

ANOTHER STRING TO SOTHEBY'S BOW !

SOTHEBY'S is to offer musical instruments in an auction aimed specifically at music students and enthusiastic amateurs. The inaugural sale on Thursday December 7, 2000 at Sotheby's South, Sussex will feature 137 violins, six of which are specifically for children, all estimated under £1,000.

Tim Ingles, Head of Sotheby's Musical instruments department in London, said: "This new type of sale is extremely exciting as it emphasises not only the accessibility and affordability of musical instruments, but offers younger enthusiasts the opportunity to obtain a feel for the auction market."

The development of printed music in Victorian England enabled the work of great composers to become more accessible and music as a hobby to grow in popularity. This in turn led to the founding of amateur orchestras and choral societies all over Europe and a huge demand for good quality, but reasonably-priced instruments. Workshops making instruments sprang up in France and Germany, particularly in Mirecourt in the Vosges mountains, and Markneukirchen in Saxony, both of which had been centres of violin making since the 18th century. Many of the instruments produced bore facsimile labels of the great Italian violin makers such as Stradivari, Guarneri and Amati and were shipped to meet the huge demand from amateur musicians all over Europe.

Many of these violins survive today and several are included in Sotheby's sale, such as those by Laberte-Humbert Frères and the workshops of Honoré Derazy. The sale also features instruments by Matthias Wörnle, Léon Mougnot, Jeffrey Gilbert and Victor Audinot.

Also in the sale are violin-related books with estimates ranging between £30 and £300 and three cellos, with estimates between £400 and £1,500.

Sotheby's press office, London contact :

Sandie Maylor, Tel : 020 7293 5162

email: Sandie.maylor@sothebys.com

Sotheby's South press office, Sussex contact :

Rachel Aked, Tel: 01403 833521

email: rachel.aked@sothebys.com