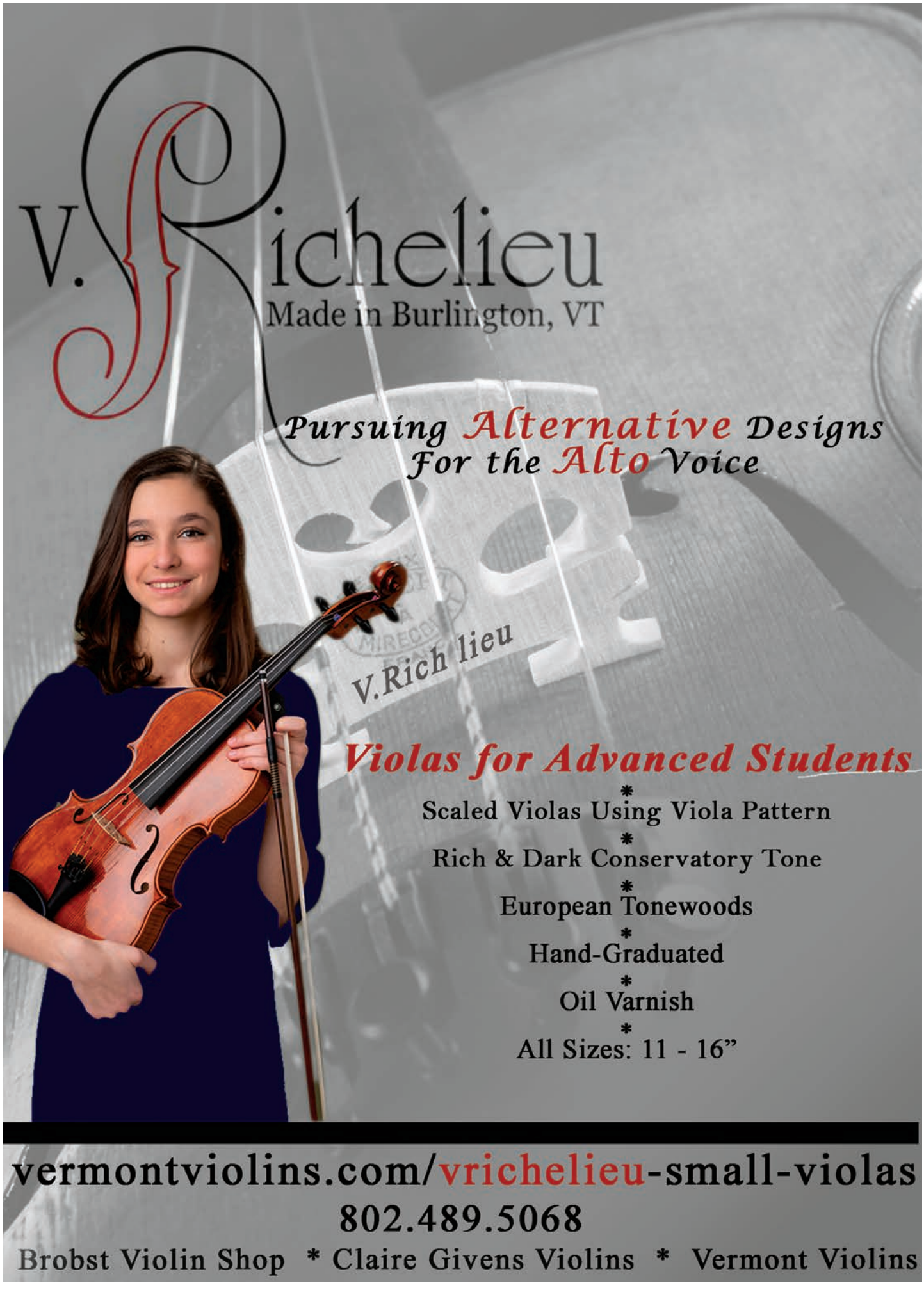
Journal of the American Viola Society
Volume 36 Number 2

Features:

A Retrospective of African-American Violists

The Works of 1919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Journal of the American Viola Society

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p. 3 **From the Editor**

p. 4 **From the President**

News & Notes

p. 5 **Announcements**

p. 7 **In Memoriam:** Hans-Karl Piltz

p. 9 **In Review:** The AVS Online Festival

p. 11 **The Development Corner**

Feature Articles

p. 13 **From Russia to the UK and Back: Musical Discoveries from WWII and the Thaw**
Elena Artamonova details the musical interchange between Russia and the UK, including a newly-discovered connection between Tertis and Borisovsky.

p. 21 **African-American Violists: A Retrospective**
In his second-prize-winning article from the 2020 Dalton Research Competition, Christopher Jenkins provides an illuminating glimpse into the lives and careers of several African-American violists.

p. 31 **Interwoven Paths and Influences: Ernest Bloch, Rebecca Clarke, Paul Hindemith**
Daphne Gerling traces the web of similarities between three famous viola works from 1919.

Departments

p. 37 **New Music:** Anne Lanzilotti describes the creation of the works in her 20/19 Project.

p. 41 **With Viola in Hand:** Joelle Arnhold examines Paul Neubauer's *Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy.*

p. 47 **Retrospective:** The Aging Violist, by Thomas Tatton.

p. 51 **Music Reviews:** Gregory K. Williams reviews Irish-themed works.

On the Cover:
Kamron Coleman
Violist
Spray paint on board, 31x48

Kamron Coleman (www.kamroncoleman.com) is a self-taught painter and sculptor from Salem, Oregon. His wife, Bethany Evans, is a harpist for several Oregon symphonies, and as his muse, has inspired numerous symphony works in oil and spray paint. His symphony-specific art has been used by symphonies, large and small, across the US to raise funds to support symphonies and music programs. The original spray paint on board 31x48 of "Violist" is available. Prints are also available at www.kamroncolemanart.store. Commissions and special projects are welcomed.

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The *Journal of the American Viola Society* is published in spring and fall and as an online-only issue in summer. The American Viola Society is a nonprofit organization of viola enthusiasts, including students, performers, teachers, scholars, composers, makers, and friends, who seek to encourage excellence in performance, pedagogy, research, composition, and lutherie. United in our commitment to promote the viola and its related activities, the AVS fosters communication and friendship among violists of all skill levels, ages, nationalities, and backgrounds.

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

From the Editor

These many months of quarantine and COVID-enforced isolation have changed our daily lives in so many ways. A year ago, I'd only ever used Zoom for our AVS Board meetings, and now I spend hours every day peering into my laptop screen, teaching pixelated students through this now essential computer program. More than just work-related changes, the pandemic has pushed us to explore new hobbies and activities. I have, unabashedly, joined the countless number of newly-minted bread bakers, so much so that my family and friends are now drowning in more sourdough than they could possibly eat. And I was finally able to grow a summer garden (if only for the fact that my summer teaching engagements were all cancelled).

While the negative effects of this virus on our society are immeasurable—especially for those in musical performance fields—I am happy to have found at least one silver lining. Over the past six months, I've received nearly triple the number of article submissions and requests than I've had—in total—during my time as the editor of *JAVS*. Violists are a truly resilient bunch. If the world conspires against us through cancelled concerts and engagements, we hunker down and keep promoting our art form through writing and advocacy.

On top of the regular submissions to the journal, we've had the largest and most successful iteration of the David Dalton Research Competition in recent memory. The 2020 Competition received a stunning array of student research submissions, many of which explored new avenues of viola-related research. This issue begins the showcasing of the winning articles with Christopher Jenkins's second-prize-winning article, "African-American Violists: A Retrospective." Much more than just a profile of four Black violists throughout American history, his article illuminates a vital area of research. His conclusion provides a clear and direct pathway for further research, as he compels us to explore the lives, contributions, and role of Black violists in America.

Along similar lines, Elena Artamonova offers another tantalizing glimpse into an area for further research: a newly-discovered relationship between two viola pioneers, Lionel Tertis and Vadim Borisovsky. Her article details the musical exchange between Russia and the UK during World War II and the decades thereafter, providing an inspiring portrait of international collaboration during a time of crisis. Both Artamonova's and Jenkins's articles show us the potential for discovery in all realms of our musical world.

While new discoveries can be found through researching and deep investigation of the past, Anne Lanzilotti shows us how to *create* our own discoveries by bringing new musical works to life. Her second article about The 19/20 Project details the behind-the-scenes process of working directly with composers and the free interchange of ideas. Part of the beauty in this project lies in its use of the old, the three famous 1919 viola pieces, to inspire the new, these three newly commissioned works. As Lanzilotti's article delves into the creation of the works, Daphne Gerling elucidates the cultural, historical, and artistic crosscurrents swirling through the 1919 works by Bloch, Clarke, and Hindemith. This pair of articles perfectly captures what many of us do daily: studying the past to create something new.

This issue features many more articles with current relevance. Joelle Arhnold's analysis of Paul Neubauer's work, *Joan Your Phone is Always Busy* brings about a welcome examination of humor in the concert hall, and its place in our new world of socially-distanced performance; long-time *JAVS* contributor Thomas Tatton provides a personal meditation on aging; Lanson Wells reviews the AVS's Online Festival; and Gregory Williams reviews two uplifting Irish works, much needed during this time. While we're all desperate to return to regular performing, I am grateful and encouraged by the outpouring of viola research I've received in recent months. This is, at least, the one thing from the year 2020 that's worth keeping around.

Sincerely,

Andrew Braddock
Editor

From the President

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we wrap up 2020 with our final journal of the year, I'm honored to share good news and exciting developments with you.

If you have not visited the AVS website recently, I encourage you to go visit. There have been some recent additions, and I would specifically like to draw your attention to the Database for Underrepresented Composers. This valuable resource is the result of countless hours of research work and effort by numerous volunteers. Please join me in thanking several of those who have made this resource available: Katie Baird, Dorthea Stephenson and Adie Cannon were the driving force behind the project and did the vast majority of the research required. Librarians David Bynog and Joshua Dieringer contributed their time and expertise while Adam Cordle, Ashleigh Gordon, Orquídea Guandique Araniva provided valuable advice to help get the project started. Brian Covington created the searchable database found on our website, while Christiana Reader wrote the welcome message and information on how to use the database. Finally, AVS Board Member Molly Gebrian was a tireless advocate for this project, overseeing all the details needed to bring it to fruition. It is the selfless work of musicians such as this that make me proud to serve on this board!

In more good news, our office has arranged for discounted instrument insurance rates for AVS members through Anderson Musical Instrument Insurance Solutions, LLC. Please see page 12 of this issue, or visit https://www.anderson-group.com/avs/ for more information.

We also have five new board members to introduce to you at this time. Our new bylaws allow the board to appoint up to eight people to help address specific needs of our organization. It is my pleasure to introduce your newest board members to you: Naimah Bilal, Jessica Chang, Ezra Haugabrooks, Johnnia Stigall and Steven Tenenbom. Each of these board members were invited to share their expertise, experience and insights. The American Viola Society is already stronger for their efforts on our board.

In this issue of the journal, you will find insights into Tertis and Borisovsky, the connections between the 1919 sonatas by Hindemith, Bloch and Clarke, as well as Ann Lanzilotti's homage to that fruitful year with her 20/19 Project commissions. This edition also features Christopher Jenkins's second-prize-winning article in the 2020 Dalton Research Competition. Named in honor of the first editor of the *Journal of the American Viola Society* to encourage excellence in viola research among students, the competition is one way the AVS strives to support and promote excellence in viola related research. Now is the time to encourage young scholars you know to consider making a submission for the 2021 Dalton Competition—details for submission are on page 54.

Efforts such as the Dalton Research Competition rely upon the generosity of our members and sponsors. This edition of the *JAVS* features a new column: The Development Corner. This is a place where we explore various small ways members can help support the AVS. For instance, did you know that the AVS is listed as a charitable organization on Amazon Smile? Consider designating the AVS as your charity of choice and .5% of your eligible purchases will go to support AVS initiatives. These tips and others, such as an exciting new "above the line" tax deduction for 2020 charitable contributions are available on the website: https://americanviolasociety.org/development.php I'd like to make a personal thank you to all those who continue to support the AVS during this challenging economic situation.

In closing, we realize that financial security is not something all musicians are able to enjoy at this time, and the AVS has been quietly working to provide support as best we can. With the backing of a generous donor we have already been able to help individual members who have reached out to us, but we know there is more we can do. Our membership committee will be sending a survey to all members in the coming weeks; please share your thoughts so that we can best serve your needs. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

May you and yours have a safe and healthy end of 2020 and a brighter 2021 ahead.

Sincerely,
Hillary Herndon

Advertiser Index

Anderson Musical Instrument Insurance Solutions. 12
Arizona State University School of Music. . . . . IBC
AVS History & Reference Guide 29
Balmforth Violas 5
Connolly Music Company/Thomastik-Infeld. . . . . BC
David Dalton Competition ad 54
Hindemith International Viola Competition 8
Rice University. 48
Robertson & Sons Violin Shop, Inc. 6
Vermont Violins & The Burlington Violin Shop . . . . . IFC

Announcements

Youth Advisory Council Application

The American Viola Society is pleased to announce the search for new AVS Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members to serve January 2021–December 2022. The YAC is open to students and young professionals between ages 18–26.

The YAC serves as a liaison to the AVS Executive board and provides a student perspective on the impact of AVS issues and projects on aspiring professional violists. The AVS Board invites input from the YAC on attracting and retaining young professionals as members of the AVS. The AVS supports the YAC as it develops and implements new projects that serve the global viola community.

The YAC consists of 6–10 members who serve for 2-year terms. 3–5 new members are selected each year. The YAC meets three times (using online video conferencing) each year. The meetings will be facilitated by an AVS Executive Board Member who will also attend the meeting.

The YAC chair will be invited to attend AVS online board meetings and annual AVS board meetings as a non-voting member. To apply, please visit http://www.americanviolasociety.org/About/Youth-Advisory-Council.php. Please email Madeleine Crouch at info@avsnationaloffice.org with any questions!

Purpose

The role of an AVS Youth Advisory Board (YAC):

- To serve as a liaison to the AVS Executive Board
- To provide a student perspective on the impact of issues and projects of AVS on aspiring violists, and
- To give insight on attracting and retaining young professionals as members of the AVS.

Guidelines

1. The Youth Advisory Council will consist of 6-10 members.
2. 3-5 new members are selected each year.
3. First term members should be between the ages of 18-26.
4. Terms shall be two years with the possibility of renewal as long as the member is still under the age of 28.
5. A chair will be selected by the members of the YAC.
6. The AVS Executive Board will provide the YAC with yearly agenda topics by October 1 each year, including current AVS Board committee activity descriptions.
7. YAC members are encouraged to submit additional ideas for AVS projects to the AVS Executive Board.
8. The YAC will arrange conference call meetings three times during a school year. These meetings will be facilitated by an AVS Executive Board Member who shall also attend the meeting.
9. To remain a member in good standing, YAC members must attend 2 out of three conference calls.

10. The YAC will share reports and minutes from their three meetings to the AVS board. The YAB chair is invited to attend AVS online board meetings and annual AVS Board meetings as a non-voting member.

Music by Composers from Underrepresented Groups

Back in early June, a team of violists got together to assemble a database of music for viola by underrepresented composers. We are absolutely thrilled to be able to share this resource with the viola community today! The VAST majority of the work was done by Dorthea Stephenson, Katie Baird, and Adie Cannon who spent untold hours hunting down works all over the internet, in multiple languages, and inputting them into the database. It is really because of them that this database has over 1100 works to date. We also couldn't have done this without the tireless wizardry of our violist/librarians Joshua Dieringer and David M. Bynog.

The database is fully searchable across a wide variety of categories. There is also a link to help us correct errors, omissions, and to submit new works to the database.

Please share widely. Let's help this amazing music and these incredible composers get the recognition they deserve! You can access the database at the following website:

https://www.americanviolasociety.org/Composer-Database/Search.php

Please contact Molly Gebrian with questions at molly.gebrian@americanviolasociety.org.

In Memoriam: Hans-Karl Piltz 1923–2020

By Ginger Sedlarova

It is with incredible sadness that we announce the sudden passing of musician, husband, teacher and father Hans-Karl Piltz on April 11, 2020 at the age of 96.

Hans was born on October 15, 1923, in Lobenstein, Germany. At the age of four, he crossed the ocean with his sister and mother on the S.S. Berlin, arriving at Ellis Island, N.Y., on March 25, 1928. They immediately headed for Chicago, Illinois, reuniting with his father, who had crossed first. It was in Chicago that Hans first picked up a violin and began to play, taking lessons at the family's church. That first violin began a passion for playing music, leading him to the viola and later also the viola d'amore. He switched full-time to the viola while playing in his high school orchestra. As he grew more accomplished, Hans began to play in a variety of duos, trios and quartets until he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1941, where he served in the signal corps during WWII. Even war couldn't come between Hans and a fiddle—he sought out instruments to play wherever he was posted in Europe.

Returning to America post-war, Hans studied viola, first with Milton Preves, then principal violist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and also via the G.I. Bill at Northwestern University, receiving his master's degree in performance. He then auditioned for a position with the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra at the same time as another talented violinist, Irene Simo. Hans got the position that day, and he also got his girl when Irene ended up joining the orchestra a week later. They were married on September 29, 1951, and spent years playing together in a variety of orchestras and touring ensembles around North America. This time in his life included positions such as principal violist with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and two years as soloist and principal violist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Hans-Karl Piltz at one of his final performances with the West Coast Symphony. Photo by Ginger Sedlarova

Their daughter Heidi was born while they lived in Atlanta. Hans had already begun teaching at colleges and universities in the U.S. when in 1959 he received an irresistible offer from Vancouver: become a faculty member of the UBC Department of Music (now UBC School of Music) and be one of the architects of their new Bachelor of Music degree program. The family packed up the car and drove across the continent so Hans could begin this newest chapter in his music career. His role at UBC that first year included teaching violin and viola to incoming students, starting an orchestra, teaching music history, starting a teaching course for strings in local public schools, and much more. Son Dieter arrived a few years after Hans started teaching in Vancouver.

As well as being passionate about teaching, Hans would also play his instruments whenever he could. The list of who he performed with could fill this entire page, but it includes: Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the West Coast Symphony Orchestra, the Pacific Baroque Orchestra and the CBC. He was a founder of Early Music Vancouver, the founder and first conductor of the UBC Symphony Orchestra, a guest conductor and viola d'amore soloist for the Vancouver Chamber Players,

played with and had an active role with the Pro Nova Ensemble in North Vancouver, and played regularly with the West Coast Symphony Orchestra for many years. He was also a longtime fervent supporter of the Canadian Music Centre, and a sabbatical spent studying at the *Hochschule für Musik* in Vienna was a highlight of his life.

Although he left his position at UBC at the age of 65, the word "retirement" had no meaning for Hans. He simply kept doing what he loved, mentoring up-and-coming musicians, attending concerts and recitals (a favorite was the Wednesday Noon Hour concerts hosted by UBC Music), continuing to play music with his friends and writing witty and eloquent emails to his friends and family in the early-morning hours.

Those early mornings in his final years were also spent arranging and adapting Late Renaissance, Baroque and Romantic music originally written for instruments other than the viola. His goal, in his words, was to create "a library of materials for violists that may help develop another marketable professional possibility. Of course, maybe more importantly, it adds another repertoire just for the violist's pleasure in making music." He also continued to play in his beloved Monday Night Gamba Group with his friends right up until social distancing practices were brought in. If not for this, Hans would have undoubtedly played until his last breath.

Hans is survived by his wife of 69 years, Irene Simo-Piltz, his daughter Heidi (Kelly), his son Dieter (Ginger), his grandson Fred (Lily) and great-grandson Luke, as well as his sister's children, Pete (Marion) and Karin. He was predeceased by his father, Ernst Paul Johannes Piltz, his mother, Thekla Kachold (Piltz) and sister Lieselotte (Walter). Our family would like to thank the many fellow musicians, friends and colleagues of Hans' for their kind words and amazing memories they've shared of Hans during this difficult time. A celebration of his life will be planned once times are safer for gathering. In lieu of flowers, our family requests that you support our local music community by attending concerts once it's safe to do so again.

We miss you so much already, Hans. You may be gone, but your love and music will never be forgotten.

The author welcomes readers to share their remembrances, stories, or any inquiries with her at gsedlarova@gmail.com.

In Review: The AVS Online Festival

By Lanson Wells

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Viola Society was forced to cancel its 2020 AVS Festival, which was to be held at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Showing the American Viola Society's resilience and creativity, the AVS mounted a successful Online Festival, from June 3 to June 7, which included five fantastic virtual lectures and performances given by artists originally slated to appear at the in-person conference. These virtual offerings reached thousands of eager viola enthusiasts via the American Viola Society Facebook page. I felt that this event blended the experiences of virtual and in-person conferences, despite being fully online. One of the hallmarks of any professional conference is personal and professional connections. Even though our community was not able to gather in-person, I felt a great sense of connection and community from the performers, presenters, and the violists who participated via the American Viola Society's Facebook page. For me, this spoke of the AVS membership's strength, solidarity, and support during the current difficult climate.

The official advertisement of the AVS Online Festival

The AVS Online Festival started on Wednesday June 3 with a lecture titled: *Collaborating in the Digital Age: The 20/19 Project* by composer and violist Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti. Her presentation gave information on Lanzilotti's long-term personal project, which included the commission of three newly written works. Additionally, viewers of this presentation learned how we as musicians can work with and support current working composers through commissions, arrangements, producing recordings, and scholarly research and writing. For me, the information gifted from Lanzilotti in this presentation could be an excellent starting point for AVS members who would like to become more active in both the new music and academic realms. Personally, I came away from this lecture inspired to record some of my own improvisations and compositions. More information about this project can be found later in this issue.

An exciting pre-recorded performance by violist Hae-Sue Lee was the second event of the Online Festival, which took place on Thursday, June 4. Hae-Sue Lee, the 2018 Primrose International Viola Competition First Prize Winner, presented a dynamic recital including: *Cadenza* for solo viola by Krzysztof Penderecki, *Aria: Cantilena* from *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* by Heitor Villa-Lobos (arranged by William Primrose), and *None but the Lonely Heart* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (arranged by William Primrose). Lee's performance showcased fluid and lightning-fast technique in the Penderecki, alongside beautiful lyrical playing in the Villa-Lobos. I greatly enjoyed the Tchaikovsky/Primrose transcription, which for me illustrates the AVS's deep connection to its roots.

On Friday June 5, violist Marina Thibeault kicked off the third event of the AVS Online Festival. Her astoundingly beautiful recital featured performances of 20th and 21st century solo works by female composers, including:

A screen shot from Marina Thibeault's performance at the 2020 AVS Online Festival.

Prelude by Ana Sokolovic, *The Child, Bringer of Light* by Anna Pidgorna, and *Fantasia*, from *Sonata Pastorale* by Lillian Fuchs. I was completely drawn in by the theme of this program, which seems especially relevant during our current times. For me, Thibeault's performance of the *Fantasia*, from *Sonata Pastorale* by Lillian Fuchs was one of the highlights of the Festival.

The fourth event of the Online Festival featured violist Matthew Lipman, who performed an extremely emotional recital on Saturday June 6. His recital included: *Partita in D Minor* by J.S. Bach, *Sonata* by Ligeti, and *Capriccio* by Vieuxtemps. Lipman's *Partita in D Minor* was another major highlight of the AVS Online Festival, making an emotional impact on the Facebook viewers. Lipman also spoke about current events and their relation to both music and the viola community, again producing one of the most emotionally charged moments of the Festival.

On Sunday June 7, David Rose brought the American Viola Society Online Festival to an end with a thrilling performance of all six *Preludes* from J. S. Bach's six Cello Suites. Rose had originally been slated to perform the full six Bach Cellos Suites in Knoxville, and his detailed and elated performance of these works provided an apt and inspiring end to five days of truly excellent viola-centric events.

The difficult decision to cancel this year's in-person AVS Festival paved the way for the success of this virtual event, allowing the participating artists to share their scholarship and uplifting performances with viewers. Like most of the AVS members, I have attended many in-person conferences and festivals, and due to COVID-19 I have participated in many ZOOM lectures and conferences this summer. I believe that the AVS Online Festival was able to bring our community together and produce a virtual festival that captured some of the experiences of an in-person conference. These five excellent virtual events allowed AVS members to come together and to see a glimpse of the exciting sessions, performances, and lectures the AVS has planned for the 2021 American Viola Society Festival.

Matthew Lipman performing J.S. Bach's Chaconne on Facebook.

Are You A Philanthropist?

By The AVS Development Team

Chances are excellent that you **are** a philanthropist! If you give money to your place of worship or simply drop a couple of bucks into the red Salvation Army bucket at Christmas, volunteer in a community service organization like Rotary or Lions or even your community youth symphony, or simply give usable items to Goodwill, you are a philanthropist. You need **not** have millions of dollars to donate to make a **huge** difference! To paraphrase Helen Keller: "Our world is moved not only by the mighty shoves of our heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes by violists like you and me." Similarly, as symphonies cannot operate on ticket sales alone, your AVS cannot provide the opportunities and services we have all grown accustomed to and enjoy without extra giving and donations from violists "like you and me."

In the *Development Corner* we will periodically call attention to "giving" ideas and strategies for violists. We will advise readers to check with their tax advisor before embarking on a giving strategy or making a large donation. The *Development Corner* allows us an excellent space to share the hopes and dreams of your AVS Board. And, you will find up-to-date information about the progress on the goals set by your Development Committee.

Please allow us to share a short success story. In 1999 the AVS leadership decided to strengthen the vision of its original charter—The Viola Research Society. The David Dalton Research Competition (DDRC) was started and has continued to grow in popularity. The DDRC began as a simple pledge by the AVS and a couple of generous donors. In 2013 it was decided to begin a campaign to enhance the Endowment so as to make the DDRC financially self-supporting. In other words, grow the endowment dollar amount to a level that the dividends produced would pay for the prize money awarded. With wonderful help from people like David Bynog, the good people in the AVS office and a few dozen donors the endowment increased from a couple thousand dollars to close to $25,000 in less than two years. This is the result of the "tiny pushes" by many violists "like you and me!"

Before we get far into giving strategies let us point out something obvious: when you go to the AVS Website, in the upper right-hand corner is the word **Donate**. After you drop down that "Donate" menu you find a comfortable way to give a little extra and a wonderful list of the activities your money will help fund. Fairly impressive! You are asked to enter any comfortable tax–deductible amount, log in and, then it's as easy as buying strings at Shar! Or, some of the more senior members prefer to add a couple of dollars when they renew their membership using the **Membership Dues** page in *JAVS*. Check it out. Almost fifty of our members renewed this year at either the *Contributing*, *Patron* or *Benefactor* levels. Some preferred to be more directed in their extra giving by checking a particular activity for their donation: the *Primrose Memorial Scholarship Fund*, the *David Dalton Viola Research Competition* or the *Commissioning Project*. Others prefer to give a little extra in the name of a loved one or simply to the *AVS Endowment Fund*.

However you decide to give a little extra, or even if that is not quite possible right now, please know that AVS leadership appreciates you!

Your Development Team
Ann Marie Brink, AVS Board Member, Chair
Elias Goldstein, AVS Board Member
Ezra Haugabrooks, AVS Board Member
Thomas Tatton, Advisor
Hillary Herndon, AVS President
Meghan Birmingham, AVS Treasurer
Naimah Bial, AVS Board Member

AVS Viola Insurance

The musical instrument insurance team at Anderson is pleased to announce special member benefit rates for members in good standing of the American Viola Society offering additional coverage and discounted rates for AVS members. IF you are not presently participating in the AVS Viola Insurance program and you are an active member of the American Viola Society (AVS Membership in good standing is required to access this valuable coverage), all you have to do is request a quote today to get this valuable coverage started. The coverage provided under this program is offered at a rate of $.45/$100. If you are not a member of the American Viola Society, please visit http://www.americanviolasociety.org/ to join right now. Once membership has been submitted you may then immediately apply for AVS Viola Insurance offered by Anderson Musical Instrument Insurance Solutions, LLC. **https://www.anderson-group.com/avs/**.

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From Russia to the UK and Back:
Musical Discoveries from WWII and the Thaw

By Elena Artamonova

Introduction

Russian music enjoyed its popularity and appreciation among British audiences throughout the twentieth century. The musical life in London during the period of World War II was infused with a good number of concert programs. They were dedicated not only to Tchaikovsky and Russian nationalist composers of the nineteenth and the turn of the twentieth centuries such as Glinka, Mussorgsky, Borodin, Balakirev, Arensky, Liadov, Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov and Rachmaninov but also to selective works of Soviet composers. Certainly, these performances were given exclusively by either home or foreign musicians of Western origin. However, they laid a fine foundation for an active musical interchange between musicians of both countries formed at the turn of the Khrushchev Thaw period, when the *crème de la crème* of Soviet performers stepped on British soil in the early 1950s. However, it was down to personal contacts of enthusiastic musicians, rather than only those signed on a governmental level known as the Soviet-British Cultural Agreement of 1959, for example, that did maintain the initiatives and musical collaborations. The concert activities and previously unknown correspondence of violist Vadim Borisovsky with his British colleagues, including Lionel Tertis, which started much earlier, is the best example in this regard. The analysis and discussion of these topics rely heavily on recent archival findings from Moscow and London.

Concert Organizers of Russian Music in London

The archive of the Royal Albert Hall contains a long list of concerts in which Russian music was performed.[1] Its promoters were themselves great lovers of the Russian culture. Among them were such conductors as the founder of the annual series of promenade concerts, known as the Proms, Sir Henry Wood and his Proms assistant conductor Basil Cameron, as well as Sir Adrian Boult, who at the start of his career worked for Sergei Diagilev's ballet company and Russian born Anatole Fistoulari. There were also noted impresarios/entrepreneurs in the classical musical world, including Harold Holt, who organized performances of such celebrities as Gregor Piatigorsky, Sergei Rachmaninov and Vladimir Horowitz among others, as well as promoters Keith Douglas and Jay Pomeroy, who spent their fortune backing classical music. There were fund-raising events and concerts to support the war effort under the patronage of the Society for Cultural Relations between the British Commonwealth and the USSR founded in 1924, Mrs. Churchill's Aid to Russia Fund and The Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross, St. John Appeal, and the London Music, Art and Drama Society Ltd.

Thanks to these joint efforts, there was a series of concerts called "Slavonic Music Concerts" in September 1941–September 1942 with four concerts in total given by the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO). "Harold Holt Sunday Concert Season 1941–1942" presented an all Russian program in Concert 9 on November 29, 1942 with the London Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO) under the baton of Sir Henry Wood that included Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony*, Borodin's Symphony No. 2, *The Firebird* by Stravinsky and the first movement of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7. A concert called "A Tribute to Rachmaninov" in June 1943 was presented by the LSO conducted by Sir Henry Wood and Keith Douglas with the Russian-born pianist Benno Moiseiwitsch as a soloist performing Rachmaninov's Piano Concertos No. 2 and No. 3 as well as the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*.

"Festival of Russian Music"

Eight concerts with the LSO and the Alexandra Choir conducted by Basil Cameron, John Barbirolli and

Anatole Fistoulari formed the "Festival of Russian Music" on September 19–26, 1943 (see fig. 1). Apart from well-known composers of Imperial Russia, including Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky and Scriabin, the programs presented works of the Soviet period, including music of some Soviet composers who had a very shaky position with the authorities in the USSR. Among them was *Factory-Music of Machines* (1926–28) by Alexander Mosolov, who served a prison sentence from 1937–38 for alleged counter-terrorism activities and just returned from exile in 1942. The score of *Factory-Music of Machines* was published in the USSR three times in 1929, 1931 and 1934. It was available in the West thanks to the efforts of the International Society of Contemporary Music. Highly acclaimed performances of this work took place in Berlin, Liège, Vienna, Paris, Rome and New York in the early 1930s before the Stalin purges started to sweep away all foreign contacts.[2] It is very likely that the London promoters of the Festival of Russian Music simply did not know the true situation in the USSR and used their musical judgement and taste for programming of these concerts.[3] However, it is obvious that they did take into consideration how to please the Soviet authorities as the *Ode/Poem to Stalin (Ashik Song)*, 1936, for mixed choir and orchestra by Khachaturian was performed at the seventh festival concert on September 25. It is a musical glorification of Stalin's personality based on rhythmic exoticism of the Caucasus and with a folksong text written by an *ashik* (a poet-minstrel/musician) named Mirza from Tovuz (Azerbaijan). All in all, it is but a modest illustration of Khachaturian's great talent. The festival program also included musical gems of the Russian repertoire: *Firebird* by Stravinsky; Symphony No. 1 and Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and Strings by Shostakovich performed by Eileen Joyce (who toured the USSR with the LPO in 1956); and Piano Concerto No. 3 by Prokofiev performed by Noel Mewton-Wood, whose distinguishing artistic features were a remarkable technical control and beautiful cantabile tone.[4]

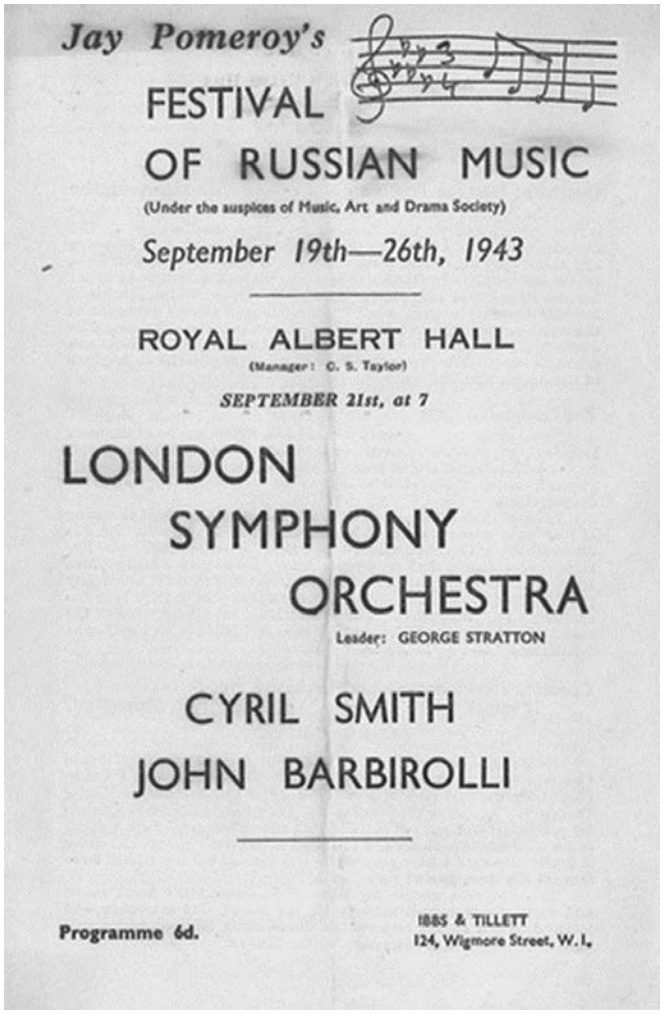

Figure 1. A program page from the "Festival of Russian Music," September 19–26, 1943. Photo courtesy of the Royal Albert Hall, UK.

British Premieres of Russian Music in 1943-1944

1943 and 1944 were fruitful years for notable Russian/Soviet music premieres and fundraising events in the UK. One performance in 1943 featured Kabalevsky's Piano Concerto with the LSO conducted by Fistoulari and Harriet Cohen[5] at the piano, with both performers being strong advocates for Russian/Soviet music.[6] The UK premiere of Shostakovich's Sixth Symphony was performed by the LPO under Fistoulari at the London's Adelphi Theatre on October 24, 1943.[7] The next day, boxing matches in aid of the National Council of Labour's "Help for Russia Fund" took place at the Royal Albert Hall. This event was followed by a concert with an entirely English program on February 23, 1944 called the "Salute to the Red Army" in celebration of its twenty-sixth anniversary. The LSO conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent performed works by Handel, Elgar, Walton, Vaughan Williams, Moeran, Arnold Bax and Sir Arthur Bliss.

The Second Festival of Russian Music took place in June 1944 with seven concerts given again by the LSO, this time conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, Heathcote Statham, Albert Coates, and Anatole Fistoulari. Its artistic highlight during the Concert 5 of the Festival on June 5, 1944 was undoubtedly Piano Concerto No. 3 by Nikolai Medtner, performed by the composer, who only recently completed

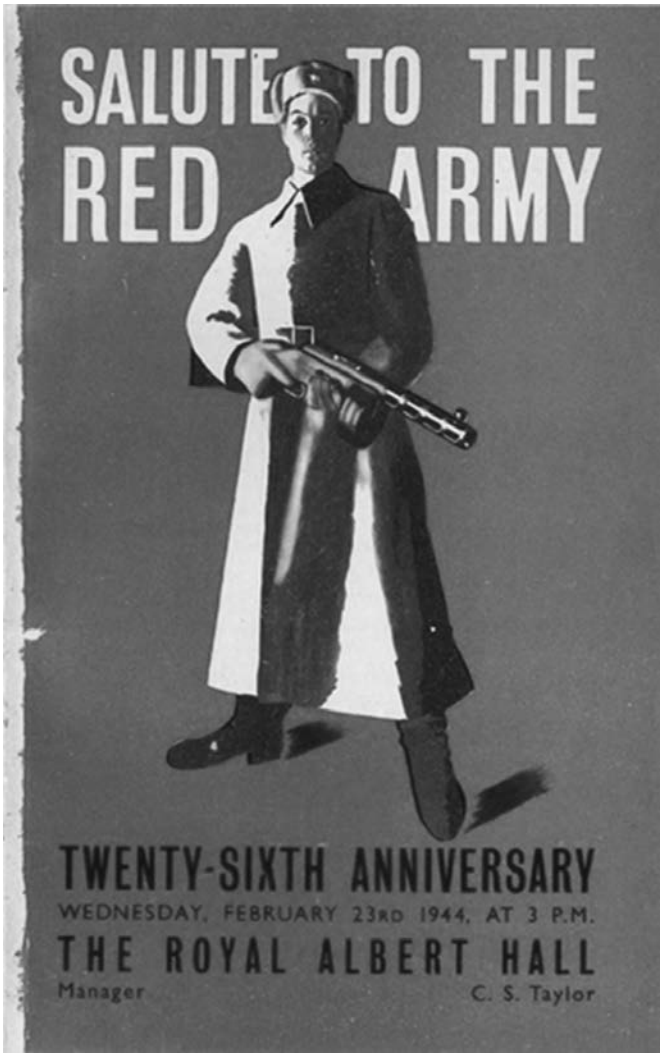

Figure 2. An advertisement from the London Symphony Orchestra's "Salute to the Red Army," February 23, 1944. Photo courtesy of the Royal Albert Hall, UK.

the work and returned to performing activities after serious health problems. This second festival also included a fine selection of works by other living composers, including Stravinsky's *Petrushka* and the UK premiers of the ballet suite *Golden Age* by Shostakovich, *Lieutenant Kije* by Prokofiev and Symphony No. 2 by Kabalevsky, for which the latter became best known in the West. It is obvious that these concert initiatives and programming were primarily of Western origin. Stravinsky and Medtner were émigrés, which in the Soviet society was a synonym to traitors. Any performance of their music along with "approved" Soviet composers Shostakovich and Prokofiev, not to mention the functionary Kabalevsky, was impossible even to imagine on Russian soil during Stalin's rule. At the same time, it was evidently acceptable abroad as a broad gesture intended to demonstrate that Russians around the globe were united in their fight against the enemy in the War.

Russian Proms of the War Period

The Proms of the war period with the LPO, LSO, BBC Symphony Orchestras, and BBC Choral Society deserve a special mention. Between the second concert of its forty-eighth season in 1942, to the thirty-ninth concert of its fifty-first season in 1945, the Proms included fourteen concerts called "Russian Concert" and "Tchaikovsky Concert," named after this especially beloved Russian composer among British listeners. The golden jubilee season had two concerts with Russian music in June 1944 and four in every season in July–September 1942, 1943 and 1945. It is interesting to note that the Prom 14 on July 13, 1942, the Prom 8 on June 28, 1943, and the Prom 38 on August 2, 1943 all had a joined name "Wagner-Tchaikovsky Concert," in which works by these two composers were performed. In the wartime USSR, such musical combination/grouping was unthinkable, due to the chauvinistic reception of Wagner's music by the Hitler regime.

The major event of the Proms in 1942 was the English premiere of Symphony No. 7 ("Leningrad") by Shostakovich on June 29 with the LPO conducted by Sir Henry Wood, who only eight days earlier, on June 22, 1942 gave the world premiere of this symphony broadcasted from a BBC studio. A special artistic highlight of the Prom 26 on July 27, 1942 with the BBC Symphony Orchestra was the admired Piano Concerto by Khachaturian, performed by Moura Lympany, who gave its British premiere in April 1940 at the Queens Hall with the conductor Alan Bush. Other highlights apart from works by Stravinsky, Borodin, Rachmaninov, Mussorgsky, Liadov and Glinka, included Overture op. 25 by Vissarion Shebalin on July 19, 1943, Prokofiev's cantata *Alexander Nevsky,* and the English premiere of the Overture on Russian Folk Tunes by Anatoly Alexandrov on July 1, 1943. The first year of the Proms held without its founder Henry Wood, who died in 1944, included the English premiere of the *Song of Jubilation* by Alexander Veprik on September 3, 1945, Gliere's overture *The Friendship of the Peoples*, and Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony on September 13, 1945.

Post-war Concerts of Russian Music in London

The post-war period continued explorations of Russian music mainly by the LPO, the LSO and the BBC in programs called "A Russian Programme," "Tchaikovsky

Night," "Tchaikovsky Concert" and "A Tribute to Rachmaninov," and numerous occasions, when Russian/Soviet music was performed during the Proms. Undoubtedly, the highlights of the post-war English premieres of Soviet music was LSO's performance of Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony July 27, 1946. It was the first night of the Proms in 1946, which speaks out how significant this occasion was for the BBC, the promoter of the Proms. On February 23, 1950 the LPO conducted by Eduard Van Beinum gave the English premiere of Prokofiev's Symphony No. 6 (in E-flat minor, op.111), which was recorded for broadcast on the BBC radio on March 1, 1950.

Thus, one may conclude that Russian music concerts in the UK during WWII and in the post-war years demonstrated the finest works of national composers of tsarist Russia. They were performed along with musical works of the Soviet period regardless of their stylistic peculiarities, traditional or unconventional and often unpredictable musical language as well as of the approved or disapproved status of their authors with the Soviet authorities. The quality and distinctiveness of music itself, as well as the finesse of musicianship, were the leading factors for English audiences and musicians in their choice of repertoire. Undoubtedly, their fair judgement, appreciation and liking for Russian music provided support and backing for British concert promoters and their high-profile patrons in their dynamic concert initiatives. One may say that this period also triggered and prepared the interest of British public to hear Soviet performers to perform the music of their motherland.

Delegations of Soviet Artists to the UK

At last, an opportunity came in November–December 1952 with the concert tour called the "Delegation of Soviet Artists" to London, Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow and Edinburgh, which included the UK debut performances of the celebrated pianist Emil Gilels and the young violinist Igor Bezrodny.[8] This delegation was led by a special host-composer Dmitry Kabalevsky, who subsequently occupied the position of the Secretary of the Composers Union of the USSR and after 1945 was regularly entrusted by the authorities to represent Soviet musicians abroad. Gilels's first programs in the UK consisted of works by Russian and Western classical composers, including Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Scriabin and Prokofiev, and were designed to show his master craft as a pianist.[9] The need to promote Russian music was important but not pivotal as it was already a frequent and friendly guest on concert stages in the UK. The fundamental objective and accomplishment of this first tour was to lay a fine foundation for bilateral collaboration and exchange of artistic musical achievements, which opened new cultural dimensions and influenced a broader scope of audiences in both countries. It is important to note that the start of this successful collaboration did take place whilst Stalin was still in power. These musical activities flourished and accelerated year by year from the period of the Khrushchev Thaw with delegations and concert tours of British orchestras, artists, and composers to Russia and their Soviet/Russian counterparts to the UK.

The intensity of concert activities of Soviet musical royalty in the UK is impressive. Overall, Emil Gilels had over 60 performances between 1952 and October 1984, giving concerts nearly every year across the country.[10] In November–December 1953, Igor Oistrakh and Bella Davidovich made their English debut with the LSO conducted by Norman Del Mar in concerts organized by Victor Hochhauser, the impresario crucially responsible for many concert appearances of Soviet artists in the UK from then on. In November 1954, David Oistrakh finally gave his Royal Albert Hall debut with his pianist Vladimir Yampolski in a recital organized by the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR. Between 1954–1972, there were over 20 more concert appearances of David Oistrakh on stage of the Albert Hall.[11] This trip in 1954 was also the UK debut of Khachaturian as a conductor performing his Violin Concerto with David Oistrakh and the Philharmonia Orchestra. These concert tours were followed by regular performances of Rostropovich from 1956, Kirill Kondrashin from 1958, Richter from 1961 and many others. The Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra toured in Autumn 1960 and was conducted by Gennady Rozhdestvensky, who proved to be the most in-demand Soviet/Russian conductor in the UK for the remainder of his life.

Concert Tour of the LPO to the USSR

The start of concert tours of British musicians to the post-war USSR took place slightly later, in Spring 1955, with the first small delegation of British composers and performers led by Arthur Bliss and his wife with concerts in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and Kharkov. This visit was

issued and approved by high officials in both countries in recognition of the value of bilateral cultural exchange.[12] The following year was the peak point in exchange visits of the highest calibre. It started with the state visit of Khrushchev to London in April 1956, the first Soviet leader to visit the UK since the foundation of the Soviet Russia. Between September 20–October 2, the LPO and conductors Sir Adrian Boult, Anatole Fistoulari and George Hurst became the first British orchestra to tour the USSR, whilst the Bolshoi Theatre had its first tour since 1914 in Covent Garden. The program of the LPO's nine concerts in Moscow and four in Leningrad was very much focused on British music. Maurice Pepper, the principal second violin, left the following recollections of this trip:

> The Russians had insisted that what they wanted most to hear was the music of British composers, and the problem of drawing up programmes proved a neat exercise in musical diplomacy as far as living composers are concerned. The Russians knew little if anything of Elgar or Holst. We therefore included Elgar's Violin Concerto and *The Planets* suite of Holst. From contemporary work we selected Walton's Symphony and Violin Concerto, the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies of Vaughan Williams, Britten's *Peter Grimes* suite, Alan Rawsthorne's *Symphonic Studies*, Arnold Bax's *Overture to a Picaresque Comedy* and Malcolm Arnold's Second Symphony. To this repertory we added Shostakovich's Symphony No. 1, Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, Mozart's Haffner Symphony and Schubert's Symphony No. 9.[13]

Mr. Pepper was slightly exaggerating. Elgar's Violin Concerto, for example, was known in the USSR.[14] However, there is no doubt that the chosen program was of great interest to the Soviet audience. The debut of the LPO at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire was recorded and received the most enthusiastic long ovation that the orchestra had ever known.[15] The soloists on this tour were Alfredo Campoli and Moura Lympany.

Vadim Borisovsky and English Music

This tour of the LPO was followed by the concerts of Sir Malcolm Sargent in the USSR in 1957, the tour of the BBC Symphony with Pierre Boulez in 1967 and the LSO in 1971 for the Festival of British Music. However, it was down to personal contacts of musicians, rather than only those signed on a governmental level known as the Soviet-British Cultural Agreement of 1959, for example, that maintained the initiatives and musical collaborations. In Autumn 1962, the young guitarist John Williams toured the USSR. In a letter, dated November 29, 1962, he wrote the following to Vadim Borisovsky, the prominent Russian violist and founder of the first viola solo faculty at the Moscow Conservatoire:

> Dear Mr. Borisovsky, It was a great pleasure to meet you when I was in Moscow and to talk to you about various musical subjects. [. . .] I wrote to Maestro Segovia the other day and sent him your best wishes. [. . .] I am looking forward to my next visit to the Soviet Union and hope that we may meet again and perhaps play some chamber music![16]

Figure 3. A concert advertisement of the "Viola-Abend of Vadim Borisovsky with Professor Konstantin Igumnov, piano," October 22, 1922, at the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire. Works on the program included Cecil Forsyth's Viola Concerto, Alexander Winkler's Sonata, and 3 Preludes and Sonata by Vladimir Kriukov. Image courtesy of the State Central Archive of Moscow, Russia. [17]

There were other occasions of correspondence between Soviet and British musicians. It is a subject for further research, but a letter dated March 15, 1945 written from Surrey by Lionel Tertis, the prominent British viola player, to his counterpart Vadim Borisovsky in Moscow did find its addressee. One can hardly imagine not only how this letter was delivered without much trouble to Borisovsky at the time of the war, but also how Borisovsky managed to send some Russian music to England in the first place, as this letter of Tertis was sent in return for musical scores he got from Borisovsky. Tertis does not specify the music he received, but very likely these were Borisovsky's viola arrangements:

> Dear Mr Borisovsky, Thank you very much for the Russian music you have so kindly sent to me. I enclose the only piece of Schubert I have arranged and also a Handel Sonata, which I hope you will like. I wish you could influence Shostakovich to write a work for viola and orchestra—it would be an immense help to viola players in the World. With kindest regards. Yours sincerely, Lionel Tertis.[18]

Unfortunately, Borisovsky failed in getting a viola concerto from Shostakovich, but he certainly knew of viola works by York Bowen, Gordon Jacob, Alan Bush, Thomas Dunhill and other British composers that he received from the J. Curwen & Sons Publishers (now imprint of Music Sales Ltd.), with whom he was in correspondence in the early 1960s. His concert repertoire included Cecil Forsyth's Viola Concerto, which he performed in October 1922 at the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire, then in March 1941 and in August 1942 on the same stage. Whereas for British audiences, this concerto was practically unknown until its recent revival. Borisovsky was a pioneer of English viola music in the USSR and gave the first USSR performance of Bax's Sonata in G in April 1923, Bowen's First Viola Sonata, and Bloch's Suite.[19]

Conclusion

One may conclude that the input of enthusiastic individuals from Great Britain and Russia was the driving force behind the perpetual interest in musical cultures of both countries. They tirelessly gave their energy, vivacity, admiration and expertise regardless of the opposing political systems as well as historical times of triumph and turbulence/struggles. The state support and high-profile patronage certainly gave these collaborations a more stable platform and closer partnership, allowing it to flourish and bring new dimensions for understanding between our people and cultures. The latter in their turn provide the fruitful line of succession from the past to future generations to encourage and enhance traditional and unconventional music, and bring in new artistic experiments, vigour, and visions.

Violist and researcher, Dr. Elena Artamonova, has published worldwide on the history of the viola and of twentieth-century Russian music and culture in Russia, France, Poland, the UK and the USA. Elena successfully combines her performing, teaching and scholarly activities, currently working as a Lecturer at University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), UK. Her research has been presented at many international conferences, with her CDs of the first recordings of the complete viola works by Grigori Frid, Alexander Grechaninov and Sergei Vasilenko on Toccata Classics receiving a high critical acclaim, describing her playing as 'excellent with smooth and well-focused tone' (Fanfare) and 'highly admirable' (American Record Guide).

Notes

1. https://catalogue.royalalberthall.com (accessed 1 June, 2020).
2. A.V. Mosolov, *Stat'i i vospominaniia* [Articles and Memoirs]. Ed. Inna Barsova. Moscow: (Sovetskii kompozitor, 1986), 15, 129. All quotations from Russian sources and publications used in this article have been translated by the author, Elena Artamonova.
3. Boris Schwartz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917–1981.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.
4. *A Symphony* by Vissarion Shebalin (with no number of the symphony stated; Shebalin was the author of four symphonies by then) was also in the program of the second concert of the festival on September 20, 1943 as well as the broadly known *Festive Overture* (1937) by Nikolai Budashkin.
5. Cohen's ancestors fled the Imperial Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century. Cohen toured Moscow and Leningrad in spring 1935, which made a special impact on her concert activities in pioneering Soviet music in the West. Cohen, well-known for her strong devotion to British piano music, performed works by Bliss, Bax, Ireland and Vaughan Williams, but also little-known abroad *Preludes* by Shostakovich,

works by Kabalevsky and Polovinkin among others, becoming the first foreign musician to perform them.

[6] Richard Morrison, *Orchestra. The LSO: A Century of Triumph and Turbulence.* London: (Faber and Faber, 2004), 266.

[7] A month later this symphony was performed again by the same performers at the Royal Albert Hall on 27 November 1943 in the 'Concert of Russian Music' at the request of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR.

[8] There was a certain intrigue regarding the choice of Bezrodny to represent the Soviet school of violin performance. The 22-year-old Bezrodny was very talented but still young, only at the very start of his career. The leading violinist of the USSR at the time, David Oistrakh, made his UK debut two years later. Among the first Soviet artists to give concerts in the UK was the soprano Nadezhda Kazantseva, who gave her British debut at the Royal Festival Hall in February 1951, which received a standing ovation from the audience. Kazantseva travelled to the UK at the invitation of the Anglo-Soviet Friendship Society. Sergei Yakovenko '*I dovelos', i poschastlivilos'…*' [It Happened to Me and I Got Lucky…] (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2007), 308–309.

[9] www.archiv.emilgilelsfoundation.net/konzerte/ (accessed 1 June, 2020).

[10] There were three relatively long gaps in Gilels's British concert tours between 1952–57, 1959–65 and 1972–76.

[11] Perhaps, the best-known event was the joint concert with Yehudi Menuhin, David and Igor Oistrakh with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kirill Kondrashin on September 28, 1963, which was recorded. See in: BBC Legends - Exclusive Archive Recording Label: Vivaldi Triple Violin Concerto Etc. In BBC Music Magazine, BBC MM99 magazine, Vol. 9, No 3, November 2000, compact disk.

[12] Cameron Pyke, *Benjamin Britten and Russia*. Woodbridge: (The Boydell Press, 2016), 143–145.

[13] Maurice Pepper, "The London Philharmonic Orchestra in Russia." *The Musical Times*. Vol. 98, No. 1368 (Feb. 1957), 67–69. Edmund Pirouet, *Heard Melodies are Sweet: A History of the London Philharmonic Orchestra*. Book Guild, 1998.

[14] Yehudi Menuhin (an American citizen at the time) had his first concert tour to the USSR after the war in November 1945. He brought music scores of violin concertos by Elgar and Bartók, which were as it turned out already known in the USSR by the means of the BBC, but the scores were unobtainable. Yehudi Menuhin *Unfinished Journey*. London: (Methuen, 1996), 196.

[15] Great Artists in the Moscow Conservatoire. London Philharmonic Orchestra, conductors Anatole Fistoulari and Sir Adrian Boult. ID: SMCCD0041 (EAN: 0000126000410). Compact disc, 2011.

[16] John Williams, *Letter to Borisovsky*. Housed in the State Central Archive of Moscow, fund L-246, op. 1, ed. khr. 160, p. 12. Quoted with the permission of Sir John Williams.

[17] The State Central Archive of Moscow, Fund L-246, op. 1, ed. khr. 228, p. 1.

[18] Lionel Tertis, *Letter to Borisovsky*. Housed in the State Central Archive of Moscow, fund L-246, op. 1, ed. khr. 160, p. 5.

[19] Kenneth Robertson, *Letters to Borisovsky*. Housed in the State Central Archive of Moscow, fund L-246, op. 1, ed. khr. 160, pp. 3–4, 9–10. Programmy kontsertov s uchastiem Borisovskogo [Concert Programmes, in which Borisovsky Took Part], fund L-246, op. 1, ed.khr. 229, pp. 1, 53, 56. Borisovsky, *Repertuarnye spiski vystuplenii* [Lists of Performed Repertoire], fund L-246, op. 1, ed.khr. 269, p. 13.

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African-American Violists: A Retrospective

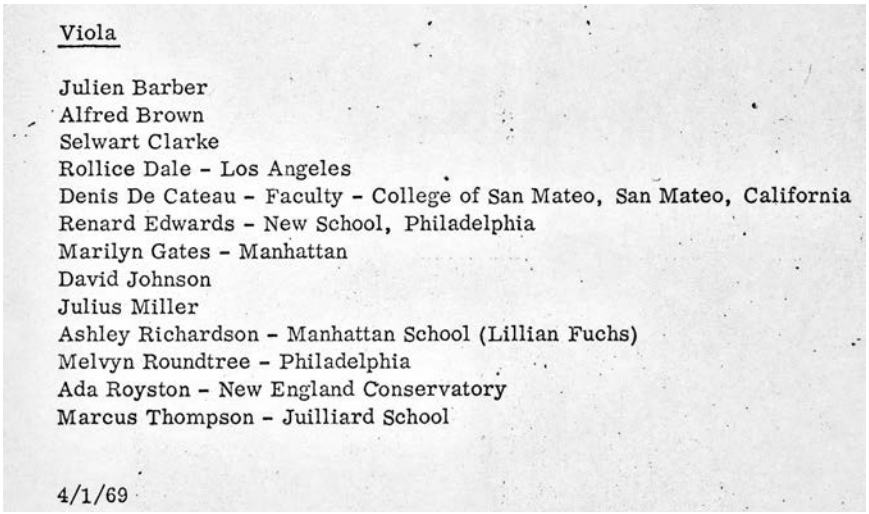
By Christopher Jenkins

The relative lack of diversity within classical music audiences and performers has been a subject of interest for several decades. Recently, conservatories have increasingly prioritized recruitment of students of color and ICSOM orchestras have developed fellowships specifically for African-American and Latinx performers, while musicologists have also begun to explore the history of classical performers of African descent, with much of their attention focused on Afro-descended violinists, pianists, and composers. As classical music has become more diverse, African-American viola soloists and teachers such as Nokuthula Ngwenyama, Marcus Thompson, and George Taylor have established prominent reputations. However, comparatively little attention has been paid to African-American violists from earlier time periods.

This lack of recognition is partly because the first generation of African-American violists did not begin to establish careers until the early and middle parts of the 20th century, and their careers were often truncated or otherwise diminished because of the antiblack attitudes common in American society at that time. A relative lack of attention paid to violists in general has also obscured the careers of these players. Eileen Southern's *Biographical Dictionary of Afro-American and African Musicians*, published in 1982, lists more than 150 prominent African-American concert artists (string players or otherwise), 38 orchestral players and conductors, and 45 jazz string players. None of these are violists.

But, in fact, there were a handful of African-American violists active in the U.S. in the mid-20th century, as evidenced by a list of such players collated by the New York Philharmonic in 1969 (see fig. 1). While some of these players, such as Marcus Thompson of MIT or Renard Edwards, one of the first African-Americans to join the Philadelphia Orchestra, are known today, research for this article, which included contact with alumni and archival offices at conservatories and phone and email interviews with former colleagues and students, uncovered very little or no information about many of the others. This article is intended to profile several of these African-American violists whose careers have concluded and who are no longer living, to provide a snapshot of their lives and the challenges they faced in developing their careers.

The musicians profiled in this article did not win international viola competitions or positions in major symphony orchestras, a lack of conventional recognition that should be attributed to contemporaneous racial


Viola

Julien Barber
Alfred Brown
Selwart Clarke
Rollice Dale - Los Angeles
Denis De Cateau - Faculty - College of San Mateo, San Mateo, California
Renard Edwards - New School, Philadelphia
Marilyn Gates - Manhattan
David Johnson
Julius Miller
Ashley Richardson - Manhattan School (Lillian Fuchs)
Melvyn Roundtree - Philadelphia
Ada Royston - New England Conservatory
Marcus Thompson - Juilliard School

4/1/69

Figure 1. Detail image from list of Black musicians, compiled by the Ford Foundation in 1969. Courtesy of the New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives.[1]

This article was awarded the second prize in the 2020 David Dalton Research Competition.

politics, in which African-American participation in classical music was not wholly accepted. In particular, the extent to which racial bias in symphony orchestras created powerful barriers to African-American participation should not be understated. In an interview conducted in the early 2000s, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson related the story of an African-American colleague in the mid-20th century:

> David, who was a very fair-skinned straight-haired Negro, had been offered a job with the Philharmonic provided he would not reveal his racial origin, at which point he told them exactly what he thought about that idea and thereby curtailed his career. I'm sure it was one of the heartbreaks of his life.[2]

It is possible that the player to whom Perkinson refers is the David Johnson listed in Figure 1. If so, Perkinson's fears regarding Johnson's career would seem to be accurate, as research for this article did not uncover any other mention of an African-American violist named David Johnson from that time period. It should be stated unambiguously that racial bias, as Perkinson's anecdote indicates, played a major role in the exclusion of African-Americans from symphony orchestras and has led directly to the current situation in which, according to a report by the League of American Orchestras in 2014, only 1.2% of players in major orchestras identify as African-American.

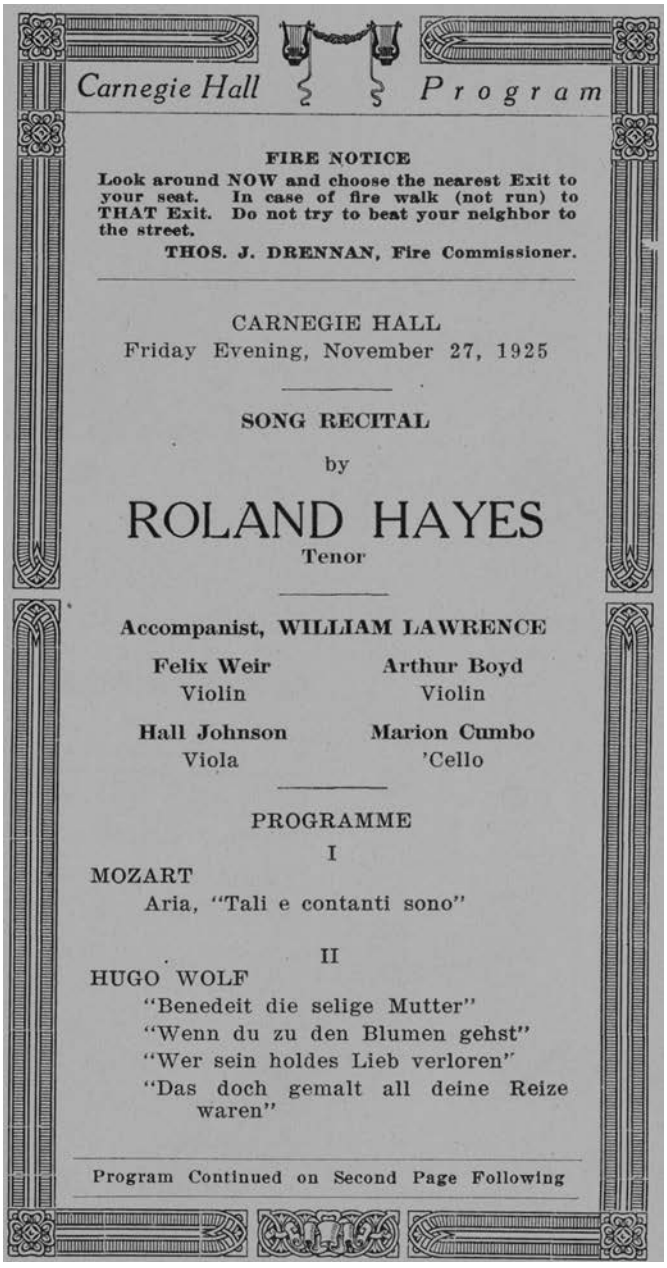
Figure 2. The Negro String Quartet. From left to right: Weir, Cumbo, Boyd, and Johnson, taken in New York City ca. 1923. Photo by S. Tarr. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. [3]

"The Tallest Viola Player in New York"
Francis Hall Johnson (1888–1970)

Hall Johnson is known mostly for his achievements as a composer and choral conductor. He was among a small number of African-American composers who elevated the arrangement and performance of spirituals to a level deemed acceptable by the gatekeepers of American classical concert music, and the founder and conductor of the Hall Johnson Negro Choir, a group that performed his music both in concert and for numerous films. But, he was also the founding violist of the Negro String Quartet, one of the first such classical groups consisting entirely of African-American players. He was a popular freelance violist in New York City, performing in James Reese Europe's orchestra and alongside William Grant Still, and numerous biographies claim that he was known as "the tallest viola player in New York" (a description not without its own racial overtones).

Johnson was born in Athens, Georgia, and began his musical studies with an older sister at an early age. While a teenager, he was inspired to take up the violin after hearing a recital by Joseph Douglass (the grandson of Frederick Douglass), but even after coming into possession of a violin, he was not able to secure a teacher in his hometown. He earned his B.A. at the University of Pennsylvania in music composition, with additional studies at the Institute of Musical Art (later integrated into the Juilliard School). Johnson's progress was evidently prodigious: while he did not even own a violin until reaching the age of 14 in 1902 and was reportedly self-taught, only eight years later, in 1910, he was already appearing on public concert programs in New York.

In the second decade of the 20th century, Johnson played chamber music and freelanced as a violist in New York City. His work during this time period including performances in the pit orchestra for the Broadway musical *Shuffle Along* alongside Eubie Blake and William Grant Still, as well as a tour with an orchestra led by James Reese Europe. Notably, he was the original violist of what became known as the Negro String Quartet. Founded by violinist Felix Weir, this group was an expansion of Weir's duo with cellist Leonard Jeter, which became a piano trio with the addition of Jeter's sister Olyve. In 1914, Weir and Leonard Jeter dropped their pianist and added violinist Joseph Lymos and violist Hall Johnson, to perform as the American String Quartet. In 1920, Weir replaced Jeter and Lymos with cellist Marion Cumbo and violinist Arthur Boyd, and renamed the group the Negro String Quartet. In this formation, with Felix Weir and Arthur Boyd on violin, Hall Johnson on viola, and Marion Cumbo on cello, the group remained active until 1933.



Carnegie Hall Program

FIRE NOTICE
Look around NOW and choose the nearest Exit to your seat. In case of fire walk (not run) to THAT Exit. Do not try to beat your neighbor to the street.
THOS. J. DRENNAN, Fire Commissioner.

CARNEGIE HALL
Friday Evening, November 27, 1925

SONG RECITAL
by
ROLAND HAYES
Tenor

Accompanist, WILLIAM LAWRENCE

Felix Weir, Violin — Arthur Boyd, Violin
Hall Johnson, Viola — Marion Cumbo, 'Cello

PROGRAMME

I
MOZART
Aria, "Tali e contanti sono"

II
HUGO WOLF
"Benedeit die selige Mutter"
"Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst"
"Wer sein holdes Lieb verloren"
"Das doch gemalt all deine Reize waren"

Program Continued on Second Page Following

Figure 3. Detail image from the program of Roland Hayes, November 27, 1925, Carnegie Hall. Courtesy of Carnegie Hall Rose Archives.

As a member of the Negro String Quartet, Johnson performed not only European concert music, but also works by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Clarence Cameron White. The group's most notable concert appearance occurred on November 27, 1925 at Carnegie Hall, where they accompanied tenor Roland Hayes on spirituals arranged by Hall Johnson for tenor, piano, and string quartet. In his review published the next day, *New York Times* reviewer Olin Downes wrote:

> The performance had the profound and mystical feeling that the slave songs may possess—if the interpreter understands them—a spirituality and pathos given them in face as well as name. Thus the final group was not merely an expected item of entertainment. It was rather the contribution of a musician and artist whose sincerity and fineness of feeling brought two races together in the presence of a common ideal of beauty.[4]

"Negro Job Boss"
Selwart Clarke (1933–1992)

"Negro Job Boss Hired by Municipal Symphony" was the headline in the *New York Age*, an influential Black newspaper, on July 4, 1959, commemorating the first-ever appointment of an African-American as a contractor by a classical music organization. The contractor, hired by the Municipal Concerts Orchestra, was Selwart R. Clarke, then a 25-year old violist and violinist from Harlem, and the appointment was made through a partnership with the Urban League, which was then working to secure positions for African-American classical musicians.

Julius Grossman, director of the orchestra, downplayed Clarke's appointment, saying "I simply hired the man I thought most capable of handling the job. Now I find I have started some kind of a rumpus." In fact, Clarke's appointment was a major step forward. A report presented by the Urban League to Congress in 1960 detailing classical performances by African-Americans within the New York City area painted a discouraging

picture of the status and recognition of this group (see table 1).

Table 1. African-Americans in US orchestras, 1960–61 season. Report compiled by the Urban League and presented to Congress.[5]

A. The symphony orchestras (major), 1960-61 season:[6]
   1. The New York Philharmonic Society:
      a. Total regulars, 102
      b. Negro regulars, none.
      c. Negro substitutes, none
   2. The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra:
      a. Total regulars, 91
      b. Negro regulars, none.
      c. Negro substitutes (1960-61), 2: John Jackson, flute, four performances; Selwart Clarke, viola, eight performances.
   3. The Little Orchestra Society:
      a. Total regulars, 50 (average).
      b. Negro regulars, none.
      c. Negro substitutes, none.
   4. The City Center New York Ballet Orchestra:
      a. Total regulars, 46.
      b. Negro regulars, 1 (eight performances).
      c. Negro substitutes, 1. George Jeffers, trombone.
   5. The City Center of New York Opera Orchestra:
      a. Total regulars, 40.
      b. Negro regulars, 1 (hired for 1961 – 62 season) Frederick King, tympani.
      c. Negro substitutes, none.
   6. The Symphony of the Air:
      a. Total regulars, 60 (average)
      b. Negro regulars, none.
      c. Negro substitutes, none.
   7. Summer Concert Orchestra at Lewisohn Stadium:
      a. Total regulars, 80.
      b. Negro regular: (1), Sanford Allen, violin.
      c. Negro substitutes, none.
   8. The Goldman Concert Band:
      a. Total regulars, 36.
      b. Negro regulars, none.
      c. Negro substitutes, none.

B. Other major orchestras in the United States:
   1. Los Angeles Philharmonic: Negro regular: (1), Henry Lewis, string bass
   2. Boston Symphony: Negro regular: (1) Ortiz Walton, string bass.
   3. Cleveland Orchestra: Negro regular: (1) Donald White, cello.
   4. San Francisco Symphony: Negro regular: (1) Charles Burrell, string bass.
   5. Denver Symphony: Negro regular: (1) Samuel Gill, string bass.

C. Broadway musicals; pit orchestras:
   1. Total musicians employed, 208.
   2. Negroes employed regularly, 6.
      a. Carnival: (1) Elayne Jones, percussion.
      b. Fiorello: (1) Harry Smyles, oboe.
      c. Sound of Music:
         i. Harold Jones, flute
         ii. Selwart Clarke, viola.
      d. Bye Bye Birdie:
         i. Alfred Brown viola.
         ii. Kenny Burrell, guitar.

Selwart Clarke was the only African-American violist that year to perform with any major orchestras—as a substitute for eight performances with the Met—and was only one of two African-American violists employed on Broadway, in addition to Alfred Brown. Of the total of 15 or so names appearing on this list, only one appears to belong to a female, that of percussionist Elayne Jones. Opposition to the recruitment of African-American players was such that Clarke himself felt compelled to eschew any possibility of favoritism, and is quoted in the article as saying "I haven't yet determined how I will go about recruiting the 42 men for the Orchestra. However, I don't plan to discriminate for or against Negroes." (Left unmentioned was the possibility that the orchestral roster could include female performers.)

Clarke graduated from the High School of Performing Arts in New York City. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree in viola performance in 1954, and a master's degree in music education in 1955, both from the Manhattan School of Music (MSM). There, he studied with Julius Shaier, the founding violist of the Manhattan and Roth string quartets. In the early 1960s, he was appointed principal and solo violist of the New York City Ballet Orchestra, making him not only one of the first African-American performers hired as a regular in a major ensemble either in the metropolitan area or nationally, but one of the very first in a principal position. Laurance Fader, a violist Clarke recommended for the section in 1966, had many positive memories of Clarke, with whom Fader toured and performed for many years as a member of the orchestra. "He was in many ways one of the most loving-life persons that I've ever met—he really was a free

spirit. It was a pleasure to be with him, and he was a very special person," Fader commented.

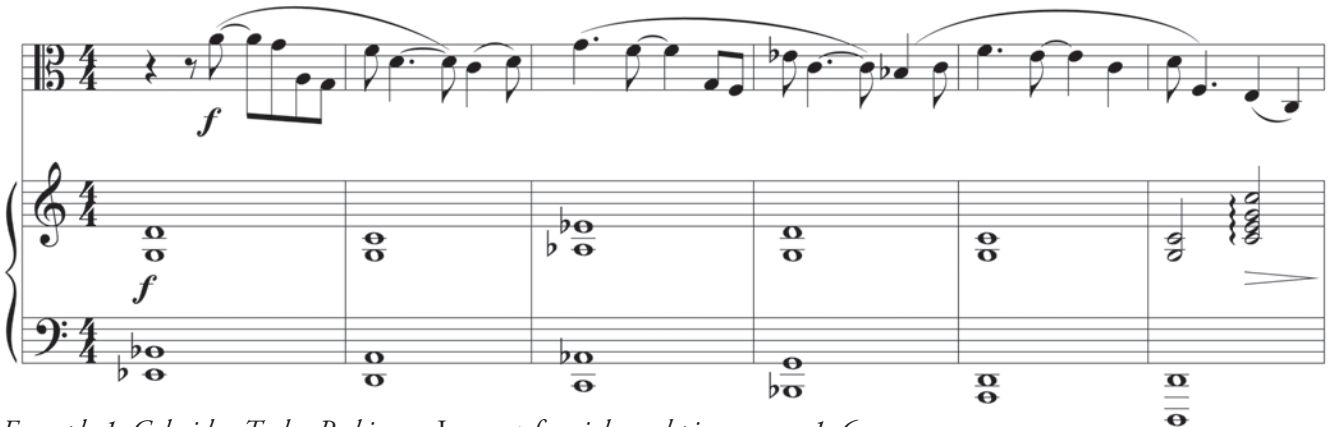
In 1964, with Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson conducting the Orchestra of America, Clarke gave the premiere of Perkinson's viola concerto, a three-movement work without pauses dedicated to him by the composer. Perkinson had written this work as his master's thesis at MSM in 1953 or 1954, and the two had known one another for some time, given that their attendance had overlapped at both the High School of Performing Arts and MSM. The dedication and subsequent performance may be taken as evidence that the two were close at the time. Unfortunately, the New York Times reviewer in attendance was not favorable towards the work. Keiser Music, which publishes much of Perkinson's work, has no record of a manuscript. Nor is the work available via recording. It seems that Clarke's performance was one of very few occasions or the only occasion at which this work was presented to the public. Another work of by Perkinson for viola, his *Lament* for viola and piano, has been published and is available through Keiser Music (see ex. 1). For more information about this work, see the author's article "Signifyin(g) within African American Classical Music: Linking Gates, Hip-Hop, and Perkinson" in the Fall 2019 issue of the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism.*[7]

The *New York Times* also reviewed Clarke's Town Hall debut recital on December 6, 1965, in which Clarke presented works by Marais, Telemann, Vaughan Williams, Fisher, and Piston.[8] He was joined by cellist Kermit Moore for the Piston, and a short encore by Kermit's wife, Dorothy Rudd Moore. The review unfavorably characterized his musical approach, labeling it overly "athletic" and "vigorous" for the program's lighter works. Reflecting Julius Grossman's good judgement in hiring Clarke as a manager back in 1959, it was as a studio musician and contractor that Clarke was most prolific. From the late 1960s to the 1980s, Clarke performed and recorded on violin and viola on hundreds of recordings with a diverse array of artists ranging from James Brown and Louis Armstrong to Frank Sinatra, Bette Midler, and Willie Colón. Of particular note is his appearance on a recording from Ornette Coleman's Town Hall appearance in 1962, on a string quartet arrangement *Dedication to Poets and Writers*, in what is considered Coleman's first chamber music utilizing his improvisational theory of harmolodics. Clarke was also one of the founders of the Symphony of the New World, one of the first integrated orchestras in the U.S.

Alfred Brown (1931–2013)

Little information is available about Brown, but he deserves mention as the sole other African-American violist, in addition to Selwart Clarke, listed as a Broadway performer in the 1960s.[9] He was one of the first African-Americans admitted to the Eastman School of Music, which he attended in 1947 before transferring to Curtis in 1948, where he studied with William Primrose and Karen Tuttle.

As the marginalization of David Johnson suggests, many talented African-American musicians during this period either did not perceive, or did not encounter, robust opportunities to enter major orchestras. Many such players instead sought out careers as performers and contractors for the more copious opportunities available in locations such as New York City for the recording of popular music and music for film, as well as opportunities for live performance with pop superstars. Brown did have occasion to perform in the NBC Radio Orchestra under Toscanini, but, much like Clarke, performed and recorded with a wide variety of famous performers such as



Example 1. Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, Lament *for viola and piano, mm. 1–6.*

Nina Simone, James Brown, Nat Adderley, Frank Sinatra, and Tony Bennett. He also recorded and contracted extensively both in film music and as a musician on film, particularly for the films of Spike Lee, for whom he performed on the soundtracks for *Malcolm X*, *Do The Right Thing*, *Jungle Fever*, and *Crooklyn*. As a contractor, he assembled the reputable Alfred Brown String Section and appeared as part of The Hip String Quartet with vibraphonist Milt Jackson in 1968, a group arranged and conducted by Jazz Masters award recipient Tom McIntosh. He also worked closely with Ron Carter in creating the string sections for the group Mandrill. In 1984, he won the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences Award for Most Valuable Player. As a general topic of investigation, the ability of classically-trained African-American musicians such as Brown to create alternate career paths in the 20th century, as a response to racial marginalization, deserves further inquiry.

Denis DeCoteau[10]

The careers of Denis DeCoteau and Hall Johnson are similar in that both performed as violists professionally at a high level, but were best-known for other musical endeavors. Born in Brooklyn, NY to immigrants from the West Indies, DeCoteau began piano lessons at the age of three, and took up the viola at the age of six. In an interview published by *The Black Perspective in Music* in 1988, he recalled that his motivation to add an additional instrument at that early age was fueled by his competition with his twin brother Norbert, who was a superior pianist but could not play viola. Because his father regularly took the DeCoteau twins to performances at Carnegie Hall, when he was ten, DeCoteau had the opportunity to hear the African-American conductor Dean Dixon lead the New York Philharmonic, an experience that inspired him to study conducting. (DeCoteau later studied with Dixon.)

DeCoteau may have built a career as a conductor, but his instrumental study and performance experience were also of a high caliber. He recalled being, as a teenage violist, one of the youngest performers on Bruno Walter's final recording of the Beethoven symphony cycle. (It seems likely that DeCoteau was referring to Walter's recordings with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, a group composed of Los Angeles-area freelancers in the late 1950s.) His instrumental study was with Ruvin Heifetz, the father of Jascha Heifetz, and he attended NYU, where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees, before going on to earn a doctorate at Stanford. From 1964 until 1967, DeCoteau was Associate Professor of Music at Grinnell College in Iowa, where he was lauded for his leadership of a performance of Verdi's *Requiem*.

In the late 1960s, DeCoteau joined the Oakland Symphony as a violist and continued to perform while serving as the conductor of the Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra. Larry London, son of the Youth Orchestra's manager and clarinetist and composer in the Bay area, recalls hearing DeCoteau in a performance of Chausson's Concerto for Violin, Piano, and String Quartet at the Old Spaghetti Factory in San Francisco around 1971, and a performance with the Oakland Youth Symphony of a work by Robert Hughes for viola and orchestra titled *Cadences*, in which he conducted and played the solo from the podium. Benjamin Simon, music director of the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, recalled his studies with Denis:

> As a high school violinist in the early 70s, playing under Denis in the Oakland Youth Orchestra was a revelation. He was—and remains—one of the most eloquent and elegant conductors I've had the pleasure to work with. He was my first, and most inspiring, conducting teacher—and I remember sitting with him in his tiny office as I tried to make sense out of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*. I don't think anyone but Denis would have handed that score to a 15-year old. An extremely talented and serious musician, he was also the funniest man. Every week he'd tell us the same jokes over and over, cracking himself up and making everyone else laugh from his sheer good humor.[11]

During this time, DeCoteau's recording credits included an appearance on an album with Ron Carter, and he was on faculty at the College of San Mateo.

In 1975, he would be named as Music Director and Principal Conductor of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, and led its first performance with the ballet that year. He would continue to hold the post of music director for 24 years. (By his own recollection, his tenure would also include nearly 2,500 performances of Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker.") DeCoteau would go on to guest conduct with the orchestras of St. Louis, Seattle, Philadelphia, and Tokyo, as well as the San Francisco Symphony, where he substituted for Edo de Waart in 1985 for a series of concerts, and served as the group's associate conductor for their national tour in 1986.

Other awards included the Pierre Monteux Conducting Prize in 1969, and the ASCAP Award for Adventuresome Programming in 1976. He was, additionally, a faculty member at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. DeCoteau commented on what being a "Black conductor" meant to him:

> Well, I feel very strongly that it is all a matter of semantics. I am a conductor who happens to be black, so in a sense I am a black conductor. The problem with that, of course, is that one runs into the risk of setting up a category—a category of musicians who are apart from any other musician. So you have good conductors, bad conductors, and black conductors. No one refers to Ozawa as a Japanese conductor. He is a conductor.[12]

Topics for Further Exploration

By no means does this article intend to present an all-encompassing profile of African-American violists, or suggest that the number of talented African-American violists from the past is limited to the four profiled here. Clarke and Brown were included in part because of their listing as the only two active in the New York metropolitan area in 1960. No female African-American violists were profiled here because almost no information whatsoever was available on them. However, all-Black orchestras, such as the Philadelphia Concert Orchestra or the National AfroAmerican Philharmonic Orchestra, have operated in the United States for centuries but are not well-researched. The Negro Philharmonic Society of New Orleans, for example, was founded in the 1830s and operated until racial hostility prior to the Civil War forced it to disband. The Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, an organization of Black postal employees who played classical music, also operated in the 19th century. Who were the principal violists of these orchestras? Did African-American viola soloists ever perform with them? Programs or other historical records are difficult to obtain on this topic. Clearly, the history of African-American violists is a subject ripe for research, particularly at a time of burgeoning interest in the history of Black participation in the arts.

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7 Christopher Jenkins, "Signifyin(g) within African American Classical Music: Linking Gates, Hip-Hop, and Perkinson," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 77, no. 4 (Fall 2019): 391–400.

8 The reviewer notes that Clarke premiered a work by a William Fisher for solo viola, but the origin of this work is difficult to authenticate. It is possible this reviewer misspelled the name of the African-American avant-garde composer William S. Fischer. A more recent article in *JAVS* volume 21 number 1 made note of a 1968 recording of a chamber work by Fischer on which Clarke performed, and their musical connection increases this likelihood of this possibility. However, a work for solo viola by Fischer, which would be one of only a handful of such works by African-American composers, has not been identified.

9 Readers might wonder why Brown is included in this article if he is so rarely mentioned in source material. The lack of research on African-American classical music and musicians creates a negative feedback loop in which research may not be conducted or published because so little previous background research is available. The only solution for this issue is to begin to build a record of research and publication on under-explored topics and individuals such as Brown, upon which future researchers can draw.

10 In an interview with Anne Lundy in 1984, DeCoteau stated that he was born in 1937. However, numerous sources state that he died at the age of 70 in 1999, which would indicate that he was born in 1929. Because of the uncertainty, his dates have been omitted here.

11 Personal email from Simon.

12 Lundy, 217.

2020 American Viola Society Festival Update:

Due to the current health crisis, the AVS Festival Committee has made the difficult decision to reschedule the 2020 American Viola Society Festival for June 2–5, 2021 at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. We sincerely regret the circumstances, but believe this is the right decision to protect the health and safety of all festival presenters and attendees.

We plan to present as much of our originally planned festival program as possible, with as many of the same artists and presenters as are available, at the 2021 American Viola Society Festival. Signature artists already confirmed for our rescheduled event include Victoria Chiang and David Perry, Dimitri Murrath, Yizhak Schotten, Matthew Lipman, Jordan Bak, and Doris Preucil, with more to come!

Accepted presenters and performers scheduled for the 2020 American Viola Society Festival will be invited to present/perform at the 2021 American Viola Society Festival.

Our deepest appreciation goes to our planned sponsors, exhibitors and donors – William Harris Lee, D'Addario, Johnson String Instruments/Carriage House Violins, Aria Lights, Eastman Strings, GEWA Music USA, Leatherwood Bespoke Rosin, Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University, Scott Studios, Inc, Slapin-Solomon Viola Duo, Timothy G. Johnson, Luthier, Ute Zahn Violin Maker, V. Richelieu Instruments, Vla Tutti (Molly Sharp), Practizma, Dr. Tom and Polly Tatton, and Mike and Cindy Palumbo – for their generous support of the festival. We also thank the University of Tennessee for generously extending their commitment to hosting our event in 2021.

We would like to extend congratulations to our 2020 Career Achievement Award winners, Yizhak Schotten and Doris Preucil, and to our AVS Honorary Member Carlos Maria Solare. We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Tom Tatton for his amazing dedication to our organization by presenting him with the Dwight Pounds Service Award for Lifetime Distinguished Service Contributions to the AVS. We hope to be able to honor all of our 2020 AVS award recipients in person at our 2021 Festival.

If you have already registered for the 2020 AVS Festival, we will automatically transfer your registration and apply all payments to the 2021 AVS Festival. This option gives you maximum flexibility to plan as needed in the coming year, while locking in the 2020 rates.

During the uncertain times ahead, donations from our members are especially appreciated to help ensure the continued success and financial stability of our society.

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Interwoven Paths and Influences:
Ernest Bloch, Rebecca Clarke, Paul Hindemith and their Viola Works of 1919

By Daphne Gerling

Taking the end of the First World War as a starting point and the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Composition Competition as a meeting point, the three principal viola works of 1919 emerge as the foundational point of celebration and reflection from which the labyrinthine journey of *The 20/19 Project* begins. When the conflicts of World War I came to an end on November 11, 1918, the Armistice heralded promises of peace, but the world had perhaps never found itself in so dire a socio-economic situation. A tremendous loss of life, worldwide, numbered over 13 million civilian and 8.5 million military deaths, whether from direct bellic impact, or displacement, starvation, exposure, massacres, and the Spanish Influenza epidemic which killed more than 500,000 in the United States alone. Given that most Western Europeans were struggling merely to re-establish basic needs like housing, employment, and healthcare, it is nearly miraculous that by 1919 nearly all major cultural institutions were working hard to re-open and to present full seasons of concerts and exhibits. The resurgence of cultural life was a point of pride institutionally and nationally for countries, as a way to prove the specter of war would permanently recede.[1]

Ernest Bloch, Rebecca Clarke, and Paul Hindemith certainly experienced the war's effects, in their own unique circumstances. Initially, from 1914–16, each tried to carry on with life as usual, but eventually all were forced into major life-changes.[2] Clarke left Europe for the United States in 1916, and Bloch in 1917, while Hindemith remained in Germany and Belgium, conscripted into active military service by the German government. They endured separation from their families, economic difficulty, displacement, and the knowledge that they might not return home indefinitely. Hindemith was directly subjected to the dangers of trench warfare, and it is remarkable that he not only retained the power to compose in such unfavorable circumstances, but indeed, found it essential to his survival. Having lost his father in the war, the presence of music around him was a way to cope, a normalizing feature that allowed him to stay busy and deny how deeply the war had impacted him. After the war ended, on being discharged from the army, he left the barracks and went directly to rehearse at the Frankfurt opera, rather than check on his mother and siblings—he knew he would be able to manage the musical demands of a rehearsal better than the emotions of being reunited with those who had also survived.[3] Bloch was able to reunite with his wife and children when he brought them to live with him in New York in the autumn of 1917. The journey was risky, and their ship was nearly torpedoed. But by the time he was writing the *Suite* two years later, it was illness and marital disharmony that chiefly distracted him from composing. Only months before composing the *Suite* he came down with the Influenza but was fortunate enough to survive. It was in this spirit of renewal and gratitude that he chose the passage from Spinoza (1677)— "Sapientia, meditatio non mortis, sed vitae"—as the inscription atop the 1919 *Suite's* manuscript. Clarke's choice to come to the US in 1916 was influenced by her great friend the cellist May Mukle, who was able to arrange concert engagements for them in Massachusetts, New York, California, and Hawai`i. Her brothers lived in Rochester, NY and Detroit, and their homes gave her a base from which to live, work, and travel until she returned to London to live

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in 1924. She finished the viola sonata in Detroit, while working at the Musical Institute there. Upon first hearing a complete performance of her manuscript, she wrote in her diary: "Expected to hate it after all that work, but really am rather pleased with it."[4]

The 1919 works were in fact a source of pride and accomplishment for all three composers, serving as a strong catalyst for artistic and professional growth, and galvanizing their careers. As a result of the recital where Hindemith premiered the Sonata for Viola and Piano Op. 11 No. 4 in June 1919, he was offered a life-long contract to publish his music with Schott, and a seat on the board of the Donaueschingen Music Festival. Meanwhile, Bloch's victory in the Coolidge Competition won him a prize equal to half his annual salary at the time, and a subsequent offer to become the director of the Cleveland Institute of Music. His *Suite* was premiered in Carnegie Hall by Louis Bailly. Championed by prominent conductors such as Leopold Stokowski, his symphonic works were performed in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. Clarke's Sonata for Viola and Piano won second prize in the Coolidge competition leading to interviews in *Vogue* and *The New York Times*, as well as the opportunity for prestigious recital debuts in New York and London. The press took notice, and reviews of her work were favorable, though heavily laden with the misogynistic gender bias pervasive in the outlook of male music critics of the time. From a compositional standpoint, the viola sonata was her most complex work to date, and spurred her, in the four-year period thereafter, to pursue the composition of her Piano Trio, which won second prize in the 1921 Coolidge competition, and the *Rhapsody for Cello & Piano* of 1923. Written for May Mukle, it was the only work Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge ever commissioned by a woman composer.

Having situated each composer within the cultural and historical panorama of this time-period and considered the reverberations of these viola pieces on their later careers, let us now examine the cultural movements informing their compositional process in this time-period: Expressionism, Impressionism, Orientalism, and Exoticism.

The Expressionist aesthetic is characterized in the visual arts by distorted, sometimes abstract or non-representational images, and in music by dissonant sonorities that push beyond the boundaries of chromatic tonality. Expressionist works aimed to express the inner experience of the artist rather than external representations of a physical world.[5] The movement has been made iconic to the broader public through Edvard Munch's painting, *The Scream*. The link between the visual arts and music within Expressionism is further heightened when one considers that both Hindemith and Arnold Schoenberg (whose compositions are seminal to the movement) were gifted painters of considerable skill. Bloch and Clarke were certainly familiar with the movement's tenets, but their 1919 viola works were less directly influenced by this movement than by others.[6]

French Impressionism, encompassing the chief stylistic developments of music at the turn of the twentieth century, influenced all three composers in this study, chiefly through the music and innovations of Claude Debussy and his great contemporary Maurice Ravel. While Debussy himself disliked the term, which came into use in 1887 to describe his *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, it successfully describes the use of "finely graded instrumental colors; static, non-climactic melodies often circling around a single pitch; harmony conceived as a coloristic element; complex textures consisting of elaborate surface figurations, and continuously evolving forms without sharp sectional divisions."[7] This accurately describes the chief features of the 1919 sonatas, as we will examine soon.

Debussy's influence in Bloch, Clarke, and Hindemith's music comes not only through his own compositions, but through the cultural interests he promoted and absorbed in turn-of-the century Paris: Orientalism and Exoticism. "Exoticism" first came into use as a term in French artistic circles in the mid-nineteenth century, following a surge of interest in far-flung locations and their artistic depiction.[8] The term describes any evocation of a foreign landscape, whether real or imaginary, in a work of art and music. Though it does not of itself specify a geographic location, in the last two centuries Spain, Italy, Turkey, North Africa, the Middle East, China, Japan, Indonesia, the Pacific Isles, the United States, and Russia have all been portrayed as exotic in works by French composers and visual artists. The principal idea underlying the concept of Exoticism is the portrayal of "otherness" in contrast to white Eurocentric cultural norms.

Exoticism depicting the Orient was at its height between 1889 and the end of World War I, a direct consequence of colonialist cultural appropriation espoused by the French and British Empires. In eighteenth and nineteenth century opera, depictions of the Orient were largely fictitious and caricatured. By the twentieth century portrayals of the oriental and the exotic in music were more nuanced, some merely imaginary, while others were rooted in the authentic music of ethnic groups performing in Paris's Expositions Universelles of 1889 and 1900. Debussy attended both fairs, becoming fascinated by the music of Vietnam and Indonesia. Clarke attended the exposition of 1900 with her father, and Bloch was studying in Paris around the same time. For composers like Bloch, Clarke and Hindemith, the option to incorporate exotic influences in their music was a creative escape—a liberation from the confines of the Germanic school in which all had been trained, and which all needed to evolve beyond in the cultural aftermath of the War. While today, composers would be sensitive to the idea of cultural appropriation, cultural borrowings of this nature were viewed differently one hundred years ago. The stylized depiction of Chinese, Hebraic, Indonesian or Russian musical ideas was not derogatory in the mind of our composers. It was a creative feature that suggested modernity, whimsy, innovation, an international cultural outlook, and musical transformation to our composers. Above all, when examining the chief musical features of the 1919 viola works, one is struck by how inventive the composers were, and how broad the scope of their musical imagination.

Hindemith was inspired to write the Sonata for Viola and Piano Op. 11, No. 4 after a cathartic experience playing Debussy's String Quartet Op. 10 at the end of the war. In his own words:

> As a soldier in the First World War I was a member of a string quartet, which represented for the colonel of our regiment a means of forgetting the hated military service. He was a great friend of music and a connoisseur and admirer of French culture. Small wonder then, that his most burning desire was to hear Debussy's string quartet. We practiced the piece and played it for him with great emotion at a private concert. Just as we had finished the slow movement the radio officer entered the room, visibly shaken, and reported that the news of Debussy's death had just come over the radio. We didn't finish the performance. It was as if the breath of life had been taken from our playing. But we realized for the first time that music is more than style, technique, and the expression of personal feeling. Here, music transcended political boundaries, national hatred and the horrors of war. At no other time have I ever comprehended so completely in what direction music must develop.[9]

The performance of French music was banned in Germany during the war, and the idea that an army colonel should have chosen to hear it would have come across not only as deeply unpatriotic but also in fact, as subversive. Hindemith's newly discovered conviction regarding the direction music must take in the post-war period signifies the impossibility of adhering any longer to Germanic musical values above all others. His choice to profile French and exotic influences in the viola sonata implies separation from his musical upbringing. As Joel Haney puts it: "The alliance with Debussy's music may be interpreted in terms of a postwar internationalist outlook through which Hindemith sought identification with a broader human community as well as distance from a cultural legacy tainted by wartime chauvinism."[10]

While most violists are quite aware of Debussy's influence on the Op. 11/4 Sonata, many fewer listeners know the work contains numerous Russian influences. (Hindemith avidly consumed and promoted new music, premiering works by Bartók, and seeking to own scores for his personal music library of works by Stravinsky, Borodin, Glazunov, Glière, Sokolov, Taneyev, and Akimenko by 1919.) As early as 1925 Franz Willms noted the "Slavic style" in the sonata, while Haney's research connects the opening melody of the second movement to material from Mussorgsky's opera, *Boris Godunov*. Hindemith's incorporation of "fluid modal pivoting between the related centers of G-flat major and E-flat minor, its frequent note repetition, shifts between duple and triple meter, and five bar phrasing" are all non-Germanic elements that allowed him greater expressive freedom.[11]

His choice to write the sonata in three interconnected movements played without pause is a further departure from tradition. What anchors his exploration formally though, is the use of variation form to scaffold the second and third movements. This allows him to explore textures ranging from the capricious balletic leaps of variation 2 to more expressionistic grotesque distortion in variation

6, famously marked "Fugato, to be played with bizarre clumsiness." His greatest achievement in the work is his ability to combine seemingly contradictory influences into a coherent musical whole whose structure does not suffer from the variety of its musical gestures. By couching his delicate approach to dynamics, coloristic use of dissonance, registral extremes, pentatonic melodies and pairs of rocking static chords in a tightly constructed formal structure, he succeeds in retaining Germanic underpinnings that make the music authentically his. This places him at the avant-garde of post-war composers responsible for balancing the quest for new approaches to music with the retention of an individual artistic identity.

Hindemith's choice to introduce non-German influences into his compositions of 1919 was deliberately informed by politics, while one can argue that Bloch and Clarke's choices were more personal—the artistic freedom they experience in exploring the Exotic was less connected to their places of origin, and more about finding a stronger compositional inner voice. For Bloch especially, incorporating the Exotic broadened his palette, furthering his quest to have his work more broadly accepted. Bloch's studies in Belgium, Germany, and France exposed him to both Germanic and Francophone styles of music. While many would view this as advantageous, at the time it created a sort of hindrance, because critics could not pigeon-hole him squarely as belonging to one school or the other. Scholar Klara Moricz explains: "Bloch's amalgam of French and German aesthetics was considered unacceptable in an era so preoccupied with national essences in music."[12] For Bloch, underlying currents of anti-Semitism further complicated his search for a compositional identity. Moricz states Bloch's identity as a Jewish composer "was as much forced upon him as voluntarily assumed," and that he would have felt he was expected to identify himself artistically as a Jew.[13] Through his extensive travel, study and contact with major composers, he was aware of all the major compositional trends of his day. Bloch chose to the end of his career to root his music in tonality, foregoing more modern possibilities such as serialism. What was crucial above all to Bloch was that his music should portray the vast landscape of human emotion and imagination:

> Most of my works have been inspired by a poetic or philosophic idea, even sometimes unconsciously. Art for me is an expression, an experience of Life, and not a jigsaw puzzle or an application in cold blood of mathematical theories—a laboratory dissection.[14]

In the *Viola Suite* of 1919 he departs from the strong Jewish influence of works like *Schelomo* (1916), but retains many features of that style of writing: long lyrical melodies with a vocal or "wailing" quality, speech-like lines, augmented seconds, chromatic and dissonant chords, and accented/syncopated rhythms including Scottish snap patterns. Composed through a French exotic lens, he adds to his musical gestures octatonic and whole tone scales, pentatonic melodies, prominent use of melodic and harmonic fourths and fifths, rhythmic liveliness, percussive accents, and pizzicato. Ultimately, many of these musical elements are neither necessarily Jewish nor Oriental, but simply an integral part of his expressive palette. His imaginary vision of Indonesia draws on his friend Robert Godet's letters, as well as the paintings of Paul Gauguin, to evoke "nights in Java, with [their] tropical and mysterious poetry."[15] The *Suite* is one of the longest viola works in the standard literature. Monumental in its four-movement structure, it rivals only Hector Berlioz's *Harold en Italie* in length, but offers the viola a far more protagonistic, central role. The orchestral writing is lush, replete with evocations of a Gamelan, and the widest gamut of dynamic and timbral contrasts. Above all, Bloch's synthesis of Jewish and Oriental influences in the *Viola Suite* is intensely personal, aimed more at expressing his own powerfully eloquent musical voice than at satisfying musical trends of the day. Clarke herself espoused this view writing about Bloch in 1929: "At a time when music too often aims at a somewhat passionless perfection, sacrificing sincerity to technique and vitality to polish, his glowing works, almost elemental in their directness, bring the breath of a new and powerful life."[16] Bloch was a professional friend to her from their first meeting in 1916 and continued to inspire her and stay in touch later in life. They met through their mutual friend and patron, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, and history has inextricably linked them as first and second prize-winners of the 1919 Coolidge Competition. Fredrick Stock, writing to Coolidge after the competition stated:

> Well, Ernest Bloch got away with the prize. We, you and I, at least, may reflect upon the outcome of the contest with one weeping eye and one laughing eye; the fact remains that Bloch has written a big work,

> one which I think will last. Personally, I feel sorry for Miss Clarke. Her Sonata has much charm; the first movement is very fine, but the scherzo is so freakish and has no thematic substance of any consequence; the last movement is too rhapsodic. But just the same, a very fine talent. What the wise-acres would have said, had a "woman-composer" and one of your personal friends in Pittsfield won the prize, I do not dare to contemplate, but I am sure suspicions of a frame-up between you and the judges would have been endless, and that we might have had a great deal of other trouble besides. All things considered we were most fortunate in your choice.[17]

Of the three 1919 composers in our study, only Clarke had to contend constantly with gender as a qualifier of her competence and compositional skill. (Hopefully this is quite different in 2019, for Anna Thorvaldsdottir than it was one hundred years ago!) Clarke recounted in her old age that

> certain reports reached me averring that I had not written my own work, or that it had been helped by other composers, among whom, ironically, Bloch himself was named. . . . I even once received a press clipping stating that Rebecca Clarke was a pseudonym for someone else—in other words that I did not exist. So I take this opportunity to emphasise that I do indeed exist; . . . and finally, that my viola sonata is my own unaided work![18]

Clarke's sonata has gone on to be one of the most beloved and frequently recorded works in the viola literature. It benefits now from the further possibility of being performed in an orchestrated version by Ruth Lomon completed in 2007. Modern listeners are drawn to the work for its ingenious combination of French influences and English modal melodies, as well as overt nods to pentatonic *chinoiserie* that Clarke was quite fond of. The Sonata's second and third movements share structural similarities with Ravel's Piano Trio, while remaining deeply original. Clarke absorbs many influences from the great French composer, learning from her friend Ralph Vaughan Williams, who studied with Ravel in 1908. Her choice to model the second movement on a "Pantoum," an authentic Eastern verse structure, implies her interest in Orientalism is more than a superficial desire to employ exotic clichés.

Ultimately to end this study discussing Clarke is a choice to come full circle in the journey connecting 1919 to 2019. From Coolidge's ground-breaking choice to sponsor a competition for viola compositions, to Clarke's posthumous stature as one of the instrument's greatest exponents, there is much to reflect on. In the end, Clarke quietly defied norms and expectations, leading a successful career as a performer, composing more than one hundred works, and traveling widely, from England, the continental US and Hawai`i to Burma, Singapore, China, Japan, Hong Kong, and Europe. Her path to prominence as a composer is circuitous, and it is wonderful to know that her Sonata, along with the seminal works by Hindemith and Bloch, has reached its centennial elevated to the status it truly deserves. May the musical connections, explorations and celebrations continue with the premieres of the 2019 works by Norman, Thorvaldsdottir and Wollschleger, and may the journey to *their* centennial be similarly bright!

Daphne Gerling enjoys an international career teaching, performing, and writing about the viola. She has participated in multiple commissioning projects is currently developing a recital project featuring lesser known works by female composers who may have participated in the 1919 Coolidge competition. She is Principal Lecturer of Viola at the University of North Texas and Secretary of the American Viola Society.

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2 Daphne Gerling, "Connecting Histories: Identity and Exoticism in the 1919 Viola Works of Ernest Bloch, Rebecca Clarke, and Paul Hindemith" (DMA diss., Rice University, 2007), 6.

3 Guy Rickards, *Hindemith, Hartman, Henze* (London: Phaedon Press, 1995), 40.

4 Bryony Claire Jones, "The Music of Rebecca Clarke (1886–1979)" (PhD diss., University of Liverpool, 2004), 306.

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6 Gerling, "Connecting Histories," 94.

7 Ibid, 9.

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9 Heinrich Strobel, *Paul Hindemith: Zeugnis in Bildern* (Mainz: Schott, 1961), 8.

10 Joel Haney, "The Emergence of a Postwar Musical Outlook: Hindemith's Hard-Edged Simplicity, 1919–1922," (PhD diss., Yale University, 2006).

11 Ibid, 236.

12 Klara Moricz, "Sensuous Pagans and Righteous Jews: Changing Concepts of Jewish Identity in Ernest *Bloch's Jézabel* and *Schelomo" Journal of the American Musicological Society* 54, no.3 (Fall 2001): 443.

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14 Joseph Lewinski, "Ernest Bloch: Suite pour alto et orchestra," Liner notes for *Ernest Bloch Helvetia, Suite for viola and orchestra, Suite Hébraïque for viola and orchestra* (Orchestre de la Suisse Romande/Shambadal): Cascavelle Records, RSR 6170.

15 Joseph Lewinski and Emanuelle Dijon, *Ernest Bloch, Sa vie et sa pensée. Tome II: La consécration américaine* (Geneva: Slatkine, 2001), 275.

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The 20/19 Project: Composer Workshops

By Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti

This is the second installment of a series on The 20/19 Project,[1] an initiative that celebrates the centennial of three of the most performed viola sonatas in our repertoire: Ernest Bloch's Suite for Viola and Piano, Rebecca Clarke's Viola Sonata, and Paul Hindemith's Op. 11 No. 4. These three sonatas written in 1919 have become staples of the viola repertoire due to scholarship, recordings of the three works, and performances together due to their origin in the same year.

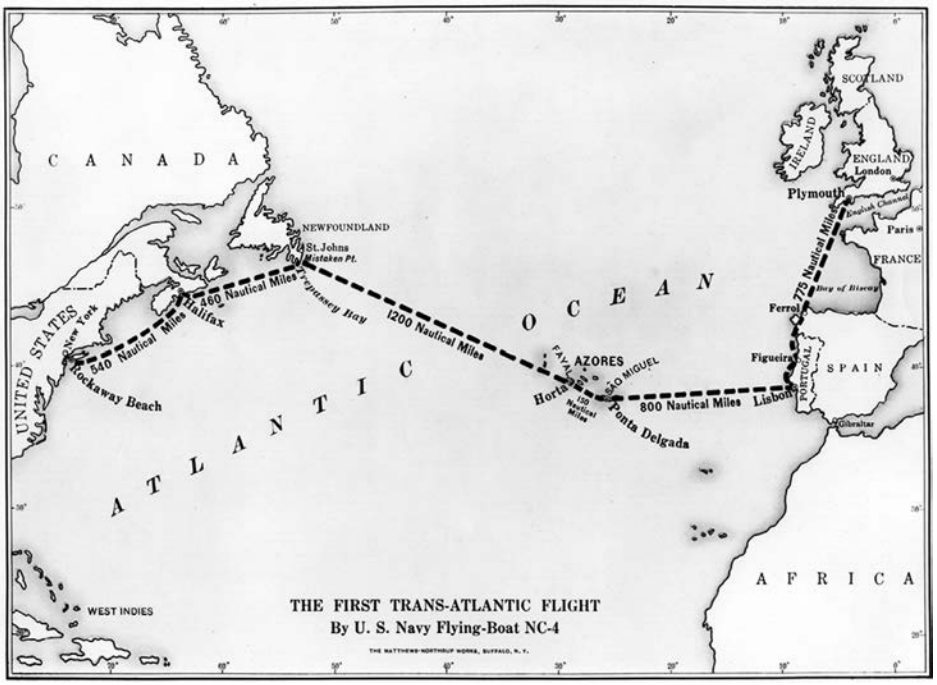
The series shares the process of The 20/19 Project at various stages. In the first article, which appeared in JAVS volume 35, number 1, I described how I came to choose the three composers: Andrew Norman, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, and Scott Wollschleger. The article also gave some insight on considerations for commissioning in general, some nuts and bolts about finding/applying for funding, and the importance of having a clear idea about the impact of any project.

Without this long-term planning and resilience in applying for lots and lots (and lots) of grants, it is difficult to sustain the support for a project of this scale.

The next stage—covered in this article—involves the creation of the works themselves. Read on for a behind the scenes look at workshops with The 20/19 Project composers held at University of Northern Colorado, Oberlin Conservatory, and Thorvaldsdottir's studio in London.

Celebrating a Centennial: Technology

In 1919, the U.S. Navy made the first transatlantic flight which took five legs.[2] Although the telephone had been developed by Alexander Graham Bell forty years before, in 1919 it was still only possible to send voices one way across the Atlantic.[3]



Map of the first transatlantic flight in 1919. Image credit: National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution (NASM A-38529) from https://pioneersofflight.si.edu/content/route-ncs-across-atlantic.

A hundred years later, digital technology and advancements in travel have completely changed the way people are able to work together as well as how information is shared. These changes impacted The 20/19 Project both on a creative level (Thorvaldsdottir's piece includes an electronics part), and on a practical level: the composers were able to workshop the pieces with me by sending material back and forth digitally.

Working with the Composers at Various Stages

Each of the composers has a very different way of working. While Thorvaldsdottir and Norman

are much more private during the writing process and prefer to give the performers the final product once it is completely finished, Wollschleger likes to workshop material many times and hear the performers during the process of refining the piece.

In May 2018, Thorvaldsdottir sent me a set of short excerpts to record that she could use to create the electronics part for the piece. I was able to use the recording studio at University of Northern Colorado to work with engineer Greg Heimbecker for free because I was a faculty member there. I spent several hours recording the material, at times verbally describing what I was doing so that when the composer listened back later, she would be able to know what technique I was using without being there.

The first read-through sessions that Wollschleger and I did were in his Brooklyn home in the summer of 2017. Playing through fragments of melodic material, we were able to try out different sounds together, and Wollschleger was also able to hear how my specific sound worked with the gestures he was creating. Since the two of us have worked together a lot, he knows that I enjoy finding interesting timbres and colors and can get an extreme range of sound with my bow, so a lot of the work was playing around with timbres over fixed harmonic material. Wollschleger's wife, Emily Bookwalter, is a violist and the Director of Development at Roulette Intermedium, so he knows the instrument very well. Nonetheless, each performer is different, so these were more about finding the sounds that worked with my instrument and the things that I could do specifically as a player.

I had several more workshops together with Wollschleger[4]: one at University of Northern Colorado supported by an award from the Provost Fund for Faculty Scholarship and Professional Development where we also filmed technique videos with Four/Ten Media. Six months later in Brooklyn, another two-day workshop was added to read through the new edits Wollschleger had made. He recorded these sessions, and then gave us a score a few weeks later that we used to do a workshop performance at Oberlin. A "workshop performance" is a private reading given while a work is in progress. In this case, we rehearsed approximately 45 minutes of material and only shared about 30 minutes of that with the students at Oberlin as a seamless performance, along with the other works in progress. I sent the video recording to Wollschleger, and a few weeks later we met again in Brooklyn to go over the piece together.

In the summer of 2019, there was a final rehearsal period at Avaloch Farm Institute before the world premiere at Madison New Music Festival in August 2019. I'm grateful to Zach Green and Caitlin Mead for hosting the premieres and making the event run so smoothly. After the world premiere of Wollschleger's piece, *Lost Anthems*,

Anne Lanzilotti (left) and Scott Wollschleger (right) discussing Wollschleger's piece, Lost Anthems. Still from The 20/19 Project: Wollschleger Workshop (Trailer), https://vimeo.com/304262980.

there was further editing that happened to clean up the score before the UK Premiere in November 2019. Wollschleger was able to come to the UK and work with pianist Zeynep Özsuca on the final version, catching last edits in the score. The final score of *Lost Anthems* by Scott Wollschleger is now available on PSNY (Schott New York) including excerpts of the UK premiere.[5]

For Andrew Norman's new work, I scheduled a workshop at Oberlin where Norman and I could work together and also coached some of the students on his chamber works. In addition, I gave a lecture on his string trio *The Companion Guide to Rome*. This workshop was more of a chance for us to interact with students and think about the project as an ongoing process that involves interaction with students and long-term collaboration. Oberlin professors Tim Weiss and Peter Slowik were especially helpful in organizing these coachings, lessons, and lectures, which allowed for us to have a full and exciting several days there. Beyond Oberlin's support for part of the fee and use of their spaces, the workshop was funded by private donations, including Larry and Arlene Dunn, as well as a donation from the Rebecca Clarke Society.

Right after the workshop in Oberlin, I traveled to London to meet up with Thorvaldsdottir and to visit potential sites for the UK premiere, as well as other outreach activities. The workshop with Thorvaldsdottir[6] took place at her studio. She generously hosted us for the day, allowing us to use her workspace. This workshop was more for me to play specific sounds for Thorvaldsdottir that are in her newly commissioned work for The 20/19 Project, *Sola*. In addition to recording technique videos, we looked at the files for the electronics part and she described her process in creating it. We also filmed an extensive interview, which along her accompanying technique videos will be discussed in more detail in the next article.

Through another award from UNCO, specifically for Research, Dissemination and Faculty Development, I was able to bring Four/Ten Media's Evan Chapman and Kevin Eikenberg to film the videos and interview. I am so grateful and lucky to have gotten this grant, otherwise it would not have been possible to work with the same videographers who filmed the workshop with Wollschleger. With two people in the room talking/working and two videographers filming, the energy of the people documenting is extremely important. Chapman and Eikenberg are not only professional, but also were amazing to work with because they were interested in what Thorvaldsdottir was saying, and were themselves engaged with what was happening in the room. I mention this because even though they do not appear on any of the footage, their presence was crucial in making the whole project work. It is so important to make sure that you are working with people who take you seriously and support your work wholeheartedly.

Anne Lanzilotti (left) and Anna Thorvaldsdottir (right). Still image from SOLA: Interview with Anna Thorvaldsdottir, https://vimeo.com/350657648

Vision & Impact: Creating a Free Online Educational Resource

The idea for the technique videos and the resource that is now *Shaken Not Stuttered* [7] came out of conversations I had with Norman while I was writing my dissertation on his string trio *The Companion Guide to Rome*.[8] He lamented that while he loved working with big orchestras, it was not always possible to have one-on-one time with players to show them the specific sounds he wanted. We thought: what if there were videos in which Norman explained the techniques that felt as though he was in the room showing the musicians? That way, the musicians would be able to hear the sounds and watch the techniques from different angles, the way one would in a private lesson. We filmed the original set of videos with videographer Stephen Taylor in Norman's Brooklyn apartment. It happened to have a wall with gorgeous gold wallpaper, so we set up next to the windows in front of that wall to get natural light. Norman was also working on *Play* (a symphony in all but name[9]), so we also took the rest of the afternoon to film the techniques used in that piece and in his large chamber work *Try*.

My experience in the past several years observing how people use *Shaken Not Stuttered* showed me the positive impact these technique videos can have. I wanted to add this element to The 20/19 Project. The extended technique videos allow for the work to be seen beyond my immediate community. Because *Shaken Not Stuttered* is a free online resource, anyone from anywhere in the world can access those sounds and explore them more. I took the videos a step further, making review videos in which there is no talking—only notation and demonstration—so that they might be more useful for composers in other countries who don't speak English and might want to also use the videos with players. Composers such as Ken Ueno and Garth Knox also film their techniques for players to watch, and there are excellent sites like *Cello Map* that are more of a catalogue of sounds. The idea was always to make it feel as though the viewer were in the room with us. This allows for them to have a window into the creative process, and to understand the sounds themselves better.

The next phase brings us to performance and recording. The extended technique videos for Anna Thorvaldsdottir's *Sola* are now available online, and I'll be releasing a recording on New Focus Recordings in December. In the final article, I'll describe more of the details of bringing the works to life through this performance and documentation phase.

Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti is a composer-performer, scholar, and educator with a passion for contemporary music. For a complete bio, please visit: http://annelanzilotti.com

Notes

1 http://annelanzilotti.com/2019-project

2 "The First Flight Across the Atlantic," *Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum*, https://pioneersofflight.si.edu/content/first-flight-across-atlantic

3 Cary O'Dell, "First Official Transatlantic Telephone Call (January 7, 1927)," *Library of Congress*, http://www.loc.gov/static/programs/national-recording-preservation-board/documents/FIRST%20TRANSATLANTIC%20CALL.pdf

4 https://vimeo.com/304262980

5 https://m.eamdc.com/psny/composers/scott-wollschleger/works/lost-anthems/ and embedded: https://youtu.be/yZ_78zUPzjk

6 https://vimeo.com/337585358

7 http://www.shakennotstuttered.com/

8 Anne V. L. Lanzilotti, "Andrew Norman's *The Companion Guide to Rome*: Influence of Architecture and Visual Art on Composition." DMA diss., Manhattan School of Music, 2016.

9 Anne Lanzilotti, " 'Cut to a Different World': Andrew Norman," *Music & Literature,* October 25, 2016: https://www.musicandliterature.org/features/2016/10/25/cut-to-a-different-world-andrew-norman

Paul Neubauer's *Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy*: Ringing in a Different Kind of Programming

By Joelle Arnhold

Paul Neubauer is a household name in the viola community. A two-time Grammy nominee and soloist with over 100 orchestras across the world, Neubauer is active today as a prominent American concert artist, as well as a dedicated educator on the faculties of Juilliard and Mannes. Less widely known and appreciated is Neubauer as a composer. Though he describes himself as primarily an improviser,[1] Neubauer does have one piece for unaccompanied viola: *Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy*, written in 2008 for Joan Tower's 70th Birthday Concert. This programmatic piece tells the story of the composer/protagonist's futile effort to get in touch with Joan by phone—each time the protagonist calls, he is met with the busy signal. The piece's two idées fixes—the 11-digit phone number and the busy signal—and their variations reveal the development of Neubauer's persistence, frustration, angst, and ultimately defeat as he fails to talk to Joan. In addition to its musical storytelling, the piece also brings up intriguing questions about the role of humor in concert music.

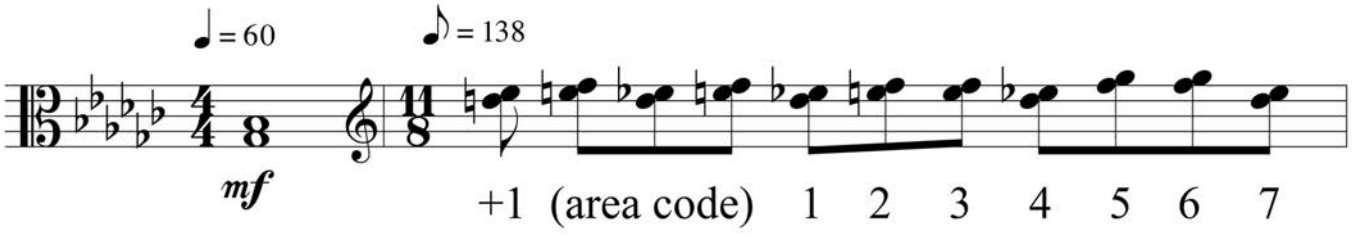
Musical Analysis

Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy is in E-flat minor and divides into three large sections and a very short coda. Although in three large sections, the piece cannot be called ternary, as the sections proceed more like ABC, rather than ternary's strict ABA. These three sections are characterized by the presence and absence of one or the other idées fixes: The A section contains both the phone number and busy signal, the B section only the busy signal, and the C section only the phone number.

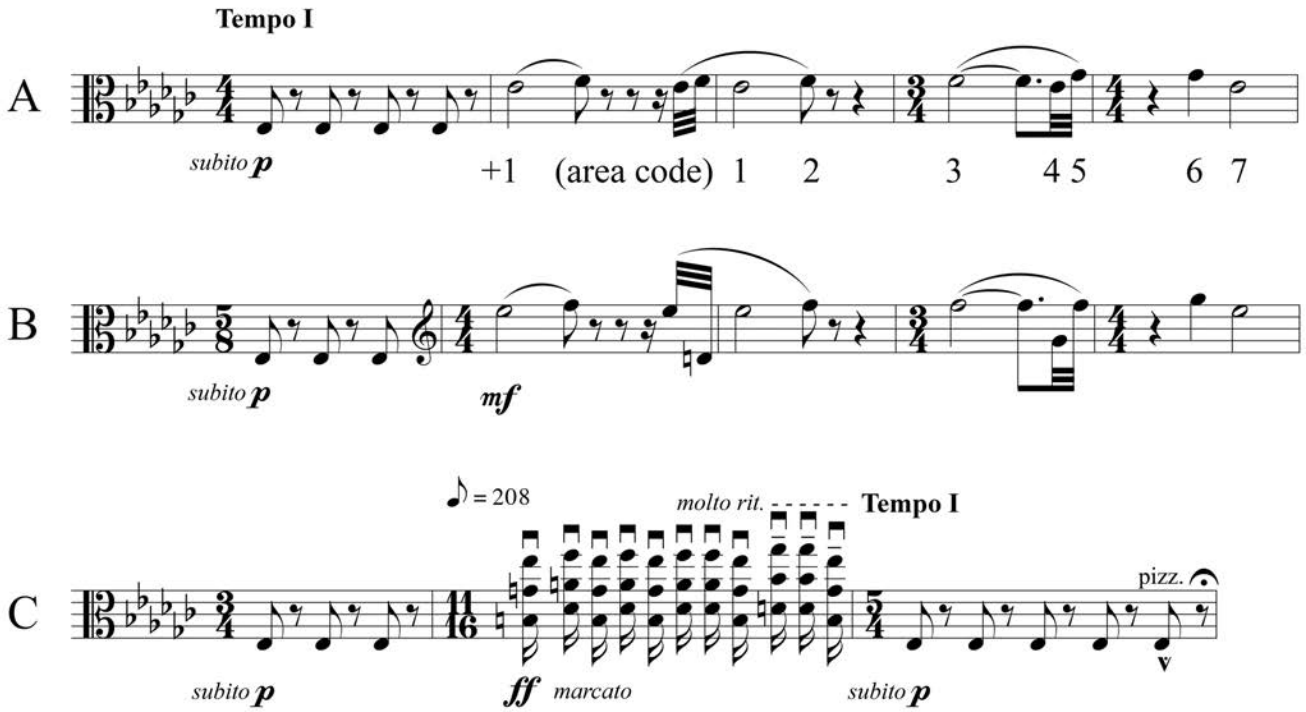
The A section begins with the dial tone and is followed by six statements of the phone number idée fixe (ex. 1). The first 3 statements closely mimic the classic dial sound, which the composer names explicitly in his performance notes: normal dialing, slowly, to make sure you dialed correctly, and the speed redial button.

The second set of phone number iterations begin in m. 8 and, while still recognizable as the phone number, begin to take on a fantasy-like characteristic suggesting that the music no longer describes the protagonist's literal behavior, but rather reveals his emotional state. These next three iterations reflect three distinct emotions: something like yearning (ex. 2a), increasing urgency (ex. 2b), and frustration (ex. 2c). The busy-signal (m. 19) that answers this final iteration concludes the A section.

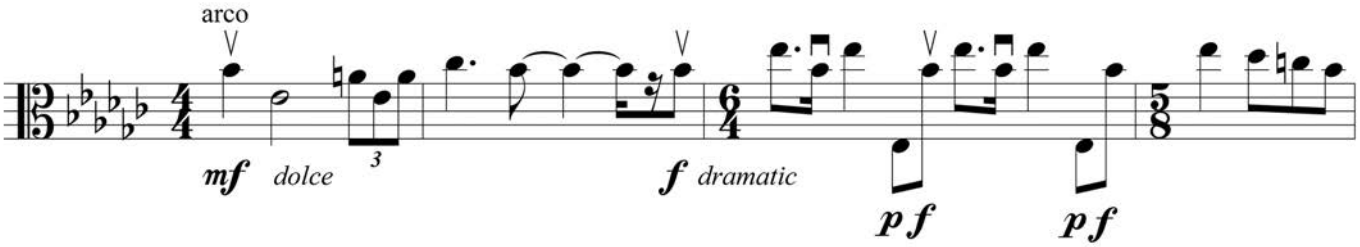
Though the busy signal idée fixe still appears throughout the B section, the phone number idée fixe is absent. The melodic content of this section is instead built around the tension between B-flat (scale degree 5) and E-flat (scale degree 1). This V-i relationship is used programmatically in creating the sense of the low E-flat busy signal as inescapable, though the protagonist tries to avoid it. In example 3, measures 20–21 huddle closely around



Example 1. Paul Neubauer, Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy*, mm. 1–2.*



Example 2. Paul Neubauer, Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy. *A: mm. 7–11, B: mm. 12–16, C: mm. 17–19.*

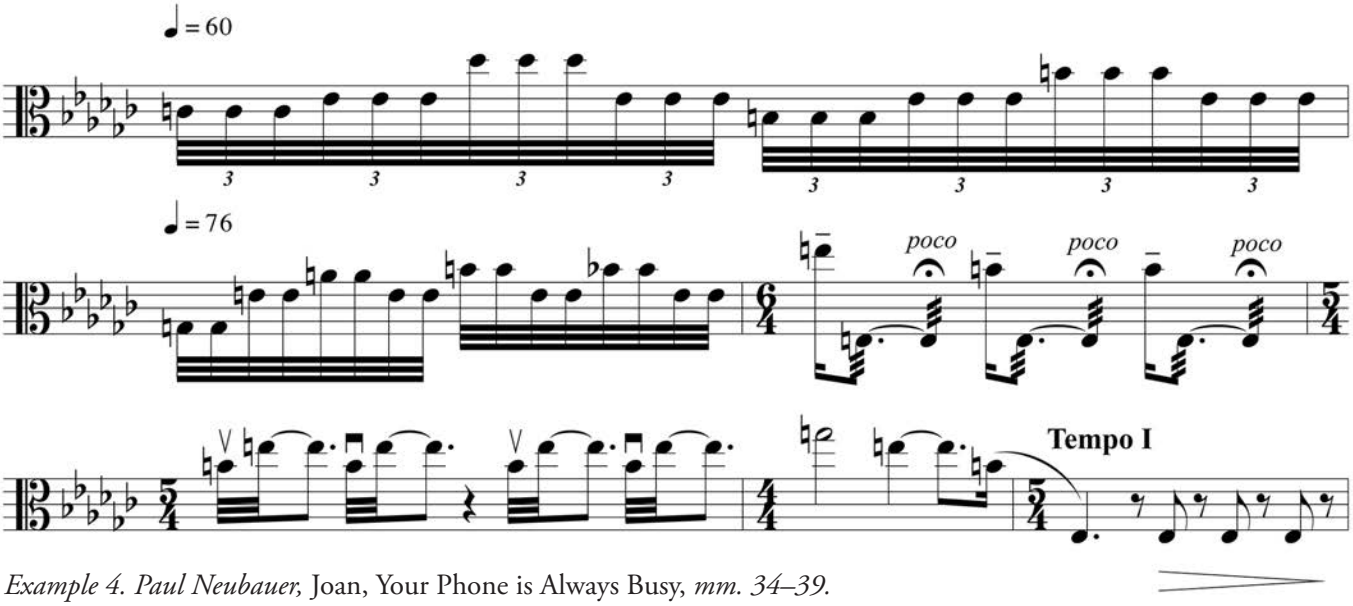


Example 3. Paul Neubauer, Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy*, mm. 20–23.*

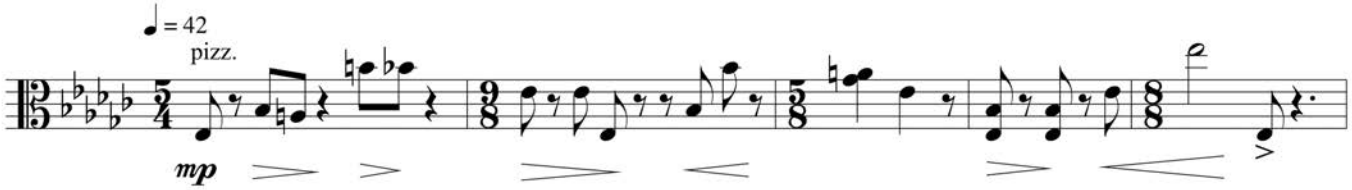
B-flat (A-natural and C-flat), as if denying the inevitable appearance of E-flat.

In the following measures, the melodic peaks become a high E-flat, G-flat, and an even higher B-flat. On the one hand, this pitch climbing suggests a sense of escape from the busy signal, as if the protagonist is about to break the cycle of the busy-signal's predictable answer to his repeated calls. However, even though the pitch-space from the busy-signal widens, the emphasized pitches remain within the E-flat minor triad. In other words, not only has the protagonist failed to escape E-flat, he has failed to travel at all. By about a third of the way through the piece, not only has the music not modulated, it hasn't even left the tonic triad. Measure 34 (see ex. 4) marks the first move away from E-flat minor, as the music briefly moves into E minor (mm. 36–38), before it suddenly, but not surprisingly, is pulled back down to E-flat minor by the busy signal in measure 38.

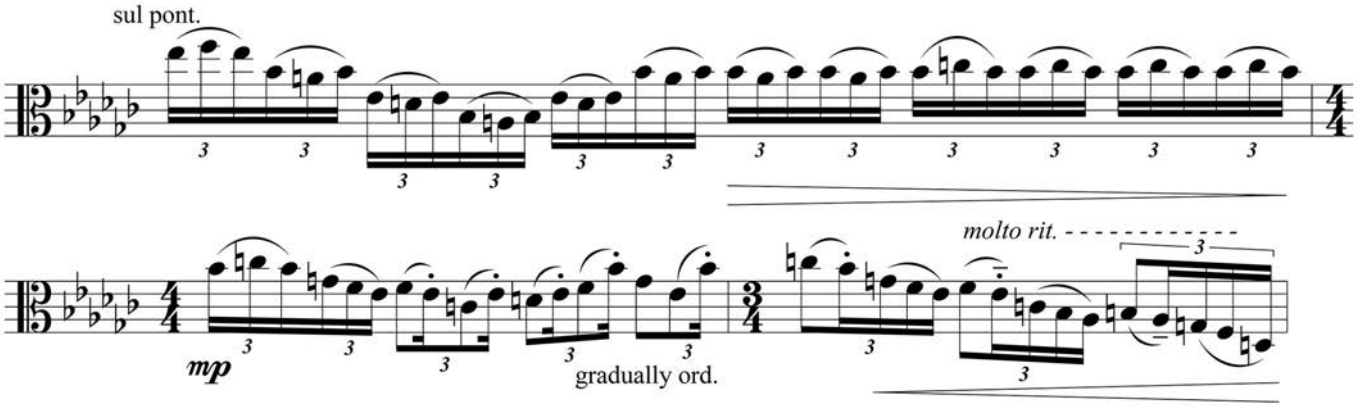
This modulation from E-flat minor to E minor is aurally striking and dramatic. E-flat minor (6 flats) and E minor (1 sharp) are nearly as far away from each other as possible. However, there is an important need to distinguish between the theoretical and aural knowledge that E-flat and E minor are very far apart, and the practical, embodied knowledge that E-flat and E minor are actually very close: in terms of the mechanics of the viola, these keys are merely a half position apart. While the key relationship may sound distant, the small physical negotiation between E-flat and E is what really matters here. The protagonist has not managed to circumvent



Example 4. Paul Neubauer, Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy, *mm. 34–39.*



Example 5. Paul Neubauer, Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy, *mm. 40–44.*



Example 6. Paul Neubauer, Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy, *mm. 65–67.*

the busy signal by changing keys, but rather, he is so frustrated by the endless busy signals that he has slid a half-step sharp. The second section concludes with a close recollection of the tension between E-flat and B-flat from the beginning of the second section, particularly the A-natural, C-flat (respelled as B-natural) huddling around B-flat (ex. 5).

The C section is defined by the presence of the phone number idée fixe, and absence of the busy-signal. Without the busy-signal to mark time as the phone goes unanswered, this section seems more of a dramatic aria than a strict programmatic narrative. "Aria" is meant in a literal, operatic sense of the term: if the recitative is where the action of the story unfolds, the aria is the lengthy and dramatic meditation on a single emotion, in this case, the event of dialing Joan's phone number over and over again. Ironically (this is a humorous piece, after all), while the protagonist is lost in a slew of phone numbers, his attention turns away from the trials of Joan's phone, and finally modulates from E-flat minor to B-flat major in m. 65 (ex. 6).

Shortly after landing in B-flat major, what has caught the protagonist's attention reveals itself in measure 66: the Mr. Softee ice cream truck jingle. In New York, Neubauer's home, the Mr. Softee tune is so common it is considered by New Yorkers to be one of the most indicative sounds of summertime. It is so prevalent that, in the summer of 2004, Mayor Michael Bloomberg attempted to ban the jingle as part of the administration's noise control initiative, which actually partially succeeded—Mr. Softee trucks are only allowed to play the tune while driving.[2] As a New York resident, Neubauer's quotation of this jingle suggests that the protagonist becomes distracted from his business with Joan's phone, and is momentarily drawn back into life outside the phoneline. However, this distraction does not last long: measures 68 and 69 modulate back to E-flat minor and into another quotation, this time of Penderecki's Cadenza (see ex. 7). Neubauer points out that the quotation could also be from the Russian folk song "Dark Eyes."[3] In addition to its function as a dual-quotation, these measures recall the huddling motion around B-flat from section B.

This is followed by a third quotation: a loose rendition of John Walter Bratton's "Teddy Bear Picnic." Bratton's tune was a popular two-step in the early 20th century, and later, once lyrics were added in the 30s, a popular children's song. However, Neubauer quotes it here as part of a running gag he shares with his close friend, cellist Fred Sherry.[4] Additionally, the particular chorale texture here recalls works like Britten's *Lachrymae* and Hindemith's *Trauermusik*, both of which prominently feature a chorale near the end of the piece that is melodically related to what came earlier. Indeed, The Teddy Bear Picnic here becomes a nice variation on the phone number idée fixe, as seen in example 7.

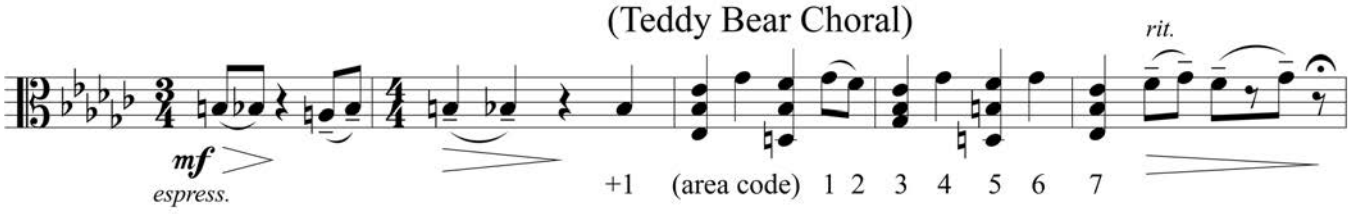
The very short codetta is a truncated and loose return of the A section; it consists only of a final statement of the phone number and busy signal. The slower tempo, senza vibrato and niente markings evoke a clear image of the protagonist dialing Joan's number one last time, only to let the phone drop from his ear, defeated by the busy signal.

All told, *Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy* is just a bit over five minutes (so it will fit on any recital program), is firmly in a contemporary music idiom (so it would add some nice variety to recitals seeking to add some 21st century repertoire), and is at an accessible difficulty level for performer and audience (only slightly more difficult than the Kodaly *Adagio*). As an added bonus, its amusing genesis story lends itself well to an engaging re-telling to audiences.

However, despite the many strategic advantages this piece affords, the only time I have heard it performed is on YouTube, which I only accidentally found while searching for videos of Joan Tower's *Wild Purple*. Its unpublished status certainly contributes to its obscurity. Additionally, while my own performances of the piece seemed well-received, there was not a strong interest in how to get the score and learn it, even from audiences specifically interested in viola repertoire. I find this lack of interest in the piece to be curious. In the remainder of this article, I will explore some possibilities for the difficult appeal of *Joan*, and argue that, not despite, but because of its non-traditional humorous slant, this is not only a good, functional recital piece, but also an interesting challenge to some problematic elements of concert programming.

Music and Humor

Neubauer's piece and others like it run into a unique obstacle blocking their paths to the recital program circuit: a "humor prejudice" in the classical music world. While Peter Schickele, the musician/composer mastermind behind PDQ Bach, has complained of the "stuffiness" of classical music's codes of behavior (not clapping between movements, dressing nicely, etc.), and argued that their stuffiness belies the generally down-to-earth and welcoming personalities of the musicians, classical music and humor nevertheless seem



Example 7. Paul Neubauer, Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy*, mm. 68–72.*

to co-exist uneasily.[5] Take, for example, YouTube user KhagarBalugrak's strong negative reaction to Neubauer's recording of Joan:[6]

> Actually, I take [previous comment that this piece is terrible] back. This piece is wonderful. Instead of communicating something deep, it communicates the superficial, which has its own sort of depth. Instead of communicating beauty, it communicates ugliness, which is beautiful in its own right. Instead of communicating that which uplifts people, it instead ascends to the height of depravity, which of course has its own virtues. Wait. No. I take that back. This piece is abysmal.[7]

While this reaction may be atypical, the commenter is circling, if in somewhat dramatic terms, a commonly held belief that there is something about humor that doesn't quite have a place in "good" music. Leonard Bernstein, in one of his Young People's Concert Series lectures titled Humor in Music, goes to great lengths to conceptualize humorous music as a "lesser" art. Bernstein structures this lecture hierarchically, so that certain types of humor, for example the wrong-note jokes in Mozart's *Ein musikalischer Spaß*, are described as "the lowest you can go,"[8] whereas musical satire is deemed to occupy a space of greater cultural legitimacy. Accordingly, Bernstein presents Prokofiev's Classical Symphony, which he describes as one of the greatest musical satires ever written, in its entirety, an arguably strange choice in a lecture meant for an audience of children.

The third movement of Brahms's Symphony No. 4 is the only other musical unit the lecture features in its entirety. Bernstein prefaces the performance with the explanation that, while the piece is not humorous, it is "in good humor."[9] Bernstein explains that the Brahms "is not going to be funny at all, nor is it supposed to be funny" but that "all humor doesn't necessarily have to be funny" because "there's such a thing as plain good humor which means simply being in a good mood."[10] Bernstein's sole reference to humor as 'temperament' rather than something 'funny' is in relation to the Brahms, which is not discussed or performed until the last seven minutes of the hour-long lecture. This surprising rhetorical turn seems to imply disdain for the whole topic of humor in music. Even though the lecture is entirely devoted to humor in music, Bernstein feels compelled, after sinking all involved "about as low as [they] can go in musical humor," to "pull [everyone] up again, and finish by playing a piece of great symphonic humor."[11] Especially considering the positioning of this illustration of "good humor" to conclude the lecture on what everyone thought was about something else, Bernstein seems to make the point that there is a place for humor in music, but that it is not in the masterworks with which we should be primarily occupied.

Whatever Bernstein's particular hang-ups about humor and KhagarBalugrak's specific objection to *Joan*, certain aspects of humor seem to be at odds with the Western Classical Music Tradition. This vague inappropriateness of humor, wrapped up in and related to the expectations of and obligations to fit a certain profile of what it means to be great music, reveals a preoccupation with music and musical performance that is not normally a priority: the preoccupation with bodies. For example, in a peculiarly self-conscious way, we may be concerned that an audience may not get the humor or else might be offended by it, or we may be unsure if it is acceptable to laugh or if doing so will be disruptive or seem uncultured. While navigating humor by assessing or predicting the effect on other people, our focus is drawn to the social vs individual and the present vs the timeless. In this way, the performance becomes not about abstract goals of truth or beauty, but about connecting with people in a straightforward, fundamentally physical way. Rather than these disembodied abstract concepts, *Joan* forces our attention on the normal, mundane, and embodied task of phone tag.

Approached from this binary perspective of metaphysical/physical, the vague discomfort of humor in music simultaneously makes sense and begins to seem problematic. After all, what is music, and performance in particular, if not a unique experience in time, necessarily physically bound and defined? Does it not make sense to acknowledge and attend to the bodies present, which seek both the metaphysical, as well as other physical bodies and all the lived, occasionally mundane, experiences that come with them? Especially in this moment where we are socially-distanced and aware of the absence of others' bodies in our day-to-day lives as well as performance schedules: the importance of individuals' physically present bodies certainly emerges as an overlooked privilege.

Humor, especially humor that evokes the everyday and quotidian, is as legitimate a subject for music as those

abstract ones that can only be grasped cerebrally. The fact that the experience of humor is instead marginalized suggests an underlying ideology of concert programming that intentionally celebrates a very specific and limited range of experiences, which, in turn, celebrates a very specific and limited set of priorities and ideals. These strategic celebrations ultimately culminate in a confirmation of a certain kind of identity characterized by valuing the mind over the body, and the eternal over the present moment.

There is nothing wrong with valuing and seeking out experiences that reward contact with the cerebral and 'serious', and certainly prolonged meditations therein yield great aesthetic experiences. But the distain of humor and that which is shared between bodies seems designed to perpetuate a limited, and therefore false, sense of what is of value in the human experience.

Neubauer's piece is a small offering toward a more stylistically diverse Western classical music repertoire that is representative of a broader range of experiences. Especially at this moment, I encourage you to consider humorous music as part of your online recital programming. Consider it an opportunity to offer your audience a reminder of our embodiment that we are all otherwise so sorely missing.

Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy is unpublished. You can contact the composer through his website, www.paulneubauer.com.

Dr. Joelle Arnhold is a violist, teacher, and co-creator of the music ensemble collaboration app Cyborg Llama. She has appeared as lecture-recitalist at the 2018 AVS and will return in 2021 as an emerging artist recitalist. Her recording of Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy *is available on her website, www.joellearnhold.com.*

Notes

1. Paul Neubauer, e-mail message to author, April 30, 2018.
2. Stephanie Gaskell. "Mr. Softee Pledges Cones of Silence." *New York Post,* January 27, 2005. August 11, 2018. https://nypost.com/2005/01/27/mr-softee-pledges-cones-of-silence/
3. Paul Neubauer, e-mail message to author, April 30, 2018.
4. Ibid.
5. Hugh Sung. "Peter Schickele, Composer and P.D.Q Bach Specialist". Filmed [July 2016]. YouTube Video, 52:44. Posted [July 2016]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_qrgiPISGM&t=6s.
6. KhagarBalugrak disliked the piece so much, they commented three times. The comment quoted here is the final of the three.
7. KhagarBalugrak. (ca. 2010). Re: *Joan, Your Phone is Always Busy* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwbgJ81Gr8U
8. Artful Learning, "Leonard Bernstein: Young People's Concerts Humor in Music (Part 4 of 4)". Filmed [February 1959]. YouTube video, 14:51. Posted [May 2011]. *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkj7a9Fw2Rg.*
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

The Aging of a Violist

By Thomas Tatton

Yikes!! I'm 76 and having to work at staying positive. America is troubled: a vicious pandemic, business and employment meltdowns, school systems in disarray (I fear greatly for our school music programs) and racial unrest from lingering injustice. Everything seems to be tearing at the threads that bind us together as a country.

To help keep myself positive I do two things every day: I fly our flag and I play my viola. I fly our flag because I believe in the promise and hope of America! And, I take great solace in my viola. I can say without reservation, that I remain in love with my viola and everything about it. I enjoy the dark, rich variegated colors as my instrument resonates so beautifully in my hands and under my ear. Then, there is our fabulous literature, still fresh for exploration and open to varied interpretations. We have a rich heritage of composers, makers, and performers (heroes really!). Perhaps most important are the wonderful people who call themselves violists. We are a collegial, cooperative, friendly, and helpful bunch. Our local, regional, national festivals and international congresses are cause for celebration and marked by conviviality. Perhaps Karen Ritscher[1] said it best when recently several of us from across America and Germany worked on an awkward viola music issue. In the midst of finding the solution, Karen blurted out: **"Violists helping violists!! That's why I love us!"**

I spent my youth engaged in a variety of activities, one of which was playing the violin. I didn't come to the realization that music was going to be my career until my early twenties—a very late decision. At that time, I wanted to be just like Mr. Paney, my high school orchestra director. It was in my first semester of college when I found the viola, or it found me. The viola and I instantly became, like any two consecutive bars of Mozart, a perfect match! I finished a Bachelor in Music Education; my dream was to become a Mr. Paney, not a soloist or orchestral player.

Thomas Tatton

I went on to complete my Masters in Music Education, and finally to the University of Illinois for work on my DMA in Viola Performance. There my future collided with my dream. During my first week on campus, I chanced upon a master teacher, Paul Rolland, sharing his love of the violin with one, very young child. The child may have been six, or so. I was completely mesmerized. So, now I'm enrolled in a doctoral program in performance, and my heart ached to become a Mr. Paney with a Mr. Rolland thrown into the dream.

My first real, full-time job (1970) was at Whittier College where, among my other duties, I performed: I gave yearly campus recitals and lots of chamber music concerts. I often moved off campus to strategically selected venues that would help me recruit music students to Whittier. In 1980, I moved to University of the Pacific, a larger campus but with similar duties. During this time, I was practicing two and sometimes three hours a day.

1985 brought my first chance to realize my dream of becoming "Mr. Paney." A high school orchestra job opened up and I grabbed it. But, what to do with my joy of playing the viola, the district was certainly not going to pay me for performing! I quickly came up with yearly recitals for the music students in the district. Titles became part of the fun: "Dr. Tom, Going for Baroque," "Dr. Tom, Romantically Involved," "Thoroughly Modern Dr. Tom," "Dr. Tom and Friends," and other such catchy

titles. You can just imagine the repertoire. I enjoyed a skilled faculty pianist who went along for the sheer joy of it. I gave sixteen such concerts over the years.

In 2008 I came to the end of my formal teaching career. My first retirement project: record the six Bach cello suites. Not for sale, but for me! The two-CD set was used for birthday and Christmas presents—a great hit, by the way. Early in my preparation I noticed my library held six different viola editions of the suites. I started comparing the editions as part of my recording project. Curiosity came over me and I decided to find out how many viola editions were currently in use. There are at least 16! Out of this came the article on the "Bach Violoncello Suites Arranged for Viola: Available Editions Annotated."[2]

Now retired, I perform occasionally, often at church, while giving clinics[3], occasional master classes and judging. I practice because I want to sound my very best, always. Frankly, I enjoy my practice! Over time I have gradually reduced my practice time. Muscles began to ache and my first finger, right hand, acquired a touch of arthritis. In January, COVID-19 hit and the subsequent shut down of businesses including my gym. I had controlled the normal aches and pains of aging with a little blue pill[4] and by stretching with resistance and walking with some elevation on the dreaded treadmill. As my gym was closed, I had to be creative. So, I keep taking that little blue pill and, I do morning stretches, deep pushups against the kitchen counter, some squats, toe touching and daily walks of between two and four miles.

Since everything was shut down, I created a new project for myself: re-visit the Bach Suites and memorize as much as possible, especially the Preludes. Recently, my daily practice consists of two sessions of 30 minutes each. I don't/can't run twenty minutes of Flesch scales and then some Dont or Ševčík exercises like I did when I was younger, much younger. I warm up on variety of less difficult pieces that I have played in church like *Amazing Grace*, the violin edition of *Ashokan Farewell* and *Ave Maria.*[5] This allows me to practice some shifting and vibrato while working out the "kinks" in my first finger. Since I have limited practice time, that time must be used efficiently. I have employed every practice technique and strategy I learned over the years. Actually, smart practice techniques have been a subject of my interest for some time.[6] Last fall, I gathered up my ideas and gave a clinic (Salon) titled: "The Joy of Practice" for the Northern California Viola Society.[7]

More troublesome than the minor physical problems are the mental difficulties that have cropped up in my maturity. For one, it seems like it takes me longer to memorize music than I remember! Another issue is staying focused. When giving talks on creative practice techniques, one of my main points is: "Be There." In other words, rid yourself of outside distractions, concentrate on the task at hand.[8] For some reason, that is more difficult for me now. I can start my practice session clear headed and focused, but little gremlins[9] creep in where they didn't in earlier years. This often occurs when I am trying to memorize a section or movement or, when playing by memory. I have Preludes I, II and III memorized and can play them musically, but the fifth suite Prelude is proving to be difficult. The fugue is four pages long and a bit complicated. I have it committed to memory, but when the little gremlins creep in I make errors—it's frustrating. Lastly, not always, but occasionally, when I am playing something fast, it feels like my brain has difficulty keeping up with my fingers.

I have a good friend, Julie Howard, who is a trained gerontologist.[10] I asked her if what I am experiencing is normal for my age. Julie said:

> What Tom is experiencing is considered normal as part of aging. However, what makes Tom quite remarkable is his ability to use his cognitive reserve. To experience some degree of cognitive slowing—the ability to process information at a slower rate—is an expected part of what many older adults show in studies that focus on cognitive processing speed. According to a study by the National Institute on Health[11], from midlife onwards, cognitive processing speed declines with age. This slowing occurs in otherwise healthy, normal adults who show no sign of a neurodegenerative disease. In addition to cognitive slowing, many older adults also have difficulty with focused attention. So, while it may be difficult for Tom to memorize a new piece, the fifth suite Prelude for example, he is really doing two things at once. His attention is divided between his cognitive task to *memorize* and his fine motor skills to *play* the piece. Staying focused while learning a new skill or task is a normal challenge for any age. Having difficulty with divided attention is a common complaint for many older adults. A USC-led study[12] finds that seniors' attention shortfall is associated with the locus coeruleus, a tiny region of the brainstem that connects to many other parts of the brain. The locus coeruleus helps focus brain activity during periods of stress or excitement. "Increased distractibility is a sign of cognitive aging," said senior author Mara Mather, an expert on memory and professor at the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. The study found that older adults are even more susceptible to distraction under stress or emotional arousal, indicating that the nucleus's ability to intensify focus weakens over time. "Trying hard to complete a task increases emotional arousal, so when younger adults try hard, this should increase their ability to ignore distracting information," said Mather, who has a joint appointment at the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. "But for older adults, trying hard may make both what they are trying to focus on, and other information stand out more."
>
> Recalling my previous comments, Tom's ability to use his cognitive reserve, which is one's ability to find alternate ways to do tasks, relying on the richness of one's cognitive reserve (education, social networks, leisure or work experiences etc.), he demonstrates a wonderful example of successful healthy aging! Continuing to challenge himself with tasks that may even create difficulty or frustration will be just the types of opportunities for him to continue to foster his neuronal growth! This neuronal growth or plasticity can stave off neurodegenerative diseases and at a minimum contribute to overall quality of life! Keep on playing Tom!

These are trying times yet the threads that bind us will surely hold. Now is an excellent time for reflection and it's always a great time to be a violist. I am given hope by the many violists who played brilliantly into their 60s and 70s. I was fortunate to hear, in live performance, many including Joseph de Pasquale, William Primrose, Walter Trampler and Emanuel Vardi. They gave me inspiration then, they give me hope now.

It is comforting to know that what I am experiencing and have described is a normal part of the aging process. Today there is army of outstanding violists of all ages, many more than I remember as I grew up. Several will weave their magic at our 2021 AVS Festival in Knoxville (look for the announcements). It is my wish that all violists live to play well into their 70s and beyond, if they wish. They will have to make adjustments in

their practice and playing along the way, as I did. It is possible to enjoy the viola well into maturity and, as Julie mentioned, "contribute to the overall quality of life"! That is the promise of those who came before us. And, as we lead longer, healthier lives, playing into our maturity is the hope we give to those violists who will follow us.

I believe I will know when it is time to close my case. Until then I will continue to enjoy my viola and share my music. It won't be by memory though! Yet, it is comforting that I know the music well enough to play from my heart!

Yikes! I'm 76 and still in love with my viola!

Now retired, "Dr. Tom" Tatton enjoys sharing his love of music through performing, by giving occasional clinics and workshops and doing some judging. A former AVS Board member and president (1994-1998) he remains active helping to provide opportunities for violists in both the AVS and the Northern California Viola Society. Dr. Tom and his wife Polly live on the beautiful coast of central California.

Notes

[1] Violist Karen Ritscher is recognized internationally as a leading pedagogue and performer. Based in New York City she currently teaches at the Manhattan School of Music and New York University.

[2] Thomas Tatton, "Bach Violoncello Suites Arranged for Viola: Available Editions Annotated", *Journal of the American Viola Society*, Volume 27, Summer 2011 Online issue: 5.

[3] One fun clinic is: "Bach, How Suite It Is." I have a chance to share my understanding of Bach and his Suites, pick a suite then talk about and play each of the movements.

[4] Aleve.

[5] John Newton, *Amazing Grace,* arr. by Samuel Stokes, 2016; Jay Unger, *Ashokan Farewell,* arr. by Calvin Custer, Swinging Door Music, 1983; Franz Schubert, *Ave Maria*, arr. by Doris Preucil, Suzuki Viola School, Volume 7, Summy-Birchard, 2000.

[6] Thomas Tatton, "Effective Practice Techniques", *American String Teacher*, Spring 1997: 57; and Thomas Tatton, "Guide to Home Practice for String Orchestra Students and Their Directors" *CMEA Magazine*, vol. 47 #2 Summer 2012: 15.

[7] May 11, 2019.

[8] Today it's called mindfulness

[9] Stray thoughts.

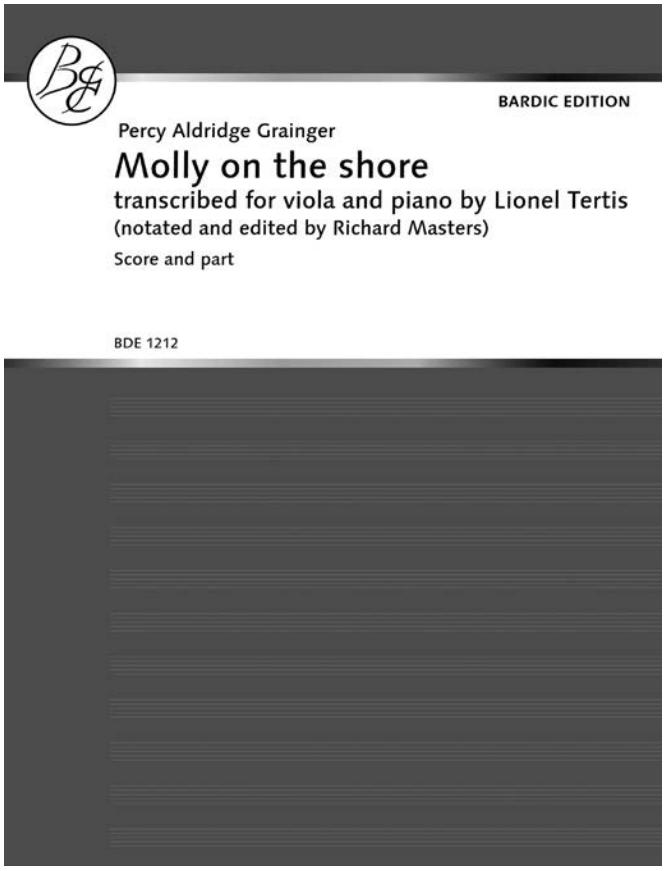
[10] Julie Howard, MSG, Director of Residency Development and Communications, Villaggio, San Luis Obispo (MSG = Master of Science in Gerontology).

[11] www.ncbi.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3503892

[12] www.news.usc.edu/142450/distracted-older-adults/

Irish Melodies

By Gregory K. Williams

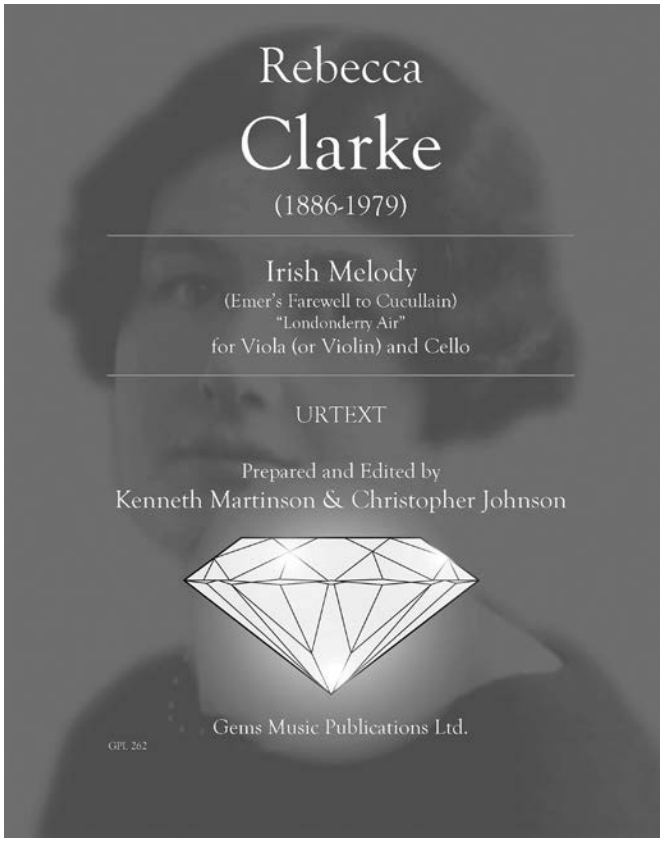


***Molly on the Shore: Irish Reel,* by Percy Aldridge Grainger**
Transcribed by Lionel Tertis, notated from the recording and edited by Richard Masters.
Bardic Edition, BDE 1212

Molly on the Shore: Irish Reel, adapted for viola by the Australian-born Percy Aldridge Grainger (1882–1961), is better-known by its string orchestra version. *Molly on the Shore* is based on two reels from Cork, Ireland, "Molly on the Shore" and "Temple Hill," both found in a collection of Irish Folk Tunes compiled by Charles Villiers Stanford. The piece was originally set in 1907 as a birthday gift for Grainger's mother, with a dedication to the recently deceased Edvard Grieg. Grainger later arranged it for wind band in 1920. Fritz Kreisler created an arrangement of "Molly on the Shore" for solo violin and piano, an arrangement with which Grainger was not thrilled. Itzhak Perlman and Rachel Barton Pine's recordings of Kreisler's arrangement show the melodic line at the beginning of the arrangement is stinted by the violin's lack of a C string, preventing the violin from reaching the low Ds in the opening of the piece. The fast tempos (with a Presto marked at 120 per half note) in Kreisler's arrangement cause a loss of clarity on shorter articulations.

Lionel Tertis took a turn at transcribing and recording "Molly on the Shore" for viola and piano in 1923, with Frank St. Leger as his pianist. Unlike in the violin arrangement, the viola arrangement successfully maintains many of the original voicings from the string orchestra version. Tertis creates embellishments that are not in the violin or string orchestra arrangements.

Richard Masters's 2019 edition published by Bardic Edition Music Publishers is based on Tertis's 1923 recording. Masters captures several of Tertis's performance details, even going so far as to add articulation suggestions, such as "rough" at measure 75 in a passage of sliding doublestops that are not designed to be graceful. Masters also successfully incorporates an ascending glissando from Tertis's performance practice at measure 137. Although this rendition captures many playful moments from the original string orchestra version, the viola and piano instrumentation contains nearly uninterrupted passagework—allowing for few places between phrases in which to breathe. Perhaps the point of a reel is to keep the dance moving, almost breathlessly, and let the melodic line meander from one phrase to the next. This piece would serve as an excellent encore piece on a recital for any advanced-level violist.



Irish Melody (Emer's Farewell to Cucullain): "Londonderry Air"
Rebecca Clarke, prepared and edited by Kenneth Martinson and Christopher Johnson
Gems Music Publications, GPL 262

Keeping consistent with fresh arrangements of celebrated Irish melodies (coincidentally themed), another publication worth examining is *Irish Melody (Emer's Farewell to Cucullain): "Londonderry Air,"* which was adapted in 1918 by Rebecca Clarke for viola and cello duo. Clarke's setting of *Irish Melody* is based upon texts written by the Irish poet and songwriter Alfred Perceval Graves (1846–1931) that were set to the melody of Londonderry Air in Charles Villiers Stanford's *Songs of Old Ireland.* In the preface of this edition, Christopher Johnson indicates that Clarke incorporated plagal cadences at the ends of phrases as a direct homage to Stanford's edition. Gems Publications produced the first published edition, based on Clarke's manuscripts, which were part of a private collection held by Royal Academy of Music viola professor John White until 2015; the manuscripts have since become part of the Royal Academy's Rare Manuscript collection, along with the manuscripts of Clarke's *Lullaby and Grotesque.*

Rebecca Clarke's *Irish Melody* was first performed in 1918 with Clarke playing viola and her frequent collaborating partner May Mukle performing on cello. The duo used *Irish Melody* as a companion performance piece to Clarke's better-known work for viola and cello, *Lullaby and Grotesque.* In her diaries, Clarke noted that she completed a modified arrangement of *Irish Melody* for violin and cello in 1927, to be performed by Constance and Margaret Izard at Aeolian Hall in London.

While *Irish Melody*'s well-known melody is easily recognizable to most audience members, the setting of this much-loved Irish folk song features characteristics distinct to the compositional style of Rebecca Clarke. Her fascination with open harmonies laden with parallel fourths and thick luscious doublestops in both parts indicate a clear link to the soundscape Clarke developed in her *Lullaby*, composed in the same year. While this work was originally composed for a concert series that fundraised for the American Red Cross during World War I, Martinson and Johnson's edition of *Irish Melody* arrives at a time in which performers can console audiences remotely, evoke nostalgia, and mitigate a yearning to connect with loved ones in-person again.

The Tertis-Masters rendition of Percy Grainger's *Molly on the Shore* is a new music summer pick for its lightheartedness, while Clarke's *Irish Melody* (edited by Martinson and Johnson) allows for a cathartic outlet sorely needed in these challenging times.

Dr. Gregory K. Williams is on the viola and chamber music faculty at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, City University of New York (CUNY), and has cultivated a private viola studio in the New York metropolitan area. He is a Co-Assistant Director and Viola Faculty member of Mountain Springs Music Festival in Draper, Utah. He also performs as Assistant Principal Violist of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Principal Violist of the Berkshire Opera Festival, and Violist of the Golden Williams Duo.

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Eligibility:
All entrants must be members of the American Viola Society who are currently enrolled in a university or who have completed any degree within twelve months of the entry deadline.

General Guidelines:
Entries must be original contributions to the field of viola research and may address issues concerning viola literature, history, performers, and pedagogy. Entries must not have been published in any other publication or be summaries of another author's work. The body of the work should be 1500–3500 words in length and should adhere to standard criteria for a scholarly paper. For more details on standard criteria for a scholarly paper, please consult one of these sources:

Bellman, Jonathan D. *A Short Guide to Writing about Music*. 2nd ed. New York: Pearson, 2007.
Herbert, Trevor. *Music in Words: A Guide to Writing about Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
Wingell, Richard J. *Writing about Music: An Introductory Guide*. 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2009.

Entries should include relevant footnotes and bibliographic information and may include short musical examples. Papers originally written for school projects may be submitted but should conform to these guidelines; see judging criteria for additional expectations of entries. Any questions regarding these guidelines or judging criteria should be sent to info@avsnationaloffice.org.

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A panel of violists and scholars will evaluate submissions and then select a maximum of three winning entries.

Entries will be judged according to scholarly criteria, including statement of purpose, thesis development, originality and value of the research, organization of materials, quality of writing, and supporting documentation.

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(Continued on page 2)
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