

**Marje Lohuaru**

Chairman of the European Chamber Music Teachers' Association  
[www.ecmta.eu](http://www.ecmta.eu)

Board Member of the Estonian Foundation of Musical Instruments  
[www.pillifond.ee](http://www.pillifond.ee)

### **Cooperation between the music and business fields as illustrated by the Instrument Foundation**

Culture has always required patrons as well as sponsors. Culture always needs funding, with always the need to include private capital now and in the future. How to arrange funding such that both sides reap benefits – the donator and recipient?

**One possibility is to support culture through investments.**

**On the 7th of December 2015 as an initiative of the Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Culture, AS Swedbank, the Estonian National Culture Foundation as well as maestro Paavo Järvi, founded the Estonian Foundation of Musical Instruments.**

A change of generations has occurred in Estonian music life. A new generation of highly educated, talented, hard-working, devoted to the field and of international standard interpreters has grown up. Their international careers are hindered by the lack of high quality instruments, especially string instruments. Good string instruments are expensive and their acquisitions by a young musician at the start of their career is not an affordable transaction.

The Estonian Foundation of Musical Instruments has taken as its aim, in cooperation with the state and private sector to find solutions for acquiring valuable instruments and ensuring they reach the hands of talented musicians. One does not need to look far to find inspiration, as in all countries which value high culture, similar collections of string instruments exist. Different countries indeed use different methods for financing new acquisitions to their collections. The Instrument Foundation turns towards our successful, culture appreciating investors for support and investment.

All music instruments, other than string instruments, become useless over time. New, freshly built string instruments might have very good quality. Will their good characteristics and value be preserved over time – these are questions which will find a response only after a lot of time has passed. These questions do not arise when

purchasing instruments that have survived until today, that were made by old recognised European masters. It is estimated that there are only 7 000 such instruments left in the world. The quality of string instruments made by historic top masters increases significantly over time, whereas they are valued more and more by the music world too.

### **New form of patronage**

In the Estonian context the Instrument Foundation offers a new form of patronage. Usually when a business supports culture, the company does not expect financial profit. Investing in instruments is still somewhat unfamiliar, but the interest is great. Businesses and many others want to support high culture. The new opportunity to unite spiritual interests with financial ones, has found a positive reception in business circles. The rare instruments with high quoted prices are the key for musicians and string instrument culture being noticeable in the international competition. It is important to exert effort to make instruments available that will open all possibilities for musicians to express their talent.

### **The Instrument Foundation performs with the support and in the interest of culture friendly, long-term investors**

To date Estonian investors have invested approx. €1.4 million into the foundation. The instruments acquired have been given to talented and internationally performing Estonian musicians for fixed periods of use. See more: [www.pillifond.ee](http://www.pillifond.ee)

Currently, the Instrument Foundation's collection consists of 9 instruments and 2 bows. The unique instruments have been made in the period from 1610 until 1904, mainly by Italian and French masters. The oldest instrument in the collection is the close to 400 year old violin made by the Italian master Giovanni Paolo Maggini. In addition to the best instruments by the Italian masters Nicola and Giuseppe Gagliano, Enrico Catenar and Celeste Farotti, three top class instruments by the French masters Auguste Sébastien Bernardel (Père) and Francois Fourier belong to the collection, as does an early English viola prepared by the master Thomas Urquhart in the years 1650-1700.

The instruments have been certified by Vatelot Rampal (Jean Jacques Rampal), Hieronymos Köstler, Charles Beare and Andreas Post.

The Instrument Foundation's project is interdisciplinary including competences of different fields: legal, insurance, security, special expertise etc.

The following strategical developments confirm the project's sustainability:

### **Educational field:**

A one year training programme for Estonian instrument makers has been started with the cooperation of The Guild of Finnish Violin Makers as well as experts from Sweden, Germany and Great Britain, with funding from the European Commission Programme.

### **Cultural field:**

The concert series with Eesti Kontsert (5 concerts, 2019 – 2020). The performers include the instrument users. The aim of the concert series is to increase broader awareness about the historical and high quality instruments.

### **Business field**

As Swedbank has branches in Latvia and Lithuania in addition to Estonia, then the Instrument Foundation as a „best practice“ disseminates at the initiative of Swedbank to Latvia and Lithuania also.

**The Instrument Foundation is a good example of how the state and private sector cooperation can help the development of Estonian culture and that excellent investment opportunities can be found in the cultural field.**

**The addition of the international dimension and the synthesis of networks from different fields adds an important extra impulse for the diversification of the financing means for the music field.**