

Guilhermina Suggia Gift

Guilhermina Suggia

Musicians
Benevolent
Fund



Guilhermina Suggia (June 27 1885 – July 30 1950), full name Guilhermina Augusta Xavier de Medim Suggia Carteado Mena, was a Portuguese cellist. She studied in Leipzig under Julius Klengel, and from 1907 to 1913 she lived and worked in Paris with fellow cellist Pau Casals. Starting in 1914, she built a spectacular career based in London and Portugal. She was a frequent visitor to Lindisfarne Castle in northern England, where a cello now rests in the Music Room in commemoration of her time spent there. She gave her last British concert at the Edinburgh Festival in 1949.

Perhaps the most famous depiction of Guilhermina Suggia is the oil painting (below), entitled *Madame Suggia*, by Welsh artist Augustus John, which is now part of the Tate Collection. Guilhermina is also renowned in her homeland where an aircraft from the Portuguese national flag carrier, TAP Air Portugal, is named in her honour.

“I received the Suggia Gift in 1970....it was exciting and the first time I had won such a prestigious award”

Steven Isserlis

The Guilhermina Suggia Gift was founded in 1955 by a close friend of Guilhermina's, following the sale of a property that was left in her will. The Gift was administered by Arts Council England until 1995 when it was handed over to the Musicians Benevolent Fund. Suggia's wishes were to advance the musical education of the young, especially in relation to the cello, with the aim of creating outstanding solo performers.

The Guilhermina Suggia Gift has, over the past 50 years, been awarded to some of the world's foremost cellists including Jacqueline Du Pré, Steven Isserlis, Robert Cohen, Raphael Wallfisch, and Julian Lloyd Webber, and more recently rising young cellists Reinoud Ford, Guy Johnston and Bartholomew La Follette.

