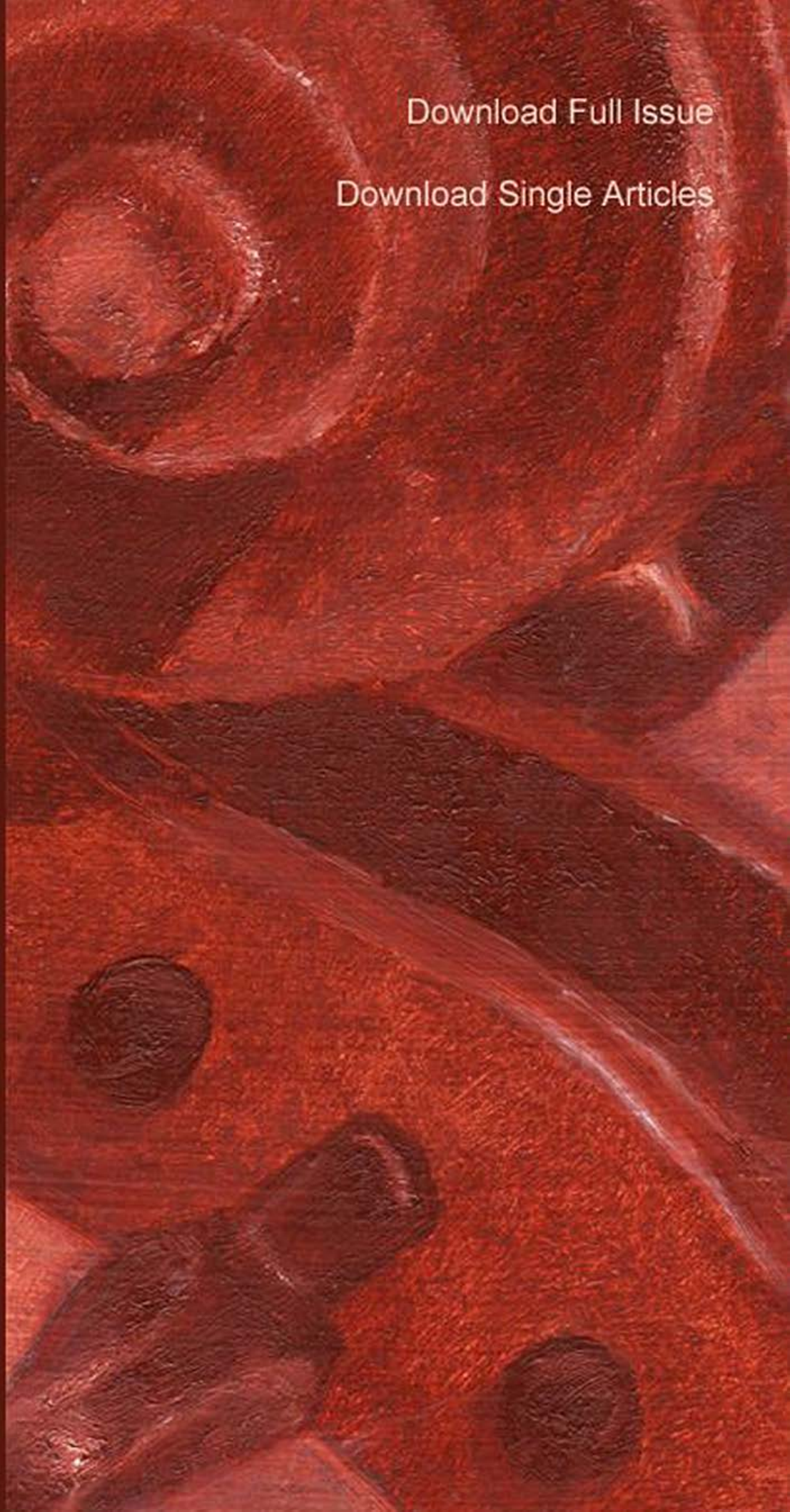


Journal of the American Viola Society

Volume 25 Summer 2009 Online Issue

[Download Full Issue](#)

[Download Single Articles](#)



Journal of the American Viola Society

A publication of the American Viola Society

Summer 2009

Volume 25 Online Issue

Contents

- p. 3 **From the Editor**
- p. 4 **From the President**
- p. 5 **News & Notes: IVS News**

Feature Articles

- p. 9 **Brazilian Music for Viola: Francisco Mignone's *Valsa Lenta*:** Carlos Aleixo dos Reis discusses the Brazilian composer Francisco Mignone and his *Three Brazilian Waltzes for Viola and Piano*
- p. 23 ***Lament and Lament with Ghosts: A Collaboration with Helen Callus:***
Composer Joel Feigin introduces us to three new compositions for solo viola and viola ensemble
- p. 35 **Revisiting the 2008 Primrose Competition:** Dwight Pounds interviews the three top prize-winners of the Eleventh Primrose International Viola Competition in the first installment of a two-part feature

Departments

- p. 44 **Alternative Styles:** Martha Mooke provides a resource guide of recordings and compositions featuring the electric viola
- p. 53 **In the Studio:** Steve Wyrzynski reflects on Joseph de Pasquale's legendary sound
- p. 57 **Student Life:** Jason Bonham reveals the importance of branding and creating a website to market your services



On the Cover:

Alyssa "Zoe" Whitney *Viola Scroll*

Alyssa "Zoe" Whitney is a student of graphic design and traditional art at the University of Utah. She also writes music and plays viola in her rock band Merlin's Pants. Prints of her viola-themed paintings and other artwork can be found at her etsy shop: zoepapilia.etsy.com

Editor: David M. Bynog

Departmental Editors:

Alternative Styles: David Wallace

At the Grassroots: Ken Martinson

Fresh Faces: Lembi Veskimets

In the Studio: Karen Ritscher

Meet the Section: Michael Strauss

Modern Makers: Eric Chapman

New Music: Ken Martinson

Orchestral Training Forum: Lembi Veskimets

Recording Reviews: Carlos María Solare

Student Life: Adam Paul Cordle

Consultant:

Dwight Pounds

AVS National Board of Directors

Officers

Juliet White-Smith, president (2011)

Nokuthula Ngwenyama, president-elect (2011)

Kenneth Martinson, secretary (2010)

Michelle Sayles, treasurer (2010)

Helen Callus, past president (2009)

Board Members

Claudine Bigelow (2009)

Sheila Browne (2010)

David M. Bynog (2012)

Kirsten Docter (2011)

Michael Fernandez (2009)

David Holland (2010)

Kathryn Plummer (2011)

Deborah Price (2010)

Carol Rodland (2009)

Ann Roggen (2011)

Marcus Thompson (2011)

Lembi Veskimets (2010)

Louise Zeitlin (2009)

AVS General Manager

Madeleine Crouch

AVS National Office:

14070 Proton Road, Suite 100

Dallas, TX 75244

(972) 233-9107 ext. 204

The Journal of the American Viola Society is published in spring and fall and as an online-only issue in summer. The American Viola Society was founded for the promotion of viola performance and research.

©2009, American Viola Society

ISSN: 0898-5987

**JAVS welcomes articles
from its readers.
Submission deadlines are
December 15 for the
Spring issue, April 15 for
the Summer online issue,
and August 15 for the Fall
issue. Send submissions to
the AVS Editorial Office,
David M. Bynog
dbynog@rice.edu
or to
Madeleine Crouch,
14070 Proton Rd.,
Suite 100
Dallas, TX 75244**

*The JAVS offers print and web advertising for a receptive and influential readership.
For advertising rates please contact the AVS National office at info@avsnationaloffice.org*

FROM THE EDITOR



Summer never seems to be a period of rest for musicians. Whatever activities you may be involved in this summer, I hope that you will find time to take a break for our online issue of the JAVS; it contains some wonderful offerings. Carlos Aleixo dos Reis starts things off with his article on the Brazilian composer Francisco Mignone. The article presents a survey of Mignone's career and focuses on one of his compositions for viola: the *Valsa Lenta in C Minor*. South America offers a wealth of music for the viola, and it is exciting that recent research is helping to promote and make available these lesser-known works.

The AVS's past president, Helen Callus, is also known for furthering the cause of the viola through various activities. Composer Joel Feigin recently collaborated with Helen on a

project, composing three new works for viola and viola ensemble. Feigin writes about the process, giving insight into the creation of these compositions. The process is particularly fascinating because of the intertwined nature of the three works. We are happy to provide complete recordings of two of the works by Feigin to accompany the article: *Lament* and *Lament with Ghosts*.

In our final feature article, Dwight Pounds catches up with the three top prize-winners in last summer's eleventh Primrose International Viola Competition. The interview covers a range of topics including details of their career plans and their thoughts on the nature of music competitions.

Our Alternative Styles Department continues the "Year of the Electric Viola" with Martha Mooke's resource guide for the instrument. The guide lists recordings and compositions for the electric viola and provides information about other online resources, including a Facebook group and YouTube videos. I encourage you to investigate some of the works in Martha's excellent guide, particularly if you have never seen nor heard an

electric viola. You may uncover a new outlet for your music-making.

Our Student Life department once again offers an article that is useful not only for students, but for all of us: how to promote yourself on the Internet. Jason Bonham, a successful web designer, educator, and violist, gives practical advice and tips about how to market yourself and design your website. This article is a must-read for anyone interested in marketing themselves on the web, regardless of whether you plan to create your own site or hire someone to help you.

Lastly, Steve Wyrzynski reflects on the legendary sound of violist Joseph de Pasquale. A profound musical force on the viola, Mr. de Pasquale's influence has extended for decades through his teaching and performing. If you are in the Philadelphia area on October 25, 2009, please join Steve and his colleagues at the Curtis Institute for a celebration of de Pasquale's ninetieth year.

Cordially,

David M. Bynog
JAVS Editor

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Summer Greetings, Fellow Violists!

The past few months have been a busy time for the American Viola Society. I just returned from the annual meetings of the AVS Executive Board, which were held at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Many thanks to Claudine Bigelow for hosting the board! This was the first year that the AVS Board used an online meeting service to include those members who were unable to attend in person. Despite a few initial glitches, the meetings were very successful. The online service helped to alleviate the travel cost to board members, who are responsible for covering their own travel expenses, and the meetings were as productive as ever.

I am delighted to announce the election of the following new board members: Rebecca Albers, Timothy Deighton, Sel Kardan, and

Karen Ritscher. Their terms begin July 1, and run through June of 2012. I know you join me in warmly welcoming them and in thanking them for their willingness to serve.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the four members rotating off the board at the end of June: many thanks to Claudine Bigelow, Michael Fernandez, Carol Rodland, and Louise Zeitlin for their service to the AVS. I wish them all the very best in their future endeavors.

The AVS Executive Board also welcomes two new advisors to the board: Ronald G. Worsham, Associate Professor in the School of Accountancy/Marriott School at BYU and Charles C. Tucker, Attorney at Law in Fort Collins, Colorado. I am grateful to them both for volunteering their time and expertise to the board in the areas of accounting and legal matters.

Kathryn Steely recently announced her resignation as AVS Webmaster. Kathy has been a tireless force behind the AVS for over ten years, first as successor to David Dalton as Editor of the JAVS and then as the creator and maintainer of the AVS's presence on the World Wide Web. I commend Kathy on a

fabulous job in both these capacities and on her outstanding service to the organization. She will be greatly missed, and we wish her the very best as she pursues other projects. The AVS is in the process of receiving applications to fill this open position.

I am excited to announce a new benefit to AVS membership: the Anderson Group is now offering group instrument insurance rates to our members. If you do not already have instrument insurance, I encourage you to explore this option. Please visit <http://www.anderson-group.com/avs/> for more information and an easy online application or quote. Let your viola friends and colleagues know of this great new program for AVS members and encourage them to join our great organization!

I look forward to seeing many of you in South Africa next month. Stay tuned for the Fall issue of the JAVS and news and updates of AVS programs and benefits, such as a CD evaluation project and access to new music on our website.

Wishing you the best in your summer travels,

Juliet White-Smith, President

NEWS AND NOTES

WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL VIOLA SOCIETY: A BRIEF LOOK AT WHAT THE IVS HAS DONE, IS DOING, AND PLANS TO DO

by **Michael Vidulich**

The work of the International Viola Society (“IVS”) is to: bring the world’s violists together in order to foster dialogue and communication; coordinate international congresses; honor our distinguished members; encourage the formation of viola societies worldwide; support our member societies; promote viola research, publishing, composing, instrument making, performances, etc.

To better understand how the IVS has, is, and plans to achieve its aims, this “brief” paper has been written. This paper/article is not intended to be a comprehensive document that lists all the activities of the IVS, but instead focuses on the following (in no particular order):

International Viola Congresses

IVS Awards: recognizing persons who have made outstanding contributions to the viola internationally (briefly addressed)

IVS viola media and communications: publications, articles, recordings, the “web,” etc.

IVS viola society sections: forming new viola societies and support for existing viola societies.

[The present IVS member Viola Societies are: 1. American (USA), 2. Australian & New Zealand, 3. Canadian, 4. Chinese, 5. English, 6. French, 7. German, 8. Nigerian, 9. Nordic (Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish), 10. South African, 11. Spanish and 12. Welsh. Memberships pending: 13. Brazilian and 14. Polish]

The outstanding work of the founding international viola society (last known as the “Internationale Viola-Gessellschaft,” or IVG) included: awarding International Viola Congresses, awards to violists for outstanding international contributions, worldwide viola societies that were chapter (section) members, support for viola activities, and the major publication *Die Viola*, among many other things.

Previous IVS Work

When the IVG successor organization, the “International Viola Society,” or IVS, was formed, it adopted many of the activities of the previous IVG, with the major exception of the publication of *Die Viola* (which had not been issued for several years).

The first IVS Presidency (1999–2001) recognized the need for an IVS publication and worked extremely hard to achieve this. After many years of communication with a leading music

magazine, this aim was almost achieved. Unfortunately, a change in the editorial staff of that magazine decided not to proceed with the project. However, three successful congresses were held (including awarding the first ever congress outside Europe and North America to the Australian & New Zealand Viola Society, which was held in Wellington, New Zealand, in 2001), changes of policy for a more representative and “moveable” international IVS Presidency were promoted, a “fairer” — “more equitable” IVS dues policy for its sections was established, the policy of contacts for new sections was begun, and other IVS work was completed.

The second IVS Presidency (2002–2004) continued seeking out publication options and explored “web” options. As the IVS had only four section members (American, Australian & New Zealand, Canadian, and German), the formation of new viola society sections worldwide was further explored, and discussions were held with violists in Poland, Lithuania, and Sweden (as the previous Swedish Viola Society had “lapsed”), among others. In 2004 the IVS was faced with a real possibility that no International Viola Congress would be held in 2005 (a non-North American Congress year), so work was started to ensure this would not be the case. The IVS was successful in securing the 2005 Congress in Reykjavik, Iceland (which only gave the Icelandic hosts a very short lead-up time to prepare).

The third IVS Presidency (2005–2007) made it a priority to assist with the formation/creation of new viola sections worldwide. This was a necessity if congresses were to continue to be held in non-North American Congress years. To achieve this in part and to assist with viola

communications, an IVS Brochure was created, an IVS website was launched, and three publications were written and became available online:* Guidelines for forming an IVS Section, Guidelines for organizing an International Congress, and Guidelines for making a bid online to host an International Congress. Initial research was begun for further fundraising options and for an IVS update/revision of Peter Slowik’s Handbook for Viola Congress Hosts. Work also began on an IVS Trust Fund Scheme for Congress Hosts. The IVS organized “gift/donation” assistance of violas, strings, music, etc., to our two African IVS sections, and other projects were worked on. By the end of 2007 our IVS sections had increased from four to eleven.

[*For additional information, please see our web site at www.viola.com/ivs. Click on “IVS Sections” for Guidelines for forming an IVS Section or contact our IVS Secretary, Kenneth Martinson at kamart@ufl.edu. Click on “Congresses” for Congress Guidelines and Congress bids.]

Present IVS Work

The fourth IVS Presidency (2008–2010) is presently halfway through its term and has accepted its twelfth section (France) and is close to accepting two more sections (Brazil and Poland). The IVS represented its sections at the Fortieth Anniversary Conference of the founding of the International and German societies in Düsseldorf, Germany, last November—a “milestone” event in our viola society history. The IVS project for a Viola Congress Handbook has been completed; it was

a joint IVS and American Viola Society/Canadian Viola Society effort (and this document will soon be available through the American Viola Society's head office). To assist the IVS to better assess its work, an IVS Survey was taken in April to May this year asking our sections questions on "how the IVS is doing" and "what we should be doing." This survey is one way the IVS is working to maintain a close link with its sections and to improve our work for our sections. In the future, the IVS plans to send similar surveys out to our sections at least twice during each IVS term of office. Work on finalizing the IVS "Trust Fund," various fund raising projects, collating a worldwide Database of Violists, and web updates (including articles) are all being worked on and will be some of the topics for this year's IVS meetings at this year's International Viola Congress in Stellenbosch, South Africa (July 27, 2009 to August 1, 2009).

Future IVS Work

For the remainder of this term and beyond: The IVS with twelve sections (and possibly two more very soon) now has a much more secure base for hosting International Viola Congresses. Creating new sections will hopefully continue to be a major IVS aim, but more time can now also be devoted to other issues.

Selecting recipients for IVS Awards has worked well for many years now, and I believe the IVS sees no "urgent" change as being required.

One of the goals in the early days of the IVS was to continue in some form an IVS periodical. The IVS is presently working on the idea of an online periodical (with an IVS editor and including contributions from individuals and our

sections). Another aim for the IVS is to support new compositions and recordings for the viola in a "practical" way.

At present, the IVS is solely funded by its sections, each paying 7% of its annual members' dues to the IVS. Most of this money annually assists the IVS officers to attend "in person" meetings at the annual congresses (used to pay part of their travel costs). The IVS meets only once a year "in person," and this is vital to the workings of the IVS, as only "so much" can be done through e-mails alone.

In order to serve our sections better and fulfill further IVS projects, it is now essential to work harder to seek out additional fund raising initiatives. With additional sources of income, the IVS could take on many more projects, including much needed assistance for our "developing country" sections with new viola works, viola teaching help/aids, sheet music, various projects, publications, instruments, supplies, etc. (as stated above, the IVS has already started looking at ways to achieve additional funding). The IVS plans to research an "incorporated" status for the IVS in various countries and how this might work worldwide for our international "non-profit" organization. This is vital for certain groups and individuals who might consider IVS sponsorship, donations, and private grants to the IVS. Support from various governments and government agencies including schemes available through international organizations—such as the UNITED NATIONS, the COMMONWEALTH, and the EUROPEAN UNION—will be explored. A donors/sponsors program and an IVS online store are ideas the IVS will also be addressing soon.

The IVS is planning to seek out contacts with other string associations, viola makers, composer associations, publishers, etc., for mutual benefit to all our members. IVS work on the IVS Database of Violists will be of assistance with this and will also be useful in a variety of other ways.

The IVS hopes to implement many of these projects by the end of this term (December 2010) and will surely continue to work on many of these and others in the next term of office (2011–2013) and beyond—offering improved service to all our sections and violists worldwide.

Michael Vidulich, QSM

President, International Viola Society

June 2009

BRAZILIAN MUSIC FOR VIOLA

FRANCISCO MIGNONE'S *VALSA LENTA*

by **Carlos Aleixo dos Reis**

The history of the viola in Brazil is not well documented. We can assume at the latest that the viola arrived with other European instruments during the reign of Dom João VI de Portugal at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹ According to Andrade, the classical string family—violin, *viola*, cello, and double bass—probably arrived in Brazil in a group of instruments brought by the court of Portugal. According to Nobre, the number of copies of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven string quartets (found among the scores of the old music school and in historical cities all over the country) attests to the presence of the viola in Brazilian musical life since the late eighteenth century.²

The meaning of the term *viola* needs to be explained within the Brazilian artistic community. In Brazil, *viola* is also a name of an instrument originally related to the guitar, called *viola de arame* (wire guitar), and it can have four, five, six, or twelve strings. *Violeta* is the name given by the Portuguese to the *viola* (with a bow).

The history of music in Brazil after World War II follows the same cultural changes as were occurring in Europe, but proceeds more slowly toward modernity. Andrade states that since the beginning of the establishment of Brazilian art, the emerging society played an important role. Music was one of the tools used by foreign missionaries to educate and colonize the

population. Religious songs were taught to every ethnic group they found in the new land.³

Almost the same may be said in regard to the development of stringed instruments (in this case the viola) within Brazilian musical society. Previous studies reveal that during the second half of the twentieth century, post-nationalist Brazilian composers renewed their interest in viola repertory.⁴ According to Nobre, it was only from the late period of nationalism in Brazil that leading composers such as Edino Krieger (b.1928), Francisco Mignone (1897–1986), and Camargo Guarnieri (1907–1993) began to write outstanding works for viola and piano.⁵

Francisco Mignone (1897–1986)

One of the most representative of Brazilian second-generation nationalist composers, Mignone was born in São Paulo on September 3, 1897. The son of Italian parents who had immigrated to Brazil, he began his musical studies with his father, Aferio Mignone, a music professor and flutist of the *Orquestra Municipal do Teatro de São Paulo*. The lack of documentation about the life of Francisco Mignone is typical of most Brazilian composers except Villa-Lobos, who is widely recognized. Mignone, in his interview with Bruno Kiefer, stated that in 1917 he graduated in flute, piano, and composition from the *Conservatório Dramático de São Paulo*. He also observed that his classmates at that time were Mário de Andrade, Dinora de Carvalho, and Lúcia Branco da Silva.⁶ Andrade later influenced composers

of his generation as an important figure in Brazilian modernist art.

Since early in his life, Mignone was influenced by different aesthetic tendencies.⁷ At first, it was within his family and a small Italian community in the center of São Paulo that exposed all Brazilians to a strong, traditional European culture. Also, the cultural ambience of popular music played in pubs, restaurants, and taverns all over São Paulo was a special attraction to Mignone.⁸ It was an interesting situation that a son of an Italian, with an Italian background and who had musical studies structured on Franco-Italian principles (that gave him the great singing lines of his works), was able to capture the uniqueness of folk songs, rhythms, and melodies of African culture mixed with Brazilian culture.

The start of Mignone's musical studies was not different from other Brazilian composers. He did spend time working in movie companies and was exposed to popular and classical music from an early age. His desire to compose and mix these styles quickly emerged. Mignone used the pseudonym *Chico Bororo* for his popular works including sambas, maxixes, waltzes, and several tangos, of which very few have survived. Kiefer also noted that Mignone himself started to catalog his own works, which were then published by the *Ministério das Relações Exteriores* in 1978.

He traveled several times to Europe and the United States, where he performed and conducted his music with much success. At that time, his best works were considered to be nationalistic. The situation in his homeland was good, as he was admired by the majority of Brazilians, but critics accused him of being a "fake" Puccini and a fabricated nationalist composer. At home, Mignone played piano and

flute in different orchestras, salons, and at several events in order to pay for his education. At this time he became more familiar with Brazilian urban music such as *chorinhos*, *serestas*, *modinhas*, and *valsas*. In São Paulo, he spent nights playing in a group of musicians accompanied by typical Brazilian instruments. Most of his popular music composed under the pseudonym *Chico Bororo* dates from that time, and this experience would reflect in his later works such as *Valsas-Choro* and *Valsas de Esquina*.⁹

In 1918, an important event changed his life: the concert at the Municipal Theater of São Paulo. This concert not only featured his compositions, conducted by his father, but Mignone also played Grieg's Piano Concerto. These early works were written in the traditional western European structure. In response to the success of the concert and in acknowledgment of Mignone as a great artist, the Commission for Artistic Pension of São Paulo granted him a scholarship for further musical studies in Italy. He decided to go to Milan, where he studied with Vincenzo Ferroni, an Italian professor and a former student of Massenet. The French aesthetic and technical refinement he learned in Italy brought the right balance to the works of Mignone, which always had a strong Italian influence.¹⁰ From 1920 to 1929, Mignone lived in Italy.

Mignone returned and settled in Brazil in 1929. He brought to Brazil two operas with a strong Italian character and suffered severe criticism from his friend and writer Mário de Andrade, a writer and Brazilian nationalist militant artist.¹¹ In the article "Campanha contra as Temporadas Liricas" (Campaign against the Lyric Season), published by *Musica, Doce Musica* in 1928,

Andrade attacked Mignone with the following comments:

Still, the case of Francisco Mignone is further proof that nationality was left at home during the season. No one prizes this artist greater than I do. I cheer for him as I cheer for all those I consider to be of some worth. But I have to admit that Francisco Mignone's current situation is very sad, and we run the risk of losing, in losing him, a valuable Brazilian quality. Francisco Mignone is in a regrettable situation. He cannot find librettists who can offer him subject-matter on national themes. And if he were to find this: the libretto, in order to be performed, would need to be translated into Italian, because nobody in the world will ever sing in Brazilian.¹²

After being classified as a non-nationalist composer, Mignone presented to the public his new work, *First Fantasia Brasileira*, for piano and orchestra (1929). It was premiered in São Paulo in 1931. This time in his review of the work, Andrade said: "It was with much pleasure that I received the best impressions of *Fantasia*. It is a piece that is unquestionably very cheerful, and, incidentally, the best one will find in the symphonic works of Francisco Mignone."¹³

When he moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1933, Mignone turned his attention to the Afro-Brazilian culture. *Maracatu de Chico Rei* and a ballet that describes a celebration of free Africans-Brazilian slaves during the construction of the *Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Rosário* in Villa Rica (today called Ouro Preto) are representative works during this period.¹⁴ As an educator, Mignone and a group of Brazilian composers led by Oscar Lorenzo Fernández created in 1936 the *Conservatorio Nacional de*

Música; later the name changed to *Conservatório Brasileiro de Música*.¹⁵ The death of his close friend Mário de Andrade had a strong effect on his activities as a composer, conductor, and teacher during the 1940s and took him away from producing the same amount of work as before. Mignone also experimented with atonal systems from 1960 to 1970, but he did not permanently adopt the system.

Mignone had successful international appearances, such as in the United States at the Music Educators National Conference Biannual Convention in Milwaukee and the League of Composers in New York. Leopold Stokowski, in 1935, conducted his work *Seguida-Mirin* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Ormandy presented Mignone's *Festa das Igrejas* with the Philadelphia Orchestra. In Rio, Toscanini also conducted *Congada*.¹⁶

Three Brazilian Waltzes for Viola and Piano: A transcription by Francisco Mignone

The waltz is one of the high points among Mignone's styles. *Saudade*¹⁷ is the Portuguese word that best represents the emotions when hearing Francisco Mignone's waltzes. This concept of *saudade* possibly made him return to his earliest compositions, from the times he used to play serenades with his friends in the city of São Paulo. His first group of waltzes consists of twelve works entitled *Valsas de Esquina*,¹⁸ written in 1938, 1940, and 1943. The waltzes in *Valsas de Esquina* were dedicated to close friends of Mignone, among them the immortals Mário de Andrade and Manuel Bandeira. These compositions recall the street

Example 1. Original works for piano and the same transcribed for viola and piano.

Original Piano Version	Viola and Piano Version
Valsa-Choro No. 4 in G Minor	III - Vivo e com Entusiasmo in G Minor
Valsa-Choro No. 5 in B Minor	I -Valsa lenta in C Minor
Valsa-Choro No. 11 in A-flat Minor	II - Suave e delicato in A Minor

corner serenades, common in Brazil, and emphasize the composer's contact with the expressions and the popular essence of profound nationalism. The twelve *Valsas de Esquina* have a nostalgic character derived from the old, romantic, popular Brazilian genre of *modinhas*, a sentimental art-song form with flowing melodic lines. This set of works was the germ for a new group of waltzes called 12 *Valsas-Choro*, composed in 1946, 1950, and 1955.¹⁹

Mignone transcribed three waltzes from this second set (originally for piano solo) for viola and piano, compiling the transcriptions in a group called *Tres Valsas Brasileira para Viola e Piano*. This work, written in 1968, was not Mignone's first work for viola. Before that, Mignone wrote a Viola Sonata (1962) in four movements: *Andantino*, *Allegretto*, *Intermezzo*, and *Rondo*. The thematic ideas in the sonata have no similarity with the waltzes. In the early 1960s he was reevaluating his aesthetic principles of composition. He made atonal experimentations, and the artistic community

accused him of becoming an opportunist composer. In the 1970s he returned to his original style with maturity and total domain of the compositional technique.²⁰

The Brazilian Waltz No. 1 for Viola and Piano

I - *Valsa Lenta (Slow Waltz) in C Minor*

The major structure of the work follows the traditional form of ABA, with some variations. Within these simple harmonic structures, Mignone applies short variations and complex technical devices for the violist. The suggestions that will follow in this article concern technical and interpretative ideas for the violist, including right- and left-hand techniques.

The original key of the work for piano solo is B minor. In transcribing for viola, Mignone used C minor with the intent to explore the melancholic character of serenades, the full and dark tone of the viola, and the natural resonance of the instrument.

Example 2. Overall harmonic structure of Valsa Lenta.

Section I			Section II		Return to Section I
A	A'	A' Closing theme	B = dominant	B'	A
i-V7-I	I-V7-vi7-V-i	i-V/6 th -V7-I	V to I	V-I	C minor
mm. 1-18	mm. 19-33	mm. 34-41	mm. 41-58	mm. 58-74	mm. 1-40
8a + 8a'					

Concerning expression marks, the full score (the manuscript of the viola and piano part) does not have as many expressive marks by the composer as the viola part does; specifically the

directions of dynamics and tempo are in the viola part (ex. 3). Mignone uses both Portuguese and Italian as can be observed in the copy of his manuscript.²¹

Example 3. Mignone, Tres Valsas Brasileiras: Valsa Lenta, viola manuscript, mm. 1-20.

TRÊS VALSAS BRASILEIRAS
para viola e piano

VIOLA 1
Mignone
(1968)


valsa lenta

cresc. e animando

atenção

poco affrettando cresc. cedendo poco rit.

The waltz begins without introduction, and the phrase structure of the waltz follows the traditional pattern of four measures for the first statement (mm.1 to 4); it repeats twice, forming a twelve measure phrase. In measure

thirteen, the figure , emerges for three bars in ascending and quickly descending motion toward the next section. From measure 1 to 18, a beautiful, simple melody emerges accompanied by chords on the piano in the style of an acoustic guitar's serenade. Beginning in measure 19 through measure 33, the melody is repeated again with the same structure. Here, the composer applies embellishment so that the second version is more brilliant than the intimate opening.

Three elements are important to help the reader understand how Mignone structured this waltz: the pitch, the temporal value, and

the sensations of movement from one note to another (change of value and meter). The way Mignone combined the three elements give to this waltz the character of *modinhas* and *choros*.²²

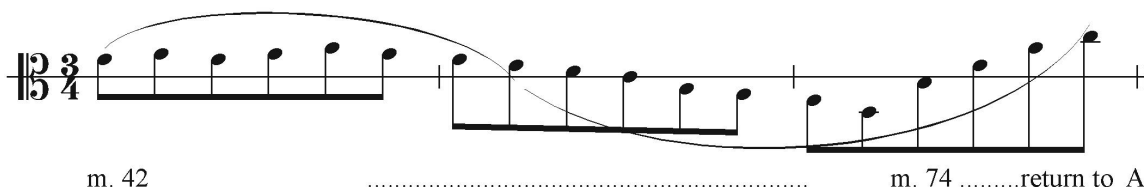
In section II (from mm. 42 to 75) of the *Valsa Lenta*, the structure is close to the *chorinho* style. It starts in the dominant of the original key of C minor in a *Piu vivo* tempo. The curve of the melodic line in this section shows an improvisational character moving with a lively and virtuosic tempo, as exemplified below in example 4. This section follows the same harmonic structure of the previous one.

The overall harmonic structure is simple, as shown in example 5. The construction is based on the popular Brazilian serenade's harmonic progression of **I-IV-V-V7-I**. It also includes sixth chords, inversions, and sequences of secondary dominants.

Example 4. Mignone, Tres Valsas Brasileiras: Valsa Lenta, phrase shape, mm. 42–75.

Phrase Shape in the Section II

Theme BB' (one octave above with different bow articulation)



Example 5. Overall structure of section II and return to section I.

Theme: B	B'	Return to Section I
G M–V7–I (V of C minor)	GM–V7–I (V of C minor)	Original A Section C minor
mm. 42–58	mm. 58–75	mm. 1–41 (Da Capo)

Two new textural devices are adopted in section II: chromaticism and the repetition of the melody one octave above. The form is kept in the same pattern as in the first section of the

piece, and the piano accompaniment is built on seventh chords, but now the harmonic rhythm does not flow with the solo part as in section I:

Example 6. Mignone, Tres Valsas Brasileiras: Valsa Lenta, piano score manuscript, mm. 49–64.

The musical score for Mignone's 'Valsa Lenta' (mm. 49–64) is presented in a piano score manuscript format. It consists of four systems of music, each with a right-hand (treble) and left-hand (bass) staff. The right-hand part features a melody that is repeated one octave above in the left hand, creating a chromatic effect. The left-hand part provides a harmonic accompaniment of seventh chords. The score is in 3/4 time and C minor.

Example 7. Mignone, *Tres Valsas Brasileiras*: Valsa Lenta, piano score manuscript, mm. 49–53.



In example 7, an improvisatory section with the leading voice in the viola part creates the *Piu vivo* ambience of *chorinho* style. The piano imitates the popular acoustic guitar playing full chords with appoggiaturas. The excerpt below clarifies the change of texture between section I and II. The successive contour of the melodic line and later, the return of the “melody” in the right hand of the piano, is an echo of the serenade mood illustrated in example 2. In measure 58 a single melody, in the right hand of the piano, carries the same shape from the first section. It recalls the opening of the *Valsa Lenta* (ex. 6), in a harmonic progression of **iv–V7–I**,

into a closing character of the work as showed in example 8.

The composer does not give suggestions of fingerings or bowings to the violist, but it is clear through the copy of the manuscript his desire to give enough information for the performance (see ex. 3). As noted earlier, the viola part shows more expression marks than the piano score. The viola was far from being recognized as a solo instrument, and Mignone being an outstanding pianist probably trusted the skills of Brazilian pianists more than he did the violists.

Example 8. Mignone, *Tres Valsas Brasileiras*: Valsa Lenta, piano score manuscript, mm. 59–69.



FRANCISCO MIGNONE

A performing edition of Brazilian Waltz No. 1 for Viola and Piano (1968)

Waltz I – Valsa Lenta (Slow Waltz)

Technical and interpretative suggestions from this author were applied to the following score. This Waltz No.1 demands a long melodic line and “warm” viola sound. It requires a balanced use of right- and left-hand techniques in order to allow the strings to speak easily.

Left hand:

Measures: 1 to 18

The passage is to be played on the IV and III strings. The color and deep sound of the viola helps to bring out the nostalgic mood of the opening. To avoid the shifting from mm. 1 to 3, the third finger should be extended to C; this fingering also enhances the smooth vibrato. From measure 8 to 9, a short glissando with the third finger provides variety to the opening motif.

From measure 11 to 18, the first finger on the III string helps to open up the phrase gradually. The *animando* section should stay on the III string until measure 14, which is in third position on the D string. The gradually descending line takes place in the steps shifting in parallel with a *cedendo un poco* tempo to measure 18. In order to keep the nostalgic concept—which is the primary intention of the composer—the vibrato in the waltz should not

be too intense. Only from measures 27 to 34 should greater amounts of vibrato be applied according to the development of the phrase.

Measures: 31 to 40

A virtuoso section with a variety of techniques: ascending scales with chords in a high register, embellishment, and a long sequence of octaves. The choice of fingering was made primarily to improve the melodic and aesthetic idea of the work.

Measures: 42 to the end

Keeping the fingerings in first position easily brings out the natural color and harmonics of the viola. In general, violists should be careful with intonation. The minor keys demand an *expression intonation*, meaning an exaggeration of the Pythagorean tendencies such as high leading tones, higher major thirds, and lower minor thirds. This *expression intonation* brings out the intensity of the melody.

Right hand

There is no great variety of bow articulation on this waltz. From measure 42 to the end the use of legato and spiccato follows the composer’s idea. From measures 29 to 41, a bowing change was made in order to improve the singing line and sound projection. The amount of speed and weight applied from measure 1 to measure 28 is in accordance with the direction of the shape of the phrase. From measures 35 to 41, the bow leads the sequences of octaves as a *sole musical gesture*. In the spiccato section the bow is played from one-third of the lower part in light way and not too short.

Manuscript of Waltz No. 1

TRÊS VALSAS BRASILEIRAS
para viola e piano

VIOLA,
Mignone
(1968)

valsa lenta
cresc. e animando
atempo
poco affrettando *cresc.* *cedendo* *poco rit.*
port. *poco* *animando*
e cun. *un poco precipitando*
poco rit. *atempo* *rit. poco* *sostenendo*
Piu Vivo *(rit.)*
cedendo un poco *leggero*
poco rit. *D.C.*

Valsa Lenta (Performing Edition by Carlos Aleixo do Reis)

Tres Valsas Brasileiras

Viola

I. Valsa Lenta

M ignone (1968)

Ed. by Carlos A dos Reis

Valsa Lenta

p *cres.* *animando* *poco affrettando* *cresc.* *cedendo un poco* *a tempo* *poco rit.* *cres. e animando*

II string
III string IV string
I string
II string

2

39 *8va* *To Coda* *vbto*

45 *vbto*

52 *cedendo un poco*

58 *poco rit.*

64 *vbto*

70 *poco rit.* *D.C. al Coda*

Dr. Carlos Aleixo dos Reis was born in Brazil/State of Minas Gerais and graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Brazil), a Master of Master degree in Music Performance from Shenandoah University (USA), and a DMA in Viola Performance at Shenandoah University as a CAPES/Brazil scholar in the studio of Doris Lederer. Since 1997, he has served as Professor of Viola at Federal University of Minas Gerais. A frequent soloist and chamber musician, Carlos performs in a duo with pianist and wife Prof. Dr. Cenira Schreibe, emphasizing modern works by Brazilian and Latin American composers.

Notes

¹ Mário de Andrade, *Pequena História da Música* (São Paulo: Martins, 1951), 184–85.

² André Nobre, “Musica Brasileira para Viola Solo” (master’s thesis, Universiade do Rio de Janeiro, 2000), 12–18.

³ Andrade.

⁴ Emerson L. DeBiaggi, “Brazilian Art-music in the Post-nationalist Period” (PhD diss., University of Santa Barbara, 1996), 3–4.

⁵ Nobre.

⁶ Bruno Kiefer, *Francisco Mignone, Vida e Obra* (Porto Alegre: Editora Movimento, 1983), 9–12.

⁷ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 5th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Editora nova Fronteira, 2000), 229–33.

⁸ Esdras Rodrigues Silva, “Francico Mignone: Experimentation in the Three Sonatas for Violin

and Piano (1964–1966)” (D.M.A. diss., Boston University, 1999).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi Brasileira, 1981), 64–5.

¹¹ Kiefer, 16.

¹² Ibid., 16–17 (Translated by Robert Estep).

¹³ Ibid., 19 (Translated by Robert Estep).

¹⁴ See Mariz, 234–35.

¹⁵ Kiefer, 31.

¹⁶ Priscilla Paes, “A Utilização do Elemento Afro-Brasileiro na Obra de Francisco Mignone” (master’s thesis, State University of São Paulo, 1989), 21.

¹⁷ Brazilians claim there is no equivalent word in English. The word may come from Portuguese navigators who discovered most of the world and who spent long lonely years sailing the high seas away from their homes. The word “saudade” comes from the Latin word “solitas” (loneliness) and denotes “a feeling of nostalgic remembrance of people or things, absent or forever lost, accompanied by the desire to see or possess them once more.” Saudades are what we all feel for family members, Rio, Carnival, music and batucadas, our homeland and its culture, and for each other. *Etymologic Dictionary Nova Fronteira da Língua Portuguesa* by Antonio Geraldo da Cunha.

¹⁸ Street corner waltzes.

¹⁹ Kiefer, 48–50.

²⁰ Mariz, 239–40.

²¹ The original manuscript is at the Music Archive of the National Library of Rio de Janeiro.

²² According to Grove, in the twentieth century the *choro* or *chorinho* have been closely connected with other popular dances of urban Brazil such as the maxixe, the *tango brasileiro*, and the samba. All have the same rhythmic patterns (syncopated binary figures).

Sources

Andrade, Mário de. *Ensaio sobre a Música Brasileira*. São Paulo: Martins, 1962.

———. *Modinhas Imperiais*. São Paulo, Brasil: Martins, 1964.

———. *Aspectos da Música Brasileira*. São Paulo: Martins, 1965.

———. *Pequena História da Música*. São Paulo: Martins, 1951.

Béhague, Gerard. *Music in Latin America: An Introduction*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979.

Barrett, Henry. *The Viola: Complete Guide for Teachers and Students*. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1997.

Dalton, David. *Playing the Viola: Conversations with William Primrose*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

DeBiaggi, Emerson L. "Brazilian Art-music in the Post-nationalist Period." PhD diss., University of Santa Barbara, 1996.

Feres-Lloyd, Sônia. "The Viola Compositions of Ernest Mahle and Their Idiomatic and Pedagogical Characteristics." D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2000.

Garcia, Thomas George Caracas. "The Brazilian Choro: Music Politics and Performance." PhD diss., Duke University, 1997.

Kater, Carlos. *Musica Viva e H. J. Koellreutter: Movimentos em Direção à Modernidade*. São Paulo: Musa Editora, 2001.

Kiefer, Bruno. *Francisco Mignone, Vida e Obra*. Porto Alegre: Movimento, 1993.

Mariz, Vasco. *História da Música no Brasil*. 5th ed. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2000.

Mendes, A. N. "Música Brasileira para Viola Solo." Dissertação de Mestrado UniRio/Universidade do Rio de Janeiro, 2002.

Neves, José Maria. *Música Contemporânea Brasileira*. São Paulo: Ricordi Brasileira, 1981.

Nobre, André. "Música Brasileira para Viola Solo." Master's thesis, Universidade do Rio de Janeiro, 2000.

Paes, Priscilla. "A Utilização do Elemento Afro-Brasileiro na Obra de Francisco Mignone." Master's thesis, State University of São Paulo, 1989.

Silva, Esdras Rodrigues. "Francisco Mignone: Experimentation in the Three Sonatas for Violin and Piano (1964–1966)." D.M.A. diss., Boston University, 1999.

LAMENT AND LAMENT WITH GHOSTS

A COLLABORATION WITH HELEN CALLUS

by Joel Feigin

When Helen Callus arrived at the University of California, Santa Barbara, it was as if a dynamo had come—she had more energy than the rest of us put together, and she quickly built up a first-class viola studio.

This development was particularly wonderful since I have always loved the viola: it is obvious to me why Gluck said, “The viola never lies.”

It took me a while to screw up my courage to ask Helen if she would be interested in my writing for her and her studio. Fortunately she responded with enthusiasm, and our collaboration has borne fruit in two performances of new viola works—*Lament*, a virtuosic solo piece for Helen; and *Lament with Ghosts*, in which a consort of six violas is used as an accompaniment for the original solo piece, turning it into a concerto-like work. The six-violas “accompaniment” is designed to form yet a third piece, *Ghosts*, which can, like the other two, be performed as an independent work. And, in listening again to these pieces in preparation for this article, I am increasingly intrigued by an idea Helen and I have tossed around—a fourth piece in which all three versions would be played successively as one larger work.

I began these works immediately after finishing *Twelfth Night*, a very tonal and melodic opera based on Shakespeare’s comedy, which had occupied me for several years. Now I hoped to

explore very different musical possibilities, and a *Lament* seemed a natural place to start. Indeed as its title implies, these pieces are expressions of passionate, even operatic grief. The ensemble represents “ghosts,” fragments of feeling and action that lie behind the solo as its disembodied reflection, perhaps the cause of its grief.

With these ideas in mind, in my first meeting with Helen we explored a long list of extended techniques. She was very patient indeed; we went through each possibility and quickly agreed that many of them were simply ineffective. There remained some that worked very well, most of which had been explored in the first half of the twentieth century—*col legno* (if time is allowed to replace bows!), *ponticello*, various kinds of *pizzicato* and harmonics, *glissandi*, and quarter-tone trills. And, although I am not fond of over-bowing in most circumstances, it proved to be useful in some of places of extreme anguish.

Then, shyly, Helen said: “You know, what I really like are beautiful, smooth melodies.” Relieved, and confident after my experience with the opera and earlier vocal music, I said, “Oh, in that case, don’t worry—I can do that easily!”

So I was left with two very different ideas for the work: a dark lament with mysterious and strange sounds, and Helen’s desire for beautiful melodies. It was really quite a quandary! I had already jotted down a short snippet of

anguished music, beginning with *fortissimo* quadruple stops, which we agreed worked fine; but its closest approach to a melody was a slow, legato, three-note phrase that I had stolen from Bach's F Minor Three-part Invention—a dark piece if ever there was one. It might be very nice, but a melody it wasn't. So I began to think of the possibility of writing a different piece altogether, and I came up with a simple, folk-like melody in C-sharp major—almost like a spiritual—that I liked very much (ex. 1). I had no idea what it might have to do with the ideas I had previously sketched. A few weeks later, while on vacation in the Blue Ridge Mountains, I was going over my three-note melodic fragment in my head, and I found that by raising one note a half-step, it formed the beginning of a quiet A-

major melody, similar to the folk-like melodies that can be found in the lieder of Schubert and Brahms (ex. 2). Now the piece began to take shape—anguished writing, using quartertone-trills and *glissandi* to heighten the intensity, is set off by two melodic sections of the utmost simplicity.

Both the simple melodies and the anguished quartertone trills take place against a background of silence. Especially at the beginning and ending of the work, vast stretches of silence encompass the anguish: the initial quadruple stop emerges like a scream from empty space, and at the end quiet, fragmentary phrases die away until only the soloist is left, her quiet *pizzicati* fading back into the all-encompassing silence.

Example 1. Feigin, Lament, mm. 35–48.

Adagio (♩=50)
cantabile e molto espressivo

The musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three staves. The first staff shows measures 36 to 40, starting with a half note F# and a whole note G#. The second staff shows measures 41 to 45, starting with a half note F# and a whole note G#, followed by a series of quarter notes and eighth notes. The third staff shows measures 46 to 48, starting with a half note F# and a whole note G#, followed by a series of quarter notes and eighth notes. The score includes various musical markings such as 'p' (piano), 'cresc.' (crescendo), 'ten.' (tenuto), 'harm. vibr.' (harmonic vibration), and '3' (triplets).

Example 2. Feigin, *Lament*, mm. 109–32.

Adagio ♩=50

The musical score is written for a single instrument, likely a violin or viola, in 3/4 time with a tempo of Adagio (♩=50). The key signature has two sharps (D major). The score is divided into five systems. The first system (mm. 110-113) is in bass clef, starting with a fermata, then playing a melodic line with a *p* dynamic. The second system (mm. 114-117) continues the melodic line, marked *senza misura* and *mf*. The third system (mm. 118-122) is in treble clef, showing rests for measures 118, 119, 120, 121, and 122, with a fermata over measure 119. The fourth system (mm. 123-127) is in treble clef, starting with a rest for measure 123, then playing a melodic line with *LH pizz.* and *arco* markings, and a *p* dynamic. The fifth system (mm. 128-132) is in treble clef, showing a melodic line with dynamics *f*, *p*, and *ppp*, and a *rit.* marking with a dashed line.

This use of silence is, for me, the most important new aspect of the *Lament* cycle, and of course it would not have been possible without the influence of John Cage. My own background has been in a very different tradition than Cage, and I had never been particularly interested in the “happenings” that he was engaged in as I was starting to compose. But, about ten years ago I discovered the “number pieces”—his last works, in which each player is directed to play short, quiet, melodic

fragments written in fully traditional notation, beginning and ending at any point within a designated time-span, say, twenty-five seconds or so. The result is that the vast majority of the pieces consist of silence, and that the performers, having so little to do, play their short fragments with the utmost expressivity and concentration. I found the results not only extraordinarily beautiful, but also the closest expression in music to the experience of “samadhi,” or meditative concentration, at least

as I was beginning to experience it in my Zen practice. There are brief periods of time in meditation in which thoughts arise and disappear, but without leading to a *train* of thought—they are experienced against the background of silence, and whether painful or joyous, they can be felt to be “OK” somehow, because they are simply emanations from silence. Of course, *Lament* is very far from the indeterminacy of events in Cage’s number pieces, and there are trains of thoughts and ideas—melodies and anguished trills that continue for pages. This is closer to my own experience that meditation is filled with many thoughts and strong emotions, the moments of concentration being few and far between.

Cage had one other related influence on the *Lament* pieces. After one of my students heard about my idea he said, “You’re aware that you’re doing ‘modular composition,’ aren’t you?” Indeed I was not—I had only a vague idea what was meant by the term, and I certainly had never dreamed of writing such a piece myself! He explained that in this form of composition, a group of independent pieces arises when the separate parts of an ensemble piece can be performed in their own right. So, apparently I was doing “modular composition” after all! For me, it is the use of silence that allows this possibility to be actualized: when there are vast lengths of silence, these silences can be filled by many very different kinds of music—and these different “musics” can thus form continuities of their own; sometimes far removed from that of the other musics around them. For example, in the solo version, the C-sharp major “spiritual” is heard on its own, in total simplicity, with vast silences between each phrase. But in the concerto-like version, *Lament with Ghosts*, the accompanying “ghosts” fill in these rests with very quiet and simple diatonic

descending scales, like sobs in Italian opera, *non-vibrato ponticello* tremolos against simple *ponticello* harmonics. But in the six-violas version, *Ghosts*, this disembodied music is heard by itself, interspersed with silences, where originally the solo viola played its “spiritual.” Thus, despite their common derivation, *Ghosts* is bound to be a quite different piece than its companions—it never uses the “spiritual” at all! And, the A-major melody never appears as such, either. What is heard is the accompaniment that in *Lament with Ghosts* turns the unaccompanied melody into a quiet chorale: *Ghosts* has the chorale without the chorale melody. Further, since in the concerto-like *Lament with Ghosts*, the solo naturally has quite extended sections all to itself, the amount of silence in *Ghosts* is far larger than in either of the other works. It is the most radical of the three works, and we haven’t been able to bring it to performance yet. Even though the actual notes are already there in *Lament with Ghosts*, the entire flow of the piece is totally different, and it needs to be learned as if it is a totally new piece, which indeed it is.

The descending “sobbing” scales I mention above are the only survival of one of my original ideas for the piece: the “ghosts” would play snippets of the viola repertory using strange, distorting techniques—the repertory itself being the “ghosts” haunting the solo player. The only remnant of this idea is at mm. 60 to 64: here the six accompanying violas play a version of the opening theme of Mozart’s G-minor viola quintet (ex. 3 and 3a). The descending half-step motive derived from Mozart then becomes the basis of the disembodied sobbing scales that have so often represented tears and grief, and which perhaps represent them in Mozart as well.

Example 3. Feigin, Ghosts, mm. 60–4.

The musical score is for six violas, labeled Viola 1 through Viola 6. The music is in 2/4 time. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 60 to 61, and the second system covers measures 62 to 64. The dynamics are *ff* (fortissimo), *sf* (sforzando), *p* (piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). The articulations are *arco* (arco), *pizz.* (pizzicato), and *arco, pont.* (arco, ponticello). The score is written in a grand staff for each viola, with a single staff for each. The notes are in the bass clef. The first system shows Viola 1 with a melodic line, while Viola 2 through Viola 6 have a rhythmic pattern. The second system shows Viola 1 with a melodic line, while Viola 2 through Viola 6 have a rhythmic pattern. The dynamics and articulations are indicated above the notes.

Viola 1

arco pizz. arco, pont.

ff *sf* *p* *pp*

pizz.

Viola 2

ff *sf*

pizz.

Viola 3

ff *sf*

Viola 4

arco pizz.

ff *sf*

pizz.

Viola 5

ff *sf*

pizz.

Viola 6

60 61 62 63 64

ff *sf*

Example 3a. Mozart, *String Quintet in G Minor*, movt. I, Viola I, mm. 8–10.



I wrote most of the *Lament* pieces in the summer of 2006, my first major work after *Twelfth Night*. The most challenging aspect of the project was to imagine the three different versions at once. I therefore started with what ultimately became *Lament with Ghosts*, which brings together all the elements of the cycle. When I had a fairly advanced draft, I began to focus on *Lament*, perfecting the solo part as best I could, so that Helen could start working on it.

From the beginning, I emphasized that my intention was to write a piece that, however difficult, would feel like it had been written by a violist. I have found that fine performers are often very reluctant to suggest changes, and so I have a few techniques I use to make them feel permitted to suggest changes, and thus inform me of unidiomatic passages. I always mention Brahms's playful threat to Joachim to take the Violin Concerto to a "stricter player" who would be more honest in his or her criticism—indeed, I feel that the openness of Brahms to Joachim's advice is a wonderful model for composers in relation to the performers for whom they write.

Once Helen understood my attitude, we had a great time (or a least I did!) in making some changes so that every phrase of the piece was

really idiomatic. A lot of this had to do with notation—the very first chord, as I had written it, suggested to Helen a bowing that wouldn't allow her to achieve the dramatic intensity that I intended. Eventually we worked out the bowing indications that now stand in the score. When I first heard Helen play it this way, I immediately said, "Yes! That's the sound I heard!" (See ex. 4.) Helen suggested the fingering in measures 30–33, and the bowing marks throughout have either been suggested by her or (at least) didn't give rise to complaint. I find it important to notate so as to give permission to players to play as they would if the composer wasn't present; when, eventually, a performer achieves my exact intent in a passage, I always ask "how could I have notated that so you would have done it immediately?" I have learned a tremendous amount by asking good players this question through the years. Of course, performers have different reactions to the same marks, but nevertheless, it is illuminating to ask, and I always take the advice (sometimes to the annoyance of the next player!)

Example 4. Feigin, Lament with Ghosts, mm. 1–3.

Grave ♩=50
senza misura

Allegro furioso
♩=150
martellato e staccatissimo;
choke sound

Solo Viola

Grave ♩=50
martellato e staccatissimo;
choke sound

Allegro furioso
♩=150

Viola 1

Grave ♩=50
martellato e staccatissimo;
choke sound

Allegro furioso
♩=150

Viola 2

Grave ♩=50
martellato e staccatissimo;
choke sound

Allegro furioso
♩=150

Viola 3

Grave ♩=50
martellato e staccatissimo;
choke sound

Allegro furioso
♩=150

Viola 4

Grave ♩=50
martellato e staccatissimo;
choke sound

Allegro furioso
♩=150

Viola 5

Grave ♩=50
martellato e staccatissimo;
choke sound

Allegro furioso
♩=150

Viola 6

The most illuminating exchange concerned *pizzicati*. I love the dramatic power of *fortissimo pizzicati*. I have always wanted to steal the violin *pizzicato* chord immediately before the first quiet episode of Schoenberg's String Trio

(although I haven't pulled it off yet!) But Helen pointed out that, on the viola, *pizzicati* as strong as I had imagined can pull strings out of tune. (And I remembered that in my only piece with such *pizzicati*—*Echoes from the Holocaust*, for

viola, oboe, and piano—the *pizzicato* passage is at the very end of the piece, making that danger irrelevant.) Therefore, we changed a lot of *pizzicati* to very short *fortissimo* chords, marked *martellato e staccatissimo*, and with an additional indication to choke the sound, as in measure 3 (see the previous example).

In other places, I had to encourage Helen to exaggerate some of my markings—for example, I had imagined the *ritenuto* in measure 82 as

very extreme indeed—enough so that the harmonics can be played with total confidence (ex. 5). I find that I very often have to encourage players and singers to use enough *rubato* for my music—despite including notes on performance that basically summarize romantic performance practices involving *rubato*, tempo modification, and long lines. (The best model for performance of the solo part of *Lament*, especially the anguished sections, is Maria Callas singing Verdi at his most passionate.)

Example 5. Feigin, *Lament with Ghosts*, mm. 81–88.

The musical score for Example 5, Feigin, *Lament with Ghosts*, measures 81–88, is presented for six violas. The score is divided into measures 81, 82, 83, and 84. The markings and performance instructions are as follows:

- Solo Viola:**
 - Measure 81: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 82: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 83: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 84: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
- Viola 1:**
 - Measure 81: *ritenuto*, *pont. ansioso*, *pp non vibr.*
 - Measure 82: *ritenuto*, *pp non vibr.*
 - Measure 83: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 84: *ritenuto*, *harm. modo ord. 8va*, *pp dolciss.*
- Viola 2:**
 - Measure 81: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 82: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 83: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 84: *ritenuto*, *harm. modo ord. 8va*, *pp dolciss.*
- Viola 4:**
 - Measure 81: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 82: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 83: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 84: *ritenuto*, *harm. modo ord. 8va*, *pp dolciss.*
- Viola 5:**
 - Measure 81: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 82: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 83: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 84: *ritenuto*, *harm. modo ord. 8va*, *pp dolciss.*
- Viola 6:**
 - Measure 81: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 82: *ritenuto*, *pp*
 - Measure 83: *ritenuto*, *harm.* (marked with a sharp sign), *pp dolciss.*
 - Measure 84: *ritenuto*, *harm. modo ord. 8va*, *pp dolciss.*

Allegro

Solo Vla.

Allegro

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

harm.
(#)

pp *dolciss.*

pont.

p *agitato*

Allegro

Vla. 4

Vla. 5

Vla. 6

pont.

ppp

85 86 87 88

The aspect of the piece that Helen and I worked on the most were the silences, which are far longer and more frequent than in any of my

previous works, and which I think Helen found more challenging than the most virtuosic passages. The key here was to realize that the

music and thus the performance continues without a break through the silences—and to extend them far longer than one would at first imagine them, and to be able to stay with the tension until it is vividly palpable for the audience.

After Helen performed the premiere of *Lament* magnificently in June 2007, I set to work on refining *Lament with Ghosts* and *Ghosts* to make them ready for performance by her class the next year. I was frankly a bit nervous about this, since to express the anxiety and pain of the “ghosts” (the six accompanying violas), I used far more extended techniques than I ever had previously; I needed to go out on lots of limbs. Another very difficult matter was realizing the accompaniment so that it could stand as an independent piece—and a different piece than the other two—without any compromise in the effectiveness of *Lament with Ghosts* itself. For example, while the six accompanying violas all play the first chord of the work, the second chord is left for the soloist alone (see ex. 4). It would have been perfectly possible to have the entire ensemble play the second chord, but I found that this greatly diminishes the effectiveness of the ensemble entry in measure 15, which arrives after a very long silence. Somehow, the second chord suggested that the music had “gone somewhere” and after that long silence, it proved more dramatic for the audience to realize that, at least in *Ghosts*, the music had not gone anywhere yet, rendering the harmonic motion of the succeeding passage much more mysterious. At the same time, in *Lament with Ghosts*, having the soloist play the second chord alone served to assert his or her dominance all the more powerfully.

When the ensemble rehearsals reached the point where I could hear the piece, I was

delighted that a few changes enabled the passages I had worried about the most to sound very well. For example, I changed some *col legno* attacks to very short, accented *arco* attacks, just as with the *pizzicati* Helen and I had changed the year before. I also asked all the players to pile up their entrances on the high B in measure 4, and similarly, I asked that the players play the climatic phrase of measures 225 to 227 out of synchronization. In the spring, the entire studio performed the work with great success, and I was all the more impressed when I listened to a recording of the performance once again in preparing this article.

The *Lament* pieces are very dramatic, and Helen and I have found that lighting can enhance their effectiveness. The lighting we used, designed by the lighting-designer at UCSB, Mark Somerfield, began and ended with total darkness. The two melodic sections were lit in warmer tones than the rest of the piece, and the final fade-out was very long, Helen playing the last pizzicato notes from memory in total darkness. We also experimented with simple movement ideas: at the end of *Lament with Ghosts*, I directed the ensemble players to turn off the lights on their music stands and leave slowly and quietly as their music comes to an end. This proved very effective, and I would like to find ways to extend movement to other sections of the piece, thus providing a more organic basis for this conclusion. It would be wonderful if a stage director or choreographer could join us!

From the beginning, I hoped that the *Lament* pieces would be practical pieces for violists and their studios. The *Lament* itself is a large-scale (seventeen minute) solo work for a master player, requiring passion, dramatic projection, and great virtuosity. But the other two works are designed for the teaching studio of such a

performer. They will introduce players at various levels to contemporary techniques, but above all they are very serious pieces indeed; each, naturally, on the same large time-scale as the solo work. The six violists in the accompanying viola consort of *Lament with Ghosts* are divided into two groups: the first and fourth parts are written for advanced

students, who join the soloist to form virtuoso trios (ex. 6). The second and fifth players need less experience and the third and sixth still less. The work is unquestionably a major project for a studio, and the ensemble is sometimes quite difficult. At the same time, the most difficult sections need not be played with absolute synchronization.

Example 6. Feigin, *Lament with Ghosts*, mm. 112–14.

The musical score for Example 6, Feigin, *Lament with Ghosts*, mm. 112–14, is presented for five staves. The Solo Viola part is marked *sfp molto passionato* and features a melodic line with dynamic markings *f* and *sf*. Viola 1 and Viola 4 have similar melodic lines with *mf* and *f* markings. Viola 2 and Viola 5 are mostly silent, with a final measure marked *f* and a trill *tr 1/4*.

Altogether, my collaboration with Helen Callus and her studio on these pieces was one of the most rewarding I have enjoyed with any performers. They brought all their passion and technique, not to mention a lot of sheer hard work to making this project a reality, and I am deeply grateful to them all—and to the wonderful instrument that inspired these works—the viola.

Joel Feigin (b: New York, City, 1951) is a composer whose music has been heard across the U.S. and abroad, from France and Germany to Taiwan and Korea. His latest work is a piano concerto for Yael Weiss commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard. A student of Nadia Boulanger at Fontainebleau and Roger Sessions at Juilliard, he currently is Professor of Composition at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Links to sound files:

[Lament recording](#)

Helen Callus, viola

[Lament with Ghosts recording](#)

Helen Callus, solo viola

UCSB Viola Ensemble:

Kevin Bishop

Bridget Callahan

Alex Chang

Shannon McCue

Hillary Schoap

Linda Shaver

INTERVIEW

WITH THE 2008 PRIMROSE INTERNATIONAL VIOLA COMPETITION WINNERS

by Dwight Pounds

DRP: It is my privilege, and indeed high honor, to be visiting with the top three finishers in the 2008 Primrose International Viola Competition (Primrose Memorial Scholarship Competition), held concurrently with International Viola Congress XXXVI last June at Arizona State University in Tempe. These include Dimitri Murrath, first prize winner, and Emily Deans and Molly Carr, second and third place finishers respectively. Now that articles and pictures have been published and their names have been spread throughout the viola- and string-playing world, my purpose today is to match their names with their personal experiences and come to know them as individuals, learn their similarities, differences, and something of their thought processes.

Before we began the discussion of backgrounds, major teachers and recital experiences, I have a comment and a question specifically for Dimitri.

As a Belgian, you are the only European among the three winners. For benefit of the readers who have never heard you speak, let me comment that your English is very American in pronunciation and almost without accent. I find this puzzling because the Belgium to the United Kingdom to the U.S. sequence seems to contradict this. To my thinking your English should have either a heavy French or English accent, but I am beginning to suspect that French is not your mother language.

DM: At home, I spoke French with my mother and Flemish with my father. But I went to a French speaking school, and this means that my French is much stronger than my Dutch. At school in Belgium, we started learning English only at the age of fourteen, which meant that arriving in the United Kingdom, I could not understand anything. It took about six months to get my English more fluent, which happened very naturally, since I was totally submerged in the language.

DRP: Let's discuss how you got to where you are in your careers at the moment; for instance, where you were born, when you began your musical studies, and something about your instruction—beginning with Dimitri and moving on to Emily and Molly.

DM: I was born in Belgium, where I lived until I was fifteen. My life was very regular, going to school, and doing some violin in the evenings. But as a teenager, music became a stronger passion, and by the age of fifteen, it was very difficult to devote enough time to practice with the time spent at regular school. So I left Belgium to go to a special music school, the Yehudi Menuhin School in England. There I received intense training (on violin) from Natalia Boyarsky, and her assistant Lutsia Ibragimova. This is where I learnt all the basics in music, whether it be music history, harmony, or instrumental playing. The school is very small—around fifty students— and with its tailor-made individual teaching, one can learn a lot very fast.



From left to right: Jennifer Stumm, 2005 Primrose Competition winner; Nokuthula Ngwenyama, 1993 Primrose Competition winner and 2008 Primrose Competition Director; and Dimitri Murrath, 2008 Primrose Competition winner (all photos courtesy of Dwight Pounds)

DRP: How long were you there and what was your next move?

DM: After four years in the Menuhin School, I moved to London to study (this time on viola) with David Takeno. Mr. Takeno has a very deep knowledge of music, but what he does better than anyone else I have met is to bring out strengths and what makes every individual special. What he did for me was to let me find who I am as a musician. During this time, I began to give regular recitals in major venues in Britain and in Belgium. As I had spent quite a bit

of time composing myself, performing contemporary music became a “specialty,” and I commissioned some new works for solo viola for my recitals. *Soliloquy* 2 by Edwin Roxburgh is one of them.

DRP: Was it at this point you came to the States?

DM: Yes. Two years ago, I came to study with Kim Kashkashian at the New England Conservatory. It has been a tremendous experience, receiving guidance from an artist and someone who knows best about performing as a recitalist and soloist. As well as

Ms. Kashkashian, I was attracted to come to the U.S. for the freedom of expression one enjoys here. Over the past three to four years, I was able to live concentrating solely on solo and chamber music work. I am very blessed to be able to do so.

DRP: Emily, tell us something about your early career in music.

ED: I was born in Dallas, Texas, where I began violin studies at the age of five. Even as a Suzuki student, I was extremely serious about my studies, and I told my teacher I wanted to be a soloist when I was only six! After taking lessons at a local Suzuki institute for two years, I switched to Emanuel Borok, concertmaster of the Dallas Symphony, when I was seven. I was also home schooled and didn't attend a "regular" school until I entered Curtis at the age of nineteen. I lived in California, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey before my undergrad, and throughout this time continued to pursue my violin studies. I entered Curtis as a violinist in 2003, and I had absolutely no idea that there was a career change in site. I am extremely indebted to my teachers there: Pamela Frank, Arnold Steinhardt, and Joseph de Pasquale. They were all wonderful teachers and extremely instrumental in my switch to viola. Kim Kashkashian, my current teacher, has also been an amazing mentor, and I am greatly indebted to her.

DRP: Molly, where were you born, where did you live, and how did you find yourself with a violin under your chin?

MC: I was born in North Carolina and then moved to Egypt (it's always fun to surprise people with that phrase!), where I lived for a little over a year before moving to Reno, Nevada, where I stayed until moving to New

York City at age eighteen. Like Emily, I was home-schooled for almost all of my life, with the exception of the first, third, and fourth years of high school in which I attended a private school and took classes at the University of Nevada, Reno, in order to fulfill my high school credits. After moving to New York, I studied at the Manhattan School of Music for two years before transferring to the Juilliard School, where I am currently a fourth-year undergraduate. My teachers in Reno were Caryn Neidhold and Virginia Blakeman. My teachers at the Manhattan School of Music were Pinchas Zukerman and Patinka Kopec, and finally, my present teachers are Heidi Castleman and Steve Tenenbom.

DRP: This is a rather incredible list of teachers—not many people can boast this type of pedigree.

MC: Absolutely. All were and are incredible teachers; I am truly indebted to each of them for all they have given me, individually and collectively.

DRP: It is safe to presume that one does not study with such a distinguished group of teachers without virtue of considerable study in music before enrolling at the Manhattan School. And how did music fit into the home-schooling?

MC: I started on the violin at the age of six. My mother decided that part of my home-school education would be learning to play a musical instrument. When a teacher came into Reno spreading word that he wished to start a home-school orchestra program, my mother told me I had until their first meeting to pick an instrument. My first choice was the drums, but she wouldn't have anything to do with that, so I settled for my second choice—the violin.

DRP: You doubtless are the first violist I have ever heard admit that his or her first instrumental preference was the drums! Percussion's loss is our gain. Please continue.

MC: I studied the Suzuki method until I was eleven—when I first discovered the viola. Caryn Neidhold, my teacher at the time, wanted to start a viola quintet with a group of four violinists and a cellist, and so one other violinist and I got the short straws and were handed violas. From that point on, the violin ceased to exist for me ...

DRP: Do you have the slightest idea what prompted Ms. Neidhold to start this viola quintet? Was she a violist herself?

MC: She taught and played both the violin and the viola, but I believe she had only one or two beginning viola students, as apposed to about forty violin students! And—although I am not *entirely* sure—I think her preference was always for the viola. This was just the first of many subsequent, successful “alchemic” experiments: trying to discover if it was possible to change silver into gold and see how long that change would last.

DRP: And this short and relatively insignificant experience in a pick-up chamber ensemble was your introduction to the viola?

MC: It gets better! Even though I was playing on what had to be something close to a plastic, midget-sized, factory-made viola, I couldn't put the thing down! The sound seemed so deep, rich, and melancholy, I had never known such an instrument existed! I started to play my entire violin repertoire on the viola—until my teacher finally said, “It's time you make a choice, Molly.” But it really wasn't much of a choice; the viola was my instrument—no

question about it. A year later, I became really serious about music and knew without a doubt that I wanted to make a career playing the viola.

DRP: Dimitri, was your initial experience with the viola similar to Molly's? Love at first sight, or first sound, as the case may be?

DM: The viola took a long time to become my primary instrument. I could have done the transition more quickly if it wasn't for some ingrained bias against the instrument at first. This is how it started: at the Menuhin School, every violinist was made to also play viola, in quartets and in orchestra. I did not escape, and the first time I picked up a viola it was a disaster, so much so that I told my violin teacher I never wanted to touch that instrument ever again. I expected Ms. Boyarsky, my teacher at the time, to be sympathetic to my arguments, but instead, she told me to go grab my viola, and she would teach me a viola lesson. After the lesson, my aversion to the instrument was only healed partially. But Ms. Boyarsky and the director of music of the school both could see that I had a more natural talent on viola than on violin. That comes from my long arms, but also my character. I am more comfortable with singing than showing off fireworks of virtuosity. I found myself being given concert opportunities on the viola that I did not get on violin. And so, naturally, I started playing viola more. It still took another three years to overcome the prejudice I had against the repertoire. However, from the day I decided to jump, I never looked back.

DRP: I find it almost ironic that we have two people as PMSC finalists who could be classified almost in the “reluctant” category—Molly, a would-be percussionist but quick convert to the

viola and Dimitri, who required several years to complete the switch. Emily, how do you fit into this scheme?

ED: I was attracted to the sheer virility and boldness of the instrument and the rich and sonorous tone. Everything changed for me when I decided to attend a Kim Kashkashian master class during my third year at Curtis.

DRP: So the Kashkashian legacy of performance and teaching had preceded her in your mind?

ED: Yes, but I didn't have the slightest idea that my life would soon take a very important turn. The many wonderful things I had heard about her really piqued my curiosity, and I also wanted to hear some of my colleagues who were her students. Upon hearing the fourth movement of the Hindemith op. 25, no. 1 sonata, I knew this was for me. The very next day I went to the instrument office and checked out a viola. This simple act in effect marked the beginning of the end of my violin-playing career.



Emily Deans at the Primrose Winners' Recital

Primrose Memorial Scholarship Competition (PMSC)

DRP: I would like to address the PMSC specifically. Precisely how did you get involved with the Primrose competition? Beginning with Molly.

MC: At the beginning of my junior year, I decided it was time to give myself a "kick in the pants." I find that often the best way to improve my own playing is by pushing myself to take giant leaps that even I think are next to impossible: learning pieces that look way too hard forces me to learn repertoire faster than I

feel comfortable doing; signing up for a concert although I feel that it is way too soon; volunteering to play for people despite the fact that my knees will knock, or entering competitions that seem WAY out of my reach. There's a saying that goes something like this: "Shoot for the moon! Even if you miss you'll end up among the stars!" The only way to push to the next level is by going for it! So, I decided to go for it, thinking that even if I got kicked out of the first round, at least I would have pushed myself to learn a lot of repertoire and perform it at a high level.

DRP: Had you met or encountered many of the contestants prior to the competition?



Molly Carr at the Primrose Competition finals

MC: I knew so many contestants! I must have known at least fifteen of the violists competing at Primrose. I hadn't realized they were all going to be there, so it was nice to get to see them all again! The viola world is so small.

DRP: It is obvious that you and Emily were acquainted, but had you met Dimitri?

MC: I had never met Dimitri before the competition. Unfortunately, I never got to hear him play, either! I was always backstage madly warming up while he was performing.

Emily and I had known each other for about a year. She was a good friend of my roommate here in New York and had come to stay with us a few times while visiting the city this past year. We also attended a festival in England together just a few months before going to Arizona. When I heard she was competing, there was no doubt in my mind she would win a prize in the competition. She's fantastic!

DRP: Dimitri, how did you progress to the PMSC?

DM: I had heard of the Primrose competition for many years, especially through the four previous winners. Over the years, I had played with, met, or heard Jennifer Stumm, Brian Chen, Antoine Tamestit, and Lawrence Power. For me they were the best advertisements for the competition. Also, among the contestants there were probably about a dozen whom I had met previously in other competitions, festivals, or schools. With Emily, and all of Kim Kashkashian's students, it was more special. We go to school together of course, but also, we had this little group doing "the Primrose sessions," in which we performed our

competition repertoire for each other every few days.

DRP: And by so doing, kept one another sharp, alert, and honed the group competitive spirit. Emily, Dimitri established that you were in the "Primrose sessions." Does it follow that the inertia of all this activity left you no choice but to enter?

ED: I applied for the Primrose along with many people in my studio. I knew many of the contestants, including Molly and Dimitri. I've stayed with Molly and her roommate many times when taking trips to New York, and I know Dimitri from my studio at NEC.

Competitions

DRP: Let me invite you to comment on the subject of competitions: one must suppose that the ultimate purpose is to win them, but I am more concerned with deeper insights into either benefits or sources of disappointment. How many have you entered, how many have you won or placed, and how do you handle disappointment if you are dissatisfied either with how you played or with the judging? Continuing with Emily.

ED: For me, entering a competition is always a gamble. Even if you play your absolute best, there is no guarantee you will be given a fair or impartial chance. There are also many personal tastes involved in this process, and with this many opinions. For this reason, I think it is best to enter a competition as thoroughly prepared as possible, but expecting nothing. The goal should simply be to play well, and beyond that it is out of your hands. From my experience, this is also when you are the most successful.

DRP: Dimitri, please share your observations on competitions.

DM: Competitions are subjective, and it can be difficult to deal with a result that doesn't go your way, especially if you played your best.

The way I deal with this is to leverage those moments to push myself further to a point no one can question the authority of your interpretation. The Primrose came for me at one of those points, where I had had to deal with disappointment. To learn to step on those moments to reach higher is very important. I take part in competitions not to win but to challenge myself.

Competitions can be of great help in building a career, but whether you get a good or bad result, it is essential to remember the highly subjective nature they have and not fall into overconfidence or insecurities.

DRP: Molly?

MC: Perhaps the most obvious answer would be for gaining exposure. Most big competitions attract a number of judges and audience members who are known to be well connected and/or are "well-seasoned" musicians who have been successfully maneuvering about the music world for a long time. It could be that playing for these people could open doors in unexpected places and present new opportunities. Often, one doesn't have to win a prize in a competition in order to benefit in this way.

Also, as I said before, competitions can be extremely useful in getting yourself to "go for

the gold" or push beyond what you think you're capable of—in other words, they're good for expanding one's boundaries. I think as long as one goes into a competition with no expectations of winning or losing, but instead has a mindset to use the opportunity to help learn to play one's best under pressure, it's a win-win situation. My first teacher told me two things which I have never forgotten: firstly, there will always be someone who likes what you do and there will always be someone who doesn't. Often you'll never know why. Secondly, there's always a winner and there's always a loser in a competition—and it's really never up to you who's who.

Even though it's been years since I first heard these two statements, they were a lot of what helped me keep a clear head through any competitions/auditions I took over the past couple of years. When one realizes that there's no need to be either intimidated or headstrong, it's quite a load lifted from your psyche! If one humbly plays, without a thought of whether the judges are going to like this or dislike that, it's thoroughly satisfying. What will be, will be. You really have no control over the decisions made in a competition: What if a judge has heartburn while listening to your Bartók Concerto and subsequently forms an ugly opinion about your playing? Or someone just had a terrible fight with a spouse before coming to listen to you? Or ... (the list could go on and on). The judges will decide what they will decide, and as long as you're comfortable with this thought, competing can be a wonderful way of honing your performance skills.

Career Plans

DRP: I realize that you are still young people with many decisions yet to make, but, let me ask about your long-range goals, personally and professionally, to the extent you are able at the moment. Continuing with Molly.

MC: I would like my career to be comprised of a mixture of solo recitals and chamber music performances, hopefully with a professional string quartet.

DRP: Emily?

ED: I have many goals, but I cannot say exactly what sort of career I would like to have at the moment. I want to do many things, including chamber music, solo, teaching, and possibly orchestral playing. More than anything, I hope to be a mentor to many young musicians in the future, just as my unbelievably amazing teachers have been to me. I cannot think of anything more enriching than passing on this wonderful art form to other people.

DRP: Dimitri?

DM: Sharing music is an amazing privilege. With music, you can bring to another soul a deep emotion, whether it is joyful or sad. If one is touched and strengthened by what I do, then I consider a performance successful. As a violist, the three sources of great joy are solo performance, chamber music, and teaching. In solo performance, you can express yourself without any restraints; in complete freedom. In chamber music, it is exciting to add your creativity to others, to have four or sixteen times more ideas; there is of course the amazing repertoire. Teaching is also a very enriching work; in fact teaching and

performing go hand in hand. After teaching I find my own practice so much more organized, clear, and fun!

Dr. Dwight Pounds is past executive secretary of the International Viola Society, photographer of many violists, frequent contributor to the Journal of the American Viola Society, and has served on the AVS executive board multiple times (more than thirty years total). He is the author of The American Viola Society: A History and Reference and Viola for Violinists.

ALTERNATIVE STYLES

ELECTRIC VIOLA RESOURCE GUIDE: DISCOGRAPHY AND LIST OF COMPOSITIONS

by **Martha Mooke**

This issue's article continues the exploration of the electric viola with a discography of works and a list of compositions for the instrument (this includes actual electric instruments—of 4 or more strings—or acoustic violas plugged in or miked so the sound is affected, not just amplified). There was some difficulty in selecting works to include, because technically a 5-string violin and 5-string viola can play the same repertoire, and I also have a collection of CDs from 5-string violinists. I have only included works that, as far as I can tell, were created for 5-string viola.

There are a few exceptions to the rule. For example, I included Jean Luc-Ponty because he was the first 5-string violinist that inspired me (in fact, I went out and bought the same Barcus Berry 5-string violin—before I could find any electric violas). I also included Debbie Spring. Though she plays acoustic viola, it's within an electric band (jazz-fusion), and she was one of the first violists I listened to playing something other than classical music). John Cale is the original electric violist (I had the privilege of touring and recording with him in the early 90's). There are more violists that could be included if the article was about violists breaking the mold (like Christian Asplund or Ljova) and Tanya Kalmanovich is a wonderful jazz violist, but mainly in an acoustic environment.

Many of the works on the list of compositions were composed for me and which I also premiered. I have performed several of them many times in subsequent concerts (such as Alvin Singleton's "Mookestueck" which I also recorded for Tzadik, Dave Soldier's "East St. Louis 1968 is a fave, and Tania León's "Hebras d'luz"). I've come across many videos on YouTube and a plethora of electric violists on MySpace (many of whom are jazz/rock or heavy metal), so these are wonderful resources for violists to investigate when searching for electric music. Please feel free to visit my YouTube channel at:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/POWERVLA>.

For those of you on Facebook, you are welcome to join a group I created called "[Violas on the Verge](#)" which is an extension of a clinic that I have presented at the American String Teachers Association National Conference and other events to explore and discuss the progressive journey of the viola!

Obviously this is an ever-growing list, by no means definitive, so there may be recordings and compositions that should be included. Please send email with pertinent information to violist@violasontheverge.com.

Discography

Entries include Artist, CD Title, Year, Ensemble Name, CD Details, Store details, and Artist's Website. CD Details are drawn from liner notes, artists' websites, and store advertisements and are not necessarily the opinion of the compiler of this list.

Bultmann, Nils

Forgiveness
2003

Ensemble: Nils Bultmann

Details: A unique blend of various styles and sensibilities driven by intense, creative, and extremely energetic viola playing. Solo and multi-track recording featuring guests Andy Ewen on guitar and Noah Onstrud on Didgeridoo

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website: www.nilsbultmann.com

Cale, John

The Velvet Underground and Nico
1967

Ensemble: The Velvet Underground

Details: On electric viola, Cale's sound evoked the terror of Lou Reed's compositions, with the bowed strings screeching like a runaway subway car

Available at: Amazon.com

Artist's Website:
www.rockhall.com/inductee/the-velvet-underground

D'Alberto, Luca

Apri gli occhi
2009

Ensemble: Ex. Wave

Details: Luca D'Alberto plays a 6 string Violectra

Available at: iTunes

Artist's Website:
<http://www.myspace.com/lucadalberto>

Darling, Leanne

Spiral
2006

Ensemble: Leanne Darling

Details: Viola and electronics in a mix of modern classical, jazz, blues with a touch of the Middle East and gypsy influences

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website: www.leannedarling.com

Dreyfuss, Michael

Nice & Queasy
2006

Ensemble: Michael Doc Dreyfuss

Details: Amazing instrumental rock by a founding member of McKendree Spring and a master of the electric viola

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website:
www.myspace.com/michaeldocdreyfuss

Frendin, Henrik

Viola con Forza

2003

Ensemble: Henrik Frendin

Details: A portrait album with music written by Swedish composers exclusively for the artist

Available at: www.phonosuecia.com

Artist's Website: www.frendin.com

Golani, Rivka

Viola Nouveau

1983

Ensemble: Rivka Golani

Details: An album of contemporary works for viola, including Jaeger's *Favour* for electric viola

Available at: Amazon.com

Artist's Website:
www.mgam.com/artists/golani/biography.html

Haken, Rudolf

Rudolf Haken: Concerto for Five-String Viola

2007

Ensemble: Rudolf Haken

Details: "Ordinary boundaries do not fence Rudolf Haken in.... He flaunts his fiddling capabilities in a Concerto for Five-String Viola—four wacky but well-crafted movements..."
Selected as American Record Guide Critics' Choice 2007

Available at: Amazon.com

Artist's Website: www.rudolfhaken.com

Mooke, Martha

Enharmonic Vision

1997

Ensemble: Martha Mooke

Details: Playing a space-age five-string viola, using digital effects to sound like everything from a swarm of insects to a Hendrix power guitar ... startlingly original

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website: www.marthamooke.com

Mooke, Martha

Bowing: Café Mars

2003

Ensemble: Bowing

Details: Electric viola & electric guitar; Jimi Hendrix meets Maurice Ravel meets Terry Riley

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website: www.marthamooke.com

Mooke, Martha

Klezmer Concertos and Encores

2003

Ensemble: Rocketekya

Details: Features "Rocketya" by Osvaldo Golijov. Written for and performed by David Krakauer (clarinet), Alicia Svigals (violin), Martha Mooke (electric viola), and Pablo Aslan (double bass)

Available at: Amazon.com

Artist's Website:
www.osvaldogolijov.com/wd32.htm

Mooke, Martha

Somehow We Can

2002

Ensemble: Martha Mooke

Details: Chamber works by Alvin Singleton. Features "Mookestueck" composed for and performed by Martha Mooke

Available at: Amazon.com

Artist's Website: www.alvinsingleton.com

Novog, Novi

Songs from the Home Planet

2008

Ensemble: String Planet

Details: Re-imagines pop music from "Lady Madonna" to "Sukiyaki" and de-constructs the classics: Prokofiev, Saint-Saens, and Edvard Grieg

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website: www.stringplanet.com

Novog, Novi

String Planet

2004

Ensemble: String Planet

Details: Bela Fleck meets Prokofiev meets Esquivel—light-hearted instrumental fusion with a touch of classical around the edges

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website: www.stringplanet.com

Novog, Novi

Freeway Philharmonic

1977

Ensemble: Freeway Philharmonic

Details: Creative and quirky instrumentals with Chapman Stick, viola (Novi), and acoustic guitar

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website:

cdbaby.com/cd/freewayphilharmonic2

Ponty, Jean-Luc

A Taste For Passion

1979

Ensemble: Jean-Luc Ponty

Details: Recorded in 1979 in Los Angeles. First recording where Ponty is using a five-string blue Barcus-Berry violin

Available at: Amazon.com

Artist's Website: www.ponty.com

Seidenberg, Danny

Alto Logic

2008

Ensemble: The Unbande (with Novi Novog)

Details: A pop/jazz/classical crossover instrumental concoction for two violas and a Chapman Stick, created by Danny Seidenberg, long-time violist of the Turtle Island String Quartet, and Novi Novog and Larry Tuttle of String Planet and Freeway Philharmonic.

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website: www.dannyseidenberg.com

Spring, Debbie

Ocean Drive

1990

Ensemble: Debbie Spring

Details: Contemporary jazz recording featuring Spring's vocals and expressive viola playing

Available at: Amazon.com

Artist's Website:

Wallace, David

Nahum / What a Friend

2004

Ensemble: David Wallace

Details: Electric Viper-Viola instrumentals performed by a Juilliard virtuoso. Ranging from celestial to raging, Wallace's hair-raising compositions deliver an emotional and spiritual punch

Available at: CDBaby.com/iTunes

Artist's Website:

Wood, Mark

Voodoo Violince

1991

Ensemble: Mark Wood

Details: Mark's first release on Guitar Recordings. Featuring Dave Lewitt on drums, Gerald Veasley on bass, Laura Kaye and members of New Voices of Freedom on vocals.

Time Magazine calls this record "Funk metal violin at its best!"

Available at: iTunes

Artist's Website: www.markwoodmusic.com

Wood, Mark

Favorite Things

2001

Ensemble: Mark Wood

Details: A compilation of the best of Mark Wood's hard-rock violin catalogue, with highlights including material such as a new hip version of "Eleanor Rigby" with vocals by Laura Kaye and a smoking rendition of Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze"

Available at: iTunes

Artist's Website: www.markwoodmusic.com

Wood, Mark

Portrait of an artist

Ensemble: Mark Wood

Details: Inspired by the paintings of his father Paul Wood, these modern classical compositions by Mark Wood for double-string quartet, percussion, and voice (vocalist Laura Kaye) are lushly melodic and hauntingly beautiful

Available at: www.markwoodmusic.com

Artist's Website: www.markwoodmusic.com

Compositions for Electric Viola

Entries include Composer, Composition title, Medium, Duration, Publisher, Discography, and Contact information.

Bond, Victoria

Insects

Medium: 5-string electric viola and electronics

Duration: 5:00

Publisher: Protone Music

Discography:

Contact Information: www.victoriabond.com

Bultmann, Nils

Driven

Medium: Viola and looping device

Duration:

Publisher: Nils Bultmann

Discography:

Contact Information:

www.nilsbultmann.com/info/

Burwasser, Daniel

Voila!

Medium: 5-string electric viola

Duration: 9:00

Publisher: Daniel Burwasser

Discography:

Contact Information: dbur@nyc.rr.com

Cornicello, Anthony

Loops, Drones and Riffs

Medium: Electric viola and computer

Duration: 10:00

Publisher: Anthony Cornicello

Discography:

Contact Information: cornicello@sbcglobal.net

Festa, Fabrizio

Urban Dances

Medium: 5-string electric viola and CD

Duration: 15:00

Publisher: Fabrizio Festa

Discography:

Composer's Website: festafab@yahoo.com

Frendin, Henrik/Emilson, Fredrik

Soft Christ

Medium: 5-string electric viola and tape

Duration: 5:26

Publisher: Protone Music

Discography: *Viola con Forza*

Contact Information: www.frendin.com

Frisk, Henrik

drive

Medium: 5-string electric viola and computer

Duration: 6:00

Publisher: dinergy music

Discography: *Viola con Forza*

Contact Information: www.henrikfrisk.com

Haken, Rudolf

Concerto for 5-string Viola and Orchestra

Medium: 5-string electric viola and orchestra

Duration: 18:00

Publisher: Rudolf Haken

Discography: *Rudolf Haken: Concerto for Five-String Viola*

Contact Information: www.rudolfhaken.com

Leon, Tania

Hebras d'luz

Medium: 5-string electric viola and electronics

Duration: 8:00

Publisher: Iroko Music

Discography:

Contact Information:

tlfproductions@gmail.com

Jaeger, David

Favour

Medium: Electric viola and electronics

Duration: 5:42

Publisher: David Jaeger

Discography: *Viola Nouveau*

Contact Information: info@musiccentre.ca

Mooke, Martha

News

Medium: 5-string electric viola and electronics

Duration: 3:00

Publisher: Vener Music Publishing

Discography: *Enharmonic Vision*

Contact Information: VenerMP@aol.com

Jenkins, Leroy

A Social

Medium: 5-string electric viola AND electronics

Duration: 9:00

Publisher:

Discography:

Contact Information:

Mooke, Martha

as the phoenix

Medium: 5-string electric viola and electronics

Duration: 8:00

Publisher: Vener Music Publishing

Discography:

Contact Information: VenerMP@aol.com

Karpman, Laura

Common Tones

Medium: 5-string electric viola and electronics

Duration: 8:00

Publisher: Laura Karpman

Discography:

Contact Information: www.laurakarpman.com

Mooke, Martha

Winds of Arden

Medium: 5-string electric viola and electronics

Duration: 5:00

Publisher: Vener Music Publishing

Discography: *Enharmonic Vision*

Contact Information: VenerMP@aol.com

Mooke, Martha*Fanfare***Medium:** 5-string electric viola and electronics**Duration:** 1:00**Publisher:** Vener Music Publishing**Discography:** *Enharmonic Vision***Contact Information:** VenerMP@aol.com**Shapiro, Alex***Evolve***Medium:** 5-string electric viola and CD**Duration:** 7:35**Publisher:** Activist Music**Discography:****Contact Information:**www.alexshapiro.org/Evolvepg1.html**Mooke, Martha***Terminal Baggage***Medium:** 5-string electric viola and electronics**Duration:** 5:00**Publisher:** Vener Music Publishing**Discography:** *Enharmonic Vision***Contact Information:** VenerMP@aol.com**Singleton, Alvin***Mookestueck***Medium:** 5-string electric viola and electronics**Duration:** 9:00**Publisher:** Schott Helicon Music**Discography:** *Somehow We Can***Contact Information:** info@eamdllc.com**Mooke, Martha***Virtual Corridors***Medium:** 5-string electric viola and electronics**Duration:** 8:00**Publisher:** Vener Music Publishing**Discography:****Contact Information:** VenerMP@aol.com**Söderberg, Fredrik***Wrong Music***Medium:** 5-string electric viola, chamber orchestra, and tape**Duration:** 13:00**Publisher:** Protone Music**Discography:** *Viola con Forza***Contact Information:**<http://www.myspace.com/wrongmusicspace>**Paranosic, Milica***Seek or Sneak***Medium:** Electric viola and computer**Duration:** 9:00**Publisher:** Milica Paranosic**Discography:****Contact Information:**milicaparanosic@milicaparanosic.com**Soldier, Dave***East St. Louis 1968***Medium:** Electric or acoustic viola and CD**Duration:** 8:00**Publisher:** Dave Soldier**Discography:****Contact Information:**www.davesoldier.com/scores.html

Soley, David

Laberinto IV

Medium: 5-string electric viola and electronics

Duration: 12:00

Publisher: David Soley

Discography:

Contact Information:

Wallace, David

Nahum

Medium: 6-string electric viola

Duration:

Publisher: David Wallace

Discography: *Nahum* / *What a Friend*

Contact Information: daviola@aol.com

Martha Mooke, composer/electro-acoustic violist, a pioneer in the field of electric five string viola, transcends musical boundaries by synthesizing her classical music training with extended techniques, digital effects processing and improvisation. She is a Yamaha Artist and leading clinician on electric and alternative approaches to string playing.

IN THE STUDIO

A LIFE IN SOUND: VIOLIST JOSEPH DE PASQUALE

by **Stephen Wyczynski**

Sound is the means by which music expresses the complex range of human experience. The quality and uniqueness of sound distinguishes the ordinary instrumentalist from the world-class artist. Legendary violist Joseph de Pasquale, who is celebrating his ninetieth year in October, has employed his sound for decades to achieve an unparalleled career as a performer, as well as a pedagogue. His sound combines the burnished richness of the cello with the brilliant virtuosity of the violin. It is this range of expression that has placed his live performances and recordings at the highest echelon—not only of viola playing, but also of string performance—in the current and past century.

Joseph de Pasquale began violin studies with his father Oreste de Pasquale, an accomplished violinist in his own right, and later continued with Lucius Cole, father of the celebrated cellist and teacher Orlando Cole. When he auditioned at the Curtis Institute of Music, he was accepted to be a violin student of Léa Luboschutz. At this point, Jascha Brodsky and Max Aronoff, of the Curtis Quartet, suggested to Mr. de Pasquale that he should switch to the viola because of his physical stature and digital span. With the counseling of his father, Mr. de Pasquale decided to make the transition to the viola and study with Max Aronoff and Louis Bailly. When the Second World War broke out, Mr. de Pasquale enlisted in the Marines and was



stationed in Washington, DC. It was at this point that William Primrose joined the faculty at Curtis, and Mr. de Pasquale made the trip to Philadelphia every two weeks to take lessons with him. William Primrose, who had been a student of the great Eugène Ysaÿe, can be considered the greatest teaching influence of Mr. de Pasquale. His lush and unmistakable sound and artistry has been the standard to which Mr. de Pasquale encourages students to strive.

Mr. de Pasquale first taught in Boston at the New England Conservatory. Then, at the invitation of Efrem Zimbalist—the great violinist and former president of Curtis—he began to

teach at the Curtis Institute. It is here that he would succeed his great mentor, William Primrose. This succession would not only be a physical one, but also a pedagogical one, where Mr. de Pasquale would pass down the traditions and methods of his teacher. Mr. de Pasquale spends a large part of a lesson demonstrating and playing along with a student. His teaching is centered on the student imitating him on the phrasings and nuances of a particular work or passage. There is no substitute for listening and absorbing first hand the scales, études, and viola repertoire. Eventually, the student is encouraged to develop his or her own style of playing.

Mr. de Pasquale incorporates classic Primrose concepts like the “link-finger” shifting technique, where one shifts on the last finger used in starting position to “link” to the next position. He also uses the Primrose scale method, which is found in *The Art and Practice of Scale Playing on the Viola*, and accompanies it with Campagnoli’s 41 Études, edited by Primrose, as standard fare for students. He also insists on long tone scales to master a legato, sustained sound. He instructs students that in order to increase the smooth bow change at the frog, to bring your left shoulder forward slightly, bringing the viola to meet the bow at the frog, as Primrose taught. This makes for a seamless connection. He also introduces the Franco-Belgian concept of “tirez and poussez,” the pull and push of the bow over the string. One should never press or force the sound. One creates better overtones and volume by drawing the sound out, not squeezing it down.

He, like Mr. Primrose, was blessed with fleshy fingers but realized many viola players do not have this advantage. The fourth finger, and proper fourth-finger vibrato, is often chronically

underused by violists. When addressing the vibrato issue, he suggests keeping the third finger down and close to the fourth finger so that the third finger supports the fourth to vibrate. This added leverage increases the oscillation radius and improves the contact between the tip of the fourth finger and the string, thus improving the quality of the vibrato sound.

As the principal violist of the Boston Symphony for eighteen years, then later as principal violist of the Philadelphia Orchestra for thirty-four years, he has had a major influence on the sound of not only the viola section, but also of the string sections as a whole. While in Boston, Mr. de Pasquale acquired the ex-Bailly Gasparo de Salò viola. This viola was enormous by any standards at 17 5/8 inches. The depth and darkness of its sound was Mr. de Pasquale’s signature on so many recordings and broadcasts. He was the envy of conductors around the globe, so much so that Eugene Ormandy was determined to steal Mr. de Pasquale away to join the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ormandy succeeded in doing so in 1964. During de Pasquale’s tenure there, a viola was made for him by Sergio Peresson, an unknown maker at the time. This viola measured 17 3/8 inches and is patterned on a Guarnari del Gesù model. Mr. de Pasquale was so taken by the tone and projection of it that he sold his Gasparo de Salò and played continuously on the Peresson for the rest of his orchestral career.

Of course, just playing on an exceptional instrument does not automatically guarantee an understanding of good sound production. Mr. de Pasquale’s contributions to the lauded “Philadelphia Sound” really come from his musical leadership in terms of

challenging the overall level of the string playing to be exemplary. He would often suggest to his viola section particular fingerings mirroring the violins' virtuosity and expressiveness. He frowned upon safe and uninteresting fingering solutions. To this day, Philadelphia Orchestra parts are marked with Mr. de Pasquale's suggested fingerings, which were designed to create a dynamistic middle voice. He was not afraid to suggest risk-taking. For instance, there are passages in the slow movement of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra where the violas play the melody entirely on the C string in order to create musical tension in the sound. It had never been done before in Philadelphia. Another example of Mr. de Pasquale's fingering choice that puts sonority at the top of the list of priorities is the first theme in the beginning of Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloë, Second Suite*. He asks that the entire viola section play this passage on the C string. This fingering choice maximizes the legato sound and homogenizes the viola section's approach.

Also, in the famous viola tutti passage in the first movement of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, Mr. de Pasquale opts not to crawl up in high positions to avert the long shift to the high E-flat, but uses a tasteful shift up on the A string to serve as the ultimate dramatic climax in *piano espressivo* (ex. 1). This fingering sensibility is not unlike Primrose, who, in his scale fingerings book, reflects more brilliant fingering choices for the sake of clarity and sonority.

As Mr. de Pasquale approaches his ninetieth birthday, he can reflect on the generations of violists he has influenced. Currently in the Philadelphia Orchestra, there are nine out of thirteen violists who were his students, including the principal, Choong-Jin Chang. The former principal who is now president of the Curtis Institute of Music, Roberto Díaz, was also his student. Other students include violists and titled-chair players in the Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Minnesota Orchestras, as well as successful professionals around the world.

Example 1. Shostakovich, Symphony no. 5, movt. I, mm 107–19.

The musical score for Example 1, Shostakovich, Symphony no. 5, movement I, measures 107-19, is presented for three string parts: I string, II string, and III string. The I string part is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The II string part is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The III string part is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The score includes fingerings (1-4) and dynamics (p espress.).

Because of the diversity and longevity of his career, one can count Joseph de Pasquale among the towering figures of teaching and performing to this day.

To honor his career, his continued musical contributions, and his upcoming life milestone, the Curtis Institute is celebrating Joseph de Pasquale in his ninetieth year. On October 25, 2009, beginning at 3:00 p.m., the Curtis Institute will host an afternoon of events commencing with a master class, given by the honoree himself, to gifted violists playing some of his favorite repertoire. This will be followed by a panel discussion with Mr. de Pasquale covering the highlights of his career in performing and teaching, facilitated by Roberto Díaz and Stephen Wyczynski. There will then

be a short audio and video presentation culminating with a birthday toast and refreshments concluding in the Bok Room at Curtis.

Stephen Wyczynski studied with Kim Kashkashian, Karen Tuttle, and Joseph de Pasquale. He has been a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra for eighteen seasons. He is on the faculty at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado where he teaches both private lessons and an audition seminar for viola orchestral excerpts. In addition, he will be a visiting Professor of Viola at the Jacobs School of Music of Indiana University for the 2009–2010 school year.

STUDENT LIFE

HOW TO BE A WEB VIOLIST: CREATING YOUR BRAND AND YOUR WEBSITE

by Jason Bonham

If you are in the professional world, the notion that a musician's life is financially risky and extremely competitive is reality. Yet in my opinion, too many of us have a one-dimensional view of how to get work: a business card. While business cards are important and helpful, I want to alert you to a new product that will exponentially grow your business and put more dollars in your wallet: the Internet.

Musicians are now recognizing the need to fully embrace web technologies, yet many do not have the faintest idea of where to start. If you have large amounts of resources, you could [collaborate](#) with YouTube to market yourself and get a lot of fame very quickly. But what about the recent graduate with a pile of student loans who is trying to get some recital gigs? Or the forty year-old mother of three who wants to teach some lessons to supplement income? How can they do it? Well, it's not that hard, and it's not that expensive.

My aims for this article are the top two priorities of any web strategy: online branding and your website. In a second article I will discuss the various tools currently being pioneered, like Facebook, Twitter, web video, e-mail campaigns, etc., and how the pros are using the web effectively. So, let's get to work!

Be Your Own Brand Manager

A "brand" is marketing jargon for "reputation." Your brand is basically how customers view

your product. I don't think the notion of a good reputation is anything groundbreaking, but the idea of strategically deciding your reputation before others do is worth considering.

The fact is, you have near total control of what associations people link to your brand in the beginning of your career. Most corporate brand managers will tell you that changing a brand midstream is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to do. If you are careless, branding can go in directions you don't like, and soon you will find yourself watching the phone for wedding jobs when in fact you were really interested in performing with a high-caliber quartet. It's in your best interest to decide what your brand is from the outset and then build your advertising and services around that brand. A cohesive brand will sell your services in the direction you like.

When deciding your brand, you need to decide the context in which your services fit. Are you a teacher? A performer? An academic? Once you have decided your context, you need to decide (and highlight) the points of difference between you and likely competitors that will become your selling points. Perhaps you have a certain pedagogical training that most don't. Perhaps you're a soloist who can play all of the Paganini Caprices from memory. Primrose made a career out of the notion that he was the one violist who could play as prodigiously as the leading solo violinists of his day, and people bought it. We're not all Primroses, but we can all learn from the fact that highlighting and selling the

differences between you and your market segment will help form a convincing brand. A word of caution: highlighting your points of difference does not mean going negative on others—in fact, that could inherently weaken your brand if you were to do so. Highlighting your differences means selling the strengths you have that might set you apart, not calling out others weaknesses.

Beyond this, all of your advertising needs to reflect the image and reputation you are trying to build. The colors of your business cards, the graphics on your website (yes, you should have one!), the way you dress, the things you say, the jobs you take; they all build your brand. Avoid anything that can likely damage your brand. Think through the effects of your decisions. Make sure that everything you do (online and offline) reinforces the professional image you would like to project. Be your own brand manager.

Your Website

The days are long gone of safely ignoring web advertisement. Ask any print media salesman; they seem to be left trying to sell wagon wheels at the Ford plant while their revenues are severely declining. Places like eBay and Craigslist have usurped a lot of brick and mortars that were flying high ten years ago. Beyond this, potential customers are more likely to demand informational websites prior to making a contact. A website is *the* place to present yourself at your best, let people read your history, see pictures of you, and hear you play. It's your website; you have total control of your image.

Function

On first thought, what makes a successful website may not be what you think. You are likely attracted to websites that have strong aesthetics, background music, and animated objects. I don't want to discount any of them, they do have their place and importance, but certain priorities should be considered prior to placing a spinning viola on your home page.

Rule number one: Don't let your desire for a fancy website overrule usability, SEO (Search Engine Optimization—how well your site permeates Google search rankings), and usefulness. In a perfect world every web visitor will have a super-fast connection, know exactly who's site they want to visit, and have a set of headphones on—but don't count on it. Any competent web designer will tell you that site visitors have a wide range of Internet connection speeds, screen sizes, and experience. The design of your site needs to take all of this into consideration. Avoid large image files that take excessive time to download and process. Important links and buttons should be easily found and used. Your site should function within the average monitor width (less than 1000px) so visitors don't have to scroll sideways to view the whole thing (scrolling up and down is generally fine), and you should understand that someone who views your site in a quiet library might not want to be jolted with the opening chord of *Der Schwanendreher*. Exceptions are allowed, and you might decide it's worth breaking one of these rules if the effect is grand enough—and it can be. Just make sure to consider the user's experience.

Rule number two: Make your site a resource of information. Offering your contact information

and resume is essential, but also consider offering advice, your own recordings and videos of recitals, columns you have written, and other tidbits of advice and information that will bring your users back. One friend of mine has information on how to choose and care for instruments, studio rules, a calendar, links to other sites, etc. This information will only encourage people to use her site regularly. The more that people see you as a resource, the more likely they are to call you when in need of your type of services. Don't be greedy either. Resist the urge to be concerned that you are offering up too much information for free. Unless you have something to patent or copyright, chances are nothing you have that is related to teaching or performing can be used efficiently offline without your active involvement.

Rule number three: Your graphics should be a reflection of the branding you choose. If you are looking to promote yourself as a high-caliber violist, probably a site with party balloons and little puppies is not the way to go. If you are looking to promote yourself as a studio teacher who specializes with three- to five-year-olds, you just might want balloons and puppies. Also, be very careful not to clutter your site with pointless graphics, hard to read fonts, and distorted images. Overall, your site should look current and up-to-date. Think of usability like technique and graphics like musicality. All technique and no musicality equals no fun; the same with usability and graphics. Try for eye-pleasing and clean aesthetics coupled with strong usability; your users will thank you.

Overall, your website needs to be a usable, visual representation of your brand. Now, how do we get there? There are multitudes of ways.

Types of Websites

There are so many ways to create a website and no one certain way that works for everyone. So much of the planning and implementation will depend on what you hope to achieve. For instance, a famous artist may not consider Google rankings paramount. If you were soloing every weekend with top orchestras and recorded regularly for Deutsche Grammophon, potential customers would probably know who you are, search your name directly, and then call your agent. Your website in that case would mostly be a reference point for the already converted. The New York Philharmonic isn't surfing the web randomly looking for solo violinists. Yet, someone looking for a private teacher in Kalamazoo, Michigan, might be. So high Google rankings would be paramount for that person, since the higher you rank in a search the more likely you are to be called. With that in mind, let's consider some of the ways websites are created and their pros and cons.

Flash

Adobe Flash is a well-known program, with which designers like to make fancy websites to dazzle their visitors. A Flash website will basically run you anywhere from \$1500 to \$5000 and operates on a video platform. In other words, when you land on the site, your browser is showing you a video that has clickable buttons allowing you to visit other parts of the video as you choose, like a video game. You generally stay on one page. This is the opposite of HTML websites, which I will cover in a minute, that operate based on text commands telling the browser what to show the visitor and containing multiple pages.

A good Flash example would be [Blue Fountain Media's](#) website. If you visit the link, you will quickly notice their site is a dazzling display of video and movable graphics. It's cool and impressive, doing its job well. The hitch? Google spiders or Google bots, the computers that comb the Internet looking for web pages to add to its search indexes, read text, not video. A spider trying to read a Flash video is like you unreeing a VHS cassette and reading the black tape—it doesn't work. So Flash, with its possibilities of moving graphics and full customization, is limited by the mere fact that search engines can't categorize its video files for potential searches. The net effect (pun intended)? It is much more difficult for people to fall upon your website unless they know who you are and visit your site purposefully. Google wants readable words, not video. If high Google rankings are your goal, avoid Flash. If strong aesthetics are the higher priority, Flash may be your ticket. One other option is to have two web sites: one that is Flash, and another that closely resembles your Flash site, but written in HTML.

Another downside to Flash is a lot of people have slow computers that will download the video slowly, or even browsers that are unable to show Flash video. Most mobile phone browsers are unable to show Flash as well. So be sure to consider the strong advantages and disadvantages associated with Flash before paying the big bucks.

HTML

The flip side of video-based Flash would be text-based websites that use HTML and other languages like PHP and CSS. This type of website can run you anywhere from \$0 to \$5000.

HTML is the basic Internet programming language. It's very easy to learn and implement, and there are some great online tools like [w3schools](#) that will teach you the basics for free. It's worth learning a little bit of HTML. Probably the majority of sites are created with HTML, PHP, or some derivative. These languages have the advantage over Flash in that they are exactly what search engines are designed for. A knowledgeable HTML programmer can implement bits of Flash video into a site so there are moveable objects and interactive elements on your site, but still maintain the ever-important text for search engines.

Blogs

A lot of people choose to just use a blog, which is like an online journal. Blogging has quickly become a "must" in the professional world, with businesses hiring bloggers to write, blogging strategist to consult, and blog managers to manage the company image in the "blogosphere." A blog is basically a website that has daily entries, with the most recent entry/posting being at the top. Readers can subscribe to your blog's "feed," the stream created by your blog entries, either through an RSS reader on their computers or through periodic e-mails. Blogs can generate a lot of traffic, anywhere from a handful to millions of unique visitors a day.

Blogs are free to create unless you want to customize beyond what the many free blog companies offer. Blogs also allow you to create an endless number of web pages, since every time you create an entry you are creating another page for your site. Therefore, herein lies the power of blogging: more entries mean more text for search engines to add to their

indexes. More pages in Google's database means someone surfing the web will be more likely to run across your site, read it, and hire you. In today's world, random traffic equals more money. For instance, you might write about what a great time you had at a wedding gig. A month later, someone searching Google for "violin wedding Spokane" might hit your site and give you a call. It can even be more random than that, but you get the point: regularly updated blogs generate a lot of content, which is the stuff search engines feed upon.

Additionally, blogs allow an effective means to offer information as a free resource. The mere format, a daily journal, allows one to continually add more information and ideas. Your site is never done, thus always producing a constant stream of information for regular visitors. Having a comment section at the bottom of your posts will allow visitors to take an active role and return regularly for the conversation.

Several companies offer free blog websites like WordPress, Blogger, and TypePad. They will host your blog for you, give you some basic templates to choose from, and provide you a simple text editor account where you can write content for your blog. Yet, this is the same reason a lot of people don't like using a blog as their sole website: free isn't always professional. Since many people know blogs can be created cheaply or freely, there is an element of amateurism with a blog-only website. So there is always the trade off: the powerful tool of constantly generating text through a blog, or a more traditional and professional-looking website. Don't get too glum though; there is a way around this—blogs aren't always blogs.

Take for instance my own [chamber music society's website](#), created entirely with the free

blogging tool [WordPress \(WP\)](#). Notice it looks nothing like a blog; we even have a slideshow on the front page. There is blog too, but I decided to rename it "Headlines" and only allow the front titles to show on the front page.

A WP-based website seems to be the happy medium: a site that takes advantage of blogging, but allows a more traditional website design. If designers are skilled enough, they can even implement Flash video onto the site. Usually a professionally built WP-based site can cost from \$200 to \$5000. If you are wondering how serious a blog-based website can really be, checkout both [CNN.com](#) and [Harvard.edu](#). Both are created entirely out of WordPress's free blogging software by skilled web professionals.

Creating a WP-based website also allows the user to add all sorts of functions easily. WordPress offers thousands of free, installable mini-programs called "widgets" featuring such things as calendars, videos, contact forms, PayPal integration, weather, shopping carts, and tens-of-thousands more. Another option is to have an HTML or Flash website with a link to your own blog. This is an easy and popular way to do it.

The Most Important Aspect

The number one part of your website, above all else, is contact information. You need to be easily accessible. Your e-mail address, phone number, Facebook page link, instant messenger information, etc., are all necessary and should be found immediately and repeatedly throughout the site. You might be surprised at the number of people who make their contact info impossible to locate or leave it off entirely from their website. I once saw a website that only had a logo and a P.O. Box address! All I could wonder was who thought a web surfer

would want to write a letter to a box at the post office?

Summary

In summary, musicians need to understand the relevancy of the online world to their professional goals. Musicians need to find ways to market themselves appropriately and use the web effectively in that pursuit. While this article has focused purely on how to manage your brand and use a personal website to attract jobs and business, the next article will focus on the fun stuff: online tools like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, e-mail, and others. Believe it or not, these new web tools can offer a lot in terms of generating business.

Jason Bonham is Adjunct-Professor of Viola at Dixie State College, Director of Orchestras at Tuacahn High School for the Performing Arts, and Technology Officer for www.SaintGeorgeNow.com. He is also a co-founder and co-director of the Chamber Music Society of Southern Utah (www.CMSSU.org) and has been member or substitute member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and Fort Wayne Philharmonic. He can be reached through his website at <http://www.jasonbonham.org>.