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**YURI KORCHINSKY -**

**Violin: “The moment of truth”**

**Everything you know and don’t know about a violin…**

**40-YEARS EXPERIENCE OF VIOLIN PLAYING**

**30 YEARS OF TEACHING PRACTICE**

**IN MEMORY OF MY MOTHER L.L. KORCHINSKAYA**

**TO WHOM I’M OBLIGED BY EVERYTHING IN MY LIFE…**

From the author:

Many of the professors of various music conservatories of the world asked me to put on paper those remarks I say to my students because these words and phrases are not meaningless but something more significant that is supported by long-term educational experience and skill as well as by the experience of all Russian violin pedagogic and Russian musical violin school.

**Introduction:**

A violin is a marvelous divine creature! Yes, really, it’s a **creature** asthe violin is able to sing,laugh,grieve, worry, suffer, it feels joy, it thinks, doubts and does many of those things that are peculiar just for a **human being.** Besides the wooden stick called “sound post” that transfers acoustic vibrations from the top plate of the instrument to the back plate, the violin inherits a big soul**.**

At the same time (that seems to be strange) it is able to live its own life! From my experience, I know that when I happen to miss one or a few days of contact with this beautiful **Lady,** thenI **have to** inevitably deal with hurt: “Why didn’t you open a violin case for such a long time? And why didn’t we play music for such a long time? I felt sad…”In this situationyou need to apologize and say sorry to crawl back into **Queen’s** favour! I’m not afraid of this expression stereotype, you know, as the violin is **“The Queen of music”…**

The modern violin is the instrument that has been evolving for many centuries. The instrument evolution was connected with historical development of music and method of playing. In European musical history the violin (as the folk musical instrument) dates back to the XVth century, from the origins of Slavic lands, then it transforms into a viola that is the string instrument of aristocratic saloons.

**The viola** had weakly stretched strings tuned in according to the highest string or the thirds, also it had wide neck and the fingerboard with concords. Its sound was dark, dense, not very loud, tender and mat, that satisfied the intimate atmosphere of small saloons. Bass viola was put by a leg (basso da gamba). Discant viola was put on a shoulder (da braccio). In the XVIth century the violin replaced the viola da braccio,first in orchestral ensembles, where it performed the firsts, and then it took the place of the leading instrument in big concert halls. The instrument perfection took place in Cremona and other Italian towns as well as in the workshops of Amati, Guarneri, Stradivari, Ruggeri, Guadagnini, Galliano, Bergonzi, etc…

**Russia – Moscow and St.Petersburg…**

For more than 200 years they were the major musical centres and played important role in Russian violin school formation. To be fair, it needs to be pointed out that this school was formed under the influence of many European musical directions. Famous violin players-composers descended from the origins of Russian musical and violin culture: А. Brodsky, P. Kohansky, G. Venyavsky. It’s also important to remember Professor Leopold Auer and his brilliant followers: Heifetz, Zimbalist, Elman.

One of the most famous American teachers Ivan Galamyan also was the educate of the Moscow music conservatory… Later on those traditions have been followed by famous violin players/composers: D. Oistrach, L. Kogan, D. Tsyganov, Y. Yankelevich, L. Tseitlin, А. Yampolsky, P. Bondarenko, К. Mostras, I. Bezrodny, М. Vaiman, B. Gutnikov and many-many others…

The main purpose of writing these notes is to widen pedagogical opportunities while teaching violin performance. From this point of view, modern theories are presented here applicable to forming a musician-artist.

The main things in the centre of this system are: mind and creation technique. All these elements are necessary for continuous further development, musical-instrument growth of a student and for stimulating his own needs in creative activity. It needs to be pointed out that technical skill has fundamental importance in forming the image of a violin player, artist and actor, but if it exists by its own, then it’s **vain**, as there is no thought, no spirituality in it and its peak momentum doesn’t flow from vital rise of arts.

It’s impossible to look for easy ways in pedagogic; you must not strain after external success showing too much indulgence to students’ weaknesses by setting easier creative tasks for them… Each teacher must have creation feeling as well as the feeling of inexhaustible hedonism and belief into creative vocation of **each person**.

**Chapter 1.**

**How to teach a violin to sing…**

**(Some moments of shaping performance technique)**

During the last decades of the violent XXth century I happened to observe how difficult it was to perceive tuition on the violin, how hard it is to teach right “singing”, “proper” sounding “technique” as well as the basis of everything, i.e. overcoming various instrumental difficulties.

**First of all is sound**

Prior to starting tuition on the violin, be it a child, a teenager or an adult, he should already spiritually possess some music, keep it in his mind, carry it in his soul and hear it in the inner ear. The entire secret of a talent and genius is that music lives its life in his mind bеfore he touches the key or scrapes a bow across a string. That is why Mozart, almost from his very birth, started to play both the piano and the violin…!!!

It’s much better to start teaching violin skill since the age of five or six. The main thing is to turn the process itself into a game. So, what do you need to require from a little violin player?

First of all, good phonation, i.e. clear and transparent sound with no any scratches and hisses. If the teacher is able to show how the violin should sing, reminding woman’s voice, then it will be a good example for a little child and he will have hope that one day, while working hard, he’ll be able to achieve something similar… But let me repeat, all this should be achieved in the process of sounds game: echo, a locomotive, a favorite puppy, cat, etc. It would be nice to show (if qualification of a teacher allows to do it) how the cat mews, how the dog barks, how the gun or the main gun shoots. First what the student should learn is the sound quality.

It’s necessary to distinguish musical sound, sound in general and the definition of musical tone as the part of musical intonation, as the way of expressing its substance. Musical sound consists of various parameters (volume, sound color, pitch, rhythmic value and broad localization), though it is not yet the essential component that is the tone!

The tone is the intonation part, in connection with this, musical intoning is developing as the tone component. At the same time it’s not right to assume that intonation comes from the tone. It’s initial. Not the tone creates music but music creates the tone.

How do the movements in the category connected with sound happen? In the very beginning the technique of sound retrieval should be understood: the bow weight pressure on the string, weight adjustment, the bow movement speed control, etc. but, apart from it, we consider just aesthetic characteristics of the sound: good or bad, nice or ugly, rich or shallow, dense, scratchy, etc…

And in this context we analyse violin sound apart from its intonational-expressive potential. If to widen this definition, it’s possible to talk about the violin player personality, also taking into account concertizing masters with really good violin sound in their expressive arsenal. The individual actor’s tone while performing various compositions and intonational sense of interpretation are superfine inimitable substances.

**Beginning**

The beginning of tuition on the violin is always more problematic than, say, on keyboard or percussion instruments. It’s not very easy to achieve natural body posture, physical condition of full relaxation and the feeling of comfort… The teacher should show how to hold the violin and the bow. The violin is held by quite strong pressing a chin against the left shoulder not to let the violin slip from the chin while moving the left arm along the fingerboard. In other words, if the student lowers the left arm, parallel to his body, the violin stays in the same position where it was.

The shoulder pad is chosen on the basis of physiological features of the student (his neck’s length, etc.). To hold the violin in the right way, the head and the chin should be in their natural position and not tense. Student’s head should be a little bit bent to the left shoulder. The violin head is placed against the student’s nose. The left hand palm is perpendicular to the violin neck. The neck lies between the thumb and the index finger in such a way that a gap is left between it and the palm.

The bow

The mechanism of sound production is difficult by its simplicity. All key action is arms.

The bow is the continuation of the right arm brachium. The teacher should for some time draw attention of the student to make sure that the sound production made by the right arm together with the left arm is nothing else but just the function that is performed by these movements. But when you straightforwardly and one-sidedly pay attention just to the violin key action, this turns music into a cold-sounded scheme instead of its breathing and spontaneous flow. Music is first of all!

So, the thumb is situated right by the frog. However, it should be bent in such a way to make sure that the finger back touches the bow hair. Other fingers are placed on the bow stick on their first phalanges that should be rounded, with no sticking out bones, a little bit bent to the bow shaft. Everything should happen softly and naturally.

Fingers are not tense. There cannot be the feeling that the bow is held in a fist. The index finger plays the main and the most important role. It regulates the sound strength and has an effect on the sounding quality. Other fingers just help it. Fingers form a ring. The expression “to keep the ring” in the right hand means the position formed by a bent index finger together with the middle finger, this way they touch the bow stick, one from below, another one from above. So-to-speak “keeping the ring” predetermines flexibility and sounding expressivity.

After all this has been explained to the student, the bow movement can be started. In the beginning of the tuition it’s recommended to exercise on D and A strings.

Let’s start from a violin bow frog proceeding to the bow tip. This motion is called **down-bow.** Countermotion, from the bow tip to the frog is called **up-bow.** It’s very important for the bow to touch the string not with entire surface but just with its right edge.

However, there should be the inclination angle of 35-40 degrees to the right of the violin stand. Steady bow motion and disposition as well as natural holding the elbow are important: all parts of the right arm work harmoniously and together. So, they say for a reason: “The right arm is the voice of a singer”.

These important things are invented not deliberately, they are about interaction of the hand, the forearm, the elbow, etc. It’s very important here , while changing the bow motion (i.e., down-up), to keep smooth rounded motion by the hand together with fingers (so-to-speak “fingerstrich”), when the bow motion change becomes very smooth and tender, just as the singer unnoticeably takes a breath, not cutting the phrase and not breaking musical continuity. The bow motion direction should always be parallel to the stand.

Here it’s needed to pay attention to the bow length that should be suitable for the student’s age and his right arm length.

The bow motion direction cannot happen simply by bending and straightening fingers and the wrist. Prior to changing the bow direction, the shoulder and the forearm softly and without any pushes changing the direction, get ready for the bow direction change that will help better smoothness!

The main thing is that you should never separate technological moments from the string of notes contents, from Music itself: **so, the bow direction changes can be completely different during sharp, brisk, emphasized music bowing, as opposed to smooth, songful, melodious bowing, like it’s required by entire obeyance to the string of notes.**

When a certain rhythmic moment comes and a new note appears, then the right hand fingers, already partially moved backwards by the hand that continues its movement in the opposite direction, outline a geometrical figure reminding a drop in the air, with its thin end pointed to the right or to the left, depending on the motion direction.

The more performance skill there is, the less the area of the bow change and the less audible it is.

The sound quality depends on the bow pressure on the string and on its motion speed. The slower the bow moves, the weaker should be its pressure on the string. Otherwise we’ll hear a scratching sound. The sound force is regulated by the index finger pressure.

You need to consider that near the frog the bow weight, including the arm, is heavier than at the tip. And for regulating the pressure on the string the little finger steps in, it regulates the right arm weight and heaviness. Sometimes for more perfect bow change by the frog they use so-to-speak **elevated arm** technique, thus making the bow change easier in its lower part.

So, you’ve just learnt to play on A and D strings. Now let’s master E and G strings. Specific position of the right arm corresponds to each string, and you just need to remember that the elbow and the hand should always be lower than the joint of the hand and the forearm. Then there will be the right position. Here we won’t be talking about strings, hair of the bow and rosin quality, etc. All this affects the tuition success.

### The left-hand fingering

Fingers should be roundly held above strings, don’t rise them high as the sound quality doesn’t depend on the height of the finger fall but on the force of the stop. During too high fingers rise in fast technical episodes you’ll lose time that will lead to problems in performing passages.

So, **strong stop by the finger is the** **guarantee of good and quality sounding,** but you don’t need at all to rise your fingers high for this. They just should be active. It’s also important to remove the fingers from strings, not obliquely but strictly perpendicularly up! It’s also important not to remove fingers from strings unless it’s interfering with the technique. For instance, on A string, in home position, you play B-C-D-E, accordingly, with the first, the second, the third and the fourth fingers. However, the second, the third and the fourth fingers are left where they were before.

### Music bowing

All music bowing is divided into 4 groups:

1. Separable bowing (**detaché)**

2. Conjunct bowing (**legato)**

3. Stab bowing (**martele)**

4. Jumping bowing (**spiccato, staccato, riccochet,** **sautill'e)**

It’s very important during studying **detaché** to have neither pauses nor accents (pushes) in between the notes, when changing the bow. All this is achieved by smooth right-hand motion together with fingers manipulation.

Here is what L. Auer said about bowing:

1. Detache

Detache in compliance with continuous “long” sounds or, as the French call them “sons files”, described by us in the previous chapter, is the basis of the bow technique. When practising detache, use the full bow length by playing at the moderating tempo and try to receive the sound of equal force while down-bows and up-bows. Start each bowing from your hand, continuing it with the forearm that enters the game, until you reach the bow tip while performing down-bow or its frog while performing up-bow. Vary this bowing by using separately various parts of the bow, playing with the upper half of the bow, with the middle of it and by the frog.

2. Martele

This bowing performed by the bow tip is very important as such, and its use promotes muscle power of the hand. It’s the basis of two other bowing variations: staccato and so-to-speak “dotted notes” that, like martele, are played by the bow tip.

Martele is achieved by strong pressing on the string with the bow head, you use just your hand for producing the desired sound. In case you feel that you are not able to master this bowing with one hand, then you can apply light push of your forearm, but never use the shoulder push.

3. Down-bow and up-bow stаcсatо

Opinions are divided about the way of producing staccato. Masters of the previous century, such as Kreutzer, Rode, Spohr and others, taught that staccato should be performed with the help of the hand. Apparently, Spohr had excellent staccato as he often uses it in his concertos.

Many of great virtuosos of the XIXth century whom I happened to hear, for instance, Joachim, had middle-speed staccato. Joachim achieved it exceptionally with his hand, and it was quite rapid for the classical repertoire preferred by him in solo and chamber performances. Joachim was the first one who proclaimed this principle: “The virtuoso exists for music but not music exists for the virtuoso”.

He was the first one who made popular violin concerto by Beethoven, sonatas for the violin solo by Bach and, mainly, his “Ciaccona”, Tartini sonatas, particularly that one that’s well-known as “Les trilles du Diable”, and the most part of the classical repertoire, appearing nowadays in concert programs.

Vieuxtemps was playing his concertos and some other compositions of his own performing mixed staccato, i.e. with the hand and the forearm he was able to play a lot of notes with one bow change, achieving amazing effects.

No doubt, Venyavsky had the most brilliant staccato. He used just his shoulder for it, straining his hand till the condition of full stiffness… His staccato was dizzily rapid and at the same time it differed by its mechanical steadiness.

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*I personally have come to conclusion that this method of playing staccato is more effective and I use it.*

*On the contrary, Sarasate, having dazzling tone, used just staccato volant that wasn’t very fast but endlessly graceful. The last line, i.e. grace, lightened all his playing accompanied with exceptionally melodious sound, though it was not too strong.*

***4. Staccato volant***

*Staccato volant (volatile staccato) is presented by the combination of two methods: playing with the shoulder and with the hand that is used simultaneously, but the only difference is that, when playing hard staccato, the bow is separated from the string and, if I may say so, it digs into it, and when playing staccato volant, the bow elastically bounces after each stricken note.*

*Here I’d like to repeat once again that just vivid demonstration of staccato methods of playing can be really useful for the student. But on the basis of my long-term experience I have to admit that for achieving success in this direction something else is needed, along with staccato bowing tuition itself.*

*In addition to it, the student should have natural inclination for bowing, and his hand should act like a spring made of the best steel.*

***5. Spiccato***

*I always taught spiccato technique with the help of detache in the middle of the bow, playing it as far as possible shorter with no effort, using one hand and, what’s the most important, at a moderate tempo. Exercising this kind of bowing, you should gradually increase the speed, having fixed the bow on the string quite well. As soon as your hand acquires some technical skill, you can proceed to the next exercise on two strings (G-D):*

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*After that the similar exercise should also be repeated on other two strings (А-—Е). To get the right spiccato, you just need to weaken fingers pressure on the bow, continuing the same movement with your hand that’s used for detache short bowing mentioned above. The bow will automatically bounce, provided that* *abrupt arm movements are eliminated.*

*Random actions in this direction and determination to make the bow bounce as much as possible due to the arm strength lead to the opposite results. The bow stick does uneven jumps, and you won’t be able to control the stick movements and handle it. All you need to do for achieving better sounding is not to change your hand position and to hold the bow so that to use three quarters of the bow hair width.*

*Your arm rests keeping its usual position. Just the third finger is in hardly noticeable motion, turning the bow, so that the most part of hair would be found on strings: otherwise the sound will be weak and without resonation, and also hair touching the string will start sliding with whistling sound from one place to another.*

*In order to avoid this whistling, you should try to hold the bow in one place, between the stand and the fingerboard.****6. Ricochet-saltato***

*When performing this technique, hold the bow as far as possible lightly, barely touching the bow with your fingers. Lift the bow above strings on one-fourth of the inch\* or more depending both on the bow stick weight, elasticity and the player’s skill. Let the bow fall with the help of flexible hand motion, and you’ll notice it’ll bounce so far as you’ll let it do it.*

*First you’ll produce several chaotic and hurried sounds but after some practice of using this specified way, after some time you’ll master chaotic motion and you’ll be able to absolutely rhythmically play two, three, six and eight notes at one bowing, depending on whether you’ll shorten or lengthen it.****7. Tremolo***

*For tremolo you should use the same principles that have just been mentioned for ricochet-saltato bowing: the bow motions performed immediately one after another.*

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*Make well-defined movement by your hand at each down-bow, significantly weakening its tension so that the bow could bounce.*

*The weaker and the more flexible the movement you make, the stronger the bow bouncing is. It’s also used while bouncing in case of up-bow.  
  
Comment: Inch\* = 2.52 cm.*

*Berio used this bowing in his brilliant composition named “Tremolo”, the variation of Andante from A-major sonata, ор. 47 by Beethoven, known as “Kreutzer Sonata”.*

*Francois Prume, highly valued virtuoso of the middle of the previous century, also widely used tremolo in his extremely popular play “Melancholy”.*

*Also quite recently Henri Marteau used tremolo, that had been ignored by virtuosos and composers for a series of years, in his many compositions.****8. Arpeggio***

*Similar to tremolo, arpeggio is played according to the same principles that ricochet-saltato has. If you want to simplify your practice on arpeggio then first play it legato to achieve even bow movement down and up on all four strings. Do it with no tension in your arms and using the upper half of the bow. To provide better beginning on G-string, raise your arm a bit and lower it as much as it’s necessary to be able to switch to А- and Е-strings without any restraint.*

*As soon as you completely master this motion, you can start arpeggio with flexible motion of the hand while down-bowing, in the same way as you did it with tremolo before:*

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***9. Legato***

*Legato is the most frequently used bowing and, if to perform it well, it differs by great expressiveness. To make it sound clean, proceed from one string to another with the help of your hand supported by your forearm motion; proceed from А- and Е-strings to G- and D-strings as well as back to А and Е, letting your arm to return to the normal position.*

*But this transient motion of your arm from one string to another one should happen absolutely unnoticeably, without any pushes and sharpness. Improving your legato with the method mentioned by me here, you’ll make sure* *as the time goes by that you can play a lot of notes at one bowing:*

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*It’s useful to exercise in various modes and distances, for instance, in thirds, sixths and septenaries, first very slowly, i.e. with quarter-notes, then with quavers and semiquavers.*

*After that change the strings: go to А and Е. Place the bow on two strings, i.e. on G — D or А—E, and try to produce a sound with it, not pressing and not tending to increase or decrease it. After some time devoted to a rational use of the exercises mentioned above you can start playing special easy etudes by Keiser, Fiorillo and Kreutzer (the last-mentioned etudes should bе preferred in Mazas edition). “Principles and Pratice of Violin Bowing” by А. Bloch will be of invaluable benefit, especially for beginners.*

*Play the exercises in various modes and distances: in thirds, sixths and septenaries. A bit later try to play quavers and semiquavers at one and the same bowing and at the tempo speeding up proportionally, depending on increasing fluency of the student, while moving around strings and from one position to another one.*

*To achieve really perfect legato you should keep an eye on the fingers placed on both strings, they will stay in this position until the bow completely moves from one string to another one. By lifting any of these fingers you will break the sound continuity, and then, no doubt, it’ll be something like stutter.*

*In reality legato is neither more nor less than getting rid of “sharp corners” in violin playing. This is the ideal materialization of soft, rounded and continuous stream of sounds. Legato technique, developed as it was explained by me, results in beautiful melodious sound, in other words, in natural violin tone. Surely, we should apply detache, martele, staccato and other bowing as the beauty of “long” sounds (sons files) has to be emphasized, otherwise even their perfection turns into monotony.*

*Though legato is the quintessence of a sustained, smooth-flowing melodic line when playing: without it the violin singing isn’t possible. And even when it’s rarely alternated by other bowing, legato doesn’t produce monotonous impression. Let me give an example from vocal literature: let’s view some of the big arias in Bach cantatas. According to the existing rules, they have to be preceeded by recitative…*

*But great musician Bach knew that nothing is so tiring for the person who has an ear for music as long declamatory recitatives (something similar to vocal detache), so he wrote short recitatives and long arias.*

*The violin is a homophonic, melodic and singing instrument. Its main expressive quality is always smooth-flowing melodic line. All virtuosity triumphs, such as victory over double thirds, brilliant staccato bowing and “fingered” septenaries and tenths, don’t change the basic fact.*

*That is why legato stringed bowing that creates a melody will stay one of the most frequently used and the only bowing that has to be developed by each violinist till perfection, if he doesn’t want his instrument singing to be interrupted and if he wants its sound to always be smooth and continuous.*

*I’d like the following general rule to be burnt into consciousness of each violinist who is keen to achieve good legato: don’t lift your finger from the string until you hear the next string sound**.*

***Vibrato***

Vibration (vibrato) is a special moment of the violin tone beauty. It’s particular sound tremble activated by swinging your left arm, not just the finger, but the whole arm!, i.e. your wrist, the forearm and the elbow. This technique should be extremely diversified, both by your arm swinging amplitude and by the speed, depending on the artistic tasks set for this or that piece of music.

It’s necessary to pay special attention to one popular mistake peculiar to about 7 to 8 students out of 10. It’s automatic stop of vibration while the bow change, both at the frog and at the bow tip.

This is the moment when coordination of both arms movements has negative effect! It’s not of less importance to mention that you should begin vibrato study just when the student has mastered intoning bases, change of positions and with confidence orientates himself in sensations of his left arm as well as in navigating the violin fingerboard.

It’s very important, especially in smooth-flowing melodic line, when vibration wouldn’t start and end together with fingers change but would be continual, so-to-speak “vibrato – legato”.

It’s also essential to mention that you can’t allow the stronger finger (the 1st and the 3rd one…) to vibrate with other amplitude and strength rather than the 2nd and the 4th one. Vibration evenness should be ***integrated*** and under complete control of the melodic line. All those details in technique lead to accuracy and gracefulness (sophisticated professional performance).

***Open (not pressed) strings***

Open (not pressed) strings play a great role in general violin sounding. They define the instrument’s timbre performance as each of these strings has one timbre peculiar just for it.

Skillful use of open strings enriches colorful possibilities of the instrument and makes it sound sharper. A lot of composers wrote pieces of music with open strings sounding: violin concertos by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Paganini. Also open strings are widely used in Ysayee compositions for a violin solo, Kreisler cadenzas to Beethoven and Brahms concertos as well as in Kreisler unique “Recitative and scherzo” composition.

Though in some cases composers tend to avoid open strings, creating by doing it so-to-speak dim, “unopened” instrument sounding. For instance, b-moll mode excludes open strings use in “Serenade Melancolique” by Tchaikovsky. So, this composition sounds very intimately and dimly.

If to use open strings, it restricts the left arm and fingers movement. Though when choosing fingering, you need to remember that open strings always sound louder and brighter rather than strings pressed by the finger. And it’s necessary to apply various techniques, both for your right and left arm, not to break sounding of the melodic episode or a passage and to achieve ***even timbre coloring avoiding unnecessary tones.***

Developing this theme, I need to point out that when you play in high registers (especially on “Е” string), the bow pressure on the string can’t be the same as in the first - the fourth positions. In this case the bow pressure on the string is compensated by performance impressiveness in your left arm.

***Positions changes***

Clever use of positionsopens unlimited possibilities for the violinist. Choosing positions in the art of violin playing is connected with peculiarities of the violin nature: possibility of producing sounds of one and the same pitch level on different strings, possibility of melodious connection of sounds of various pitch levels with the help of smooth finger sliding on the string. The degree of positions use on different strings varies. In practice, positions of low and middle registers are more often applied on ***A, D and G strings***.

You can use all positions on ***E*** string. Samples of using all ***G-string*** interval are Variations on “Moses” theme by Paganini, Bach Aria transcribed by Wilhelmy, “Gipsy” rhapsody opening by Ravel.

Considering that in old violin methods fingering variants of odd positions are more common, to my point of view, insufficient learning the 2nd, the 4th and the 6th positions leads to minimizing fingering and technical opportunities, and big difficulties and inconveniences arise for the performer while playing the violin.

Fingering even positions has its advantages. It has smaller spaces while changing positions and let hold your arm in between two positions. Sometimes even positions use lets eliminate the fourth finger activity that helps to give more freedom and disjointedness to your fingers, adding accuracy and steadiness to technical episodes performance. Wherever artistic goals allow you to do so, positions can be changed with the help of open strings, (especially if you want to change to a distant position).

It happened so in the art of violin playing that the Ist, the IIIrd, the Vth and theVIIth positions are considered to be the most convenient, strong, steady rather than dual ones (the IInd, the IVth, the VIth position, etc.) So, for upbringing a real virtuoso you should pay close attention to musical episodes performance in dual positions, that by no means should differ from “convenient” positions number I, III, V, etc.

In most cases, especially in fast passages, you should use semitones to change to the nearest position as this makes your violin technique particularly virtuosic. If you can’t achieve this by any means, then you should use strong beat to change, namely, when there is strong beat of a bar-line, to change to the new position. Then inevitable push when moving the arm matches with natural stress and this way it will be unnoticeable.

In general, fingering selection in this or that piece of music, certainly, depends on physiological features such as: the arm size, fingers’ length, etc.

### But fingering choice should always be dependent on maximally deep revelation of the composition artistic values and to be invaluable help in search of the most expressive interpretation.

While changing positions, particularly in passages, do it smoothly, evenly, with no any jerks and kicks, fingers should be maximally close to the string.

During the process of becoming a violinist the teacher should pay a lot of attention to scales, broken chords, the thirds, the sixths, the tenths and fingering.

### *Scales and broken chords*

Scales containing one or two septenaries don’t present any difficulty as they can be performed in one position and with the help of one fingering. The same scales containing three septenaries are more difficult for studying as they are much higher than the 5th position, here special technique is required when moving the thumb, near the violin neck.

Special attention should be paid to the thumb not holding back the arm motion along the fingerboard: the thumb’s end has to be turned to the bridge but not to the violin head. It’s important to study scale with the help of various fingering techniques that improves technical abilities of the violinist. When you finish with Fis scale, study scales containing 4 septenaries.

Let me remind you that just G, As, A, B and H can be played on the violin with the use of four septenaries. At the same time corresponding broken chords are studied.

Besides, sometimes it’s better to start studying scales from similar broken chords to feel much more and to compare their major and minor sounding.

Very often work with scales is formal. They have to be as proximate as possible to all musical and sound order. The main disadvantage is rhythmical instability, carelessness in relation to rhythm!

It’s very important to play in one tempo having accurate rhythmization of quarter-notes, quavers, semiquavers, demi-semiquavers performed with 2, 4, 8 and 16 ***legato*** notesand with one bow motion (i.e., at one change).

When changing from slow to fast performance, tempo has to be changed proportionally, each time twice faster, in other words, per two notes at one change, after that per four notes at a change, etc.

Minor scales sound much more sad (if to consider reduced sensation of the fingerboard, especially in flat scales).

This moment is very important for training sharp, so-to-speak, “affronting the ear” intonation. And, what’s interesting, while performing flat scales in minor, systemic condition of your arms, body and soul becomes softer, more relaxed, in other words, all your bad energy leaves you, for instance, while performing A-dur-у or D-dur-у.

This is from mystic powers and something from another world!

Besides diatonic scales, a lot of attention should be paid to chromatic scales.

They are performed just in two fingering variants:

* The 1st - the 2nd fingers (moving along semitones)
* The 1st – the 2nd – the 3rd fingers (interchanging twice and the 4th finger takes just one note during the second time).

First chromatic scale is studied slowly. Then faster, gradually increasing tempo.

Meanwhile you have to make sure that semitones sound very distinctly, fingers are not sluggish and sounds don’t merge.

I need to point out here that you can benefit from exercises that make sense only when you achieve high quality phonation result: even, clean, filled with overtones sound.

When Miron Polyakin used to play scales and exercises, even by doing so he delighted the listeners, first of all by beauty of sounding.

***Double notes***

Along with studying scales, double notes, such as thirds, sixths and septenaries, are very important and significant in tuition, and especially important are tenths and fingering.

Since it’s impossible, for instance, to play Caprice No 17 by Paganini if you have no skill of playing fingered scales.

***Chordal technics***

To perform chords in quite fast tempo, for instance, in Moderato 4/4, with triple chords in quavers, it’s essential to bring the bow back to the next chord as soon as possible. At that the right arm movement has to be not flat, parallel to strings, but a little bit inbent, ellipse-like.

***Pizzicato performance***

If possible, all the notes are under vibration, the left arm fingers are very energetic and maximally pressed against the fingerboard. When performing pizzicato chords, the right arm index finger moves a bit diagonally from the bridge (approximately under the angle of 45 degrees ) and not parallel to the strings at all. And, what’s even more important, mostly by the index finger pad.

***Etudes***

Starting from Mazas and Dont, let’s proceed to classical etudes by Kreutzer. Here we have a lot of exercises for all kinds of bowing, learning how to play shakes, etudes for the left arm passages, etudes played with septenaries and with double notes.

It’s very effective for every-day exercises to learn etudes with diatonic and chromatic scales, with common chords, piqué etudes, shake etudes, staccato etudes, etc.

I think that to properly study etudes as physical exercises you need to spend 1 hour – one hour and a half daily.

Further exercises are continued with etudes by Mazas, ор.36, exercise book 2.

They are a little bit more complicated than Kreutzer etudes, though very melodious and interesting for the student and, above all, useful for bowing variety and for mastering sound melodiousness. They are followed by Rode classical etudes: 24 caprices, with all modes contributing to student’s general growth in music.

I need to point out here as very useful “30 Preludes”, op.12, by Campagnoli and “12 Caprices” by Rovelli.

After that you can proceed to “School of violin technics” by Schradieck (volume 2)…

...Here we have more difficult exercises with double notes.

Standard divisions of exercises and etudes:

Before Kreutzer

Kreutzer and Dont

Dont and Paganini

Ernst, Gaviniés and Venyavsky.

***The feeling of time, pause, “breathing”***

It happens very rarely when the teacher can explain how to play and how to feel 1/8 of the pause that Brahms wrote in his sonatas for violin and piano (in slow parts).

It’s very important here not to have formal perception of this pause but to have spiritual and active approach.

***The pause can and must also live and breathe, not less than a note.***

To bring emotions to the listeners, to catch their attention as much as possible and to keep the audience interested, the performer should feel several times stronger and emotionally perform compositions as at the concert you inevitably face losses because of the large space.

All technical difficulties, such as: virtuosic passages, double notes, flageolets, pizzicatos of the left and right arms can’t be performed heavily and tensely but should sound lightly and spontaneously, and they should also strictly follow the music, the string of notes, the piece of music completeness.

***Gradual sound growth and reduction***

The bow, especially when it moves from the frog to the bow tip in fast tempo parts, should be maximally lightened while getting closer to the upper half (no doubt , it doesn’t have to affect sounding). Then the string of notes will become light, airy and, so-to-speak, breathing.

***About memory***

There are several memory types: audio, visual and memory while learning various compositions.

Taking all this into account, don’t forget about, so-to-speak, subconscious memory of fingers and arms. Many times I experienced myself at my own concerts that it’s enough to lose control even for a moment, to be distracted from the performed music, from the string of notes, from the episode, and inevitable disaster may happen…

The author of these lines witnessed when great David Oistrach, having lost self-control in the Large Hall of Moscow Conservatory, was getting all mixed up for 20 seconds while performing the first part of Tchaikovsky concerto (which he performed at least 1000 times before!).

In this case memory of fingers and memory of arms mechanical movements come to help.

**Chapter 2.**

**How to start learning the new composition that you’ve never played before?**

It depends on the complexity of the composition itself, on the performer’s technical abilities and on how quickly the artist solves bowing and fingering problems...

When these moments are overcome (for 40 – 50 %), then it’s possible to start solving corresponding problems in musical and technical moments.

The experience proves that when technical and musical problems are solved separately, then it never leads to great results. Everything should happen as one! Perceive music in such a way as if each note you play is the last one …in your life and as if you’ll never have a chance to play it once again. When you do it, and only when you do it, you have sense of playing great pieces of music!

Main and principal attraction in performance is constant freshness, renewal possibility, denial of routine and stereotype.

M. Rostropovich used to say: “Today it’s sunny, and I have one Bach, tomorrow it will rain, and the same Bach will become purely different”.

### *Architectonics and the piece of music style*

Any piece of music has its own architectonics, in other words, its design, structure. *(The theorists teaching typology of musical forms* *would object here).*

So, Bach’s pieces of music, his sonatas and partitas for violin solo, especially all his three fugas in g-moll, a-moll and C-dur sonatas as well as his Chaconne from d-moll partita remind the structure of cathedrals in Cologne or Milan.

Violin concertos by Paganini, Spohr, Vieuxtemps bring thoughts of detailed Italian operas by Donizetti, Verdi and Mascagni.

Kreisler miniatures have incredible charm of old Vienna with its cosy cafeterias, fiacres and that special aroma of the old charming capital of Austro-Hungarian Empire.

All that should motivate the performer for stylistically correct performance of the composer’s intention, that’s why it’s necessary to apply the images’ palette (vibrato, bowing techniques, the sense of style, gradual sound growth and reduction, tones, etc.) that would be peculiar just for that epoch, just for a certain composer.

All cultural baggage the artist should have contributes to it: painting, literature, poetry, knowledge of operas and symphonies, historical and socio-political sciences and theatre.

Frescos by Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, pictures by Degas, Monet, Picasso, plays by Shakespeare and Chekhov as well as a lot of other creations have effect on the mankind: all this has to be of great help for the artist and musician as rich inner world of spirit influences on interpretation, appreciation of music and, obviously, is reflected by the audience.

***Starry night, magnificent sunshine in the cloudless sky, coming back to some familiar sweet place, meeting your old friend, the loving woman look, shaking her hand, thoughts of unfeasible hope, dreams of the future, recalling your past...***

***All this is artistic musical space.***

To my point of view, the combination of classical and romantic directions (styles) is significant. Bearing in mind that this modern world is so multiplicated, the definition of romanticism obtains specifically important meaning.

Not without a reason we call V. Horowitz as the last romantic of our epoch. Romanticism was inherent to him and it was felt in everything, even when he performed sonatas by Clementi.

In the XXth century music of Viennese classics, for instance, Mozart, was played quite differently from how it was performed in the XVIIIth century.

Listening to P. Schreyer, when he sings Mozart, first you don’t accept his dynamic and contrasting performance.

But gradually, with the force of his talent and expressiveness the artist convinces the listener that his interpretation is right, and Mozart appears to be lively, passionate and with superfine feelings and nuances.

By the way, in year 1776 in his “Versuch einer grundliechen Violinschule”, i.e. in his school of violin playing (the year when his famous son was born), Leopold Mozart paid a lot of attention to such definition as “Tempo Rubato”, putting a lot of sense into it, and he wrote that it was impossible to explain, that it was much easier to show it!

You can clearly see that the son followed his father’s will. In his compositions V.A. Mozart left us the right of interpretation freedom, the right for your own (surely, in cooperation with the author) PERFORMANCE.

***Concert at Mozart's Birthday:***

***“Mozart Quartet”:***

***Yuri Korchinsky – the first violin, Alexander Ostrovsky – the second violin, Michael Bezverchny – viola, Boris Shishkin – cello:***

[*http://files.mail.ru/JSV9AE*](http://files.mail.ru/JSV9AE)

### When compositions of old Italian masters sound, there is a danger of getting into stylistic monotony. Igor Stravinsky used to say about the music of the XVIIIth century: “It’s one sonata played 400 times”.

Heinrich Neuhaus specified 4 performing styles:

I – without any style,

II - dead performance,

III - museum style,

**IV** – modern style.

Music is not a closed world but constant conflict of life and human problems. There is a lot of unexplainable in music: mystery of the composition itself, fingers, the bow, strings.

All this while performance is called INSTINCT!

***Mode and sound colors***

Е-dur and D-dur are the most frequently used in violin literature , they are the most clear, bright, they highlight expressiveness of the sound, timbre, colors of the mode what is determined by the pitch of strings tuning system.

At the same time there are the modes where the composer tries to emphasize special mood of his piece of music.

For instance, P. I. Tchaikovsky in his “Serenade Melancolique” used both the color and low-sounding strings with a variety of flats, what creates a certain intimate hue to his composition.

Beethoven’s works written in F–dur have always been connected with the nature images: symphony No 6 (Pastourelle), sonata for piano and violin No. 5 (Spring).

***Artistic image in pieces of music***

I must say, this phrase seems to be questionable! Since what’s this, if not music itself, music speech with its elements: melody, harmony, polyphony, with certain structure, poetic and emotional contents?

Many times I used to hear how some students who didn’t get any real art school, who were not musically developed, who didn’t receive any aesthetic education were trying to play works of great composers.

…It’s a pity but it was nothing worthwhile out of it! Not a clear thought but just… fragments, no poetic images, no deep logic.

Accordingly, it wasn’t skillful enough. The kind of performance, where the word picture is transformed, where it doesn’t deserve any attention!!!

The more significant the musician is, the less time he has for work on the image: all work on the new composition comes to the fact that the composition is practically “learnt”...

But exactly at this moment the work (so-to-speak, parturiency) begins for the artist! Vrubel painted Demon’s head forty times not because he was untalented but because he was a genius…

Each great musician/artist for the teacher is like an undivided atom for the physicist.

The presence of a large amount of soul energy, mind, talent and sensibility is needed to penetrate into this complex organization.

**With great pleasure I’ll turn to the next dialectical trine: thesis-music, antithesis-instrument, synthesis - performance**.

Music is inside us, in our consciousness, imagination, feeling. Music “location” is our hearing; this instrument exists, so-to-speak, out of us, it’s the part of our objective external world that needs to be learnt, owned, this part should be dependent on our creative will, on our inner world. You need to start working on the artistic image together with primary tuition on the violin and learning musical notation. Just in a combination!

I’d like to point out here that, if a child is able to perform the simplest melody on the instrument, you need to strive to make this performance expressive.

In other words, the way of performance should match well to the contents of this very melody. It would be nice to use folk epos for this. Besides folk compositions, there are a lot of the simplest melodies by Haydn, Mozart, Weber, Tchaikovsky, etc.

It would be not bad to make sure as early as possible that the student plays plaintive melody sadly, festive melody in a festive manner.., in other words, it’s important to show very clearly your artistic musical intention to the young student.

To benefit from instrumental-technical work, work on mastering the instrument and training the motor apparatus, it would be good to set clear and defined goals for the student and to achieve their complete fulfillment.

**“What?”** defines **“How?”.** The player as early as possible should understand what’s called the artistic image: contents, meaning and poetic essence of the music.

This clearly comprehended goal will help to strive for personalizing **Music** while it is performed without the hint of amateurism, with full professional perfection**!**

**Chapter 3.**

**Defining the nature of playing movement taking into account musical and psychophysiological basis**

The thoughts expressed below originated from my personal violin pedagogic experience. At the same time I’d like you to perceive the number of moments wider, correlating them with cello or piano pedagogic.

Here you’ll find doctrines concerning the bases of musical performance and not depending on specific instrumental peculiarities.

Mastering various playing techniques is carried out by mechanical training and by frequent repetition of the episodes you’ve failed before. Quite often it caused professional illnesses as it was (and it should have been) the result of insufficient knowledge about the essence of nature of motions.

Leopold Auer in his book “My school of violin playing” pointed out: “Young students, who came from far away and who were not properly led by teachers, were exercising from eight to ten hours a day, ineffectively hoping to improve and to expand their technical opportunities.

Due to excessive continuous work they could hardly move their fingers…”

In the end of the ХIХth century Pablo Casals wrote: “… Then we were forced to play with hard hand, holding a book under the arm…

And I wanted to add full flexibility to my right arm motions, and because of this goal I let my elbow play freely, what made my bow movements easier and stronger…”

In violin pedagogic of the ХIХth–ХХth centuries I’d like to mention the violin school by Joachim - Moser.

The authors explain: “Our final aim is not a virtuoso but a musician who will be able to submit his technical skill to artistic goals. Putting stone after stone, we want to gradually lead the student to that moment, when home-made violin playing finishes and starts artistic music-making.

After the first exercises in bowing and on the fingerboard he must learn the elements of phrasing to understand as early as possible that conscious expression and performance are not taken from outside but organically connected with the whole playing.

However, I don’t talk here as much about the student being able to expressively perform short plays at this stage of development but about the teacher playing (showing) and explaining certain parts to arouse the student’s artistic thinking! Adding comparisons from similar arts and literature as well as using folk music and folk songs considerably simplifies this task…”.

It’s essential to mention here that, if the student’s ear feels what the good sound is, then it will, better than any theory , teach him those mechanical ways of the bow control that are necessary for producing a certain sound.

Correctness of the bow position of various instrumentalists needs to be checked just by the sound it produces.

Ergo: first you need to search for the sound and after that you’ll find the bow position.

It’s important to achieve good sounding and after that you can already add particular sensations and motions.

Following the French expression “L’esprit de son metier”, the spirit of craft would show itself in every little thing of the professional artist’s craft.

The gift of the artist must simply be combined with his analytical talent, unmistakably understanding physiological moments of the violin movements.

In modern physiology and psychology by applying numerous experimental observations you can see that the motions we do have multi-level arrangement.

To perform them correctly, sensorial and effectory systems of cortex and subcortex are needed as well as the degree of perception of this or that motion moment coming from the contents of the motor task.

And this task defines both the affectational system (sensual complex with monitoring and coordination of movements based on this system) and effective system (of the left arm).

So, all the problems of instrumentalists’ movements were central in musical pedagogics.

It’s obviously that any performer implements his artistic intentions through playing actions. Just a motion (!) is expressed by varied texture life of a man.

All endless variety of cerebration activities finally comes just to one thing, i.e. to muscular movement: whether a child laughs when he sees a toy, whether Garibaldi smiles being sent away for his great love to motherland, whether the girl is trembling when she sees the object of her loving adoration, whether Mendeleyev systematizes the chemical table and after that writes it down. All this is the result and the factor of muscular movement.

Meanwhile, everything that’s called modern physiology and psychology along with the results of observations and experiments shows that our unpretentious movements have very complex form consisting of many levels.

For their accomplishment cortex and subcortex sensorial and effectory systems as well as motion are needed; motion takes place depending on the task perception degree and contents. I think that understanding a certain motion as fixed reaction for some excitator in its turn complicates right understanding of psychophysical sense of performance skill during the musician play basic technique. At the same time there is controversy between motion processes: motion and resting. Transition from one condition to the other is very often complicated and becomes the moment of impaction, restraint and tense play.

You have to reject the familiar hypothesis that violin play tuition is mechanically automated, besides, that violin play consists of fixed conditioned responses and to reproduce them you need to avoid the student’s activity, and, mainly, it mentions about variations inability as well as inability to control variations.

It will mean change from mugging up and mechanical coaching to upbringing rarely met skill: control of your own actions.

On the basis of the abovementioned, let’s make a conclusion: moments of control and coordination of motion processes should be essential, they become effective just after forming creative tasks in the human brain.

Sometimes sharpness appears when choosing resources. The performer who has the most serious intentions takes the instrument having the aim in front of him! He will try by performing this or that piece of music to deliver acoustic images that have already been formed in his acoustic imagination.

It’s not the same for the artist what resources he has for solving the tasks set by him. Very often discrepancy between motivation and commitment towards motorial processes is so significant that this leads to inability of achieving a certain result under these conditions. Images of pieces of music open to us such performance requirements for playing skill that no any technical exercises can be related even to the auxiliary elements when overcoming various technical difficulties.

There are many examples when not so conveniently written pieces of music, for instance, violin concertos by Brahms, Tchaikovsky, being at the same time outstanding by their musical significance, stimulated to developing new techniques and other innovatory ways. In L. Auer class, while performing Tchaikovsky concerto, “new” or “Russian” way of the bow holding appeared.

It’s perfectly clear that there is certain specificity during work on each particular composition. It already becomes not so important to produce just a nice sound but the sound of a certain quality; not just bowing but the kind of bowing that corresponds to the required character; not just piano but various shadesof **piano**... (the artists will understand what I mean).

In his time L. Auer appealed to wide use of physical activity research. He wrote : “ Play a phrase or a passage in a number of different ways, change expression , first play more quiet, then louder , until you find natural interpretation , until those factors that all together create “shading”, merge into harmonious unity of expression. …”.

Almost the same thought is found, when reading Rakhmaninov: “ You need to play the music piece thousand times, carrying out thousands of experiments, listening, comparing , matching the results…”.

Тechnical achievements of the performer are filled with dependence on the musical image, however, the imaginative criterion should be dependent on the aesthetic criterion; herewith the moment of expression is used for its implementation up to unpleasant (not-violin-like) sounding! When performing artistic task, you shouldn’t forget about basic aesthetic, prevailing matters. It happens that auditory image of the educatee violinist weakens, in consequence of which various errors appear (forcing sounding, unreasonable tempo increase, harsh tones, etc.).

I recall F.I. Shalyapin who used to say: “When I sing, the embodied image is always visible… Each moment it’s in front of my eyes. I sing and listen, act and observe. I’m never alone on the stage. There are two Shalyapins on the stage. One of them plays, the other one controls. “Too many tears, brother, remember that it’s not you who cries but the character” – the controller says to the actor.

“Reduce tears!…” I don’t part with my consciousness on the stage, not for a minute. Not for a second I lose my ability and the habit of controlling the harmony of action”.

I’d like to point out here that experience of great Ysayee teaches us this, Flesch wrote the following about it: “…Ysayee’s tone was full of noble greatness, exceptionally rich with modulation accents and obeyed the slightest impulse”. The manner of Ysayee’s bow technique was intuitively adapted to his performing intentions. “He didn’t do a single bowing that wasn’t perfect by its sounding”.

If vocal interpretation and understanding of the violin singing is right, then “volens – noilens” performer has to value beauty and melodiousness of sounding.

Studying the author’s text, comparing different versions, deep comprehension of the composer’s style peculiarities… All this must be inherent part of work on creating interpretations of various compositions.

Music lives in constant continuation, in ceaseless development of its intonation sense.

If one of the participants in the playing ensemble performed the phrase successfully, then the holy aim of other performers is to find deserving continuation for this!

It’s essential for the student to realize why he keeps repeating various episodes of music pieces. It’s exceptionally important for the growth of young musicians’ performance skill… You should bring up in yourself responsibility towards any action reproduced on the instrument and accept for granted that you should play each rehearsed episode not like the previous one. The number of the episodes required has to lead to the desired result.

In this case constant work of head and soul turns out to be the source of all success in our lessons.

The more clear what you have to do, the more clear how you have to do it. The aim itself shows means for its achievement. This is the key to great masters’ technique. “The arm is obedient to the intellect” (Michelangelo).

I do think that it’s essential for musical development to come before technical development or, at least, to come together with it, hand in hand.

It’s necessary to teach musicians **to be** but not **to seem** participants of creative process. This sensation would help them to solve all creative tasks, taking away everything accidental and excessive from their performance, in other words, everything that prevents from full sensation and from sending **music** to the listener.

As one of the examples, I’d like to recall how great masters of the Russian culture used to work, to toil at words: Pushkin, Tolstoy, Lermontov, Chekhov and Bulgakov… They could achieve high artistic delicacy, in combination with convincing expression! However, they kept efficiency and economy of words in the phrase.

Let’s recall Rodin who used to get rid of everything excessive, guessing about hidden shapes of the statue sculpted by him.

By the way, performing any sonata by Beethoven, you don’t have to forget about life and inner dignity of those times when that wonderful composition was written.

It doesn’t matter how thoroughly and securely some techniques have been studied, but they should be easily and freely controlled by the performer. It’s important to constantly widen ideas about the ways of applying a certain playing skill, its dependence on music type as well as on music dynamics, speed, development, etc.

Compositions by I.S. Bach, by the way, require deep comprehension of the meaning hidden inside them. In musical dramaturgy they need to be systematized as thoroughly as any Gothic cathedral would have been erected before. Everything in these compositions should be very carefully thought of and measured. Lord forbid! Just imagine that one of the cathedral pillars is not in its place. Then the whole structure would be destroyed, no matter how beautiful the details are!

Romantic music is played quite differently: here open feelings are allowed as well as free and somewhere spontaneous performance. At the same time, expression and emotional outburst, interpenetration of tonally-expressive meaning of any played episode cannot cross aesthetic borders outlined by the composer.

**Chapter 4.**

**Some peculiarities of performing Sonatas and Partitas by Bach for violin solo.**

This chapter will be interesting for violin players, professors, students of conservatories and academies of music. Here I try to help violinists and teachers to correctly perform modern style of musical material as well as the ways of playing this outstanding music contributing to maximally full interpretation of these compositions and also to avoiding plenty of textual mistakes that appeared during 300 years, since the moment of writing this music by I.S. Bach in Kothen town in 1720.

In spite of nearly 30 publications of editions that have also been done by such outstanding violinists as М.Rostal, C.Flesch, I.Menuhin, G.Szeryng, К.Mostras, all of them have textological, rhythmical, polyphonic, intonational, agogical and stylistic faults as bright individuality of these artistic masters is reflected in published music, preventing the other performers from freedom of individual creation and apprehension of compositions written by the great organist of “Thomaskirche” in Leipzig.

I thoroughly studied those editions, matched them with URTEXT and checked them on the stage. Please, agree with me that Bach is in constant development and creative growth as the music he heard with his inner ear and after that wrote down needs to be comprehended, rightly performed and understood in our ХХIst century (excuse me for not being modest because it’s impossible to imagine creative growth of the GENIUS!).

Any composition interpretation is in endless development because the sensation of time, professional implementation, integrity of forms, feelings and harmony changes. There are those grains in I.S.Bach creative work whereof you can gather the most challenging interpretational thoughts.

Without daily access to the genius creative work, without thorough work on his each and every phrase it’s impossible to stay the musician inside your soul, to keep interpretational skills at high level. You need to remember that there is supreme instrumental technology in violin sonatas and partitas. By the way, it’s always essential to start from URTEXT using first of all the author's bowing variants that break monotonous angularity of traditional “square” decisions helping to find internal dynamism of a certain part and underlining its language emotion. Bowing is the phrase itself, its essence and breath. It’s important to choose the right speed and the character of the first measures of sonata cycles for further musical form building.

So, let me offer you my recommendations concerning performance of six Sonatas and Partitas by I.S. Bach**.**

**Рartita No 1, h – moll**

**(Allemande, Double, Courante, Double Presto, Sarabande, Double, Bourree and Double)**

**Allemande (Allemanda)**

Each measure should be counted by 8 beats. All 64th notes are played as wide as possible, melodiously and expressively. In triplets, with three notes at one bow, it’s especially important to keep the general melody line, the bow change should be unnoticeable and smooth.

There should be full phonation with even vibrato in Allemande. In Double the other acoustic technique is needed: dim, mat sounding, with little vibration, just on strong beats of the melody line, as if the violin imitates a flute sound coming from afar.

It’s essential to deeply feel tempo while performing Allemande h-moll and its Double. Here we have ingenious prompt of Bach himself. He achieved wonderful contrast in two adjacent parts sounding by crossing “С” in Allemande and changing it to “С” with the vertical bar in Double and not breaking their tempo harmony.

The contrast of this part is **Courante** performed with energetic marked non legato bowing. There are no questions about Courantetempo as it’s enough just to have a look at its Double.

**Sarabande (Sarabanda)**

But what to do with Sarabande? If to perform its Double in the same tempo, in the motion of noble, sad and festive dance, then it will be the longest part of the whole cycle. Since it’s impossible to speed up Sarabande performance, the only decision would be to play Double after it twice faster! Melody line of Sarabande in h-moll consists of two-bar structures; herewith the support is constantly on the first beat of the second measure.

**Bourree** (**Tempo di Borea)**

Bourree (Tempo di Borea) is heavy, playful and teasing dance of woodcutters. Energetic tones in strong beats of the measure are characteristic for it. The mood of the play is temperamental, this is the brightest part out of all partitas’ dancing parts. Chords should be performed at the frog, with short energetic bow motion at a short distance. Bowing in this melody should be brisk, it’s big martele. Double is the actual cycle final movement.

In h-moll partita, as we can see, there is always a great advantage from such performance when there is MOVEMENT in doubles after each previous part. It leads to one rhythmical denominator. Important peculiarity of all partita is h-moll mode. Alteration, all sharp notes have to be maximally close to the note they flow in.

**Sonata No 1 for g-moll violin solo**

**(Adagio, Fuga, Siciliana, Presto)**

**Adagio**

Besides the fact that it is the opening of a fuga, it’s also lyrical “self-statement” coming from the depth of human soul!

Each measure needs to be counted by 16 beats. The thirty-seconds should be performed melodiously, widely and expressively as they are by nature similar to semiquavers. All shakes, as far as possible, begin with the highest notes, slowly and melodiously. Fermatas are played strictly, according to Bach, in other words, they are lengthened evenly, by half of the notes’ rhythmic value. Changes from one string to the other one, same as positions changes, are performed very smoothly. The last adagio chord, as I.S. Bach wished (though it’s not possible on a violin) should sound for twenty four beats.

**Fuga**

In the beginning you need to play with 1/8 of a pause in the first measure! Further on you should play with light and airy bow keeping elasticity as well as iron rhythm of this part, what means, as you know, “running”. Each introduction of the new theme should happen in development with crescendo and a little ritardando prior to fall and dominant.

All interludes are played with semiquavers, with a bit more free rhythm, slightly stressing on the keynotes, improvisatorily, with sensation of more freedom compared to strict rhythmical theme. It’s very important to follow the statement in various voices of chords: in middle voice, in high voice and in basso. In this case you need to return the bow after the chords, as it is marked in the notes, to the theme voice.

In the second half of the 35st measure there should be so-to-speak “Bariolage”, where the thirds, with the up-bow, interact with open string “D” and further, at crescendo, proceed to the next interlude. The 71st measure is “fis”. The 64-notes passage played in the last two measures of the fuga in no way can be virtuosic, on the contrary, it’s maximally melodious and expressive.

**Siciliana**

Andante con moto. Through all the length of this dancing music you need to keep triple-meter onward motion. All the rest is very thoroughly marked in published music, including bowing and fingering.

**Presto**

Forte mark is performed with wide detache and, in addition to it, with light vibration and the bow showing basso notes. All the dynamics, including crescendo, diminuendo, forte and piano, is thoroughly observed starting from the first marked note. Repetitions of both halves, according to I.S.Bach recommendations, are obligatory.

**Partita No 2, d – moll**

**(Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue, Chaconne)**

This partita is the deepest by its contents. It could be called “The queen of all partitas”. The most significant stress in it is put in the final movement, i.e. in Chaconne. Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue are the parts of the unfolded entrance to the main dramatic, topmost and monumental part of this composition called Chaconne. In my opinion, there cannot be a pause between Gigue and Chaconne. So, Chaconne, so-to-speak, arises directly from the last measure of Gigue.

**Allemande (Allemanda)**

Now it’s difficult for us to imagine how to dance to this music. This part isn’t like a dance at all, it’s rather a prelude, parts like these are met in Bach organ preludes. It’s like an introduction to the whole cycle. Apparently, Bach didn’t imagine to himself suites without the introductory, non-dancing part. The main point is to eliminate from students’ play artificial slowing down that is performed by students with such pleasure (due to the problems with technique and polyphony)!

**Courante (Corrente)**

This part differs from Couranteof the first partita h-moll by its sharp and vigorous character. The quaver with a dot and the sixteenth note are played a bit wider and closer to triplet. Besides, by changing quadruplet rhythm with triplet, as marked by the author, without glides, stylistic sounding unity and more naturalness for melody line development is achieved.

**Sarabande (Sarabanda)**

In Bach Sarabandes’ suites deep lyrical-philosophical beginning is expressed as well as some sadness. Sarabande d-moll, in comparison with the first one in h-moll, is more improvisatory by its contents. In the first measures of Sarabande we can already clearly hear Chaconne character.

**Gigue** is the collective sailors’ comic dance on heels. А.Rubinstein used to say: “In Sarabandes we can clearly hear Bach melodic genius and in Gigues his “humor” is heard”. This concerto piece is very similar by its character to the final movement of the first sonata, though it’s brighter!

All four parts of partita d-moll are duple, both of them are even in Allemande and Gigue, but they are in 3:4 proportion in Courante and in 1:2 proportion in Sarabande. All repetitions are obligatory in all four parts, except for the second half of Sarabande (all that lately has been developing in concert practice).

**Chaconne** **(Ciacona)**

Chaconne (Ciacona) is the top of instrumental style, apart from the fact that this is the brilliant and the most concentrated and perfect composition.

Chaconne consists of 30 variations (of 8, sometimes of 4 or 12 measures) and three statements: in the beginning, in the middle and in the end of the composition. Chaconne theme is filled with noble pathos, in deep and generous sense, except for the elements of outside affectation.

When performing the theme in its **emotional depth**, it should be at the same time calm (Pushkin said: “…condition of beautiful is necessary”).

To open the style possibilities to the fullest, Bach used variations form, as it had been used before by А. Corelli in his famous “La Folia”. On the basis of short chordal theme the grand music fresco was created by the genius composer. Variational form of Chaconne was written in three parts, where the author underlines the unity of three **homonymous** modes. Bach **patiently** builds development of this wonderful music.

**Early spring doesn’t come very fast, and he who lives in eternity is never impatient.**

Music dramaturgy of Chaconne is based on one image that is in constant development. But this development is so deep, universal and intensive that it leaves behind regularities of all the cycle dramaturgy. In respect to the technique during the statement you should try to make an effort not to differentiate at all **sounding density and the bow tension** in a separate quaver compared to the quarter-note with the dot bу the chord.

In the sixteenth measure of Chaconne tension drops and variation starts performed in very heartfelt piano. There is a bit more movement in the 28th measure. The 56th measure is marcatissimo meaning big will and rhythm at continuous polyphony. The 64th measure is the same as metal structure, very strong-willed rhythm written just by demi-semiquaver notes. The 80th measure is a bit distant “subito piano”, no any **audible** bow changes, maximal smoothness in glides and minimum vibrato. The 84th measure is pianissimo that is equal in passages, like a **thread**. The 88th measure is “bariollage”, wherein the 87th measure flows in very smoothly (two thirty-second notes up and two thirty-second notes down with the bow), in compliance with the chords written by the author. The 100th measure is mezzo forte. Follow like this till the end of variation, starting from the bow tip and with big crescendo, observing polyphonic line, with either two double thirty-second notes plus two double notes (with double notes performed by down-bow and up-bow) or with the thirds, the sixths, the septenaries, depending on how the chords’ harmonic line is written.

Inside the variation there are its own crescendo and diminuendo, subito, piano, etc., everything that’s required by the music and what’s accurately marked in notes. 111-120 measures is superb crescendo ending in fortissimo with “d” quaver (unison). Further the passages follow with marked semiquavers leading to the theme where, just like in the beginning of Chaconne, the violin should sound as the **organ!**

132 measure is in D dur, “subito PР”. Light, godly and calm major (full of glides, try to pay attention just to polyphony and voice-leading, even the chords should be performed as melodiously and smoothly as possible). 152 measure, “mP”, is played with light marcato, at the bow tip (more outsung rather than sharp).

In 160 measure three similar notes of organ point are very important. This organ point is in development and at crescendo it becomes fortissimo in 176 measure, where trumpets of **heaven archangels** sound. And there is d-moll once again: Bach meditates. It’s an improvised interlude, though strict and polyphonically expressive; then there is a short break, after which, in “PP” nuance, movement with paired double semiquavers resumes (per two notes at one bow, with superb crescendo and flying into the final theme with “furioso”).

Here I’d like to point out that at the last statement it’s very essential to make it sound slightly differently. If the first two statements are characterized just by energy, fullness and vividness taken from the previous music material, then during the last time the theme sounds very wisely, philosophically, it’s a little bit languorous (without lost tension) and reminds us a person who, having learnt everything during his long life, carries in his soul such depth, expression and heartfullness that a listener surely feels goose bumps on his skin…

Huge rocks that Bach lifts in his music material in the course of development (contrasts and oppositions) already don’t fit into the borders of one simple movement. Chaconne obtains the features of circularity so, as to music style, it’s the unique composition. Music development is taken from the theme and it constantly returns to it; for the third time it’s presented in the form of “dynamic recapitulation”. It shows the unity of the composition by its meaning and adds complete and harmonious form to it.

***Chaconne is the gothic cathedral of the late flamboyant Gothic style, when each architectural detail serves as the embodiment of all-encompassing idea of striving to God!!!***

“Chaconne” by Bach, edited by Y. Korchinsky – http://[files.mail.ru/67P185](http://files.mail.ru/67P185)

“Chaconne” by Bach, performed by Y. Korchinsky – <http://files.mail.ru/4Z8P1D>

**Sonata No 2 for violin solo in a-moll**

**(Grave, Fuga, Andante, Allegro)**

**Grave**

This sonatas part as the entrance, as lyrical monologue has festive elevated sounding underlined by the name given by the author (“Grave” means “heavily”, from here comes attraction and gravity). But in this music, with all its brightly expressed polyphony, we feel movement and pace leading us to culminating points and taking us back, to empyreal stretches of the horizon.

“G” basso in the first measure is very important as it’s played on open string, in other words, this note needs to be performed extremely accurately, with vibration in alt and at the same time expressively, keeping all taste sensations of the deepest note that can only be played on the violin.

I’d like to point out that I.S.Bach in numerous episodes, especially when there is melody rise, where the second should be, creates pauses, as if paying our attention to the brightest and the most expressive development of melodic-polyphonic line. In the seventh measure we come to С-dur that lasts for a moment, after a number of improvisatory motions returning to a–moll. In the ninth measure “h” note should be “spun out” (without a change of bow), polyphonic voice in “a” basso is performed very carefully, as if gradually, you count the semiquavers, i.e., in each measure there are 16 semiquavers; they are regular, sometimes improvisatory, played step-by-step, heavily sounding (please, don’t mix it with laborious performance!).

Changing to other positions and from one string to another is smooth, without any pushes. It reminds calm and boundless sea with no wind. When performing triad chords, you have to sit a bit on the highest note, as if enjoying it, listening to it till the end and after that continuing the composer’s plot discovery. In the 13th measure “C” note on “G” string is performed very colorfully, with certain timbre and a little bit longer than with the usual rhythmic value. Try to listen to it carefully till the end and to “spin it out”.

Further on it’s essential to watch the bow allocation and expression of thirty-seconds in the most perfect legato. In the 16th measure the first chord is played in forte and a little bit longer, the next passage is performed slowly, as if after censorship. Further on everything is the same but crescendo and diminuendo are obligatory in measure 22. Shakes in the sixths are played very properly: they are calm and flow unnoticeably from one to another. The last “e – e” septenary is stretching for 16 beats.

**Important!** After the end of Grave,after unclear completion on the dominant before the beginning of Fuga, there cannot be any pauses!!! Grave on three “spun out” piano with the same phrase marking, smoothly flows into Fuga, but in the beginning of Fuga it’s necessary to perform 1/8 of the pause!!!

I consider the edition of sonata No. 2 made by K. Mostras to be not quite correct, namely: *mf* phrase markings in the first fuga development. Here, I think, Bach imagined the effect of full incompleteness of Grave, acoustic horizon of leaving on the dominant in “pp”, half-questioning of intonations. The stop between Grave and Fuga is even more inappropriate. If to start Fuga in active “Р” here then possibilities for development of music material will reach fantastic horizons!

**Fuga**

All glided eighth notes, dotted and with bars below the glides, are slightly accentuated with the bow and vibration.

While the theme development, you need to accurately follow the principal voice, sometimes returning to it by means of broken chords (depending on where it happens).

Semiquavers in interludes can be played a bit more improvisatorily (more free) but you should always strictly return to the initial tempo. It’s firmly! You should start playing piano and forte written down by the author strictly from the first semiquaver and to finish in the same way, not changing the phrase marking (without diminuendo and crescendo).

**Andante**

In this part you should constantly keep step motion. Also you have to accurately observe interchange between melody line development and ground; besides, ground is performed as unintrusively and gradually as possible.

The second half repetition, as it has been lately developed in concert practice, is at your will (i.e., ad libitum).

**Allegro**

Subito piano and subito forte have to be performed with special attention, starting from each first note with this kind of phrase marking. Cue thirty-second notes are not to be played mechanically, according to the rhythm, instead of it try to sing them. Both halves of this part are repeated.

**Partita No 3 (E-dur)**

**(Prelude, Loure, Gavotte, Menuet I, Menuet II, Bourree)**

**Prelude (Preludio)**

It’s very essential to perform 1/8 of the pause, as if taking a breath, in the beginning of the part. The first two measures should be played with sharp “martele”, then with wide and expressive “detache”, strictly following the phrase marking. So-to-speak “bariolage” starts with measure 13, first on two strings and after that on three strings and with crescendo; closer to the 30th measure it’s performed with piano. In the end of this part there is ritardando **performed with martele bowing just in the last measure!!!**

**Loure**

It is a stately dance with magnificent melodic**s** and with wonderful droplets of semiquavers in bass voice. Triplet notes written down with semiquavers should be performed not formally-rhythmically but slightly wider; try to sing every note. Make sure your voice-leading is right and repeat both halves.

**Gavotte (Gavotte en Rondeaux)**

Bach’sVivace in “URTEXT” is written with “C” crossed with the vertical line meaning duple meter. It is a very graceful part but not ceremonious, full of dignity, curtseys and bowing with a hat in hand in front of ladies. After measure No 92 there is repetition from beginning, till measure No 8 (Fine).

**Menuet I**

Everything is the same as I’ve just explained you above. It is only in another way, with triple meter. Tempo moderato. Repetitions are obligatory.

**Menuet II**

It’s resonance of the first menuet, though it is slightly calmer and more meditative, also pay attention to polyphony.

**Bourree**

Molto vivace. This part is splashing with joy, life and energy (contrary to the previous part). All repetitions are also obligatory but it would be nice if during the second repetition some difference was felt (depending on your rational fantasy).

**Flour in a good mill shouldn’t be coarse-grained!**

**Gigue (Giga)**

Vivace. It’s the final part of all partita. Perform it with sharp bowing called martele, slightly revealing strong polyphonic beats. Pay attention to sfp phrase markings. Both halves are repeated. Ritardando is just in the last measure, in “P” and “PP” phrase marking!

**Sonata No 3 (C-dur)**

**(Adadio, Fuga, Largo, Allegro Assai)**

It’s the longest and the most disadvantageous sonata for performance in concert halls and for listeners out of all Bach sonatas. That is why it’s comparatively rarely appears in programs of concertizing violinists. Superficially this sonata lacks various music and artistic effects as well as it lacks its music scoring. Bach seems to have spent all his imagination for the previous compositions. But certain charm is hidden in this music ascetism.

**Adagio**

Calm, regular, slightly relaxed flowing and developing melody line. In no case play the semiquaver after the quaver with the dot in formal rhythm but, on the contrary, play it a bit wider, with lyricism and don’t rush to part with it, listening to it till the end! Perform measure 39 and further on more improvisatorily in cadenza style!

**Fuga**

It’s the longest and, at first sight, the most “straightforward” out of all three Bach fugas. This presents its complexity for the performer. Keeping the fuga **character** this part needs to be analyzed very inquisitively and thoroughly to achieve the most variety and expression in this very poor (compared to other fugas) music material.

The other conditions, such as different voices statements, “bariolage” starting with minimal diapason and with further crescendo are more free, compared to the theme. Interludes are in form of cadenzas. Thorough observation of written bowing, fingering, phrase marking and agogics complies with previous fugas.

**Largo**

This part is full of heartfelt lyricism. Slow and smooth melody development (very simple and straightforward) that’s very similar to Allemandes of Bach suites.

**Allegro assai**

Among all sonatas’ endings this one is remarkable for its more intensive development of hidden polyphony. The final movement of this sonata is the example of instrumental mobility and spontaneous vital power which is animated with thought.

Bowing and fingering have been thought over and tested; by their musical direction they are more compliant with “Urtext” and the best examples of previous sonatas’ and partitas’ editions for violin solo by I.S. Bach.

And now let me present you some of my thoughts concerning the performance of famous caprices by Paganini. If Bach is in the beginning of violin mastery then Paganini compositions without breaking their connections with folk traditions rise this very mastery to the degree of fabulous virtuoso skill of applying violin technologic details and peculiarities.

**Caprice No. 1.**

Problems with performing this composition arise because this caprice requires quite big hands (they need to be stretched), besides, you have to provide accurate changes from broken *saltando* to scale-wise thirds played with spiccato bowing. In *saltando* it’s essential to achieve clear audibility of all notes, along with melody line and harmonic foundation. Fast fingers change from one string to the other one is the common requirement while working on this caprice and fugas by Bach.

**Caprice No. 2.**

Major problems when working on this caprice are as follows: the bow jump across two strings and connection of imaginative music content with artistic meaning. It’s important to point out that *dolce* in *h-moll* mode requires pastel shades along with sad and melancholic mood.

**Caprice No. 3**.

This is one of the most unpleasant and uncomfortable compositions of the great Genoese. Its peculiarities are heavy outer movements. Wonderful music material of the melody line is joined by the author under one glide including 4 notes. Virtuoso strings combination, skillful motions economy, preparing and leaving fingers on the fingerboard will lead to success.

**Caprice No. 4**.

This is the fantastically famous composition that is often necessarily included into the programs of many international contests. Almost all violin technique elements are collected here. When playing this caprice, excessive delay while performance of its opening is wrong as well as ignoring the author’s notional recommendations, i.e. just “*maestoso”*!

**Caprice No. 6**.

This is one of the most significant and musically informative caprices with typical fast tremolo in the left hand. It expresses to the fullest romantic attitude of the author, reflecting his inner world, full of uneasy anxiety.

**Caprice No. 7**.

It’s the most effective concert composition including expressive cantilena, clear chords and brilliant passages. To my mind, there shouldn’t be too long octaval entrance, try to play it closer to opera “*bel canto”*. According to Paganini, each note has a dot below and a tone above it, what gives strong and determinate character to music. Unfortunately, in many editions, including C. Flesch version, it wasn’t mentioned that in this caprice there is more emphatic recitation rather than orientation to sentimental performance.

**Caprice No. 8**.

There is no telling that this very caprice is the least of artistic failures of this Genoese but there are a lot of technical problems connected with keeping fingers on the fingerboard at very uncomfortable position!!! I think that this is one of a few cases when Paganini didn’t intend to go beyond the level of artistic-aesthetic tasks, so the main difficulties concern physical apparatus, technique has contemplative character and feelings sphere as well as imagination of the performer are practically untouched.

**Caprice No. 9**.

This is the brilliant composition of the great Italian. It was attentively listened to and edited not just by violinists but also by pianists (Liszt and Brahms). Inspite of the fact that this caprice is well-known to everyone, it opens many possibilities for the artist.

**Caprice No. 13**.

This is the outstanding composition that is continuation of the traditional tripartite form. It’s not very technically difficult, that’s why it is often used in education programs. One of the most frequent mistakes is to perform fermata at the second of the eighth of the first measure (*b, d*), what completely changes the melodic line meaning.

**Caprice No. 15**.

This is the vivid example that the master’s dots have meaning; the author puts dots below the notes, staccato is above the notes; at that he unites the melodic lines with measure glides, what is absolutely ignored by many editions!

**Caprice No. 17**.

This caprice is among the mostly played and very popular compositions. One of the difficulties is the middle octaval division (Paganini never used this technique in his play, i.e. fingering while playing septenaries). But the principal thing is performing scale-wise passages, including semitonal ones. To my mind, they should look like a bright photic stroke in the artist’s picture, besides, they should be played in such a way as if it’s pity to part with each note.

**Caprice No. 21**.

It’s the brightest concerted item. Much is included into it: bright colors of melodism (nobody used it before Paganini), oppositive registers and brilliant bowing. Here Paganini applies his favorite technique for the right arm, i.e. quick *staccato*. It is a very difficult bowing: rhythmical steadiness and restricted movements. And the principal thing (!!!) is the right arm change from *G string* to *E string*. Everything has to be done with bouncing jump across two strings.

**Caprice No. 24**.

You can endlessly enjoy the beauty of this music. The unique character of the theme itself unveiling similarities with the great “Chaconne” by Bach gives inexhaustible possibilities. Variations are not alike and, at the same time, they are integrated into each other! I’d like to point out that since their childhood the majority of violinists committed themselves to studying performance skills just for the benefit of the only but the highest aim of ever playing “Chaconne” by Bach and caprice No. 24 by Paganini. These two Everests of human spirit and thought are immensely attractive. They are followed by ambitious intentions of young artists. They also support the artists’ self-esteem. But these peaks of human spirit require, as many others, extremely cautious and thoughtful attitude.

Analysing phrase markings of Paganini caprices, you should learn to reveal those hidden binding moments that connect their music structure, to find in them similar elements in passage technique variety. Here I’d like to mention that such analysis helps to reduce the time necessary for learning the composition.

The author of these lines can confirm that while working on Emilie Sauret’s cadenza to Paganini’s concerto No. 1 in D-dur, technical episodes in the concerto itself already don’t require any efforts and time spent.

In caprices No. 4, 8 and 18 there is a tendency to lean on similarity in tertian steps, what can serve as a foundation for the left arm motions in tertian steps of the 24th caprice.

There is a lot of common in technical ways of bowing and musical form arrangement, if to compare caprices No 3, 15, 19 and 22. You just need to find out those key moments that would let you lean on former creative and performance experience.

**Conclusion**

**How to educate the artist-performer?**

**How to relate to music and its performance?**

I recall 1969 when P.А.Bondarenko, the assistant of D.F.Oistrach, brought me a ticket for Yehudi Menuhin’s performance who played Beethoven’s violin concerto.

Menuhin, who was finishing his career, had an ache in his right arm and there were faults in quality but what **expression** it was! Not to mention phrasing, music feel and penetration into the composer’s intention.

It seemed as if the highest rank musicians were creating the music exactly at that moment. Closely paying attention to the performance of THE GREAT ONES, you can quite clearly understand how to achieve maximum effectiveness in the musician’s educational moments and upbringing.

Any performance consists of three fundamental positions of music: played music material, the performer and the instrument. By the way, an orchestra (chamber orchestra, symphonic orchestra, various ensembles) is also an instrument!

Quite often I observe exaggeration, in one way or the other, in one of student teaching components. Particularly nowadays, it’s sad that “technical” mastery of the instrument prevails over the contents evaluation, i.e., music itself, the word picture.

At the same time I’d like to mention that the word “technique” comes from the Greek word “tehne” meaning “art”.

Any technique improvement means perfection of the art itself, therefore assisting the contents revelation, and this is the real flesh of the art. The major problem is that many performers, when you say the word “technique”, understand it as fluency, quickness, bravura, but not as technique in general, like the Greeks used to understand it and like the artist sees it.

Mastery in work, maximum efficiency in home rehearsals.

LABOR is one of the criteria in achievement of real maturity by the musician. The more commitment, will and maximal attention are involved into this process, the more significant the result is!

Not once the author of these lines tested the following: to achieve technical excellence, some episodes requiring multiple rehearsals can be studied with careful attention and ultimate concentration within 60 minutes instead of 2 to 3 hours!

I’d like to mention that the artist of fame and distinction is the same product of his own time as any other person, but, moreover, if his name is Pushkin or Mozart, then he belongs to the most precious men who have ever been born on the Earth.

In addition to it, this is the most complex thing out of everything that exists in nature, even more complex than the atomic core or all galaxies!!! Young musicians should learn by example of the elder ones, who are more skillful and experienced, thoroughly adopting their experience and knowledge.

Nevertheless, you can constantly refer to knowledge and skills of great musicians, neither introducing any changes corresponding to it, nor adapting to new requirements. Then it means nothing! …

Once F.I. Shalyapin said that in art “a little bit” determines everything. I purely agree with him!

When you mention it, from the very beginning it’s essential to explain to any student what kind of precious material he’ll face in his life, if he really devotes his life to the art.

…**All of this is just a little part of what should be really brought to notice by the curious artist and seeking musician.**

**Summarizing these notes, I’d like to say that in the process of their formation young artists, dipping into the music world, will inventively and intelligently absorb all the best that the mankind has been producing for many centuries….**

**Yours Sincerely,**

**Yuri Korchinsky**

*Please, visit my site at* [*http://www.korchinsky.ru*](http://www.korchinsky.ru)

*Violinist Yuri Korchinsky.avi at* [*http://files.mail.ru/E9I9HG*](http://files.mail.ru/E9I9HG)

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Translation from the Russian language *by Ludmila Ershova*