

President's Message

Karen McGee-Hensel

It's concert season! That's when you are expected to give your students the opportunity to demonstrate all the skills they have learned this year to the parents and the administration. But it is also the season for testing and prom and spring sports and graduation. Your student's minds seem to be everywhere but on the music. We have all experienced that frustration. Counter that negativity by taking care of yourself. Get enough sleep, eat healthy and remember that school is almost out.

Naturally, I am going to ask you to add one more thing to your "to-do" list. Get out your calendar, smart phone or computer and jot down the dates of the summer KASTA workshops at WSU and KU. Check them both out and make it your year to attend. These are wonderful opportunities to recharge your teaching batteries and to meet new colleagues and, naturally, to see your old friends from across the state.

I was honored to attend the National ASTA Convention in Rhode Island as the Kansas representative. I attended many leadership sessions and learned so much from some of the greatest pedagogues in the country. I encourage you to consider attending next year in Nashville.

I also want you to take a moment in your busy spring to recognize and thank your colleagues who are retiring. Thank them for their contribution.

Have a great summer and I'll see you at the workshop!

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Exploring Pre-Bowing Exercises: The Search for a Definition and its Application

Jacob M. Dakon, *The University of Kansas*

Introduction

In the field of string pedagogy, there exists an overall lack of definitive descriptions regarding our most basic bow strokes, even though these very strokes have become fixed principles within our curricular sequences. For those of us who study string instruments, this doesn't pose much of a threat to our pedagogical prowess; however, for pre-service string teachers or non-string players who currently teach string education classes, the dearth of information presents a formidable problem. We cannot expect such instructors to teach effectively that which they cannot fully conceptualize. Such definitive descriptions could provide valuable and profound insight into the deep recesses of string pedagogy. Over the next several Kansas ASTA issues, I will present a series of articles, to define more carefully each of the necessary bow strokes through thoughtful discussion of previous literature and current practice. I will also use anatomical terminology when discussing body parts and movements in an effort to assist the overall clarity of descriptions. The first order of business: a discussion about pre-bowing exercises.

Pre-Bowing Exercises: The Problem

One of the most challenging aspects of teaching beginning-level string instrumentalists is how to introduce the bow. If the bow is introduced too early, students may struggle to maintain correct body position, left-hand position, and bow-hand shape. If the bow is introduced too late, students become impatient and we risk high attrition rates. This leads us to question if there really is a perfect time to introduce bowing.

One way to address this problem is to examine how we perceive the initial stages of bow training. In my opinion, using the bow should not be an all or nothing endeavor. Students should not be allowed to play with it on the first day, nor should the bow be ignored until students finish with initial training of the left hand. Rather, introducing the bow should be a gradual and sequential process that prepares students for the détaché bow stroke in isolation from the left hand. Skipping such a process would essentially be like throwing students in the deep end of the pool to see if they can swim. To avoid using such distressing tactics on our students, let us discuss the act of using pre-bowing exercises.

It is not exactly clear at this point how to define pre-bowing exercises, since no explicit definition exists currently in string literature. The purpose of the present article is two-fold: 1) to define pre-bowing exercises through the analysis of the *ASTA Curriculum* (Benham, Wagner, Aten, Evans, Odegaard, & Lieberman, 2011), and 2) to suggest a sequence of applicable strategies that could be used in either the string class or studio setting.

Pre-Bowing Exercises: A Definition

The most current and informative resource on the topic of pre-bowing exercises is the *ASTA Curriculum* (Benham, et al., 2011). Content Area 1C, Learning Task 1.4 describes their pre-requisites, activities, and outcomes. Of these contents, the pre-requisites and activities are of particular interest.

Prior Knowledge & Precursors

- Students can demonstrate a relaxed, correct bow hold using a pencil, straw, and/or dowel rod.
- Students know the terms and correct directions for down- and up-bow.

Sequence of Activities

- Have all students practice finger taps (on a bow or bow-like apparatus) to a CD in common time.
- Smiley face thumb—have students turn their right hand to the right and look for a curved thumb that look like a smile.
- Open/close the door—with right arm parallel to the floor at face level, place left index finger in the elbow and open and close the gate door to imitate bowing motion. Chant names of classmates and move arm in rhythm.
- Form the bow hold on the bow either at the balance point or at the frog depending on teacher preference. Have all students practice down- and up-bow by vertically air bowing.
- Put the bow on a cake of rosin and practice the bowing motion while saying down and up.
- Going Tubing!—Use a toilet paper tube, paper towel tube, or . . . PVC tubing . . . and practice bowing through it. Hold the tube slightly above the left shoulder. (Benham, et al, 2011, p. 90)

These contents reveal three distinct aspects about pre-bowing exercises: 1) In most cases, they are performed with the bow or a bow-like apparatus away from the instrument; 2) they begin after students can demonstrate a correct bow-hand shape on a bow-like apparatus (e.g., pencil or straw) and 3) students must be able to identify the actions and terminology associated with the up- and down-bow motion.

The primary purpose of pre-bowing exercises is to train the right hand and arm in isolation from the left hand. This paradigm has appropriately been termed the ‘divide-and-conquer’ principle (Allen, 1994, 2003; Kjelland, 1987). According to the *ASTA Curriculum* (Benham, et al., 2011), there are three executive skill sets that must be taught during the initial stages of string instruction: body-position, left-hand, and right-hand skills. In order to ‘conquer’ inherent coordination issues between these skill sets, efficient teaching necessitates that string teachers ‘divide’ each set into individual units during initial instruction. Once each skill set is developed to a satisfactory standard, the instructor can then gradually and systematically combines them (for more information, see Allen, 2003). Pre-bowing exercises prepare novice string students to unify right-hand skill sets with left-hand skill sets, in an effort to perform a basic *détaché* stroke.

The second aspect suggests that students begin pre-bowing exercises after they can demonstrate a relaxed, correct bow-hand shape on a bow-like apparatus (i.e., pencil, straw, or dowel). I cannot emphasize enough how important this prerequisite is for students’ overall technical development. Improper execution of this basic skill will severely hinder students’ success for the remainder of their career if not remediated as soon as possible. While this may seem a bit

Exploring Pre-Bowing Exercises, Continued

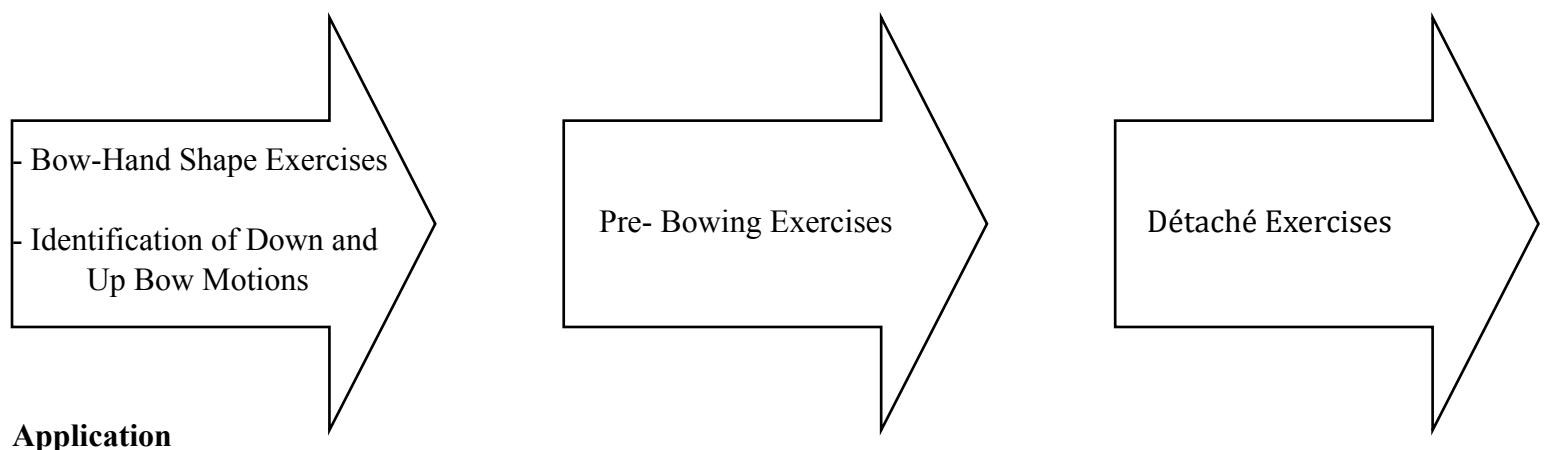
idealistic, it is not impossible. It just takes vigilance, perseverance, and constant repetition of effective strategies (for further discussion of such strategies see Fischer, 1997; Hamann & Gillespie, 2009; Watkins, 2008).

The final aspect suggests that students should be able to identify and associate bow-direction terminology with corresponding gross kinesthetic movements of the bow (Benham, et al., 2009). In other words, students must know the difference between an up- and down-bow motion, understand the icons and verbiage associated with the motions, and be able to demonstrate the concept at a basic level.

This information offers substantial evidence regarding the constraints needed to define pre-bowing exercises (see Figure 1). On one side of the continuum, students develop the ability to form a correct and relaxed bow-hand shape around a bow-like apparatus, and learn to identify up- and down-bow motions. On the other side of the continuum, students apply the bow hair to the strings and learn the motions associated with a *détaché* bow stroke (Benham, et al., 2009, p. 93). In between these right-hand skills lie pre-bowing exercises, which now can be defined as follows.

*Pre-bowing exercises are a logical sequence of right-hand activities that succeed bow-hand shape exercises and bow-directional understanding, and act as preparatory actions for the *détaché* bow stroke. They are frequently performed with a bow or bow-like apparatus away from the instrument, but may involve the instrument toward the later stages of pre-bowing development.*

Initial Sequence of Teaching Right-Hand Technique



Now that we have developed a definition, let us examine its application. Pre-bowing exercises should coincide with basic left-hand exercises, such as left-hand position and pizzicato tetra-chords on the ‘D’ and ‘A’ strings. Be mindful, however, that the right- and left-hand training should remain isolated from each other at this point in the curriculum. To accomplish this task, consider introducing the skill sets at different times during each lesson.

I introduce students to the bow in three stages: 1) Setting the bow-hand shape, 2) engaging in joint actions, and 3) simulating the *détaché* stroke. It should be noted that the first of these stages is not a pre-bowing exercise based on our previously stated definition, but it still bears mentioning.

Step 1: Setting the Bow-Hand Shape

First and foremost, ensure students can maintain a correct and relaxed bow-hold shape prior to beginning pre-bowing exercises (for more information, see Hamann & Gillespie, 2009). This is a difficult skill for novice string instrumentalists to procure, so be patient. You will need to review the bow-hand shape consistently throughout the first year of teaching strings. No child should pass through the first year with an improper bow-hand shape.

Step 2: Joint Action

The next step (i.e., our first set of pre-bowing exercises) is to teach students the most basic motions required of right arm to push and pull the bow. First, teach student to release their joints. Tension in the shoulder can severely impact the mobility of joints located in the elbow, wrist, and fingers. Rolland refers to such immobility as “static tension” (Rolland, 1974, p. 32). To counteract static tension, Rolland suggests that students engage in “action.” (p. 32). Muscles in the body cannot remain static if they are engaged in movement; therefore, I suggest students engage in the following ‘joint actions.’

Shoulder Hang

The first ‘joint action’ I teach is the ‘shoulder hang.’ Ask students to stand up, bend over slightly, and hang their arms down from the glenohumeral joint (shoulder joint). Then asks the student to swing their arms back and forth freely. The arms should hang to floor and swing in a relaxed manner. Have students take a ‘mental picture’ of how free and relaxed their arms feel. This is exactly how the bow arm should feel during the bowing motion.

Opening /Closing the Door (Hamann & Gillespie, 2009, p. 67)

The next action occurs in the synovial hinge joint (elbow joint). This exercise has traditionally been called ‘opening/closing the door’ (Benham, et al., 2011, p. 90). Ask students to stick the index finger of their left hand in the air toward to the ceiling, and extend their right arm in front of them. Place the left-hand index finger into the cubital fossa (elbow pit). Using the index finger as a fulcrum, swing the forearm toward the body (elbow flexion) and away from the body (elbow extension). This action should resemble the swinging action of a door as it opens and closes. Again, ask students to take a ‘mental picture’ of free and relaxed their arm feels. All students should engage in this exercise, even cellos and basses, since the purpose of this exercise is to relax the synovial hinge joint.

The Jellyfish

The last ‘joint action’ occurs in the wrist and fingers. Ask students to hold their right hand in front of the body in a relaxed manner. Initiate an upward pulse with the wrist; allowing the arm and hand to move freely through space. The hand and fingers should react to the pulse as if they were tentacles of a jellyfish that was swimming through space (see also Young, 1978, p. 22, “The Dripping Wet Hand”). Through this action, students release any tension in right-hand fingers and wrist. Again, ask students to take a mental picture of how this feels and help them make the transfer to similar motions in the bow.

Step 3: Simulating Détaché

The last step in implementing pre-bowing exercises is to deconstruct the détaché stroke into a series of smaller motions and to couple each motion with an instructional strategy. These strategies are then implemented in a purposeful sequence, so that each strategy builds off of the former. What makes this difficult is that upper- and lower-string instruments require different motions. Let us begin by discussing these motions.

The Détaché Action

Détaché is defined as a series of detached analogous bow strokes that differ by degree of accentuation and bow length (Seagrave & Berman, 1976, p. 23). More simply stated, it is the action of pulling and pushing the bow, while pausing in between strokes to set the succeeding stroke. All four string-instruments use three motions to implement a basic détaché bow stroke. The first is the extension (opening) and flexion (closing) motions in the right synovial hinge joint (elbow joint). The second motion is a slight abduction (raising) and adduction (lowering) of the glenohumeral joint (shoulder joint). The third motion is a pronation (inward rotation) and supination (outward rotation) of the forearm.

Violins and violins begin détaché by extending and flexing the synovial hinge joint while keeping the humerus (upper arm) immobile and relaxed. If the shoulder remains relaxed during this motion, the elbow will naturally rise and fall due to a slight abduction and adduction of the glenohumeral joint.

There are many schools of thought on vertical right-elbow movement during the détaché stroke. I believe that the elbow should hang slightly below the wrist to relax the right shoulder. When the elbow is held even with the wrist at the middle third of the bow, the right shoulder remains activated and yields tension in various shoulder muscles and tendons. This is not a problem during a downward stroke, because the elbow elevates naturally as the forearm and hand pronates into the bow. During an upward stroke, however, students tend to elevate and hold their shoulder as they get closer to the lower half of the bow. To avoid this maladaptive behavior, students should allow the elbow to drop naturally by adducting the glenohumeral joint. I am not advocating that the elbow hang so loosely from the wrist that it becomes tucked into the right side of the body. It merely hangs ever so slightly below the wrist. Once students demonstrate this skill consistently, teachers should combine both motions together into one smooth motion: i.e., as the synovial hinge joint extends during a downward bow stroke, the forearm pronates and the glenohumeral joint abducts naturally; as the synovial hinge joint flexes (without tension) during an upward bow stroke, the forearm supinates slightly and the glenohumeral joint adducts.

The cello and double bass motions (French style) are fairly similar to the violin and viola with a few slight variations, because the motions occur on a lower spatial plane. Starting from the lower half of the cello bow, a downward détaché stroke begins with a slight abduction of the right glenohumeral joint. After pulling the bow a couple of inches, the abduction movement in the glenohumeral joint ceases, and an extension of the forearm occurs from the synovial hinge joint. As the forearm extends, it also pronates into the bow as the performer reaches the tip of the bow. The opposite occurs during an upward motion of the bow. A flexion motion of the forearm occurs from the synovial hinge joint until the performer reaches the lower half of the bow. At that time the glenohumeral joint engages, yielding an adductive motion until the performer reaches the frog. The result should be that the shoulder and elbow are relaxed upon arriving at the lower half of the bow. Once again, teachers should combine the motions together into one smooth motion.

Exploring Pre-Bowing Exercises, Continued

Applicable Strategies

As previously mentioned, the purpose of pre-bowing exercises is to cover each of these détaché movements in isolation, and then gradually combine them until students can simulate a smooth détaché stroke away from the instrument. To do this, I suggest the following initial and simulation strategies.

Initial Strategies

Review with your students the “Swinging Out/Opening and Closing the Gate” strategy (Hamann & Gillespie, 2009, p. 67).

Chicken Wings

- Have students raise their forearms in a relaxed manner so that they are parallel with the floor. Ask them to ‘flap their chicken wings,’ while monitoring the slight abduction and adduction of their glenohumeral joints.
- Outcome: Teaches students to move the glenohumeral joint freely.

Traveling Down the Road (Hamann & Gillespie, 2009, p. 69)

- While in a seated position, have cello and bass students place a yardstick on their knees with the edge of the yardstick on left knee. Stabilize the left end of the yardstick with the left hand and hang the remainder of the stick over the right side of the right knee. Place the tips of the right-hand fingers on top of the yardstick over the right knee. Brush the fingers along the right side of the stick until you reach the end. Ensure students glenohumeral and synovial joints are engaging appropriately.
- To reinforce this motoric task, associate the verbal cues “out, open, close, in” with each motion of the stroke. Isolate each motion and allow time for each motion to be studied and memorized. Then perform each motion in succession with the metronome. The motion should be demonstrated in a smooth, seamless manner before introducing the bow.
- Basses use a similar sequence of motions to perform détaché, but the range of motion is less than that of the cello.
- Outcome: Students practice each motion of the détaché stroke in isolation of the others away from the bow and instrument.

Simulation Strategies

To implement these strategies, you will need a couple supplies: 1) wooden dowel rods, 2) unsharpened pencils, and 3) toilet paper tubes or PVC pipe. Ask students to provide toilet paper tubes and pencils; the rods and pipe can be purchased at any home improvement store. Cut the dowel rods into lengths of 29-30 inches (i.e., the length of a violin bow). The PVC pipe should be cut into 6-inch sections (approximately the length of a toilet paper roll). Be sure to buy the thinnest pipe available so that it is not too heavy for your youngest students. Ensure a bass bow can fit through the pipe (It may need a little shove).

Exploring Pre-Bowing Exercises, Continued

Tubing It (Hamann & Gillespie, 2009)

- Hold the dowel over the left shoulder (violin/viola) or in front of the body (cello/bass) with your left hand. Form a bow-hand shape on PVC tube. Place the dowel through the tube. Practice the détaché motion by moving the tube no more than 3-4 inches across the dowel.
- Outcome: Students have the opportunity to practice the détaché motion in an authentic manner. The dowel helps students feel the actions associated with bowing in a straight line.

Shadow Bowing with a Tube (Rolland, 2000, p. 85)

- Hold the tube over the left shoulder or in front of the body with the left hand. Form a bow-hand shape at the balance point of the bow. Place the tip of the bow through the tube. Practice the détaché motion by moving the bow no more than 3-4 inches through the tube.
- Outcome: Students have the opportunity to practice the détaché motion with the bow. The tube allows students to transfer the actions practiced previously with the dowel, but in a freer bowing environment.

Pencil Inside of the Bow Tip

- Hold the bow at the balance point or at the frog with the right hand, depending on students' level of experience.
- Violinists and violists: Hold an unsharpened pencil by the right ear with the left hand, *pretending* as though you were going to insert the pencil into the ear. Place the bow over the left shoulder and insert the pencil between the stick and the hair. Practice the détaché motion.
- Cellist and bassist: Point the pencil toward the ceiling while holding it at waist level with the left hand. Hold the bow in front of the body, as though you were going to play an imaginary instrument. Insert the unsharpened pencil between the hair and the bow stick. Make sure the hair is facing toward the body. Practice the détaché motions.
- Outcome: Students have the opportunity to practice the détaché motion with the bow. The pencil allows students to transfer the actions practiced previously with the tube, but in a freer bowing environment.

Instrument Tubing (Hamann & Gillespie, 2009, p. 66)

- “Place the rubber band under the strings, and position the tube on top of the strings. Loop the ends of the rubber band around the ends of the tube to fasten the tube to the strings. The tube should sit between the end of the fingerboard and the bridge” (p. 66). After placing the instrument in playing position, insert the bow into the tube and practice the détaché motions.
- Outcome: This strategy is unique in that it merges left- and right-hand technique in preparation for the détaché stroke without bowing across the strings.

Final Thoughts

Training adaptive bowing technique from the onset of instruction is essential to the success of any novice string musician. Such technique, however, must be introduced carefully and gradually to ensure student understanding. Rushing students to the bow, while stimulating, is maladaptive in the sense that it threatens to undo all previously learned skill sets (e.g., left-hand and body posture). Pre-bowing exercises offers teachers a fun and exciting alternative that properly equips student with the necessary skills needed to implement the détaché stroke.

This article contains only a few suggestions of strategies. Many more exist in the works of Phyllis Young, Paul Rolland, Simon Fischer, Don Hamann, Robert Gillespie, and other string pedagogues. I would encourage string teachers to seek out these strategies in an effort to better equip students for the exciting world of string playing.

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You've got to be kidding! There were operas in western Kansas high schools in the early twenties of the 20th Century? Yes, shortly after Edgar Gordon was building orchestras in Winfield with class lessons, and Lindsborg was celebrating 50 years of the Messiah Festival, operas were happening in the Garden City schools.

Sometime after 1919, a young choir and orchestra director was beginning his remarkable career in the Garden City schools. He was E. Thayer Gaston, a genius in mind and music.

Much later, many music educators in the Midwest had graduate classes at KU under the tutelage of Dr. Gaston, who would challenge young teachers to "aim high in music." After all, he had trained Garden City high schoolers to perform grand opera with full orchestra, chorus and solos during the 20's.

As a professor, one of his gifts was a photographic memory. Another was that he had read a "book a week" for more than 30 years and could quote chapter and verse from his readings. Besides his work in public schools and scholarly work at KU, he is known as one of the founders of music therapy, giving him a place in music history.

During the early part of the century, traveling opera troupes and major symphonies came through Kansas as they traveled from NY and Chicago on their way to and from Denver and LA. People here knew good music. After all, many towns already had opera houses, making Kansas a regular stop for traveling musicians and thespians clear up to the 1940's.

Twenty years after Gaston went to teach public schools, Loren Crawford, a young Southwestern College grad, became orchestra director at Garden City. His groups played for many KMEA meetings during the 40's and 50's. In the 60's, Crawford took a 75 piece string orchestra from GC to play at MENC. Sitting in the cello section of that orchestra was Dean Angeles, who became the director at Hays High School and later a well-known guest conductor in the US.

Today, the Garden City orchestra director is Summer May Miller, who grew up in Paola, a town that did not have an orchestra when she was in school. Summer, are you planning on doing any operas in GC, 100 years later?

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The Violin Sonatas and Partitas of J.S.Bach: A Ranking and Pedagogical Analysis

Matt Means, Fort Hays State University

Introduction

It is the end of another year, and with that brings recitals, solo performances in general, and auditions for summer festivals. It is also a time to reflect on the past year and plan for the next. Since a lot of that reflection and planning involves literature choice, I've decided that for this issue of the Kansas ASTA newsletter I would include a paper I wrote during my time at the Cleveland Institute of Music while taking a graduate level class solely dedicated to the 6 Solo Violin Sonatas and Partitas of J.S. Bach. A fascinating and thorough tour, this class required all of its members to complete one research project. The project that I completed required that I interview most of the school's violin faculty at that time about pedagogical aspects related to the teaching and performance of these staples of the violin repertoire. Even now, I find myself smiling at the results of this project. As a result, I reproduce it here for you, my friends and colleagues, in the hopes that it may offer similar elucidation and interest. I hope you enjoy it and wish you the best for a happy and fulfilling summer!

Overview

During the course of the semester, I have interviewed the Cleveland Institute of Music violin faculty in an attempt to obtain a difficulty ranking of these seminal staples of the repertoire. The interview questions I designed generally produced a 30-minute conversation. Those I spoke to included Linda Cerone, William Preucil, David Russell, Carol Ruzicka, Donald Weilerstein, and David Updegraff.

The questions I asked were designed to give pedagogical aspects of these works, as well as produce the ranking. Due to the nature of the format, a comprehensive movement by movement consensus regarding the varying degrees of difficulty of the sonatas and partitas was not possible. Many subjective variables such as the technical challenge vs. interpretative challenge and personal experience vs. anticipated difficulty for a generic student "X" compounded the issue. The list I provide below thus represents a composite of the opinions surveyed, and the infusion of my own opinion and experience in preparing these works.

The Ranking (From most difficult to least difficult)

1. C major Fugue/Chaconne
2. G minor Fugue/A minor Fugue
3. E major Loure/G minor Siciliano
4. C major Adagio/B minor Allemande/ A minor Grave/ G minor Adagio
5. E major Preludio/A minor Andante/ C major Largo
6. G minor Presto/ B minor Tempo de Bourree/ C major Allegro Assai/ B minor Corrente-Double
7. E major Gavotte en Rondeau/ D minor Sarabande/ B minor Sarabande
8. E major Minuets/ Bourree/ Giga
9. B minor Allemande Double/ B minor Sarabande Double/ B minor Tempo di Bourree-Double
10. D minor Allemande/ D minor Corrente/ D minor Giga

The Interview Questions with Summaries of Responses

1. The importance of the 6 sonatas and partitas in the violin's repertoire is undeniable. However, taking into account the extreme breadth of material, what emphasis do you place, as a teacher, on their importance as technical exercises vs. pieces to be performed publicly? At what age/level should these pieces be introduced to a student?

All surveyed felt that Bach should be introduced to a student at the earliest point possible (early teens for most students). Many said that the later movements of the E major partita, and the D minor partita (minus the chaconne) were the best places to begin. They cited the works' value in developing clear/focused tone as one of the best benefits to this early introduction, though refinement of left hand chordal structure, sense of harmony, and string crossing coordination were also mentioned. Dr. Ruzicka offered other etudes that could be assigned immediately prior to certain Bach movements to emphasize these technical aspects. In addition, students could be given listening/written assignments concentrating on Bach's other works (especially organ and other suites) to help develop a general sense of style. Mr. Weilerstein noted the importance of introducing stylistic components at the earliest stages, concentrating on aspects of stroke (separation of detache bowings and left hand finger action/articulation) and bow distribution. All surveyed felt that the possibility of performing these pieces (if even as individual movements) should be explored to the fullest degree.

2. How can a teacher reconcile the various possibilities of interpretation with these pieces (i.e. baroque performance practice vs. performance on modern instruments with more romantic portrayals)?

All surveyed had serious questions about the baroque performance practice movement, and none advocated a strict discipleship of this dogma. They felt that trying to perform in a "baroque manner" on modern violins was antithetical to the tonal possibilities of the instrument. Performing on baroque violins was deemed acceptable (especially as a point of reference for performance on modern instruments), but all had suspicions as to the authenticity of the performance practice movement. Mr. Updegraff articulated his frustration with students who attempted to perform Bach too "lightly"; that a certain amount of exertion was needed to get the instrument to ring to its greatest degree possible. Differences of opinion regarding certain characteristics (such as vibrato) among varying treatises of time, a lack of concrete evidence as to how music was universally performed in the period, and a perceived de-emphasization of the pieces' interpretive capabilities (especially in regards to more dramatic movements, such as the Chaconne) were mentioned as reasons behind the suspicion.

However, all stated that there needed to be a "common denominator" of understanding regarding the interpretation of the sonatas and partitas, and that a certain degree of "good taste" had to be exemplified to capture the spirit of the music. Dr. Ruzicka and Mr. Weilerstein encourage their students to listen to different recordings of the movement(s) they are playing to note differences (this being especially valuable if one of the recordings is performed on a baroque instrument).

Mr. Preucil said, "I expect everyone to play the music differently, but I want it to make sense, especially as it applies to cleanliness and a sense of structure."

Mr. Weilerstein provided a very detailed and interesting account of some of the specific components of his pedagogical approach to Bach. He mentioned that the feeling of playing with a baroque bow was important, for it gave certain clues as to the limitations and possibilities of articulation and color with the right hand. Over-sustaining was not possible with this kind of bow, and a certain "springiness" and elasticity was characteristic. He noted the use of vibrato as a coloristic aspect only, his non-advocation of scordatura and gut strings, and the inherently improvisatory nature of many of the movements. But within this improvisatory style the basic rhythm and pulse was deemed critical for the appropriate execution of rubati.

3. Do you believe that varying movements from differing sonatas/partitas can be learned separately, or do you believe that the entire sonata/partita should be learned at the same time?

The key factor in the answers to this response was age/level of the student. At the conservatory level, preparation of the entire sonata/partita was advocated. Mr. Updegraff stated that students who were capable of performing the fugue of a given sonata should be encouraged to learn the other movements. For younger students, individual movements could be prepared, though mixing and matching from different sonatas/partitas was not generally supported (Mr. Weilerstein stated that mixing and matching could be helpful for pedagogical purposes).

Even though the entire set of movements might not be learned concurrently, the interrelatedness of the other movements was mentioned as being important for basic educational function (the d and b minor partitas were mentioned specifically in this regard), as well as the differences between the sonatas and partitas. Introduction of the varying dance movement characteristics was also advocated, even if the entire sonata/partita was not being prepared.

4. What specific difficulties are associated with the Chaconne?

The number one response here was rhythm: maintaining a stable sense of it throughout the piece, while allowing for elasticity and rubato. The number two response was stamina. Third mentioned was the ability to maintain interpretive interest throughout while not straying from the realms of musical good taste. Mr. Weilerstein reminisced about the first time he became aware of the ground bass that ran throughout the entire piece, and how this could change one's approach.

The following micro-oriented difficulties were also given: intonation in the chords, performing the arpeggiation effectively, the accentuation of the proper voice in contrapuntal textures, relating variations to each other while staying aware of the tripartite construction of the movement, capitalizing on the extreme range of articulations/dynamics possible, deciding to what degree dotted rhythms should be executed (strict v. double dotting, for instance), breaking chords in various manners, bringing out the dance elements of the movements, preventing and releasing tension in the body, etc. Mr. Updegraff offered a hint he learned from Henryk Szeryng about chord execution: down bow chords were encouraged to be played at different parts of the bow, depending on the musical context (with only forte chords being started at the frog). Mrs. Cerone mentioned, interestingly, that many of her students found the chaconne to be more accessible than other "easier" movements.

5. Which movements stand out as being the most difficult (in any single regard, or combination), and which are notable for the converse?

I listed my own compilation at the beginning of this paper. I include the below for added detail.

Mr. Russell: Mentioned the difficulty of the siciliano of the g minor sonata for continuity of the line and the implied harmonies, the loure of the e major partita for the intonation, phase structure, and the elisions, the b minor partita in its entirety for its lack of melodic material, the fugue of the a minor sonata for its abundance of chords and chromatic line, and the partita of the e major partita for its tendency to sound monotonous.

Mrs. Cerone: mentioned the difficulty of the 2nd and 4th movements of the d minor partita for coordination, the fugue of the c major sonata, the memorization difficulties of the fugue of the a minor sonata, and the difficulty of preparing the e major partita on a very high level.

Mr. Preucil: mentioned that the fugue of the g minor sonata is the most awkward, the fugue of a minor sonata has more chords/requires more stamina, but the fugue of the c major sonata requires the most stamina/but is not as awkward. The adagio of the g minor sonata requires the ability to set a mood and sound improvisatory, but the grave of the a minor sonata is more difficult. The siciliano of the g minor sonata must retain its flow and feeling of the dance. The sarabande of the b minor partita is harder than the d minor. The bourree of the b minor partita must not sound crunchy. The separation of voices is difficult in the grave of the a minor sonata. Bow distribution in the gigue of the d minor partita is difficult. The fugue of the c major sonata must sustain interest. The prelude of the e major partita has difficult string crossings.

Dr. Ruzicka: mentioned the difficulty of the fugues generally for voicing reasons.

Mr. Weilerstein: mentioned the difficulty of the allemande of the b minor partita for establishment of tempo and the fifths, the andante of the a minor sonata due to its lyrical capabilities and duet aspect. The adagio of the c major sonata for chord breaking, the corrente of the b minor partita for its bow stroke (variety of), and the preludio of the e major partita for its string crossings and intonation.

Mr. Updegraff: mentioned the difficulty of the allemande of the d minor partita for its tendency to sound uninteresting, the minuets of the e major partita for intonation, and the siciliano of the g minor sonata for its voicing problems.

6. Do you believe that there is a distinct Bach violin “sound”, as compared to other composers, such as Mozart, or do you believe that this is more a question of style?

This question provoked the most thought from my respondents. Mr. Russell stated that there was indeed a distinct Bach sound, describing it as being more “earthy”, and “more bratwurst than crepes.” Mrs. Cerone mentioned that while there may not be a unanimous Bach violin sound, there was definitely an anti-Bach sound. Mr. Preucil believe that it was distinctive, and that the Bach works had something that was very “Italian” to them; that they lacked the romantically

The Violin Sonatas and Partitas of J.S. Bach, Continued

operatic character of Mozart. However, he did state that listening to the Bach cantatas was helpful in developing a “singing character” in the slower movements. He mentioned that many of the slower movements could better be described as “arias”. Dr. Ruzicka felt that there was not a distinct sound, and Mr. Updegraff concurred, stating that the two aspects were too interrelated. Mr. Weilerstein felt that in Bach there was a certain “cragginess” that did not exist in other baroque composers, and that Bach conveyed in his music perhaps a more deeply humanistic spiritual quality.



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- Participation fee will be \$30/student. Students are responsible for their own travel, food, and lodging expenses.

More details regarding the KIO, including registration forms and audition excerpt information, will follow soon.

For more information, please contact Jacob Dakon (jmdakon@ku.edu) or visit the Kansas ASTA website (kasta.org).

Join The 2013-2014 Topeka Symphony Youth Ensembles

After a fun and highly successful 2012-2013 season, the Topeka Symphony Youth Ensembles are currently holding auditions for the 2013-2014 orchestras. All string, wind, brass, and percussion players are invited to audition and join one of three ensembles: Youth Orchestra (full orchestra; ages 13-21), Youth Philharmonic (string orchestra; ages 11-18), and Debut Orchestra (string orchestra; up to age 12). All three ensembles rehearse on Tuesday evenings, meet only part of each school semester, and perform two concerts a year. Although the posted audition date has passed, it is not too late to audition.

More information about this coming year's Youth Ensembles and their audition requirements, plus the Audition Registration Form, can be found online at:

www.topekasymphony.org/youth-ensembles.asp

If you have further questions or would like to set up an audition time, please contact the Topeka Symphony Office at tso@topekasymphony.org or 785-232-6204.



String Fling at
Kansas State University is
January 18-19, 2014.
More details to come soon



Announcing the first annual Hornet String Improv Day

World-renowned string improv artists, Eugene Friesen (cello, Paul Winter Consort) and Darol Anger (violin, Turtle Island String Quartet) from the Berklee College of Music, will be the featured artists and clinicians. John Harrison (violin, Wichita Symphony concertmaster), Mark Foley (bass, Wichita State faculty), and ESU faculty, Susan Mayo (cello) and Jeremy Starr (violin), will also be clinicians. The day will include workshops by the clinicians, lunch, a select participant Honor Improv Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Friesen, and a finale concert featuring the Improv Orchestra and performances by the clinicians. Participation is limited to 60 high school students. Encourage your students to come explore what improv is all about in a creative and supportive environment! Open to improv novices through well-seasoned crossover artists.

Please contact Jeremy Starr (jstarr2@emporia.edu; 620-341-5336) for registration forms and if you have any questions or would like further information.



Join Us In The Flint Hills On Saturday, September 28, 2013, At “The Joyful Noise: A Music And Prairie Family Camp”

Enjoy an entire day immersed in the beauty of the Flint Hills while family members of all ages take part in music workshops, guided prairie walks, horseback rides, and a twilight concert under the stars featuring renowned guest artists, cellist Eugene Friesen and violinist Darol Anger.

For the third year, this special event will take place at Camp Wood YMCA in Elmdale, Kansas, a world-class, family-friendly facility with spacious, interior, all-weather spaces.

For more information and to register for the camp online, visit www.joyfulnoisecamp.org.



Calling All WSU-Bound String Players

Do you have a graduating senior enrolling at WSU in the fall? Students who do not major in music are still welcome to audition for the WSU Symphony Orchestra. It is a terrific opportunity to continue a musical activity while also gaining a support network of friends from throughout the campus community. Incoming students are encouraged to register for orchestra (MUSP 211) during orientation. Please send contact information for WSU-bound students to Mark Laycock(mark.laycock@wichita.edu; 316-978-6202).





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Summer Workshop at WSU

Deborah Perkins, Professor of String Pedagogy at Southern Methodist University and longtime string educator in South Carolina, Florida, and Texas, will join Jacquelyn Dillon and Mark Laycock for the WSU Orchestra Directors' Retreat July 18-19. Dr. Perkins will present four sessions: "The Self-Propelling Orchestra Class," "Recipes for Success," "Music and Artistry," and "More Than Words Can Say." Jacquelyn and Mark will each present a session as well. There will be plenty of time for sharing questions and ideas, from favorite repertoire to successful recruiting. The workshop will include an opportunity to observe rehearsals at the Bows at the Barn string camp at Prairie Pines in Maize. The retreat informally begins on Wednesday, July 17, with a string music reading session at Senseney Music; there is a separate charge for this event. Up to two hours of graduate credit are available. Registration is now open via the WSU webpage (www.wichita.edu); enroll in MUSE 750Q.

WSU Summer Orchestra

The WSU Summer Orchestra will perform Dvorak's Symphony No. 6 in D Major and collaborate with WSU faculty artists Emily Sternfeld-Dunn, soprano, and Randolph Lacy, tenor. Rehearsals will be held each Tuesday and Thursday, 7:00-9:30pm, from June 18-July 18, culminating in a final concert Friday, July 19, at 7:30 pm; there will be no rehearsals the week of the Fourth of July. One hour of academic credit is available; register online for course number MUSP 711. For more information on these and other WSU string events contact Mark Laycock (mark.laycock@wichita.edu or 319-978-6202).



Continuing Education or Graduate Credit Opportunity!
MUS 604, Upper String Pedagogy: The "Basics" of Simon Fischer
July 17-19, 2013
Kansas State University
Cora Cooper, Instructor

Renowned violin teacher Simon Fischer, who has written the "Basics" column for Strad magazine for years, is known for his ability to target, explain, and clarify the fundamental principles of violin playing. The genius of his approach is that these principles apply to all levels of player, from beginner to most advanced. This three-day course will be an immersion into his books and teaching. Fischer's "Warming Up" will serve as the text. This short book covers most aspects of right and left hand technique, and can be played through in 30 minutes (Cooper was lucky enough to study the material with him on sabbatical in 2011). Fischer's other books-- the classics "Basics" and "Practice," as well as his newest books "Scales" and "The Violin Lesson"--will also be explored in the class.

The course can be taken for either 2 or 3 credits. To enroll, please contact Frederick Burrack at fburrack@k-state.edu.



Dr. Jeremy Starr will be giving an all-day conducting workshop on Wednesday, July 3, 2013, from 9 am - 5 pm as part of Emporia State University's Great Plains Music Education Workshops (www.emporia.edu/music/summer-music-education-workshops/). The workshop can be taken for continuing education credit, graduate credit (see registration form for details-www.emporia.edu/dotAsset/58032c16-b488-43c4-8b6b-41d928070453.pdf) or simply for further education and experience. Here is an explanation of the conducting workshop's content:

"Creating Poetry on the Podium"

Create music with your hands and enjoy the passion and thrill of conducting, which still remains one of the most unexplored musical skills. Through gestural/physical concepts, five points of preparation for the podium, and podium time conducting an ensemble of your peers, further develop your conducting confidence with clear and communicative conducting technique and effective musical gestures. How to conduct other ensembles you are not familiar with will also be addressed. The workshop is intended for band, choir, and orchestra conductors. Limit of 20.

Participants in the workshop will be required to bring batons and their instruments (voice, orchestral instruments, etc.), and no video camera will be provided. To register, fill out the registration form (www.emporia.edu/dotAsset/58032c16-b488-43c4-8b6b-41d928070453.pdf) and send it in along with the appropriate fee to:

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