Journal of the American Viola Society

Volume 26 Number 1

Features:

Shanghai's Viola Festival

Merging the Old and the New: Margaret Brouwer's Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

Ernst Krenek and the Viola: New Discoveries in the Modern Repertoire

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Journal of the American Viola Society

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Spring 2010
Volume 26 Number 1

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On the Cover:

Lena Karpinsky *Andante for Viola*

Russian-born painter Lena Karpinsky has been surrounded by a family of musicians and frequently finds inspiration in musical themes. She considers the viola an underappreciated instrument whose inner magic is "waiting to be discovered" by audiences. For more of her works, please visit http://www.artbylena.com.

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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.

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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

From the Editor

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, instrumental soloists were expected to write and perform their own compositions. The viola repertoire is filled with music by these composer-performers, from Stamitz and Rolla to Vieuxtemps and Hindemith. Changing musical tastes have led to a sharp decrease in this trend, and the composer-performer is now a rarity. Instead of composing, most violists in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have increased the repertoire by actively commissioning and championing music of contemporary composers. This issue of the *JAVS* celebrates the diverse relationships between composers and violists in creating music and gives readers a chance to try their own hand at composing.

If any contemporary violist continues to carry the torch of the composer-performer, it is Scott Slapin. A rapidly rising musician, Slapin has come to prominence through a series of recordings, often featuring his own works. In our Fresh Faces column, readers can learn more about the multi-talented violist and then perform his *Elegy-Caprice*, a recent composition for solo viola.

An even more recent work is the Viola Concerto by Margaret Brouwer. Commissioned by Ellen Rose, longtime principal of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and former AVS board member, Brouwer's concerto was premiered to great acclaim earlier this year. In her article, Laurie Shulman examines the associations between soloist, composer, conductor, and orchestra in bringing this new composition to life.

While violists have been strong proponents of contemporary works, some wonderful compositions languish after their premieres. Such is the case with Ernst Krenek, whose viola works—long out of print—will soon become available from Universal Edition. Composer and violist Brett Banducci is championing the cause to revive these works; his article provides a thoughtful introduction to Krenek's compositional styles and places these viola compositions in a historical perspective.

Our Student Life department examines the situation where every violist should know how to compose: writing your own cadenza. Annette Isserlis provides practical advice—specifically aimed at violists—on how to approach writing a cadenza. Using the Telemann and Stamitz concertos as starting points, she illustrates the article with her own examples of cadenzas for both works.

Readers have another opportunity to compose in our Alternative Styles department. David Wallace introduces us to the American fiddle waltz, a genre that he thinks violists will embrace. Fiddle music has been experiencing a resurgence in popularity, and it's not just for violinists anymore! Wallace offers sound advice and useful resources for exploring this style. As added inspiration for violists to compose their own waltz, or just to learn the genre, we are fortunate to publish Wallace's fiddle (alto-fiddle, that is) waltz, *Tannehill*.

This issue also surveys viola events on the international scene. IVS President Michael Vidulich reports from the 2009 Viola Festival held in Shanghai. String playing has been thriving in China, and this festival honored Professor Xi-Di Shen for her exceptional contributions as a viola teacher. Vidulich also details more international news as part of his IVS President's message.

We are also sad to report the passing of two violists in December. Rob Bridges, the founder of RBP Music Publishers passed away after a long battle with cancer, and Franz Zeyringer, whose name is synonymous with viola research, passed away after a lengthy illness. Our In Memoriam section offers personal tributes to both men.

Cordially,

David M. Bynog
JAVS Editor

The David Dalton Viola Research Competition Guidelines

The Journal of the American Viola Society welcomes submissions for the David Dalton Viola Research Competition for university and college student members of the American Viola Society.

Entries must be original contributions to the field of viola research and may address issues concerning viola literature, history, performers, and pedagogues. Entries must not have been published in any other publication or be summaries of other works. The body of the work should be 1500–3500 words in length and should include relevant footnotes and bibliographic information. Entries may include short musical examples. Entries must be submitted in hard copy along with the following entry form, as well as in electronic format for either PC or Mac. Word or WordPerfect format is preferred. All entries must be postmarked by 15 May 2010.

The American Viola Society wishes to thank AVS past president Thomas Tatton and his wife, Polly, for underwriting first prize in the 2010 David Dalton Viola Research Competition.

Send entries to:
AVS Office, 14070 Proton Road, Suite 100, Dallas, TX 75244.
A panel of viola scholars will evaluate submissions and then select a maximum of three winning entries.

Prize categories:
All winning entries will be featured in the Journal of the American Viola Society, with authors receiving a free one-year subscription to the Journal and accompanying membership to the American Viola Society.
In addition:

1st Prize: $300, sponsored by Thomas and Polly Tatton
2nd Prize: *Bartók's Viola Concerto* by Donald Maurice and Facsimile edition of the Bartók Viola Concerto
3rd Prize: *An Anthology of British Viola Players* by John White and *Conversations with William Primrose* by David Dalton

David Dalton Viola Research Competition Entry Form

Please include the following information with your submission to the David Dalton Viola Research Competition. Be sure to include address and telephone information where you may be reached during summer.

Name _____

Current Address _____

Telephone _____ Email address_____

Permanent Address _____

Telephone _____ Email address_____

University/College _____

Academic Level: Fr / So / Jr / Sr / Grad

Topic _____ Word Count _____

Current AVS member? Yes / No
If you are not a current AVS member, please join AVS by including $23 student membership dues with your submission, along with a membership enrollment form, which can be found in the current issue of JAVS.

From the President

I just returned from the annual conference of the American String Teachers Association in Santa Clara, California. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to several people who assisted with hosting the AVS booth during the exhibits: my UNC colleague William Hinkie, current AVS board member Deborah Price, past-AVS board member Michael Palumbo and his Weber State University students Crystal Hardman and Amanda Kippen, AVS past-vice president and past-secretary Pamela Goldsmith, violist/composer Katrina Wreede, University of Alabama viola professor Daniel Sweaney, and AVS past-president Tom Tatton—all clearly active AVS members! We signed up roughly twenty-five members, at least twenty of whom are new to the organization. There were some wonderful viola-centric presentations and master classes at the conference. Of particular note was *JAVS* Alternative Styles Contributing Editor David Wallace's inspiring keynote address, during which he closed his remarks on teaching, mentoring, and creativity with a performance of *What a Friend* on his electric instrument.

I am delighted to announce the winning composition of the first Maurice Gardner Composition Competition. Rachel Matthews's *Dreams*, for viola and piano will be given a joint premiere: first by violist and AVS past-president Helen Callus with the composer at the piano on April 30 in Seattle, and then by violist Scott Slapin and the composer on June 16 at the 38th International Viola Congress. I wish to extend my deep gratitude to the selection committee led by Michael Palumbo and including Scott Slapin and composers Joan Tower, Libby Larsen, and my UNC colleague Paul Elwood. Donations to support the first year of the competition and to simultaneously establish an endowment are currently being accepted on the AVS website. Please join me, with Michael Palumbo and others, by helping to extend the legacy of an important American composer.

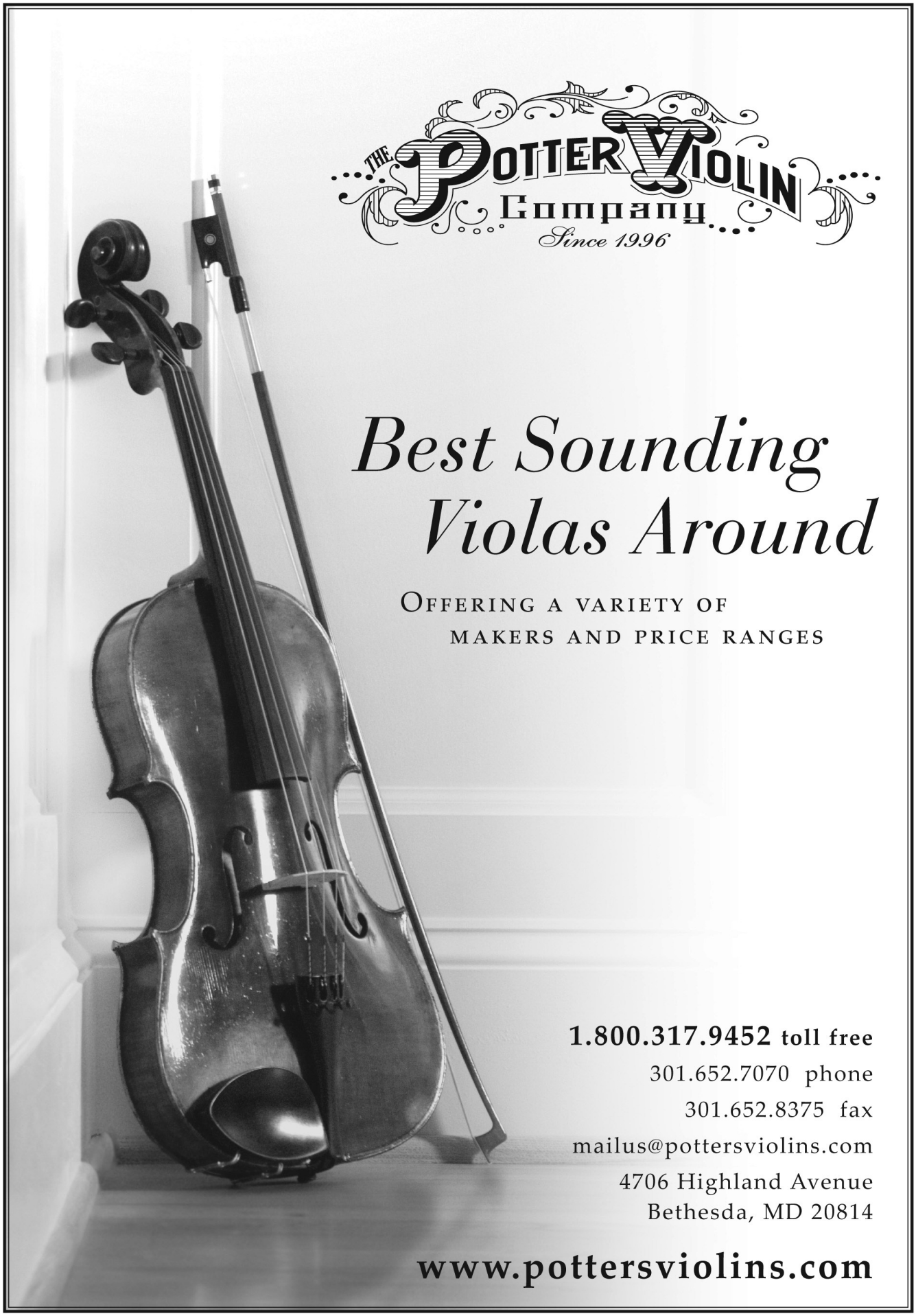
As I write this message, I am just over the halfway mark in my three-year term as President of the AVS. This has caused me to reflect on my goals for the remaining sixteen months of my tenure. One of the first goals is to increase our visibility to violists and viola advocates. Our newly redesigned website is a wonderful first step in that direction. We plan to add more features to enhance what is already a great online community for the "middle voice."

Beyond having a greater visibility, I am determined that the AVS remains a relevant organization. This can be particularly challenging in this day and age between the recovering economy and the growing isolation that we can experience in our busy lives. It surprises me each time that I have hosted the AVS booth at the ASTA conference the number of people who stop by and are surprised that an organization such as ours exists. It is extremely important for us to get the message out that our organization is a thriving community for violists to connect with and support one another.

Speaking of connecting, I urge you to attend the viola congress this summer at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and I challenge you to bring a friend, someone who perhaps has never had the pleasure of experiencing one of these events. Nothing can replace the excitement and inspiration that attendance at a series of wonderful live performances, lectures, and master classes brings! Traveling to a congress also affords one the opportunity to make human contact, which can be as simple as putting a voice with a face from the journal or on that record album in your collection (well, perhaps on that icon from your iPod instead). If I've managed to inspire you to attend this summer, I invite you to introduce yourself at the congress.

Warmly,

Juliet White-Smith,
President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IVS President's Message

IVS President, Michael Vidulich

Greetings one and all! I hope the start of 2010 has been a pleasant one for you. IVS elections will be held this year for the next three-year term of office (January 2011 to December 2013), and we wish to ask you to please submit names for the various IVS positions to your AVS Secretary, AVS President, or AVS General Manager (Madeleine Crouch at info@avsnationaloffice.org). Submissions for IVS positions must come to us through the AVS. The closing date for nominations has yet to be set, but will probably be in August, and the elections will probably be held in October or November.

Nominations will be accepted for:

- IVS President
- IVS Vice President
- IVS Secretary
- IVS Treasurer

Eligible candidates for the position of president are those who have served as an IVS officer and/or as a national section president or vice president. Eligible candidates for the other positions are those who have served as IVS officers and/or as national section officers or executive board members.

The IVS would like to see at least two highly qualified nominees on the ballet for each of the four positions. Please do not hesitate to submit your nominations to the AVS.

We are pleased to announce (and congratulate) our IVS Vice President and President of the English Viola Society, **Louise Lansdown**, on having received her doctorate last year. Also in 2009, the first-ever International Viola Congress was held in Africa and was hosted by the **South African Viola Society**. This congress held in Stellenbosch, South Africa, was an outstanding event, enjoyed by all who had the pleasure to attend. The host was **Hester Wohlitz**, President of the South African Viola Society, who was supported by groups including MIAGI (Music Is a Great Investment), UNISA Music Foundation, and the ABSA Bank, among others.

Last October/November saw many countries presenting viola festivals and other viola events. Germany presented its annual *Bratschistentag*; Canada, its Thirtieth Anniversary Canadian Viola Festival (which included presenting the Canadian Viola Society's Lifetime

Achievement Award to ten violists); Sweden hosted the Nordic Viola Symposium; and China, its 2009 Viola Festival, to mention just a few.

IVS awards for 2009 included: **Ronald Schmidt** receiving the 2009 IVS Silver Alto Clef for his decades of service as an officer of both the IVS and the German Viola Society (the award was presented at the 2008 *Bratschistentag* held in Düsseldorf). Louise Lansdown presented **John White** the 2010 IVS Silver Alto Clef at his home in Harlow, England, with several close friends and John's wife Carol in attendance. John White is probably a familiar name to many, as he has hosted four International Viola Congresses, worked with the Tertis International Viola Competition organization, written two viola books, arranged and edited numerous pieces for the viola, and more. Lastly, an IVS Special Award plaque was presented to **Xi-Di Shen** on her seventieth birthday in Shanghai at the televised Viva la Viola concert. Professor Shen is the foremost viola professor in China, and her students have included almost every professional violist or viola teacher that has studied in China over the last fifty years. Her contribution to the viola in China is without equal.

Last year saw two more countries forming viola societies and joining the IVS. They were **Brazil**, our thirteenth section (and our first one in South America) and **Poland**, our fourteenth section. As of December 2009, the **Taiwanese Viola Society** was established and is almost ready to apply for IVS membership, and work is "in progress" on forming a **Hong Kong & Macau Viola Society**. If you have any viola contacts in countries without viola societies, we would love to hear from you (e.g. all of Latin America (except Brazil), Japan, Korea, Russia, Italy, Ireland, Czech Republic, Benelux, Portugal, Switzerland, Austria, Middle East). Please e-mail me at vervid@xtra.co.nz

This year we are all looking forward to the **38th International Viola Congress**, June 16–20 to be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, at the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. The hosts, **Catharine Carroll and Masao Kawasaki**, are putting together a fantastic line-up of international violists and viola events. More information is at http://www.ivc2010.com.

Improvements on our IVS website at http://www.viola.ca/ivs/ivs are continuing, and it is our aim to keep all violists informed about IVS events, our sections' news, and other general viola items worldwide. A special thank you must go to **Ann Frederking** of the Canadian Viola Society for all her work as our webmaster. Thank you Ann (and congratulations on your CVS's Lifetime Achievement Award)!

My best for the rest of this year, and I hope to see you at this year's International Viola Congress in Cincinnati!

Kind regards,

Michael Vidulich
IVS President

By-laws Revisions

Below are proposed amendments to the AVS Constitution. The AVS Board unanimously approved the following changes to the By-Laws, and these Amendments thus proposed are hereby announced to the membership. Amendments shall be placed on the agenda of a meeting at the 2010 International Viola Congress for discussion and possible revision. Two thirds of the ballots cast in a mail ballot submitted to the entire membership shall be required for the acceptance of an amendment. The ballot shall state that the amendment has the endorsement of the Executive Board. Proposed deletions appear with a line striking the text, and proposed additions appear in bold.

Proposed changes to By-Laws

1. Article III: Membership
Section 2:
B. Student members who join the society shall be students in residence in any accredited U.S. educational institution **or be under the age of 18.** Their rights and responsibilities shall be the same as those of regular members. ~~except that: (1) they shall be eligible for student membership for a period no longer than six years?~~

2. Article IV: Officers
Section 1:
B. The President-Elect, during the absence, incapacity, or disability of the President, shall exercise all the functions of the President and, when so acting, shall have the powers of the President and shall be subject to all the duties of and restrictions upon the President. In the event that the Office of the President becomes vacant before the conclusion of the elected term, the President-Elect shall succeed to that office. The President-Elect shall also have other powers and discharge other such duties as assigned that office by the Executive Board. At the end of their three year term of office, the President-Elect will automatically assume the office of President for a three year term. **A member is eligible for election to the office of AVS President upon having completed three years experience as an officer or Board member within the last nine years as of the date assuming office.**

3. Article IV: Officers
Section 1:
E. The Secretary shall attend to such correspondence as may be assigned, shall keep the minutes of the meetings of members and the Board of Directors, ~~**maintain**~~ **oversee** membership records, chair the Membership Committee **and perform all other duties incidental to the office not performed by the General Manager. Also, if not attended to by the General Manager,** the Secretary shall attend to the giving and serving of notices on behalf of the Society and shall be in charge of books, records, and papers of the Society as the Board may direct. The Secretary shall also administer by mail **or electronically** elections and balloting, **except in the case when he/she is running for re-election, in which case the Chair of the Nominations Committee shall administer by mail or electronically elections and balloting.**

4. Article IV: Officers
Section 2: Terms of Office
Terms of Office: The President, President-Elect and the 12 at-large Board members shall serve

for terms of three years or until their successors are elected. The Secretary and Treasurer shall serve for terms of four years or until their successors are elected. The terms of newly elected Executive Board members shall begin on July 1st of the year in which they are elected, with elections of said officers to be conducted in the first half of that year. Except for the Secretary and Treasurer, officers may not be elected to succeed themselves. Any office vacated in the course of a term, aside from that of President, may be filled by the Executive Board until the next term begins. The *JAVS* Editor's ~~membership~~**, and the Webmaster's memberships** on the Executive Board shall be concurrent with the tenure of ~~his/her appointment~~ **their appointments** as editor **and webmaster.**

5. Article IV: Officers
Section 3: Nominations and Elections
The chair of the Nominations Committee, appointed by the President, shall present in each election year a double bill (slate) of candidates for officers of the Society **and at-large members** of the **Executive Board**. Regarding the posts of Secretary and Treasurer, the Executive Board may decide to present only one candidate provided the candidate has already served at least one year in the same post. During the election year the slate of officer and at large Board candidates shall be mailed to the voting members of the Society in the form of a printed ballot at least two months before the meeting of the Society. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote cast in sealed envelopes **and/or in secure online voting.** ~~**The name and address of the voter must be affixed in the upper left-hand corner of the envelope by which means the status of the voter will be verified against the membership rolls.**~~ **To ensure the confidentiality of each ballot, the elections ballot shall include two return envelopes. One will be pre-printed with the name and return address of the voter by which means the status of the voter will be verified against the membership rolls, the second one will be blank. The ballot is placed in the blank envelope, which in turn is placed in the return envelope.**

6. Article V: Executive Board
Section 1
The Executive Board shall consist of 12 members-at-large, the four elected officers specified in Article IV, the Past President and the current *JAVS* ~~editor~~ **Editor and the current AVS Webmaster as** ~~**a Board appointee**~~ **Board appointees** (Article V, ~~section~~ **sections 5 and 6** below).

Section 6: AVS Webmaster. The Webmaster of the AVS website shall be appointed by the Executive Board for a four-year term in office and will be eligible for reappointment. The appointee shall also serve as a voting member of the Executive Board throughout his/her tenure as Webmaster. The Webmaster shall receive such compensation as the Board may determine.

Section 7: Primrose International Viola Competition Director. The Director of the Primrose International Viola Competition shall be appointed by the Executive Board for each specific competition and may be eligible for reappointment.

Section ~~6~~ **8**: Action of the Executive Board without a meeting. *(Previous section 6 becomes section 8)*

7. Article VI: Committees
Section 2
D. Primrose ~~Memorial Student~~ **International Viola** Competition Committee members shall assist the appointed chair director in the preparation of publicity, in the selection of competition repertoire, and in any way they are able to help plan the event.

8. Article VI: Committees
Section 2
E. The Publications Committee shall make recommendations to the Executive Board for special publications (other than the *JAVS*) that are authorized by the Executive Board, shall assign editorial responsibility, and shall collaborate in the execution of all business in connection with their manufacture and distribution. **The Publications Committee shall also present to the Executive Board at an annual meeting a one-year review of the appointment of a new JAVS Editor.**

9. Article VI: Committees
Section 2
I. The Technology Committee shall explore any advance in technology that will be of value to the Society and the meeting of its objectives. **The Technology Committee shall also present to the Executive Board at an annual meeting a one-year review of the appointment of a new AVS Webmaster.**

10. Article VI: Committees
Section 2
H. The Awards Committee shall select from an appropriate list of nominees the recipients of the Founders Award, the Maurice W. Riley Viola Award, and make recommendations to the Executive Board for Honorary Membership, Congress Dedication **and Career Achievement**, which are chosen by that body.

11. Article VIII: Society Membership Meetings
Section 5:
The membership may initiate proposals of any kind concerning the affairs of the Society to the Executive Board through (1) a majority vote or a vote of one hundred or more members of any membership category at a congressional or special meeting, or (2) by petition, signed by one hundred or more members of any membership category. Should such a proposal not be adopted by the Executive Board, it shall be referred to the membership for resolution by means of a mail ballot **and/or secure online voting**.

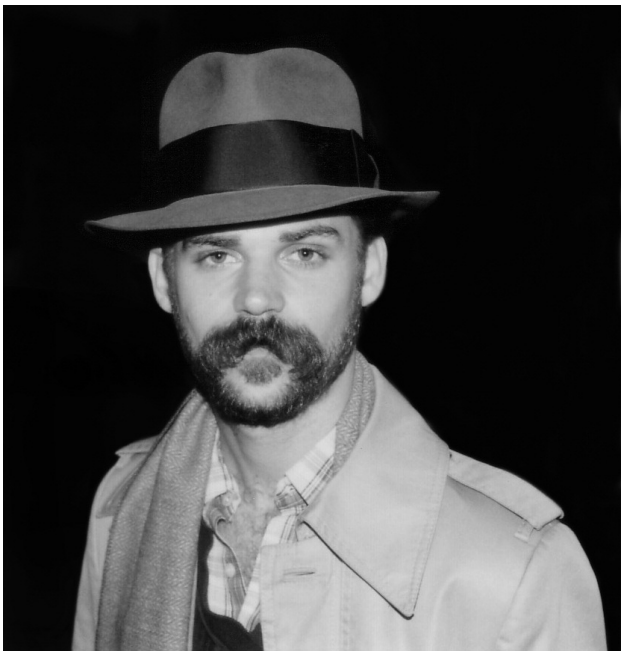
12. Article IX: Chapters
Section 2
B. Membership. ~~All chapters shall strive toward a goal of having 100% of their members hold AVS membership~~. **All chapters shall require their members to hold AVS membership.**

E. Grants. The executive board may make or authorize money grants to chapters that (1) have current officer information on file with the AVS. ~~And (2) meet the following goals for individual membership in AVS:~~
~~Under 20 members: 80% of local members must be AVS members~~
~~20–39 members: 70% of local members must be AVS members~~
~~40–80 members: 60% of local members must be AVS members~~
~~80+ members: 50% of local members must be AVS members~~

13. Article XII: Amendments
Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed to the Executive Board by the By-Laws Committee, at the congressional meeting of members, or by a petition of 50 or more members. Amendments thus proposed shall be announced to the membership through the Society's publication or by other means, at least six weeks before the next congressional meeting. Amendments shall be placed on the agenda of that meeting for discussion and possible revision. Two thirds of the ballots cast in a mail ballot **and/or in secure online voting** submitted to the entire membership shall be required for the acceptance of an amendment.

14. Article XVI: Special Funds of the Society
A. Scholarship Fund: Sustaining the *Primrose ~~Memorial Scholarship~~* ***International Viola Competition*** *Fund* shall be an official responsibility of the Society.

In Memoriam



Robert Bridges

Robert Bridges
1957–2009

Robert Stanley Bridges, violist and the man behind RBP Music Publishers, passed away December 19, 2009, after a long battle with cancer. Originally from Milwaukee, Rob began studying the viola at the age of nine. Among his early teachers were Gerald Stanick and Abram Loft. He continued his studies at the Peabody Institute with Karen Tuttle and the Banff Institute of Fine Arts with William Primrose and Donald McInnes.

A much-loved fixture of the Houston community, Rob was a member of the Houston Ballet and Houston Grand Opera orchestras and a favored substitute in the Houston Symphony viola section. He was the librarian for the Houston Ballet for over twenty years. Rob was also a passionate gay-rights activist who managed Houston Mayor Annise Parker's first two political campaigns in the early 1990s; he is remembered by her for his intellect and uncanny analysis of voter demographic data.

Rob's association with the American Viola Society was lifelong, both as a violist and a publisher of interesting and new viola transcriptions. In 1979 he was one of fifteen violists invited to participate in the first William Primrose International Viola Competition. He appeared as guest soloist at the 1999 Viola Congress in Canada, performing his arrangement of Tchaikovsky's Theme and Variations for Viola and Piano. A lasting legacy of Rob's love of music is his viola and ballet scores, which are in music libraries worldwide including those of La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, and the opera houses of Berlin, Sweden, and Finland.

He will be deeply missed by all his colleagues, friends, and family not only for his integrity and dedication as a musician and political activist, but for his wicked sense of humor involving impersonations of everything from composers to female Bolivian violists to alligators.

–Rita Porfiris
Assistant Professor of Viola, the Hartt School and New York University; former violist in the Houston Symphony; and owner of Polly the cat, who was fascinated with Rob-as-alligator.

Franz Zeyringer
1920–2009

Had he asked people to found a society to plant daisies on the moon, the reactions in the sixties of the last century would have been almost the same: "A society for the viola? What is that?? What will they do???" Such was the echo when he began to gather helpers and friends for his idea. Upon finishing his studies of the violin in Vienna, Franz Zeyringer began a concentrated study of the viola. When he asked his teachers for final examination literature, the list he received contained only transcriptions from works for the violin or even the violoncello. As he had already quite a good knowledge of the history of his instrument he thought: "An instrument with a history of four-hundred years—and no original music of artistic

From left to right: Paul Doktor and Franz Zeyringer at the 1977 International Viola Congress. (From the Louis Ouzer Photographic Archive. Courtesy of the Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester.)

value for it? That seems hardly possible!"

This was the genesis of his idea to collect original viola music from wherever he could find it. He began a correspondence with universities, libraries, big music shops, composers, collectors, and artists around the world. Franz confided to me that these endeavors cost him out of his own pocket thousands and thousands of shillings (none of which were ever reimbursed), but which resulted at last in a "definitive catalogue of compositions for the viola" (Maurice Riley, *The History of the Viola*, vol. 2, 1991, p.116) of over fourteen thousand titles of viola literature. By far the greater half of this collection consisted of original works for the viola; important transcriptions and arrangements were also included, but were documented as such.

The idea to found a society to further these researches had been put into reality for a first time by the German Wilhelm Altmann around 1930. He had founded a *Bratschisten-Bund* (a society of violists), had written the early issues of a small journal for violists, and had begun to collect literature—but the bad political and financial situation in Germany during the following years brought his activities soon to an end.

Franz Zeyringer found better political conditions when he began, but people understanding his goal were as rare as in Altmann's time. Luckily he found Dietrich Bauer in Kassel, who had a similar idea, Wolfgang Sawodny in Ulm, and a few more viola-enthusiasts, many of whom pursued non-musical careers. It was this rather unusual combination of professionals and "*Liebhaber*" (amateurs) who helped Franz to found the *Viola-Forschungsgesellschaft* in Kassel in 1968, the organizational cornerstone of the International Viola Society of today and its many national members.

Again quoting Maurice Riley (vol. 2, p.316): "Franz Zeyringer, who had been the guiding figure of the IVG [*Internationale Viola-Gesellschaft*, the official name of the society from 1976 until 1999] throughout the first 20 years, resigned as president (in 1988). For 20 years he has unselfishly given his time and skill to help promote the goals of the IVG. His leadership, dedication, and devotion is a major factor in the many successful achievements of the organization."

–Uta Lenkewitz-v. Zahn
2nd Vorsitzende (Chairperson), long-time General Secretary, German Viola Society

In the early 1960s, I was browsing through music books at Patelson's Music House, in back of Carnegie Hall in New York City, and came upon a book titled *Literatur für Viola* by an Austrian, Franz Zeyringer. It was an amazing book as it documented and listed hundreds of works for viola in different settings, a large number of them original pieces. Inside the book was a form, inviting all readers to submit to the author any information on viola works not

found in his book. I wrote to Zeyringer, complimented him on his book, and started sending him data on many American and other viola works that I knew of and had not found in his book.

I received a Fulbright Grant to study viola d'amore in Vienna for 1964–65, and during that year, my wife and I made a trip to visit Zeyringer in Pöllau, a small village not far from Graz. Franz, a teacher as well as violist (and for some years he had a trio—clarinet, viola, and piano that concertized), took me into his office in his school and showed me his research. It was most impressive. At that time, he also started speaking of the formation of an international viola organization. I thought this a marvelous idea (it had been attempted before by Wilhelm Altmann, Vadim Borissovsky, and others, but never succeeded just before the Second World War broke out) and offered to start an American section. This was the Viola Research Society, the predecessor of the American Viola Society. The American chapter grew quickly, and I edited its first humble newsletters. Part of its dues went to the international organization, an important part of its growth and existence. Franz, also a good viola player, and I gave a performance of Graupner's Concerto in D for Viola d'amore and Viola soli with strings with the local string orchestra there. We performed together on several occasions at viola congresses.

Franz came to America several times for International Viola Congresses here. He was also a guest in my home, and although he spoke no English, my young children responded to him quickly and easily. En route to the International Viola Congress in Graz, I returned to Pöllau again in the summer of 1980 as a guest of the Zeyringer family, where I felt most welcome. Franz loved the outdoors and led me on a strenuous and energizing walk into the mountains near Pöllau.

Franz Zeyringer was a man totally devoted to the viola, its music, and its history. He was most intelligent and always had a sparkle in his eye. Our earlier frequent communications dwindled down to just a Christmas card once a year and then to nothing. I heard of his illness, a great sadness to me for such a focused, bright, and talented man. He leaves a great legacy that will live on way beyond today's viola world.

–Myron Rosenblum
Founder, Viola Research Society
(now the American Viola Society)

The opening lines of my tributes to Milton Katims and Walter Trampler were almost identical: "Perhaps I should remain silent …" because my contact with each was limited. Now that Franz Zeyringer has passed, the opposite problem confronts me—how could I possibly remain silent, and how could my recollections be confined to less than ten pages??

It was my great joy to know Franz Zeyringer very well: I shared his home on two occasions, hosted him in mine—my children took to him immediately despite the language barrier, and they spoke of him for years. I traveled and had viola lessons with him. It was my privilege to serve as his translator during numerous American viola congresses and to conduct research with him one-on-one. He was generous with his time and hospitality as I consulted him and scoured his personal archive for data pertaining to my AVS history project. Our bond of friendship was such that we often were privy to one another's joys and sorrows. This giant of viola research, with Myron Rosenblum, Maurice Riley, and David Dalton, was one of four central actors in my book, *The American Viola Society: A History and Reference*, which is dedicated to all four.

Zeyringer was somewhat rustic by nature and enjoyed long walks in the mountains, actively played tennis well into his seventies, and preferred to live in the city of his birth (Pöllau, Austria) rather than the musical centers of Vienna or Graz. He owned and played a superb Stainer viola that was given to him by a local Catholic church in grateful appreciation for his assistance and many appearances with them. Obviously they had no idea of the value of this rare and magnificent viola but, intentionally or not, placed it in very responsible hands. He had other instruments as well, was both a collector and private dealer during much of his career, wrote articles on viola construction, and even had an instrument built to his exact specifications.

To be hosted by the Zeyringer family in their lovely home in Pöllau was always a memorable

and marvelous experience. It was spacious in volume, gracious in its design and appointments, and dotted with mementos, firstly of his family, secondly of viola-related items, and thirdly of memorabilia pertaining to their Austrian heritage—all of which reflected the essence of his and Linde's lives. He even insisted that I play his Stainer and some of his other violas, a marvelous instrumental experience! Aware of my own military background, he showed me two small frames in a quite remote section of his living room that contained his uniform epaulets from World War II and the badge signifying that he had been wounded three times in battle. He confided that, following the hostilities with which he was all too familiar, he was determined to fill his life with music and the important things in life that war had denied everyone—thus his emphasis on his family, the viola, and his beloved home. It is obvious that I enjoyed a particularly impressive first visit.

Zeyringer was nothing if not a visionary and builder: all of his major organizational accomplishments began with a simple document, the *Pöllau Protokol*, co-authored with Music Director Dietrich Bauer from Kassel (Germany). The outgrowth of that document has benefited quite literally every violist in the world and resulted in the transition from the original *Viola-Forschungsgesellschaft (VFG)* and *Viola Forschungs-Institut (VFI)* to the organizations we now know as the International Viola Society (IVS) and the Primrose International Viola Archive (PIVA).

On a one-to-one basis, Franz Zeyringer was the gentlest, kindest, and most considerate of men, but regarding his research, music criticism, or the destiny of the viola archive he had so carefully assembled, he could be tenacious, stubborn, and unwilling to compromise very high standards and expectations. I have seen him criticize composers to their faces for what he considered poor efforts, but likewise generously praise that music which pleased him. We were sitting together during the world premiere of Maurice Gardner's Concerto for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, premiered by Andre Granat, Donald McInnes, and the USAF Symphony at Congress XV (1987) in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Gardner and his son, Gerry, were sitting directly in front of us. Franz was so enamored with the concerto that, at one point between movements, he leaned forward to Gardner and said, "Das ist Musik!" Years later, Mr. Gardner confided to me, "The greatest compliment I ever received was from Franz Zeyringer when he said, 'Das ist Musik!'" What a joy to have witnessed both moments!

He was a dear friend who enriched my life and my love for the viola—I shall miss him very much.

–Dwight Pounds
Historian, American Viola Society

When I was given the opportunity to attend the Ypsilanti Viola Congress in 1975, I heard about the new catalog of viola music by Franz Zeyringer called *Literatur für Viola*. You can be sure that I ordered my copy and made the acquaintance of Mr. Zeyringer. The book arrived at my home the following year, and I read it with great interest. At the congresses in Rochester, New York, in 1977 and in Provo, Utah, in 1979, I took as many opportunities as I could to talk with this man who had done so much for the literature for our instrument. It was at the congress in Provo (BYU) that I made the decision, however foolhardy, to host the next North American Viola Congress at the University of Toronto, June 11–14, 1981.

I was fortunate enough to get a Canada Council (of the Arts) travel grant to attend the Graz Congress in 1980, to see how the job should be done. I was in Graz a little early since I was traveling by car, and as I was walking along the main street that evening I recognized Franz also out for a stroll. I went up to him and had a pleasant conversation, and I told him of some plans I had for "my" congress the following year. The next day we had lunch together with Dr. Francois de Beaumont and Myron Rosenblum, and we had a photo taken together after lunch, which I still treasure. I was indeed fortunate to have Myron along to translate for me since my German was about as good as Franz's English. I thought it might therefore be good to take some German courses to prepare myself for the coming congress, at which there were sure to be several German speakers.

On June 10, 1981, I picked Mr. Zeyringer up at the Toronto airport. While we were driving up to the university area where the delegates' hotel was, I tried some of my German skills. Franz laughed and then told me what I had really said. Needless to say I was somewhat embarrassed, but he did so with good humor, which I appreciated. He was also kind enough to present me with a beautiful little blue wool outfit from Austria, a gift for my young son Karl, then one month old!

Unfortunately I was not able to see him very often from then on, but I greatly cherish the correspondence I have from him, some Christmas cards, and so on—ordinary things but also very important to me. Dr. Zeyringer was most influential in the furtherance of viola research, and having the opportunity to meet him has left an indelible mark on me. I feel fortunate indeed to have met and known such a man.

–Baird Knechtel,
Honorary President of the
Canadian Viola Society

I loved this man. I know that he could be irascible, hardheaded, and controlling; he did not suffer fools easily and was sometimes slow to forgive. (*Write those weaknesses in sand.*) But what I admired in him was his single-minded determination, devotion to a cause, vision, willingness to sacrifice, loyalty to a friend, and love of homeland. (*Carve those qualities in stone.*)

I owe my introduction to Franz to Maurice Riley at the 1975 Viola Congress. Maurice had invited me to take a small part in the bestowal of an honorary doctorate on Primrose at Eastern Michigan University. Actually, it was Primrose who acquainted me with the name "Zeyringer" ten years before when he showed me during a private lesson at his home on Sunset Boulevard a small booklet of viola literature by this Austrian professor. There was Zeyringer in Ypsilanti along with two other pillars of the fledgling IVG Dietrich Bauer and Wolfgang Sawodny. Franz had no English, but I had German. Communication was therefore immediate, and I like to think on several levels. It continued through the ensuing thirty years until Franz's ability to communicate faded.

We were guests in his home, and he in ours, the last time, thankfully, with his wife Linde when the new Primrose and PIVA Rooms were inaugurated at BYU in 2002. I say "thankfully" because Linde had never been to America, and more importantly, she also deserved to be honored because of the hidden role she played in the more visible accomplishments of her husband. Franzl confided in me more than once that what he had done for the viola came at the sacrifice of his wife and their three children.

And what were a few of those accomplishments? I ponder how much poorer my professional and personal life, and that of my wife Donna, might have been had there been no Professor Zeyringer. Think of several possibilities:

- No International Viola Society with an accompanying yearly congress somewhere in the world
- No 1985 then-definitive lexicon with fourteen thousand entries, *Literatur für Viola*, the galleys of which Franz finger-pecked on his typewriter, and without computer
- No PIVA, that is, in its present size of eight thousand scores and enriched with collections, including one he hand-carried piecemeal across the communist Czech border
- No written and composed books and works from his hand on the viola
- And perhaps most importantly, the rich and abiding friendships and associations, engendered directly or indirectly over forty years among so many violists, a result of the Zeyringer legacy

Can heaven for him be more beautiful than the valley in Styria where Franz was born and erected his life's work? The Pöllauberg, the diminutive town, the friendly inhabitants, his Musikschule—and so essential for Franz—the brooks and the woods. Fishing and hunting were the necessary antidote for too much viola!

–David Dalton
Professor Emeritus of Music
Brigham Young University

2010 Congress Host Letter

The time has come to register for the 38th International Viola Congress in Cincinnati, Ohio, June 16–20, 2010! Violists from six continents will converge in an impressive lineup of events for a memorable congress. The distance-learning master class from Berlin with Tabea Zimmermann was recently confirmed with a successful test, and the list of guest artists has been finalized. Many exciting performances of lesser-known works are planned, as well as three world premieres. There will be a large number of performances of music for viola and orchestra with appearances by David Aaron Carpenter, Victoria Chiang, Paul Coletti, Roberto Díaz, Nobuko Imai, Masao Kawasaki, Walter Küssner, Sergey Malov, Dimitri Murrath, David Perry, and Gil Shaham. Peruse the complete schedule of performances on our website, http://www.ivc2010.com.

Students and teachers should also point their browsers to http://www.ivc2010.com for registration information for the congress master classes, orchestral audition workshop, and young artists competition. Master classes will be given by Roberto Díaz, Bruno Giuranna, Nobuko Imai, Jeffrey Irvine, Donald McInnes, Michel Michalakakos, Jutta Puchhammer-Sédillot, Xi-Di Shen, Peter Slowik, and Tabea Zimmermann. Violists from the orchestras of Berlin, Cleveland, and Philadelphia will lead the orchestral audition workshops. For violists under eighteen, cash prizes and summer scholarships will be awarded in the young artists competition.

A number of interesting lectures are planned throughout the congress, featuring a wide variety of presenters and topics. The closing concert will include chamber music with Gil Shaham and Adele Anthony and viola ensemble performances with all of the guest artists.

Registration is online, but those who cannot access the site or would like to pay by check should call (513) 558-1810. Car and air travel to Cincinnati is easy from everywhere in the United States, and a variety of lodging options are available, with information online now. No matter how you get here, it's going to be a great congress!

See you in Cincinnati!

Catharine Carroll and Masao Kawasaki
Co-hosts, 38th International Viola Congress

Shanghai's Viola Festival

by Michael Vidulich

Last November the Shanghai Conservatory of Music celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its founding. It was also the seventieth birthday of the conservatory's viola professor, Xi-Di Shen. To mark this joint occasion, a "2009 Viola Festival" was staged in Shanghai, China, from November 28 to December 1, 2009. It was my great pleasure to attend this remarkable festival, and in addition to the fantastic musical events on offer, it was extremely educational for me to learn about China's musical development—including changes over the past fifty years—and to experience and learn about the music scene today in China.

On my arrival in Shanghai, I was greeted by Niny Lam, who was one of the major organizers of this event and would act as my hostess for my visit. Two days prior to the festival, I had the opportunity to do some sight-seeing, which included attending "*Hong Yi, Monk & Composer*" (a Chinese musical production by Doug An) and visiting the luthier Zhen Hua Ling and touring his violin/viola factory. Mr. Ling makes "top of the line" violas (as well as violins, cellos, and basses), and he has won several awards for his instruments; meeting him and visiting his factory was most enjoyable. Just prior to the official festival opening, I was invited to have dinner with fifty-six teachers of the viola who had come from all over China and beyond to attend this festival. In the course of the evening, over a delicious meal, I was introduced to Professor Shen and to the other teachers present, many of whom had been her students. This was also my introduction to all the excellent viola teaching in China.

I quickly learned that there are numerous music conservatories throughout China and most have viola professors (the largest having seven viola professors on its staff). The Shanghai Conservatory has four viola professors: Jensen Horn-Sin Lam, Nian Liu, Li Sheng, and Xi-Di Shen. Combined, they teach about eighty viola students. The conservatory has an attached "middle school" (a school emphasizing music but also teaching other subjects) that prepares pupils aged ten- to eighteen-years old, for the conservatory. Shanghai also has three professional orchestras.

The book Viva la Viola: Waltzing with the Viola for Half a Century *was published as part of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music's fiftieth anniversary celebrations*

The four-day festival began with an opening concert featuring three outstanding alumni from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and former students of Professor Shen. Wen-Xiao Zheng, a prize-winner in the Bashmet, Tertis, and ARD viola competitions) played Shostakovitch's Sonata, op. 147; Jay Liu (special prize-winner in the Tertis Viola Competition) played Britten's *Lachrymae*; and Hong-Mei Xiao (a prize-winner at the Aspen Music Festival and the Geneva Viola Competition) played Brahms's Sonata, op. 120, no. 1 and her transcription of Bloch's *Nigun from the "Baal Shem Suite."* Each of the performers gave a thoroughly enjoyable and outstanding performance. The two accompany-

ing pianists played their parts in perfect balance with the violists, making for a most enjoyable concert.

Day two began with the *Viva la Viola* concert held at the beautiful Art Deco Shanghai Concert Hall. This public concert had 1,100 audience members in attendance—impressive indeed! The concert was both televised on the Arts Channel and broadcast on Shanghai's *Weekly Radio Concert* program and reviewed (the following day) in two Chinese newspapers. Professor Yong Wang (the conservatory's Vice Director of the Arts Administration Department) was the Master of Ceremonies; he introduced the concert items and gave a commentary throughout the concert for both the audience in attendance and for the broadcast audience.

The concert began with the *Viva la Viola* ensemble of seventy violists led by Professor Jensen Horn-Sin Lam, which included viola professors, professional violists, and student violists of all ages playing Handel-Halvorsen's *Passacaglia* arranged for massed viola ensemble. This was followed by a Chinese item for solo viola (Yang Ye Yang's *Mountain Nostalgia*) brilliantly played by a talented eleven-year-old student violist, Zunyi Fan. Next was a viola duet (Frank Bridge's *Lament*), a viola trio (Vladimir Rosinski's *Music for Three Violas*), a viola quartet (York Bowen's *Fantasie Quartet*), a viola quintet (Paganini's *La Campanella*), a viola septet (Astor Piazzola's *Meditango*), and a viola octet (Lu Pei's *Prelude*), followed by three more massed viola pieces (combined *Habanera & Tango* melodies by Carlos Cardel and Isaac Albeniz, Khachaturian's *Sabre Dance*, and a fun "spoof" Strauss encore).

Although I enjoyed all the festival had to offer, this *Viva la Viola* event was the highlight for me. In my thirty-odd years of hearing massed viola ensembles, this had to be the best. The playing was of the highest standard. The vitality of the playing and the musicality of the performers and the performance all made this a memorable experience. The technical demands required of the performers in all the pieces presented was formidable indeed (especially Paganini's *La Campanella*), but these seemed no obstacle for this outstanding group of violists. All the pieces were performed with ease and fully expressed the style appropriate to each work.

It was my pleasure as the International Viola Society's President to present Professor Xi-Di Shen an award from the International Viola Society for her lifelong contributions to the viola. Professor Shen was born in Chung Qing, Si Chuan province, in 1939. After graduating with a Bachelor of Music degree from the Shanghai Conservatory in 1962, she began working there as a violin teacher. She also was the violist in the first female string quartet, the Shanghai Ladies Quartet. During the "Cultural Revolution" from 1966 to 1976, the Shanghai Conservatory was closed, and Professor Shen worked for the Shanghai Chinese Opera Company playing for "Red" operas. After 1976 the Conservatory was reopened, and Professor Shen was appointed as a viola teacher. In 1985 she traveled to Tasmania, Australia, to study for a year with Professor Jan Sedivka. Professor Shen has been a major force in viola performance and pedagogy in China for decades and continues to be so.
At the conclusion of this concert, a book signing was held for the commemorative 345-page book: *Viva la Viola: Waltzing with the Viola for Half a Century*, published by the Shanghai Conservatory of Music (including a DVD). This book (written entirely in Chinese, with the exception of an article by Pamela Goldsmith on her visit to Shanghai in 1996 and a Welcome/Foreward letter by me, both in English) covers the many topics relating to the viola and violists at the conservatory in Shanghai, in other parts of China, and even abroad.

From left to right: Master of Ceremonies Yong Wang looks on while IVS President Michael Vidulich presents Professor Xi-Di Shen with an IVS special award

At this *Viva la Viola* concert, I met up with Malcolm Mawhinney, a former viola student at a school where I taught in Auckland, New Zealand, for many years, who was in the audience with his wife. Malcolm is presently a music teacher and professional violist who has been living and working in Shanghai now for the past six years—it certainly is a small world!

Later that evening a celebration dinner was held for Professor Shen at a restaurant, where about two hundred violists and other guests attended (many coming from other parts of China and overseas). The many presentations and speeches given reflect the high regard in which she is held.

The internationally acclaimed Japanese violist Nobuko Imai was the principal guest artist. She presented a master class, spoke about the Viola Space Competition, and gave a recital among other things. For me her master class was most informative. She not only tackled technical problems (holding the viola, shoulder rests, and the way we stand), but included time on interpretation and feeling—playing from the "heart and soul"—observing the period style, the composer's wishes, and importantly, what we as violists (performing artists) feel. All this is needed for a truly musical interpretation/performance. And true to her philosophy, her performance concert on the last day of the festival was *Music from the Heart* that moved the audience to a standing ovation and three encores. She played: Shostakovich's *Adagio & Spring Waltz*, Schubert's Four Lieder (arranged for viola), Schumann's Violin Sonata in A Minor, op. 105 (on viola), Takemitsu's *A Bird came down the Walk*, and Brahms's Sonata, op. 120, no. 1.

Another master class I attended was conducted by Hong-Mei Xiao, who presently is the viola professor at the University of Arizona and who has recorded on NAXOS, playing both the Serly and Peter Bartók/Neubauer versions of Bartók's Viola Concerto plus Serly's *Rhapsody for Viola and Orchestra*. She expertly conducted a master class emphasizing interpretation differences for sections of the movements presented and skillfully explained how to achieve the desired results. A stimulating presentation indeed.

It was a pleasure to hear the "Outstanding Students Concert," where the violists came from the conservatories of: Shen Yang (Peng Xu and Dan Liu), Tian Jin (Yao Li), Shanghai (Yi Wen Zhang and Yu Cheng Shi), and Guangzhou (Bo Cheng Chen); the arts academies of: Nan Jing (Guan Liang Zhong) and Shen Zhen (Han Duo He); and the Tainan National University of the Arts (Shi Xian Cai). The composers

Participants and attendees from the Nobuko Imai master class

played were: Bach, Hummel, Weber, Clarke, Hoffmeister, Franck, and Hindemith. This very enjoyable concert was well received by an appreciative audience.

All the recital concerts were well attended with the audiences averaging 250; the audiences for the lectures and master classes averaged 150. The festival featured several other concerts and master classes and included an award presentation for China's first Viola Thesis Competition. The competition had twenty-seven students (under the age of thirty-nine), each submitting a thesis on a viola topic of their choice in the Chinese language. A crystal award and certificate were presented to the winners. The judging panel decided not to award a first prize this time. The awards given were: two shared second prizes awarded to Nisha Ren and Yilian Guo and three shared third prizes awarded to Shuimiao Fu, Li Chen, and Zhen Wei.

Many of the members of the Chinese Viola Society were in attendance during the festival including its President Wing Ho (Professor of Viola at the Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing). They announced that the society now has a website at www.violachina.org, and their e-mail is violachina@gmail.com. They will host the next viola festival (2010 in Beijing).

All the organizers and sponsors are to be congratulated on presenting a *fantastic* Viola Festival. I cannot thank my hosts enough (especially Niny Lam and all those at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music) for all the hospitality shown to me during my visit to Shanghai. I look forward to the next Viola Festival in China (2010), scheduled for Beijing.

Merging the Old and the New

Margaret Brouwer's Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

From left to right: Margaret Brouwer, Ellen Rose, and Paul Phillips at the premiere of Brouwer's Viola Concerto (photo courtesy of Bob Adams)

by Laurie Shulman

Throughout music history, many of the most successful concerti have come about as the result of a fruitful collaboration between friends and colleagues. From Haydn and his Esterháza stars Tomasini and Weigl to Shostakovich with Oistrakh and Rostropovich, there are abundant examples.

One of the most recent is the new Concerto for Viola and Orchestra that New York-based Margaret Brouwer has composed for Ellen Rose, principal violist of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra (DSO) since 1980. Paul Phillips led the premiere performances in Dallas's superb Meyerson Symphony Center in January of this year.

The two women have been friends since the early 1980s, when Brouwer lived for a couple of years in Dallas. "Ellen and I came to Dallas at the same time," Brouwer recalls. "Because I was still playing violin, we had a lot of mutual musical friends. We worked on several projects together when I was in Dallas.

"The first piece Ellen commissioned, *Dream Drifts*, was very Crumb-like, with extended techniques and ping-ponging sounds between two speakers (at the time we used two tape recorders). I think she commissioned it for a recital at Southern Methodist University. It has been played by several other violists since then."

They stayed in touch and, when Rose had the opportunity to commission a concerto under the auspices of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Brouwer was her first choice.

A native of Ann Arbor, Brouwer grew up in Michigan in a music-oriented family. Her father, a journalist, was also an amateur musician; her mother was a singer. Brouwer was schooled as a violinist and started composing in high school. She thus brings an intimate understanding of string playing to the concerto, as well as considerable experience writing for orchestra. Most important is her specific knowledge of Ms. Rose. "I love Ellen's playing; she is so wonderfully musical, and she has such a gorgeous, rich sound," Brouwer declares. "I also admire her fabulous technique and attention to detail."

Brouwer's extensive experience as a violinist made it comfortable to be writing for viola. "It certainly helps," Brouwer acknowledges. "It's difficult to compose well for string instruments. In the years that I taught [composition], I found that students who had never played one lacked essential knowledge about basic things like bowing. It's a definite advantage to have played violin.

"The viola provides the rich inner backbone of the orchestra," she continues. "But that presents a paradox. Because of its great blending quality, it's easy for the viola to get swallowed up as a solo instrument. That's the reason I included so many cadenza-like passages in the concerto, with only transparent accompaniment."

Ellen Rose agrees. "The viola is so easily covered," she points out. "Walton wrote a beautiful concerto, but his orchestra part is far too heavy." She cites a passage in Walton's first movement—reh. 15–16—where the violist is almost *obbligato:* the oboe has the solo voice and the viola is underneath with accompaniment in sixteenth-note triplets. "When Hindemith wrote his viola concerto, he left out the violins. That was very smart," Rose opines. "He knew better, because he was a violist himself! Margaret's orchestral score is sparse, which puts the soloist always at the forefront."

Brouwer adds, "I also used some instruments uncommon in other viola concertos: harp, marimba, and vibraphone, which I thought would make a nice sound in combination with the viola."

Combining Old and New

The terms of the commission were fairly flexible. The DSO specified approximate length of twenty minutes and what orchestral instruments would be available. Ms. Rose, however, had an unusual request: that the medieval chant *Ubi caritas* be incorporated somehow into the score. Brouwer was happy to accommodate her. "I often quote from older music. I love the sense of bringing together music from different periods. One of the challenges for composers in the twenty-first century, I think, is to learn from and acknowledge in some way the extremely rich and varied music that has come down to us through many periods of music, including the twentieth century. I am experimenting with overlaying some of these sounds to create my own fresh sound."

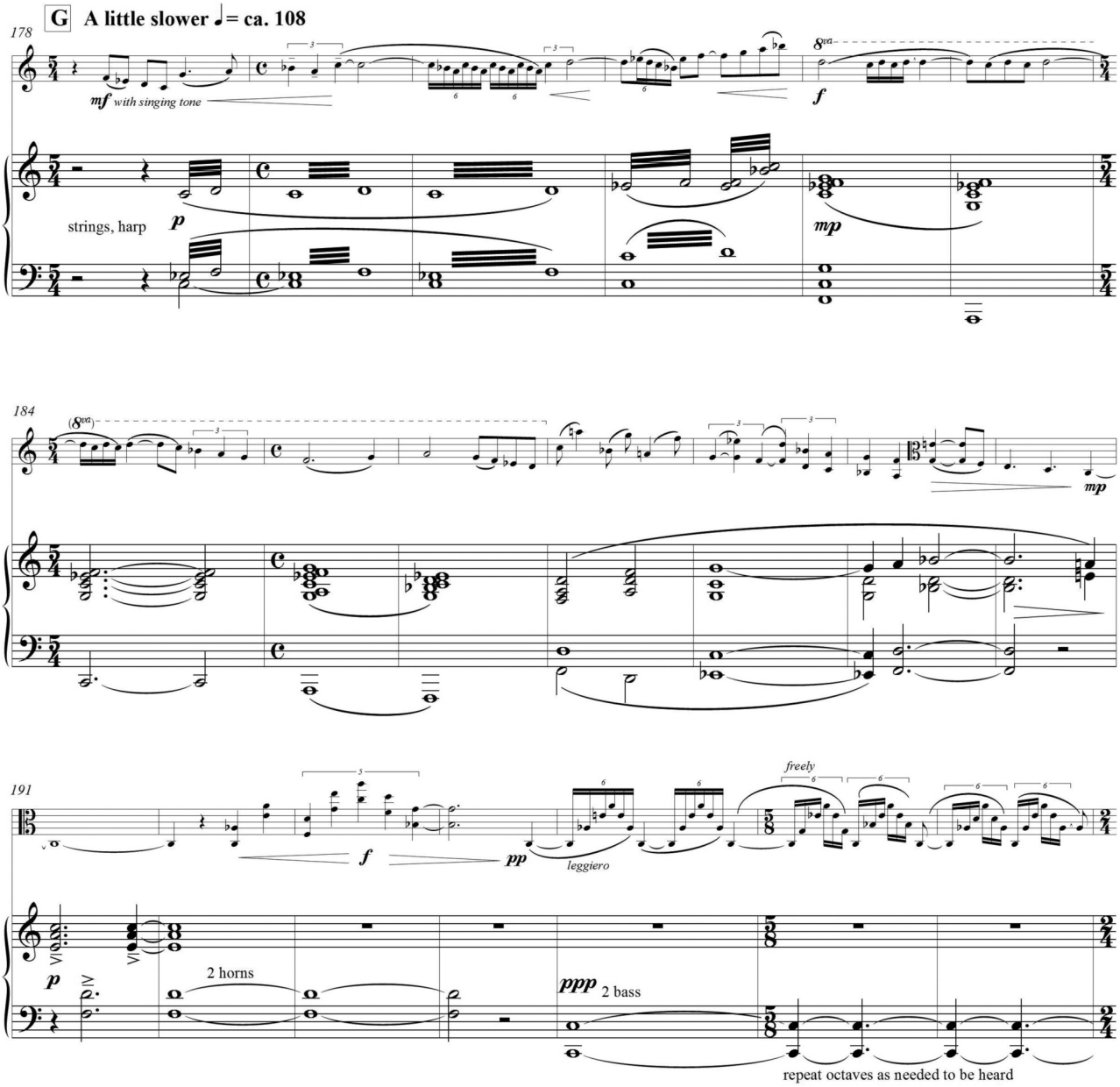
A New Piece Takes Shape

The two worked closely together throughout calendar 2009, when the concerto was taking shape. When Ms. Rose was in New York City last March, she visited Ms. Brouwer so they could try certain passages in the first movement. "I like to have input from per-

Violist Ellen Rose specifically requested that Margaret Brouwer somehow incorporate the medieval antiphon Ubi caritas *into her Viola Concerto. The chant lent not only its musical contour, but also its spiritual subtext to the resulting work, particularly in the first movement. This is its first stanza.*

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.	Where charity and love are, there God is.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.	The love of Christ has gathered us into one flock.
Exultemus, et in ipso iucundemur.	Let us exult and in Him be joyful.
Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.	Let us fear, and let us love the Living God.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.	And from a sincere heart let us love each other.

Example 1. Brouwer, Viola Concerto, movt. I, mm. 178–97. (All examples © 2009, Margaret Brouwer. Used with permission.)



formers, particularly when I'm not too far into a piece," says Brouwer. "It's stimulating creatively to hear a performer play what you're writing. I always come up with all these ideas. Just hearing Ellen play, I had her sound, her technique in my ear when I continued composing."

They worked further last summer during the DSO's residency in Vail. That was when conductor Paul Phillips got his first look at the score. At the time, he was serving as cover conductor for the Dallas Symphony's appearances at the Vail Valley Festival. "When Margaret flew out to Colorado, she had quite a bit of the piece sketched," he recalls. "Much of it existed in piano reduction. Ellen played through large segments of the concerto. We all listened and talked and worked together. I made some suggestions about articulation.

"I remember thinking what a wonderful afternoon it was, because Margaret was very open to the suggestions that Ellen and I made. It was a time of sharing ideas among the three of us. I was delighted with what I was hearing; the piece had a remarkable lyrical quality." (Ex. 1.)

That experience heightened Phillips's eagerness to receive the

full score, which arrived in early October, three months ahead of the premiere. "That's generous for a new work," he says. "It allowed me to not feel rushed. This time, I was confident there would be sufficient time to prepare."

Meanwhile, Ellen Rose's learning and preparation process was arduous. Brouwer completed an orchestral reduction for piano, which Rose shared with a Dallas Symphony viola section colleague, Mitta Angell, who is also an accomplished pianist. Unfortunately Angell broke her arm in September 2009, which left Rose without a rehearsal pianist.

Gabriel Sanchez, another North Texas pianist who specializes in collaborative piano, jumped in when a mutual friend put him and Ellen Rose in touch. "He's fabulous," declares Rose with conviction. Rose and Sanchez rehearsed together through the autumn, performing the concerto in the piano/viola version for several soirées in private homes. The audiences varied from Rose's viola students to gatherings of music aficionados. At a salon in early November 2009, she played through the concerto with Sanchez. That audience included Brouwer and Phillips.

"The concerto was in a much more finished format compared to what I'd heard in Vail," Phillips remembers. Things were shaping up nicely. Phillips and Rose spent what he calls "a lot of quality time" together in December in preparation for the January performances.

Phillips acknowledges that such close interaction is rare. Though he is an enthusiastic proponent of new music and has commissioned and conducted many premieres, he cited only one prior instance when he was able to work so closely with both soloist and composer in a new concerto—with a very young Renée Fleming in the 1980s, singing *Chansons de Jadi*s, an orchestral song cycle by Sydney Hodkinson, with the Eastern Connecticut Symphony.

"This Brouwer concerto was unusual, to have so much time," he says. "Having composed myself, I know how hard it is to meet deadlines. So I really applaud Margaret for her ability to deliver this to both Ellen and me well in advance. It gave us a lot of comfortable time to grow into the piece."

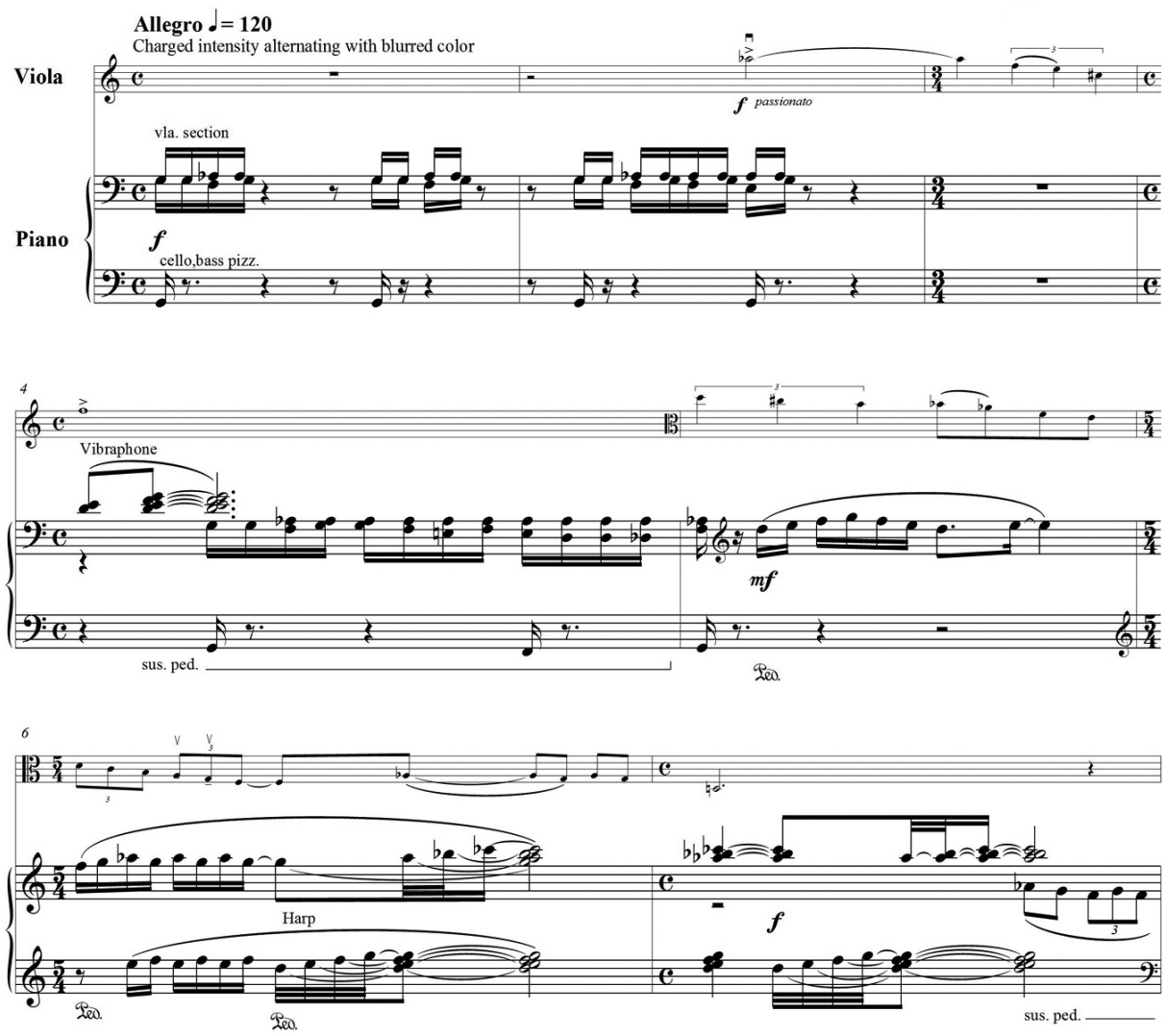
Phillips had no prior acquaintance with Brouwer's music. In preparation for conducting the concerto, he also listened to some of her other music. "I really like her voice," declares Phillips. "I think she's got something wonderful to say."

During rehearsals in January 2010, Dallas Symphony Orchestra members had a similar reaction. Associate Principal Viola Barbara Sudweeks played principal for the Brouwer concerto concerts. "I think it's a beautiful piece: very listener-friendly and very positive for the viola," she says. "Margaret Brouwer was really thoughtful in her orchestration. She understands the instrument's limitations for projection in the middle range, and she never covered the viola. She also has a great sense of using instruments to their fullest: percussion, the bells—our musicians really liked this work. It is a welcome addition to our repertoire."

The concerto includes a prominent harp part, which prompted Ellen Rose to request that the harp be placed close to the soloist, amid first stand string players. "The harp part is beautifully written," says DSO Principal Harp Susan Dederich-Pejovich. "I enjoyed the way the harp timbre was always audible, even when other instruments sounded. My colleagues and audience members told me they really liked the supporting role of the harp, as well as solos, during the entire work."

From left to right: DSO Principal Harpist Susan Dederich-Pejovich confers with composer Margaret Brouwer at a break during rehearsals (photo courtesy of the author)

Example 2. Brouwer, Viola Concerto, movt. I, mm. 1–7.



Critical reception was also positive at the January premiere. *Dallas Morning News* music critic Scott Cantrell summarized: "Brouwer has written skillfully and imaginatively for both viola and orchestra, and the music engages start to finish. How about a recording?"

How about one, indeed.

Story Line

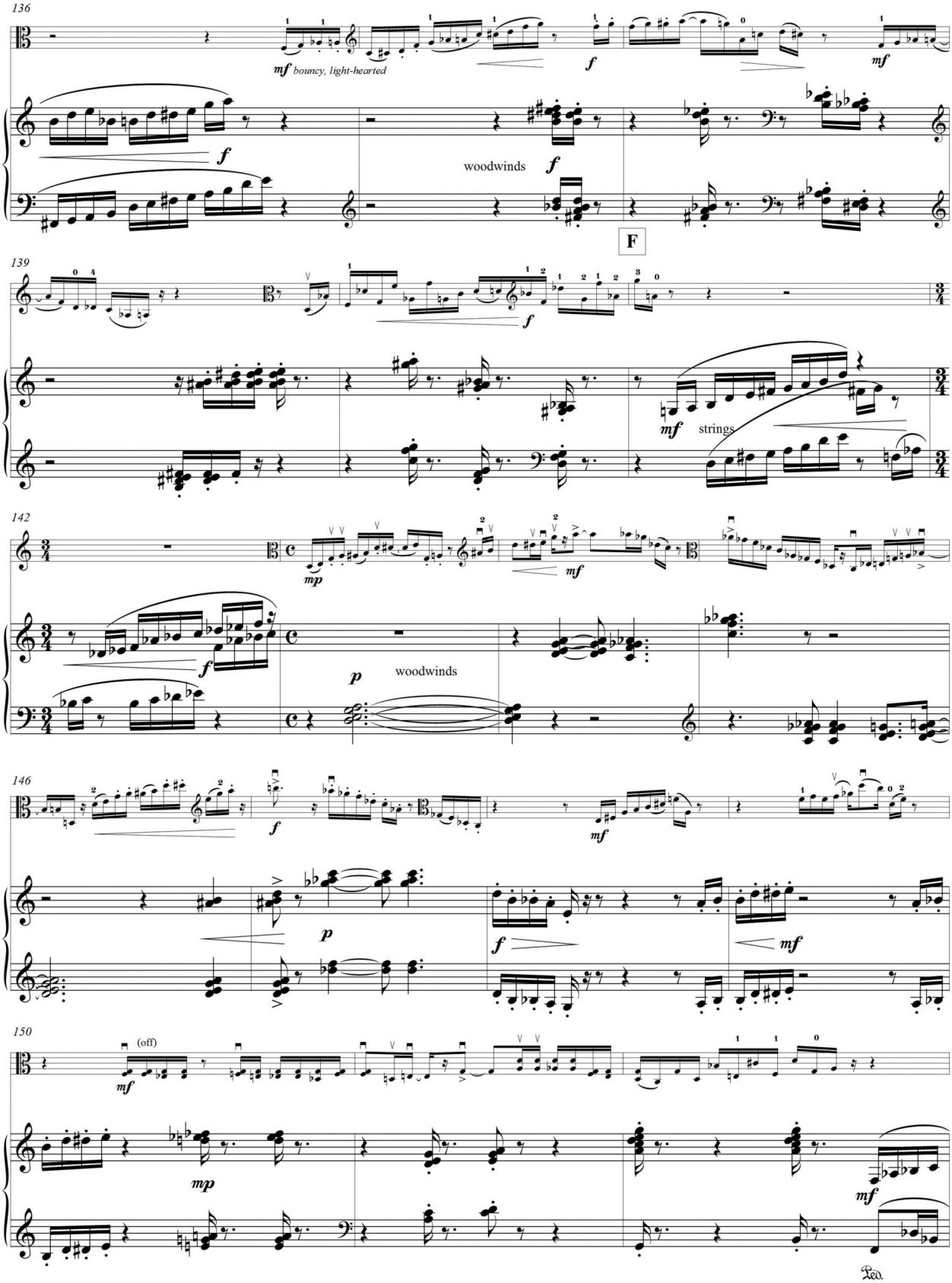
As the movements arrived, Ms. Rose gradually came up with a story line for the concerto. "The first movement clearly starts out with *angst*," she asserts (ex. 2). "Some terrible conflict has occurred. The second theme provides a refuge, a safe place, then the turmoil resumes. Later, some doubt sets in, bringing more conflict. The process of relinquishing resentment and letting go of a grudge is gradual. There's a transition as enjoyment of life returns, with sixteenth-note passages that are lighthearted in comparison to what came before (ex. 3).

"The cadenza is the start of forgiveness, toward a more peaceful ending to the movement," Rose continues. "Eventually the music moves toward something chant-like. I hear it as unity of spirit and, at the end, God's presence. Charity is all about spiritual lives. You have to be able to forgive and forget. The first movement traces that tremendous growth process.

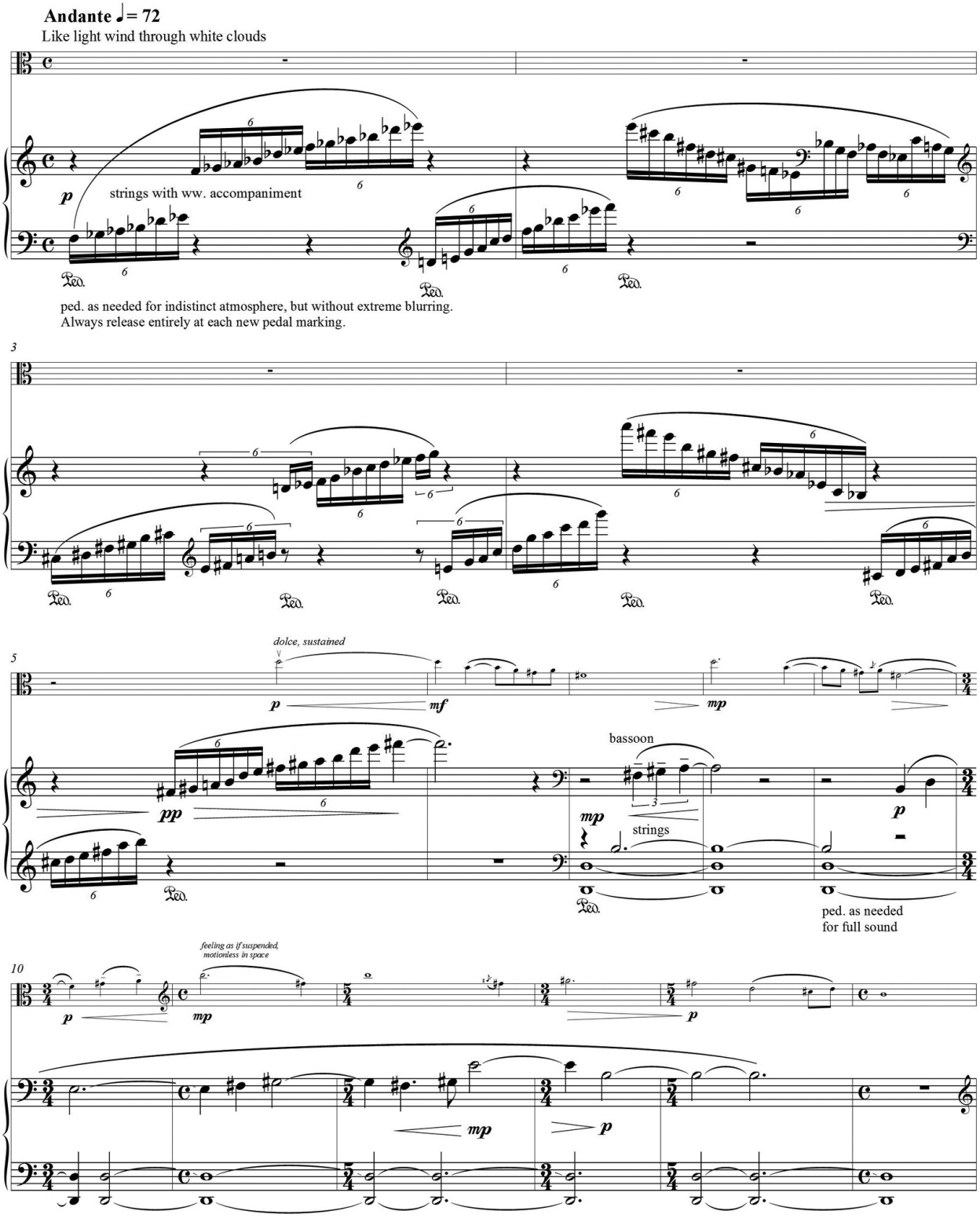
"I hear the opening of the second movement as the first glimpse of a person who becomes a beloved. Slowly, intimacy builds to passion. It concludes with a section about long-lasting love: passion, partnership, and friendship combined." (Ex. 4.)

Both Brouwer and Rose acknowledge that the finale is completely

Example 3. Brouwer, Viola Concerto, movt. I, mm. 136–52.

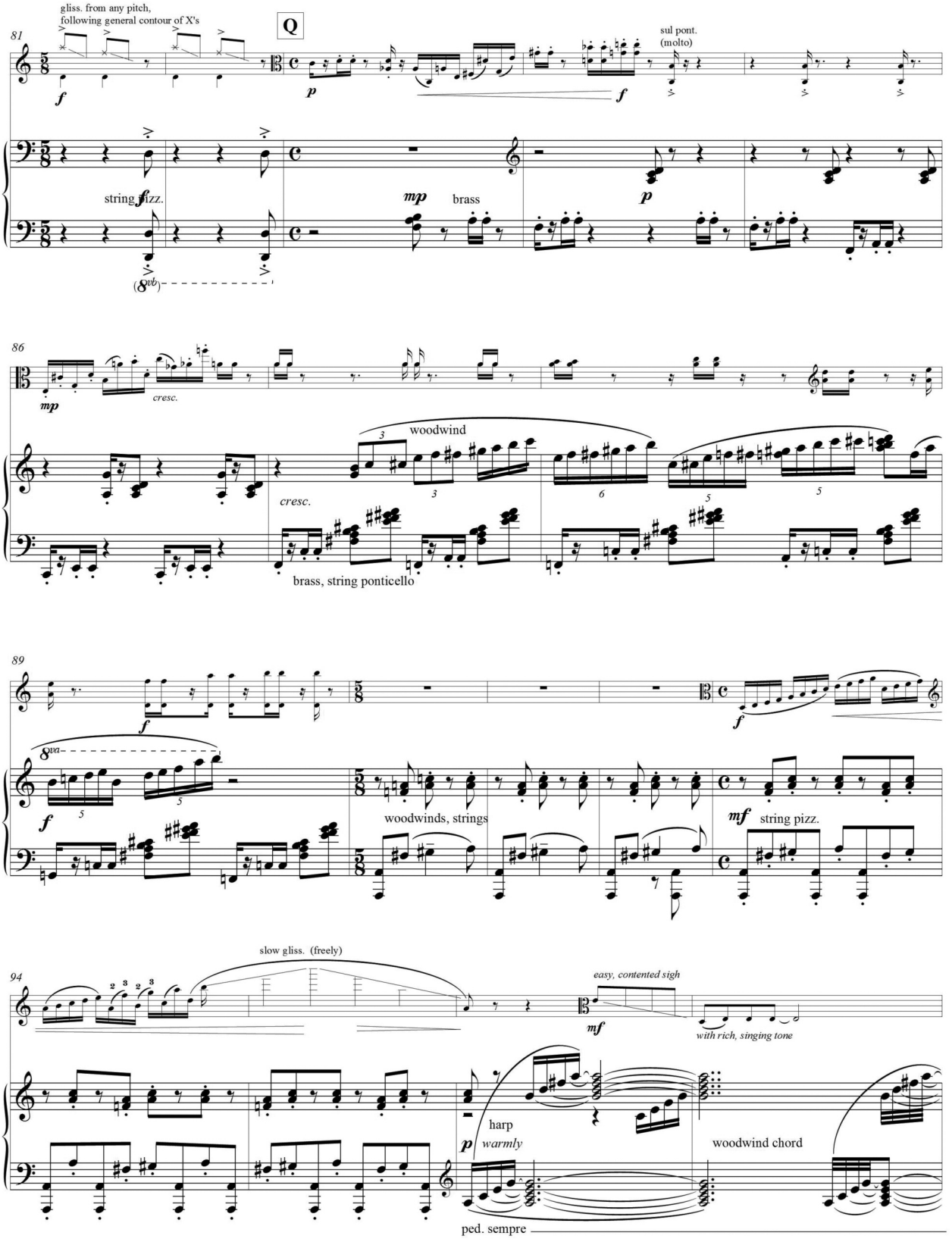


Example 4. Brouwer, Viola Concerto, movt. II, mm. 1–15.



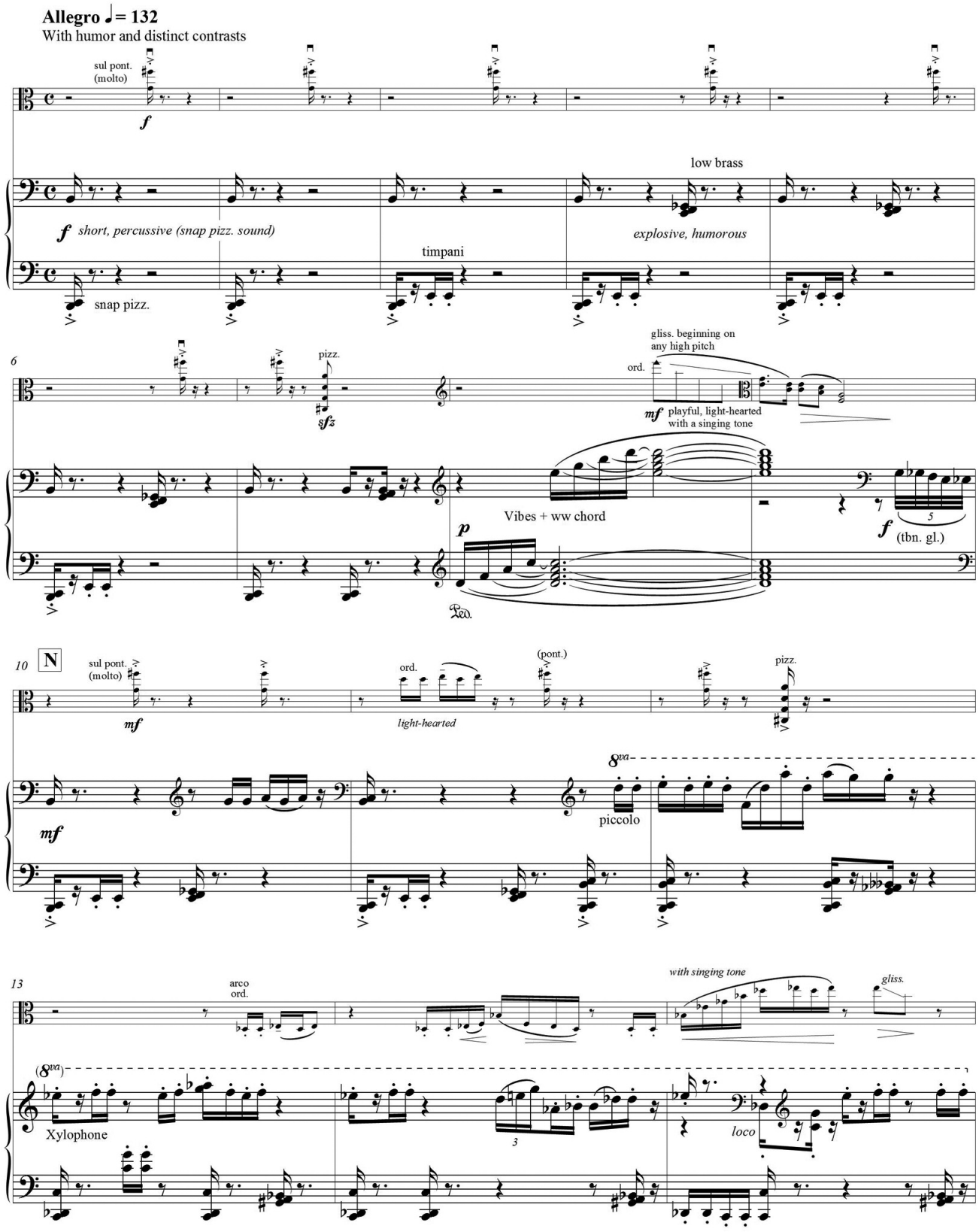
different in mood, technique, and effect, with tricky rhythms and a lot of technical wizardry. "The solo part is highly virtuosic," allows Rose. "It makes great demands on the violist to negotiate all sorts of technical requirements very quickly in succession, with changing meters. The different technical demands come fast and furious, sometimes within a single phrase. Look at bars 81 to 97: *glissandi, sul ponticello*, double stops, and runs (ex. 5). All this at a very fast tempo. And all that happens again from 123 to the end.

Example 5. Brouwer, Viola Concerto, movt. III, mm. 81–97.



"Margaret wanted me to have fun with this movement. So, I had to come up with images or experiences that would take me out of the technical realm into the interpretive. I envisioned myself playing with our little doglet, Francis. He loves to play tag with my right index finger! I wave it around and he

Example 6. Brouwer, Viola Concerto, movt. III, mm. 1–15.



chases, jumping in the air. Another part of the movement we are playing hide and seek. This all helps tremendously, because I cannot help but smile when I think of these images." (Ex. 6.)

Tradition and Asymmetry

Margaret Brouwer's Concerto for Viola and Orchestra is traditional in the sense that it has three movements more or less arranged fast-slow-fast. It breaks from tradition in the absence of an orchestral introduction in any of its movements. The movements are asymmetrical; the first movement is nearly as long as the second and third combined. The opening movement, *Caritas*, also contains the widest variety of music stylistically, the clearest statement of the *Ubi caritas*, and the most significant transformation of musical material.

"The viola entrance after just one measure of orchestra has great emotional impact," observes Ellen Rose. "That holds true for the other movements, too. The soloist cannot rest much, because there are few extended orchestral statements. The violist has to find ways to rest while playing, in order to conserve enough energy for all three movements."

The piece is loosely programmatic. Brouwer drew her second movement title, ". . . *fair as the moon, bright as the sun* . . ." from the biblical Song of Songs, in keeping with the religious subtext. She perceives the overall trajectory of the concerto as proceeding with unrest, then gradually becoming more charitable, compassionate, and peaceful. The slow movement is a love song, and the finale playful and light. She has written:

> The concerto musically describes a person (the soloist) who is on an internal journey. In the first movement, the solo part begins in a mood of questioning and anger, contrasted with an orchestral atmosphere of blurred color and melodic fragments that suggest the chant *Ubi caritas*. Under the influence of the orchestra, the *passionato* mood of the soloist gradually dissolves, turning to a mood of compassion and charity with only occasional references to the opening tensions. Near the end of the movement, the solo viola plays *Ubi caritas*, accompanied only by low string harmonics and flute. This is followed by a melody inspired by *caritas*, first in orchestral tutti, and then solo viola. The second movement, *... fair as the moon, bright as the sun ...*, is simply a love song. Opening with soft breathless motion in the orchestra, "like a light breeze through white clouds," it quickly goes to a melody in the viola that exudes warmth, pleasure, and delight. The name is taken from the biblical Song of Songs (6:10). The same chant, *Ubi caritas*, is referred to near the end of the movement in the lower strings. The last movement, *Blithesome Spirit*, continues the light-hearted mood and becomes buoyantly playful, mischievous, and sometimes a bit jaunty.

Her sense of the concerto's dramatic narrative is remarkably similar to Ms. Rose's, although they never discussed it. Brouwer allows, "She did ask me to incorporate the *Ubi caritas*, which probably had a lot to do with the narrative—but maybe not. My original version of the concerto began with the chant, quiet and subdued. Later, after I heard her play, I decided to change the order and open with impassioned music.

"My first love is sound: orchestral sound, the timbres of individual instruments. I like ringing sounds. They ring more when you use notes within the overtone series. I tend to use a lot of thirds and fifths, which can make my music sound tonal. My system of how I move from one place to another is not traditionally tonal at all.

"I love sounds and colors: the regular way each instrument plays, but also unusual, non-traditional combinations of instruments. I also love to create new sounds for the instruments using extended techniques. Of course I'm not the only composer who does that! There's not a lot of that in the Viola Concerto—a little bit in the first movement cadenzas, but mostly in the last movement. It just depends whether it fits in as an integral part of the music.

"I'm not a composer who starts with the story then makes the music 'go with' the story," she continues. "Some people look at a painting then write a piece about the painting, or read a poem and base their music on that poem. I've never been very good at that. A musical idea comes to me, then the piece grows out of that. As it evolves, I realize what it means to me as a narrative, or an emotion, or whatever it happens to be in that piece."

Margaret Brouwer has come a long way since her days in Dallas in the early 1980s. At that point, she was still playing violin professionally, but composition had become increasingly important to her. "I realized I needed to focus on one or the other," Brouwer recalls. She left Dallas in 1984 to pursue a doctorate in composition at Indiana University. Her principal teacher there was Frederick Fox. She also worked with Donald Erb, with whom she had studied briefly in Dallas before he left Texas for Indiana, and with Harvey Sollberger. At Maine's summer Bowdoin Festival, she also worked with George Crumb. She considers Erb and Crumb to have been her most important influences.

"From Crumb, I learned about beautiful sounds through extended techniques. He's into finding the most out of every instrument. He's very melodically influenced."

As for Erb: "I like his strong contrasts. He'll go from something soft and whispery to a big, loud, powerful passage. The power of his orchestral sound influenced me; also structure, the flow of musical line, and pacing. You don't want to change events too soon. You're never bored in Erb's music. When the next thing happens, it feels inevitable."

Her first teaching job after completing her doctorate was at Washington and Lee University in Virginia, which Brouwer describes as "a solid liberal arts school with a small music program." During her Virginia years, she served as composer-in-residence with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra for about seven years.

From there she went to the Cleveland Institute of Music. "I loved it at CIM," she says. "It's a fabulous school. I ran the new music ensemble there. The caliber of performances was extraordinarily high."

After serving twelve years as head of the composition department, Brouwer left CIM in 2008. "I've been too busy writing music since then to be teaching as well," she says. Last year, she had two major orchestral premieres: one with Leonard Slatkin leading the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the other with George Manahan and the American Composers Orchestra.

Brouwer currently divides her time between New York and Cleveland, maintaining a residence in both cities. She is currently working on a piece for the Cleveland Women's Symphony commissioned through Meet the Composer. Five record labels have now issued CDs of Brouwer's chamber and orchestral works. With her national and international profile rising, and with this important new Concerto for Viola and Orchestra adding to her renown, we can anticipate hearing more of her music.

Laurie Shulman is a Dallas-based author and program annotator. She currently provides program notes for the Dallas Symphony, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Charlottesville & University Symphony Orchestra, and Richardson Symphony Orchestra. She is the author of The Meyerson Symphony Center: Building a Dream *(2000), a lively chronicle about Dallas's celebrated concert hall in its socio-political context. Ms. Shulman is a popular and frequent public speaker on music. She also remains active as an amateur pianist playing chamber music. She holds a Ph.D. in musicology from Cornell University.*

Ernst Krenek and the Viola:
New Discoveries in the Modern Repertoire

by Brett Banducci

Ernst Krenek, c. 1930 (photo courtesy of Nationalbibliothek Wien)

In 2008 I found myself in the glamorous Southern California resort/retirement town of Palm Springs, playing viola in a chamber music concert. At the reception following the concert, one of my colleagues pointed out a petite and probing woman: "That's Gladys Krenek!" Having just started my master's degree in composition, I was searching for a thesis idea that was both rewarding and musically important; something that would actually make a difference and be used by performing musicians. I suddenly had a vision of the subject of my thesis. I quickly ran up to Mrs. Krenek—the widow and former student of Ernst Krenek and a brilliant composer herself—and without as much as a proper introduction blurted out my not-well-thought-out plan, "I'd like to research Krenek's works for viola for my master's thesis." Somewhat stunned and taken aback, she soon became excited about my enthusiasm. We spoke at length for the duration of the reception, and I am happy today to count Mrs. Krenek as one of the musical treasures of my life. One can imagine my excitement when the Library of Congress sent a facsimile of the original manuscript of the Sonata for Viola—at Mrs. Krenek's request—only a couple of weeks after our meeting. The project was off and running!

Krenek composed three chamber works that prominently feature the viola. In chronological order, these works are:

Sonatina for Flute and Viola, op. 92, no. 2A
Sonata for Viola [solo], op. 92, no. 3
Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 117

Initially it was my plan to research and include the Sonata for Viola, op. 92, no. 3 and the Sonata for

Viola and Piano, op. 117 in my thesis. This daunting task was soon curtailed owing to the sheer volume of material to consider, and in the end my published thesis was on the solo viola sonata only. It was during the research process that I discovered there was a third work by Krenek that included viola, the previously unpublished Sonatina for Flute and Viola, op. 92, no. 2A. A transcription of this work, made by the composer, for flute and clarinet was published in 1945 by Bärenreiter and cataloged as op. 92, no. 2B. I quickly e-mailed Mrs. Krenek, and the original manuscript of the work, which was in her possession, was sent to Vienna for publication.

Ernst Krenek (1900–1991), who immigrated to the United States in 1938, was a seminal voice in twentieth century contemporary music. His contributions to modern musical life included not only original compositions, but writings on music, music theory, and the compositional process. Like many twentieth century composers still under the influence of the late nineteenth-century style, Krenek was determined to establish a unique and forward-looking voice for himself. Consequently, he went through a variety of periods and was a master of many styles. Early works from 1919 to 1923, notably his first two string quartets, are aggressively atonal. He followed this with a more Romantic style, often called his "Schubert" period. During this time he continued to display various influences, exemplified by the jazz-inspired opera sensation of 1926, *Jonny spielt auf*. Beginning in 1932, Krenek adopted the popular twelve-tone/serial technique. While he did write works in a strict twelve-tone style, his use of serialism was also highly individualized. All three chamber works for viola date from this period. Krenek's late works, from 1962 until his death in 1991, display highly imaginative writing free of any system. In the twenty-first century, scholarship for Krenek and his works has surged, bringing to light strikingly original, although neglected, works for the viola. In the spring of 2010, the Austrian publishing house Universal Edition will release three new editions of Krenek's works for viola; all of which will certainly find a permanent place in the viola canon.

In the article that follows, I will offer a brief description of the Sonatina for Flute and Viola and the Sonata for Viola and Piano, along with a more detailed analysis of the Sonata for Viola [solo].

Sonatina for Flute and Viola, op. 93, no. 2A

The Sonatina for Flute and Viola is a fascinating composition, not only for its unique instrumentation but for its structure, harmonic language, and sheer effectiveness. Krenek composed this work in Poughkeepsie, New York, on January 6, 1942, astonishingly in only one day. A dodecaphonic composition, the Sonatina uses Krenek's inventive adaptation of the twelve-tone practices of Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School. Krenek's brilliant interpretation of Schoenberg's principles included the separation of the twelve-tone row into two six-note segments. After separating the twelve-tone row into two halves, or hexachords, he then implemented an ingenious procedure that he called "rotation." This method of row transposition shifted pitches from the beginning of the row series to the end and yielded a wonderfully rich, often consonant, number of musical results. In the Sonatina, Krenek used the row not only linearly but vertically as well, where the flute and viola engage in an intriguing dialogue: sometimes starting and sometimes finishing each other's rows (fig. 1).

Figure 1. The opening bars of the Sonatina for Flute and Viola. The dual function of the flute's entrance acts not only as a response to the viola's entrance, but also serves to complete the row started by the viola. (Ernst Krenek, Sonatina für Flöte und Viola, op. 92/2a/ © Copyright 2009 by Universal Edition A.G., Wien/UE 34943. Used with permission.)

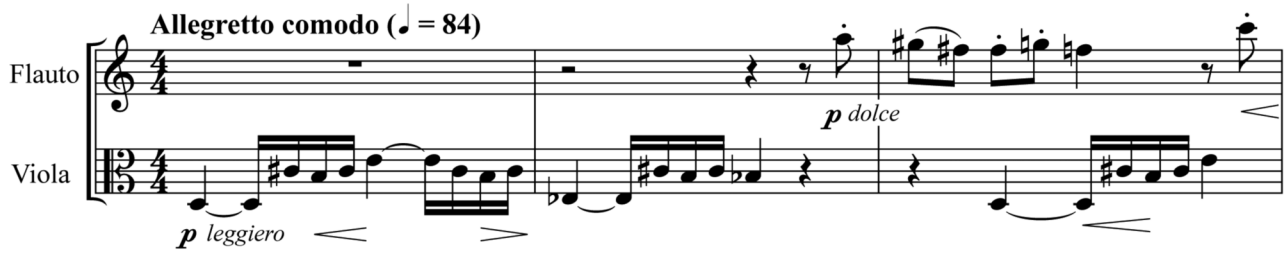
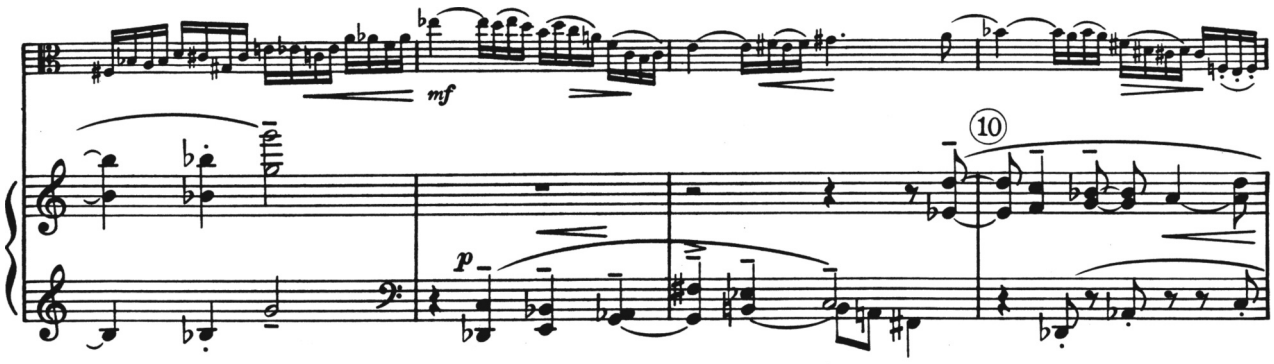


Figure 2. Measures seven through ten from the Sonata for Viola and Piano, movt. I. (Ernst Krenek, Sonate für Viola und Klavier, op. 117© Copyright 2009 by Universal Edition A.G., Wien/UE 34942. Used with permission.)



One of the most fascinating aspects of Krenek's serial writing was his ability to throw the entire process out the window when it did not suit him aesthetically. Krenek was never completely satisfied with the Second Viennese School's insistence on "melodies" that contained exactly twelve pitches without exception. He felt that should the material warrant it, a row could contain ten or even eight pitches. Also unique to his aesthetic was his desire to embrace consonant intervals. This concept will be discussed in greater detail with the solo sonata for viola.

The Sonatina, with its original instrumentation (for flute and viola), was premiered on October 22, 1942, at the Teatro del Pueblo in Buenos Aires, with Esteban Eitler, flute and Simon Zlotnik, viola. The work is in three contrasting, albeit short, movements: Allegretto comodo, Adagio, and Vivace, and it offers many interesting challenges to the dueling musicians. A varying juxtaposition of contrasting expressions and harmonically unorthodox counterpoint make the Sonatina a strikingly original composition for flute and viola and an important addition to both repertoires.

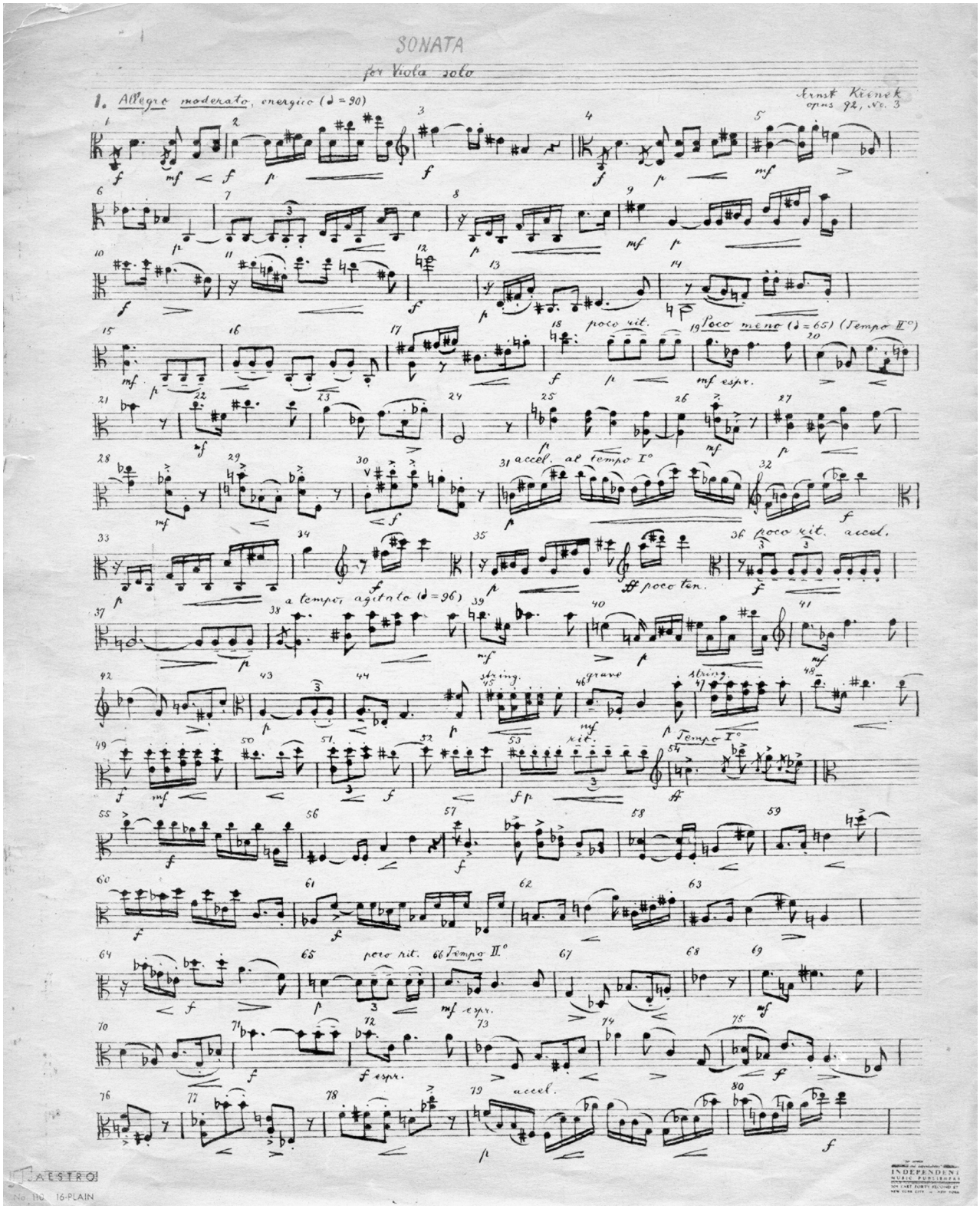
Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 117

The Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 117 was composed in December of 1948 while Krenek was residing in Los Angeles, California. Impressively, the work was completed in a span of just four days and dedicated to violist Ferenc Molnar and pianist Jane Hohfeld—both of whom premiered the work in San Francisco in March 1949. Violist Michael Mann—son of the renowned author Thomas Mann—took an affinity to the sonata. He performed it frequently in the United States and Europe, many times alongside the Sonata for Viola, op. 92, no. 3.

Krenek's approach to serialism evolved greatly over his lifetime, and the Sonata for Viola and Piano illustrates the free atonal/serial technique he had adopted by the late 1940s. Written in three movements, the sonata is brief and inventive and contains the depth and emotional weight that one would expect from the sonata genre. The three movements of the work: Andante, Allegro vivace, and Andantino take the listener, and performer, on a journey of surprising harmonic and temporal arrivals and departures. Perhaps more so than any of Krenek's other works for viola, this sonata offers more eccentric and unconventional voice-leading. The anomalous layout of material, along with the vertical aspects of dialogue between the viola and piano part, make this sonata a true original. It is also important to note the highly contrapuntal writing for the piano in this work (fig. 2). While the über-Romantic and bravura piano writing in many popular viola/piano sonatas can cause concerns regarding projection, the writing in Krenek's sonata does not require the violist to battle against a wall of sound, nor does it require the pianist to enter into the incredibly unmusical realm of "playing less" in order to avoid covering the violist. Here, Krenek intertwines the two parts around one another in a brilliantly balanced and controlled musical tableau.

Sonata for Viola, op. 92, no. 3

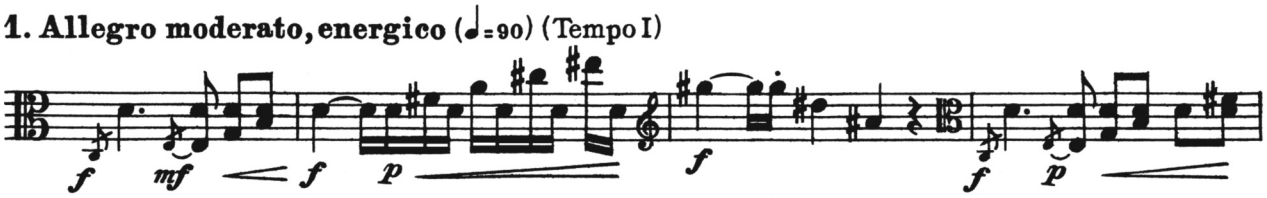
The Sonata for Viola, op. 92, no. 3 was composed in Bear Lake, Colorado, between August 12 and August 27, 1942, four years after Krenek's immigration to the



Page one of the original manuscript of the Sonata for Viola (photo courtesy of Gladys Krenek, with permission of Library of Congress, Music Division)

United States. The sonata is in four movements and employs what can be described as a free serialized harmonic language. Pre-dating Krenek's post-serial idiom of the 1960s, this work relaxes the strict dodecaphonic systems of Webern and Schoenberg through innovations made by Krenek to pre-established twelve-tone techniques. The first movement can be summed up as a study in compression, as all contributing ele-

Figure 3. Opening four bars of the Sonata for Viola. Krenek's use of open strings makes his writing for the viola resonant and effective. (All excerpts from the solo viola sonata: Ernst Krenek, Sonate für Viola, op. 92/3© Copyright 2009 by Universal Edition A.G., Wien/UE 34941. Used with permission.)



ments are deployed in their most concise and lucid form. Dance elements appear, sometimes for only a bar, and then disappear into an anachronistic atonal fog, only to reappear in another form later in the work. The twelve-tone row is presented and spread out temporally through the interjection of a linear reference pitch "D," which the row alternates between as it ascends through the required pitches of the series (fig. 3).

The effect is Baroque in appearance and texture while simultaneously satisfying a modern function as well. Krenek uses this technique of series interruption throughout the first movement and exploits a freedom with his handling of the individual pitches of the series. The outcome is both refreshing and characteristic of his compositional process. At times the rhythm is retained from the original row while other pitches are abandoned, then interrupted, then, as if enclosed in a giant set of parentheses, re-started in an altered form. The dialogue that ensues is one of linear versus vertical and has many sonic resemblances to the sixteenth century, most specifically Ockeghem—a composer whom Krenek deeply admired—more than it does to his immediate contemporaries: Hindemith, Webern, and Schoenberg. Krenek's unique solution to polyphony, on a basically monophonic instrument, is to not suffocate the instrument's rich and haunting quality with cumbersome over-orchestration, such as difficult-to-execute double and triple stops in quick tempi. Krenek, rather, creates a controlled and systematic usage for double stops, reserving the more difficult multi-note surfaces for the slower second movement.

The free atonal style, which uses elements of the twelve-tone series in this work, has its origins in precompositional justification. A strict twelve-tone idiom requires each row to be related back to the original series through a hierarchy. In a more free atonal vocabulary, where dodecaphonic elements contribute to motivic development, the precompositional creation of sets prevails. Here, practical application offers a more structural function and component of spontaneity. The ingenuity is not in the interplay of the various incarnations of the sets, but rather in the distinctive contributions that the sets make to the motivic evolution of the work. Krenek accomplishes this through the creation of a hybrid twelve-tone system that would aim to rectify some of the eccentric qualities of the more customary strict twelve-tone system. Krenek's solution to this was to partial the row of twelve pitches into two sets of six-tone rows; each containing a series of intervals that is closely parallel but not identical. To this series he then employed what he called "row rotation," as discussed in the Sonatina for Flute and Viola, by which the first note of each six-tone row moves to the end, thus creating two new six-tone rows and a new twelve-tone row as well. The first row of the work

Figure 4. The top stave is the original row seen in its partialized form and the bottom stave is the original row in its first rotation, arrows point to the progression of the first tones as they rotate into the new series.

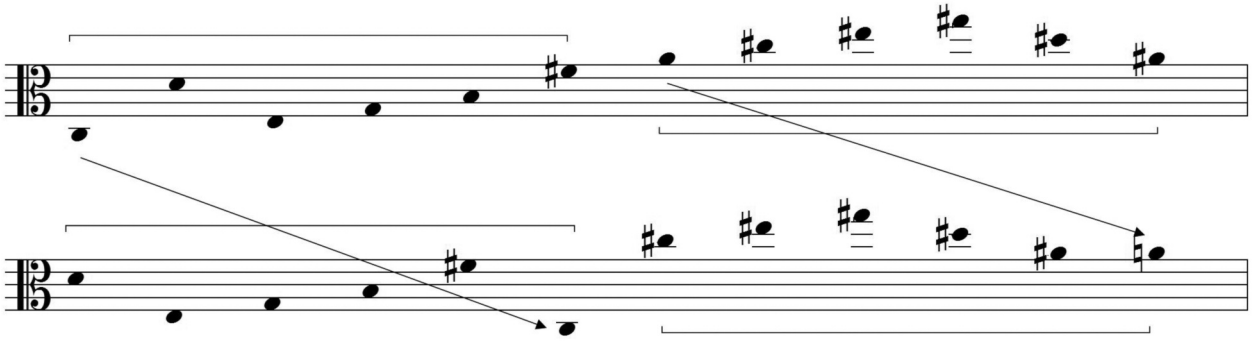
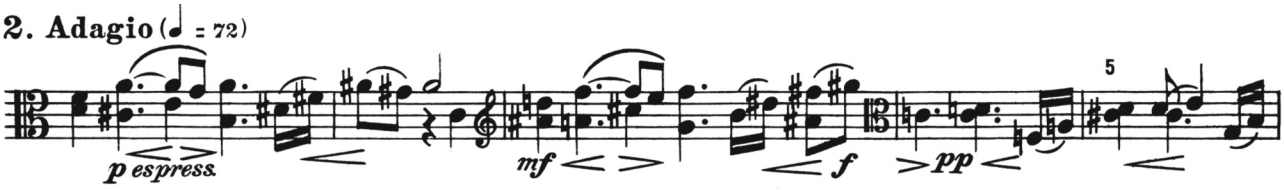


Figure 5. The opening bars of the second movement of the Sonata for Viola exemplifies Krenek's choral-based influences in instrumental, primarily monophonic works.



and its first rotation can be seen in figure 4.

It has often been said that Schoenberg and his followers, determined to "liberate dissonance" through the dodecaphonic idiom, failed on one key point: to liberate dissonance would require the employment of an equal number of consonances. A work that included a liberated dissonant vocabulary would then contain, in balance to that, a symmetrical number of consonant elements. In fact, in Schoenberg's most strict dodecaphonic system a "good" row was one that alleviated the succession of consonant intervals, thus making the series as dissonant as possible. Krenek's genius was his solution to this problem: an equal number of consonant and dissonant intervals. It is clear from the construction of this sonata that a true balance has been accomplished between the duality of consonance and dissonance.

The slow movement of the sonata is polyphonic in nature and has connotations of choral elements expressed in instrumental writing (fig. 5). A duality between polyphonic and monophonic material is in dialogue throughout the work's second movement. Krenek's familiarity and comfort with vocal writing is well known as many of his most renowned works—and for many the most pivotal in the evolution of twentieth-century modern music—include operas, oratorios, and songs.

Krenek had firm opinions in defining the terms "atonal" and "tonal." In his book from 1939, *Music Here and Now*, Krenek writes, "'If … 'tonal' is 'whatever belongs to tone, whatever corresponds to the nature of the tone,' and the like, then 'atonal,' merely on this supposition … cannot be applied to anything pertaining to the sphere of music."[1] The second movement of the solo sonata shows Krenek's exploitation of consonance and dissonance while linear melodic elements converge with vertical tonal pillars (see fig. 5, measures 4–5).

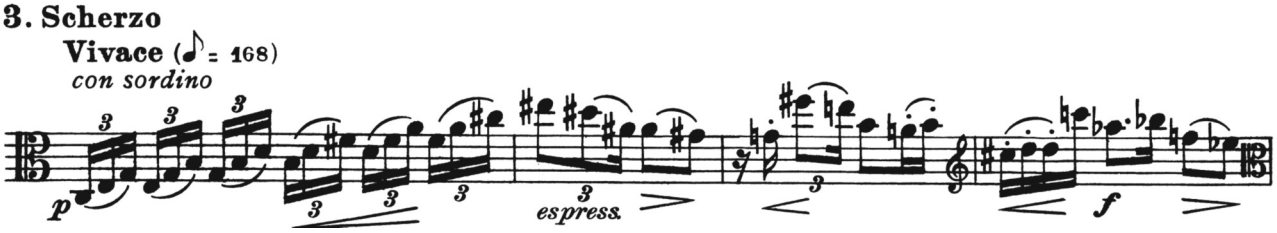
Here, aspects of a major/minor harmonic dialogue are established through an allusion to both F major and D minor, respectively. Reference to modal temperaments is one result of Krenek's all-encompassing amalgamated system of twelve-tone writing. As we will see in the later movements, especially the third, rows that contain stacks of consecutive thirds tend to lend themselves well to an atonal/tonal interchange. Modal elements pervade many of Krenek's works from the 1940s, and this is particularly true for the works that encompass the opus 92 set.

Historical references, not only tonal in nature, infuse the third movement of the Sonata for Viola: the form of the work is a scherzo and trio, in which the composer follows strict examples of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century examples. While Krenek does not specifically "dissonate" the structure of the scherzo-trio, he does create drama by interrupting the subject matter through textural, metric, and harmonic means. Indeed, few works of twentieth century twelve-tone technique are so daring in their exploitation of tonal-harmonic elements. Somewhat quixotic for the time, the opening bar of the third movement of the sonata shows the exclusive use of thirds for its melodic material (fig. 6). This also serves to capitalize on the resonant qualities of the viola's open strings, a conscious mechanism that Krenek has exploited throughout the sonata.

The trio section of this movement is a rich example of contrasts, exemplified by both articulation and tonality (fig. 7). The marking, *appassionato*, present in the first published edition but missing from the autograph manuscript of the work, can offer a glimpse into the true character of this section.

Consistent with the aspects of historical narrative found throughout the Sonata for Viola, the last move-

Figure 6. Opening of the third movement of the Sonata for Viola.



ment of Krenek's sonata is a chaconne reminiscent of the great Baroque examples of J. S. Bach, mainly the famous D-minor example from the Partita No. 2, BWV 1004 for solo violin. Here, in Krenek's sonata, the formal structure of the Baroque chaconne is in altered form as the first theme is longer than the customary eight-bar themes found in Baroque examples. In Krenek's work, a nine-bar theme is employed, which does not reoccur unaltered at the end of the work, as was Bach's practice. Krenek, however, does retain the essence of Bach's chaconne, which was clearly modeled after the French orchestral chaconne, by retaining the rhythmic schema of dotted rhythms on the second beat (fig. 8).

This final movement of the sonata includes references to each of the prior movements through the sequential variation formula that makes up the structure of the work. Krenek's admiration for J. S. Bach reached a zenith in a work of 1950 titled *Parvula Corona Musicali*s, or *Little Musical Wreath*, scored for string trio. Krenek described this work, in the subtitle, as a composition "in honor of J. S. Bach composed according to the twelve-tone technique."[2] The work is in three movements with subsections totaling six separate sections, the last of which is a chorale-type five-bar harmonization of the pitches that represents the name B–A–C–H.

Consisting of seven variations, a compressed restatement of the theme, and a coda that makes reference to the opening subject of the first movement of the sonata, this last movement is a masterpiece of conservation. The composer is able to encapsulate the drama and theater of Bach's original into a tight, well-contained space; in this specific example, that space is confined to one page of printed music. The final movement is thus a fitting tribute to the chaconne of the late Baroque—the form of which relies on a system, both harmonic and structural. There could not be a better template on which to superimpose these new and emerging systems of twentieth-century music.

The Sonata for Viola, op. 92, no. 3 is a staunch and inspired example of an innovative approach to twelve-tone composition, free atonal writing, and the reconciliation of consonance and dissonance, reinvented and overlaid by the composer onto the historical narrative of the sonata. The rhythmic inventiveness, harmonic innovations, and idiosyncratic writing for the

Figure 7. First four measures of the trio section from the third movement of the Sonata for Viola.

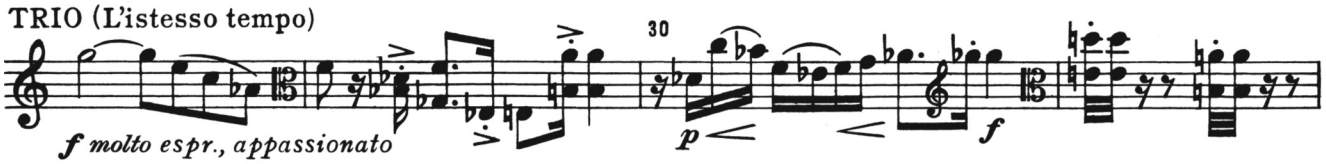
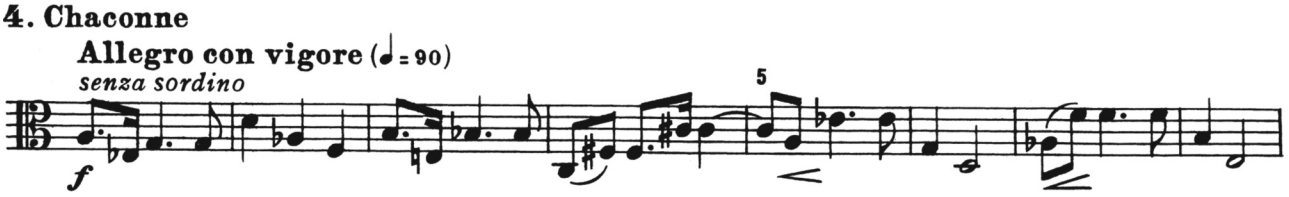


Figure 8. The opening eight bars of Krenek's chaconne for solo viola, movement four, shows his great admiration for J. S. Bach. Krenek's ability to make something ancient sound new and fresh was one of his great gifts as a composer.



instrument make it one of the great undiscovered works for solo viola. Krenek's ability to flourish creatively while under the confines of a "system" is the essence of his genius. What might limit some to the point of creative exhaustion, the result of which would be a mundane, academic creation, had the opposite effect on Krenek's muse. His works are always concise, never artificial, and consistently engaging. The Austrian Art Deco furniture designer Paul Frankl once wrote: "style, then, we may define as the external expression of the inner spirit of any given time."[3] Unsparing construction and refinement of materials make Krenek's works, and the Sonata for Viola in particular, an enduring and defining example of twentieth-century modernism and a true harbinger of style. It is no wonder that much of this music, neglected and relegated to bare mention only in academia, is resurfacing today.

Epilogue

In his essay *Conversation Past Midnight* Krenek comments, "Genius brings forth something that reflects eternal truth, the sort of truth to which we cannot attain by ourselves, which comes only to saints in moments of revelations. An artist's work belongs of course wholly in this world, but all the same it can catch a glimpse of the other world, of the eternal. And in doing so it partakes of immortality."[4] It is this author's hope that the austere works of Ernst Krenek will continue to inspire audiences and performing musicians for generations to come. Krenek's life-long devotion to his art, his profound and deep understanding of music, and his ability to communicate in a clear and elevated way, in a multitude of genres, has solidified his place as one of the great composers of the twentieth century, and now, a major contributor to the repertoire for the viola.

Today the works of Ernst Krenek are experiencing a revival by the international music community: the establishment of the Ernst Krenek Institute Private Foundation in Krems, Austria, in 2004 by the composer's widow Gladys Krenek; the Krenek Prize of the City of Vienna, a biennial award that is open to composers and musicologists who have ties with the city of Vienna; and the recent republication and distribution of out-of-print and unpublished works by Universal Edition, Vienna, including the three works discussed here, are all contributing to new scholarship as well as inspiring a new generation of performers on an international scale.

Notes

[1] Ernst Krenek, *Music Here and Now*, trans. Barthold Fles (New York: W. W. Norton, 1939), 143.

[2] Ernst Krenek, *Parvula Corona Musicalis*, op. 122 (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1993), X.

[3] Paul T. Frankl, *Form and Re-form: A Practical Handbook of Modern Interiors* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1930), 27.

[4] Ernst Krenek, *Exploring Music*, trans. Margaret Shenfield and Geoffrey Skelton (New York: October House, 1966), 241.

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Weber, Jürgen. *Excursions*. Musicaphon, 55718. © 2008. (Includes works by Ernst Krenek (Viola Sonata, op. 92, no. 3), Krzysztof Penderecki, Gideon Klein, Vincent Persichetti, Ernest Bloch, Jan Zdenek Bartos, Samuel Adler, and Benjamin Britten.)

William Kraft, Ernst Krenek, Joan Huang. Southwest Chamber Music. Cambria, 8803. © 2000. (Includes *Music for String Quartet and Percussion*, by William Kraft; Sonata for Solo Viola, op. 92, no. 3, by Ernst Krenek; *Settings for Twelve Chinese Symbols*, by Joan Huang; and *Evening Voluntaries*, by William Kraft.)

Websites:

Ernst Krenek Institut: http://www.krenek.com/

Ernst Krenek Society: http://www.ernstkrenek.com/

Universal Edition, Vienna: http://www.universaledition.com

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Alternative Styles

A Case for the American Viola Waltz

by David Wallace

Marimba players are an interesting breed. Shameless transcribers of anything and everything, they take pride in being the first to render a transcription on their instrument and are constantly expanding their repertoire by harvesting masterpieces from other musicians' catalogs. As a violist who has sometimes felt defensive or apologetic about playing transcriptions, I find their courage and zeal inspiring.

Ultimately, though, our choice to transcribe is best guided by an oft quoted slogan: "It sounds better on viola!" In this spirit, I wish to examine a genre that is ripe for our transcription and performance: the American fiddle waltz.

In America, the waltz became a popular ballroom dance during the 1820s,[1] but by 1925, a distinct style of southern waltz fiddling had emerged, which was quite distinct from the waltzes of Chopin and Johann Strauss, or even Celtic traditions:

> *These waltzes are usually played on the fiddle with guitar, banjo, or mandolin accompaniment. They are distinguished from their Northern and British counterparts by more highly syncopated rhythm and by more varied and complex bowing and ornamentation. They are distinguished from the art-music waltz and its Continental descendants by their use of long flowing melodic lines instead of short, repeated motives (as in "Blue Danube"), and often by their slower tempo.*[2]

I first encountered the American fiddle waltz as a child listening to fiddle contests in Texas; it quickly became one of my favorite genres. When I was a student, the waltz almost single-handedly built my left-hand position, double-stop technique, and intonation. (So many waltzes involve sweet, non-droning double stops and double-stop shifts that can only be executed well if the hand is in a comfortable, ergonomic position.)

When I first experimented with playing fiddle tunes on the viola, I found that the waltz's emphasis on lyricism, expressive tone, and harmony seemed in many ways more suited to the viola than the violin. I also began to think about how the waltz's technical benefits could fill significant developmental gaps in the viola repertoire. We owe it to ourselves to invade fiddle territory and take this genre by storm. Here's the plan:

1. Watch and Listen

To master any idiom, we need to study the greatest exponents of it. While there are many outstanding American fiddlers, here is a list of some who are particularly known for their interpretations and love of waltzes: Kenny Baker, James "Texas Shorty" Chancellor, Johnny Gimble, Aubrey Haynie, Randy Howard, Clark Kessinger, Mark O'Connor, and Jay Ungar. Purchase, download, or stream sound recordings and videos of their waltz performances. Internalize the lilting rhythms that are neither strictly triplets nor eighth notes. Get to know the phrasing and the way that non-harmonic tones get just a little extra tension and volume before they resolve and relax. Listen for when and how vibrato is used and not used. Capture the flavor of the portamento and slides. Observe the range of tempi among different fiddlers. When watching videos, observe bow distribution and how the bowings defy predictable patterns. See how expressive notes often occur on an up bow, because going against gravity adds a certain urgency to the sound.

2. Get Sheet Music for Fully Realized Authentic Arrangements and Learn Them

In the old days, most published waltzes provided only the basic tune, but now it is possible to purchase highly accurate transcriptions with detailed bowings and ornamentation.

A great starting place for an advanced violist is Craig Duncan's excellent transcription of Johnny Gimble's *Gardenia Waltz*,[3] a harmonically lush double-stop workout that requires no transposition or recomposition for viola performance. As a frequent performer on five-string fiddle, Gimble is no stranger to the C string or the beauty of stringed instruments' lower registers. Except for the final double stop, this waltz entirely ignores the violin's E string.

Pete's Waltz by Peter Martin is written in a similar vein and is available from Petimar Press.[4] Mark O'Connor's *Appalachia Waltz* is a haunting tune that has already become a classic. While it is written in a slightly more classical style than the two aforementioned waltzes, a solo viola version can be downloaded from O'Connor's website (markoconnor.com). I have been nudging him to publish a viola rendition of his *Misty Moonlight Waltz*; your e-mails can help the effort!

When evaluating the quality of waltz arrangements, look for how much detail is provided, especially with bowing, ornamentation, and rhythm. Many of the best transcriptions and arrangements were edited or supervised by professionals or are from recorded performances. Keep an eye out for available source or companion recordings, as they are indispensable in understanding the printed page.

3. Learn Waltzes by Ear and Transcribe Performances

The American fiddle waltz tradition was largely developed and passed on by oral tradition. Fiddlers learned to play what they heard on records or radio, and they taught one another tunes by ear. At strings conferences, camps, and traditional music festivals, it is easy to expand one's repertoire by learning tunes directly from other musicians and by making video and audio recordings that may later be transcribed and learned. Video recordings are particularly helpful, as they help to confirm bowings and fingerings.

4. Make Your Own Arrangements of Existing Waltzes

Building on tunes you have heard, learned, or encountered in printed anthologies, begin to create your own arrangements. In the case of many idiomatic fiddle waltzes, it may be best simply to transpose the entire tune down a fifth. Some waltzes borrowed from popular music like *Tennessee Waltz* can be transposed into any key whatsoever without purists raising an eyebrow. Anthologies like *The Fiddler's Fake Book*[5] or *The Phillips Collection of Traditional American Fiddle Tunes*, Volume Two[6] provide a wealth of basic waltz tunes that may be developed and embellished to taste.

Highly melodic waltzes like Mexican composer Juventino Rosas's famous *Sobre las Olas* (*Over the Waves*) or minor-key waltzes like Andy Statman's klezmer tune *Flatbush Waltz* lend themselves particularly well to the viola.

5. Write Your Own American Viola Waltz

Once you know the idiom, expand the viola repertoire by writing your own waltz and sharing it with others. To practice what I preach, I am including *Tannehill*,[7] a viola waltz inspired in part by a camping trip to Tannehill State Park near Birmingham, Alabama. There is an unwritten law that when a fiddler gets married, he should write his wife a waltz. This is mine.

The piece can be played with varied accompaniment, but the ideal is an acoustic guitar, a double bass, and a tenor guitar or mandolin. The first measure is unaccompanied, and the accompanists sustain an A-flat chord in the penultimate bar before resolving to C major on the second beat of the final bar.

My friend, champion contest fiddler Daniel Carwile, recently told me that one of his violin students performed Tannehill at the Kentucky State Championship Fiddle Contest. I wonder if anyone echoed the sentiment a fan expressed after my first violin perform-

ance of this waltz: "You know, I still liked it, but … it sounds better on viola!"

Notes

[1] H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie, eds., *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Waltz."

[2] Barrett E. Hanson, "The American Country Waltz," *John Edwards Memorial Foundation Quarterly* 5, pt. 1 (1969): 4–6.

[3] Craig Duncan, *Mel Bay Presents Top Fiddle Solos* (Pacific, Mo.: Mel Bay Publications, 1986). Duncan's book includes eight waltzes, all of which lend themselves well to viola transcription.

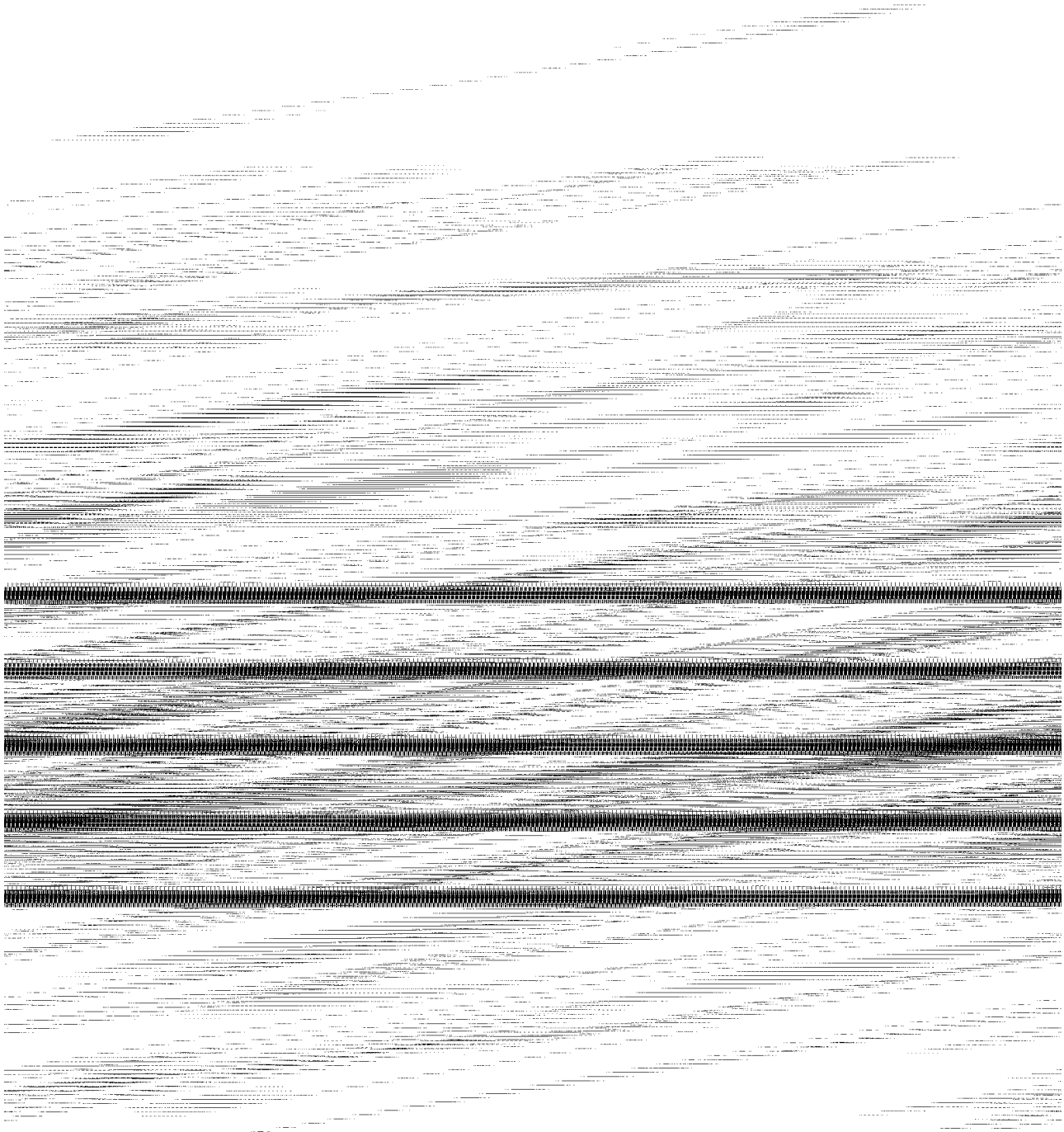
[4] Peter Martin, *Texas Style Fiddle Transcriptions*, vol. 2 (Seattle: Petimar Press, 1998).

[5] David Brody, *The Fiddler's Fake Book* (New York: Oak Publications, 1983).

[6] Stacy Phillips, *The Phillips Collection of Traditional American Fiddle Tunes*, vol. 2, *Rags, Blues, Hornpipes, Waltzes, Polkas, Jigs, etc*. (Pacific, Mo: Mel Bay Publications, 1995).

[7] The "e" is pronounced long (i.e., "tanny").

Dr. David Wallace is a faculty member of the Julliard School and author of the book Reaching Out: A Musician's Guide to Interactive Performance*. For a recording of David performing his waltz,* Tannehill*, please visit: http://americanviolasociety.org/resources/recordings/*



Fresh Faces

Scott Slapin: Charting His Own Course

by David M. Bynog

2008 was a banner year for Scott Slapin. His composition *Recitative for Solo Viola* was commissioned for the Primrose International Viola Competition as the required contemporary work. Later that year, he released his recording of Paganini's 24 Caprices transcribed for viola to critical acclaim, only the second violist to record the complete cycle. And while Slapin's reputation continues to increase as both a composer and recording artist, he maintains a full-time career as an orchestral musician. I had a chance to chat with Scott about his multifaceted career.

Scott Slapin (left) with Tanya Solomon

DMB: You graduated with your Bachelor's in Viola Performance from the Manhattan School of Music at the relatively young age of eighteen. Tell us a little about your background on the viola.

SS: My father plays the double bass, and my mother played the cello, so I suppose it's natural that my parents wanted me to play the viola since it was next in line. Though my mother's plan all along was for me to play the viola, I actually started on violin when I was six, and at eight I switched to the viola. I studied the viola privately for about five years each with Barbara Barstow and then with Emanuel Vardi. I also studied a year with Sally Peck at the North Carolina School of the Arts prior to my time at the Manhattan School.

DMB: And how did your interest in composing come about?

SS: I remember as a kid playing the overture to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* in the New Jersey Youth Symphony and marveling at how Wagner put that all together. Slowly I started to write music on my own, and around twelve or so I started to take lessons with Richard Lane. At first I was trying to write orchestral pieces (somewhat in imitation of what we were playing in the youth orchestra). I wrote a big piece that made the rounds of several orchestras in New Jersey and was played in the New Jersey State Theater when I was fourteen. I figured I should stop while I was ahead, and ever since I've written mainly for the viola, sometimes with other strings.

DMB: So, do you see yourself in the once-very-popular role of performer/composer?

SS: I'm not sure I would have phrased it that way, but I'll say yes. These days when I write, it's almost always something for my wife, Tanya, and me to play. We just did a recital of all my own pieces for my thirty-fifth birthday. I'm also in the process of arranging my Suite for two violas and string

Eight-year-old Scott Slapin performs on viola with his parents, Bill Slapin (double bass) and Margi Ramsey (cello)

quartet/orchestra so that we'll have something else to play with strings besides the Sixth Brandenburg!

But, I wouldn't want to be a full-time composer. I like to write when I want to write and that's often in spurts. The piece for the Primrose Competition was the last commission I did, but it was a short piece, and I had a while to "get in the mood" and write it. For the moment I'm happy to have enough repertoire of my own to give recitals with Tanya, and I'm always thrilled to hear when other people are playing some of it.

DMB: As your compositions become more broadly available, I am sure you will have more chances to hear other violists perform your works. Do you have any valuable insight for interpreting your works?

SS: When I hear other violists play something I have written, I always enjoy hearing them put something into it that I hadn't thought of, even when it's in opposition to what's on the page. (Of course I may not always like what everyone does with it, but it's also their concert, not mine.) Ultimately I think the classical world has become very specialized, and there's something unnatural about that. There are so many viola players in the world, trying to play mostly the same repertoire and many of them trying to play it the same way (following the latest historical research/critical edition).

The focus has become increasingly narrow, and for me that takes a lot of the fun out of it. I don't like "tracing a map" as Heifetz referred to it. What I like about both writing my own music and coming up with my own "interpretation" of someone else's is that not only does it allow me the freedom to express whatever it is I'm trying to express, but it also lets me put some genuine musical thought into it.

Much of the recital music we play was written in a time when personalization of interpretation was expected. To be wholly confined to the markings on the printed page (and whatever has been recently discovered about performance practice of the time) is a modern obsession that's gotten out of hand. We've gone from musicians playing our own music to musicians interpreting the music of others—but with personalization—to where we are today: specialists at hitting notes how we're told. I'm exaggerating somewhat, but the progression has largely been one of artist to artisan.

DMB: So it is safe to say that you are fairly relaxed in your ideas about the roles of the composer and the performer. In addition to your own compositions, you have premiered several works written expressly for you. Has your role as a composer helped (or conflicted) when you are working as a violist with another composer?

SS: Perhaps it's helped a bit, in that I can analyze the music and (usually) see what they're after. Typically they'll steer you in a few places but leave most of the smaller details up to you. In my experience, it's a very small group of composers who will dictate specifically phrase-by-phrase (and probably would be playing it themselves if they could only play the viola!).

DMB: Since you are primarily writing viola music, do you compose on the viola?

SS: It depends on what the piece is. If it's for unaccompanied viola, I'll work the piece out on the viola. If it's a viola duo, I usually end up writing it on viola and dragging Tanya in every half hour to try something new. She's been a good sport about that so far! The more other instruments that are involved, the more the piece gets worked out on the piano. But there's a certain "string color" that makes certain chords sound better and others not so good. With small groups of strings, I don't always trust that if it sounds good on the keyboard it will sound good when transferred over. So if I have the instrument available I'm writing for, nothing beats trying it out on that.

DMB: You have mentioned your wife, Tanya, who is also an accomplished violist and frequent musical partner. Have there been difficult career decisions with two violists in the household?

SS: We work really well together. People often ask about conflict, but there really isn't any. We both enjoy playing duo recitals, and we trade off playing the first and second parts. So that we don't get confused in the concert, the music we play from isn't marked "Viola I" and "Viola II," it's labeled "Scott" and "Tanya."

We met touring with a chamber group; we were the only two violists. I remember we fought not about who would get to sit principal, but rather about who wouldn't have to do it! (I won and enjoyed the rest of the tour not having to worry about taking care of bowings.) Most of the time we have been lucky to get two jobs together.

It was Tanya who introduced me to orchestral playing since I was not trained for it. At the end of our tour with the chamber group, she got a job as principal violist in the Chattanooga Symphony in eastern Tennessee. Soon there was an opening for principal viola in the Knoxville Symphony, also in eastern Tennessee. I was terrified. I didn't know the first thing about taking an audition. She showed me how to play the excerpts and somehow got me through it (I won the job). We've been traveling about with orchestral jobs ever since.

DMB: As a performer (and composer), you have done a good bit of recording. What are your feelings about the recording process and how these recordings have been affecting your career?

SS: I like recording, especially repertoire that isn't often available. The recording I'm probably best known for is having made the first complete set of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas on viola. It was also my first solo CD. Now that's it's gotten enough good reviews and enough time has passed, I'll confess that we did that recording in my mother's living room in Somerville, New Jersey. The room had great acoustics (there was a lot of wood). It was quite a process. We had to first turn everything off (including the refrigerator and heating). It was January and snowing. Then we had to get takes between dogs barking and planes overhead en route to Newark.

Since then, we've learned to do things much more easily. I've been working with my engineer, Larry Bentley, for over a decade. He has a great sound-proof studio in North Plainfield, New Jersey, and we work very quickly together because we know what will work and what won't. A couple years ago in Larry's studio, I re-recorded all the Sonatas and Partitas for volume one of Eroica Classical Recording's series *Baroque Preludes, Dances, and Fugues*. (Tanya recorded all the Cello Suites for volume two.) It was much easier the second time around!

Like anything else, recording gets better the more you do it. Advances in technology haven't hurt either. Many things you can do today in a studio didn't exist when we started, or it took forever to accomplish them. I don't believe in taking forever to record. Either you can play it or you can't. And if you can't, no amount of editing is going to make it sound like you can.

DMB: Several of the works you have recorded are transcriptions of technically difficult works for the violin (most recently the Paganini Caprices). Why did you choose to tackle these works?

SS: The two main areas in playing are musicality and technique. Neither can exist without the other. The Paganini Caprices really stretch the viola to its outer limits. Occasionally a bit past them! They are an important part of the viola's history—all as technical studies and a few as concert pieces. Paganini didn't perform most of them either; he wrote them as etudes for his own practice (Paganini also played viola). Until quite recently, almost all violists had full training as violinists before switching. Therefore their training also included the Caprices. Now that we're in an era where

many people bypass the violin and begin on the viola, I understand that there's the temptation to want to skip the violin repertoire. Still, I don't know of anything that takes the place of Paganini for developing technique (all the while trying to make music out of it!).

I also believe the intent of Bach and Paganini (among others) was that their technical studies would also be used for the viola. They were both violists themselves, and had they believed that the viola required different studies than the violin, I'm sure they would have composed some.

This of course doesn't mean that playing the violin and viola is the same. Certainly the slower response, the darker sound, and many other differences will cause you to play them differently. But still, both instruments are held the same way, have strings tuned in fifths, and have historically used the same technical material.

I chose to record them since a recording hadn't been made on viola since the early 1960s. I think enough of them work well as concert pieces to justify the few that really are just etudes. I also wanted to have a record of all the work I put into them, and I knew that I wasn't going to keep some of them in my fingers forever. My left hand feels a lot better now that I'm not playing the twelfths in No. 12 anymore (which is a stretch so large that some violists have rewritten them as fifths!).

DMB: What are your feelings, then, about transcriptions for the viola in general?

SS: The argument against transcriptions usually goes something like this: Composer X wrote a certain piece for heckelphone in A-flat major, and no one else should play it except heckelphone players (and in A-flat major). This again supposes that the composer was very picky. He might have been, but many weren't, so you really have to go on a case-by-case basis.

Transcriptions (for general concert music, not meant as technical studies) depend on the musical material and the compatibility of that with the instrument in question. Many pieces aren't so dependent on "color," which is why Bach's music works well for so many combinations. Bach himself arranged many of his own pieces, and I know many composers today who do the same thing.
While I'm at it, I'll mention that I'm always amazed at how some violists who accept the Bach Cello Suites, the Brahms Clarinet Sonatas, and the Schubert "Arpeggione" Sonata as part of the viola's basic repertoire will turn up their noses at other transcriptions.

I also know of no evidence that when Bach played the music of Palestrina, that he made any effort to play it in an older style, or with older instruments. I think if Bach were around today, he'd be amazed that some people won't accept modern interpretations of his music on modern instruments, in transcription or in a different key (even though he was doing all of that himself). I have nothing against historically informed performances or even historical recreations. They certainly have their place, and they can be interesting and even musical in the right hands. But does everyone have to do that?

DMB: Of course, in addition to transcriptions, you have recorded many unjustly neglected original works for the viola by the likes of Rolla, Bruni, and Leclair. It appears that you have wide and diverse musical tastes and that you have found your niche in the viola world. Do you have any final words on how other violists can find their own niche?

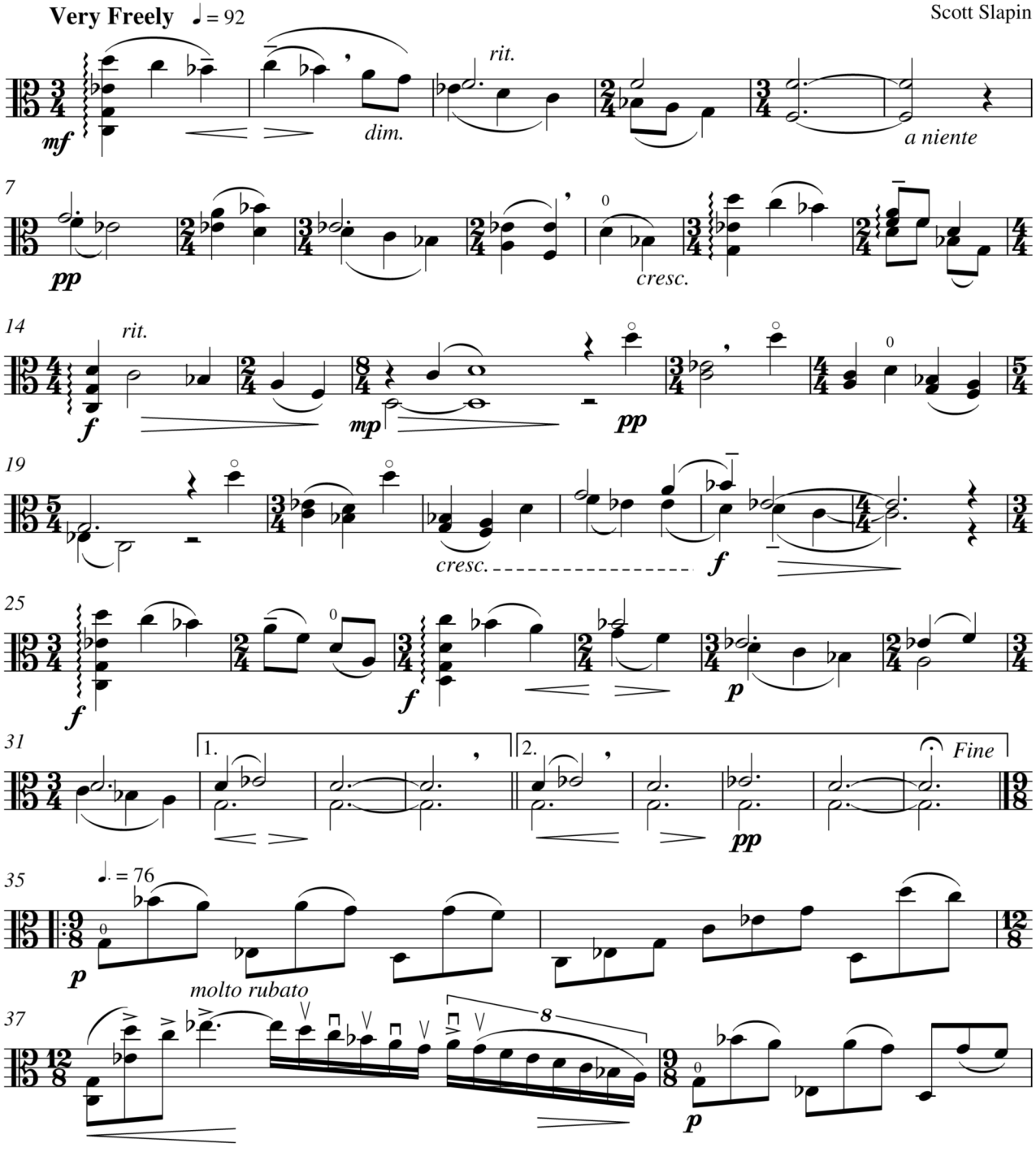
SS: You have to find your own path and that will change over time as you try out different things, but it will develop organically. It's hard to say why people are the way they are. Some combination of genes and environment, but in any case we didn't create ourselves. Even our will to work hard is a product of what came before. Over time you come to realize what you like and what you don't. And then there's a third category: what you like but isn't really you. You'll enjoy hearing someone else do something that you wouldn't want to do yourself.

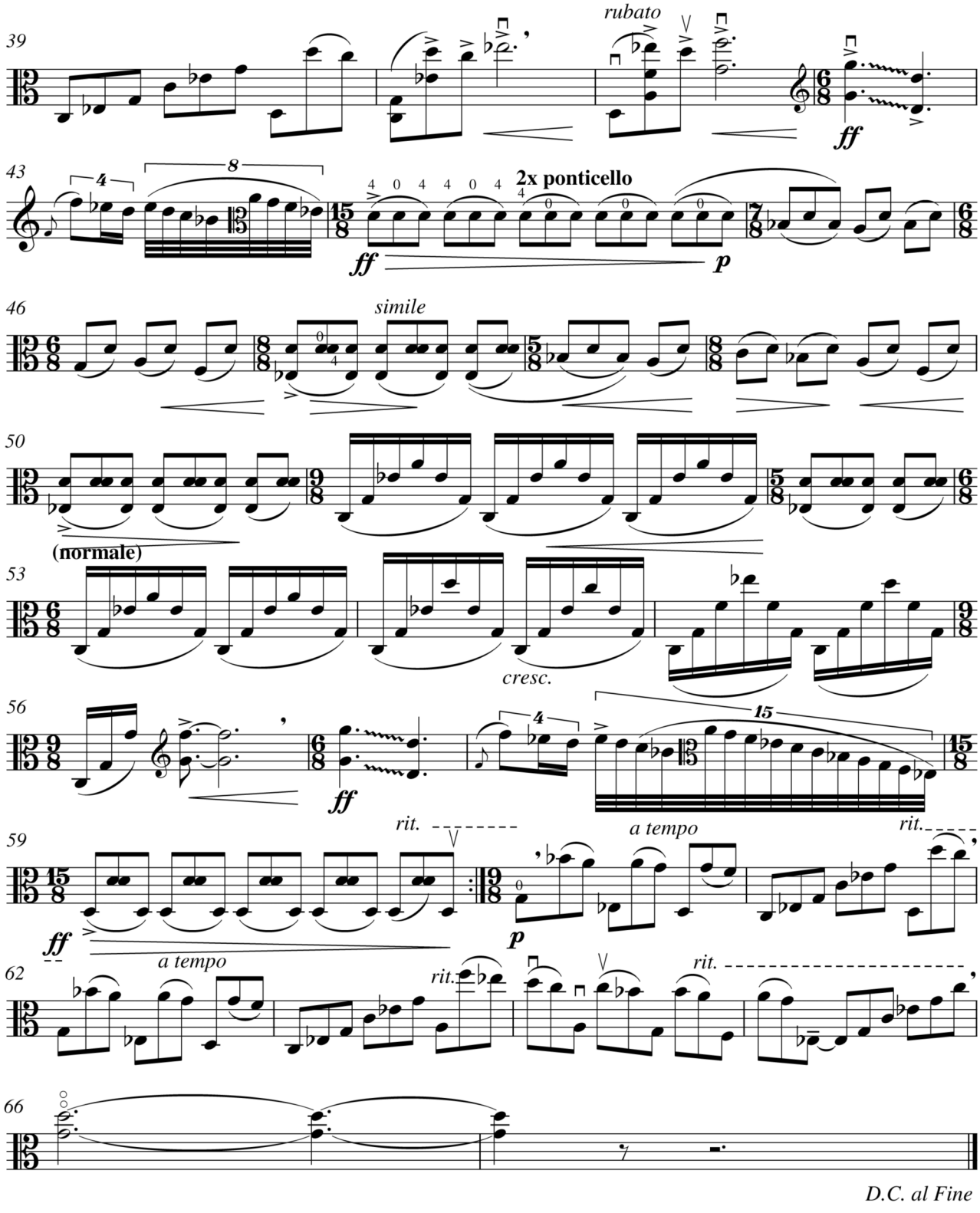
Some authoritarian people will try to stop you ("there's only one right way to do this, and it's my way!"), but others will encourage your creativity, reining you in only occasionally when you go too far beyond the pale. Charting your own course might take longer, but you'll end up with something you'll be more comfortable with. You'll never please everyone, but if you really like how you're doing something, there will be others who feel that way, too.

Scott's compositions are available from the publishers Ourtext (http://www.ourtext.co.uk/) and Liben (http://www.liben.com). For more information, please also visit http://www.scottslapin.com.

Elegy-Caprice

for Margi Ramsey's Memorial Concert





Score preparation by Tanya Solomon and John Harding

Modern Makers
Catch a Rising Star

A student works on a scroll at the Chicago School of Violin Making (all photos courtesy of Anthony J. Elia)

by Eric Chapman

Here's a riddle: what do a surgeon, a sculptor, and a bass player have in common? Answer: they have all been violin-making students at the Chicago School of Violin Making, and they have all made exquisite and affordable violas.

In these hard economic times, violists are all on the hunt for bargains. You know what I mean—that magical viola that doesn't cost the earth but sounds as though it came from the studio of Stradivari; the $3,000 model that sounds like a million. There is a way to achieve this dream: catch a wonderful maker on the way up who is under the tutelage of a master but has not yet made a reputation and therefore does not have a high price point. These makers of tomorrow are studying at the nation's schools of violin making today.

There are several noted schools of violin making in the United States, among them the Violin Making School of America in Salt Lake City, the North Bennet Street School in Boston, and the largest, the Chicago School of Violin Making, located in Skokie, Illinois. These schools train aspiring makers in the initial and very crucial foundations of the craft.

The Chicago School was founded in 1975 by the late Kenneth Warren. It is a reflection of his lifelong commitment to the luthier's art. Originally known as the Kenneth Warren & Son School of Violin Making, the school was the second such in the United States. Warren, a noted connoisseur of instruments, had previously represented W. E. Hill and Sons in London and had worked in restoration at the Wurlitzer firm in Chicago. Although he founded his own firm in Chicago, and was a member of the International Entente, he was the only member who had never actually made a violin.

He founded the school in spite of that and quickly hired a stellar faculty, led by Tschu Ho Lee, a luthier known for violas, who had worked with the important maker Joseph Kantuscher in Germany. In 1983, the eighty-four-year-old Warren passed the reign of the school to Lee, who renamed it the Chicago School of Violin Making. The school incorporated as a not-for-profit institution in 2002 and is run by co-directors Rebecca Elliott and Fredric Thompson and an independent board of directors.

As the students progress through their three-year course at the school, they are guided through the making of three violins and a viola, which may be made in one of several models. One is a 15 3/4 inch Guadagnini-inspired design, well suited to players with smaller

Instruments in the varnish and drying room

hands. With a string length of 14 1/2 inches and narrow upper shoulders, the model is a fit for younger players. Another model is a 16 inch Tschu Ho Lee model, designed with the big sound and shorter string length of the Guadagnini model, but with slightly larger proportions. A third option, a Goffriller model copied after the work of the great Venetian master Matteo Goffriller (1659–1742) has a body length of 16 3/8 inches and is a bit wider than the others in the upper bout. The string length is the same 14 1/2 inches as the Lee model, making it eminently playable. These are those magical instruments—the violas made at the Chicago School of Violin Making sell between $3,000 and $4,000.

These violin-making stars of tomorrow have come from quite varied backgrounds. Third-year student Aaron Brown is a professional bass player who received his Bachelor of Music degree in 2001 from the Oberlin Conservatory. He has spearheaded a bass-making project at the school and is working on a Goffriller model viola. To support his violin making while he is a student, he plays Principal Bass with the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra and freelances in Chicago. Elizabeth La Porte studied violin at Macalester College in St. Paul. She was hooked on a career in making after spending a summer working with well-known maker and restorer John Waddle. Raija Eggert Tuuri studied viola and violin at the University of Delaware and Temple University. She has worked part time for David Bromberg, a leading authority on American-made instruments (and famous rock guitarist) who himself is a graduate of the school. Other graduates have included individuals from diverse professions—doctors, lawyers, sculptors, full-time mothers—all who have succumbed to the siren mystique of violin making.

While the school does not ship instruments for trial purposes, staff can advise on availability and inform about shops that may have school-made instruments for sale. Musicians are welcome to visit the school in Skokie, Illinois, about fifteen miles from downtown Chicago. For further information and inspiration, see http://www.csvm.org.

Eric Chapman is a founder of the Violin Society of America and a long-time contributor to the Journal of the American Viola Society. *The owner of Eric Chapman Violins, Inc. in Chicago, he has been commended for distinguished service by both the AVS and the VSA.*

FLOURISHES AND CADENZAS IN THE BAROQUE AND EARLY CLASSICAL CONCERTO

by Annette Isserlis

The art of improvisation and rhetorical embellishment on the violin has many fine exponents, including Sigiswald Kuÿken, Lucy van Dael, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Andrew Manze, and Rachel Podger. Applying this art to the viola needs consideration of which aspects will suit the mellow tones best. My own experience has shown that the freedom to improvise is essential, as is flair and fantasy, but it should always spring from musical considerations in matters of harmonic language, style, and proportionate length. I encourage my own students to be able to improvise an inner part to a written or heard melody with bass accompaniment, as well as to be able to supply their own bass-line to a melody. This is a good basis for improvising solos with confidence. Embellishment is a tool to enhance the performer's communication of rhetoric.

Personally, I have absorbed as much as I could from what sounded natural and effective in practice. One's brain, ears, and musical instinct are the finest creative source. While trial and error is the most effective way to acquaint oneself with the art, there is some reading material that is instructive. In addition to the standard *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing* by Leopold Mozart, another excellent manual is Judy Tarling's *Baroque String Playing for Ingenious Learners*. Tarling deals with many different aspects of ornamentation, citing several examples where composers have supplied their own. Robert Levin, who is a remarkable exponent and authority concerning classical improvisation, has published a set of cadenzas for the Mozart violin concerti. These cadenzas contain practical formulas for those who want to do it themselves!

This article, then, will attempt to provide a few ground-rules and some inspiration for composing one's own cadenzas, as well as the means to embark upon improvised flourishes. I have taken the Telemann Viola Concerto as my Baroque concerto model, but these principles will apply to Galante-style sonata movements as well. The Stamitz Concerto in D Major, op. 1 is a later, longer, and more complicated work, but we will see that the cadenzas here grow from the same roots in many respects, although they can be proportionately longer.

We will start with a look at the purpose of the cadenza in the context of a concerto. I have compiled a basic list of its uses, which is by no means comprehensive. However, I have slanted my view of the purposes specifically toward the viola, as opposed to any other instrument, as our needs differ from the rest of the string family:

1) To draw attention to one's tone by providing a solo spot free of orchestral texture

2) To express oneself without tempo restriction combined with spontaneous rhetoric

3) To show improvisatory skill while drawing from favored aspects of a concerto movement

4) To show off one's best technical points while giving a last blast!

I will enlarge upon these points individually, although inevitably there will be some overlap.

1) The viola offers rich sonorities, particularly in its lower and middle registers. The individuality of each instrument's voice is the fascinating result of each craftsman's solution to the inherent anomaly between pitch and available string-length. Know your viola's best tonal

points and exploit them in your cadenza. There is often a temptation to equate virtuosity with the top of the A string, but that may not necessarily be the most attractive part of your instrument. In the cadenza, you have the opportunity to vary the tessitura and dynamic extremes to complement your instrument's needs while unfettered by competing orchestral sounds.

2) Your musicality and expressive powers have a chance to shine here and capture the undivided attention of your audience. Although virtuosic flourishes are associated with cadenzas, they can often be set against more reflective moments effectively; the one can enhance the other, depending upon the musical context of the movement.

3) Basically speaking, there are two types of cadenzas: the first type being the flourish, which remains within the relevant chord(s) and commonly features scales or arpeggios. This is particularly relevant to the Telemann and other Baroque concertos (even some sonatas), taking into account that the individual movements are relatively short. It would not be proportionate to have too extended a cadenza. In the second type (usually for later Classical works), one has the freedom to select motifs from the first and second themes of the movement as a basis (preferably starting in the respective original keys) and have fun with them, ending on the dominant chord, usually with a trill to alert the orchestra. Your choice of motif could be simply limited to a rhythmic thematic reference or a melodic one, embellished or double-stopped. I will expand more fully on this subject later on.

4) Typically the flourishes or cadenzas of the faster movements will be more extroverted and end more triumphantly than those of the more reflective slower movements.

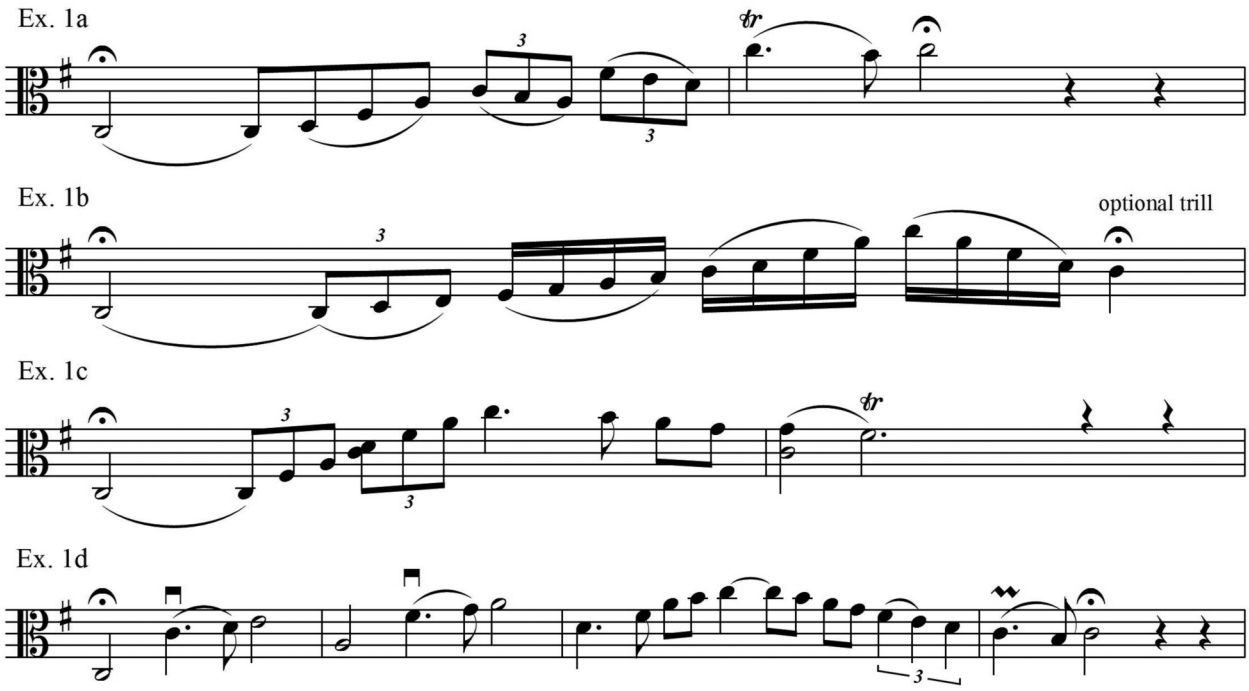
Speaking from a violist's standpoint, developing one's harmonic listening and thinking is crucial to musical development and intelligent participation in any form of music, be it solo, chamber, or orchestral music. The enjoyment one gains from playing inner parts, in particular, can only be enhanced by a full appreciation of the emotional result of the harmonic tension and resolution, but this naturally applies to solo performance too. Those of us lucky enough to have had the opportunity to learn a keyboard instrument have a head start here, but those who haven't should not feel discouraged, as one can learn most of what one needs to know about harmony by becoming familiar with the unaccompanied works of J. S. Bach. In the context of my own teaching, I frequently add a bass-line from my viola to the student's account of a Bach movement, following up by asking them to do the same for me. On occasion, some fascinating solutions can be discovered: for instance, whether the opening four bars of the Cello Suite No. 2 in D minor are intended to be harmonized bar-by-bar, or whether a more powerful effect can be gained from a sustained D pedal throughout those same bars.

The reason I make this point is that, while confidence in improvisation is largely gained via trial and error, a deep awareness of tonality (including knowledge of which notes are related to the relevant chord) will greatly affect the aptness of your improvisation. Personally, I feel it is important for a cadenza to be in the harmonic style of its "parent"; it is very useful to be able to identify what is appropriate for Baroque, Galante, and Classical styles, overlapping areas notwithstanding. Ultimately, one relies on one's ears and one's musical instincts.

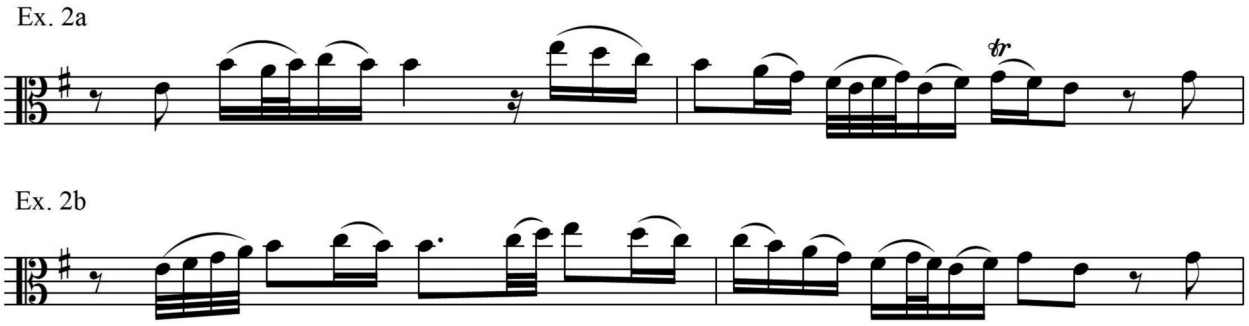
We now come to the art of improvising. The concept is very intimidating to many players, particularly because as students we immerse ourselves so thoroughly into the written note that our instinctively musical childhood talents can become submerged. It can feel akin to driving into a completely empty parking lot and being faced with an agony of indecision as to where to park! Jazz and folk musicians are among the best musicians I come across, as they seem to have totally integrated their ears, fingers, and "chops" with their personal creativity, though (or maybe even because!) many of them cannot read music.

A less challenging way to explore your own improvisatory skills is to have a framework upon which to

Example 1a–1d. Telemann, Viola Concerto, movt. I cadenza (mm. 45). Four versions.



Example 2a–2b. Telemann, Viola Concerto, movt. III, mm. 20–21. Two embellishments.



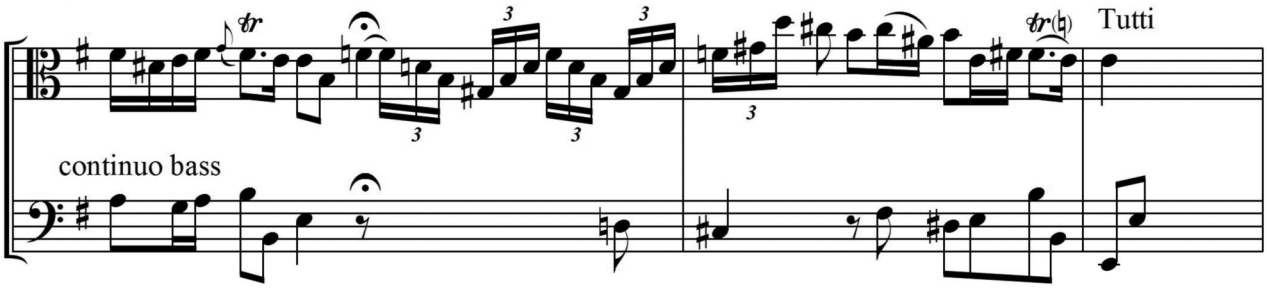
build your first efforts. I recommend you start with this exercise: take just three notes, preferably drawn from a major scale. Now see how creative you can be within the strictures of these three notes: vary tessitura, rhythm, length, dynamics, etc. (don't worry about "style"), and give yourself permission to make strange noises: it is the only way you can find out where your boundaries lie! Don't forget the value of silence where appropriate. When you are comfortable with this and feel ready to spread your wings further, gradually introduce another note at a time until you have the whole scale to play with. Once you have explored all that scales, arpeggios, and double-stopping have to offer, start to embellish with trills and appoggiaturas, which will immediately make you sound more Baroque. (It is customary in this repertoire to commence trills with an appoggiatura on the upper note.)

Now we turn to the Telemann Concerto. I present a few examples of flourishes for each movement only as building blocks and encourage you to take them further or try something a bit different. In addition, the third movement's return of the theme benefits from the odd embellishment (ex. 2a–2b) such as "infill" of intervals with passing tones and slight embroidering of the melody, or ornamentation.

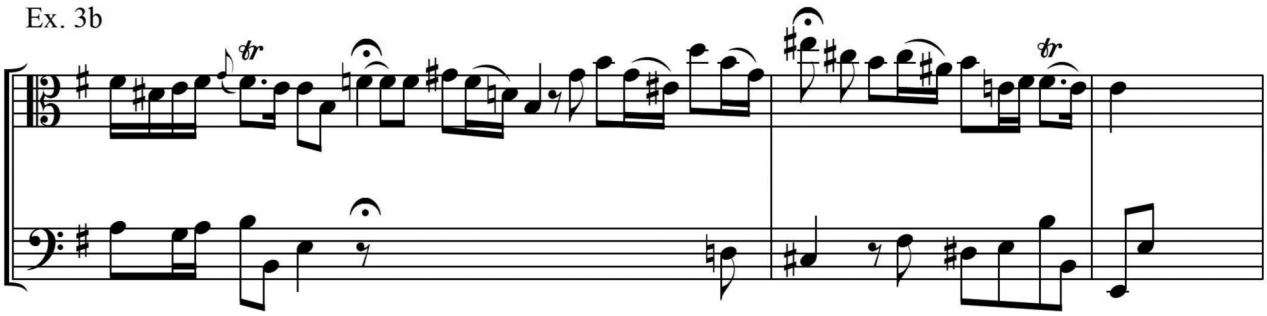
Regarding the Telemann cadenzas, the low ending in ex. 1b can be particularly effective because it does not upstage the final phrase. In the third movement's cadenza, I feel that incorporating diminished arpeggios works the best.

Example 3a–3c. Telemann, Viola Concerto, movt. III cadenza (mm. 25–27). Three versions.

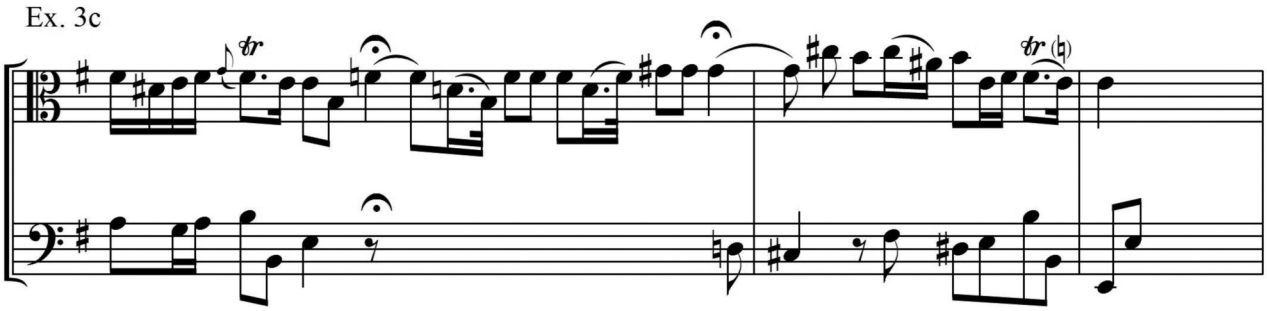
Ex. 3a



Ex. 3b



Ex. 3c



Regarding the Stamitz concerto, there are many ways to approach composing one's own cadenza. Indeed, I believe there are many versions already published, including one by my colleague Mark Knight (published by "Strings Attached Ltd."). The concerto's style is inherently virtuosic, particularly in the first movement, which implies that the cadenza should be similarly virtuosic (if not more so). Whatever you write, make sure that it is well within your capabilities! It makes sense to exploit your strong points since the target of this exercise is to tailor your cadenza to show your playing capabilities in the best possible light.

Accordingly, select your favorite motifs or riffs. I would recommend starting your first movement cadenza with one of the D-major themes before moving to anything in A major, as that is the key you'll be ending on to bring the orchestra back in. There is a lot of choice here, but don't feel that you have to include every form of arpeggio or double-stopped riff. You can use devices such as fragments of counterpoint, broken octaves, infill of themes (as in the third movement of the Telemann) and different sorts of occasional double-stopping if wished. In addition, I would remind you of the value of silence. It can be a very effective rhetorical device (questioning or exclamatory), or useful if you cannot think of how to get elegantly from one key to another!

You could perhaps quote the first four bars and use them as a springboard to diverge briefly into a related minor key, B minor being the most obvious. Or you might feel you would like to start with the second eight bars of the first statement (i.e., bar nine of the first solo entry). In this case, you could take a different direction when you come to the arpeggios, by varying the notes to form a little fantasia with which to segue into the A-major theme. Allow your imagina-

tion to lead you and try many alternatives before committing something to paper. Don't feel pressured to make it very long: although a mere flourish would be somewhat inadequate in this context, refer to the "purposes of the cadenza" list to remind yourself why you will be playing it. If you need some help with the cadenza, ask a friend to listen. Most will give their honest opinion, as long as they know you genuinely want to improve things and that you will not be wounded if an improvement is suggested!

Regarding the second movement, concentrate on the lyrical aspects. This movement does not need too extended of a cadenza, just enjoy your viola's sonorities and refer to Stamitz's own embellishments.

For my cadenzas (see the sample score), I used Fuzeau's reprint of two early editions, which do not call for a cadenza in the third movement. If you choose to write a cadenza for this movement, the rondo is just a bit of high jinks, so something short and witty would suffice, perhaps throwing in a minor version of the rondo theme for fun at some point but ending in high spirits!

Good Luck!

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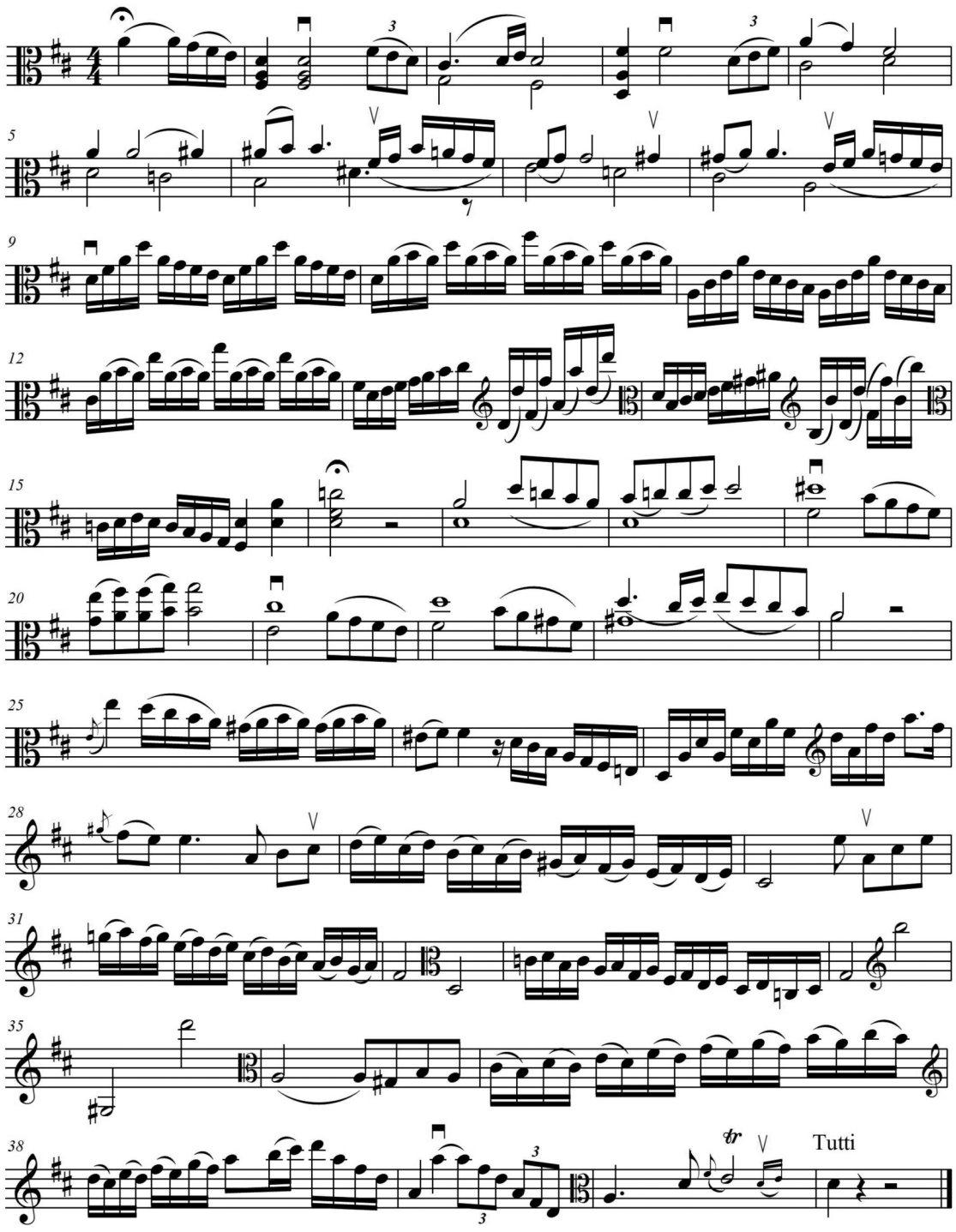
Annette Isserlis studied at the Royal College of Music, where she now teaches historical performance practice on Baroque and Classical viola, as well as at the Royal Northern College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music. In addition to being a founding member of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, she is co-principal viola for Sir John Eliot Gardiner's English Baroque Soloists, and with these and many other ensembles has traveled, recorded, and broadcast extensively. She participates in many chamber music concerts, regularly attends I M S Prussia Cove Open Chamber Music, offers master classes at various institutions, serves as an invited speaker on panels dealing with musicology, and does music-arranging and record-producing.

Sample Score

Cadenza for Stamitz Viola Concerto No. 1

Annette Isserlis

Movement I

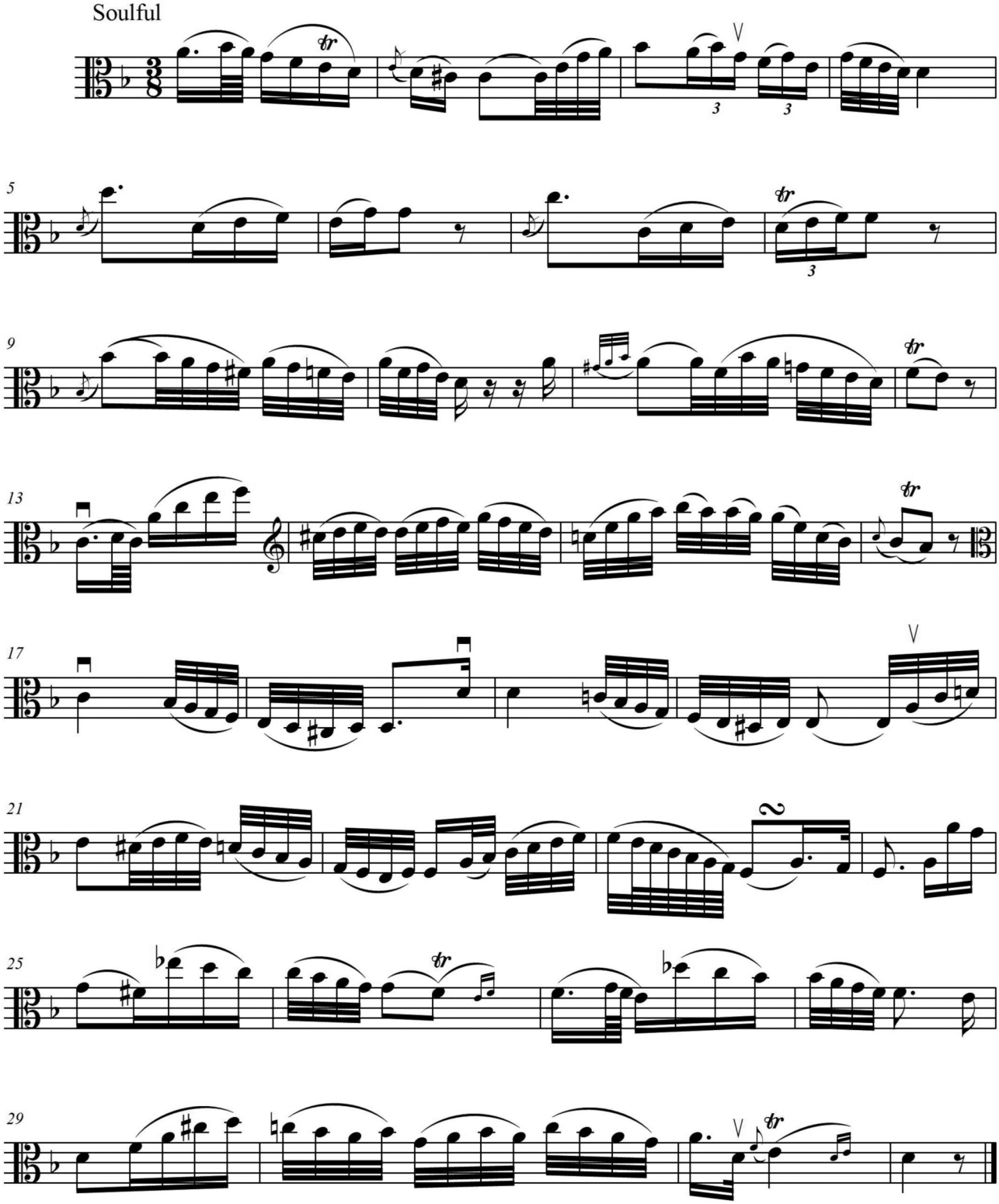


Cadenza for Stamitz Viola Concerto No. 1

Annette Isserlis

Movement II

Soulful



New Music Reviews

by Ken Martinson

This issue's column features newly available works for viola ensemble.

The Gathering: An African Suite for Massed Violas in Six Voices (2009)
I. Arrival
II. Peace Hymn
III. Stephanie Jive
IV. Oliver's Lullaby
V. The Afterparty

Difficulty: Level 4
Duration: 18 minutes
Premiere: XXXVII International Viola Congress Aug. 1, 2009, in Stellenbosch, South Africa

By Elizabeth Rennie (b. 1969)

This work really caught my attention at the closing ceremony of the International Viola Congress in Stellenbosch, South Africa. It was performed by the Mass Viola Ensemble, conducted by Eric Rycroft, which included several congress attendees and several South African students from a development project under the tutelage of congress host Hester Wohlitz. This work has an immediate appeal, and afterward I promptly listened to the recording of the work, analyzed the score, and introduced the work to my studio class.

Rennie mixes beautifully the African rhythmic influences of her country with the classical viola sound, and the result actually sounds very much like American popular music, whose roots deeply stem from African-American folk music. This music will certainly be received well by American audiences, and I hope that this work becomes a regular feature at our future international viola congresses. As I spent time in South Africa and became aware of the struggles classical music has been enduring there with the recent loss of government funding for the orchestras, it seemed that classical musicians in South Africa were making a concerted effort to reach out to black audiences who were previously excluded from classical music. There was a noticeable effort to present classical music in a way that a larger majority of the population could enjoy. This piece seems to have been written with this spirit of inclusiveness.

Compositionally, this work is very well-voiced, and the range of the individual viola lines never feels clumped or restricted. Each of the movements is in 4/4 time (except for movt. II, *Peace Hymn*, which is in 3/4). The individual parts are not too difficult to perform or count, although the rock feel and swing in movt. V, *Afterparty*, may prove out of the ordinary for the pure classical player. These choices of a consistent time signature and relatively uncomplicated individual parts was a good strategy, as these mass viola performances are too often pressed for time and done within the confines of the usually somewhat short viola events.

The first movement, *Arrival*, begins with an upbeat pizzicato ostinato, which is followed by a catchy rhythmic tune in Viola 3. This movement continues to build with excitement above the ostinato pattern—which never gets boring. The second movement, *Peace Hymn*, is a gorgeous, solemn movement that uses a repeated eight-bar harmonic pattern, like a passacaglia, with a constant C pedal tone, which is grounding, but adds a tension throughout the work. The third movement, *Stephanie Jive*, has some of those "rock" rhythms I mentioned earlier that might take a little thought to work out from the pure classical player (including some syncopated rhythms at the beginning). I love usage of the E Maj (add C#) chord that sounds especially "rocky" and reminiscent of many Beatles tunes I have analyzed. The solo viola quartet with the beautiful viola solo against it at the end of this movement is quite poignant. The fourth movement, *Oliver's Lullaby*, is a very beautiful, somber, reflective movement that is relaxing to listen to. The gorgeous opening melody in Viola 1 closes the piece as well and sandwiches the middle section, which is a bit more rhyth-

mic and uses a hemiola of the repeated five eighth-note pattern. I found out from Rennie that this movement was written as an elegy for a seven-year-old student, Oliver, and the movement in the heavenly key of C major was written as a token to Oliver's family. The final movement, *Afterparty*, is where the African influence is most strongly heard. There is something authentically indigenous about the after-beat foot stomps and viola taps required in this movement. This movement sounds like great fun to play and makes for an excellent closer. I can't say enough good things about this piece, and this work will no doubt serve as an excellent memorable inclusion to any viola-ensemble event at future congress and local viola society events.

The music and CD of this work is available through:
Passioneering
P. O. Box 7622
Observatory, Johannesburg, 2187
SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 116480727
E-mail: passioneeringcc@gmail.com

Adagio for 4 Violas (ca. 1870)
Difficulty: Level 3
Duration: 3 minutes

By Matthias Durst (1815-1875)

This piece is certainly a curiosity worth sharing [the work is freely available online at: http://americanviolasociety.org/resources/scores]; it was brought to my attention by David Bynog. Bynog writes about Durst:

Matthias Durst (1815–1875) was a violinist, violist, and composer from Vienna. For many years he played second violin and viola with the famed Hellmesberger Quartet, the leading quartet in Vienna during the middle of the nineteenth century. Durst's compositions include solo and concertante works for the violin, string quartets, and orchestral music.

The edition for this short piece is based on a manuscript housed in the Richard Stoelzer (1864–1947) Collection, part of the Special Collections Department at Adelphi University Libraries in Garden City, New York. Originally from Germany, Stoelzer spent the majority of his career playing viola and viola d'amore in the United States. The manuscript, which includes a score and parts for four violas, is in Stoelzer's hand. Given the unusual instrumentation, the idiomatic treatment of the viola ensemble, and the relative obscurity of Durst as a composer, it is probable that this is an original work rather than an arrangement by Stoelzer, though the circumstances of its composition are unknown.

Compositionally it is not bad and never offensive. The harmonies are certainly Romantic sounding and Viennese. The rhythmic motif passed among the voices does however get a little tedious, and perhaps Durst is being a bit too restrictive in the rhythmic variety. Certainly this piece is worth being included in a larger program of other viola quartets, probably in the middle of the program to break up the mood, especially if there is a need to offset a number of faster-paced works. For someone who seems to be somewhat of a novice as a composer, Durst did a pretty good job with this composition, and it certainly is interesting to hear a slice of music history as an original viola quartet from that time period.

I'm Lost without My Beautiful Viola for 4 Violas (2005)
Difficulty: Level 3
Duration: 2 and a half minutes
Dedication: Iowa City Viola Quartet

I Really Love to Play Viola for 4 Violas (2005)
Difficulty: Level 3
Duration: 3 minutes
Dedication: Iowa City Viola Quartet

Three Quirky Little Pieces for 4 Violas or 4-part Viola Ensemble (2006)
I. Rambling Rag
II. Wandering Waltz
III. Misbehaving March
Difficulty: Level 4
Duration: 8 minutes
Dedication: 2006 ViolaFest MidWest at the University of Iowa

Two Pieces in Spanish Style for 4 Violas (2008)
I. La Noche
II. Danza
Difficulty: Level 4
Duration: 3 minutes

Viola Fight Song for 4 Violas (2004)
Difficulty: Level 4
Duration: 1 minute 30 seconds
Dedication: Iowa City Viola Quartet

By Michael Kimber (b. 1945)

Since I have started writing the New Music Review column for *JAVS,* I have really enjoyed getting to know Kimber's music, and I am truly in awe and amazement at his ability to continually produce wonderful music for our instrument. Michael has been active with his group, the Iowa City Viola Quartet, and he has a number of new compositions for that ensemble. In true Kimber fashion, the style of each work is greatly varied; it seems he takes great joy in dipping his feet in as many different styles as possible. For violists seeking new music for their own viola quartet or fun read-through pieces as part of the program for your local viola society event, these Kimber pieces are a must-have.

I'm Lost without My Beautiful Viola and *I Really Love to Play Viola* seem to be written as a set and composed as if they are arrangements of popular "sappy" tunes. However, I believe these are actually "wordless" tunes that Kimber composed (the hint was "Lyrics by (?)" under the composer's name). The melody is entirely in the first viola part in both of these works.

Three Quirky Little Pieces has three movements: Rambling Rag (ala Joplin), Wandering Waltz (ala J. Strauss) and Misbehaving March (ala Sousa) where Kimber enjoys taking Dadaism to a new extreme. The pieces sound remarkably like the composer who Kimber is paying homage to (or poking fun at), and he does it in the most interestingly quirky and humorous way.

Two Pieces in Spanish Style, inspired by Kimber's recent trip to Spain, is also a very attractive, somewhat lighthearted, but serious work. I hear some subtle influences of Ravel's *Bolero*, Chabrier's *Espana*, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*—it is actually quite wonderful to hear all of these subtle influences wrapped up into one viola quartet!

Viola Fight Song is a very humorous piece written in a 6/8 march time that mimics the college fight songs typically heard at football games, but with the tunes being from best-loved themes from our viola solo repertoire such as: Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*, Brahms's Sonata in E-flat, Stamitz's Concerto in D, Telemann's Concerto, Bartók's Concerto, J. C. Bach/Casadesus's Concerto, and J. S. Bach's Cello Suite No. 1 (Gigue). I hope we hear this work at a viola congress dinner party soon!

All of Michael Kimber's music is available through the website at: http://m_kimber.tripod.com/mkmusic.html

House of Dawn
Difficulty: 4/5
Duration: 8 minutes
Dedication: Timothy Deighton
Premiere: Nov. 2, 2008, Sage Theater (New York City) by the Penn State Viola Ensemble

By Marvin Lamb (b. 1946)

The following are some notes submitted by the composer about this piece:

Its inspiration is drawn from the wonderful novel, House Made of Dawn *by the Native American author N. Scott Momaday. Dr. Momaday was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for this novel in 1969. The novel tells the story of a young American Indian man, Abel, home from the war and caught between the world of his heritage and the modern world. I was struck particularly by the description of music as a pervasive voice in his Native American society. The following passage best describes that pervasive quality and the artistic response leading to my piece:*

"The drummer was there, on a rooftop, still beating on the drum, slowly, exactly in time, with only a quick nearly imperceptible motion of the hand, standing perfectly still and even eyed, old and imperturbable. Just there, in sight of him, the deep vibration of the drum seemed to Angela scarcely louder, deeper, than it had been an hour before and a half mile away, when she was in a room in the rectory, momentarily alone with it and borne upon it. And it should not have seemed less had she been beyond the river and among the hills; the drum held sway in the valley, like the breaking of thunder far away. Echoing on and on in a region out of time." House Made of Dawn*, N. Scott Momaday. Harper and Row, 1968.*

I found this comparatively serious work very captivating yet sub-

dued, very much like Kimber's *Evocations for 3-part Viola Ensemble*. The whole work has a dark quality with a constant tension that follows the story of the American Indian man mentioned in the notes. There is also a primitive quality to the work, which adds to this impressionism. Compositionally, the style reminds me a little bit of Martinu, especially his symphonies, in his usage of long lines and off-beat rhythms. The work is for 4-part viola ensemble with frequent divisis and an occasional "solo," so this work would really not work as a viola quartet, but only as a large ensemble. Technically speaking, the work is not too difficult to play, but the work does demand a higher level of musical maturity from the performers to pull it off. Lamb is a well-seasoned composer and makes excellent use of dynamics and tempo indications to add variety to the work. This work should certainly be conducted as well to help bring off all the nuances in the score. I also really enjoyed the use of harmonies in this work; it was always pleasant to listen to, and when dissonances were used, they were done so sparingly and effectively. I love it when composers write slow music that is tonal and lyrical, but they are not afraid to use harmonies where the interval of the minor second is exploited in tense moments. Overall I found this to be a well-crafted, emotionally moving work, well deserving of future performances for massed viola ensemble performances.

This work is available directly through the composer at: mllamb@ou.edu

Key to the Difficulty level chart:
1 Very Easy
2 Somewhat Easy
3 Intermediate
4 Somewhat Difficult
5 Difficult
6 Very Difficult

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Recording Reviews

by Carlos María Solare

Frank Proto: Sonata for Violin and Piano, Duo No. 2 for Violin and Double Bass, Duo for Viola and Double Bass. Larrie Howard, violin and viola; Michael Chertock, piano; Frank Proto, double bass. Red Mark CD 9233.

Double bassist and composer Frank Proto (b. 1941) is nothing if not prolific: this latest in an ongoing series of recordings of his chamber music is labeled as volume 6! Proto himself features in the two pieces involving his own instrument, as he has throughout the series. His long-time colleague in the Cincinnati Symphony, Larrie Howard, is featured in the three works included, both as a violinist (her main instrument) and as a viola player in the most recent composition included, the Duo for Viola and Double Bass from 2007. Proto's musical language assimilates within a basically tonal sound-world elements of jazz and Latin music. Letting his early experience as a jazz musician shine through, he also provides frequent cues for improvised sections (mostly for the bass player!). This is particularly the case in the Duo for Viola and Double Bass, which in this performance lasts over twenty-five minutes (the proviso is necessary, since the improvised bits make up such a large part of this piece). In the written-out sections, Proto achieves some nice timbral blends combining the viola's lower register with the double bass playing in its upper ranges. Howard's dark and fruity viola tone gives the lie to any prejudices about "moonlighting" violinists, sounding convincingly alto-ish in quality. The Sonata for Violin and Piano from 2004 brings aural reminiscences of Brubeck or Chick Corea in its bluesy harmonies (its movements are headed "Allegro di Funk" and, indeed, "Bluesy"!). The performances by all concerned are definitive, with Proto extracting unsuspected lyrical qualities from a potentially recalcitrant instrument. The recordings were made in different locations in and near Cincinnati and are uniformly excellent. I'll make sure to catch up with the previous installments of this series.

Reflection—Violacentric Chamber Music of Scott Slapin: *Tune; Reflection; Soliloquy; Elegy, Song and Dance; Nocturne; Lullaby; Triptych; Processionals*. Scott Slapin and Tanya Solomon, viola; Margi Ramsey, cello; Bill and Harold Slapin, double bass. Eroica Classical Recordings JDT3327.

A family affair in the best sense of the word, this recording features compositions by violist Scott Slapin, performed by him, his viola-playing wife, his late mother (a cellist), as well as his father and uncle, both double bass players. The liner notes are reticent about exactly who is performing in which piece, and thanks to Slapin's idiomatic writing, the music's full textures often suggest that more people might be involved than is actually the case. Most of the pieces, however, are viola duos and are in the safe hands of the composer and his wife (*Nocturne*, written in memory of Scott's composition teacher, Richard Lane, has already been released on the CD *Sketches from the New World*, JDT3250). The CD opens with the punningly titled *Tune*. This is the first part of a Suite for two violas, the remaining movements of which are scattered along the CD. Yet another duo, a two-movement piece called *Processionals*, concludes the CD. Tanya Solomon stars in the unaccompanied *Soliloquy*. A searing *Elegy* is scored for two violas and double bass, while the three parts of the *Triptych* feature variously viola, cello, and double bass. As Slapin admits in his introductory remarks, an atmosphere of "melancholy or reflection … does prevail for a lot of the disc," as might have been expected from the instruments involved. Welcome exceptions, however, include the *Triptych's* last section, inimitably titled *The Hassid and the Hayseed*. Slapin's ear for string colors is evident throughout this beautifully played and lovingly produced recording, which I have enjoyed immensely.

At The Grassroots

Penn State

Introducing the New Penn State Chapter

Composer Paul Chihara with members of the Penn State chapter

The viola studio at the Penn State School of Music is excited to announce the formation of its new AVS student chapter. The chapter was formed in September 2009 and consists of undergraduate and graduate students in viola performance and music education. The chapter's activities so far have included master classes by visiting violists and several performances by the viola ensemble and graduate viola quartet. The chapter organized a recital in the fall semester featuring the graduating seniors, who performed as soloists and in groups. In December, the chapter hosted a reception for visiting composer Paul Chihara, whose works involving viola were featured prominently on a recital of his music. His newly expanded viola sonata and his trio for clarinet, viola, and piano entitled *Images* were premiered, and his viola quartet and *Redwood*, for viola and percussion were also performed. Following this performance, Mr. Chihara composed a Tarantella for the graduate viola quartet, which was premiered at a New York Viola Society concert In January. The enthusiastic chapter is working on plans for future concerts and other events.

– Hannah Sams, secretary

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dsweaney@music.ua.edu

Arizona Viola Society
Jeff Norman, president
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Central Texas Viola Society
(includes Austin, San Antonio, San Marcos, Waco)
Martha Carapetyan, president
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Dr. Wheeler works with Justin Parks

University of Northern Colorado

The University of Northern Colorado student chapter of the AVS was excited to have Dr. Lawrence Wheeler of the University of Houston present an outstanding recital and an inspiring master class in early March. The recital on the evening of March 3 featured works by Bach, Bridge, and Hawkins, along with several caprices from Dr. Wheeler's own Nine Caprices for Solo Viola, op. 1. He was assisted in the performance by professors Juliet White-Smith on viola and Caleb Harris on piano.

In the master class on the morning of March 4, Tim Brock, Juckrit Charoensook, and Justin Parks played works by Bach, Stamitz, and Walton. The UNC chapter had a wonderful time and would like to express their appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Wheeler for his visit.

-Tim Brock

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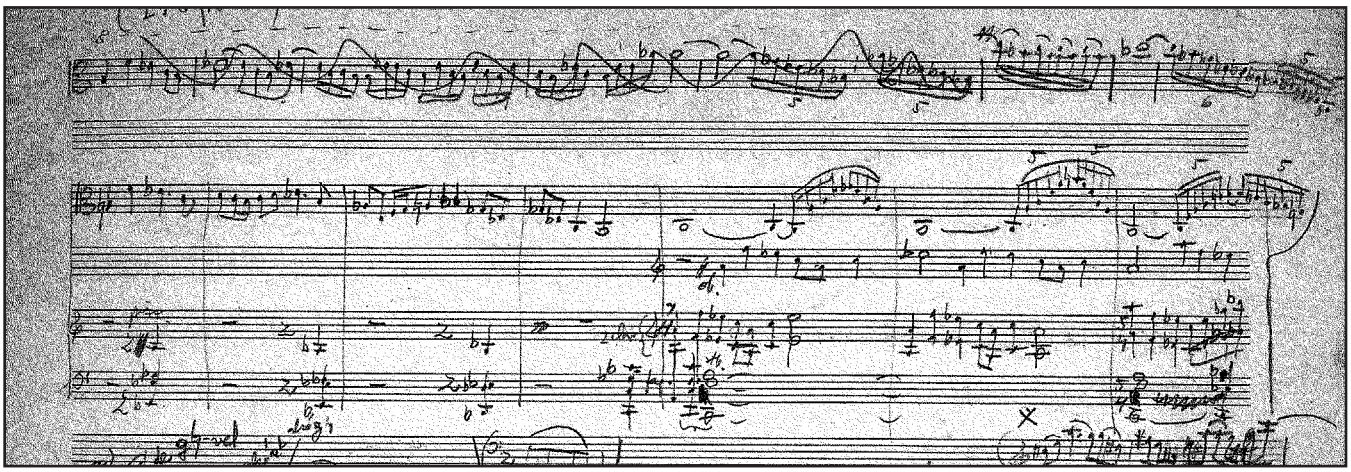

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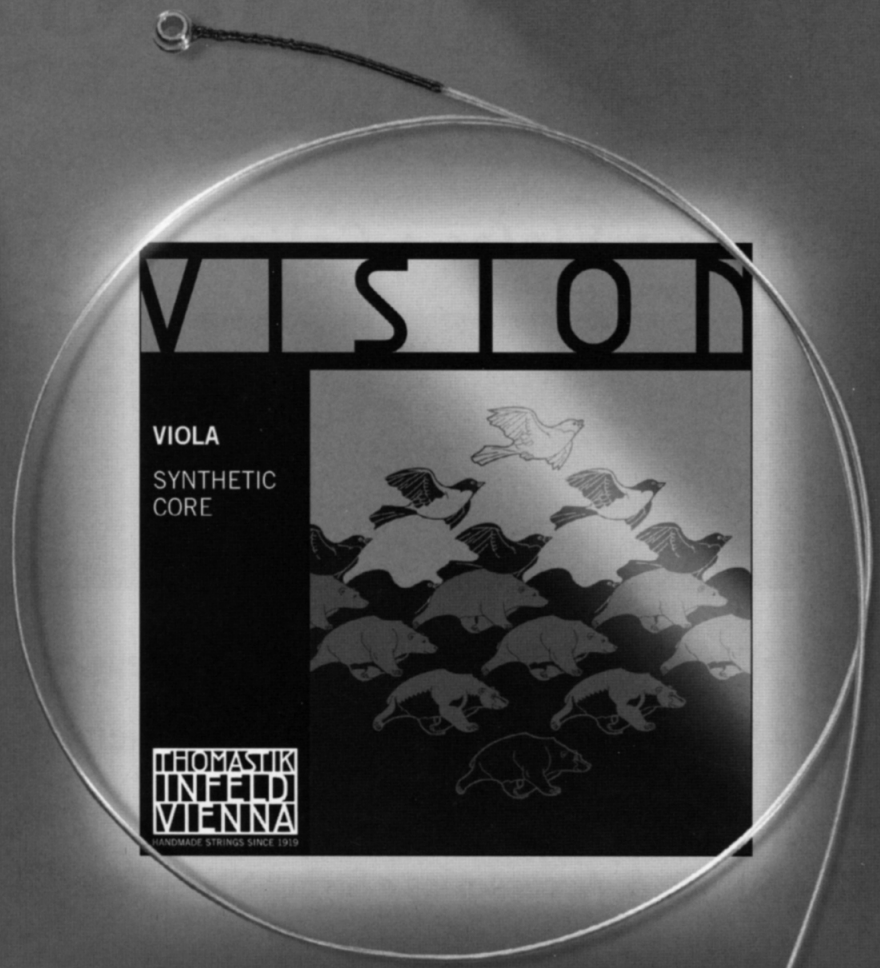

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