

A fine violin by Angelo Soliani, Modena 1807

Catalogue Number: RKT-0750

Reduced to: \$105,000

Labeled: “Angelus Soliani, fecit Mutinae 1807”

Provenance: This instrument is accompanied by a certificate by William E. Hill & Sons of London dated 1967 certifying it to be the work of Soliani and quoting a registration number of W.331, which is also stamped 4on the end of the fingerboard.

Description: This instrument has a one-piece maple back showing finely quilted flame. As the Hill certificate states, the wood is from the lower part of the tree where it expands into the root system and hence the grain is not straight as it comes into the lower bout. There is a small knot in the back near the bass side edge. The wood of the sides is similar, but apparently cut on the quarter and showing fainter, though quite fine flame. The head is of plain softer wood, likely poplar which has been grafted to a new neck showing moderate flame. The front is of two pieces of spruce showing fine grain gradually becoming broader towards the edges. The bass side of the front shows some cross grain figure in the upper and lower bouts. The fittings are of boxwood and were likely installed by Hills in 1967. The varnish is of a light orange/brown colour over a yellow ground, in very good condition and showing some retouching. The head is darker in colour, while the back is a lighter, more golden colour.

Back measurements:

Length: 355 mm. Upper bout: 161 mm. Middle bout: 110 mm. Lower bout: 200 mm.

Repairs: Hill & Sons did some repairs in 1967 when the past owner bought the instrument from them. We think they replaced the original baroque or transitional style neck, though it may have been done earlier. Small cracks in the front have been repaired and there are patches inside under each foot of the bridge. The bass bar has been replaced. Some excellent retouching of the varnish is evident and the repairs are hardly noticed. The peg holes been bushed 4 times. Kim has re-fit the Hill pegs, smoothed the fingerboard, replaced the bridge, and a sound post slightly longer than before. We have the Hill bridge dated 1967, sound post, and strings. The restoration and certificate by the Hill shop give this instrument much appeal.

Condition: This violin is in very good repaired condition. There is a minor amount of distortion in the front around the bass sound hole. The neck is slightly crooked, but not enough to consider correction.

Comments: Instruments by Soliani are fairly rare, but well regarded. Although it appears small and is light in the hand it has a very full and beautiful sound that is especially gratifying to the player and offers good expressive possibilities. The lower register is often described as very much like a viola.

SOLIANI, ANGELO.

Born 1752. Worked at Modena. Died 1810. Two models, one slightly arched somewhat reminding of a Guadagnini, and one of higher arching and longer body length. Effective graduating of plates with a nice suggestion of Amati grooving which gives the edging a slight tilt. Purfling very slender and thread-like. Scroll of smallish dimensions, but of very graceful swing and deeply cut. Belly wood generally of medium grain, strong in fibre. Usually two-piece backs of close-figured material, also ribs. Golden-orange varnish with a touch of red—supple and transparent, also a golden amber tending towards brown. Tonal quality moderately powerful, very silvery and clear, and of matured mellowness. One specimen, dated 1790, realised 1,200 dollars in the U.S.A., 1928.

*Angelus Soliani fecit
Mutinae, 1789*

—(bearing the “Sign of the Sun” in
right-hand corner)

Sometimes branded. £450 to £600, 1960.

- From: “Universal Dictionary of Violin and Bow Makers” by William Henley
- Some other references suggest that he died later, in 1812 or 1814.

R. KIM TIPPER
& ASSOCIATES
FINE VIOLINS

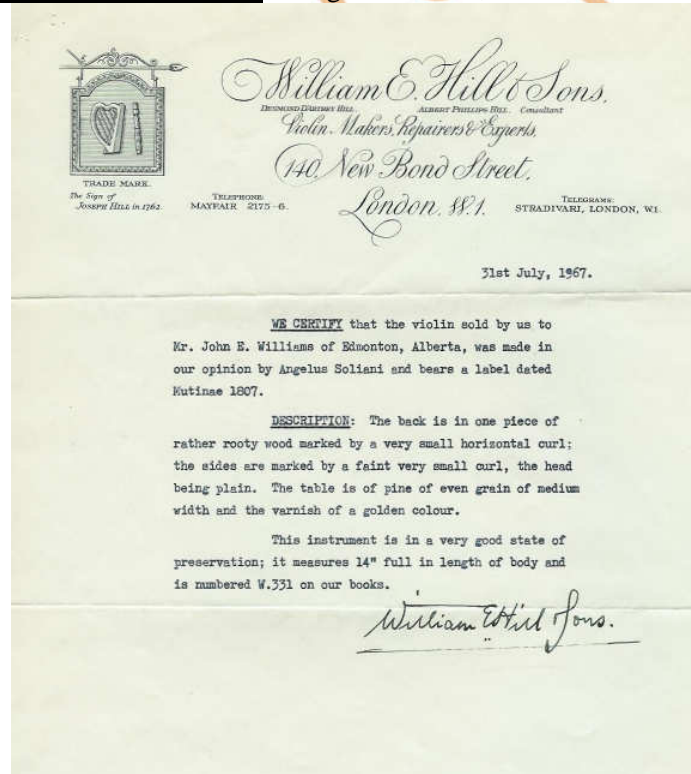
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September 18th, 2010