

# Agassi & Graf - from Tennis to Legendary Stradivarius Red Violin

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*By Marci Weiner*



Three centuries and no one  
has been able to make  
anything this perfect

BEVERLY HILLS (Hollywood Today) 10/2/11 — Tennis legend Andre Agassi and his hard-hitting spouse, Steffi Graf were on hand to witness the performance of the world's most famous instrument – the Red Mendelsohn Stradivarius Violin, crafted in 1720, that is said to have inspired the Academy Award winning film, *The Red Violin*.

Virtuoso performer, Elizabeth Pitcairn has been playing the violin since she was 3 years old, and her grandfather purchased the famed instrument for her 16th birthday for \$1.7 million at auction at Christie's London.

We were privileged to hear her magnificent performance during an intimate event to support the UCLA Division of Digestive Diseases. They are the world leader in the diagnosis, treatment and research at combating deadly disorders affecting the gastrointestinal tract.

The serene Japanese Gardens at the Beverly Hills estate of Paula Kent Meehan (who co-founded Redkin hair products) was the perfect setting; and the perfect co-hosts were philanthropists Barbara Davis and Candy Spelling.

Agassi spoke at length about his own Foundation for Education that transforms state legislation, and advocates nationally for policies to improve public education. He has built a charter school in Las Vegas, and raised \$150 million dollars to benefit the mission.

Among the honored guests enjoying an amazing array of Asian hors d'oeuvres were Dr. Gary Gitnick, chief of Digestive Diseases at UCLA, Dr. Eric Esralian and gorgeous Sela Ward (CSI-NY) who is quite the benefactor herself. She established Sela's Hope Village Foundation for abused and neglected children in her hometown of Meridian, Mississippi.

And you thought she was just another pretty face!