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Association for the Promotion of Viola Performance and Research

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

I'd like to begin my first President's Message with a few "thank-yous." First, to the AVS nominating committee for placing their confidence in me. Second, to the members of AVS for electing a fine slate of officers and board members to serve as our leadership team for the next four years. Third, to Tom Tatton for his committed leadership over the last four years. Fourth, to such AVS "regulars" as David Dalton, Dwight Pounds, and Pam Goldsmith for their willingness to share their unique historical AVS insight with the board.

I have just returned from the AVS board meetings, graciously hosted by David Dalton in Provo, Utah. At the meetings, I was asked by Tom Tatton to share with the board my ideas, concerns, and vision for the next four years. I'd like to share those with you now because it is important for us to realize that AVS is not just the officers or the board, but *each member*. The success of this organization lies in the ability of each of us to promote the performance and study of the viola and collegiality among violists.

My three goals for the next four years (which I hope become your goals for AVS participation as well) are

1. Increase membership (to a target of 2000 members by the year 2000).
2. "Think globally—act locally."
3. Increase communication among violists.

1. Membership drive—the *2000 for 2000* campaign: Continued growth in AVS membership is essential to our long-term health. Increasing our membership base will allow us to become a more efficient organization (with fixed overhead costs shared by more members) and will allow the board to investigate such activities as publishing, historical CD production, increased support for the Primrose Competition, and other worthy projects. At our current membership base of approximately 1,000 members, AVS has run minor deficits in recent years. If we each add ONE MEMBER in the next year, we can create surpluses that can be used to create new programs and enhance AVS membership for everyone. Please join me in the *2000 for 2000* campaign and recruit a new AVS member this month!

2. "Think globally—act locally": From my experience in the Chicago Viola Society, it has become apparent to me that AVS serves its membership best when it functions at two levels: a national level, producing congresses and this fine journal, and a local level, encouraging area performers and creating a sense of the local viola community. In Chicago we have had a marvelous time with such events as a Chicago Symphony Viola Section Recital, a solo competition, and a play-in for amateurs, students, and professionals. These events helped in adding over 100 new members to AVS. The AVS board will be working diligently in the next four years to fulfill Alan de Veritch's dream of a series of local chapters around the U.S. to serve each member of the AVS at both the national and local level.

3. Increase communication among violists: One of the pleasures of the advent of the Chicago Viola Society has been the increased awareness of important local viola happenings. A dedicated group within the AVS board will be looking into expanding our presence on the Internet and actively seeking out chapter news for the *Journal*. We can all play our part in this process by sharing our news of significant appointments, recitals, competitions, etc. Feel free to e-mail any viola news to me at pjs279@nwu.edu. I will make sure that it gets posted or published.

I look forward to serving the Society for the next four years and to working with you to achieve these three vitally important goals.



Peter Slowik

Peter Slowik

Hail and Farewell

by Dwight Pounds

The official seal of the American Viola Society was passed to Peter Slowik at the summer meeting of the AVS Executive Board in July in Provo, Utah, by the outgoing president, Thomas Tatton. Accepting office with Peter were William Preucil (Vice President), Ellen Rose (Treasurer), and Catherine Forbes (Secretary). The event closed the tenure of four people who served the viola and the Society so very well, and provided a fitting time to review their accomplishments and contributions.

MARY ARLIN was a most conscientious custodian of the Society's funds, disproving the adage that it is easy to be generous with other people's money. She expeditiously accounted for every cent that entered and left the AVS coffers. Tom Tatton once quipped, "Mary is the perfect treasurer. Every time I buy a roll of stamps, I expect a telegram that the Society is going bankrupt." Far from bankruptcy, the AVS has experienced unprecedented growth during the past four years, which added to Mary's work; but she nevertheless treated each donation, each new membership, and each expenditure as if an auditor were monitoring her every transaction. Mary was elected Treasurer in 1994 and was Host for Congress XXI (1991) in Ithaca, N.Y. Thank you, Mary, for paying our bills, balancing the budget, and helping keep us solvent.

DONNA LIVELY CLARK kept our minutes, recording the best of our thoughts and documenting our actions. She translated into scholarly English a maze of dialects, expressions, suggestions, half-baked ideas and what-if's from dozens of discussions. Further, she handled hundreds of dues checks and money orders, revised mailing addresses, and sent thousands of cards and letters for the Society. To do so more efficiently, Donna had to master the technology of a new generation and become a skilled user of computer programs and spreadsheets. Her words will be the permanent record of the Society's governance from 1994 to 1998. Donna will continue her service to the AVS, having been elected to the new Executive Board. Thank you, Donna.

When perusing Donna's minutes, one would have ample reason to suspect that any good idea recorded could have come from AVS Vice President PAMELA GOLDSMITH, whose contributions have been legion—leadership, organization, workshops, master classes, recitals, and articles for the *Journal*. Her energy has been as boundless as her dedication to the viola and the Society. She remains the only artist to go to the exhaustive effort of performing the Bach Suite in E_b Major at a North American Viola Congress in its entirety (Bloomington, 1995). In addition to her AVS position, her responsibilities as viola professor at the University of Southern California, and her engagements as a recording studio violist for the film industry, Pam was one of the organizers of the Southern California Viola Society. Like Donna Clark, she will continue AVS service on the new Executive Board. Thank you, Pam, for each good idea and every one of your many contributions.

His students call him "Dr. Tom." He is an unabashed advocate for the viola, for the AVS, for his students, and for life itself. He is TOM TATTON. His goals for the Society were ambitious (see *JAVS* Vol. 10.2), among them to double membership and to create twenty chapters throughout the country. Although Tom leaves office with only eight chapters in place, the membership rose to 1000 during his tenure and the policy of chapterization is well established. Tom Tatton assumed a wide and assorted range of responsibilities on his watch, including membership, money-raising, and chapterization. But the challenge that absorbed most of his presidential time and energies was one he neither expected nor sought—reconciling the relationship between the International and American Viola societies. Even as I write these words, Tom is



preparing to negotiate with IVG officials at Congress XXVI in Glasgow regarding international elections and efforts that will be necessary to further internationalize the IVG governing body and improve its service to its national member sections.

The sheer force of his personality, his musicianship, and pedagogical acumen have motivated hundreds of students of all ages at viola congresses, schools, churches, and all-state festivals for many years. His tenacity has been that of the proverbial bulldog, as evidenced by an uncompromising stand on IVG reforms. And yet he showed he could be gentle to the point of tenderness, as evidenced in his eulogy for Rosemary Glyde and his moving performance at her memorial recital at Bloomington. He led by example, seeking only what he thought best for the Society and the viola. He both expended the enormous effort necessary to attain his goals and absorbed the criticism that inevitably accrues for people in high leadership positions.

Tom Tatton's tenure as AVS President has been extraordinarily effective and has witnessed unprecedented growth. Peter Slowik can assume the presidency confident that the invaluable insights into the Society's many functions are at his disposal in the person of the immediate Past President, Thomas Tatton. Tom, borrowing the highest accolades of the U.S. Navy, thank you for a job well done!

Thank you Mary, Donna, Pamela, and Dr. Tom. We have all been your students for four years.



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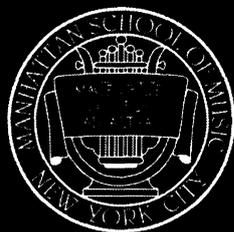
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1998 AVS Election Results

(four-year term)

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Vice-President:	William Preucil
Secretary:	Catherine Forbes
Treasurer:	Ellen Rose

Elected to Board (term runs until 2002)

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Continuing on Board (term runs until 2000)

Victoria Chiang
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JAVS Editor Resigns

David Dalton, longtime editor of the *Journal of the American Viola Society*, announced his resignation no later than *JAVS* Vol. 15 No. 1, 1999, at the AVS Board Meeting in July. A search is now underway for his replacement.

JAVS editor is a paid position.

JAVS is published three times yearly.

Editorial subcommittees are organized to assist.

Candidates must submit before 31 January 1999.

Send notification of interest and request for job description to:

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Csaba Erdélyi established his presence in the music world with another first. In 1972 he became the only viola player ever to win the prestigious Carl Flesch International Violin Competition. He went on to serve as principal of the Philharmonia Orchestra and violist in the Chilingirian Quartet,

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The Canadian Viola Society is pleased to announce that the International Viola Congress will be held 9–12 June 1999, in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. (Guelph is a university community about one hour's drive west of Toronto.) The artistic chair will be Ms. Jutta Puchhammer. If interest warrants, a third of the performance time will be devoted to Canadian performers and works, with the remainder of the program divided between performers from the United States and other parts of the world.

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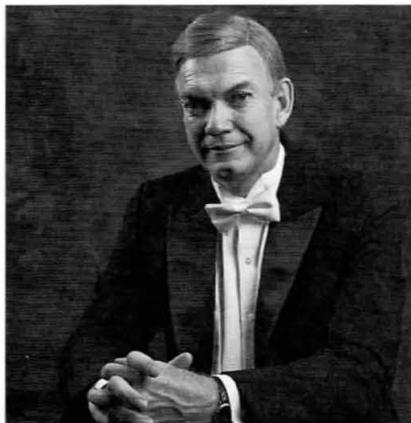
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THE VIOLIN MAKING SCHOOL OF AMERICA

*An Interview with Peter Paul Prier, founder,
by David Dalton, Editor, JAVS*

Dalton: To talk about the beginning of your violin-making school in Salt Lake City, I suppose we should go back to your own origins to understand what led you to its founding. Please speak about your European, and specifically German, heritage.

Prier: I was born in Neumarkt, Silesian, now Poland, actually very close to Breslau. In 1945 when the Russians were advancing, my mother in her wisdom decided we had better leave. Right then! Within ten minutes we were gone, on our way to the West. We traveled from one settlement and city to the next—about a dozen in all—she doing knitting and trying to keep three little children alive. It had to be her responsibility as my father was in the *Wehrmacht*, but had already been killed, although we didn't know it at the time of our leaving.

Dalton: Was your father on the Russian front?

Prier: No, he had been on the western front in France. The official document indicates that his company retreated several times over the Rhine until they came to a small town, Ebermanstadt, in the Rhône mountains. His duty was to give the command to disperse from the entrance of a hotel during an air raid when someone shot him. So he was killed in the act of doing a good deed. Father played the violin. And my grandfather, also in the German army, became a prisoner of war of the American forces. He was very handy at making metal cups and cans relating to the war effort, though he was a jeweler by trade. He received a job working for the Americans near an air base in Schweinfurt. That's where my family and I lived for four years.

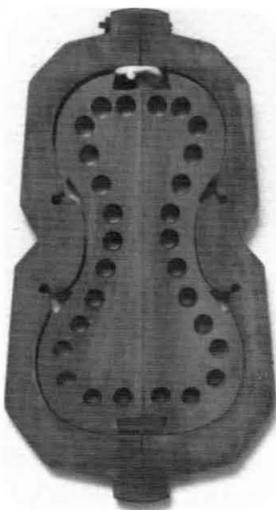
Eventually we moved to Aschaffenburg, and from there I was able to go to the Youth

Conservatory in Munich. I was a good enough violin player that they allowed me to enroll, but the rigor of it all was too much for me, and I left after ten months at age fourteen. On the way home, I bought a battery-operated radio for twelve marks. I remember sitting in the train, and turning on the radio, when it was announced that a special program about a violin-making school in some German city would be broadcast. After listening to the program for about a half hour, I was so excited that I wanted to become a creator of instruments. My thinking at the time was that I could keep on playing the violin, but better still, I could learn to make violins.

Dalton: I'm putting the story together ahead of you, I realize. So you were inspired to go to Mittenwald and enter the violin-making school there?

Prier: Exactly. I was almost fifteen and my mother set up an appointment with the director. There were forty applicants and three of them were accepted. I was the last one to arrive, and I was the last one taken, not because I scored higher on the entrance test, but because I was a better violinist. Immediately I had a position in the school orchestra, which toured Austria, Switzerland, and Greece. It was known as one of the better youth orchestras in Bavaria.

I was enrolled in the Mittenwald violin-making school for three and one-half years when I was given a luthier diploma, a *gesellenprüfung*. Actually, I remained there for over four years while I waited for my visa to arrive so that I could leave Germany. Germany was not the place to be at the time, I thought, because there were already about three hundred active violin makers. I didn't have the





advantage of a father or grandfather who had a violin shop where I could work. I was headed for Stockholm to work in the violin shop of Mr. Gardner, a well-known Swedish



maker. However, I ended up in Stuttgart at the respected establishment of Walter Hammer, where I stayed for eight months. There were six other guys sitting on the bench there, and I thought I had better find somewhere else to go.

Ticket to America

Dalton: About here, I assume, came an impulse to go to America.

Prier: Indirectly. I received a phone call from the director of the Mittenwald school, Leo Aschauer, under whom I had done most of my work, who asked, "Why don't you come work for me?" I said, "But Gardner wants me to come soon to Sweden. Where should I go? Where is the best place?" Then Leo suggested I get in touch with his son Ludwig Aschauer, who was working in Salt Lake City, Utah, of all places. So I wrote his employer, Wesley Pearce, of the Pearce Music Company but didn't hear anything for three weeks. I was getting nervous. Then it arrived: a letter plus two and one-half thousand U.S. dollars in cash! I had never seen so much money in my life. Basically everything was taken care of for my trip to America. I went to Munich to fill out thousands of immigration forms, it seemed, and I left soon after that. I had a contractual agreement with Pearce, verified through Ludwig Aschauer, that I would have a job sitting two and a half feet away from Aschauer on the bench. What was so nice about all of this, and so noble about Wesley

Pearce, was that he gave me enough money to get out of Germany, to take care of all the debts I had created over the years to keep alive and to keep going. (Later, I paid him back \$1500.) I had enough money to get myself a ticket on the *Hanseatic* to come over to America, which is exactly what I did. I arrived in Salt Lake City on 6 June 1960.

Dalton: The Pearce Music Company, as I recall it from almost forty years' distance, was not a typical violin shop. Rather, it was a music supply center, with band instruments, sheet music, music supplies, and everything the school musician would need. The "violin shop" was tucked away in the back.

Prier: That's right. At the time, besides myself and Aschauer, there was Louis, Wes Pearce's son, as well as Ray Miller working in string instruments. I worked for Pearce for five years. Interestingly, the word was that when Pearce invited an employee to breakfast, it was usually for the purpose of letting you go, firing you, downsizing, as we now say. He invited me to breakfast, and I thought this was the end. Instead, he gave me a raise. He was a very good man, I thought. Maurice Abravanel, then the music director of the Utah Symphony, came into the shop occasionally and for some reason or other seemed to take a liking to me. Why did he like me? Maybe because I had done work on the instruments of some of the Utah Symphony players. Abravanel needed one more violinist, so I was told by the orchestra manager to come and audition. But I said that I hadn't prepared anything. He told me to come as I was, show up and just play! There were five other guys standing around waiting their turn, all bass players. I believe that by the time my turn came up, the committee was so tired of hearing "oink-oinks" from bass players, a violin tone was such a relief that they hired me on the spot. I was with the Utah Symphony for two years and went on their tours to Greece, Spain, and South America as their "doctor," as Abravanel put it. It was probably a good thing, because a lot of violins got "sick" on those tours.

Dalton: So what brought you to leave the Pearce Music Company and to strike out on your own? There must have been a certain risk in that and, after all, Wes Pearce had taken good care of you.

Prior: There was a fellow by the name of Livitree just across and down the street from Pearce's. He had a little violin shop with guitars, harmonicas, and such. But he was an eighty-four-year-old man. I did some repair work for him to help him out a little, and we became good friends. One day he said, "You know, this could all be yours." That was a motivation to think and perhaps do something about it. On 4 August 1965, five years and two months after arriving in Salt Lake, I hung out my shingle at that place on 144 East 200 South Street. The business started growing, and I hired assistants. We needed more room, so when the Mexican restaurant, El Charro, next door moved, I purchased it, broke a hole through the wall and moved part of the operation in.

Later, still expanding, we moved to the present location at 308 East 200 South, but just a single unit, a two-story house. I was passing by the place when a man was hanging out a "For Sale" sign in the window. I stopped, ran inside, and said, "I'm buying this." He said, "You don't even know what I'm asking for it." I said, "I'm buying it." "Well, I don't know if you want to purchase at \$96,000." I knew these houses were selling for about \$40,000. I asked, "Well, what are you going to do for me for that amount of money?" He said, "Well, I'm going to put a fence around

it, lay some concrete, put on a new roof, install air conditioning, and I'm going to put in a new heating system." The more he talked, the more interesting it became to me, and we were able to come to terms.

Dalton: Who were some of your earliest assistants?

Prior: Ray Miller had moved over from Pearce, and sometime later after Wes Pearce closed his business, one of his repairmen, Don Eklund, joined us, then John Nebeker. At this time it was sales and repairs with some building going on in the upstairs rooms.

A Violin-Making School

Dalton: When did the brash idea occur to you to start a violin-making school? First of all, how many violin-making schools are there in the world? I imagine you could count them on one hand.

Prior: That's right; there are about five. Three fellows walked into my shop one day in 1968 and said, "We would like to learn how to make violins." They were David Birkedahl, Kevin Smith, and Billy Wolf. Billy was a surgeon's son who could play the guitar very well and wanted to build. I said, "That's a very grand idea, a wonderful idea. But I can't teach you because there isn't any time. I have to make a living." They trotted off and I thought the matter was closed. A year later, the same three young men came in again and asked me what I had decided about their request. This time I

thought maybe there is something to be done here. After all, there was no other violin-making school in this country. Why not?

Dalton: But surely there were instruments being built in New York, Chicago, and some of the other large cultural centers.

Prior: Yes, but not a regular violin-making school with a set curriculum of daily studies over a period of years. Some of the players in



The Violin Making School of America



the Utah Symphony got wind of the idea, among them Oscar Chaussow, the concertmaster, and David Freed, the principal cellist. They thought it was a terrific idea and suggested I take the proposal of the school to the University of Utah, where they were on the teaching staff. I wrote up the proposal outlining the tools I would need, how much wood, the site, etc., and took it to the proper administrator. He said, "Sounds like a good idea. Where are the other violin-making schools in this country?" I answered, "There are none. This would be the first." "Well, anybody can have dreams," he answered, and that was the end of that. I went home crushed, but I decided to go ahead anyway, on my own. I bought wood, and I bought tools, and I sat down and worked out a curriculum that would have students working from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. everyday, five days a week. I put the school in close quarters upstairs in my workshop and opened the Violin School of America on 6 September 1972. I knew that there would not be enough room, and I would have to expand. So I was able to purchase half and, eventually, the entire building next door, which is where the school has been ever since.

Dalton: What was the makeup of your first class?

Prier: There were four students. One dropped out, and of the other three, two were from Salt Lake City and one from Grand Junction, Colorado. These were the original three, you remember, who four years before had approached me about starting a school.

Dalton: At the time of start-up, how long did you imagine the course to be before graduation?

Prier: The same as it is today, and the same as I went through in Mittenwald, four years. I have gained renewed respect for the amount of time it takes to learn violin-making and also the benefit of hindsight in trying to make this a preparation for a profession. You really can't hurry a process where a student starts from a point of not knowing much, if anything, about it. This is what I found out.

Dalton: From 1972 to the present is twenty-six years. Universities seem always to be interested in the dropout rate of students, freshman to senior. How many of those who started actually finished the four-year course and received their diplomas?

Prier: We have graduated 131 students with a degree in violin-making, which is the same as a journeyman's degree. That's from 394 who have applied and been accepted, or about a 33 percent graduation rate. During the time our school has been in existence, we have had a few students who have completed the course in less than four years, the shortest time taken was two years and eight months. That was the case of Christopher De Groote, who really whizzed through the curriculum.

Dalton: And where has he established himself as a maker?

Prier: He hasn't. Instead, he became a psychiatrist! Chris is exceptional, simply one of those people with lots of brains and ability. The general course is four years, but some take six years depending how much time they spend on the ski slopes in this area! There are other reasons besides the slopes why some take longer or don't complete a degree, of course. Some are not able to fulfill the demands of the course and the workload; some decide they would rather play the violin or guitar rather than make an instrument. Some marry. Interestingly, we have had students that marry each other. The late David Birkedahl and Laura Downing are one example, Michael and Carrie Scoggins another.

Dalton: Of the more than one hundred who have graduated, how many of these to your knowledge find themselves in the profession of building or repairing? One wonders if there has been a place for a hundred violin makers from this school who go out and hope to find a job.

Prier: Only four of our graduates that I know of are not in the field anymore. The psychiatrist, a boat builder, another who became a

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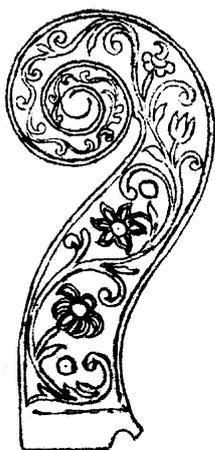
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farmer, and the fourth I have lost track of. Our school has rapidly gained a reputation so that all of the students who have graduated have been, or are being, hired by violin shops around the world. In the beginning, naturally, it wasn't that automatic. Of our graduates, twenty-two have gone independent, as I once did, established their own shops and are doing quite well, makers like Ray Melancon, Michael Scoggins, Samsi Montovich, John Waddle, and others. The rest work for other employers. Today we have enough applicants to the school until the year 2001. We carry fourteen to twenty students a year, right now, twenty.

Dalton: I imagine that the nationalities you have represented in your students are overwhelmingly North American. And I would be curious about the gender ratio.

Prier: Well, out of the twenty students enrolled today, there are seven nations represented. Students come from practically all over the globe, from France, Germany, Sweden, Canada, Korea, and China. There are two ladies and the rest gentlemen. This ratio has been fairly consistent over the years. Our approach to violin-making has stayed very much the same, as well as the hourly commitment in building. We have enjoyed an increase in visiting artists and string players coming to the school and showing their instruments. The class is always interested in how the owners came about acquiring them, why they chose a particular instrument, the cost, etc. We have also built up a large collection of colored slides of instruments. Our teaching method is to put up two screens and compare instruments with each other. On Fridays we devote an hour and a half, both in the morning and the afternoon, to projecting these images to show how instruments were built 250 years ago and onward.

The Curriculum

Dalton: Since you have touched upon some of the activities within the school, would you mind sketching a typical week for students at the violin-making school?

Prier: They come in on Monday morning at eight o'clock. They generally work on their instrument until ten. At that time they go to the classrooms upstairs, where they take artistic and mechanical drawing classes. This class lasts from ten to twelve, and again from one to three. Mechanical drawing is very important because of the mechanical aspects of the violin. The artistic drawings help in drawing proportions of the various parts of the instrument, where the upper and lower bouts fit, as well as the F holes, and how these parts work in relationship with each other. All of these drawings have to be learned and studied carefully for their artistic value. At 4:30 we finish up after the students have given some thought about what they will be doing the next morning.

Tuesday starts again at eight o'clock. The drawing classes have been finished for the first- and second-year students Monday. Now the third- and fourth-year students are taught by Blaine De Mille in artwork, shadow, and crayon drawings. Incidentally, Blaine was the one who painted the mural on the outside of the school thirteen years ago. We appreciate his services as a teacher in the school very much. He brings live models and props to the art and drawing classes. All this helps the student have a concept of what that student wants to build and then enables him or her to draw that concept, perhaps the instrument with which the student will eventually graduate.

Wednesday mornings from ten to noon, I give my first lecture. This is a class on woods, tools, and dimensions that is given to the first-year students. Eventually, we try to teach the concepts of how to choose models, such as those of Stradivari, Guarneri, Maggini, Bergonzi, Rocca, Vuillaume, and Montagnana, so that the students may be versed in the different aspects of these models. Later they can then be confident in their correct productions when they proceed to make their own instruments. They are required to keep a class notebook with all the details recorded, so that we can later evaluate them. One student has taken it all down on a computer. By graduation he will have his final notebook at the press of a key.



On Thursdays we have another two-hour class on the setup of instruments and on the techniques of varnishing for the third- and fourth-year students. Fridays are the identification classes that I have already mentioned. We also hold an orchestra rehearsal under Kory Katseanes, a violinist and the assistant conductor of the Utah Symphony. He instructs on how an orchestra works and why musicians are so intensely interested in how instruments sound in the different string sections.

Dalton: Are all students required to play a string instrument with a certain proficiency?

Prier: Yes, everybody. Katseanes gives each student a half-hour lesson a week, and everyone is expected to practice and play in the school orchestra and to perform in the two yearly recitals held in the fall and spring.

The final exam is quite demanding. At the end of three and a half years, the student starts his or her graduation project the first of February, first making a mechanical drawing from which the student will build two instruments.

Dalton: Are the “graduation” instruments necessarily violins?

Prier: No. The very first instrument made here was a viola d’amore! The students could make two violas or two cellos. We even had a student once who did two basses. One instrument will stay white and one will be totally varnished and set up. The student also makes an artistic drawing that can involve a lot of imagination and flair. Some students become good artists, very clever in their interpretations.

Two weeks before graduation, we give them the subject for a thesis on violin-making. The subject can be anything related to the work. If they chose to write in their native tongue, they also have to translate it into English. They write the thesis and turn it in on graduation day, along with the notebook they have been keeping for over three years. I think all this stimulates them toward establishing themselves as artists. I would like to stress that violin-making is an art. It is not just crafting a piece of furniture, because there is one more important dimension we haven’t talked much about, and that is tone.

Dalton: How many employees do you have on your staff assisting you in sales and in the repair shop, and also instructing in the school?

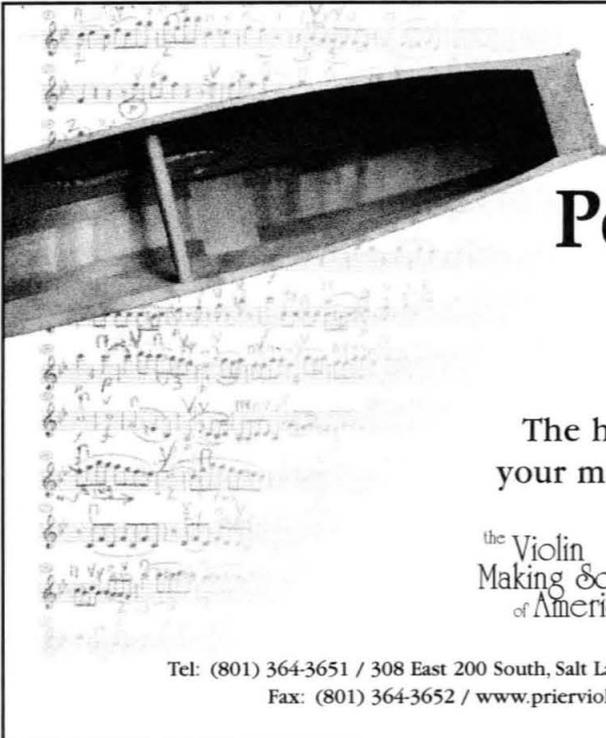
Prier: There are thirteen employees, all of whom have their perimeter in which they work. I feel that it is very important to have the best possible help I can get, the most honest workman, the most artistic person, the most diligent employee in that particular area.

New Horizons

Dalton: May we speak about some new enterprises on your part? For instance, the Spiccato Bow. How did you become interested in this bow, and how did it come to be developed in your company?

Prier: The Spiccato Bow, in my opinion, is one of the most innovative ideas of its kind that I have seen in my lifetime. It was conceived and developed by Benoît Rolland in





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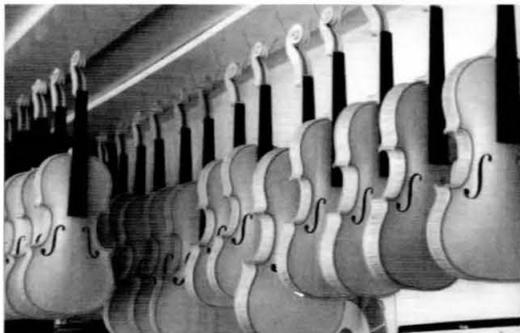
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France. He worked for a half-dozen years on the idea of changing the bow's hardness and softness, its elegance, playability, etc. The Spiccato Bow is constructed of carbon fiber. It is cast, and because it is hollow, the kevlar thread is placed inside the stick. When you



tighten the kevlar string, it reduces the arch of the bow stick so as to make the bow stiffer. By the slightest move of the thread, you can get different qualities of sound, something that cannot be done on a regular wood bow. The weight of the bow, the length of the bow, and the balance of the bow, all allow it to be handled like a first-class French bow. To the bow is attached a silver ebony frog and a silver ebony end button. Rehairing the bow is done the same way as a wood bow.

I was introduced to the bow by my son, Paul Prier, who went to France to study bow-making with Benoît Rolland. I had bought several wonderful wood bows of his, and Paul introduced me to the Spiccato Bow when he returned to America. Now we make the Spiccato Bow here in Salt Lake City next door to my establishment, and Benoît comes from France to maintain quality control on this venture.

Dalton: Another enterprise you are engaged in is the video you are producing on how to take care of one's instrument. Would you describe its contents and why you feel the need for the video?

Prier: For the past several years it has come to my attention that teachers and students really have very little knowledge of how to take care of their instruments. When they have a problem, even a minor one, they have to go into a violin shop to find out what to do

when they could easily have taken care of it themselves. The video is called "String Stress," and it's about eighteen minutes long. We start right from the scroll and pegs; we include how to take care of the saddle and the fingerboard, and other things people can take care of themselves without a trip to the repair shop. This could cause some makers some unhappiness, because it might cut into their business. But most players and teachers, I believe, will be very happy to be able to serve themselves and take care of many of their own problems.

About five years ago, we also produced another video, "The Sounding Tree," that shows the process of violin-making step by step. It actually takes the viewer through the process from the cutting of the wood through the tuning of the strings.

Dalton: Have you done a market study on the videos, or do you simply have confidence that this is going to be attractive and sell?

Prier: I think our latest video will sell. I mentioned the idea to several people in the Suzuki Association, and to the president of the American String Teachers Association, and to others. They all expressed interest in the concept. The video is not just a camera focusing on a workbench showing the repairs. Rather, it is more practical. For instance, a student is shown playing a concert when a string breaks and the bridge falls, and then the video shows what to do under those circumstances. As for the "Sounding Tree," it has been quite successful with copies having been sold all across the country.

Dalton: Do you foresee any future projects such as these that might be considered complementary to your main focuses—instrument sales, violin-making and repairing?

Prier: I can see the prospect of another video production showing the creation of the bow from the raw material to the finished product, with the help of my son Paul, of course.

Dalton: Are others of your family engaged in your business?



Prier: Yes, my oldest son, Martin, for instance. He is a computer wizard and is our business analyst. My youngest son, Daniel, is enrolled in the Violin Making School right now.

Dalton: Yours is certainly in the venerable and revered European tradition of family craftsmanship, business, and enterprise. But that is understandable considering your heritage. You must see yourself at some time passing on. Will your school then come under some other management? Do you have a plan for its continuance?

Prier: I do have a plan for the future, which I can't discuss right now, because I don't know if it's going work. Nevertheless, in the next two years we would like to start a bow-making school. Ben Rolland mentioned to me he would move to Salt Lake and would be delighted to run it.

Dalton: I ponder the initial risk in your going about building this school. As the university administrator asked, "Show me the other violin making schools in the country!" This was a considerable undertaking which has expanded into not a small enterprise. As you review your professional career, including almost thirty years of the school's history, what aspect of your activity has brought you the most satisfaction? As a builder (because you are a fine builder), as a repairman (because you have done a good deal of that), or as the head of a violin-making school? If you had to take one of those things with you and leave the other two behind, what would you choose?

Prier: I have thought about this quite often. We must remind ourselves that Stadivari made new violins. Violin-making gives us the opportunity to perpetuate ourselves. When I am gone, my instruments will remain. There



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is something noble in doing an artistic thing that the world can enjoy. That is the way I feel about it. I know of many makers in the field who have given up repair work just to build. I understand them.

Dalton: But how many of them have founded a violin-making school that has continued almost into its third decade?

Prier: True. I see what you mean. I was fortunate. I was very blessed, so to speak, to receive everything at the right time. You will pardon me if I say something about the religious aspect of my life. My adopted church has a lot to do with my situation since my coming here. Whenever I kneel down and say what I would like to do, it seems to happen. The Lord helps me in this. It is still a lot of work, but I don't mind that at all. Many times in the last half-dozen years, I have thought I should really close the school. It has been long enough, and I feel I have done my work. Then comes along one of our young students who says, "I love making violins. I can't sleep at night, because I can't wait to get up in the morning and go down there and work on my violin." David, that is what it is. That's what keeps me going. It's all worth it.



Peter Paul Prier, founder of the Viola Making School of America



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The Art and Value of Warming-Up: A Warm-Up Routine

by Christine Rutledge

When I ask my students, “Do you warm up before you practice?” the usual response is “sometimes.” Then, when I probe a bit further I find out that their “warm-up” typically consists of tuning, playing a few noodles, or playing through a movement of a piece without stopping—that’s it. I then like to ask, “Why do you think warming-up is important to your playing?” This is when I believe the student starts to realize why I am such a stickler for this ritual of getting the body, as well as the mind, prepared for the many challenging tasks ahead.

Our normal comparison is to an athlete; you wouldn’t expect a serious runner to wake up, drive down to the track and then run a race, and not expect to lose or to inflict serious bodily injury. This analogy is an easy one for most students to relate to. The problem is convincing them that the smallest muscles and tendons in the hands, arms, neck, and back are just as important as the large muscles they would need to warm up before running a fifty-yard dash. This is especially true since my students are typically in their teens and twenties and have yet to experience the “ravages” of age and to fully comprehend the absolute necessity of good physical maintenance. They are invincible! And it isn’t until an injury or ailment afflicts them that they realize that they are not—they are simply flesh and bone like everyone else. I suppose the same can be said about my own attitudes in youth, which is likely, from experience, the main reason I stress having a healthy and consistent warm-up routine.

Even with my youngest students I like to regularly monitor their practice routines and make sure that their daily practice schedules include a significant amount of warm-up exercises. I also want them to understand the

reasons they are doing them. And if nothing else, a warm-up routine can serve to establish the foundations for structure in their practice.

One day several years ago, when I was a member of the Louisville Orchestra, a colleague approached me and asked me to explain the warm-ups that I did every morning before orchestra rehearsal. She had noticed that I was fairly consistent about arriving a half-hour early to rehearsals and going through my entire routine of exercises and scales. She had been particularly vexed by her students’ lack of any specific warm-up regimens and asked if I might come and work with them one day and show them what I did. I, of course, agreed to give a class and set about to commit to paper what exactly it was that I was doing each day. This particular task led to the following “Warm-Up Routine.” I now issue this to all of my students, no matter the age or level, and we try to cover some or all of it during the course of our studies together. I have found it to be one of the most valuable tools I have in teaching. And over the years my students have helped me to add to it and to delete from it as well. I fully expect that over the next several decades, and generations of students, this routine will continue to grow and change. I hope that you may find it helpful to yourselves and your students. Each exercise typically includes a list of goals, instructions, and variations when applicable.

I would like to express my gratitude to my former teachers David Holland and Karen Tuttle and my colleagues Jeffrey Irvine and Lynne Ramsey for their contributions towards this Warm-Up Routine. Without their invaluable advice over the years this would not have been possible.





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Warm-Up Routine

All exercises should be practiced with vibrato, unless it is impossible, or eliminated for a specific reason. (I believe that vibrato is an essential part of tone and cannot and should not be thought of as “icing on the cake.” Stressing continuous and “automatic” vibrato helps to prevent a lazy left hand, allows the hand to be loose, and prevents tension caused by static motion.)

1. Open Strings

I like to begin my practice day with slow, long bows on open strings to get my whole upper body loose and limber without having to worry about the left hand. Since I believe the bow to be the real “meat and potatoes” of playing the viola, this approach seems appropriate.

- Play long, whole notes, setting the metronome to a slow, steady beat if necessary.
- Draw the bow as slowly as is comfortably possible without the tone “cracking.”
- Draw the bow from frog to tip (literally, from “silver to ivory”).
- Play at least four full bows on each string, starting with C.
- Play with a full tone, *mf* to *f*.

2. Finger Action Exercises

Once I begin my work with the left hand I like to start with basic finger action movements to loosen up the knuckles and joints and establish a good “plop-release” finger action—that is, allow the finger to firmly strike the fingerboard and release after the “plop,” so that the finger does not remain “drilled” into the fingerboard.

- Start these exercises on the C string and transpose to other strings.
- Make sure to allow the lower fingers to lift slightly when playing with the upper fingers; this can allow the hand to “rebalance” for each finger and discourages unnecessary stress on the upper fingers. (This is particularly important for students with large instruments or small hands.)
- Keep a moderately full tone, about *mf*.

Figure 1.



3. Pentatonic Finger Exercises

Pentatonic finger exercises are additional finger exercises that grow out of the previous finger action exercises. They basically allow you to explore the various finger positions you will encounter within one position, including the whole-tone spacing.

- Play with a moderately full tone, about *mf*.
- Use the full bow, frog to tip.
- Transpose to all four strings, starting with C.

Figure 2.

Figure 2 consists of five staves of musical notation, each representing a pentatonic finger exercise on a different string. Each staff begins with a square symbol in the first measure, indicating the starting position. The notes are written in a sequence that covers the range of the string. A 'V' marking is placed above the second measure of each exercise, likely indicating a bow change or a specific fingering point. The exercises are transposed to all four strings, starting with C.

4. One-Octave One-String Scales

The next four exercises are essentially Flesch-based. They all provide a good warm-up for shifting as well as intonation (“warming-up” the ear).

- Practice slowly, listening for pitch and tone.
- Observe ascending and descending shifts.
- Practice using full arm weight, about *mf* to *f*.¹
- Practice for clean bow changes at frog and tip.
- Maintain a consistent dynamic level from frog to tip.
- Repeat each scale at least two times.
- Begin on C string and transpose to all four strings.
- For intonation work, practice each scale while sustaining the adjacent lower or upper open string.

1. It is better to begin your warm-ups with a full tone and then “subtract” weight as you go along. This allows you the comfort and freedom to prevent injury and prevents a sense of being too stiff and “careful.”





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Figure 3.

Figure 3 consists of five musical staves, each with a set of fret numbers below it. The fret numbers are: 0 1 2 3 -1 2 3 4 4 3 2 1 -3 2 1 0; 0 1 2 3 -1 2 3 4 4 3 2 1 -3 2 1 0; 0 1 2 3 -1 2 3 4 4 3 2 1 -3 2 1 0; 0 1 2 3 -1 2 3 4 4 3 2 1 -3 2 1 0; 1 2 3 -1 2 3 4 -4 4 -4 3 2 1 -3 2 1.

5. *One-Octave One-String Arpeggios*

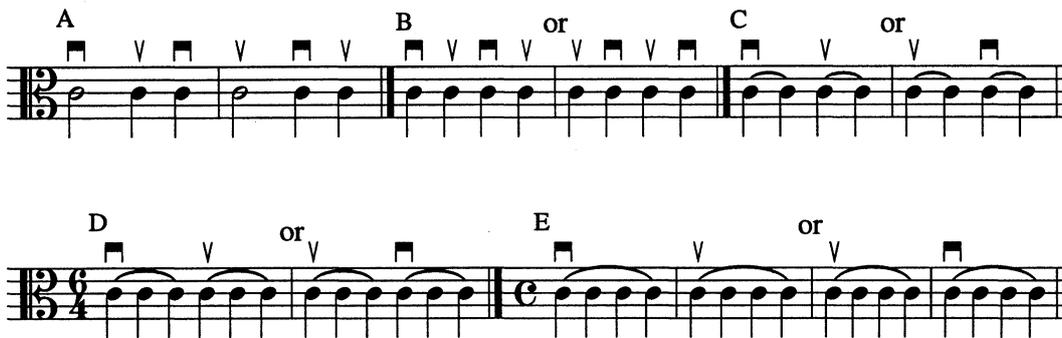
Practice arpeggios with the same objectives and guidelines as the one-octave scales given previously.

Figure 4.

Figure 4 consists of two musical staves, each with a set of fret numbers below it. The fret numbers are: 0 2-1 4 1-2 0 2-1 4 1-2 0 2-1 4 1-2 0 3-2 4 2-3; 0 2 -1 3 4 3 1 -2 0 2 -1 3 4 3 1 -2 3.

Bowing Variations for One-Octave Scales and Arpeggios

Figure 5.



Note: Variation "A" is especially helpful to use when practicing for clean, smooth bow changes.

6. *Broken Thirds*

- a. Observe ascending and descending shifting action.
- b. Observe intonation.
- c. Practice each at least two times.
- d. Transpose to all four strings, beginning on C.
- e. Use drone adjacent lower or upper open string for intonation practice.

Figure 6.

0 2 1 3 2-2 1 3 2-2 1 3 2 4 3 4 4 3 4 2

3 1 2-2 3 1 2-2 3 1 2 0 0 2 1 3 2-2 1 3

2-2 1 3 2 4 3 4 4 3 4 2 3 1 2-2 3 1 2-2 3 1 2 0

7. *Chromatic One-Octave Scales*

- a. Practice for intonation; even, "cool" half-steps; use drone adjacent open lower or upper string if necessary.
- b. Shifting should be kept light and as silent as possible.
- c. Practice with and without vibrato, at least two times on each string.

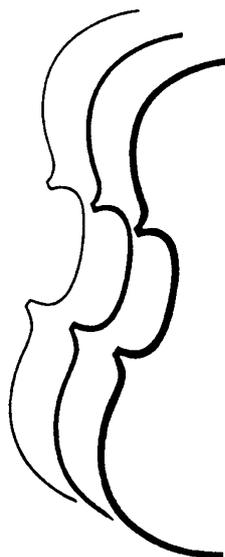


Figure 7.



8. *Shifting Exercises*

This particular exercise illustrates what I call a “swing shift.” I have found that the main problem with shifting stems from a lack of knowing exactly when to shift, rather than where to shift. This leads to tension in the left hand, squeezing, and inaccuracy. Once you understand the timing of a shift, or how to prepare yourself physically and mentally for a shift, it will be smoother, lighter, and much more accurate. The term “swing” comes from the jazz technique of playing in triple-like flow by reiterating the previous note into the next: bop-a-dop-a-dop-a-dop-a-dop, etc. I have my students reiterate the note they are shifting from on the bow change and then slur it into the note they are shifting to with a long slide in between the two notes, the reiterated note having a triplet or sixteenth-note value (like the following exercise). At first I do not discourage them from making a slurpy shift; I like them to get the feel of staying in contact with the string and understanding and memorizing the pathway from one note to the other—kinesthetic memory. Adding the triplet or sixteenth-note value to the “swing” note gives the shift a spacial or time element, putting the shift into the context of a rhythmic value and thereby eliminating the seeming randomness of shift timing. Without fail I have never had a student who did not respond to this technique with overwhelming success (and enjoyment!).



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- a. Transpose to all four strings.
- b. Repeat using fingers 2, 3, and 4.
- c. Repeat in minor.
- d. Keep fingers, knuckles, and wrist loose and supple.
- e. Make sure that the shifting finger remains in contact with the string at all times.
- f. Release shifting finger on the shift and keep it light; do not “squeeze” the string.
- g. Make sure that elbow and arm are around and over the bout of the viola above the fourth or fifth position (depending on the viola size and arm length).

Figure 8.



Variation

9. *String Crossing Exercises*

- a. Make sure that the stick stays slightly rolled, or pushed, forward toward the scroll and does not “flop” back and forth on bow changes.
- b. Practice in the upper-half of bow (these exercises can be done in the lower-half of the bow if you feel it would be a helpful exercise).
- c. Transpose to all four strings.
- d. Keep bow changes and string changes smooth and clean.
- e. Practice keeping vertical bow motion to a minimum.
- f. Observe the function of wrist/hand motion and arm/elbow motion (keep both loose and “noodly”).
- g. Practice “b” and “c” with rhythms given in “a.”



students cannot believe that I actually get all of this in, as well as the preceding exercises. But I can manage to do all of this in about twenty to thirty minutes. I would expect a student just learning this routine to take significantly longer, and not to include all of the exercises on a daily basis.

Remember: All bow strokes begin “from the string” and are not thrown from above the string. (The only strokes that begin from above the string are ricochet and fouté.)

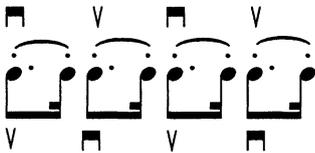
a. Martelé Group: Forearm-Initiated Strokes with Finger Articulation

- (1). Slow martelé with full, long bows; loud (*ff*); from frog to tip
 - (a). Start on down-bow in duplet pattern; emphasize down-bow slightly.
 - (b). Start on up-bow in duplets; emphasize up-bow slightly.
 - (c). Triplet patterns: emphasize the beginning of each group of three.
- (2). Moderato martelé: marcato with short bows; loud (*f* to *ff*)
 - (a). Use rhythm and bowing patterns given above.
 - (b). Play in the middle to upper half of bow.
 - (c). Vary bow placement to the frog and upper half.
- (3). Détaché: moderately loud (*mf* to *f*); moderately quick tempo (if tempo is too quick you can double or triple up each scale note); this is a smoother bow stroke than marcato, slightly detached, and almost legato.
 - (a). Use about three to four inches of bow per stroke.
 - (b). Use the middle to upper half of the bow.
 - (c). Use rhythm and bowing patterns given above.
- (4). Controlled Spiccato: forearm-initiated with finger articulations for clarity; for use in slower tempi and louder dynamics
 - (a). Use the lower half of the bow.
 - (b). Use rhythm and bowing patterns as given above.
 - (c). Keep the bow close to the string.
 - (d). This uses more bow than finger-initiated spiccato.
 - (e). This allows for a great variety in length of stroke, due to the controlled element of forearm initiation.

b. Spiccato Group: This stroke is still basically forearm-initiated, but there is a much greater use of finger articulation and less forearm motion. These strokes are lighter than the martelé group and are generally used in quicker tempi and softer dynamics.

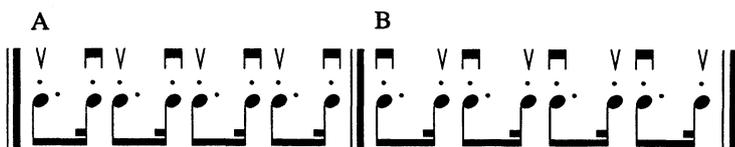
- (1). Hooked Bowings with Dotted-Rhythms: Begin the pattern on down-bow and then on up-bow.

Figure 10.



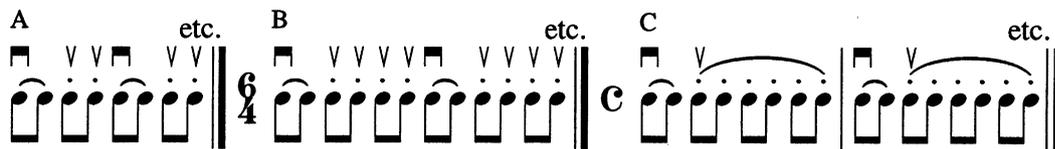
- (2). “Shoeshine” Bowing

Figure 11.



(3). Up-bow Staccato

Figure 12.



(4). Fast Spiccato (Sautillé)/Finger-Initiated Spiccato

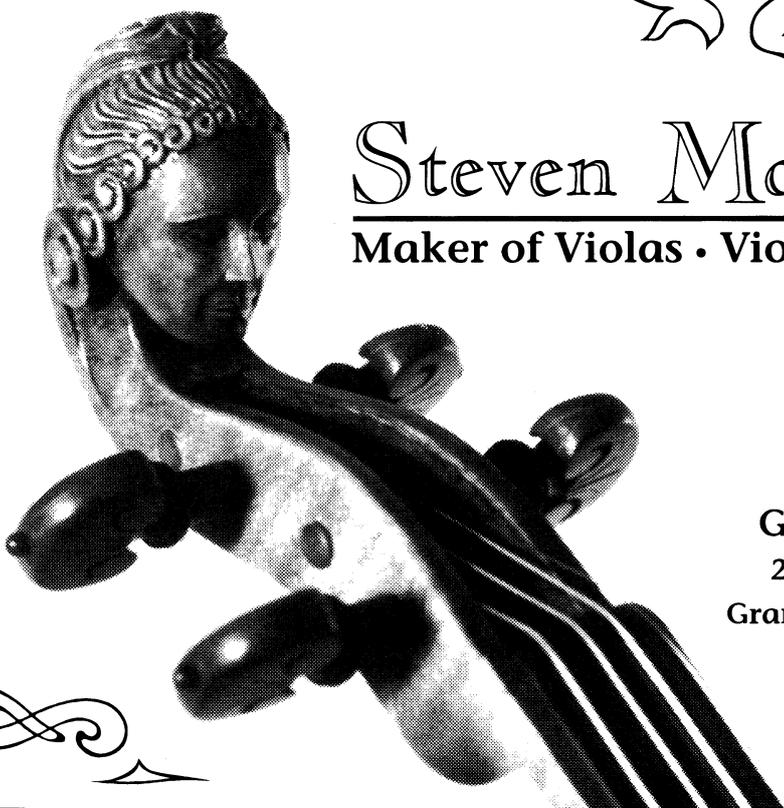
- Use rhythm and bowing patterns for forearm-initiated spiccato.
- For use in very quick tempi and soft dynamics; uses very little bow.
- Bounce in the middle to upper half of bow.
- Bow should bounce very close to the string.
- Keep forearm and fingers loose and “reactive” to natural bounce of the bow on the string; “allow” the bow to bounce, rather than “making” it bounce.
- Find individual “spiccato spot” on stick, generally lower on the viola bow than on the violin.

11. Complete Three-Octave Arpeggios

Though I admit that I do not practice arpeggios as much as I should, many students benefit from some daily arpeggio practice—especially students with weak intonation, shifting, and/or position work.

12. Vibrato Exercises

My former teacher, Karen Tuttle, once told me that she objected to learning vibrato by vibrating “in rhythms.” I understand her rationale; vibrato should be an organic part of a violist’s



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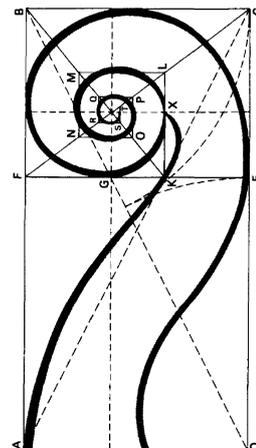
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sound and should come naturally and effortlessly. Unfortunately, my vibrato needed a major overhaul and my being the kind of student who needed a routine to follow, she had me practice vibrato in the following rhythms. It really worked for me. A few years later I came back to these exercises to “cure” myself of lazy vibrato after Karen reprimanded me in a lesson. I found that by having a mental image of the oscillation in a steady rhythmic pattern, especially a triplet-based rhythm, I could vibrate from note to note without a break or lapse in the vibrato action. Since then I have used this exercise for all of my students either learning vibrato for the first time or brushing up on it. I encourage viola students to try using a wrist vibrato, as opposed to an arm vibrato, as the wrist vibrato is generally less taxing on the arm and elbow. But some students have a natural proclivity for arm vibrato and therefore there is no avoiding it, nor should they need to, as long as their vibrato action is loose, quick enough, and consistent. (A great example of wonderful arm vibrato is Pinchas Zuckerman’s.)

- a. Set metronome to quarter note = 60 or slower (always practice with a metronome for this exercise).
- b. Begin in third position using the bout of the viola as a wrist “brace” (this helps prevent wrist “pumping” or the vibrato action being a result of the wrist flopping back and forth).
- c. Evaluate vibrato action and make sure that it is correct (that the fingertip is moving up and down the string and not sideways).
- d. Keep wrist, knuckles, and fingers loose, particularly the base row of knuckles connecting the fingers to the hand.
- e. Make sure that vibrato action begins on the principal pitch and oscillates below it (trying for about a half-step oscillation in this exercise).
- f. Use all four fingers on all four strings.
- g. NEVER GO FASTER THAN YOU ARE READY TO GO! Stop the exercise at the point where you feel you have mastered it. Progress further only when the vibrato action is healthy and secure.
- h. When ready, you can raise the metronome marking and repeat the exercise.

Figure 13.

Figure 13 consists of three staves of musical notation in 2/4 time, all starting with a metronome marking of quarter note = 60. The first staff begins with a quarter note, followed by a triplet of eighth notes, with a vibrato symbol (V) above the triplet. The second staff begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a quarter note, with a vibrato symbol (V) above the quarter note. The third staff begins with a sequence of six sixteenth notes, with a vibrato symbol (V) above the sequence. Each staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.





This warm-up routine may seem too thorough, especially if you are not used to doing much warm-up. But I do not intend it to be used in its entirety on a daily basis. I instruct my students to use it on an "as needed" basis if they like, or to choose portions of it to supplement their own particular routines. I am always flattered when a student elaborates on one of my ideas or creates one of his or her own. Recently I happened to catch a former student (whom I have not taught in several years) warming up with one of these exercises before a chamber music performance that we were playing in together. Needless to say that was one of the most rewarding moments of my teaching career!

In fall of 1998 Christine Rutledge was appointed Associate Professor of Viola at the University of Iowa, where she succeeds her former teacher William Preucil. She was Assistant Professor of Viola at the University of Notre Dame and a member of the Notre Dame String Trio and con tempo, Notre Dame's contemporary music ensemble. She was assistant principal viola of the Louisville Orchestra and violist with the Kentucky Center Chamber Players. Rutledge holds a B.M. degree from the Curtis Institute of Music, having studied with Karen Tuttle and Michael Tree, an M.A. degree in music performance from the University of Iowa, and a diploma from the Interlochen Arts Academy. She is commissioning new works from such composers as Claude Baker, composer in residence with the St. Louis Symphony.

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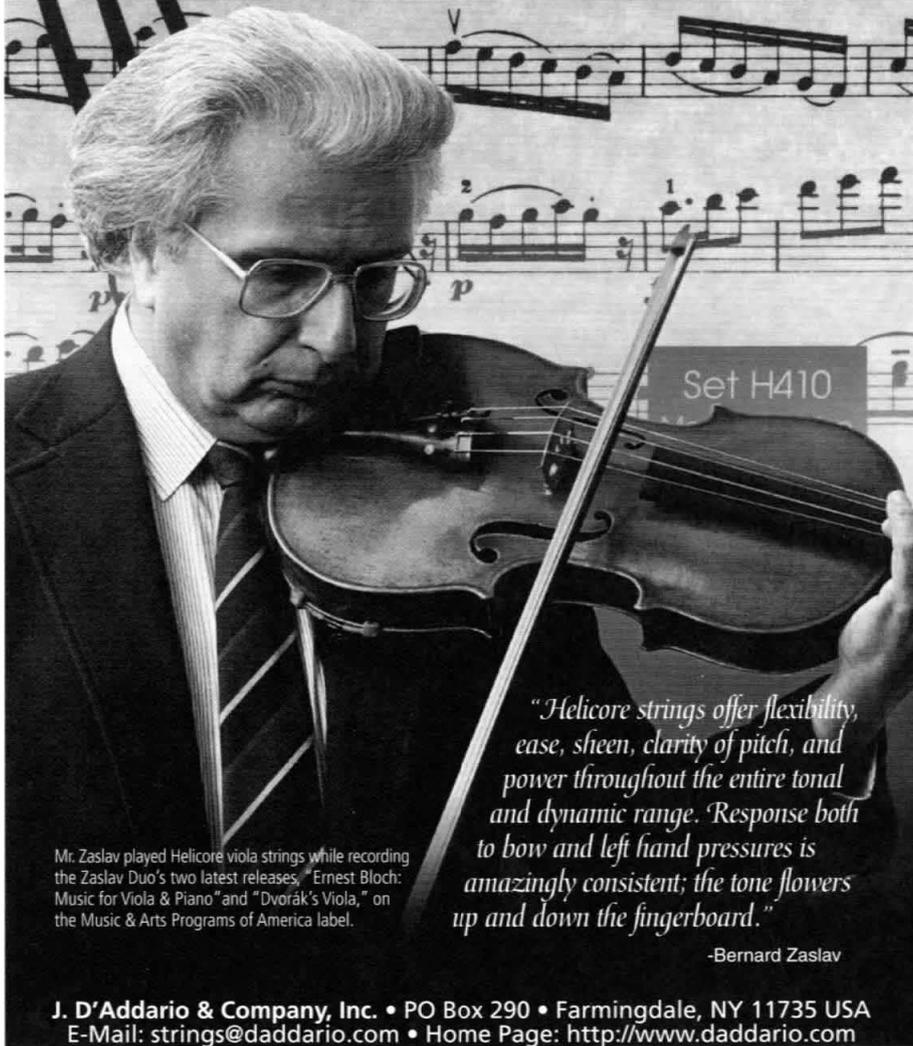
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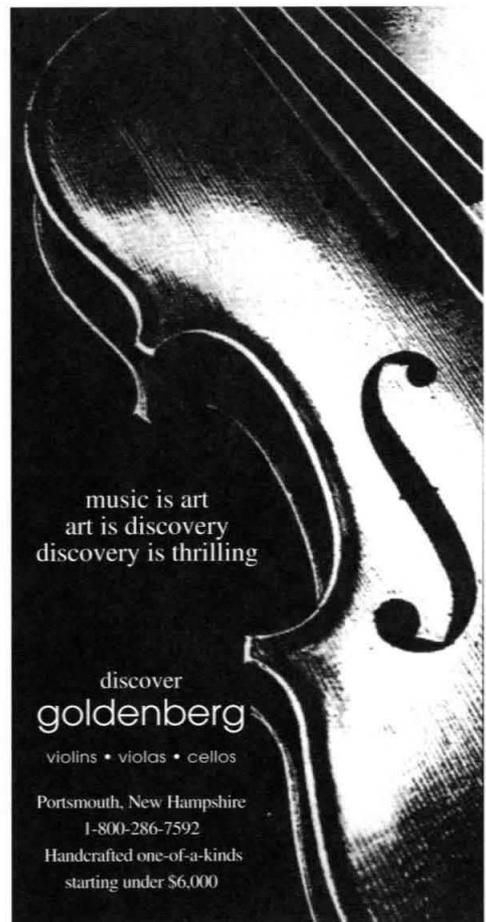


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Robert
Mann

Invocation

for Violin and Viola

Robert Mann, founder of the Juilliard String Quartet, was born 19 July 1920 in Portland, Oregon. In 1938 he won a scholarship to the Institute of Musical Art in New York and went on to the Juilliard Graduate School. In 1941 he won the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation competition and made his New York debut.

In 1946, on discharge from the army, and at the invitation of William Schuman, then president of Juilliard, Mann formed the Juilliard String Quartet with Robert Koff, Arthur Winograd, and Raphael Hillyer. Juilliard String Quartet now looks back on more than 4500 concerts, not only in the United States, but throughout forty-three countries. The Quartet's repertoire includes over 550 works, more than 150 by twentieth-century composers, and it is especially noted for its championship of American composers. In the summer of 1948 it made nationwide headlines for the performance of the complete Bartók quartets at the Berkshire Music festival in Tanglewood. After a final concert at Tanglewood in July 1997, Mann retired from the Quartet to devote more time to composing, conducting, and performing nonquartet repertoire.

Robert Mann has composed more than thirty works for narrator with various instruments, several of which have been recorded on the Musical Heritage label. His *Fantasy* for orchestra was performed by Dimitri Mitropoulos with the New York and the Vienna Philharmonic orchestras. Other works include a violin–piano duo premiered at Carnegie Hall by Itzhak Perlman and a string quartet included in the repertoires of the LaSalle and Concord quartets. Appearances as a conductor include concerts with the Juilliard, Jupiter, and Seattle symphonies, as well as with the Boston Symphony Orchestra on a recording of music by Bartók. He has received honorary doctorates from Oberlin, Earlham, and Jacksonville colleges, Michigan State University, and San Francisco Conservatory. He has been elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Robert Mann is married to actress Lucy Rowan, who performs with the “Robert Mann Players,” and has a daughter, Lisa, a clinical psychologist, and a son, Nicholas, a gifted violinist and violist who often plays duo-recitals with his father and is himself a founding member of the Mendelssohn String Quartet.

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Composed for the wedding of my daughter
Lisa Mann and Rocco Marotta

Invocation

for Violin and Viola

Duration: c. 5'

ROBERT MANN
(1980)

Molto espressivo (♩ = 60, ♩ = 30)

5 *p* *poco* *mp* *mf*

5 *f* *dim.* *f* *dim.*

11 *p* *mf* *dim.* *pp*

16 *mf* *dim.* *pp*

21 *cresc.* *cresc.* *pp*

Also available for Violin and Piano (144-40232), and for Cello and Piano (144-40226)

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26 *molto dim.* *molto dim.* *8va* *5:2* *7:3* *5:3*

rit. **Tempo I** (♩ = 60, ♩ = 30) **(accel.)**

29 *sotto voce* *sotto voce* *pp* *pp*

35 **(rit.)** **a tempo** **accel.** **a tempo** *p* *cresc.* *cresc.*

39 **molto rit.** *ff molto dim.* *ff molto dim.* *pp* *pp* *♩ = 90, ♩ = 45*

44 *mp* *pp* *pp* *p* **rit.** *sempre dim.* *sempre dim.*

50 *♩ = 90* **rit.** *♩ = 60* *ppp* *mp* *morendo* *ppp* *mp* *morendo*

FORUM

Letter from Glasgow



During mid-July 1998, from Thursday morning, the 16th, until Sunday afternoon, the 19th, the city of Glasgow, Scotland, was host for a grand gathering of violists. Virtuosi, professional players, teachers, students, connoisseurs, groupies, the curious, and even some critics spent the better part of four days and three evenings sampling aspects of the viola in what should rightfully be considered ideal circumstances. It was a genuine festival. The site was the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. Situated comfortably in downtown Glasgow, the eleven-year-old facility has a beautiful, 290 seat recital hall, where most of the events took place. The large flat stage area is viewed from a bank of steeply raked, comfortably upholstered seats, divided by two aisles. The lighting, the ventilation, and most importantly, the acoustics are excellent. A hale and hearty nine-foot Steinway concert grand did an excellent job of staying in tune, through lots of fancy pianism.

Glasgow is a port city and was a center of shipbuilding earlier in the century. Not too long ago it was an old UK city with more than its share of urban problems. But in the summer of 1998, it was a pleasant community with the advantages of being the largest city in Scotland (approaching a million persons in greater Glasgow, according to city council figures). Glasgow exudes a sense of

civic identity and pride. With its many universities, hospitals, an opera house and concert halls, the Scottish television production facility, a transportation system that works, plenty of more-than-adequate restaurants, and museums, it presents the appearance of being prosperous and sophisticated, with fewer problems than one might expect in a big city. Citizens are friendly and civil.

The Glaswegian accent, in its unadulterated delivery, can defy identification as part of the English language, but in most cases, when these patient citizens realize that they are dealing with an outsider, they will slow down and make every effort to make themselves understood to the interloper.

Luthier Exhibition

There was plenty of space in the lobby area of the Scottish Academy for music merchants and publishers to display sheet music, some featured in the various Congress sessions and some simply of interest to violists: Bärenreiter, Boosey & Hawkes, Chester Music, Oxford, Peters, Serenade for Strings (an all-mail-order house that features only music for strings, located in the countryside close to Inverness), the Scottish Music Information Centre, Josef Weinberger, and Biggars (a Glasgow music store), to mention the most prominent. It was a fine display of items one doesn't see every day, even in large music houses.

This Congress was held in memory of William Primrose, who was born in Glasgow, not far from the site of the Royal Academy. In his honor the lobby featured a wall display of photographs and memorabilia about Primrose, including a commemorative plaque that will be placed at his birthplace. The host chairman of this, the XXVI International Viola



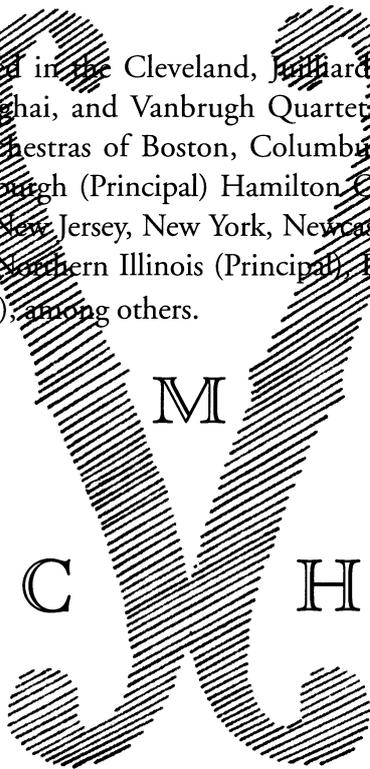
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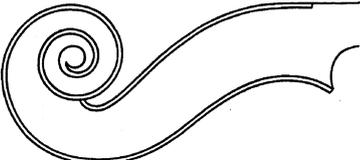
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Congress, was John White, prominent English violist and pedagogue, who studied with Watson Forbes, another prominent Scottish violist. Forbes, who was also honored at this Congress, died in 1997 and so Forbes memorabilia was included in the display as well.

A large space was dedicated to a display by luthiers or dealers, who provided many instruments and bows for sale. The only radical display was from a Scottish concern named Starfish Electric Bowed Instruments. These are skeletal instruments, which have the essential parts of traditional stringed instruments, except the resonating mechanism. The tones are produced electronically. The number of strings is not set; they feature violins with four, five, or six strings. They come in a variety of colors. The instruments are named after sea creatures: "Stingray Violins," "Octopus Bass Violin," "Stingray Viola," "Dolphin Cello," and "Orca Bases." The company is located in Fort William, Scotland, which is near Loch Ness. The question as to whether the names were inspired by *The Monster* was not taken seriously.

The Congress sessions themselves featured a rich mix of recitals, lectures, a few master classes, and more formal or elaborate evening presentations labeled "Concerts." There was, as might be expected, an emphasis on Scottish composers and performers, although there were performers from Belgium, China, England, Ireland, and Japan, among other countries; however most had a pretty firm connection with the UK, either through training or birth. A handsome and amazingly accurate program booklet provided easy guidance to the events and information about the participants.

Information about the Congress was made available through a simple but thorough website and e-mail address, which answered crucial questions in a timely manner. To sum up, this Congress was model of good organization, from the attendee's standpoint.

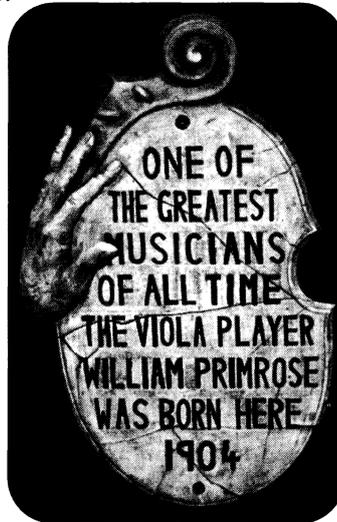
The first event of the Congress was a

morning "Coffee Concert" by a trio of flute (Richard Chester), viola (James Durrant), and guitar (Phillip Thorn). They played together and in different combination, mostly Scottish works. Flute, viola, and guitar make an agreeable ensemble, emphasizing the quieter side of things. The concert was followed by a lecture given by Tully Potter, who relied heavily on his collection of vintage recordings to illustrate the importance of William Primrose in twentieth-century viola history. Mr. Potter should be a requisite for any viola gathering, as his knowledge of the instrument, its literature and players is encyclopedic. An entertaining speaker and professional journalist, he generously supplied articles on Primrose and Forbes for the Congress program.

The first afternoon session consisted of hard-core twentieth-century viola music presented by violist Garth Knox and pianist Peter Evans. Composers included Henze, Ligeti, James Dillon, and Takemitsu. Knox is a specialist in this sort of thing, having spent considerable time with the Arditti Quartet and before that, Pierre Boulez. This was followed by a somewhat wandering panel discussion by Scottish composers on the subject "Writing for the Viola."

Participants were Thomas Wilson, Sally Beamish, James Dillon, Sebastian Forbes (son of Watson Forbes), and Edward McGuire. All except Wilson were composers whose works were performed at the Congress.

Paul Silverthorne, principal violist of the London Symphony Orchestra, gave a recital that was a Congress highpoint. Sophia Rahman, his brilliant accompanist, plays with the piano lid fully open, and thereby achieves immediacy, clarity, a wide dynamic and texture range, yet balance was never a problem for her or her partner. Her work is clean, accurate, and musical—she is a real treat. Silverthorne is a large man who plays a 17-inch Brothers Amati viola, part of the collection of the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he teaches. The sound is glorious, and



huge. He expanded his program by inserting *Viola Duet* by George Benjamin, which he performed with Garth Knox. The piece was originally written for Yuri Bashmet and Nobuko Imai. The two violas seemed to be doing about the same thing, but not at the same time—a complex counterpoint, using mostly motives based on “extended techniques.” It’s hard to make much of such a work with one hearing, but it was more musical and interesting than a good deal of composition.

The evening concert was devoted to baroque music featuring the viola, performed on reproductions of period instruments. Katherine McGillivray directed the ensemble of young players and singers. Although the period instrument phase is embraced more enthusiastically by some than others, it’s fair to say that this performance was more in tune than is often heard and was given even more sonic vitality than is often associated with performances that use a G-sharp for tuning, rather than an A. The programming was interesting too, with names like Castello, Biber, and Kinderman, along with Telemann and Bach.

Friday’s Events

Friday, 17 July, began at 9:00 a.m. with a Paul Silverthorne master class on Max Bruch’s *Romance*, Opus 85. Mr. Silverthorne demonstrated that he is a perceptive teacher, spending the hour talking about bow distribution, sustaining phrases, and, in general, providing a gentle and musical approach to performance. At 10:00 or so, John White gave a brief remembrance of Watson Forbes, who had a strong influence on White’s personal development, as well as his musical career. The main speaker was Tully Potter, who again illustrated his talk with historical recordings. Sometimes the sound quality of these illustrations leaves much to the imagination, and Mr. Potter’s sound equipment was simplicity itself. Still, these sessions about Primrose and Forbes did bring these personalities to life. A few verbatim Potter quotes about Forbes



John White and Tully Potter

come to mind: “A great character of the British viola Renaissance”; “a constant thread in the tapestry of British musical life for sixty years”; “He never got on with Tertis”; “Forbes was a large man . . . an imposing physical presence,” and, quoting Forbes, “My mother was meticulous and my father had the flair.”

Martin Outram, the violist of the Maggini Quartet, and Julian Rolton, pianist of the Chagall Trio, presented the morning recital, listed as “A Tribute to Watson Forbes.” Obviously the two have worked together a good deal as their sense of ensemble was faultless. The program included two Forbes editions of Nardini and Rameau works, a *Viola Fantasy* by Sebastian Forbes written some time ago and dedicated to his father, and sonatas by Alan Rawsthorne and Lennox Berkeley, who are earlier twentieth-century composers. The sonatas are attractive works in the academic style Tully Potter labels “British Renaissance,” that often evoke memories of music by Elgar, Frank Bridge, Vaughan Williams, Charles Stanford, and Delius. The recital closed with a Forbes transcription of a wonderful aria that J. S. Bach used at least twice, as the *Sinfonia* in *Cantata* 156, and in various concertos. It’s a fine encore piece.

Simon Rowland-Jones, professor of viola and chamber music at the Royal College of Music in London, began his 2:35 p.m. lecture on his experience of publishing a new edition of the *Bach Cello Suites* for viola,¹ which he worked on for about ten years. He described it as “a very trying experience,” but the result





is a handsome edition for sure. The lecture covered the sources he used, a little history of baroque suites, and how he came to some of his editorial decisions, as well as a demonstration by a very able student. Mr. Rowland-Jones has recently recorded the Suites. He uses a five-string viola for the Sixth Suite, which he demonstrated by playing the Prelude. The addition of an e-string does facilitate performance of that work; however, the addition seems to alter the overall viola tone quality considerably.

Dr. Myron Rosenblum, founder of the American Viola Society, who studied with Primrose, gave a talk at 4:15 entitled "The Primrose American Connection." The Congress schedule at this point became a bit dense, as the evening needed to make room for the "Celebrity Recital" by Michael Kugel and a Civic Reception in the Glasgow City Chambers, hosted by the Lord Provost of Glasgow himself. Mr. Kugel is a Russian viola virtuoso, living now in Belgium, whose mastery of the viola is astonishing. He does technical things with a seeming ease that most players would be hard put to imagine: the whole gamut of Paganini-like violin tricks, including left-hand pizzicato, double-stop artificial harmonics, scales in thirds, enormous and instant changes of position, continuous up- and down-bow staccato, etc. Yet he is a very tasteful musician, capable of great subtlety and sensitivity. His recital included the Arpeggione Sonata by Schubert, followed by the Sonata per la Grand Viola by Paganini. He finished with his arrangement of the Carmen Fantasie, by Franz Waxman. Mireille Gleizes, his accompanist, provided a firm rhythmic foundation, but, at times, could have been more sensitive. Two encores were needed to satisfy the full house audience: the Passacaglia from Kugel's own Suite, *In Memoriam Shostakovich*, and his arrangement of the very gypsylike Variations on an Original Theme by Wieniawski.

The Kugel recital was scheduled to start at 6:00, and it was finished by 8:00, whereupon Dawn Durrant gathered the Congress participants and probably a good deal of the recital audience into a group and led them on foot, the six blocks or so, through the streets of

downtown Glasgow to the handsome City Hall. The reception, which was attended by at least 200 persons, was held in an elaborately gilded reception hall with a high ceiling decorated with murals depicting historical Scottish scenes. The room was grand, in nineteenth-century style, champagne and good things to eat were plentiful, and the Lord Provost greeted all with a formal pronouncement. The violists were properly welcomed to Glasgow for sure.

Kugel's Saturday Class

Saturday, 18 July, started at 9:30, with what was billed as Michael Kugel's master class on the Shostakovich Viola Sonata. The young lady who had helped Rowland-Jones by demonstrating in his lecture played the first movement of the Shostakovich with Mireille Gleizes at the piano. Instead of giving a public lesson on the Sonata, Kugel asked the young lady to sit down, and he proceeded to give an explanation of the meaning of the Sonata. He spoke for more than an hour, and although his English was heavily accented, he was understood easily and was wonderfully effective. Kugel knew Shostakovich personally, and he also had his own serious problems with the Soviet government.

A summary of the talk is not appropriate here, but a few key points come to mind. The Sonata is autobiographical and is a continuation of the Eighth Quartet. Shostakovich died just a matter of days after completing the Sonata. The movements have names: movement one is a Novel (story), two is a Tragic Scherzo, and three is Reconciliation (peace). Kugel quoted Shostakovich as saying, "Never pay attention to my metronome marks." The Dies Irae is used a lot, often fragmented. The motive from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is quoted, with the last note going up rather than down. Certain repeated intervals have symbolic meaning: minor second is "suffering," perfect fourth descending is a "deep moan." The piano opening is serial writing (no tonality), followed by a searching or questioning motive . . . "What will be?" Many thought that this session was the high point of the Congress; for those familiar with the

Eighth Quartet and the Viola Sonata, it was a revelation.

Saturday recitals were devoted to viola and piano works, mostly by early to mid-twentieth century composers with ties to Scotland, either by birth, education, or employment. The same also could be said about the performers. The first recital was given by Michael Beeston, the violist of the Edinburgh Quartet and a professor at the Scottish Royal Academy of Music and Drama. His pianist was Cameron Murdoch. Two Scottish Tunes by Forbes/Richardson were memorable in that they courted the lighter muse, had a legitimate folklike quality, and avoided the dower personality that seems to accompany a great deal of Scottish music.

After lunch, the recital featured four different violists and two different pianists who presented more Scottish composers' works. The violists were all elegant players and definitely youthful, demonstrating that the state of viola playing and teaching in the UK is highly developed. The first pair was Stephen Tees, principal violist of the City of London Sinfonia, and Zoë Solomon, a pianist who had some training at the Cleveland Institute, one of the few Congress performers with a U.S. background. Their work was Sonata for Viola and Piano, by Robin Orr, a substantial and essentially academic piece in four contrasting movements. The next duo was Su Zhen, a brilliant young Chinese national, currently studying viola with John White at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and Sophia Rahman, the wonderful pianist who plays with the Steinway lid fully open and yet never covers the violist. They played two works by Alan Richardson—Intrada and Rhapsody—both composed in the late nineteen thirties. Rebecca Low, another product of John White and the RAM, joined Miss Rahman. They played Sonata for Viola and Piano by Sir John Blackwood McEwen, an attractive work in the British Renaissance mode. The last movement has echoes of the Scottish fiddle style. They also played *Autumn Sketches* by Alan Richardson. These Richardson character pieces were very pleasant, making use of the best viola characteristics and demonstrating Richardson's knowledge of the

instrument. Primarily he was a pianist, and for a good many years he collaborated with Watson Forbes as a performer.

The final violist of the early afternoon was Esther Geldard, who was accompanied by Zoë Solomon. They played *Filters*, by David Horne. *Filters* uses extended techniques: loud pizzicato, dissonant chords, naked rhythms, and exaggerated tone qualities. At one point, there was even some reaching into the piano. They returned, and after much tuning, started over. The last work in this rather extended presentation of Scottish composers was another lovely folk-song like piece by Alan Richardson, *Sussex Lullaby*, a good contrast to David Horne's *Filters*.

At about 3:25, we went to the room that housed the luthiers' displays, where we heard a talk by Rex England, a mature gentleman who makes stringed instruments and lives in Milton Keynes, England. John White introduced him, making a joke about the king of England giving a lecture in Scotland. England talked about the process of selecting wood and shaping it, the importance of thickness, setting the neck, bridge height, and varnish. He was generous in leaving ample time for questions, of which there were many. His gracious and knowledgeable manner made this a pleasant hour or so.

Shortly after 5:00, Kenta Matsumi and his accompanist, Yuko Sasaki, presented a program of seven transcriptions by Primrose or Forbes. These were really encore pieces, so the listening was easy, and the performances were "perfect" in the best sense of the word. There was not a blemish, nothing out of place; it was a polished ensemble—balanced, faultless, exact, and finished. The Vaughn Williams/Forbes Fantasia on "Greensleeves" stands out in memory as being particularly delicious. We don't hear this type of literature as much as we used to; and played so elegantly, this was a real treat.

The Saturday evening concert was mostly devoted to viola concertos, accompanied by a small string orchestra, conducted by James Durrant. First we heard a rather nervous (at least in the fast movements) performance of the Telemann Concerto, played by Philip Dukes. Mr. Dukes plays a viola that has upper





bouts cut away, shaped like a viola d'amore. Compared to many of the instruments we had heard in the past few days, it sounded thin in the upper registers. It did look like the design would facilitate high-position playing. Next we had a world premier: 7:1 Concerto for Viola and Strings, by Audrey Mackie. The soloist, Vanessa McNaught, is a very able young player. The title supports the construction of the concerto, which consists of seven short movements (really short, Webern-like) followed by a final more substantial movement. The work is atonal but not unpleasant. It's full of glissandos, unrecognizable chords, snaps, and grunts; it seems to be mostly "effects," but this is hard to tell on one hearing. It was nice to hear a concerto by a young woman composer being performed by a young woman virtuoso. This was followed by Stephen Tees playing Pastoral Fantasia by William Alwyn. Here we had the "British Renaissance" again, and welcome it was. (This sounds for all the world like Delius.)

Mairi Campbell, a young woman who plays Scottish traditional fiddle music on the viola, made an unprogrammed appearance on the Saturday evening program. She played a gentle folk tune, which was mostly pianissimo but had plenty of scotch snaps as well as drones. This was an advertisement for a "Ceilidh," traditional Scottish dancing and music to be held at 10:00 p.m. at another site in the city, put on specifically for the Congress attendees.

After James Durrant led the youthful string orchestra in a performance of the three movements of the early Divertimento K. 136 by Mozart, we were treated to the world premier of Concerto for Viola and Strings by Edward McGuire. The soloist was Gillian Haddow, a twenty-six-year-old native Scot and a virtuoso who had no technical problems with the considerable demands of this concerto. It is a substantial three-movement work, in a twentieth-century style, but is solidly based on traditional musical values. The viola is allowed to function as a concerto instrument and does not have to compete with the orchestra for the attention of the listener. The last movement has a strong jazz flavor, not present in much viola litera-

ture. This is a strong work and could enter the repertory as a happy twentieth-century selection.

Finale

Sunday, 19 July, started with a workshop held by James Durrant at 10:00 a.m. on "basic viola technique." The workshop was held on the stage of what appeared to be a television studio, in the Drama section of the building. He discussed posture, stance, bow contact with the string, bow holds, bouncing bow, practicing good intonation, and developing a pattern of practice. All of this was most sensible and demonstrated a no nonsense approach to teaching that has enabled Professor Durrant to produce many wonderful violists.

The Sunday "Coffee Concert" began at 11:30, with Robert Plane, clarinet; Philip Dukes, viola; and Sophia Rahman, piano. These three have functioned as a trio since 1992, and their chamber music performance polish certainly showed that they are used to performing together. Their program started with three of the Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, Opus 83, by Max Bruch. The performance (which was played with violist and clarinetist standing) left the impression that these players are first rate and that Sophia Rahman is as expert a chamber musician as one could hope to hear. Two pieces by Benjamin Britten followed: *Elegy for Solo Viola*, which Britten wrote for himself when he was sixteen years old, and *Reflections for Viola and Piano*. The full trio played *Märchenerzählungen*, Opus 132, by Robert Schumann. These are four short but beautiful movements in the unmistakable Schumann style. Plane and Rahman played *Sketches from a Bagpiper's Album*, by Judith Weir. The "sketches" are three character pieces: "Salute" (all in rhythmic unison between clarinet and piano), "Nocturne," and "Mist over the Sea." Weir is apparently a well-known and successful British composer, and these pieces were most convincing. The concert closed with the Trio in E-flat, K. 498, "Kegelstatt," by Mozart. This performance was perhaps more pressured and less expansive than is often heard but did not lack for energy.

The "Grand Finale" concert started at 2:30, with appropriate "thank you" remarks by John White. The program consisted entirely of viola ensemble pieces performed by the young virtuosos (mostly female) we had heard earlier in the Congress: *Elegy for Four Violas* (originally four cellos), by Marie Dare; *Fantasia for Four Violas*, by York Bowen (edited by Thomas Tatton, who was present); and *Introduction and Andante, Opus 5, for Six Violas*, by Benjamin Dale (edited by John White). The last performance included all violists who wanted to play. There were thirty-four, in a semicircle around the stage, conducted by James Durrant playing *Divertimento for Twenty Violas*, by Edward McGuire. What it lacked in clarity and decisiveness it certainly gained from enthusiasm. That many middle-fiddles all playing at once in a relatively small auditorium is a unique sonic experience. It was a fitting close.

To sum up, the XXVI International Viola Congress was a thoroughly enjoyable and intense four days. One leaves with the impression of Glasgow as a gracious and civilized city that was pleased to have its viola guests. The organization and carrying out of the Congress was a virtuoso performance in itself, and the display of viola talent, artistry, and accomplishment shows that the viola is in fine and capable hands in the United Kingdom.

Thomas G. Hall
Chapman University

Note

1. J. S. Bach, transcribed and edited by Rowland-Jones, Simon, *Six Suites for Solo Violoncello*, BWV 1007-1012, Edition for Solo Viola (London: EDITION PETERS No. 7489, 1998).

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Viola-Fest

Viola-Fest

26.–27. Juni in Kronberg im Taunus



Yuri Bashmet
mit dem
Moskauer Solistenensemble
Nobuku Imai
Kim Kashkashian
Tabea Zimmermann

Traditionally the individual and corporate sponsors of this annual musical event, held in this “bedroom” town of Frankfurt, Germany, have focused their energies and funding on the cello and cellists, featuring internationally known artists in recitals, forums, and a competition. I was unable to ascertain why an exception was made in behalf of the viola this year. Inspiration? Certainly much of the credit in bringing about this event goes to Uta Lenkewitz-von-Zahn, Walter Witte, and Raimund Trenkler.

One of the most extraordinary features of the Viola-Fest was having four of the world’s leading concertizing and recording violists gathered on one spot of earth at the same time. They were the Japanese Nobuko Imai (now living in Holland), the Russian Yuri Bashmet, the American Kim Kashkashian (currently residing in Berlin), and the German Tabea Zimmermann (she, two months before the delivery of her first child). Each occupied a solo recital and all joined together to play

various viola solo and ensemble pieces in two other concerts.

If listeners had anticipated a vicious “I-can-top-that” competition among the soloists, they would have been disappointed. From all appearances, cooperative efforts among the soloists were a model in collegiality. We could all be reminded that this is how musical performance ideally should be approached. One presents his or her own talent and gift of music, not as a way of comparing or, worse, denigrating another’s, but simply as a presentation of a musical gift. Upon hearing four mature and highly endowed musicians, one may have favored the musical subtlety, tone, technique, performing personality, or other individual elements of one artist over the other, but it would have been futile to have picked a “winner.” And that, refreshingly, was not the object of the Viola-Fest. It was essentially a celebration of the instrument and its repertoire—both familiar and unfamiliar—celebrated by four superb players, who in turn were deservedly celebrated by full houses of admirers.

From several introductory and congratulatory letters found in the handsome festival brochure, I gleaned the following words that might resonate in every violist from the eminent conductor Carlo Maria Giulini:

“Many, many years have gone by since the time I experienced one of the greatest joys of my musical career, which is when I was offered the position of twelfth viola in the Augusteo Orchestra in Rome. During that period I had the opportunity of playing—with the exception of Toscanini—under the greatest conductors and composers of the time. I would like to suggest to all [violists] to continue to love and respect their instrument with the wish that they will be able to be proud of the joy they convey to the listeners through music.”

David Dalton
Provo, Utah



OF INTEREST

AVS Board Meeting Minutes

Annual Board Meeting of the American Viola Society

Friday, 10 July 1998
Provo Marriott Hotel, Provo, Utah
7:00 p.m.



Officers present:

Tatton (Pres.), Preucil (Vice Pres.), Forbes (Secretary), Dalton (Past Pres.)

Officers unable to attend:

Arlin (Treasurer), de Veritch (Past Pres.), Rose (incoming Treasurer), Slowik (incoming Pres.)

Board members present:

Clark, Fielding, Goldsmith, Hirschmugl, Irvine, Kosmala, Pounds (Special Consultant to the Board), Ryan, White-Smith

Board members unable to attend:

Chiang, Coletti, Graham, Ritscher, Rutledge

Meeting called to order by Pres. Tatton 7:05 p.m.

I. Introduction of new Board members by Pres. Tatton.

II. Reminder that the XXVII Congress to be hosted by Henry Janzen in Guelph, Canada, 9–12 June 1999.

III. Corrections to the 1997 minutes.

Moved (Irvine), seconded, and unanimously agreed to accept minutes from the 1997 Board Meeting at the XXV Viola Congress at the University of Texas at Austin.

IV. Clark delivered the AVS Membership Report.

(Dual memberships of AVS/CVS, membership renewal notices.) Secretary explanation of malfunction of computer database. Plea for help notifying any members deleted by mistake.

V. Tatton presented Treasurer's Report from Arlin.

Tatton suggested that a Finance Committee comprised of Rose, Arlin, Dalton, and Slowik will meet in the near future to discuss budget and direction to take.

Moved (Tatton), seconded, and unanimously agreed to approve 1998 Treasurer's Report minus the 1999 budget.

VI. Irvine reported on development of AVS Website.

VII. Goldsmith opened the report of New AVS Chapters, including the inaugural events of the LA Chapter and the AZ Chapter. Hirschmugl presented the newsletter with financial summary of Chicago Chapter and events. Smith delivered the Rocky Mountain Chapter report.

VIII. Tatton reported on setting Guidelines for Financial Support to Local Chapters.

IX. Hirschmugl requested honorary lifetime membership for Harold Klatz.

X. Fielding reported on ballots and voting of new Board members.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Saturday, 11 July 1998
 Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
 9:00 a.m.

Officers present: Same as 7-10-98

Officers unable to attend: Same as 7-10-98

Board members present: Same as 7-10-98

Board members unable to attend: Same as 7-10-98

Meeting called to order by Pres. Tatton 9:15 a.m.

Tatton complimented the excellent work done by Goldsmith in her report of new AVS chapters.

I. Goldsmith reported on negotiations with the New York Viola Society.

As authorized by vote from 1997 Annual Board Meeting, Goldsmith will attend an upcoming NY Viola Society meeting to maintain an amicable AVS/NYVS relationship and encourage NYVS participation in the AVS.

II. Goldsmith opened discussion of Congresses and Primrose Competition.

Review of Texas Congress XXV, suggestions for future Congresses, discussion of International Congress, and suggestions for Primrose Competition.

Moved (Goldsmith), seconded, and unanimously agreed that the AVS will contribute more money to the CVS for the XXVII Viola Congress.

III. Irvine and Fielding offered Proposal to Amend Length in Term of Officers.

IV. Dalton reported on *JAVS* publication.

Dalton announced retirement from BYU as of 31 August 1999 and resignation from position as editor of *JAVS*. Discussion of future of *JAVS* publication.

V. Clark reported on AVS mailing list.



L-R. Juliet White-Smith, David Dalton, Tom Tatton (Past Pres.), Lisa Hirshmugl, Peter Slowik (President), Jerzy Kosmala, Catherine Forbes (Secretary).

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VI. Tatton reported on AVS/IVG relationship.
 Discussion of Tatton proposal to offer to IVG.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Saturday, 11 July 1998
 BYU Conference Room
 2:00 p.m.

Officers present: Same as 7-10-98, with Slowik present
 Officers unable to attend: Same as 7-10-98

Board members present: Same as 7-10-98
 Board members unable to attend: Same as 7-10-98

Guests present: Anna Kosmala

President Tatton called meeting to order 2:10 p.m.

I. Tatton returned to discussion of proposal for IVG.

Moved (Goldsmith), seconded, and unanimously agreed that the Board empower Pounds and Tatton to negotiate for the AVS at the International Viola Congress IVG Board Meeting in Glasgow.

Moved (Slowik), seconded and unanimously agreed in principle and structure that this proposal is the one Pounds and Tatton will take to the tables in Glasgow.

Moved (Irvine), seconded and unanimously agreed that AVS will provide \$600.00 each for Tatton, Pounds and Forbes to attend Glasgow Congress.

II. Tatton surrendered the AVS symbol of presidency, the official seal, to Slowik.



AVS Board members viewing expansion site of BYU library where Primrose Room housing PIVA will be constructed.



III. Slowik greeted board as new President and stated goals of his Presidency:

1. To increase AVS membership to 2000 by the year 2000.
2. To improve communication.
3. To address short-term goals for the future (publication, growth, new committees, restructuring funds for Chapters, AVS Website).

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, 12 July 1998
Provo Marriott Hotel, Provo, Utah
9:00 a.m.

Officers present: Same as 7-11-98

Officers absent: Same as 7-11-98

Board members present: Same as 7-11-98

Board members absent: Same as 7-11-98, with Clark and Irvine absent

Meeting called to order by Slowik at 9:05 a.m.

I. Tatton opened discussion of 1999 budget.

Motion made (Goldsmith), seconded, and unanimously agreed to accept 1999 budget proposal as a preliminary budget, refer it to a finance committee for discussion and amendment, and perform e-mail votes for final Board approval by 12-01.

Motion made (Goldsmith), seconded, and unanimously agreed that Rose, Slowik, and Fielding will comprise the Finance Committee.

II. Slowik reopened discussion of Irvine Proposal to Amend Length in Term of Officers.

Moved (Slowik), seconded, and unanimously agreed that the Proposal to Amend the Length in Term of Officers will be referred to the Constitutional Committee for discussion and amendment and that the committee will bring it to vote for Board approval at the next meeting.

III. Slowik designated Committee appointments:

Internet and Finance: Fielding, Chair

Chapters Committee: Goldsmith and Preucil, Co-Chairs (White-Smith, Rutledge)

Publications: Forbes, Chair (Ryan and Dalton on committee)

Primrose Competition Committee: Hirschmugl, Chair (Kosmala and Graham on committee)

Constitution Committee: Tatton, Chair

Congress and Finances: Slowik, Chair (Goldsmith will help if Congress is in AZ)

Meeting adjourned 10:35 a.m.

PETER SLOWIK
President

CATHERINE FORBES
Secretary

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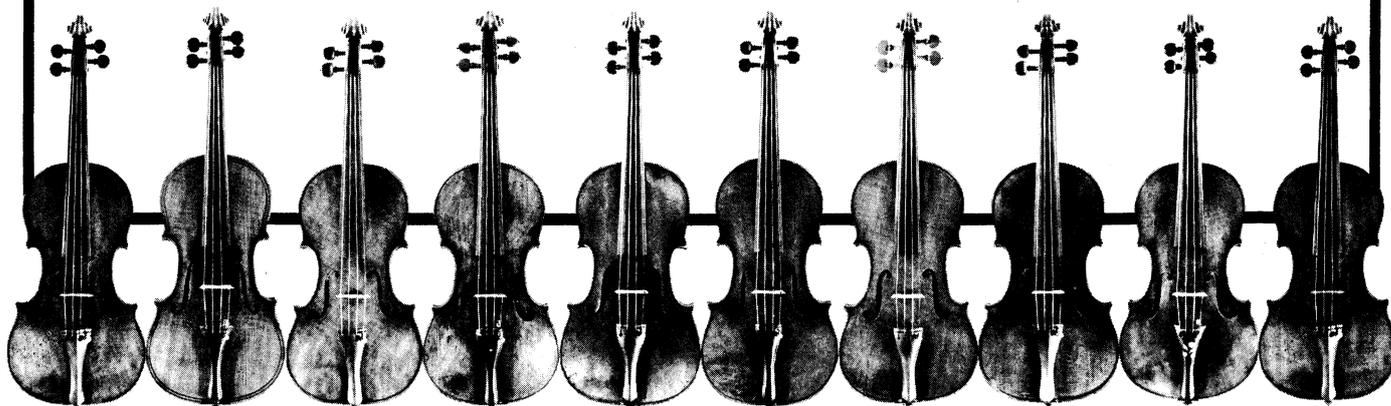
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IVS Board Meeting Minutes

International Viola Gesellschaft
Annual Board Meeting
Friday, 17 July 1998
XXVI International Viola Congress
The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama
1:00 p.m.

Board Members Present:

AVS: Tom Tatton, Dwight Pounds, Catherine Forbes
CVS: Henry Janzen, Ann Frederking
IVG: Günter Ojstersek, Ronald Schmidt, Uta Lenkewitz
Special Host: John White

Meeting called to order by XXVI Congress Host, John White.

I. White delivered his opening statement along with a warm welcome to all IVG, AVS, and CVS Board members.

White offered 3 recommendations for this meeting:

1. That Board members strive to resolve problems.
2. That a second meeting be scheduled for later after this first meeting.
3. That this meeting be distinguished as an Executive Meeting to remain private for now.

White advised that the Board recognize that Ojstersek is the current President of the IVG and offered him the floor first.

II. Lenkewitz spoke for Ojstersek and presented his statement to the Board.

Lenkewitz translated that Ojstersek was very pleased that everyone was attending and was optimistic that the Board will reach a result that is viable. He has talked to IVG officers in Sweden, Croatia, Germany, and Switzerland. They are in agreement that elections should be resolved within the next two to four months. The officers and Board will be in place by 1 January 1999.

III. Tatton delivered the Proposal for the Restructuring of the IVG. (Attachment A)

IV. Ojstersek spoke as representative of the entire IVG and was in complete agreement with the proposal brought to the tables at this meeting. He requested that the present IVG Board remain in place until the new one is elected.

Moved (Janzen), seconded, and unanimously agreed that Günter Ojstersek be appointed Chairman of IVG Nominating Committee.

Pounds requested that Dalton be included in the process until elections. Ojstersek agreed that they would be delighted to include him.

Tatton expressed the importance of including UK in the IVG and that if John White isn't willing, perhaps he could suggest someone who is.

Pounds reminded the Board that his function as Executive Assistant is not mentioned in the by-laws but is actually a position appointed by the president (like the president bringing in his own cabinet).





Motion made (Janzen), seconded, and unanimously agreed that the AVS proposal for the officers representing North America be accepted by acclamation so that elections of the European representation will be elected by ballot as soon as possible, with the following stipulations:

1. This is not a normal case, but it is put into place to expedite the election process this one time only.
2. That the ES and AES positions are only for the next three years.
3. That the AES will be elected by European ballot.

Motion made (Pounds), seconded, and unanimously agreed that the stipulations as stated on this particular report be accepted in total and that the by-law meeting referring to officer travel is covered by the motion passed in Austin TX 6-6-97, page 2.

Janzen requested clarification on the discrepancy of the AVS payments to the IVG and the financial sheet provided. He requested that a financial report be circulated from AVS treasurer to CVS treasurer with this clarification.

Motion made (Lenkewitz), seconded, and unanimously agreed that the AVS, CVS, and IVG continue to collaborate on the International Congresses as in the past system.

Motion made (Pounds), seconded, and unanimously agreed that being hosted by the UK violists, specifically John White and James Durant at the RSAMD, this Board goes on record as favoring the establishment of a British Viola Society, as a section of the IVG, and that we dedicate ourselves to that end.

Furthermore, that we are deeply grateful to John White for hosting the XXVI International Viola Congress.

Meeting adjourned 3:05 p.m.

Helen Callus, viola

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American Viola Society
 PROPOSAL FOR THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE
 INTERNATIONAL VIOLA GESELLSCHAFT
 Friday, 17 July 1998

THREE-YEAR OBJECTIVES:

To reorganize and restructure the IVG

1. Complete the by-laws revision, which is in progress.
2. Implement fair and equitable election procedures.
3. Formulate and institute a financial reporting procedure.
4. Begin a process of national Section development.

OFFICERS:

President—David Dalton

Executive Secretary for Section Development—Dwight Pounds

Assistant Executive Secretary—European leadership to nominate three candidates for selection by IVG President. (Note: The Europeans preferred to elect this position, which was acceptable to the IVG Reorganization Board.)

Treasurer—Ann Frederking (with Henry Janzen's approval and her acceptance)

Vice President—elected or appointed by current European leadership

Secretary—elected or appointed by current European leadership



NOTE: It would be to the Society's advantage if European candidates had fax and e-mail capabilities; the Assistant Executive Secretary should be bilingual and be able and willing to do translations.

STIPULATIONS:

Maintain Incorporation in Germany.

All but 5–10% of current IVG treasury balance to be transferred to a bank convenient to the new Treasurer and acceptable to the President.

Current IVG financial account to remain open.

A complete list of all members within the active Sections to be delivered to the President as soon as possible.

Progress with by-laws revision to remain in place, especially concerning officer travel.

IMMEDIATE GOALS:

Provide all IVG members with a current roster of active sections and their membership.

Publish an International Viola Journal once a year to include information on events and activities; possibilities include cooperation with *The Strad*.

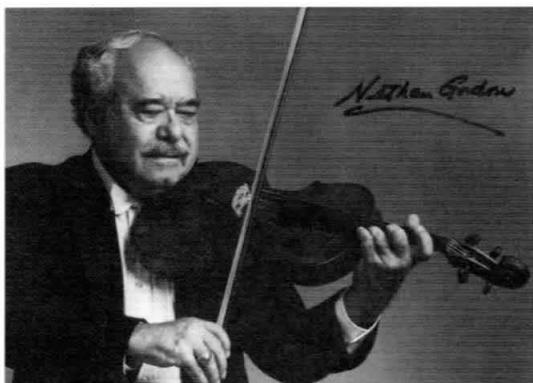
Provide a complete annual financial accounting.

Continue collaboration and cooperation between Europeans and North Americans in sponsorship of International Viola Congresses.

These objectives and the structure are intended to guide the organization through the next three years, a time of transition. They are not meant to be renewable.

ABOUT VIOLISTS

In Memoriam



On 7 September 1998, Nathan Gordon, one of the world's leading viola virtuosos and a dear friend of mine, passed away in Boca Raton, Florida. Gordon died of congestive heart failure.

He was born in New York and was brought up in Cleveland, where he studied violin at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Later, Gordon studied violin with Hans Letz at the Juilliard School of Music in New York. While studying at Juilliard, he changed his major instrument to the viola and later studied with William Primrose. During his long and active career, he was a

member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, principal violist with the Pittsburgh Symphony, associate principal with Toscanini's NBC Symphony, principal with the Detroit and Chataqua symphonies. Gordon performed as soloist with all these orchestras many times. While a member of the NBC Symphony, he was also a member of the Mischakoff Quartet and the NBC Quartet. For many years, he was also violist with the Kroll Quartet and appeared as a guest artist with the Budapest Quartet.

While principal violist in Detroit, Gordon founded the Dearborn Symphony and conducted it for twenty-five years. He was also Regional Director of "Outreach" in Michigan.

Nathan Gordon made numerous recital appearances throughout the United States and Europe in collaboration with his wife, soprano Marjorie Gordon. They also collaborated with their son, the outstanding horn player Peter Gordon, in many concerts.

Gordon was an active teacher throughout his life and taught many of this country's finest young violists. Among his students were Michael Ouzounian, principal violist, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; Kim Kashkashian, solo recitalist and recording artist; and Darrel Barnes, former principal of both the St. Louis and Indianapolis Orchestras. Gordon was a wonderful pedagogue, bringing a wealth of experience to his teaching as a soloist, orchestral player, chamber musician, and as a teacher. His warm and engaging personality endeared him both to his students and everyone who knew him. During his career he taught at Wayne State University, Carnegie Tech, Chatham College, Duquesne University, Interlochen, and Indiana University.

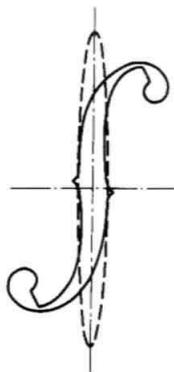
Nathan Gordon's tone on the viola was ideal—deep, rich, and warm. His technique was all encompassing. He was able to play the most difficult works with the greatest of ease. Works such as the Bartók, Walton, and Hindemith concerti posed no problems for him. During most of his career Gordon played his Gasparo da Salò viola.

I've never known a finer violist or human being than "Nat" Gordon. He will be greatly missed.

Those wishing to contribute to the Nathan Gordon Scholarship Fund at ASTA may send contributions to

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Viola Today in Greater LA

The fall and winter of 1997–98, in Southern California were barren times for performances featuring the viola. Then, around the vernal equinox, like bears or perhaps sloths coming awake from hibernation, violists began rousing into a flurry of activity.

The first event after our long winter's nap probably represented the stretching and waking-up phase of the spring. On Saturday evening, 21 March, the soloist was Robert Becker, principal violist of the Pacific Symphony, with John Alexander conducting forty-seven voices from the Pacific Chorale and a small orchestra. The work was *Flos Campi* by Ralph Vaughan Williams. The venue was three-thousand-seat Segerstrom Hall in the Orange County Performing Arts Center. All of us who know and love *Flos Campi* realize there are built-in problems with balance, and in a huge, unflattering hall, they get serious. In this performance, the violist was a fine visual presence, and with the last two movements' soporific tempo there was a decided inclination to return to torpor.

The next and much happier event was Sunday afternoon, 22 March, at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach. The Australian violist Simon Oswell, who now makes his home in Pacific Palisades, performed with Ami Porat and the Mozart Camerata. St. Andrew's is acoustically friendly and a reasonable size. Porat is a string-player as well as conductor. Oswell has a beautiful, unforced and large viola sound, which could be enjoyed easily. There were two viola pieces: *Yiskor (In Memoriam)*, by the twentieth-century Israeli composer Oedoen Partos, which is scored for solo viola and strings. Written right after WWII, it is in memory of victims of the Holocaust. Mildly dissonant, it wanders rhythmically and melodically and was mildly received. It has a cadenza of mostly double-stops, which the soloist handily dispatched. This is yet another work in the viola repertory which is funereal in tone.

The Camerata program listed Concerto for Viola by J. C. Bach as the next viola offering. Program notes, however, made clear that this work is doubtless by Henri Casadesus, who founded the Société des Instruments Anciens in Paris and who also played and published music for the viola d'amore. He had two brothers who wrote music and attributed it to composers of past ages.¹ Nevertheless, this C-minor concerto is a splendid work, almost in the classic style; but with a thematic echo of the first movement in the last, and other interior evidence, this is not a product of the eighteenth century. The entirely successful orchestral accompaniment is by brother Francis Casadesus.

The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra often performs programs in pairs in different venues. On 28 March they repeated the program of the 27th, performed at Veterans Wadsworth Theatre in Westwood, in Glendale's Alex Theatre, a refurbished art nouveau movie palace, which makes a wonderful concert hall. The new music director of L.A. Chamber Orchestra is Jeffrey Kahane, a pianist, mostly, but a refreshing program builder. To introduce *Lachrymae*, for Viola and Strings, Opus 48a, by Benjamin Britten, he had the lute songs on which *Lachrymae* is based performed by soprano Virginia Sublett and lutenist John Schneiderman: "Flow my tears," and "If my complaints could passion move," both by John Dowland.

Lachrymae is a much more successful work in the string orchestra version than in the piano version, which is the one usually heard. This performance used four violas on the conductor's left, four violins and four celli in the middle, two basses stage-left and rather back, with the soloist, Roland Kato (regular principal violist of the Chamber Orchestra) in a normal soloist's position. His playing was artistic, effortless, restrained, interesting, with no projection problem at all. There were texture changes, harmonics,





extreme ranges, pizzicatos, subtleties of dynamics that the piano cannot approach that greatly enrich this piece, which is basically a series of variations on fragments of the Dowland songs.

Immediately after the Britten came the Copland Clarinet Concerto, unashamedly jazzy and loud. The contrast was really successful, but almost too strong.

David Dalton, editor of this journal, who is well-known in viola circles for years of varied contributions to the cause, came to the Los Angeles area and gave three presentations of "The Art of Primrose," a lecture-with-illustrations in videotape, vintage recordings, and personal remembrances. Tuesday, the last day of March, found Dalton at USC and the California Institute of the Arts; Thursday, 2 April, at Chapman University in Orange County. For some of us who have knowledge of Primrose as part of our life experience, the fact that many in the audiences really knew nothing about Primrose's virtuosity or the artistry of his performances vividly emphasizes that he is a historical figure whose performance career was at a peak somewhere around fifty years ago. We are approaching a new millennium.

Pamela Goldsmith presented another in her series of faculty recitals at USC on Sunday afternoon, 5 April, in Hancock Auditorium on the central-city campus. The audience, all twenty-two of us, was given an informal verbal explanation for the use of different bows for different pieces. For the unaccompanied Bach C-Major Suite she used a copy of a baroque bow, which is shorter, lighter, and slightly convex. Goldsmith played the whole recital with elegance and technical aplomb, but her Bach is really a demonstration of unusual insight and historical understanding. Bryan Pezzone assisted at the piano for the Hummel E-flat Sonata and the sugary Adagio by Kodaly, an early work sometimes heard on the cello, closed the program. The Cadenza for the Penderecki Viola Concerto provided twentieth-century perspective for the afternoon.

Certainly an important event in spring viola activities was the inaugural meeting of the Southern California Viola Society, which occurred on Sunday, 24 May, at Occidental

College. Since this date conflicted with at least one University Commencement activity, this report is founded on enthusiastic hearsay and some handsome documented evidence. The able coordinators of this ambitious project were Ralph Fielding and Valerie Dimond, and their efforts called forth cash contributions from some seventy "founding members" whose names are listed in the lovely printed program, responsibility for which has been laid to Janet Lakatos. Rumor has it that ninety or so violists actually did attend. There are thirty "Performers Biographies" in the program booklet (some of the biographies are lighthearted), which gives an idea of the extent and diversity of the music presented. The event opened at 10:30 a.m. and proceeded to a concert of four twentieth-century works at 10:45. There was a membership meeting at noon, a "jazz forum," which featured Ray Tischer prominently, followed by another concert of seven performances at 2:30. These afternoon pieces were again mostly twentieth-century works, but some were from the first part of the century (Frank Bridge and Benjamin Dale). Thomas Tatton, who traveled to Oxy from Stockton, has given assurance that the inaugural meeting was a splendid success, and that the Southern California Viola Society was indeed properly launched.

Ralph Fielding is setting a fine pace of activities as the weather warms up to summer. He received a complementary critical review of his performance with Gloria Chang (a pianist who is something of a twentieth-century specialist here in L.A.) of *Like the Clay in the Potter's Hand*, by Menachem Weisenberg, on a program at the Skirball Cultural Center featuring new music from Israel, in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the State of Israel. On 14 June, Fielding and Evan Wilson (principal violist of the L.A. Philharmonic) played the Sixth Brandenburg Concerto at Mission San Luis Rey in Ocean-side, California.

Thomas G. Hall
Chapman University

Note

1. Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 3 (London: Macmillan, 1980).

Viola Anecdotes

Pierre Monteux, the great conductor, entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1884 to study violin. (Fellow pupils included Flesch, Kreisler, Enescu, and Thibaud.) By 1890 Monteux was leading the violas of the Opera Comique in the premiere of Debussy's *Pelleas et Melisande*. He became the viola player with the Quatour Geloso in 1894, where, as a member, he met Brahms and played one of the composer's quartets in his presence. On one occasion when Monteux was in his seventies, the Budapest String Quartet, due imminently to perform a Haydn quartet, found themselves minus the viola player. Monteux stepped in, and although he probably hadn't played in a quartet for years, managed the viola part without rehearsal or score.

As to Monteux's early years as an orchestral viola player, Barry Tuckwell (the hornist) has pointed out that if you play an inner part in the orchestra, "You're the one who helps score goals." Tuckwell's comment was part of a paragraph that discussed how superbly Monteux delineated inner voices as a conductor.

—From *Grammophone*,
January 1998, p. 34

William Primrose was invited to join Toscanini for dinner at his house in Riverdale, New York. Toscanini's family was away and he wanted company. Primrose was stunned at this opportunity, especially for the stories he would hear: Verdi, Puccini, Farrar, Caruso, Gatti, Lehmann! But instead of unfolding his tales, Toscanini silently raced through dinner and packed Primrose into the television room for Toscanini's favorite entertainment—wrestling, with running commentary by Toscanini himself. "Punch 'im in ze stomach!" the Maestro urged. "Grab 'im to ze leg! Jomp on 'im! Make 'im into mess!" That was all Primrose heard.

—From *Opera Anecdotes*
by Ethan Mordden, p. 241

Maurice Gardner, Composer, on Aging

Eighty-nine
May be fine, but
contemplating it makes me
Humbler and bumbler.
I'm soon to join with nonagenarians
Both the omnivores and the vegetarians.
I may rank with the Methuselah Wannabies
Or Couldabies—(perhaps Wouldabies), but
811 years is too long to wait
Since I'm not headed for that Pearly Gate.
My thanks for all greetings (some a day too
late)
Your loving good wishes galore
I couldn't ask for more amour!



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AVS CHAPTERS

Editor's Note: Each president of the various AVS chapters is requested to send chapter news to the editor of JAVS.

Southern California Viola Society



Inception and Inaugural Event
by Valerie Dimond

It all began when I had a lunch meeting with Pamela Goldsmith, AVS Vice-President and Chair of the Chapterization Committee. With Pam's advice and encouragement, I contacted a representative crowd from L.A.'s huge pool of violists: teachers, free lancers, and symphony musicians. I also called Lisa Hirshmugl and Peter Slowik to get ideas from their very successful chapterization of the Chicago area. Like so many others, I had become an enthusiastic member of the American Viola Society after attending a Congress. It seemed a great idea to have a mini-Congress or a viola day to start a local chapter. This idea was the kernel of the inaugural event.

After a flurry of phone calls, a meeting was set up in October, which took place at the Fielding/Dimond residence. At the first meeting were Karen Elaine (via telephone), Ralph Fielding, Marlow Fisher, Pamela Goldsmith, Laura Kuennen-Poper, Janet Lakatos, Danny Neufeld, Simon Oswell, Robin Ross, and Misha Zinoviev. Not everyone who wanted to was able to attend. Subsequent meetings included Keith Greene, Jennie Hansen, Allan Lee, Donald McInnes, Vicki Miskolczy, Kazi Pitelka, John Scanlon, and Ray Tischer.

In order to get things under way, officers were chosen at the first meeting. Interim officers were Valerie Dimond and Ralph Fielding, Co-Presidents; Pamela Goldsmith, Secretary; and Janet Lakatos, Treasurer. All others were Board Members at large. It was decided that an election would be held at the inaugural event, where we hoped there would be a large membership to vote.

At the first meeting a chapter dues structure was created. Marlow Fisher came up with the designation of C-string (Patron) \$75+, G-string (Sponsor) \$50+, D-string (Member) \$25+, and A-string (Senior/student) \$15. Naturally the C-string had to be the patron level! We also determined that everyone who joined before the 24 May event would be designated as Founders. Our excellent treasurer Janet Lakatos opened an account and reported on the gradual rise in balance from month to month even before May.

It was marvelous to have so many people involved from the very beginning. Meetings had a partylike atmosphere (lots of work got done, too!), and besides ourselves, Kazi Pitelka, John Scanlon, and Marlow Fisher hosted meetings. The actual workload to stage the inaugural event was divvied up and committees were formed. Early in the process a wonderful logo was created by Vicki Miskolczy. Mailing lists were compiled by Ralph Fielding and Robin Ross. Ralph Fielding also volunteered to make up the mailer (a flyer that contained a multitude of information on one sheet and then was folded with origami cleverness), and Laura Kuennen-Poper created a premailer postcard. These were eventually sent to almost 500 people.

Various people spearheaded aspects of the event. Ray Tischer took care of the many logistics of the location, a recital space donated by Occidental College. He also put together the Jazz Forum lecture/demonstration portion of the event. Vicki Miskolczy and John Scanlon were the dessert and beverage committee (since it started in the morning and concluded in the afternoon, a lunch break was included). Jennie Hansen created the program booklet on her computer and did a beautiful job. It was a classic journalistic experience for her,

staying up until all hours of the night to meet the deadline. Allan Lee created the SCVS web page. (Hey, check it out!)

The program committee (Laura Kuennen-Poper, Jennie Hansen, Kazi Pitelka, John Scanlon, and Karen Elaine) did a fabulous job. They did everything from fielding submissions by players and getting together groups of up to six violists for ensemble pieces, to editing bios from people who ultimately played on the program (try editing Don Innes's bio to thirty words). A favorite bio was Cynthia Morrow's (professional violist and professional psychotherapist!): "Been there. Done that. Probably will again." It required no editing. When the dust had settled, a program had evolved, comprised of three performances with a membership meeting in the middle. The date had been set for 24 May 1998. Months were needed to organize simply because the performers (there were twenty-three violists who played) were members of every performing organization in the Greater Los Angeles area and we wished to attract to the membership meeting our fellow players as well as avid amateurs, students, and teachers. The only day that was fairly free of performing obligations was 24 May. (The Los Angeles Philharmonic had a Sunday matinee but seemed otherwise to be free until 2 p.m.) It also turned out to be Memorial Day weekend, which was probably why it was fairly free! Nonetheless, we proceeded with that date as it worked best for the most people.

The location turned out to be an inspired choice. Bird Studio at Occidental College has a charming chapel-like setting. We found the acoustics in Bird to be warm and pleasing for the viola. There is pew seating that can accommodate up to 100 or so, and although there is no antechamber for audiences to congregate, there is a lovely stone courtyard with plants and covered walkways. The weather was gracious: El Niño did not rain upon us and the overcast sky kept the sun from baking us. The doors opened at 10:30, and people came and went all day long, just like a regular viola congress. We had an average of fifty to

sixty people in the audience most of the day, and we signed up many new members. We had included San Diego in our Southern California net and a contingent of San Diegoans did show up. Vladimir Venczel-Dimitrov not only came up from San Diego for the meeting, he got himself elected to the new board! In a show of support for our endeavor, AVS President Tom Tatton came down from the Bay Area (the AVS had contributed \$250, as it will to all emerging chapters). The audience was the most exhilarating in the world . . . fellow violists!

The first program was titled "Engaging the Creative Spirit: Collaborating with Composers." All works had been commissioned by Southern California violists. The composers were all in attendance at the performance, with the exception of the late Vincent Persichetti. Valerie Dimond and Ralph Fielding played Maria Newman's dramatic viola duo *Quemadmodum*. Don McInnes performed Alan Smith's "Four Folk Songs" with the composer at the piano, featuring the magnificent soprano Jessica Rivera. Vicki Miskolczy, a former student of Don McInnes, played Persichetti's Parable for Viola, a work written for Don. The Gaia Ensemble (violists Robin Ross, Renita Koven, Margot MacLaine, and Cynthia Morrow) performed the world premiere of "Strings in Paradise" by Benedict Brydern, which was written in swing style with the four violas used like a sax section with occasional breakout solos.

The membership meeting followed this program. We elected the following people to be officers: President, Keith Greene; Vice-President, Don McInnes; Secretary, Ralph Fielding; Treasurer, Janet Lakatos. A board was also elected. They are Karen Elaine, Jennie Hansen, Laura Kuennen-Poper, Simon Oswell, Vladimir Venczel-Dimitrov, David Rosen, Hannah Skupen, and Tom Metzler. The amazing and delightful quality of the elected group is that amateurs, performers, and teachers are all represented, as well as nearly all the areas of Southern California.

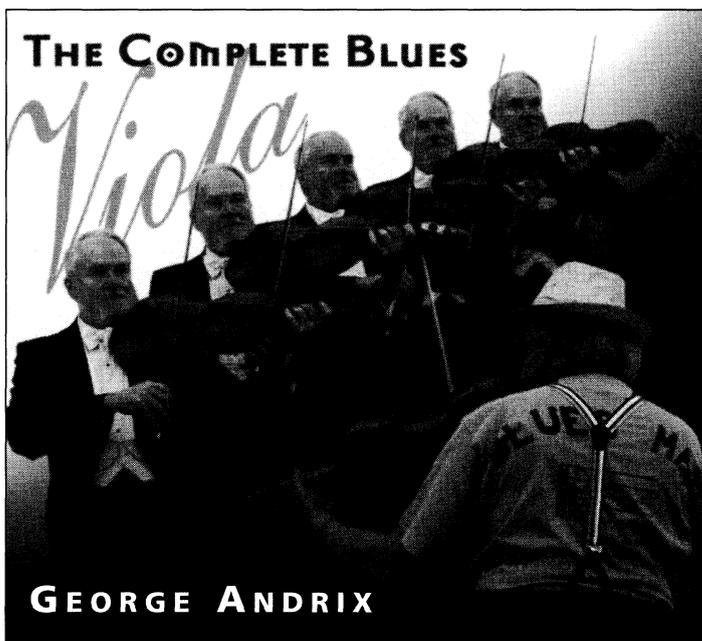


Following the meeting was the Jazz Forum put together by Ray Tischer. In addition to Ray, Novi Novog and Daryl Silberman gave wonderful demonstrations of jazz idioms on the viola by playing their own and others' pieces. All three turned out to be clear and compelling lecturers as well as evocative advocates for playing alternative music. They ended by playing a bebop arrangement for three violists and bass, by Danny Seidenberg, violist of the Turtle Island String Quartet.

The third program was called "Pastiche." It was an eclectic group of works that included the somber *Lament*, by Frank Bridge (played by Laura Kuennen-Poper and Marlow Fisher), and the serious Sonata for solo viola, by Grazyna Bacewicz (Carole Mukogawa), to

lighter works such as the Grand Tango, by Astor Piazzola (Carol Castillo), and Waltz from *Masquerade Suite*, by Khachaturian (Pamela Goldsmith and John Scanlon). The meaty Introduction and Andante for six violists, by Benjamin Dale, was played by Janet Lakatos, Jennie Hansen, Kazi Pitelka, John Scanlon, Andrew Picken, and Keith Greene. This sextet of violists then ended the program and the day with the effervescent and delightful arrangement of "Mr. Sandman" by Chicago's symphony violist Max Raimi. It brought a joyous day to a joyous close.

By the end of the day the SCVS had more than ninety members. And even more gratifying were the words from the performers and listeners, "Let's do this again!"



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Northern California Viola Society

by Tom Heimberg

All members of our Northern California branch were invited to a gathering at San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House on Saturday, 27 June. "Meet! Eat! Play! Talk! Tour! (The Opera House)" began the invitation, and that's what we did. Those who came (the customary small but enthusiastic turnout) had a good time, and we also made some provisional plans for the coming months that promise to be musical, fun, and maybe even attention-getting. (The viola deserves lots of attention.)

As is usual during the summer, many members are out of town—at festivals, teaching at camps, on vacation. When the academic and performance year starts again in the

fall, we will have some interesting and distinctive events to offer.

In the meantime, here is a short summary of some of the recent viola happenings in the Bay Area:

The new music facilities of the University of Santa Clara were the site of a Viola Week from 20 July through 24 July. The event was cohosted by Eleanor Angel, the founding President of our Northern California Chapter, and Janet Sims, now a member of the music faculty at the university. Activities included master classes, work on chamber music and orchestra repertoire, some personal instruction, and a final recital in the splendid recital hall. (Janet specifically mentioned that Dimitri Kogan was the accompanist for the whole week and that he was wonderful.)



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The event was so successful plans are already in action for next year; rooms have been reserved and there is a list of potential participants. May they all join the Viola Society!

While we are speaking of plans for the next year: Geraldine Walther and Roy Bogas intend to perform more of their duo recitals this fall and early in 1999. They might also be producing a CD. The Bliss Sonata and the Bloch Suite figure large in their plans.

The Redwood Ensemble performed at the beautiful Portola Valley Presbyterian Church

on 14 June as part of the ongoing Music in the Redwoods series. For the past three years this group has been exploring the repertoire for clarinet (John Zorn), viola (Tom Heimberg) and piano (Peter Grunberg), as well as taking advantage of the opportunity to play other ensemble combination and solos. On this evening the large work was Reinicke's compelling Trio, Opus 274 (yes, the one for french horn or viola). And I got to play Schumann's always beautiful, but never easy, *Märchenbilder*.

Chicago Viola Society

Chicago Viola Society Turns Two,
Plans New Season of Events
by Les Jacobson

The Chicago Viola Society is tuning up for a second stellar season of musical and educational activities. Last year's first season attracted 140 members (almost 100 new to the AVS) and included the Midwest's first major viola competition, recitals, and a well-attended community play-in.

A viola recital featuring members of the Lyric Opera's viola section will kick off the second season scheduled for mid-September at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. (Details of this and other upcoming events can be found on the CVS information line, 312/409-6609, or on its website, <http://nsn.nslsilus.org/evkhome/violasoc>).

The second annual CVS Solo Competition will be held 10 January 1999, at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill. There will be four contestant divisions: ages 19–25, 16–18, 13–15, and 12 and under. The contest is open to residents of Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, and Indiana; more than \$6,000 in prizes will be offered. Flyers with more information will be mailed out to CVS members, string teachers, and others in early September.

A community play-in will be held next spring, featuring Vivaldi's transcribed concerto for four violins and Bartók's duos. The

CVS is exploring the possibility of holding this event at the Chicago Symphony's new home, the Symphony Center. CVS is also planning a viola series at Northwestern University, including performances for guitar and viola with Philadelphia principal violist Roberto Diaz and a chamber music program with Marlise and Alex Klein in February.

New officers include President-elect, Marlise Klein; Secretary, Mary Kay Hoffman; and Student Representative (a new position) Doyle Armbrust. Other officers and board members include President, Peter Slowik; Treasurer, Lisa Hirschmugl; and Richard Ferrin, Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff, Vincent Oddo, Rami Solomonow, Robert Swan, and Richard Young.

Karen Armbrust was named the CVS Volunteer of the Year. She hosted three outstanding receptions last season and is the mother of three CVS members—Doyle, Kyle, and Rose.

Part of the season's success was due to the participation and support of its business sponsors. They are Bein and Fushi, Kagan and Gaines, Performers Music, Mark Russell, SHAR Products, Kenneth Stein Violins, and Thompson and Seaman Violins.

Finally, CVS was pleased to present Lifetime Achievement Awards last season to four Chicago viola legends—Milton Preves, William Schoen, Harold Klatz, and the late Irving Ilmer. Each had a division of the Solo Competition named in his honor.



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RICHARD FERRIN OPENLY AND UNABASHEDLY WISHES TO CELEBRATE WITH OTHER VIOLISTS HIS FIRST THIRTY YEARS IN THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Richard Ferrin grew up in Pratt, Kansas, and studied violin with Benita Mossman, Viola Forsell, and Loren Crawford. He received two degrees from the Eastman School of Music, studying with Samuel Belov and Millard Taylor. From the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*: "Richard Ferrin is a thorough master of the techniques of his instrument and has a huge, vibrant tone." Further studies were taken at USC in the master class of Jascha Heifetz, playing viola in Friday afternoon chamber music sessions in Clark House or the home of Mr. Heifetz. Several times Heifetz would perform in these sessions in addition to getting involved in fiercely contested ping-pong doubles matches. Ferrin was viola soloist with solo cellist Gabor Rejto in Strauss's *Don Quixote* with the USC Symphony. He appeared as guest violist in Ingolf Dahl's Piano Quartet with Eudice Shapiro, Gabor Rejto, and Lillian Steuber, piano. Ferrin studied viola with Sanford Schonbach at USC and with William Primrose at the Music Academy of the West. Primrose gave him very important professional advice without which Ferrin later would not have played his successful audition for the Chicago Symphony. He played viola with Henri Temianka in a performance of the Mendelssohn Octet on a Temianka Southern California Chamber Orchestra concert at UCLA.

1957 Ferrin receives a Sibelius Scholarship, granted by American Finlandia Foundation, enabling him to study at Sibelius Academy. When Sibelius dies, Ferrin is invited by the Finnish government to attend the composer's state funeral at Great Church in Helsinki.

1962 Ferrin receives grant from University of Washington to study Pedagogy of the Violin and Viola in the Soviet Union and interviews leading professors, listens to their students perform at conservatories in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, and Odessa. During the last three years as a member of the violin faculty at U of W, he is also principal violist of the Seattle Symphony under Milton Katims, director.

Late 1960s and early 1970s, Ferrin is violist with Chicago Symphony Trio that includes Samuel Magad, CSO concertmaster, and Leonard Chausow, assistant principal cellist. Guest appearances with Mischa Dichter and Jeffrey Siegel, pianists. Ferrin teaches violin and viola on faculty of North Shore Music Center. He is a member of the artist faculty at AFM-sponsored Congress of Strings for six summers at USC, Cal State Northridge, University of Washington, and Cincinnati Conservatory.

Late 1970s, early 1980s, Ferrin teaches on several occasions at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee and Madison in place of Bernard Zaslav, when the Fine Arts Quartet is on tour. He teaches violin at the American Conservatory and is first violinist of the Landolfi Quartet; presents several concerts including one at Eastman School of Music.

1980 Since this date, Ferrin is a member of award-winning CSO ensemble, Chicago Pro Musica, and performs with the group at international festivals in Tokyo, the Osaka Exposition, Australian Bicentennial Festivals, Valencia Festival in Spain, Bahnhof Rolandseck Fest in Bad Godesberg, Germany; at Glinka Hall, Leningrad, at 92nd St. "Y" in New York; and Davies Hall, San Francisco. *Chicago Tribune* writes, "This ensemble is one of the most versatile and artistically accomplished in the American chamber music scene." On 27 January 1999, Chicago Pro Musica will give the first Chicago performance of "Night Window," for clarinet, viola, and piano, by Brett Dean, violist, composer, and member of the Berlin Philharmonic. From *Chicago Sun-Times*, 13 May 1997, "Chicago Pro Musica, whose members performed ten of the twelve Lucian Berio's *Sequenzas* in Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, NWU, brought more than virtuosity to the stage. . . . Richard Ferrin played both *Sequenza VI* (for viola) and *Sequenza VIII* (for violin). His assertive playing of their austere, repetitive melodic lines and non-stop virtuoso requirements brought to mind Bach's solo partitas."

On 15 January 1980, Ferrin gives first Chicago performance of Shostakovich's Sonata with Mary Sauer, pianist, on CSO Artists Chamber Music Series at Orchestra Hall, latter broadcast on WFMT.

1986 Ferrin is invited by the Peoples Republic of China as soloist with Shanghai Symphony. Gives the first performance of Bartók Concerto with a Chinese orchestra, Xiejang Chen, conducting. Critic of *Shanghai Daily Newspaper* writes: "Mr. Ferrin deeply expressed the style and feeling and great understanding of this work. His strong performance made a lasting impression on the audience." Ferrin credits his experiences in Shanghai to Hui-Yuan Wang, former principal violist of Shanghai Ballet Orchestra, who arrives in Chicago in 1984 and studies with Ferrin at Roosevelt University. Wang's roommate, Xiejang Chen, later becomes music director of Shanghai Symphony.

1988 Ferrin is soloist in Beijing with the Central Philharmonic Orchestra, performing Bartók and Mozart's *Symphonic Concertante* with concertmaster, Danan Liang. Ferrin returns in 1990 as soloist, and in his visits to China, he presents recitals and master classes at Shanghai and Beijing conservatories. Ferrin and his wife sponsor four Chinese students to study with him at Roosevelt University.

1990 Ferrin submits chamber music program that is chosen by Sir Georg Solti for touring Eastern U.S. and is presented by Columbia Artists Management. The group tours as Chicago Symphony Chamber Ensemble, closing its concerts on Allied Arts Series in Orchestra Hall. On his performance of William Balcom's *Fancy Tales*, the *Chicago Reader* notes: ". . . Ferrin's tone and variety of color and dynamics were magnificent for the piece's many effects, including a tritone section in which he hauntingly whistled along."

1991 and the centennial year of the CSO, Ferrin is viola soloist with Li-Kuo Chang, assistant principal violist, in CSO subscription concerts in performances of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6, with Andras Schiff, conductor-keyboardist.

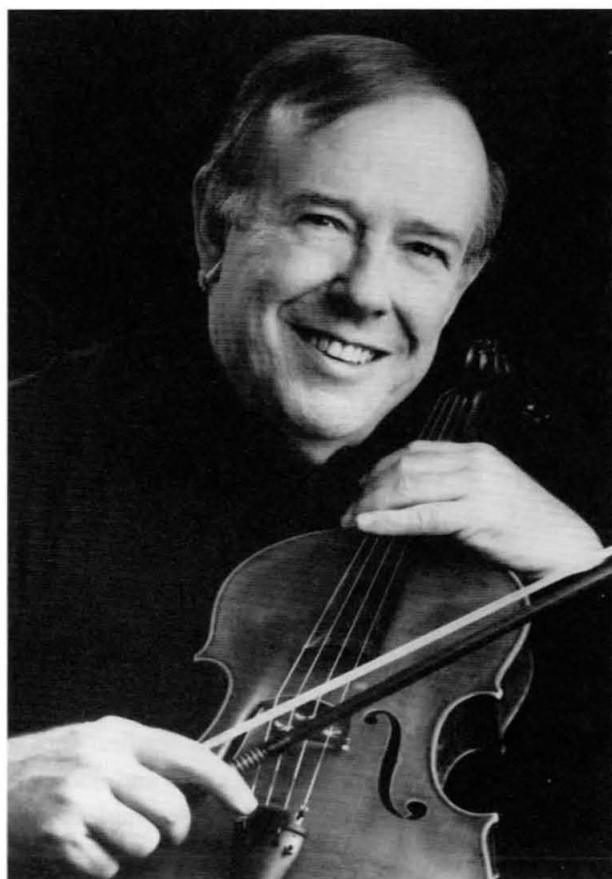
1992 He joins Charles Pickler, principal violist of CSO, at Ravinia Festival in Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6, with Vittorio Negri conducting. Ferrin also participates in the National Orchestral Institute as violist and conductor, Vancouver International Festival, as guest artist at International Clarinet Conference, International Viola Congress, and First International Webern Festival.

1993 ABC News sponsors Ferrin to South Africa to work with African Youth String Ensemble, Soweto, which is televised on "ABC World News Tonight." Three of these students (violin, viola, and cello) are selected to study at Roosevelt University.

1995 Ferrin enjoys long association with Seiji Ozawa and New Japan Philharmonic, most recently in commemorative performances of Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony in Tokyo and Nagasaki.

1996 Since this time, Ferrin has been violinist of Buckingham Trio with Li-Kuo Chang, viola, and Richard Hirschl, cello. 13 June 1999, they perform all-Shostakovich concert at Fullerton Hall of Chicago Art Institute. February 1998, Ferrin serves as principal violist of Pavarotti Orchestra for concert given by the tenor at United Center in Chicago before thousands.

Ferrin's denouement will be his claim to a new bowing technique, the "Rick O'Shea"—with apologies to Carl Gustav Jung—and with finest greetings to friends and colleagues, "and my students, past, present, and future!"



NEW WORKS

"Invocation for Violin and Viola," by Robert Mann

"Invocation for Violin and Viola," by Robert Mann. Merion Music, Bryn Mawr, 1997. Theodore Presser, Sole Representative. \$4.50.

The last two issues of this journal have included "music inserts," and it's good to see this feature continuing, thanks to the generosity of Theodore Presser Co. (pp. 49–51). "The Invocation" by Robert Mann is quite different from the previous morsels by Fritz Becker, found in these pages. Robert Mann, well known to us as the long-time first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet, has recently retired from that post which he filled with such distinction. Probably few of us think of him as a composer, but he certainly is that, as this duet for violin and viola clearly demonstrates. It was written in 1980 for his daughter's wedding and can also be performed by piano and violin or cello and piano. The harmonic style is completely nontriadic, filled with uncompromising dissonance and unexpected melodic direction, recalling the vocabulary of Elliot Carter or Carl Ruggles. It's atonal, but if this is composed in some systematic way, the method isn't obvious. Perhaps he just thinks in these harmonic terms.

Rhythmically it's complex, but the intentions are obvious and expressive. Essentially it is a slow and quiet piece, built in short sections with definite cadences.

Since it is a wedding piece, one wonders about symbolic intentions. There are two performers, and the first thirty measures are almost like a dialog, with the two instruments answering one another, in rather complex rhythmic counterpoint. Including the cadence starting in measure thirty, both lines are almost in rhythmic unison through the end of the work. Is this a perfect union symbol?

The measures that have harmonics show how to play the harmonics, not the notes that will sound, a natural choice for a composer with so much performance experience. It would be helpful to have further fingering and bowing editing, especially from such an authority. But the expression editing is ample and unambiguous.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to attend a wedding where this work served as the invocation? There are some practical performance problems, but if you have Robert Mann and Raphael Hillyer as performers, it certainly would be more fun than "Oh Promise Me."

String Syllabus

String Syllabus, Volume 1, Revised 1997, ed. David A Littrell. American String Teachers Association, c1997. Tichenor Publishing, Division of T.I.S., Inc., PO Box 669, Bloomington, IN 47402-0669. (Available from MENC Publications, 1806 Robert Fulton Dr., Reston, VA 22091. Tel. 1-800-828-0229. \$18.00 for ASTA/MENC members, plus shipping and handling.)

String Syllabus is a graded listing of published methods, studies, and "repertoire" for violin, viola, cello, and double bass. There is a section called "Ensembles" which lists graded

material for violin, viola, or cello, and any combination of these three. There is a separate section listing string ensemble publications that include double bass. For those of us who teach, this guide, in a recent edition, is a most practical help.

String Syllabus has been produced by ASTA since the early fifties, and it has been revised every ten years or so since then. The 1963 edition shows that a major purpose was to facilitate standards and procedures for the ASTA "Achievement Examinations," which were done on a local and state level throughout the U.S. The secondary purpose was



“as a guide for string teachers in presenting a logical sequence of studies and repertory.”¹ There were eight “level grades,” plus a young artists level, and much less material in the “Technical Studies,” “Etudes,” and “Repertory” departments in those days. There was no “Ensemble” category, but there was a section of publishers’ addresses.

The viola committee for this new 1997 edition consisted of Richard L. Bauer, Steven Kruse, and Robert Stoskopf. According to brief biographies, they are active violists and teachers in Oregon, Missouri, and Georgia, respectively. Kruse is a member of the American Viola Society. The listings for each of the six “grades” now in use are preceded by a description of the limits of performance accomplishment for that level. The reader is supposed to be guided as to what repertory is appropriate for, say, level 4, by this instruction. “The first five positions are used freely; a few higher notes may be added. Double stops and chords appear more frequently. Hemiola and polyrhythm may be introduced. Passages may be written for various forms of spiccato, sautillé, and staccato bowings.”²

Of course assigning levels of difficulty is a most personal task, and everyone expressing opinions probably will hold different ones. Given the vagueness of grade definition, the user should realize that the levels are quite broad and are certainly valid only if thought of in relative terms. However, these lists are useful in identifying good, standard studies and repertory, and their publishers, which are likely to be available currently. The fine points of appropriateness probably are not identified.³

In his “Guidelines for Using This Syllabus”⁴ David Littrell points out that there is no guarantee that the music listed will be in print and available. There is a list of eleven small publishing houses and their addresses. (*Viola World*⁵ is not among them.) There is not included in the Syllabus ways of contacting the major publishing houses or help in ordering music. Instead, the reader is referred to The Music Publishers’ Association of the

United States for current addresses. A list of addresses, or telephone numbers, web or e-mail addresses would be most useful.

String Syllabus is attractively presented, spiral bound, and large enough to be easy to use. It will be a welcome help and is, at least in the viola section, a sincere and well-executed effort to present the literature in an organized and reasonable way. Congratulations are in order for the American String Teachers Association. *String Syllabus Volume II* is also now available. It is devoted to music for guitar and harp.

Thomas G. Hall
Chapman University

Notes

1. *String Syllabus*, American String Teachers Association (Kenneth Byler, Peter Farrell, and Paul Rolland, Syllabus Committee Chairmen) (Urbana, Ill., 1963).
2. page 28.
3. A somewhat more refined list of graded viola literature can be found in Henry Barrett, *The Viola, Complete Guide for Teachers and Students*, 2nd ed. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1978). Of course it’s twenty years old, but it does have a “Directory of Music Publishers.”
4. page vii.
5. *Viola World*, 2 Inlander Road, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. This small publisher has a fine, practical catalogue, which includes studies, repertoire, and ensembles.





Premieres

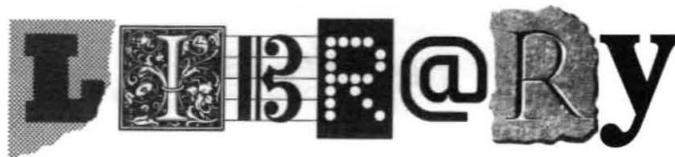
Benjamin Britten's recently discovered Double Concerto for Violin and Viola was given its U.S. premiere on 25 July 1998 by the Minnesota Orchestra under Eiji Oue. Soloists were concertmaster Jorja Fleezanis and principal violist Thomas Turner in the twenty-five minute work. Britten's original piano score was written in 1932 and has been fully orchestrated by Britten scholar and composer Colin Matthews in accordance with the composer's detailed instrumentation. The

Double Concerto is published by Oxford University Press and has been recorded by Gidon Kremer and Yuri Bashmet on Erato Records with the Halle Orchestra led by Kent Nagano.

Stephen Gerber's Viola Concerto was premiered by Yuri Bashmet on 23 July 1998 at the annual Semaines Musicales de Tours in France. Gerber is a member of the American Composers Alliance and has also written concertos for cello and violin.

VIOLA CONNOTATIONS

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From Veronica Jacobs
New York, New York



From David O. Brown
Brentwood, New York

RECORDINGS

Beach: Viola Sonata; Barcarolle; *La Captive*; Berceuse; Mazurka; Invocation; Romance. **Laura Klugherz**, viola; Jill Timmons, piano. Centaur 2312 (Qualiton)

Bruni: Viola Sonatas Op. 21; **Antonello Farulli**, viola; Gabriele Micheli, harpsichord; Francesco Dillon, cello. Dynamic S 2005 (Qualiton)

Note: The first three sonatas are performed with personnel and instruments as listed above. The second group of three are performed by Farulli with Micheli performing on fortepiano alone.

Brahms: Sonatas for Viola Op. 120 No. 1 and No. 2; Three Intermezzi for Piano; **Christoph Schiller**, viola; Michelle Mares, piano. Novalis 150 137-2 (Qualiton)

Dohnanyi: Serenade for Violin, Viola, and Cello; Reger: String Trio; Francaix: Trio; **Trio Ligeti**, Leman LMN 44901 (Qualiton)

Holmboe: Concertos No. 7, No. 8, No. 9; **Tim Fredriksen**, viola; Mikkel Futtrup, violin; Max Artved, oboe; Danish Radio Sinfonietta; Hannu Koivula, cond. DaCapo/Marco Polo 8.224086 (Naxos)

Note: Concerto No. 7 is for oboe, No. 9 is for violin and viola, and No. 8 is for orchestra.

Frankel: Concerto for Viola; Concerto for Violin, Serenata Concertante; **Brett Dean**, viola, et al. Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Brisbane, Werner Andreus Albert, cond. CPO 999 422-2 (Naxos)

Arthur Lourie: Quartets for Strings No. 1, No. 2, No. 3; Duo for Violin and Viola; **Daniel Raiskin**, viola; Members of the Utrecht Quartet. ASV CD DCA 1020 (Koch International)

Mozart: Divertimento for String Trio K 563; Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano; **Georg Schmid**, viola; Kurt Guntner, violin; Walter

Nothas, cello; Wolfgang Sawallisch, piano; Gerhard Starke, clarinet. Koch-Schwann SWN 312822 (Koch International)

Reger: Trio for Viola, Violin and Piano; Complete Piano Trios; **Gunter Teuffel**, viola; Trio Parnassus. MDG 303 0751-2 (Koch International)

Art of Oscar Shumsky: Historic Studio Recordings; Respighi: Sonata for Violin; Ravel: Sonata for Violin; Viotti: Concerto No. 22; Chopin (Arr. Sarasate) Nocturne in E-Flat; Wieniawski: Polonaise; Oscar Shumsky, violin; Artur Balsam, piano; Bernard Greenhouse, cello; Vladimir Sokolov, piano; Radio Art Concert Orch., D'Artega, cond; Longine Symphonette, Mishel Piaastro, cond. Biddulph LAB 136 (VAI)

Art of Oscar Shumsky: Historic Broadcast Recordings; Mozart: Rondo; Schubert: Rondeau Brillante; Ibert: *The Little White Donkey*; Glazunov: Grand Adagio; eight other compositions. Oscar Shumsky, violin; Curtis Symphony Orch cond. by Fritz Reiner; Voice of Firestone Symp. Orch. cond. by Howard Barlow. Biddulph LAB 137 (VAI)

Review: The two CDs recently released by the English record company Biddulph are the first entirely violin recordings I have reviewed for the *Journal*. Oscar Shumsky, who recently celebrated his eighty-first birthday, is represented here by recordings made in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s. Shumsky has also made recordings on the viola and is the father of well-known viola virtuoso Eric Shumsky. Many were taken from radio broadcasts, private recordings, and unreleased commercial recordings. Shumsky is well known to Primrose enthusiasts since he was selected by Primrose to be the first violinist of the justly famous Primrose String Quartet when Shumsky was in his early twenties. For the most part he was involved in independent violin circles in the New York area. If there was a



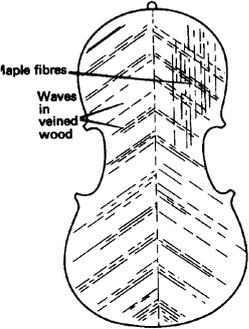
violin solo to be played or a violin section to be led, he was the man called upon. LAB 136, Historic Studio Recordings, features sonatas by Respighi and Ravel originally recorded for Concert Hall; a concerto by Viotti, with piano accompaniment; and two short pieces by Chopin and Wieniawski. An interesting aspect of the Chopin Nocturne is that it was I who discovered it on an American Radio Transcription record in a thrift shop and sent it to David Hermann of the Ft. Worth Symphony, who was preparing to send a group of his Shumsky recordings to Biddulph for publication. Hermann received a promise that I was to be given credit in the notes for providing the recording. This never happened and Hermann received the credit. However, I received copies of the above disks from Hermann so I could review them here.

The extraordinary playing, with beautiful tone, technique, pitch, and inimitable phrasing, make this a most attractive disk. LAB 137, Historic Broadcast Recordings, features one movement each of the Beethoven and Mendelssohn violin concertos with the Curtis and NBC Symphony Orchestras. We can all bemoan the fact that entire concertos may not be extant. Eleven other short compositions are performed including Benjamin's *Jamaican Rhumba* arranged by Primrose for viola and for Shumsky on the violin. There are over seventy-five minutes of glorious music on each of the two disks. All string players and lovers of the finest string music should heed my strongest recommendation of these CDs.

David O. Brown
Brentwood, New York

Discography of Robert Verebes

1. SNE LP 529 Brahms: Two Sonatas for viola and piano. **Robert Verebes**, viola; Dale Bartlett, piano
2. SNE LP 535 Beethoven: Notturmo
Shostakovits: Sonata for Viola and Piano. **Robert Verebes**, viola; Dale Bartlett, piano
3. SNE CD 550 Mendelssohn, Martinu, Coulthard sonatas. **Robert Verebes**, viola; Dale Bartlett, piano
4. SNE CD 546
5. SNE CD 547 (double CD) Hindemith: The Complete Sonatas for Viola. **Robert Verebes**, viola; Dale Bartlett, piano
6. SNE CD 562 *The Solo Viola*. **Robert Verebes**, viola
Penderecki: Cadenza
Vieuxtemps: Capriccio
Stravinsky: Elegie
Barnes: Ballade
Reger: Suite
Hindemith: Sonata Op. 25, No. 1.
7. SNE CD 564 Bach: 3 Gamba Sonatas. **Robert Verebes**, viola; Mireille Lagace, harpsichord
8. SNE CD 569 *Classical Sonatas* for viola and piano forte. **Robert Verebes**, viola; Mireille Lagace, pianoforte
Hummel
Stamitz
Vanhal
Dittersdorf
9. SNE CD 580. **Robert Verebes**, viola; Suzanne Boldin, piano
Schubert: Arpeggione Sonata
Schumann: *Märchenbilder*
Vieuxtemps Sonata
10. SNE CD 612 "The Romantic Viola." **Robert Verebes**, viola; Suzanne Blondin, piano
Vieuxtemps: Elegie
Kodaly: Adagio
Bruch: Romanze
V. Williams: Romance
Wieniawski: Reverie
Enesco: Concert Piece
Bloch: Meditation
Processional
Suite Hebraique



COMPETITIONS

1999 Primrose Memorial Scholarship Competition

Eligibility: Applicants must meet the following criteria:

Have not yet reached their 28th birthday by 3 June 1999, and
Must be a current member, or presently studying with a current member, of the any of the branches of the International Viola Society (AVS, CVS, etc.)

N.B.: If you are not currently a member of the AVS and wish to join, please see application form for details.

Prizes:

- 1st Prize: \$2000.00, a Mini-Recital at the XXVII Congress & an invitation to make a featured appearance at the XXVIX International Viola Congress.
- 2nd Prize: \$1000.00 and a Performance in a Master Class at the Congress.
- 3rd Prize: \$ 500.00 and a Performance in a Master Class at the Congress.

THE COMPETITION

REPERTOIRE: General Information

There are four categories of repertoire: (1) Viola and Orchestra, (2) Viola and Piano, (3) Unaccompanied Work, and (4) Virtuositic Primrose Transcriptions. Candidates must prepare one complete work from each category, within the following guidelines: One of the works prepared must be selected from the Contemporary Selections: Penderecki, Schnittke, or Takimitsu.

Work with Orchestra: Walton Concerto, Bloch Suite (1919)

Contemporary Selections: Penderecki Concerto, Schnittke Concerto

Work with Piano: Brahms Sonata (E_b or F minor), Hindemith Op. 25, No. 4, Clarke Sonata, Shostakovich Sonata

Contemporary Selection: Takimitsu *A Bird Came down the Walk* (Published by Sharp)

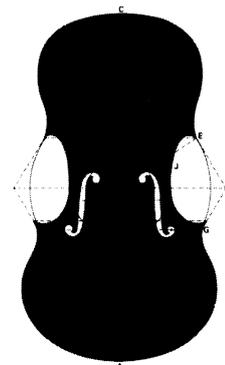
Unaccompanied Work: Hindemith Sonata (any), Bach Suite (any), Reger (any)

Contemporary Selection: Penderecki Cadenza

Virtuositic Primrose Transcription: Benjamin *Jamaican Rhumba*; Borodin Scherzo; Benjamin *Le Tombeau de Ravel*; Paganini *La Campanella*; Paganini 24th Caprice (Viola and Piano); Sarasate-Zimbalist Tango, Polo, Maleguena, or Zapateado (from "Sarasateana")

FIRST ROUND:

The first round is recorded and submitted on audio cassette tape, which will then be auditioned by a jury. Candidates chosen from the taped round to compete in the final round(s) on 9–12 June 1999 in Guelph, Canada, will be notified by 15 April 1999.



In order to assure anonymity, the applicant's name and address should appear only on the applicant's outer package. There should be no personal identification on the tape or its container. Tapes will be coded before being sent to the adjudicating committee. Tapes will not be returned.

Applicants should understand that the quality of the recording may influence the judges; therefore, a new tape of a high quality should be used.

Repertoire for the First Round:

The cassette tape must include the applicant performing the following in accordance with the Repertoire General Information above:

- The first movement of a Work with Orchestra;
- An excerpt (c. 5 minutes) from the Work with Piano;
- An excerpt (c. 5 minutes) of an Unaccompanied Work.

N.B.: One of the selections must be from the list of Contemporary Selections, and candidates may not change repertoire between the First and Final round(s).

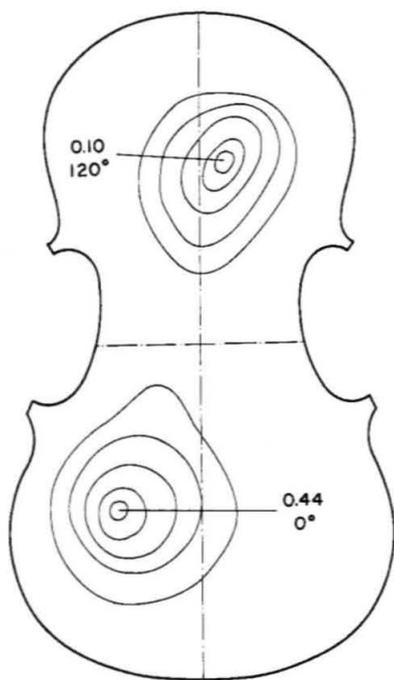
FINAL ROUND(S):

The Final Round(s) will take place in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, in conjunction with the XXVII International Viola Congress, 9–12 June 1999 at the _____.

Each of the finalists will be asked to perform (from memory, unless noted)

- The entire Work with Orchestra from the first round
- The entire Unaccompanied Work from the first round
- The entire Work with Piano from the first round (need not be memorized)
- A complete Primrose Virtuoso Transcription from the list above.

Finalists will receive discounted lodging and a waiver of the registration fees during the Congress. An accompanist will be provided if requested. The Jury for the Final Round(s) will be



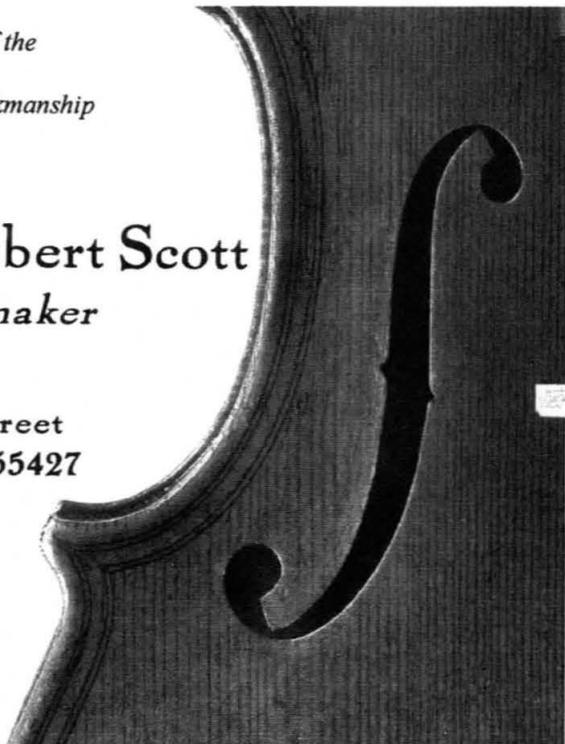
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selected from those artists participating in the 1999 Congress who do not have a student invited to the Final Round(s). No screens will be used. Finalists are responsible for their own transportation expenses.

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Application Form

Name: _____ Birthdate: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Current Teacher, if any: _____

Please check the appropriate items:

I am or my teacher is currently a member of the American Viola Society,
 Canadian Viola Society, International Viola Society.

OR

I am not currently a member and wish to join the AVS.

If you wish to join the AVS, please enclose a SEPARATE check (made payable to the AVS), in the amount of \$15.00 (student member) or \$30.00 (regular member), along with your filled-out entry form, tape, and competition application fee.

Enclosed is my nonrefundable application fee of \$25.00, in the form of a check made out to the Primrose Memorial Scholarship Competition—AVS, and my unmarked audition tape. I have read the Competition Rules and Repertoire Lists and certify that I am eligible to participate in this year's Primrose Memorial Scholarship Competition. I am enclosing a photocopy of proof of my age (passport, driver's license) and proof of my or my teacher's membership in one of the branches of the International Viola Society.

Signature Required:

_____ Date: _____

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION, TAPE, AND APPLICATION FEE TO

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MUSICAL COLLEGE

Richard Ferrin and Li-Kuo Chang, CMC Viola Faculty

Li-Kuo Chang, appointed assistant principal viola of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by Sir Georg Solti in 1988, held similar positions in China, Europe, and the United States, including assistant principal viola of the Denver Symphony Orchestra. A graduate of the Shanghai Conservatory, he was the first violist to win the Young Artist Competition in Shanghai. In the United States he studied with Francis Tursi at the Eastman School of Music, and with Milton Thomas, Donald McInnes, Paul Doktor and William Magers.

Li-Kuo Chang has appeared as soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony, and the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra; in chamber music performances at the Los Angeles Music Center, at Le Gesse Festival in France and the Taipei Music festival in Taiwan, to just name a few. He has taught and performed at the Affinis Music Festival in Japan since 1992.

Richard Ferrin, violist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 1967, has enjoyed a distinguished career as soloist, chamber musician, symphony member and teacher. Concertmaster of the Interlochen World Youth Symphony as a teen, he studied viola and violin at Eastman and the University of Southern California, at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, and visited the Soviet Union in 1962 to study pedagogy in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev and Odessa.

Richard Ferrin has been soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, the Finnish Radio Orchestra, and the Houston Symphony, and in 1986 gave the first performances of the Bartok *Viola Concerto* with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and the Central Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing. As a violist of Chicago Pro Musica, he has performed at international festivals in Japan, Australia, Spain, Germany, and the former Soviet Union.

Mr. Ferrin and Mr. Chang's string faculty colleagues at Chicago Musical College include violinists Cyrus Forough, Joseph Golan, Yuko Mori (in 1999), and Albert Wang, cellist Natalia Khoma and John Sharp, and bassist Stephen Lester.

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Li-Kuo Chang



Richard Ferrin

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