

Restoration of quartet instruments : Advanced level

Teachers : Damien SAINMONT et Almuth McWILLIAMS

Date : from wednesday 14 until 22 May 2025

(trainees must be on site the day before for the 5 p.m. assessment)

Schedules : from 9h00 to 13h00 and 14h00 to 18h00

Lenght 9 days (66 hours) spread over 4 full days of 7h45/day - 1 half-day of 4 hours and 4 full days of 7h45/day

Venue : Ferme de Villefavard, 2 impasse de l'Eglise et de la cure, 87190 Villefavard

Maximum number of trainees: 8

Course given in english (french and german spoken)

Target audience and prerequisite

- Professional luthiers wishing to deepen their knowledge in the highly specialised technical field of restoring period instruments.

- A few years' professional experience, particularly in restoration, is desirable.

Prerequisites :

- To be a professional violin maker, craftsman or employee with a diploma from a violin making school.

- To enter the course, students must bring with them at least one instrument requiring restoration work, on which they will be required to work during the course.

Course aims

Acquire knowledge and skills related to the activity of restoring period instruments. The items worked on are, for example, depending on the projects brought in by the trainees :

o general inspection of the instrument to be restored, survey of the condition and set up before work is carried out, diagnosis, planning of the work to be done, documentation of the work carried out,

o cleaning or removal of original and non-original surfaces,

o Moulding techniques and shaping of counterparts,

o restoration of vaults or deformed parts,

o restoration of fractures (cleaning, gluing, reinforcement, filling),

o filling in dowel holes,

o touching up varnish,

o other themes to be defined according to the students' projects, following the enrolment interview.

2. To be able to use or experiment with various techniques specific to the trade of violin maker-restorer from among those listed above, depending on the value of the instrument and the complexity of the work to be carried out.

On the other hand, other objectives (e.g. restoration of arches, restoration of fractures, retouching of varnish, etc.) cannot be completed during the course but students will have the necessary knowledge to be able to carry them out afterwards.

Course contents

- Grafting of missing or already replaced parts, in particular through-piece techniques,
 - consolidation of structurally important fractures, in particular web parts),
 - worm damage,
 - replacement or modification of an old handle,
 - other topics as requested by the students when the projects are analysed.
- The daily schedule may be adjusted based on the progress of practical work .

Daily program

Arrival Day:

- Introduction of instructors and participants.
- Evaluation of the projects brought by participants by the instructors.
- Diagnostics and identification of work to be done.

Day 1:

- Restoration ethics.
- Documentation before, during, and after interventions.
- Afternoon reserved for supervised practical work on the projects brought.

Day 2:

- Use of UV light for identifying original and non-original surfaces.
- Cleaning of original and non-original surfaces.
- Afternoon reserved for supervised practical work.

Day 3:

- Plaster cast techniques.
- Arching correction techniques.
- Afternoon reserved for supervised practical work.

Day 4:

- Crack cleaning.
- Crack gluing techniques.
- Crack reinforcing.
- Afternoon reserved for supervised practical work.

Day 5:

- Peg hole bushing.
- Review of individual project progress.
- Afternoon reserved for 'free' practical work.

Day 6:

- Restoration wood: selection and preparation.
- Grafting missing or already replaced parts, particularly through-piece techniques.
- Afternoon reserved for supervised practical work.

Day 7:

- Worm damage.
- Sound post patches.
- Afternoon reserved for supervised practical work.

Day 8:

- Materials and tools for retouching.
- Varnish touch-ups.
- Afternoon reserved for supervised practical work.

Day 9:

- Supervised practical work and optional topics requested by participants.
- Evaluation of project progress, Q&A session, course closure.

Teaching methods

- Teaching aids include :

- o presentations illustrated with photos,
- o sketches
- o demonstrations in real-life situations.

- Supervised individual practice for each trainee,

- At the end of the course, the trainers provide a summary of the problems encountered individually,

- At the end of the course, trainees are tested on what they have learned and the results of their case studies are pooled,

- A number of documents will be distributed during the course (theoretical notes, lists of products and addresses for purchasing them, etc.),

A list of equipment common to all trainees will be sent with confirmation of enrolment.

A list of additional equipment adapted to each individual project (tools, raw materials, technical products) is defined in advance with the trainer.

In both cases, this equipment is essential in order to follow the session.

Trainees are invited to take notes and photos during the session.

Evaluation methods

Achievement of the training objectives will be assessed :

- Continuously, during the course, through interaction between the trainee and the trainers during the individual practical exercises.
- At the end of the session, by means of a questionnaire and a round table discussion at the end of the day.

A certificate of attendance will be issued.

Access procedures

Complete the online registration request form. The form and questionnaire of the requirements are sent to the teacher to validate your registration. A conversation may be needed depending on your information. Once the validation has been completed by the teacher, we send you an email with the link to complete your application on the aladfi administrative website and proceed to payment. Finally, you will receive an email with details for organising your trip, the list of materials to bring to the course and the welcome booklet. For any question during the process: campusformation@aladfi.com

Prices

Registration price (not including B&B, transport) :
Trainees with a financing file (either via OPCO, FAFCEA or France Travail) : 1 800 euros
Trainees not working in France or not having a financing file : 900 euros

For any question regarding B&B, please contact campusformation@aladfi.com

Pour tous renseignements concernant l'hébergement sur place merci de contacter campusformation@aladfi.com

Disabilities

Contact for persons with situation of disabilities :
Mélanie Kaltenbach melaniekaltenbach@icloud.com +33 6 14 65 07 81

Your teachers

After studying science, Damien SAINMONT (<http://damiensainmont.com/>) decided to follow his first passion and joined the Newark School of Violin Making, graduating with honours in 2004. That same year he took part in the 1st British Violinmaking Association (BVMA) competition and won the student prize.

Damien SAINMONT then went on to train in the world-renowned workshops of Florian Leonhard in London, Pierre Mastrangelo in Lausanne and Kogge-Gateau in Berlin. He was soon entrusted with prestigious instruments as his restoration skills came to the fore. For more than 10 years, he acquired and developed both techniques inherited from the long tradition of Hills&Sons and J&A Beare and new, avant-garde techniques. He regularly takes part in courses and workshops with the best international specialists in the field. In 2015, he set up his own workshop in Lausanne, where he continues to work as a restorer. Convinced that the highest levels of skill can only be acquired through the exchange of knowledge, Damien favours close collaboration with his colleagues. He is constantly exploring new techniques and materials, while maintaining a highly ethical and conservative approach to restoration. Keen to pass on his knowledge, he now works as a trainer in the field of professional training.

Almuth McWILLIAMS studied at the renowned school of violin making in Mittenwald, Germany, from 1998-2001.

After graduating, she began working in the workshop of Kevin Gentges and Felix Scheit in Berlin, where she gained experience in all the important areas of violin making: construction, repair, restoration, as well as sales and tuning.

In 2002, she joined the workshop of Daniel Kogge and Yves Gateau, where she concentrated on the restoration of fine old instruments. Throughout her career, she has frequently taken part in restoration workshops in England and Italy.

In 2019, she began teaching instrument restoration for the BVMA in West Dean.

Contacts

Information sur les contenus pédagogiques / suivi de votre inscription / hébergement, restauration, logistique :
Comité Formation continue ALADFI (Paul Noulet) - campusformation@aladfi.com