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The Contemporary Revolution—Evolution of Viola Repertoire

A supporting document submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts
in Music

by

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ABSTRACT

The Contemporary Revolution—Evolution of Viola Repertoire

by

Jordan Warmath

Today, it is somewhat rare to attend a classical music concert be it a quartet performance, orchestral concert, or solo recital and have a contemporary or “new” work on the program. What was once common practice in Beethoven’s time must once again be embraced as common practice among performers if the viola repertoire and the classical genre are to flourish. It is simply no longer enough to have mastered the 20th century demands of the instrument as a performer but rather all its satellite components as well.

The contemporary violist bears little resemblance to a violist of the 19th century. Some 200 years ago, playing a viola meant being a performer of the “lesser” sibling to the violin. Today, etudes for the viola are detrimentally tilted toward the romantic, while the majority of the standard viola repertoire is decidedly contemporary. The standard etudes are largely antiquated transpositions of 18th century classicism whose application proves less helpful as the decades pass by. No longer do the tonalities of Ševčík, Kreutzer, and Mazas

bear resemblance to the music they attempt to help facilitate. How does one rectify a pedagogy that has fallen so far behind in preparing its acolytes for the true challenges of its repertoire?

Part I of this document describes the current progression of pedagogical literature and technical studies at the intermediate level. This pedagogical progression is then augmented by the inclusion of contemporary literature and alternative etudes within the framework of the standard repertoire. Part II discusses the current advanced pedagogical progression and its standard accompanying etudes and technical studies. This advanced repertoire is explained further and altered to incorporate appropriately challenging contemporary literature. A new set of etudes composed in the last century will then be included to help the violist overcome the differing technical hurdles these pieces present. This part of the document will contain specific examples of contemporary pedagogical literature to highlight how a different progression of etudes, studies, scales, and repertoire can aid the student in attaining success in the landscape of a 21st century violist.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Description of Purpose

I have chosen to discuss the contemporization of viola literature as the focal point of my research in an effort to aid violists and future pedagogues in the necessary restructuring of viola pedagogy and to illuminate how and why such alterations are overdue. In this vein, I propose that the student violist focus on contemporary pedagogical viola literature as early as possible as that is where the majority of the instrument's advanced literature is situated. For example, I believe in introducing the chromatic scale before any diatonic scales as not only does this prevent early bias towards diatonicism, mitigating the statement that "contemporary music sounds weird," but also clearly maps out the fingerboard for the student. Later portions of this paper will outline the plethora of benefits gleaned from the early introduction of contemporary tonality and techniques.

In this paper, "contemporary" works will be defined as compositions published from **1945-present**. My research will build upon the pedagogical work already published by my colleague, Molly Gebrian, in her dissertation entitled "Rethinking Viola Pedagogy: Preparing Violists for the Challenges of Twentieth-Century Music."¹ Gebrian's dissertation focuses on an in-depth study of several etude books, demonstrating their use in solving technical issues presented by already standard pieces in contemporary viola literature. It is here where

¹ Molly Gebrian, "Rethinking Viola Pedagogy: Preparing Violists for the Challenges of Twentieth-Century Music" (DMA diss., Rice University, 2012), <https://login.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1468462583?accountid=4840>.

Gebrian and I part, I pair these new etude books with equally difficult contemporary compositions to be added to the viola repertoire.

Emily Jensenius's dissertation focuses on a similar topic: *An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Viola Works for Pedagogy of Contemporary Musical Styles and Techniques*.² Here Dr. Jensenius provides a detailed discussion on the inclusion of a specific set of contemporary works into the viola repertoire and highlights other etude collections in addition to the several that Dr. Gebrian discusses. I, however, will present a complete restructuring and comprehensive pedagogical progression of the viola literature with the incorporation of contemporary works, etudes, scales, and technical studies interspersed within the traditional pedagogical framework beginning at the intermediate level and progressing to the advanced. The importance of such a pedagogical overhaul lies in the refocusing of our pedagogy that highlights and enables the student to grasp contemporary technical demands in addition to those posed by Kriesler, Galamian, and Ševčík.

1.2 Motivation for Challenging the Status Quo

Why is it paramount that the standard viola pedagogy be rethought? My interest stems from a personal preference towards the study and performance of largely contemporary music. I define contemporary works as those written within last 35 years—the early 1980s to present. Audiences would undoubtedly disagree as music took an aurally contemporary turn in the first half of the 20th century. However, for the purposes of this document I have

² Emily Jensenius, "An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Viola Works for Pedagogy of Contemporary Musical Styles and Techniques" (DMA diss., Florida State University, 2014), <http://diginole.lib.fsu.islandora/object/fsu:185270/datastream/PDF/view>

defined “contemporary” as all works composed after 1945-present and while many of these works do lack a “normal” structure and tonality, most do not. But what does “contemporary” music sound like? What elements need to be altered for the audience to “dislike” contemporary music? Or, more clearly defined, what elements provoke audiences to feel that music is “hard” to listen to much less understand? Perhaps the simplest answer is the lack of a discernable or catchy melody or a “normal” tonal structure. The devolution of these components puts the works that lack them into the aurally contemporary category for the average listener. In high school I was fortunate enough to play in the New York Youth Symphony which performed three concerts a season, all of them in Carnegie Hall. Along with playing the seminal works of Mahler, Brahms, Prokofiev, and Beethoven, the NYYS performed *The Rite of Spring*, *Petrushka*, *Firebird*, and a newly commissioned work on every concert. While I loved Stravinsky and Mahler, I failed to understand and disliked the very tricky new music compositions entitled so gratuitously (or so I thought) as *Sacred Geometry*³ and *Among Joshua Trees*.⁴ Little did I know that I would learn invaluable skills from performing these enigmas and would later seek them out. In my junior year of high school, when given a choice by my viola teacher whether to play Hindemith or Bartók’s concerto for my undergraduate auditions, I chose the seemingly friendlier Hindemith.

My acumen for playing contemporary works began with my love for Hindemith’s *Der Schwanendreher* Concerto which I dutifully tackled successfully for my undergraduate auditions. Something about Hindemith’s veiled romanticism that inexorably overcomes its non-diatonic grounding drew me to his music. I found the rhythmic and chromatic tensions not only technically challenging but exhilarating. His music was an unexpected adventure, a

³ Andrew Norman: *Sacred Geometry* 2003.

⁴ Steven Gates: *Among Joshua Trees* 2004.

true gripping story whereas Schumann and Brahms felt conversely too predictable in their overt beauty and romanticism. Simply, their performance felt too prescribed by tradition. As a college freshman, I found myself quaking with fear while performing Hindemith's Sonata Opus 25 No.1 (1922), later performing Op.11 No.4 (1919) much more confidently. Here began my evolution as an artist, inspired by contemporary music, ignited by the not-so-contemporary Hindemith.

As I headed towards the end of my undergraduate experience, I found myself seeking out, albeit timidly at first, contemporary works. I premiered a small orchestral work by Rice University Professor Arthur Gottschalk and soon followed that with the compositions of my fellow students, culminating in the inclusion of a contemporary work by Sally Beamish, *That Recent Earth*, on my senior recital. Following my recital, I bravely tackled Ligeti's challenging viola sonata (1991-1994) despite largely lacking the technical understanding or practical etudes to be completely successful. It was here that I began questioning the practicality of our standard set of technical studies. They had to be missing *something* or should Ligeti have felt foreign and intangible, scary and unfamiliar? The contemporary works I was increasingly drawn to looked less and less familiar when paired with my standard technical practice, and I was unprepared to play them even after hundreds of hours of grueling etudes and scales. I hope that with the publication of this document, future music students and pedagogues might find themselves a pre-made solution to this problem. Here I will present a potential complete pedagogy or "how to" for preparedness for the preparation, performance, and practice of contemporary viola works.

When struggling with Ligeti's microtones, I sought the advice of my colleagues and was introduced to Garth Knox's 2009 *Viola Spaces* whose introduction aptly describes how I arrived at purchasing the volume:

When young musicians start to play contemporary music, many of them are discouraged by the complexity of what they are asked to do, and are ready to abandon the piece because it is 'too difficult.' I think the real problem is that there are too many problems all at the same time—notation, rhythm, unfamiliar symbols and an array of seemingly 'new' techniques, all to be tackled simultaneously.⁵

Garth Knox solves this problem by introducing a variety of extended techniques, one a time. For example, his volume contains a microtonal etude called *In Between* that proved immensely helpful with Ligeti. I found several other gems in the volume that helped me with a handful of difficult-to-grasp contemporary techniques such as the pizzicato etude, *9 Fingers*. It is fantastically fun, an excellent study on rhythm, two handed pizzicato technique, and can be performed as a solo work. Extended left hand and right hand pizzicato technique using nine of ten fingers is studied in this etude, as well as tricky rhythms such as 4 versus 3 between the two hands. The volume includes 7 other incredibly useful etudes based on contemporary technique. However, this is the only advanced etude book that truly addresses contemporary extended techniques in a beautifully enticing Campagnoli-esque fashion. I, in fact, needed more microtonal etudes to aid in my mastery of Ligeti's technical demands but resigned myself to make do with what I had. Since Garth Knox's publication of this volume, there has yet to be published a similarly helpful book of exercises even though the need for one grows daily.

Violists find themselves playing an ever-increasing variety of new and creative sounds from spectral works to percussive works where requests for instrument knocks or the

⁵Garth Knox, Introduction to *Viola Spaces, Book I* (New York: Schott, 2009).

bouncing of a rubber ball on the fingerboard are not incredibly unusual (Gubaidulina String Quartet no. 4). Ligeti's sonata is not the only well-known viola work whose technical demands cannot easily be practiced in pre-existing etudes. Morton Feldman's *The Viola in My life* (1970-71), Grisey's *Prologue* (1976) for solo viola, and *Embellie* (1981) by Xenakis all contain elements of metric ambiguity and explore the limits of the viola's sonoric capacity.⁶ Just reading Grisey's score is a feat of no small magnitude, and this exploration is largely unrepresented by any existing etude or preparatory piece. However, the inclusion of preparatory 12-tone, serial, and minimalist works performed prior to standard advanced repertoire would make the eventual study of Feldman, Grisey, and Xenakis tonally, rhythmically, and technically easier. An understanding of how to present a discernable tonal hierarchy via the differentiation in sound quality (*dolce*, ringing, aggressive) to highlight and depict a musical line separate of any connectivity between notes is the basic foundation upon which to produce these works. If a performer were unfamiliar in playing works that lack a clear melodic line or clear melodic connectivity between notes, this would prove prohibitively challenging absent any consideration of succeeding technically. As such, training the ear in addition to the technique is equally important. This is incredibly challenging when one considers the incipient romantic or classical tonality of all of the standard technical studies for the viola.

Despite the fact that the majority of the viola repertoire remains firmly rooted in the 20th and 21st century, the standard set of etudes used to prepare a student for this repertoire were composed primarily in the 17th-19th centuries. A standard but not comprehensive list includes:

⁶ Jensenius, 8.

- Jacques Mazas (1782-1849): *30 Etudes Spéciales, Op. 36*
- Jacob Dont (1815-1888): *24 Studies, Op. 37* (Preparatory Studies for Kreutzer and Rode)
- Rudolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), *42 Studies or Caprices for the Violin*
- Pierre Rode (1774-1830): *24 Caprices for Violin*
- Bartolomeo Campagnoli (1721-1857): *41 Caprices for Viola, Op. 22*
- Otakar Ševčík (1852-1934): *School of Violin Technique* (Op. 1 Books 1-4), *School of Bowing Technique* (Op. 2), *Changes of Position and Preparatory Scale Studies* (Op. 8), and *School of Violin Technique*

Additionally, all of these etudes were transposed from the violin. Not a single one, with the exception of Campagnoli, was composed with the viola in mind. Conversely, there are several 21st century etude collections that are not only worth mentioning, but are technically quite useful. However, the real question is this: why are these contemporary etude books not part of the standard viola pedagogy when they are undoubtedly a needed and useful pedagogical and technical aid?

Notably, the renowned player and pedagogue, Lillian Fuchs (1901-1995), composed *12 Caprices for Viola* (1950), *16 Fantasy Etudes for Viola Solo* (1959), and *Fifteen Characteristic Studies for Viola* (1965). Additionally, Maurice Vieux (1884-1951), composed three etude books worth noting, which I, incidentally, used to aid in my pursuit of Hindemith's Op. 11 No. 4: *20 Études* for viola solo (1927), *10 Études sur des traits d'orchestre* (1928), and *10 Études sur les intervalles* for viola solo (1931). Although the previously mentioned six etude books were composed in the 20th century, they are largely tonal works. They do display moments of intense chromaticism but are rather romantic in

atmosphere, largely standing in the realm of diatonic understanding. They fail to address extended secondary techniques and stray away from complex rhythms. As such, they are not ideal exercises for the student who is attempting to come to grips with contemporary repertoire.

During the pursuit of my Master's degree, I ran into a similar problem learning the Schnittke concerto as I did attempting to learn Ligeti. I found myself lacking in certain technical aspects that I had not anticipated. Certain double stop patterns were exceedingly difficult, strange arpeggios appeared whose patterns I had never practiced, and I was expected to be able to nail incredibly high notes out of thin air. These could be described as typical technical requirements of a virtuosic violinist. However, in today's 21st century classical landscape, composers are demanding more of the violist, presenting the viola as a virtuosic solo instrument—no longer do violists need transpositions of Paganini's La Campanella to show off. The viola itself is slowly gaining its own contemporary, virtuosic works. However, as a performer, not only have such technical demands proven to be exciting but also immensely frustrating as we are not prepared for these demands by any of our etudes, technical exercises, or for that matter, scales! Long gone are the days of simple G major arpeggios or Major/minor 6th double stop sections as made infamous by the Walton viola concerto. Now, violists must contend with Major/minor 9th and 7th variations, diminished 13 chords, and mile-long leaps in non-diatonic keys. Practicing the blues scale at this point would even prove incredibly useful, perhaps more so than the scalar exercises of Flesch and Galamian. Standard arpeggios and scales are not designed to prepare the student for such demands as Schnittke, Gubaidulina, Penderecki, and Takemitsu. Nor do the shifting exercises of Ševčík. In which Ševčík exercise does the student learn shifting in minor 9ths in

a non-diatonic key? Do these exercises even exist? Are they even necessary? Why aren't we using or composing them and, most importantly, why are teachers waiting to introduce them when a student is playing at the intermediate level? What are we waiting for?

1.3 Previously Established Research

As I mentioned previously, while other documents have been written on this topic, most of them fail to present a clear restructuring of the viola literature, or, as Gebrian discusses, focus on using contemporary etudes to facilitate the teaching of already standard technique and works. Similar to Gebrian's dissertation, Emily Jensenius's complementary document entitled "An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Viola Works for Pedagogy of Contemporary Musical Styles and Techniques," expands upon Gebrian's findings and provides the reader "with a longer list of etudes and concert studies to choose from in addition to lists of selected works for solo viola and works for viola and piano."⁷ This document, in contrast to Gebrian's, focuses on the inclusion of contemporary etudes and pieces *in place of or in concert with* already standard works where these new inclusions aid in the future attainment of standard "contemporary" viola repertoire and encourage the exploration of contemporary works as part of the standard oeuvre. Examples of this would be the inclusion of the fantastic Schnittke and Gubaidulina viola concertos and Kancheli's *Styx* into the standard viola repertoire as potential alternatives and additions to the Bartók and Walton viola concertos. Such substitutions or alternatives are then prepared by the earlier inclusion of shorter contemporary works that teach romanticism in a contemporary context

⁷Emily Jensenius, "An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Viola Works for Pedagogy of Contemporary Musical Styles and Techniques" (DMA diss., Florida State, 2014), <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/islandora/object/fsu%3A185270>.

and force standard technical considerations in a non-diatonic framework; smooth, non-diatonic shifting a la contemporary Ševčík being a fine example.

Problematically, these works are often extraordinarily challenging, particularly the newer viola concertos. The student must possess an incredible mastery of bow control and left hand technique to perform them convincingly, a mastery that generally isn't attained until graduate school. However, this need no longer be the case. These works can and should be performed by undergraduate students as with greater technical difficulty there also lies increased virtuosity, unexplored territory, and generally greater excitement for both the player and the audience. With the inclusion of both contemporary etudes and pedagogical works early in the teaching process these challenging pieces can be mastered at a much earlier level.

In this sense, my document focuses on creating a more successful violist by “modernizing” the standard viola repertoire. Now the student can play a progressive curriculum that includes more contemporary works (post-1945) and omits some classical and baroque transcriptions that serve as place holders for better suited works that have yet to be popularized (largely due to the fact that our pedagogy has no means of preparing their introduction technically). With the inclusion of strategically placed contemporary works and etudes, the required technical facility to successfully play these advanced contemporary works can be attained more readily and quite possibly much earlier without the student having to learn their technical facility in utero, a solution to which I will outline here.

1.4 Qualifying Criteria for Works Selected

First and foremost, all of the contemporary works included or inserted into the standard viola repertoire as proposed by this document must be “contemporary” as described by the following criteria:

- Post tonal harmony
 - Pentatonic, octatonic, modal, or whole tone scales
- Dissonance, resolved or unresolved
- Chromaticism
 - Non-existent keys (F# and G#)
- Extended and Secondary techniques
 - Microtones
 - Left hand pizzicato
 - Natural or fingered harmonics
 - *Tremolo*
 - Bowing behind the bridge or on parts of the wood of the instrument
 - Knocking on the instrument for percussive effect
 - *Ponticello, col legno, and sul tasto*
 - Overpressure
 - *Spazzolato* (“a bow stroke involving bridge-to-fingerboard motion”)⁸
- Non-diatonic pitches
- Complex rhythmic patterns
 - Beat displacement
 - Unbarred music
 - Irregular meter
 - Irregular subdivisions of the beat

These elements do not necessarily need to appear in a work to make such a piece contemporary, nor does their inclusion inherently elevate a work to contemporary status. For example, the extended techniques of *tremolo*, harmonics, *ponticello*, and *col legno*, appear in pieces composed as early as the 17th century and are not, by definition, “contemporary”

⁸ Jensenius, “An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Viola Works for Pedagogy of Contemporary Musical Styles and Techniques,” 3.

elements. *Tremolo*, for example, first appeared in the 17th century and can be found in Purcell's *King Arthur* (1691) and Corelli's music, depicted as repeated eighths with slurs.⁹ However, what makes *tremolo* a potential element of contemporary music is in the composers degree of use and its combination with other elements, if any. For example, Luciano Berio's (1925-2003) *Sequenza VI* (1967) presents a work of chords performed with near constant *tremolo* interspersed with melodic fragments. The two gestures of the work, chordal and melodic, sound decidedly contemporary in juxtaposition with one another. The pervasive *tremolo* becomes almost the calling card of the work, and within the first fifteen seconds of the piece the audience is well aware of its contemporary standing. It is the contents of Berio's melodic gestures and his chosen means of sonic presentation that mark his work as contemporary where the abundance of *tremolo* is a vehicle for his desired expressive atmosphere, a vehicle by which to induce anxiety and anticipation in the listener. Berio's program notes state, "as fast as possible," "avoid prolonged patterns of regular articulation," and "sometimes the broken tremolo can be momentarily substituted by legato tremolo and/or arpeggios."¹⁰ This extreme use of a given technique is a frequent element of contemporary composition.

In addition to these required contemporary elements, the works I have selected to be placed within the standard viola repertoire are easily programmable on a recital. They are either works written for solo viola, viola and orchestra, viola and choir, or viola and ensemble. Those works written for viola and ensemble, orchestra or otherwise, must have a

⁹ Jackson, Roland John. *Performance Practice: A Dictionary-guide for Musicians*. New York: Routledge, 2005, 409.

¹⁰ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza VI per viola sola* (London: Universal Edition, 1970), performance notes.

piano reduction to facilitate their performance in a standard recital. Those that do not are placed in the repertoire as preparatory works for more programmable, stylistically related works. Additionally, the etudes that have been included to accompany this new, more contemporary pedagogical progression are easily attainable.

I.5 Extended Techniques

A frequent comment from performers, particularly students, regarding the intimidating nature of contemporary works surrounds its frequent incorporation of secondary or extended techniques. Everything from knocking on the instrument, to microtones, and *spazzolato* are becoming pervasively prevalent technical hurdles. In particular, microtones have become common inclusions in post-1945, contemporary works. However, microtones have been in use in Middle Eastern music for centuries. Progressions such as C, D, and E-half flat are common and par for the course. However, for the student violist, an introduction to microtones seems unlikely before the advanced or undergraduate level. Despite their rise in popularity, they are mostly absent from intermediate pedagogical literature (understandably so), difficult to produce accurately, and lack a common means of musical notation. As a result, microtones are considered an extended technique, a device by which to explore different sonorities on the viola and will, likely, remain an extended technique. Although not commonly used as the main device of a work—Ligeti's Sonata being the exception—microtones are commonly present in parts of a work. However, commissions by the world's foremost contemporary quartet, the Kronos Quartet, have inspired composers to incorporate a wide variety of extended techniques like microtones, into their new compositions: electronic instruments, recordings, and bowed wine glasses to name a few. As

a result, the above list of contemporary elements is constantly growing and evolving, an evolution that hopefully will result in a standardized notation for microtonality.

In 1937 John Cage stated, “whereas in the past, the point of disagreement has been between dissonance and consonance, it will be, in the immediate future, between noise and so-called musical sounds.”¹¹ While the extreme use of tremolo in Berio’s *Sequenza VI* highlights how a standard device can become contemporary, the 20th and 21st century have been marked by the creation of new, extended techniques. In 1938 John Cage composed a work for prepared piano, effectively inventing the instrument. Essentially, the performer could place any object on the strings inside the piano as long as the placement was reversible and produced the described, click, clank, bang, thud, bonk, or buzz. Objects such as erasers, pencils, and paper clips are among just a few of the potential options. From here, composers strove to explore other pathways of creativity.

George Crumb in his piece, *Black Angels* (1970), premiered by the Kronos Quartet, called for bowed wine glasses, for the players to play their instruments while wearing thimbles, and to produce pedal tones via overpressure among a plethora of other extended techniques. Extended technical demands such as these are not overly common but no longer are they rare and the 21st century violist should be prepared to tackle them.

Like George Crumb many composers call their performers to do more than just play their instrument. Frequently they become singers, exclaiming words or numbers in a variety of languages (Crumb), or to become percussionists, shaking maracas, bouncing balls on their

¹¹ In: “The Future of Music: Credo” (1937); in: *Silence: lectures and writings* by John Cage (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2001).

fingerboards (Gubaidulina) or banging on triangles and tambourines. Even standard bowing techniques have been expanded to the realm of contemporary extended secondary techniques. A prime example being extending bowing technique to include bowing on, behind, or very close to the bridge, on the fingerboard, on the fingerboard behind the left hand, overpressure, bowing only at the frog or tip, fast bow with light bow pressure, *col legno tratto* (bowing with the wood), *jete* (bouncing the bow), and *col legno battuto* (striking with the wood).¹² These markings are prevalent in contemporary works where the instrumentalist frequently has to switch between natural bowing and some form of extended bowing like *col legno* or even *pizzicato*. Often this becomes mind-bendingly difficult as the brain struggles to keep up with the rapidly changing contact point of the bow. Additionally, such an alteration of bowing style is neither taught nor often practiced. How does one exactly establish the stylistic difference between *col legno battuto*, *jete*, and *col legno tratto*? Is standard *col legno tratto* the most lyrical and *col legno battuto* the epitome of a percussive element with the bow? The answers to these questions are dependent upon their context and usage in a work and highlights the ever-growing nebulous nature of extended secondary technique. Krzysztof Penderecki's 1960 *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* employs many of these extended bow techniques in its large string ensemble to profound effect, resulting in a striking atmosphere of pain. The work's longstanding importance as an epitome of the potential power of contemporary composition makes its performance practice of *jete* and *col legno* as the gold standard for these techniques' production.

¹² Matthew Burtner, "Making Noise: Extended Techniques After Experimentalism," *Newmusicbox*, March 1, 2005, accessed May 17, 2017, 2005. <http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/making-noise-extended-techniques-after-experimentalism/>.

Like extended bow technique, harmonics are rising in popularity as composers strive to explore different sound worlds. In 1995, La Monte Young composed a 90 minute work for string quartet called *Chromos Kristalla* that exclusively employs natural harmonics in which each string is specifically tuned. The end of the Penderecki cadenza (1988) contains tricky fingered harmonics. Even Béla Bartók employs a few harmonics in his 1945 viola concerto. Harmonics, as a sonic technique, seems to have taken a step out of the world of romanticism, à la Paganini, where it was originally used as a means of virtuosic display. Now it has adopted the role of adding gravitas to a portion of a work by altering the sound color of a composition. Such an evolution of initial intention is common to the techniques that often define or are contained in contemporary music. Nonetheless, like many other extended techniques, violists very rarely practice harmonics. Now, in the last half century, they have become prevalent in contemporary works giving rise to the necessity of their practice and study. Garth Knox has tackled this paucity of pedagogical instruction with his inclusion of *Harmonic Horizons* in his Viola Spaces publication. As such, techniques like harmonics need to be reexamined and emphasized by the pedagogical literature, where necessary, to ensure the student's mastery.

If a pedagogue were to produce a diet of study for the mastery of these techniques, natural and fingered harmonics would top the list. Harmonics are both simple and confusing, a dichotomy that is not lost on any student who has ever attempted to perform them. Some works depict the desired pitch while other composers notate the method of their production. The latter is far more prevalent. However, an awareness of how to produce notated pitches requires an understanding of the harmonic series which, at best, is studied only for a moment in upper level music theory. A simple chart of this can be found either on the internet, in a

music theory text book, or notated in Sibelius or Finale in less than ten minutes. The process of practicing the harmonic series is even simpler, though the execution can be difficult at first. The student should learn to produce a 2 or 3 octave g major scale and a G-flat major scale (for example) using fingered and natural harmonics. Achieving this is a bit tricky: the student can either “fish” around for the pitches on the viola and write the fingerings down as necessary or they can study a cheat sheet of sorts describing where the pitches can be found. An hour or so of attempting to produce and find the notes for a 2 or 3 octave G major and G-flat major scale would prove to be a rapid and highly successful education in harmonics. Ultimately, the goal is to produce all scales, where possible, in 3 octaves using natural and fingered harmonics. This would be followed by a study of all forms of *col legno*, microtonality, and non-diatonic shifting. The order of this progression is intentional. The study of harmonics teaches the ear to listen carefully while instructing the hand how to do something that is perhaps uncomfortable, strange, and even difficult without adding tension to the left hand, squeezing the viola so to speak. Here the student also learns that the contact point and speed of the bow hold great power and importance when ensuring that harmonics speak. Multitasking is coming to the fore here.

A focus needs to be made, as soon as possible, on non-diatonic shifting: shifting outside the context of tonality or a hierarchy of pitch. This is normally reserved for the more advanced student as such shifts are inherently hard to perform as they are hard to hear and intrinsically lack any musical connectivity. I fear that we teach young violists how to shift solely inside a tonal context, and when it comes time to learn the Penderecki Cadenza or Gubaidulina’s concerto or even Bartók for that matter, this form of technical practice is simply not enough. I personally experienced this frustration. I know where high C (C5) on

the A string resides, but both my brain and my hand didn't know how to get there from B-flat in first position on the A string. Luckily, Helen Callus has solved this in her book, *One Step Scales*, where students practicing shifting from B-flat to B, back to B-flat, and then B-flat to C and back to B-flat and so on. Up and down the fingerboard, on every string, with each finger. She terms this exercise "Interval Leaps, Single Notes." This same exercise is used for double stops as well. A complimentary exercise, easier in many ways, is the first presented in the book. Students shift on their first finger from B to C, C to C#, C# to D and so on, again doing this exercise on every finger and every string. Not only do her exercises lack a key base, but they also map out the fingerboard extraordinarily well. Next the focus is switched to the bow, where bow control becomes paramount and attention to sound production a necessity.

Bow control must be established akin to the first few exercises in Ivo-Jan Van der Werff's *Notebook for Viola Players*, discussed more fully in Part I. Fortunately, *col legno* is not very difficult and a brief study is all that would be required, providing a break from the intense focus on the left hand. Garth Knox's etude, "Up, Down, Sideways, Round" would prove an excellent augmentation of the study of *col legno* and bow control in general. Knox's etude is decidedly not *col legno* focused but rather introduces the wide variety of sounds produced by different uses and placements of the bow. Here, the notes can be slightly altered if too difficult, but the implementation of this technique and awareness of bow control would prove immensely helpful in tackling a wide variety of bowing styles, from *col legno* to *sul tasto* to *ponticello* and everything in between.

It is clear upon studying contemporary viola repertoire that not only does a restructuring of pedagogy for the right-hand need to occur but also the left hand as outlined

by the incorporation of extended techniques like microtonality in contemporary viola repertoire. Along these lines, it is immensely helpful to study microtones prior to an in-depth examination of shifting. Once the student can shift reliably, around the advanced intermediate level which I will discuss further in Part I, the examination of microtones will aid the ear in listening more carefully to the pitches in between the shift—the notes passed along the way that inform the left hand’s destination. In this initial study of microtones, standard diatonic scales should be practiced with every note half flat and then every note a quarter flat, and then alternating these two. This is painstaking and difficult to listen to but the student will discover that not only do whole worlds lie between C and C# but that in these in-between spaces, one can use pitch as an expressive, musical element. Moreover, when a student’s awareness of pitch is fine tuned in such a manner, teaching non-diatonic shifting becomes remarkably easier. Shifting from B to G-flat becomes merely a matter of hearing all the pitches in between and waiting until G-flat arrives. To arrive at this point, where this particular style of technical study proves helpful to the performer, requires one to reconsider the current pedagogy of the viola and its accompanying repertoire.

PART ONE
CHAPTER 1
INTERMEDIATE PEDAGOGICAL TECHNICAL REPERTOIRE

In this chapter, I define an intermediate violist as one who is capable of playing some scales and arpeggios in three octaves, performing basic double stops, maintaining reasonable bow control, and displaying a functional vibrato. Additionally, they should have no trouble reading in both alto and treble clef, understand but still are working on a variety of bow techniques from *spiccato* to *martelé*, and be able to convincingly produce a wide range of dynamics. Under these guidelines, rarely do pieces exceed 3rd position, perhaps extending to 5th position, notes are not necessarily diatonic but are idiomatic, and any 16th note passages are not overly fast. The typical intermediate student is generally between the ages of 12-17. Here, students tackle the same challenges technically and musically that an advanced student would face, but each technique would be studied in its most elemental form. For example, whereas varieties of *spiccato* are studied at an advanced level (*secco*, up bow, down bow, brushstroke, more on etc.), the individual movements to produce *spiccato* are examined and dismantled in a step by step process for the intermediate student. This elemental break down of technique is supplemented by appropriate etudes and scales to then be implemented in more complex music such as easier concertos, complex sonatas, and challenging Bach suites.

My basis for restructuring the viola repertoire is hinged upon its inherent failure to prepare the violist for the instrument's contemporary tonalities and ever-growing technical challenges. Double stops in fourths and sevenths are vastly more common than thirds and sixths in the viola repertoire and violists often contend with works that contain complex meters or are even unbarred. However, the intermediate viola repertoire lacks works that

contain these components common to advanced viola literature and such a lack of preparation can prove to be discouraging, resulting in a general dislike of contemporary music, or music post 1945. As such, I propose several changes, or, more accurately, different emphases from the pedagogical etude repertoire.

At the more advanced end of the intermediate level, standard two-octave double stop scales should be practiced. It would also be beneficial to introduce Helen Callus's one step scales with an emphasis on some of her double stop exercises. Her scale system includes the intervals we least practice and need the most, such as Major and minor 7ths. Part 2E is entitled "Double Stops in Sevenths," and here the student starts on all pairs of strings with fingers 1-3 and 2-4 and creeps up the fingerboard and back down 1 minor 7th interval at a time a la a chromatic scale in minor 7ths. Then the student does the same thing in Major 7ths and then minor thirds and so on. No alternating fingering patterns. Such a division and intentional lack of alternating hand frames and chords not only teaches these intervals that are so prevalent in viola literature but focuses the student's attention to intonation and a relaxed hand frame. These exercises are so incredibly useful for contemporary works that it's almost unbelievable that this type of double stop practice isn't more widely taught or instructed. The real benefit of practicing double stops in Major/minor 3rds followed by Major/minor 7ths stems from their presence in contemporary viola literature. A student who, at the intermediate level, already possesses this technique will be far better prepared to tackle any Hindemith or even the concertos of Walton and Bartók. Most students, unfortunately, have to learn *how* to play major/minor sixths while preparing the first movement of Walton or major/minor 7ths while playing Hindemith. Not only is this occurrence preventable, but it is frustrating to the student as it results in a section of music

that becomes overly time consuming and detracts their attention away from expressive melodic considerations.

Concurrent with Callus's double stop exercises, teachers should pair Ševčík shifting exercises as these exercises map out the keyboard quickly and efficiently. It is crucial that the violist does not become overly comfortable with solely diatonic or tonal shifting exercise like those of Ševčík. Ševčík's greatest fault is its tonality, a byproduct of its era of composition. Violists rarely have difficult shifts that are diatonic, and it is here that the preparatory studies for the violist fall short. Often, if a shift is diatonic it is excruciatingly large, which is an exercise that is infrequently practiced. This too should arguably change. With a diminished focus on tonal shifting, the violist can begin to master the tonality that they contend with most: chromaticism, neo-romanticism, and even atonality. Luckily, there are a few more contemporary alternatives to Ševčík such as the etude books of Alfred Uhl, Michael Kimber, and Sven Reher that contain exercises in shifting, contemporary harmony, and complex rhythms. Etudes such as these need to be practiced alongside Ševčík and must be combined with all manner of scalar practice, although not prevalently until the advanced level.

1.1: Current Progressive Etude Studies Reinvented

After having mastered the etudes of Wolfhart and perhaps Kayser, intermediate level students are generally introduced to the etudes of Ševčík, Hoffmeister, Dont, Mazas preparatory studies, and some Kreutzer (#2 for example) while continuing to work on the scalar studies of Flesch and Galamian. This is the current, prescribed methodology of pedagogical instruction for the intermediate student. However, the usefulness of this

particular mode of preparation is debatable especially when one considers the technical challenges of the majority of the current repertoire. Scales are a crucial exercise to mapping out the fingerboard. But, would it not be possible to introduce other types of scales? Would it perhaps even be wiser introduce a wide variety of scales at this point and to incorporate etudes of a non-diatonic nature? Is it perhaps too soon?

In her dissertation, Dr. Gebrian explores a variety of new etudes for the non-diatonic violist in addition to encouraging the practice of whole tone, octatonic, pentatonic, and modal scales. I agree with Gebrian that all violists, especially as early as the intermediate level, would benefit from practicing these scales and non-diatonic etudes. Gebrian uses the incorporation of certain new technical studies to aid the violist in pursuing standard viola repertoire. I intend to build upon Gebrian's argument and offer a comprehensive explanation of how these new etudes and scales might be incorporated in a new, more contemporary, systematic pedagogical instructive that melds standard etudes with contemporary technical studies. First, I have compiled a comprehensive structure of scalar and etude exercises ordered in the chronology in which they should be taught.

- Wolfhart: *60 Studies for the Violin Op. 20*
- Kayser: *36 Violin Studies Op. 20*
- Ševčík: *School of Bowing Technique* and “*40 Variations*” *Op.3*
- Ivo-Jan Van der Werff: *A Notebook for Viola Players*¹³
- Helen Callus: *One Step Scales*¹⁴
- Flesch: *Scale System*

¹³ Ivo-Jan Van der Werff, *A Notebook for Viola Players* (Friendswood , TX: TotalRecall Publications Inc, 2014).

¹⁴ Helen Callus, *One-Step Scale System for Viola: 10 Exercises to a Better Left Hand* (Carl Fischer, 2016).

- Galamian: *Contemporary Violin Technique Vol. 1*
- Michael Kimber: *Scales, Arpeggios, and Double-stops for the Violist*¹⁵
 - Pentatonic and Modal Scales in two octaves with four transpositions
 - Whole-tone scales in 2 ½ octaves to be practiced without the given fingering and no shifting.
 - Chromatic Scales
 - Octatonic scales: A variety of fingerings should be explored.
- Sven Reher: *12 Studies for the Intermediate Violist*
- Double stop scales
 - Galamian: *Contemporary Violin Technique Vol. 2*
- Ševčík: *Changes of Position and Preparatory Scale Studies Op. 8*
- Christian Howes: *Jazz Scales for Violin, Viola, and Cello*
- Sven Reher: *Twelve Studies for the Viola*
- Mazas: *75 Progressive and Melodious Studies, Op. 36*
- Dont: *24 Studies Op. 37*

This list of progressive theoretical studies serves to highlight a more contemporary bend without incorporating an overwhelming number of new etude books. Kayser and Wolfhart Etudes prepare the student for the majority of these books by introducing a wide variety of techniques from bowing to shifting, to a variety of fingering patterns couched in a tonal structure. Kayser is arguably a beginning etude book for the young violist but it must be

¹⁵ Michael Kimber, *Scales, Arpeggios, and Double-stops for the Violist*, fourth ed. (Iowa City: soundpointMusic, 2011).

mastered before Kreutzer can be introduced. As such, I have placed it at the start of this list following Wolfhart as a stepping stone to more substantive intermediate level technical studies and scales. Ševčík's Opus 2, "40 Variations," and Opus 3 bowing exercises should be considered before introducing Galamian as means of instructing fine bow control without the extra added hurdle of nailing fast scalar passages with up to 24 notes in a bow. In essence, Ševčík largely removes left hand difficulty from the picture. Having excellent bow control is the foundation for producing a good sound, a critical skill for a good viola player, and the main reason people seek to play and love to hear the viola. The bow produces the soul of the viola. It matters little how fast or accurately the left hand can play the notes if the right hand is undisciplined and produces sounds akin to that of a screeching bird. However, despite the overly tonal nature of Ševčík, the etudes exist independent of any musical thought. This proves problematic as stylistic bowing is a key aspect of convincing sound production and musical expression.

Intermediate students also frequently struggle with pulling a straight bow and Ševčík does not inherently correct any underlying bowing issues. A student could work through twenty of these variations and fail to resolve such a problem. As a result, I would pair Ševčík's bowing etudes with that of the first four exercises of Ivo-jan Van der Werff's *Notebook for Viola Players*. In Van der Werff's etude book the student learns bow control by practicing bow placement and string crossing exercises on all open strings and in all parts of the bow using differing amounts of bow. The variety of exercises allows the pedagogue to tailor their instruction to the level of the student. If a student were to have a drifting bow at the tip, exercise two would help remedy this if they had not already begun solving the problem when it became an issue in practicing exercise number one. These exercises, when

practiced every day with a metronome, will lend the violist incredible bow control and form the foundation for good sound production as well. Lastly, exercise number four is intended as a *spicatto* exercise but more importantly forces the student to develop an awareness of arm position, weight, and sound in different parts of the bow. Learning *spicatto* in an environment that engenders such awareness will ultimately produce a fine-tuned ear and a high level of expectation in tonal clarity. The simplicity of these four exercises belies their practicality, and they can be taught at the earliest beginnings of the intermediate level.

Once the student has demonstrated sufficient bow control via these exercises, a focus on scales becomes prudent. However, the typical focus of scalar studies for the intermediate student centers on Galamian and Flesch. Today that feels insufficient. By the end of the intermediate level, students should already be able to produce the majority of scales in three octaves, including Galamian bowings. From here, the student must focus on a set of scales that even professional violists rarely practice—pentatonic, modal, whole-tone, and octatonic scales. The student should first learn a pentatonic scale as it is the most similar to the major/minor scales that they have already mastered via Galamian and Flesch. Similarly, modal scales are quite accessible as they were the precursors to the major/minor system and sound folk-like to most ears. Their production does not sound atonal but can be used as an easy introduction to post-tonal harmony. Michael Kimber's scale book, *Scales, Arpeggios, and Double-stops for the Violist* provides the student with two-octave pentatonic scales and four variations of modal scales in addition to scales from other musical traditions.

Rarely will a violist encounter a pentatonic or modal scale in its entirety in either the orchestral or solo literature. However, 20th century composers often use certain modes or sections of a pentatonic or whole-tone scale in a work. For example, in the first movement of

Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher* concerto, Hindemith writes an A-flat natural minor scale or an Aeolian modal scale.¹⁶ In the beginning of the second movement, Hindemith starts in A Lydian.¹⁷ Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher* is considered one of the easier major viola concertos (third movement aside), whose first movement is frequently performed for undergraduate auditions. Other than this piece's preparation, rarely has a student, received any instruction, much less practice, in playing the modal scales that would make the performance of this work easier.

As previously mentioned, the third movement of *Der Schwanendreher* is considerably more challenging than the first two movements combined. Despite this, the work as a whole, is arguably a better pedagogical tool than its theoretically more challenging cousin, the Walton viola concerto. The chromaticism incipient to Hindemith's concerto alone provides an excellent argument for the introduction and mastery of *Der Schwanendreher* before Walton's pastoral composition is studied as such chromaticism serves a more functional pedagogical purpose. Conversely, Walton functions as the epitomizer of diatonic romanticism, a to overt grandiosity and diatonic technical challenges. Although lessons can be gleaned from the performance of this work, would it not be more prudent to tackle a concerto more along the directionality of the future viola repertoire, towards chromaticism?

Outside of an argument concerning the pedagogical usefulness or progressive planning of the big 3 standard viola concertos and following the rather painless introduction to non-standard scales, a student should begin practicing whole tone scales. The importance of the whole tone scale lies in its inherent lack of tonal hierarchy. No single pitch pulls or

¹⁶ Gebrian, 35.

¹⁷ Ibid., *ibid.*

demands the resolution of another. As such, the scale became popular in the 19th century due to its intrinsic symmetry and equality. Today, whole tone scales are still incredibly common in 20th and 21st century contemporary works as they allow the player to sneakily work their way up and down the instrument. However, the necessary hand frame for this scale can be uncomfortable as it is unfamiliar and rarely practiced. Michael Kimber's aforementioned book includes several 2 ½ octave whole tone scales in an attempt to reintegrate the scale into standard diatonic scalar practice. The passage in the book includes Kimber's fingerings, but the student should practice their own—particularly ways in which to avoid or minimize shifting.

A chromatic scale, the effectual opposite of the whole tone scale should be practiced concurrently with the whole tone scale. The intended goal of chromatic scalar practice is to acquire technique to avoid a same finger shift, a 1-1 or a 2-2. Orchestral passages in viola literature include the chromatic scale, infamously in Stravinsky's *Petroushka*. I spent hours every week practicing one horrific chromatic passage from *Petroushka* in high school simply because I had never practiced a chromatic scale or its accompanying fingering pattern before. Perhaps fifty percent of this practice time could have been spent otherwise engaged if I knew to practice chromatic, whole tone, and pentatonic scales alongside my much despised Flesch. Passages of incipient chromaticism are common in 20th and 21st century music as chromaticism was employed as a musical device for harmonic effect beginning in the early 20th century by composers such as Debussy, Ravel and Hindemith. In some sense, the chromatic scale fingering pattern, 012, 1234, 012 and variants, serves as an excellent shifting exercise while helping the student map out the fingerboard. Chromatic fingerings become essential to the success of the violist at the end of the first movement of Bartók's Concerto

for Viola and Orchestra (m. 243). Additionally, most of Hindemith's works include long passages of chromaticism where such a minute understanding of half steps across the fingerboard proves paramount to playing in tune. Practicing chromatic and whole tone scales then serves not only as a facilitator for technical achievement in the viola repertoire but also functions as a perfect precursor to the octatonic scale.

The octatonic scale alternates half-steps and whole-steps and can be easily practiced in Michael Kimber's scale book where he provides three octatonic scales in two octaves. There are multiple fingering options for these octatonic scales and students should explore all possible fingerings, standard and otherwise. The practice of these four "contemporary" scales will aid the student in developing a larger variety of fingerings and teach the brain alternate patterns that are crucial to the playing success of the viola repertoire. A problem that arises from a lack of non-diatonic scalar practice is a brain and left hand that become programmed to play a set of fingering patterns that are often non-existent in modern composition. This in turn makes contemporary passage work more difficult. When addressed early, this can easily be rectified by incorporating non-diatonic scales that introduce unconventional patterns, rewiring the brain to think less systematically and instead more malleably. Previously, students had to learn tricky, creeping fingerings to mask shifts or play fast passages. But, after practicing this scalar set, students will already be prepared for the challenges posed by Ligeti's fourth movement and Hindemith's chromatic sonatas.

The successful practice of some of these scales undoubtedly requires confidence and the ability to shift to higher positions on the viola. At this point, the student is well aware of the distance between first, second, and third position but might find the shift from first to fourth or from first to fifth unpredictable and unreliable. The progressive solution would be

the practice of Helen Callus's *One Step Scale System*. The benefit of her first shifting exercise lies in its ability to teach a standard hand frame for playing the viola that is maintained during all shifts and in all positions. More importantly, uncommon shifts are eventually practiced, from first to seventh position, second to sixth, and so on where many of these shifts are often non-tonal. A student could shift from B-flat to C-sharp and from B-flat to F-sharp in the same shifting exercise. These non-diatonic shifts will help the student when the viola repertoire takes its contemporary turn at the advanced level.

Concurrent with the student's success in Callus's shifting exercises the student should tackle double stops. Prior to these exercises, double stops are rarely practiced on the viola outside of a standard work or in a scalar context (a scale in octaves or thirds, for example). However, the ability to play double stops is crucial to the success of any instrumental player. The mastery of minor 6ths up and down the viola on all strings is an invaluable skill, although it is likely that at this level the intermediate student will struggle to master these double stops. Should they prove overly challenging, it would be wise to focus on Major/minor seconds, thirds, and octaves as the octave outlines the complete hand frame and the Major/minor seconds demonstrates a more compact hand frame that must still be identical to the octave hand frame. From here, a study of Galamian's second volume can be used to augment Callus's double stop practice, if necessary.

I have arguably left Ševčík's shifting exercises until perhaps too late in this comprehensive theoretical progression. It can be introduced as soon as the student reaches an intermediate level but I have prolonged its inclusion as the exercises are too tonal to prove overly useful for the contemporary violist. The shifts that are practiced in this opus (Op.8) lack the chromaticism that describes the largely romantic and contemporary viola repertoire.

By the time the student reaches the middle or end of the intermediate theoretical study outline in this document, Ševčík exercises should not be overly challenging as the student has already practiced a variety of shifting exercises outside of a tonal context. In this way, the tonal grounding of Ševčík serves as a crutch to the student, a pillar of tonal context that will only aid them in nailing every shift. A contemporary violist rarely has the crutch of diatonic shifting a la Ševčík so the practicing of tonal shifting then becomes dubious. As such, I propose the late introduction of Ševčík under the assumption that if the student can successfully shift chromatically outside of a key or musical context, then when the player is provided these tools, they will serve as elements of assistance to their technical success. Conversely, Ševčík shifting etudes are exercises that the student will practice throughout their career and time should be spent, when applicable, to ensure their familiarity with them.

Not only does the contemporary violist need to be the master of chromaticism, modality, romanticism, and by extension Ševčík, it has become commonplace for a classical musician be a musical polymath. For example, a singer plays the piano extremely well, the violist is a great violinist, and the pianist is a conductor and master of the harpsichord and organ. As a result, I have included Christian Howes's technical study book in the intermediate etude repertoire: *Jazz Scales for Violin, Viola, and Cello*.¹⁸ The book introduces jazz scales, the blues scales, diminished, bebop major, bebop dominant, melodic minor, altered, pentatonic, and whole tone scales. Outside of merely presenting such a plethora of non-traditional scalar work, Howe's scalar exercises have students play scales with extended versions, their inversions, in a 4 note ascending pattern, in descending thirds, and in voice led scale pairs (two measures of G melodic minor paired with two measures of D altered). Not

¹⁸ Christian Howes. *Jazz Scales for Violin, Viola, Cello*, www.christianhowes.com, 2017.

only is the student becoming aware of the inter-relations between keys and fingering patterns but some of these basic voice leading exercises feel strange to the hand. This is the proverbial light bulb. The notes are not atonal, 12-tone, or contemporary; they are scalar, yet they feel uncomfortable and potentially sound strange when in fact they should not. Learning to produce these fingering patterns and hear this particular type of voice-leading will not only inspire the student as they sound undeniably “jazzy” and “cool,” but also inform their brain and left hand to that the simple alteration of a few notes can radically change the sound of a composition and hand position. Such extended etudes are intended to not only be fun but helpful. These studies will not only make the student more marketable but also a better player as they are able to hear a completely different set of chords and predict their musical function in ways that will aid their intonation, interpretation of harmony, and inform better fingerings. Following this brief interlude of extra-classical training, the performance of standard etudes begins with Mazas.

Mazas prepared a three-volume set of progressively difficult studies. They combine elegant bow technique with differing fingering methods to teach a sense of melodic line, complete with expressive phrasing. Each etude emphasizes a different stroke: “the sweeping stroke,” “the firm stroke,” “detached tones,” “the trill,” “the mordent,” “shifting,” “romance,” and “polonaise,” to name a few.¹⁹ The exercises are simple in construction but effective at teaching the titled technique while inspiring musicality and expressive playing. However, they are tonal and highlight techniques largely present in classical to early romantic era playing. They are outdated, stripped of their usefulness by the current, contemporary elements of viola repertoire. However, a means by which to make these studies more

¹⁹ F. Mazas, *30 Etudes spéciales, op. 36, for violin* (New York: International Music Co., 1964).

applicable to the viola player would be the alteration of key signature to that of alternate, non-standard keys. For example, altering the key signature of the first exercise to f-sharp and g-sharp, a key that Hindemith uses in his Op. 11 No.4 Sonata, would bring chromaticism and unpredictability to the exercise and help move the etude towards the post-tonal realm of the majority of the viola repertoire.

Dont composed similar studies with a greater emphasis on fingering and bow dexterity. They function, as per their subtitle, as preparatory studies for Kreutzer and Rode and focuses on legato bow strokes that are combined with frequent fourth finger extensions. Dont encourages finger facility while maintaining a fluid bow stroke or while forcing a slow bow speed into which many notes are played. The prevalence of fourth finger extensions throughout the volume is not an overly useful technique for the viola player and can be avoided or circumvented by shifting. Unfortunately, Dont's etudes, like the majority of transposed violin etudes for the viola, are incredibly tonal. The finger patterns and tonalities instructed in this volume are rare in the standard viola repertoire belieing their usefulness. Additionally, the exercises, like Rode's, are quite challenging. Rarely does a violist spend much time studying them when a more contemporary solution would prove vastly if not equally helpful. This contemporary solution can be found in the etudes of Alfred Uhl in *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola* (1973).²⁰

Uhl's *Zwanzig Etüden* presents a contemporized, easier version of the challenges presented by Don't; shifting between *pizzicato* and *arco*, double stops in 6/4, shifting between positions one and four, dotted rhythms, hemiola in non-diatonic keys, false

²⁰ Alfred Uhl, *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola* (Mainz, Germany: Schott, 1973).

harmonics, tremolo, octatonic and hybrid modal scales in slurred runs of 5-9 notes. Although these techniques are not direct contemporary parallels to Dont, they are similar in difficulty and present a contemporary grounding to the technical instruction of the same techniques. For example, instead of fingering passages in the typical pairing of 8, 16, or 24 notes to a bow in common scalar patterns, there are groups of five to nine notes in a variety of non-standard scales. Additionally, exercise number 2 in Uhl's book presents fast chromatic sixteenth notes in unfamiliar patterns. Practicing these etudes enables the student to generate out of the box fingerings, discover how to creep up the fingerboard without shifting, and grow comfortable with unpredictable, non-repeating patterns. Although this particular etude is a *spicatto* study, its real benefits lie in its finger facility. Similarly, exercise 3 presents fast chromatic scalar patterns in quintuplets, an uncommon grouping in the majority of the viola technical studies but not uncommon to the viola repertoire. Moreover, these groupings are alternately easily sight-read and tricky, keeping the student player on their toes. Uhl's seventh exercise is centered on fourths, the exercise is non-tonal and is an excellent extension of Helen Callus's double stop exercises. The mastery of fourths becomes crucial when performing Shostakovich's viola sonata, Bartók's viola concerto, and Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher*, the challenge being maintaining the hand frame and intonation while shifting silently.²¹ Perhaps one of the highlights of Uhl's book arrives in etude number 9 where he introduces strange fingerings for "normal" chords, an introduction that will make future encounters with dissonant chords or strange fingerings notably easier. Schnittke's viola concerto particularly comes to mind.

²¹ Gebrian, 69.

Interspersed amongst Uhl's etudes are those incorporating mixed meter, an ever-growing commonplace item in contemporary music. He also incorporates syncopated rhythms in mixed meter, yet another challenging element of contemporary music that lacks representation in pedagogical technical studies. Not only are the notes of contemporary music and by extension the viola repertoire challenging, but as are the rhythms that they contain. Uhl does a commendable job at interweaving the two in an excellent etude book for the young violist. His work should be seriously considered before one immediately delves into ascribing the standard Dont to an intermediate student. It is a much improved representative of the techniques a violist must master for the repertoire than that present in Dont. Uhl's etude books, combined with that Sven Reher's, *12 Studies for Intermediate Violist*, would prove an excellent contemporary study for the intermediate violist.

Reher's intermediate studies do not present rhythmic challenges but rather exercises in bow placement, stroke, and connectivity with the left hand. Reher's etudes reinforce bow control while focusing on left hand technique in a Campagnoli-esque fashion. Reher's etudes are less musically entertaining than Campagnoli but the notes systematically teach their desired facility and technique while incorporating some chromaticism combined with varied bow strokes. Van der Werff's exercises from his *Notebook for Viola players* will nicely complement Reher's in filling the gaps rhythmically and in bow technique. The two together in concert with Callus's shift exercises and a super healthy dose of altered scales a la Howe is how one sets up a student for the technical demands of contemporary music. A very abbreviated technical warm up for the intermediate violist would go as such: Chromatic scale, pentatonic scale, altered scale, a Callus shifting exercise and double stop exercise, Ivo's open string exercises with different bow placements, followed by Reher study. Are

there quite a few other options, yes, absolutely, this is just one potential option. Ultimately, it should be noted that Kreutzer and Ševčík should be added as well as Galamian scales.

CHAPTER 2

INTERMEDIATE VIOLA REPERTOIRE

Intermediate repertoire is largely Classical or Baroque as the viola maintains a paucity of literature in comparison to its more popular cousins, the cello and the violin. In the last fifty years, the popularity of the viola has increased and contemporary composers have sought to express their ideas via the viola. However, before a discussion on the expansion or alteration of current viola repertoire can commence, a standard list must first be established. A potential intermediate level list of “standard” viola repertoire presented in intended order of study is as follows:

- Bach: *Cello Suite No. 1*
- Handel: *Concerto in B-flat Op. 4 No.6* and *Sonata in G minor HWV 368*
- Eccles: *Sonata in G minor*
- JC Bach: *Concerto in C minor*
- Vivaldi: *Concerto in D minor Op. 3 No.6*
- Fauré: *Après un rêve*
- Fauré: *Elegy, Lamento, and Sicilienne*
- Dvořák: *Romance in F minor Op. 11*
- Haydn: *Divertimento in D Major, Hob. XVI: 19*

- Hummel: *Fantasie for Viola and Orchestra Op. 94*
- Rachmaninoff: *Vocalise Op. 34 No. 14*
- Hindemith: *Trauermusik*
- Carter: *Elegy for Viola and Piano*
- Hoffmeister: *Viola Concerto in D Major*
- Stamitz: *Viola Concerto in D Major Op. 1*
- Glinka: *Viola Sonata in D minor*
- Kreisler (transcribed): *Praeludium and Allegro “in the style of Pugnani”*
- Bruch: *Romanze for Viola and Orchestra Op. 85*
- Bach: *Cello Suites 2-4*
- Schumann: *Adagio and Allegro Op. 70, Märchenbilder Op. 113*
- Schubert: *Arpeggione Sonata D. 821*
- Bloch : *Suite Hébraïque*
- Bax: *Legend for Viola and Piano*
- Vaughan Williams: *Suite for Viola and Small Orchestra*
- Rebecca Clarke: *Viola Sonata*
- Bach: *Cello Suite 5*

The above list is only a sample of a possible intermediate progression of works for the intermediate violist as there are hundreds of other possibilities that I have excluded. The majority of these works listed above were composed in the romantic style, largely in the 19th century. Such a tonal bent leaves the violist unprepared both technically and aurally for the majority of the standard contemporary literature. John Woolrich, a composer who was

commissioned to write *Through a Limbeck* for the 2002 Lionel Tertis Viola competition, commented in an interview:

After you've heard 40 different players just running through the notes it's a bit soul destroying. In competitions you meet people who've never played contemporary music. It's both a technical issue and interpretative, as many players don't know how to make the notes make sense. It makes an interesting challenge, but painful.²²

Consequently, I propose that contemporary works be interspersed amongst the romanticism and classicism of the intermediate repertoire, not only to teach contemporary technique but to prepare the ear. Woolrich commented further that "the assumption is that contemporary music is different from Brahms, but it's not.... With contemporary music you have to make it up, which throws players back on their own resources, and many players don't have those resources."²³ If the viola is to be one of the primary instruments of contemporary music, the preparatory works must reflect this early on so that the violist can develop these resources. I propose the inclusion of the following works into the intermediate repertoire to be interspersed amongst the "standard" literature. To be clear, these works are not included merely because they were written post-1945 and are contemporary in their date of composition, but rather that their content, and inherent musicality is contemporary. For example, although the Alwyn *Ballade for Viola and Piano* is an excellent piece for the intermediate violist, it is incredibly tonal, lacks chromaticism, and eschews complexity. As a result, the work fails to aid the intermediate violist in preparing for the challenges of Bartók over the existing standard repertoire. As such, the pieces listed below supplement the gaps in the intermediate repertoire and do not serve, as the Alwyn would, to augment what is already

²² Todes Ariane, "John Woolrich: 'Contemporary music is no different from Brahms.'" Elbowmusic, July 22, 2015, accessed May 17, 2017, <http://www.elbowmusic.org/single-post/55af98120cf2f7a6a92f9080>.

²³ Ibid.

largely tonally and technically represented. Listed in instructional order, I will highlight and speak about some of these works in detail but all should be considered as excellent pedagogical inclusions to the student repertoire.

- Gavin Bryars: *The North Shore* (1993)
- Ursula Mamlok: *From My Garden* (1983)
- Adolphus Hailstork: *Sanctum—Rhapsody for Viola and Piano* (2006)
- Marga Richter: *Aria and Toccata for Viola and String Orchestra* (1956)
- Helmut Eder *Sonatine for Viola and Piano Op. 24 No. 2* (1963)
- Ruth Gipps: *Lyric Fantasy for Viola and Piano Op. 46* (1962)
- Augusta Read Thomas: *Incantation for Solo Viola* (1995)
- Augusta Read Thomas: *Pulsar for Solo Viola* (2003)
- Michael Kimber: *Emerald Isle* (2004)
- Jacques Veyrier: *Grave et Allegro for Viola and Piano* (1969)
- William Bergsma: *Fantastic Variations on a Theme from Tristan* (1961)
- Aram Khachaturian: *Sonata-Song for Viola Solo* (1976)
- Vincent Persichetti: *Parable for solo Viola (Parable XVI) Op. 130* (1974)

All of the above works are attainable options for the aspiring violist. Some of these works can even be used for undergraduate auditions. If we are to continue to remain current, the viola literature performed must reflect that. Here the inclusion of contemporary sonatas and other works in standard auditions becomes crucial.

Gavin Bryars's, *The North Shore*, is the best first introduction to contemporary repertoire. While technically approachable the work's allure resides in its dark emotionality and decided contemporary, non-diatonic tonality. The work projects the soulful, often

existential atmosphere that is common to viola repertoire in such a manner that the student learns how to express emotion outside of a romantic, Brahmsian context. The music is minimalist, complete with long musical phrases, pointillistic sections, slurred bariolage with easily managed notes, and never exceeds fifth position. In essence, Bryars's work incorporates all the foundational elements at the most basic level that a good violist must be able to produce before the concerns of technical achievement, be they shifting concerns or secondary techniques, become even a consideration.

An alternative or excellent subsequent work to *The North Shore* is Ursula Mamlok's, *From My Garden*. Mamlok's work is a short, idiomatic 12-tone composition. The work is excellent material for developing bow control, particularly the use of weight, placement and speed as a means of achieving a wide dynamic range. The tempo is slow, quarter note equal to 48, and rhythmic challenges are practically non-existent. However, what makes this work imperative is its lack of diatonicism and use of secondary techniques in a easily digestible fashion, incorporating natural and artificial harmonics, left-hand pizzicato, glissandi, and tremolo performed sul ponticello.

Marga Richter's *Aria and Toccata* also serves as an excellent and easy choice for an introductory contemporary work. However, Augusta Read Thomas's *Incantation* or *Pulsar* would prove equally excellent choices while doing away with the extra challenge of being composed with a piano accompaniment in mind, something that must be contended with in Richter's work. Thomas's works are distinctly more challenging than Marga Richter's work, but with acceptance into top music schools in mind this becomes a selling point. *Incantation* is decidedly easier technically than *Pulsar*. The work is not diatonic but neither is it tonal. It is largely a lyrical piece that contains a handful of tricky double stops. However, its greatest

challenge is in the player's ability to mold the composition into a coherently musical work, understandable to the audience. *Pulsar*, on the other hand, was premiered by Carol Rodland after its initial premier on the violin and is increasingly more difficult. *Incantation* contains dissonant chords and high notes that appear out of thin air. For a successful performance, the student must possess facility in high positions, a good sound, musical sensitivity, and a bit of bravery to perform it well. Therefore, not only has the student begun preparing their technique for the contemporary tonality of advanced literature but they are simultaneously working on the hallmark qualities of a good violist, qualities traditionally instructed via romantic literature (Schumann, Brahms, Bruch)— a good sound, strong command of a long melodic line, and seamless shifting paired with an expressive vibrato.

As a viola teacher, it is best to begin instructing intermediate works as early as possible, as this allows the student time to adjust and enables a few “trial” pieces before the looming demands of undergraduate audition requirements. As such, I would introduce Gavin Bryars's, *The North Shore* (1993), concurrently with the JC Bach Concerto or even perhaps after the first Bach Cello suite. If the student is more technically inclined towards or prefers Marga Richter's *Aria and Toccata* that could also function as a challenging but aurally useful introduction to contemporary viola literature. If Richter's *Toccata* proves too difficult at first, the *Aria* can be pursued separately if the goal is only to introduce simple, long-line melodies and complexly dissonant harmonies. However, if the instructor's goal is to also use the work to teach technique in contemporary tonality, (the thesis of this document) the *Toccata* is an excellent early precursor to the likes of Hindemith's Op. 25 No.1 fast fourth movement. Another short introductory contemporary piece is Helmut Eder's *Sonatine for Viola and Piano*. The work is a 12-tone composition in the manner of Schoenberg for beginners. One of

the work's greatest challenges and benefits is that the notes are not idiomatic and contain some leaps. This is excellent practice for Hindemith, though the work as a whole can be learned before the Bruch *Romanze* and Schumann's *Märchenbilder* and shortly after the second Bach cello suite.

As we move towards the advanced end of the intermediate level, Khachaturian 1976 Viola Sonata, becomes a perfect work to display the intermediate violists range and control of melody while excellently demonstrating technical facility. It is repetitive and its melodic line develops slowly in a minimalist-like fashion. The slow, somewhat obscure melodic development demands that the performer be capable of keeping the audience intrigued via creating a clear emotional landscape that develops into a discernable story—a real challenge for all levels of performers. However, this proves as an excellent teaching tool for the student to demonstrate thought and ability in making the sonata's melodic and emotional journey evident to the audience. Certain technical difficulties are prevalent: challenging left hand *pizzicato*, unusual chords, and moderately high notes to name a few. Not only does it prove to be an excellent post-1945 piece for undergraduate auditions and an excellent introduction to the contemporary sonata, it also remains a beautiful precursor to the Hindemith's sonatas tackled at the advanced level or the beginning undergraduate years.

Vincent Persichetti's *Parable XVI* is definitively a late intermediate or even an advanced work. However, if a student can muster the technique required, the work could, at the very least, function as a capstone piece for contemporary repertoire at the intermediate level. Persichetti's work includes a wide variety of techniques amidst rapid character changes, sounds freely atonal, and incorporates frequent changes in meter and tempo. These elements are combined with standard contemporary technical hurdles including chromatic

figures, polyphonic sections, large leaps, difficult rhythms, harmonics, left hand *pizzicato*, *glissandos*, *col legno*, *ricochet*, *tremolo*, and *sul ponticello*. Such a conglomeration of both left and right hand technique proves this work to be rather challenging. To find a piece that is not overly long—approximately 8 minutes—that can express such a wide variety of techniques is rare. As such, I propose that it be learned as an etude of a Campagnoli-like style, a partita of sorts. Such an approach serves the student as a review of their study and mastery of these techniques.

In conjunction with highlighting numerous contemporary works that can and should serve an earlier pedagogical purpose, I have compiled a revised intermediate pedagogical list that incorporates crucial contemporary works into the standard repertoire. It is divided into three sections as follow: Easy Intermediate, Intermediate, and Advanced Intermediate.

Easy Intermediate

- Bach: *Cello Suite No.1*
- Handel: *Concerto in B-flat Op. 4 No.6* and *Sonata in G minor HWV 368*
- Eccles: *Sonata in G minor*
- Ursula Mamlok: *From My Garden*
- Gavin Bryars: *The North Shore*
- J.C. Bach: *Viola Concerto*
- Helmut Eder: *Sonatine for Viola and Piano Op. 24 No. 2 (1963)*
- Vivaldi: *Concerto in D minor Op.3 No.6*
- Fauré: *Après un reve*
- Fauré: *Elegy, Lamento, and Sicilienne*

- Dvořák: *Romance in F minor Op. 11*
- Marga Richter: *Aria and Toccata for Viola and String Orchestra*

Intermediate

- Hummel: *Fantasie for Viola and Orchestra Op. 94*
- Adolphus Hailstork: *Sanctum—Rhapsody for Viola and Piano*
- Hindemith: *Trauermusik*
- Carter: *Elegy for Viola and Piano*
- Rachmaninoff: *Vocalise Op. 34 No. 14*
- Ruth Gipps: *Lyric Fantasy for Viola and Piano*
- Hoffmeister: *Viola Concerto in D Major*
- Glinka: *Viola Sonata in D minor*
- Bach: *Cello Suites 2-4*
- Kreisler (transcribed): *Praeludium and Allegro “in the style of Pugnani”*
- Bruch: *Romanze for Viola and Orchestra Op. 85*

Advanced Intermediate

- Alan Shulman: *Theme and Variations for Viola and Orchestra*
- Lynn Job: *Armiger’s Gate*
- Schumann: *Adagio and Allegro Op. 70, Märchenbilder Op. 113*
- Augusta Read Thomas: *Incantation*
- Schubert: *Arpeggione Sonata D. 821*

- Vincent Persichetti: *Parable for Solo Viola (Parable XVI) Op. 130*
- Augusta Read Thomas: *Pulsar for Solo Viola*
- Bax: *Legend for Viola and Piano*
- Stamitz: *Viola Concerto in D Major Op. 1*
- Aram Khachaturian: *Sonata for Viola Solo (The Singing Viola)*
- Vaughan Williams: *Suite for Viola and Small Orchestra*
- Rebecca Clarke: *Viola Sonata*
- Bach: Cello Suite 5

This breakdown of the intermediate viola repertoire includes contemporary works at all points of the intermediate stage. There are many “standard” works for the intermediate violist that have been excluded, many of which could also prove pedagogically beneficial and could be added. However, the purpose of this section is not to outline a comprehensive list or an exact pedagogical progression but rather to demonstrate the ease and benefits of the strategic inclusion of these contemporary works.

The intermediate student will not have time to approach playing even a quarter of these works, but perhaps eventually the student will play most of these standard works as their career progresses. I have presented quite a few options in this extensive list to illustrate the plethora of potential pedagogical avenues that exist as the pedagogy should be tailored to the individual needs of each student. A foundation of contemporary works paired with standard viola works, if introduced early on, will produce better violists than the current pedagogy. At the start of the intermediate level, the first Bach cello suite should be followed by Gavin Bryars’s work, to then be capped off by J.C. Bach’s concerto and Marga Richter’s work. The middle intermediate level starts with Hummel, Hindemith, Gipps, and Kreisler.

The Hummel teaches flowing melodic line paired with technique. The Hindemith teaches melodic sensitivity, emotionality, and shifting in a non-diatonic context. The Gipps combines the Hindemith and Hummel techniques by emphasizing higher positions with slightly harder rhythms, chromatic passages, alterations between treble and alto clef, and non-tonal harmonies couched in an andante tempo. Lastly, I would encourage the practicing of the Kreisler as the work teaches virtuosity, confidence, and left hand finger facility in terms of speed and right hand/left hand connectivity while maintaining a spiccato stroke in the right hand.

The advanced intermediate level begins a marked trend toward largely contemporary works. However, I would begin with the Schumann *Märchenbilder* as a means of ensuring that should the student need a “standard” sonata- like piece for undergraduate auditions that they will have already learned one. Additionally, *Märchenbilder* effectively teaches romanticism melodically, in shifting choices, and in expressive vibrato. Schumann should then be followed by one, if not both of Augusta Read Thomas’s works, depending on time availability. Lastly, Aram Khachaturian’s Sonata caps the intermediate level, bridging towards advanced repertoire. Should the student choose to play Bartók for their undergraduate auditions, this sonata would prove to be incredibly useful in helping build the necessary technique. Once again, this progression serves as a mere example of how a teacher might proceed to instill a more progressive bend to the pedagogical process. The options are nearly boundless and greatly depend upon the student’s strengths and weaknesses. One thing remains clear: an emphasis on contemporary technique early on will only serve to mold a better violist for the demands of the modern day professional.

CHAPTER 3

INTERMEDIATE CONTEMPORARY ETUDES

The vast majority of existing contemporary etudes stand firmly in the technical realm of the advanced student. This merely highlights the need for additional contemporary etudes and encourages the practicing of non-diatonic scales. Although the necessary contemporary etude books do not exist for the viola, there are a few to aid the aspiring contemporary student. Willard Musser tackles the tricky rhythms of contemporary music in his publication: *The Rhythm of Contemporary Music: A Collection of Melodious Studies which Progressively Explore the Rhythmic Concepts of 20th Century Music*. This volume's first section, some ten beginning studies, are perhaps too easy as they contain very simple melodies in easily changing meters, from 3/4 to 2/4 for example. However, exercise six contains quarter notes, half notes, and dotted half notes in 5/4 time while exercises eleven and twelve alternate between duples and triples, a seemingly difficult alteration until the student learns the "feel" of it. Beginning in exercise fifteen one can see the direct application in the viola repertoire. Exercises fifteen and sixteen present alternating measures of 6/8 and 2/4 with complex rhythms via simple notation. Exercise nineteen presents quintuplets; twenty-five alternates between 3/8 and 2/4, and exercise twenty-seven alternates between 2/4 and 5/8. Section two of Musser's book presents similar exercises, but thrives as a true addition to my pedagogical curriculum due to its lack of complete diatonicism. It is here that the exercise book gains its true usefulness: rhythmic complexity coupled with contemporary post-tonality.

Generally, the top exercise of each page presents a similar rhythmic challenge to its counterpart on the bottom half of the page where the tonality and notes of the top exercise are decidedly less challenging than its bottom counterpart. Each exercise on the bottom of the

page is highly chromatic and presents some form of rhythmic complexity, be it 7/8 meter or quintuplets and quarter note triplets in cut time. Musser's study presents the pedagogue two options: diatonic etudes that highlight complex rhythmic elements and/or chromatic etudes highlighting equally complex rhythms whose greater tonal challenge proves a more direct correspondence to viola literature. In this way, this etude book is excellent at a variety of levels including the beginning intermediate student, the advanced intermediate student, and even the advanced student.

Alfred Uhl's *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola* is perhaps one of the few etude books appropriate for the intermediate level. Its level of difficulty is akin to Rode and Dont's preparatory etudes for Kreutzer, but contains contemporary tonality unlike its violin precursors. Gebrian goes into lengthy detail about the particular usefulness for a handful of these etudes highlighting the techniques that each exercise teaches. For example, exercise number 3, "Giusto," contains octatonic and hybrid modal scales slurred in 5-9 note segments while number seven, a 5/8 exercise that is difficult to count, is akin to Musser's etudes. Number 11 contains an alteration between pizzicato and arco in 6/4 time with the incorporation of double stops. Number 13 introduces false harmonics in 4/2 time preparing the student for the extended techniques and harmonics section of many contemporary works. Similarly, number 17 is an excellent preparatory exercise for Berio's *Sequenza* as it is a tremolo exercise. Lastly, number 20 is a non-diatonic exercise with dotted rhythms, ties and hemiola.

Sven Helge Reher's, *Twelve Studies for Intermediate Viola*, does not present rhythmic challenges, but rather exercises in bow placement, stroke, connectivity with the left hand, and largely focuses on left hand technique. Technique is clearly the goal but the music

itself is fun to play and many of the etudes are very manageable for a violist who is currently learning the first Bach Cello Suite. Standard diatonic fingering patterns are interrupted by non-standard, modulatory or non-diatonic patterns. These studies precede the introduction of an easy contemporary piece that pairs “new” tonality with standard bowing studies and musicality. Reher’s etudes paired with the aforementioned etude books with a healthy dose of octatonic, pentatonic, modal, chromatic, and whole tone scales. This salad bowl of scales, when combined with Musser’s rhythmic exercises, Uhl’s studies, Reher’s studies, Callus’s one step scales, and some Ševčík (preferably in altered keys), comprise enough of the contemporary range for the intermediate student.

PART II

CHAPTER 1

ADVANCED PEDAGOGICAL WORKS

The “advanced” realm of viola repertoire is not only vastly larger in quantity and scope than that of the intermediate repertoire, but also far more interesting to play and teach. As an instrument that is making its mark as a vehicle for the introduction of contemporary works its performative boundaries technically and tonally are seemingly endless. (In 2016, Cynthia Phelps, the principal violist of the New York Philharmonic, premiered a contemporary, edgy viola concerto, *Unearth, Release*, composed by Julia Adolphe and co-commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to celebrate Phelps’s 25-year anniversary with the orchestra.) On one end of the advanced spectrum, the two Brahms sonatas are instructed generally at the advanced level due to their emotional and musical requirements. On the opposite end of the same spectrum, the Liebermann Sonata, Schnittke’s Viola Concerto, and Gubaidulina’s concerto are gaining ground in popularity each year. All three of these works fall into the advanced realm yet their technical requirements and tonality vary considerably. As such, the aspiring professional violist must have malleable technique, a strong grasp of romanticism, and facility with varying styles from Baroque to contemporaneity. Pedagogical repertoire should serve to reinforce these styles by teaching them separately in some works and combining them in others. It is paramount to the success of any violist that their mastery of romanticism be complete and grounded in a performative understanding of Bach. Without romanticism and Bach in combination, any violist’s performance of musically challenging contemporary music will prove lackluster and unconvincing. It is from these diverse types of music and technical experiences that the violist must garner the resources necessary to

convincingly perform contemporary music. In an interview with the contemporary composer John Woolrich, the composer stated,

“the assumption is that contemporary music is different from Brahms, but it’s not. It’s the same in respect of considering a way of shaping it, slowing down, speeding up... ‘I agree with Berio, who said he didn’t believe in players who didn’t play both Bach and contemporary music. I certainly don’t want my music to be played by people who only play contemporary music and can’t play Bach.’”²⁴

Few violists know that to successfully performing contemporary music, the resources necessary are the same ones employed when considering the melodic lines and modes of technical expression for Bach and Brahms. The vibrato must be expressive, the sound varied and beautiful, and the shifting seamless. These are the same attributes, later refined at the advanced level, to then be combined with advanced rhythms, strange hand positions and chords, and extended techniques to bridge the gap to contemporary repertoire.

The early advanced repertoire—also the tail end of “intermediate” repertoire—reveals post-1945 bent. These works are designed to push the violist aurally and technically while maintaining the refinement of romantic technique. Hindemith is arguably the best bridge between romanticism and contemporaneity of any composer of the viola repertoire whose compositions are considered “standard” to the pedagogy. As such, the works in the following list that precede Hindemith serve as preparatory works for the demands of his music, and simultaneously prepare the student for upcoming contemporary works.

- Aram Khachaturian: *Sonata for Viola Solo* (The Singing Viola)
- Atar Arad: *Sonata for Viola Solo*
- Bloch : *Suite Hébraïque*

²⁴ Todes Ariane, "John Woolrich: ‘Contemporary music is no different from Brahms.’" , " Elbowmusic, July 22, 2015, accessed May 17, 2017, <http://www.elbowmusic.org/single-post/55af98120cf2f7a6a92f9080>.

- Bach : *Cello Suite 5*
- Brahms: *Sonata Op. 120 Nos. 1 and 2*, F minor and E-flat major
- Hindemith: *Sonata Op. 11 No. 4*
- Vieuxtemps: *Sonata in B-flat Op. 36*
- Vieuxtemps: *Capriccio Op. 55 and Élégie Op. 30*
- Isaac Albeniz: *Asturias from Suite Española Op. 47* (2006)
- Sally Beamish: *That Recent Earth* (2003)
- Hindemith: *Sonata Op. 25 No. 1*
- Quincy Porter: *Suite for Viola Alone*
- George Rochberg: *Sonata for Viola and Piano* (1979)
- Luciano Berio: *Sequenza VI* (1967)
- Joan Tower: *Purple Rhapsody* (2005)
- Hindemith: *Sonata for Viola and Piano Op. 11 No. 5*
- Hindemith: *Sonata for Viola and Piano Op. 25 No. 4*
- Shostakovich: *Sonata for Viola and Piano Op. 147* (1975)
- Bloch: *Suite* (1919)
- Stravinsky: *Elegy* (1944)
- Katherine Hoover: *Shadows for Viola and Piano* (2001)
- Bartók: *Concerto for Viola* (1945)
- Krzysztof Penderecki: *Cadenza, for solo viola* (1983)
- Tadeusz Baird: *Concerto Lugubre per viola e orchestra* (1975)
- Sally Beamish: *Concerto No.2 "The Seafarer"* (2001)
- Lowell Liebermann: *Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op.13* (1984)

- Giya Kancheli: *Styx*—for Viola, mixed choir, and orchestra (1999)
- Alfred Schnittke: *Viola Concerto* (1985)
- Sofia Gubaidulina: *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra* (1999)

Except for Khachaturian's *Sonata-Song*, the beginning of this list remains firmly tonally planted in the romantic genre. The ability to convincingly express romantic works is foundational to creating intelligible melodic lines in less tonally cohesive contemporary works. As such, the student must master Brahms and Vieuxtemps before tackling Shostakovich, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Penderecki. It is my hope that instead of perpetuating the standard Schumann *Märchenbilder* or Brahms to fulfill the undergraduate sonata movement audition requirement, that contemporary sonatas, such as the Khachaturian, can fill that role. As a result, I have included it in both the contemporary list and the intermediate list as the student, likely, did not learn the entire sonata for their undergraduate auditions and should do so. If Khachaturian's work is too advanced for the budding undergraduate violist, it can be replaced by other contemporary such as Atar Arad's *Sonata for Viola Solo*. That said, the challenges remain similar: Arad's work does contain several instances of high notes, shifts, and challenging scalar passages but it is largely easier on the ear. Finding a contemporary piece to fulfill the sonata requirement (should there be one) is easily doable and teachers should strive to find a work that best suits their student be it Arad, Khachaturian or something else. Additionally, the student *could* play a more standard sonata though this would be disappointing as the aim of this document is to instill a desire and demonstrate the need to play contemporary works in standard auditions as a mode of increasing their popularity where such a reversion to romantic standard repertoire proves effectually detrimental. If pedagogues and institutions alike were to welcome, or even merely accept the

performance of contemporary works in augmentation of the standard repertoire in an audition, these worthy and incredibly well written pieces of contemporaneity would gain popularity and ultimately their deserved place in the repertoire.

This list of advanced pedagogical repertoire is nowhere near complete. It intentionally omits major portions of the standard lexicon like the Walton Viola Concerto and several excellent Hindemith sonatas in addition to his *Konzertmusik* and *Kammermusik*. The list omits such works as Berlioz's "Harold in Italy," Britten's "Lachrymae," the Enescu "Concertpiece," Ligeti's Sonata, Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet," the Enescu "Concertpiece," and Paganini's "per le Gran Viola e Orchestra," among many others. Their absence is not intended to diminish their importance or excellence, but rather to highlight a pedagogical progression that maintains a striking contemporary turn. This pedagogical progression aims not to merely include works which are contemporary solely in their date of composition but whose tonal composition also sounds contemporary. A work composed in 2012 that sounds as if it could have been composed by Vieuxtemps in the 1850s, a neoromantic work, or even a neoclassical work has been excluded from this catalogue. The "new" works on this list sound just that: new. Their tonality may contain elements of neo-romanticism, neo-classicism, serialism, atonality or even Baroque counterpoint. However, their overall composition lends itself to an experience that is different and contemporary, an experience that the listener and performer cannot prescribe to being overly similar to such and such composer or the third movement of Bartók, or the Walton concerto, for example. The current standing pedagogical repertoire encourages the study of works that contain mostly romantic elements in tonality and rhythm. In contrast, the advanced pedagogical works have constantly changing key signatures, rhythmic variation, and chromatic key

signatures. All of these types of contemporaneity should be included at this stage of the viola pedagogy; works that are 12 tone, serial, minimalist, and non-diatonic but tonal. It is here, where the excitement of learning, performing, and teaching contemporary music arises. There is an adventurous journey one must take to make sense of it all and to impart that journey to the audience.

My first adventurous journey occurred when I learned and played Sally Beamish's *That Recent Earth* on my Junior year undergraduate recital. The work is divided into five sections based on a 7th Century pre-Islamic Arab poem, "a ritual lament written by a woman for her brother recently buried."²⁵ It is not technically overtaxing, contains discernable melodic fragments, and could function as an excellent precursor to the Rochberg *Viola Sonata*, Joan Tower's *Purple Rhapsody*, or Hindemith's *Sonata Op. 25 No.1*. Joan Tower's *Purple Rhapsody* is a comparatively easy advanced concerto and would prove a successful choice over Walton or Hindemith. Its emotionality, technique, and musical components are vastly different than any of the big three concertos. The work is musically virtuosic without demanding great feats of technical acuity in shifting, chords, or double stops. Its tonality is less contemporary than Schnittke or Gubaidulina, the musical lines rarely demand complicated fingering patterns, and the 16th note passages and double stops are well within reason. As such, immediately after learning the first movement of Bartók, Walton, or Hindemith for undergraduate auditions, the student learns Tower's work next. In an ideal world, the concerto should be learned prior to Bartók as the student must learn how to present the work convincingly without a score that allows a violist to show off.

²⁵ Sally Beamish, "That Recent Earth." SallyBeamish.com. <http://www.sallybeamish.com/pid/757/info.html> (accessed May 17, 2017).

Tower, Bartók, Walton, and Hindemith all serve as potential preparatory works for the latter portion of the advanced list beginning with Sally Beamish's second viola concerto. At this point, the advanced works are those a professional would keep in their repertoire arsenal for performance. Here is where the violist specializing in contemporary music diverts from the aspiring orchestral violist, soloist of more standard works, or aspiring teacher. Arguably the promise of attaining a professional solo career is slim, and the handful of violists who have succeeded in this field decidedly do not play the "standard" repertoire. Instead they record new works and popularize new viola concertos. It is to these few performers: Kim Kashkashian, Tabea Zimmerman, Yuri Bashmet, Nadia Sirota, and Garth Knox, to whom we owe a considerable portion of the contemporary repertoire. The majority of the works that they support and market are technically at the professional level and as a result greater effort must be expended to popularize more pedagogically appropriate works for the student in an effort to make contemporary music palatable and sought after early on.

The end of the advanced repertoire, the Beamish, Schnittke, Baird, and Gubaidulina concertos, is markedly challenging. These incredible works are of equal if not superior excellence to that of the violas three "contemporary concertos," Walton (1929), Hindemith (1922), and Bartók (1945). The problem with these contemporary concertos lies in their formal structure. While Walton, Hindemith, and Bartók contain the standard three movements they are currently termed contemporary despite the fact that Walton's tonality is pastorally romantic and Bartók's concerto is equally romantic though comprised of more chromatic elements and Hindemith's work sits tonally in between the two. The Schnittke, Gubaidulina, and Beamish concertos are primed for acceptance into the standard viola canon but remain on the fringes as they are not only contemporary in name but also in composition

both formally and compositionally. The structure of the Schnittke Viola concerto is problematic. It is a concerto whose first movement is a single page, played attacca into the next where the first page of the second movement presents dissonant chords that change rarely. Similarly, the Gubaidulina viola concerto lacks a clear delineation of movements, sounding to the ear as a concerto without the normal chapters, which undoubtedly is the composer's goal as she strives to create an uninterrupted soundscape. These beautiful aspects of these two concertos prove them to be a logistical challenge when playing an audition. Conversely, Beamish's second viola concerto presents the standard movements, delineated clearly and musically, priming it for use in an audition. Regardless, a non-standard form can be overcome when the performer and auditioner request a number of minutes of a concerto over a specific number of movements. In the end, the goal is to demonstrate technique and musical ability and not to the same standard first movement of a concerto that has been heard and played virtually the same way by thousands of violists.

Tadeusz Baird's concerto remains largely unknown despite its incredible composition. The piece begins with a very exposed solo pizzicato introduction by the soloist, akin to the minimalist beginning of Shostakovich's viola sonata. As a requiem for his mother, the work maintains a "lugubre" mood throughout, very similar to Shostakovich's Sonata. Soon the viola picks up the bow to proceed with a chordal section. Connecting these dissonant chords to present a discernable, melodic line with a clarity of emotion is difficult, but Baird presents the material linearly in a way that clearly lays out his intention and aids the performer in realizing its underlying anxiety. Despite its dark beginning there is a notable repeating melodic, chordal line that sits on top of the orchestra's dominantly dark atmosphere of impending doom, enabling the audience to "understand" the work more easily than other

contemporary concertos. The musical narrative expresses standard romantic elements in both melody, the expression and release of tension, and in its transparent formal structure. The concerto presents a discernable three movement form where the main theme is presented by the viola in the first movement via a series of two-three sound combinations. The second movement is slower, more lyrical than the first two, a sentiment that is interrupted by the anxiety of the third movement. The work's mostly standard musical and formal structure places it as a great precursor to Schnittke, Kancheli, Gubaidulina, and even the Beamish Concertos.

There is undoubtedly a technical gap between Bartók and Baird, Walton and Beamish, and Hindemith and Schnittke. The technique required to successfully play the advanced concertos can really only be gleaned by the performance of other contemporary works, especially when one considers "making sense" of their structure and melodic progression. Despite this challenge, their expression of emotion, harmony, and musical atmosphere is unmatched. These works function as emotional pillars to the potential expressivity of the viola and enrapture the audience in their varying atmospheres in ways that neither the Walton nor the Bartók can achieve. They are the future of the viola, the harbingers of virtuosic contemporary viola literature and as such they must function as standard concertos not only for the contemporary specialist but for the average violist. If the viola and its player are to progress with time, perhaps the only way to ensure a violist's future employment, the player must learn to play the music of their time.

Contemporary music has a reputation for embodying a genre of works that is categorized as being prohibitively difficult. However, this perception will be challenged if the pedagogical viola repertoire and accompanying technical studies evolved to match the

new challenges of the now virtuosic violist: non-diatonic shifts, augmented chords, strange hand positions, microtonality, harmonics, and challenging rhythms to name a few. The goal of this pedagogical shift remains the reduction of what is now considered to be the difficult contemporary elements to that of standard technique. The first step to this process was explained in Part I with the early inclusion of non-diatonic scales, a handful of contemporary etudes, and the proposal of practicing Ševčík in strange keys. This is then coupled with easy contemporary works introduced at the intermediate level. Finally, the student works their way technically through the intermediate level acquiring contemporary technique along the way that allows for the performance of truly fun contemporary repertoire at the advanced level. If contemporary techniques are taught early enough in the pedagogical process it is possible for the intermediate student to perform works normally saved for the advanced student. Some contemporary works are just acutely difficult. However, others would be more approachable if nonstandard fingerings were introduced early in addition to chromatic scales and contemporary etudes. For example: what if fingered harmonics were practiced before octaves? They require the same hand frame, but harmonics produce less tension in the hand resulting in less pain and mitigating injury. Additionally, less pain often results in more time spent practicing this particular skill and the student will learn the overtone series in the process—frequently a skill learned late at the advanced level. This is merely one example of how advanced technical pedagogy can be rethought early on to ease the violist into mastering contemporary viola technique and literature with greater success.

CHAPTER 2

ADVANCED PEDAGOGICAL TECHNICAL STUDIES

Technical studies for the advanced student do not differ significantly from those of the intermediate student. Ševčík is still rigorously practiced in concert with Flesch and Galamian scalar instruction. Kreutzer is studied more thoroughly as appropriate to the necessary technical needs of the student. Campagnoli is introduced. Dont, Rode, and Mazas are continued, now paired with Schradiek and occasionally Vieux and Fuchs. However, this technical pedagogical progression could greatly benefit with some revision from the status quo, as here there is a real need and even a stronger argument for contemporary technical studies. At this point in the student's career, seemingly in the last years of the undergraduate degree and into a graduate degree, the student is, at the bare minimum, contending with boundless chromaticism. Definitely by their junior or senior year they are contending with a variety of the advanced literature. Hindemith's sonatas, Bartók's Concerto, the Penderecki Cadenza, Bach's Chromatic Fantasy, and even Schnittke's Concerto, to name a few, all of which contain chromaticism in addition to complex rhythmic variation, challenging double stops, and extended technique. Meanwhile, the advanced student is practicing technical etudes firmly grounded in diatonic tonality, instilling finger patterns and shifting tendencies that do not appear all that often in these works. Although this might help prepare the student to take orchestral auditions, it will, in the end, prove less fruitful than the study of contemporary technique including simple, contemporary scales and contemporary extended technical studies.

Although there is a paucity of preparatory contemporary etudes, there are several noteworthy publications worth mentioning.

- Alfred Uhl: *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola*
- Alfred Uhl: *Dreißig Etüden für Viola*
- Michael Kimber: *20th Century Idioms for Violists*
- Willard Musser: *The Rhythm of Contemporary Music*
- John Harbison: *The Violists Notebook (Books I and II) for Solo viola*
- Garth Knox: *Viola Spaces: Contemporary Viola Studies*
- Christian Howe: *Jazz Scales for the Violin, Viola and Cello*
- Ellen Rose: *Extreme Viola!*
- Sven Helge Reher: *Twelve Studies for Viola*

All of these technical studies, excepting Rose, Reher, and Howe, are presented in great detail in Molly Gebrian's thesis. She highlights where and how to use them to help instruct existing standard viola repertoire. These publications represent nearly the entirety of useful contemporary viola etudes. There are other etude books, but these publications are by far the most useful. Unfortunately, there simply are not many to choose from. I discussed the usefulness of Howe's book in Part I. Rose's book is available upon request and fills in some of what she perceived were the gaps in technical scalar studies for the viola. However, her book is more suited for a standard, orchestral performer looking to practice standard technique outside of the constraints and modalities of Kreutzer, Dont, Ševčík, and Schradieck etc. In addition to the single etude book by Michael Kimber I have placed on this list, there are at least nine more he has composed that could supplement *20th Century Idioms for the Violist*. Of note is Kimber's *Scales, Arpeggios, and Double Stops for the Violist (4th edition)*. This book emphasizes two octave scales, arpeggios, and double stops, including whole tone, octatonic, and pentatonic scales with a wide variety of fingerings.

Although Gebrian speaks at length about Kimber's *Twentieth Century Idioms*, I would like to highlight the specific benefits of the volume and demonstrate how it might be instructed in conjunction with several other etude books on the aforementioned list. Michael Kimber's *Twentieth-Century Idioms* is a compilation of 15 brief etudes where each exercise explores a specific technique or a particular technical or musical idiom common to 20th century music. The title of each etude explains its intended technical instruction. For example, exercise 1 is titled, "Pentatonic," exercise 2 is titled "Quartal," and exercise 3 is titled "Whole-tone." The etudes rarely exceed third position, occasionally stretching to fifth and most of the exercises include some double stops. Secondary bowing techniques do not appear until etudes 12-14, including *ricochet*, *tremolo*, *sul ponticello*, and *col legno* and the work lacks a *pizzicato* study.²⁶ The etudes are in simple, easy meters such as 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8, somewhat undermining their usefulness at the advanced level. However, Kimber's book is a great precursor to Garth Knox's *Viola Spaces* (whose *pizzicato* exercise "9 Fingers" fills in one of the gaps in the volume) and the two should be explored in conjunction with one another. Additionally, I would instruct No. 17 from Alfred Uhl's *Dreißig Etüden für Viola* No. 11 from *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola* to help fill this *pizzicato* gap.²⁷

Reher's book is reminiscent of Kruetzer. However, his technical studies are much better suited to the challenges a violist might face. Exercise 2 and 7 have large string crossing leaps that are somewhat unpredictable with manageable changes in position and would function as an excellent exercise in the connectivity between the left and right hand. Exercises 3,6,8, and 11 are non-diatonic, often times intentionally repetitive 16th note exercises in various bowings and keys. Exercise 11 is particularly challenging as it combines

²⁶ Jensenius 21.

²⁷ Ibid., Ibid.

string crossings in 16th note passages where the notes and fingerings are often awkward and unpredictable-- a perfect combination to practice some of the challenges of contemporary music. Fingering patterns are not what one would expect and provide an exercise that reinforces chromatic fingerings and alternative arpeggio interspersed with diatonic segments and standard Kruetzer-esque scalar passages. Exercise 4 is a beautiful exercise in 3rds and 6ths, a perfect study to aid the violist in perfecting these intervals for the famous 3rds and 6ths section of the Walton Viola Concerto. Exercise 9 is a trilling exercise in the likes of mordents, reminiscent of something that might be seen in Classical or Baroque music. It is rare that this particular technique is necessary but it is difficult to produce cleanly and proves a challenging exercise in left hand clarity and shifting. Exercise 12 combines all the elements of the previous eleven in a sort of caprice-like review that is not only effective in forcing the student to employ perfect technique but encourages musical expression as well.

CONCLUSION

It is my hope that the publication of this document will play some role in popularizing the usefulness and fun of studying and playing the contemporary works highlighted here. The fundamental problem remains that few string teachers are aware of contemporary works that can serve to fill the holes in the standard viola repertoire, or are aware that contemporary works can serve to improve and expand the outdated standard viola pedagogical repertoire. As viola players, we need accept the inherent problems and challenges of the viola repertoire. As teachers we need to help our students solve them. The etudes and repertoire do exist, as highlighted here, where the best solution can be found in contemporary literature at all levels of composition. To that point, the thesis of this document does not function as a shameless plug based upon my personal preference towards contemporary music where these types of works should be included because they are “cool” or “new,” but rather a proposition that contemporary music is the solution to the problem. In fact, the majority of the viola repertoire is rarely performed publicly and is not a hot ticket with the listening public. Is this due to the viola’s inherent struggle with being heard over an orchestra? Or rather that its pre-1945 works lack the virtuosity necessary to capture an audience?

Sought after contemporary works are those championed by the few star solo violists: Yuri Bashmet, Tabea Zimmerman, Kim Kashkashian, Carol Rodland, and Garth Knox. It is to these few people that the rise in awareness and resulting popularity of contemporary music can be attributed. Without them, rarely would the viola be heard on the radio or sought after as a potential solo instrument for new, contemporary works. However, the works that are recorded and performed by these violists largely constitute the complete body of contemporary works knowledge for string teachers when there is infinitely more available.

Due to the tonality and composition of many of these works, it is from these performers that the assertion that contemporary music is exclusively challenging is derived. Rather, there is a large spectrum of contemporary music from the easy works to the nearly impossible to play. These easier, often pedagogical works can become more popular. As teachers, we simply must do what our vocation demands of us, teach. We must teach contemporary literature and as early on as possible.

The performance and practice of contemporary music not only improves the violist technically, but also expands their playing in other directions-- toward pop music, improvisation, and employment. Many violists pursue music at the undergraduate and graduate level in an effort to attain an orchestral position as it is one of the very few ways to make a reliable living as a classical musician. To this end, violists focus on the standard repertoire. However, today's top tier orchestras are including contemporary works on their programs and colleges and conservatories are calling for auditioners to prepare contemporary works. While a career performing contemporary literature can be made, it is a passion that must be doggedly pursued. A study of the contemporary climate of classical music and its most recent compositions not only produces a better player and globally aware musician but prepares a better teacher. The violist will need to be well aware of and able to play contemporary literature, not only to teach but to also audition and perform on stage in a manner that intrigues and engages the audience. A violist will rarely play the Bartók viola concerto outside the atmosphere of a college or orchestral audition. The work itself is fundamental to the repertoire, but it is not what an audience wants to sit down and hear played, begging the question as to why other works haven't been explored that might both augment its position and provide an alternative. The Schnittke Viola Concerto is arguably a

better example of a work that would fulfill an audience's desire for lively, virtuosic, viola playing. While Bartók is largely an exercise in technique, Schnittke is a dazzling display of demonstrable virtuosity, technique, and intense emotionality.

The chasms of the viola repertoire are also evidenced by the scarcity of solo performers. Perhaps if the viola repertoire were to rival that of the violin or even the cello, a rise in solo performers might occur. Perhaps an even larger argument can be explored when one considers the lack of public appreciation and popularity for classical music. One of the largely accepted explanations lies in its antiquated traditions, mode of performance, and inherent, predictable tonalities. If the pieces were to evolve with the times, as contemporary music does, then perhaps classical music as it is currently understood would evolve to be more approachable and interesting to the average public. Ridding the antiquated traditions of all black concert dress, formal bowing, and "standard repertoire" could be viewed as a sort of coup to the genre but perhaps this is exactly what is required. It's time for the revolution to evolution to begin. Here's to contemporary music!

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