

JOURNAL

of the

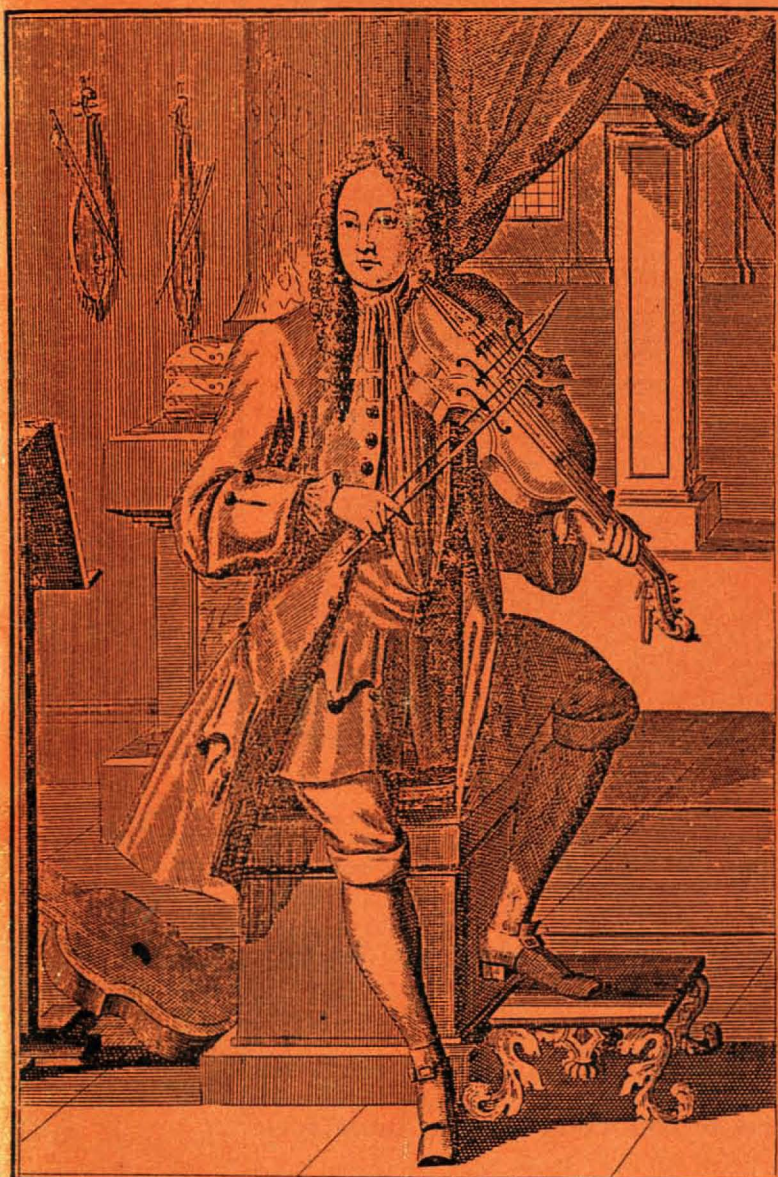
AMERICAN VIOLA SOCIETY

Chapter of
THE INTERNATIONAL VIOLA SOCIETY
Association for the Promotion of Viola Performance and Research

Vol. 5 No. 3

Fall 1989

42



VIOLIST oder BRATSCHIST.

Die Stim ist etwas muh. so die Violo giebet.
doch heist sie angenehm. dem der sie recht versteht.
ein Stück wird edeler geachtet und geliebet.
wann dieser artige Thon zugleich darunter geht.
Dem. so die Mutter- Stadt der Music-Künstler heißet.
Ist. die mein Instrument als etwas schönes preißet.



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THE AVS IN THE USSR

A message from President David Dalton:

The American Viola Society has been invited through U.S. EXCHANGES, a private company with offices in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, to undertake a concert tour of the Soviet Union in 1990. U.S. EXCHANGES, whose director is Dr. Robert C. Everett, specializes in sponsoring tours and cultural and scientific exchanges between the United States and the USSR and the People's Republic of China. This past spring, for instance, a group from the American Flute Association undertook a rewarding tour to the Soviet Union under the sponsorship of U.S. EXCHANGES where they enjoyed interaction with their Soviet counterparts.

I have received a response to my inquires about such a tour from Mr. A. Kozachuk, First Deputy and Chairman of the Moscow Musical Society, who has relayed through Dr. Everett the word that his society would look favorably upon such a visit and make on-site arrangements as necessary. I have proposed a format of master classes, lectures, viola ensemble concerts, and solo viola concerts-- where possible featuring repertoire by American composers--in three cities, including visits to the Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev conservatories. The tour is to take place in the USSR 19-30 September 1990.

Cost is about \$2,550.00 per person, based on double occupancy. Included is round trip airfare from JFK in New York on KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, transfers, portorage, programs listed, and three meals each day within the Soviet Union. There will possibly be a stopover in Amsterdam en route and in Vienna on the return from the USSR. If desired by the AVS group, a concert may be arranged in Vienna plus a couple of days stay after which the group will disband and individuals will have the option to stay longer on their own in Europe before traveling to Amsterdam for return home.

The maximum number of people our group can accommodate is about forty. If you are interested in participating in this tour, you must give notification of this by 10 January 1990.

_____ I wish to apply to go on this AVS tour to the USSR.

_____ My partner will come.

As a violist I can offer the following to the tour:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Send a copy of this form by 10 January 1990 to: David Dalton, AVS President, C-550 HFAC, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602.

KENNETH HARDING

The Viola is his Life

by

Philip Clark

A concert of viola ensemble music at the Royal Academy of Music in London on 13 March 1980 featured four pieces by one composer: a duet, a quartet, a quintet and a dodeclet. An esoteric offering to be sure, and one that may not have attracted a black market in tickets, but as a 77th birthday tribute by friends and colleagues, it demonstrated Kenneth Harding's lifelong love affair with the viola.

Many readers will know of the *Idyll for Twelve Violas*, subtitled "June Sunrise-Blue Sky," performed at this year's International Viola Conference at the University of Redlands. However, they may not be aware that Kenneth Harding is the composer of a large amount of music--symphonic poems, concertos, chamber music, songs--which include an almost completed series of works for violas in ensemble, numbering from one to twelve.

The fact that his music is not widely known may be largely due to Harding's philosophy that music should not be a business for entrepreneurs. Instead it is, he says the "musical endeavor" that is important. He is fiercely possessive of his own music, perhaps a characteristic of his stubborn Welsh heritage. Besides, there are certainly many lesser known composers whose music cannot be judged on its popularity. It is not played because it is not known, and it is not known because it is not played.

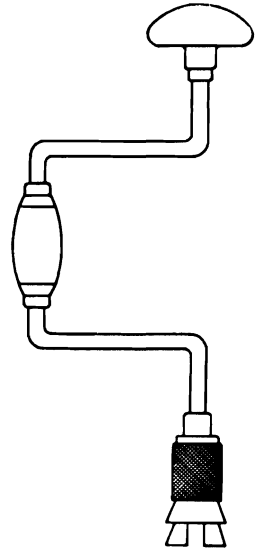
Harding joined the new BBC Symphony Orchestra in 1930, and has lived in London ever since. I was therefore pleasantly surprised by his Welsh accent when I met him at his home this past summer. I had assumed he would have lost all trace of that lovely lilting Celtic manner of speech. More evidence of his resolute character and persistent individuality perhaps? His music is also refreshingly free of the usual "twentieth century" influences. Intensely personal, charmingly direct and persuasive, it is blatant in its romantic impressionism.

His Musical Origins

Harding comes from a musical family. His father was an accomplished pianist who taught him much by extemporizing on the young Kenneth's tunes. He remembers making up tunes when he was five, beginning violin at six, and soon after that learning how to notate. He began his professional career working in a cinema, and at seventeen went to University College of Wales at Aberystwyth to study with Sir Walford Davies. He believed his compositions for piano called "minuet," "Study on White Keys," and "Concert Waltz," dating from 1923--his twentieth year--were the best of a large collection of early work. Davies strongly encouraged him in a study of the classics. Harding tells of being caught carrying the "modern" scores of Vaughan Williams and Holst from the library. However, Davies told him to put them back and instead take out the Brahms Fourth. Harding returned to the library, obstinately removing another modern score he wanted to study. Davies and he eventually became good friends.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Harding was drafted for service in the Army, but narrowly escaped going to El Alemein when the BBC Symphony Orchestra needed someone with experience to lead the viola section while the others were gone. Before joining the BBC he had taught in Wales, and had written a number of large-scale works, including a tone poem, a symphonic poem, and a double concerto for violin and cello. In the twenty years before 1949, however, a choral symphonic poem entitled "The Sun Descending" was his only major composition. Of course, it was during this time, thanks to the tireless efforts of Lionel Tertis, that the viola made enormous strides as a solo instrument.

Thus, inspired by the viola's enfranchisement, Harding began his own crusade. First came a divertimento for quartet dedicated to Harry Danks and his colleagues in the orchestra. Lionel Tertis was responsible for arranging performances of the Divertimento for the BBC. During a rehearsal, Tertis suggested transposing a solo down the octave so that it could be played on the C string; exploiting the viola's rich, lower register was a Tertis hobbyhorse. Harding obligingly complied,



SONATINA for Two VIOLAS by KENNETH HARDING

Violin I
Violin II

p *2 3* *Allegretto* *con moto* (nim=d 78) *p*

mp *p* *mp* *p*

mp *mf* *p* *pizz.* *arco* *mf* *p*

espress. *mf* *p* *mf* *ten.* *f*

subp cresc. *lunga.* *f* *mf* *poco piu mosso* *f* *mf* *poco piu mosso*

Sonata

A. Kenneth Harding

(Jan. 1979)

for
Viola and Pianoforte

Viola

Piano

$\text{♩} = 48$
pp
Very slow, remote, free, without accent.

port./Sul D+G
port.

Bar 4

2 ped (held)

2 Ped. sempre

* Ped

port.

ten.

port.

p espress.

pp p cantabile molto legato
col. parte

(8)

sost.

* Ped. - Ped. - Ped.

Harm:

ten.

mp

mp

ten.

mp

mp

arp. bb

(12)

Ped. + Ped. x Ped. *

Ped.

* Ped *

ten.

ten.

ten.

mf

f sub.

mf

col. parte

f sub.

f

(16)

Ped.

* Ped.

*

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

do not spread

To Lionel Tertis

A birthday tribute to a highly valued old friend

Concertante for Five Violas

by KENNETH HARDING

Molto lento

but midway through trying the passage, Tertis stopped, saying that he could tell from the composer's face that he didn't like it! Harding says that Tertis was most gracious and never mentioned it again.

Next came a string quartet, which he scrapped after a poor first performance ("it never had a chance!") and a Concertante for Viola Quintet, dedicated to Tertis. A Sonatina for Two Violas dates from 1951, and a *Kammersymphonie* for Nine Violas, now called Nonet, from 1956, which Harding refers to as "a difficult piece."

None of Harding's viola works are easy to play. He writes for the full range of the modern viola, and in some of the larger ensemble pieces, there are difficult "corners" to be negotiated, much rubato and intricate nuances of dynamics. An ensemble unused to playing together--after all, there are not too many full-time viola ensembles in the world--might save a lot of time by employing a conductor to help with rehearsals.

Hiatus and Production

It was another twenty-two years before Harding composed the *Idyll for Twelve Solo Violas*, dedicated to Thomas Tatton. The inspiration for this piece came rather surprisingly from a blackbird's song. Harding got up one morning before dawn and went into the garden, "just as the birds were getting busy." Inspired by the blackbird's singing, he began to whistle along. The blackbird was evidently surprised, for it got half way through its next song and suddenly stopped. Harding then decided to tell the bird that "if it didn't mind, he'd go back into the house for pencil and paper and that the bird should stay right there." He happily copied a dozen or so tunes and used two of them in the *Idyll*.

After the *Idyll* came a spate of viola works--three solo pieces with piano, a Sonata, based on a quotation from a poem by Charles Kingsley, a Legend, which could also be played by a horn, and "moonlit Apples," inspired by a poem of John Drinkwater. Three ensemble pieces followed, a Sextet, "Rondo Capriccioso," a Septet, "Sunset Paradise," from 1986, and "Renata da Capa" for Ten Violas from 1987. Harding confesses that at eighty-six he

doesn't have as much energy as he used to, but he would still like to write for eight and eleven violas to complete the cycle.

Given the medium, opportunities to perform the ensemble works are infrequent; however, the real problem might lie in finding the score and parts. Their extremely limited marketability puts publication by any major company out of the question. Your music dealer does not stock them, neither will you find them in your music library. A few photo copies are owned by colleagues in the U.K. and U.S.A. who have taken part in performances, and the viola world is small enough for you to track them down with a little persistence.

Perhaps this is a case for a project funded by one or more of the string organizations such as the AVS? A private edition, made from the photographed original scores, or printed by a computer, could be made available to libraries and interested parties. Making this beautiful music accessible to future generations of violists would be an admirable aim and an attractive project for someone with time, initiative and expertise. Any takers?

Philip Clark is Assistant Professor of Viola and Violin at Ithaca College, New York. His principal studies were with Nannie Jamieson at the Guildhall School of Music in London and with the late Peter Schidlof of the *Amadeus Quartet*. ■

A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

Stokowski and Barbirolli

by

Wayne Crouse

When I arrived in Houston, Texas in October of 1951 to assume my new position as assistant principal violist of the Houston Symphony, I was quickly introduced to the world of Texas hyperbole. Texans loved to brag about anything to do with their state: the fact that it was larger than the entire country of France, the vast number of oil wells, cattle, cowboys, the Cadillacs, and nearly anything any other state might aspire to glorify, Texas had, except bigger and better. Pretty much anything, that is, except cultural events, until the Van

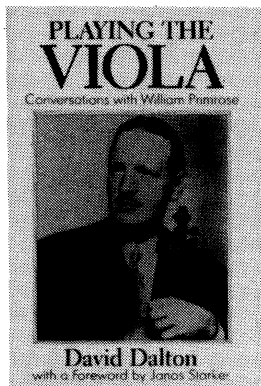


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STOKOWSKI

Cliburn International Piano Competition began in that upstart city, Fort Worth. Suddenly, the major Texan cities had a bigger and better challenge on their hands, and Houston was no exception.

A few years before my arrival, the Houston Symphony had become a professional orchestra. This to Houstonians meant that salaries were raised, the players were actually given a contract, and were expected to make a living at orchestra without resorting to other employment--at least in the winter months!

The first reorganization of this new cultural oil spout was initiated by Efrem Kurtz, who relied heavily on the advice of teachers at conservatories such as Juilliard and the Curtis Institute of Music to provide him with new players (such as the fresh-faced new assistant principal violist). Kurtz was followed by a brilliant young Hungarian conductor named Ferenc Fricstay whose "misunderstanding" with the Board of Directors unfortunately led to his departure after only half a season. The remaining six weeks of the season were filled by the venerable Sir Thomas Beecham, whose disdain for "barbarous" Texas caused enough hilarity among orchestra members to fill a Texas-sized book!

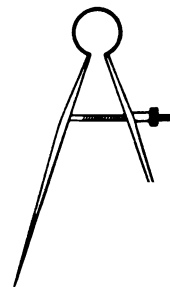
The management, being Texans, needed a "big name" to pull the public (also, of course, being Texans) into the concert and convince them to support this new and expensive "cultural" orchestra. Who better then, than the co-star of that famous actor, Mr. Mickey Mouse, in the box office Disney success, *Fantasia*, Leopold Stokowski? Why Mr. Stokowski was a household name (although many Houstonians bragged about the fact that "Tchaikovsky" was coming to Houston!). The Board of Directors convinced Stokowski (with a lot of money, of course) to assume the title of Music Director of the Houston Symphony. This meant that he would bring along a few of his many recording contracts and make infrequent visits to the orchestra; *but*, agree he did, and the Houston Symphony acquired the big name it wanted.

At the time of Stokowski's announcement, I was "conducting" in Europe, and was anxious to return to audition for the recently vacated position of principal violist. The Maestro, however, had already filled the position in New York City, and it wasn't until the next season when, along with thirty-two other positions, the job opened up again and I was hired.

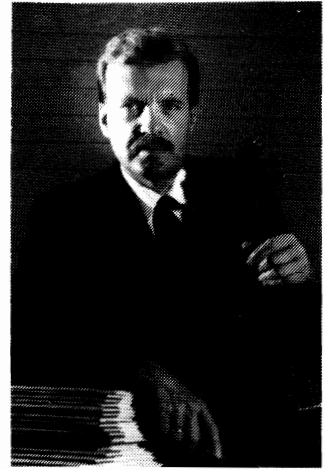
The press had a field day when "Stokie" (our nickname for Stokowski, used liberally and carefully behind his back) arrived in Houston. He must have felt he was back with M. Mouse in Hollywood, because he was made an honorary member of the sheriff's posse and was photographed wearing a huge, ten-gallon Stetson cowboy hat! And it must have seemed only natural for him to assume that he was taking over an orchestra of native-born Texans who operated best, perhaps, rasslin' cows or pumpin' oil. The truth was that most of the orchestra were from elsewhere, and were as baffled by Texas as was Stokie.

Stokie, however, was sure that any lack of ability to communicate to the orchestra owed to the fact that we were all Texans. "Now, how do you say slower (or faster, or louder, or softer, etc.) in *Texan*!" he would say to the orchestra. "I don't speak this strange dialect, but I see that I must soon learn it." All of this was delivered in his own puzzling accent, the mysterious result of an English birth and a German-speaking nanny. Some days words sounded more Slavic than others, and when he referred to the first violins as "dose yolins" and the second violins as "dese yolins" there was speculation that the nanny might have been born in Brooklyn!

The Maestro didn't hesitate to use various tactics to "size up" this Texas orchestra. One of his favorite tricks was to remain seated on his stool during breaks and scrutinize those who had the courage to remain in his sight. He had, either in his late seventies or early eighties, sired two boys by the young Gloria Vanderbilt (who never chose to visit her husband's Texas connection) and welcomed any parent who would come up and share stories about their offspring. Those of us who had no offspring considered swapping stories about our nieces, nephews or even our pets, as



THE VIOLA



AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

CLYN BARRUS is a graduate of the Curtis Institute, the Vienna Academy, and the University of Michigan where he earned his doctorate in viola. He was principal of the Vienna Symphony and for thirteen years occupied that same position in the Minnesota Orchestra. He has been heard frequently as a soloist and recording artist, and is now director of orchestras at BYU.

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—Edward B. Fiske
The New York Times

DAVID DALTON studied at the Vienna Academy, the Munich Hochschule, and took degrees at the Eastman School and Indiana University where he earned his doctorate in viola under William Primrose. He collaborated with his teacher in producing the Primrose memoirs *Walk on the North Side* and also *Playing the Viola*. He is president of the American Viola Society.

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this seemed to be one of the few genuine ways of conversing with the Maestro.

Early on we learned that the Maestro liked to test the alertness of his players. While rehearsing a piece he might stop to change something and then begin again in an entirely different place from where he had stopped. Our only clue as to where he'd begin was the fact that while giving the downbeat he'd simultaneously call out the letter of the new starting place. This was quite a test indeed, and we suspected that many other orchestras had had the same Stokie alertness tests practiced on them, because many of his scores were marked with enormous letters in the margins of the music!

He travelled with an extensive library of his own music, all carefully stamped with the inscription "PROPERTY OF LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI" in the right hand corner. My favorite piece was the one where the "principal stampist" had missed the first four letters, leaving only "OLD STOKOWSKI" on the page! I wondered how many other principal violists had gotten a grin out of that one and how truly accidental the stamping had been.

The Maestro was an ardent supporter of a technique known as "free bowing," which he believed gave the orchestra a "seamless sound . . . more powerful and unstructured." This caused problems, however, amongst his conservatory schooled orchestra members, who were trained in the traditional discipline of bowing together. We had to concentrate on *not* bowing together and began to develop an "after you, my dear Alphonse" attitude with our bowing patterns. If we lost our concentration and began (heaven forbid!) to bow together, we would feel the Maestro's glare and hear his shout from the podium, "*Don't be machines! You and your canned soup and your social security!*" We were never quite sure what soup and social security had to do with free bowing techniques, but the Maestro left no doubt in our minds that it was an insult.

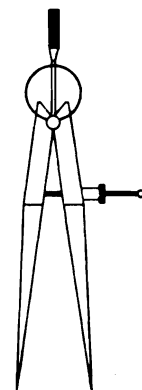
Saga of Mutes

It was during Stokowski's second season with the orchestra that the "Saga of the Mutes" occurred. The Maestro decided that certain compositions required specific types

of mutes to create the "distinctive sound" envisioned by each composer. Thus the string players were required to buy three different kinds of mutes: one made of aluminum, one of wood, and one of leather. We were unable to guess which composition required which mute, but Stokie had definite ideas about each piece. For example, it might be that Wagner required wood, Brahms was, of course, a leather-mute sort of composer, and a French composer might be aluminum.

Logistically, these mutes became a nightmare! How could we store them so that they were accessible and how could we use the right one without dropping it? (This merited an ominous glare from the podium!) The local music store was owned by an enterprising symphony violinist who quickly put in a supply of every conceivable mute that might be used, and we armed ourselves to the teeth (or the strings, as the case might be), for we were constantly dropping and losing them in the dimly lit backstage areas. There were mutes everywhere that year, and every conceivable method for storing them was used. We finally worked out some methods that seemed plausible and by the beginning of the third season felt prepared for any "mute possibility!" The first passage where a mute was required came up in a new composition we were performing early in the season, and the concertmaster dutifully asked the Maestro which mute we were to use. Stokie looked at him rather blankly and said in a tone that implied the barbarous nature of Texan musicians that it really didn't matter at all to *him* which mute we used! Ah well! They're all made of plastic today anyway!

It was during an intermission of a rehearsal, shortly before the end of that season, when Stokie overheard me discussing my summer plans with our principal cellist, a most attractive young woman. He often seemed to involve himself in conversations if beautiful women were around. (Let us not forget this is the man who sired two boys well into the last quarter of his life!) He had heard me mention that I would be conducting in Scandinavia and looked at me with a very different gaze than had been directed toward me previously. "And what orchestras do you conduct in Scandinavia, Maestro?" he said. "Oh, I don't conduct orchestras,



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in Performance

Maestro," I said. "I conduct tours." "Oh. Tours!" said the Maestro with a decidedly relieved look. "Will you be in Norway?" he asked. I replied that I would. "Then you must go and see the 'Veeking' ships in the museum, in Bergen, Norway. They are magnificent and have been encased in mud for hundreds of years."

That summer I saw those ships. Not in Bergen, however, but vividly displayed at the "Veeking" museum in Oslo. At a social gathering in the fall (given by several lovely young ladies in the Maestro's honor) I mentioned to him that I had seen the "Veeking" museum when I was in Oslo. "You mean in Bergen," said the Maestro. That ended that conversation, for he was, after all, the Maestro, and he conducted orchestras, not tours!

The Day Shirley Smiled

Stokie was a man of many moods. There were the days bright with humor, and he might remark to a player, who had pleased him with his playing, to "Do again tonight, Mr. X., whatever it was you did last night!" Such slightly risqué remarks were designed to make everyone smile and enjoy the good mood of the Maestro. The dark moods were a terrible contrast, particularly if one of his own works was being rehearsed. On one occasion such a mood occurred while rehearsing his transcription of the Bach Toccata and Fugue in D minor, a work originally written for organ, the instrument Stokie played as a youth in London. The rehearsal was not to his satisfaction at all, and his mood was growing darker and darker. Unfortunately, Shirley, one of the first violinists, chose that moment to smile at a little secret joke with her stand partner, and Stokie saw it. Incensed, he told her to leave the stage and "go to a funny movie where you can smile all you wish."

Shirley was asked by the management not to return the next season. A smile at the wrong time could be costly when Stokowski was maestro!

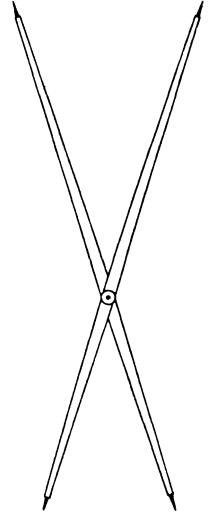
Stokowski was renowned for championing the works of living composers and continued his cause in Houston, even founding a Contemporary Music Society (which lasted exactly as long as his tenure in Houston). Perhaps he felt that if he

performed enough new works, one of them would surely be a "hit," and he would have added to his achievement the kudos of having "discovered" it. Houston, of course, was a city that loved the pot boilers of classical music, and the patrons were terribly confused by his erratic programming of some of these new composers. But as long as there were enough 1812 Overtures and Beethoven 5th Symphonies in the program, they would accept these strange contemporary pieces.

One of these works was written by a percussionist for (what else?) percussion and strings. It was, to say the least, extremely complex and involved a lot of diving, throttling, banging, pounding, plucking, and hitting of an amazing assortment of esoteric percussion instruments strung across the entire back row of the stage. The strings kept abreast of the situation by skill, prayer and the use of a big fermata (a place indicated in the score where the conductor stops the proceedings and waits a while before starting again). The young composer attended the dress rehearsal, and Stokie asked him, basically as a formality, if he had any comments. This brash fellow had the temerity to come forward with a very long list of "suggestions," which were not well received by the Maestro. As a matter of fact, these suggestions so unsettled him that during the concert he turned two pages of the score rather than one and completely missed our fermata, or regrouping spot!

Surely the chaos at the beginning of the world was mild compared to what happened on stage during the rest of that composition. The Maestro finished the piece long before we did, and we finally stopped playing wherever we were! He was not a maestro for nothing, however, and so motioned with great dignity to the young composer to rise and take his applause. The composer simply slumped in his seat and surely would have crawled under it if he could have!

With great aplomb, the Maestro turned back to the orchestra and gave the downbeat for the next number on the program. Unfortunately, it was a composition for the whole orchestra, many of whom were not on the stage. It went fairly well for a few moments until we reached a passage solely for winds and brass



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Don Ehrlich, former principal viola of the Toledo Symphony and a former member of the Stanford String Quartet, currently serves as assistant principal viola of the San Francisco Symphony. He received his B.M. from Oberlin Conservatory, his M.M. from the Manhattan School of Music and his D.M.A. from the University of Michigan.

Leonid Gesin is a member of the San Francisco Symphony and several chamber music groups including the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. He studied with A.G. Sosin at the Leningrad State Conservatory, then performed with the Leningrad State Philharmonic and taught before emigrating to the United States.

Paul Hersh, former violist and pianist of the Lenox Quartet, studied viola with William Primrose and attended Yale University. He has performed with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and many other groups. He has also made a number of recordings and has been artist-in-residence at universities and music festivals in the U.S. and Europe.

Isadore Tinkleman studied with Kortschak and Weinstock at the Manhattan School of Music and with Raphael Bronstein in private lessons. He headed the Violin Department at the Portland School of Music before becoming director of the Portland Community Music Center.

Geraldine Walther, principal violist of the San Francisco Symphony, is former assistant principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony and a participant in the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. She studied at the Curtis Institute of Music with Michael Tree and at the Manhattan School of Music with Lillian Fuchs, and won first prize in the William Primrose Viola Competition in 1979.

Denis de Coteau, music director and conductor for the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, has conducted dance companies, youth orchestras and major symphonies throughout the world. He has received a variety of awards and commendations, earned his B.A. and M.A. in music from New York University, and holds a D.M.A. from Stanford University. Newly appointed.

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instruments. Stokie was vastly irritated when his conducting was met by silence for lack of players and their instruments on stage. He crossed his arms in indignation while the entire stage had to be rearranged! He remained in this position for what seemed like an hour after we were all seated, glaring at the orchestra for its impudence until he finally decided to raise those famous hands and begin the piece again.

Three Houston newspaper critics covered the orchestra at that time, and none of them mentioned the incident the next day. When it came to Maestro Stokowski, the emperor wore fine robes indeed!

BARBIROLI

It was in 1963 when a ray of sunshine, in the shape of Sir John Barbirolli, swept through Houston. Stokowski had departed and Sir John was on an invitational conducting tour of the U.S. In his hand, as though it were an extension of his fingers, he wielded a lovely long slim stick--a baton! Something we hadn't seen much of during those six seasons with Maestro Stokie!

The orchestra played with a genuine enthusiasm and love of music for the first time in a long, tense history. It was magical, and it marked the beginning of a love affair between orchestra and conductor that lasted until Sir John's death seven years later. After a concert was over, the entire orchestra would wait to speak to Sir John or even to shake his hand. He gave us back our music, or at the very least, our love of playing it together.

He must have sensed our euphoric response, even in the short time he worked with us, for he signed a contract to return the next season as Conductor-in-Chief. We were overjoyed and didn't even mind the fact that he divided his time between us and his beloved Halle Orchestra in Manchester, England.

Sir John was a cellist, trained at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and had played in cafes and theaters as well as pit and symphony orchestras. Unlike his predecessor in Houston, he had "come up through the ranks." He knew what it was like to sit in an orchestra, and he also knew

that the only reason for someone to be "up on the box" (the English expression for podium) was because they were more knowledgeable than the others. When someone asked him if he taught conducting, he'd answer, "I suggest you go play in an orchestra for twenty years and *then* think about conducting!"

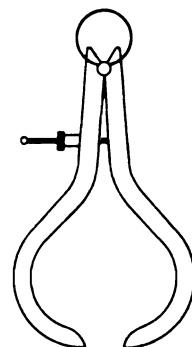
And so this wonderful man from Manchester found a group of admiring musicians absolutely "ripe" to be shaped into a real orchestra. And shape us he did. Unlike Stokowski's free bowing techniques, Sir John was absolutely precise about bowings, and every stroke had a reason. He brought his own music from Manchester and insisted that no one change or erase a single mark unless, after a discussion with some of his principals, he decided to change a bowing. This was always a momentous occasion, and he was adamant that it be put in every part!

Sir John loved to "demonstrate" to the strings how he wanted (or didn't want) a particular passage to sound. He would borrow the cello from the principal player and show us just how he wanted a pizzicato or a particular bow stroke to go. He left no doubt in the minds or the spirits of the players as to the sound he wanted.

One of my favorite memories of Sir John took place during a rehearsal of an all Viennese concert--lots of Strauss waltzes, polkas, etc. The viola parts to these pieces were written to torture the violists, for the parts don't allow you to play the melody for more than a few notes. It is a violist's concept of Hades, and surely, where a viola player will be sent if he or she isn't deserving in the afterlife! Evidently my face registered the extreme discomfort I felt during the rehearsal, for Sir John leaned down and said to me, "For God's sake Wayne, play the tune!" It was if I had been granted a pass to heaven, and for the rest of Sir John's tenure I felt authorized to play the tunes in the Strauss waltzes! It was a true indication of the sensitivity of the man on the podium.

"We," Strings

As a string player himself, Sir John enjoyed the rehearsals that involved only the strings. When speaking to the other sections





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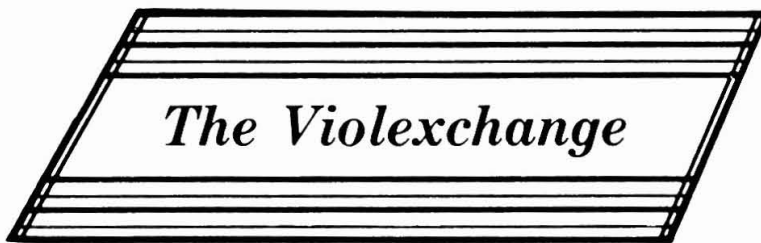
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of the orchestra he would frequently refer to the strings as "we," saying, for example, "we" must not be covered or "we" must be able to play very softly. He knew exactly how to make an entire string section play the dynamic he wanted by telling them precisely the part of the bow he wanted used. If there was a very soft tremolo passage he would insist that every player use an inch of the bow at the tip, the *very tip* of the bow! He said that "only those with advanced cases of serious arthritis might be excused from this procedure!" At this time in his career he was conducting the Berlin Philharmonic as a regular guest conductor, and he loved to tell us that he was referred to by that orchestra as "Herr Spitze"--Mr. Tip-of-the-Bow!

Whereas Stokowski was reluctant to tour with our orchestra, and his wife never appeared in Houston, the Barbirollis were very amenable. The orchestra was "marketable" with Sir John's name as director, and we made our first New York appearance with him, returning in triumph to the city where he had conducted before World War II. Lady Barbirolli always traveled with us, sometimes as an excellent soloist oboist.

In the early 1960s composers such as Mahler, Nielsen, Vaughan Williams and Elgar were not played in America as they are today. Sir John frequently included these composers' works on the program, and we played them on many tours to splendid critical acclaim. It was a challenge to the orchestra to perform a huge work like the Fifth Symphony of Mahler night after night on the road, and Sir John spent a lot of time encouraging us. Before a dress rehearsal he would say, "Now we are about to embark on a long musical journey. Get your backsides in a nice comfortable position and off we go!"

It was after a performance of Mahler's Second Symphony ("The Resurrection") that the Barbirollis came for supper at my house. Late in the evening Sir John had a coughing spell which stopped only with great difficulty and alarmed us enough that I called a doctor friend who had attended the concert. The doctor came over immediately, bearing with him a portable EKG machine which required that Sir John lie on the bed, arms and legs

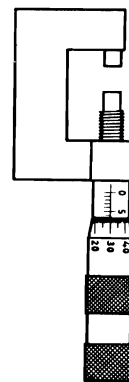
outstretched. When I tiptoed into the room to see if I could be of any assistance, Sir John looked up at me and said, "Wayne, don't you think I rather resemble a primitive crucifix? Mahler would be so pleased!"

Harold

I had the privilege of being a soloist with Sir John on numerous occasions. During his second year in Houston I appeared on the opening subscription concerts performing Berlioz' *Harold in Italy*, and the same work again on Sir John's seventieth birthday concerts five years later. I spent hours with the Maestro, not just playing and rehearsing, but talking and listening to his ideas about the work we were doing together. He could never understand why Berlioz wrote so little for the solo viola in the last movement of "Harold" and suggested that a chair be placed on stage so that I might sit down during the three-hundred or so measures during which the violist doesn't play a note. "If you stand there the audience will keep wondering when you're going to play again," he said. "But if you sit down, they won't!"

We worked very hard on a section of the movement called "The Pilgrim's March," in which the solo viola has accompanying arpeggios which are to be played ponticello. He felt that Berlioz wanted a contrasting "eerie" sound in the solo instrument against the muted sound of the strings playing the chant of the pilgrims. It was with great surprise when we read in one of the papers the next morning the words of the critic who said, "An otherwise beautiful performance of the Pilgrim's March in the Berlioz was marred by the soloist's lack of control of his bow to prevent it from making a scraping sound against the bridge."

Another work that was a great favorite of Sir John's was the tone poem *Don Quixote* of Richard Strauss. The principal cellist, Shirley Trepel, and I spent many wonderful evenings (usually followed by a meal of Sir John's famous *linguini di vongole bianco*) playing for the Maestro. The viola, of course, takes the part of Sancho Panza, the servant of the Don, and there was one particular passage that I couldn't quite play the way the Maestro wanted. Finally he said, "My dear Wayne,





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I'm sure you'd much rather be following 'The Don' in the backseat of a Rolls Royce, but I rather want it to sound like you're on the back of a jackass!" The passage has been crystal clear to me ever since! Sir John always knew exactly what he wanted and was willing to work until that sound was communicated to the player and he could achieve it.

Our first performance of *Don Quixote* was postponed because of the assassination of President Kennedy. When we finally performed the work, Sir John came out and gave an eloquent tribute to the late president before the performance. The entire orchestra and the soloists performed with an eloquence and majesty that is rarely achieved. Many of those in the room, both performers and audience, were moved to tears.

A few years after Sir John's death, a European guest conductor programmed *Don Quixote* in Houston. It was the first work that we'd originally done with Barbirolli and we were now performing under another conductor; and of course our memories rushed back to our memorable Barbirolli performances. At the obligatory party afterwards, the guest conductor was overheard telling a group of people that he felt he had made a tremendous impression on the Houston Orchestra, because there were tears in the eyes of so many of the players during the performance!

But a handful of us players are left who played under the direction of these two men in Houston. Certainly we experienced two extremely different approaches to handling the members of a symphony orchestra. True, neither was in his youth when they were in Houston, but both had had brilliant careers conducting world famous orchestras.

Stokowski knew how to strike terror to the very depths of a player's soul. Sometimes one played with an incredible intensity simply, it seemed, because it might be God himself up there on the podium! Certainly, with his waxen outstretched hands and the halo of snow-white hair, Stokowski created an almost religious atmosphere on stage. However, it was at his altar, not the composer's, that you worshipped.

Sir John's approach was so entirely different that it makes comparisons difficult--I can only reach for the contrasts. He treated his players like colleagues, with respect and admiration, always insisting that we "get things right." And we would do everything in our power to do just that. His abilities to teach, inspire, lead and control an orchestra made him the finest conductor I have ever known.

Wayne Crouse graduated from the Juilliard School of Music, where he studied with Ivan Galamian, Dorothy DeLay and Milton Katims. He became principal violist of the Houston Symphony and was soloist under such conductors as Barbirolli, Sir William Walton (performing his viola concerto), Andre Previn, and Jorge Mester at the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico. Crouse has been associated with the Marlboro and Aspen Festivals and is currently principal violist of the Sante Fe Opera Orchestra. He is professor of viola and chamber music and violist of the Quartet Wuartet Oklahoma at the University of Oklahoma.■

THE BACH SUITES

A Narrative

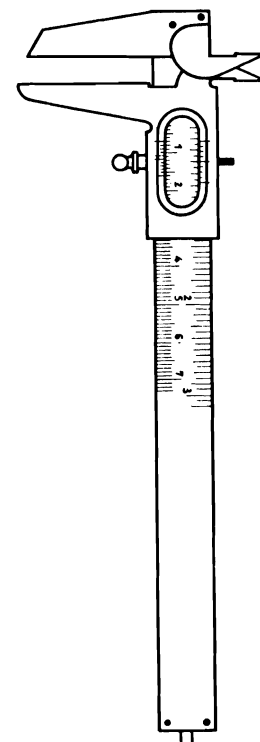
by

Leonard Davis

One day when I was very young, my teacher announced to my parents, "I think he's ready for Bach." Since she was strict and serious, I could foresee more troubling pages on my stand, along with the problematical etudes of Jacques Dont and Hans Sitt. Side by side their yellow covers proclaimed commands from my teacher: "Dont Sitt!" For years to follow, I felt a pang of guilt when I sat to practice.

At first, the new minuet seemed hardly different from any others. Not at all! This was *Bach*, where the slightest errors became mortal sins!

That was my inauspicious introduction to Bach and I could never have known that his music would one day become such a magnetic force in my life.





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Following high school I was granted a fellowship for four years of study at the Juilliard Graduate School, and left home for New York. Juilliard was astonishing! The small student body exuded an atmosphere electric with musical and philosophical thought. Raw ideas and instinctive decisions were rampant, particularly during chamber music rehearsals, spilling over into on-going discussions which lasted for days. We had opinions on everything: loving this composer, hating that one, Strad against del Gesu, Baldwin versus Steinway. Not until years later did we realize that it had been a dress rehearsal for life and we had left such an environment to discover a different world.

I worked assiduously on the standard repertoire, including the Sonatas and Partitas. Many of their movements created no great problems. The difficult ones with the finger and bow-twisting fugues were simply played into submission. Occasionally, rising from a festering sea of black notes, I would discover a world I had never dreamed existed. How deeply touched I was upon first hearing the haunting ostinato in the second movement of the E Major Concerto! As though a switch had been thrown, I was immediately beguiled by this composer.

Although my teacher was admirable in many respects, he never hinted at the fact that the works of Bach were so remarkable that they required a performer's understanding before they could be properly transmitted to the listener. That germ of discovery, so epidemic at the School, brought the realization that my labors were making me an expert on the tip of the iceberg.

The allure of the School's two fine violas was irresistible, and I decided to specialize on that instrument. I returned to Juilliard, carrying a chubbier case. I was fortunate to study with Milton Katims, who, for the next four years, guided me through the repertoire, including some of the Cello Suites. We began with the Second. What a revelation! The bogey-man of my childhood had grown into a most congenial, even romantic fellow, with no intention whatever to frighten or destroy!

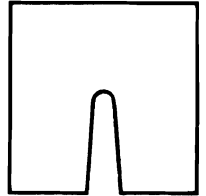
Although I had covered almost all of the known viola repertoire, of which (regardless of some popular opinions) there is plenty, my appetite for the Suites was never satisfied.

Kellner Manuscript

For some years after Juilliard, having performed, taught and analyzed the Suites, I realized that I had, in fact, created my own edition. My major source of reference had been the manuscript of Anna Magdalena Bach. I needed more authentication from another source, that of Bach's contemporary, Johann Peter Kellner. Searching for it had the air of an international intrigue.

During one of three summers spent teaching at Indiana University, I requested from their music librarian any information that might be had on the location of the Kellner manuscript. Within an hour I was given the address and file card number of a library in East Berlin. Wearing many hats, (Professor at I.U., New York Philharmonic, Manhattan School of Music), I wrote to the library, but there was no reply. A month later, at a huge banquet for the peripatetic Philharmonic by the Ministry of Culture in Moscow, I gingerly approached the dour Minister himself, asking, through an interpreter, if somehow, someone might nudge the library people in East Berlin on my behalf. The man, suddenly more pugilistic than ministerial, became irate. I had struck an exposed political nerve by even hinting at any influence with the East Germans! However, when I arrived home two weeks later, the twenty-three beautiful pages of music awaited me.

Because I cannot play and speak simultaneously while demonstrating for students, I purchased from a colleague one of the older monstrous tape deck models complet with microphone, believing this to be a solution. It would allow me to play the tape and make comments at the same time. But the machine had its own thoughts on the matter by simply recording, deleting or playing back whatever it wished. It eventually died of its own recalcitrance. At least I thought it did. The father of a student, an "electronics expert," volunteered to "take a look." He promised to bring some tools to his son's





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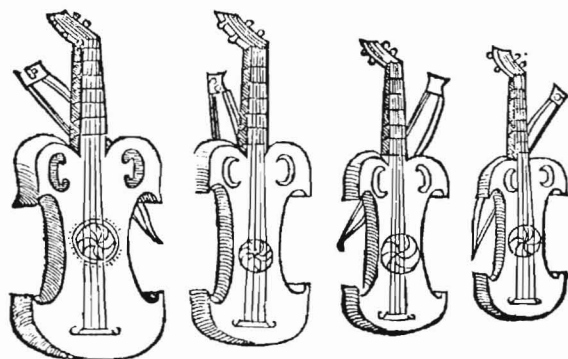
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next lesson. It became a weekly exercise: three of us carrying the behemoth to the kitchen table, where he worked and groaned, while I taught his son, thus trading our services. His timing was perfect. On their ninth visit, the day of his son's last lesson of the semester, he installed a home-made cluster of colored globules vaguely resembling a model of the endocrine system. He assured me that all systems were now "go," leaving with a musically advanced son and my profuse thanks. I rushed from the door, eagerly plugged in the machine, and began to play. However the regenerated evil spirit within waited gleefully for my first notes. From its bowels came a loud pop, a lightning blue flash, and a puff of acrid smoke. Instead of a genie appearing, I heard the laconic announcement, "Okay, Pan Am 235, you're cleared for takeoff." The new components had picked up the control tower at Laguardia Airport!

Recording the Suites

My wife, Frieda (we met as violinists at Juilliard), performed a gigantic research project and bought for me a state-of-the-art tape deck and microphones. In our stolid building we set up a recording studio, and after three months of experimentation, I began to record. Early in the process we were delighted to have as an overnight guest our dear friend, Josef Gingold. He wondered why we had the recording equipment, and insisted upon hearing some of the tape. Joe, with his sweet disposition, paid me an embarrassing number of compliments. The true effect of any performance being the length of time it lingers in the memory, I was particularly pleased when, before leaving the following morning, he asked if I would mind playing some of it for him again, later insisting, by mail, that I record the complete Suites and make them available to the public.

With this major incentive, and a broader view of what I had originally intended in recording these works, I set out with new vigor upon the project I would devote most of my free time to for the next five years. My lone companion was our blond cocker spaniel, who slept blissfully on my foot. Early on, I created a game to be played out, the goal being to record a movement in one complete take. It meant da Capo if there was any flaw, resulting, for example, in one

hundred and twenty eight takes of the Sixth Prelude. Intensive sessions sometimes started after a Philharmonic concert and ended at daylight. I constantly felt a compulsion to continue. Frieda was the final judge of the playbacks, patiently listening, to hours of tape.

The Suites were released as cassettes, making them affordable, portable and consequently a bit less formal than other formats. International published the printed edition.

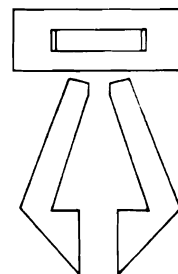
With the completion of this project has come the end of my narrative. I have resisted the temptation to make it scholarly or educational. It is anecdotal, nothing more.

As one who has been enriched by traveling that road, I take the liberty to suggest that the violist spend hours in isolation with the clear and uncluttered music of these beautiful Suites, concentrating not so much on the instrument or upon one's own abilities, but delving earnestly and objectively into the notes themselves in order to appreciate fully their remarkable use as constructive and expressive media.

The violist may find, as did I, that at some magical point a door opens, which leads to the very mind and heart of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Leonard Davis studied at Juilliard under Milton Katims. Mr. Davis is on the viola and orchestral studies faculty of the Manhattan School of Music. He is principal violist of the New York Philharmonic and has enjoyed an international career as a soloist, chamber musician, and teacher of master classes.■

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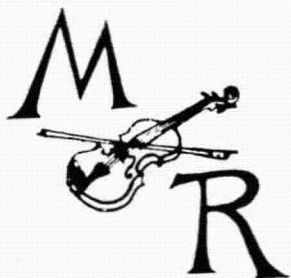
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MUSICAL MALADIES

A Discussion of their Prevention and Cure

by

Steven Ansell

As students with many passages to practice and much technique to learn, violists and violinists must practice many hours a day with rather large, ungainly objects under their chins. When youth is on your side, practicing six to eight hours a day or playing ten or more hours is not unreasonable. Getting older and operating at the same level of intensity can cause problems. Tennis elbow, golfer's elbow (lateral and medial epicondylitis), carpal tunnel syndrome, rotator cuff tears, arthritis, bursitis, and all manner of shoulder and back injuries are feared, and they are rampant among professional musicians. How can we prevent some of these "overuse syndrome" disorders?

First of all, we must accept the fact that playing the viola (or violin) is a task that involves the repeated use and overuse of some very small and specialized tendons and muscles. In the elbow, the insertions of the pronator, supinator and flexor tendons all bunch together in the same place, the medial side of the elbow, which contains the passage for the ulnar nerve. If you extend your palm upwards, away from your body, this area is on the inside of your arm. You use the flexors to hold the bow and depress the strings (left hand); the pronator and supinator are used to get in and out of the string and apply pressure, or support weight from the arm while you drag the bow across the string. Holding your arms in a position that permits proper technique does not promote good circulation to the arm and hand. In addition, these tiny muscles and tendons are used almost exclusively and repeatedly; such use also promotes oxygen depletion of areas without good circulation in the first place. Blood vessels that carry oxygen throughout the body are much more prevalent in muscle tissue than connective tissue. As we get older, we become less resilient and flexible, and for all these reasons there is a built-in preponderance for some sort of injury.

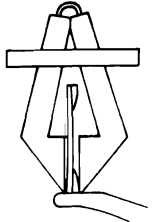
The same applies to the shoulder area as well. Typically there is less pressure

here, but with stiff shoulders, neck or trapezius, or with improper technique, injuries here are common, for the joint is inherently unstable. Many tendons in the shoulder area also must pass through a narrow passage that connects with the neck; inflammation or pinching of nerve is a painful problem.

Proper Technique

I routinely teach and see many students who have chronic tension from raised shoulders, bow arms twisted at almost impossible angles, left hands bent at the wrist as if with rigor mortis, etc. Often, however, a much more subtle tension which will predispose one to tendinitis. In the prevention of injury, it is first and foremost important to use proper technique! This means that the head, neck and shoulder area should be balanced, the instrument should not be clutched onto for dear life, and the fingers and arms should move as freely as possible. The left wrist and hand should be balanced and in line with the forearm, and not held rigidly. Fingers should not clutch the strings, but exert just enough pressure or weight to depress the strings and vibrate freely, not mechanically, as is so often the case. Vibrato should "roll" from the fingers. The bow arm should be balanced and free on one plane without a death grip on the bow, which should also be balanced in the hand, to facilitate feeling. If you restrict the movement of one area or joint by holding that area, nothing will really be able to move freely, and stiffness will manifest itself in other areas as well. (For example, bend either wrist twenty degrees or more, and notice the reduction of strength and mobility in the fingers.)

Although many injuries occur because of improper technique, the viola is an awkward task for even the most naturally gifted player; just plain overuse can cause tears in the tendons or their sheaths. *Prevention* of these injuries is paramount. To this end a regular program of stretching, as an athlete does, is very helpful, especially for those who like to do physical things away from the profession, whether it be golf or handiwork around the house. It is important to stretch gradually and slowly, without pain of any kind. If you hold your hand out in front of you at shoulder level, elbow straight and fingers



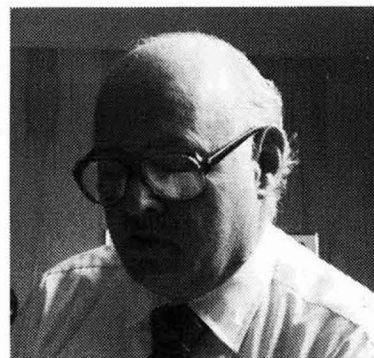
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extended upward while *very* slowly and gradually pulling back on the fingers with your other hand, you will stretch the flexor muscles and tendon group. If you assume the same position and instead start to extend your fingers downwards, pointing them toward the ground and taking your hand just below the wrist with the other, you will stretch the extensor, the tennis elbow side of the forearm. For stretching the pronator and supinator, extend either arm out to the side at shoulder height, then, palm rotating either downwards or upwards, try to make a circle with the forearm. Each of these stretches should be held at a point at which you meet resistance, but do not feel pain, for fifteen to thirty seconds before playing or warming up. These elementary stretches can be shown you by any good sports medicine physical therapist, especially one who has experience with or specializes in musicians. Shoulder stretches are more commonly known. These simple exercises, done just before a session with the instrument, can help prevent pain and anxiety of injury, as well as possible loss of money. Imagine what would happen to Carl Lewis if he didn't stretch regularly, *especially* just before a sprint! All athletes go through extensive stretching and conditioning programs as a matter of course: what makes musicians think they are any different?

Sports Therapist

If you have an injury caused by playing, or one that is caused by other activities but affects performance on the instrument, treatment with a good sports medicine physical therapist will get you back on your feet. You may be put on a general conditioning program, or a specific one, depending on your needs. Icing of the effected area at various intervals is almost universally prescribed. The first task in clearing up the injury is to control the inflammation. Icing does this and increases blood flow at the same time. Taking aspirin or ibuprofen after meals can also help, because these are anti-inflammatory agents. After the inflammation has subsided, you may begin to exercise with caution, usually icing after each workout or playing session. It is generally not a good idea to stop playing if you have tendinitis, because the muscles and tendons involved need exercise; and with disuse, they atrophy and make one even more prone to further injury. Discuss this with your physician or

therapist. Recovery time from even a seemingly minor injury can take some time, so be patient with yourself and use common sense in the use of the injured area. Take breaks in your work, and don't paint half of the house just after or before you practice two hours!

The last and most debilitating part of these types of injuries is the psychological drain, the depression, anxiety, uncertainty and anguish over the inability to play or play with the same abandon as before. Now restricted somewhat, you must use caution, which can certainly put a damper on enjoyment! These are legitimate concerns, but it is most helpful to have a positive, or at least determined, attitude. Most people recover fully in time, and doubt can prey on the psyche like a plague. You may not be able to practice as much as you would like, but this cloud also have a silver lining and can be used to advantage. Study the scores!

Steven Ansell is violist of the *Muir String Quartet*, in residence at Boston University. ■

PREVENTING ULNAR PROBLEMS

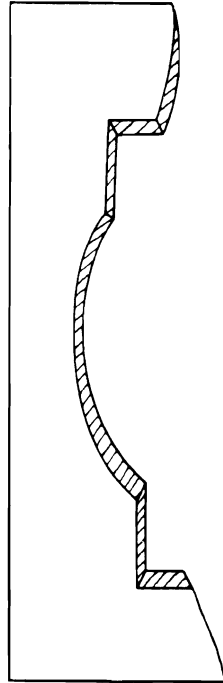
by

Don Ehrlich

Editor's Note: This is the second article in *JAVS* by the author on players' maladies.

In last issue's article on preventing injuries to violists, I failed to mention the ulnar nerve, the problems it gives, and some ways to prevent injury to it.

A colleague of mine, a violinist, has an ulnar nerve injury that wasn't diagnosed for a long time. Before she could get treatment for the problem, she lost control of the ring fingers and little fingers of her left hand to the extent that she couldn't play in tune with velocity, or adjust intonation. It took almost two years for the nerve to return to normal after treatment. Injuries to the ulnar nerve can be serious; thus, it is useful to know



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something about this nerve and to practice preventive measures regarding it.

The ulnar nerve leaves the spinal column in the neck, travels through the armpit and down the inside of the upper arm to the elbow. There is a little hole in the elbow, called the cubital tunnel (remember the Biblical unit of measure, the cubit, from the elbow to the finger tip?), which is lined by a little sheath through which the ulnar nerve travels. The nerve continues along the lower part of the forearm, through the wrist and into the hand. The ulnar nerve is the path for nerve impulses from the ring and little finger to the brain and from the brain to the ring and little finger.

Every time you bend your arm past a right angle, you put a great deal of stress on the ulnar nerve as it goes through the cubital tunnel. In case you hadn't noticed, both arms are frequently bent to a greater degree than a right angle when we play. In this case, it is better to be a violist than a violinist, because even in first position, most violinists' left arms are bent smaller than ninety degrees, while many violists' arms remain wider than ninety degrees.

If you ever have had any tingling or numbness in the ring or little fingers, you likely have had a little too much stress on the ulnar nerve. Things are complicated by the fact that when a nerve is injured it tends to expand a little. The cubital tunnel is normally large enough, but after an injury to the ulnar nerve, the tunnel can become too small.

Two Effected Areas

There are a number of things we can do to prevent ulnar problems. They fall into two areas: one around the cubital tunnel, and one around the shoulders.

The most important way to prevent ulnar nerve problems is to keep our arms straight. It seems that it should be easy to change our habits and keep our arms straighter than a right angle, but it is surprisingly difficult to keep this in mind. The position we have when we rest the viola between movements or during long rests will often bend the elbow past the right angle. We should try to extend our arms at such times. Obviously, we must put

some stress on the ulnar nerve when we play, but we should try to keep the arms somewhat straighter when not playing. This also includes when we drive, eat, talk on the phone, jog, and so forth. The more time we spend thinking about keeping the arm straight, the better it is for the nerve.

While sleeping, we can also put tension on the ulnar nerve. Therefore, we should try to change our sleeping habits to sleep with our arms extended, and not tucked under the pillow. This can be very difficult to accomplish, since we are not aware of our arms when we sleep. As you fall asleep, try to think of your arm positions, making sure they are straight enough. When you awaken during the night and in the morning, try to think at once of your arm positions in order to monitor them. It will take quite a long time to develop new sleeping patterns, but it is worth it to reduce stress on the ulnar nerve. If the ulnar nerve becomes stressed during sleep, you can force your arms to remain extended by putting them through a pillow sewn in the form of a cylinder. Medical supply houses have splints for arms which accomplish the same thing.

Several Exercises

Several exercises, designed for the shoulders, were recommended to me by my physical therapist. Since the ulnar nerve comes through the arm pit, one's posture may pull against the nerve, increasing the potential for a problem at the cubital tunnel. This is especially true if one has a posture that includes a sunken chest, with shoulders pulled forward. These exercises are intended to increase the strength of the upper back to help pull one more upright. They were shown to me while on a small table in a doctor's office. They can be done on a bed as you lie diagonally across on your back, your head in a corner, and the arms over the sides.

First, with some small weights (two cans of soup are sufficient), extend your hands out to the side, arms straight, thumbs pointing up, while lifting several times. Second, with your arms bent at ninety degrees, hands near your head, thumbs pointing toward your head, lift your arms again several times, keeping the forearm level. Then, with your arms extended over your head, lift the weights again. Finally,



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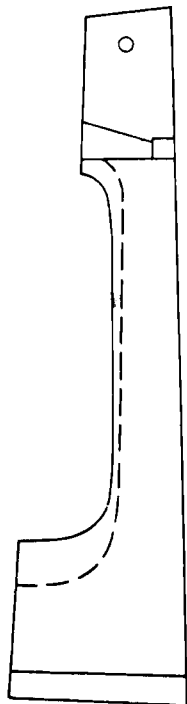
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with your arms down along your body by your legs, lift the weights once more. Following this it is often good to do the "corner stretch." Put your hands on the wall in a corner at about shoulder height, elbows pointing down. Lean into the corner for at least twenty seconds before coming back to normal position. This can also strengthen the shoulder muscles.


When unusual stress is felt or an injury is sustained, remember not to delay getting medical help. It should be no embarrassment to get injured, and you can prevent problems from worsening with therapy.

Don Ehrlich is the assistant principal violist of the San Francisco Symphony. He has made frequent chamber music appearances and was a founding member of the Stanford String Quartet. He currently instructs viola at the San Francisco Conservatory. Ehrlich took degrees at Oberlin, the Manhattan School of Music, and the University of Michigan, where among his major teachers were William Lincer and Francis Bundra. ■

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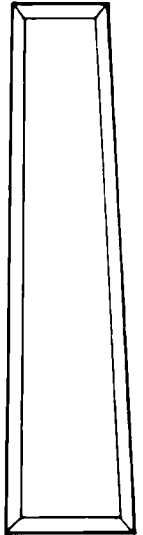
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Forum

CONFESSIONS OF A NONVIOLIST

What is a nonviolinist doing as a member of the American Viola Society? I love the viola and I'm a record collector. What a pleasure it was to be in touch with Dr. David Dalton and be able to send him tapes of William Primrose performing, which Dr. Dalton didn't even know existed (they were taken from radio broadcasts). Surely someone who has six different recordings of Primrose playing *Harold in Italy* (two with Munch, two with Toscanini, one with Koussevitsky, and one with Beecham) and four copies of *Symphonie Concertante* with Primrose playing with Heifetz, Spalding, Stern, and Grumiaux, has more than just a casual interest in the viola.

I don't want it to seem that my love of the viola came out of thin air. My brother Arnold graduated from Juilliard in 1949, majoring in the viola, and is still playing professionally in the Houston area. From the time of his days at the High School of Music and Art in Manhattan through his Juilliard days, he would take me along with him to chamber music and orchestra practices. He would also ask my opinion on phrasing and fingering during his practices. What an exposure for a teenager.

When I started my formal music training at Brooklyn College Evening Session and studied Theory and Harmony with Miriam Gideon and George Kleinsinger and Chorus with Elie Siegmeister in 1950, I had already been collecting records for several years and listening every chance I got to WQXR and WNYC, the classical radio stations in New York City. When my brother went to the University of Illinois for his graduate work, he invited me to come there for a visit. I wound up staying four years and earning two degrees, majoring in voice. Just this

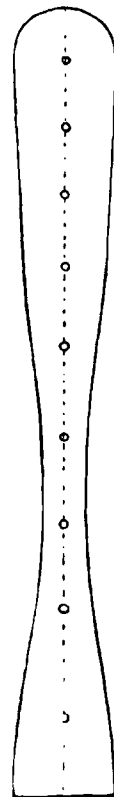
past year I finished my thirtieth year in music teaching in Brentwood, New York Public School System.

I don't want to give the impression that Primrose is the only violinist that I like. I have collected records of many violinists, including Emanuel Vardi, Georg Schmid, Cecil Aronowitz, Lionel Tertis and the latest, Kim Kashkashian. For the past eight years I have been a classical "disc jockey" at the radio station of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, where I play as much viola music as I can. Having access to the library's 19,000 recordings has meant a great deal to me because I can add taped record copies to my collection.

Recently at a summer music camp, a fellow teacher was working with the string students. After hours she would relax by playing some viola quartet music with other teachers and advanced students. Later I asked if she was still studying, and she said she was, with a well known violinist and teacher in New York City. When I asked her if she had any records of her teacher, she said, "I don't collect records." I didn't say anything but I was really shocked. I consider that collecting records and comparing musical styles and techniques has made me a better musician and teacher. How could I talk to her about great pianists like Backhaus, Casadesu and Gilels, or other musical greats like Kipnis, Milstein, de los Angeles, Fischer-Dieskau, Ma, Rampal, etc.? She didn't listen! She was too busy to spend time with them. Shame, Shame!

A few months ago, after giving a lesson to a young man on my fencing team at Brentwood H. S., I mentioned to him I had just learned that he was the principal violinist in the school orchestra. I asked him who was his favorite violinist. He could not name a single one because he was not being exposed to the rich heritage of the viola.

As far as my own collecting is concerned, I need just about a dozen 78 R.P.M. records and two L.P.S (Bartók Concerto and Brahms Viola Sonata with Gerald Moore are available in England), and I will have every solo recording ever



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made by Mr. Primrose. I almost bought the 24 Paganini Caprices by Mr. Vardi, but someone beat me to them. I shall continue to persevere in my quest for additions to my collection.

Again, I love the viola. Maybe it's the timbre, so close to my baritone voice with the slightly nasal quality. Its warm tone speaks directly to my heart, and that's from someone who has never drawn a bow across its strings. I'm trying to be a preserver of viola performances of the past, the present and hopefully many years into the future. If any collectors are reading these words, I certainly would like to hear from you. I'm in the AVS directory. Happy listening!

David O. Brown
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Of Interest

1990 CONGRESS

The XVIII International Viola Congress will be held 21 May-4 June 1990 in Lille, France. It will be sponsored by *Les amis de l'alto*, the French chapter of the International Viola Society. For information write:

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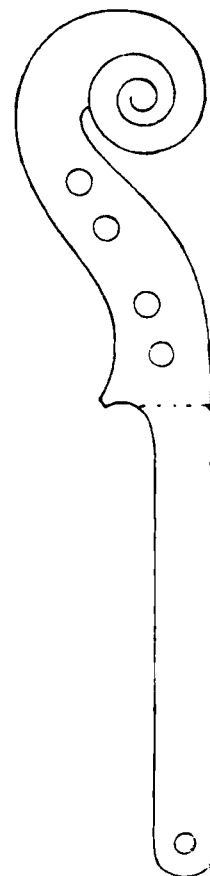
SOL GREITZER DIES

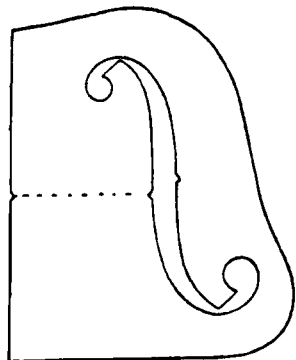
Sol Greitzer, a member of the AVS, and a prominent violist and the New York Philharmonic's longtime principal player until he resigned in 1985, died of a stroke in Manhattan on 31 August 1989. He was 63 years old.

Mr. Greitzer played with the NBC Symphony under Toscanini in the early 1950's and joined the Philharmonic in 1954. He was named principal violist by Pierre Boulez, then the music director, in 1972.

Mr. Greitzer was also a distinguished soloist and gave the premieres of concertos by Jacob Druckman and William Thomas McKinley. He also played as soloist under such conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Daniel Barenboim, James Levine, Rafael Kubelik, Zubin Mehta and Gerard Schwarz. Since leaving the Philharmonic, Mr. Greitzer had been an active performer and was on the faculties of the Mannes School and the State University of New York at Purchase. He collapsed while telephoning a student and was taken to St. Luke's Hospital where he died.

Mr. Greitzer was born in New York in 1925, the son of a shoe designer. He began as a violinist, in which capacity he appeared as a soloist with the City





Symphony Orchestra at the age of twelve and again at sixteen. He entered the Juilliard School at seventeen and studied the violin with Louis Persinger and the viola with Milton Katims. Mr. Greitzer was drafted in World War II, saw action and was decorated in the Battle of the Bulge. On his return to civilian life, he decided to concentrate on the viola.

Mr. Greitzer is survived by his wife, Shirley Greitzer, a pianist and teacher.

DOKTOR HONORED

A Memorial Tribute was given on 2 October 1989 for Paul Doktor who died in June of this year. It was held at the C. Michael Paul Recital Hall at the Juilliard School, Lincoln Center. Works by Gordon Jacob, Brahms, Marais, and Bach were presented by violists Paul Neubauer, Samuel Rhodes, Walter Trampler, Emile Simonel, Meredith Snow, David Harding, Daniel Thomason, Kristen Linfante, Heidi Castleman, and other assisting artists.

New Works

De Profundis for four-part mixed voices and viola with optional organ. By **Daniel Pinkham**. Ione Press, Inc., 1989. Sole Selling Agent: E.C. Schirmer Music Company, Inc., Boston.

Albumblatt for viola and piano. By **Bertold Hummel**. N. Simrock, Hamburg-London, 1989. Selling agent: Theodore Presser Co., Bryn Mawr.

Basic Bach for the Young Violist. Edited and arranged by **Alan Arnold**. Viola World Publications, 1989. Huntington Station, New York.

Three small, useful, but distinctly different publications of music for viola have made their debuts this year. *De Profundis* by Daniel Pinkham is for solo viola and S.A.T.B. choir, with organ optional and certainly not necessary, as it doubles the voices. The text is

important to the composer here, since the rhythms and even the melodic inflections seem derived from the poetry. The starting point for the text is Psalm 130. Thomas Campion, who is credited for the words, was an Elizabethan poet and lute-song composer (also a physician) who either retranslated or, more likely, paraphrased freely most of the well-known psalm.

The solo viola functions somewhat like a protagonist, stating motivic material used later by the choir, embellishing, commenting, restating, and emphasizing. Mr. Pinkham writes for the instrument so masterfully that he might be suspected of being a closet violist; at the very least he is getting first-rate advice. There are no pyrotechnics here, just good melodic writing that allows the instrument to sound its best.

The harmonic style is dissonant, basically triadic, elusively modal, with tonal centers shifting, eventually landing on A. Straightforward four-four time provides the singers logical rhythms and ample opportunity to pronounce the words. *De Profundis* is a just-right five-minute anthem for a church that takes its music seriously and likes a little variety.

Albumblatt (Album leaves) by Bertold Hummel is a forty-three measure morceau for viola and piano. Its limited technical demands and mildly dissonant harmonic style would make it a good vehicle for introducing a young violist to 20th century music. The viola meanders pleasantly, if morosely, in a song-like melody (vaguely reminiscent of Hugo Wolf or Max Reger), while the piano provides harmony with lots of open fourth and fifths. The piece is written with no key signature, although it seems clearly in G-minor. It's rhythmically traditional, in three-four time. Since relatively easy 20th century teaching material is in such short supply, this work could fill a real need.

Basic Bach for the Young Violist, an album of ten short works arranged for viola with piano accompaniment, should fill a need also. They range in difficulty from that which could be played after

mastering "Tune a Day, Book II" to the *Air* from the *Third Orchestral Suite in D* (the "Air for the G-String"). The *Air* presents some real challenges, both rhythmic and interpretive, and this edition calls for the use of positions one through four; but most of the other selections should be accessible to the person who has studied privately for a year and a half or so. They are tuneful, carefully edited, and fun to play--musically rewarding.

Three of the pieces are extracted from vocal music in the *Peasant Cantata*. There is the *Air* and the *Bourée* from the C-Major Cello Suite. The remaining five are taken from the *Anna Magdalena Bach Book*. Perhaps it would be appropriate to mention somewhere in a footnote that the authorship of the Anna Magdalena pieces is in double. J.S., after all, did not use the gallant style, and most editors these days refer to these pieces as "anonymous." But that is probably quibbling when such fine music is made available to students in such an agreeable and carefully thought-out edition. At an advertised cost of \$6.60, the price is also right.

--Thomas G. Hall
Chapman College

Three Airs Varies for Solo Viola. By Jean Baptiste Cartier. Newly edited by Wolfgang Sawodny. Verlag Walter Wollen-weber/Foreign Mus. Dist., 1986. \$14.40

These three compositions for solo viola by Jean Baptiste Cartier (1765-1841) are musically very interesting although technically difficult, both because of the double stopping and the extreme range of the fingerboard covered. They are essentially virtuoso violin material translated directly to the viola.

Professor Dr. W. Sawodny retains the original bowings in this edition "as a document of the then prevailing taste," as he states in his informative postscript (printed in both German and English), but he omits the original fingerings because they "depend too much on the violin technique of his (Cartier's) time."

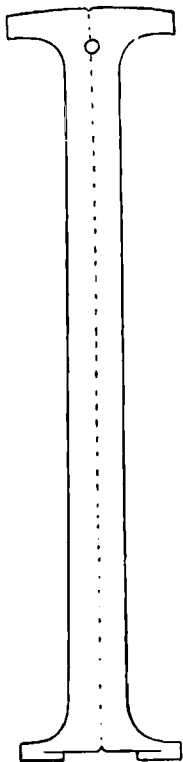
This omission is disturbing on two grounds: first, if the bowings are of historical interest, so are the fingerings. Presumably they are from 1809, when the first edition of these works was published by Sieber in Paris; it is always illuminating to know how a composition might have been performed originally. Secondly, the difficulty of the passagework is such that new, editorially added fingerings would be an enhancing feature. It might be argued that since only advanced players are going to attempt this material, they might prefer to create their own fingerings, but I personally am always interested in the suggestions of my colleagues. We thank the Internationale Viola-Forschung-Gesellschaft, Salzburg, for their cooperation in this issue. *Pamela Goldsmith*. (Courtesy *American String Teacher*)

Recordings

ELGAR/TERTIS: VIOLA CONCERTO IN E MINOR, OP.85; BAX: PHANTASY FOR VIOLA AND ORCHESTRA; ELGAR: THREE CHARACTERISTIC PIECES, OP.10

Rivka Golani (viola)/RPO/
Vernon Handley
Conifer CFC 171, TAPE MCFC 171,
CD CDCF 171

For years I have been trying to persuade record companies to record the Bax *Phantasy* and Lionel Tertis's viola version of the Elgar Cello Concerto--and now here they are, from a totally unexpected source. Rivka Golani's success in recording Martinu's Rhapsody Concerto led Conifer to ask her to do the Elgar, and she studied the work carefully before accepting. She now feels that the viola version is a valid work on its own--and having heard her performance, I agree. Tertis won Elgar's approval for the transcription by tuning his C-string down to B-flat and playing



the composer the Adagio as written. Elgar recommended Novello to print the revised solo part and he himself conducted the premiere of the transcribed version. For this recording, Golani did not tune down, as she wanted to play the work exactly as she would in concert (Tertis always managed to retune before the finale, but there is very little time available for the soloist to do this); I hardly noticed that she had taken the higher option. Indeed, the only time the transcription bothered me was in the first movement, as the undulating solo line undulated up when I was expecting it to go down! One or two Tertis touches in the various flourishes and cadenzas struck me as well suited to the lighter weight of the viola. The performance is magnificent, with Handley controlling the orchestra well; the more virtuostic passages of the second and fourth movements hold no terrors for Golani and she creates a rapt atmosphere in the Adagio, holding a slow tempo with great concentration. Does the viola bring anything to the work that the cello cannot supply? Yes, if it is played as well as this!

Bax was inspired by Oskar Nedbal's viola virtuosity as early as the 1980s, and in Tertis he found an ideal interpreter for a number of works for the instrument (he also wrote the Fantasy Sonata for viola and harp for Raymond Jeremy). The one-movement *Phantasy*, originally called a Concerto, comes from his greatest period, like the Sonata for viola and piano; Tertis gave the premiere, with Eric Coates conducting, in 1921. Golani seems to empathise with its Celtic inspiration--the slow central section is actually based on an Irish folksong--and give a most affecting account of it, though some of the writing takes her into the highest reaches of the viola's range, not the best-sounding aspect of her Erdesz cutaway instrument. Handley is a strong, sympathetic partner. Conifer gives a timing for the performance of 16.22, which would be disastrously fast, but it actually times out at 23.28, considerably more expansive than the 19 to 21½-minute parameters listed in Lewis Foreman's book on the composer. The three early Elgar orchestral pieces are

enjoyable makeweights. This enterprising programme is urgently recommended to all who love the viola. *Tully Potter*. (Courtesy *The Strad*)

Competitions

Brazos Valley Young Artist Competition

The Brazos Valley Young Artist Competition for string concerto will be held March 3-4, 1990, in Bryan, TX. The competition is open to students 14 through 27 years of age who are permanent residents of the State of Texas or who reside there for educational purposes. Up to 20 applicants will be accepted in the Strings Division, based upon date of mailed entry. Deadline is January 26. Cash and performance awards will be given. Contact: Brazos Valley Artist Competition, c/o Brazos Valley Symphony Society, PO Box 3524, Bryan, TX 77805, (409) 776-2877.

East & West Artists Prize for New York Debut

The annual international auditions for "East & West Artists Prize for New York Debut" will take place in New York City from March 17-25, 1990. It is open to classical instrumentalists and ensemble players born after January 1, 1954 and who have not given a formal New York debut. The prize is a fully sponsored debut at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. Tape and application deadline is January 24. Contact: Ms. Adolovni Acosta, Director, East & West Artists, 310 Riverside Dr., #313, New York, NY 10024, (212) 222-2433. Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for application forms.

Corpus Christi Young Artists' Competition

The 1990 Corpus Christi Young Artists' Competition will be held February 16-18 at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, TX. Applications and tapes will be accepted until December 15. The

competition is open to musicians under the age of 26. Awards range from \$150-\$1,500 plus a performance with the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra. Contact: Mary Mayhew, PO Box 81243, Corpus Christi, TX 78468-1243, (512) 852-5829.

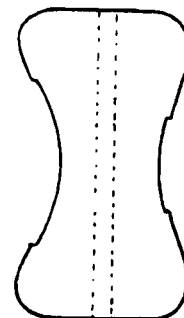
Emerson String Quartet Residency Program

Auditions for the Emerson String Quartet Residency Program will be held from January through April. Winners of the audition will study exclusively with members of the Emerson String Quartet, resident quartet of the Hartt School of Music, in a two-year program. They will receive full-tuition scholarship, annual stipends, and an ensemble debut recital in New York City. Contact: James Jacobs, Director of Admissions, Hartt School of Music, University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT 06117, (203) 243-4465.

ASTA National Solo Competition

The 6th ASTA National Solo Competition will be held Thursday and Friday, March 29-30, 1990 at College Park, Maryland. All inquiries should be directed to: Professor Lawrence P. Hurst, Chairman, 1990 ASTA National Solo Competition, Indiana University, School of Music, Bloomington, IN 47405, (O) 812/335-3328, (H) 812/333-9715.

New works should be submitted to the editor by composers and publishers for possible review in JAVS and deposit in PIVA.



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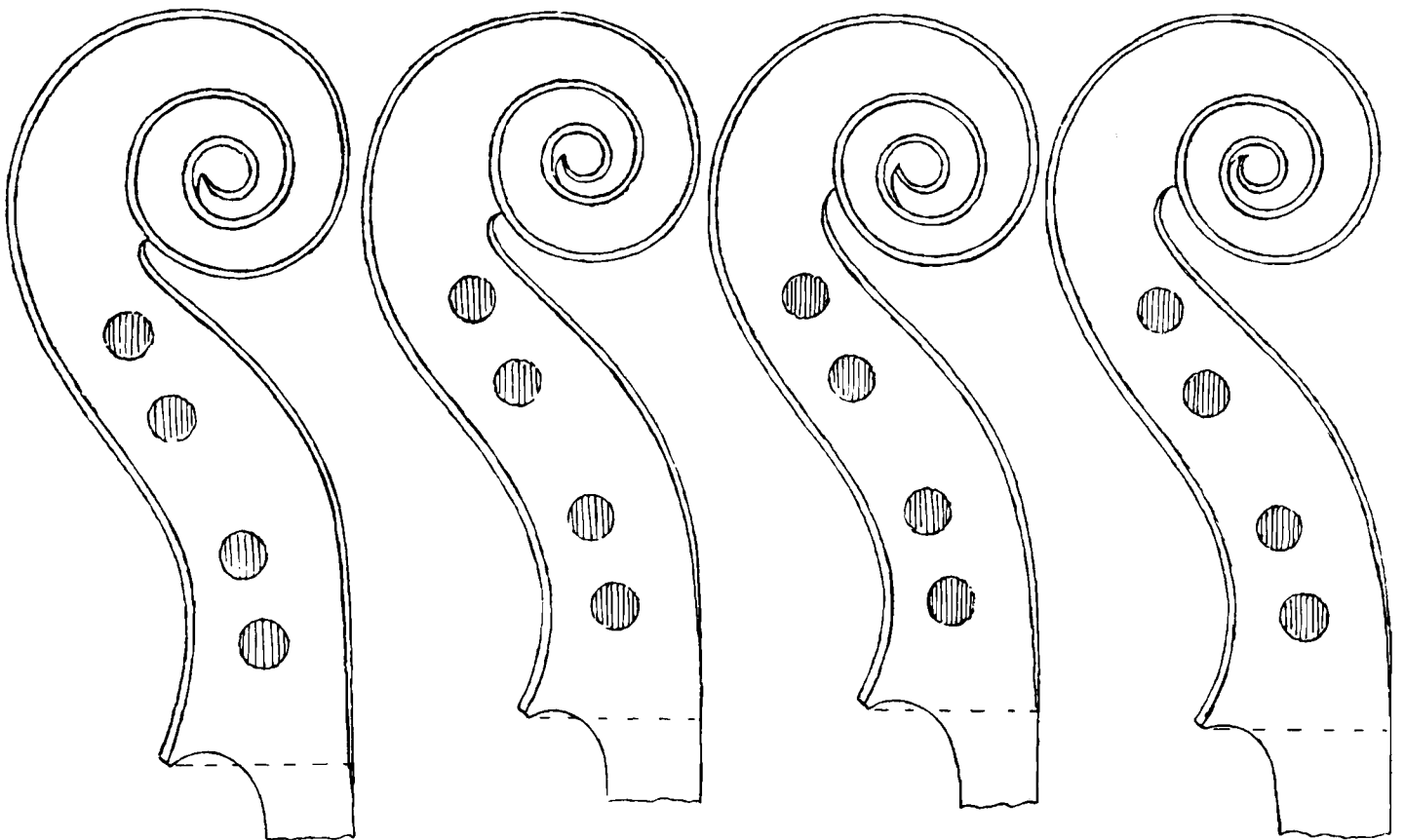
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