



UNIVERSITY OF AGDER

P. I. Tchaikovsky

***Concerto for violin and orchestra,
op. 35***

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This Master's Thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as a part of this education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.

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Introduction

The aim of the thesis

The aim is to compare two performers (artists) playing Tchaikovsky's violin concerto, with my own way of performing of the same piece. Impressed by the music itself, I wanted to fully experience and deepen the knowledge, so as to comprehend the way these two artists were thinking while preparing it. The artists are supposed to have had different violin schools, David Oistrakh represents the Russian-east school and Janine Jansen represents the west-European understanding of music. Oistrakh was born in 1908, in Odessa; he is typical representative of the old Russian violin school. On the other side, Janine Jansen is still young, 34 years old, born in Netherlands and one of the most popular violin players nowadays. I've chosen compare the performance of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto done by these two completely different performers, Janine, a great musician and very interesting player, and Oistrakh who is my favorite violinist.

Problem definition

A possible problem definition for my thesis has been:

A comparison of three performances of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto done by Janine Jansen, David Oistrakh and myself, focusing on differences in interpretation.

Section 1

In the first part of my master thesis I'll give some facts on Tchaikovsky's, Oistrakh's and Jansen's lives, few important and interesting things from their lives with accent on performers' school time, their professors, performances, etc.

Section 2

The second part is about how the concerto was created and why the composer changed his mind about the person he would dedicate his work to. This part also addresses issues around the performance of the concert, which is considered very difficult and physically tiring to perform.

Section 3

After the introduction on the history of the concerto, I have done an analysis part and compared the performances. I have also compared Jansen's and Oistrakh's performances to my own interpretation of the work and compared the first and the second part of the first movement, before and after cadenza.

Section 4

Conclusion: this part of the thesis consists of a brief summary of my findings.

Empirical basis and methods

To gain information about historical facts, reading of the books and analyzing relevant data, as well as careful listening and concentrated practice, which in turn have improved the analyses of the records, have been necessary. This includes among other things an investigation of the surrounded circumstances in which the concerto was composed, and a look back in order to do a necessary review of the players' lives.

I have used literature only for the first part and the beginning of the second part of my thesis, where I'm talking about the historical facts. I have used a few books and letters to the composer's friends, brothers and Nadezhda von Meck (his patroness). Also, I have used Oistrakh's recording with Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, recorded in Moscow, and Jansen's recording with Deutsche Radio Philharmonie recorded in Berlin.

The most recent research on Tchaikovsky's life and his music talks about where he's lived, where and when certain piece appeared, form, orchestration, etc. I consider these writings to be the most interesting when it comes to my theme here.

Another approach has been observation, listening to the different recordings used in this research. My research is also based on comparisons and analyzes of almost every part of this concerto. In places where they interpret in very different ways I have enclosed parts of the original score to show this, and to explain why I have chosen to do it in my way. In technically very difficult places of the work, I have given examples how to practice them, a kind of action research where I have tried out different aspects of the performance.

Considering that I have been practicing, playing and performing this particular concerto for some time, I found it more than interesting to do this research which has raised some questions, opened a discussion and given some conclusions regarding this violin master piece.

Expectations

My expectations were limited to find the differences in Jansen and Oistrakh's performances and finally decide how I wanted to do my own interpretation and performance. Through this work, my hope was that I would be able to improve my own practice and playing, and mirror it from different angles. I also hoped that analyzing and comparing some special and characteristic places in this piece, which can be performed in various ways, would help me be more familiar with the piece itself and also the two performers' personalities.

Challenges

It has been a challenge for me to explain the two performers' way of interpreting this work because of their different characteristics and obvious different feelings about the same piece or place. It has been difficult to state what is a right or wrong interpretation, but, surely there are many various impressions, and my view on this is that the different interpretations are unique and are entitled to respect from listeners and performers.

SECTION 1

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Early life

Pyotr (Peter) Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born on May 7th 1840 in Votkinsk, Russia. He was the second son of Aleksandra Andreevna Tchaikovxky and Il'ia Petrovich Tchaikovsky, one of the most respected mining engineers of that time. His first experiences related to music come exactly from his home. His parents raised all of their children with the music of Mozart, Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti. It was at the end of 1845, when his father noticed his music talent and decided to provide him with private piano lessons with Mariia Palchikova who shows him the Chopin's music.

St. Petersburg period

Later on, in 1852 he starts going to School of Jurisprudence in St. Petersburg where he becomes the choir member. While going to school he was living in a dormitory for a few years and many find a relation between those years and his homosexuality, which will definitely leave a mark in his future life and some of his compositions. Many people have been relating him with his school mate Sergeii Kireev (arguably the most passionate of all Tchaikovsky's attachments). Even his brother, Modest Tchaikovsky, referring to his brother's relation to Sergeii wrote in his biography: "*strongest, most durable and purest amorous infatuations*" of Tchaikovsky's life. "*It possessed all charms, all sufferings, all depth and force of love, most luminous and sublime, and that without Tchaikovsky's passion for Kireev, the music of Romeo and Juliet, of The Tempest, and of Francesca da Rimini is not entirely comprehensible*".¹ "*I believe that Tchaikovsky dedicated to Kireev one of his first songs, My Genius, My Angel, My Friend*"(Poznanski 1991, p. 48), written in 1858. In the fall of 1861 Tchaikovsky received an offer from the Russian Musical Society to enroll in harmonic classes with Nikolai Zarembo (who respected the most the late style of Beethoven) and those were, in fact, his first professional music lessons. When Saint Petersburg Conservatory was opened, which was September 20th 1862 Tchaikovsky was one of its very first students.

¹ Klin House-Museum Archive (ref. B2, No. 21, p. 29)

Harmonic classes with Nikolai Zarembo (who respected the most the late style of Beethoven) and those were, in fact, his first professional music lessons. When Saint Petersburg Conservatory was opened, which was September 20th 1862 Tchaikovsky was one of its very first students. He continued to do the harmonic and form with Zarembo, and orchestration and composition with Anton Rubinstein. Mostly everything about his college life we know from his classmates' stories, especially from Herman Laroche (Garden 1973, p. 5-11).

When he decided to dedicate his life to music, Tchaikovsky spent three years in St. Petersburg Conservatory bringing his knowledge about composition, instrumentation and piano, flute and organ to perfection. Tchaikovsky has always respected the definition given by his professor Rubinstein: "*sketch quickly to the end of a work, then score; work every day, and hold to music as a sacred calling*" (Pejovic 1979, p. 138).

He managed to create his own music, keeping the distance from both nationalists and composers of Western outlook, and at the same time he reconciled the controversy over international versus which divided Russian music in his day.

Moscow period

Anton's brother, Nikolai Rubinstein had offered him the position of professor of theoretical classes in Moscow's conservatory, which he accepted and that's why he moved to Moscow in January 1866. He soon started writing his First Symphony, entitled "*Winter Daydreams*", and then a set of piano pieces "*Souvenir de Hapsal*" op.2, opera "*The Voevoda*", etc. but he would always consult with Zarembo and Anton Rubinstein from Saint Petersburg prior to publishing his composition (Koolbergen 1995, p. 15-16).

Back in those days, in Russia there was a lot of dispute about homosexuality of many public persons such as the Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II, Prince Vladimir Meshcherskii (who was, incidentally, Tchaikovsky's schoolmate and friend), and also Tchaikovsky and his younger brother Modest. It was the reason why he withdrew from the public life, and avoided every contact with the audience and happenings.

In the fall of 1869 Tchaikovsky met Balakirev in Moscow, and he encouraged him to start writing a new tone poem based on Shakespeare's "*Romeo and Juliet*". Russian

obsession for love and death, the themes which permeated the story of the young lovers have immediately given the sparkle to the composer's imagination. The first time "*Romeo and Juliet*" was performed under the conductor Nikolai Rubinstein in Moscow on March 16th 1870. After he finished with composing his First piano concert in B flat minor which was a big success he starts working on his first ballet, "*The Swan Lake*" in August 1875, which ended up as being one of his the most famous and actually the best piece. He finished it in April the following year (Garden 1973, p. 35-40).

Traveling

At the end of 1875 together with his brother Modest Tchaikovsky decides to leave Russia. In Paris, Tchaikovsky has for the first time heard the performance of the opera "*Carmen*" by Bizet, which made one of the strongest impacts in his entire life. Later on he was in Bayreuth, where the entire festival was dedicated to Wagner "*Der Ring des Niebelungen*". During his visit to Germany he had the opportunity to meet Liszt, and he refused to meet Wagner.

Marriage

In spring 1877, the composer's passion for Kotek has dropped, and his second close homosexual friend got married. It was then when Tchaikovsky started receiving love letters from his ex-student Antonina Miliukova. She fell in love with Tchaikovsky during college days, but he has never noticed anything. On April 7th 1877, Antonina sent Tchaikovsky a written confession of her love for him. Both Antonina and Tchaikovsky testified that they "began a correspondence", as a result of which the composer received her offer "of hand and heart" already in the early days of May 1877 (Sokolov 1994, p. 19-24). After a few dates they agreed on the marriage date. They got married at Saint George's Church in Moscow on July 18 1877.

Most importantly, however, his impulsive marriage helped him to realize that his homosexuality could not be changed and had to be accepted as it was. That Tchaikovsky at some point came to think of it as "natural" follows from his use of that very term in a letter to his brother Anatolii on 25 February 1878 from Florence: "Only now, especially after the tale of my marriage, have I finally begun to understand that

there is nothing more fruitless than not wanting to be that which I am by nature". (Poznansky 2000, p. 184-185; Poznansky 1996, p. 9-22).

Another girl walks into the composer's life. That is Nadezhda von Meck, the widow of a rich railway magnate. She has heard a few of his pieces, and when she found out that he was in a financial crisis, she decided to help him. They both agreed that she could help him, but under one condition- never to meet each other. They have sent to one another more than 1200 letters in 14 years. Their silent understanding never to meet each other made their friendship more profound and emotional, and sometimes they reached ecstatic moments.

Journeys

At the end of 1877 composer goes on a trip with his brother Modest. Later on Iosif Kotek joins them. At the beginning of January 1878 Tchaikovsky had finished his Fourth symphony which was actually one of his mature symphonic pieces, and he dedicated it, secretly though, to Nadezhda von Meck. Another of the important pieces which was created those days is Violin concerto D major, inspired by Iosif Kotek. Four years earlier he wrote another piece, The First Piano Concerto, and together with Violin concerto they shared the same destiny-many have refused to play it, because it seemed as too difficult and almost impossible to play. Today the situation is the complete opposite; it is one of the most performed and most popular pieces, but still one of the most difficult in the literature of violin.

At this time appeared the new genre which had characteristic elements, contrasts between movements, very simple and formal patterns and it pointed to showing charm and the pleasing and not just capricious rhythms.

In December he leaves to Frolovskoe for six weeks, and his intention was to write the ballet "The Sleeping Beauty", based on a French fairy tale, and requested upon director of St. Petersburg's theatre. Success of "The Queen of Spades" leads the composer to two new orders from St. Petersburg's theatre for the "Iolanda" opera and the ballet "The Nutcracker". He also accepted the invitation to do the tour in America, which was a big success (Koolbergen 1995, p. 39-58).

Last part of his life

In the last chapter of his life the composer felt his death was approaching, so most of the compositions sounded with a hint of melancholy, and the themes were rather moving. After the Fifth Symphony the most used were farewell themes

When he heard the news of some friends and a professor who passed, in 1893 he decided to write Sixth symphony, which he named "*Pateticheskaia simfonia*", which is in Russian very similar to Beethoven's Sonata in F minor, op.57 "*Apassionata*". This symphony bears the moments of suffer and sorrow.

After a dinner which Tchaikovsky attended with his brother, and which was held in the honor of a premiere of the Sixth Symphony, composer all of a sudden started feeling bad. He had very strong stomach ache, he vomited and felt weak. When they called the doctor, he diagnosed him with Asiatic cholera, in its severe or algid stage. He started feeling spasms, his color was blue, and his body temperature was dropping. After a lot of massages and injections he was stable again. On that day, November the 3rd the police and journalists have found out about his illness, and the news traveled fast, so soon the whole St. Petersburg was informed, too.

He was weak in body and spirit, and he had no faith that he would ever recover. On November the 5th he started losing consciousness and to fall into delirium. As a consequence of lungs edema and lower heart activity, he passed at 3:15 a.m., on November 6th. His brothers Modest and Nikolai, so as his nephew Vladimir Davydov and the doctor Nikolai Mamonov, were the persons who were together with Tchaikovsky in his last moments of life. Alexander III decided that Tchaikovsky should be buried in St. Petersburg and all the costs were covered by Emperor's personal treasury. On November the 9th the body was brought to the Cathedral Kazan where the ceremony was held, and after that the body was taken to Tikhvin Cemetery of the Saint Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery where it was buried with the presence of a lot of people, friends, family members and the celebrities of those days.

David Oistrakh

Early life

David Fyodorovich Oistrakh, Russian violinist, was born in Odessa (which belonged to Russia) on September 30th 1908. His father was an amateur musician; his mother was a soloist at the opera house. He started playing the 1/8 violin when he was only 5 and his first teacher was Professor Pyotr Stolyarsky. David was his student until he graduated. His education was based on working with this very eccentric but efficient professor. They mostly followed the Czech school principles of teaching the violin and music, trying to stay away from the Hungarian influence which was dominant those days in Russia. Stolyarsky also allowed his students to develop individually depending on their own skills and needs. In 1920s, when followers of the Hungarian school Miron Polakin and Joseph Szigeti became popular, Oistrakh selectively accepted the Hungarian influence, but until that moment he had fully developed love towards Brahms music.

Conservatory

He entered the Odessa Institute of Music and Drama in 1923, and the very same year he had his big concert with the orchestra, on which he played Bach's Concerto in A minor with the Odessa SO, as both soloist and leader, and the next year he made a debut with a recital.

His graduation concert was held in 1926, and he performed Bach's Chaconne, Tartini's 'Devil's Trill' Sonata, Prokofiev's First Concerto and Rubinstein's Viola Sonata. Later on Prokofiev wrote two sonatas for him. Oistrakh played Glazunov's Concerto for violin and orchestra as a conductor in Kiev, Ukraine in 1927. The big success of this concert brought him one step up, so he was offered to play Tchaikovsky's Concerto for violin and orchestra in Leningrad next year with the Philharmonic Orchestra under Nikolai Malko.

Moscow period, competitions

Oistrakh moved to Moscow in 1928 and there began a period of intense artistic growth. He married the pianist Tamara Rotareva in 1928, and in 1931 they had a son Igor. During 1930s he won first prizes on a several competitions: Ukrainian Contest (1930), and the All-Soviet Contest (1935); the second prize for Wieniawski Contest in Warsaw (1935); the first prize on Concours Eugène Ysaÿe in Brussels in 1937. Unfortunately, due to beginning of the WW II his international career has stopped. During the war he played in the occupied Leningrad, in hospitals and factories. It was then when he played hundreds of concerts in the country, and that made a connection into a trio with Lev Oborin and Sviatoslav Knushevitzky in 1941. Later the string quartet was made with Bondarenko, Terian and Knushevitzky. Also, during the war his friendship with Shostakovich grew bigger, and due to that the composer wrote two concertos for violin and a Sonata. The most heroic act in his life was a performance of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in central music hall during the Battle of Stalingrad in winter of 1942 (while the center of Stalingrad was bombed by Germans). His progress and various successes brought him to the assistant position at the Conservatory in 1934.

International carrier, WW II

He performed for the first time in Vienna, Paris and Budapest together with his accompanist Lev Oborin presenting himself with Sonatas. When he won at Ysaÿe competition he became the greatest violinist ever of the Soviet Union. After the premiere of Miaskovsky and Khachaturian Concertos, he was promoted into a full time professor at Conservatory in 1938.

His most famous students who ended up with having international careers are: Oleg Kagan, Gidon Kremer, Zoya Petrosyan, Victor Danchenko, his son Igor Oistrakh, etc.

A new art season was opened again in 1945 with a concert of Bach's Double Concerto where Oistrakh and Menuhin (the first artist from abroad who came to Russia after the war) performed.

It was an unforgettable event both for artists and numerous audiences.

Period after WW II

During 1946 and 1947 he played cycles of concerts: “*The Development of the Violin Concerto*”. He performed then the concertos of Sibelius, Elgar and Walton, as well as Khachaturian’s, dedicated to him. When he was for the first time in New York in 1955 he presented the Shostakovich’s First Concerto, written for him. Ever since the travels to western countries for the Soviet Union citizens were allowed, Oistrakh’s schedule was overbooked. He had hundreds of concerts in Russia and abroad, countless lessons and later on he was a conductor. He recorded almost all the literature written for the violin. He celebrated his 60th birthday in the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory with the performance of Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto, which is one of Oistrakh’s favorite Concertos, with the conducting of Gennady Rozhdestvensky.

He was one of the best violinist of his time (together with Jascha Heifetz and George Enescu), and even now he still remained the best. He was one of the most real presenters of the Russian violin school. He is my favorite performer because of the extraordinary tone color he plays, always moderate, soft enough, warm and yet at the same time very certain, sophisticated and powerful with the beautiful vibrate which is specific for Russian school, one of the most quality one ever. Russian school has given so many performers who are on the leading rankings on the world list of musicians. Even though the virtuosity is not his main characteristic, he fantastically managed to present his magnificence through music of a specific play.

He had an incredible desire to present new pieces; so many composers have actually dedicated their works to him: Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Myaskovsky, Khachaturian, Rakov, Weinberg, etc. He was named People’s Artist of the USSR in 1954 and received the Lenin Prize in 1960. Also, he was honored by the Royal Academy of Music, London, and the Conservatorio di S Cecilia, Rome. He processed many pieces for violin and arranged Sonata for flute and violin by Prokofiev, with the composer’s approval.

Last days

Chess was his hobby, and he played one game with Prokofiev in 1937. He played on seven Stradivari violins which were posed of Soviet Union. He decided to choose “*Conte di Fontana*” Stradivarius 1702, which he used for 10 years, and after he switched to “*Marsick*” Stradivarius 1705 in June 1966 and he used it for the rest of his life. Oistrakh used bows by Albert Nürnberger and Andre Richaume.

He died all of a sudden in Amsterdam after having a second heart attack, during the 1974 tour. His remains were sent back to Moscow where he was buried in Novodevichy Cemetery.

Janine Jansen

Early life

Janine Jansen was born on January 1978 in Soest in the Netherlands. She started playing the violin when she was 6. All the members of her family were musicians: her father played the piano, both of her brothers played cello, and her mother was classical singer.

First performances with orchestra

Even though she didn't start performing together with the orchestra in her early age (which is, with most of the world famous performers, usually the case as they turn 8 or 9) she managed to get to the top. The first time she had performed as a soloist was with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland in 2001, Brahms: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. That went pretty well, many of the world famous violinists have noticed her, and her international career has started with a powerful rise.

She played at the opening of BBC Proms in 2005. Every time she performs in live her music is full of experiences, her musical playing sometimes are not so moderate, but they are never boring and dull. She is well known as one of the best violinist of the day, so as an artist who is very exciting and divertive in form.

Education

Janine started her education with Coosje Wijzenbeek who was born in the Netherlands and graduated from “Fabritiussschool”. He studied violin with Frits Knol in Utrecht, and later with Davin van Wely at the Conservatory in Amsterdam. He has a great experience in working with children and students. Later on he began working at the King’s Conservatorium in Hague. He brought to light many successful violinists, and he won a lot of rewards as being one of the professors who “discovered” a great number of affirmed students. He still holds master classes all over the world. Philipp Hirshhorn was Janine’s second professor. He was born in Riga in 1946. His very first violin professor was from Lithuania and his name was Waldemar Sturestep. After that he went to St. Petersburg where he worked with a German professor Michael Waiman. He was very successful, and maybe one of the greatest successes was winning the Queen Elisabeth Music Competition in 1967. He didn’t load himself with a career and soloist concerts, he very much liked perfectionism, so he dedicated more time to his students than to his performances. He was professor to many high quality violinists. He died in 1996. The third professor that Janine used to work with was Boris Belkin (born in 1948), who was a Russian violinist and who owes his success to Isaak Stern. He lived in Moscow and had concerts all over Russia and since 1974 all over the world. He cooperated with the leading world orchestras and conductors. Belkin was an exquisite professor with the full time engagement with master classes.

Important concerts

After Janine performed with Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 2006 in Berlin’s Waldbühne Amphitheater, with 25000 auditoriums, and in Los Angeles at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in 2008, which was also sold out, the audience greeted Janine with many ovations and left the concerts full of impressions. She definitely doesn’t leave anyone indifferent. Her performance of the Tchaikovsky Concerto with the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra and Vladimir Ashkenazy conducting is considered by some to be one of the greatest performances in her generation.

She founded her own chamber music festival in Utrecht. Being a chamber musician she cooperated with the best musicians of today : Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Mischa Maisky, Julian Rachlin, Itamar Golan, Martin Fröst, Khatia Buniatishvili, Leif Ove

Andsnes and Torleif Thedéen, etc. Jansen received the Dutch Music Prize in 2003, and the distinguished Royal Philharmonic Society Instrumentalist Award in Britain in 2009 (Kjemtrup 2011, hentet fra Strings Magazine).

Janine Jansen is one of the most faithful representatives of the Western Europe violin schools. Considering the fact that she was born in the Netherlands, she had many opportunities to visit concerts in Europe, and to work with the professors who represent the west school, which is a lot different than the Russian one. Her equal, wide and always good quality tone gives the impressions that she carefully and with no exceptions chooses and evaluates each and every tone.

She is using the Stradivari "*Barrere*" violin 1727 at the moment, which she received as an extended loan by the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

SECTION 2

Tchaikovsky: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra D major, op. 35

The one of the most well known and technically worthwhile, and at the same time, according to many, the most beautiful concerto for violin was written in Clarens, Switzerland, in 1878.

Instrumentation

The concerto is written for a soloist, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets in A and B flat, two bassoons, four horns in F, two trumpets in D, timpani and strings: violins I, violins II, violas, cellos and double basses.

Form

The piece is in three movements, as most concertos.

Allegro moderato—Moderato assai (D major, 339 bars)

Canzonetta. Andante (G minor, 119 bars)

Finale. Allegro vivacissimo (D major, 639 bars)

The second and third movements are written *attacca*.²

History

Tchaikovsky went to Clarens (Switzerland) in 1878 to recover from depression, which he had suffered from after the marriage with Antonina Miliukova. Soon, the student, the violinist, Josif Kotek, who was studying in Berlin in Joseph Joachim class at that time, accompanied him. Tchaikovsky and Josif spent their time together, playing pieces of music for violin and piano, among which was Edouard Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*, arrangement for violin and piano. Peter was delighted with this piece of

² Grove Music Online defines *attacca* as: "It.: "attack", "begin"; A direction, usually found at the end of a movement, signifying that the next movement is to be joined to the preceding without a pause..." <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/01477> (accessed February, 2012)

music and he wrote to Nadezda vom Meck: "*It (the Symphonie espagnole) has a lot of freshness, lightness, of piquant rhythms, of beautiful and excellently harmonized melodies.... He [Lalo], in the same way as Léo Delibes and Bizet, does not strive after profundity, but he carefully avoids routine, seeks out new forms, and thinks more about musical beauty than about observing established traditions, as do the Germans* (Brown 1982, p. 260). He also wrote to her that he was about to write a new piece of music for the first time in his life; before he finished the one he had started earlier (in this case it was *Piano Sonata*). On 22nd March, five days after he had begun writing the concerto, Tchaikovsky completed the first movement, on 23rd March he started the second the movement *Andante*, and on 26th March he wrote to Nadezda that he had begun *Finale*, and that the concerto would be finished soon. He composed with a lot enthusiasm. Two days later, on 28th of March, Tchaikovsky he finished the concerto.

After Tchaikovsky and Kotek had played the whole concerto, the composer decided to write a new second movement, having thought that the already existing movement did not fit in well with the remaining two movements. Therefore, he separated the existing second movement from the other two and regarded it as a single piece of music which renamed into *Méditation*, and to which he added two more pieces of music later, connecting them to the form cycle *Souvenir d'un lieu cher*, Op. 42. In a letter from 11th of April, he wrote to Nadezhda that the full score is ready. "*How lovingly he's busying himself with my concerto!*" Tchaikovsky wrote to his brother Anatoly on the day he completed the new slow movement. "*It goes without saying that I would have been able to do nothing without him. He plays it marvelously.*" (Brown 1982, p. 261).

Tchaikovsky was in two minds who to dedicate the concerto to, Josif Kotek or Leopold Auer. Because of the rumors about his being a homosexual and about his being in relationship with Kotek, Tchaikovsky felt restrained and confined to dedicate the concerto to Josif. So, he decided to dedicate the concerto to Leopold Auer. The composer wanted Auer to be the first to play the concerto, which Auer refused and canceled premiere of concerto, scheduled for 22nd of March in 1879, by saying that a new soloist should be found. Auer and the piano player Karl Davydov explained that the concerto was too difficult to be played. Later, Kotek and his piano player confirmed that it was difficult for playing; therefore, their performance was cancelled also and the concerto was declared as unplayable.

Eventually, after the concerto was orchestrated, it was performed for the first time on 8th of December 1881, in Vienna. Adolph Brodsky played it and the conductor was Hans Richter. As Tchaikovsky was pleased with the performance of his concerto, he changed the original dedication and since then the concerto has been dedicated to Brodsky. The concerto was a great success and nowadays it is thought to be one of the most important concertos for violin.

The concerto was published by Petr Jurgenson - the arrangement for violin and piano in October 1879; the orchestral parts in August 1879; and the full score in June 1888.

At the time when the concerto was composed, violinists played on gut strings, and probably it was because of that that concerto seemed unplayable to the majority of violinists at that time. The gut strings (which were then made from the animals' giblets) were much softer than the strings which we are using now and they are manufactured products. In Tchaikovsky's time, they tried to add a metal layer manually in order to "wrap" a string so they could make it stronger and eventually get a more audible sound. Vibrato, which can be played on the gut strings, is not as audible as when it is played on metal strings, actually on synthetic strings; therefore, many places in the concerto, as they would play it then, could not be expressed enough. In addition, the parts, which are technically worthwhile, could neither be carried out as they were composed nor could they single out the soloist from the orchestra. Having in mind the fact that Tchaikovsky was not a violinist, Kotek helped him a lot by playing through the violin arrangement while the concerto was being composed, whereas it was Auer in particular, who made it sound "comfortable" by altering and adapting certain parts of the concerto as they suited to the instrument themselves.

SECTION 3

Analysis

Key

As the majority of “great” concertos for violin (Beethoven, Brahms, Sibelius) Tchaikovsky also decided to compose his concerto in D major. It is, perhaps, the most suitable key for violinists, and for instrument itself. It is then when the tonality contains all the open strings that the instrument resonates best and can be achieve the most open sound and clearest tone. The open strings of the violin are the G-, D-, A- and E-, which in D major are the subdominant, tonic, dominant, and dominant of the dominant, in which often is modulated from D. The primary second movement was written in the D minor, which would show enough contrast, and the new second movement is in G minor, which is the subdominant minor.

First movement

The first movement of this concerto is written as Sonata form.

What is great about this concerto is that it has a little bit of everything. People think of it as a big, powerful, almost bombastic and virtuous showpiece. But, it starts out tenderly, the orchestra opening is so gentle and you will never know where it's going. When it does introduce the first theme in the strings, there is almost a kind of dark atmosphere, but when the solo violin enters a few bars later, and the first theme comes again, then the darkness is completely overcome by this beautiful, pastoral type of melody. The feeling of gloominess does not last for long, it gets exciting very fast, but I think that the opening is very special for such a big piece (it's quite a short introduction considering that the first movement has 339 bars).

The melodies are essential to the greatness of this concerto, but are also transitional passages, which are very important.

The Orchestra and the solo introduction

Melody, fingering, dynamics

The concerto opens in F sharp held for a three quarter note in orchestra, and this F sharp reappears five more times in the first eight bars. These first eight bars link the theme of the first and the third movement, giving the concerto subtle cycle form. The first two bars come from the tonic D major chord, in the similar way as the violin part will appear later in the theme. Next, in the seventh and eighth bar in the orchestra introduction quarter notes D, C sharp, B and A appear, exactly the same as the violins will do in the A major section in the third movement, at the dramatically end of the lyrical theme which will later modulate in surprising G major - the subtle presentation of cyclic form.

The concerto opens in *Allegro moderato tempo*, the quarter is 126. After the 22nd bar of the orchestra introduction, the solo violin enters in the 23rd bar. From the 20th to 23rd bar when the solo violin enters, the dynamics in the orchestra is *f*, *mf*, *p* and *pp*, which implies that it is gradually becoming quieter and in this way it leads us into the solo introduction. Then the solo violin enters and it is just wonderful. It comes right out of the orchestra introduction and this brief cadenza follows which the violin restates in the first theme, but in such a beautiful, open, warm way. I think it is just one of the most inviting moments in any concerto, which catches all the audience attention. Many orchestras together with this diminuendo play *ritardando*³ which is not written, and this is the case with the orchestra that followed Oistrakh, on the recording that I analyze, and which functions as a preparation for the soloist entrance. The orchestra that followed Janine Jansen plays significantly smaller *ritardando*. The orchestra introduction continues into the solo introduction in the same dynamics, *p*, as when the orchestra completes its introduction. The majority of listeners, and even players, expect that the opening of the soloist performance in such a great concerto will be in dynamics *f*, so most of the players beginning with a considerably stronger dynamics than the one that is written (*p*). Having in mind the fact that the concerto opens with the orchestra introduction which leads us into the solo introduction with a

³ Grove Music Online defines *ritardando* as: "It.: 'holding back', 'becoming slower'" (Fallows, 2012), accessed in February 2012

big *crescendo*⁴, if the player does not start at least in dynamics *mf*, he will not be able to grow the dynamics up to *f* in that first passage.

The solo introduction is written as a cadenza, so that there is no need to be played in a strict rhythm though it is certainly not *ad libitum*⁵. Tchaikovsky's idea was to develop melody with this first passage, and to "start speeding" with the crescendo and the rhythmical measures in order to get the attention of the audience at the very beginning. After a eight and quarter note which is tied with the same tone eight, he wrote rhythmical measures which are gradually shorter and shorter and consequently the rhythm becomes faster and faster. This implies that if we played in the exact rhythm as composed (three eights, three thirds and four sixteens) and the crescendo, the tempo would "accelerate" by itself; namely, the expecting excitement would be achieved. In my opinion, it is the first passage for the soloist that represents the bud growing into a beautiful flower at the same moment when the highest note appears. The next very important tone is B natural in the 25th bar, quarter note on the third bit, before which we are not certain whether we are playing in major or minor, and then when this tone comes, the melody is viewed in a different manner and leads into the first theme which is definitely in D major.

Oistrakh opens the solo introduction in a quiet exact rhythm, but immediately after the first passage a freer rhythm is observed, which is closer to the cadenza. The first tone is in *mf* dynamics and certainly, there is enough space to reach a big crescendo to the highest note. Two bars before the beginning of the first theme he plays a big ritardando with a small diminuendo, and at the part where Tchaikovsky wrote *Moderato assai*, the first theme opens.

The orchestra, which follows Janine Jansen on the recording I analyze, plays a real ritardando just one bar before the opening of the first theme, and it also starts in *mf* dynamics, but it sticks to the rhythm closely, and even it can be said that she plays *rubato*⁶. Likewise, from the very beginning of her performance we can confirm that

⁴ Grove Music Online defines crescendo as: "It.: 'growing', 'becoming louder'..." (Donington) accessed in February 2012

⁵ Grove Music Online defines ad libitum as: "Lat.: 'at the pleasure' [of the performer], (Fuller) accessed in February 2012

⁶ Grove Music Online defines rubato as: "It.: 'robbed or stolen time'..." (Hudson, 2005)

her tone is much “thicker” and “compressed” than the one Oistrakh plays. By playing *diminuendo* and *ritardando* she brings us beautifully into the first theme. When I perform this part my accompanist will play the orchestra introduction in a quite exact tempo, with a small *ritardando* before I start playing, and I will just “take over” and continue where he stops, playing in as similar tempo and using a similar dynamics as my accompanist. I will open the solo introduction between *p* and *mf* dynamics develop passages and emphasize the note B natural as the tone that will eventually confirm major tonality. Likewise, I emphasize the note A in the bar before the opening of the theme, in which a fermata is written and as it is a syncope, the note is further emphasized.

Exposition

First Theme

Melody, rhythm, fingerings and dynamics

The first theme begins with 28th tact, tempo *Moderato assai*, quarter is 80. The orchestra plays from the start of the theme. This is one of the most beautiful themes in the whole violin literature, which, with its wideness and wonderful melody in a way represents Russia, the size of the country and greatness of hearts of people living there. Oistrakh plays the very beginning on the G- string as written in the score (my fingering is in the same position, as well) while Jansen plays the beginning of the theme in the first position. Playing on the G- string provides softer and wider tone with warmer color than the one provided on the D- string, while playing on the D- string provides the theme with more concrete sound. Oistrakh starts with *p* although he develops melody to *mf* pretty fast, while Janine remains longer in *p*. Small *decrecendo* in the first part of 31st bar is followed by *dolce*⁷ part where I play the same fingering as Oistrakh does, at the end of 31st bar there is flageolet on the D- string, and the next difference from Janine is that Oistrakh and me play the written fingering, i.e. in the following tact the second bit is open A- string quarter which

⁷ Grove Music Online defines *dolce* as: “It. Sweet”, (Fallows),
<<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/07936>>, accessed in February 2012

makes the difference between second A note which is second finger on the D- string. Janine plays both times the same A on the D- string. After several bars dotted notes passages, we come to triplets passage in 40th bar (this part is not followed by the orchestra) which takes us to the second exposition of the first theme, 41st bar, which is now dramatically more dynamic and written in a much more complex manner than the previous one with double stops and an octave higher.

At the beginning of the second exposition of the first theme, Oistrakh and Jansen play different fingering, as well: Janine plays Auer's printed fingering, while Oistrakh plays the first position on the E string. I also play printed fingering as Jansen does. She almost skips the eight-note pause at the very beginning of the theme, i.e. she extends the first eight-note on the first bit and "sticks" it to the second bit of that bar which is the same note, i.e. the same chord in this case. I do not think that the theme should be changed in that way, particularly because during that eight-note break orchestra plays an eight-note that should be heard and distinguished as being played precisely between the first and the second bit with the soloist. Oistrakh plays the precise rhythm and in 42nd bar on the third and the fourth bit he makes portato so each of the triplets is clearly heard.

Vibrato and use of the bow

In this part Oistrakh uses pretty wide vibrato which is typical for the Russian school of violin and he also uses the whole bow from the frog to the top as frequent as possible which is also one of the characteristics of the Russian school.

Unlike him, Janine Jansen uses very fast and smaller vibrato which might be frequently heard with younger generations of players and is typical for Western European School of violin. Her tone is also more consistent, compact and the phrase "pressed" is frequently used for this type of sound. Like Oistrakh, she uses the whole bow as frequently as possible, which means that she has to use lots of energy to achieve the consistence of the tone she wants to achieve. In this part of the exposition of the theme I use almost the same fingering as Janine does, but the manner of my playing is more similar to Oistrakh's performance.

Bridge

Melody, bow-use, accents, tempo and dynamics

After the exposition of the theme and dotted rhythm passage, follows the bridge *Ben sostenuto il tempo*, bar 51. The beginning melody of this bridge reminds of ballet music which we know that an important part of the composer's opus so he had decided to pay the due attention to it in the violin concerto. This very same melody is by many connected to his homosexuality since it is a bit similar to the conversation between the composer and one of his lovers.

Oistrakh plays this part more gently and "airy", i.e. he respects each written 32nd note by lifting the bow from the string thus achieving the genuine effect of that small pause providing the impulse for further stream of the melody.

I would say that Jansen plays this part a bit more "roughly" with the bow completely "glued" to the string trying to achieve the pause by emphasizing the note before 32nd break, i.e. by adding the accent to the very end of this tone moving the bow faster. In the 53rd bar there is a series of passages lasting for 6 bars and it belongs to one of the most difficult parts of the first movement. The passages have been written in triplets rhythm with frequent change of accidentals. Oistrakh begins 53rd bar a bit more slowly than the real tempo and then, in two tacts, he "raises" it and returns to the real tempo, then from 55th bar he makes small accents to each even eights of bar, i.e. to each fourth triplet. In the orchestra, exactly at the same place there are the eights, therefore, together with the small accents in the solo violin stability in tempo and safety not to diverge from the orchestra are achieved.

Janine Jansen keeps the same stable tempo all the time and she almost does not make those "auxiliary" accents at all. I play more similarly to Oistrakh; I start from *mf* and then make a big crescendo, add accents aimed at keeping the same tempo all the time. For a part like this one you can never be sure that you practiced it enough, that is why it takes a lot of practice and plenty of different ways of practicing. O. Sevcik published a book on the ways of practicing for whole Tchaikovsky's concerto so, here, I would say a few examples about several ways to prepare this particular part:

a) O. Sevcik: Studie, Tchaikovsky Violin concerto, op.19, exercise for bars 54-59

The image shows a musical score for violin, consisting of four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 3/8 time signature. It features a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamic markings *p*, *mp*, and *mf*. The second staff continues with more complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, with dynamics *f* and *ff*. The third and fourth staves show a change in tempo and character, with markings for *Fr.* (Forte), *M.* (Molto), *Sp.* (Spiccato), and *sautillé*. The score includes various fingering numbers (1, 2, 3, 4) and bowing techniques like *Fr.* and *M.*.

With such long concerts the bridge is expected to have many bars, so this one lasts from 51st to 69th. From 60th bar to the beginning of the second theme passages similar to scales are exposed. There are both chromatic and broken accords, but everything is melodious and serves the music; none of the passages is just a technical difficulty or monotonous presentation of the music and virtuosity of the soloist. In 64th bar Oistrakh suddenly takes the slower tempo than the previous one, probably because of the accents that should be respected well and which provide the needed character to the music and because of very difficult passages appearing in the following bars before the second theme.

Janine Jansen plays the same tempo as she did by then with a very good legato, nicely continued and with compact structure of the sound. I will try to keep the same tempo, very rhythmically with well-articulated 32nd. In 69th bar, Tchaikovsky wrote syncopated rhythm and one of the questions frequently asked is whether the last eighth-note from that tact should be “linked”, i.e. whether it belongs to the following tact, i.e. the second theme. Decrescendo has also been written, and perhaps, majority of things indicate that, in fact, the last note of the bridge actually introduces and defines tempo of the second theme. By that note, F sharp, a soloist can make a sign to the orchestra and define the tempo in which he wants to continue the playing.

Oistrakh plays that very last note prior to the second theme exactly as the end of the previous part, he plays it more slowly and he even enters the second theme in a slower tempo than the one he played by then.

Jansen has performed it very well and her performance of that note sounds both as the end of the previous part and the beginning and good introduction to the tempo of the second theme which she plays in the same tempo as she played everything by then.

I play that F sharp both as the end and the beginning trying to make the sign to the orchestra and define the tempo I want to continue with and I also play the second theme in the same tempo I played the first one. The composer used these passages to modulate with them by A major.

Second Theme

Melody, bow-use, dynamics, articulation, tempo, fingering

The second theme of the first movement is very lush, very beautiful; I think one of the most famous melodies in any violin concerto. It is, as everything implied in sonata form in dominant key, A major. Both Oistrakh and Janine start the first sentence of the theme from the top and when seven bars later appear then they play the same material from the frog. Both times I play from the frog and I change the color in the way that the first time I play almost *sul tasto*⁸, i.e. further from the bridge. Since they both play on Stradivari instruments which are of a very good quality, sometimes it is enough to change the bowing and achieve the desired variation.

The very beginning of the second theme, 70th bar is *p*, which should sound a bit blurred, *misterioso*, and 76th bar should be played with a more “concrete” tone. 72nd and 73rd are played on the A- string, they are very similar and, most frequently in the second half of 73rd bar *glissando*⁹ is played and it is achieved by playing the tones F sharp, B natural and the following F sharp with the same finger, most frequently it is 3rd finger.

Oistrakh plays the whole theme much more slowly than the previous part, although it is not written in the notes to play different tempo than the one played by then. The only mark at the beginning of the second theme is *con molto espressione*. The theme

⁸ Grove Music online defines *sul tasto*, *sulla tastiera* as: “It.: ‘on the fingerboard’”, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/41703?q=sul+tasto&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit, accessed in March 2012

⁹ Grove Music online defines *glissando* as: “italianized, from Fr. *glisser*: ‘to slide’; It. *Strisciando*”, (Boyden and Stowell), accessed in March 2012

is so musically written that, without any particular effort, one can achieve a really beautiful tone and emphasize wonderful, lyrical melody, although in its intonation it is not simple at all.

With his slower tempo, Oistrakh achieves greater depth of the melody so that one can get the feeling of its being static. His deep and pretty slow vibrato makes the impression of calmness and the quality of tone creates special atmosphere during continuance of the theme. Janine plays the second theme in tempo but with significantly more compact tone than Oistrakh, particularly in 75th bar when introducing the second sentence of the theme which is exactly the same as the beginning. From 76th tact Tchaikovsky developed melody leading to the high register. The interesting thing is that he, almost always in significant and “tense” positions, wrote syncope which added more tension. The same applies to the second half of 79th bar where he wrote accent on the middle note of syncope which in this case is E3. Great effect is achieved if one “unties” these three notes from the syncope and then, between the first two, i.e. before the accented middle note, adds *glissando* by third finger. That’s how I play and that is the influence of Russian-German school. The same bowing is played by Oistrakh but without *glissando*, Janine uses a different fingering, she remains longer on the A string thus achieving softer tone. I chose fingering on the E string since I believe that it is good preparation for further stream of melody which certainly is on the E string in a very high register. Oistrakh plays the last note in 79th bar without vibrato which, in my opinion, is a good pause prior to triple passage that follows.

The following bar consists of triplets only in the written *f* dynamics. Oistrakh respects that - he plays with as wide bow as possible in *f* but with a high quality tone.

Janine starts 80th tact pretty loud and then, suddenly, she makes diminuendo which is not written, making herself space to, before re-appearance of the second theme, make a big *crescendo* an octave lower, thus emphasizing deeper register. From 82nd bar, she plays “thicker” and more complete tone and uses wide vibrato which is still much faster than the Oistrakh’s tone.

The representative of Russian school plays this place in *mf* exactly as it is written but still in its slow tempo. I play this in the same position, in *mf*, with plenty of bow but without exaggerated pressure in the right hand. From 90th bar a very difficult

intonation position follows and it lasts eight bars. High register which should be in *f* with wide bow becomes very difficult for both hands, particularly for the left hand which has to play all tones as pure as possible. They both played this position excellently and Oistrakh, through it, returned to Tempo I, to the end of the second theme.

Closing section

Bow-use, tempo, articulation, rhythm, fingerings

The closing section starts from 98th bar. The first four bars are written as passages in the form of scales; combination of tied 32nds and triplets with accents. In this place Oistrakh plays bowing “how it comes”, while Janine starts each sequence of 32nds from the frog; I play the same bowing, as well. Oistrakh plays triplets shorter and with greater accent while Janine plays more untied and “glued” with the “dubbed” bow. My way of playing these triplets is more similar to Oistrakh’s, only the bowing is different. In the following six tacts, the violin has its conduct while the orchestra has a beautiful melody line. The following place is marked by *Poco più mosso*; it consists of 4 bars made of triplets only. As the very mark of the tempo shows, it is suddenly faster than the previous part, new tempo. The first two bars are played *detache*¹⁰, in the string, with wide moves of bow and the following two tacts are the same note material but with the mark *spiccato*¹¹, almost “jumping” move, tiny and “prickly” sound in a quieter dynamics – *mf*.

These 4 bars are followed by *Poco più lento*, meaning that slower tempo begins from there. For many, including me, this part is the most difficult one in the whole concerto. Tchaikovsky is known for his virtuoso of fireworks, and there is a lot of this type of writing in the first movement. I think it is interesting to add a little bit of historical prospective; some of the writing was very unusual for its time, there is a wonderful spot happening twice in the first movement, where a triplet type of

¹⁰ Grove Music Online defines *détaché* as: “simply means ‘separated’ and it can be applied to any notes not linked by a slur...” (Bachman), accessed in March 2012

¹¹ Grove Music Online defines *spiccato* as: “It. In modern string playing, a short, off-the-string bow stroke. The term is sometimes synonymous with the bouncing stroke *SAUTILLÉ*. Before 1750, however, ‘spiccato’ and ‘staccato’ were regarded as equivalent terms (in, for example, Brossard’s *Dictionnaire*, 1703, and Corrette’s *L’École d’Orphée*, 1738) meaning simply detached or separated as opposed to *legato*”, (Boyden and Walls) accessed in March 2012

figuration gets working in double stops and to any young musician it is one of those famous passages, at the first time you hear it, you just think: That's great! I want to learn how to do that! These triplets in combination with double stops cause problems to both left and right hand at the same time. While practicing this spot, I figured out that the left hand can easier and faster learn to practice its part of the work, but concerning the right hand we are never sure whether it is on the right spot of the fiddle-bow. At the beginning, when the passage is played on the A-, D- or G- string, the position of the right hand is in a more natural and comfortable position than it would be when the passage gradually goes up to the E-, A- and D- string. Then the right hand naturally goes to frog, and on that part of the fiddle-bow this move is performed with much difficulty, almost non-performable, triplets become uneven and there is no way to separate the sound of "two and one" note. One should be aware of this when performing this passage and try to keep the bow somewhere a bit below the half. There are also those who suggest playing this passage as high as possible on the string so that all notes might be heard and to be able to distinguish between double stop and a single stop, and there are those who suggest that the bow should not be on the string all the time but to be moved with the tendency to use sufficiently wide move.

Oistrakh plays the first three bars with upper tone, i.e. he does not play double stops. This is much easier for both hands: to the left hand because it does not play double stops and to the right because it does not play on the G- and D- string and it does not play two strings at the same time at any moment. Therefore, he performs this move a bit above the half of the bow, gently jumping move in *mf*. This is one of his performances of this concerto.

Janine Jansen plays as it is written in Tchaikovsky's edition, i.e. his elaboration of the concerto. She plays double stops from the very beginning of *Poco più lento*, with the bow well "glued" to the strings somewhere around the half of the bow. She started much more slowly than previous *Poco più mosso* and by stable tempo and bow on the string she makes the effect that the whole spot does not seem too complicated and difficult. In these three bars I play the same text as Jansen but with bowing close to Oistrakh's, although neither so "light" nor so "heavy" as Janine.

b) *Poco più lento*, Tchaikovsky's edition, bars 15-22 counting from closing section

poco *a* *poco* *cresc.*
scen - do
f
E
E

c) *Poco più lento*, Auer's edition, bars 15-22 counting from closing section

cresc.
f détaché large
sempre détaché
restes
restes
restes
restes

The following five bars have been written as a sequence, continuation of double stops in the same manner as in the previous three bars in the first half of the bar, and the second half of the bar is also made of triplets but broken accords (5/3). Four bars of *trills*¹² where tempo *Poco più mosso* has been written are followed by five bars triplets-arpeggio.

Development

The Orchestra

Tempo

The orchestra development starts with the tempo *Moderato assai* and exposes the first theme in A major now. After 15 bars there is fragmentary structure (form) where the composer plays 19 bars with one motif which is followed by the soloist performance. Although the composer has not written it in the score, some orchestras make ritardando before the soloist enters and that happens with the orchestra playing with Oistrakh. By a subtle delay, i.e. “braking” of the tempo in the last bar of orchestra development, they prepare the re-performance of the soloist.

Oistrakh started in a slower tempo, exactly the same one that the orchestra finished, although the new tempo *Molto sostenuto il tempo, moderatissimo* in the partiture was written two bars after the soloist started playing. He also makes a small ritardando by the end of that second bar and then continues in that new tempo.

Unlike Oistrakh and his orchestra, Jansen’s orchestra plays the whole development in tempo, then she continues with the same tempo in *Solo* part, and only in the second half of the second bar she makes ritardando as preparation for new tempo and new tonality.

My idea of this part is much similar to Janine’s, i.e. it follows printed marks from the score.

¹² Grove Music Online defines trill as: “Ger.: Triller; It.: trillo, an ornament consisting of rapid alternation of the main (notated) pitch with a note usually a semitone or tone above it. (Milsom and McVeigh), accessed in March 2012

Solo

This is one of the most beautiful parts of the concerto. It is written in C major. Here, the composer plays with the motif from the first theme and, through variations, he reminds us of it. There are many technical difficulties since it has been complexly written. There are double stops, 32nds, etc. There are two ways to perform this part: one of them has been written by Tchaikovsky and the other has been elaborated by Auer. From 8th bar (counting from the beginning of *Molto sostenuto il tempo*) performer can choose the version that suits him better or that he likes better.

I play the same version as Oistrakh does, and that is the one that Tchaikovsky has written. Almost everything has been written an octave higher than the first part of variations and that makes the difference. This part is technically much more complex but for many much more beautiful. With the composer's edition there is no literal repetition.

Jansen plays Auer's elaboration, i.e. she plays the same material both times. This place lasts for 15 bars. From 16th bar one of the most difficult parts of the concerto follows (along with the part with triplets). Here, the composer plays with the motif from the second part of the first theme. Everything is written in 16ths with much complex double stops, chromatic-chords, etc.; it is technically very complex but along with technical difficulties music plan must be respected. The whole place reminds of a tempest, as if by each motif it attacks and then again calms down and again and again. This second part of solo development lasts for 13 bars.

The Orchestra

After the soloist there is another presentation of the first theme in the orchestra in C major which is now even more pompous and grandiose. After six bars of presenting the theme there are 16 bars of the plot and preparation of cadenza. This is, at the same time, the last big break for the soloist in the first movement. After this, he plays to the end of the movement without the break.

Cadenza

Chord playing, fingerings, bow-use, articulation, trills

The cadenza was written by Tchaikovsky and he did not leave space for a soloist to improvise on his own will. After the first chords (the first bar of the cadenza), the rest of cadenza was written without bar lines. Four bars prior to the very beginning of the cadenza the soloist and the orchestra alternately play one bar each. The soloist begins the cadenza in the same manner as he played by then but now he further develops the melody stream. The first part (mainly broken chords) was written in A major (which is dominant for D major).

The first bar of the cadenza is much different with these two performances which I analyze. Oistrakh and Jansen play with completely different fingerings and bowings in that bar. The edition from which I play (Auer with Oistrakh's elaboration) completely complies with the one played by Oistrakh. The first four chords are in the first position, then the fifth in the third, the sixth in the fifth and the only difference occurs in the last chord which he plays starting with the G- string in the eighth position.

I avoid the G- string on that place, since on an average instrument that I play such type of a chord cannot sound good each time. That's why I decided to play A- and E- open strings on the place of the last chord, and then in the eight position C sharp and A; during those two higher notes I am changing direction of the bow thus providing one whole bow for the two highest notes of that sequence. Both of us play down-bow on each chord.

Starting from the introduction in cadenza where the violin alternately with the orchestra play chords, Janine Jansen started 'violently'. When she begins cadenza she plays *ff*, but with the bowing which, in my opinion, cannot play all written notes. The second, third and fourth chord in the first bar are written with four notes and if we want to play all four of them at once, i.e. not to "break the chord" with the bowing "how it comes" (down-bow, up-bow, down-bow, up-bow), this is not possible to perform. On the recording one can hear that she even does not try to "hook" the G-string in order to play the lowest note chords (A). With this kind of bowing she played this place with plenty of energy with the bow strongly "glued" to the string without

any “air” between down-bow and up-bow. Our fingering differs at the final, seventh chord – she added two tones for an octave lower than the two highest tones of that chord and then, by glissando, she reaches them (up to the climax) using the second and the third finger.

Janine plays continuation of the cadenza with much excitement and thrill while Oistrakh, patiently and without rush listens to and plays each note to its end respecting each break and each pause mark.

After elaborated 5/3, parallel sixths, glissandos with sixths, trills, etc. we come to the part *Quasi andante*. In this part, the composer reminds us of the second theme and develops the motif from its beginning. He adds chromatics and chords thus introducing the end of the cadenza where, in the final three and a half rows (in Auer’s edition since there are no bar lines I cannot say the exact number of the bars) Tchaikovsky wrote the passage consisting of two notes only (A and B flat) in a few different octaves. That’s how he “walked” that motif throughout the instrument fingerboard which makes this part one of the most difficult ones in the concerto. The final two trills prior to recapitulation serve to return the melody to the basic tonality D major. The first trill is on A with B flat, and then comes trill on A with B natural. I begin that second trill more slowly thus emphasizing major and make greater difference between B flat and B natural.

d) The end of cadenza (cadenza is written without bar lines)



Recapitulation

Now, we have very beautiful recap of the original theme, it is played by the flute and there is a variation upon it in the violin. And we basically move to the same material that was presented in the first part of the movement with a few extra variations. It all builds into incredibly exciting *coda* where the violin is flying all over.

Again, this part starts in *Tempo primo; Moderato assai* - like in the beginning. While the flute plays the first theme, the soloist plays in *p* marked by *dolce*. And, indeed, this place radiates special sweetness and gentleness, but soon, after 6 bars it returns to the old style and character. This part is variation which, in the first part of the movement, is between the first and the second occurrence of the first theme.

First theme

After a huge *crescendo* we come to the original theme, this time again in D major, but with somewhat quieter beginning than before, *mf*. Both Janine and Oistrakh now play gentler and softer unlike the first occurrence of the first theme which was much more pompous and ceremonious. They both play in the first position, me, too, and that's how the fingering was originally written. After almost the same 4 bars, Tchaikovsky led the theme to minor thus making a surprise. But he soon returns the melody into major and by the same type of passage (with dotted rhythm) leads it to the bridge, tempo *Ben sostenuto*. In the recapitulation, the composer wrote only one exposition of the theme so that part is significantly shorter and reaches the bridge pretty sooner.

Bridge

Accents, passages, dynamics

This time the bridge is in the basic tonality. With the mark *grazioso*, it adds special character to the bridge. Actually, the first 7 bars are played in *grazioso* style and then a series of passages follows exactly the same as in the first part of this movement. In *grazioso* part Tchaikovsky wrote a small crescendo on the first eights in the bar then decrescendo on the second eights and so on alternately. It is difficult to perform it on such a short motif so many use a small accent on the second eights of the bit. On that same note the orchestra plays eights and on the bit there is a break.

Oistrakh plays pretty expressively that accent while Janine does not play it; she leaves it to the orchestra, when entering the second part of the bit to add volume to the whole sound. I play it with the small accent since the piano cannot make the sound similar to the violin as the orchestra with the stringers certainly can.

The passages follow: the first three bar passages were written in triplets and there are two versions: Auer's elaboration is for an octave lower than the one written by the composer, that version is a bit easier and for many more acceptable.

Janine and I play Auer's version while Oistrakh plays Tchaikovsky's version. Passages similar to scales follow with many chromatics and broken 5/3. This part is much more difficult than in the exposition since it is in higher positions, fingerings are more difficult and intonation is more sensitive. Six bar prior to the second theme, Oistrakh again takes slower tempo than the one by then and he plays each note with big accents from the right hand. Janine plays this part in genuine tempo so that the whole part looks much more virtuoso than it looks like in Oistrakh's interpretation. The last two bars prior to the second theme are played on the G- string and they reduce the tension that existed during the fast passages with many notes. The first of the two bars begins with *f* with wide vibrato and much bowing and in the second bar it becomes calmer and by decrescendo it leads to *p* and to the beginning of the second theme.

Oistrakh plays these two bars more slowly than Janine and adds accents, i.e. plays portato 16ths – four per one bow and then he slows the second bar and the last eights in the bar is almost the same length as the previous quarter-note B sharp. Janine plays these two bars more “briskly”, 16ths are played by a separate bow (“how it comes”) and in the second bar she prepares the beginning of the theme “stretching” the eights that were written as syncope. Here she uses small but not too fast vibrato. By the last tone of that second bar she announces the tempo of the second theme that follows.

Second theme

Tonality, bow-use, vibrato

According to the rule, the second theme in recapitulation should be in the basic key (in exposition second theme is in dominant key), and the same is in this concerto – the second theme is in D major. In the exposition the first and the second sentence of the

second theme start from A, both times in the same octave. And, in recapitulation, the first sentence starts from D on the G- string and the second sentence, which starts from 6th bar, is for an octave higher – D2 on the A- string.

Oistrakh plays this theme slowly, widely with the vibrato from the hand but wide enough to give the melody calmness. That vibrato, combined with wide bowing and orchestra having long notes (in violins there are three 16ths that give the color and are almost inaudible) which are perfectly “tailored” with the theme so that they are not distracting and provide excellent “basis” to the beautiful melody performed by the soloist. Jansen starts the theme pretty quietly but with the concrete sound, she plays with the bow exactly between the bridge and fingerboard at the place where we expect to remove the bow from the bridge to get more closed tone. On the Stradivari instrument on which she plays, she made a gorgeous tone, high-quality sound, but for this concrete part it might be too light. In the second sentence of the theme there is counter theme performed by the trumpet which creates fantastic atmosphere and difference versus the exposition and the first sentence.

One of the most difficult positions when speaking about intonation follows. By the end of the second sentence the composer “climbed” the violinist to a very high position on the E- string where the passage starts from B3 natural and it remains in the “heights” in the following eight bars. At the very end of the second sentence of the theme and the beginning of the melody on the E- string the composer created an excellent effect: from big *f* it suddenly gets calm to *p*, *subito p*¹³. They both excellently played that effect, although on one note before printed *p*, Janine still plays with 2cm bow very accurately and carefully while Oistrakh, by the wideness of the bow and closeness of fingerboard, gets *p* and richer sound than Janine. I play close to fingerboard but much wider than Janine. At this part it is very difficult to control both left and right hand because they are close to each other, so in that situation the bow loses its direction and the left hand becomes unstable in intonation. Eight bars before the beginning of the closing section the composer worked with the motif of the second

¹³ Grove Music Online defines subito as: “A word found in musical scores in such contexts as *subito piano* (‘suddenly quiet’), *volti subito*”, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27057?q=subito+&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit, accessed in March 2012

theme, he started from B3 flat and gradually descended to D1 where the closing section begins.

Closing section

Tempo, articulation

This part is almost the same as in the exposition. It is in D major now. Tchaikovsky again wrote a sequence of passages derived from the scales in eight bars as a conduct to the orchestra. Then, the second part of the closing section follows like in the first part of the movement, *Poco più mosso*. Four bars with triplets, the first two bars are *detache*, and another two are the same note material only marked by *spiccato*. *Poco più lento* follows. This time again, Oistrakh plays his own elaboration without double stops, slow tempo, in *mf*, with the relaxed right hand, a bit above the middle of the bow. And Janine again “glues” the bow on the strings and does not let it “separate” and be above them, not for a single moment. When this part is compared with the same place in the exposition, it might be concluded that it is more comfortable for both hands to have it all in the first and the third position and that the position of the right hand should not interfere with the moves of the left hand. I also find this part easier to perform and it leaves space to express the music idea.

Poco più mosso is suddenly much faster tempo. Four bars of trills lead to the last sentence prior to *coda*. Huge *crescendo* leads to the first note of the first bar of *coda* followed by *subito p*.

Coda

Tempo, dynamics

The *coda* actually starts from the second 16th in the bar and the first belongs to the closing section. The tempo written is *Allegro giusto*, although *allegro* actually describes the mood not the tempo. The first three bars of *coda* are the same in each edition and there are two versions of the following three bars. One was written by Tchaikovsky and the other is Auer’s version. The first halves of the bars are the same while the second halves differ for an octave (Auer wrote an octave lower than the composer and that is the easier edition). In the following bar, only the first note is different (for an octave, as well). The following three bars are different in one note

which is placed at the second eighths in the bar; Tchaikovsky's edition has sixths and Auer's edition has an octave at that place.

At the beginning of the coda, Oistrakh made *subito p* as it had been written, "held" the tempo and began a bit more slowly than he had finished the closing section. He began with *spiccato* and as he was "climbing" up to higher positions with his left hand he lowered the bow on the string so that in the fourth bar it was completely on the string playing *detache*. He plays the original Tchaikovsky's edition which I also chose – at this place we play the same fingering and bowing having the same music idea.

Jansen plays Auer's edition. She began the coda with the bow "glued" to the string in *f*, and then, in the second bar, she made *decrescendo* followed by *spiccato*, and in the following bar she slowly reached *detache*. Two bars of descending triplets passages follow: the first starts from F3 and the second from F3 natural. Tchaikovsky further continued in the same style, triplets passages, but, here, he also added double stops. This place is marked with *stringendo*¹⁴.

There are also two versions for the following four bars (Auer, for an octave lower than Tchaikovsky, in both the second and the fourth bar wrote triplets unlike the composer who wrote 16ths). Oistrakh and I play Tchaikovsky's version while Janine plays Auer's where the first two bars are identical with the following two. From the mark *stringendo* the tempo slowly "raised" but constant acceleration follows from the place *Più mosso*. After many bars and many notes, much easier part for the soloist follows; a few bars of the octaves during which the orchestra plays the melody that, with its tension, still keeps great excitement lasting from the very beginning of coda. From the very first chord in the next to the last bar, Janine seems to suddenly start with the slower tempo and adds *ritardando* to the end and, of course, finishes with huge *ff*. Oistrakh "stretched" three chords before the last note and in that way prepared the end of the first movement.

Such a grandiose and big *finale* frequently makes the audience think that this is the end of the whole concerto and then, at the end of the movement the overwhelmed audience bursts into applause. The first part of coda is one of the most difficult parts

¹⁴ Grove Music Online defines *stringendo* as: "It, 'drawing tight', 'squeezing'; a direction to perform with more tension and therefore specifically faster..." (Fallows), accessed in March 2012

of the concerto particularly because it comes after 17 pages of great music, technical difficulties, almost constant emotional tension and countless number of notes.

The conclusion we can make from the first movement is that Oistrakh much more follows his own feeling and musicality while Jansen respects more the printed marks and guidelines such as: tempo, articulation, fingerings, dynamic, etc. Generally speaking, Oistrakh plays a bit slower tempo, he plays the second theme even more slowly than the tempo he previously played, so he plays passages and bridge in a calmer tempo and these are all reasons making the difference between their two performances for about 1 minute (Oistrakh plays for about 1 minute longer than Jansen). I play in a sort of a middle tempo – neither too slowly nor too fast: fast enough to make the second theme “flow” and slowly enough to make all passages sound stable and certain. Such a moderate tempo provides both stability for playing and presentation of technical abilities.

Second movement

When Tchaikovsky had completed the concerto, his student, Kotek, played it to him in the whole, and the composer realized immediately that that second movement did not belong and did not fit in between the two bombastic, brilliant movements (I - III). Therefore, he decided to write a new second movement, and the already existing one *Andante* got a new name – *Méditation*, and was considered to be a single piece of music because it seemed to the composer to be too long and too complicated to be placed after the first movement, which was already long enough and which lasted about twenty minutes. This is how *Canzonetta*¹⁵ came into being. The beautiful second movement, a very simple and introverted piece of music, was written in the form a ternary piece (ABA), tempo *Andante*, G minor key. One thing that is very unique about it, is that it starts with a melancholy woodwind theme, and the first string note that we hear in the movement is from the violin. This movement is relatively brief, and has a very melancholic atmosphere. It is a love story; we could

¹⁵ Grove Music Online defines canzonetta as: “A title given to a light secular vocal piece, particularly in the Italian style, from the late 16th century to the late 18th. As a normal diminutive of ‘canzone’ (song), the term may refer generically to any short, simple song...” (DeFord), accessed in March 2012

even perhaps say the story about an unrequited love, which at same point has a positive connotation, just to slide again into melancholic, gloomy, love story at the end.

Part A

Dynamics and fingerings

After the 12 bars of the orchestra introduction, the soloist opens the theme and enters at the last bit of the 12th bar. Part A is written in G minor in a very clear form. The first line has 4+4 bars, the second line also has 4+4 bars, out of which the first 4 bars are completely the same as the first 4 bars in the first sentence, and the second 4 bars with trills lead further developing melody and forming another 6 bars which bring us to the end of the orchestra introduction of part A in which the orchestra played with the theme end in which the modulation took place.

Oistrakh began in *p*, *molto espressivo*, but with a very gentle sound, which gave the theme warmth and the special sweetness. He played the first tone in open D- string, therefore, on his instrument he got an open sound with a pleasant resonating of Stradivari instrument. He followed all written fingerings and bowings so that each tone was given a unique radiance and expression.

Jansen played with a second finger in the third position on the G- string, and the second sentence too, and the 5th bar of both sentences she started with the open D- string. Therefore, in her performance almost the whole first sentence (except for the first and the last three tones) she played on the D- string. She opened the solo introduction very quietly and by her sticking to the D- string, she got an dimmed and closer tone, which certainly had a pleasant sound though much different from the one that Oistrakh got. She played the second line very loudly, even in *f*, and perhaps she reached aggressiveness in desire to make it differ from the previous line. She used a concrete tone, and with her transition to the E- string because of trills she got clearer sound which she “darkened” and made quieter to *mf*.

In this part, I will play exactly the same fingering and bowing as Oistrakh did, and my vision of this movement resembles his, a lot. The flute and clarinet play a beautiful motive from the theme, and then the violins take over, which modulate in E flat major in which part B is written.

Part B

Vibrato, rhythm and tempo

This part begins in the 40th bar. Since this part is the major part, it is certainly expected for the atmosphere to be more positive lighter and opener.

Oistrakh used here from the very beginning much faster and smaller vibrato which made the atmosphere pleasant and which perfectly fitted the orchestra that played syncopated rhythm which gave the impression of vivacity. In this way the indication *con anima*¹⁶ that is found at the beginning of the part B is obeyed.

Janine began with a lighter tone, fast vibrato and wider bowing trying to avoid the stillness of the melody. After a short calm, expressive part follows, which has very interesting and exciting melodies. After the six bars of triplets, we come to the point which is written in two different ways.

One version is written by Tchaikovsky, the version that Oistrakh and I decided play, and the second version is written by Auer, and it is lower for an octave than the composer has written and this is the version performed by Jansen. After that calm and modulation, we are brought to the part A, which is written in the basic G minor key.

Part A

Dynamics, vibrato

The second part A (the third part of the movement) starts in the 70th bar. This part is almost identical to the first part A, with the exception to the orchestral part in which the clarinet plays a wonderful counter melody and in combination with the theme that the soloist performs creates idyllic atmosphere.

Oistrakh started this part very calmly and the orchestra followed him perfectly and supported him in that. Janine this time played the first sentence more aggressive and louder than the second sentence, which is contrary to her playing in the first part A.

¹⁶ Grove Music Online defines animato as: "It.: 'lively', 'enlivened'; past participle of animare, 'to enliven'. A mark of tempo and expression which has never achieved particular prominence in any specific form but which appears in all kinds of shapes and forms in 18th- and 19th-century music..." (Fallows), <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/00953>>, accessed in March 2012

There are again two versions from the second line on, which differ from one another in an octave and the performers follow their previous decisions in their performance, that is to say Oistrakh (and so do I) plays Tchaikovsky's version and Janine Auer's version. Tchaikovsky's version differs and gives diversity to this simple melody which is repeated more than once during the movement.

It is then when we get the impression that the movement soothes and the melody slowly "dies away" that the composer surprises us by developing the melody further, arousing a new excitement which signals the oncoming third movement, though soloist also comes down the atmosphere and finishes in *p* with a long trill. The orchestra continues and connects the second and third movement attacca.

In this movement Jansen's fast vibrato, which can be attributed to her character, is expressed. In all three movements there is a huge difference between her and Oistrakh's vibrato, but in this movement this is the most obvious since the whole movement is calm, with long phrases and there is no virtuosity in it. They both nicely lead the theme although the whole movement has been wonderfully written making it wonderful in itself even without any individual touch of a performer. I try to make my vibrato calmer in both parts A, while in the middle part which is major, to make it faster and more "restless" and in that way I achieve even greater difference in characters.

The Third Movement

At the end of the second and the beginning of the third movement the orchestra finds its way to take from calm, light and melancholic second movement which is in G minor key to temperamental and surprisingly “lively” third movement which, in the beginning, is in A key to, later on, confirm the basic D major key. When speaking about the analysis of form, there are two possibilities: one is to analyze it as a Sonata form with several exceptions and the other is to analyze it as a Rondo. While analyzing this movement I realized that it might be more acceptable to observe it as Sonata rondo having in mind that Finale of concertos frequently written in the form of Rondo and organization of parts of this movement.

This is a very exciting, very virtuous rondo, with various episodes. The orchestra gives an introduction and then the violin, which is a bit unusual, plays a brief cadenza.

Orchestra introduction

In the orchestra introduction, the composer presented the motif from theme A of this movement, although in a completely different mood than the one that will appear later. All the time it remains in *f*, tempo *Allegro vivacissimo* (quarter-152). The motif is played by the violins and then by the flutes and suddenly ends in a chord immediately followed by the solo violin. This part is written in A key although it cannot easily be distinguished whether it is in minor or major. The orchestra introduction lasts for 16 bars.

Solo introduction

The soloist almost “jumps” in the third movement. Solo violin appears as one of the characters at a village party in Russia and wants to draw attention to himself and make all others look at him only. In this case, the soloist nearly “blows” the whole orchestra and the audience seems to listen only to him. The soloist begins in *f*; note A on the G- string followed by a small motif from the basic theme of this movement. After two almost the same sentences (the first has 8, the second 12 bars) there are 16 bars sequentially leading to theme A.

This solo introduction can be observed as a sort of a *cadenza*. From the moment the soloist appears to the beginning of theme A he plays alone, without the orchestra and

Tchaikovsky wrote it so that it might be free enough (although it is not *ad libitum*) that every soloist can leave his own personal trace and mark.

Dynamics, tempo, articulation

Oistrakh began the third movement as if he was angry at someone during the orchestra introduction. This probably is the right way to perform solo introduction in the manner the composer imagined it. He started in *f*, in “greasy” and big tone, wide and meaningful vibrato. He found balance between “over-forced” tone and the one pleasant to listen to and again he is very loud and “rounded”. He played the first four bars a bit more slowly and then in the following four bars he accelerated, i.e. “pushed” the tempo, which we can freely call *rubato*.¹⁷

He started the second sentence even more slowly, i.e. more significantly. He started chord slowly and gradually accelerated, and, when for the second time *pizzicato* appeared, he made a big *ritardando* finishing the second sentence with it, after which he started different material than the previous one. It was followed by a big sentence lasting for 16 bars. Tchaikovsky has written that it starts with *ff* and that the sound becomes quieter from 5th bar and from there the dynamics gradually rises and reaches *f* again. The last three bars prior to Tempo I, i.e. prior to the basic theme, the composer wrote crescendo then decrescendo along with the simultaneous *ritardando*.

Jansen started solo introduction nearly in the same tempo in which the orchestra finished its introduction, a bit “furiously”, perhaps nervously and she played chords in 5th and 6th bars in even faster tempo than the one she had begun with. She also played the cords from the following sentence pretty “adherent” to each other, and then other chords which are *pizzicato*, she played in *ff* with retention.

I do not play the beginning of solo introduction too loud (I believe that the climax comes later and also due to the capacity of the instrument) but I do give much significance to the accent on the last chord in bar 7 from the beginning of solo introduction and I make a big break between that note and the following G sharp on

¹⁷ Grove Online Music defines *rubato* as: “It., ‘robbed’; tempo *rubato*, ‘robbed time’, the practice in performance of disregarding strict time, ‘robbing’ some note-values for expressive effect and creating an atmosphere of spontaneity. The pulse remains constant but expressive nuances are created by making small changes to the rhythmic values of individual notes; this method was widespread in the 18th century and into the 19th and is thought to have been practiced by Mozart and Chopin... (Latham)

the G- string. I begin the second sentence slowly and then from the chords I “take a run” and I continue the first pizzicato in the same style. Then, two bars of the same chords follow and the following two bars I play more calmly, ritardando with decrescendo to pizzicato.

The last sentence, 16 bars before the theme A Oistrakh started very “seriously”, *ff* as it has been written and with a wide bow and wide but fast vibrato compared to the one he used by then. He made decrescendo only when the motif from the theme A appeared, after which he made crescendo then decrescendo with ritardando and in that way he introduced the beginning of the theme A.

Janine starts that last sentence very aggressively, in *ff* by using much bow and she raises the bow from the string on each eight-note in the bar which is written at the end of the tie (Oistrakh does the same thing, as well). She makes decrescendo 6 bars before the theme A and plays almost in *pp*. She slowed down the tempo and by the last motif in a series appearing before the theme A she announced the character of the upcoming theme.

A

The theme starts in 53rd bar, exactly where the composer wrote Tempo 1 and consists of *a* and *a1*.

After this brief cadenza, the violin introduces the main theme of this movement, it keeps coming back. It’s very exciting and it has lots of notes for the violin, lots of fun to play.

a

Character, dynamics, bowings, articulation

This theme presents the village party in Russia when one character, who drew attention to himself, now invited all others to dance with him and, the party could begin. This theme has been written with much virtuosity, with many sixteenth-notes in solo violin and with plenty of similar material which frequently underlines this exposition of the theme and each other time when it appears.

The composer has written that it begins in *p*, although it is almost impossible since so “small” notes in *p* would not be heard from the orchestra (or the piano) so that the majority of the performers and so do Oistrakh and Jansen and me, as well, begin the theme in *mf*.

Oistrakh gets his spiccato from the fingers above the half of the bow and his bow much “rebounds” from the strings and in this way he creates “airy” sound. He creates crescendo by wider movement of the bow but not by higher pressure or “lowering” of the bow on the string. For example, the first two notes of the bar 5 and 6, counting from the beginning of the theme (later on numerous the same and similar situations will appear) are eight-notes written with a dot above, i.e. staccato which means that it should be short. Oistrakh each time plays (down-bow and up-bow) short, except when playing down-bow he uses a bit more bow. While Janine at the same place when playing down-bow she plays completely on the string so it cannot be said to be a staccato note. I think that this type of articulation should be respected since it is part of the theme and the motif that is constantly heard throughout the movement. I agree that sometimes, at some place, to make a difference or “surprise” one can deviate from the original bowing and articulation.

The beginning of the theme Janine starts with a concrete tone, the bow does not “jump” a lot from the strings and she plays almost in *f*. She plays around the half of the bow, and she is frequently on the lower half of the bow. If we compare her and Oistrakh’s bowing, Janine seems almost “to hold” the bow in her hand all the time and she does not get the bowing from the fingers but from the whole hand. She achieves crescendo when “glues” the bowing to the string, wider bowing and she uses wider movements from the right hand. It is also interesting that, at the parts such as 17th and 18th bar, the first eight-notes on the second bit in the bar she plays the note completely on the string even the legato with the following eight-note although it has a dot above (staccato).

Another interesting thing is that in some editions there is a “shortening” of what the composer wrote (vi-de), where the theme is shortened for 12 bars. When speaking about the first exposition of the theme, those would be the bars from 17th to 28th. Janine plays without this shortening, i.e. she plays everything that the composer wrote and Oistrakh decided upon the shortened version (me, too). In that case, the original

version is shortened for the extension of the second sentence of the first theme, i.e. extension of that sentence. The meaning of the theme and the movement is certainly not lost with this shortening.

e) Part of the first theme, shortening is between the signs Φ , bars 55-78

a1

Dynamics

It starts in the same way as part *a*, the first seven bars are completely identical and from 8th bar the composer wrote different passage that also leads to D major theme, this time for an octave higher and he now adds chords on eight-notes. This part is much louder than the previous one since now the soloist because of chords can (and he also has to) to lower the bow on the strings and in that way he can get *ff*, the sound is much “richer”. In the following sentence, the composer “led” the theme for one more octave higher and through passages led it to D4.

Oistrakh started the second part of the main theme in *mf*, although by previous passage and crescendo he led to *f*, and in that way got enough space for a big crescendo which follows in three bars. When he reached the second sentence which is different from the one in the previous part, he descended to the lower part of the bow and leaned the bow to the strings.

Janine started this part in *f*, so that in the second sentence she did not have space to make bigger sound by the bow, but he got it only by the text the composer wrote and those are the additional chords. She also had to lower the bow on the strings and to play with the wider bowing, she most frequently used lower half and the middle of the bow.

I start in *mf*, gradually make crescendo and both dynamic and musical climax is the end of this part. I also play with the bow on the string.

The last period of theme A follows which is a bit different from the theme but it contains the motif from it which is constantly there and is intertwined with the passages which are in sixteenths-notes. In the second sentence of this part, i.e. the other 8 bars, the soloist and the orchestra alternately exchange that most famous and most frequent motif from this movement which lasts for one bar. The composer used the following 12 bars for modulation.

Oistrakh started the first sentence in *f* and then he made a wonderful surprise and he suddenly started the second sentence in *p*, so that he had a lot of space to make an excellent crescendo through even 8 bars alternately exchanging the main motif from the movement with the orchestra. Eight bars before the end of this part he also made a diminuendo and through the following passages a huge crescendo and in the very last bar he “spread” sixteenths-notes and prepared the end of this, i.e. the beginning of the new part.

Janine plays the first 16 bars in *ff*, she even has to adjust the bowing to it, so that in each bar where the motif from the theme is the second eight-notes situated on the second bit she plays as if it was written without a dot and she completely connects it with the following note. She even plays the last eight-notes in those bars with the bowing separated from the previous note. She starts the last 12 bars in *pp*, although *ff* was printed in the notes and so she plays all the way through to the beginning of the passage when she slowly starts making crescendo and reaches *ff* by the end of the part.

B

b

Tempo, melody

We come to the episode B. This is the part which is contrasted to the main theme with which it makes Sonata rondo. The orchestra has three bars introduction to confirm the new key, A major, which is dominant to D. The tempo is also different; it is a bit slower than the previous one and has the printed mark *Poco meno mosso*.

This melody sounds pretty robust, it reminds of some of the Russian melodies and it could represent a tough and tall Russian who is at the same party and at the moment he is “the main speaker” introducing himself to the other guests. As I already mentioned, this part of the episode is in A major which is of different color than D major. If we speak about concrete colors, perhaps we could characterize D major as green and A major as red color. The first 4 bars repeat and are completely the same except that in the second sentence on the last note A is played decrescendo thus preparing a bit different character in the following 8 bars. In the first 8 bars the robust melody is in *f*, and in the following 8 bars the character changes to a more gentle melody that can present the main character of this episode, who now sees a girl he wants to charm. But this does not last long because after these eight bars the tempo returns to Tempo 1 and the melody becomes similar to the one from the beginning of part *b* and reminds of the main theme A due to some smaller note values, 16ths-notes. My ex violin teacher taught me that this very part was written by Tchaikovsky as a sort of a protest, i.e. description of his “battle” with the authorities related to his homosexuality. When the soloist finishes with the exposition of this melody, the orchestra takes it over, but not literally, and the soloist continues with 16ths-notes which become accompaniment to the orchestra, but, at the same time, they can present the dialogue he has with the orchestra (where the orchestra represents the Russian authorities and the soloist represents the composer) and it looks as if they all speak at the same time and everyone is trying to fight for his own opinion.

Bowing, fingering, character

Oistrakh plays the beginning of this part very loudly, with rich tone and much bowing. By constant and wide vibrato he again confirms the Russian school of violin. The other 8 bars he started from *mf*, although he did not make a big difference in character. From the place where Tempo 1 was written, he used the first bar to make *accelerando*, and from the following bar he is in tempo. He now plays close to the frog and when spiccato begins he goes to the middle of the bowing even a bit above and he again gets the bowing from the fingers. The bowing played in that way is soft, “airy” and cannot be too loud. By the end of the part, 7 last bars the bowing is above the half and in that way he gets wider bowing, at the beginning he makes crescendo and then in the last bar he makes *rallentando*¹⁸ and decrescendo. Tchaikovsky wrote octaves in the last 7 bars, and Auer, in his edition “left” only the upper notes. Oistrakh and I play Auer’s edition while Jansen plays precisely what the composer wrote (fingers octaves). Edition with octaves is much more difficult and it is very likely that it will be out of tune, so that the majority of performers decide upon playing without octaves which do not “disturb” either the flow of music or the meaning.

Janine plays the beginning of part b very “briskly” with plenty of energy. The character she presents is very “mischievous” which she particularly showed in other 8 bars starting more softly in *mf*. Here, she completely changes the character, now she plays very interestingly and the big change in character reminds of a character from an opera who is, at the same time, an actor. The first two F sharp notes she played widely and, when after 4 bars the same melody repeats she played them with dots, i.e. staccato. With the change of character she had to change the quantity of bowing, width and speed of vibrato so that she plays this part with much shorter and more “prickly” bowing and in the first 4 bars she uses wider vibrato which will later become “smaller” and faster and it is also interesting that both times when F sharp appears she played it completely without vibrato. In that way she avoided constant vibrato, which if it is always the same or similar achieves the same effect as if there is

¹⁸ Grove Music Online defines *rallentando* as: “...A direction to reduce tempo, often abbreviated to *rall.* In the 18th century the form *lentando* was common. *Rallentando* itself is of relatively recent usage, being scarcely encountered in scores before the 19th century; now it is perhaps the most common of such terms, though *ritardando* and *ritenuto* both occur frequently...” (Follows) <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/22829>>, accessed in March 2012

no vibrato at all. From part Tempo 1, she suddenly accelerated and changed the character. She plays completely on the frog and it is interesting that she “lifts” the bowing away from the strings and again she returns there right on time. With the help of both hands and her excellent instrument she provides high quality and loud tone. In the part where the soloist becomes accompaniment to the orchestra she suddenly becomes quieter, playing in *mf*, somewhere around the middle of the bow. When she reaches the octaves she again returns nearer the frog and leans the bow on the strings to provide the safety in the right hand while in the left hand she has one of the more difficult parts in the third movement. She finishes this part in *p*, and she decomposes the last octave.

This part I play very similar to Janine. I try to show different characters, and make the melody as interesting as possible. I use different kinds of bowing, vibrato and articulation, trying to make various atmospheres. When the 16th-notes come, I play nice spiccato, around the half of the bow.

b1

There has been much discussion whether this part is actually the second part of B episode or C episode. If we take into account that this part is in different tonality than B episode (this is tonality parallel to part B, F sharp minor) and that from there a new tempo begins (*Molto meno mosso*), and that there is the complete change of character and new material then we would say that it is C episode, or that the whole movement is Sonata rondo with the exception, since between episodes B and C refrain A is missing. Those believing that it is the second half of part B claim that it is so because after its completion the theme (i.e. refrain) A immediately follows which is the rule in the form of Rondo (ABA etc.); another very similar part to this one will appear after the next occurrence of episode B and this is yet another indicator that this might not be episode C.

Dialogue, melody, tempo

Part b1 starts with dialogue between oboe and clarinet lasting for 12 bars, only for the last time instead of the oboe bassoon appeared. On the half of 13th bar there appears the soloist playing the same melody previously played by the oboe but in the dialogue with the cello section and it lasts for 8 bars. The melody is gentle, lyrical and really

beautiful, it is performed in *p*, and is a complete contrast to what has been performed before and will be performed afterwards. After these 20 bars, the soloist continues with the same melody played in *mf*, the tone, i.e. color is warmer, except that now it is being further developed going into deeper register (on the G- string) and repeating one motif from the previous melody. After 14 bars the composer wrote tempo *Quasi andante*, and after only 2 bars he wrote *rallentando* which also lasts for 2 bars, and then is followed by *poco a poco accelerando* in the following 8 bars introducing the main theme A.

Color, bow-use, vibrato, dynamics

In the first two occurrences of the soloist in the dialogue with the orchestra, Oistrakh played with the light but warm color of tone. Both times he started with the bow from the top and used the whole bow. First time he replied to the orchestra more calmly and statically, while the next time he replied with more movement and smaller vibrato from the fingers.

First time Janine started with the bow from the half to the frog with wide but fast vibrato reflecting the character of her personality. Both times she played pretty quietly, but for the second time she played with a lighter and “brisker” color of tone.

The next sentence with the development of this melody, Oistrakh started with a more concrete tone, *mf*, much darker color than the previous one and with a wide vibrato. He “drew” the warmest sound from the instrument which is “round” and very pleasant to listen to. By thickness and depth on the G- string he got the sound reminding of the cello or the viola and by the calmness of his vibrato he made the sound similar to the human voice. He connected the part *Poco a poco accelerando* with the previous one by putting the emphasis on the last note in the bar and between it and the first one in the following bar he made a small glissando. He started this part with *p*, and through *accelerando* and *crescendo* he reached *mf* and made the introduction to theme A.

Janine started the melody that will be developed later on in *p*, very gently and then she slowly went towards *mf* as the melody was going to the deeper register. Unlike Oistrakh who, all the time, from 6th bars of this melody was on the G- string (as written) she played 6-8 bars on the D- string and only then she “crossed” to the G- string thus making the difference between the material that was literally repeated

many times. She started the part marking the beginning of acceleration in *pp*, and through *accelerando* she made a big crescendo and started the theme A in *f*, the same as she played in the first occurrence of the refrain A.

I play the first sentence in the dialogue in *p*, as far as possible from the bridge and in that way I get warm color which is quiet enough and obtained from the width of the bow. I remain in *p* in the following sentence but I play it with a more concrete tone, and the concrete place is nearer to the bridge. When the melody starts developing my tone becomes darker, core constant, now at its usual position near the bridge and, as long as possible, I “stay” on the G- string. With several techniques like this one from an average instrument one can “extract” more different colors that are much significant for this part.

A

a

Dynamics, articulation, bowing

We come to the second occurrence of the theme A. Part a is completely the same as at the beginning of the movement when we heard it for the first time. Completely the same dynamic, fingerings, bowings, etc. were written.

Oistrakh plays with his unique *spiccato* from the fingers but with pretty wide move of the bow, very musical although it is about small note values (16th-notes). If we compared the dynamics taking into account larger units (Oistrakh) the whole dynamics is for one step lower, i.e. quieter than the one played by Jansen. His tone is also more pleasant since it is not constantly “packed” as with Janine Jansen.

Janine plays perfectly articulated, each note is very clear and precise. This part she played even more energetically than the first one and almost till the end of the part she did not play *p*.

It is amazing how Oistrakh plays each eight-note which the composer wrote to be played *staccato* – he plays it that way, it is perfectly articulated, sufficiently short to be different from 16th-notes and to be in the dynamics it was written in and long

enough to be staccato and not a detache note. In this part he seems to do it even better and more expressive than in the first part a.

Jansen here also frequently lengthens eight-notes which are staccato depending on the bowing.

Oistrakh and I play the shortened version identical to the first part a, while Janine plays the longer version. My interpretation of this part is very similar to the first occurrence of the theme A, firstly: according to what the composer wrote we can conclude that he wanted to make almost the same exposition as the previous exposition of the same material, and, secondly: part A is frequently called “refrain” and we know that refrains are always the same and that the episodes are different (in this case parts b, b1 or C). We can also notice that the composer made great differences between other parts of the refrain and episodes (a1, b1).

a1

This is a completely different part from part a1 which previously occurred. Firstly: part a1 was very similar to the part a, we can even say that it was a sort of variation on part a. Now the material is different, although it is pervaded by the short motif from the main theme A. We can say that this is the most difficult part of the third movement and one of the most difficult parts of the whole concerto, and there are several modulations in it. In the first third there is much chromatics pervaded by the motif from the main theme. In the second third there are broken chords with many accidents, technically highly demanding part for both hands. The 3rd third is a series of fast passages.

Passages, dynamics

The first part begins with the sequential lowering of the motif from the first theme. The same passage with three bars in *f* appears twice and then Tchaikovsky “left” only the beginning of these two passages, repeated it for four times, the first two are the same and the other two differ in one tone only. The first of these four motifs is the loudest one and then it gradually becomes quieter and for the fifth time the same motif begins from *p* and further leads to crescendo and development of the melody (in this case chromatics adds to a mystic and dramatic atmosphere).

Oistrakh plays the first two passages with almost the whole bow in *ff*, while Janine plays on the lower half of the bow with the bow “glued” to the string in *ff*, as well. I play very loudly and use about half of the bow but I move round the middle or even a bit towards upper half of the bow. In this way I am sure that the bow would be well enough “glued” to the strings and that I would be able to achieve sufficient amplitude and speed of the right hand.

When the melody begins to develop, i.e. when it gets complicated, it is usually played quieter so that the performer has space for crescendo. Oistrakh starts in *mf*, very carefully; he uses small staccato getting it from the fingers and using only a few mm of the bow. While making bigger crescendo he lowers the bow on the strings and uses the upper half of the bow.

Janine also starts in *mf*, although with much more “prickly” bowing than Oistrakh’s and the bowing I use in this part. She plays around half of the bow and when she starts making crescendo she “glues” the bow on the strings and plays on the lower half of the bow.

I decide upon the manner more similar to Oistrakh’s since I find it more ‘comfortable’ to play 16th-notes on the upper half of the bow than on the lower half because in that way I have better mobility of my hand and better control over the bow. This part requires high concentration since the passages are very similar and are different in few 16th-notes, i.e. half-tone note. One cannot let the hands to play alone what they practiced.

The second third lasts for 18 bars. It consists of three passages in solo part lasting three bars each and two passages of two bars between which the orchestra plays the motif from the main theme. The whole part is in *ff*. There are double stops in the passages which make additional difficulty to both hands.

Oistrakh plays “broken” chords around half of the bow and that is why his bow “jumps”. With such a bowing he achieves very “healthy” *f* during which no “material” is being heard.

Jansen plays a bit below the half of the bow and therefore she has to use her hand wrist which has to be very soft and flexible. She plays wider bowing than Oistrakh

and me and uses much power to produce a loud tone that opposes the orchestra. Her bow is on the string all the time.

My interpretation of this part is somewhere between Oistrakh and Jansen. I play a bit below the half of the bow, although not that low as Jansen plays, my bow does not 'jump' from the string as Oistrakh's, and, on the other hand, it is not so much 'glued' to the string as with Janine. When I tried to hold the bow on the string and make *f* or *ff*, my instrument produced light crunching and crackling sound probably due to the pressure. Therefore I had to find the compromise, not to make each of the "broken" chords too short since it would not be heard that way and not to make it too long since too much "material" and "by-sounds" would be heard.

Third third consists of four very similar passages, i.e. the first two are completely the same and the other two are different, the third passage is broken chord A minor and the fifth one is broken chord F major leading to G major in the following part B2. This is a very complex part since the passages are fast and each passage begins on the G- string in the first position of tone A and each one finishes on the E- string at the same tone, as well, but for three octaves higher. This is really a long distance for the left hand to quickly pass and, at the same time, to be very precise. Each of these passages starts in *p*, and with the "climbing" of the left hand a huge crescendo is made each time.

Oistrakh plays with his recognizable bowing spiccato from the fingers but with quite a wide bowing while Janine remains on the string all the time, very stable and safe. Each of these passages I start staccato and with the crescendo I lower the bow to the string and "spread" the bowing. In this way I get greater difference between *p* and *f* at the end of the passage.

B2

b

Variations, tempo, bow-use, character, dynamics

This part is marked as a new tempo, *Poco meno mosso*, written in G major which is a subdominant tonality of D major. It begins with the orchestra introduction lasting for three bars. Cello and bases play quarter-notes on every bit. The soloist enters at the

half of the fourth bar and performs completely the same melody the first episode B began with, but now it is in G major (meaning that everything is for one tone lower). That melody lasts for 16 bars and is followed by Tempo 1.

This part is variation of tempo 1 from the first episode B. It is now written as a combination of double-stops and bas-tone (open D- string), the melody is on the bit and bas-tone is most frequently on the second, fourth, sixth and eighth 16th-notes in every bar. One should be very skillful to distinguish the upper tone in which the main melody is. This variation lasts for eight bars and then is followed by the next variation which was written in octaves but bears the same melody and also lasts for eight bars.

The following eight bars are only 16th-notes following the orchestra this time bearing the melody. The following 8 bars are marked as *Poco meno mosso*, the character changed with the tempo and now the soloist plays the melody in flageolets and this time the melody is melancholic.

Oistrakh started quite persuasively, strongly and much more slowly than the previous part. He uses almost the whole bow, very “greasy” tone and wide vibrato. By such expression he splendidly performed the real Russian melody and did it in the way that only someone who is from Russia can do. He played those 18 bars very calmly and then quite suddenly he started faster tempo at the place where Tempo 1 begins. He plays the “first variation” on the upper half of the bow, quite loudly and as if emphasizes a bit each note coming to him up-bow and which actually is part of the melody. In this way he makes the melody separated from the bas-line. He plays the part with octaves on the frog in *f* with a very steady tone. When the soloist becomes accompaniment, Oistrakh turns to staccato around the half of the bow from the fingers, quite wide bowing but he plays flageolets with the whole bow and a very healthy sound in *mf*. In the last two bars he makes a *ritardando* and leaves to the orchestra (oboe in this case) to start the next part b1.

Like in the first episode B, Janine makes a big difference between the first and the second sentence. She plays the first one very loudly with “greasy” and compact tone and with much bow, while she plays the second sentence in *mf* with a completely new character and vibrato which is now of a “frolic” character. From the very beginning in Tempo 1 she ‘glued’ the bow to the strings, she used only couple of cm of the bow and from the beginning of the octave she did not lift it from the string, not for a single

time. She played the “variation” with the octaves quite “roughly”, we might even use the expression “scratching on the instrument”. Even her Stradivari could not bear that quantity of weight, force and roughness. She played near the bridge and on the frog. When the soloist becomes the accompaniment, here she plays the first four bars on the string and then she turns to staccato and makes a diminuendo leading to *Poco meno mosso*, she plays flageolets with the whole bow but the tempo remains almost the same.

I begin this episode with a concrete tone, perhaps a bit robust, but I also make a big difference in character between the first and the second 8 bars. I use the same bowing as Janine since it is very convenient to make dynamic and character differences. I play Tempo 1 very similarly to Oistrakh, with same bowing since it is the easiest way to make the difference between the main melody and the accompanying notes and I add small accents to the main notes. Octaves are played only on the G- and D- string, that’s what is written in the notes and, basically, everyone respects that. I play them in *f* taking care that the tone is “healthy” and that there is no by-sound (material). I play the accompaniment in *mf*, although quite actively while I play flageolets with wide and slower bow with a very accurate tone and melancholic character.

bl

Melody, fingering, tempo, “cadenza”

The mark for new tempo *Molto meno mosso* is followed by the second part of the episode B2. It starts with the dialogue between the oboe and clarinet playing the same melody as in the second part of the first episode B but this time it is one tone higher. The first two sentences are led by the oboe and clarinet and the following two by the flute and the bassoon. In 17th bar enters the soloist who, unlike the first time (exposition) when he had the melody on the E- string and two dialogues with cellos, now starts on the G- string and immediately develops the melody (without dialogue with the orchestra). This melody is based on the same motif the composer worked with in the second part of the first episode B. The soloist remains there entire 15 bars on the G- string and he works with the same motif all the time.

It is followed by six bars where the same motif sequentially goes up through all four strings and reaches D3 on the E- string (printed mark *Quasi Andante*) and then it turns

to the opposite direction downwards and it again goes to the G- string and very deep tones. This is followed by 4 bars where the composer tries to naturally accelerate the tempo by shortening note values and in that way through eight-notes and triplets we reach sixteenth-notes. After calming down one starts feeling excitement and the plot (or denouement) in these four bars and gets ready for re-occurrence of the main theme of the movement.

The following 7+1 bars are written as a cadenza. Tchaikovsky wrote seven completely the same bars whose beginning is marked with *poco a poco stringendo*. Most frequently (approximately) the first three or four bars are played spiccato and then while making greater crescendo, the bow more and more leans on the string, transforms to *detache* and the tempo accelerates. In Auer's edition this 7+1 is written completely differently compared to what the composer has written. Auer wrote real cadenza consisting of broken chords, and is mainly very fast, virtuous and belongs to more difficult parts of this movement. The last bar prior to Tempo 1 is the same in both cases.

Oistrakh starts with *mf*, playing a very pleasant sound and calm vibrato. Prior to the beginning of a sequential "ascending" the melody upwards he makes a small decrescendo and makes space for a bigger, more beautiful and more natural crescendo. From the part *Quasi Andante* he significantly "widens" the tempo and he even adds small accents to the first bits in several first bars. When the motif (A, C sharp, E, A, B flat) begins to repeat, he goes to *p*, makes *ritardando* and prepares brilliant cadenza. He chooses Auer's cadenza which is much more virtuous than Tchaikovsky's cadenza. *Poco a poco stringendo* is actually the beginning of the cadenza; he begins it in *p*, with a "jumping" bow and then, together with crescendo he spreads the bowing, leans the bow on the string, although he still gets the bowing from fingers. In the last bar prior to Tempo 1 he makes a small decrescendo and begins the theme in *mf*.

Jansen begins very gently and quietly. She makes the combination of the G- and D-string and she does not remain on the G- string only as it has been written and as Oistrakh and I play. In this way she makes greater variety although she does not respect the composer's idea. Since she is already in a quiet dynamics, she only begins to develop the melody and to develop the crescendo while going towards higher notes.

She adds faster vibrato and widens the bow. She plays *Quasi Andante* in the previous tempo. While the melody descends, she makes decrescendo and slows down the tempo so that the beginning of cadenza is in *p*. She plays with a bit of the bow which much “jumps” from the string and she spreads the bowing with the crescendo. She plays Tchaikovsky’s cadenza which is also my choice.

I play the beginning of the part b1 in *mf* remaining on the G- string as long as possible. I think that the G- string provides special tone to the violin and if it is colored with a nice and wide vibrato it can produce the sound similar to viola being an excellent contrast to the E- string which frequently is high-pitched and whose altitude can sometimes be irritating. I like to “push” the tempo four bars prior to *Quasi Andante*, so when I come to that a bit lighter tempo when we add and deduct the previous part we get approximately the same tempo (very similar to rubato). From a very rich-in-sound *f*, by decrescendo I get to *p*, I make a small ritardando and enter the cadenza. I decide to play Tchaikovsky’s cadenza because I think that in a whole concerto there is much space to present the virtuosity and that is not necessary in already fast and virtuous movement to add cadenza which presents purely technically difficulty and which has not been written by the composer himself. The composer’s cadenza is much easier than Auer’s, but when it is nicely designed, when the climax is emphasized and the beginning of the following theme is nicely prepared, there is no need for excessive virtuosity.

f) “Cadenza” is between two bold vertical lines, Tchaikovsky’s edition, bars 50-66 counting from a1



g) “Cadenza” is between two bold vertical lines, Auer’s edition, bars 50-66 counting from a1

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line with triplets and dynamics 'cresc.' and 'poco - a - poco -'. The middle staff is a complex orchestral texture with 'stringendo' marking. The bottom staff is a single melodic line with dynamics 'f' and 'p', and a 'Tempo I' marking. Bold vertical lines are placed at the beginning and end of the 'Cadenza' section in the top and bottom staves.

A

a and a1

The whole theme A is completely the same as it is in its first exposition. Only the end is different, which, this time, introduces the coda. In the first exposition, at the beginning of the movement, the composer wrote 12 bars more than this time and there modulation into A major took place. Now he just interrupts the streaming and instead of D sharp he left the same tone D as if he “cut” the end and inserted the orchestra which now plays with the motifs from the theme and reminds of certain parts of the movement. These 26 bars of the orchestra are very “thundering”, of rich sound and melodies interweaving through various sections of instruments. The violinists from the orchestra by this concrete orchestra part send the message to the audience that they can do the same as the soloist, that they are of the same virtuosity and that they can draw the attention to the same extent as the soloist.

There is also the dilemma whether the coda begins from the beginning of the orchestra part or from 38th bar prior to the end of the movement and the concerto itself. It makes sense to observe this part as the extension of part a1, since in the mid part of A very similar material in the solo violin appears. In that case, the coda can

begin from 38th bar prior to the end because that transition from the previous part to coda is almost the same as in the first movement.

On the other hand, we can observe that the coda begins from the very beginning of the orchestra part since further material does not include any significant melody; it is more in function of fragmentary structure, although in this case the coda would be quite long. I decide to analyze this part as the second part of part a1. When the orchestra finishes its exposition the soloist “jumps in” with his “broken” chord, exchanging them with the orchestra which plays the motif from the main theme. After 28 bars of a very similar material, there follows a very difficult, inconvenient and unpleasant passage lasting for four bars and four more bars of “descending” of the soloist from the altitudes – absolution, and from that part coda begins.

Bow-use, chords

Parts a and the first part of a1 Oistrakh and Jansen play the same as in the previous expositions. So do I. Since the same bowings, fingerings and articulation have been written, and that is the main theme, as well, there is no need (or many possibilities) to change the manner of interpretation.

From the second part of a1, Oistrakh continues with his style: he breaks the chords around the half of the bow; he “spends” much bow but produces a very sound tone. In the last passage he adds small accents on each fourth 16th-note in this way “braking”, i.e. “holding” the tempo to make it stable.

However, Jansen continues in her style: she breaks the chords below the half of the bow but remains deeply in the string. In this way she gets stronger tone remaining close to the instrument and “does not take” far away. She plays the passage very stable, she does not add any “additional” accents and she uses quite wide bow.

I play the beginning of the part the same as when this very same material appeared. This interpretation is somewhere in-between Oistrakh and Janine. I play around the half of the bow but it does not “jump” as high as Oistrakh’s – I try to keep it closer to the strings in order to gain better control over it. I also add small accents in the passage - they contribute to better stability of the tempo and better articulation. The whole part is in *f* and *ff*.

Coda

Bow-use, dynamics

The coda lasts for 38 bars. It consists of a series of passages in D major; it is very virtuous like the remaining part of the movement. The composer “walked” the soloist through all positions on the violin in a very fast tempo. The whole coda carries within itself a lot of excitement and reminds of fireworks. All this leads to the incredible end of the concerto, for many the most beautiful finale of all violin concertos.

Oistrakh begins very “violently” but with much control. He plays in *ff* all the time to the end of the concerto and occasionally changes spiccato for *detache* by wide bowing depending on what string he is and depending on the importance of the particular harmony.

Jansen remains on the string to the end of the concerto, she only changes quantity of the bow she uses depending on whether she makes *crescendo* or *decrescendo* and depending whether she’s got “the melody” or is accompaniment to the orchestra.

I also begin the coda with the bow “glued” to the string, although the right hand is quite flexible and allows the bow to occasionally “jump” off the strings if needed. I remain in *ff* to the end of the concerto, although in 6 bars when the soloist is the accompaniment to the orchestra and holds tremolo the same tone D3 then I relax my hand a bit, “withdraw” to *f* and afterwards “rush” to the end.

Having in mind that Oistrakh plays the shortened version and Janine plays the whole one, Oistrakh plays the third movement for 9:32 seconds and Jansen for 9:52, we can say, generally speaking, that Jansen plays the third movement much faster. This is one of the fastest interpretations of this movement ever. It really reflects today’s style of playing where a soloist is expected to show his virtuosity, skill and, above all, musicality, which in previous years, particularly when Oistrakh lived, was not the case. At that time, there was not much competition, no perfect performance was expected and therefore the soloists were much more relaxed without much stress. Grandiose finish of the concerto leaves the audience breathless no matter what tempo it is finished in.

SECTION 4

Conclusion

A possible problem definition set at the beginning of the paper is: ***a comparison of three performances of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto done by Janine Jansen, David Oistrakh and myself, focusing on differences in interpretation.*** The answer is in the paper you are reading and the enclosed CD.

Writing this paper made Tchaikovsky's violin concerto even closer to me, it made me love it more and respect the composer more. While countless listening to the recordings of the concerto, both Oistrakh's and Jansen's performances I have analyzed, and many other performances, I perceived each note of this concerto from several angles and listened to each of them with the particular attention realizing their importance and character. Each of the notes makes this wonderful composition, the most beautiful concerto in the violin literature in my opinion and each of them is of equal importance. I can also say that I now play this composition with much more understanding, having understood better both the form and the structure.

While analyzing these two performances, I realized that the great difference in performing lies in the character of a performer, his/her age, period in which he/she lived as well as the teachers teaching the performer. There is a difference in style between Russian-eastern and western-European schools. Such differences are best perceived when comparing two representatives of different styles performing the same composition. According to this, it is most likely that youth, much enthusiasm, desire to prove oneself and the attempt to keep the leading position in the world of tough competition lead to fast tempo, fast and sometimes nervous vibrato, somewhat rough chords, striving towards perfection, etc. attributed to Janine Jansen and calmness, wide, "easy-going" vibrato, "comfortable" and not too fast tempos, temperateness of each tone present Oistrakh's long experience and confidence in himself and his quality. We have to always keep in mind that neither performer will play the same composition twice in the completely same manner, particularly if the difference between the two performances is couple of years. Many things happen in a moment depending on inspiration, mood and feelings, therefore, depending on the

experience, a performer can decide in a moment to play certain part differently than he planned, visualized and practiced.

As I already mentioned, it is difficult to decide whether a performance is either good or bad. When speaking about art, we can only speak for ourselves and present our own point of view which is neither finite nor necessarily right.

In the spirit of Derrida's deconstruction we can "sharpen" the previous attitude and even say that host of various interpretations of one music work certainly does not carry within itself imperfection but quite the opposite – the more various performances there are the better, only then the work of art makes its complete sense in one act of a performer's reception! Music as the type of art should be the field where a Man would act in the manner that would liberate him from the constraints of social norms, the only field where, although through strict musical forms (but the ones he himself prescribed) he will liberate his spirit to the utmost boundaries!

About enclosed CD

The CD I enclosed with the written paper contains the first movement of the concerto I have analyzed. Instead of the orchestra I play accompanied by the piano. I try to perform everything I have described in my paper, i.e. to present the way I presume this composition should be performed. While analyzing and listening to the concerto, I come to new ideas and on several occasions during preparation of this paper and CD I changed my mind and found even better solutions. In many parts of Oistrakh's and Jansen's performance I saw excellent solutions referring to the bowing and fingering and I tried to adopt them and add them to my own interpretation.

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