlin Philharmonic in 1977. Critics have noted Mutter's dedication, as well as her personal and thorough interpretation of the musical works she plays. She often studies the composer's letters, original scores, and other historical documents to guide her interpretation. Mutter is known for performing in strapless gowns. Mutter explained that having fabric on her shoulder makes it too slippery to hold her violin firmly while she plays.

She owns two Stradivarius violins: the Emiliani of 1703, and the Lord Dunn-Raven Stradivarius of 1710.

Hilary Hahn began playing the violin one month before her fourth birthday in the Suzuki Program of Baltimore's Peabody Institute. In 1991, at age 11, Hahn made her major orchestral debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

Her violin is an 1864 copy of Paganini's Cannone made by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume.

Akiko Suwanai, at the age of 18, became the youngest winner of the International Tchaikovsky Competition in 1990. In addition, she was awarded second prize in the Paganini Competition in 1988 and Queen Elisabeth Competition in 1989 and is a laureate of the Music Competition of Japan.

Until 2019 she played the 1714 Dolphin Stradivarius, on loan from the Nippon Music Foundation.

Violin builders

A Stradivarius is one of the violins, violas, cellos and other string instruments built by members of the Italian family Stradivari, particularly Antonio Stradivari (Latin: Antonius Stradivarius) during the 17th and 18th centuries. They are considered some of the finest instruments ever made and are extremely valuable collector's items.

The woods used included spruce for the top, willow for the internal blocks and linings, and maple for the back, ribs, and neck.

Depending on their condition, instruments made during Stradivari's "golden period" from 1700 to about 1725 can be worth millions of dollars. In 2011, the "Lady Blunt" violin of 1721, which is in pristine condition, was sold in London for £9,808,000 (\$15.9 million) over four times the previous auction record for a Stradivarius violin. The violin was named after Lord Byron's granddaughter, Lady Anne Blunt, who owned it for 30 years. It was sold by the Nippon Music Foundation in aid of the Japanese earthquake and tsunami appeal.

Google your own choice of violin players.
Expect more items in this series "Artists and Instruments".



Anne-Sophie Mutter and John Williams
and Vienna Philharmonic.

"Hedwig's Theme" from "Harry Potter and the
Philosopher's Stone".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsCZP3wdF4w>

6.11 mins



Vaughan Williams - Lark Ascending played by
Hilary Hahn.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOWN5fQnzGk>

This is a bit longer!

15.36 mins