

PHILHARMONIE DE PARIS

JANUARY 2026

# International Lutherie Competition

3<sup>rd</sup> edition : The Viola



PHILHARMONIE  
ORCHESTRE  
DE PARIS



talents  
& violon'celles



PHILHARMONIE  
DE PARIS  
MUSÉE DE LA MUSIQUE

The Musée de la Musique and Talents & Violon'celles are putting the viola in the spotlight. After celebrating the cello in 2022 and the violin in 2024, the Musée de la Musique - Philharmonie de Paris and the Talents & Violon'celles endowment fund are dedicating the third edition of their international competition to an often overlooked instrument: the viola. Less standardized than its cousins, the violin and cello, the viola presents a technical challenge for luthiers, offering them great creative freedom.

Beyond the competition, this event aims to introduce the public to the richness of this instrument, while highlighting the excellence and diversity of contemporary Lutherie. As in previous editions, there are two categories: professionals ("Talents of Today") and students of lutherie schools ("Talents of Tomorrow"). The competition, which began behind closed doors on January 14, will be open to the public on January 17 and 18. This is a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of the viola, between tradition and innovation.

Composed of renowned personalities, violists, and specialists in instrument making and its history, the international jury consists of:

Ana Bela Chaves, Miguel da Silva, Pauline Sachse, violists

Riccardo Angeloni, Ibiza Avalos, Jonathan Marolle, luthiers

It is chaired by:

Raphaël Pidoux, cellist and co-founder of Talent & Violon'celles.

The open public rounds are presented by:

Jean-Philippe Échard, curator, Musée de la musique.

The violas are played by:

Hervé Blandinières, Flore-Anne Brosseau, Clara Petit, Francisco Lourenço, violists of the Orchestre de Paris accompanied by **Mélanie Bracale**, pianist.

# Programme

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17 ————— FROM 11.30 A.M. TO 12.30 A.M.

## SEMI-FINAL "TALENTS OF TOMORROW"

This semi-final features **five instruments**, all inspired by Girolamo Amati "Stauffer" viola exhibited at the Museo del Violino. The violas are hidden behind screens throughout the round to remain anonymous. The jury assesses their tonal and musical qualities.

Each instrument is played by the violists of the Orchestre de Paris according to the following repertoire:

**J.S. Bach**, *Suite for cello No.2 in D minor, BWV 1008, Prelude*

**J.S. Bach**, *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D minor, BWV 903* (arrangement by Zoltán Kodály)

**G. Kurtág**, *Signs, Games and Messages, In nomine all'ongherese*

At the end of this round, **three instruments** are selected to take part in the final.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17 ————— FROM 3.30 P.M. TO 5 P.M.

## SEMI-FINAL "TALENTS OF TODAY"

**Fifteen violas**, hidden behind screens throughout the round to remain anonymous, take part in this semi-final.

The jury assesses their sound and musical qualities awarding them marks according to a precise scoring system. Each instrument is played by the violists of the Orchestre de Paris according to the following repertoire:

**J.S. Bach**, *Sonata for Solo Violin No.1 in G Minor, BWV 1001*

**B. Bartók**, *Viola Concerto*

**C.M. von Weber**, *Der Freischütz* (orchestral excerpts)

At the end of this round, **eight instruments** are selected to take part in the final.

## FINAL "TALENTS OF TOMORROW"

**Three violas**, hidden behind a screen throughout the round to remain anonymous, take part in this final.

The jury assesses their sound and musical qualities, awarding them marks according to a precise scoring system. At this stage of the competition, the jury also evaluates the instrument's ability to express itself in a duet with piano. As in the previous rounds, the pieces have been chosen to reveal and highlight the full potential of the instruments.

Solo repertoire:

**H. Berlioz**, *The Roman Carnival* (orchestral excerpts)

**J.S. Bach**, *Sonata for Solo Violin No. 1 in G Minor, BWV 1001*

**J.S. Bach**, *Suite for solo cello No. 2, Allemande*

Duet repertoire:

**R. Schumann**, *Märchenbilder*, 3<sup>rd</sup> mouvement

**H. Vieuxtemps**, *Elegy for viola and piano*

**J.S. Bach**, *Sonata for Viola and Piano, Impetuoso*

At the end of this round, the jury deliberate and award the First, Second, and Third Prizes.

During this deliberation, the "Luthiers Jury" may award a "Coup de cœur" prize to a school for the quality of its viola craftsmanship.

## FINAL "TALENTS OF TODAY"

This final round features **eight violas**, chosen freely by their makers, hidden behind screens throughout the competition to remain anonymous. Each instrument is played several times in different repertoires by the violists of the Orchestre de Paris.

The jury assesses the sound and musical qualities according to a precise scale and evaluates the instrument's ability to express itself in solo and piano duet performances.

Solo repertoire:

**G. Kurtág**, *Signs, Games and Messages, In nomine all'ongherese*

**G. Bruns**, *Jungle Book* (arrangement by Ulysse Vigreux)

**J.S. Bach**, *Suite for cello No.2 in D minor, BWV 1008, Prelude*

Duet repertoire:

**J. Brahms**, *Sonata for Viola and Piano No.1*

**G. Enesco**, *Concertstück for Viola & Piano*

**G. Fauré**, *Three Melodies, op. 23, The Cradles*

At the end of this round, the jury selects three instruments, which are awarded First, Second, and Third Prizes respectively.

Three "Coup de cœur" may be awarded by the "Musicians' Jury," the "Luthiers Jury," and the violists of the Orchestre de Paris.

The audience may award a "Special Prize."

## **AWARDS CEREMONY**

### **"TALENTS OF TOMORROW" CATEGORY**

First, Second and Third Prize

Luthiers Jury "Coup de cœur"

### **"TALENTS OF TODAY" CATEGORY**

First, Second and Third Prize

Orchestre de Paris's violists "Coup de cœur"

Luthiers Jury "Coup de cœur"

Musicians Jury "Coup de cœur"

Audience "Special Prize"

The competition ends with a concert on the awarded violas played by the violists of the Orchestre de Paris and a meeting with the audience and all the instruments in competition.

# Members of the Jury

**Riccardo Angeloni** has been curator of the collections at the Museo del Violino in Cremona since 2024. His expertise and experience were commended by an international selection committee, which praised his ability to strengthen both local and international collaborations. A graduate of the Cremona International Violin making School, he also holds a master's degree (honours) in the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage,

specialising in musical instruments, from the University of Pavia. He has worked with several prestigious institutions, including the National Museum of Musical Instruments in Rome and the Civic Museum of Modena. Riccardo Angeloni is a lecturer at the University of Pavia, where he shares his expertise in the restoration and preservation of instruments.

**Ibiza Avalos** is a Mexican luthier based in Cremona since 2022, where she runs her own workshop specialising in the making of violins, violas and cellos. At the same time, she also works part-time as an assistant in Filippo Fasser's workshop in Brescia, Italy. Initially trained at the University of Veracruz, Ibiza went on to graduate from the School of Violin Making at the National Institute of Fine Arts in Querétaro, Mexico, while also taking part in

workshops with master violin makers such as Claudio Amighetti, Horacio Piñeiro, Raymond Schryer and François Denisse. From 2010 to 2021, she worked in Mexico, collaborating with numerous orchestras and musical institutions (the Michoacán Symphony Orchestra, the University Chamber Orchestra, the Conservatoire Chamber Orchestra, the Baroque Orchestra, and others). She also taught at the Academia Cremonensis from 2022 to 2023

**Jonathan Marolle** is a renowned French luthier who has been associated since 2017 with the Vatelot-Rampal workshop, one of the most prestigious violin-making houses in Paris. Having joined the workshop in 2005, he has developed recognised expertise, becoming an Expert to the Paris Court of Appeal in 2019. His passion for lutherie and his keen sense of expertise

have led him to assess instruments around the world, while also sharing his knowledge through lectures and publications. Together with Cécile Paumier, he upholds the tradition of excellence of the Maison Vatelot-Rampal, founded in 1909. Their workshop is a benchmark for musicians, collectors and institutions, contributing to the international reputation of French lutherie.

**Ana Bela Chaves** is an internationally renowned Portuguese violist who served as Principal Viola of the Orchestre de Paris from 1980 to 2020. A graduate of the National Conservatoire of Lisbon, she has won numerous prestigious awards, including First Prize for Viola at the Geneva International Competition in 1977. Her career

as a soloist has led her to perform with leading orchestras under the baton of eminent conductors. She has also taught and given masterclasses around the world. The recipient of many honours, including the titles of chevalier and later officier of the *Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, Ana Bela Chaves is a major figure in classical music.

**Pauline Sachse** performs on the world's leading stages, from London's Wigmore Hall to the Berlin Philharmonie. She collaborates with renowned ensembles such as the Armida and Modigliani Quartets, as well as with distinguished soloists including Sabine Meyer, Isabelle Faust and Janine Jansen. A regular guest at prestigious festivals such as Salzburg and the Schubertiade Schwarzenberg, she possesses a wide stylistic range, premiering works by contemporary composers and contributing to an extensive

discography. Former principal violist of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Pauline Sachse has extensive teaching experience. Since October 2023, she has been a Viola Professor at the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy University of Music and Theatre in Leipzig. Pauline Sachse plays two violas — one by Paolo Maggini (1610) and the other by Patrick Robin (2017) — reflecting her deep commitment to both historical heritage and innovation.

**Miguel da Silva** is an internationally renowned French violist, trained at the Paris Conservatoire, where he was awarded First Prizes in both viola and chamber music. After winning the First Grand Prize at the Paris International Chamber Music Competition in 1985, he co-founded the Ysaÿe Quartet, an award-winning ensemble that went on to enjoy a distinguished international career. A sought-after soloist, he has performed

with prestigious orchestras and distinguished musical partners. A dedicated teacher, he founded a chamber music class at the Paris Regional Conservatoire (CRR) and directs several music academies. A Chevalier of the *Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, he currently teaches at the Haute École de Musique in Geneva and was recently appointed Master in residence at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel in Belgium.

## Exhibition

During the competition, the violas are exhibited in the Musée de la Musique's permanent collection, creating a dialogue between traditional and contemporary musical instrument making. All the instruments are presented on Sunday, January 18, during the meeting following the awards ceremony.

MUSÉE DE LA MUSIQUE – CITÉ DE LA MUSIQUE  
TICKET: 10 € - FREE UNDER THE AGE OF 26

### Viola model from the “Talents of Tomorrow” category

The viola that students are required to reproduce in the “Talents of Tomorrow” category is one of the most emblematic instruments in the entire history of string instruments: the “Stauffer” viola by Girolamo Amati, dated 1615. Owned by the Stauffer Foundation, this instrument was entrusted in 1996 to the Musical Instrument Collection of the Cremona Town Hall. Although the label bears the names of both Amati brothers, the viola was actually crafted by Girolamo, as Antonio had passed away in 1607. This instrument, in excellent condition, stands as a living testament to the excellence of Cremonese stringed-instrument making. Its varnish, entirely original, displays a beautiful golden-brown hue. The viola's sound is remarkably well balanced, offering great ease of response and exceptional projection. This viola, the oldest known to have been made in Cremona, was played for over thirty years by Henry Danks, principal violist of the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London, who acquired it in 1962. That same year, an authenticity certificate was issued by W. E. Hill & Sons, who had bought and resold the instrument several times. In May 1996, the instrument was acquired by the Centro di Musicologia “Walter Stauffer” and is now exhibited at the Museo del Violino in Cremona, Italy.



Viola by Girolamo Amati, Cremona 1615  
(Stauffer Foundation – exhibited at the Museo del Violino, Cremona)

# Musée de la musique – Philharmonie de Paris

This national museum with a collection of nearly 9,000 instruments and works of art, holds one of the world's most important collections of instruments, remarkable both for the rarity and the diversity of its pieces. Renowned in May 2025, the museum presents the global history of music from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, highlighting European modernity and the vitality of the musical cultures of Asia, Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. The more inclusive museography emphasizes the links between musical heritage and its contemporary developments. Above and beyond its permanent collection, the museum runs temporary exhibitions devoted to major musical

or artistic figures, musical genres, or specific geographical areas, thereby encouraging crossovers between different artistic disciplines. A wide range of events — guided tours, workshop visits, conferences, concerts, and more — extends the visitor experience, aligning with the major themes that shape the life of the Philharmonie. In particular, free concerts are held every day in the Museum, allowing the public to meet and interact with musicians from a wide variety of musical backgrounds. The cello and violin, winners of the “Talents of Tomorrow” category in the 2022 and 2024 editions of the international lutherie competition, are therefore regularly played at these events.

## Talents & Violon'celles

Starting from the observation that acquiring a high-quality instrument can represent an investment beyond the reach of many musicians, the endowment fund Talents & Violon'celles supports talented players by lending them an instrument enabling them to develop their full potential by continuing their studies in the best possible conditions, taking part in international competitions, and launching or furthering their professional career. Through its work, Talents & Violon'celles highlights instrumental and musical heritage and builds a collection of instruments representing the finest achievements in stringed instrument making. Thanks to the support

of private and institutional patrons, Talents & Violon'celles currently manages a collection of more than 120 string quartet instruments (violins, violas and cellos), including 36 built on its initiative, plus six currently in production — some of which are Baroque period instruments, such as the tenor viola da gamba, the bass violin, the bass viol, and the treble viol. The originality of the project lies in its three converging aims: heritage, social, and cultural. These three components, shared between talented musicians, craftspeople, and donors, are a source of excellence.

# Orchestre de Paris – Philharmonie de Paris

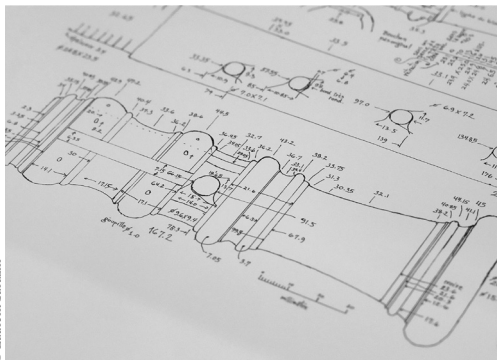
France's leading symphony orchestra with 119 musicians, The Orchestre de Paris, has been led since September 2021 by Klaus Mäkelä, its tenth music director. It stands out for its projects, as varied as they are ambitious, with a multitude of educational initiatives and innovative artistic offerings. The orchestra took up residence at the Philharmonie when it opened in 2015 and now participates in many of the institution's flagship programs, including *Démos* (a social music and orchestral education program) and *La Maestra*, an international competition that aims to promote gender equality in orchestral conducting. Expanding its audience is one of its top priorities: whether in the various spaces of the Philharmonie or outside its walls, in Paris or its suburbs, the Orchestra offers a wide range of activities for families,

schoolchildren, young people — with concerts specifically dedicated to those under 28 — and citizens who are not familiar with music. Founded in 1967 and heir to a long history dating back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Orchestra has been led by Herbert von Karajan, Sir Georg Solti, Daniel Barenboim, Semyon Bychkov, Christoph von Dohnányi, Christoph Eschenbach, Paavo Järvi, and Daniel Harding. Starting in September 2027, Esa-Pekka Salonen will be the principal conductor for a period of five years. The involvement of the musicians of the Orchestre de Paris in the International Lutherie Competition has developed naturally since its first edition in 2022. The two winning instruments from 2022 and 2024 in the “Talent of Tomorrow” category are currently on loan to the musicians of the Orchestre de Paris.

## TECHNICAL DRAWINGS

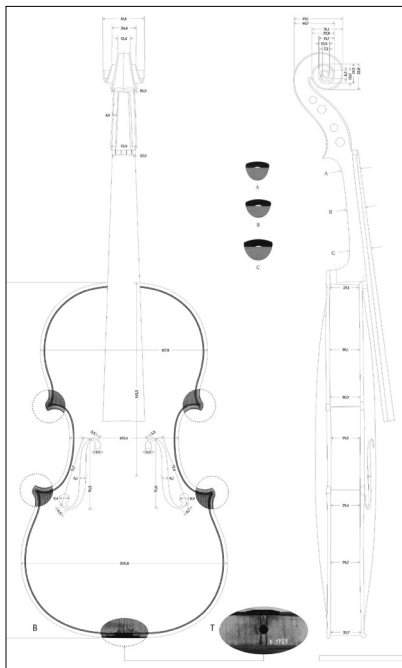
« MUSÉE DE LA MUSIQUE » COLLECTION

Bass viols, transverse flutes, a guitar by Jean Voboam, a recorder head, harpsichords from the Ruckers family, a Venetian theorbo by Matteo Sellas, bows: Éditions de la Philharmonie have reissued a wide selection of technical drawings from the collections of the Musée de la musique, printed at a 1:1 scale. Bringing together art and craftsmanship, these instrument plans highlight the richness of instrument making and offer a glimpse into the makers' workshop practices fr



© Laurent Sarazin

PRINT OF THE TECHNICAL DRAWING  
OF THE ALTO RECORDER IN G (E.368)  
DESIGN BY JEAN-FRANÇOIS BEAUDIN (PARIS, 1979)



VIOLON « SARASATE » (E.529)  
MADE BY ANTONIO STRADIVARI  
IN CRÉMONE IN 1724

© Designed by Sébastien Kirsch (Paris, 2022)

**A special thanks to the 138 donors of the Talents of Tomorrow 2025  
campaign for their support to the competition!**

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**Thanks to the Belle Main Foundation and Alpentonholz Pähler.**



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+33 (0)1 44 84 44 84  
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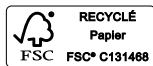
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