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Russell Crowe's Inspirational Speech Encourages Musical Benefaction

The Leandro Bisiach Snr violin dated 1890 purchased at auction from *Russell Crowe: The Art of Divorce* has been generously lent to violinist Bridget O'Donnell, Australian Youth Orchestra and former Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellow



A violin by Leandro Bisiach Snr (Milan, 1864-1946), used by Russell Crowe as the character 'Captain Jack Aubrey' in the film, *Master and Commander* (2003), Milan, dated 1890. Sold for AUD\$164,700 April 2018

Motivated by the impromptu inspirational speech by actor, film producer, director and musician, Russell Crowe at Sotheby's Australia's auction *Russell Crowe: The Art of Divorce* on 7 April 2018, the buyers (who wish to remain anonymous), bid strongly to fulfil his wish that the concert level violin by Leandro Bisiach Snr be lent to a young violinist to be played in concert halls around the world.

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Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: 'Following the auction of *Russell Crowe: The Art of Divorce*, the buyers of the violin confided that they attended the auction out of curiosity with no intention to bid. Inspired by Russell's heartfelt speech and the moving musical performance by Bridget O'Donnell and Hanna Oblikov, they felt compelled to purchase the violin to ensure that the young violinist could use this remarkable instrument during her burgeoning career. Sotheby's Australia liaised with the purchasers, Bridget O'Donnell, and Russell Crowe to promptly facilitate this generous act of benefaction.'

Russell Crowe tweeted: 'For those who don't believe in the extraordinary ... The captain's violin has been loaned long term to this young musician [Bridget O'Donnell] and she will travel the world with it and its voice will be heard. A selfless gesture of magnificent generosity. A perfect example of creative visualisation.'

Leandro Bisiach Snr was one of the leading Italian violin makers of the late 19th century and early 20th century. The two main centres of violin making in Italy at the time were Turin and Milan, with Bisiach's leading Milanese workshop. The concert level violin used by Russell Crowe as the character 'Captain Jack Aubrey' in the film *Master and Commander* (2003) was crafted by Leandro Bisiach Snr and dated 1890 and sold for \$164,700 at the *Russell Crowe: The Art of Divorce* auction on 7 April 2018 (estimate \$110,000-140,000, lot 31, pictured first page). This violin was inspired by the violins of Andrea Guarneri who worked in Cremona from circa 1650-1698.

- Listen to the violin played by Bridget O'Donnell, Australian Youth Orchestra and former Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellow <https://vimeo.com/259237248>

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