

An Intangible Cultural Heritage Asset as a Driver for the Development of Tourism: Violin Making in Cremona, Italy

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In 2012, “Traditional Violin Craftsmanship in Cremona” was included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In the city, the link between the urban context and artistic craftsmanship is seen most clearly in the Cultural District of Violin Making, characterised by the so-called “atelier effect”. This high concentration of professionals in the field has led to the presence of several actors that play a role in the handing down and dissemination of this art: the “Antonio Stradivari” Cremona Consortium of Violin Makers, the Italian Violin Making Association, the Fondazione Museo del Violino Antonio Stradivari, the UNESCO office of the Cremona Municipality. The Safeguard Plan for traditional violin craftsmanship in Cremona and its application in the UNESCO Creative Cities network are now in progress. This study intends both to understand how the violin-making supply chain moves between traditional and innovative aspects and to analyse how its dense cluster of institutions and professionals (about 150) could enhance musical tourism based on the desire of tourists to get in touch with the creativity of the artisanal manufacture of musical instruments. The aim is to highlight how to promote this niche of cultural tourism in this period of significant changes resulting from technology implementation. Furthermore, it is necessary to understand how this aspect integrates with the other specificities of the area (e.g., the monumental ones) to convey and strengthen its image. The research was carried out through qualitative and semi-structured interviews.

Keywords: Cremona, violin making, territorial identity, intangible heritage, cultural tourism, music tourism.



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Introduction

This research takes its cue from UNESCO’s concept of intangible heritage, in line with the “Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage” (Blake & Lixinski, 2020; UNESCO, 2020; Olalere, 2019; Tudorache, 2016), approved in 2003 and then ratified in various countries; this had a long gestation before being disseminated in its current form (Aikawa,

2004). Between 2008 and 2021, this led to the inclusion in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of 629 elements in 139 countries (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-a). In the last twenty years, intense debate has arisen regarding the conception of intangible heritage and its implications (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004; Bouchenaki; 2007; Bindi, 2013; Paratore, 2013; Morbidelli, 2014;

Adell et al., 2015; Smith, 2015; Richards, 2018, pp. 6–7; Gualdani, 2019; Cioli, 2020; Qiu et al., 2020).

UNESCO's 2003 Convention considers five wide-ranging 'domains' of intangible cultural heritage (art. 2, com. 2):

1. Oral traditions and expressions, including language, are a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage.
2. Performing arts.
3. Social practices, rituals, and festive events.
4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.
5. Traditional craftsmanship.

The reflection that follows will concentrate on category no. 5. However, its scope will be limited to a particular kind of *savoir-faire*, that of making stringed instruments: traditional violin craftsmanship in Cremona, Italy – the only example of this type of artisanal expertise in the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). In 2012 it was included in the Representative List (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-c). Numerous actors were involved in the intensive preparation of the paperwork for its inscription, who then underwrote the application. Illuminating is the article by Fulvia Caruso (2014) – who participated in the laborious compilation of the forms – in which Cremona's candidacy is presented critically, and the procedure adopted by the stakeholders is described. In the end, the city's registration was decreed at the seventh meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2012a), specifically with the pronouncement of DECISION 7.COM 11.18 (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2012b). The manufacture of stringed instruments in Cremona – with the production of the full range of those played using a bow: violins, violas, cellos and double basses – commenced around the sixteenth century and became consolidated from the 1700s onwards in the "botteghe" of master luthiers such as Amati, Stradivari, Guarneri, Bergonzi and Ruggeri, as well as by exponents of their families who made instruments for numerous monarchs, for noble families, and for the clergy (see the volumes published since 2015 by

Edizioni Scrollavezza & Zanrè in the series "Treasures of Italian Violin Making", Parma and others; Antoldi, Capelli et al., 2017). In past centuries, as well as in Italy – in the Cremona area, of course, but also in Milan, in the Province of Brescia, in Mantua, in Venice, in Emilia Romagna, in South Tyrol, and around Naples – one could find luthiers all over Europe; this occurred in conjunction with the establishment and differentiation of musical products and the involvement of other population strata when performances spread from aristocratic salons to theatres (Tesini, 2016). Bowed-stringed instruments are still in prevalent use today. On a worldwide basis, one must count the numerous classical and modern symphony and chamber orchestras and the vast number of varied formations: octets, sextets, quintets, quartets, trios, duos (even solely strings), and soloists. These instruments are also used in Conservatories, universities, and schools for Musical Education, though with specific problems at various levels (for example, in Italy, see Comploi & Schrott, 2019). For extremely varied information and reflections on string instruments, see the publication *A Tutto ARCO* of ESTA-Italia (European String Teachers Association), *Archi Magazine* and *Strad* over different years. Thanks to the archives and catalogues of exhibitions held in Cremona, it is possible to discover all the individual instruments produced over time in the city; following their ownership changes is more difficult. We are not only talking about recent instruments; there are also splendidly fashioned antique instruments in circulation, some even referred to by their names (e.g., Hämmerle, Cremonese, Principe Doria or Bracco). Indeed, one of their characteristics is that they are incredibly long-lived and can be restored and adapted (Cacciatori, 2014; 2016; Rovetta et al., 2016). More or less ancient instruments are preserved in specialist museums like those in Milan, Bologna, and Venice or Academies (Zanrè, 2017), Conservatories and Philharmonic Societies (e.g. that of Verona) (Magnabosco, 2008). Usually, these collections result from donations. These instruments are often the focus of studies. An example in this regard is the research concerning the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the Museo del Violino in Cremona: a comparison was made of 15 violins from the two mu-



Figure 1 Audizione alla Città: Violin Concert by Lena Yokoyama (Torrazzo, Cremona-Italy)

Source https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F13JrI3_AMs

seums dating from between 1564 and 1816 (including the famous 1715 “Cremonese” of Antonio Stradivari), of which 11 were crafted by luthiers in Cremona (Blümich et al., 2020).

Today, musical events are very widespread (Robiglio, 2009; Rizzo, 2011; Cerutti & Dioli, 2013; Cafiero et al., 2020; Rizzo, 2020) in towns and extra-urban settings, indoors or in the open air, in large or small municipalities, in plains, hills or mountains, and on the shores of lakes or by the seaside... in wide open areas or in enclosed spaces with locations in theatres, arenas, castles, country houses, gardens, parks, townhouses, auditoria, piazzas, by town walls, in churches, cloisters, abbeys, museums, by poolsides, in cellars, at agriturisms, on farms or anywhere that the spaces will allow. Music played on string instruments may be enjoyed in its own right or part of more complex events. Examples are in Italy, Sorsi d'autore in the Veneto, or EnoArmonie in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (with guided tours, tastings, performances, exhibitions, etc.). Emblematic was the initiative titled “Audizione alla Città”, organised on 4 April 2020 by Pro Cremona with

the collaboration of the Municipality of Cremona, the Museo Verticale, the Museo del Violino, the City Police force, the Chief of Police of Cremona, and Acid Studio s.r.l. On that occasion, the violinist Lena Yokoyama played for a quarter of an hour at the top of the Torrazzo, the highest bell tower in Europe, in the centre of Cremona. The streets and piazzas were filled with the sound of the - globally broadcast - string instrument, creating a particularly moving communal moment (also because of the deafening silence in the city, typical of the initial wave of the pandemic was taking place). That said, it is worth mentioning music's place in accompaniment to the other arts: music in film, music for the theatre, dance or a medium like television with its varied range of programmes.

So, faced with this proliferation of events, including festivals and – a series of individual – concerts, the question naturally arises: what possible relationship may exist between working musicians and the ICH of Cremona and whether this relationship is transmittable to the spectators/listeners or if they are aware of it themselves.

The manufacture of string instruments in Cremona has continued – with alternating fortunes – to the present day. After a notable crisis before the Second World War in which “companies in the sector were reduced to nil”, from the 1960s and ‘70s, it picked up again and has now become decidedly established as a specialist district - a leader in its field anywhere in the world - and with a high concentration of producers (Antoldi, Macconi et al., 2017, pp. 330–335). One can attribute a place-making role to violin-making and its associated associations and institutions (Caruso, 2014). Qiu generally states: “From performing arts, festive events, rituals, traditional craftsmanship, oral traditions and knowledge of practices, ICH provides place-making tools to improve places’ aesthetics and attract tourists. It contributes to an understanding and enrichment of local history, identity, and ecology” (Qiu et al., 2022, p. 15). The whole city identifies itself with the production of stringed instruments and music. The city is presented, in the context of the #in-LombardiaComeMe campaign devised by the Region of Lombardy, as *Cremona è musica* (*Cremona is Music*); this is not a claim linked solely to the city’s tradition of violin making; Cremona is music everywhere, in the ateliers of the craftsmen, in the kitchens of the restaurants, in the streets, on “our” River Po.

Everything about Cremona is music; all you have to do is come and discover it in person. (Comune di Cremona, n.d) in this regard, watch the eight short videos of the promotional campaign on the website cited above).

The reasons discussed above bear witness to the fact that the proposal to UNESCO to insert violin-making savoir-faire in the list of intangible assets was able to satisfy the Convention’s five criteria, as shown below:

Decides that, from the information provided in file 00719, the nomination satisfies the criteria for inscription on Representative List, as follows:

- R.1: Traditional craftsmanship for violin-making has been transmitted from generation to generation, both through apprenticeship and through formal education, playing an important role in the everyday life of people

in Cremona and giving them a sense of identity.

- R.2: Given the high degree of skills and manual inventiveness of the internationally known traditional violin craftsmanship, its inscription on the Representative List could testify to human creativity, while contributing to intercultural dialogue and to the visibility of the intangible cultural heritage as a whole.
- R.3: Past and current efforts to safeguard the craftsmanship enjoy the participation and support of diverse stakeholders including the municipality and national government, local institutions as well as violin-makers’ workshops and associations.
- R.4: Violin-makers and their associations, together with local institutions and representatives of the town of Cremona, participated in the nomination process and gave their free, prior and informed consent.
- R.5: The element is included in the national inventory of cultural heritage maintained by the Ministry of Cultural Properties and Activities; the Archive of Ethnography and Social History of Lombardy Region also included the element in its Register of Intangible Heritage of Lombardy Region” (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-b).

Methods and Object of the Research

The study was conducted by examining and carefully reading existing primary and secondary sources, both desktop and online. This methodology was then implemented using a qualitative investigation, with open interviews with privileged territorial actors: luthiers, teachers, representatives of city institutions, representatives of musical associations and organisations, etc. The common denominator of these interviews was the initial two-part question (identical for all stakeholders):

Does the Fact that it is Part of UNESCO's Intangible Heritage Help Actors to Highlight and Promote Cremona as a Place Where Stringed Instruments are Made?

The rationale behind this question draws inspiration partly from the article by Qiu, Zuo and Zhang, *Intangible Cultural Heritage in Tourism: Research Review and Investigation of Future Agenda*, in which the authors conduct a review of academic studies regarding the relationship between tourism and ICH, reflecting on how ICH influences the process of place-making: “the image and emotion perceived from ICH deserve more research, and place-making results within and without ICH elements should be clearer. For example, what is the role of ICH in place-making and place-making? How does ICH contribute to tourists’ cognition and emotion in the place-making process? How do tangible and intangible heritages bring differences in place making?” (Gasparini, 2017; Qiu et al., 2022, p. 15).

Is the Tourist and Day Visitor Who Arrives in Cremona Aware that he or she is Visiting One of UNESCO's “Intangible” Sites?

This latter question, again asked to the district’s actors and (in this phase, because of the current pandemic, it was not possible to reach tourists) not to the tourists themselves, is imprinted on the vision and perception that the tourist has of the intangible heritage represented by ‘violin making in Cremona’. It draws its inspiration – though with a qualitative investigation – from studies regarding the impact of tourism on the inscription of heritage (tangible or intangible) of other resources inserted in the UNESCO list. These analyses investigate whether such inclusions in the list – in so far as they guarantee the (intrinsic) value of the heritage being visited – do or do not become a feature of attraction for the tourist (Huang et al., 2012; Ivanunuk et al., 2021; Bak et al., 2019; Canale et al., 2019; De Simone et al., 2019; Mariani & Giuzzardi, 2020).

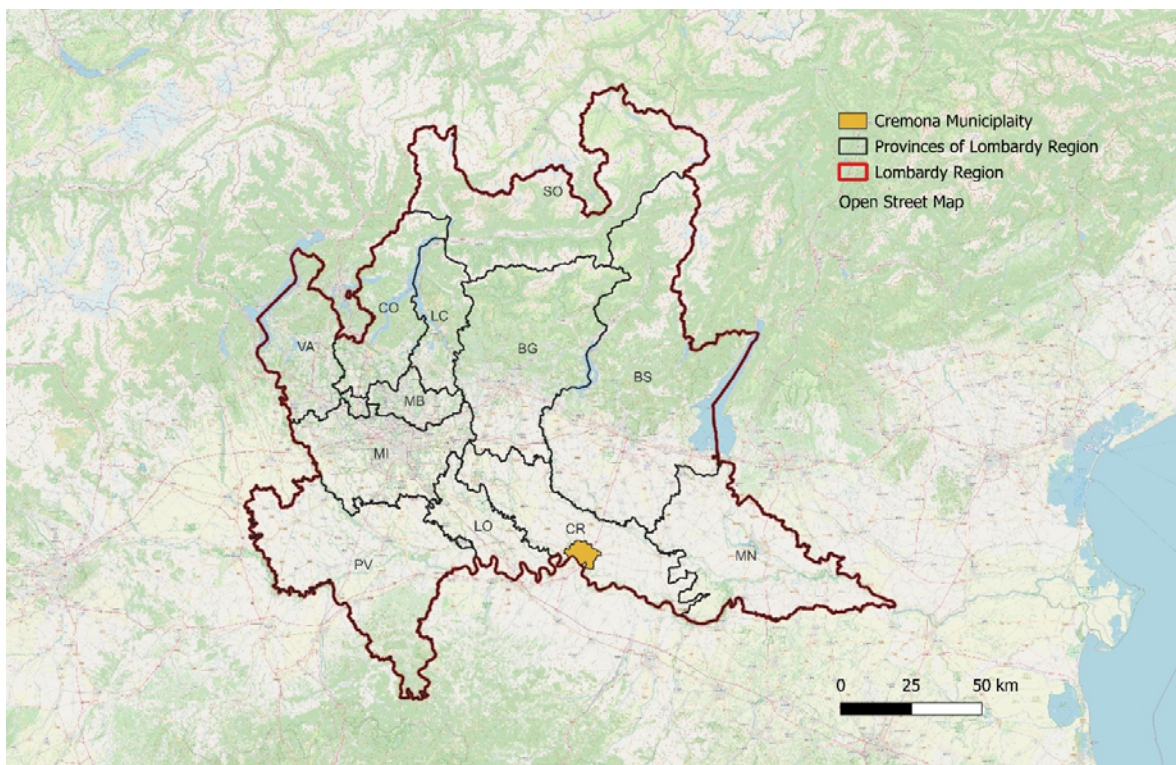


Figure 2 Location of the Province of Cremona

Source by the Author using QGIS 3.34.4 and OpenStreetMap cartography

The Context of the Research

Having decided on the methodology of the study, setting the two-party research question in a well-defined context was deemed appropriate; this revealed itself to be complex.

From a methodological point of view, it was necessary to:

- a) define the area under examination – *Cremona, city of music* – along with its tourist flow.
- b) Identify the fundamental aspects that have recently delineated (and are continuing to transform) tourist destinations linked to UNESCO sites and others.
- c) Trace the identity of the contemporary tourist.

The Territorial Context: Tourist Flows in Cremona

The research began in the Province of Cremona before focusing on the urban context of the city of Cremona. Situated in the southern part of the Region of Lombardy, this province had, on 1 January 2021, a resident population of 352,242 and an area of 1,770,407 sq. km.

The province presents itself (again in 2021) with 316 structures offering accommodation (hotels and others) that can boast 4,178 beds, mostly in 3- or 4-star hotels and agritourims. In the five years 2015–2019, arrivals and overall stays increased, ending with 228,278 arrivals and 391,438 overnights. One can note a predominance of domestic tourism from the Lombardy Region and nearby Regions such as Emilia-Romagna, the Veneto and Piedmont, with an average stay of 1.7 days. The 2020–2021 has not been considered, given the drastic reduction in numbers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, whose only noteworthy outcome was increasing the average stay to 3 days. Changing territorial scale and entering the situation in the municipality of Cremona (the province's capital lies in the centre of the Po Valley), this contains in its territory (70,492 sq. km) 44% of the province's establishments offering accommodation. This percentage covers 35% of the beds (1,466) available in the province. Tourist flow in the municipality consisted of 81,012 arrivals and 156,133 overnights in 2019, characterised by the same snapshot of provenance indicated at the Provincial level (Province of Cremona-Statistics Department, 2021).

The figures demonstrate that tourism is, for now, a limited phenomenon. Battilani (2019) also asserts that “the entire Province of Cremona has never been a tourist destination, despite the splendid cathedral and the attraction of the violin makers. The limited number of tourist presences proves this. The interest in tourism is very recent and has grown in parallel with the reappropriation of the ancient art of the luthiers” (pp. 120–121).

Covid and Post-globalisation

A multidisciplinary debate about the crisis of the paradigm (and of the dynamics) of globalisation is currently taking place (Flew, 2020; Islam, 2021; Roudometof, 2021; Shukla, 2021; Contractor, 2022). The research shown here refers, on the one hand, to a period in which SARS-Cov-2 (COVID-19) has been pandemic – perhaps now at the beginning of a post-pandemic phase? – and, on the other, in an era of post-globalisation. Academics and researchers are trying to understand what a new model of this phenomenon might be, as is nicely summarised by James and Steger: “re-globalisation, that is, a profound rearrangement of globalisation's constituent formations that are moving conjecturally at different speeds and levels of intensity” (James & Steger, 2021, p. 807).

The Figure for the Tourist

In a similar scenario characterised by multiple changes in society and, simultaneously, by a certain degree of (generalised, worldwide) uncertainty about the future and hypothetical forecasts about what that future might be, how can one describe the figure of the tourist? And, more specifically, that of the cultural/musical one? To try to reply to a question of this significance, it is worth remembering that one of the significant challenges of this historical period (see b.) is digital transformation, which is still taking place. In this regard, one is reminded of the six pillars of the Recovery and Resilience Facility of the European Union (European Union, 2021) and the Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza #Nextgenerationitalia (Fadelli & Fava, 2021; Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021a; D'Alessio, 2022; Meazza, 2022). The Italian Plan contains “a series of actions and interventions

designed to overcome the economic and social impact of the pandemic and construct a new Italy ... giving it the necessary instruments to face the environmental, technological and social challenges of our time and of the future” (Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021b). One of the six projected missions is that of “digitalisation, innovation, competitiveness and culture”, which represents the second item of expenditure and includes “investments in tourism and culture” for a sum of over 8 billion Euro, (Missione M1C3 – Turismo e Cultura 4.0) (see Table 1.1 of the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021a, p. 24). In Mission M1C3, the Italian government proposes courses of action aimed at “valorising historic and cultural sites” through interventions “accompanied by efforts to augment tourist/accommodation facilities and tourism services, to improve the standard of what is on offer and increase its overall attractiveness. These operations of producing added quality /renewal of what is available for tourists are in line with a philosophy of environmental sustainability and full exploitation of the potential of digital media, taking advantage of the new technologies to offer new services and improve access to tourist/cultural resources” (Ministry of Economy and Finance of Italy, 2021a, p. 89) (Mancini Palamoni, 2022, p. 4).

Within the context of this European and national picture, one finds the figure of a constantly evolving tourist. On the one hand, there is talk of the phenomenon of transformational tourism (Pung et al., 2020; Pung & Del Chiappa, 2020) as “a positive change in attitudes and values among those who participate in the tourist experience” (Christie & Mason in Pung et al., 2020, p. 2) and of the co-design of a cultural tourist experience (Cuomo et al., 2021). Conversely, the tourist figure emerges as a subject who is “contemporary, increasingly digitalised and omnivorous concerning the content and touchpoints to gain access to information and make his or her choices as a consumer” (Battaglia et al., 2021, p. 131). At the same time, the tourist is an actor increasingly seeking experiences providing territorial identity, authenticity, and proximity. This quest leads the tourist to interact – not only in a passive manner – with concepts that are proposed with ever greater insistence by those who produce tourism

and cultural tourism in this age of Tourism 4.0 – and heading towards 5.0 (Carbone, 2020; Pencarelli, 2020; Stankov & Gretzel, 2020): smart tourism, e-tourism, Internet of Things (IoT), augmented reality, virtual reality, metaverse, phygital, travel designer, travel blogger, communities, Exponential Organization (EXO), Online Tour Operator/Online Travel Agencies (OTA), Destination Management Organization (DMO)...: a lexicon that bears witness to the concatenation of challenges and opportunities and – at the same time – potential problems and threats that the transformation of the tourist sector is bringing about.

The Violin Making District of Cremona: Creative and Cultural Craftsmanship

Though small in terms of the number of people it employs, this district is very complex: the value chain reveals elements of very different kinds that are closely integrated. Most of these elements are situated in the city’s historic centre; they occupy urban buildings and create the aesthetic “landscape” of portions of the city. The luthiers – who, as a whole, constitute the actual nucleus of an ‘industrial district’ – have their artisanal workshops mainly close to one another, and they are, in turn, close to any satellite activities. They may sell their products directly or commercially (Macconi & Antoldi, 2020; Tuccia, n.d.). They often carry out their work “in the shop window”, in full view of those passing outside. They operate practically in an experienced, manual fashion, with high quality and professionalism. Their biographies are fascinating: they have always attended the International School in Cremona or other educational establishments elsewhere and have then undergone specialist training in the city or abroad (e.g., in Lausanne in Switzerland, New York, UK...) in the workshops of eminent luthiers. One can read their stories on their business websites or – if they are members – on the website of the Consorzio “A. Stradivari” Liutai, where one can also admire some of the instruments they have produced. The life stories of the luthiers are very varied: some come from Conservatories and are real musicians (just as an example, see Gabbani Martin, n.d.) Some also have experience as teachers at the School of Violin Making and in the workshops. They participate in instrument

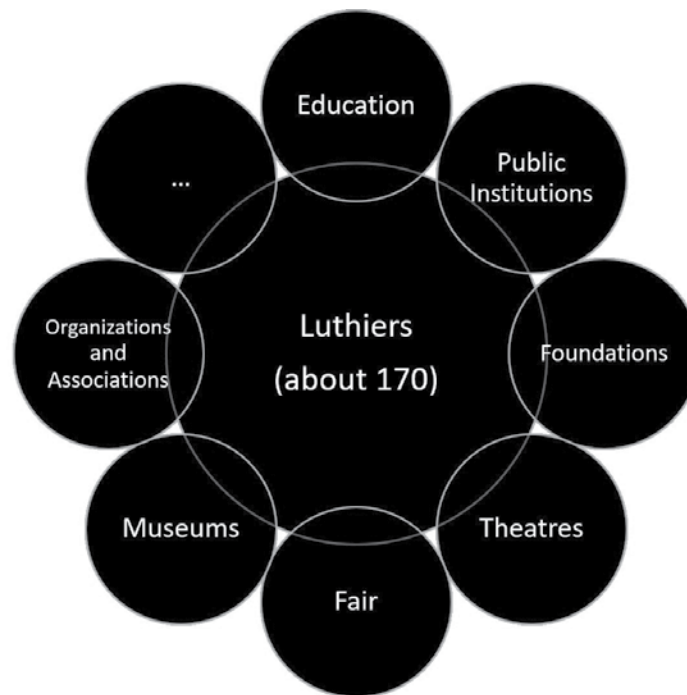


Figure 3 The Violin Making District of Cremona.

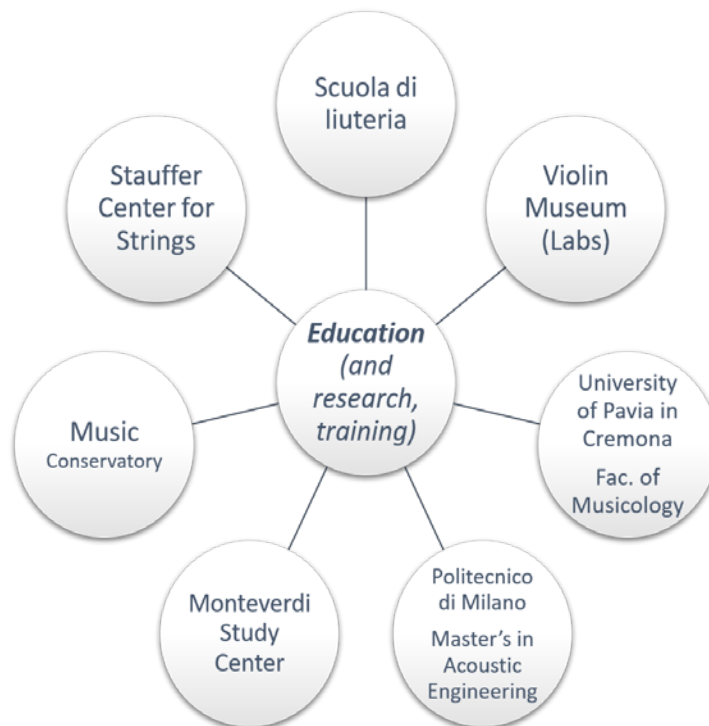


Figure 4 The Educational Actors in the Violin Making District of Cremona.

Table 1 Institutions and Other Bodies in the Violin-Making District of Cremona.

Group of actors	Actors
Education Training Research	• Scuola Internazionale di Liuteria and Liceo Musicale in the IIS (Istituto di Istruzione Superiore) A. Stradivari • Workshops (Museo del Violino) • Univ. of Pavia-Faculty of Musicology in Cremona • Univ. Politecnico Milano- Master's in Acoustic Engineering • Conservatorio Statale di Cremona/Istituto "Claudio Monteverdi" and Monteverdi Study Centre • Accademia W. Stauffer • Accademia Cremonensis
Public Institutions	• Municipality of Cremona – UNESCO office; InfoPoint for Tourism • Region of Lombardy • Province of Cremona • Cremona Chamber of Commerce with Cr.Forma
Foundations	• Fondazione Stradivari • Fondazione Teatro Amilcare Ponchielli • Fondazione Cariplo • Fondazione Lucchi
Theatres	• Teatro Ponchielli • Teatro Monteverdi
Museums	• Museo del Violino • Museo Ala Ponzone
Diocese of Cremona	• Diocese of Cremona
Fair	• Ente Fiere Cremona spa
Organisations and associations	• Consorzio Liutai "A. Stradivari" • Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa (CNA) • Associazione Nazionale Liutai Artistici Italiani (ANLAI) • Associazione Culturale CrArT • Associazione Costanzo Porta
Others	• Private citizens with Town Houses • Service companies, tourist agencies (e.g., Target Turismo) • Hotels • Musician instrument shops • Other shops and services functional for the violin making district

festivals, exhibitions and national and international competitions, such as the ANLAI (Associazione Nazionale Liuteria Artistica Italiana) competition in which luthiers from Cremona compete against violin makers from the whole of Italy and around the world. The violin-making businesses are small, usually made up of one or two persons who sometimes have moved here due to their passion (Guercini & Caccarelli, 2020). The groups surrounding the nucleus of luthiers

are made up of bodies in the tertiary and quaternary sectors and have been grouped here by category (Table 1). Together, they give rise to the type of district stated in the title of this section (Segre & Re, 2020). Once the training at The School of Violin Making and, subsequently, a superior level of learning at the university and an advanced course are completed, the subjects may remain in Cremona, but generally, they "disperse" elsewhere in Italy or the world.

As can be seen from Table 1 and in the descriptions on the websites of the respective institutions, training in violin making and music education can be carried out here at any level one wishes. Many initiatives originate in institutional establishments but involve the whole city in close collaboration. As regards the Istituto “C. Monteverdi”/Conservatory, there is the Monteverdi Festival, a top-quality event focusing on the music of the two Monteverdi brothers (Claudio, Cremona 1567 – Venezia, 1643 and Giulio, Cremona 1573 – Salò, 1630) and other outstanding coeval composers. The festival involves – apart from the Conservatory’s Orchestra Monteverdi – well-established national and international orchestras, musicians, and students of the Conservatory itself, along with theatrical and artistic inserts. During the festival, workshops are held for instrumental and vocal groups. These events are also publicised on social media. Part of the Festival also takes place in the Giovanni Arvedi Auditorium of the Museo del Violino, where this year, Maestro Jordi Savall played instruments from the sixteenth century.

The Violin Museum works closely with all the entities in the district and, in some aspects, is functional for them (Lucarno, 2020). It also conducts international collaborations and relationships with the proprietors of the “Friends of Stradivari” instruments, which form part of the collection exhibited in a particular room in the Museum. The Museum offers a tour through ten rooms, where one can first learn (using multimedia techniques) about the process of constructing a violin and subsequently admire the exquisite instruments on show, played by top-class musicians on special occasions and at the short weekly concerts. In the fifth room – referred to as “The Treasure Chamber” – one can admire instruments by:

- Andrea Amati (circa 1505–1577) – the “Carlo IX” violin, circa 1566
- Girolamo Amati (circa 1548–1630) – the “Stauffer” viola, 1615
- Nicolò Amati (1596–1684) – the “Hämmerle” violin, circa 1658
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the “Clisbee” violin, 1669

- Giuseppe Guarneri *fiilius Andreæ* (1666–1740) – the “Quarestani” violin, 1689
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the “Stauffer – ex Cristiani” cello, 1700
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the “Il Cremonese” violin, 1715
- Antonio Stradivari (circa 1644–1737) – the “Vesuvius” violin, 1727
- Giuseppe Guarneri “del Gesù” (1698–1744) – the “Stauffer” violin, 1734 (Museo del Violino, n.d.).

Mention the public institutions, the City Government’s Culture Department takes initiatives regarding the art of violin making: first, it was one of the signatories of the proposal for the recognition of ICH status; in 2021, it constituted the UNESCO Office, and it is notably involved in all the main events. Last year, with the Teatro Ponchielli (which has an annual programme), the Museo del Violino, the Conservatory and the University’s Department of Musicology, it launched the first edition of the Festa del Violino.

We close this brief description of the district with two bodies always present when businesses are being promoted and initiatives to be hosted: the Cremona Chamber of Commerce and the Cremona Fair (CremonaFiere s.p.a.). For the former and reflections regarding this paper’s subject, please see Fulvia Caruso: *La Camera di Commercio di Cremona e la liuteria classica Cremonese* (2017). Regarding the latter, attention is due to the annual *Cremona musica International exhibitions and festivals*. Every type of top-quality musical instrument and event fills the spaces and the calendar of the fair during the festival.

Awareness of the Actors Regarding Cremona’s Violin-making ICH

The first part of the question asked by the author regarded an understanding of the extent to which the actors involved in various ways in Cremona’s Violin Making District are aware of the value of the ICH element that they create, produce, use, or communicate, and which they should highlight and promote to a highly varied public. Emblematic in this sense is the sign that most luthiers attach to the windows of their



Figure 5 Window of luthiers Gaspar Borchardt & Sibylle Fehr-Borchardt in Piazza Sant'Antonio Maria Zaccaria in Cremona, May 2022.

shops/ateliers: “UNESCO Traditional Violin Craftsmanship in Cremona”.

The sign inspired the author to conduct exploratory interviews to comprehend whether the sign was only a “decorative” element affixed in the windows of their workshops or if it had, as it were, become “alive” over time. Dialogues were conducted with the main actors who work in Cremona and the environs in fields involved with the *savoir-faire* of violin making (see the section on methodology in this paper). From these open interviews, it emerged from all the interviewees that they recognised the need to implement actions themselves in favour of the awareness of the craftsmanship of violin making as a UNESCO intangible element. In the context under examination, the process of drafting a Plan to Safeguard the *Savoir Faire* of Violin Making, for which the subject of ref-

erence with the Ministry is the Municipality of Cremona, coordinated by its own UNESCO Office, is still in progress. In this regard, the author wishes to cite the importance of the public event on 10 May 2022, at which the work already accomplished was presented to the community by the local institutions (see Museo del Violino, 2021 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cucY72vidUQ>).

Ten years after UNESCO recognition was granted, the actors involved in the general agreement, coordinated by the Municipality of Cremona, have done a great deal of preparatory work towards drafting the Plan: in particular, they have drawn up a questionnaire (as an instrument in which the craftsmen can have their say) which will be given to the luthiers and have agreed on a calendar of work sessions on the themes that are considered of cardinal importance

for their activity, to begin the phase of so-called “capacity building”. These sessions represent, in fact, the basis for the subsequent creation of measures that will be inserted in the planning for managing the violin-making heritage as a “heritage that is living and therefore – of necessity – ever-changing” and also “an expertise rooted in the local context, which has at the same time a global scope” (Ana Luiza Massot Thompson-Flores, director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, in Museo del Violino, 2021). From the voices of the luthiers, also confirmed by the questionnaire given to them voluntarily, it emerges that they sense the need to promote their professionalism/activity combined with that of UNESCO in an action that is synergic and shared with the various institutions of Cremona.

Awareness About the UNESCO ICH Element for Tourists and Day Visitors

The second question in this research regards the tourists and day visitors’ awareness of the ICH element under investigation. Of interest – and before the study conducted by the author – is the survey carried out by Cremona’s municipal Infopoint office in 2021 on a sample of 4,000 tourists, from which it emerges that “69% of the tourists interviewed declared that the principal motive for their visit to Cremona was “art, culture and related events”, followed by “food and wine and related events” (28%)” (Province of Cremona-Office of Statistics, 2021, p. 40). Such a decision on the part of the tourist suggests that Cremona is a destination for cultural tourism tout court and, within this, for music-based tourism. The promotional choices made by the institutional subject, the Municipality of Cremona, bear witness to the result of this survey.

Taking her cue from this consideration, the author sought to comprehend the relationship between the tourist and the ICH of Cremona’s violin, making *savoir-faire*. She, therefore, asked the question, “Is the tourist and day visitor who goes to Cremona aware that they are visiting one of UNESCO’s immaterial elements?” in open interviews with some twenty stakeholders: officials of the UNESCO Office in the Municipality of Cremona and those responsible for the city’s promotion/tourist information; university lecturers

(musicologists and ethnomusicologists); violin makers (in particular the dozen or so out of 150 who are prepared to give guided tours of their workshops); directors of the Cremona Fair; tourist guides; specialist publishers in the musical/violin making field; and musicians/orchestra members. The question was asked to these territorial actors rather than tourists because of the characteristics of the historical period in which the study was conducted. A common denominator in all the interviews was the assertion that there is no awareness of the tourists regarding the ‘UNESCO immaterial element of violin-making *savoir-faire*’ when they visit the city of Cremona and its iconic locations (e.g., the Violin Museum, violin makers’ workshops, Ponchielli Theatre, etc.). Three declarations appear to be symbolic and worthy of being quoted:

“Tourists do not know about our UNESCO membership” (all the stakeholders interviewed);

“The average tourist does not know the intangible heritage value of Cremona, and the luthiers’ workshops are not perceived as tourist places” (tourist guide);

“Cremona has always been perceived as the city of violin music; UNESCO came later, and it is not in the tourist’s mind” (words of the luthier who carries out the most significant number of guided tours).

Conclusive Remarks

To understand the role and the attractive/competitive/complementary importance of a small city like Cremona, one must remember that the urban cultural tourism available in Italia is highly subdivided. Apart from the “classic”, overly-frequented tourist destinations of Florence, Venice and Rome, even if one considers only Northern Italy (Turri, 2000) – apart from the metropolises of Milan and Turin – many small and medium-sized cities contain inestimable cultural heritages: the Italy of the “intermediary cities” of Giuseppe De Rita (2022). These are now all “open” for musical entertainment. From the numerous medium-sized towns, one passes to the minor centres (Touring Club Italiano, 1983) and then to the so-called Borghi, where

one can enjoy a slower-paced, alternative form of tourism. Within 100–200 km from Cremona, we find Pavia, a Longobard city on the Via Francigena; Piacenza, with the imprint of the Farnese family; Mantua*, the city of the Gonzagas and the painter Mantegna; Bergamo with the walled Bergamo Alta and the birthplace of Donizetti; Brescia with the complex of Santa Giustina; Verona*, the city of Shakespeare, opera and music in general; and then to the south-east Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena*, Bologna* and Ferrara* (*UNESCO tangible World Heritage Sites).

For Cremona, being a UNESCO ICH site is a plus factor, which should be communicated as much as possible (Gomez-Oliva et al., 2019); this calls, on the part of the recipient, for a specific sensibility and acculturation regarding the role of UNESCO, which seems more obvious as far as what is “tangible” is concerned. In contrast, the intangible still must make an impression. For every person today, referring to UNESCO should become a *forma mentis*, on whatever scale locations are being considered. In our case, one might pressure musicians (violinists, cellists, and bass players) to underline their trait union with the violin-making district of Cremona.

Returning once again to focus on the city of Cremona, the most appropriate instrument for adhering to its context in the form of an ongoing rapport with the luthiers of the present and of the past, composers of the past, musicians and singers is an “itinerary” or “route”, a topic that is now mainstream. At this point, the question would become broader and more complex; i.e., it would be possible to include the route in Regional tourist policies - especially in connection with local governance (Regional Law no. 27 of 1st October 2015, *Regional policies regarding tourism and the attractiveness of the territory of Lombardy*) and communication aimed at tourists (Regione Lombardia, n.d.) - as well as those for Italy and Europe. Concentrating on what is already materially feasible, in this case attention should be drawn to internal urban itineraries on a local scale, organised by guides who have refined their knowledge of the places involved in connection with people who are alive or were in the past, their lives and their material and musical production (an example: Adami, 2020). There is also a predispo-

sition to seek out these characteristics in a larger area (Scaratti, 2020). In the case under investigation, this necessarily includes frequenting the numerous musical events that are offered throughout the year.

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