

# Journal of the American Viola Society

Volume 32 Summer 2016 Online Issue



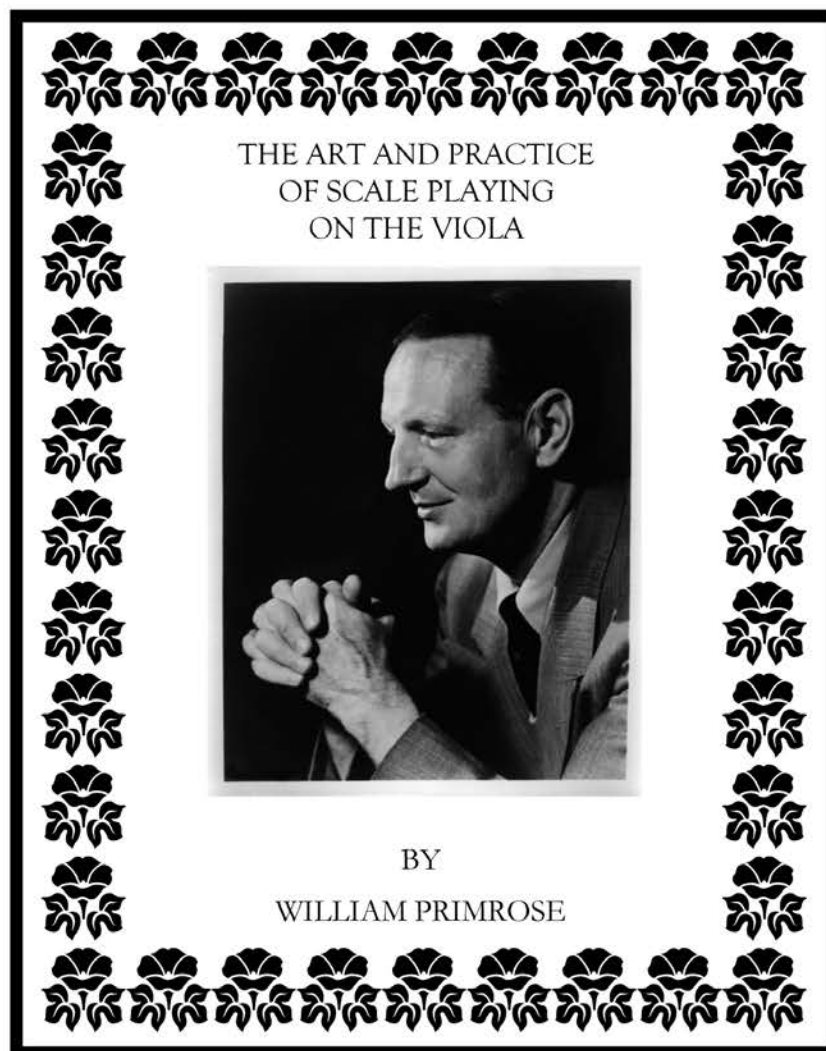
## Features:

In Review: Tertis Festival and Competition

Alessandro Rolla's Viola Duets

An Afternoon at Skittles: On Playing Mozart's "Kegelstatt" Trio Part II

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# Journal of the American Viola Society

A publication of the American Viola Society

Summer 2016: Volume 32, Online Issue

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On the Cover:  
[Two Violists Playing a Duo]  
Lithograph by Kaepelin et Cie

This rare nineteenth-century image of two violists serves as the cover illustration for Joseph Vimeux's *Méthode d'alto*, published in 1841 by the Parisian firm Nadaud.

Image courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France:  
[http://imslp.org/wiki/M%C3%A9thode\\_d%27alto\\_\(Vimeux,\\_Joseph\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/M%C3%A9thode_d%27alto_(Vimeux,_Joseph))



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Greetings,

I am sure that many of you have been enjoying a busy (and hopefully restful) summer. Here at JAVS, we have certainly been busy working on this present summer issue, which is full of articles that I hope our readers will find

both insightful and useful.

Our first article takes us to the Isle of Man, where Louise Lansdown and two of her students describe their studio's wonderful time at the 12th Lionel Tertis International Viola Festival & Competition; JAVS readers are invited to take a look at their Facebook page, titled "Tumultuous Tertis" (@TumultuousTertis2016) to get a sort of play-by-play look into their whole experience. There is also a wealth of other photos on their Facebook page that did not ultimately make it into the published article.

Next, Kenneth Martinson presents the fascinating history behind the Alessandro Rolla viola duets, taking a look at the composer himself—his life as violist/violinist and teacher—and also the historical context of the viola duets within that of Rolla's extensive catalog of string duets. Also, I am sure that many of you will want to take a look at the collection of Rolla's viola duets (and a wealth of other music) published by Kenneth's company, Gems Music Publications: [www.gemsmusicpublications.com](http://www.gemsmusicpublications.com).

Edward Klorman is the author of our third feature article, which is a part II of his article that appeared in the Spring 2016 Issue of JAVS. In this part II offering, Ed presents a fascinating analysis of Mozart's "Kegelstatt" Trio, and has also provided links within the article to extra content hosted on the website for his new book, *Mozart's Music of Friends: Social Interplay in the Chamber Works*.

Our departmental offerings this summer start with a great piece from The Eclectic Violist, by undergraduate student Emilie Catlett, who describes her roots in Texas-style fiddle music and how folk influences have impacted her musical development over the years. Next, we are pleased to announce our new Chamber Music department, headed by Les Jacobson; in this inaugural article, Les presents an interview with his teacher Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff, in which our readers will find invaluable tips for forming and maintaining a chamber group. Finally, our Music Reviews editor, Andrew Braddock, presents reviews on two relatively new works for viola: Tigran Mansurian's *Ode to the Lotus* (2012), for viola solo, and Jonathan Leshnoff's *Three Minute Chaconne* (2011), also for viola solo.

Warm regards,

Chris Hallum  
JAVS Editor

Application Deadline:  
September 1, 2016



## The American Viola Society Youth Advisory Council

The American Viola Society is seeking 3 to 5 students to serve on a new Youth Advisory Council.  
Responsibilities include:

- ♪ Serving as a liaison to the AVS Executive Board
- ♪ Providing a student perspective on the impact of issues and projects of AVS on aspiring violists
- ♪ Giving insight on attracting and retaining young professionals as members of the AVS

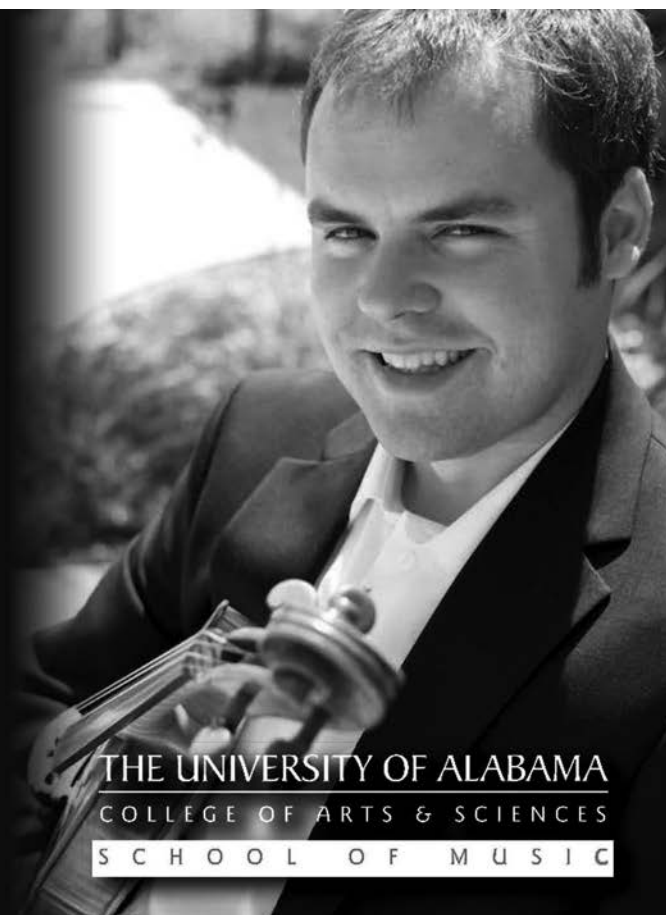
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Greetings from the American Viola Society!

Earlier this summer, many violists gathered on the campus of Oberlin College & Conservatory to celebrate all things viola at the 2016 American Viola Society Festival. Over those four days in June, attendees were

treated to a beautiful celebration highlighting the many gifts of our varied community. It was such a joy to see our young professionals share their research and their artistry; an honor to hear some of our most seasoned professionals treat us with beautiful performances and pearls of wisdom; and exciting to hear our youngest members perform and participate in the festivities. We truly have a bright future ahead of us!

One of the many festival highlights was a world premiere performance of Kenji Bunch's AVS commission *Rise (and Shine)* during the closing celebration recital on Saturday afternoon. Prepared so admirably by our own AVS past President Tom Tatton and featuring close to 50 violists of all ages on stage in Finney Chapel, this new work is sure to become a popular addition to the viola ensemble repertoire. The title beautifully describes our organization as the AVS is growing, "Rising (and Shining)" in so many ways! If you have not seen Laurie Niles' festival posts (and the Kenji Bunch performance) on her blog at [www.violinist.com](http://www.violinist.com), I encourage you to take a moment to visit her site and enjoy this wonderful performance and all of the other great festival posts.

As is true for every collaborative effort, the sum is greater than the individual parts, yet each part is essential.

The AVS needs each of its members to be a part of the continued growth of the society in order to expand its ability to meet its mission each and every year. From our mission statement, the AVS seeks to *encourage excellence and to promote the viola and its related activities, by fostering communication and friendship among violists of all skill levels, ages, nationalities, and backgrounds*. Seeking excellence and fostering communication and friendship are noble pursuits both in our artistic experiences and our broader lives, especially during these unsettled times.

As the AVS lays the groundwork for the 2018 AVS Festival at Colburn, we need members to be increasingly active at the local level, sharing, teaching, and making great music together and of course, encouraging AVS membership growth. Your assistance is vitally important as membership determines the level at which the AVS is able to continue to "Rise (and Shine)!" If your membership is up for renewal, please consider renewing at one of our donor member levels. And, while you are at it, consider gift memberships for students or friends and share your commitment to the ongoing work of our society with those around you. Together we can do great things!

Kathryn Steely  
American Viola Society, president

### The AVS Festival Youth Competition Winners

The Collegiate Division award (for students ages 19-25) went to Eastman sophomore **Alexander McLaughlin**.

The Senior Division award (for students ages 15-18) went to seventeen-year-old Portland, Oregon native **Samuel Zacharia**.

The Junior Division award (for students ages 14 and under) went to **Sofia Gilchenok**, who currently studies with Hsin-Yun Huang, Yi-Fang Huang, and Molly Carr at The Juilliard School Pre-College Division.

### The AVS Announces New Youth Advisory Council

The American Viola Society is seeking student input regarding viola issues and projects, especially those in which younger violists find interest. To that end, the American Viola Society is excited to announce its inaugural Youth Advisory Council. Students between ages 18-26 are eligible to apply.

The application deadline is September 1, 2016.

More information and a link to the application can be found here: <http://www.americanviolasociety.org/AVS/Youth-Advisory-Council.php>

### 2016 American Viola Society Awards

The AVS periodically honors special achievement and outstanding service through presentation of AVS Awards. Four awards were presented on June 11, 2016 at the AVS Festival Awards Banquet, held at the Hotel at Oberlin. Nominated by the AVS membership and selected by the AVS board, these individuals represent a measure of the excellence that marks our artistic community.

This year's Maurice W. Riley award went to **Shelly Beard**, in recognition of creative teaching and enduring commitment to excellence in viola education, and to **Timothy Deighton**, in recognition of outstanding contributions to studio teaching and enduring commitment to expanding the viola repertoire through commissions, performance, and recording.

The AVS Founders Award was awarded posthumously to **Peter Paul Prier** in recognition of excellence in lutherie

and for contributions to the advancement of the viola. Accepting the award for his father was Peter Prier's youngest son **Daniel** who continues to run the Prier shop in Salt Lake City.

The final award presented was the American Viola Society Career Achievement Award, which is reserved to honor a lifetime of achievement and excellence. This year's honoree is **Robert Vernon** in recognition of his distinguished career as Principal Violist of The Cleveland Orchestra (1976-2016); as soloist, chamber musician, and recording artist; and for significant contributions through teaching at the Cleveland Institute of Music, The Juilliard School, and summer music festivals.

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# In Review: The 12th Lionel Tertis International Viola Festival & Competition

Louise Lansdown, Martha Evans, and Alistair Rutherford

## Introduction | Louise Lansdown

The Lionel Tertis International Viola Festival and Competition is an event like no other on earth. Try and picture this: the global viola community descends on a tiny island located right in the middle of the Irish Sea; this tiny island—the Isle of Man—is thirty-three miles in length, thirteen-and-a-half miles wide, and occupies an approximate total area of two hundred twenty-one square miles.

A mere twenty-minute drive from Ronaldsway Airport on the Isle of Man is the small village of Port Erin where the Tertis Competition is held. The population of this little town almost doubles when the competition is held there every three years, with the pubs, fish and chip joints, Chinese takeaway, and cafés literally bulging with violists and their easily distinguishable hallmark viola cases!

The view of the bay, rustic and tired fishing boats, and Milner's Tower, which is situated on the other side of the bay on the edge of Bradda Head, are all features of the Tertis landscape. Now in its thirty-sixth year, the Tertis Competition has its very own unique flavor and quintessential character—from the Directorship of John Bethel with his right-hand lady, Gloria Balakrishna, to the quaint and characterful Erin Arts Centre, the walls of which are crammed with black-and-white photos of the hundreds of famous musicians who have visited and performed there over the years—the Tertis Competition is truly one-of-a-kind.

I had seven of my viola students from Birmingham Conservatoire with me on the Isle of Man, and while there we maintained a Facebook page with literally hundreds of photos and commentary from throughout the week. Aptly named “Tumultuous Tertis,” the page gained its title while we were en route from Birmingham Airport to Liverpool. After our flight, supposedly a forty-minute flight from Birmingham to Ronaldsway Airport,

could not land due to fog, we were forced to turn around and land back in Birmingham. A thirty-six hour delay ensued, and when there were not enough seats on one flight to accommodate all of us, we split up into two groups; one group drove to Manchester and the other to Liverpool (in a horrid school bus, I might add), stayed overnight, and then caught flights the following evening to the Isle of Man.

Each of my students, all of whom shared a house just around the corner from the Erin Arts Centre, undertook to report a certain day of the competition and festival to the “Tumultuous Tertis” page, and some days we even shared the role! Let me introduce you to the characters who contributed to our page. Meet Yue Yu from the Xinghai Conservatory of Music in Guangzhou, China, and Mabon Llyr from Snowdonia in Wales, both Year One undergraduate students who were absolutely star-struck having famous violists in such close proximity. Yue's English name is Daisy, and she was intrigued before we left Birmingham as to what sort of place the Isle of Man was; she even inquired if there was a Chinatown in Port Erin or a Chinese Supermarket!

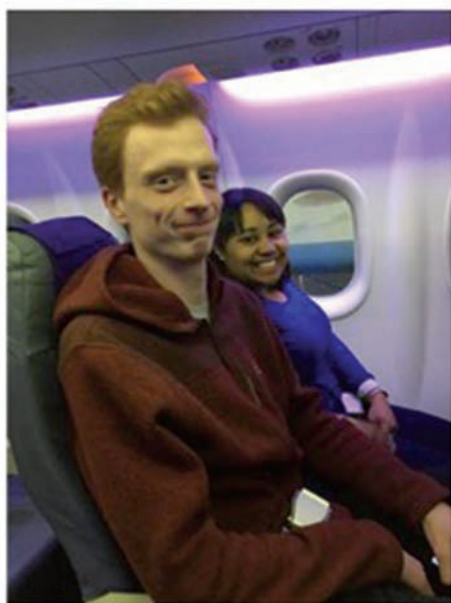
Alistair Rutherford, one of my Year Three students, was also with us, and incidentally came in eleventh in the Liverpool Half Marathon right in the middle of our travel delay; he used his time very wisely indeed! Rebecca Stubbs, also a Year Three student, from Huddersfield, managed to turn pages for several of the competition rounds and jury recitals during the festival. Both Rebecca and Alistair are performing the complete Walton Concerto for their end-of-year recitals, so the exposure to so many varied and brilliant performances of the work during the week was invaluable for them. Katharina Von Colson, a German postgraduate student pursuing a part-time Master of Music degree, is currently learning the Brahms F-Minor Sonata, and Lee-Ann

April, a postgraduate student from Cape Town, is currently learning the Rebecca Clarke Sonata; both students were lucky to hear each work in several master classes conducted by jury members—an enlightening, provocative, and engaging experience on so many levels. Finally, meet Martha Evans, a mature student, who is mid-way through a part-time Master of Music degree and is currently converting from a life as a General Practitioner to that of a professional violist! Not a path that is frequently walked.

We all wanted to try and bring this unique event to life for those who were not lucky enough to be able to attend, hence attempting, where possible, to deliver live updates and alerts of our experience throughout and to provide the backdrop to Port Erin; the beautiful walks, sunsets, camaraderie, and elements that made this competition completely unique. Please find our “Tumultuous Tertis” Facebook page by navigating to [www.facebook.com/TumultuousTertis2016](http://www.facebook.com/TumultuousTertis2016); here, the reader can access all of the photos included in this article, and a host of other images and interesting content from our time on the Isle of Man.



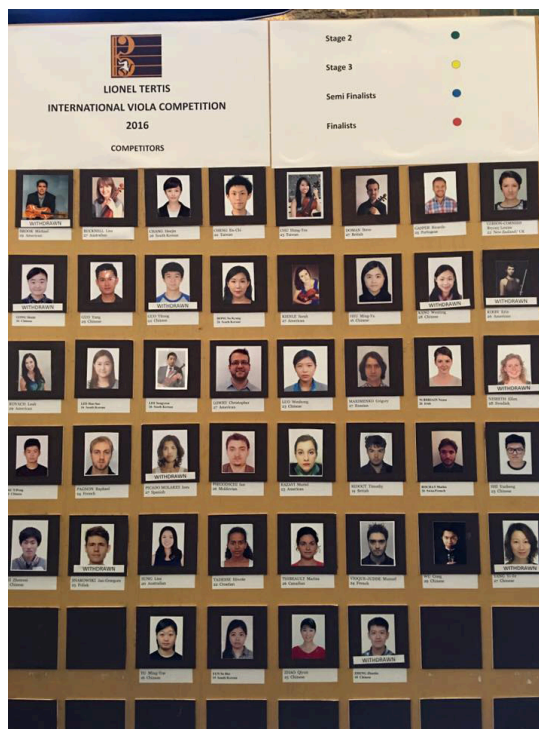
Looks like we are on our way at last!!!



Left to right: Alistair Rutherford and Lee-Ann April

## The Competition | Martha Evans

Ninety-six violists from twenty-seven countries submitted applications to the 2016 Lionel Tertis Competition. Of the forty-four selected to attend the competition in Port Erin, thirty-three arrived with high hopes to progress through the second and third rounds to the semi-finals.



List of competitors in the 2016 Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition

Unfortunately, Round 2 (Solo Bach, Paganini Caprice, and a test piece by Stuart MacRae, titled *fenodyree*) and Round 3 (excerpts of a Viola Sonata and Concerto) were not open to observation by workshop entrants or members of the public. There was great anticipation, therefore, to see the first performances of the eight semi-finalists of Beethoven's C-Minor String Trio, op. 9, no. 3, with violinist Krysia Osostowicz and cellist Jane Salmon.

We were not challenged in listening to eight renditions of the trio in one day; on the contrary, it was quite educational to experience the interpretative differences among the contestants: Steve Doman (age twenty-seven, U.K.), Ming-Yu Hsu (age sixteen, Taiwan), Hae Sue Lee (age sixteen, South Korea), Wenhong Luo (age twenty-three, China), Timothy Ridout (age twenty, U.K.), Lisa Sung (age twenty, Australia), Manuel Vioque-Judde (age twenty-four, France), and So Hui Yun (age nineteen, South Korea). Most compelling was Timothy Ridout's



*Competitor Hae Sue Lee with violinist Krysia Osostowicz and cellist Jane Salmon*

unique performance; Mr. Ridout creatively highlighted certain elements of the score, which would have otherwise been lost to the listener.

It was no surprise then that Timothy Ridout joined Manuel Vioque-Judde and Wenhong Luo, who had also both given captivating performances, in the finals. Each finalist performed a complete concerto, the test piece by Stuart MacRae, and the Beethoven Trio. All three renditions were technically assured, musically engaging, and of an extremely high standard. The final decision by the judges was weighted by performances throughout the whole week and fell to Timothy Ridout, making him the first-ever British violist to win the Tertis International Viola Competition.



*Timothy Ridout (center), winner of the 2016 Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition, with violinist Krysia Osostowicz and cellist Jane Salmon*

## Talks, Master Classes, and Juror Concerts

Alistair Rutherford

### *Talks*

We were treated to a vast array of thought-provoking talks by many of the UK's most well-respected music professionals. On Monday, March 14, we were treated to two talks by Chris Milton from the Britten-Pears foundation on Britten and the viola; the first talk covered Britten's solo viola repertoire and the latter, his writing for the viola in an orchestral context.

On Wednesday, March 16, we had another really interesting and informative lecture and discussion led by David Hume on "Matching Bow to Instrument," which is something that we don't always think an awful lot about! How healthy is your bow?

On Thursday, March 17, we went back in time with Tully Potter and searched into the Viennese tradition of viola playing; it was interesting to hear of so many forgotten viola players of the twentieth century.

Saturday, March 19 saw the last talk of the competition given by Sean Bishop from Bishop Instruments, London, who gave an interesting lecture on some of the gems of viola lutherie encompassing all of modern history.

### *Master classes*

Each of the jury members gave inspiring master classes covering much of the repertoire played in the competition and some of the most popular pieces in the viola repertoire! The master classes were a very friendly affair, and the jury members were incredibly insightful.



*Wing Ho (left) giving a master class*





*David Hume (right) presenting on "Matching Bow to Instrument"*



*Garth Knox (left) giving a master class*



*Pictured left to right: Thomas Riebl, Yuri Bashmet, George Caird, Garth Knox, Wing Ho*

Wing Ho led the first master class and helped students with Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher* and Bartók's Viola Concerto; he gave many inspirational ideas, some of which included feeling the natural weight of the bow (at all points) and practicing in the style of a singer. He ended with a thought-provoking idea: within classical music, rhythm is invisible, but by contrast it is always obvious within popular music.

Garth Knox also gave a master class, which turned out to alternate between Bach Suites and the Bartók Concerto. It was incredible how he described the inextricable link between both styles of playing and how one should utilize techniques from both styles to improve one's playing. Here are some memorable ideas that he shared: strategizing the meaning of repetition, vibrato being a

tool of sending the sound further (like an opera singer), and focusing on the idea that the audience is listening rather than watching as a means to counter performance anxiety.



*Thomas Riebl (left) giving a master class.*

Thomas Riebl gave an entirely Bach-focused master class with his "teaching assistant" (his Baroque bow!), which can be seen in the student's hand in the above photo. Thomas has infectious musicality, and it definitely rubbed off on all of the students in their master classes. Some of the highlights for me in the master class included having an awareness of large and small phrases throughout the music, playing at A=415 to experience the sound-world in Bach's head when he wrote the music, and exploring the history of the style of dance movement as a tool to interpret the musical language.

Yuri Bashmet filled out the entire church hall and gave a master class to everyone who wanted to play for him—what homage to viola pedagogy! He gave master classes



on many great pieces of the viola repertoire, but the highlights for me were the Bartók Concerto and Brahms F-Minor Viola Sonata. In the Bartók, he spoke about the need to always question the sound one makes; for instance, recognize when one bulges the sound and how it happens. He also spoke about a figure of eight style of bowing and the necessity to always prepare changes at the heel and point. In the Brahms, he spoke about not overusing the bow and managing it through means of color and having a presence of sound at the beginning of the note.



*Yuri Bashmet (left) giving a master class*

#### *Juror Concerts*

All of the viola-playing jury—everyone excluding George Caird (an oboist!)—performed in evening concerts open to the public. This was a fantastic opportunity to hear the judges in concert and experience their interpretation of some of the highlights of the viola repertoire.



*Pictured above, right to left: Wing Ho and pianist Caroline Dowdell*

Wing Ho (March 14) performed the second jurors' concert of the week with a show-stopping performance of Qingwu Guan's *Song of the Prairie*, completing a program of Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, op. 73; Hindemith's Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 11, no. 4; and Franck's Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major, transcribed for viola.



*Pictured above, from left to right: Garth Knox and Louise Lansdown*

Garth Knox hosted another fantastic concert on March 15, and the performance was dedicated to the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. Works included: Frederic Rzewski's *Sixteen Sneakers*, Rory Boyle's *Such Sweet Sorrow*, Benjamin Dwyer's *Imagines*: the first movement titled "St. John's Well" and the second "Rutland." Lauri Joeleht's *Chat Harmonique* was also on the program, and some of Knox's own works, including *Three Weddings and a Fight* and *Viola Spaces*, with special guest Louise Lansdown playing No. 4, "Nine Fingers"; No. 3, "One finger"; and No. 8, "Up, down, sideways, round."



*Pictured above, from left to right: Yuri and Xenia Bashmet*

Yuri Bashmet's moving recital on March 16 featured Beethoven's *Notturmo for Viola and Piano*, op. 42; Britten's popular *Lachrymae, Reflections on a Song of Dowland*, for viola and piano, op. 48; and Shostakovich's Viola Sonata, op. 147, with his daughter Xenia Bashmet at the piano. It was a night to remember from the president of the competition.



*Pictured above, from left to right: Sophia Rahman (piano) and Thomas Riebl (viola)*

On March 17, Thomas Riebl wowed us with his five-string viola, performing Beethoven's Cello Sonata in F Major, op. 5, no. 1; a world-premiere performance of the Norwegian Michael Andreas Grolid's *Images*, and Schubert's "Arpeggione" Sonata.

#### **Final remarks** | Louise Lansdown

I believe that Lionel Tertis would be thrilled if he could see the role this competition, now after thirty-six years, plays within the international viola community as well as the aspirant effect and ethos it projects on those few who are privileged to be competing. It was high time there was a British winner, considering the epic British role in the development of the viola's prominence (to name but just a few who played a part in this: William Primrose, Lionel Tertis, Peter Schidlöf, Frederick Riddle, Cecil Aronowitz, and Lawrence Power). It was with a heavy heart that we all left the Isle of Man, a return journey that was certainly nothing near as tumultuous as on the way there! We have taken with us the sound of truly wonderful music-making, friendships, and a sharing of a deep love for the viola in one of the loveliest places you can imagine.

**Louise Lansdown** has been Head of Strings at Birmingham Conservatoire since 2012, after working as Senior Lecturer in the Strings Department at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester since 2001. She is the founder and President of the British Viola Society, founder of the Cecil Aronowitz International Viola Competition, and sits on the Council for the European String Teachers Association, Lake District Summer Music, Quartet of Peace Trust and is the founder of the ARCO Project (a collaborative long-distance learning project between Birmingham Conservatoire and Soweto, South Africa). Louise plays a French viola made in Paris (circa 1750) and a Sartory bow (1890), previously belonging to Cecil Aronowitz.

**Martha Evans** is currently in her second year of the Master of Music degree at Birmingham Conservatoire, and studies viola under Louise Lansdown. She has participated in master classes with (among others) Tatjana Masurenko, Nobuko Imai, Thomas Riebl, Robin Ireland, Nils Mönkemeyer, Philip Dukes, Garth Knox, Predrag Katanic, and Rachel Roberts. Together with her colleagues, she recently premiered new music by Simon Rowland-Jones and Robin Ireland at the 42nd International Viola Congress, Porto, and has also made solo performances at Bogan house, Totnes (UK); Dartington Hall (UK); Hindemith Music Centre, Blonay (Switzerland); and Leiston Abbey, Suffolk (UK). She plays a 2014 Viola made by Frederic Chaudiere.

**Alistair Rutherford** is a Year Three undergraduate at Birmingham Conservatoire currently studying viola with Louise Lansdown. He has played principal viola with the Birmingham Conservatoire String Orchestra, National Youth String Orchestra (Great Britain), and has also played with the Britten-Pears and Birmingham Festival Orchestras. He has participated in master classes with Atar Arad, Thomas Riebl, Tatjana Masurenko, Nils Mönkemeyer, Roger Chase, Garth Knox, Bogusława Hubisz-Sielska, Błażej Maliszewski, Luis Muniz, and Robin Ireland. Alistair currently plays a 1695 Tyrolean instrument by Matthias Albanus with a bow from Matthew Coltman, both of which are generously on loan from Birmingham Conservatoire.



# Alessandro Rolla's Viola Duets

Kenneth Martinson

## Introduction

Alessandro Rolla (b. Pavia, April 23, 1757; d. Milan, Sept. 14, 1841) spent the majority of his career as the conductor of the La Scala Orchestra (from 1802–1833) and the professor of violin and viola at the newly opened Milan Conservatory (from 1808–1835).<sup>1</sup> Rolla began his professional career as a violist, but he quickly became known more as a violinist. After that, he was known foremost as a conductor; however he maintained a vibrant musical life as a well-rounded musician, dividing his time between performing on violin and viola, conducting, teaching, and composing. In his early professional years, when he was mainly a dedicated violist (having written his first viola concerto sometime between 1772 and 1774, between the age of fifteen to seventeen), he held the position of principal viola in the Parma Orchestra beginning in 1782 (at age twenty-five).<sup>2</sup> In 1792 (at age thirty-five), Rolla became the concertmaster and conductor of the Parma Orchestra, where he remained until he was summoned to become the conductor of La Scala in Milan in 1802 (at age forty-five).<sup>3</sup>

## Rolla's String Duets

*"Alessandro Rolla's production in the genre of string duets takes on a very peculiar position in the history of music."*

— Ulrich Drüner<sup>4</sup>

When examining the complete works of Rolla (cataloged by Luigi Inzaghi and Luigi Bianchi with the BI. numbering system)<sup>5</sup> we can find the following works written for two players (see table 1).

Of the 575 cataloged works of Rolla, 302 are for two instruments; over 50% of his catalogued compositions. There are also six duets for two violas, two duets for two violins, and one duet for two clarinets that escaped the Bianchi-Inzaghi cataloging system; all of these pieces can be found on the IMSLP website.<sup>6</sup> This increases the total to 311 known works by Rolla for two instruments. The viola duets, in particular, come to us in manuscript

Table 1. List of Rolla's catalogued duets.

BI.	GENRE	TOTAL
1 to 32	2 Violas	32
33 to 110	Violin and Viola	78
111 to 241	2 Violins	130
242 to 245	Violin and Cello	4
245 to 256	Violin and Flute	12
257	2 Mandolins	1
258-267	2 Clarinets	10
268-283	Violin and Guitar	16
284-287	2 Guitars	4
290-297	Violin and Piano	8
323-325, 327	Viola and Basso	4
326	Viola and Cello	1
334	Violin and Harp	1
335	Piano and Harp	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>302</b>

form, never having been published during Rolla's lifetime, and there are no dates of composition written on these manuscripts. The majority of manuscripts are housed in the Archivio Nosedà at the Milan Conservatory Library but are also accessible on the IMSLP/Petrucci website. Despite the fact that there are no dates on the manuscripts of the viola duets, scholars seem to agree that these works are from Rolla's early career, during the period in which he was primarily earning his living as a viola player. "The duos for 2 violas, . . . are obviously from Rolla's youth, most of them emerging from a very early age, and the latest ones arising from when he was still in Parma before 1802."<sup>7</sup> The liner notes for the recording of the six uncatalogued Rolla viola duets state that these duets "present some characteristics (as a lively dialogue between the parts and a special attention for the accompaniments) so that it is possible to date [these 6 uncatalogued viola duets] from 1780 to 1790, that is to say, the moment in which Rolla started to develop a more mature musical writing."<sup>8</sup> Inzaghi also believes the viola duets are early works, stating that the "duets

for two violas, not having been published by Rolla, are difficult to date, but certainly they were composed before 1802, when Rolla leaves Parma and becomes the chief conductor of the La Scala Theater in Milan.”<sup>9</sup>

“Clearly, Rolla has an artistic fondness for the string duet as his compositional expression abilities are found to be particularly adequate for this genre, and so to me there is no other composer known whose career from the earliest years to his old age faithfully composed for the Duo-Composition.”<sup>10</sup> His total output of 311 works for two instruments trumps by wide margins all other composers in this period; his closest competitors in this regards were Bartolomeo Bruni (144 duets) and Giuseppe Cambini (120 duets).<sup>11</sup> Even in terms of total viola duets written by Rolla (38), this amount trumps Cambini (12) and Bruni (6) as well. This eyebrow-raising special attention and importance that Rolla gave to the duo-composition raises the question as to why Rolla had such an affinity for this genre and what was the purpose for composing these works? Are the viola duets of Alessandro Rolla—unpublished during his lifetime—evidence of his pedagogical work while a professor at the Milan Conservatory of Music, or did they serve some other purpose?

#### Rolla as Violin/Viola Professor at the Milan Conservatory of Music

The idea of a “music conservatory” was very new at the time the Milan Conservatory was established in

1807. Naples had four early music conservatories in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the other notable examples that came to birth before Milan’s in 1807 were established in Paris (1795) and Bologna (1806).<sup>12</sup> Therefore, it would seem that the idea of teaching a violin/viola studio was somewhat of a pioneering endeavor. Rolla accepted this position at the Milan Conservatory in 1808 at a time when he already had many years of experience as a composer. Having compositional skills in his arsenal, it makes sense that he would use his talents as a composer to provide music for his students to play for lessons. It has been attested to by Ambrogio Minoja, the Censor of the Milan Conservatory, that Rolla composed music for use of the students at the conservatory to perform with the university orchestra including: 1) *Divertimento for Violin Obbligato and Orchestra* (for violin student Giacomo Zucchi and a woodwind version for Giacomo Buccinelli), 2) *Divertimento for 2 Violins and Orchestral Accompaniment* (for the arrival of S.A.I.R. Archduke John), and 3) *Divertimento for Oboe Solo and Orchestral Accompaniment* (for student Ivon vedi Yvon and a flute version for Giuseppe Rabboni).<sup>13</sup> Recent scholarly research by Marina Vaccarini Gallarani includes a table of eleven works that have dedications to Rolla’s students, which also suggests that these pieces were written for them as part of their instrumental studies (see table 2).<sup>14</sup>

Bernardino Ferrera (who is listed as the dedicatee in the last two works in table 2), was the successor to Alessandro

Table 2. Works of Alessandro Rolla with dedications to his students on the cover page.

TITLE	DATE	BI.	GENRE	DEDICATION
<i>Giro a 24 Toni, 12 maggiore e 12 minore</i>		306	violin solo	Cesar Pagni
<i>Quartetto in la maggiore</i>	1811	408	2 violins, viola, cello	Vigani
<i>Adagio e Tema con variazioni in la minore</i>	1816	493	violin, orchestra	Giacomo Buccinelli
<i>Concerto in re minore</i>	1819	516	violin, basso	Michele Rachelle
<i>Divertimento in fa maggiore</i>	1830	330	viola, strings	Giovanni Bussola
<i>Concertino in mi bemolle maggiore</i>	1830–31	328	viola, strings	Carlo Carcano
<i>Adagio e Polonaise in mi maggiore</i>	1832	484	violin, orchestra	Antonio Balducci
<i>Divertimento in re maggiore</i>	1834	477	violin, orchestra	Girolamo Sormani
<i>Divertimento in mi maggiore</i>	1835–36	485	violin, orchestra	Alessandro Biaggi
<i>Rondo all Pollaca in mi maggiore</i>	1836	481	violin, orchestra	Bernardino Ferrera
<i>Tre duetti facile e progressivi</i>	1841	127	2 violins	Bernardino Ferrera



Rolla for the violin/viola professor position at the Milan Conservatory. Ferrera developed a deep friendship with Rolla after having initially been a student of his at the conservatory.

The following is an English translation of a letter from Rolla to Giovanni Riccordi regarding the *Tre duetti facile e progressivi*, BI. 127, dedicated to Ferrera for him to use with his own students:<sup>15</sup>

Dearest friend.

The House from November 6, 1837.

Alas! ... Are you surprised! ... And yet ... you sir, and at my age of eighty years and six months I came "[schiribizzo]" [sl.](excessively whimsical) to compose three new Duets for 2 violins, dedicated (as you see) to young scholars, in order to compensate you.

An additional source of evidence that Rolla's string duos could generally be regarded as teaching pieces comes to us in the form of a new music review from a German musical journal:

The above three major concertante duets are indeed of rare quality. Particularly, the Adagio. . . . In respect of the difficult passages, these duets can serve budding concert players on both instruments as preliminary exercise pieces.<sup>16</sup>

### The Thirty-Eight Viola Duets of Alessandro Rolla

Two well-known treatises of musical composition available to Rolla during his compositional career, Carlo Gervasoni's *La scuola della musica in 3 parti divisa* (1800) and Augustus Frederic Christopher Kollmann's *On Practical Music Composition according to the Nature of the Science and the Principles of the Greatest Musical Authors* (1799) have sections on the craft of composing duets, and they both agree that a certain amount of "imitation" needs to occur between the voices. Gervasoni states that "the main melody ought to be distributed between the two parts in an enjoyable alternating and even manner, and that in the progression of the music you should always recognize the unity of the melody."<sup>17</sup> Kollmann states that when composing duets "the two parts should also be constantly imitating each other, or at least the one have as good a share in the harmony and the passages as the other."<sup>18</sup> At the point when both books were written, however, Rolla had a well-defined and established method of composing his duets, so this raises the question whether Rolla was

instrumental in developing the duet-form and that both Gervasoni and Kollmann were aware of the mastery of this medium by Rolla as well as other master composers.

The thirty-eight known viola duets (BI. 1–32 and WoBI. 1–6) have all been published by my company, Gems Music Publications, and they are available in five volumes:

- GPL 102 22 Viola Duets, BI. 1–22 Vol. 1 (BI. 1–8)
- GPL 103 22 Viola Duets, BI. 1–22 Vol. 2 (BI. 9–15)
- GPL 104 22 Viola Duets, BI. 1–22 Vol. 3 (BI. 16–22)
- GPL 113 6 "Torinese" Viola Duets, WoBI. 1–6
- GPL 114 10 Etude Duets, BI. 23–32

The GPL 114 is a set of ten viola duets that were published during Rolla's lifetime in a version for two violins, with a version for two violas published in 1895 by Bremen, Praeger, and Mejer.<sup>19</sup> They are catalogued as viola duets by Bianchi and Inzaghi, though they are not definitively original works for the viola.

The GPL 113 6 "Torinese" Viola Duets are the uncatalogued duets, nicknamed "Torinese" because they were found among several other loose and uncatalogued manuscripts in the music library at the music conservatory in Torino.

The twenty-two viola duets BI 1–22 were difficult to compile, as they were found in several different places. The majority of them were found within one of four groups of Rolla's viola-duet groupings as they appear in the Archivo Nosedà archives at the Milan Conservatory: one of three (BI. 10, 3, 14), one of five (BI. 22, 5, 11, 21, 20), one of six (BI. 9, 19, 13, 17, 18, 4), and another of six (BI. 22, 5, 11, 21, 20, 15) (these are also available on IMSLP). BI. 1, 2, 8, and 16 [incomplete] were found in the Greggati Library in Ostiglia (within a larger book of viola duets by Rolla and "Signore Parea"), and BI. 12 was originally in the private collection of an Italian professor, but he later gave the manuscript to the La Scala music library. BI. 7 and 8 (the "Arpeggios") are questionable as being originally for two violas despite the cover title of each, as they seem to be idiomatically better suited for violin and viola. Strangely, the manuscript copy seems to be scripted by a more experienced person, perhaps by Rolla, but there is no way to be sure. Those two works were also clearly written as pedagogical teaching exercises with the melodic part in the top part (teacher) and the technical arpeggio part in the bottom (student).

Though a short span of time separates Rolla's early and mature viola duets, they can be broken down into three groupings based on time periods, defined primarily on the manner in which Rolla handled the imitation between the two parts.

#### **“Group A”: Early Duets (1772–1775)**

BI. 1, 12, and the group of three (BI. 10, 3, 14) strike me as the earliest pieces, because the parts primarily imitate each other simultaneously at the interval of a third or sixth in unison rhythms (see ex. 1). They probably were written near the time when Rolla wrote his first viola concerto between 1772–1774.

This type of duet writing (with passages in parallel intervals) from Rolla's early career is similar to other viola duets written in Europe at the time by composers including Michel Corrette, Augustin Holler, Jean-Marie LeClair, Pietro Nardini, Signore Parea, Félix-Jean Prot, Carl Siegmund Schönbeck, Carl Stamitz, and Franz Xaver Sterkel, as well as two Anonymous sets. These duets, which I will call “Group A,” are listed in table 3.

#### **“Group B”: Transitional Duets (1775–1780)**

The BI. 5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 21, and 22 duets seem “transitional” in their use of imitation (much less unison rhythms at parallel intervals and more motivic and

*Example 1. Alessandro Rolla, Duetto in do maggiore, BI. 1, mvmt. I. Allegro, mm. 1–6 (example of unison imitation at the interval of a third).*

**Allegro**

Table 3. “Group A” viola duets (with abundant parallel imitation in 3rds and 6ths)

COMPOSER	LIFESPAN	TITLE OF VIOLA DUETS	DATE	PUBLISHER
Anonymous		<i>44 18th Century Italian Viola Duets</i>		Gems Music Publications
Anonymous		<i>Serenata: 14 18th Century Italian Viola Duets</i>		Gems Music Publications
Mathieu Frédéric Blasius	(1758–1829)	<i>33 Viola Duos</i>		Gems Music Publications
Michel Corrette	(1709–1795)	<i>Sonata in D, Menuett</i>	c. 1780	Schott
Augustin Holler	(1744–1814)	<i>Avertiment in D</i>		Gems Music Publications
Jean-Marie LeClair	(1697–1764)	<i>6 Sonaten à deux violes, Op. 3</i> <i>6 Sonaten à deux violes, Op. 12</i>	1730 1749	Gems Music Schott
Pietro Nardini	(1722–1793)	<i>Six Duets for 2 Tenors</i>	c. 1775	Schott
Signore Parea	(c. 1765–1845)	<i>30 Divertimenti di Minuette</i>		Gems Music Publications
Félix-Jean Prot	(1747–1823)	<i>Six Duos, Op. 9</i>		Gems Music Publications
Carl Siegmund Schönbeck	(1758–1804)	<i>3 Duos Concertans</i>		Schott
Carl Stamitz	(1745–1801)	<i>6 Duetten</i>		Schott
Franz Xaver Sterkel	(1750–1817)	<i>Drei Duette</i>		Hofmeister

Example 2. Alessandro Rolla, *Duetto in la bemolle maggiore*, Bl. 21, mvmt. I. *Largo sostenuto*, mm. 8–16 (an example of a “transitional duet” with much shorter episodes of parallel intervals).



Table 4. “Group B” viola duets (with elements of motivic and quick imitation)

COMPOSER	LIFESPAN	TITLE OF VIOLA DUETS	DATE	PUBLISHER
Wilhelm Friedemann Bach	(1710–1784)	<i>3 Duetten</i>	c. 1775	Gems Music Publications
Felice de Giardini	(1716–1796)	<i>Duetto in D</i>	c. 1769	Schott
Giovanni Battista Viotti	(1755–1824)	<i>Duetto pour deux Altos</i>		Gems Music Publications
Georg Anton Walter	(c. 1772–1842)	<i>3 Duos, Op. 3</i>	c. 1795	Gems Music Publications

Felice de Giardini, and Georg Anton Walter, which we will call “Group B” (see table 4).

### “Group C”: Mature Duets (1780–1790)

The last group of Rolla viola duets, Bl. 2, 4, 9, 13, 17, 18, 19, and the WoBI. 1–6 have entire phrases of music that are imitated from one part to another, often times flipping the melodic and accompaniment parts (see ex. 3). This seems to be the “imitation” about which Gervasoni and Kollmann were writing (and these duets are dated closer to when the two treatises were written).

This flipping of parts is then followed by more imitation, sometimes by playing the same melodic rhythm at

shorter episodes of imitation within the bar, or of two bars total in length) and probably would have been written between 1775–1780. They also seem to make an effort to be more evenly written so that both parts are interesting; however, there is still a tendency to favor the upper line with more melodic material (see ex. 2). Other viola duets from the period that also seem “transitional” in the treatment of imitation would be the ones by Wilhelm Friedemann Bach,

Example 3. Alessandro Rolla: *Duetto in re maggiore*, Bl. 17, mvmt. I. *Maestoso*, mm. 1–11.

**Maestoso**

the interval of a third or sixth and other times by having the imitation happen much more quickly within the bar. Other composers besides Rolla who wrote viola duets that employ this imitation strategy similarly are Bartelomo Bruni, Giuseppe Cambini, and Christian Stumpff, which we will call “Group C” (see table 5).

The best way to demonstrate repetition as a teaching tool is to analyze one movement from the Specifically, Rolla’s *Duetto in si bemolle maggiore*, WoBI. 1 will be analyzed for this purpose (see figures 1 and 2 and the accompanying sheet music). “Group C” viola duets so that this idea can be seen and explained with visual models.

Table 5. “Group C” viola duets (with imitation on phrases that flip parts on repeat).

COMPOSER	LIFESPAN	TITLE OF VIOLA DUETS	DATE	PUBLISHER
Antonio Bartolomeo Bruni	(1751–1821)	<i>6 Duos Concertans</i>	c. 1787	Edition Kunzelmann
Giuseppe Cambini	(1746–1825)	<i>6 Duos Concertans</i>	1784	Gems Music Publications
Giuseppe Cambini	(1746–1825)	<i>6 Duos Concertans, 2. Livre</i>		Gems Music Publications
Christian Stumpff	(1730?–1785?)	<i>6 Duos</i>	1783	Gems Music Publications

This repetition of phrases between parts functions exceptionally well as a teaching tool, because once the first part (performed by the teacher) plays the melody, the second part (performed by the student) will then get a chance to play the melody after hearing the manner in which the teacher plays it. The student will also hear how the teacher plays the accompaniment after having tried it him or herself at the beginning of the work.

The pattern of imitation shown in the breakdown of mm. 25–43 also appears in the analogous sections in mm. 44–62, 96–115, and 116–34. Within mm. 1–10 (and the analogous section 11–20) we also have unison rhythm with parallel thirds/sixths in mm. 3–4 and mm. 7–8. All of this imitation, which is encouraged in the compositional treatises of Gervasoni and Kollmann, provides opportunity for the teacher to demonstrate how

Figure 1a. An analysis of Rolla’s viola duet, WoBI. 1, (first half) in terms of imitation and its pedagogical value.

MEASURES	1–10	11–20	21–24	25–42	43	44–62	63–45
VIOLA 1	melody 1A	melody 1A	trans. mel. 1	melody 2A	transition	accomp. 2A	coda mel. 1
VIOLA 2	accomp. 1A	melody 1A	trans. acc. 1	accomp. 2A	parallel 6ths	melody 2A	coda acc. 1
KEY	B-flat major			F major			

Figure 1b. An analysis of Rolla’s viola duet, WoBI. 1, (second half) in terms of imitation and its pedagogical value.

MEASURES	66–76	77–83	84–90	91–93	94–95	96–115	116–134	135–137
VIOLA 1	melody 1B	dev .acc.1	dev. mel. 2	transition	transition	melody 2B	accomp. 2B	coda mel. 2
VIOLA 2	accomp. 1B	dev. mel.1	dev. acc. 2	par. 3rds/6ths	trans. acc. 2	accomp. 2B	melody 2B	coda acc. 2
KEY	F major	D-flat major	B-flat minor	F major		B-flat major		



Figure 2: Further breakdown of mm. 25–43.

MEASURES	25–27	28–29	30–32	33–34	35–39	40–41	42–43
VIOLA 1/2		Parallel 3rds/6ths		Quick imitation		Parallel 3rds/6ths	
KEY	F major						

these passages should be stylistically played while serving as a model for good tone and intonation. In this duet, we see a combination of the types of imitation from groups A and B, combined with the new type of preferred imitation on long phrases unique to the Group C duets, which also demonstrates that this group is more advanced in its style of writing.

### Evidence of Performances of Rolla's Duets

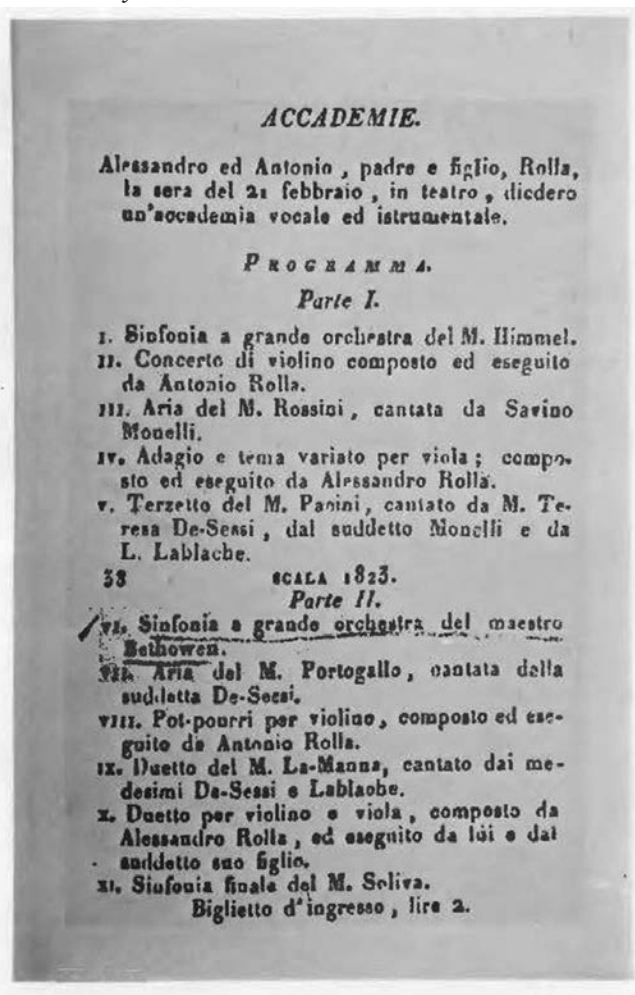
In reviewing all of the available biographies on Alessandro Rolla, there are only a couple of pieces of evidence that show his duets could have been conceived of as stage works. One of these pieces of evidence is a physical concert program for a concert performed at the Milan Conservatory of Music on Feb. 21, 1823 (fig. 3).<sup>20</sup>

Of the numerous works on this program, we can see one violin/viola duet being performed tenth on the program, which demonstrates to some degree that the string duet genre was viable for concert performances at the time. Another compelling piece of evidence comes in the form of a new music review (from 1809) of Rolla's *Tre Duetti per violino e viola*, op. 10, which states that "music works of this genre are known and popular enough among skilled musicians and amateurs. These duets here, which are concert pieces, all deserve to be [popular as well]."<sup>21</sup> To prove the point definitively that Rolla's string-duos were written with the expectation of being programmed on concerts, it would be desirable to have more than just these two sources. Additional proof for this would be probably best found with direct access to the historical holdings at the Archivo Nosedà at the Milan Conservatory.

### Accessing Rolla's Music

Gems Music Publications is in the process of publishing the complete works of Rolla. In addition to publishing all of Rolla's music as individual editions, these editions will eventually be released in large hardcover book-

Figure 3: Concert program from a concert at the Milan Conservatory.



style bound volumes of Collected Works for libraries. Currently, all of Rolla's viola duets and solo works, along with several of his viola concertos and violin-viola duets, are already published by Gems Music Publications and are available at [www.gemsmusicpublications.com](http://www.gemsmusicpublications.com).

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of Florida, and Principal Violist of the Orlando, Brevard, Peoria, and Toledo symphonies.

### Notes

1. *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Alessandro Rolla," by Antonio Rostagno, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed November 30, 2015).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. "Alessandro Rollas Produktion auf dem Gebiet des Streichduos nimmt eine sehr eigentümliche Stellung in der Musikgeschichte ein." Ulrich Drüner, "Die Streichduos von Allesandro Rolla (1757–1841) Unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung Der Duos für Violine Und Viola," *Das Orchester: Zeitschrift für Orchesterkultur Und Rundfunk-Chorwesen* 46, no. 4 (1998): 13. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own. This article is the well-researched article that exists on Rolla's string duets. Drüner is well known for the "Drüner microfilm collection" of rare viola manuscripts which is housed at the Primrose International Viola Archive at Brigham Young University.
5. Luigi Inzaghi and Luigi A Bianchi, *Allesandro Rolla: Catalogo Tematico Delle Opere*. (Milan: Nuove Edizioni, 1981). This book is the most well-known biography on Alessandro Rolla and contains the listing of all of Rolla's works as catalogued by Bianchi and Inzaghi. The listing of works shows in most cases the first few bars of music for identification purposes, and lists the libraries where the manuscripts and first editions can be found.
6. "Category: Rolla, Alessandro." IMSLP/Petrucci Music Library, 2012. [http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Rolla, Alessandro](http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Rolla,_Alessandro)
7. "Etwas heraus fallen lediglich die Duos für zwei Bratschen, die offensichtlich in Rollas Jugend, zumeist sogar in früher Jugend entstanden sein dürften; auch die spätesten dürften noch in Parma, also vor 1802 entstanden sein." Drüner, 14.
8. Christiana Vianelli, liner notes to *Alessandro Rolla: Sei Duetti a Due Viola*, performed by Francesco Lattuda and Carlo Barrato, Tactus, TC 751803, 2003, compact disc. This recording of the "Torinese" viola duets is the only one in existence, and Carlo Barrato has been a key Italian promoter for Rolla and is the person who facilitated the addition of Rolla's manuscripts to IMSLP.
9. "I duetti per 2 viole, non essendo stati pubblicati da Rolla, sono difficilmente databili, ma certamente sono stati composti primi del 1802, anno in cui Rolla lascia Parma e diviene capo d'orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano." Luigi Inzaghi, "Duetti per 2 Viole," in *Alessandro Rolla: Vita E Opera Del Grande Musicista Maestro Di Niccolò Paganini* (Milan: La Spiga, 1984), 41. This book was published after the well-known biography that Inzaghi wrote on Rolla, and he talks specifically about the different genres in which Rolla wrote.
10. "Ganz offensichtlich hat Rolla im Streichduo eine für seinen künstlerischen Ausdruckwillen besonders adäquate Kompositionsform gefunden, und so ist mir auch kein anderer Komponist bekannt, dessen Berufslaufbau von der frühesten Jugend bis ins hohe Alter ebenso treulich von der Duo-Komposition begleitet wurde." Drüner, 13.
11. Ibid.
12. *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Conservatory," by Percy Scholes, Judith Nagley, and Piers Spencer, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed Nov. 30, 2015).
13. Inzaghi and Bianchi, 39.
14. Marina V Gallarani, "La Scuola Violinistica Di Alessandro Rolla Nei Primi Anni Del Conservatorio Di Milano," in *Alessandro Rolla: Un Caposcuola Dell'arte Violinistica Lombarda: Atti Del Convegno Di Studi, Pavia, Università Degli Studi, 4–6 Maggio 2007*, ed. Mariatheresa Dellabora (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2010), 219. This book is the most recent book with scholarly research on Rolla. It has several chapters, each written by different Italian musicologists with a specific focus regarding Rolla.

15. "Carissimo Amico. Da Casa il 6 novembre 1837. Ma che! . . . stupite forse? . . . eppure . . . si signore, e colla mia età di ottant' anni e sei mesi mi è venuto lo schiribizzo di comporre tre nuovi Duetti per due violini, dedicati (come vedete) ai giovenetti studiosi, onde compensarvi." Alessandro Rolla, "Epistolario Di Autori Celebri in Musica. Lettere, Inedite, Dirette a Giovanni Ricordi." *Gazzetta Musicale Di Milano* Anno XIX, no. 46 (1861): 185.
16. "Vorstehende drey grosse konzertirende Duetten sind in der That von seltener Güte. Besonders zeichnen sich die Adagios. . . . Ansehung der nicht leicht gesetzten Passageo, können diese Duetten angehenden Konzert-Spielern auf beyden Instrumenten als Vorübungsstücke dienen." Anonymous. "Recensionen [Review]." *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung Den 10ten* [Fünfter V Jahrgang], no. 46 (1803): 766.
17. "La melodia principale per siffata maniera esser dee fra le due parti distribuita che ne risulti una piacevole alternazione della medesima, e che nel progresso dall'una all' altra parte si riconosca sempre l' unità della melodia." Carlo Gervasoni, "II. Dei Duetto Instrumentale," in *La Scuola Della Musica in 3 Parti Divisa* (Piacenza: Dai Torchj di Niccolo Orcesi, 1800), 478. This treatise is of particular importance because it is in Italian and there is a high likelihood that Rolla was familiar with the material in the treatise, and it was probably circulated among the musicians at the Milan Conservatory in Rolla's time.
18. Augustus F. C. Kollmann, "C. Sonatas for Two or More Principal Instruments, without Accompaniments," in *An Essay on Practical Musical Composition according to the Nature of That Science and the Principles of the Greatest Musical Authors* (London: Printed for the Author, 1799), 13. This treatise is also important, not that Rolla necessarily knew this particular English treatise, but rather to give strength to the fact that this trend in duet writing was agreed upon widely across Western Europe.
19. Alessandro Rolla, *10 Etüden Duette, für 2 Bratschen* (Bremen: Praeger & Mejer, 1895).
20. Inzaghi and Bianchi, 30.
21. "Musikstücke dieser Gattung sind unter geübten Musikern und Dilettanten bekannt und beliebt genug. Auch diese Duetten, die concertirend sind, verdienen beydes zu werden." Anonymous, "[Review] Tre Duetti per Violino E Viola, Composti Da Alessandro Rolla. Oper 10," *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* XII, no. 9 (Nov. 1809): 144.

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# Duetto in si bemolle maggiore per 2 viole, WoBI. I

Alessandro Rolla  
(1757-1841)

Allegro

Viola 1

Viola 2

4

8

12

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16

20

*p*

*p*

24

28

31

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# An Afternoon at Skittles: On Playing Mozart's "Kegelstatt" Trio Part II: Analyzing and Performing Musical Play

Edward Klorman

## Some Preliminaries

Any musical analysis is ultimately a kind of story, a way of conceptualizing or experiencing a passage or composition that is useful for some purpose. This concept of analysis—as *a* way, rather than *the* way, to understand an excerpt or piece—underscores the fundamentally *interpretive* nature of the enterprise. Moreover, an analyst's interpretive task is in some respects similar to a performer's.

For example, both analysts and performers engage in metaphors of musical tension and release, of striving toward goals and arriving at them, and so forth; and both are concerned with how ongoing, momentary events relate to the musical whole. In the same way that a performer's practicing or rehearsal process involves some intrinsic (if often tacit) analytical component, I would submit that the following analysis constitutes a kind of imagined or virtual performance of the "Kegelstatt" trio. To be sure, it is informed by my own experiences performing the piece (in the more conventional sense, that is, with viola in hand). The aim of this project, therefore, is not to go "from analysis to performance"—which would imply a problematic asymmetry, where only the one discipline is seen to offer something to the other—but to present an analytical interpretation that is vividly performative and (as promised in Part I) playful.

The following analytical story of the "Kegelstatt" trio indulges in the fantasy that the interplay among the three instruments in some way resembles that of their real world counterparts—Masonic brothers Anton Stadler and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, both professional musicians, together with Franziska von Jacquin, who besides being

Mozart's talented, young, aristocratic student was also sister to one of his closest friends. A more accurate representation would be to describe the story as an analytical fiction, probably informed as much by tropes found in Mozart's comic operas as by my imagined versions of Jacquin, Stadler, and Mozart.<sup>1</sup> I make no specific claims to historical authenticity in my analytical methods, nor does my interpretation of the piece attempt to decode a specific social script attributable to Mozart. Yet, in presenting a reading that resembles my own experience of the trio as a violist, I hope to describe what it feels like to play the "Kegelstatt" and to conjure an account in which the musical and the social are deeply interwoven, perhaps reflecting something of the ambiance in which the "Kegelstatt" was first played.

A final caveat pertains to my use of gendered pronouns: In an effort to represent the viola, clarinet, and piano parts as anthropomorphic characters, I will refer to them with human pronouns (e.g., "The piano interrupts the viola with *her* entrance," rather than "with *its* entrance"). While this has the benefit of affording the characters the dignity of human status, it has the drawback of introducing a certain measure of "gender trouble." As a convention, I will generally use male pronouns for the clarinet and viola characters, reserving female pronouns for the piano character.<sup>2</sup>

This convention applies in a clear way for most of the piece, when I interpret each instrument as representing a single, independent character. However, certain musical contexts invite exceptions to this one-to-one correspondence. For instance, the first movement opens with the viola and piano playing as a composite, unison

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bass statement (mm. 1–2), answered by a treble-register, solo-piano response (mm. 3–4); in such passages, I will designate the composite bass statement as a single character (on account of the unison, even though it is realized by two players), and I will use male pronouns (on account of its status as the bass voice). In very rare instances, musical context may invite interpreting the piano's two hands as distinct characters, of which I refer to the lower as male and the higher as female (even though they are realized by a single player).

Readers will wish to follow the annotated score [provided here](#). Alternatively, readers may also follow the score in a [video format](#) in which the annotations are animated in sync with a recording by clarinetist Charles Neidich, pianist Liza Stepanova, and the author.

### Andante

As the first movement gets underway, it is not yet established just what kind of composition for three instruments this will be: a piano sonata with clarinet and viola accompaniment? a quasi-clarinet concerto, with piano and viola standing in as *ripieno* ensemble?<sup>3</sup> In most any eighteenth-century chamber formation, a keyboard can rely on some bass instrument to bolster her left hand, but who in this ensemble might be inclined (and able) to provide such support?<sup>4</sup> As noted in Part I, whereas string quartet players might reasonably approach a new piece with certain generic expectations of how the parts will interact, here the clarinet, viola, and piano must establish the terms of their intercourse only as they go along; in so doing, they invent a new genre. How will these three dissimilar instruments find common ground to “play” together (in both senses of the word)?

The movement begins as a halting exchange between two parties.<sup>5</sup> The unison bass-line persona (viola plus piano) makes an elaborate opening proposition (mm. 1–2): his chordal entrance and sweeping arpeggio, suggestive of an exaggerated, almost theatrical bow, makes for an elaborate display, but his elegant *grupetto* figure and switch from *forte* to *piano* signify his efforts to adopt a refined manner as he addresses a lady. The solo-piano persona responds coquettishly (mm. 3–4): her reaction ostensibly skirts his advance by responding with a contrasting idea with parlando declamation (“who, me?”), but in another sense, her reply invites him back in, since her V<sup>6</sup> harmony requires a resolution.

And so the unison bass-line persona makes a second, harmonically intensified statement (mm. 5–6), eliciting from the piano another coy riposte (mm. 7–8).

Enter the suave clarinet, who deftly spins the *grupetto* figure into a longer idea that very nearly leads to a cadence in m. 12 . . . only to elide his cadential note at the last moment, as the piano effects a deceptive resolution from V to VI.<sup>6</sup> The clarinet's clever choice to rest on the downbeat of m. 12 allows him to re-enter with a lead-in that invites the piano's right hand, who all-too-willingly takes up the clarinet's idea and leads to a cadence in m. 16. The slight chromatic intensifications in the piano's version—B-natural in m. 13 and G-flat in m. 14—reflect her eagerness not only to adopt but also to develop the clarinet's idea. The clarinet, for his part, participates intimately in the cadential action through a parallel-thirds duet with the piano's right hand (mm. 15–16), while the viola remains relegated to a lesser, accompanimental role. It is clear who has won the lady's favor and who has been pushed aside, at least for now.

The cadential arrival in m. 16 overlaps with the first of three statements in the piano's left hand (mm. 16, 18, and 20), seemingly a new incarnation of the unison bass-line character from mm. 1–2, only now played by the piano's left hand alone. That the left-hand entrances seem to emphatically interrupt the right-hand cadences encourages hearing the two hands as separate characters at this juncture.<sup>7</sup> “Now I will rejoin your party,” the left hand seems to assert, although without much social grace, since his entrances repeatedly interrupt just as the others are trying to achieve cadential repose. Moreover, as the others are attempting to cadence on the tonic harmony, his B-naturals repeatedly force a swerve toward the relative minor, each time undoing the just-achieved cadential closure.

Unfazed, the clarinet leads the full company in a codetta to the primary theme (mm. 17–20)<sup>8</sup> that resolves each of the left-hand piano motions to C minor with a return to the E-flat tonic. “As nice as this is,” thinks the piano, “we can't stay in E-flat forever. This is supposed to be sonata form, so perhaps I can use the C-minor harmony to help us move on to B-flat major for some new adventures.” And so, seizing the characteristic interval of the clarinet's codetta idea (concert G–C, as in mm. 17

and 19), she uses the same interval in m. 21 to initiate a concise transition that leads to an emphatic half cadence in the dominant key (m. 24)—one that involves some conspicuous, minor-mode inflection (G-flat–F).<sup>9</sup>

The resourceful clarinet introduces a subordinate theme based on the melodic cadence of the primary theme (first ventured by him in mm. 11–12 though only properly completed by the piano in mm. 15–16); this, in turn, is based on the movement's opening gesture (see ex. 1).

Example 1: Derivation of subordinate theme (i)

a. Subordinate theme (mm. 25–26)



b. Cadential idea from primary theme (mm. 15–16)



c. Opening *gruppetto* gesture (mm. 1–2)



The viola, long since edged out of the limelight, finds his way nearer to the soloistic clarinet, at first through an inconspicuous pedal tone (mm. 28–30) and then by joining the clarinet in a close duet (mm. 31–35). As the piano's ornamented repetition of the subordinate theme (mm. 35ff.), accompanied by the viola and then also clarinet, there is mounting suspense when an expansion of the predominant (II<sup>6</sup>) harmony (mm. 43–44) delays the cadence.<sup>10</sup> But by the arrival of the cadential  $\frac{6}{4}$  (m. 45), all three parties seem to be having a grand time: the piano's descending (mostly diatonic) scale is answered in good humor by a chromatic, ascending one in the clarinet. Through the *crescendo* and the simultaneous trills in the viola and piano, all parties show their zeal for the grand cadence in m. 47, which marks the end of the subordinate theme.

The ensuing closing section is parallel to the music that followed the primary theme's cadence (compare mm. 16ff. and mm. 47ff.), at least at first. But the shadowy piano left-hand character soon begins mixing in murky tones (D-flat and E-natural, mm. 51ff.) that push the harmony in an unexpected direction. Typical closing sections tend to reinforce the arrival of the new key in preparation for the expositional repeat. Instead of emphasizing B-flat major, however, this passage lingers on a C dominant-seventh harmony tinged with mysterious, minor-mode inflections (D-flats, heard as f $\flat$  in F minor). Whereas the bass line's *gruppetto* figure had been associated with tonal stability and establishment at the movement's outset, here the left hand uses it instead to ask questions: "Will the key of F minor come next after the fermata? What happens if we skip the expositional repeat and I nudge things over there instead?"

The clarinet, preferring to waive the expositional repeat and avoid the minor mode at the start of the development, opts instead for a road less traveled. Arriving via chromatic-median relation in A-flat major, he introduces a new statement of the subordinate theme. His choice to begin the development with the subordinate theme reflects a parallelism he recognizes between mm. 53–54 (D-flat–C in the bass) and the cadence of m. 24 (G-flat–F). As the clarinet gets underway, the viola enters on the upbeat to m. 58 with his innocuous pedal-tone accompaniment. But soon after he engages the clarinet in a heated exchange (mm. 60ff.) that chromatically intensifies the discourse and nudges it toward C minor, arriving at a half cadence in m. 64. As the cadential harmony is prolonged with a pedal tone (mm. 64–69), the viola and piano's right hand finally have the exchange of the *gruppetto* figure that the viola might have hoped for at the movement's outset, although the intensity of the piano's dissonant statements (F-sharp diminished seventh over a G pedal, concurrent with the clarinet's painful diminished fourth) suggests circumstances that make the exchange difficult to enjoy. "How will we find our way home to E-flat major from here?" they wonder. But together they find a solution: the piano (mm. 70–71) transforms the G major triad into a B diminished  $\frac{4}{3}$  chord, which the viola further transforms into a B-flat dominant-seventh chord (mm. 72–73) through the reinterpretation of B-natural as C-flat, thus preparing the return.



Compared to the exposition's tentative opening, the recapitulation is conspicuously congenial (ex. 2). The *gruppetto* figure is passed around with imitations in successively higher registers on each beat, and a chuckling duet between viola and piano's right hand (mm. 77–78 and 81–82) fills in what had been an awkward silence in the exposition (cf. mm. 4–5 and 8–9).

The coda emphasizes a friendly exchange of the *gruppetto* figure among the three instruments in mm. 118–22 and 124–26. The movement ends in pure delight: the *leggero* sextuplet figure (mm. 127ff.) is passed around four registers as the clarinet and viola, imitating a pair of horns, play “farewell” gestures. “That turned out to be pretty fun,” they seem to agree, smiling. “What’s next?”

#### Example 2: Comparison of opening vs. recapitulation (i)

##### a. Opening: a tentative exchange

The musical score for the opening (measures 1-4) is in 3/8 time, B-flat major, and marked 'Andante'. It shows a tentative exchange between the instruments. The piano's right hand (RH) and left hand (LH) both play a descending eighth-note pattern, with the RH starting on a half note and the LH on a quarter note. Dynamics of forte (f) and piano (p) are indicated.

##### b. Recapitulation: a group of friends

The musical score for the recapitulation (measures 74-78) is in 3/8 time, B-flat major, and marked 'Andante'. It features a more confident and joyful exchange between the instruments. The piano's RH and LH both play a descending eighth-note pattern, with the RH starting on a half note and the LH on a quarter note. Dynamics of forte (f) and piano (p) are indicated.

The remainder of the recapitulation proceeds more or less by the book, in line with expositional precedent. A few noteworthy moments include mm. 85–86 (where the piano's left-hand D-flat–C nudges the theme flatward (counterclockwise on the circle of fifths) and recalls the earlier left-hand D-flat–C in mm. 52–54). The viola finally gets a chance to play the subordinate theme (mm. 98–107), which ushers in a “one-more-time” repetition that begins in the piano's right hand (mm. 107–8) and comes to involve the complete ensemble, leading to the structural cadence in m. 113.<sup>11</sup>

#### Menuetto

The sole minuet among Mozart's trios with keyboard, this movement gives the impression at the outset of a trio imitating a grand ballroom ensemble—a “toy” orchestra, as it were—on account of the *tutti* scoring in *forte* dynamic; the full, chordal voicing in the piano's right hand; and the doubling of both the melody (clarinet and piano's right hand) and the bass (octaves in piano's left hand). As in many stylized dance pieces, this movement's wit is found in its metrical interplay. The opening four-bar statement establishes a minor detail of rhythmic

design that becomes a point of fascination throughout the piece: the three-quarter-note figure in the bass line (m. 1) is passed to the viola (m. 2), then to the melody shared by the clarinet and piano's right hand (m. 3), and back to the bass line to mark a weak cadence (m. 4). By "three-quarter-note figure," I mean a discrete measure of all quarter notes both preceded and followed by some other rhythmic value and most commonly (especially in the bass) played with detached articulation.<sup>12</sup>

In m. 5, the piano's left hand instigates a second cycle of passing the three-quarter-note figures, except that the viola bungles the exchange by playing together *with* the bass (in m. 5) instead of in the *following* measure. Bereft of the regulation of the three-quarter-note imitations to reinforce the downbeats, mm. 6–7 become rhythmically freer. That is, among the eighth notes spinning forth in the melody, the greatest emphasis falls on the second beat of m. 6, and in m. 7 the bass plus viola respond with a similar emphasis by entering after a hiatus on the second beat.

This metrical irregularity seems to elicit a final statement from the solo piano—a "toy" piano within our "toy" orchestra, playing in *piano* dynamic and with both hands in treble register. If mm. 1–8 imitate an orchestral *tutti*,

mm. 9–12 simulate the unaccompanied upper strings of an orchestral texture, and the piano accomplishes a modulation to B-flat and new-key cadence without the aid of the viola or clarinet. The piano's syncopated entrances, emphasizing the third beats, comment on earlier metrical irregularities that similarly emphasized "wrong" beats. "Pay close attention, gentlemen," she says mischievously. "With this sleight of hand, I can manipulate the meter (mm. 9–10). But now (m. 11), with these three quarter notes, I can set it right again. See, that three-quarter-note figure is what you were supposed to be doing all along! And while I'm at it, I'll take care of modulating to the dominant and reaching a cadence too. No need for your help!" The clarinet offers a dismissive retort (upbeat to m. 12), "Oh, it's all in good fun. Let's play it again—follow me this way for the repeat!"

The piano's four-bar solo statement occupies a curious status: it achieves the important tasks of the modulation, new-key cadence, and restoration of the three-quarter-note motive, yet the solo-piano instrumentation, register, and dynamic confer a parenthetical quality. The statement's extraneous character is illustrated through a comparison of the following hypothetical recomposition with Mozart's first reprise (ex. 3).

Example 3: Recomposition of first reprise (ii)

Example 3 (which retains Mozart's mm. 1–4 and recomposes the rest, especially mm. 7–8) strictly maintains the pattern of passing the three-quarter-note figure every measure. This results in a highly regular, if rather foursquare, parallel period that is self-sufficient as the minuet's first reprise. By comparison, the rhythmic freedom in mm. 6–8 of Mozart's version is palpable. Since a minuet's first reprise (especially a short one) may end on either a half cadence in the tonic key or an authentic cadence in the new key, the piano's solo statement in mm. 9–12 is in a certain sense superfluous. But in Mozart's version, as the piano elects to make the modulation and new-key cadence, the piano suggests a more ambitious type of minuet, implying that more games will be afoot in the second reprise.

The second reprise is indeed richer in metrical play. The opening four bars (mm. 13–16, imitating mm. 1–4) almost reinstate the passing of the three-quarter-note figure, except that the viola once again misses his turn in m. 14; this time, the other players simply proceed without him to complete the four-bar statement. The “toy” piano then makes a surprising move in mm. 17–18: whereas the entire minuet has thus far been organized in regular units of four measures, mm. 17–18 interpolate an unexpected echo of the previous two bars, thus bypassing the proper place for the viola's statement of the three-quarter-note figure. (That is, if the viola is meant to play in the second bar of a four-bar unit, the piano has essentially circumvented the issue by proceeding directly to the third and fourth bars.) Is the piano being whimsical by inserting a two-bar parenthesis within the established four-bar phrase rhythm? Or is she a stickler, drawing attention to the viola's previous mistakes? Or is she resourceful, finding a solution to accommodate the undependable viola?<sup>13</sup>

Whatever the piano's motivations, the viola reacts with sudden alertness by jumping in to provide the requisite bass line in m. 18 (cf. mm. 4 and 16 in the piano's left hand). The clarinet introduces a new idea in mm. 19–20: a  $3 \times \frac{2}{4}$  *imbroglio* (or hemiola) figure,<sup>14</sup> which is articulated not only by his own contour but by the imitative entrances in all parts at intervals of two quarter notes. Having united as a cohort, they beat their way to the dominant with the equivalent of three incisive quarter notes in m. 21, this being the first homorhythmic, *tutti* statement of the three-note figure.

Whereas the dominant arrival at the end of a contrasting middle is typically a point of clarity in rounded binary form, here it ushers in the minuet's most ambiguous passage in terms of both phrase rhythm and formal function. We have noted that, up to this point, the minuet has been composed in four-bar units, save for the two-bar echo in mm. 17–18; the metrical strength of odd-numbered bars has remained unperturbed. Thus long notes in the piano's left hand commencing in mm. 22 and 24 go against the grain, attempting to establish the even-numbered bars as strong.

This, the first serious disagreement over the strength of odd vs. even bars, is a setback to the movement's recapitulatory process. Energized by an argument, the bass abandons the dominant pedal for a deceptive resolution to VI, which ushers in a corrupted and misplaced return of the main theme at mm. 27–28—but in the wrong part (piano's left hand, joined by the viola in m. 28) and the wrong key (G minor). But the clarinet (mm. 28–29) insists, “Come, now: this is my tune, and the recapitulation belongs in B-flat major!”<sup>15</sup> The ensuing canon between the piano's left hand and the clarinet contributes to the remarkable metrical unclarity; even the  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter is contested somewhat by the clarinet's syncopations emphasizing the third beats (mm. 32–34, recalling the piano's solo statement in mm. 9–12). The clarinet's climbing scale reaches a climax as the passage culminates in a grand hemiola cadence (mm. 35–36, leading to an authentic cadence in m. 37).<sup>16</sup> Then the “toy” piano chimes in, “I bet you're wondering precisely where the recapitulation occurred back there. But never mind all that, since it's over by now. Just let me play my little solo—in the tonic this time—and we'll be all done.”

But all is not done: the minuet's trio lies ahead. A full analysis of the trio, in all its metrical complexity, is beyond the scope of this article, but I wish to underscore some important links between the trio and minuet. The three-quarter-note figure that had been a point of fixation throughout the minuet returns in the clarinet in the trio's first measure (m. 42). When the clarinet repeats the idea in m. 46, it seems that four-measure cycles are being inaugurated (as in the minuet). Only the clarinet subversively upsets the pattern he had begun to establish by entering one bar too soon, in m. 49 (after only three bars) and again in m. 52. “Hey, are we dancing this minuet in units of four bars or three?” the others object.

Seeking to “reckon the matter out,” the piano develops the clarinet’s statements into a complex little canon (mm. 55ff.), only to confuse the  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter beyond recognition with several measures of *imbroglio*. The clarinet re-enters just in time to clarify the meter before the reprise-ending cadence. But the issue of the four-bar vs. three-bar phrase rhythm remains an unresolved point of tension throughout the trio.<sup>17</sup>

Returning to the trio’s first measure: the clarinet’s first statement stands in neutral tonal territory, at the border between the B-flat-major minuet and the G-minor trio, at the precipice of a nascent modulation. The clarinet thus seems to recall the minuet’s problematic recapitulation,

which likewise involved a conflict between G minor (the “wrong” key, advocated by the piano’s left hand) and B-flat major (the “right” key, supported by the clarinet). The trio’s own recapitulation features a similar conflict between the same two characters; note the consecutive statements of the trio’s main motive in the piano’s left hand (m. 72), anticipating the clarinet’s recapitulation in the following bar (ex. 4). The minuet’s lighthearted conflicts thus seem to linger in the more serious trio. But not too serious, since the trio’s intense demeanor is soon let go in the playful transition back to the minuet (mm. 95–101).

#### Example 4: Two problematic rounded-binary recapitulations (ii)

##### a. Minuet

Clarinet recapitulation in B $\flat$  (but over G-minor harmony)

Piano (l.h.) recapitulation (in G minor?!)

##### b. Trio

Recapitulation

Piano (l.h.) anticipates  
recapitulation motive



The movement's coda restores the passing of the minuet's three-quarter-note figure, bar by bar—now from clarinet to the piano's left hand to the piano's right hand.<sup>18</sup> The viola, who was never the best at passing the quarter-note figure anyway, has found other material with which to occupy himself. “But enough of the three-quarter-note gesture,” the viola thinks, “what will be our next game?”

### Rondeaux: Allegretto

As the “Kegelstatt” trio lacks an Allegro first movement, its Allegretto finale stands as the most spirited of its three movements. The episodic nature of rondo form allows many opportunities for the instruments to assume diverse roles and combinations throughout. The rondo theme, based on the subordinate theme from the first movement (see ex. 5),<sup>19</sup> is introduced by the clarinet with piano accompaniment (m. 18) and subsequently repeated, with embellishments, by the piano with viola accompaniment (mm. 9–16).

Example 5:  $\hat{5}-\hat{6}-\hat{7}-\hat{8}$  motive

a. Subordinate theme (i)



b. Rondo theme (iii)



As the first episode gets underway—a clarinet melody with piano accompaniment (mm. 17–23) that gives way to an imitation piano concerto (mm. 24–35)—it becomes clear that the poor viola is the only one who has not yet carried the melody (even as the flamboyant piano revels in the limelight). So when the clarinet begins the next section of the episode as a transposed restatement of the rondo theme (mm. 36ff.), the viola chimes in with “me too” imitations, edging his way into a close duet with the clarinet by the cadence in m. 43. The piano follows up with another extended imitation-concerto passage (mm. 43–58), showing off her virtuoso skills; in the latter half of her display (mm. 51ff.), the clarinet and viola provide amused approval in the form of laughing gestures

(“ha ha ha!”). Having emerged as concerto soloist, the piano takes the liberty of presenting the second (tonic-key) statement of the rondo theme entirely on her own (mm. 59–66).

The viola, expressing his frustration at repeated slights, launches into the second episode in a stormy C minor. As the episode begins, the viola's Lombard rhythms (m. 67) and *coup d'archet* (bow retake) gesture on a dissonant chord (m. 68) express an *agitato* mood. But as the consequent phrase (mm. 71–76) modulates to E-flat major, the mood brightens and the viola lapses into an effusive singing style, accompanied by the clarinet.<sup>20</sup> “That's right,” he says, “*this* is the key I eventually want to sing in the next time the rondo theme comes around. And, Herr Clarinet, I'm perfectly content for you to accompany me, thank you very much. So, if you please, do stay down in that chalumeau register for a while.” The solo piano contributes the contrasting middle (mm. 77–80) in the form of a sequence that prepares a return to C minor. However, as the viola recapitulates the episode's

main theme (mm. 81ff.), he hardly imagines that the clarinet will swoop in out of nowhere to interrupt him in m. 85, taking over “his” theme and playing up in the clarion register, thus forcing the viola once again into an accompanimental role. “I think that's more like it,” says the clarinet. “Isn't it more natural this way, with me playing the melody?”

Although the episode proper ends in m. 90, the piano initiates a retransition (mm. 91ff.) that muses on the previous two bars—that is, on the very melodic figure and triplet accompaniment over which the clarinet and viola had quarreled. In opening the subject back up, the piano seems to set the two of them off again (middle of m. 92), inciting what has turned into a three-way dispute. But somehow, as the sequence arrives in m. 97 at the goal harmony of B-flat major (the dominant that prepares for the return of the rondo theme), the ensemble's tensions

seem to have been worked out, and the viola emerges as soloist in his most ostentatious display so far. He even performs the important harmonic task of introducing the chordal seventh (m. 102) to signal the impending thematic return. And, lo, after his triumphant chord (m. 106), the culmination of his virtuoso labors, he finds himself alone and playing an *Eingang* (lead-in) to the next statement of the rondo theme (mm. 108–15). “Can it be? Is it really, finally my turn?” he gleams, almost incredulous at his good fortune. The piano joins him with a supportive accompaniment that foregrounds ornate, quasi-*extempore* triplets. But she in no way challenges the viola for the melody, and he certainly welcomes this, their first extended duet together.<sup>21</sup>

All instruments having played the rondo theme and having been showcased in various ways, the trio comes together as an ensemble in the third episode (mm. 116–68). Here, the clarinet and viola enjoy a parallel-thirds duet shadowed an octave lower by the piano’s right hand. “What exactly was our earlier disagreement about?” the clarinet asks. “Oh, it hardly matters anymore,” replies the cheery viola, “and besides, it’s more fun to play together this way anyhow.”

The final statement of the rondo refrain begins as a clarinet/piano duet (mm. 168ff.) and ends as a boisterous party (mm. 176ff.).<sup>22</sup> A climactic moment arrives in mm. 189–90, when all three players present the rondo theme together, in three different octaves, the piano’s statement bedecked with a virtuoso run and turn ornament. The coda introduces one new game involving a *leggiere* parallel-thirds duet between clarinet and viola, interspersed with run figures in the piano’s right hand (mm. 192–201), only for the roles to be reversed in the second round (mm. 201–12). Part of the fun, or perhaps the challenge, is that the runs that the piano tosses off so easily are more difficult for the others to execute, particularly the clarinet if he observes Mozart’s unslurred articulation.<sup>23</sup> At this point, one can scarcely recall the reserved, almost cautious way these three players interacted at the outset of the first movement. By now, clarinet, viola, and piano have become three friends having a marvelously amusing time together. Musical carousing with this much spirit, among such good friends, is better than *Kegelspiel* any day!

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## Notes

1. Just as Eric Blom’s poetic hearing of “an Emily Brontë-like quality of smouldering passion” in the “Kegelstatt” trio is a product of his own fantasy, the narrative and metaphorical elements in my interpretation are without question creations of my own imagination. Blom, *Mozart*, rev. ed. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1966), 249. For a broader view of music analysis as fiction, see Marion A. Guck, “Analytical Fictions,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 16, no. 2 (Autumn 1994): 217–30.
2. This convention is largely arbitrary, although it does correspond to the genders of the original players of each part: Franziska von Jacquin (keyboard), Anton Stadler (clarinet), and W. A. Mozart (viola). This, in turn, reflects practices of the late-eighteenth century, when performance on string and wind instruments was generally reserved for men, whereas women enjoyed more equal treatment as keyboard players.
3. Whereas the clarinet tends to dominate performances on modern instruments (if the players do not adjust the balance accordingly), performances on period instruments benefit from a more homogeneous blend especially between viola and clarinet. Listen, for example, to the recordings by Charles Neidich, Jürgen Kussmaul, and Robert Levin (Sony Classical SK 53 366) or by Elmar Schmid, Erich Höbarth, and András Schiff (Teldec 4509-99205-2); the latter recording was made using Mozart’s fortepiano and viola with a copy of Stadler’s clarinet. See also John Irving’s documentary *Mozart’s “Kegelstatt” Trio K. 498: An Eighteenth-Century Conversation*, which includes a performance on period instruments (London: Institute for Musical Research, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2013).

4. This issue seems to motivate the octave doublings in the piano's left hand in many passages in which the viola and clarinet both play sustained material (e.g., mm. 13–15 of the first movement and throughout much of the minuet). It may also figure into the viola joining the piano to form a composite, unison-bass-line texture in the opening of the first movement.
5. As noted above, I am interpreting the unison viola/piano voice as a single, composite persona. A reader who is troubled by my interpretation of the piano's statement (with the viola) in mm. 1–2 as a different character from the piano's statement (alone) in mm. 3–4 could opt to reformulate my analysis as an exchange between two musical gestures instead of two instrumental personae.
6. Regarding the clarinet's lack of a melodic cadential note on the downbeat of m. 12, different interpretations are possible. Did the piano's deceptive resolution from V to VI prompt the clarinet's rest? Or did the clarinet's intention to rest somehow prompt the piano's deceptive resolution?
7. I have temporarily adopted male pronouns for the piano's left hand for this passage. The impression that the left hand interrupts the other parts in mm. 16, 18, and 20 depends in part on the performed dynamics. The *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* accepts the *forte* markings on these downbeats, in all parts, based on the first edition. Mozart's manuscript contains no dynamic markings in these measures. To enhance the sense of interruption, one possible performance choice would be for the left hand only to enter with *fortepiano* (imitating m. 1), while the other parts complete their cadences in *piano*.
8. I use the terms *primary theme* and *subordinate theme* to designate what traditionally have been called the "first" and "second" themes of a sonata-form exposition, respectively. The term "codetta" refers to a brief, post-cadential passage that follows either a primary or subordinate theme, typically emphasizing the harmony on which the theme's cadence has arrived. For further background, see William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
9. By around m. 21, when the piano's right hand comes to the fore, one may retroactively recognize the transition as having begun already in m. 16. In other words, mm. 16ff. stands as a codetta to the primary theme that "becomes" a transition.
10. More precisely, this phrase is expanded relative to the model in mm. 25–34, an expanded sentence whose presentation phrase comprises two statements of a three-bar basic idea, followed by a typical, four-bar continuation/cadential segment. The restatement in the piano tracks the model measure-for-measure until m. 43, when the expansion of the predominant begins.
11. On "one-more-time" repetitions, see Janet Schmalfeldt, "Cadential Processes: The Evaded Cadence and the 'One More Time' Technique." *Journal of Musicological Research* 12 (1992): 1–52.
12. The minuet's three-quarter-note figures may originate in various three-eighth-note statements from the Andante first movement (e.g., second half of m. 1, m. 3, and especially mm. 25–26, which recall the detached articulation of m. 3 and anticipate that of the minuet's statements). Given the difference in tempo, the Andante's eighth notes are performed at roughly the same speed as the minuet's quarters.
13. I am grateful to Rowland Moseley (personal communication) for suggesting these three possible motivations for the piano's two-bar echo to me.
14. Late-eighteenth-century musicians observed a distinction between hemiola (associated with *stile antico* music) and the more modern, often comic type of metrical play known as *imbroglio* (or *Verwirrung*, German for "confusion"). See Danuta Mirka, *Metric Manipulations in Haydn and Mozart: Chamber Music for Strings, 1787–1791* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 135–51 and 159–64. See also Floyd K. Grave, "Metrical Dissonance in Haydn," *Journal of Musicology* 13 (Spring 1995): 168–202.

15. The conflict between the bass's G-minor "recapitulation" (m. 27) and the clarinet's B-flat-major one (m. 28) relates directly to the metrical conflict introduced by the bass in m. 22, since the recapitulation is meant to commence on a strong bar (by parallelism with previous statements of the theme commencing in mm. 1, 5, and 13).
16. The hemiola is strongly articulated in the piano's left hand and in the viola and to some extent also in the clarinet's melodic contour. The hemiola grouping is less evident in the piano's right hand, despite the fact that it largely shadows the clarinet in parallel motion.
17. For a detailed treatment of these issues, see my *Mozart's Music of Friends*, chapter 6.
18. This juncture makes explicit the connection between the trio's materials and the minuet's bar-by-bar exchanges of three-quarter-note figures.
19. This particular  $\hat{5}-\hat{6}-\hat{7}-\hat{8}$  motive is originally introduced by the clarinet (movement 1, m. 28) as a varied repetition of the subordinate theme's basic idea. Although that original statement appears in B-flat major, example 5 reproduces the theme as it appears in the recapitulation in E-flat major, which makes its resemblance to the rondo's main theme more apparent. Yet another motivic connection (suggested to me by Patrick McCreless, personal communication) is at the climax of the minuet, mm. 30–35; the clarinet's scale ascends a full octave from B-flat to B-flat, but the upper tetrachord ( $\hat{5}$ -sharp- $\hat{5}-\hat{6}-\hat{7}-\hat{8}$ ) receives dynamic emphasis that intensifies the drive to the highpoint.
20. The consequent phrase's effusiveness is expressed by its two extra measures (mm. 73–74) relative to its antecedent (mm. 67–70).
21. After the viola's failed bid for a duet with the piano at the outset of the first movement, his next opportunity in the same movement (mm. 98ff.) was again thwarted by the entrance of the clarinet only three bars later. Their extended duet in the finale, spanning mm. 108–15 (with the clarinet resting), thus fulfills a long-sought wish.
22. Mozart, in fact, revised his original version of the passage to increase the "boisterous" element. The autograph shows that the effervescent passage in mm. 176–84 was a later insertion; mm. 175 and 185 were originally contiguous.
23. A comparable example occurs in the first movement of Mozart's Clarinet Quintet: the arpeggio figuration of the clarinet's first entrance (mm. 7–9) is highly idiomatic for that instrument but is far more challenging for the others—who must contend with string crossings—as they exchange the same figure throughout the development section (mm. 89–114).

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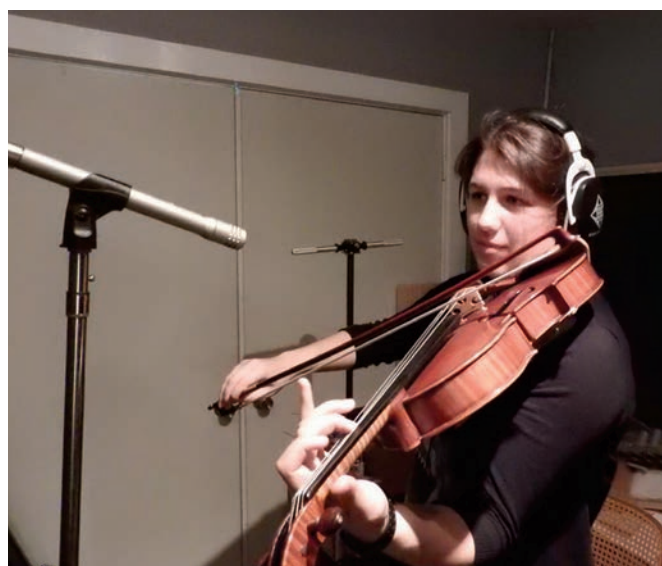
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# Reflections of a Hybrid Violist

Emilie Catlett



*Emilie Catlett recording at Beebe Gunn Studio (Houston, TX).  
Photo credit: Garreth Broesche*

*With a formative background in both classical music and American roots, Violist-fiddler Emilie Catlett represents an emerging archetype of collegiate and professional violists. As her undergraduate studies at the University of Houston's Moores School of Music draw to a close, Emilie shares some of the highlights, discoveries, and challenges of her unique musical journey.*

## A New Sensation

As I write this, in mid-April of 2016, I am realizing that the past five years of my musical education finally clicked about a week ago. I experienced a new sensation following two different performances on the stage of Dudley Recital Hall at the University of Houston's Moores School of Music.

The feeling came after performing Nino Rota's *Intermezzo for Viola and Piano* as part of a viola studio recital, but also after playing a bluesy "Take Me Out to the Ballgame"

with Austin, TX jazz guitarist/clarinetist Stanley Smith. Something about those two performances felt different from any of my other undergraduate performances, but I needed some time to process the experience and listen to the recordings before I could identify it.

As I was woodshedding some spots for an upcoming opera performance, it hit me: the unfamiliar feeling was *satisfaction*. In both performances, the stage was hot, my hands were cold, and I knew that I probably performed better in my lesson earlier in the week. However, in both performances, I was (mostly) comfortable with myself onstage. I was confident that when I picked up my viola and played, I would give a piece of myself to the audience.

I was switching between two different languages without the fear of being misunderstood by my listeners. For the first time, I left the stage feeling satisfied that my audience heard and felt *Intermezzo* and "Ballgame," as I meant to express them.

## Grappling with a Complex Identity

In 2011, I dove face-first into a viola performance degree knowing little about what it would entail. My degree program put me in symphony, opera, and even ballet orchestras, and it also placed me in the hands of a very patient classical viola professor, Wayne Brooks, longtime Principal Violist of the Houston Symphony. My undergraduate studies exposed me to some fantastic and inspired musicians and peers, but violists like myself who were eager to explore everything from J. S. Bach to Woody Guthrie were hard to come by.

I don't mean to suggest that my colleagues lacked passion—far from it! Everyone was on fire about something, and their violas were extensions of their interests. It just seemed that everyone around me entered

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music school knowing who they were as musicians, who they wanted to become, and what kind of music knocked the black performance stockings from their feet.

In contrast, I entered music school with a strong background in Texas-style fiddling; four years of high school orchestra; diverse bits of music theory and tunes learned at summer fiddle camps; a mad, mad crush on the viola C-string; and no clues about what I might do with any of it. As I approach the end of my undergraduate studies, I now see myself emerging as a classical violist-fiddler hybrid.

I identify as a hybrid musician<sup>1</sup> because I have been unable to separate myself from either part of my musical background since I started college. Every fall and spring, I studied the music of Brahms, Bruckner, Strauss, and others as I performed in symphony, opera, and ballet orchestras. In the summer, when my friends went to Round Top, Aspen, and the Texas Music Festival, I ran off to fiddle camp and had a ball.

Needless to say, my performance degree challenged me in different ways from fiddle camp. The first challenge might be pretty obvious to classically trained string players: developing and adhering to a consistent technique.

### **Coming to Terms with Divergent Pedagogies and Technical Approaches**

Generally, the fiddling world teaches its students by ear. The focus is on learning tunes; technique is rarely taught in isolation for its own sake. The technique that emerges is usually quite different from the results of classical training.<sup>2</sup>

If you visit a jam session, you will notice that no two bow-holds or left hands look alike. Consequently, no two fiddlers sound exactly alike. Blending with others in a section is not a primary concern. Fiddlers need to develop a unique sound that cuts through a band, and they often amplify with microphones or pickups.

Fiddlers also learn their repertoire differently. Realizing and interpreting a written score exactly as written is not the typical approach to learning a tune. In fact, you will rarely hear a fiddler play a tune the same way more than once. My fiddle teacher, Dale Morris, Sr., did give me sheet music for the tunes he taught me, but not before I learned each tune aurally.

The learning process went like this: Dale would play a section of a tune, and I would play it back to him. Eventually, I would internalize the basic tune; then Dale would pick up his guitar and accompany me. I would put the finishing touches on each tune, filling in any memory gaps with double stops or turnarounds of my own invention. Creativity and improvisation were part of the process of refining and perfecting my repertoire.

Dale would supplement my learning process by playing recordings of other fiddlers. I was to mimic the tone and phrasing of old-time Texas fiddlers like Eck Robertson, Terry Morris, Mark O'Connor, and many others. Studying under Dale, I developed a sensitive ear and a body trained to respond to what I was hearing. These skills certainly helped me when I needed to memorize a classical piece for a recital or jury, but they did not teach me how to maintain a consistent, disciplined sound of my own.

In most classical environments, playing with a completely different tone each day is not the goal. To say that this was frustrating for my mentor, Wayne Brooks, and myself, would be an understatement.

Mr. Brooks plays with a naturally consistent and easy technique. I mean, he is able to create a thousand different sounds by changing very little about the contact between his bow and strings, but in contrast to where I was coming from, his fundamental approach to tone production is efficient, consistent, highly controlled, and intentional rather than incidental.

When our lessons focused on technique, as they very often did, I would watch his right arm from various angles and distances. Eventually, my difficulties became less about my arm and more about my right fingers. My fingers did not move with my bow very well, if they moved at all. They remained rigid when they should have been acting as “shock absorbers.”

When the little muscles do not respond with the big ones, drawing a straight bow is difficult, and the big muscles overcompensate. Kreutzer études and long tones would offer some progress, but I often found myself stuck.

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In the semester before my junior recital, Mr. Brooks mandated that I play everything (literally, everything) in the lowest four inches of the bow, preferably the lowest two, if I could manage it. This was drastic, but something changed: my fingers freely moved, but they were now initiating motions that should have been reserved for my forearm. In short, we fixed a problem...but not really. In my junior recital, I could pull a decent sound from my instrument, but bow alignment was still a problem. We had to find a happy medium.

I finally began to make real progress on my viola-bow alignment problems within the last year because I realized that the sounds that I could produce (namely, the sounds of my teachers and the individuals whose performances I imitated) were getting in my way. Those “mimicked” tones interfered with my ability to internalize the new sound that I wanted to produce. Long tones, scales, and études can only be helpful to me if I shut off my inner ear’s “second-hand tone production” and focus exclusively on the feeling of the viola and bow as my new tone emerges.

Even now, I am not completely out of the woods. My bow will still veer off course if my mind wanders, and I have to consciously not let my right fingers do the job belonging to my forearm and elbow. However, the simple mind trick of replacing my inner ear’s habits with conscious awareness has allowed for new and more consistent physical habits to take root.

I have also learned that if something is not exactly clicking, I need to be quite explicit in my questions to Mr. Brooks. This means that when he asks me to make a minor adjustment, I immediately report back to him about how I am physically interpreting that adjustment.

On a positive note, my years of fiddling greatly aided the development of my classical left hand technique, especially double stops. David Wallace has written about fiddle waltzes as pedagogical gold mines before, and I agree.<sup>3</sup>

Waltzes were the foundation of my studies with Dale Morris. Jay Ungar’s “Lover’s Waltz” was one of the first tunes he taught me. Waltzes like “Kelly Waltz,” “Gardenia Waltz,” and “Fiddler’s Waltz” are notorious for their

double stops, especially thirds. These waltzes require the player to climb by step or even leaps, and these feats cannot be played out of tune.

One of Dale’s old tricks to hitting perfect fifths was to flatten the finger holding the fifth, which is done by lowering the left hand vertically without changing the angle at which you hold the instrument. You will be using the pads of your fingers more this way, but it makes finding a perfect fifth (or any other interval) much easier in a pinch. This method helped me polish a difficult double stop section in Rota’s *Intermezzo*: at the climax of the piece, the viola cascades from sixths in sixth position on the highest strings down to sixths in first position on the lowest strings.

### **Finding Kindred Souls and Additional Musical Outlets**

Another challenge hybrid musicians face in a traditional classical environment is a shortage of other hybrid musicians for collaborations. Moores School of Music boasts some esteemed programs. Vocalists flock here from all over the country to study performance at a school that puts on four operas annually,<sup>4</sup> and instrumentalists are drawn to ensembles like our symphony orchestra and Aura (our twentieth/twenty-first century music ensemble). We even have a couple of tight jazz ensembles. Moores is a fantastic place for young string players to gain both an education and a serious repertoire list, but Moores is not known as a place for string players who want to play “Old Joe Clark.”

That being said, several passionate and dedicated faculty members have founded a number of ensembles that supplement the orchestras and wind ensembles that form the core of our education. I was fortunate to be part of the formation and development of one such ensemble, Cougar Roots.

During the spring of 2014, music and culture professor, ethnomusicologist Dr. Barbara Lange, helped me to put together a project requirement for a scholarship application. For my project, I traced the performance history of the fiddle breakdown “Sally Goodin’.”



When I realized that I needed to work with a guitarist who was familiar with Texas-style rhythm guitar—or at least open to adapting to it—Dr. Lange suggested that I contact Dr. Garreth Broesche, who had been my sophomore theory and aural skills professor. Dr. Lange informed me that Dr. Broesche was a talented swing guitarist and a singer/songwriter.

It turned out that he was exactly the person to help me complete the project. He accompanied my presentation-culminating performance of “Sally Goodin” which included all of the common variations I found between fiddlers from Eck Robertson to Mark O’Connor and even the traditional Irish band, The Chieftains.

In June of 2015, Dr. Broesche approached me with the idea of forming an American folk music ensemble at Moores School of Music. Our previous collaboration had sparked his hope that there were indeed musicians at our school who enjoyed playing other genres. I immediately jumped on board.

Since he teaches freshman and sophomore-level theory classes every semester, Dr. Broesche knew of other students who might be interested in such an ensemble, but he cast a wide net by posting flyers calling for interested musicians all around campus. The result was a raggle-taggle quintet of music school outliers who were eager to play and sing some tunes by the first week of the fall semester.

Our lead vocalist is a freshman performance major, Emily Hardey, an Austin, TX native who sang with a fiddle group in high school. Even as a freshman, her voice is quite versatile: she croons jazz favorites like “Dream a Little Dream of Me,” breaks your heart with “Once a Day,” but also sings in opera choruses.

Zachery Lacey, a music education major, is another vocalist, songwriter, and guitarist. He picked up mandolin at Dr. Broesche’s request last August so that our band would have a wider color palette.

Nick Zizinia, who plays banjo and guitar, is the only non-music major in the band so far. He is a U.S. History master’s student and a lover of all-things-Jerry Garcia.<sup>5</sup> Thus the University of Houston American Roots Ensemble was born. We quickly nicknamed ourselves “Cougar Roots” after our school’s mascot.



*Cougar Roots logo created by Garreth Broesche*

We landed our first gig as Cougar Roots at a campus coffee shop called The Nook, and we began by playing at a monthly Thursday night wine-sampling event, but the manager soon invited us to play weekly gigs. This was a fantastic development, but we were still a new, incomplete band. Finding a bassist was turning out to be unbelievably difficult. Our percussionist, Justin Grubbs, filled the rhythm section gap with his drum set while the rest of us sweet-talked every local bassist we knew.

Surprisingly, most of the bassists we approached at Moores were not interested in playing with us,<sup>6</sup> though eventually, Kyrie Bouressa, a freshman bassist double majoring in biology, joined us in January. Her eclectic musical background included jazz, and she quickly locked into the spirit of UH Cougar Roots.

New performance opportunities began to come our way in the spring of 2016, as people at Moores School of Music started talking about us. In February, we played three Woody Guthrie tunes with Houston Open Dance Project<sup>7</sup> as part of their show “Stories to Tell.”



*Members of Cougar Roots in a recording session at Beebe Gunn Studio (Houston, TX). Left to right: Emilie Catlett, Nick Zizninia, Kyrie Bouressa. Photo credit: Garreth Broesche*



*Emily Hardey of Cougar Roots, singing in a recording session at Beebe Gunn Studio (Houston, TX). Photo credit: Garreth Broesche*

Through that dance performance, we earned a grant to collaborate with them on another Woody Guthrie show. In April, Stanley Smith collaborated with us on our first official recital. It has been an exciting year for everyone involved.

### **Looking Forward**

Though some unforeseen health complications have pushed my final recital back to September 2016, I will receive my bachelor's degree at the end of the year. I have spent the last five years pursuing a viola performance degree and seriously studying English literature on the

side. I have considered continuing my education in musicology or more viola performance, but nothing I have looked into for the future seems to be the right fit at the moment.

I do know for sure that I would like to continue finding my voice on viola. In one of my most recent lessons, Wayne Brooks asked me what I was thinking about for the next year, and I told him my concerns; I confessed that I often worry that I am a disappointment to him that I did not readily take to classical performance.

We talked about my turning to Texas Waltzes to help solidify my new good bowing and left-hand habits, and we talked about the music I have played at Moores that made me want to "stand up and shout." I have enjoyed playing Mahler, Brahms, Bach, and the composers in between, during my time here. David Carlson's *Anna Karenina* gave me the opportunity to play something extremely psychological, and it was the first opera where I was truly sorry to hand in my part on closing night. Perhaps this was because it was my first real experience with a composer pushing classical music to its limits; it was new sound, which to me is intoxicating.

I do hope to create a future where I can continue to bushwhack my way between genres with my viola. Wayne Brooks (always having my back) agrees that my future will not follow a traditional route. He assures me that this is okay, especially in my frequent moments of self-doubt. My recent collaboration with Stanley Smith probed some new parts of my brain, and I have since thought about honing my jazz chops, which would definitely be exciting and largely uncharted territory for viola.



*Nick Zizninia of Cougar Roots, playing in a recording session at Beebe Gunn Studio (Houston, TX). Photo credit: Garreth Broesche*



*Cougar Roots at Beebe Gunn Studio (Houston, TX).  
Back, left to right: Garreth Broesche, Justin Grubbs, Nick Zizinia, Emilie Catlett, Paul Beebe. Front, left to right: Kyrie Bouressa, Zach Lacey*

For the moment, though, I may focus on creating my future through teaching. Whether I am teaching privately or at Pamela Wiley's American Music System summer camps, I strive to encourage students to pursue the sounds and styles that pique their interests. At the same time, I try to atone for the technical shortcomings of my own background by devoting part of lessons and classes to developing technique (at fiddle camp, my viola class always warms up with long tone scales).

Most of my students know me as a fiddle player, so we often spend time learning tunes. However, I am dedicating this year to building a studio in which my students know me as a hybrid violist, adept at both classical and fiddling styles, and hopefully my students will be inspired to study both as well.

*Emilie Catlett is a student of English literature at the University of Houston, and is also pursuing a degree in viola performance under the guidance of Wayne Brooks at Moores School of Music, University of Houston. She teaches viola and fiddle lessons through Cypress Fairbanks ISD, as well as through Pamela Wiley's American Music System summer camps. Since the writing of this article, Emilie has decided that she will likely be pursuing graduate performance studies in viola after graduation—exact program is to-be-determined.*

*Listen to Emilie & Cougar Roots' performance of Maryville Train-Folsom Prison Blues on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8KMQ-CpFbg>*

## Notes

1. I adopted the term "hybrid musician" from Berklee College of Music String Chair, Dr. David Wallace. Earlier this year, I heard him use that phrase to describe musicians whose training, identity, and technique owe a substantial debt to two or more distinctly different musical traditions.
2. If you conduct a photographic study of fiddle technique you will find that some of history's most celebrated fiddlers pointed their scrolls toward the floor.
3. See "A Case for the American Viola Waltz" in *Journal of the American Viola Society* Vol. 26 no. 1.
4. I am currently a part of the first university-level performance of David Carlson's *Anna Karenina*, but I have also played in eleven other operas by Mozart, Puccini, Strauss, Floyd, and others.
5. Jerry Garcia was the lead singer and lead guitarist of the legendary psychedelic jam band, The Grateful Dead, as well as an active folk musician highly skilled on mandolin and banjo.
6. Our bass department is heavily classically-trained. Everyone we approached seemed uncomfortable with the idea of no music besides a chord chart and his/her own creativity and spontaneity.
7. Houston Open Dance Project is a local, non-profit, contemporary dance company. The dancers often engage with the audience as part of their performances. In "Stories to Tell," many of the dancers told stories about their family members, particularly their parents and grandparents who immigrated to the United States.



# Improving Your Chamber Music Skills: Tips from a Pro

Les Jacobson with Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff



*While interviewing violist Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff (pictured above) concerning the art and practice of studying chamber music, I gleaned some tips that will be useful not only to music students and professionals, but can also serve as a guide for amateurs who play chamber music strictly for enjoyment.*

*As an experienced violist, university music professor, and chamber musician, Ms. Lasareff-Mironoff has led many small-ensemble coaching sessions for string quartets, piano trios and all manner of mixed instrumental and vocal combinations, performing music written from the 18th to 21st century.*

*These are some of Ms. Lasareff-Mironoff's insights regarding her journey in chamber music.*

## **Compatibility**

Of utmost importance to a chamber music ensemble is the technical and personal compatibility of the players. Having the same type of background and level of play will help your group move forward together. It isn't just about technique; compatibility is also determined by your

personality type and how much work and time you are willing to commit to the group's development.

You don't all have to be the same age either. When I was a high school student, one of my most positive experiences was meeting once a week to study Haydn string quartets with my teacher (a professional violin soloist) on first violin, a member of the local symphony on second violin, and an amateur cellist. The seventy-eight-year-old cellist decided after a working life as a butcher that he would pursue his dream of getting a degree in cello performance. He had an extensive collection of chamber music that he had purchased over the years and we would meet in his home for marathon readings of Haydn and some Beethoven string quartets. Our group performed a few times that year and we were featured on the local radio station as an end-of-year highlight. The ages in the group ranged from sixteen to seventy-eight. (The cellist did finish his degree at at over eighty years of age, and I attended his "senior" recital!)

## **In the Beginning**

For a string quartet that has just been put together it is wonderful to start each rehearsal by reading a different J.S. Bach Chorale. (It may be challenging for the violist to read the tenor line in bass clef, but the player will soon get the hang of it.) Doing this regularly helps develop a good core sound and intonation center and builds basic balance and listening skills. You might want to start by reading a chorale without vibrato to agree on clean intonation, getting used to building the intonation center from the lowest voice in the chords, and then working on developing a range of matching vibrato speeds and intensities and varied volumes to build a unified sound.

Choosing repertoire can be done in a few ways. Try not to get overly eager and jump into works that are beyond



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your current level of study. Read a few different pieces to see how everyone does, and listen to recordings for inspiration.

Choose two works and divide your rehearsal time between them. If you can almost sight read a piece and struggle with just a few passages, that may be a good selection to take on as your major work, one which increases everyone's technical abilities and challenges the group.

Select another work that is relatively easy for the group to sight read in order to work on intonation, balance, and pacing goals. Even my top student ensembles work on either a Mozart or Haydn chamber work in addition to studying late Beethoven, Romantic pieces, and beyond. There is much to be gained by regularly studying the chamber works of Haydn and Mozart.

### **Be Prepared**

After your initial meet-and-greet reading session and once repertoire is determined, practice your part thoroughly and diligently. Get help with difficult passages from a teacher or colleague and come to your very next session fully in control of your individual part. The more effort you put into this at the start, the more comfortable your rehearsals will be.

### **Knowing the Score**

Once you have selected repertoire that is within the current abilities of the group, find full scores to your pieces, including a critical edition to compare and contrast with other editions. Find a score that matches your edition of the parts with consistent measure numbers and rehearsal letters, but don't stop there. Have other versions of the score to resolve questions and discrepancies. Sometimes there will be bowings, phrase markings, articulations and/or dynamic markings, and possibly misprinted notes in parts that might not match the score. If such discrepancies are found, it is best to bring them to someone who has expertise with works by that specific composer or in that era in order to ask their advice.

There are a lot of traditional stylistic performance practices that aren't printed in a score. Recordings and live performances can help expose you to these traditions. Watch videos of your piece to see where in the bow your ideal ensemble plays a passage that you are studying. Find another video of a different group that plays the same passage in another part of the bow. Which version works

for your group? Are their tempi the same? Try both and see what is most convincing and still stylistically sound. Make sure every member of the group has a copy of the score and take turns playing difficult passages directly from the score, while others play from their parts.

Alternatively, try to have everyone play together from the score in rehearsal to understand how each individual part lines up with the others. Study your individual part while listening to a recording alone from beginning to end, then go back and study your individual part while following it in the full score and listening to the recording. Then go that extra mile and study each of the other parts from beginning to end while following the full score. This will give you a tremendously comprehensive knowledge of the piece.

Study scores and parts can sometimes be found in your local library, and they are often available free for downloading from the IMSLP Music Library, at [imslp.org](http://imslp.org). Additionally, there are other sites that charge a fee, such as [CDSheetMusic.com](http://CDSheetMusic.com) and [Everynote.com](http://Everynote.com), and [PerformersMusicChicago.com](http://PerformersMusicChicago.com) also has an extensive collection.

### ***Metrono-macy: Diplomacy with a Metronome***

It can be challenging to put three or more musicians in a room and ask them to agree on everything that occurs in a twenty-minute piece. At times, it can feel like ratifying a peace treaty: full of tricky negotiations and lots of give and take. Each player has certain natural tendencies. Some have to work hard not to rush through a phrase, and some expand their phrases out of time. Every ensemble experiences one form or another of these individual tendencies at some point. If things are not lining up during a particular rehearsal, the ensemble should take time to play the passage slowly in groups of two or three with a metronome to see where the tendencies lie that day. The Tempo app for iPhone (<https://goo.gl/Vtmj6M>) is particularly good for situations such as these! Some groups even plug a metronome into a speaker system so that everyone can clearly hear it while cleaning up the ensemble in a particular passage. The ensemble should decide on the ultimate metronome markings for the piece, and each player should work out individual passages with a metronome between rehearsals. Each player can also take turns conducting the other group members to help better align certain passages.

## Peace-keeping Mission

It is really wonderful to be in a chamber ensemble with friends and colleagues whose playing you like. It is even better to remain friends after being in a chamber ensemble together, and the following are some suggestions to help ensure a rich and peaceful collaborative experience.

*Treats and socializing* can go a long way in maintaining a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Work a break into your session and take turns bringing delicious, nutritious treats to share at the break; the break will give everyone a chance to rest and visit, and the treats will provide mental fuel for the second half of the rehearsal.

*Play regularly together.* The more playing time, the better a group can connect, learn how to communicate well and make progress.

*Be open to new ideas and to trying things in different ways.* Yes, one bow stroke might be most comfortable for you, but it might not be comfortable for a colleague. Keep in mind if you practice between rehearsals you just might find the new idea comfortable. Some things take getting used to, so don't be afraid of exploring alternate ways to articulate passages or new ways to pace a movement.

*Negotiate the choices you make with your colleagues and communicate respectfully.* Though this suggestion may seem obvious, sometimes we are so passionate about our positions that it can cause tension in a group. If consensus proves hard to achieve and you don't have a coach to guide the group, choose one member to be in charge artistically of each movement as a sort of tiebreaker; this member will have the final say on how a passage should be bowed or phrased. See how the group sounds when you take turns artistically "driving" the ensemble.

*Be respectful of the other members of your group and offer constructive ways to solve musical challenges.* Instead of resisting an idea, be honest if something doesn't come easily for you, and one of your musical partners may offer you useful technical advice. The best chamber groups, no matter the level, share their strengths with one another for a richer end result.

## Peace Keeper

Hiring a coach to work with your chamber ensemble can be a tremendous help. Listening to a group from a few feet away provides an entirely different perspective from being inside of a group; a coach observes how everyone is producing sounds and hears how the balances are truly coming across. A coach can help correct intonation, detect problems, and help to solve them. I suggest ensembles check the roster of a local university or orchestra for names, and try splitting the charge for a coaching session among group members; this can be a good investment and provide further inspiration.

## Bowings

If the intent is to bring a work to a higher level, beyond that of a reading session, and to prepare the piece for performance, then well-marked, consistent and often unified bowings can help achieve this. The main point here is to make sure passages that *should* sound the same

within the group *do* sound the same. Embrace discomfort as you try each other's suggestions for bowing solutions. Work together, and give and take ideas.

## Further Suggestions

*Know when to lead, when to follow.* If your line is not the most important, find out whose is and become a supporting actor, not a leading actor, until your line gains prominence.

*Work things out slowly—even at half speed*—especially when focusing on intonation, ensemble and balance issues.

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*From left to right: U.S. Ambassador to Malta G. Kathleen Hill, Secretary of State John Kerry with Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff and VIP guests. At the State Department in January 2016 where she performed her arrangement of the Star Spangled Banner for solo viola at the reception following the Swearing in Ceremony of the Ambassador.*



*From left to right: Betsy Vick (played viola in high school), Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff with Secretary of State John Kerry and VIP guests. Swearing in Ceremony of the U.S. Ambassador to Malta, G. Kathleen Hill.*

*Record your rehearsals* and watch or listen to them together as a group.

*Perform in public.* Nothing promotes progress like committing to a public performance. Even if your ensemble is “strictly amateur” you can invite friends and family over to hear a movement or two. Deadlines and performances are the best way to motivate practicing at all levels.

*Listening Exercise:* Turn your chairs away from each other while playing a difficult passage so you cannot see your colleagues. This will encourage players to listen to each other, in order to stay together.

### **Finally, enjoy the process.**

Chamber music is one of the most challenging and rewarding art forms. It teaches us how to work well, communicate and solve problems with one another while experiencing and sharing the talents and creations of the masterminds of great music. We are able to participate in their genius and bring their music and spirits to life.

*Violist Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff is the Adjunct Professor of Viola at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Guest Lecturer at DePaul University. She has been the principal violist of the Cape Town Symphony, the Colorado Music Festival, and Chicago Opera Theater, and has performed chamber music with members of the Chicago Symphony, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Eighth Blackbird, and the Fulcrum Point New Music Ensemble. For more information visit [www.claudialm.com](http://www.claudialm.com).*

*Readers can find sheet music for Bach's Chorales Nos. 1–24 arranged for string quartet on the AVS website at: <http://www.americanviolasociety.org/Resources/Scores.php>*

*Les Jacobson is a writer and violist in Evanston, Illinois. You can see his work at [www.lesterjacobson.com](http://www.lesterjacobson.com).*

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# Music Reviews

Andrew Braddock

## *Ode to the Lotus* (2012), for viola solo By Tigran Mansurian



Armenian composer Tigran Mansurian's *Ode to the Lotus* is a lyrically vital work for solo viola that overflows with rhapsodic energy and imaginative colors. Mansurian is no stranger to the viola, having written at least eight significant works for the viola over the past fifty years. His decades-

long collaboration with violist Kim Kashkashian is responsible for the majority of these works, including the viola concerto "...and then I was in time again" (1995), *Confessing with Faith* (1998) for viola and four voices, *Lachrymae* (1999) for viola and soprano saxophone, various works for viola and percussion (1998-2004), and a viola arrangement of his *Four Hayrens* (2007) originally for mezzo soprano and piano. Although *Ode to the Lotus* was not a direct result of this collaboration—it was the commissioned work for the 2013 ARD Music Competition—it clearly bears the hallmark of a composer particularly attuned to the viola's unique qualities.

In the composer's preface, Mansurian cites the lotus flower as the inspiration for both the sonority and the structure of the work. Mansurian sees the flower's petals as "a series of folds, of waves" and translates this image into a musical structure featuring interweaving motives and sectional overlap. This structure, he claims, also appears in ancient Armenian sacred music. As for the work's sonority, Mansurian finds that the mystical associations of the lotus flower can "best be

celebrated in music through the viola, an instrument with a no less mystical sound."

The entire work is infused with a sense of restless horizontal lyricism that constantly pushes the music forward. This lyrically propulsive energy is the most prevalent and essential aspect of the work. Mansurian achieves this through a variety of compositional techniques, including monophonic texture, an avoidance of hard-edged cadences, metrical fluidity, and his enfolding technique of motivic interweaving. Of these, the meter initially contributes the most to the work's forward flow. The work maintains a half-note pulse for its entirety, but the number of beats per measure and their subdivisions change frequently, allowing the music to stay aloft, avoiding any heavy and repetitive structures.

Although the lotus-like enfolded form obscures easy sectional delineation, this piece consists of five primary sections, in addition an eleven-measure opening pair of phrases. When the first note—a delicate major second double stop in the viola's lowest register—sneakily begins, it seems as if the piece is picking up in the middle of things, like it had already been going for some time, but just slightly outside the range of human perception. This *in medias res* opening immediately establishes a sense of unfurling forward momentum.

Following a crunchy dissonant chord and a passage in which the pulse is divided into smaller and smaller subdivisions, the work's rhapsodic first section begins. A churning monophonic line of eighth notes in the lower middle register is given aural definition by occasional open-string eighths protruding from the texture. Despite its motoric pattern of eighth notes, this thirty-two measure section has a *parlando*-like quality with its twisting shapes, enhanced by a visceral and earthy tonal palate. It concludes with repeated F-sharps that settle into the work's second major section. Here, the propulsive



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lyrical energy from before is sublimated into high-arching melodic lines that wend through the instrument's entire range. Marked *cantando*, this section contains the most plainly lyrical music of the work. Tinged with diminished third harmonies and with a general pitch center of C with B-flat modal colorings, this part forms the luscious and tender core of the piece.

The third section is dominated by doubled *sul ponticello* eighth notes that regain and amplify the energy from the first part. After this, interjections of syncopated double stops usher in the work's penultimate section, which is characterized by off-kilter rhythmic structures. A direct quotation from the first part heralds the work's concluding *andante misterioso* section. Halting double-stop utterances are punctuated with various harmonic Cs, bringing the work to a vaguely defined, yet unmistakable conclusion.

While the above analysis might give the impression that sections are clearly defined, Mansurian's enfolding technique provides *Ode to the Lotus* with an organic coherence in which nothing is altogether unexpected. This structure is essential to the work's forwardly progressive character. Although manifested in several ways, the enfolding technique can be defined as the incorporation of bits of musical elements from one section into the body of another. It is most easily observed in the work's second section. The *cantando* melody is interrupted three times by the *sul ponticello* doubled eighths that form the backbone of the third section. Foreshadowing like this, and the inverse—echoes of previous motives/quotes—permeate the musical narrative, giving it a varied and unified structure. A similar technique occurs in the linkages between sections. Phrases like the one between the fourth and fifth sections contain a mixture of elements from each: the pulsations of the syncopated double-stops from the fourth section, combined with the high leaps from the fifth. These phrases are like the brackish mixture of water where a river meets the sea, not quite fresh and not quite salt water, but a new mixture composed of familiar elements. On the structural level, they serve to smooth over any clear-cut divisions and contribute to the forward flowing nature of this piece.

More subtle applications of the enfolding technique occur through processes of diminution, in which larger phrases are quite literally folded into new smaller units while nevertheless maintaining the same harmony. For example, the four beats

of m. 105 (the first measure of the final section) contain in sequential order all of the harmonic material from the sixteen beats of mm. 85-89. Also, in the *cantando* section, the first phrase (mm. 52-54) is folded down an octave and compressed into half the original length when it reappears in the next phrase. With yet another application of enfolding, Mansurian condenses and reorders earlier music to form a musical pastiche. Mm. 40-42 contain all of the material from mm. 5, 6, 7, 14, and 15 in sequential order. All of these formal processes create a unified musical structure that serves as a foundation for this work's free-flowing character.

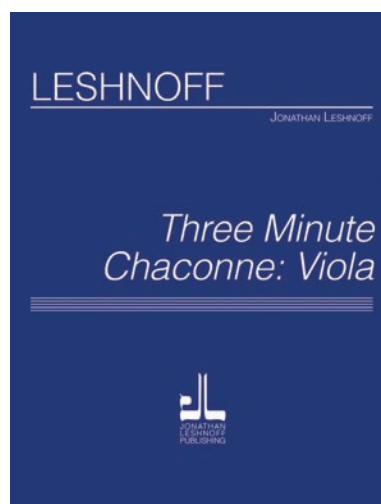
In addition to structural techniques, Mansurian ensures an unimpeded flow by avoiding traditionally strong cadential gestures and any type of sharp angularity. Except for the two deliciously sonorous chords marking the end of the introductory phrases, there are no bold vertical cadences in this work. Most phrases conclude with a 'cadence by assertion,' in which a single pitch is repeated, and left to linger on a long final note. This happens on a small scale between the phrases in the first major section, with repeated Gs, F-sharps, and Cs marking the end of phrases or larger structures. In the final section, this cadential concept applies on a greater scale. Throughout this fifteen-measure concluding section, Mansurian uses harmonic Cs from three different octaves—set off by their timbre and register from the surrounding music—to signal the end of the work. This passive method of cadencing through repetition removes the hard edges found with standard cadences and allows the work to continue its lyrical unfurling without strong vertical gestures tying it down.

The challenges of performing *Ode to the Lotus* lie mostly in the conceptual rather than technical realm. Solo works by their nature require the performer to have an unassailable command of expression and pacing. This piece will clearly expose the performer who only plays the notes without tapping into its underlying flow and *parlando* delivery. As for the technical side of things, the rhythm is very clear and straightforward, and, excepting a single C above the treble staff, the work stays below fifth position. Unfamiliar pitch patterns and frequent double-stops present some challenges for the left hand, but when one becomes better acquainted with the pitches, the piece fits the left hand very nicely. From a purely technical perspective, any violist comfortable playing Reger's *Suites* will find this work accessible.

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Tigran Mansurian's *Ode to the Lotus* is a coolly entrancing work that features unyielding horizontal lyricism shaded with hints of Armenian modal color. Mansurian's deep familiarity with the viola has enabled him to craft a work highlighting the instrument's broad color palate and earthy timbre. Its inventive form and engaging monophony make this work not only a fantastic piece for the viola, but an outstanding compositional and artistic statement as well.

***Three Minute Chaconne* (2011), for viola solo**  
**By Jonathan Leshnoff**



When string players see the word “chaconne,” J. S. Bach’s masterpiece for solo violin invariably comes to mind. It is singularly rare that a generic title like this commands such close association with a specific piece (compare this to “sonata” or “gigue”). With the title of

his 2011 work for solo viola, *Three Minute Chaconne*, Jonathan Leshnoff cheekily winks at this association. This title, however, belies both the serious and staid character of this work, as well as its wealth of musical ideas.

Composed for the 2012 Johansen International Competition for Young String Players, this 81-measure work was written to be played on violin, viola, or cello. Despite the more generalized instrumentation of the piece, Leshnoff’s version for viola succeeds in featuring the instrument’s most favorable tonal qualities: plaintive lyricism on the A-string, a husky and smoky sound in the lower registers, and a fresh brightness in chordal passages. The majority of the notes lie within the middle and lower registers, rarely venturing beyond fourth position, which adds to the work’s somber quality.

*Three Minute Chaconne* consists of a theme and five variations divided into two major sections: the subdued theme and first three variations, followed by the energetic

final two variations and coda. The first section is about double the length of the second. The work’s overall form is similar to a piece such as Britten’s *Lachrymae*, with the most straightforward presentation of the chaconne’s harmonic structure occurring in the final variation with triple-stopped eighth note chords. This variation and the theme most clearly display Leshnoff’s harmonic language, which consists of vertical triadic harmonies contrasted with horizontal movement in perfect fourths. The tension between tertian and quartal harmonies creates harmonic motivation in the absence of traditional functional harmony. When writing triads, Leshnoff almost singularly uses minor triads: in fact, the first five triads of the works are all minor (B-flat, F-sharp, C-sharp, A, and D). This reliance on minor triads adds to the work’s oppressive and nearly inescapable sense of harmonic gloom.

Unlike traditional examples of the chaconne form, this work is not bound to exact harmonic repetition. Leshnoff instead maintains the relationships between chordal shifts, rather than repeating the same specific chords throughout all variations. Although Leshnoff gravitates around the pitches B and F, he freely bends them by semitone in one direction or another, producing a feeling of being harmonically unmoored. So, with this chaconne, we don’t hear a repetitive ordering of chords, but rather a repetitive set of relationships between chords. Whatever the *Three Minute Chaconne* loses by eschewing the structural solidity of the traditional genre, it gains a greater expressivity with its freely shifting harmonic centers.

By its nature, the chaconne form prioritizes harmony and texture over rhythmic invention. This piece is no exception. Leshnoff pours the majority of his creative energy into harmonic relationships and textural changes, often to the detriment of rhythmic variety. Beyond a few triplets sprinkled here and there, the work is written entirely in simple divisions of a quarter note beat (excluding one measure in  $\frac{3}{8}$ ), and each variation uses only one subdivision of the beat (eighths in variations one, three, and five; sixteenths in variations two and four). The only moment of metrical variety occurs in the third variation, in which pairs of eighth notes are shifted off the beat. Along with its rhythmic dissonance, this variation contains the most harmonically dissonant passage in a piece otherwise composed solely of major/minor triads and quartal harmonies.

In addition to the regularity of subdivisions, Leshnoff also employs a long-short pattern of beats throughout the entire work. This pacing is clearly displayed in the theme, in which every measure begins with a long note—half or dotted quarter—and finishes with eighths or triplet eighths on the final beat. As the variations begin, however, this pattern disappears from the rhythmic surface and is instead articulated solely through harmonic movement. These passages again show how Leshnoff prioritizes harmony as his primary means of expression. Although more rhythmic and metrical variety would be welcomed, the regularity of the harmonic pacing— even in the agitated second section—creates a halting and meditative mood throughout the entire work.

The narrative energy of *Three Minute Chaconne* comes from changes in texture, as each variation exhibits a distinct point of view. The theme consists of rolled grace note chords accompanying a plaintive melody, punctuated by aimless perfect fourths that descend to the viola's lowest note. The first variation prolongs this meandering, amorphous quality through its arch-shaped lines, ending on a questioning, *ppp* high E harmonic. Providing a needed burst of agitated energy, the second variation features broken sixteenth-note double stopped chords that exploit the viola's raspy lower register. The concluding harmonic creates a link to the stratospheric realm of artificial harmonics that dominate the third variation. Coupled with the aforementioned dissonant harmonies, these harmonics create a spectral mood that transitions into a direct quote from the theme, thus

closing the structural frame of the work's first section.

The *allegro* fourth variation contains the most virtuosic technical passages of the piece, consisting of repeated *spiccato* sixteenths and slurred arpeggios. Amidst all of the triads, the sudden injection of perfect fourths require additional left-hand dexterity, while providing a uniquely propulsive effect. Some of the extensions will be a stretch for those with smaller hands, but in general, this work's technical demands can be overcome by those able to play advanced intermediate works like Vieuxtemps' *Elegie*. Following the fifth variation's triple-stopped chords, a coda reprises the quartal gestures from the end of the opening theme. The work ends with two staccato chords, providing a punchy and incisive conclusion.

Despite its brevity, this work contains an abundance of musical riches. Leshnoff unifies his inventive harmonies and textures with an ever-present metrical backbone, providing structure in this musically satisfying and attention-grabbing work. It will be well worth three minutes of your time to get to know this piece.

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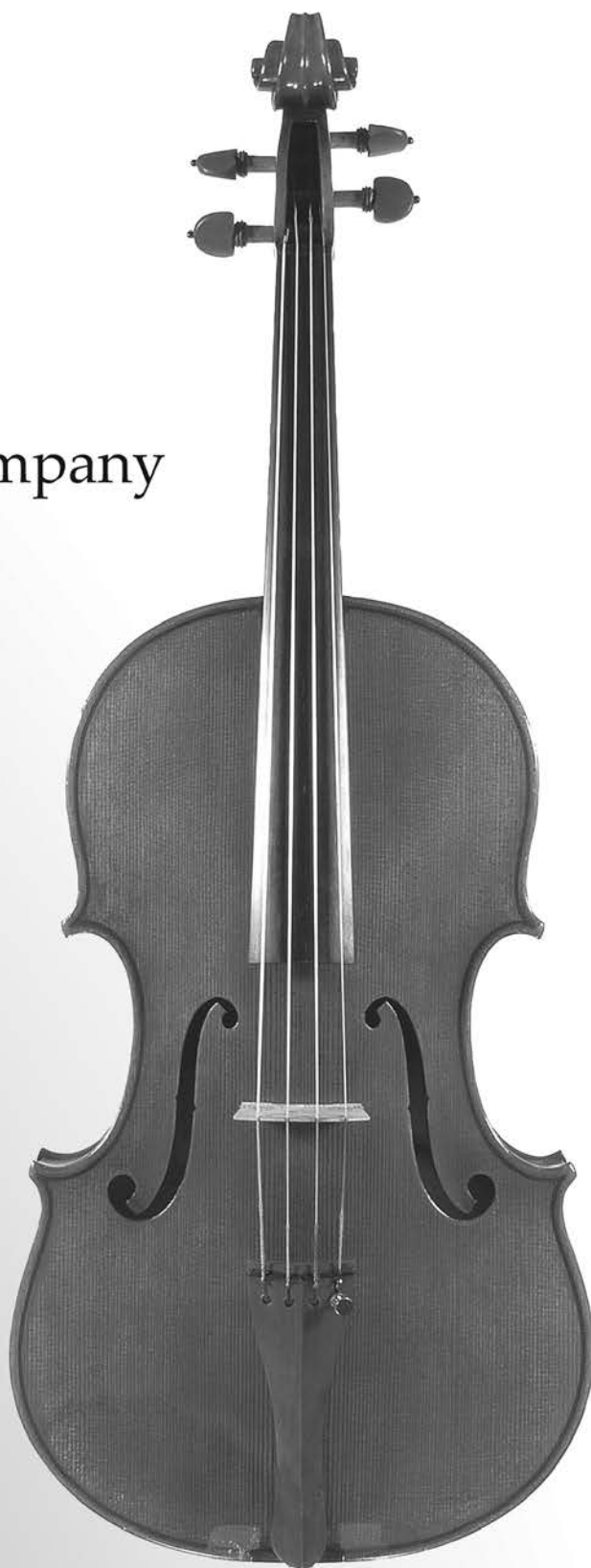
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