

Cremona, a European Hub for Chamber Music

Two days of networking and innovation for the sector with MERITA Platform

Cremona, October 2026 – On Thursday 29 and Friday 30 October 2026, Cremona will welcome an international network of chamber music professionals. **Le Dimore del Quartetto**, **Fondazione Stauffer** and the **Museo del Violino**, under the patronage of the **Municipality of Cremona**, are promoting the **Chamber Music Networking Event**: two days dedicated to networking, the exchange of ideas and the development of new collaborations among musicians, institutions, professionals and cultural organisations from across Europe.

The event takes place within the European Platform **MERITA**, coordinated by the cultural enterprise **Le Dimore del Quartetto** and co-funded by the European Union through the Creative Europe programme. Launched in 2021, MERITA has developed an international network of **over 20 partners**, **72 heritage venues** and **82 ensembles** (string quartets and piano trios), which have presented **94 original musical projects** through the platform. With **over 400 concerts scheduled between 2022 and 2029**, MERITA aims to create opportunities for young musicians, cultural organisations, heritage venues and audiences across Europe to meet and collaborate, helping to strengthen touring opportunities, visibility and the long-term sustainability of the next generation of chamber musicians through a new-generation ecosystem.

"MERITA is the natural evolution of the networking work developed by Le Dimore del Quartetto over the past ten years. It is a digital platform designed to foster innovative dialogue among international partners, while recognising the irreplaceable value of meeting in person. Just as music comes fully to life through live listening and lutherie through the craftsmanship of those who practise it, innovation also needs meaningful relationships, dialogue and shared work. It is through encounters between the people and the different areas of expertise that make up the chamber music ecosystem that new ideas and opportunities can emerge to help the sector grow together," says **Francesca Moncada di Paternò**, President of Le Dimore del Quartetto.

The choice of Cremona reflects the desire to bring the international chamber music community into dialogue with a city that has made music and violin making the beating heart of its identity. In this context, Cremona's cultural heritage becomes a starting point for meeting, sharing experiences and building new collaborations.

Fondazione Stauffer and the **Museo del Violino**, leading institutions in advanced musical training, violin making and the promotion of musical culture, are joining **Le Dimore del Quartetto** in this initiative, connecting the intercultural dimension of the platform coordinated by the cultural enterprise with the expertise and history of the city. The patronage of the Municipality of Cremona highlights the significance of the event for the city and its potential contribution to strengthening Cremona's role as a meeting point for the entire music sector.

“Fondazione Stauffer’s institutional mission is to support violin making and the training of string players. Our collaboration with the Museo del Violino in Cremona, which houses historical instruments owned by Fondazione Stauffer, and with Le Dimore del Quartetto, which coordinates the European MERITA project, offers the city of Cremona – the birthplace of both historical and contemporary violin making and home to the Accademia Stauffer, a leading centre for advanced string instrument training – an opportunity to introduce major European cultural institutions to the unique coexistence of violin makers and musicians in training. Through their mutual exchange, both can further develop their professional skills.” – Alessandro Tantardini, President of Fondazione Stauffer.

The programme opens on the afternoon of 29 October at **Sala Maffei, hosted by the Chamber of Commerce**, with the panel *Dialogue for a Sustainable European Music Ecosystem*. The meeting will offer a preview of collaboration opportunities through the MERITA Platform, introduce the new *Antonio Stradivari International Triennial Competition for String Instruments* and present the initiatives of Fondazione Stauffer.

The day will continue at the **Auditorium Giovanni Arvedi of the Museo del Violino** with the **Le Dimore del Quartetto Annual Award Concert and Ceremony**, which in 2026 celebrates the organisation’s tenth anniversary (2016–2026). The event brings together musicians, owners of historic houses, luthiers, cultural professionals, partners and supporters of chamber music every year. This edition will also be an opportunity to celebrate the people and relationships that have contributed to the growth of the network.

“Over the past ten years, the paths of the Museo del Violino and Le Dimore del Quartetto have frequently crossed, reflecting a shared commitment to an open and multifaceted approach to artistic languages and knowledge. I recall the Archipelago and The String Circle projects, also made possible through collaborations with Fondazione Stauffer, Fondazione Cologni and the Michelangelo Foundation. Hosting the Chamber Music Networking Event at the Auditorium Giovanni Arvedi reaffirms and renews our commitment to building on this synergy, supporting outstanding musical talent and encouraging encounters with Cremona’s great violin-making tradition. It also brings the international dimension of the MERITA Platform into dialogue with the expertise, history and master craftspeople of the city.” – Virginia Villa, Director General of the Museo del Violino Antonio Stradivari.

The two-day event will conclude on the morning of 30 October with activities at **Palazzo Stauffer**, home of the Accademia Stauffer, and **Palazzo Raimondi**, home of the Department of Musicology and Cultural Heritage of the University of Pavia. A **professional workshop dedicated to the chamber music sector** will bring together professionals from across the field. Through collaborative working sessions, the workshop will explore shared needs and challenges and encourage new connections and partnerships across organisations, areas of expertise and territories.

The **Chamber Music Networking Event** represents a concrete step in a broader journey to celebrate Cremona’s musical heritage and strengthen its position as an international point of reference for the global chamber music ecosystem, connecting the region’s outstanding institutions and professionals with the European music community. The initiative also forms

part of the context of Cremona's bid to become **Italian Capital of Culture 2029** and aims to establish a lasting event that can continue to foster international exchange and cooperation over time.

"Today, Cremona is playing an increasingly prominent role on the international music scene, thanks to its ability to combine its historical heritage with education, research, artistic production and dialogue with new generations of musicians. The Chamber Music Networking Event, held in collaboration with and under the patronage of the Municipality of Cremona, represents an important opportunity to share this wealth with an international community of professionals, institutions and ensembles, fostering the exchange of experiences and the development of collaborations that transcend national borders.

The involvement of prestigious organisations such as Le Dimore del Quartetto, Fondazione Stauffer and Museo del Violino demonstrates the value of a network that brings together expertise, perspectives and projects, strengthening the connection between our cultural heritage and the new directions of European chamber music.

This initiative is fully aligned with Cremona's commitment to consolidating its role as a city of music, open to the world and able to transform its identity into a driving force for cultural and social development. It is also with this vision in mind that we approach our bid to become Italian Capital of Culture 2029: an opportunity to showcase our excellence, promote new forms of cooperation and make culture increasingly accessible and a catalyst for new opportunities," says **Andrea Virgilio**, Mayor of Cremona.

PROGRAMME

Thursday 29 October 2026

15.00–18.30 | Dialogue for a sustainable European music ecosystem

Sala Maffei, Camera di Commercio di Cremona-Mantova-Pavia – Cremona Headquarters

The panel will bring together experts in European project development, institutions and music and cultural professionals to reflect on opportunities for the development, internationalisation and sustainability of the sector.

The session will include a presentation of MERITA and a preview of upcoming opportunities for collaboration with the platform, the presentation of the new **Antonio Stradivari International Triennial Competition for Stringed Instruments**, and an introduction to the activities of **Fondazione Stauffer**.

Free admission by registration. More information [at this link](#).

21.00–22.30 | Le Dimore del Quartetto Annual Award Concert and Ceremony

Auditorium Giovanni Arvedi, Museo del Violino, Cremona

The day will conclude at the Auditorium Giovanni Arvedi with the annual event organised by Le Dimore del Quartetto, which takes on special significance in 2026 as the organisation celebrates its tenth anniversary.

The evening will bring together the network's national and international community, including award-winning ensembles, musicians, luthiers, owners of historic houses, partners and professionals who have contributed to the development of the project. The programme will combine musical performances with presentations highlighting the history and activities of the network.

Free admission by registration. More information [at this link](#).

Friday 30 October 2026

9.30–13.00 | Professional Workshop on the Chamber Music Sector

Palazzo Stauffer, Cremona

The second day will be dedicated to a workshop for professionals in the sector, designed as an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences on the opportunities and challenges facing chamber music. The workshop will aim to share experiences and good practices and foster new connections and collaborations between local organisations and international partners.

The workshop is organised by **Le Dimore del Quartetto**, **Fondazione Stauffer** and **Museo del Violino**, in collaboration with the 19 members of the **MERITA Platform** and the **SynAmp project consortium**, bringing together international partners and organisations from the local area.

PARTICIPATION

The event is aimed at professionals working in the music, cultural and violin-making sectors, musicians, artistic directors, festivals, concert societies, foundations, academies, managers, representatives of heritage venues and other professionals interested in taking part in the exchange.

For further information and accreditation details:

www.ledimoredelquartetto.eu

CONTACTS

Le Dimore del Quartetto | Press Office

press@ledimoredelquartetto.eu

www.ledimoredelquartetto.eu

Fondazione Centro di Musicologia Walter Stauffer | Press Office

press@stauffer.org

www.stauffer.org

Fondazione Museo del Violino Antonio Stradivari | Ufficio Stampa

press@museodelviolino.org

www.museodelviolino.org

ORGANISING PARTNERS

Le Dimore del Quartetto

Le Dimore del Quartetto is an international creative enterprise that promotes chamber music and cultural heritage, generating social value and innovation within a circular economy. The social enterprise supports international chamber music ensembles at the beginning of their careers, providing concrete opportunities for artistic and professional development. The network operates through an integrated approach combining artistic residencies, concerts, cultural programming and educational activities, working with historic houses, institutions, festivals, schools and universities. It designs and manages festivals, musical itineraries, masterclasses and training programmes, as well as educational projects for primary and secondary schools and universities, team-building activities for companies, and residencies and concerts in historic houses and other culturally significant venues. Through this combination of activities, Le Dimore del Quartetto creates shared value, promotes cultural innovation, fosters social cohesion and enables young musicians to develop professional skills in international contexts, while bringing new audiences closer to chamber music and enhancing cultural heritage.

www.ledimoredelquartetto.eu

Fondazione Stauffer

Fondazione Stauffer is one of Italy's leading private institutions dedicated to the promotion and safeguarding of musical cultural heritage. Established in 1970 at the initiative of entrepreneur Walter Stauffer, an enlightened patron of Italian-Swiss origin with strong ties to Cremona, the Foundation's statutory mission is to promote the teaching of stringed instruments, musicological research and the preservation of the violin-making tradition that has made the Lombard city famous throughout the world.

In 1985, the **Accademia Stauffer** was established to support the artistic development of young and promising string players through advanced training courses and concert performance programmes.

Alongside its musical education activities, Fondazione Stauffer supports some of Cremona's leading musical institutions, including the International School of Violin Making, the Fondazione Museo del Violino Antonio Stradivari and the Department of Musicology and Cultural Heritage of the University of Pavia.

www.stauffer.org

Fondazione Museo del Violino Antonio Stradivari

Since 1976, the **Fondazione Museo del Violino Antonio Stradivari** has been dedicated to safeguarding and preserving Cremona's violin-making tradition, and to promoting its knowledge and development. In 2012, this tradition was inscribed by UNESCO on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

At the Museum, visitors can discover the fascinating history of this outstanding craft through the masterpieces of its great masters – Stradivari, Amati, Guarneri, Rugeri and Bergonzi – following a path that weaves together creativity and tradition, skill and knowledge, from the late Renaissance workshops to the present day. Their instruments come to life in the Auditorium Giovanni Arvedi, a unique and inspiring venue where aesthetics and function find their perfect synthesis.

www.museodelviolino.org