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OP. 44.

1. Präludium-Allegramente
2. Thema und Variationen
3. Allegro assai
4. In türkischer Weise
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6. Rondoletto
7. Mazurka
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10. capriccio

Johannes Palaschko, who was born 13 July 1877 and died 21 October 1932 in Berlin, became in 1913 the director of the Böttcher Conservatory in the same city. He was a violinist who wrote thirteen volumes of viola etudes. Although not widely known to modern pedagogues, these are a veritable gold mine to us violists. The following presentation of each opus will enable a serious viola teacher or student to discover a plethora of useful exercises. Each opus number will be considered with the exception of Opus 70, which as yet has not be obtained. With this one exception, all of Palaschko’s pedagogical works for viola are contained in the Primrose International Viola Archive at Brigham Young University. Opus 44 will be examined here in detail, and eight others will be reviewed.

Opus 44: 10 Künstler-Etüden für Viola

This etude book could easily be compared to the Paganini caprices. His twenty-four caprices played on the viola can be very difficult because of the extensions demanded in the left hand. Palaschko’s Opus 44 (publisher: Zimmermann), while presenting the violist with some challenging problems, still lies within the grasp of a strong technique. Like Paganini’s caprices, these can be presented as solos in a recital program. Since these caprices are musically oriented and technically exacting, the Künstler-Etüden are definitely worthy of exploration. After study and evaluation, I have tried to determine the pedagogical value of each caprice and identified Palaschko’s specific teaching objective. As one explores these pieces, one will notice that these echt viola etudes can be used regularly in teaching.

I. Präludium-Allegramente

At first, this piece does not sound like a typical etude; it reminds me of the Reger Solo Sonata in G Minor. Since Palaschko is only a few years younger than Reger, this post-Romantic style would be expected. The opening is marked “largo,” with a few unusual double stops that are awkward but playable. Musically, this opening has a lot of potential if the violist prepares for and anticipates the occasional double and triple stops. The player also needs to be prepared for some untraditional harmonies and voice leadings as compared to etudes by Kreutzer or Campagnoli, for instance. The first section closes on the dominant after a difficult passage in half position:

![Musical notation]

The piece continues in a more typical etude style. The 3/4 meter, with running eighth notes and bowing pattern, remain constant:

Allegramente.
Double and triple stops are encountered throughout, and in unusual left hand patterns. Although playable, these patterns are not necessarily logical or readable at first glance (unlike Kreutzer or Gaviniès). The harmony is again unusual. Thus precise intonation is essential. The bowing pattern suggested might be martele. The composer has carefully notated dynamics, an aspect often neglected in most etudes.

**II. Thema und Variationen**

The theme, marked Andante con moto, is probably folkish in origin. This lovely tune is the basis of the six variations that follow. Variation I maintains the same tempo with a flow of triplets. Bow distribution must be heeded because of unsymmetrical bowings.

Variation II (like Variation VIII in Brahms’ Haydn Variations) consists of long bows of running sixteenth notes and complicated string crossings, which help foster an even bow technique and good right elbow adjustment:
Variation III has difficult arpeggiated thirds, sixths, and octaves. The player must keep the bow evenly placed on the two strings and lead with the right elbow:

**Variation III.**

Variation IV, marked Allegro deciso, shifts from common time to 6/8. This variation of double stops, if played in a forceful manner with a stroke off the string, can be pleasurable:

**Variation IV.**

Allegro deciso.

Variation V is much like Variation II because the same focus of the bow is important.

**Variation V.**

Tempo I.

---

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New works should be submitted to the editor by composers and publishers for possible reviews in JAVS and deposit in PIVA.
Ysaye’s “round bowing” technique, as illustrated in Playing the Viola: Conversations with William Primrose by David Dalton, p. 66, should be applied.

Variation VI, marked Poco piu lento ed espressivo, modulates from the previous prevailing G minor to G major. Polyphony is the main variable here, with an occasional third voice by means of pizzicato. The correct positioning of the left hand in playing this variation is essential. The right hand must be evenly set over the fingerboard, with equal emphasis of the first and fourth fingers:

Poco più lento e espressivo.

III. Allegro assai

This etude deals with the right hand’s execution of complex chromatic runs. The right hand, as in the previous etude, should emphasize basic fluidity:
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Had Palaschko written here an etude that was entirely chromatic, it would not be so difficult, but he seems to enjoy some unexpected departures with some resultant unusual modulations:

Bear in mind that these Künstler etudes are complicated and fairly long. Feeling completely comfortable with this piece requires extensive practice and effort.

**IV. In türkischer Weise**

This etude is in ABA form. Pure intonation is an obvious challenge and the proper execution of chords in the A section is essential—a good preparation to any solo work by Bach. Its polyphonic complexity makes the etude difficult to play convincingly:

The B section is excellent preparation material for Paganini's Caprice No. 6, because one must differentiate the melody from the harmony. Finger placement in block fifths requires special consideration:
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V. Grave-Allegro

This stately opening has two distinct voices that requires a careful working out of which voice should predominate. Though not unusually difficulty technically, it demands a controlled right hand. One should practice extremely slowly and in a sustained fashion:

```
Grave,
```

After this somewhat brief introduction, the music goes segue into an allegro filled with right-hand difficulties. Bow distribution needs special attention also, but the numerous string crossings within legato are more crucial. The etude on first exposure does not appear to lie well for the left hand. The music reminds of the presto section in Caprice No. 3 by Paganini:

```
Allegro,
```

VI. Rondoletto

The opening section, which occurs four times in this seven-part rondo, is not too difficult. The etude is musically enjoyable, but again, some obvious “Palaschian” chromaticism adds difficulty to the first reading:

```
Allegretto.
```

The small C section employs quick off the string bowing. Palaschko indicates *violentemente*, perhaps showing that the stroke should be an aggressive one, like the triplet passage in Wagner's Tannhäuser Overture:

\[ \text{\textbf{VII. Mazurka}} \]

This etude is an allegro clearly in 3/4 meter, but a publisher's mistake has it in 3/8. It is one of my favorites in the whole volume. The opening presents a good opportunity for switching between a collé and legato stroke.
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This etude shows something about the ten Künstler etudes: They are not necessarily ranked from easy to difficult. Each one, in its own way, can help improve the technique of the violist who studies them.

VIII. Allegro moderato

Like many of the middle Kreutzer etudes, number eight deals with the trill, the short variety with two or three turns at the most.

\[ \text{Allegro moderato.} \]

\[ \text{p dolce e grazioso.} \]

I recommend exploring bow placement before each trill. After the two notes in an up bow, I would practice placing the bow on the string before actually trilling. This helps set and properly initiate the clear quality of the trill. Palaschko does not forget the not-so-easy three to four finger trill. An interesting characteristic of Palaschko’s writing encountered here that involves similar passages being written enharmonically on reoccurrence (much as in Maurice Vieux’s Orchestral Etudes):

\[ \text{Be careful of the fingered 1-4 octave reaches which occur in a tricky sequence of four-note chords:} \]

IX. Adagio cantabile

On first glance, this etude was a little daunting to me: many two-part harmonies, accidentals, and no fewer than five flats. But as I studied this etude (another personal favorite), I found its intimidating outward appearance changing to a sweet inner beauty. It reminded me somewhat of the Sarabande from the D Major (Cello) Suite by Bach. Many technical problems arise, but none that have not been encountered already in the preceding etudes. This etude is actually within the grasp of the strong intermediate player. It offers the opportunity to analytically and technically distinguish the melody amid all the multiple-stopping: (continued on p. 14)
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Starting from the string seems to be an aspect of clean bowing technique in such passages especially appropriate in orchestral playing. The following extended section in C-sharp minor is very challenging:

X. Capriccio

This is the longest of the etudes in this opus and requires much practice. Besides being written in the rather awkward key of E Major, other demands are placed on the right hand in the opening and closing sections. A firm stroke starting from the string is appropriate in defining the first two predominant rhythmic motives:

Starting from the string seems to be an aspect of clean bowing technique in such passages especially appropriate in orchestral playing. The following extended section in C-sharp minor is very challenging:
In all, Opus 44 is well worth any violist’s examination. They are useful and enjoyable etudes for Künstler-Bratschisten.

**PALASCHKO’S REMAINING ETUDES**

Here I offer a brief overview of the other Palaschko etudes, specifically trying to pinpoint a graded level of difficulty: easy, intermediate, difficult.

**Opus 36.** This volume is probably the most common and most used of Palaschko’s pedagogical works for the viola. The reasons for this might be that they are easily purchased and consist of twenty pieces that could be seen as continuing in difficulty where Kreutzer leaves off. They start at the intermediate level, progressing gradually to the advanced. These are much like Opus 44 in that they are very tuneful and musical. They explore many difficult technical problems as well as musical ones. (Publishers: International, Siegel-Kisner)

**Opus 49.** These etudes show a consistency in style. Depending on the tempos taken, the ten etudes could be classified as difficult. They may be somewhat easier technically than Opus 44. (Publisher: C. F. Schmitt)

**Opus 55.** The twelve etudes found here are definitely more accessible to the intermediate player, with the possible exception of number 12. Along with Opus 36 and Opus 45, Opus 55 is also available. (Publisher: Urtext)

**Opus 62.** These etudes belong to the difficult category. They stand nicely by themselves as concert pieces, particularly No. 2, entitled “In the oriental style,” as well as all others that are titled, such as No. 9 “Souvenir.” Although difficult, these twelve etudes are not as virtuosic as those in Opus 44. They are on the same level as the more advanced etudes of Opus 36. (Publisher: Ricordi)

**Opus 66.** 15 studies are contained, many with names of musical forms, such as that of No. 15, “Thema und Variationen.” These are also in the difficult category:
Opus 77. These etudes could be learned by the intermediate student. Titles and styles again play an important role, for example No. 23, “In a Spanish style,” which includes pizzicato fifths and fourths. These would be effective in keeping the interest of a young student who may not find great joy in playing etudes, indeed, sometimes a dread. (Publisher: LeDuque)

Opus 86. These are entitled “Easy and Melodious Studies for the Viola” and would serve as an effective collection of studies for the student making the transition from violin to viola. They are evenly graded to comply with a student’s learning the alto clef. Aside from this, they are melodious pieces suited for the advancing beginner. All but the last few of these etudes remain in the first position, employing the third position with an occasional fourth finger extension to an open harmonic. There are no double stops found except in No. 23, “A Hindu Song,” which uses an open-string drone. These are extremely well thought out and remain consistent with Palaschko’s meticulous indications of fingerings, dynamics, and bowings. (Publisher: Schott)

Opus 87. These “25 Easy and Melodious Studies for Viola” are for the beginner. They represent a carefully graded set of pieces well suited for beginner-type problems. The etudes rewritten in simpler keys, gradually exploring up to four sharps and no more than three flats. The opportunities for working on pure intonation and bow control are plentiful. As the title implies, the pieces are melodious. Even though these etudes are direct and simple, I believe they can be successful in keeping the interest of the young student. Their use should be considered more seriously. (Publisher: Ricordi)


The most noteworthy aspect of this opus, which includes both Volumes I and II, is the fact that the etudes have an optional piano accompaniment. Despite this addition, they are designed to be played solo and accomplish this end successfully. Volume I consists of twelve studies that can be played by the beginning to intermediate violist, comparable in difficulty to the easiest of the Kreutzer etudes. Double stops are not encountered, and only the first four positions are employed. Characteristic of the Palaschko etudes, he uses very specific fingerings for both musical reasons and the development of technique, and he composes in styles that are attractive to the student, for example No. 6, entitled, “Mazurka,” or No. 8, “Oriental Dance,” or No. 12, which is a contemplative “Vision.”

Opus 92, Vol. II. Melodious Studies.

These twelve etudes are expanded over Volume I in that they are now somewhat longer and more difficulty technically. Chords occur, not as in the Sevcik models, but are interspersed in these “melodious” compositions that also explore technique. Up- and down-bow staccato are also indicated. There is a “Chromatische Studie,” which is quite difficult, and an adorably cute “Elf Dance,” that could easily be choreographed by the ballet instructor down the street. Melodies are definitely of paramount importance, perhaps for no other reason that to maintain the interest of the student.

Opus 96. This volume also contains twenty-five examples that are more pieces, than etudes in the more traditional meaning. They are for the intermediate student, perhaps a continuation of Opus 87. All bear a title, such as “Chromatische Studie,” (No. 14), “Staccato-Studie,” (No. 11), and “Octaven-Studie,” (No. 11). I find it fascinating that a man, whom references identify as a violinist, would write so many viola etudes. I can assume that he had a vision for the viola of the future. In any case, his etudes deserve and await further discovery and use by violists, both teachers and students. How appropriate for Palaschko to end his etudes with an “Epilogue:”
Epilog
Joël Belgique is a member of the San Diego Symphony. He has studied with Heidi Castleman at the Eastman School of Music and at the Cleveland Institute of Music where he received his bachelor’s degree. He has studied with Clym Barrus at Brigham Young University where he is pursuing a master’s degree. He has appeared as soloist with the Utah Symphony, the National Repertory Orchestra, and the BYU Chamber Orchestra on two European tours.

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1993 VIOLA CONGRESS

The XXI International Viola Congress, to be held at Northwestern University (Evanston, Illinois, just North of Chicago) June 23-27, 1993 will bring together many of the finest violists from this country and around the world. The four-day viola extravaganza promises to be an exciting, stimulating, and illuminating event. The wide variety of concerts, lectures, master classes, and panel discussions planned for the Congress will meet the intellectual and musical needs of all viola aficionados, from casual “friends of the viola” to the most devoted professional.

The recitals and concerts planned for the Congress have been planned to present a variety of types of music, including solo, duo, chamber music, viola ensemble and concerto repertoire. Whereas programming in past Congresses has concentrated on the standard viola literature, performances at the Northwestern Congress will range from original instrument performances. While planning and negotiation with several prominent international violists is still underway, the Northwestern Congress already promises a dazzling array of performances. Among the highlights:

**Concerto Concert**: Featuring William Schoen (premiering a concerto by Maurice Gardner), Rosemary Glyde (performing music of York Bowen), Karen Ritscher (performing the Joel Friedman Viola Concerto) and the winner of the Primrose Scholarship Competition.

**Solo recitals** by Altar Arad (including the premiere performance of his solo sonata) and Paul Coletti (performing works of Bach, Bolling, and Clarke).

**Mixed solo recitals** spotlighting such artists as Edward Adelson, Amy Brandfonbrenner, James Dunham, Jerzy Kosmala, Doug McNabeny, Matt Michelek, Rami Solomonow, Robert Verebes, and Richard Young.

**Baroque/Classic recital** showcasing original instrument performances by Aliza Appel, Pamela Goldsmith, Judson Griffin, Susan Iodone, and Lisa Rautenberg.

**Viola duo recital** of husband/wife duos Ralph Fielding/Valerie Diamond, Max Raimi/Diane Mues, Jeffery Irvine/Lynne Ramsey.

**Viola chamber music recital** highlighting Yizhak Schotten in several important works involving the viola in mixed ensembles.

**Two viola ensemble concerts**: The Northwestern University Viola Ensemble will present a recital of music written for one to twelve violas, including several premieres of music written expressly for the ensemble. The Corelli Strings of Wheaton College (a rapidly-growing Suzuki ensemble) will present an outdoor concert as part of the Congress’ community outreach.

Each day will include several lectures or panel discussions. Among the presentations:

**Frank Babbitt** will address the interpretive and technical challenges faced in the solo writings of Paul Hindemith.

**Alice Brandfonbrenner** will speak of methods to control the physical stress of viola playing, including the aspects of conditioning, position, stretching, and more.

**Alan de Veritch** will present a session on how to organize, maintain, and reap the benefits of a local viola society.

**Great violas of the world**: a lecture/presentation of representative works of such leading makers as da Salò, Guarneri, Maggini, and Stradivari.

**Nathan Phillips** will present a lecture/demonstration illustrating the state-of-the-art possibilities of interfacing viola performance with computer-controlled electronic effects.

**Milton Preves** will speak on his collaboration with Ernest Bloch in the creation of several works in the standard repertoire.

**Panel Discussion** on the musical and technical rewards of studying baroque viola, featuring the prominent performers mentioned above.

**Panel Discussion** focusing on the most appropriate way to conduct orchestral auditions. Members of the panel will include Robert Vernon, Ralph Fielding, and representatives from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The Congress will also present some of the country’s brightest young violists in master classes by Heidi Castelman (solo performance), Jeffery Irvine (solo performance), Michael Tree (chamber music performance), and Robert Vernon (orchestral performance).

The Primrose Scholarship Competition, displays of instrument makers, a gala banquet and several receptions round out the Northwestern Congress schedule. In planning the congress host chair Peter Slowik has expressly reserved free time to allow conference participant to take advantage of Chicago’s many cultural opportunities.

Information regarding registration and housing for the Congress will be available January 1, 1993. Each member of AVS will receive a registration form in the mail in early January. Northwestern University will provide splendid facilities on the shore of Lake Michigan, and many fine artists have pledged their commitment to perform—WE NEED YOUR HELP to make this the greatest Viola Congress ever—let us know of other viola players/fans/students that would like to come to the Congress, and we will include them on the mailing list. Please forward your lists of names and addresses (by January 1 to be included in our mailing) to:

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REMEMBERING WILLIAM PRIMROSE

Editor's Note: This solicited tribute from Dwight Pounds was to have been included in IAVS Vol. 8 No. 1, 1992, the issue commemorating the tenth anniversary of the death of William Primrose. It was inadvertently left out and is included here with the editor’s apologies.

William Primrose and Dwight Pounds were born and lived in quite disparate sections of the Western World—Scotland and Texas. He was inheritor of the strict formality and structure of the Church of England and prescribed etiquette of European concert halls; I inherited the informality typical of West Texas and the Southern Baptist Church. We shared a love of music, we each valued humor, and in time our paths crossed and we became good friends.

Dean Wilford Bain at Indiana University felt that all his applied faculty should teach as many students as Joseph Gingold (who could never have enough!), and Mr. Primrose accepted me primarily to complete a rather heavy teaching assignment. Primrose, who felt he did his best teaching with seven to twelve full-time students, attempted to make the best of the situation, as did I, despite my insufficient training and technique to warrant study with a teacher of his caliber. Thus began my three-year association with William Primrose and, under his tutelage, I began to play the viola. To my great honor, he served on my doctoral committee.

There was much to learn, both about the viola and the man. The profundity of his hearing loss was not apparent until one day, during a lesson, the telephone rang. Mr. Primrose was marking fingering and made no attempt to go to the phone through the third ring. I said, “Mr. Primrose, the telephone ...” “What?” he asked, somewhat startled that he had been interrupted. “The telephone is ringing!” I answered, projecting my voice as strongly as possible without shouting. “Oh!” he said, and promptly went to the phone. He later accused me of having a “booming” voice! That he taught so effectively despite the debilitating handicap was astonishing.

I saw him angry one time in my life. Reporting to a lesson one afternoon, he met me at his door and said, “I am terribly sorry, but I am simply too upset to teach today.” He owed me no explanations, but before I could leave, he said, “Come on in!” and proceeded to vent his anger to me, David Dawson, David Dalton, and a third party regarding comments regarding him in a nationally published article about another prominent American musician. The magazine’s next edition carried a clarification in his defense, Primrose was satisfied, and the situation blew over. It remains a treasured compliment that he elected to share the incident with me, for whatever reason.

For William Primrose, the extraordinary was often typical, both in his great art and his teaching. My most memorable experience with Mr. Primrose involved my doctoral orals. As a viola minor, I had no performance responsibilities, but did have written and oral exams. Mr. Primrose mentioned several source books and asked that I be familiar with them. I received his written questions after an exhausting German exam, late in the day. Recognizing only two questions, I scribbled the answers, turned them in, and returned home dejectedly to tell my wife that I had flunked my viola exam. She said, “Mr. Primrose just called and is coming here to see you.” He and his son, who was visiting him at the time, were there within five minutes. He walked in, embraced me vigorously, and said, “My boy, I intended for you to use those reference books to answer my questions, not to do them from memory!” He returned the paper and, totally invigorated by his visit and a hot dinner, I spent five hours in the library that evening attempting to justify his trust. The following morning as we met for my orals, Mr. Primrose’s beaming face indicated he was most pleased with my efforts! He simply cared enough to interrupt a visit with his son in my behalf, an act of unique generosity that I can never forget.

William Primrose received the C.B.E. and was given an honorary doctorate, and delighted in these honors. Still, he was the one person I have ever known who required no title. When one said, “William Primrose, Violist,” or simply “Mr. Primrose,” nothing more sufficed to increase his stature.

He was truly unforgettable. To spend five minutes with William Primrose was to improve one’s life. Like many others, I was fortunate: my time, both as student and friend, was measured in years.
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VIOLA & CRITIC

Violist Plays Unbalanced Program
by Jerome Reed

The following lines opened a review in the Saturday, 10 October 1992, edition of your newspaper:

"I must admit that the anticipation of a viola recital does not get my adrenaline flowing. My enthusiasm builds only marginally more than for a tuba recital. Perhaps that is due to the fact that the viola is the invisible instrument of the string family - always relegated to an inner, harmonic voice but rarely heard as a solo instrument. Last night at Blair Recital Hall, violist Kathryn Plummer proved that there is at least one substantial work for the viola."

— Jerome Reed

The opening paragraphs of Mr. Reed’s review of the Kathryn Plummer-Amy Dorfman recital, which I also attended, do all violists a disservice. Instead of enlightening and informing his readers, he only reiterated familiar cliches which serve only to perpetuate the myths that the viola is not a solo instrument and that it has very little literature. Somehow he even managed to malign tubists in the process.

First of all, the joy and intellectual curiosity of Mr. Reed’s opening lines lead his audience to think he is anticipating a root canal rather than attending a viola recital! Secondly, in referring to the viola as “the invisible instrument . . . always relegated to the inner, harmonic voice,” he fails to distinguish between the orchestral, chamber, and solo roles of the instrument. Mr. Reed writes as if he expected no more from Ms. Plummer’s performance than soft chords, afterbeats, and Alberti accompaniment patterns to non-existent melodies. The fact that the viola is given a heavy accompanying role in much orchestral music by no means makes it less credible as a solo instrument.

Next, Mr. Reed condescendingly suggests that there exists “at least one substantial work for the viola,” referring to Shostakovich’s Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 147. One must surmise that the critic has never heard of Paul Hindemith, Ernest Bloch, Rebecca Clarke, Hector Berlioz, William Walton, Carl Stamitz, or Béla Bartok (to name but a few), all of whom wrote “substantial” works for the viola — as did Robert Schumann.

Mr. Reed is on firm ground only in his comments regarding the music itself and the performers. Although I or any other reader may disagree, the critic has both the right and responsibility to “call his shots” as he sees fit, as long as the observations are based on knowledge and documentable fact. I have no argument in principle with the fact that he took Plummer and Dorfman to task for the selections in the second half of the recital and the overall balance of the program — these are legitimate subjects for critical review. Ms. Plummer obviously chose lighter material to balance the very serious Shostakovich sonata rather than another three-movement work. Program content is highly subjective and both Reed and Plummer make valid points. However, Mr. Reed’s observation that the four sections in the second half were “not demanding” on either player or listener is
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misleading, at least for the player: Benjamin's *Jamaican Rumba* is deceptively difficult. Kathryn Plummer's flawless technique and impeccable intonation resulted in a performance which may have appeared effortless, but wasn’t. Even the great William Primrose prepared it carefully, and it was his arrangement! One presumes Mr. Reed has heard of William Primrose.

On the whole, I suggest that the unfounded, condescending and biased comments in this important review reveal Mr. Reed to be reluctant to attend and unprepared to review this recital and therefore poorly qualified to write critically about either the viola or its literature. Had he visited with any active violists, he may have learned why they love their instrument: because of the big, warm and beautiful, mellow sound it produces! Had he visited Blairs music library, perhaps he would have found a copy of Franz Zeyringer’s *Literatur für Viola*, which lists thousands of works for viola in every conceivable instrumental combination. Perhaps then his approach to the review would have been curiosity, anticipation, a willingness to expand his musical expertise and the desire to share these insights with his readers.

Dwight Pounds, Ph.D.  
Bowling Green, Kentucky

cc: Jerome Reed  
Kathryn Plummer

### OF INTEREST

#### Chapters of the American Viola Society

In the spirit of the recommendation by AVS Officers and Board at their past board meetings in Ithaca, New York and Idyllwild, California, this past year has shown a marked increase in activity focusing on the viola in local areas. This has taken form in various events generally described as “Viola Day” or “Viola Celebration,” and has resulted in the formation of local or state chapter of the AVS. News was received of a lively viola evening with various soloists and ensembles in Los Angeles and the Midwest Viola Day in Chicago. The founding of the New York Viola Society with Rosemary Glyde, chair, and also the Utah Viola Society with Michael Palumbo, chair, is announced.
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The Arizona Virtuoso Violas
by
DeeAnn Greene

One hundred twenty Arizona violists performed a mass concert Saturday, 17 October 1992 for the Second Annual Virtuoso Viola Festival at McClintock High School in Tempe, Arizona. Sponsored by the Tempe Elementary School District, the event was coordinated by Arizona State University professor, Williams Magers, former Phoenix Symphony member, Patricia Cosand, and Tempe string specialist, Sally Pullen. The morning of festivities featured master classes, lectures, a viola competition, and a recital.

Viola students ranged in ages from five years to high school and included nine students who flew in for the day from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Never before in Arizona have so many viola players gathered together.

Jill Osborne, Katherine Black, Carol Reeves, Sherry Gordon, Jaime Johnson, Martha Hughes, and Margaret Haviland, were among the more than sixteen enthusiastic viola teachers who donated their time and talents to make the day possible. The common goals of these teachers was to bring young violists together and foster continued interest in the viola.

Young violists enjoyed meeting and performing with fellow violists, learning more about the viola, and listening to fine viola performances. The Virtuoso Viola day filled a gap for these young musicians who might otherwise be overshadowed by their other string counterparts.

This year, a viola competition was added to the scheduled activities. Three cash prizes were awarded. VerRona Waddell, the first place winner, performed Alan Shulman's Theme and Variations for the noon recital. The second and third place winners were Sarah Chamberlin and Sara Lindsey.

Another first for the Virtuoso Viola event was the addition of nationally known guest lecturer, Don Robertson, of Robertson's String Shop in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mr. Robertson discussed various functions and care of violas with each of the five master classes. Lecturers were geared to the age and ability level of the students. Young players delighted in seeing the inside of a viola for the first time while learning what a soundpost was. Older students learned about placement of the soundpost and how to treat unwanted problems such as wolf tones.

The growth of viola players in the communities of Tempe, Mesa, and Gilbert, Arizona is indicated by the doubled enrollment of this year's event. Originated by Jill Osborne, the first event began three years ago with sixty violists. Excited parents flocked to this year's performance in record numbers. The Arizona Virtuoso Violas enthusiastically look forward to expanded state wide growth for their next annual event.

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Growing up in the Los Angeles area, Katrina Wreede began work on her bachelor’s degree at California State University, Northridge with Louis Kievman. While in school, she worked as a freelancer with several of the community orchestras in Southern California. In 1982, she moved to San Jose to complete her degree at San Jose State, studying with Don Ehrlich. With Ehrlich’s encouragement, she explored the interdependence of physical awareness and artistic expression, studying yoga, the Alexander technique, and bellydancing with zils. Books she found helpful were *A Soprano On Her Head* by Eloise Ristad, and Galway’s *Inner Game of Tennis. “I had gone into music to express myself and connect with people, but got caught up in trying to play ‘right.’”* So in addition to her position with the San Jose Symphony, Katrina formed the Almaden String Quartet, a group for fun and profit, for which she arranged pop and jazz tunes.

In spite of her extracurricular explorations, Katrina found the realities of the professional classical musical world and traditional methods of study to be counterproductive to personal musical expression. “You study twenty years to learn how to express yourself, and then, when you play in the orchestra section, if you hear yourself too much, you’re doing it wrong. I was leaving rehearsals frustrated—in tears. One day, I was invited to a chamber music party attended entirely by improvising musicians. We read standard classical music, but they had a completely different way of feeling and living the music—honest to the musical intent first, not the “right technique.” In one Haydn symphony, the viola section included steel drums and me, and it sounded great!”

Because of that party, Ms. Wreede committed the next two years wholly to learning to improvise. She formed the Skyline Trio, a classical and jazz group with Irene Sazer, then violinist and violist of the Turtle Island String Quartet, and Mark Summer, cellist of the Turtle Island, as well as playing with and learning from many musicians outside the classical music scene.

From August 1989 to December 1991, Katrina toured and recorded as a member of the Turtle Island String Quartet. Although she had immersed herself in jazz before, the different approach to rehearsing was an education. During the first rehearsals, Wreede asked about specific bowings. The other players hadn’t considered making rules about it. Only the musical intent and feeling it together were important—and it worked.

Ms. Wreede believes that classical training creates problems for musicians by emphasizing the perfection of expressive tools, that is, correct bowing, pitch, ideal tone, vibrato, accepted articulations, often over, or at the expense of, the musical intent of a piece, as well as the player’s character. “So many students come to me saying, ‘I’ll get the notes, then we can talk about music.’ Like a symphony audition, where the first goal is to be perfect, if you can slip in some music, that’s great.” She observes that even in the performance of 20th century music, such as string arrangements of jazz, players often play within the limits of 19th century techniques because that is the “perfect” and “right” way to play. “If string players study other forms of music and dance, they might hear Bach or Beethoven in a different way that reflects their own eclectic ear. Listen to Nigel Kennedy’s *Four Seasons* to hear music honest to Vivaldi and modern sensibilities.”

An aspect of jazz not foreign to the Great Masters, yet abandoned by modern string players—possibly because it can never be perfected—is improvisation. “In the drive toward the ‘perfect interpretation’ of old war-horses, classical musicians have lost track of this tool. Music should also reflect who and what is alive now. We ought to continue playing music.
by great composers, but consider that one hundred years from now, historians should have more to say than "the late 1900s—when musicians gave great performances of Beethoven."

Katrina Wreede is doing her part in the New Music world now. Much of her energy is directed toward composing. Recent compositions include "C-String Blues," performed en masse at the 1991 International Viola Congress in Ithaca, "Li'l Phrygian Rondo for Karen" (Karen Elaine), "Bop Caprice One" for solo viola, (featured in Strings magazine), and "Tango Duo" for Harmonica and Viola—all on Vlazville Music, BMI. As a founding member of the Bay Area Jazz Composers' Orchestra, Ms. Wreede has arranged her "Synapse Lapse" for the big band with strings.

Playing with jazz greats like Dr. Billy Taylor and John Blake gave her the impetus to explore groove-oriented compositions for string players. "Li'l Phrygian Rondo" for two violas, one improvising, one "straight," was commissioned by myself in 1992. Katrina says of the work that "my objective was to create a performer and audience-friendly piece that sounds good, is technically accessible, and uses groove-feels." Ultimately to be included in a collection of works for the violist learning to improvise, she conceived "LPRK" so that a player without extensive experience in grooving can explore this realm, developing more gut awareness of the rhythmic meter and practice self-expression without the regular "rules."

Karen Elaine is Adjunct Professor of Viola at San Diego State University, an active solo recitalist, and enthusiast for new music.

Following is the first page of "Li'l Phrygian Rondo for Karen" (available from Vlazville Music, 2884 Carmel Street, Oakland CA 94602):
Lil' Phrygian Rondo for Karen

by Katrina Wreede
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About Violists Cont’d.

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Mr. Neubauer, who was the first-prize winner of the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition at age seventeen, and who was appointed principal violist of the New York Philharmonic at twenty-one (the youngest principal string player in the orchestra’s history), has enjoyed an active career as soloist and chamber musician since leaving the Philharmonic. He will have North American performance rights of the new Bartók through Boosey & Hawkes until July 1994.

Neubauer has worked on the revision of the Concerto for several years in cooperation with Bartók’s son, Peter Bartók, and the publisher, Boosey & Hawkes.

GLYDE SERIES

The other two concerts are scheduled for 28 February and 25 April 1993 in which three premiers will be given. Collaborating with Ms. Glyde are Paul Coletti, Karen Ritscher, Emanuel Vardi, the Essex Quartet, and pianists Norman Carey and Diana Kacso. The series will benefit the Edgar C. Glyde Viola Scholarship Fund.

GLAZER DUO
Robert Glazer, viola, and Gilda Glazer, piano, will perform on 6 February 1993 the world premiere of the Double Concerto for Viola and Piano by Sabin Pautza with the Plainfield (New Jersey) Symphony conducted by the composer. The Concerto, written for the Glazers, will be played by them in several Eastern European countries in May.

FELLOWSHIP FOR MINORITY MUSICIANS
The Concert Artists Guild has announced the winners of its Fellowship Program for Minority Musicians. Three performers and one composer will receive $60,000 in support of their career development. Among the performers to be awarded is Amadi Hummings, violist, who began his musical studies at the age of four, and received his formal training at the North Carolina School of the Arts, the New England Conservatory, Rice University, and Indiana University. His principal teachers have been Sally Peck, Marcus Thompson, and Atar Arad. Many of his musical activities have been sponsored by the Boys Clubs of America and Epstein Young Artists Program, under whose auspices he has performed in various major cities in the U.S.

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NEW WORKS

The Primrose International Viola Archive recently has been sent a number of works for viola, either alone, in duet, or quartet, but without the sullying influence of piano, or any other instrument. The viola is found in solitude or ensemble... pure, but in these cases, anything but dull. Of the eight pieces received, only two look like they were prepared for publication using standard engraved printing techniques. Three look like they were prepared by hand in ink, two by computer music-printing. (One is unpublished, still in the composer's manuscript.) The fact that viola music is being distributed commercially in this form should be encouraging, as it means the publishing industry will consider alternatives to the expensive engraving process, so that pieces targeted at a small market, like violists, can be published. Of course the other side of the coin is that, using modern techniques, publishing can be accomplished by small publishing houses that are not really primarily interested in profit. The problem then becomes one of distribution. Perhaps JAVS can help bring publishers and buyers together. All eight of these viola pieces take six to seven minutes to perform, and all eight seem like welcome, felicitous, useful additions to our repertory. Five works are considered below; three others which are somewhat more adventurous, will be reviewed later.

**Fantasia for Two Violas (1992) by Robert Linn. Unpublished.**
Notations on the manuscript: "based on a tune by Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)" and "Composed for Donald McInnes and Pamela Goldsmith who gave the first performance on April 15, 1992 playing two Gasparo violas." (This performance was cited in JAVS, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 39.)

The Fantasia is a set of eleven variations plus the tune, which Frescobaldi used in an organ piece titled *Canzona dopo l'Epistola* (Canzona after the Epistle), which is part of his *Fiori Musicali* (Musical Flowers) that bloomed in Venice, in 1635. The Linn style might be described as neo-baroque, with counterpoint dominating; refreshingly dissonant, slightly modal sounding, straight-forward rhythmically, traditionally notated. The performers need to be fluent, unafraid of double-stops or the higher tessituras, but this music is written with the intention of letting the violas sound good. The composer stated that the piece was written for the two Gasparo violas used by these wonderful players, and may be unique in that it was written specifically for these instruments.

Each variation is distinguished by its own tempo and compositional idea, so contrasts of personality among the variations abound. They are short, but uneven in length, ranging from four to twenty-seven bars. All in all, this is one of the happiest additions to the repertory encountered recently. It deserves immediate publication, and acceptance in the viola community seems assured.

**Quartet for Four Violas by Richard Lane. Baird Knechtel, Thomas Tatton, editors. Available through the Canadian Viola Society, 103 North Drive, Islington, Ontario, Canada, M9A 4R5 or 2705 Rutledge Way, Stockton, California, 95207. Complete score and parts $20.00.**

Richard Lane was a featured composer at the Ithaca Viola Congress in 1991, where we heard his *Aria* and Allegro and Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano. Baird Knechtel, President of the Canadian Viola Society, and Thomas Tatton (unofficial King of viola ensemble) have teamed up to present this viola quartet which Lane composed in 1978. This is a desk-top printing effort for which the editors deserve praise, as without them, the piece would not be available. The printing lacks refinement here and there, but is preferable, aesthetically, to most hand-written editions.

The Quartet is in four brief movements, which make modest technical demands on the players. The harmonic style is mildly dissonant but triadic, with meters that shift a bit in the first movement, but are consistent in others. This would be a fine vehicle for competent high school violists of roughly equal abilities, as the musical interest is distributed so that no one part dominates. The style is 20th century enough to present a "contemporary" impression. There are no fingerings indicated, so young players would need some help. The work is dedicated to Myron Rosenblum and is a valuable addition to the meager viola ensemble repertory.


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Lamentations of Jeremiah for Solo Viola

Lamentations of Jeremiah was composed in Siena, Italy in 1959 for cello originally, then transcribed for viola. Like the Sposalizio by Franz Liszt, it is a musical representation of a painting, in this case "Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem" by Rembrandt. Lyrical, recitative-like, full of emotional outbursts and wailing, tuneful and rhythmic, it carries the Jewish disposition perhaps a step further than Ernest Bloch. The uncredited editor has done a first-rate job with both fingerings and bowings, and with the exception of one short unnecessary 8va passage, the presentation is apparently without flaw, even the page-turn has been considered. The work takes about six minutes, which is long enough for this emotional level.


Partita, which is in five short movements, is dated "Summer, 1954." What a shame it has taken thirty-eight years to come to print! The work is a partita in the true gist of the word, meaning "game" or "match." Mr. Lamb has studied Swedish folk music, and folk elements are abundant here. The rhythmic vitality, modal harmonic approach, general clarity of mood, and technical directness are clear signals of its derivation. The approach and effect is like pieces for young people by Bartók. The names of the brief movements explain the intention: Prelude, Caprice, Romance, Scherzo, Charivari. Technical demands are modest; extreme ranges are avoided, but there are some well-reasoned double-stops. "Extended techniques" are not present. There are some bowings shown, but not fingerings. This work will need considerable editing to be ready for performance, but it would be a good vehicle for an undergraduate college violists of less than virtuoso development.

There are page-turns in the first and last movement for which no provision is made. Perhaps this defect is compensated for by the charming drawing on the cover by Sydney Stibbard, which shows a satyr playing the viola with two girls and a young satyr dancing. Overall, Partita is a fun and refreshing piece.
—Thomas G. Hall
Chapman University

RECORDINGS

William Primrose
Primrose Quartet Reissue. Schumann Piano Quintet in E-flat, op. 44 (with Sanromá); Brahms String Quartet in B-flat, op. 67 (first issue); Smetana String Quartet in E minor "From my Life;" Haydn "The Seven Last Words of Christ;" Biddulph Recordings, 2-CD, LAB 052/53. Available through the American Viola Society (see page 2 of this issue of JAVS).

Peter Hatch
Johannes Brahms Sonata in D Major, op. 78; Joseph Joachim Hebrew Melodies, op. 9; Hans Sitt Album Leaves, op. 39 (first recording); Georges Enesco Concert piece (Delores Stevens, piano). PRO - VM 5008 CD.

Paul Cortese
Elliott Carter Elegy for Viola and Piano; William Bergsma Fantastic Variations on a Theme from Tristan; Alan Hovhaness Chalagir for Viola Solo; George Rochberg Sonata for Viola and Piano; Vincent Persichetti Parable for Viola; Infanta Marina; (Jon Klibonoff, piano) Crystal Records CD636, 2235 Willida Lane, Sedro Wooley WA 98284

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Workshop, February Sonatina is the second in a series of "Calendar" Sonatinas by Mr. McCabe. It is dedicated to John Bethell. The work is in one movement which alternates between vivo and lento tempo markings. The basic pulse is the quarter note and measures are indicated, but they contain differing and unspecified numbers of quarter beats. Melodic content seems absent, but the lento sections are somewhat lyrical, in contrast to the vivo sections where phrases begin with loud sixteenth notes and diminish in order to imitate the action of breaking ocean waves, as the composer explains in a "Programme Note." There are many double stops, emphasizing fifths and seconds, often using open strings. The lower and middle ranges of the instrument are used to good effect. The overall result is quite dramatic, using an approach that is reminiscent of the Berio Sequenza VI, although not nearly as extreme.

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CLYN BARRUS is a graduate of the Curtis Institute, the Vienna Academy, and the University of Michigan where he earned his doctorate in viola. He was principal of the Vienna Symphony and for thirteen years occupied that same position in the Minnesota Orchestra. He has been heard frequently as a soloist and recording artist, and is now director of orchestras at BYU.

DAVID DALTON studied at the Vienna Academy, the Munich Hochschule, and took degrees at the Eastman School and Indiana University where he earned his doctorate in viola under William Primrose. He collaborated with his teacher in producing the Primrose memoirs *Walk on the North Side* and *Playing the Viola*. He served as president of the American Viola Society.

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Leonid Gesin is a member of the San Francisco Symphony and several chamber music groups including the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. He studied with A.G. Sosin at the Leningrad State Conservatory, then performed with the Leningrad State Philharmonic and taught before emigrating to the United States.

Paul Hersh, former violist and pianist of the Lenox Quartet, studied viola with William Primrose and attended Yale University. He has performed with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and many other groups. He has also made a number of recordings and has been artist-in-residence at universities and music festivals in the U.S. and Europe.

Isadore Tinkleman studied with Kortschak and Weinstock at the Manhattan School of Music and with Raphael Bronstein in private lessons. He headed the Violin Department at the Portland School of Music before becoming director of the Portland Community Music Center.

Geraldine Walther, principal violist of the San Francisco Symphony, is former assistant principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony and a participant in the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. She studied at the Curtis Institute of Music with Michael Tree and at the Manhattan School of Music with Lillian Fuchs, and won first prize in the William Primrose Viola Competition in 1979. On leave 1992–93.

Denis de Coteau, music director and conductor for the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, has conducted dance companies, youth orchestras and major symphonies throughout the world. He has received a variety of awards and commendations, earned his B.A. and M.A. in music from New York University, and holds a D.M.A. from Stanford University.

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