

ANDREA GUARNERI

WRITTEN BY JULIAN HERSH

Andrea Guarneri was the patriarch of one of the most important families of Italian violin makers. It included his sons, Pietro of Mantua and Giuseppe 'filius Andreae', and grandsons Pietro of Venice and Giuseppe Guarneri 'del Gesù'. Only the Amati family, with its five illustrious makers (Andrea, Antonio, Hieronymus I, Nicolò, Hieronymus II) shares such a rich lineage. The two families also had a close personal connection: as a young apprentice Andrea Guarneri was trained in the workshop of Nicolò and lived in the Amati household. He was also a witness at Nicolò Amati's wedding.

Some instruments attributed to Andrea Guarneri show the hand of his sons: in the 1670s Pietro of Mantua, and by the mid-1680s Giuseppe 'filius Andreae', who took over the shop after Andrea's death in 1698. It is especially true of Andrea's cellos, where the collaboration of 'filius Andreae' is evident in many of the later examples, including this cello dated 1689.

PROVENANCE

In their 1931 book about the violin makers of the Guarneri family, the Hills list a total of 14 cellos by Andrea Guarneri that were known to the firm at that time. This cello was not on that list. However, in 1951, the Hill firm sold it to a Mrs Lawrence of Chelsea, London.

MATERIALS

Andrea Guarneri did not always use the highest-quality materials as the shop was probably making instruments for a less well-heeled customer than the Amati shop (and later the Stradivari workshop). However, no expense is spared here: the spruce top and prominently flamed maple back and ribs are exceptionally beautiful and a lavish choice for a cello. The plentiful orange-brown varnish is also first-rate and on the long expanse of a cello body this combination of wood and varnish is striking.

FORM AND CONSTRUCTION

Andrea Guarneri was one of the makers at the forefront of the development of a successful smaller-size cello model. With a generally shorter body length (under 30 inches) but broad widths,

the model is not unlike some examples by his contemporary Francesco Rugeri. Although the size of this cello has been slightly modified, much of the original shape is still intact. Built on a more diminutive model it is probably the result of a collaborative effort with 'filius Andreae', whose cellos tend to be slightly narrower in the C-bouts.

On this narrow platform the broadly placed and upright f-holes are neatly carved with gently hallowed wings. The finely carved edge and long slender corners with purfling mitres pointing straight up the corners are likely the work of 'filius Andreae'. Andrea's corners tend to be a bit broader, and the purfling mitres are frequently deflected quite sharply across the corners.

ARCHING

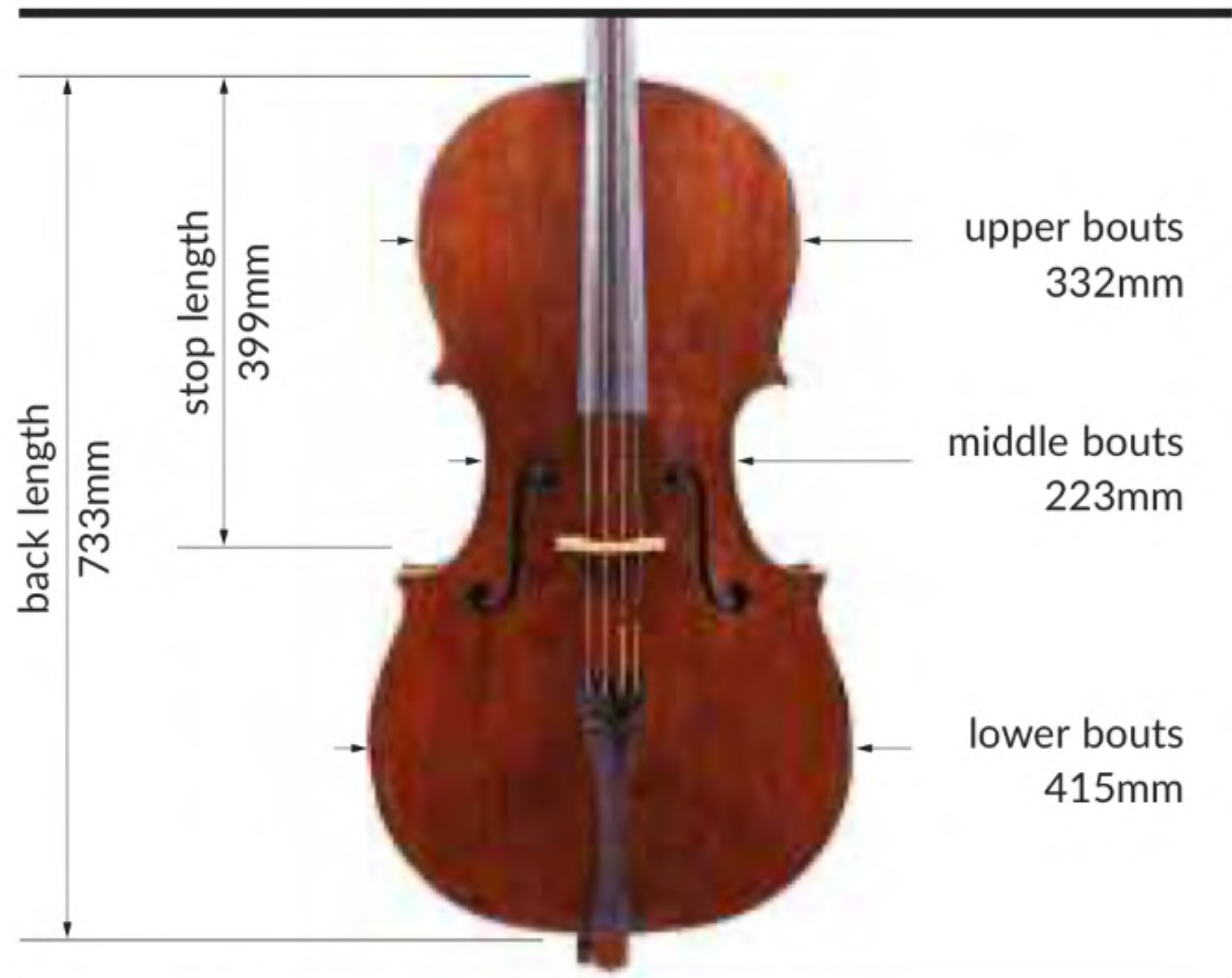
The moderately high arch is full to the edges in the top and bottom bouts. In the C-bouts it is a bit pinched, with a small amount of recurve around the edge.

SCROLL

The later scroll was made by Carlo Giuseppe Testore and is typical of his work; the volute is diagonal in shape. ▶

•	MAKER
	ANDREA GUARNERI
•	NATIONALITY
	ITALIAN
•	BORN
	1626
•	DIED
	1698
•	INSTRUMENT
	CELLO
•	DATE
	1689





All measurements taken with a tape measure



