Journal of the American Viola Society

Volume 30 Summer 2014 Online Issue

The 35th Anniversary Primrose Competition and Festival

Walton's Viola Concerto

The Macdonald Strad

School of Music

Scholarships and graduate assistantships available

Master of Music in Performance
Bachelor of Music in Performance
Bachelor of Music Education
Bachelor of Arts

Bruce Berg, *violin*
Eka Gogichashvili, *violin*
Angela Fuller, *violin*
Kathryn Steely, *viola*
Gary Hardie, *cello*
Sandor Ostlund, *double bass*
Karen Abrahamson, *harp*

Kathryn Steely
American Viola Society
President

For more information visit: Baylor.edu/music

Journal of the American Viola Society

A publication of the American Viola Society
Summer 2014
Volume 30 Online Issue

Primrose: A Legacy

Contents

On the Cover:
Stephen Thompson *Vio/LA*

Sedona-based architect Stephen Thompson created the cover artwork specifically for the Primrose Competition and 35th Anniversary Festival. He writes: "Occasionally inspiration comes easily, but only on rare occasion. The *Vio/LA* image is one of those 'sketches-on-a-napkin,' finished within a few minutes and later formatted with color and text. The image came to me during a series of spirited encounters with PIVC Director and AVS President, Nokuthula Ngwenyama. Her inexhaustible passion for music and sheer artistic talent combined to create a truly inspirational process. From familiarizing me with the AVS and the competition to sharing tales of growing up in LA, the conversations enabled the project to take on a life of its own, becoming a 'homecoming' of sorts for us both and an opportunity to make a grand entrance back to this magically manic city. Indeed, a rare opportunity."

AVS National Office:
14070 Proton Road, Suite 100
Dallas, TX 75244
(972) 233-9107 ext. 204

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

ISSN: 0898-5987

JAVS welcomes articles from its readers. Submission deadlines are December 15 for the Spring issue, April 15 for the Summer online issue, and August 15 for the Fall issue. Send submissions to the AVS Editorial Office, Andrew Filmer andrewfilmer@gmail.com or to Madeleine Crouch, 14070 Proton Rd., Suite 100 Dallas, TX 75244

From the Editor

(Photo courtesy of Jonathan Yee)

Salutations, fellow violists!

On receiving the news that I would be taking over the editorship of our journal, I began reading past issues housed on the AVS website, and only then fully realized the role the publication has played over almost three decades. It is an extensive archive, and a significant source of research and discourse on our instrument, its repertoire, and its champions both on the concert stage and in the studio. In addition to this, the journal provides angles to the AVS's history, with records of membership and the development of chapters, and even a surprisingly explosive discussion on whether viola jokes demean our community. David Bynog, who is staying on as Associate Editor, has taken much effort in digitizing these past issues and making them available to us all, and I aim to categorize and promote this excellent resource.

With this in mind, the next three issues—being the thirtieth year of this journal's publication—will feature short reflections of past issues, illustrating their relevance to conversations we continue to have today. With the theme of *30 Years of JAVS* it will show how where we are going is very linked to where we have been. To start the ball rolling, I have included a brief look at our very first issue at the end of this message.

The current issue celebrates another milestone: 35 years since the first Primrose International Viola Competition. David's review of the Competition and the associated Festival show us the lasting legacy of William Primrose, while Tom Tatton's detailed and insightful article on William Walton's *Concerto for Viola* in part examines to how the performer influenced the many alterations to and versions of the concerto.

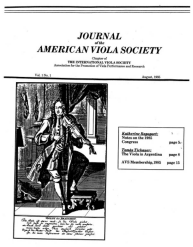
My thanks to the AVS Board for allowing me this opportunity to contribute in this new role, the various departmental editors and contributors, and David Bynog, to whom I send not only thanks but also congratulations, for the Founders Award that acknowledges his contributions over the years.

Best wishes,

Andrew Filmer
andrewfilmer@gmail.com

1985

30 Years of JAVS


JOURNAL
of the
AMERICAN VIOLA SOCIETY

The first issue was published in August 1985, with AVS membership totalling 177. Katherine Rapoport's notes on the 1985 Congress at the New England Conservatory included the mention of one "Cynthia Phelps, a young player on the threshold of a career"—seven years later she would be principal viola of the New York Philharmonic.

A feature article titled 'The Viola in Argentina' by Tomás Tichauer, detailed the relatively late development of the instrument in the early 20th century, two works by Argentine composers, important pedagogues of times past, as well as five of the most prominent violists present then. In noting the issue of promising players who leave for greener pastures, the author noted, "The Argentine musician's worst enemy is probably the economic conditions of his environment."

From the Presidents

Dear esteemed American Viola Society friends and colleagues,

It is with a myriad of emotions that I write today to thank you for entrusting me with leading this amazing organization over the past three years. We have continued many wonderful traditions and accomplished innovation during this time. I also give gratitude to an incredible executive board and office management team for tremendous support and hard work. This has been one of the most rewarding projects I have had the honor of being a part of.

While there are many people I would like to thank for their tremendous service, one person in particular who has tirelessly worked on behalf of our organization is outgoing *JAVS* editor David Bynog. His inspiring dedication and commitment have ensured our continued relevancy within the global musical realm. I also embrace an exciting future with Kathryn Steely's leadership at the helm. Please join me in supporting her dynamic presidency!

Regards and Gratitude,

Nokuthula Ngwenyama
Past President, American Viola Society

Greetings AVS members!

I hope that your summer has been filled with the joys of music and hopefully opportunities to spend time with family and friends. As I begin my term as AVS president, I am truly excited about the promise of the next several years in the life of the American Viola Society.

This past June, the 35th anniversary celebration of the Primrose International Viola Competition and Festival was held at the Colburn School in in Los Angeles and provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our viola future. From the outstanding performances of the Primrose Competition participants, to the polished presentations and performances by our young professionals, it is clear that our future is bright. Attendees also had the opportunity to hear many performances and presentations from an international array of presenters on a wide range of topics. One could not help but leave with great expectations and anticipation for the years ahead.

I want to sincerely thank all of those involved in preparing this event, including our wonderful hosts Sel Kardan and Paul Coletti at the Colburn School, and their caring and dedicated staff. Our energetic AVS Board and an enthusiastic group of volunteers helped ensure that the event ran smoothly. Finally, I wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to PIVC director Nokuthula Ngwenyama, who worked tirelessly to ensure that the competition was a success. It truly takes a team to create an experience like this. Working together, we were able to enjoy time interacting with colleagues, gaining inspiration for the future, and appreciation for all things viola.

As this is a time of transition, I want to also send special thanks to Thula for her years of service as AVS President. During the past three years we have been able to lay the groundwork for a number of very important initiatives, including several projects that will soon come to fruition. As has been mentioned previously, the AVS has been working on a new database and website project that was funded entirely by donations within the AVS Board. As we near the release date of that new site, I would like to extend my thanks once again to the AVS Board for the generous contributions that made this project possible.

> "The American Viola Society depends on your active participation and your encouragement of others to join in our mission."

Speaking of transitions, I also want to extend my sincere thanks to David Bynog for his dedicated service as *JAVS* Editor over the past six years. Our publications have benefited greatly from his expertise and perspective. We look forward to his continued work as Associate Editor and with ongoing AVS publication projects.

As David transitions to another role, we welcome our new *JAVS* Editor, Andrew Filmer, who brings experience and a wonderful new perspective to our organization. Currently Senior Lecturer at Universiti Putra Malaysia, we have enjoyed getting to know Andrew through his scholarship, deep commitment to research as one of our own Dalton Research Competition winners, and through his many additional publications. As a related note, we would also like to welcome Sherri Fleshner who recently accepted the role of AVS Advertising Editor. Your advertising support, both in the Journal and on the AVS website, makes possible the ongoing publication and scholarship of our organization

Finally, I want to thank outgoing board members Karin Brown, Michael Kimber, Kathryn Plummer, Marcus Thompson, and Ann Roggen for their tireless work and service to the AVS. It is truly an honor to have served with all of you and I wish you the very best for a bright future! In their place, we welcome new board members Daphne Gerling, Michael Hall, Allan Lee, and David Rubenstein. I look forward to their many contributions and new energy as we start a new year.

The American Viola Society depends on you. It depends on your support through membership and advertising, and your donations to help build AVS endowed projects. The AVS depends on your active participation and your encouragement of others to join in our mission. In our time of easy access to internet resources and communication through electronic platforms, it is easy to lose sight of the important ongoing work and contributions of service organizations like the American Viola Society. However, membership is the life force behind the work we are able to accomplish – it is because of you that we exist to serve. Please take a moment today to renew your membership and to invite your friends and students to join as well. Together, we can make a difference!

Wishing you the very best,

Kathy Steely
President, American Viola Society

Announcements

AVS Award Winners

The American Viola Society presented its biennial list of award during the Primrose International Viola Competition and 35th Anniversary Festival at the Colburn School in Los Angeles on June 14, 2014:

Career Achievement Award honoree Samuel Rhodes, in recognition of distinguished performance as violist of the Juilliard String Quartet (1969–2013).

Career Achievement Award honoree Kazuhide Isomura, in recognition of distinguished performance as violist of the Tokyo String Quartet (1969–2013).

Founders Award honoree David M. Bynog, in recognition of distinguished contributions to the AVS and the viola, for excellence as editor of the *Journal of the American Viola Society*, 2008–2014, and for his advocacy and leadership.

Maurice W. Riley Award honoree Lynne Ramsey, in recognition of distinguished performance as first assistant principal viola of the Cleveland Orchestra since 1989 and for her distinguished teaching at the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Aspen Music Festival.

Honorary Membership to Nobuko Imai, in recognition of extraordinary performance and recording as viola soloist and chamber musician, and for her distinguished teaching.

Honorary Membership to Tabea Zimmermann, in recognition of extraordinary performance and recording as viola soloist and chamber musician, and for her distinguished teaching.

The inaugural Dwight Pounds Service Award, given to Dr. Dwight Pounds, in recognition of many years of dedicated service to the AVS as violist, historian, author, photographer, mentor and advocate.

Past President Plaque presented to Nokuthula Ngwenyama, in recognition of her dedication to and leadership of our organization 2011–2014, by Dr. Kathryn Steely, AVS President-Elect.

Dr. David Dalton, recipient of the Gold Alto Clef awarded at the 41st International Viola Congress in Krakow, Poland in 2013, was honored and recognized at the AVS ceremony by Dr. Dwight Pounds.

Spotlight on the Primrose Competition and Festival June 8–14, 2014

by David M. Bynog

Jury members of the 2014 Primrose International Viola Competition, from left to right: Claudine Bigelow, Wing Ho, Luis Magin, Cassandra Lynne Richburg, Cathy Basrak, Martin Beaver, Pierre-Henri Xuereb, Nokuthula Ngwenyama (competition director), Caroline Coade, and Massimo Paris (photo courtesy of Dwight Pounds)

For one week in June, all eyes in the viola world turned toward Los Angeles, where twenty-seven young violists gathered to compete in the fourteenth Primrose International Viola Competition (PIVC). International viewership of the competition was once again made possible by the American Viola Society's live HD streaming of competition rounds, and more than 18,000 visitors from 67 countries tuned in to follow along. In celebration of the competition's thirty-fifth anniversary, the AVS hosted a companion Primrose Festival from June 12 to 14, which offered recitals, master classes, workshops, lectures, health and wellness sessions, and more.

The Colburn School of Music, with its first-rate facilities and helpful and knowledgeable staff, served as the backdrop for events. Gina Coletti of the Southern California Viola Society hosted a ViolaFest for violists from the fourth through twelfth grades on Saturday, June 14, and area music lovers came out in full force to volunteer.

The Competition (Quarterfinals and Semifinals)

PIVC competitiors sign up at the start of the competition (photo courtesy of the author)

The competition kicked off Sunday, June 8 with a welcome by PIVC Director Nokuthula Ngwenyama and drawing of lots by competitors, followed by a reception. Quarterfinalist rounds took up most of the days Monday and Tuesday with each violist performing the first movement of a major concerto (Bartók, Walton, or Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher*) on Monday followed by solo Bach and a Primrose transcription on Tuesday. The technical and artistic level of each competitor was exceptionally high, with each filling Zipper Hall with a large, robust sound.

For me, a few standouts during these rounds were concerto performances by Born Lau, Cong Wu, and Matthew Cohen (who gave an immensely colorful reading of Bartók's concerto) and Yifei Deng's absolutely effortless playing of both Walton's concerto and Paganini's *La Campanella*. The judges had a difficult decision in narrowing the twenty-seven quarterfinalists to only eight, but these semifinalists were announced on Tuesday evening:

Matthew Cohen (USA)
Yifei Deng (China)
Kyuri Kim (South Korea)
Born Lau (Hong Kong)
Kei Tojo (Japan)
Manuel Vioque-Judde (France)
Cong Wu (China)
Zhanbo Zheng (China)

Each of the semifinalists next played a full recital (not exceeding fifty-five minutes) over the course of Wednesday and Thursday including a sonata, solo Bach, another Primrose transcription, the first movement of Mozart's "Kegelstatt" Trio, and the commissioned work, Christian Colberg's *Aldonza*.

Written as the second movement of his Viola Concerto, *Aldonza* was presented here in a "chamber version" for solo viola with string quintet, with the composer conducting. Each movement of the concerto is based on a character from Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, and the composer explained in a note that:

> "Aldonza" is the real name of the woman *Don Quixote* called "Dulcinea." This concert piece depicts her as she truly was and not as the romanticized vision Don Quixote saw. Unlike the first and the third concert pieces, the second has at its core a sense of freedom, almost unstructured and cadenza-like.

An apt description, the work's musical language and free-flowing style captures the peasant-like nature of Aldonza while also suggesting the "inner beauty" that inspires Don Quixote. Considering its effectiveness in this reduced chamber version, perhaps Colberg will continue to allow performances with this instrumentation.

PIVC judge Caroline Coade makes notes during the competition (photo courtesy of Dwight Pounds)

My recollection from having watched the streamed semifinal rounds of the 2011 competition was that performances of Mozart's *Divertimento* were generally very good, while performances of solo Bach were less impressive (with Wolfram Hauser's interpretations being far and above the rest). For the 2014 competition, the reverse seemed true: solo Bach was quite outstanding in both the semifinal and quarterfinal rounds, while Mozart's "Kegelstatt" Trio seemed a bit lacking. Still, each semifinalist displayed such technical facility and musicianship that the judges surely had no easy decision in selecting the three finalists. But, late in the evening of Thursday they announced that Manuel Vioque-Judde, Cong Wu, and Zhanbo Zheng would advance to the final rounds on Saturday.

The Festival

Not officially opening until Thursday, the festival portion got an early start on Wednesday, when several young professionals offered master classes to area high school violists. In the evening, a panel of violists (Hillary Herndon, Ed Klorman, Kate Lewis, Kathy Steely, and me) led a spirited discussion on career opportunities with a packed audience as part of a Young Professional Development Roundtable.

Thursday, June 12

Yoga or Alexander Technique sessions greeted early risers each day of the festival. As with previous viola congresses, overlapping sessions made for difficult decisions, and I unfortunately was unable to attend the 8:30 a.m. session with April Losey and Katherine Rapoport (but you can read about the session on violinist.com). The 9:00 a.m. recital featured "rising stars" of the viola and was evidence that the competition would not be the only place to hear exceptional, young talent. Performances by William Johnston of Gershwin's *It Ain't Necessarily So* and by Marcus Pyle of two movements from Erland von Koch's Viola Concerto were standouts in a concert that demonstrated that the future of the viola is in very good hands.

Noon saw the official opening of the festival with remarks by AVS President Nokuthula Ngwenyama, PIVC Festival Committee Chair Ed Klorman, and Colburn School President and CEO Sel Kardan. Wing Ho, one of the competition's judges, then led the Beijing Viola Choir in arrangements, including two works by Chinese composers. Closing out the session was David Aaron Carpenter (a laureate of the Primrose Competition from 2005) with a set of virtuosic showpieces intended to dazzle and entertain the crowd, with siblings Sean Avram Carpenter and Lauren Sarah Carpenter and area musicians in the accompanying ensemble. And dazzle he did; Carpenter's impeccable technique and flair for showmanship harks back to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when string players played more diverse fare on a recital than the "three major, serious works" that has become *de rigueur* among classical string players.

From left to right: Jessica Meyer, Myrna Layton, Margaret miller, and Marcus Pyle at the Community Engagement session (photo courtesy of Dwight Pounds)

Jessica Meyer led a community engagement panel at 1:00 p.m., which covered ground about festival planning, fundraising, career development, and more. The panelists articulated useful skills for musicians, including writing, speaking, and planning and remarked that instilling these skills in students is important (examples included requiring students to talk about their pieces in class and teaching an etiquette class in a summer music camp). Marcus Pyle mentioned that in planning his summer music camp talking to area teachers about needs and areas to cover was helpful.

Thursday evening ended with a recital showcasing Primrose Competition laureates playing transcriptions. Christian Colberg and Karin Brown (a Primrose Laureate from 1997) displayed lovely, evenly matched tones in Colberg's own arrangement of Prokofiev's Sonata for Two Violins, op. 56. Unfortunately, the work did not translate well, lacking the brilliance and sprightliness of the original, becoming lugubrious played on violas. Nokuthula Ngwenyama (a Primrose Laureate from 1993) next gave a sunny performance of Bach's Cello Suite No. 1, adding some attractive (and tasteful) embellishments. The concert closed out with Elias Goldstein (a Primrose Laureate from 2011) and Chris Lowry performing Goldstein's arrangements of caprices by Paganini for two violas. Goldstein has performed these on several occasions recently, including at the 2013 International Viola Congress. These came across as more than "transcriptions" and might instead be called "reimaginings" of the originals. Caprice No. 6 (practically a duo for one violin) was particularly effective, while Caprice No. 24 immediately brought to mind Halvorsen's own reworking of music by Handel for violin and viola (the *Passacaglia* and *Sarabande con Variazoni*). I was then a bit astonished that the pair played the Handel-Halvorsen *Passacaglia* as an encore, reinforcing the "reimagining" impression of Goldstein's own transcriptions. Neither Goldstein nor Lowry were fazed by any of the technical demands of the music (Goldstein played most of the Handel-Halvorsen at the violin's original pitch), and they also sounded well-matched in tone and spirit.

From left to right: Elias Goldstein and Chris Lowry (photo courtesy of Dwight Pounds)

Friday, June 13

The 9:00 a.m. recital on Friday was devoted to "New Horizons" and displayed no less talent and interesting repertoire than the Rising Stars recital the day before. Mara Gibson's *Canopy*, performed by Michael Hall, coupled hypnotic electronic sounds with attractive music for the viola, though the piece felt slightly long. Violist Carol Gimbel and pianist Charles Tauber next played Richard Reed Parry's *Duet for Heart and Breath*, where Gimbel played music following her own breath, while Tauber, who was wearing a stethoscope, played music following his own heartbeat. Such a concept runs the danger of coming off as gimmicky, but it worked well here, with a calm and zen-like result. The audience's ability to "hear" Tauber's heartbeat slowing over time through his playing was extraordinary. Jessica Meyer played a set of her own compositions, many of which were inspired by a particular moment in time. Each piece used a looper and was quite attractive, the best being *Getting Home (I Must Be . . .)*, which conveyed the frantic anxiety that she once felt about her seven-year-old child while on a plane trip back home.

A performance of Bowen's Fantasie Quartet for Four Violas *in Zipper Hall (photo courtesy of Dwight Pounds)*

In what was already shaping up to be an outstanding festival, the 11:00 a.m. lecture-recital on the Cobbett Chamber Music Competition proved to be a high point. Renate Falkner provided a concise, articulate, and highly interesting overview of the chamber music competition established by Walter Wilson Cobbett in 1906, which was instrumental in developing the careers of several English composers as well as the genre of "Phantasy." The competition was then placed in the context of York Bowen's extensive catalogue of viola music, including his 1918 *Phantasy for Viola and*

Piano, op. 54, which won the 1918 Cobbett Competition. Falkner finished out her portion by joining fellow violists Cathy Basrak, Karin Brown, and Kathy Steely in a lovely performance of Bowen's *Fantasie Quartet for Four Violas* from 1906, which may have been inspired by the competition. The Kruse Duo (Penny Thompson Kruse on violin and Steven Kruse on viola) were joined by pianist Solungga Fang-Tzu Liu for more English music (and one German outlier) including Thomas Dunhill's Trio—which was a related commission by Cobbett—and Rebecca Clarke's *Dumka* to close out the recital.

At 2:30 p.m. Molly Gebrian and Shelly Tramposh teamed up for what was perhaps the best session of the entire festival. Gebrian, a violist who studied neuroscience, demonstrated what violists can learn about practicing from current brain research. She covered four areas: blocked versus random practice, metronome use, the value of sleep, and mental practice. The website *violinist.com* reported at length on these topics, and it is worthwhile to take a look at them in more depth. With these topics, Gebrian presented studies and evidence to challenge conventional wisdom about practicing. Perhaps the most surprising was the effect of mental practice, where research shows that mental practice has the ability to fundamentally change your brain (increasing the size of a certain portion) in the same way that physical practice does; as Molly put it: "You can physically alter a part of your body just by thinking about it." Shelly Tramposh followed Molly by returning us to more familiar territory, focusing on the "art" rather than the "science" of practicing. Further specifics on Shelly's portion can be found at the aforementioned website, but she emphasized focusing on musical aspects as an integral part to learning and performing a piece. A particularly enlightening comment was the disconnect that we often have between practice and performance, in our manner of doing things differently on a performance day—whether it be eating, relaxing, type of practicing—than on a "practice" day. Trying to make one's performance and practice more closely aligned is a goal that Tramposh recommended.

A panel session at 5:30 p.m. offered a chance for each of the leaders of the health and wellness sessions (Travis Baird, Kate Fox Colie, Sherri Fleshner, and Matthew Jones) to provide background on how they came to their area of specialty (yoga, Alexander technique, and bodywork). Each then led attendees through a few of their favorite routines. Kate Fox Colie, who was performing the open table massages and was trained as a dancer, was particularly illuminating in the many comments she had about posture and movement from her observation of violists in practice and performance.

The 7:30 p.m. recital featured Colburn faculty members Martin Beaver and Paul Coletti in the oft heard Duo No. 1 in G Major by Mozart and the seldom heard Duo for Violin and Viola by Villa-Lobos. Both performances by these renowned musicians were excellent, with their interpretation of the Villa-Lobos making a strong case for others to take up the work. In the second half of the recital, Dimitri Murrath displayed the elegant artistry that not only earned him First Prize in the 2008 Primrose Competition but also a $25,000 Avery Fisher Career Grant. With Charles Tauber at the piano, the Hindemith Op. 11, No. 4 sonata sounded fresh and inspired, almost as if I were hearing it for the first time. With his masterful technique and understated performance style, the music always comes first with Murrath, and the audience was visibly impressed by his entire set.

From left to right: Martin Beaver and Paul Coletti (photo courtesy of Dwight Pounds)

Saturday, June 14

Saturday morning's 8:30 a.m. session was devoted to string quartets. James MacKay, Associate Professor of Music Theory and Composition at Loyola University in New Orleans, presented a paper on the melodic use of the viola in Haydn's late string quartets. Using multiple musical examples from the Op. 64, 74, 76, and 103 quartets, MacKay illustrated how Haydn gradually redistributed more melodic material among the instruments of the string quartet over the course of his compositional career. Dr. Sarah Ellis, Associate Professor of Music Theory at the University of Oklahoma, then looked at Shostakovich's first eight string quartets, suggesting that in each one the viola serves as the force of rupture and alienation. Examples from the third and seventh quartets were particularly illuminating examples of this theory.

I only had a chance to hear the end of the 9:00 a.m. recital: Chris Rutledge performed Harald Genzmer's Sonata for Solo Viola. Afterward, Rutledge recognized Matthew Browne as the winner of the Third Biennial Maurice Gardner Composition Competition, and violist Jarita Ng performed the winning work, *Exit, Pursued by a Bear*. The Gardner Competition is shaping up to be a force in identifying and presenting the best of contemporary viola music, and this year's winner was no exception. Clocking in at just four minutes, *Exit* is a swift, breathless, virtuosic showstopper that would be an ideal closer for any recital. Not an easy piece by any means, Ng handled the challenges effortlessly in this riveting performance.

Composer Matthew Browne and violist Jarita Ng after the performance of Exit, Purused by a Bear*, winner of the Third Biennial Maurice Gardner Composition Competition (photo courtesy of the author)*

The 10:30 a.m. AVS General Membership Meeting attracted more attendees then I have seen in any previous years, and like the Chapters Meeting the day before, many useful suggestions about the future of the organization were raised.

The final festival session at 12:30 p.m. offered a panel of California violists building on the theme of community that ran through several prior sessions. Donald McInnes talked about high school teachers and the importance of helping students choose the best schools. The many bits of advice that he shared were fodder for discussion by the audience. Janet Lynch next emphasized that teaching in the public schools can be rewarding musically and monetarily. Particularly interesting was the point that many primary and secondary education string programs are led by non-string players, eliciting a comment from an audience member about how many young college violists look down on Music Education as a major (and career path). Ethan Filner rounded out the session by highlighting the many activities that the Northern California Viola Society (NCVS) has been doing to build community, including their well-attended ViolaManias, Young Artist Competition, Viola Salons, and commissions. The success of the NCVS had been noted several times previously throughout the festival, with many attendees seeing it as a model for what violists can do at the local level to build awareness of the viola.

The Primrose Competition Finals and Awards Ceremony

The finals for the Primrose Competition Finals started at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday and featured each of the finalists performing with the Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Heiichiro Ohyama. Manuel Vioque-Judde started off with a nice version of Britten's *Lachrymae*, though it lacked the character that he brought to works in earlier rounds. Cong Wu next played the Handel-Casadesus Concerto, featuring a lovely and melancholy tone in the second movement, surrounded

by vigorous outer movements. After an intermission, Zhanbo Zheng offered an exceptionally introspective and musically sensitive interpretation of Britten's *Lachrymae*, particularly impressive for a youth of only seventeen.

Zhanbo Zheng, first-prize winner of the 20114 PIVC (photo courtesy of Dwight Pounds)

The 4:30 p.m. PIVC and AVS award ceremony got off to a late start with the AVS presenting its list of biennial awards. Kathryn Plummer read touching letters from the two recipients of the Career Achievement Award, Samuel Rhodes and Kazuhide Isomura. Two surprises were in store for long-time AVS members: Dwight Pounds was honored with a new award for service to the AVS, appropriately named the Dwight Pounds Service Award. Dwight in turn re-dedicated the International Viola Society's Gold Alto Clef to David Dalton, who was unable to attend the presentation of the award at the 41st Congress in Poland last year. The PIVC awards were next, with a number of special awards for individual competitors. The finalist's prizes were saved for last with Zhanbo Zheng taking home First Prize. A full list of PIVC awards is below:

Prizes

First Prize: Zhanbo Zheng
Second Prize: Manuel Vioque-Judde
Third Prize: Cong Wu

Primrose Prize: Kendra James
Tone Prize: Olivia Palazzolo
Best Bach Performance: Kei Tojo
Best Performance of Christian Colberg's *Aldonza*: Matthew Cohen
Concerto Prize: Yifei Deng
Sonata Prize: Manuel Vioque-Judde
Mozart Prize: Cong Wu
Honorable Mention: Born Lau and Kei Tojo

Concluding Thoughts

This year marks the first time that the AVS has hosted a festival of this magnitude. While comparisons to a viola congress are inevitable, the festival had a very different atmosphere and tone than recent American congresses. Smaller in scope than a congress, the festival allowed for more camaraderie among the presenters and attendees, and it was easy to chat with high-profile performers, most of who would tarry in the lobby before or after their performances. Most notable was the open submission process for proposals, and the many accepted programs were outstanding. Young violists were heavily represented, and their performances were of a consistently high quality.

As with past congresses, there were minor hiccups along the way: the printed program was delayed in arriving, competitor details were not displayed in the early streamed rounds of the competition, and a last-minute change resulted in the PIVC finals not being streamed. Other organizational complications were handled efficiently, thanks in part to the Colburn School's outstanding staff. Many aspects, however, worked better than at recent congresses: overlapping of events—often bemoaned at viola congresses—seemed less of a problem at the festival, with all festival sessions starting and ending on time (competition rounds also regularly started and ended on time, as they have in recent years). Introductions of presenters at each session were a welcome addition. The smaller number of attendees and the compact venue space provided a more intimate setting to enjoy great music with good friends. In all, it was an auspicious start to a new type of international event for the American Viola Society; here is hoping that the trend continues.

David M. Bynog recently stepped down after six years as the Editor of the Journal of the American Viola Society. *Heavily involved with many AVS activities in recent years, he plans to continue his work with the AVS's publishing efforts and to assist with the* JAVS *in his new role as Associate Editor.*

The Journey of a Concerto: The Story of the Walton

by Thomas Tatton

The beloved viola concerto of Sir William Walton suffered through some seventy-four years of serpentine twists and turns from its original composition in 1928/29 until 2002, when Christopher Wellington paired the preferred solo part with the orchestration.[1] Much of the confusion was composer inflicted: some was simple miscommunication with a timing difficulty thrown in for good measure. Now this concerto belongs to all of us; it now belongs to the ages. It has achieved communal ownership, and with that comes the shared responsibility to understand its journey and to pass that understanding on to the generations of violists to come.

A Snapshot

Picture a youthful composer who is shy and unsure, with no marketable instrumental skills. He certainly had little ability at the piano, described as "excruciatingly bad," among several other disparaging observations.[2] As for his compositional skills, he was basically self-taught.[3] This simply does not comport with a commonsensical picture of a "famous" composer. Yet, with all this, he was determined to become a composer.[4] This combination of reticence and less-than-stellar musical skills, but with dogged determination, can, in part, explain much of the complications within the concerto we are about to explore.

Even the genesis of the concerto is not without some dispute. The popular notion that Sir Thomas Beecham suggested the concerto to Walton early in 1928 is quite logical. Beecham and Tertis enjoyed a long and mutually respectful relationship going back to 1909.[5]

William Walton in 1928, the year that he began work on the viola concerto

Tertis was Beecham's principal viola; at that time the conductor described Tertis as "the best violist I have heard anywhere."[6] But, Bernard Shore (1896–1985), a student of Tertis and longtime principal viola of the BBC Symphony, relates that he and Walton were sitting next to each other at one of the frequent Tertis London concerts, and at the conclusion of the concert Walton exclaimed that he had never heard anything like that before and that he must write a concerto for Tertis.[7] This is certainly plausible, since it was Shore who assisted Walton in the early stages of the concerto's composition.[8]

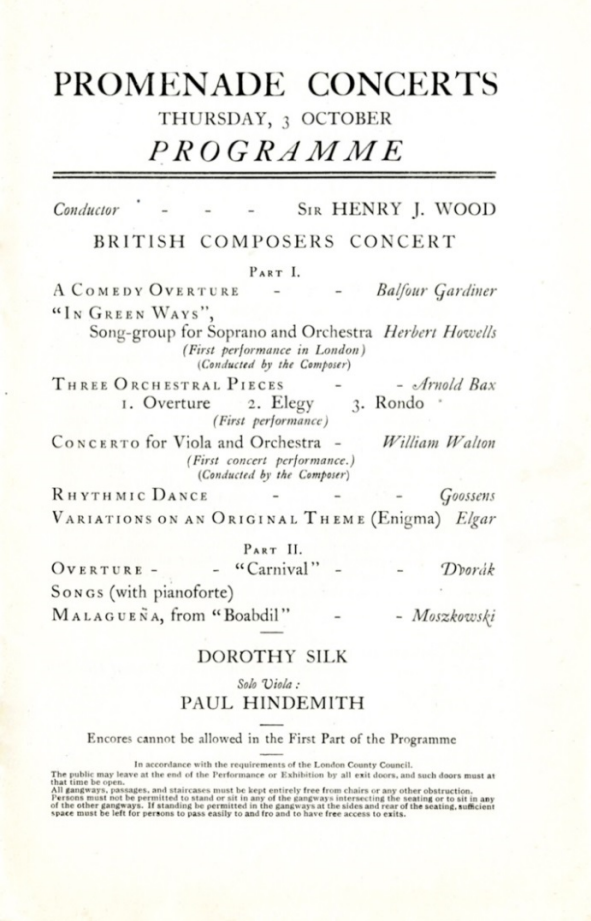
In addition to our snapshot, other powerful forces helped shape the personality traits and self-image of this young composer and thus his opportunities. It was in 1919 that Walton first came into contact and eventually under the patronage of the Sitwell siblings.[9] Through the high society family of two sisters and two brothers Walton received financial support and entrée into fashionable concerts to hear not only the latest European composers, including Stravinsky, Bartók, and Prokofiev, but also the latest works of English composers, including Bax, Bliss, and Holst. He was able to watch and hear the finest performers and conductors of the day, including Kreisler, Tertis, Beecham, and Boult. He met well-connected composers as well as other persons of substantial influence including Edward Dent (President of the International Society for Contemporary Music from its inception in 1922 to 1938) and the influential pianist Harriet Cohen.[9] Cohen was the recipient of a CBE (Commander of the British Empire), among other honors. Lastly, these connections allowed him to access scores to study, crucial to a mostly self-taught composer—many of which were by the new guard, including Stravinsky and Prokofiev. The impact of this kind of traveling in this kind of currency on the shy and reticent youngster from Oldham in Lancashire and some 210 miles north and west of London was immense.

It happens that the Sitwells appointed Henry Duncan McLaren to oversee the trust they had set up for Walton. McLaren's wife, Christabel, became Lady Aberconway in 1934 when her husband was elevated to the title of Baron.[11] She also was of society, moneyed, and well-connected. Alas, poor Walton fell in love with Christabel. This then becomes the age-old story of unrequited love oft told in popular culture throughout the centuries. Quite in love with the unattainable Christabel, Walton is inspired and dedicates the viola concerto to her: "To Christabel." Inspired by both Tertis and the love of Christabel, young Walton, in 1928, buries himself in the composition of the concerto, removing himself to Amalfi, Italy, in the winter of 1928 to complete the work. Once complete, sometime before July 3, Walton returned to London with the premiere performance being organized. Walton, as planned, sent the score to Lionel Tertis. Tertis immediately rejected the offer to premiere the concerto.[12] Rejected—what a blow that must have been.

Early Reception

As Tertis had rejected the concerto, what was to be done? Walton wanted to turn it into a violin concerto, but Tertis's autobiography states that the violist suggested contacting Hindemith for the premiere.[13] A contrasting account by Walton's biographer states that it was Edward Clark,[14] then program planner for the BBC, who suggested approaching Hindemith. Whichever case it was, Walton met with Hindemith in July of 1929 in Germany. Hindemith agreed to

premiere the work! On October 3, 1929, Hindemith premiered the work in Queen's Hall, London, with the Henry Wood Symphony and Walton at the baton.



PROMENADE CONCERTS

THURSDAY, 3 OCTOBER

PROGRAMME

Conductor - - - SIR HENRY J. WOOD

BRITISH COMPOSERS CONCERT

PART I.

A COMEDY OVERTURE - - *Balfour Gardiner*

"IN GREEN WAYS",
Song-group for Soprano and Orchestra *Herbert Howells*
(First performance in London)
(Conducted by the Composer)

THREE ORCHESTRAL PIECES - - *Arnold Bax*
1. Overture 2. Elegy 3. Rondo
(First performance)

CONCERTO for Viola and Orchestra - *William Walton*
(First concert performance.)
(Conducted by the Composer)

RHYTHMIC DANCE - - - *Goossens*

VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME (Enigma) *Elgar*

PART II.

OVERTURE - - "Carnival" - - *Dvorák*

SONGS (with pianoforte)

MALAGUEÑA, from "Boabdil" - - *Moszkowski*

DOROTHY SILK

Solo Viola:
PAUL HINDEMITH

Encores cannot be allowed in the First Part of the Programme

In accordance with the requirements of the London County Council.
The public may leave at the end of the Performance or Exhibition by all exit doors, and such doors must at that time be open.
All gangways, passages, and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstruction.
Persons must not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating or to sit in any of the other gangways. If standing be permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, sufficient space must be left for persons to pass easily to and fro and to have free access to exits.

Program from the premiere of Walton's viola concerto

Tertis, in the audience to hear Hindemith's performance, immediately recognized the enormity of his error:

> One work of which I did not give the first performance was Walton's masterly concerto. With shame and contrition I admit that when the composer offered me the first performance I declined it. It took me time to realize what a tower of strength in the literature of the viola is this concerto and how deep the gratitude that we who play the viola should feel towards the composer.[15]

Tertis then became the early champion of Walton's concerto. Wellington estimates that Tertis performed the concerto some thirty times over a period of ten years. Prominent early performances include:

- September 4, 1930—ISCM Festival at Liége. BBC Symphony Orchestra's first European tour, William Walton, conductor.[16]
- March 26, 1931—London Queen's Hall, Ernest Ansermet, conductor.
- September 10, 1931—BBC Promenade Concert, Sir Henry Wood, conductor.
- November 1931—Zürich Tonhalle concert hall in Switzerland, Volkmar Andreae, conductor.
- January 14, 1932—Hallé Orchestra in Manchester, Sir Hamilton Harty, conductor.
- January 21, 1932—City of Birmingham Orchestra, Leslie Heward, conductor.
- September 8, 1932—Worchester Three Choirs Festival, William Walton, conductor.
- December 1, 1932—Reid Orchestra in Edinburgh, Sir Adrian Boult, conductor.

The final of these concerts was so well received that Boult suggested that Tertis play it again on the second half of the program. Tertis wrote, "I am still amazed at the courage of Dr. Boult in suggesting to the audience a second performance."[17]

Tertis's appreciation of the concerto extended to having Oxford University Press (OUP) publish his rendition of the solo viola part, fingerings and all, with a piano reduction. According to

John White, the edition was published on July 3, 1930, some two months before Tertis's first performance of the concerto.[18] A copy signed by Walton included the inscription: "For Lionel Tertis with gratitude for everything he has done for this work and for his magnificent playing of it."[19] Apparently Walton was thrilled with Tertis's interpretation, as he wrote Harriet Cohen after the 1930 performance in Germany: "You have no conception of what Tertis has made of the work—if you liked it before, you will pass out when you hear him play it. I nearly did."[20]

Early Changes by Violists (1930–1937)

Walton knew of the Tertis edition early on, because he signed the aforementioned copy for Tertis on February 3, 1931.[21] The composer also knew how it sounded, as he conducted the work with Tertis as soloist on the 1930 first BBC Symphony Orchestra European tour.[22] Nonetheless, there seems to be no record of any discussion or collaboration between Walton and Tertis on this important edition. Now we have two versions of the solo part available to the public: the original solo part published by OUP in both the orchestral score and the piano reduction (in early 1930) and the new OUP Tertis edition of the piano score and solo part (in July 1930). The changes by Tertis amount to some bowings, three passages in octaves, and some lines an octave higher; all perfectly noticeable and important. Therefore, this question arises: Why was Walton conspicuously absent from the process of producing this new version?

William Primrose, relatively new to the viola scene coming to the viola full time when joining the London String Quartet in 1930, first performed the Walton in a Royal Philharmonic Society concert on February 27, 1936, with Sir Thomas Beecham conducting. Subsequently, Primrose gave multiple performances of the work, several with the composer at the baton. Primrose was a major factor in introducing the concerto to US audiences and violists, and he recorded the concerto not once, but twice: in 1946 with Walton at the baton, and in 1954 with Sir Malcolm Sargent. Primrose made multiple adjustments to the solo line—more adjustments and changes than even the Tertis edition. These are outlined in *Playing the Viola: Conversations with William Primrose*:[23]

> While preparing the Concerto for my début performance with Beecham, I contrived to rewrite some passages in the scherzo-like second movement and certain sections of the other two. But, I do assure you, not without the full approval of the composer—or so it seemed to me. For thirty-five years I pursued my way, many performances taking place under Walton's direction, to say nothing of the one recording in 1946 with him conducting, and another under Sir Malcolm Sargent in his hearing. All this time nary a peep of protest from the composer. Was he too modest, too sensible of my pride, my inner feelings, to tell me to play what was written and not mess about with his ideas, that he was the composer and knew best?[24]

When none of the alterations appeared in the 1964 edition, Primrose asked the logical and operative question: "What stopped Sir Walton from coming down hard at the very outset and saying to me, 'No, not your way. My way!'"[25]

Wellington reports that Alan Frank, head of OUP's music department, wrote: "As far as I

can tell William approves of what Primrose does but doesn't come off the fence sufficiently to say that they must all be incorporated in anything we print."[26]

Now we have a world-class violist, who for thirty-five years performed, recorded, and taught the concerto in a manner apparently not condoned or approved, but apparently tolerated, by Walton, even under his baton. Again, where was Walton in protecting the integrity of his concerto?

Frederick Riddle (1912–1995), then member and soon-to-be principal viola with the London Symphony Orchestra, made the first recording of the concerto. Tertis was asked first and declined as he had earlier announced his first retirement.[27] Riddle performed a studio broadcast with the London Symphony Orchestra with Walton at the baton. Shortly after that, on December 6, 1937, the recording was made in the Decca Studios in London. According to Christopher Wellington:

> When Fred Riddle was asked to broadcast the concerto with the composer conducting . . . he looked at the solo part sent to him by OUP and thought: "I can't play it like this—the bowings and articulations don't correspond with the nature of the work—I'm going to do what I think is right for the composer's intentions." Walton was so taken with the details of Fred's editing that hereafter he preferred this solo part to all others.[28]

The Tertis printed edition of the solo part of the concerto is now extremely difficult to obtain and is not in use today. Nonetheless, when Tertis was performing and teaching the concerto, his influence was not insignificant. The Primrose edition, while never in print, enjoyed a more lasting influence. His two recordings and the sheer number of his outstanding students impressed in the minds of many violists his musical ideas about the solo part. Certainly the most lasting and authentic version is the one produced by Frederick Riddle and approved of by Walton himself; the version printed and in use from 1938 until 1963 and from 2002 through today.

Walton fully appreciated Riddle's editorial changes, so much so that he asked Riddle to forward his viola part to OUP and enjoined OUP to re-issue the piano score and solo part, and from 1938 until 1963 that is how it was sold.[29] This created three significant issues. The first is that OUP did not enter the new viola part into the existing score, so when someone rented the score, the score and the most current solo part did not match. The second problem is that now we have three versions of the solo part in circulation, in teachers' studios, and in second-hand music stores. The final complication was that Primrose was performing the concerto all over the United States and Europe, with his changes, and "nary a peep" from the composer—not even when Primrose recorded the concerto in 1946 with Walton conducting!

Illustrations 1–3 demonstrate the contrasts between the various editions.[30]

Illustration 1(a): Movement I, m. 54 (Walton edition)

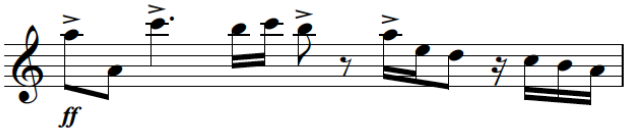


Illustration 1(b): Movement I, m. 54 (Riddle edition)

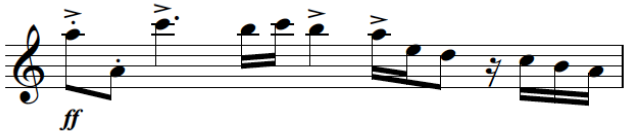


Illustration 1(c): Movement I, m. 54 (Tertis edition, also performed by Primrose)

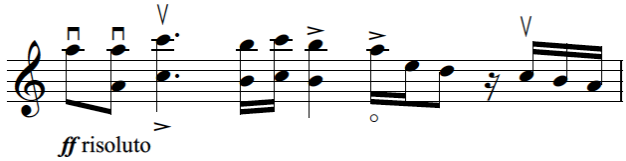


Illustration 2(a): Movement II, mm. 1–9 (Walton edition).

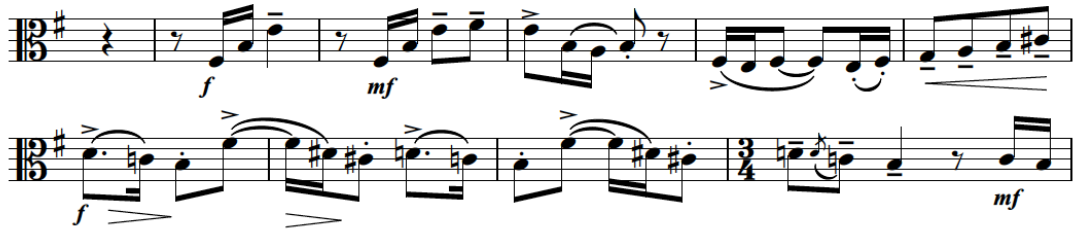


Illustration 2(b): Movement II, mm. 1–9 (Riddle edition).

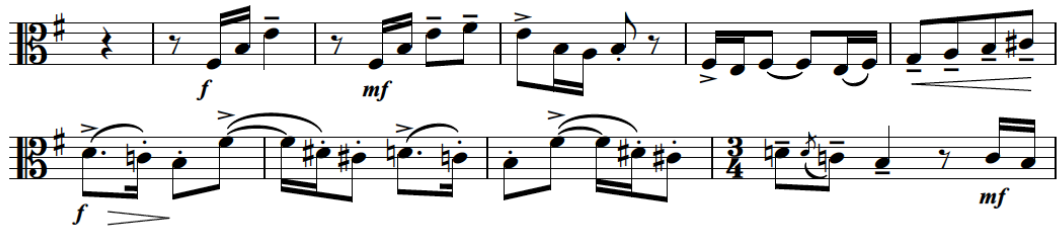


Illustration 2(c): Movement II, mm. 1–9 (Tertis edition, also performed by Primrose).

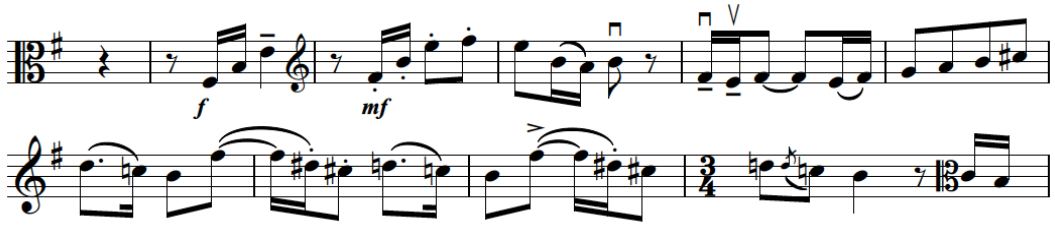


Illustration 3(a): Movement III, mm. 279–280 (Walton edition)

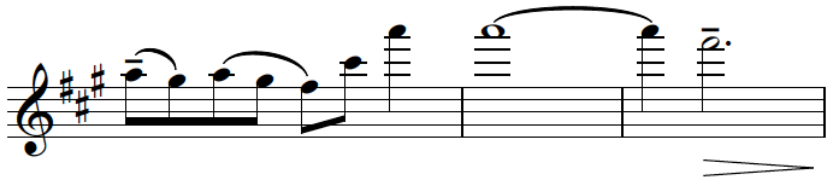


Illustration 3(b): Movement III, mm. 279–280 (Riddle edition)

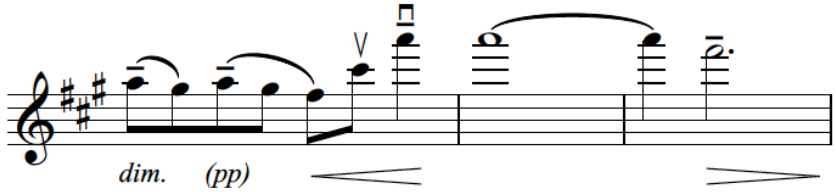
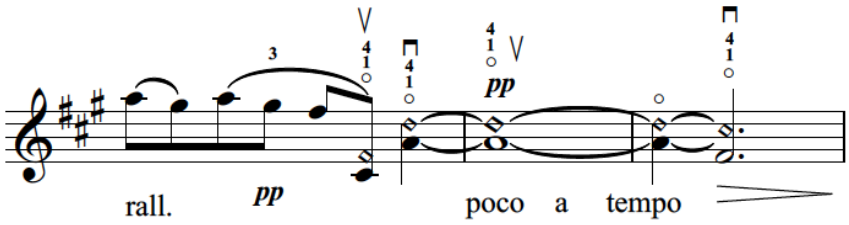


Illustration 3(c): Movement III, mm. 279–280 (Tertis edition)



Changes by the Composer (1930–1962)

For some twenty-five years the viola concerto was performed often and increased in popularity. In addition to the Riddle recording, Primrose recorded it twice (1946 and 1954); during this period, it was also recorded by Emanuel Vardi (1943).[31] Over the years, Walton tinkered with the orchestration, and in 1955 OUP copyists entered these modifications into the original 1929 score.

These changes were adopted for the current edition of the 1929 orchestration as presented by Christopher Wellington.[32] It was Walton's habit of re-working many of his more prominent

compositions and often re-publishing the same titled work in different guise: among them are *Façade*, *Portsmouth Point*, *Balshazzar's Feast*, the violin concerto, sinfonia concertante, and the cello concerto, as well as the *Scapino* overture. Additionally, he reconfigured his String Quartet No. 2 as the *Sonata for Strings*. However, it is less common for a composer to continually make or accept changes to the same titled work over time and not to "pull" the former when releasing the latter. Now, some have argued that this demonstrates maturity over time or a reflection of a more refined musical style. However, as we have seen in our concerto, this has caused confusion among soloists, musicians, and conductors alike.

To add yet further confusion to the plethora of changes made before 1961, Walton decided to re-score the entire concerto. The 1929 orchestration of triple woodwinds, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings, even with an instructed reduction of strings when the solo viola is engaged, seems overpowering. However, it is rightly pointed out by James Dunham that "in both versions the full orchestra only plays during the tutti sections, yet when the soloist is playing there are actually a few *more* strings called for in the revised version than in the original."[33] In addition to the masterful, memorable melodies; the perky, brisk, and somewhat jazzy scherzo second movement; the cross currents of major versus minor; the cohesive logical handling of the musical material; and the idiomatic lines, the genius of this concerto is heard in the brilliance of the orchestration. Walton uses all manner of color and texture combinations: viola unaccompanied, viola with light accompaniment, viola as accompaniment, chamber-ensemble texture, solo instrumental lines other than viola, and full orchestra without viola!

The 1961 version calls for piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, harp, and strings.[34] The reasons for the re-orchestration are a little elusive. A letter to OUP indicated that Walton believed the new version improved clarity and definition.[35] Other reasons might include codifying the multiple changes over the years, to encourage more performances;[36] the neo-classical sensitivity sweeping across Europe may also have been a factor.

Between the years 1929 and 1962, there appeared yet other versions of the concerto, including a score sent to Koussevitsky from Walton with an acknowledgment by Koussevitsky dated February 8, 1930. This was discovered in the collection of music that Koussevitsky bequeathed to the Library of Congress in 1978. According to Wellington, this score contains significant differences from the 1929 edition. Wellington simply comments: "Mysterious."[37] There were also two different miniature scores published by OUP of the 1929 version with minor alterations and additions, and one miniature score appeared in 1962 with the re-orchestrated version and Walton's original viola part, which was reprinted in 1976.

The 1962 Edition

Through these conflicting versions, this project became a muddled quagmire of misunderstanding. This occurred on two levels: first, with the viola part, and second, with the orchestration.

In regard to the viola part, the 1962 re-orchestration included the 1929 original solo viola part as written by Walton, not the solo viola line from the 1937 version as created by Frederick Riddle and as intended by the composer. The fiasco, through oversight and miscommunication, is well summarized by Dunham and thoroughly detailed by Wellington.[38] This 1962 re-issue, of course, came with the piano reduction score also with the "wrong" solo viola part included. The first performance with the new orchestration came on January 18, 1962, by John Coulling, violist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Malcolm Arnold.[39]

In regard to the orchestration, Walton did not withdraw the 1929 publication but instead wrote to Alan Frank of OUP: "I agree about the Viola Concerto, that the new version need not cancel out the original—it just may be on occasion more convenient."[40] This gave weight to the argument that the re-scoring was to promote more performances.

The acceptance of the new orchestration has been favorable. Even Walton, in the end, favored the 1962 orchestration. Yet, others, including Malcolm Sargent, have stated their preference for the original 1929 orchestration. Dunham notes:

> I really like the original, and miss the contrabassoon in the last movement very much in the 1962 scoring! In my opinion it is . . . [written] by a young man at a time when much was changing in British/European music . . . . As a much older man, of course, Walton had the experience of a rich and rewarding lifetime, and the redrafted score is beautiful: that of a mature and wise man! I like "both" men, but in this case, kind of miss the young guy! Anyway, what a luxury to have both![41]

Both orchestrations are available from Oxford University Press. There is much to be said for each version—the 1929 edition displays youthful British grit while the 1962 edition enjoys a delicacy and recognition of newer colors, especially with the use of the harp. Of the plethora of recent recordings, only the 2007 recording by Lawrence Power and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra returns to the 1929 orchestration. Wellington's words are the ultimate reality: "Whichever version is performed, William Walton's Concerto for Viola and Orchestra is surely established as a classic of the twentieth century and a major pinnacle of the viola repertory."[42]

Inspiration and Models

Walton was very coy about his inspiration, barely crediting Bernard Shore for his assistance, and he gave only a glancing acknowledgment to the influence of Hindemith's *Kammermusik No. 5* or the more specific influence of Prokofiev's first violin concerto on the composition of the viola concerto. The rhetoric of novelty can seem to benefit a young composer when it is perceived that melodies, harmonic scheme, and structure are all new. That is not how great music is created—it does not come in a dream, out of nowhere.[43] Atar Arad, in an extraordinary piece in *The Strad*, thoroughly and quite convincingly draws close parallels with Prokofiev's concerto completed in 1917 and premiered in 1923.[44] This comparison goes not only into the frame and basic structure, but also to the thematic material and even bar numbers. It is as if Walton placed the Prokofiev score in front of him while

working on the viola concerto, in what Arad described as "large scale musical larceny."[45] The operative question, in face of our total and irrefutable love affair with this concerto is: How are we, the teachers, performers, and viola concerto appreciators, supposed to approach, enjoy, and/or teach this established masterpiece? To this, Arad replies:

> I love this concerto. It is a one-of-a-kind, remarkably written for the viola. It has its own musical personality, divorced, strangely enough, miraculously even, from Prokofiev's . . . perhaps closer to an Elgar, a Bridge or a Bax.[46]

He further notes that "the more we know about the music we play and its author, the more attached we are to it," and concludes: "after all, did Prokofiev write a concerto for us?"[47]

Ivo-Jan van der Werff describes the concerto as providing a wonderful opportunity for comparative listening and discussion of style, composition, compositional techniques, and pure sound through its quality, directness, and warmth. He says:

> Listening to older recordings can cause quite a reaction, as the basic style is so different to what we have become used to now. The use of vibrato, portamenti, etc., can often lead to an interesting and valuable discussion as to how we emote in our music making, what techniques we can utilize, what is tasteful, etc.[48]

Charletta Taylor, winner of the AVS's first David Dalton Viola Research Competition, opines that the concerto is "working composition." Taylor concludes:

> Instead, the Concerto underwent change as Walton rethought and reworked the piece. The result was a revision three decades later in which Walton clarified, expanded, and altered his original ideas. The revision was not meant to replace the original version, but to conclude a long process of personal and musical growth and development.[49]

In Summation

The aim of this article is not limited to telling the story of how this concerto has come to us, but to chronicle the changes to the concerto and the ensuing complexities we face in performing the work. It may never be fully understood why Walton did not oppose or even object to multiple versions of his concerto, and it would be up to readers to come to their own conclusions, should they be thus inclined. We have traced these constituent factors:

- Walton did not have the musical background to immediately attain the status of a "major" composer.
- He was uncomfortable rubbing elbows with "high" society, wealthy patrons and the would-be-famous artists and pseudo-intellectuals that surrounded him as a young man.
- He seemingly was intimidated by both Tertis and Primrose, in part as noted by Primrose's own account.
- As numerous authors have noted, Walton was strongly influenced by, and even imitated, other composer's works, including Prokofiev and Hindemith. This fact, not so much in and of itself, illustrates a part of a more accurate picture of who Walton was as a man and as a composer.
- He frequently tinkered with not only the viola concerto but other works in his

oeuvre as well—perhaps an indication of insecurity.
- He was unable to communicate either effectively or authoritatively with OUP, to the extent that the wrong solo part appeared in the 1962 orchestration.
- His acquiescence to those around him led this brilliant work to the chequered history we have chronicled here.

The interesting point to note is that despite the factors that have led to conflicting versions of the concerto, it is in any form a masterpiece. The scholarship on this topic owes much to Christopher Wellington for concluding this meandering journey and pairing the right viola part to each of the orchestrations (the 1929 and the 1962). Understanding this journey makes the study and performance of our treasured concerto more real and meaningful. Walton's Concerto for Viola and Orchestra has a history and a story to tell that is now a part of violists' legacy and lore.

Thomas Tatton holds a D.M.A. from the University of Illinois and served as violist and director of orchestras at Whittier College and the University of the Pacific. His leadership positions have included that of president of the American Viola Society and vice-president of the International Viola Society. He twice served as the Orchestra Representative for the California Music Educators Association and as president of the California Orchestra Directors Association. Dr. Tatton currently serves as president of the California Chapter of the American String Teachers Association, and as a board member with the Northern California Viola Society.

He is the current editor of the Retrospective column for the Journal of the American Viola Society. *As a leading authority on viola ensemble literature he authored the chapter on viola ensembles found in* Playing and Teaching the Viola: A Comprehensive Guide to the Central Clef Instrument and Its Music*, published in 2005 by ASTA. He authored the definitive article on the life and viola ensemble works of British composer Kenneth Harding and the authoritative review of the many different viola editions of J. S. Bach's cello suites. His frequent articles on string pedagogical and public school music education can be read in the* California Music Educators Magazine*. He remains active as a performer, clinician, guest conductor, writer and adjudicator.*

Currently he enjoys living with his wife Polly on California's central coast.

Notes

1. See William Walton, *William Walton Edition*, ed. David Lloyd-Jones, Vol. 12: *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, ed. Christopher Wellington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) and William Walton, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, ed. Christopher Wellington, viola part revised by Frederick Riddle, piano reduction by Geoffrey Pratley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), piano score and part.

2. Stephen Lloyd, *William Walton: Muse of Fire* (Woodbridge, England: Boydell Press, 2001), 5.

3. Ibid., 2.

4. Ibid., 4.

5. John White, *Lionel Tertis—The First Great Virtuoso of the Viola* (Woodbridge, England: Boydell Press, 2006), 16.

6. Ibid., 17

7. Ibid., 106.

8. Lloyd, 93. Further, Wellington quoted Walton as saying "I knew little of the viola when I started save that it made a rather awful sound," see William Walton, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, ed. Christopher Wellington, vi.

9. Lloyd, 9.

10. Ibid., 14–15 and 82.

11. Ibid., 14–15.

12. White, 105.

13. Lionel Tertis, *My Viola and I* (Boston: Crescendo Publishing), 36.

14. Lloyd, 89.

15. Tertis, 36.

16. The tour also included several cities in Germany, where the concerto was performed by Tertis and conducted by Walton.

17. Lloyd, 95. Also recounted in White, 109.

18. White, 107.

19. Ibid., 107.

20. Ibid., 106.

21. Ibid., 107.

22. Lloyd, 94.

23. David Dalton: *Playing the Viola: Conversations with William Primrose* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 197–98.

24. Ibid., 197.

25. Ibid.

26. Christopher Wellington, preface to William Walton, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, vii.

27. Tertis, 81. This was a decision made because of rheumatism just before a BBC concert February 24, 1937. On that program he performed both the Walton Concerto and Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*.

28. Christopher Wellington, e-mail message to author, February 14, 2014.

29. Ibid.

30. The doubled examples came from William Walton, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, ed. Christopher Wellington. The Tertis examples came directly from the Tertis edition: *William Walton, Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, viola part edited by Lionel Tertis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930).

31. See chart.

32. See footnote 1. In 2014, OUP completed publication of a critical edition of Walton's complete works, with general editor David Lloyd-Jones. Volume 12 is titled *Concerto for Orchestra*, edited by Christopher Wellington. This volume presents the entire concerto twice: first the 1929 edition with the Riddle version of the solo part and the original Walton solo part (in lighter ink). This 1929 version includes the modifications made up to 1955. The second complete score, the 1962 version, is the new orchestration with the Riddle solo part.

33. James Dunham, "Walton's Viola Concerto: A Synthesis and Annotated Bibliography," *Journal of the American Viola Society* 22, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 16.

34. The 1929 orchestration calls for four desks only of first violins, three desks only of second violins, two desks of violas, two desks of cellos and one desk of basses; the 1962 orchestration

calls for even more strings: four desks of first violins, three desks of second violins, three of violas, two desks of cellos, and two desks of basses.

35. Wellington, preface to William Walton, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, viii.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., ix.

38. Dunham, 16, and Wellington, ix.

39. John Coulling was at the time sub-principal viola with the LPO and later co-principal of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. The first recording of the new orchestration was by Yehudi Menuhin, New Philharmonia Orchestra, William Walton conducting, October 9–11, 1968.

40. Wellington, ix.

41. James Dunham, e-mail message to author, February 10, 2013.

42. Wellington, x.

43. See footnote 7. Lloyd, 93–94.

44. Atar Arad, "Walton as Scapino" *Strad* 100, no. 1186 (February 1989): 138–41.

45. Atar Arad, e-mail message to author, January 2014.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. Ivo-Jan van der Werff, e-mail message to author, October 21, 2013.

49. Charletta Taylor, "The Real Thing: A Study of the Walton Viola Concerto," *Journal of the American Viola Society* 17, no. 1 (2001): 36.

The Legacy and Impact of the Macdonald Stradivari Viola

by Andrew Filmer

I. Introduction

In 1986, Watson Forbes prophetically said, "If you have money to spare, you couldn't do better than to invest it in buying a Stradivarius instrument. The way prices keep on rising, year by year, it might prove to be the best hedge against inflation."[1] Nearly three decades later, the Macdonald Stradivari viola was auctioned by Sotheby's and Ingles & Hayday under the sealed bid process, but failed to achieve the $45 million minimum.[2] Had the auction been successful, the viola would have been the most expensive instrument ever sold, at nearly three times the previous record.

News of the auction commanded the attention of major news organizations, providing a rare instance when a viola made international headlines. While these articles conveyed a certain excitement, it was contrastingly described by music commentator Norman Lebrecht with the headline, "The crazy inflationary spiral of 'the finest viola in existence.'"[3]

This article will begin with a brief contextualization of sales of Stradivari instruments and that of the Macdonald viola. Following this, we will have an overview of the significant media coverage, as well as a review of related research. Finally, we will have viewpoints from Paul Silverthorne, London Symphony Orchestra principal viola, and Stefan Hersh, Chicago-based instrument dealer and luthier of Darnton & Hersh Fine Violins.

Central to the discussion are two questions. First: What does the price tag say about how we place value on instruments? Forbes provides us a clear message that the acoustical qualities valued by musicians can take a back seat:

> What exactly are you buying? You are buying an instrument made by one of the finest craftsmen who ever lived, and you are buying an antique about 250 years old. Oh, yes, don't let us forget, the instrument might possibly sound better than most instruments by any other maker.[4]

This leads us to our second question: What qualities of these instruments create such a demand among collectors? One answer to this can be summed up by Harold C. Schonberg, who wrote: "Did the old makers have a secret? Nobody knows."[5]

II. History

a) Stradivari Instruments: A Financial Context

In 1971, the Lady Blunt Stradivari violin was sold for $201,000. Schonberg wrote: "But since 1971 there have been transactions that make the Lady Blunt sale look like sales at a church bazaar."[6] At the time this was a metaphorical comparison, with contrasting examples around $800,000. One could say that in recent years this

has become a literal comparison: when sold at auction thirty years later, the very same instrument was sold for $15.9 million.[7]

In 1982, when the Alard Stradivari was sold for $1.2 million, Charles Rudig of Sotheby's said that "the transaction broke all records for the sale of a musical instrument."[8] Schoenberg commented, "A violin weighs about a pound, which makes the wood in the Alard Stradivarius worth about $75,000 an ounce."[9]

To provide another view of its price by scale, Michael Cooper noted that $45 million could have saved both the New York City Opera and the San Diego Opera. "It underscores the way collectors have driven up the price of rare instruments in recent decades, with inflation far outpacing, say, musicians' wages."[10] Cooper describes several key traits of the instrument that led to its auction price: it was well-preserved, one of only ten Stradivari violas, and that it was played by a world-famous violist for a quarter of a century.[11]

The Macdonald Stradivari viola (image from the press release by Sotheby's, March 26, 2014)

b) The Macdonald viola

The following is a synopsis of a partial history of the Macdonald viola, provided in *How Many Strads? Our Heritage from the Master* by Ernest N. Doring, which traces the history of Stradivari instruments up to 1945.[12]

- In 1792, Marquis dalla Rosa brought the instrument to England.
- The instrument was sold to Betts, subsequently sold to Captain Coggan, then back to Betts.
- It was then sold to Mr. Champion, and then sold at auction: between 1820 and 1830 for 105 guineas, to General Boswell, who became Lord Macdonald.
- The instrument was acquired by John Hart, then passed to James Goding.
- Vuillaume purchased the viola for Vicomte de Janzé for 212 pounds. It was then passed to the Duke of Camposelice in 1886 for 30,000 francs (or 1,200 pounds).
- Hill purchased this, along with the rest of the Camposelice collection.
- It was sold to Baron Knoop, then back to Hill's, then to Felix M. Warburg. After Warburg's death, it passed to his son, Gerald Warburg.

Dutch composer Leo Samama spoke to Lebrecht, providing information on the more recent history of the instrument. This was apparently in reaction to the startling auction minimum, in an effort "to put the records straight. . . . Someone had to tell the story."[13] Samama's father had purchased the instrument from Max Möller in Amsterdam for $82,872 in 1961.[14] It was loaned to Peter Schidlof, and Samama notes, "Later, in the seventies, Peter asked my father as a friend since [sic] many years to sell the instrument to him, which my father did for the same price as he had paid Möller**.**"[15]

At some point, it was also on loan to William Primrose, as noted by luthier William Moenning Jr. Primrose had brought two instruments—a cut-down Amati and the Macdonald—to Moenning as exemplars from which to produce a new instrument and mentioned the "singing qualities" of the Stradivari.[16]

III. Media and Research Review

a) Controversy and the Media

It is not surprising that a high auction price attracted media attention. However, unlike previous occasions, there has been a new focus on what it means to have a minimum auction reserve that exceeds the GDP of two Polynesian countries.

Lebrecht has had the most critical voice, upon receiving news from Samama. "On these figures, this 'priceless' and 'finest viola in existence' changed hands for less than $100,000 around 40 years ago," Lebrecht wrote. "How is it possible that it should now be worth $45 million? It makes no economic sense at all."[17] Forbes noted that its value as an antique overtook its value as a tool for performance; it is only now that this discussion has found a place in public discourse.

For example, this was an opinion shared by luthier Samuel Zygmuntowicz, in an article for PBS.[18] "Because things are so expensive we assume that they're the greatest, but that's not the right way to start. When it comes to auction prices or any kind of collector's prices, it's a matter of collectability. . . . It really has the most tangential connection to its actual value as a musical instrument."[19]

This assumption of "most expensive instrument" equating to "greatest instrument" brought some further attention to the experiments led by Claudia Fritz that were critical of the idea that Stradivari instruments were intrinsically the best.[20] Her first study, published in 2012, surveyed some twenty-one professional violinists in a double-blind experiment. 62 percent of those surveyed selected a new violin over an old Italian instrument. Criticism of the methodology included a comment by violinist Earl Carlyss that the hotel room environment was inappropriate and akin to test-driving a Ford and a Ferrari in a parking lot.[21] This in turn led to a second experiment, with ten internationally recognized soloists. A Stradivari ended up coming in third, leading Ed Yong of the *National Geographic* to conclude: "The results are very clear: Stradivarius violins, despite their reputation, inordinate price tags, and indisputable craftsmanship, are no better than the best modern ones."[22] However, while some modern instruments may be better than some that Stradivari constructed—the ones made available for the experiment—it could well be

that the best Stradivarius instruments have yet to be surpassed by any modern instrument.

A second small detail, easily overlooked in the *National Geographic* article, plays a more direct role in our current discussion on the price of the Macdonald viola: "When they [the ten soloists] were debriefed later, they said that the experiment was more than realistic enough for choosing a violin for a tour (*although not for buying one*)."[23] [Emphasis added.]

In providing an update to the article, John Soloninka, a participant in the first experiment, wrote that while the Macdonald viola was a great instrument, "NO ONE used its tone or playability when determining the price. It is the rarity, provenance, physical state of preservation of the antique, and most importantly, what the market will bear, that led to the price."[24] Once again, this particular auction illustrated the inaccuracy of presumptions of intrinsic acoustical value. In unravelling this, commentaries are also highlighting the role that collectors are playing in the use of these instruments.

In the *New York Times* article, Cooper interviewed David Redden of Sotheby's, who noted it would be collectors of rare objects who would likely place interest in the auction. However, even Redden noted that the unique attribute that the viola plays—literally—is that it needs to be played. Cooper writes: "Of course, no one would try to spend a $7.6 million coin, or mail a letter with one of those postage stamps made famous by a printer's error. The viola is still meant to make music."[25] In the lead-up to the auction, Sotheby's took up an offer for David Aaron Carpenter to act as the instrument's "ambassador," and the violist performed in a concert and in promotional videos.[26] The violist, along with his three siblings, earlier attempted to obtain the instrument for some twenty-two million dollars.[27]

While its function in performance may have been used as a defining feature in the lead-up to the auction, it is this same factor that has been the subject of criticism. Zygmuntowicz mentioned that its advantage for collectors provides a disadvantage for musicians. For collectors, one aspect is having some level of celebrity status, with famous musicians visiting to play the instrument. "It's not a win for musicians," the luthier concluded. "Peter Schidlof was part of the Amadeus Quartet, a legendary group. It's quite clear that the instrument will not be used in this same way next."[28]

Association of British Orchestras director Mark Pemberton noted: "In recent years, prices have soared to over stratospheric figures—at a regular 11 per cent rise per annum. . . . Leading violin dealer David Brewer hazards a guess that half of the world's 600 Strads are sitting in high-security vaults, a billionaire's toy silent and unplayed."[29] Writing for *The New Yorker*, Rebecca Mead noted, similarly: "It is considered inevitable that a Chinese or Middle Eastern billionaire will one day spend millions on a Strad for the private use of his offspring."[30]

b) Research

"Perhaps it is possible to separate the value of a viola as an antique from its value as an instrument to be played,"[31] said Forbes. That challenge has been approached in the field of research. Almost a century ago, Lucien Greilsamer, Jay C. Freeman, and Theodore Baker suggested that these instruments

command high prices not simply because of their age, but the history that comes with it:

> Nothing is so rich in suggestion as their story. Whatever their origin, whether they were created for princes or kings, or destined for musicians more or less renowned, sold in the market-place for a song to village minstrels or humble folk of every sort, they all, thanks to the longevity with which they were endowed, have lived through centuries a life of emotion comparable to that of the men with whom they shared the most diverse, the most paradoxical vicissitudes.[32]

The authors comment that this is a specific quality of instruments of the highest reputation, namely Stradivari, Guarneri, Maggini, Amati, Bergonzi, and Montagnana. This is in contrast to "instruments of the second, third, or fourth rank," that are evaluated from their ability to aid the performer:

> Such instruments [are] being purchased less on account of their label, the renown of their earlier owners, their history, or their exceeding rarity, than for their resonant quality and the service they can render the artist who uses them, an apparent confusion as regards their price may manifest itself.[33]

Part of this history is no doubt the belief that Stradivari produced the very best of instruments: in 1927 it was thought that "in spite of every endeavour and all the progress of science, it has been and is still considered to be impossible to produce instruments that approach, even remotely, those classics."

Fast forward to 2013: the most detailed, recent research on the topic is by Gino Cattani, Roger L. M. Dunbar, and Zur Shapira in the journal *Organizational Science*. It still has the supremacy of Stradivari and Guaneri as an accepted presumption, as they "are still considered to be among the most expressive. Many performers believe they sound better when they play a violin made by a Cremonese grand master, and many also believe present-day violin makers cannot make an equivalent instrument."[34]

The authors suggest that the value of these instruments can be attributed to the search for what it was that Stradivari and his contemporaries knew about instrument-making. In other words, we recall Schonberg's question: "Did the old makers have a secret?" If there was indeed this secret, a major issue is delayed recognition:

> With the help of virtuoso performers, Cremonese stringed instruments gained extraordinary recognition. This recognition did not occur, however, until almost a century after the most famous Cremonese makers had done their best work. Despite many efforts to reproduce Cremonese masters' instruments, this significant recognition delay led to a concern that the knowledge for making such instruments had been lost.[35]

The authors note that instruments of Stainer and Amati far outstripped Stradivari and Guaneri at the onset.[36] This only changed when the center of music shifted from royal courts to concert halls and the power of projection became a principal asset, together with virtuoso musicians whose choice of instrument increased the value

that society held for the maker. By this time, the "secret" of the construction of these instruments was harder to trace, with much of the knowledge being in tacit form, only available to those in the workshop who could observe on a daily basis the techniques of producing these instruments.

"There was a significant delay, however, between when the best Cremonese instruments were made in the early 18th century and when their superior sound for concert performance was recognized in the 19th century,"[37] Cattini et al. note. "Interruptions constituted a challenge to the retaining and transferring of such knowledge—whether tacit or explicit—and this challenge increased as the elapsed time before resurrection attempts began increased."[38]

IV. A first-hand account

Paul Silverthorne is principal viola of the London Symphony Orchestra and the London Sinfonietta and professor of viola at the Royal Academy of Music, London. He had an hour in Paris playing the Macdonald Stradivari and shared his perspectives on the instrument.

Paul Silverthorne: My first impression on seeing the viola at Sotheby's in Paris curiously, was familiarity, and even ordinariness. So many modern violas are made on this pattern and the condition is so good that it could at first glance pass for a "distressed" modern instrument.

My taste in violas is for the tenor style of instrument, I play on the Brothers Amati belonging to the Royal Academy of Music which, is uncut at 45cm. The Strad is therefore a very different style of instrument. I am very familiar with the RAM's Archinto Stradivarius viola, which I have used for some extended periods. The Macdonald has some characteristics in common; the responsiveness, the wonderfully focused, burnished tone. It is in much more original condition than the Archinto and from his greatest period, this I feel gives it even greater power and flexibility. The beauty and power of the sound seemed limitless. I had a very happy hour playing bits of Schubert, Walton, Bach, etc., to a few friends and strangers.

However, I did not bemoan the fact that my savings account does not contain $45 million as I don't feel that it could surpass the special quality of human warmth which is unique to the Amati and which has inspired me for the last three decades.

V. A Conversation with Stefan Hersh

To have a clearer insight, I contacted luthier and instrument dealer Stefan Hersh. Hersh was assistant concertmaster of the Vancouver Symphony, principal second violin with the Minnesota Orchestra, and Associate Professor at De Paul University.

***Andrew Filmer**: There has been attention not only to the excellent condition of the instrument, but that it was from what is called the "golden period" of Stradivari of 1700–1720. Could you comment on what makes this time-period distinctive?*

Stefan Hersh: Stradivari produced magnificent instruments throughout his long life. Even if his career had ended at 1700 he still would have to qualify as the greatest maker of all. That some Stradivari instruments are more desirable than others can't be denied. The great majority of the most desirable of Stradivari's works are located

in time between the dates you mention. Circa 1709–18 extant examples bear witness to a large output of the highest quality and the most desirable (full) form. Especially in the year 1715 the Stradivari workshop produced a succession of truly dazzling examples built from the fanciest wood imaginable and bearing varnish of unequalled beauty. But radiant examples exist from the range of Stradivari's output, and the so-called "golden period" is a potentially misleading descriptor for this reason. The Macdonald viola does emanate from the period after 1700, but what is even more important about the Macdonald is its beauty and condition, both of which are unimpeachable.

The price of this instrument has been the main point of attention, at a minimum of $45 million—almost three times the price of the Lady Blunt. Is a contributing factor that it is viewed now as a collector's item rather than for its acoustic value?

All of these objects trade for prices that reflect a confluence of value between utility and collectability. That the best 17th- and 18th-century instruments have special tonal properties has been generally accepted for the centuries since they were made. But it is demand outstripping supply in the market that creates inflation, just as with all collectible objects from a discrete pool.

It is surprising that forty years ago the Macdonald viola was sold for $100,000 to Peter Schidlof. When does an instrument stops being a performer's tool and becomes a collector's item?

They don't "stop" and "start" so much as they have been both for centuries. A tension exists between players who regard it as a sacrilege to see instruments go unplayed for long periods and connoisseurs who are all too happy to see instruments preserved for the future. Concert use does subject these instruments to risks as well as wear and tear. It is a truly magnificent experience to hear a truly great string player put a Stradivari through its paces in a large concert hall. It is also critically important that we hand off the legacy bequeathed to this generation to the next. In this way the preservation of the Cremona legacy is like a microcosm of the tensions the world faces in the preservation of our habitat on the planet: the pull of using resources now versus preserving the resources for later generations and hopefully technological developments that will permit for the use of those resources more efficiently than in the past.

Closing Comments

Writers have approached the scale of a number like $45 million in different ways; as we have noted earlier, there have been comparisons to opportunity cost and even its value per ounce. One phrase has long been used as an example of value: "It's worth its weight in gold."

That would be an inaccurate description of the auction price set for Macdonald Stradivari viola. Had it achieved its minimum bid, it would have been worth more than 2,300 times more—the equivalent of having over forty orchestras with every stringed instrument made out of pure gold.

On the other hand, soccer team Chelsea spent around the same amount, to obtain player Cesc Fàbregas: "In the region of £30 million."[39] Musicians may find it difficult to understand how having one player whose years on the field are limited can be worth more than an instrument that has survived three centuries.

Soccer fans, however, have an advantage: it is likely that in contrast to musicians, those in the stadium will see the product of their team's purchase in action every season.

Andrew Filmer has just taken on the role of Editor of the Journal of the American Viola Society *and is a senior lecturer at Universiti Putra Malaysia. He holds a PhD in musicology from the University of Otago in New Zealand and a Master's degree in viola performance from Indiana University South Bend. He has articles published in* Arco*,* String Praxis*,* Stringendo*, and* Crescendo*, as well as editions by* Comus *and* AVS Publications*.*

Notes

1. Watson Forbes, "Hobson's Choice?" *Journal of the American Viola Society* 2, no. 1 (April 1986): 11.

2. The exact wording of the press release is as follows: "The viola will be offered through a sealed bid process, with bids expected in excess of US$45 million," www.ingleshayday.com (Accessed May 10, 2014).

3. Norman Lebrecht, "The crazy inflationary spiral of 'the finest viola in existence,'" *Slipped Disc*, March 30, 2014, http://www.artsjournal.com/slippeddisc/2014/03/the-crazy-inflationary-spiral-of-the-finest-viola-in-existence.html (Accessed 9 April, 2014).

4. Forbes, 11.

5. Harold C. Schonberg, "Violins: What Price Priceless?," *New York Times*, November 23, 1982, http://www.nytimes.com/1982/11/23/arts/violins-what-price-priceless.html (Accessed April 22, 2014.)

6. Ibid.

7. Michael Cooper, "For Sale, Playing a Heady Tune," *New York Times*, March 25, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/26/arts/music/for-sale-playing-a-heady-tune.html (Accessed April 10, 2014).

8. Schonberg.

9. Ibid.

10. Cooper.

11. Ibid.

12. Ernest N. Doring, *How Many Strads? Our Heritage from the Master* (Chicago: Bein & Fushi, 1999). Doring cites William E. Hill and Sons as his source of information.

13. Lebrecht.

14. Converted from 300,000 Dutch guilders. Cooper notes a different date (1964), citing Tim Ingles of Ingles & Hayday, at $81,000.

15. Lebrecht.

16. William H. Moenning Jr., "What Is the Proper Size for a Viola?" *Journal of the American Viola Society* 2, no. 3 (November 1986): 4. Note that this is a reprint of an article in the *American String Teacher*.

17. Lebrecht. Cooper states that this, adjusted for inflation, would be $613,000, but there is nonetheless a stark difference.

18. Artdesk,"Setting a New Bar for the Price of Musical Instruments," Art Beat, *PBS NewsHour*, March 26, 2014, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/art/setting-a-new-bar-for-the-price-of-musical-instruments/ (Accessed April 9, 2014).

19. Ibid.

20. Ed Yong, "Stadivarius Violins Aren't Better Than New Ones: Round Two," Not Exactly Rocket Science, *National Geographic*, http://phenomena.nationalgeographic.com/2014/04/07/stradivarius-violins-arent-better-than-new-ones-round-two/ (Accessed April 9, 2014.) Note that other news outlets have reports on this research, with versions of an Associated Press (AP) article in *The Huffington Post* and *The Guardian*. The *National Geographic* report is considerably more detailed, with the exception of omitting the names of the participants, as well as naming luthier Joseph Curtin as a co-author to the study. In apparently conflicting information, the *National Geographic* report states that Fritz is from Sorbonne University, while the AP reports that she is from the Pierre and Marie Curie University. Further information can be found at this link: http://www.lam.jussieu.fr/Membres/Fritz/HomePage/Vincennes.html (Accessed May 6, 2014).

21. Nicholas Wade, "In Classic vs. Modern Violins, Beauty Is in Ear of the Beholder," *New York Times*, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/03/science/in-play-off-between-old-and-new-violins-stradivarius-lags.html?_r=0 (Accessed June 29, 2014).

22. Yong.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Cooper.

26. Rebecca Mead, "Musical Gold: Can Three Ambitious Siblings Turn Old Violins Into a New Investment Strategy?" *New Yorker*, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/musical-gold (Accessed July 26, 2014). Note that the article is alternatively titled "Can the Carpenter Siblings Corner the Market in Stradivarius Violins?""

27. Ibid. In the interview, David Aaron Carpenter predicted confidently that the Carpenter siblings may be able to obtain the instrument in four years' time, for between twenty-five and thirty million dollars.

28. Artdesk (PBS).

29. Mark Pemberton, "When a Stradivarius Costs $45m, Creating an 'Art Fund' for Musical Instruments Is Vital." *Strad Blog*, April 8, 2014. http://www.thestrad.com/latest/blogs/when-a-stradivarius-costs-45m-creating-an-art-fund-for-musical-instruments-is-vital (Accessed April 10, 2014).

30. Mead.

31. Forbes.

32. Lucien Greilsamer, Jay C. Freeman, and Theodore Baker, "On Old Violins," *Musical Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (July 1927): 412.

33. Ibid., 430.

34. Gino Cattani, Roger L. M. Dunbar, and Zur Shapira, "Value Creation, Knowledge Loss: The Case of Cremonese Stringed Instruments," *Organization Science* 24, no. 3 (May/June 2013): 813.

35. Ibid.

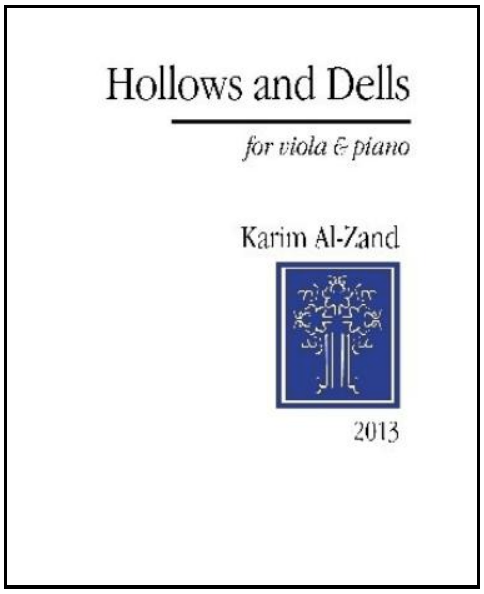
36. The authors noted that a Stainer or an Amati were worth some four times that of a Stradivari.

37. Cattani et. al., 819.

38. Ibid., 824.

39. "Cesc Fabregas: Chelsea Sign Ex-Arsenal Midfielder from Barcelona," *BBC Sport*, http://www.bbc.com/sport/0/football/27819204 (Accessed July 26, 2014).

by Andrew Braddock



Hollows and Dells, for viola and piano (2013)
By Karim Al-Zand
Duration: 12'
Available at www.lulu.com
$15.00

Karim Al-Zand's evocative new work *Hollows and Dells*, for viola and piano, artfully explores the concept of memory. Al-Zand wrote this three-movement work for his colleague at Rice University, violist Ivo-Jan van der Werff, who premiered the piece in December 2013 with pianist Simon Marlow. Both the title and conceptual inspiration for this work come from a line in the opening pages of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*: "Within the hollows and dells of memory, over which . . . the sun of my infancy has set." The composer writes that the piece is inspired by "formative musical memories" of a Canadian boarding school, with British folksong and hymn quotations and Irish and Appalachian fiddle idioms.

Of the three movements, the first exhibits the most innovative and fascinating form. Titled *I'll sing you one, oh!*, this movement uses the "stacking song" form found in the English folksong *Green Grow the Rushes, Oh!* Al-Zand provides the useful example of *The Twelve Days of Christmas* to illustrate the structure of a stacking song, in which each new verse is followed by a repetition of the previous verses. Variation in the musical ideas provides freshness and excitement in this movement, and they appear at a fairly rapid rate, creating unexpected and pleasant shifts in color. The movement begins with four successive open string quarter notes, slurred from C to A, reminiscent of the opening of Shostakovich's viola sonata. After a jaunty measure of off-beat eighth notes, the open strings return, completing the three-measure incipit. The verses then employ a variety of meters (7/8, 3/8, 5/8, and 6/8), creating stylistic contrasts, including a haunting and almost timeless *subito pp* in the 5/8 verse and a lyrical expansion and re-imagining of the incipit's second measure in a later verse.

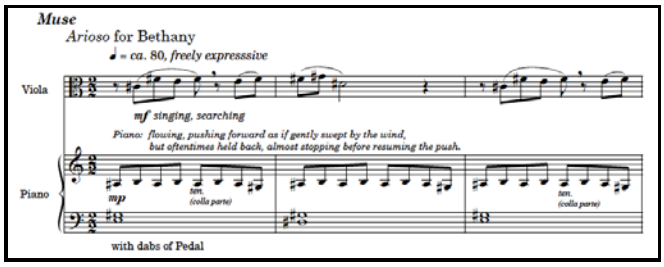
Al-Zand provides a new take on the form of the stacking song, going beyond simple verbatim restatements of earlier verses. The composer mines this repetitive structure for expressive gain by both subtly varying the restatement of each verse and, in certain instances, "cross-pollinating" his themes. In the earlier stages of this movement, the repetitions of verses are

made only slightly different from the originals, if at all, through the use of octave displacement or the exchange of material between viola and piano. As the movement progresses, Al-Zand alters each verse more liberally, with the introduction of new harmonies, effects such as pizzicato and glissando, expansion or contraction of register, and even a piano solo section. Additionally, some verses borrow distinctive motives from neighboring verses.

These compositional strategies create coherence and originality within the movement, as well as serving the greater goal of portraying the flawed, yet uniquely beautiful process of memory. Memory is not a fixed and concrete document; rather, it is influenced by a multitude of factors, including one's current state of mind or the presence of other, similar memories. In choosing a formal structure from a song lodged deep in his own memory, Al-Zand creates a fascinating musical depiction of the jostling, vibrant, and ever-changing process of memory.

The following two movements similarly engage in the concept of memory, but in unique ways. He crafts the second movement around Hubert Parry's setting of "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind," and the third draws upon Irish and Appalachian fiddle traditions, combining the energy and excitement found in fiddle music with the harmonically and rhythmically progressive features that one expects from art music.

Hollows and Dells is best suited for the advanced violist. Although the last movement lies almost entirely in first position, it nonetheless presents frequent challenges in both left and right hand technique. Because of its frequent meter and mood changes, the first movement requires both performers to be alert and nimble. Several upper-register passages necessitate accurate and fast shifting. *Hollows and Dells* will easily satisfy violists seeking a fresh, evocative, and fascinating work to add to their recital programs.



Songs without Words, for viola and piano (2011)
By Don Freund
Duration: 9'
Score freely available at www.donfreund.com

Don Freund has written numerous works for the viola, expressing a wide range of moods and characters and showcasing Freund's ability to elicit an impressive variety of sounds from the instrument. His earliest work for viola and piano, *Three Bagatelles* (1968), is an exhilarating and high-octane set of three short pieces that exude vitality, and his *Seven Etudes a due* (1973) for viola and cello explores extended techniques. The *Viola Concerto* (1995) is his most substantial work for the instrument, and the work's single movement has colors ranging from introspective and mournful to humorous and even confrontational.

Songs without Words, for viola and piano, is Freund's most recent work for the viola, written in 2011. Of the three selections, two are adaptations of Freund's pieces originally written for other instruments, with one specifically composed for the set. In a sense, this work functions as a compendium of the composer's lyrical music in its many forms, and it displays

his intimate knowledge of the viola's soulful qualities.

The first selection, *Muse*, is an arioso dedicated to Bethany Harper Bernstein. She premiered Freund's *Three Bagatelles* and taught the viola to him in an undergraduate string methods class. In this work, the viola has a plaintive melodic line interspersed with frequent interruptions. The melody is characterized by expressive leaps of perfect fourths and fifths. Underneath this melody, the piano plays right-hand eighth notes that meander throughout the entire movement, creating a feeling of searching. In the score, the composer poetically instructs the pianist to be "flowing, pushing forward as if gently swept by the wind, but oftentimes held back, almost stopping before resuming the push." Accented chromatic neighbor notes among these right-hand eighths form tritone dissonances against the simple chordal bass, infusing the music with nostalgic yearning and a twinge of pain. The movement cycles through various transpositions of the original melody, exploring all but the uppermost registers of the viola's range, before reaching a sparse conclusion with open string pizzicato chords.

Morning Sunsong, second in this collection, originally appeared in Freund's concerto for alto saxophone, *Sunscapes* (2006). Much like *Muse*, this song has a lyrical feel, along with more harmonic and rhythmic complexity. The general ABA' form of this song begins with a viola melody to be played with the indication of a "pop-tune rubato" that includes some chromatic excursions around a loosely defined tonal center of F. The composition features, among other musical designs, quasi-improvisatory chromatic triplets in the viola, along with dissonant interjections from the piano.

Come, Gentle Night is the shortest of the three and concludes this set of pieces in a lively, yet understated way. Its original form includes text; thus it is only in its present form that it has evolved into a song without words. It first appeared in the third act of Freund's music-drama for voices and piano, *Romeo and Juliet*. The speech-like rhythms in the viola part are easily perceptible, and the viola part winds its way through a variety of rhythms that create a spot-on *parlando* style, despite how complex it may at first seem on paper. *Come, Gentle Night* ends with a brief burst of treble piano color, like a small starburst in the sky, bringing this lyrical and soulful collection of songs to a light-hearted and delightful conclusion.

The songs present few technical challenges to the violist and will be accessible to most intermediate players. At around a total of nine minutes in total, and with its simple but beautiful lyricism, this work could serve to counterbalance heftier pieces in a recital program. The score is available for free download on Freund's website, and you can also hear a complete performance featuring violist Atar Arad.

42nd INTERNATIONAL VIOLA CONGRESS

PORTO
PORTUGAL
26-30th
NOV 2014

Performing for the future of music

ASSOCIAÇÃO PORTUGUESA **VIOLA D'ARCO**

LOCAL
CASA DA MÚSICA
INFO
WWW.APVDA.COM