

Journal of the American Viola Society

Volume 24 Summer 2008 Online Issue



VIOLIST oder BRATSCHIST.

*Die Stim ist etwas rauh, so die Violo giebet,
Zoch heist sie angenehm, dem der sie recht versteht,
ein Stück wird edeler geachtet und geliebet,
wann dieser artige Thon zugleich darunter geht.
Rom, so die Mutter-Stadt der Musick-Künstler heisset,
ist, die mein Instrument als etwas schönes preisset.*

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The Genesis of the Internationale-Viola-Forschungsgesellschaft and the Early American Viola Society: Factual and Anecdotal

By Myron Rosenblum

It is hard to believe that we are at the 40th Anniversary juncture of both the International Viola Society and not long after, the American Viola Society, but here we are! For me, it really began in college when I discovered the beauties and allure of the viola. I made the changeover from violin and had the good fortune to study with some viola luminaries: Lillian Fuchs, Walter Trampler, and William Primrose.

HOW IT ALL STARTED: After my army service, where I was violist in the 7th US Army Symphony in Stuttgart, Germany, I was browsing one day in the 1960s in Patelson's Music House, that fine music shop in back of Carnegie Hall. I came upon a book titled *Literatur für Viola*, published in 1963 and authored by Franz Zeyringer, an Austrian violist and school teacher. I was amazed at its contents and the apparent wealth of music for viola in many settings, most unknown to me. Inside the book was a card by the author inviting the reader to contact him and submit data on any viola music not included in the book. I wrote to Mr. Zeyringer, praised his book, and started sending him information on viola works that I either owned or knew of that were not in his book. Much of it was viola works by American composers that he knew nothing about. He sent a quick response of thanks and appreciation, and so began a close collegial friendship.

MEETING FRANZ ZEYRINGER: During my Fulbright year in Vienna (1964-65) I contacted Franz, and he subsequently arranged a concert in his hometown of Pöllau. My wife and I traveled to Pöllau where we had the pleasure

of meeting Franz and his family. I was also invited to perform the Christoph Graupner Concerto in D Major for Viola d'amore and Viola soli with strings with the local orchestra and with Franz as the violist. Franz showed me his viola research and I was greatly impressed at his efforts to catalogue as much viola music—original and transcriptions—as he could locate or knew about. From my base in Vienna that year, I was able to go through the catalogues of both the Nationalbibliothek and the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (both of which contained a fair amount of viola music) and send him substantial data on viola solo and viola chamber works that I could look at in these fine libraries. During my visit to Pöllau, Franz started speaking casually of forming an international viola society, something that piqued my interest. I told him that when I returned to the USA, I would explore the possibility of forming an American chapter, or “sector” as Zeyringer called it, something that pleased him very much.

THE VIOLA SOCIETY: There were earlier attempts to form such a viola society. In 1927, Paul Hindemith and the great Russian violist and teacher Vadim Borissovsky made an effort to form a society which they called The Violists' World Union. That never materialized. Two years later, a journal titled *Die Bratsche* appeared. Edited by the well-known German historian, librarian, and critic Wilhelm Altmann, it was devoted to articles on both viola and viola d'amore. Altmann proposed a viola organization which he called *Bratschen-Bundes* (Viola Union). However, there appeared to be a minimal response and enthusiasm for this idea of a journal (ah, these laid-back viola players!), and so it was short-lived. Undoubtedly, the decaying political

situation in Germany and in Europe at that time and the eventual outbreak of World War II contributed to the lack of interest in such viola matters and to the demise of these well-intentioned plans for a viola society and viola publications. In 1937, Altmann and Borissovsky did manage to collaborate and publish their *Literaturverzeichnis für Bratsche und Viola d'amore*, the first serious attempt to catalogue known music for both viola and viola d'amore providing library sources for the manuscripts and publishers for printed music.

With another teacher, Deitrich Bauer, Zeyringer conceived of the formation of a viola organization in 1968 and called it Viola-Forschungsgellschaft (VFG), translated as Viola Research Society. Its base was in Kassel, Germany, where Bauer lived, with the first Viola Archive set up in Kassel. Later, in 1975, this Archive would move to the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. Franz had a handful of devoted and passionate colleagues for the administration of the new society. The president of the VFG was at first Emil Seiler, the well-known violist (Seiler and Walter Trampler were stand partners in an orchestra in Munich as young men), and soon after was Dr. Wolfgang Sawodny, a professional chemist and lover of the viola. Bauer was the first secretary. The archive of viola music in Salzburg looked promising. The

VFG's executive officers changed over time. Franz Zeyringer was always there in some capacity and served as its president around 1976. Others who served in various roles over time were the scholar Walter Lebermann, editor of Classical-period viola concertos, and the Austrian composer Alfred Uhl, known to violists as the composer of some fine viola etudes and the *Kleines Konzert* for clarinet, viola, and piano.

THE AMERICAN CHAPTER: When I returned to New York City during the summer of 1965 and resumed my activities there, I set upon forming an American chapter to be known as the Viola Research Society (VRS). My initial challenge was how to make violists all over America and Canada aware of this newly-formed viola society. I wrote short pieces for both the *International Musician* and *Allegro*, the publications of the American Federation of Musicians and Local 802 of the A.F. of M in New York City (which had a large and prominent viola family). I wrote "Violists Unite" for the *International Musician* and "Viola Power" for *Allegro* in 1972. Also in 1972, a similar piece of mine appeared in *The Strad* and we had some responses from British violists anxious to join our society. Chapters were eventually set up in Canada, with Baird Knechtel as its head, and in England, led by John White with assistance by Nannie Jamieson.



Violists Unite,” from the July 1972 issue of The International Musician. Image used with permission of the American Federation of Musicians, www.afm.org

The response to these articles was quick and enthusiastic. Violists and viola teachers wrote to me expressing great interest to join and support an American chapter. Dues were set at the huge sum of \$3.50. Not long after, when the dues were increased, half of the dues would go to the parent organization, the VFG. It took a while to put things in place. At the onset I had no helpers to do all this, so I had multiple tasks. These included collecting dues and depositing them into a newly-setup bank account; a great deal of correspondence; and writing, typing, reproducing, and sending out the newsletters after stuffing them into envelopes and putting on stamps. It was time-consuming but I didn't really mind as, for me, it was a labor of love. I had always liked viola players and as a group found them decent and humble people and superior musicians. But, primarily, I loved the viola and the aim to further its image and repertory seemed like an important venture.

THE FIRST NEWSLETTERS: The VFG started publishing its initial newsletters (Mitteilungen), and I followed suit by sending them to our membership. Since they were exclusively in German, which most Americans in the society did not understand, I asked Dr. Sawodny, who had an excellent command of the English language, to make a summary in English for our English-speaking members. Later newsletters were translated into English by one of the VRS's members, Walter Wels, an enthusiastic, German-speaking amateur violist who lived in Flushing, New York.

The earliest VFG Newsletter I have is from 1971 (Mitteilungen Januar 1971), a two-page affair. In addition to reporting on general developments of the parent organization, it included the names of new members, many of them American violists. To the May, 1972 newsletter, I stapled a brief note that read:
“Dear Member of the Viola Research Society (Viola Forschungsgesellschaft): The enclosed NEWSLETTER for 1972 will bring you up to date on viola developments during the past year. Subsequent Newsletters will be made available to you in English and will include a section on viola-related affairs in the U.S.A. and Canada.”

I think with some amusement how these early VRS Newsletters were created—before the comforts and conveniences of computers—with my old L.C. Smith typewriter, sitting on my kitchen table in my Greenwich Village apartment, while I typed away. They were either run off on a mimeograph machine or photocopied, basic and not very elegant.

With the assistance of many of our talented members in both the VFG and the VRS, the content of the newsletters was at a relatively

high level and remained so with intriguing content. For example, in the Newsletter 8 (February 1975) were Walter Lebermann's "Authentic or Not? Viola Concertos of the 18th Century Evaluated as Possible Forgeries"; Jeffrey Wollock's "A Note on Alkan, Casimir-Ney, and the Viola"; and this writer's tribute to the Italian violist and teacher Renzo Sabatini on his death. The Newsletter 7 from 1974 had a fine piece by Walter Lebermann: "The Viola Concerti of the Stamitz Family," as well as a report on the death of Vadim Borissovsky, the Russian violist and teacher who died in 1972.

The Newsletters gradually increased in scope and improved in quality of content and their look. Newsletter 12 (April 1977) had Marna Street's "Tosca Berger Kramer"; Veronica Jacobs's "Rebecca Clarke"; and Shirley Fleming's "The Cinderella of Instruments Finds a Prince Charming" a wonderful, lengthy piece on violist Walter Trampler reprinted from a New York Times article (February 20, 1977).

After Professor Borissovsky died in 1972, I had some correspondence with his widow. I sent her a packet of some of our newsletters and the program of the 3rd International Viola Congress in Ypsilanti. Here was her reply:

Dearest Mr. Rosenblum.

I have no words to express my gratitude for your kindness towards me in sending the most valuable material about the Viola Congress [1975]. All the Moscow violists are getting acquainted with it with a keen interest. What a great event for the violists of all the world! What a striking demonstration of the violists' solidarity and acknowledgement of the importance of the viola in music!

*How happy would be my late husband! All his life was devoted to the popularization of the viola considered by him as he most beautiful and noble of all existing instruments.*¹

The VFG held its initial two viola congresses in those early years in Germany. It was my understanding that the attendance was not large, but there was much enthusiasm. Membership grew slowly over those early years and it is intriguing to note the numbers from the VFG. In 1974, the VFG listed members from Austria, Switzerland, Canada, Germany, Denmark, England, France, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Norway, Holland, Portugal, Romania, the USA, and South Africa. In the majority of these countries the membership was miniscule—typically 1, 2, or 3 members. The largest membership was in Italy (5), Austria (8), Germany (43) and the USA (120). The sole member in Japan was William Primrose, who had settled there with his third wife. In 1975, membership was up considerably in spite of the single-digit numbers from many European countries. Germany was up to 51 and the USA had 292 members. New countries came on board, including Australia, New Zealand, and Israel.

Dues went up to \$5.00 and in 1975 were raised to \$6.00. In 1978 dues went up to \$8.00 and I have a letter that year to Heinz Kraschl, the VFG secretary, where I note sending the VFG a check for \$972.00 as our contribution to the parent organization. It became apparent to me that the monetary support of the American chapter to the VFG was crucial to its very existence, or at least that it made possible the gifts sent to members in the early years and helped support the early congresses.

We changed the name of the society from Viola Research Society (which might have kept some violists away) to American Viola Society in 1978. That same year the American Viola Society published its first membership directory. It was an impressive list of well-known viola players, teachers, viola students, scholars, composers, dealers, luthiers, publishers, and even some violinists! Here is a sampling of those in the AVS that year (and for those I omit, my apologies, the limitations of space prevail):

Toby Appel, Sally Banks, Henry Barrett, Lyman Bodman, Frank Brieff, Robert Coleman, Robert Courte, David Dalton, Don Ehrlich, Margaret Farish, Rebecca Friskin (Rebecca Clarke), Maurice Gardner, Jacob Glick, Rosemary Glyde, Herbert Goodkind, Nathan Gordon, John Graham, Carleen Hutchins, Louis Kievman, Harold Klatz, Jerzy Kosmala, William Lincer, Donald McInnes, William Magers, Guillermo Perich, Joseph Pietropaolo, William Preucil, Dwight Pounds, Samuel Rhodes, Maurice Riley, William Schoen, Yizhak Schotten, David Schwartz, Robert Slaughter, Mrs. Ludwig Stein (Lillian Fuchs), Marcus Thompson, Walter Trampler, Francis Tursi, Karen Tuttle, Emanuel Vardi, Ernst Wallfisch, Ann Woodward, Bernard Zaslav, Rivka Golani, Otto Erdesz, William Berman, Sonia Monosoff, Franco Sciannameo.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AVS: After the 3rd International Viola Congress at Eastern Michigan University it was time to seriously think of having more input from others and to create a Board of Directors. The first Board was created in 1976 and included William Primrose (Honorary Chairman), Paul Doktor, Lillian Fuchs, Donald McInnes, Maurice Riley, Robert Slaughter, Walter Trampler, Francis Tursi, Karen Tuttle, Jacob Glick, and Ann

Woodward. Since its members were widely dispersed, I sent out periodic communications with questions and issues raised by different violists and board members with all responses returned to me and decisions made by consensus of the board. It wasn't ideal at this juncture but it was suitable at that time until additional official meetings could be held at the congresses in America.

THE VIOLA ARCHIVE: When Franz Zeyringer set up his VFG he also initiated the first viola archive. His well-laid plans for such a central library of viola music did not last long. The library in Salzburg was greatly mismanaged, and the administration of it quickly deteriorated, so Franz wrote me one day asking if the American chapter could locate a good home in a reputable library or institution in the USA for the existing viola library and one that would grow over time. I enlisted the help of Maurice Riley. Both of us started making contact with universities, conservatories, and music schools that would have the resources and funding to do this. We spent considerable time making contact with those whom we thought might have suitable sites for such an archive. Those who expressed the keenest interest were The University of Illinois, the University of Iowa, the University of Connecticut, and lastly, Brigham Young University. With a land mass as immense as America is, it was our hope to have the library housed in a more central location to service as many members as possible. Then one day, I received a letter from Franz saying that he had decided to send the entire viola archive to Brigham Young University in Provo. It was obvious that David Dalton had convinced Franz that BYU would be the best place for this music. Maurice and I were quite stunned and put off by this unilateral and sudden decision without any prior knowledge, discussion, or

consultation with us. Franz knew we were working diligently on this and things were moving along. But it was a fait accompli! So, this music was shipped from Salzburg to Provo and formed part of the basis of what is now the Primrose International Viola Archive. I am sure that Franz was greatly relieved to know that BYU would take care of this collection and that it would continue to grow, which it has.

THE EARLY AMERICAN

CONGRESSES: What put the American chapter on the map were, without question, its first two International Viola Congresses in 1975 and 1977 in the USA, at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan, and the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York, respectively. As I have already reported in some detail about these two auspicious events in two recent AVS Journals, rather than repeat myself, I will just allude to some of the events and personalities leading up to the 3rd congress in Ypsilanti.

Maurice Riley, who would become the second AVS president and author of *The History of the Viola*, was among our earliest members and enthusiastic about the new viola society. He proposed having the next International Viola Congress at his university, Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan. I didn't know Maurice and had never heard of his university, but one day, I believe in 1973, I met Maurice and his wife, Leila in their small motel room on the west side of mid-town Manhattan, where we spent a few hours going over a potential program, content, and artists for such a viola congress at EMU. This congress was an amazing success with almost four hundred attendees who came from all over America and Canada to hear an outstanding roster of viola soloists, teachers, and musicologists offer terrific concerts and

lectures. There was also an exhibit and competition of viola makers overseen by the Violin Society of America with a competition for viola-making. Viola-making was of a very high level as this event proved.

Without question, the highlight of the Ypsilanti congress was the presence of one of the greatest violists and musicians of the twentieth century, William Primrose. Riley, a most hospitable man, invited many of the officers of the VFG and VRS to stay at his home during the congress. Sawodny, Bauer, and I as well as Maurice's children and their spouses all were in the Riley home during those days and they were indeed a most intense and busy time for all. Primrose was also extended an invitation to stay but he respectfully declined, saying that he "was a terrible house guest." Primrose's appearance at the congress was magnetic. His two-hour talk about viola matters, practical and pedagogical, was inspirational, with much wisdom and wit.²

Maurice and I fretted over whom to invite as guest artists at this congress. Some key violists had other commitments and could not come, and we, naively, did not invite certain viola soloists, believing that the personalities of some might clash and cause problems. One of those not invited was Paul Doktor. Doktor called Maurice and complained bitterly, asking why he, as one of the important violists of the day, had not been invited to the congress. Maurice tried as best he could to ameliorate him by saying that Doktor had recently given a master class in Michigan and there were some important Michigan-based violists and teachers who had to be featured. We realized the hurt we had unintentionally caused Doktor and felt bad about it. A mistake had indeed been made and our fears unfounded. Doktor, however, was one of the featured

violists in the Eastman congress two years later and proved easily that he was indeed one of the great violists of his day. For me, it has been a privilege and a joy to witness the growth of the American Viola Society and the higher-than-ever level of viola playing that prevails today. The society is unique among instrumental organizations and can be proud of its congresses of superlative content, a journal of high quality, and a membership that is proud of its role in the world of music, and above all, proud to be part of that special viola brotherhood and sisterhood.



Franz Zeyringer, Paul Doktor, and Myron Rosenblum at Paul Doktor's home, June 1977

Endnotes

1 During the late 1960s and up to Borissovsky's death, we had an extensive correspondence. Borissovsky would write to me in French, and I to him in English. Though I never met him, his letters revealed a most cultured man with an ongoing passion for both viola and viola d'amore. Over those years he sent me many of his editions of viola and viola d'amore music. The viola works were mostly his arrangements made for his own performance

and for his students. But he sent some original music for viola as well: the Handoshkin viola concerto, a sonata for viola and piano by F.W. Rust, and others. After he died, his widow sent me a photograph of his grave. On his tombstone is a large engraved viola. Madame Borissovsky eventually went blind, and one day I stopped receiving her lovely letters.

2 This writer has an audio tape of the Primrose lecture that he gave at the 1977 congress at Eastman. The talk ran for almost an hour and was followed by a question and answer period. We were asked to submit written questions to which Primrose answered with much perception and humor. I also have in my library other audio tapes of many of the concerts and recitals given there by Walter Trampler, Paul Doktor, Francis Tursi, an orchestral concert that featured Harold Coletta, Robert Coleman, Robert Slaughter and Myron Rosenblum performing concerti, and a concert by The Cleveland Quartet playing with Francis Tursi as guest violist in a Mozart quintet (Martha Strongin Katz was the violist in the Cleveland Quartet). It is my understanding that the Eastman School does not have the master tapes of these wonderful events, so it is my intention to do something with these audio tapes so that these important events will not be lost. Barring any copyright restrictions, perhaps CDs could be made and they might be made available to the AVS membership.

Viola Power

By Myron Rosenblum

(Editor's note: This article first appeared on page 11 of the January 1972 issue of Allegro, the official publication of Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians in New York City. The article was instrumental in making violists aware of the Viola Research Society and in establishing the future of the American Viola Society. Reproduced with permission of Local 802 of AFM, www.local802afm.org/)

INSTRUMENTAL clubs are in! Devotees and fanatics of a wide variety of musical instruments have expressed their monomanias in the formation of clubs and societies dedicated to the propagation and dissemination of information on such instruments as the flute, harp, 'cello, recorder, and the viola da gamba.

The latest venture in these specialized areas is the recent formation of the **Viola Research Society**, officially known as the **Viola-Forschungsgesellschaft**. Lodged in Kassel, West Germany, it has quickly grown to international proportions. Under the expert leadership of the Austrian violist, teacher and musicologist, Franz Zeyringer, the society has attracted the attention of violists from major orchestras, renowned teachers, music publishers, and musicologists from Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, East Germany, West Germany, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

When Mr. Zeyringer was a viola student in Vienna, he was bothered by recurrent dogmatic statements thrown out by his fellow musicians—that the viola had little original

music of any value written for it. The question he kept asking himself was, "How is it possible that the viola, an instrument more than 400 years old, and the real 'first' of the modern stringed instruments, had virtually no music written for it?" He recalled how infuriated he had become one day when he read an article in a German musical periodical, in which the author deprecated the viola as an insignificant instrument, owing to its paltry literature. The viola works of any value mentioned by that author were concertos by Telemann and Stamitz, the two Brahms sonatas, the Reger suites, and a few Hindemith works. To prove his point, the author pointed out that Prof. Etienne Ginot, string pedagogue in the Paris Conservatory, deemed it an absolute necessity for the survival of the viola to transcribe more than 20 violin concertos for viola. Without these transcriptions of concertos by Wienawski, Vieuxtemps, de Beriot, Rode, etc., according to Ginot, the future of the viola as a viable solo instrument was indeed dim.

Intrigued and disturbed by all this, Mr. Zeyringer started on a research project, to attempt to disprove that the literature of the viola was as insignificant as most people believed.

Visits to music libraries and endless correspondence with violists, music publishers and music scholars revealed that there were far more original works for viola than was commonly known. Mr. Zeyringer's catalogue of viola works started to grow rapidly and in 1963, his book **Literature for Viola** was published in Austria. In it were listed all the known compositions for viola in which it was very prominent: unaccompanied works,

concertos (single and multiple), duos, trios, chamber works with unusual instrumentation, étude and method books, and **even** transcriptions.

Such valuable information as publisher, city of publication, library containing the MS (if original) and its catalogue number, and any other source, such as a private collection holding the manuscript is given in the book. Thus, anyone interested in obtaining a specific work can have a good point of departure.

In 1965, a supplement to **Literature for Viola** was published in which many new works were listed and corrections made where necessary. To date, Mr. Zeyringer has catalogued approximately 10,000 works with solo or important viola roles. Of them, there are more than 300 original viola concertos, many of them from the 18th and 19th centuries.

As Mr. Zeyringer's work became known, a band of followers grew to include viola enthusiasts from all over the world. The response was so favorable that the formation of some kind of viola organization seemed the next logical step. So—the **Viola Research Society** came into being!

Using the Zeyringer book as a starting point, the society has quickly set out to achieve some interesting goals: a viola archive has been initiated, which will aim to have as complete a collection of all viola works as possible—in manuscript, published editions, and on microfilm; a biographical file of all outstanding violist will be kept current; phonograph recordings of the important viola works played by major artists will make up a separate collection. Any member of the society is entitled to use these

research items on a loan basis.

A periodic gift, such as a relevant book, viola edition, or recording, will be presented to members. A newsletter will be sent out to inform violists of new and recently discovered viola pieces and where they can be located, as well as other viola-related items of interest.

What's in store for the future? Mr. Zeyringer and his devoted corps of violamaniacs will pursue further research into the history of the instrument, the publishing of viola compositions, and international viola congresses. They sincerely hope that this will be another positive push in the direction of uniting musicians from the West and the East by a common interest.

Chapter organizations are now in the process of being formed. The American chapter will be one of the first to function, owing to the large number of first-rate violists coming out of American conservatories and the interest in the viola by American composers. The **Viola Research Society** welcomes all interested violists, teachers, string players, musicians, publishers, and musicologists to participate in this new and exciting organization. For further information, write:

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Queensborough Comm. College
Bayside, N.Y. 11364

Or

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Brüder Grimmplatz 4A
West Germany

The Pöllau Protocol^I

*Co-Authored by
Franz Zeyringer and Dietrich Bauer*

English Translation by Dwight Pounds

(Editor's note: The Pöllau Protocol derived from discussions and conversations between School Master Dietrich Bauer and Music Director Franz Zeyringer, from July 16-23, 1965, in Pöllau, Austria, and inspired what would become the International Viola Society, established the International Viola Congresses, and helped collect and organize materials that would form part of the Primrose International Viola Archive.)

I. Establishment of a research body for the viola.

Both gentlemen are resolved to establish in their [respective] countries (the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria) an organization dedicated to research on the viola. Which ever of the two first succeeds in doing this will place all assimilated materials at the disposal of the other partner. The research facility should be established within the framework of a music academy, a musicological institute, library, foundation or other suitable organization.

The task of this research organization should be:

Establishment of a library for viola literature (original works and arrangements). To make microfilm copies of viola compositions which are not obtainable.

Establishment of a record and tape collection (Discography).

Establishment of a source for collecting writing which pertains to the viola.

To investigate the developmental history of the viola, its synonymy, and its playing technique and pedagogy.

Expansion and publication of the Zeyringer catalog, "Literatur für Viola."

To sketch the biographies of violists and composers of works for viola.

This extensive collection should in due course attain the highest possible degree of completeness. The material shall be accessible for all interested parties and could be made available on loan, depending upon circumstances.

Violists, composers, librarians, archivists, publishers, and otherwise interested parties should be drawn into this work and become active members of the research organization.

II. Scheduling VIOLA CONGRESSES at appropriate intervals.

Independent from the establishment of a research body for the viola, the first viola congress can take place during the summer of 1966 in Kassel (FRG), with sometime in the last two weeks of July as the most convenient time.

A public institution is to be identified which will sponsor and provide the structure and facilities required of the congress (a music

academy, Bärenreiter Publishing Company or others). The organization of this first viola congress in the history of Western music would lie in the capable hands of Dietrich Bauer. The final realization of such a congress could be based upon the following:

1. Distribution of a circular to as many violists possible inquiring whether interest in a Viola Congress really exists. If "yes," determine:

- a. what major subject areas should be considered?
- b. what contributions could the delegates themselves offer?

2. Should the circular inquiry indicate the sufficient potential of active interest, the organization of the congress can begin. The following points must be taken into consideration and resolved:

- a. Financing the congress (from state, federal, private, industrial, radio, television resources).
- b. Securing location and facilities for the congress.

Should these events come to pass, the invitation to violists, music publishers, composers and other interested parties can follow. To be effective, the invitation should be printed in all possible music publications. Regarding program content, any of the following could be incorporated into a viola congress:

- a. Presentations about the viola and its literature, with discussions.
- b. Critical survey of literature with highly specialized musical structure (solo sonatas, etudes, duos, etc.)
- c. Performance of old and new viola literature.
- d. Performance on the different viola types, i.e. algometric viola, Ritter viola, viola d'amore. The exhibition of violas from master craftsmen.
- e. Report of the current status of the viola.
- f. Discussion of the reprint of the Zeyringer index, "Literatur für Viola," with special consideration given to the new classifications of viola literature (original and borrowed works, and arrangements). Categorization of selected works in this framework (i.e. concerti by Joh. Chr. Bach and G. F. Händel).
- g. Public concerts (with radio, and eventually television) with infrequently heard viola compositions, i.e. Telemann: Concerto for Two Violas; Mendelssohn: Sonata; Graupner: Concerto for Viola d'amore and Viola; Music for two, three, four and more violas, among other compositions.
- h. Social gathering for making personal contact.

Notes:

- 1. The "Pöllau Protokoll" appears in Franz Zeyringer, *Die Viola da Braccio* (Munich: Heller Verlag, 1988), 140-41, and is gratefully used with the author's permission.

Reflections: Photos from the XXXVI International Viola Congress in Tempe, Arizona

by Dwight Pounds



Kim Kashkashian enters a mental state of extreme concentration to the exclusion of other surroundings before beginning the music at hand. Pianist Lydia Artymiw listens both with eyes and ears for every breath, nuance, and movement, no matter how subtle.



Matthew Jones adjusts Laura McDermott's position to maximize her comfort and playing efficiency. One of two presenters on health, wellness and physical recovery from injury, he learned these skills in the process of recovering from near career-ending injury.



The collection in this photo seems to suggest a combination latte or cappuccino and a box of violas, on special, while they last. As usual, our exhibitors did a marvelous job with their wares—what would our congresses be without them?



Nancy Buck chose her student staff well. Here we see the faces of the congress fireman/women who seemed to be everywhere during the congress and dousing bushfires as quickly as they occurred: host Nancy Buck, Allyson Wuenschel, Tessa Gotman, Alex Vittal, and Louis Privitera. Regarding Louis, see [Montreal Congress Review](#)



The Arizona State University School of Music, Tempe, Arizona, host to International Viola Congress XXXVI. Original architectural designs by Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation with this portion of the school by DWL/The Mathes Group.



Louise Lansdown, native of South Africa and currently President of the newly-formed English Viola Society, one of the IVS's newest member societies. She owns the restored viola which belonged to Cecil Aronowitz which was almost destroyed when he suffered a fatal stroke while playing it. Her subject at last year's viola congress was Aronowitz—Hindemith's Op. 11, No. 4 was this year's topic.



Frank Lloyd Wright, amateur viola player turned architect, who designed the A.S.U. Gammage Auditorium and Taliesin West, his home in nearby Scottsdale.



Brett Banducci, violist, composer, Director of Composer Outreach and member of Southern California Viola Choir. Learn more about Brett Banducci and his amazing career on his website, www.brettbanducci.org.



Although true of everyone, it is truer when spoken of Alan deVeritch, fourth AVS President: there is only one Alan deVeritch! He is bigger than life in size, in capability, in knowledge and experience, in taste in shirts, and in friendship. We who know him are blessed to call him our friend.



Claudine Bigelow, Chair of the 2008 PMSC Jury, shares a moment with featured soloist, Paul Neubauer, aka the “East Coast Paul,” following his world premiere performance of Joan Tower's "Purple Rhapsody."



Jerzy Kosmala, emeritus Professor of Viola at Louisiana State University, in a master class. Although quiet and reserved in his private life, Jerzy teaches with intensity and leaves little doubt with students or audiences alike that his is a formidable musical mind.



Paul Coletti, the “West Coast Paul” for those tracking similar names, escorts his wife, Gina, and daughter Olivia to the congress banquet. More than one person commented to Paul and Gina that, given the quality of Olivia’s voice, that she would be a singer rather than string musician.



Thomas Tatton, “Dr. Tom” to his students, fifth AVS President and multiple-viola music guru to the remainder of us, shares playing and conducting duties for the traditional congress play-in. The AVS as we currently know it took shape during his leadership (1994-1998). See "An Interview with Tom Tatton in JAVS Online, Summer 2005



Question: Looking at this black-and-white photograph, what would you suppose Donald McInnes was doing? If you surmised that he probably was teaching a master class at a viola congress someplace, you would be absolutely correct. The above image was taken in June 1991 at International Viola Congress XIX at Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York and is part of the collection in the PIVA gallery in Provo, Utah.



When this image of Donald McInnes in his Tempe master class appeared in my camera, it was “déjà vu” all over again. Once more he was doing what he was born to do right in front of my lens--recreating the 1991 photograph, at least in mood and composition, was a no-brainer. Having spent much of his career on stage, McInnes is as much in his element in a setting where he can coach, cajole, and encourage talented students before an audience as when performing with a professional orchestra. He has conducted dozens of master classes at viola congresses for probably well over a hundred students.



Molly Carr, Emily Deans, and Dimitri Murrath--third, second, and first place finishers in the 2008 Primrose Memorial Scholarship Competition who each thrilled us with their technique and musicality, both during the competition and the Primrose Winners' Recital.

Book Review

Making A Musical Life
The Practice, The Profession, The Joy
by Tom Heimberg

Foreword by Lincoln Mayorga
129 pages, soft bound
Published by [String Letter Publishing](#), 2007
ISBN [978-1-890490-59-1](#)

Reviewed by Dwight Pounds

Sometime in 1972, Luciano Pavarotti, in a private conversation with Tom Heimberg, apparently remarked “It all begins in the brain!” The great tenor’s impromptu remark, perhaps more than the evening’s best aria, impressed itself in Heimberg’s mind. However, anyone who reads this book must entertain the thought that Heimberg’s *Making a Musical Life* is written not for the acquisition of technique *per se* as one might expect, but as pedagogy for the mind.

Tom Heimberg (1937-2006) was a string pedagogue with numerous contributions to *Strings Magazine*, *San Francisco Classical Voice*, and the oral history collection of the San Francisco Performing Arts and Library. The majority of his on-stage (or off-stage) career was as a violist and personnel manager with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra. Anyone familiar with the 2005 ASTA-NSOA publication, *Playing and Teaching the Viola*, may recall Heimberg’s contribution, “Practicing the Viola: Thought Before Action.” As author of some fourteen articles on practice and professional development and authority on both, selection as the “practice” contributor to this

project was almost a foregone conclusion. (See JAVS Vol. 22, No. 1, p. 37 for a review of *Playing and Teaching the Viola*.) There is redundancy in *Making a Musical Life* and *Playing and Teaching the Viola* and indeed much of “Practicing the Viola” appears to be a slightly updated version extracted from “The Mind in Practice” and other essays in this book. I counted eleven sections from the new book which had been incorporated in part or whole in *Playing and Teaching the Viola*. This begs the question, “What will this book provide that is not in the ASTA-NSOA publication?” The answer is quite a bit—*Making a Musical Life* is a compilation of Heimberg’s *Strings* publications apparently with later work, some of which is very specific, i.e., “Vibrato,” “Tremolo,” “Pizzicato: The Other Way to Play,” “Bow Explorations,” and “Tools for Better Technique.” As a compilation it also places in the readers’ hands thirty-some articles in a single volume which otherwise would be available in almost as many separate publications. A violist should not expect this book to be viola-specific—most of Heimberg’s observations are as appropriate to the violin, cello, and double bass as the viola and he even feels free to draw upon the experiences of clarinetists, bassoonists, and trumpeters. His approach to a specific subject tends to be quite general—the quality and types of vibrato, for instance, are more important to him than the subtle differences in violin and viola vibrato which he does not even address. Although some of the essays and references date to the 1990s and the book has a dated quality about it,

much—even most—of the content is timeless.

“The Practice, the Profession, the Joy,” Heimberg’s subtitle for *Making a Music Life*, suggests his view of the book’s whole. It likewise is divided into three parts: part one being “Practice,” part two “Counsel and Guidance,” and part three “Views From the Musical Life.” Fourteen concise chapter-essays on practice (which comprise 54 of the book’s 129 pages and constitute its heart and soul) share a lifetime of insights on how, when, and under what physical and mental circumstances to practice. It is a book of tips, recommendations, and admonishments to student, teacher, and stand partner alike with regard to what the author considers sacred territory—efficient and productive practice—why else would he write a chapter “To Preserve, Protect, and Defend Practice Time?” Musical examples are almost non-existent. In addition to topics mentioned earlier, “Practice and Self Observation,” “Personal Practice Planning,” “Building a Personal Practice Book,” “How Fast is Slow?” and “Picking up the Pace” complete part one.

Part one, “Practice,” casts a long shadow in part two, “Counsel and Guidance,” as the consequences of good (or bad) technique are suggested repeatedly. Recycled sections from *Playing and Teaching...* include “The Fine Art of Faking,” “Tips and Tricks of the Trade,” and “Lessening Audition Agonies.” In “Be Prepared” and “Contract Tips for the Giggling Player,” Heimberg’s business acumen and negotiating skills prove as practical as his pedagogical approaches—don’t presume anything: anyone who would agree to a handshake should be willing to sign a contract. Get plenty of sleep—take care of yourself as well as your instrument and especially your bow. Anything that improves a musician’s comfort improves

his/her tone quality. Plan ahead—keep at least one extra package of strings nearby. Dress for the occasion and avoid tight or worn clothing. Be sure your automobile is well serviced: check fuel, oil pressure, tire pressure and tread condition often. Keep some snacks food and water in your car for emergencies...and a flashlight. Dozens more.

Part three in street vernacular is a “mixed bag.” The author’s subject matter changes rather abruptly in “Views from the Musical Life” and his role switches from pedagogue and dispenser of practical tips to documenting his impressions and lessons from a career in the pit orchestra. He discusses such diverse topics as the separation of the San Francisco Symphony and Opera Orchestras into indigenous organizations, the ground rules for marking music correctly, and the usually unsung (pun intended) contributions and critically important role of prompters in opera, many of whom he credits with saving entire performances. A high degree of professionalism is never far from his mind and these subjects, diverse as they might be, still manage to reflect the practical nature so evident in Heimberg’s thought process.

He seems to reminisce in the five concluding essays, with little in the way of transition to move his readers from one topic to another. It was a bit jolting to read in turn an excellent system for marking music and the essential role of the prompter to a successful production and move without benefit of segue to tributes to violist Emil Férir (see JAVS Vol. 17, No. 3), Heimberg’s friend Felix Khuner, and Fritz Kreisler—all within the same section. Although Heimberg’s “war stories” in part three were interesting and contribute to the reader’s insights from parts one and two into the very conscientious, practical, and thoroughly

professional mind that produced these valuable essays, they seemed to require a section of their own.

Who should read this book? Anyone who either loves or hates to practice, anyone who practices six minutes or six hours per day, or anyone who wants or does not want to know more about how to practice. Student, teacher, amateur, or professional would easily benefit from Heimberg's observations, especially those young people on the verge of deciding whether or not to enter professional performance as a career.

New Music Reviews:

Michael Kimber

by Kenneth Martinson

La Colombe (The Dove) (2006) for viola section, two pianos, second violins, and basses.

Difficulty: Level 2/3

Duration: 3 minutes

Dedication: West High School Orchestra (Iowa City, IA), Wayne Thelander, director

By Michael Kimber (b. 1945)

“The Dove” is truly original in concept in that it was composed to be an addition to Camille Saint-Saëns’s *The Carnival of the Animals*, which inexplicably features each of the string instruments except the violas. The work was written at the request of Iowa City’s West High School Orchestra director Wayne Thelander so that his viola students could be featured in his orchestra’s performance of the Saint-Saëns. Kimber chose the dove to represent the viola section because, as Kimber states, “most of the [violinists] I have known...are generally peace-loving beings.”

The movement certainly is peaceful and calming. It is fairly easy to play, never going higher than the G in third position on the A string. It is in a moderate triple meter, and the viola line has a long melodic “soaring” quality, like a flying dove, above a foundation of the rolling accompaniment of the two pianos, the second violin tremolos, and the grounded bass line. While it

reminded me slightly in character of the viola movement of Britten’s *The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra*, it actually sounds convincingly like Saint-Saëns, so much so that I am sure the average concertgoer would have no idea that this movement was by another composer if this fact were not revealed in the program. “The Dove” is a truly delightful and curious work that I highly recommend looking at, either in its original setting or in Kimber’s arrangement for solo viola and piano.

Reflection (2001) for three-part viola ensemble

Difficulty: Level 4

Duration: 5-1/2 minutes

Dedication: In memory of Francis Bundra (1927-2000)

Premiere: Interlochen Arts Academy, June 30, 2001

By Michael Kimber (b. 1945)

A wonderfully attractive work written for large viola ensemble in three parts, *Reflection* is probably the most serious, poignant work I have encountered for viola ensemble. The mood is somewhat reminiscent of Barber’s *Adagio for Strings*, beginning softly in the lower register. Like the Barber, this too has an “arch-form” contour, beginning and ending softly with a more intense section roughly two-thirds of the way through the work. The intense middle section is much more intentionally subdued in this work than the Barber, undoubtedly because of the elegiac qualities

and it being a remembrance of Bundra, the beloved teacher of many violists at Interlochen and at the University of Michigan. I did also hear some beautiful, hopeful moments reminiscent of some of the slow movements of the Dvorák Serenade for Strings. I enjoyed the freedom with which Kimber employs the crossing of voices, especially between violas one and two, which share the melodic lines in the treble register in an intermingled manner. The ending features all three viola parts alternating major triads on F and B (the initials of Francis Bundra) as they rise to the upper register of the viola, portraying climbing up to the heavens; then the piece ends refreshingly with a somber low register triad which dissipates into nothingness.

Evocations (2005) for viola and string orchestra

1. Rhapsodically
2. Dreamily
3. Driving

Difficulty: Level 6

Duration: 18 minutes

Commission: Iowa City Community String Orchestra, Carey H. Bostian II, conductor
Premiere: Christine Rutledge, violist, and the ICCSO, April 2, 2006

By Michael Kimber (b. 1945)

This work is a welcome addition to the genre of viola solo works with string orchestra accompaniment (only a few come to immediately to mind: the Telemann Viola Concerto, Hindemith's *Trauermusik*, the Reger Suite for Viola and Strings in G Minor (orchestrated by Victor Poltoratsky), Britten's *Lachrymae*, and Schnittke's *Monologue*). In the first movement, Rhapsodically, I noticed many Bartok-like elements: the folk melody heard in the

opening which is then imitated in the violins, his use of counterpoint, and imitative inversions of the melodic line. The driving rhythm of the 6/8 meter also reminded me a little bit of the Piston Viola Concerto and very slightly of Milhaud's *Concertino d'été*. The work is wonderfully virtuosic with some challenging double-stop passages that look fun. I really enjoyed the section in the middle of the work with the familiar folk tune in the violins and the viola "chugging" away at the fast notes above the melody. I also liked the clever usage of the viola in the lower range and Kimber's careful orchestration so that the viola can always be heard. The composition of this work is very refined. It is written idiomatically for the instrument in a manner that is practical for the soloist always to be prominent.

The second movement, Dreamily, in a slow 5/8 meter, includes quintuplets and other rhythms that help to give the movement a free and almost "through-composed" feel. The harmonies change often on the bar lines, helping to define the meter. This movement, lyrical throughout, also includes a section where the soloist plays a fast moving thirty-second note line that is juxtaposed against the other strings. This thirty-second note line moves in a sweeping manner starting high at the beginning of the first measure and sweeping down low at the beginning of the second measure, continuing this high-low sweep for about six bars, very much like the solo viola line in the third movement of the Walton Viola Concerto, the part with the quintuplets that move in the same fashion.

The last movement, Driving, is a *perpetuum mobile* with exclusively sixteenth note sextuplets in the solo viola line, very much like the third movement of the Barber Violin Concerto, especially in the double stop and harmonic E usage parts. This movement

really cooks along and sounds very fun to play. Again the string accompaniment is very transparent on the whole, often times written in staccato fashion. The entire work strikes me as being attainable for the average listener, and the harmonic language is always coherent and rarely discordant. I highly recommend that violists looking to expand their concerto literature take a look at this work, and I hope it gains enough recognition to garner more performances in the future.

All three of these works are available through the composer at:

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web: http://members.tripod.com/~m_kimber

Key to the Difficulty level chart:

- 1 Very Easy
- 2 Somewhat Easy
- 3 Intermediate
- 4 Somewhat Difficult
- 5 Difficult
- 6 Very Difficult

Please send all scores for review consideration to:

Kenneth Martinson
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