

The mystery of the 'Red Violin'

By Sean McAlindin, Tahoe Weekly

There are few things humans like more than a good mystery – other than solving one, of course.

When Elizabeth Pitcairn's grandfather put forth a \$1.6-million secret bid at a 1990 Christie's auction to win ownership of the legendary Red Mendelssohn Stradivarius violin, she was just shy of her 17th birthday.

In 1720, Antonio Stradivari crafted the historic instrument at his small shop in Cremona, Italy. It is said to be from the golden period of Stradivari's work, which includes some of the most acoustically perfect creations ever achieved by man.

For nearly two centuries, the whereabouts of the violin were unknown. Those years were beautifully reimagined in the fictional 1998 Canadian film "The Red Violin."

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