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## CHAMBER MUSIC FOR THE PRE-COLLEGIATE STUDENT: VIOLIN QUARTETS AND TRIOS

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CHAMBER MUSIC FOR THE PRE-COLLEGIATE STUDENT: VIOLIN QUARTETS AND  
TRIOS

by

Hannah E. Monk

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

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The University of Memphis

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## Abstract

In both private string studios and school orchestra programs, pre-collegiate students need more opportunities to study chamber music. One of the barriers string teachers face when establishing a chamber music program for children is instrumentation as there are often more students who play the violin than the viola and cello. While the string quartet dominates the strings chamber music genre, there is a large body of underperformed repertoire written for violin quartets and trios that provide a variety of pedagogical benefits to students and teachers alike. This project establishes the pedagogical value of some of these pieces and places each piece within several of the major strings grading systems.

Each piece is graded based on the American String Teachers Association Grading Scale, Suzuki Volume Level, and Royal Conservatory Certification Grade Level. These methods were chosen to provide recognizable scale systems for public school directors and private teachers alike. The project also contains a brief description of the three pedagogical methods as well as charts comparing these grading systems to one another for reference.

*Keywords:* chamber music, violin trios, violin quartets, violin pedagogy, pre-collegiate studio teaching, strings classroom teaching

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## CHAPTER ONE: WHY CHAMBER MUSIC? RESEARCH ON THE BENEFITS OF TEACHING CHAMBER MUSIC TO PRE-COLLEGIATE STUDENTS

Although studies have shown the benefits of studying chamber music while in middle and high school, few students have this opportunity due to the many barriers facing string teachers in both private studio and public school settings. One of the barriers teachers face in developing a chamber music program is instrumentation as programs often have more students who play violin than viola and cello. If teachers do not have the proper instrumentation for a traditional string quartet, this creates a problem when searching for appropriate repertoire. While many strings teachers regularly face this repertoire problem when teaching in studios, classrooms, and summer programs, few resources exist to assist teachers in finding appropriate repertoire for violin quartets and trios. This document seeks to fill this gap by creating a resource for teachers that provides violin-only chamber music repertoire options for a variety of ability levels.

Despite the lack of materials on violin specific chamber music, there are a number of studies showing the benefits of introducing students to chamber music at a younger age. Research shows that studying chamber music teaches students how to collaborate, improves intonation, improves students' attitudes about studying music, and positively affects students' ability to play in large ensembles.<sup>1</sup> There have also been a number of articles written in

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<sup>1</sup> For some recent examples, see William J. Carmody, "The Effects of Chamber Music Experience on Intonation and Attitudes among Junior High School String Players" (DMA diss., University of Southern California, 1988); Nola C. Stabley, "The Effects of Involvement in Chamber Music on the Intonation and Attitude of 6th and 7th Grade String Orchestra Players" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 2000); Janet R. Barrett, "Planning for Understanding: A Reconceptualized View of the Music Curriculum," *Music Educators Journal* 91 (2005): 21-25; Danelle D. Larson, "The Effects of Chamber Music Experience on Music Performance Achievement, Motivation, and Attitudes among High School Band Students" (DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2010); and William J. Harrington,

practitioners' journals describing the practices of successful chamber music programs in both studios and classrooms,<sup>2</sup> as well as qualitative studies done on the effects of chamber music programs on students in public schools.<sup>3</sup>

Research on students' technical improvement shows that studying chamber music has a positive effect on students' ability to play accurately and in tune. In a study on the effects of chamber music on the intonation of middle school students, Carmody found that chamber music improved students' ability to play in tune over a fourteen-week period compared to the control group that did not participate in chamber music study.<sup>4</sup> Students who participated in the study were tested on their ability to tune harmonic intervals, perform passages in unison with a professional musician, and tune notes within a chord. The students who participated in the chamber music program showed greater improvement in all areas studied than those who did not participate in chamber music. Stabley also found a significant difference in the intonation of middle school students who participated in chamber music.<sup>5</sup> This study was performed on sixth and seventh grade students over a thirty-nine-week period. The seventh graders showed greater improvement than the sixth graders, which is likely due to the fact that the seventh graders participated in chamber music every day, while the sixth graders only participated every other day.

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"Collaborative Learning among High School Students in a Chamber Music Setting" (EdD diss., Boston University, 2016.)

<sup>2</sup> For stories of successful chamber music programs, see Barrett, "Planning for Understanding," 21-25; and Cynthia Darling, "Chamber music for the beginning player," *Teaching Music* 18 (2010): 50-51.

<sup>3</sup> For qualitative studies done on the effect of incorporating chamber music into public school programs, see Deborah A. Baker, "Chamber Music in Selected Middle and Junior High Instrumental Music Programs in Southern California" (master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1991); Stabley, "The Effects of Involvement in Chamber Music;" Larson, "The Effects of Chamber Music Experience;" and Harrington, "Collaborative Learning."

<sup>4</sup> Carmody, "The Effects of Chamber Music Experience," 42-43.

<sup>5</sup> Stabley, "The Effects of Involvement in Chamber Music," 68-69.

Studies have also shown that participation in chamber music positively affects students' attitudes towards music and their instruments. Both Carmody and Stabley studied students' attitudes using the Zorn Music Attitude Inventory. Carmody found that while the attitudes of the control group of students not participating in chamber music got worse from the beginning to the end of the fourteen-week study, the attitudes of the students participating in chamber music improved slightly.<sup>6</sup> Stabley found no difference in the attitudes of the sixth grade students who participated in chamber music, but found a significant increase in the attitudes of the seventh graders who participated in chamber music over the thirty-nine-week study, likely because the seventh graders participated in chamber music more often and were allowed to self-select their chamber groups.<sup>7</sup> Larson also found significant improvements in the attitudes of students participating in chamber music in a high school band program.<sup>8</sup>

Many public school music directors have written about the benefits of incorporating chamber music into their programs. Nick White, a band director in a large suburban school district, found that incorporating chamber music and composition into his program two days a week increased creativity, expanded students' ability to identify and correct mistakes, and improved the overall quality of the large ensemble.<sup>9</sup> Michael Lapomardo, a middle school orchestra director in Shrewsbury, MA, said that assigning chamber music to his students beginning in their second year of study has had a positive effect on the overall level of his program because it expedites students' learning in the areas of listening and ensemble skills.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Carmody, "The Effects of Chamber Music Experience," 44-47.

<sup>7</sup> Stabley, "The Effects of Involvement in Chamber Music," 70-73.

<sup>8</sup> Larson, "The Effects of Chamber Music Experience," 87-88.

<sup>9</sup> Barrett, "Planning for Understanding," 23-24.

<sup>10</sup> Darling, "Chamber Music for the Beginning Player," 51.



High school orchestra director Joseph Rutkowski says that he believes that chamber music is the best way to encourage students to continue playing their instrument after high school and into adulthood.<sup>11</sup> James Latten explains why chamber music is a great way for directors to incorporate the National Standards for Music Education into their programs and feels that his students have learned many essential life skills such as teamwork, communication, flexibility, and conflict management through working in chamber groups.<sup>12</sup>

While less formal research has been done on the results of incorporating chamber music into the private studio, private music teachers have written about the benefits of adding chamber music to their programs. Suzuki guitar teacher David Madsen said that incorporating chamber music into his studio significantly improved his students' sight-reading abilities and caused them to seek out more opportunities for public performances.<sup>13</sup> Violin teacher Susan Kempter assigns her advanced private students chamber music parts first as etudes, leading to weekly chamber music rehearsals, culminating in a home concert party for students to play together and socialize.<sup>14</sup> Kempter says that this incorporation of chamber music in the studio has provided a positive outlet for her students to establish social relationships and to learn music that they might not be exposed to otherwise. Violin and viola teacher Dorée Huneven cited chamber music as one of the most important activities to incorporate into a strings studio to keep students playing their instrument after high school.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Joseph Rutkowski, "Starting a High School Chamber Music Group," *Music Educators Journal* 86 (2000): 23-27.

<sup>12</sup> James E. Latten, "Chamber Music for Every Instrumentalist," *Music Educators Journal* 87 (2001): 45-53.

<sup>13</sup> David Madsen, "Strengthening Your Ensemble Program," *American Suzuki Journal* 40 (2012): 70-71.

<sup>14</sup> Susan Kempter, "Spicing Up Your Studio Teaching," *American String Teacher* 45 (1995): 69-72.

<sup>15</sup> Dorée Huneven, "Studio Teaching Tips," *American String Teacher* 63 (2013): 88-89.

While the positive effects on the overall musicianship of pre-collegiate students studying chamber music have been well documented, there is little mention of the instrumentation issues teachers often face when working to incorporate chamber music into their classroom or studio. This dissertation seeks to call attention to this particular issue facing educators today and to provide appropriate solutions for teachers working specifically with groups of violin students. The pieces studied in this project are appropriate for students at a variety of pedagogical levels working in violin trios, violin quartets, and larger violin ensembles with more than one student per part.

## CHAPTER TWO: A BRIEF HISTORY OF VIOLIN QUARTETS AND TRIOS

It is difficult to trace a cohesive history of violin-only chamber music repertoire as it has never been a popular chamber music genre for either composers or performers. This may be due to the compositional challenges found in writing music for ensembles containing only treble instruments. A few composers of early music wrote for three treble instruments, usually with continuo. Some of these pieces were specifically composed for three violins, and two of them are included in this project, *Sonata XXI con tre violini*, by Giovanni Gabrieli and published posthumously in 1615,<sup>1</sup> and *Canzon Prima per Quattro Violini, ó Cornetti, Op. 8 No. 46* composed by Biagio Marini and published in 1626. Both of these pieces provide opportunities for students to improve their ensemble skills while learning music from an era they may have not been exposed to previously.

The earliest known examples of trios for violins without basso continuo are Daniel Speer's *Two Capriccios*, published in 1687 and 1697.<sup>2</sup> One of the few well-known works for violin ensemble, Telemann's *Four Concerti for Four Violins, TWV 40:201-204*, was also written to be performed without accompaniment. Violin ensemble chamber repertoire made a brief appearance in the Baroque era along with the rise of the concerto grosso and the trio sonata; in addition to Telemann's concerti, Vivaldi also wrote *L'estro Armonico, Op. 3*, a collection of four concertos for four violins accompanied by two violas, cello, and basso continuo. Both the Telemann and Vivaldi concerti are standard pieces in the violin repertoire today, and students often study and perform the Vivaldi without the accompaniment parts.

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<sup>1</sup> *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Gabrielli, Giovanni," by David Bryant, published January 20, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Eva Lundell, "The Ensemble Étude for Violins: An Examination with an Annotated Survey of Violin Trios and Quartets and an Original Étude for Four Violins" (DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2011), 28.

As the popularity of the concerto grosso and the trio sonata diminished and made way for the string quartets and solo concerti of the Classical Era, there appears to be a lull in the composition of violin ensemble music. One could speculate that this is due to the rise in popularity of the traditional string quartet. While more violin ensemble music was written in the mid to late nineteenth-century, Christina Bashford writes in the *Grove* article on Chamber Music that unbalanced ensembles, such as a group containing all treble instruments, were incompatible with the ideas and philosophies of the Romantic era.<sup>3</sup> With the rise of the virtuoso violinist in the Romantic era, it is plausible to think that violinist-composers might be inclined to write flashy works for violin ensemble; nevertheless, violinist-composers such as Paganini, Sarasate, and Joachim kept their focus narrowed to solo violin works.<sup>4</sup> The Romantic era composers of violin ensemble music are largely unknown, and it can be assumed that many of them composed their pieces with students or amateur musicians in mind.

As unusual instrumentation became more acceptable in the twentieth century, a few well-known composers wrote for violin ensemble. Steve Reich wrote *Violin Phase* in 1967 which can be performed with four violins or with violin and tape.<sup>5</sup> While it is exciting to see composers in the twentieth and twenty-first century working with soprano-heavy ensembles, the majority of these pieces are not suitable for the purpose of teaching chamber music to pre-collegiate students who have little to no small ensemble experience.

While the history of the violin ensemble consists mostly of isolated pieces rather than the cohesive developmental history that can be traced in chamber music genres such as the string

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<sup>3</sup> *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Chamber Music," by Christina Bashford, published January 20, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Kaup Galen, "A Survey and Bibliography of Chamber Music Appropriate for Student String Ensembles with Three or More Violins" (D.M. diss., Florida State University, 2008), 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 23.

quartet, many gems can be found in this genre. Violin trios and quartets have existed in the background of chamber music composition throughout music history. Due to the fact that many of these pieces were composed with student or amateur musicians in mind, they provide young developing musicians with many wonderful opportunities for pedagogical study and should be taught and played with more regularity.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Three standard pedagogical systems were used to categorize each piece in this project: the Suzuki Violin School Revised Edition, the American String Teachers Association 2009 String Syllabus Volume One, and The Royal Conservatory of Music Violin Syllabus 2013 edition. The Suzuki Violin School method books, Volumes 1-10, are used by the vast majority of private string teachers in America, as well as many teachers around the world. The RCM certification system, Grades 1-10, is used by many private string teachers in Canada and the United Kingdom. The ASTA grading system consists of six grades and is used by most public school teachers in America.

Below is a brief description of the skills expected at the various levels of each individual method. The pedagogical descriptions of the ASTA Grades and RCM Grades can also be found in their respective syllabi, and the Suzuki descriptions are based on the general level of the pieces found in each volume. Suzuki Volume 1 has been split into two parts, 1A and 1B, to account for the many pedagogical concepts studied in the first book. Volume 1A starts at the beginning of the book and continues through *Allegro* by Suzuki, and Volume 1B begins with *Perpetual Motion* by Suzuki and continues through the rest of the book.

Table 1: Pedagogical Description of ASTA Grades<sup>1</sup>

Grade 1	Basic right and left hand skills, basic first position notes with a few 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> finger alterations, keys of G, D, A, and C, simple rhythmic patterns, two to four note slurs.
Grade 2	All notes in first position, occasional third position, more complex rhythms including dotted notes, emphasis on slurs and legato bowing, slurred string crossings.

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<sup>1</sup> David Littrell, ed., *String Syllabus Volume One* (Fairfax, VA: American String Teachers Association, 2009), 1-23.

Table 1 (Continued)

Grade 3	Fluency in shifting to the first three positions, occasional shifting up to fifth position, developing vibrato, advanced string crossing skills, wider variety of bow strokes, greater control of dynamics.
Grade 4	Fluency in first five positions, occasional higher notes, greater frequency of double stops and chords, hemiola and polyrhythm, advanced bow strokes including spiccato, sautillé, and staccato.
Grade 5	Shifting into all positions on all four strings, large leaps, extended passages of double stops, control of sustained notes, rapid détaché and staccato, and extended techniques including flautando, ponticello, and col legno.
Grade 6	Vast repertoire available to students once essential techniques have been mastered.

Table 2: Pedagogical Description of RCM Grades<sup>2</sup>

Preparatory	Developing bow control, an understanding of basic bow division, steady pulse, clarity of whole and half steps, good posture and hand set-up.
Grade 1	Use of whole bows, slurs, legato, staccato, steady pulse, clear tone, dynamic variety, centered tonality.
Grade 2	Good control in all parts of the bow, slurs, legato, staccato, clear tone, dynamic variety, clarity of whole and half steps in first and third positions, centered tonality in major and minor keys.
Grade 3	Variety of bow strokes including staccato, martelé, and détaché, secure intonation in the first three positions, fluency shifting to the first three positions, beginning vibrato development.
Grade 4	Appropriate use of a variety of bow strokes including brush strokes, staccato, martelé, and détaché, secure intonation in the first four positions, fluency of shifting to the first four positions, some vibrato expected.
Grade 5	Well-developed brush stroke, beginning collé and spiccato strokes, secure intonation in the first five positions, fluency in shifting to the first five positions, consistent vibrato production with all fingers.

<sup>2</sup> The Royal Conservatory, *Violin Syllabus* (Toronto: The Royal Conservatory, 2013), 13-72, accessed February 6, 2018, [https://www.rcmusic.com/sites/default/files/examinations/documents/online\\_syllabi/S36\\_Violin%20Syl\\_2016\\_RCM\\_online\\_SECURED.pdf](https://www.rcmusic.com/sites/default/files/examinations/documents/online_syllabi/S36_Violin%20Syl_2016_RCM_online_SECURED.pdf).

Table 2 (Continued)

Grade 6	Well-developed brush stroke, collé, and spiccato, secure intonation and shifting in the first five positions, firmly established vibrato, variety of dynamics.
Grade 7	Well-developed spiccato stroke, wide dynamic range, stylistic awareness, fluency and accuracy up to the seventh position, consistent vibrato from note to note when appropriate.
Grade 8	Well-developed spiccato, sautillé, and ricochet strokes, stylistic awareness, fluency and accuracy up to the seventh position, consistent vibrato from note to note when appropriated.
Grade 9	Ability to execute all bow strokes, ability to play securely in any position, a mature and expressive tone, varied vibrato, stylistic awareness.
Grade 10	Ability to perform all bow strokes and play in all positions, precise intonation, soloistic tone, expressive and varied vibrato, sophisticated and nuanced performing.

Table 3: Pedagogical Description of Suzuki Volumes

Volume 1A	First position notes with no alterations, key of A major, A and E strings, basic détaché and staccato bow strokes, string crossings between A and E strings, dotted rhythms, basic bow distribution.
Volume 1B	Use of fourth finger, chromatic alterations including high 3 <sup>rd</sup> fingers and low 2 <sup>nd</sup> fingers, keys of D and G, more advanced string crossings, slurs and hooks.
Volume 2	Minor scales, low 1 <sup>st</sup> fingers, triplets, all first position notes, long slurs and hooks, syncopation, accidentals, basic off-string stroke, third position shifting on exercise (not introduced in repertoire).
Volume 3	Vibrato introduced, second and third position shifting exercise (not introduced in repertoire), collé and up bow staccato, grace notes, some double stops, extensions.
Volume 4	Shifting to first four positions, trills, basic octaves, thirds, and sixths, spiccato, martelé, advanced string crossings and bow distribution.
Volume 5	Shifting up to the seventh position, spiccato and brush strokes, advanced bow distribution, consistent vibrato, comfort with key changes, solid intonation on basic double stops.



Table 3 (Continued)

Volume 6	Consistent intonation playing thirds, sixths, and octaves, comfort with complex rhythms, spiccato and brush strokes, consistent vibrato, comfort shifting in the first seven positions, expansion of musical range and dynamics.
Volume 7	More complex rhythms and string crossings, more mature development of musical ideas, excellent use of bow distribution, comfort shifting into first seven positions, solid intonation of sixths, thirds, and octaves, comfort in long passages of fast notes with sequential shifting.
Volume 8	Volume 8 is slightly simpler pedagogically than Volume Seven and requires many of the same concepts.
Volume 9	Mozart Concerto No. 5 in A Major.
Volume 10	Mozart Concerto No. 4 in D Major.

In addition to the descriptions of each individual level, a comparison was done on the three systems to more accurately classify each piece in this project. Many differences in approach and skill can be found between individual system. The 2009 edition of the American String Teachers Association String Syllabus includes classifications of the Suzuki method books and the Royal Conservatory repertoire books. Below is an overview of how ASTA grades the Suzuki method books and the RCM method books.

Table 4: ASTA String Syllabus Classification<sup>3</sup>

ASTA Grade:	Suzuki Volume:	Royal Conservatory:
Grade 1	Volume 1-2	Preparatory, Grade 1-2
Grade 2	Volume 3	Grade 3
Grade 3	Volume 4-5	Grade 4-5

<sup>3</sup> Littrell, *String Syllabus Volume One*, 1-23.

Table 4 (Continued)

Grade 4	Volume 6, 7, 8	Grade 6-7
Grade 5	Volume 9-10	Grade 8
Grade 6	Not listed	Not listed

Upon further examination of the pieces in each system, the grades applied to the Suzuki and RCM method books do not entirely match up. Many of the pieces from the Suzuki books are listed as options in each Royal Conservatory Grade Level, but they do not correspond with the classification given in the ASTA syllabus. For example, as seen in the chart above, the ASTA syllabus classifies both Suzuki Volume 3 and RCM Grade 3 as being equivalent to an ASTA Grade 2.<sup>4</sup> However, the pieces from RCM Grade 3 are all from the middle of Suzuki Volume 2 including *Waltz* by Brahms, *Theme from Witche's Dance* by Paganini, and *The Two Grenadiers* by Schumann.<sup>5</sup> Some Suzuki Volume 2 pieces even appear on RCM's Grade 4 list including *Gavotte from Mignon* by A. Thomas and *Minuet* by Boccherini.<sup>6</sup> Based on this repertoire comparison, it seems impossible that Suzuki Volume 3 and RCM Grade 3 could both be classified as an ASTA Grade 2.

Below is a comparison of the levels of each system based on repertoire. The repertoire listed shows the specific crossover between the Suzuki volumes and the repertoire listed on the 2013 RCM syllabus. The ASTA grades are approximate based on an overview of the grade level

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> American String Teachers Association, *Violin Syllabus*, 26.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 31.

descriptions and other pieces listed since an examination of the repertoire shows that the specific ASTA classifications of the two systems are inaccurate.

Table 5: Repertoire Comparison

Suzuki Volume	ASTA Grade Level	Royal Conservatory	Repertoire examples:
Volume 1A	Grade 1	Preparatory Level	<i>Song of the Wind, Go Tell Aunt Rhody, Long Long Ago, May Song, O Come Little Children, Allegro</i>
Volume 1B	Grade 1	Grade 1	<i>Perpetual Motion, Andantino, Etude, Minuet I, Allegretto, The Happy Farmer</i>
Volume 2A	Grade 1	Grade 2	<i>Musette, Long, Long Ago with Variation, Minuet No. 2, Minuet No. 3, Bourree, Hunter's Chorus</i>
Volume 2B	Grade 2	Grade 3	<i>Waltz, Theme From Witches Dance, and The Two Grenadiers</i>
Volume 2B-3A	Grade 2	Grade 4	<i>Gavotte from Mignon, Gavotte in g minor, Boccherini Minuet, Humoresque</i>
Volume 3B-4	Grade 3	Grade 5	<i>Seitz concerti 2.3 and 5.1, Bach Bourree</i>
Volume 4-5	Grade 3	Grade 6	<i>Seitz 5.3, Vivaldi a minor first and third movements, Handel Sonata No. 3 in F Major, Perpetual Motion from Little Suite No. 6, and Rameau Gavotte</i>
Volume 5-6	Grade 4	Grade 7	<i>La Folia, Vivaldi g minor, Eccles Sonata, Handel D Major, Fiocco Allegro, Gigue, Country Dance</i>

Table 5 (Continued)

Volume 7	Grade 4	Grade 8	<i>Bach A minor, Handel Sonatas 1 and 5</i>
Volume 9-10	Grade 5	Grade 9-10	<i>Mozart Concerto in D Major</i>
N/A	Grade 6	ARCT Certificate	<i>Lalo Symphonie espagnole, Khachaturian Concerto in D minor, Barber Concerto Op. 14</i>

It is also worth noting that basic pedagogical skills are introduced in a slightly different order in each individual system. For example, while the Suzuki method introduces a third position shifting exercise at the end of Volume 2, the first piece in the Suzuki repertoire that requires shifting does not appear until the middle of Volume 4. Many alternate fingerings that involve shifting can be found throughout the Suzuki method books. RCM lists shifting to third position as a technical skills required starting at Grade 2,<sup>7</sup> while the ASTA syllabus states that shifting is rare at Grade 2 and required fluently up to the fifth position at Grade 3.<sup>8</sup> Below is a list of technical skills and their approximate classification in each system.

Table 6: Comparison of Technical Skills

Skills:	Suzuki Volume	ASTA Grade	Royal Conservatory
All Four Strings	Volume 1B	Grade 1	Grade 1
Fourth Finger	Volume 1B	Grade 1	Grade 1
Slurs and hooks	Volume 1B	Grade 1	Grade 1
Shifting in pieces	Volume 4	Grade 3	Grade 2

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>8</sup> Littrell, *String Syllabus*, 4-7.

Table 6 (Continued)

Third Position	Volume 2	Grade 2	Grade 2
Second Position	Volume 3	Grade 3	Grade 3
Fourth Position	Volume 4	Grade 3	Grade 4
Fifth Position	Volume 5	Grade 3	Grade 5
Sixth Position	Volume 6	Grade 4-5	Grade 7
Seventh Position	Volume 7	Grade 4-5	Grade 7
Eighth Position	Volume 8	Grade 5	Grade 9
Ninth Position	Volume 9-10	Grade 5	Grade 9
Tenth Position	Volume 9-10	Grade 5	Grade 9
Spiccato	Volume 4	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sautillé	Volume 4	Grade 4	Grade 8
Open String Double Stops	Volume 3	Grade 4	Grade 1
Vibrato	Volume 3	Grade 3	Grade 3
Sixths	Volume 3	Grade 4	Grade 4
Thirds	Volume 4	Grade 4	Grade 6
Octaves	Volume 3	Grade 4	Grade 6

As seen in the chart above, there are many differences in the progression of skills used in each of these methods. Due to these discrepancies, it is important to classify each piece in this project in all three different method systems. Three distinct classification systems are also used to benefit a broader audience of string students and teachers.

## CHAPTER FOUR: VIOLIN QUARTETS AND TRIOS

This chapter contains information on the sixteen pieces selected for this dissertation. Some of the selections are individual pieces of music, others are chamber music collections. The pieces were selected to provide options for students at a variety of playing levels. Accessibility and availability of the music was also considered, and information on where to find the music for purchase or download is included with each selection. Information on the difficulty of shifting, double stops, left hand technique, bow strokes, rhythmic complexity, and other technical aspects are discussed, as well as ensemble and musical issues. The approximate ASTA Grade, RCM Grade, and Suzuki Volume level can be found at the end of each selection. Below is a table that includes each piece selected along with the approximate grade levels for each system.

Table 7: Overview of Pieces Studied

Title	Composer	ASTA Grade	RCM Grade	Suzuki Volume	Composition Date
Four Pieces for Four Violins, Op. 15	Ernst Schmidt	2	2	2	1905
Lullaby for Violin Quartet, Op. 10 No 1	Carl V Lachmund	2	3	2	1889
Easy Trios for Three Violins, Op. 34	József Bloch	2	2	2	1905
Canzon Prima per Quattro Violini, ó Cornetti, Op. 8 No. 46	Biagio Marini	2	3	3	1626
Sonata XXI Con Tre Violini, Ch. 214	Giovanni Gabrieli	2	4	3	1615
Four Concerti for Four Violins TWV 40:201-204	Georg Philipp Telemann	3	5	4	c 1720-1740

Table 7 (Continued)

Gradus ad Parnassum, Op. 52	Jakob Don't	3	5	4	1877
L'estro armonico, Op. 3	Antonio Vivaldi	3	6	5	1711
Quartet for Four Violins	Carl Bohm	3	5	4	1901
Suite for Four Violins	Gabrielli Ladislav	4	6	5	1851
Stimmungsbilder, Op. 92, No. 1 and No. 3	Johann (Jan) Sluníčko	4	7	6	1916
Three Pieces for Four Violins, Op. 178	Charles Dancla	4	6	5	1900
Romanze, Op 43	Joseph Hellmesberger Jr.	4	7	6	1884
Quartet for Four Violins, Op 98	Richard Hofmann	4	7	6	1896
Le Carnaval de Venise, op. 119	Charles Dancla	5	8	8	?
Burlesque for Three Violins, Op. 9	Friedrich Hermann	5	10 or higher	10 or higher	1857

Four Pieces for Four Violins, Op. 15

Ernst Schmidt (1878-1955)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1905

Number of Movements: Four

**Description:** This piece contains four movements written by composer and violinist Ernst Schmidt. The first and third movements are highlighted in this project due to the availability of the music.

**Availability of piece:** The score and parts for the first and third movements are available from IMSLP. The third movement is also available for purchase at [www.musicaneo.com](http://www.musicaneo.com).

**Publisher:** Originally published in 1905 by B. Schott's Söhne.

**Shifting:** These pieces require very little shifting. The first violinist should be able to shift into third position, but the other voices do not require any shifting. The highest note in the first movement is a D6 and the highest note in the third movement is a C6.

**Double Stops:** The third movement has a few basic double stops throughout, always containing at least one note that can be played with an open string. The first movement has slightly more complex double stops. The lower voices play occasional thirds, fourths, fifths, and sixths, and the first violinist has one four-note chord in the middle of the movement.

**Left Hand Technique:** The third movement of this piece moves from C major to F major, so students should be familiar with flat keys and be able to play music with a key change. While little shifting is required, students should be comfortable with all of their first position notes and be comfortable playing low first fingers and high third fingers in the first position. The first movement contains more accidentals than the third and has chromatic scale passages that are a few notes long. The first violinist will need to be comfortable playing a couple of trills.

**Bow Strokes:** Students should be able to play staccato and legato and should be able to play four- to six-note slurs. There are opportunities in the trio of the third movement for students to use a brush stroke if they are able, but it is not necessary.



Individuality of Parts: These pieces are fairly homophonic. Sometimes the parts play in pairs and sometimes the texture is three against one, but the voices are rarely independent and there are no solos.

Rhythmic Complexity: The third movement of this piece is particularly simple rhythmically.

Students should be able to play in 3/4 time and understand dotted quarter notes. The first movement has a time signature change from 3/4 to cut time, but is otherwise rhythmically straightforward.

Musical Ideas: The third movement is a Minuet and Trio, which could provide teachers with opportunities to talk about the form. The first movement begins with a slow Andante and moves into an Allegro section, providing teachers with opportunities to work on different characters. Both movements have a great deal of rhythmic unison; this piece could be a good time to work with students on the importance of matching bow strokes in chamber music.

Note about these pieces: The third piece in this collection could be an excellent first chamber piece for young students to study. Not only is it free of advanced techniques, it is also very simple rhythmically and easy in terms of ensemble.

ASTA Grade Level: I would classify these pieces as an ASTA Grade 2. Grade 2 students know all of the notes in first position and shifts are rare but can occur. Students are able to play dotted rhythms and can perform slurred string crossings.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify the third movement of this piece as appropriate for an RCM Grade 2 student and recommend that the first movement be more appropriate for Grade 3 students. Grade 2 students have the bow control, ability to play slurs, and comfort in first

position needed to play the third movement, while the slightly more complex shifting and accidentals are more appropriate for Grade 3.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would recommend these pieces for students studying Suzuki Volume 2.

The third movement might be more appropriate for students who are in the middle of Volume 2, while the first movement is more appropriate for students who have faced challenges found at the end of Volume 2 such as accidentals and higher notes.

### Easy Trios for Three Violins, Op. 34

József Bloch (1862-1922)

Year of Composition: 1905

Number of Movements: Seven short pieces

Description: This is a collection of seven short violin trios written for beginning students.

Availability of piece: This piece can be downloaded from a number of websites including IMSLP, musopen.org, musicneo.com, and free-scores.com.

Publisher: Originally published in 1905 by Charles Rozsnyai.

Shifting: Several of the pieces in this collection do not require students to shift out of the first position including the second, fourth, fifth, and sixth movements. The first violin requires some shifting in the first three positions in the first, third, and seventh pieces. The second violin has a C6 in the third piece. The seventh piece, Gavotte, also has an E6 and an A5 harmonic in the first violin part.

Double Stops: The first violin part has only a few double stops occurring at the ends of several of the pieces. The double stops are usually thirds or sixths. The second violin parts has slightly more complex double stops in the seventh piece. The third violin part has a few

three-note chords with a sixth between the two upper voices at the end of the third piece and a few double stops with open strings at the end of the fourth piece and the beginning of the sixth piece.

**Left Hand Technique:** Students should be comfortable with all of the notes in first position before studying these pieces. The seventh piece contains trills, harmonics, and a number of accidentals.

**Bow Strokes:** Students should have a good command of legato and staccato bow strokes and be able to perform string crossings under slurs. They should also be able to use the whole bow with a sustained sound. The fourth piece requires more advanced string crossing skills in the first violin part.

**Individuality of Parts:** The parts are fairly similar and do not require previous ensemble experience.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** The sixth piece has dotted quarter notes. Otherwise, the parts are rhythmically very basic.

**Musical Ideas:** These pieces, especially the first few, are a great opportunity to work on ensemble skills with students who have little to no experience playing chamber music.

**Note about these pieces:** This collection of pieces could serve as good sight-reading pieces for more advanced players. They could also be used as gig pieces for students who need a larger repertoire of works.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 2. Grade 2 students should be comfortable with all first position notes and be able to shift occasionally. They should also be comfortable using the whole bow and performing accurate string crossings.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify this collection of pieces as being an RCM Grade 2, and add that the fourth and seventh pieces might be more appropriate for students at the Grade 3 level. Grade 2 students should be able to play all notes in first position, use the whole bow, and perform occasional shifts, but the trills, double stops, and string crossings in the fourth and seventh pieces are slightly too advanced for Grade 2 students.

Suzuki Volume Level: The majority of the pieces in this collection are appropriate for students studying Suzuki Volume 2. I would recommend that teachers save the fourth and seventh pieces for students studying Volume 3 as they contain more complex string crossings, trills, and double stops.

### Lullaby for Violin Quartet, Op. 10 No 1

Carl V. Lachmund (1853-1928)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1889

Number of Movements: One

Description: This is a simple, one-movement piece for four violins that can be found in the book Favorite Quartets No. 1, published by Carl Fischer.

Availability of piece: This piece can be found in the book Favorite Quartets No. 1 by Carl Fischer or on IMSLP. WorldCat lists this item as being available at six libraries worldwide.

Publisher: Originally published by Carl Fischer Music.

Shifting: This piece does not require any shifting in any voices, but some could be included for teaching purposes if desired. This could be a great piece to learn initially in the first

position and then again with some shifts into third position as students are learning how to shift.

Other Left Hand Considerations: While students do not have to be shifting yet to study this piece, they do need a good understanding of all of their first position notes. This piece includes low first fingers and high third fingers and has a short four note pattern of chromaticism.

Double Stops: There are no double stops in this work.

Bow Strokes: This piece requires a solid basic detaché stroke and the ability to play staccato and legato. Students also need strong slurring skills and to be able to play hooks. Students must have good string crossing skills and be able to cross the string under a slur.

Individuality of Parts: This piece presents a great opportunity for students to learn how to play together and separately. Often two of the voices will be similar rhythmically with the other two in contrast. Directly after the second ending in measure nine, there is a bit of imitation with all the voices coming in at different times, which will likely be a new challenge for students at this level.

Rhythmic Complexity: This piece consists of basic rhythms including quarter notes, half notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes. The most complex rhythms in this piece are the measures that have rests to count; there are a number of times where students have to come in on the second or fourth eighth note of the measure. The piece is also in 2/4 time, which might be a new concept for many students at this level.

Musical Ideas: This piece includes several musical directions that might be new for students at this level, including *dolce*, *piu animato*, *ritardando*, *tranquillo*, *smorzando*, and fermatas. This could be an excellent opportunity to work on musical terms with students. It also

provides a good opportunity to work on dynamic contrasts and the different between *pp*, *p*, *mf*, and *f*. Students must have the ability to play well in soft dynamics in order to study this piece.

Other Technical Concepts: The first violinist must play a grace note leading to a harmonic on the last note of the piece.

ASTA Grade Level: While this piece does stay entirely in the first position, I would classify it as an ASTA Grade 2 due to the slurred string crossings, more complex rhythms created by the rests, and slurred and staccato bow strokes required to learn this piece.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 3. The control required in all parts of the bow, the distinction of slurs, legato, and staccato, the dynamic variety, and clarity of whole and half steps all describe a level three student.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify this piece as comparable to Suzuki Volume 2. The use of all notes in first position, the use of hooks and slurs, and the greater use of dynamic range are all similar to the solo repertoire found in Suzuki Volume 2.

Canzon Prima per Quattro Violini, ó Cornetti, Op. 8 No. 46

Biagio Marini (1594-1663)

Instrumentation: Four Violins and Continuo

Year of Composition: 1626

Number of Movements: One

Description: This piece for four violins is from Marini's Op. 8, which contains sixty-one pieces.

Opus 8 also contains pieces that could be appropriate for student violin duets and trios.<sup>1</sup>

Availability of piece: This piece is in the public domain and can be found on IMSLP or purchased from sheetmusicplus.com. According to WorldCat, the string sonatas from Marini's Op. 8 can be found at 501 libraries worldwide.

Publisher: Originally published in 1626; most recently published in 2010 by Musedita Edizioni Musicali.

Shifting: There is very little shifting required in this piece. The highest note in the first violin part is a C#6; the other voices do not have any notes outside of the first position. Some shifts into second or third position on the lower strings might be appropriate for color or technical purposes.

Double Stops: There are no double stops in this piece.

Left Hand Technique: The latter half of this piece has running sixteenth notes, so students should have a solid left hand frame and good intonation.

Bow Strokes: Students should have a comfortable détaché stroke and be able to play in all parts of the bow before learning this piece. This piece also presents an opportunity for students to learn about the bow strokes required to play early music and to work on release in the sound.

Individuality of Parts: In the opening, each voice enters in imitation, and the piece continues with a sense of individuality. Students should be comfortable playing alone and counting before learning this piece. There is also a passage later in the movement where students

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<sup>1</sup> *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Marini, Biagio" by Thomas D. Dunn, published July 1, 2014.

pass off a one-measure figure of sixteenth notes. Students should have some experience with chamber ensemble playing before learning this piece.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** This piece begins in 4/4, moves into 3/4 briefly, and then returns to 4/4, so students should be comfortable with time signature changes. The piece also has a number of dotted rhythms and a few ties throughout. In the latter half of the piece, voices frequently come in off of rests on the and of beat one.

**Musical Ideas:** While this piece is fairly simple and presents few technical challenges, some musical finesse is required in order to really make this piece sound beautiful. Phrases are often passed from one violinist to the next, creating a challenge for students learning to shape the sound.

**Note about this piece:** While the technical level of this piece is quite low, the ensemble and musical challenges would also make it appropriate for more advanced students. It is likely that students have not studied very much repertoire from this time period and may be unaccustomed to hearing music like this piece.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 2. Grade 2 students should be comfortable with all of their first-position notes and be able to shift occasionally. They should also be able to use all parts of the bow and cross strings accurately.

**RCM Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 3. Grade 3 students should be comfortable in the first three positions and have control of basic bow strokes.

**Suzuki Volume Level:** I would recommend this piece for students studying Suzuki Volume 3. Volume 3 students should be comfortable in all parts of the bow, be able to play more advanced rhythms, and shift occasionally.



Sonata XXI Con Tre Violini, Ch. 214

Giovanni Gabrieli (b. 1554-57 d. 1612)

Instrumentation: Three violins and continuo

Year of Composition: Published 1615, posthumously

Number of Movements: One

Description: This one-movement piece is the final work in Gabrieli's collection of pieces

*Canzoni et sonate* published posthumously.<sup>2</sup>

Availability of piece: This piece can be found on IMSLP. There is a version of this piece published for three violins with piano or two violins and viola with piano by International Music Company that can be purchase through Shar Music. A more scholarly copy of the music can be found in *Opera Omnia* on pages 272-275, edited by Richard Charteris. This book is listed on WorldCat as being available at 44 libraries worldwide.

Publisher: Hänssler-Verlag.

Shifting: The highest note in this piece is C6, played throughout by both the first and second violins. Students do not need to shift above the third position.

Double Stops: There are not any double stops in this piece.

Left Hand Technique: There are some quick runs in this piece. Students should have a solid hand frame and good left hand articulation in the first and third positions.

Bow Strokes: No advanced bow strokes are required for this piece; however, it could be a good opportunity to work with students on Baroque sound and bow strokes.

Individuality of Parts: This piece is mostly polyphonic, presenting three distinct and independent voices. Students should be comfortable counting and coming in alone. There are

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<sup>2</sup> *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Gabrieli, Giovanni," by David Bryant, published January 20, 2001.

occasional points of imitation and some two against one between the first violin and the two lower voices.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** This piece may present new rhythmic challenges for students. It is written in cut time with eight beats in a measure, which will likely seem foreign to students and require explanation. There are a number of dotted rhythms, ties, and some syncopation.

**Musical Ideas:** This piece presents teachers with a unique teaching opportunity to introduce early-Baroque era music to students. While students have likely been exposed to music from the later Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras through their solo and orchestral repertoire, many of them may not have any knowledge of music before Corelli and Vivaldi.

**Note about this piece:** While this piece is technically very simple, playing it well requires a certain level of musical finesse. The classification below represent the technical level of this piece, but it might also be a rewarding experience for more advanced students to learn this piece to work on sound colors and early performance practice ideas. Students could use this piece to talk about the sparse use of vibrato used during the early seventeenth century and practice using only their bows to create beautiful musical lines without relying on the left hand. If they are available, this would be an excellent piece for students to study on period instruments or bows.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 2. Grade 2 students are fluid in first position and can shift to third position. They are also expected to play dotted rhythms, slurs, and slurred string crossings.

**RCM Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 4. While Grade 4 students can already shift as high as the fourth position, the pieces listed at the grade four level are

technically comparable to this piece. Grade Four students are also expected to exhibit good control of basic bow strokes.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify this piece as equivalent to the repertoire found in Suzuki Volume 3. As in Volume 3, C6 is the highest note in the piece, and students also study ties and more complex rhythms and bow distribution in Volume 3.

#### Four Concerti for Four Violins, TWV 40:201-204

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: The exact date of composition is unknown. The majority of Telemann's instrumental works were composed before the 1740s, and some scholars estimate that the pieces may have been composed in the 1720s as this was a period of time in the composer's life where he wrote many chamber works and played the violin extensively.<sup>3</sup>

Number of Movements: Each concerto contains four movements.

Description: This is a collection of four Baroque concertos with four movements each, all following the pattern of slow-fast-slow-fast. It is specifically designated to be played without accompaniment.

Availability of piece: All four concertos can be found on IMSLP and for purchase on Amazon and Shar Music.

Publisher: These pieces have been published by a number of companies. International Music Company, Bärenreiter, and Schott Music are a few of the more notable current publishers of these pieces.

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<sup>3</sup> Olaf Mühlenhardt, "Georg Philipp Telemann," April 2010, accessed March 9, 2018.

**Shifting:** These concerti do not contain many high notes or advanced shifting. Students studying these pieces should be comfortable shifting up to the third position. The amount of shifting is fairly even in all four voices most of the time, so it is not necessarily important for the first violinist to be more advanced. There are only a few notes throughout the concerti that require students to shift above third position. In the fourth movement of Concerto No. 1, the third violin has an E6 in measures 47-48, in the third movement of Concerto No. 3, the first violinist plays as high as an F#6 in measure 17, and in the second movement of Concerto No. 4, there is an imitative passage that moves through all four voices and ends on an E6. Concerto No. 2 does not have any notes that require students to shift above the third position.

**Double Stops:** The first three concertos have only a few basic double stops, often with open strings. Concerto No. 1 has only a few at the end of the second movement, and Concerto No. 2 and Concerto No. 3 do not have any. The first movement of Concerto No. 4 is almost entirely double stops, including seconds, thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and octaves. There are also some double stop sixteenth notes in the fourth movement. Students should be comfortable with all of their double stops before studying this piece.

**Other Left Hand Techniques:** These concerti all have a lot of running sixteenth notes, so students must have a solid left hand frame and well-developed intonation.

**Bow Strokes:** These concertos are an excellent opportunity to work with students on using different parts of the bow to create different sounds. It is also a great opportunity to introduce students to matching their bow speed and distribution. There are many string crossings in the fast movements of these pieces, so students should have good control of their string crossings. Teachers could introduce students to Baroque bow strokes and

release with students who are ready and have a good foundation of bow control. All students should have solid *detaché* and *legato* strokes and be comfortable in all parts of the bow before studying these pieces. There are places where advanced student could choose to play passages with an off-the-string stroke, but it is not necessary.

**Individuality of Parts:** Most of the movements of these concerti are largely based on imitation.

This piece provides great opportunities for students who are studying chamber music for the first time as the voices frequently play the same lines at different times. Students studying these pieces must learn to enter alone and also blend with the group.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** These pieces are full of dotted rhythms, running sixteenth notes, rests, and pick-up notes. Many of the rhythms repeat themselves many times and pass around all voices. Concerto No. 4 is more complex rhythmically and contains thirty-second-notes in the fourth movement.

**Musical Ideas:** In each of these concertos, the first and third movements are slow, providing excellent opportunities to teach long musical lines, phrasing, and bow distribution. The second and fourth movements of each concerto are full of repetitive moving notes, providing students with the challenge of creating a line out of repetition. The imitation in these pieces provides students with an opportunity to learn about listening to who has the melody and adjusting to that voice.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify these pieces as an ASTA Grade 3, although the first movement of Concerto No. 4 is closer to a Grade 4 due to all the double stops. Grade 3 students should be comfortable in third position with occasional higher shifting, have advanced string crossing skills, and be developing their bow strokes and dynamic range.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify these pieces as an RCM Grade 5. At the Grade 5 level, RCM students should be comfortable in the first five positions and developing their advanced bow strokes. While the technical description of a Grade 5 student might seem more advanced than necessary to study this concerti, the pieces listed under a Grade 5 are comparable.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify the first three concertos as being equivalent to a Suzuki Volume 4 level. In Volume 4, students should be comfortable shifting to third position and occasionally shifting into higher positions. Volume 4 also contains Baroque concertos for solo violin, which are comparable to these concerti. Due to the extensive use of double stops and more complex rhythms, Concerto No. 4 might be more appropriate for Suzuki Volume 5 students.

Gradus ad Parnassum: Collection of Polyphonic Music for Practice in Ensemble Playing, Op 52

Vol 1 No. 2, 3, 4; Vol 3 No. 1, 3, 5; and Vol 5 No. 1

Jakob Dont (1815-1888)

Instrumentation: Three or Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1877

Number of Movements: Seven movements in this collection are written for three or four violins.

Description: *Gradus ad Parnassum* is a six-volume collection of Dont's works for two to four stringed instruments, written to develop ensemble skills.<sup>4</sup> Three of these volumes, No. 1, No. 3, and No. 5, contain pieces that are written for violin ensemble. Vol 1 No. 3 and No.

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<sup>4</sup> *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Dont, Jakob," by John Moran, published January 20, 2001.

4, Vol 3 No. 3 and No. 5, and Vol 5 No. 1 are all pieces for violin quartet. Vol 1 No. 4 and Vol 3 No. 1 are both written for violin trio.

Availability of piece: The entirety of *Gradus ad Parnassum* is available on IMSLP. It can also be ordered from the Merton-Ourtext Project website.

Publisher: Originally published by F.E.C. Leuckart (1877), reprinted by Merton Music (1996-2010).

Shifting: Most of the notes in these pieces stay in the range of the first three positions. Vol 3 No. 5 has an E6 in the first violin part, requiring the player to shift into the fourth position. Vol 5 No. 1 also has an E6, along with a brief section marked Sul A, requiring the player to shift as high as the fourth position on the A string to reach A5. All of the pieces found in Volume 1 stay within the first three positions.

Double Stops: There are a few basic double stops, thirds and octaves, at the end of Vol 3 No. 3. There are no other double stops in these pieces.

Bow Strokes: Students studying these pieces should be comfortable with slurs and hooks, legato and staccato, and should be developing a brush stroke. These works are also a great opportunity to teach students to match the length and type of bow stroke used in an ensemble setting.

Individuality of Parts: While a few of these pieces, such as Vol 1 No. 2, demonstrate four fairly equal parts, many of them sound like a solo voice with accompaniment. The dominant voice is not always the first violin; in Vol 3 No. 1, the third violin has the most complex line. While some of these pieces do have melodic lines, they are intended as technical studies and are sometimes written like an etude with accompaniment. Vol 1 No. 3, Vol 1 No. 4, and Vol 3 No. 1 all have one voice that is far more complex and soloistic than the

others. These pieces could work well for groups with one student who plays at a higher level than the others, or they could provide an opportunity for equally matched students to rotate parts.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** While these pieces are mostly simple in terms of shifting and bow technique, they provide students with a number of opportunities to learn more complex rhythms. There are a number of dotted rhythms and triplets throughout the pieces, and there is some syncopation. Vol 3 No. 5 is written in 12/16 time and contains dotted rhythms against running eighth notes. Vol 5 No. 1 is in 6/8 time and has grace notes and syncopation. This piece is also quite difficult because the parts are very independent rhythmically from one another.

**Musical Ideas:** Although these pieces were intended to be technical studies, there are many musical things to learn from them. There are many dynamic markings throughout the parts as well as sforzandos, accents, and other musical gestures. The parts frequently move back and forth between homophonic textures and passing around solo lines, creating opportunities for students to learn to both blend as an ensemble and to come out of the texture when necessary.

**Note about these pieces:** While these pieces are technically simple, they could serve as excellent sight-reading or warm up pieces for more advanced students. Each piece is constructed as a technical exercise to teach students about ensemble playing, which could be effective for students of all musical ability levels.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this collection of pieces as an ASTA Grade 3. Grade 3 students should be fluent in shifting to the first three positions with occasional shifting as



high as the fifth position, beginning to develop a wider range of bow strokes, and have advanced string crossing skills.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify this collection of pieces as an RCM Grade 5. Grade 5 students should have a developed brush stroke and be able to play in the first five positions. Based on the pieces listed at the Grade 5 level, students should also be able to handle more complex rhythms.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify this collection of pieces as being appropriate for students who are studying Suzuki Volume 4. Volume 4 students should be able to play in the first four positions, play with a brush stroke, and demonstrate good string crossing and bow distribution skills.

### L'estro armonico, Op. 3

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Concerto No. 1 in D major, RV 549; Concerto No. 4 in E minor, RV 550; Concerto No. 7 in F major, RV 567; Concerto No. 10 in B minor, RV 580

Instrumentation: Four Violins and string orchestra with continuo

Year of Composition: 1711

Number of Movements: Four Concertos with three to four movements each

Description: *L'estro armonico* is a set of twelve concertos for stringed instruments. Four of these concerti are written for four violins. Concerto No. 10 in B minor is the most frequently studied of the four concertos and is often found among the standard chamber music repertoire for young string players.

Availability of piece: All four of these concerti can be found on IMSLP, Concerto No. 7 in F major and Concerto No. 10 in B minor can be purchased from Shar Music, Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Concerto No. 7 in F major, and Concerto No. 10 in B minor can be purchased from Amazon, and all four concerti can be purchased from SheetMusicPlus.com.

Publisher: These pieces are in the public domain and have been published by a variety of publishers. A few notable publishers with editions currently available for purchase include Edwin F. Kalmus, Ricordi, Bärenreiter, and International Music Company.

Shifting: Students studying these pieces should be comfortable in the first three positions.

Concerto No. 10 in B minor contains only one note in the first violin part that is above the third position, an E6 in the third movement. The other three concerti do not require shifting above the third position.

Double Stops: There are no double stops in these concerti.

Left Hand Technique: Students should be comfortable playing trills before studying these pieces.

There are frequent accidentals throughout. Due to the vast amount of running sixteenth notes in these concerti, students should have good left hand dexterity and articulation before studying these pieces.

Bow Strokes: These pieces requires students to have solid staccato, legato, and brush strokes.

There are also places where students could use a spiccato stroke. Student should have the bow distribution skills to play sixteenth notes with three notes slurred and one separate, and sextuplets with three notes slurred and three notes separate as these bowing patterns occur frequently throughout the concerti. Students should also demonstrate advanced string crossing skills to study these piece successfully.

**Individuality of Parts:** All four parts of each concerto are equal in difficulty, and all of the voices have solos throughout the movements. Students studying these works should be confident playing alone. All four parts frequently have independent rhythms and come in at different times.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** Several movements throughout these concerti present rhythmic challenges. There are dotted rhythms, ties, and syncopation throughout all of the movements, and the parts are frequently independent from one another. In the second movement of Concerto No. 10 in B minor, the first violin plays arpeggiated chords in sextuplets over sixteenth notes in the bottom three voices. The third movement of Concerto No. 4 in E minor is in 3/8 time, which might be a new time signature for many students.

**Musical Ideas:** These concerti are an excellent opportunity for students to work on shaping long lines of running sixteenth notes. Due to the soloistic nature of the parts, students are also challenged to balance and blend their voices. The music is often marked with subito dynamics, which can sometimes be a musical challenge for students.

**Note about these pieces:** The concerti could be appropriate pieces for students to study after studying the Telemann Concerti or Dont Quartets. The Vivaldi concertos require a similar level of technical ability in terms of shifting, double stops, and bow strokes, but they require more advanced ensemble skills due to the rhythmic complexity and the soloistic nature of the individual parts.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify these pieces as an ASTA Grade Level 3. Grade 3 students should be comfortable in the first three positions with occasional higher shifts, have advanced string crossing skills, developing dynamics, and a widening variety of bow

strokes. Vivaldi's solo violin concertos are also listed in the ASTA syllabus as examples of Grade 3 level repertoire, and these concerti are comparable in many ways to the solo concerti.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify these concerti as an RCM Grade Level 6. While Grade 6 students have more advanced shifting and double stop skills than are necessary for these pieces, they also have the comfort with complex rhythms, expanded musical and dynamic range, and ability to play brush and spiccato strokes that are needed. Vivaldi's solo violin Concerto in A minor is also listed under a Grade 6.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify these pieces as appropriate for students studying Suzuki Volume 5. While both Volume 4 and Volume 5 include Vivaldi's solo violin concertos, the rhythmic complexity and ensemble skills required for a successful performance make these concerti more appropriate for Volume 5 students. Volume 5 students likely have more advanced shifting skills than are needed for these concerti, but they also have the bow technique and rhythmic skills required.

#### Quartet for Four Violins

Carl Bohm (1844-1920)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1901

Number of Movements: One

Description: This is a one-movement piece written for violin quartet by German composer Carl Bohm. While Bohm was well-known in his lifetime for writing lieder, he is mostly unknown today; *Grove Dictionary of Music* does not contain an entry for him. His

*Sarabande in G minor for Solo Violin* is well known as a part of the standard teaching repertoire for intermediate violinists.

Availability of piece: This piece can be found on IMSLP.

Publisher: N. Simrock

Shifting: The highest note in the first violin part is an E6, requiring the student to shift into the fourth position. The other three parts stay mostly within the first position with occasional shifts into the third position. Students do not need advanced shifting abilities to study this piece but should be comfortable in the first four positions. It is possible for students who are less comfortable with shifting to play the third or fourth violin parts successfully.

Double Stops: Students should have some experience with double stops before studying this piece as there are a number of chords played throughout all parts. Many of the double stops are played with one or more open strings, but students should also be able to play thirds, sixths, and octaves successfully. The piece ends with a three-note chord in all voices except for Violin III, who has a double stop.

Bow Strokes: Students studying this piece should have a good understanding of staccato and legato and be able to use all parts of the bow. It is preferable for students to have a good spiccato stroke to use on the shorter notes in this piece. Students must be able to cross the string with slurs fluidly and play double stops with good tone. There are also a few places that require up-bow staccato for the duration of three notes.

Individuality of Parts: This is an excellent piece for students who do not have much chamber music experience because the parts are very similar. For most of the piece, the voices are playing together or with a partner. The first violin part is slightly more soloistic and might require a more confident performer.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** This piece contains dotted rhythms and pick-up notes. It is mostly a rhythmically straightforward piece.

**Musical Ideas:** Although this piece was published at the end of the Romantic era, it is very restrained and harmonically simple for its time. It sounds like a return to classical ideas with simple and clear phrase structures. This could be a good opportunity to work with students on phrase endings and clear musical lines.

**Note about this piece:** This piece is a little unusual and difficult to classify as it does not require advanced shifting but does require students to demonstrate solid thirds, sixths, and octaves.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 3. While double stops are not mentioned in the ASTA description until Grade 4, the shifting range and bow techniques used in this piece are equivalent to a Grade 3.

**RCM Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an RCM level 5. This one is a little difficult to place into an RCM level based on the description of when students are expected to learn their double stops. The RCM syllabus states that Grade One students should already be comfortable playing open string double stops and Grade Four students should be able to play sixths, but thirds and octaves are not expected until Grade Six. Nevertheless, spiccato is expected at Grade 5, and the shifting skills needed in this piece are expected at a Grade 4 level.

**Suzuki Volume Level:** I would classify this piece as appropriate for a student studying Suzuki Volume 4. Volume 4 students should be comfortable shifting up to the fourth position, be comfortable playing basic double stops, and be learning spiccato.

## Suite for Four Violins

Gabrielli Ladislav (composer dates unknown)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1851

Number of Movements: Three

Description: This piece for four violins was composed by Gabrielli Ladislav. Very little is known about this composer whose body of works consist of only a few strings chamber pieces.

Availability of piece: A score and the parts can be found on IMSLP. Parts can be purchased from [www.metzlerviolins.com](http://www.metzlerviolins.com).

Publisher: Originally published by Schott Music Company (1851), currently published by Edition Kunzelmann (1998) and Edición Scriptorium (2009).

Shifting: The first violin part plays as high as an A6 once in the first movement, but otherwise stays below an E6. The highest note found in the three lower voices is an A5, so students playing those parts are not required to play above the first position, although some shifts to second or third position could be musically appropriate for students who are comfortable shifting.

Double Stops: All voices play double stops throughout this piece, particularly the inner voices. Students studying this piece should be comfortable playing thirds, sixths, octaves, and double stops with open strings. All voices also have a three-note chord at the end of the third movement. In the third movement, the first violinist has double-stop grace notes.

Bow Strokes: Students studying these pieces should be able to play a smooth legato stroke with the whole bow and have a solid détaché. In the third movement, there are long passages

where all voices must play sixteenth notes with two notes slurred and two notes separate.

There is also an extended section of pizzicato in this piece.

**Individuality of Parts:** The parts move back and forth between an independent rhythmic texture and a duet-like texture with two voices playing similar rhythms. Students should have some ability to play soloistically.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** Students should be comfortable playing syncopation against a downbeat before learning this piece. There are also a number of dotted and double dotted rhythms.

**Musical Ideas:** This piece presents many opportunities for students to work on passing the melody around the quartet and learning to balance voices. The texture is often fairly thick, so it may be a challenge for students to learn how to listen to the person with the melodic line. The first movement of the piece is a slow movement that begins pianissimo, creating a great opportunity for students to work on playing softly with care and shaping long phrases.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 4. While Grade 4 students will likely have more advanced shifting and advanced bowing skills than are required to play this piece, the rhythmic complexity and double stops make it more appropriate for Grade 4 students.

**RCM Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 6. RCM students are not expected to be able to play sixths and octaves until the Grade 6 level, and both are required for this piece.

**Suzuki Volume Level:** I would classify this piece as appropriate for a student studying Suzuki Volume 5. Volume 5 students should be comfortable with basic double stops, fast passages, and the rhythmic complexity required for this piece.



## Stimmungsbilder, Op. 92

Johann (Jan) Sluníčko (1856-1923)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1916

Number of Movements: Op. 92 consists of three pieces; I. Abend, II. Nachtzauber, III.

Elfenreigen.

Description: These pieces for four violin were written by a little known composer who also wrote a few student works for solo violin and piano.

Availability of piece: A score and parts for this piece can be found on IMSLP. WorldCat lists this item as being owned by two libraries worldwide.

Publisher: Originally published in 1916 by Anton Böhm & Sohn.

Shifting: The first violin part in this piece requires vastly more advanced shifting than the lower voices. The first violinist shifts as high as a Bb6 in No. 2 and No. 3 and as high as a G6 in No. 1. The second violins part requires some third and fourth position shifting, and the third and fourth violin parts do not have any notes above the first position. However, the third and fourth violin parts have several places in No. 1 and No. 2 that suggest that the performer shift to a higher position on a lower string.

Double Stops: There are only a few double stops in this piece. The first piece does not have any. In the second piece, the fourth violin has a few measures of ascending thirds leading to a tritone and then a fourth. The third violin has two chords, both thirds, at the end of the piece. In the third piece, the first violin has an octave with an open string, the second violin has a brief passage of a repeated chord (a seventh) leading to another repeated

chord (a sixth). The third violin then has a repeated third leading to a repeated fourth.

Most of the double stops in this piece are brief and consist of one repeated or held chord.

**Left Hand Technique:** The first piece in this set is in C minor and the third piece modulates to E flat major, so students should be comfortable playing in flat keys and modulating from minor to major. Accidentals occur frequently throughout all voices.

**Bow Strokes:** Students studying this piece should have good legato and staccato bow strokes and have an advanced understanding of slurs and hooks. They should also be comfortable in all parts of the bow and have a basic understanding of how to use varied bow speeds for musical expression.

**Individuality of Parts:** The parts are fairly similar; often two or more voices are in unison rhythmically. Occasionally the first or fourth violin parts play something different from the other three voices. Entrances are often staggered, so students should be comfortable coming in on their own.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** These pieces are fairly straightforward rhythmically. Dotted rhythms occur frequently throughout the pieces, and voices often come in off of rests on beats other than beat one. There are also a few triplets throughout.

**Musical Ideas:** The first two pieces in this collection, *Abend* and *Nachtzauber*, provide excellent opportunities for students to work on tone, quiet dynamics, and expressive sound. The third piece, *Elfenreigen*, is a scherzo movement.

**Note about this work:** These pieces present an interesting challenge to classify because the first violin part is significantly more challenging than the other parts. This piece could be a good choice for groups of students consisting of different ability levels.

ASTA Grade Level: I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 4, mostly due to the high shifting required in the first violin part. The lower parts are appropriate for Grade 3 students.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 7 as students at the Grade 7 level should be able to handle the advanced shifting required in the first violin part. Grade 5 and Grade 6 students are likely advanced enough to perform the lower parts successfully.

Suzuki Volume Level: Due to the high shifting required in the first violin part, I would recommend that this piece be studied by students currently in Suzuki Volume 6. Students studying Volume 4 and Volume 5 could be ready to study the lower parts of this piece.

Three Pieces for Four Violins, Op. 178: *Le Départ, L'Arrivée, Le Retour*

Charles Dancla (1817-1907)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1900

Number of Movements: Three

Description: This work consists of three short movements, *Le Départ, L'Arrivée, Le Retour* (The Departure, The Arrival and The Return.)

Availability of piece: This piece is available on IMSLP and at free-scores.com. It is listed on WorldCat as being available at six libraries worldwide.

Publisher: Carl Fisher Music (1900)

Shifting: The first violin part shifts up to the fourth position frequently and shifts up to fifth and sixth positions a few times, particularly in the second movement. The highest shift in the

second violin part is to the fourth position, and the third violin only shifts as high as the third position. While it would be musically appropriate for the fourth violin to shift into second and third positions in certain places, all of the notes of the fourth violin part can be played in first position. This piece would be a great choice for a group where one or two students have more advanced shifting skills than the rest of the group.

**Double Stops:** There is a significant use of a variety of double stops throughout all four parts. All students studying this piece should have experience playing double stops in tune. The first note of the first violin part is a fifth leading to a tritone leading to a sixth, so the first violinist should have a more advanced understanding of intervals and double stops. All students end on a triple stop at the end of the second movement. There are thirds, sixths, and double stops with an open string throughout.

**Bow strokes:** Sautillé is marked in the middle of the first movement in all parts, but due to the tempo marking of the movement (*Moderato maestoso*), as the stroke required might be more accurately labeled as a spiccato. There are several places where students need to play up bow staccato on three to four notes such as the end of the second movement and the middle of the third movement. All students studying this piece should have experience with off-the-string strokes and have a good concept of bow control and distribution. This is also an excellent piece to work on long sustained sound, particularly in the second movement.

**Rhythmic complexity:** This piece could be a great first chamber music piece for more advanced students due to the mostly homophonic rhythmic structure. All four parts have similar rhythms throughout the movements, with an occasional solo particularly in the first violin. There are a number of dotted rhythms throughout such as the double-dotted

quarter note that appears in the first movement beginning in measure two, and the dotted-eighth-sixteenth pattern that appears throughout the second movement.

Musical ideas: There are many opportunities in this piece for teaching long musical lines and creative bow speed. The first and second movements in particular provide many places to teach different sound colors. This piece is also an opportunity to talk to students about French music, something they might not have encountered in their solo and orchestral studies.

ASTA Grade Level: I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 4. Although the third and fourth violin parts could fall more into the category of a Grade 3, the higher positions in the first violin part and the frequent double stops and advanced bow techniques required would make this piece more appropriate for Grade 4 students.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 6. At Grade 6, RCM students should be comfortable shifting to the first five positions and have a well-developed spiccato bow stroke. The third and fourth parts could be classified at a slightly lower level.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify this piece as being close to the level of a Suzuki Volume 5 student. While Volume 4 students could likely play the third and fourth parts successfully, the frequency of double stops, shifts into higher positions, and advanced bow strokes are more appropriate for Volume 5 students.

### Romanze, Op. 43

Joseph Hellmesberger Jr. (1828-1893)

Instrumentation: Four Violins and Piano

Year of Composition: 1884

Number of Movements: Two, but only one that will be discussed in this project

Description: This work consists of two movements, Tarantella, Op 43 No. 1 and Romance Op 43 No. 2. The Tarantella is out of print and difficult to find, but the Romance is still in print and can be found for purchase or download in a number of places. Only the Romance will be discussed for the purposes of this project.

Availability of piece: The Romance movement of this piece can be found through IMSLP, Interlibrary Loan, and sheetmusicplus.com. It can also be purchased through Shar Music or Amazon. The Tarantella is available only through Interlibrary Loan.

Publisher: International Music Company

Shifting: This piece requires the ability to shift into higher positions in all four parts. The first violin shifts into higher positions more frequently, reaching as high as the seventh position, but the other voices have high notes throughout the piece as well. The first violin part also requires the student to play Sul G up to the seventh position.

Double Stops: There are very few double stops in this piece. There are a few pizzicato chords in the fourth violin part towards the end of the piece.

Bow Strokes: This piece requires a lot of bow control from frog to tip in order to play the long pieces of the piece beautifully. This piece provides a great opportunity to teach varied bow speed and usage. This piece also requires up bow staccato in the Violin I, II, and III parts for a brief section.

Individuality of Parts: This piece is fairly soloistic with four unique parts. While there are a few passages where the parts play homophonic rhythms, there is also a great deal of imitation and some passages where voices play solos. All voices have at least one solo while the

other voices rest, so all students studying this piece should have a good tone and be comfortable briefly playing alone.

**Rhythmic complexity:** While this piece is not very rhythmically complex overall, it does include some brief passages of syncopation and some triplets. It also requires counting several measures of rests while other parts are playing solos.

**Left Hand Technique:** This is a great piece for students to work on while developing a more advanced vibrato. Students who are in control of their vibrato can be introduced to varied speeds and width and the importance of matching their vibrato to their colleagues in chamber music.

**Musical Ideas:** This is a great piece to work with students on tone, color, and dynamics. There are many places in the piece to work on phrasing as well as subito dynamics. It is also a great opportunity to get students to sing their parts and learn to plan their bow distribution to appropriately match the phrasing.

**Other Technical Concepts:** This piece includes some false harmonics in all voices.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 4. Although it requires some advanced shifting and the ASTA syllabus states that Grade 4 students should be comfortable shifting only to the fifth position with occasional higher shifts, this piece is a Grade 4 in every other technical aspect. It is also comparable with the solo rep ASTA has classified as a Grade 4 and is much simpler than the pieces typically classified as a Grade 5.

**RCM Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 7 due to the need for fluency of shifting and consistent vibrato for a successful performance.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify this piece as appropriate for a Suzuki student studying Volume 6. Volume 6 is the first volume that requires extensive use of advanced sound concepts and long bows, which are very important for this piece.

### Quartet for Four Violins, Op 98

Richard Hofmann (1844-1918)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1896

Number of Movements: Four

Description: This is a four-movement piece for four violins written by German composer

Richard Hofmann, who wrote several pedagogically appropriate chamber music works for students to prepare them for studying the standard string chamber music repertoire.

Availability of piece: This piece is available for download via IMSLP or for purchase through the Amadeus Press website and Sheet Music Plus.

Publisher: Initial Publication by Gebrüder Hug & Co; Currently Published by Amadeus Press

Shifting: Students should have fluid shifting abilities in the first three positions and be able to perform a few shifts into higher positions. The first violin plays as high as a G<sub>6</sub> on a few occasions in the third and fourth movements, and the third violins plays as high as an E<sub>b6</sub> in the fourth movement. The second and fourth violin parts do not require shifting higher than the third position, although the fourth violin part requires shifting to the third position on the G string for a passage. Shifts into the third position during scalar passages are frequent in all voices.



**Left Hand Technique:** Although this piece contains only a few higher position shifts, it is full of rapid left hand passages and accidentals. Scales and arpeggios can be found throughout all the parts. Students studying this piece should have a solid and dexterous left hand frame.

**Double Stops:** All four voices have double stops scattered throughout the parts, although they are sparse and never more than a few chords in a row. Students should be able to perform basic double stops such as thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and octaves within a melodic texture and be able to play a few three-note chords.

**Bow Strokes:** Students should have advanced string crossing skills and be comfortable with hooked bows and long slurs before learning this piece. There are also a few instances of up-bow staccato. Often sixteenths are marked as two slurred and two separate. The third movement presents the greatest bowing challenge as all voices have moving eighth notes in 6/8 for the whole movement and should play with a matching spiccato stroke. Throughout this movement, there are accents on the first and fourth eighth notes of each measure creating a challenge for students to learn to play with the same sound on up bows versus down bows.

**Individuality of Parts:** The voices in this quartet are not particularly solostic. The texture is very thick and all four voices are playing almost all of the time. The voices are often paired in groups of two. Students do not need to have advanced ensemble skills or be comfortable playing solos to learn this piece.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** This piece is fairly rhythmically straightforward. Students should be comfortable playing dotted rhythms. The third movement is in 6/8 time and the fourth movement is in 2/4 time which might be new time signatures for some students.

Musical Ideas: Although this piece was composed in the late nineteenth century, it sounds more like a Classical era piece in harmony and phrase structure. This piece has very clear phrasing, which is great for students with less musical experience to learn how to shape phrases as an ensemble. On the other hand, balance might be a challenge in this piece as all voices are busy much of the time.

ASTA Grade Level: I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade 4. Grade 4 students should be comfortable shifting fluidly in the lower positions with occasional shifts above fifth position. Grade 4 students are also able to play chords and double stops, and to use advanced bow strokes such as the spiccato needed in the third movement of this piece.

RCM Grade Level: I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 7. Grade 7 students should be able to shift up to the seventh position and have a well-developed spiccato stroke. They should also be capable of performing all of the double stops found in this piece.

Suzuki Volume Comparison: This piece is appropriate for students studying Suzuki Volume 6. In Volume 6, students should be comfortable playing melodic double stops, shifting occasionally into higher positions, and performing spiccato.

Le Carnaval de Venise, op. 119

Charles Dancla (1817-1907)

Instrumentation: Four Violins

Year of Composition: 1867

Number of Movements: Eight Variations on a Theme

Description: This is a set of eight variations on a popular Venetian song, *O Mamma Mia*. This song was also used by other composers such as Paganini.<sup>5</sup>

Availability of piece: This piece can be downloaded from IMSLP or free-scores.com and can be purchased from Sheet Music Plus, the Schott Music website, or booesy.com. It is also available through Interlibrary Loan.

Publisher: Schott Music (1997), Noten Roehr (2009)

Shifting: This piece requires advanced shifting skills. While the highest note in the first violin part is a C7, the other voices also shift as high as an A6 on multiple occasions. Many of these high shifts occur within the context of high runs. Students should also be comfortable shifting into higher positions on the G string.

Double Stops: There are a number of sixths and octaves throughout all parts in this piece and occasional thirds, fourths, and fifths. There are also a number of broken octave passages throughout.

Left Hand Technique: There are a number of fast runs in all voices in this piece, so students should have an articulate left hand. There are also a number of broken thirds and broken octaves, and arpeggios requiring rapid string crossings and high shifts.

Bow Strokes: This piece requires a number of advanced bow strokes including ricochet, sautillé, and spiccato. All voices have bariolage passages at some point in the piece. Students studying this piece should also be comfortable with up-bow staccato, rapid string crossings, and multiple down bows with retakes.

Individuality of Parts: The parts are very individualistic. Students should be experienced playing one on a part before studying this piece. While the first violin part is more virtuosic and

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<sup>5</sup> Eva Lundell, "The Ensemble Étude for Violins: An Examination with An Annotated Survey of Violin Trios and Quartets and An Original Étude for Four Violins" (DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2011), 70.

complex than the other parts, all of the parts contain high shifts, complicated rhythms, and advanced bow techniques. All of the parts have a highlighted soloistic passage at some point in the piece.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** This piece contains frequent trills, grace notes, dotted rhythms, time signature changes, and passages in compound meter including 6/8 time and 12/8 time. There are also a number of sixty-fourth-notes and dotted sixteenth-sixty-fourth-note rhythmic figures.

**Other Techniques Used:** This piece has a number of harmonics and false harmonics throughout. There are also pizzicato double stops in Variation Four and Variation Six.

**Musical Ideas:** There are many French musical markings in this piece such as *flautando* that might be new for students. This is also a great opportunity to teach students about the importance of incorporating musicality into virtuosic pieces rather than focusing on the technique.

**Note about this piece:** In some of the more technically complicated passages, Dancla offers the performer an easier alteration. This could be particularly useful if one or more students in the quartet are not as technically proficient.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ASTA Grade Level 5. At the Grade 5 level, students should have the ability to play in the higher positions on all four strings, to make large leaps, and to play extended double stop passages. They should also be comfortable with advanced bow strokes and extended techniques.

**RCM Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an RCM Grade 8. Grade 8 students should be able to execute spiccato, sautillé, and ricochet strokes and be comfortable with frequent

shifts up to the seventh position. It should be noted, however, that the first violin part in this piece has a few shifts that are higher than the seventh position.

Suzuki Volume Level: I would classify this piece as appropriate for students who are studying Suzuki Volume 8. Volume 8 students should be comfortable shifting into the higher positions and playing with advanced bow strokes. Since students of the Suzuki method study mostly Baroque compositions, it would be wise for students to study supplemental solo materials from the Romantic Era before learning this piece.

### Burlesque for Three Violins, Op. 9

Friedrich Hermann (1828-1907)

Instrumentation: Three Violins

Year of Composition: 1857

Number of Movements: One movement with eight variations

Description: This piece was composed by Friedrich Hermann who was a composer and violist who also wrote his own school of method books and composed for the violin from a primarily pedagogical standpoint.<sup>6</sup>

Availability of piece: The complete parts can be found at IMSLP and purchased on the International Music Company website or from sheetmusicplus.com. WorldCat lists this piece as being available at 29 libraries worldwide.

Publisher: Originally published in 1857 by Kistner, republished in 1944 by International Music Company.

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<sup>6</sup> "Friedrich Hermann," Bach Cantatas Website, last modified June 14, 2017, accessed March 9, 2018, <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Lib/Hermann-Friedrich.htm>.

**Shifting:** Students learning this piece should have advanced shifting skills and be comfortable playing in any position on the violin. The first violin part in particular spends a great deal of time in the upper register. The highest note in this piece is a G7, found in both the first and third violin parts. The highest note in the second violin is a D7. The lower voices also frequently play high on the G string with the second violin playing as high as a G5 and the third as high as a C5.

**Double Stops:** Students should be able to perform scales in thirds, sixths, and octaves before studying this piece. There are several extended passages of double-stop scales in all three parts.

**Left Hand Technique:** This piece is full of fast scales and arpeggios. Students studying this piece should have a solid left hand frame and excellent intonation. There is also an extended passage of false harmonics. Although the passage is longer and more complicated in the first violin part, all parts contain a passage of false harmonics at some point.

**Bow Strokes:** This piece requires a number of advanced bow strokes including spiccato, sautillé, ricochet, and up bow staccato. This could be an excellent piece to work with students on a variety of advanced bow techniques.

**Individuality of Parts:** The parts are fairly soloistic. Throughout the piece, the voices take turns showing off while the other voices perform an accompanimental part underneath. There are several places where the top two voices play a duet over an ostinato-like figure in the third violin. Students should be confident in their solo and ensemble abilities before learning this piece.

**Rhythmic Complexity:** There is a variation that contains a dotted-sixteenth-thirty-second note figure, and a variation that is all triplets. Otherwise, the piece is fairly straightforward rhythmically.

**Musical Ideas:** Due to the flashy technical nature of this piece, students may struggle to play musically. This is a good opportunity to teach students about using virtuosity to further the music rather than for its own sake. The different variations also present opportunities for bringing out different characters in the music.

**Note about this piece:** This piece is a bit like a show piece for violin trio. This could be a good piece for students to learn after they have completed their method book studies and will soon begin learning the standard Romantic concerto repertoire.

**ASTA Grade Level:** I would classify this piece as an ATSA Grade 5. Grade 5 students should be comfortable playing in all positions, shifting large distances, playing extended passages of double stops, using extended techniques, and have control over advanced bow strokes.

**RCM Grade Level:** I would recommend that students study this piece after completing RCM Grade 10. While many of the techniques necessary for this piece are listed at a Grade 10 level, this piece is slightly more advanced than the repertoire listed at the Grade 10 level.

**Suzuki Volume Level:** I would recommend that students study this piece after completing the sequence of Suzuki materials, before or during the study of the standard Romantic violin repertoire. Suzuki Volumes 9 and 10 are both editions of Mozart concerti, and students should learn Mozart before learning this piece. It might also be prudent for students to learn some Romantic literature before studying this piece as Suzuki students likely have not studied much repertoire from the Romantic era.

## CHAPTER FIVE: TEACHING RESOURCES

For many pre-collegiate students, playing in a violin quartet or trio might be their first experience learning chamber music. Studying chamber music presents teaching and performing challenges that can be different from solo and orchestral playing. This chapter provides resources and suggestions for teachers and students, including exercises for individual practice, ensemble practice, listening, and score study as well as definitions and glossaries for terms and ideas that might be unfamiliar to students. It is my hope that these practice activity pages for each piece in this project will provide teachers with a starting point for their own ideas and lesson plans.



## Schmidt's Four Pieces for Four Violins

A *Minuet and Trio* is a standard musical form that was often used by composers in the third movement of symphonies and string quartets. The Minuet was originally a courtly dance in 3/4 time, and the emphasis was on the first beat of the bar. Can you dance along with this piece?

### Practice Suggestions

**Exercise 1:** Practice the following rhythm from the piece as an ensemble on C Major and F Major Scales. The eighth notes should be played in the frog and the tip and the half notes should be played with the whole bow. Be careful to match your bow amount and speed!



**Exercise 2:** Below is a passage from the quartet. Can you practice passing the duet melody?

Musical notation for Exercise 2, showing a passage from the quartet for Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, and Violin IV. The notation includes a duet melody for Violin I and Violin II, and a duet melody for Violin III and Violin IV.

# József Bloch's Easy Trios for Three Violins



Practice Challenge: Can you tackle these tricky slurred string crossings from the fourth movement?

## Left Hand Exercises:

Practice each passage with separate bows, with doubles and with practice rhythms.



## Right Hand Exercises:

Play each slur with up and down bow staccato. Then repeat the exercise with slurs, paying careful attention to the bow distribution.



## Ensemble Exercise:

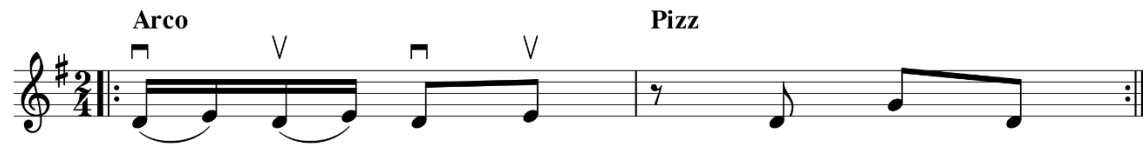
Practice the imitation at the beginning of the first movement, holding a C drone when the next player enters. Listen to each other and match bow strokes. Then practice the opening of the piece, making way for each new entrance to shine.



# Carl V. Lachmund's Lullaby for Violin Quartet

**For Practice:** Play the following exercise with a repeat to practice moving between arco and pizzicato smoothly and rapidly. Then practice the passage as an ensemble.

**Fun Fact:**  
In 1896, Carl V. Lachmund founded and conducted the Women's String Orchestra in New York City, one of the first American orchestras for women.



## Glossary of Terms:

- Con sordino:* With a mute
- Dolce:* sweetly
- Più animato:* more animated, lively
- Tempo primo:* return to original tempo
- Tranquillo:* calm, quiet
- Smorzando:* dying away

## Marini's Canzon Prima per Quattro Violini, ó Cornetti

**Exercise 1:** Before working on this ensemble exercise, practice all sixteenth notes individually. First practice slowly, then practice with doubles and practice rhythms. Then play the passage below and practice passing the melody continuously to the next voice, matching the articulation and sound.

The musical score for Exercise 1 consists of four staves, labeled Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, and Violin IV, all in common time (C). The piece is a canon where the melody is passed from one voice to the next. The sequence is as follows:  
- Violin I: Rests for the first two measures, then plays a sixteenth-note run in the third measure, followed by a dotted quarter note in the fourth measure.  
- Violin II: Plays a sixteenth-note run in the first measure, rests for the second measure, then plays a sixteenth-note run in the third measure, followed by a dotted quarter note in the fourth measure.  
- Violin III: Rests for the first two measures, then plays a sixteenth-note run in the third measure, followed by a dotted quarter note in the fourth measure.  
- Violin IV: Plays a sixteenth-note run in the first measure, rests for the second measure, then plays a sixteenth-note run in the third measure, followed by a dotted quarter note in the fourth measure.

**Exercise 2:** Practice the following hooked bowing on a two octave C major scale. Release the sound a little on the dotted quarter note and be sure to return to the frog for each new measure. Make sure the eighth note is not emphasized or too short.

The musical score for Exercise 2 is a single staff in 3/4 time, showing a two-octave C major scale. The notes are: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C5. Above the notes, there are bowing markings: a square for the first note of each measure, and a 'V' for the second note. The first measure contains C4, E4, and G4. The second measure contains A4, B4, and C5. The third measure contains B4, A4, and G4. The fourth measure contains E4, C5, and a double bar line.

**Fun Fact:** Marini specified that this piece could be played with four violins or with four cornetts. A cornett was an early wind instrument that sounded like a trumpet and was fingered like a recorder. Look up the cornett as a group to see what they look and sound like!

## Gabrieli's Sonata XXI con Tre Violini

**Exercise 1:** Practice this passage using the whole bow for the long notes and using the eighth notes to travel back to the frog



**Exercise 2:** This passage is from the end of the piece. Practice it together to match bow distribution and sound, then practice in imitation as written, letting the voice with the moving notes come out of the texture.



**Did you know?:** This piece was published posthumously in 1615, which means that it was published after Gabrieli died in 1612.

## Bow Strokes from the second movement of Telemann's Concerto for Four Violins in G Major

**Did you know?**  
Georg Philipp Telemann  
composed over 601 pieces in his  
lifetime and knew how to play ten  
instruments!

There are four rhythms used in a variety of ways throughout this movement. Practice each of the following exercises as a group, focusing on matching each bow stroke. All exercises should be practiced in the same tempo as the movement.

- a. Play the following exercise with your quartet to practice matching this bow stroke found throughout the movement.



- b. Play the following exercise to match bow distribution. Retake back to the lower half on the sixteenth rests, careful to begin the next note from the string. Listen to the length of the quarter note to make sure it matches.



- c. Play the following eighth note exercise with the stroke used in the concerto. The stroke should be performed in the middle of the bow and should have a slight release between each note.

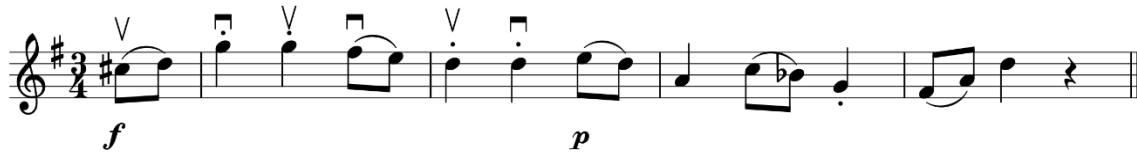


- d. The following melody appears throughout this movement. Practice together to match bow speed. Then, learn where each player has this melody and make sure they can be heard.



## *Scherzo and Trio from Dont's Gradus ad Parnassum*

**Exercise for Violin 1:** Practice the following exercise for bow distribution and dynamics. Listen to the quarter notes carefully, making sure the up bow on the downbeat of measure 2 matches the down bow on the downbeat of measure 1.



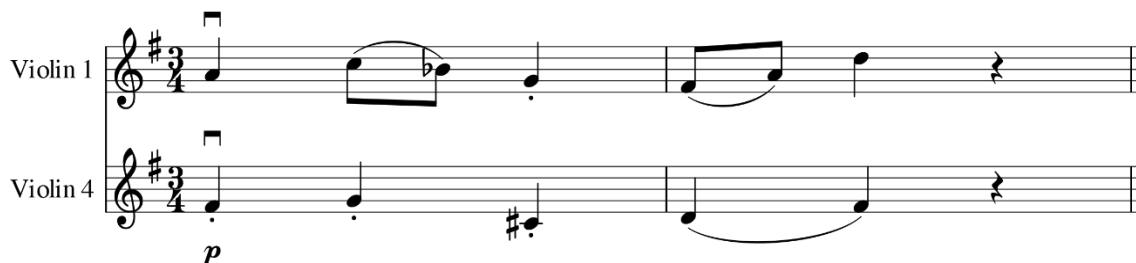
Musical notation for Violin 1 exercise. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation consists of a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and a bowing mark (V) above the first note. The first measure contains a quarter note (F#) and a quarter note (A). The second measure contains a quarter note (B), a quarter note (C), and a quarter note (D). The third measure contains a quarter note (E), a quarter note (F#), and a quarter note (G). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (A), a quarter note (B), and a quarter note (C). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (D), a quarter note (E), and a quarter note (F#). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (G), a quarter note (A), and a quarter note (B). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (C), a quarter note (D), and a quarter note (E). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A). The piece ends with a double bar line. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is placed below the fourth measure.

**Exercise for Violin 2, 3, and 4:** In the opening of this movement, the role of the lower three voices is accompanimental. Practice this passage together to work on matching the length of each quarter note, paying careful attention to the accent on beat three.



Musical notation for Violin 2, 3, and 4 exercise. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation consists of three staves, each with a treble clef. Violin 2: The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (A), and a quarter note (B). The third measure contains a quarter note (C), a quarter note (D), and a quarter note (E). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (B), a quarter note (C), and a quarter note (D). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (E), a quarter note (F#), and a quarter note (G). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (A), a quarter note (B), and a quarter note (C). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (D), a quarter note (E), and a quarter note (F#). The piece ends with a double bar line. Violin 3: The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (A), and a quarter note (B). The third measure contains a quarter note (C), a quarter note (D), and a quarter note (E). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (B), a quarter note (C), and a quarter note (D). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (E), a quarter note (F#), and a quarter note (G). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (A), a quarter note (B), and a quarter note (C). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (D), a quarter note (E), and a quarter note (F#). The piece ends with a double bar line. Violin 4: The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (A), and a quarter note (B). The third measure contains a quarter note (C), a quarter note (D), and a quarter note (E). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (B), a quarter note (C), and a quarter note (D). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (E), a quarter note (F#), and a quarter note (G). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (A), a quarter note (B), and a quarter note (C). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (D), a quarter note (E), and a quarter note (F#). The piece ends with a double bar line. An accent (>) is placed above the third note of the second measure in all three staves.

**Exercise for Violin 1 and 4:** Throughout this movement, Violin 4 moves away from the accompanimental role to play duets with the first violin. Practice playing each of the passages like the one below, carefully matching sound and bow speed.



Musical notation for Violin 1 and 4 exercise. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation consists of two staves, each with a treble clef. Violin 1: The first measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (A), and a quarter note (B). The second measure contains a quarter note (C), a quarter note (D), and a quarter note (E). The third measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (B), a quarter note (C), and a quarter note (D). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (E), a quarter note (F#), and a quarter note (G). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (A), a quarter note (B), and a quarter note (C). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (D), a quarter note (E), and a quarter note (F#). The piece ends with a double bar line. Violin 4: The first measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (A), and a quarter note (B). The second measure contains a quarter note (C), a quarter note (D), and a quarter note (E). The third measure contains a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (B), a quarter note (C), and a quarter note (D). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (E), a quarter note (F#), and a quarter note (G). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (A), a quarter note (B), and a quarter note (C). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (D), a quarter note (E), and a quarter note (F#). The piece ends with a double bar line. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is placed below the first measure.

A Scherzo is a movement with a light and playful character. The Scherzo and Trio often replaced the Minuet and Trio as the third movement of a string quartet or symphony after Beethoven. How can you make this movement sound light and playful?

## Antonio Vivaldi: Concerto for Four Violins in B minor from *L'estro armonico*

**Exercise 1:** In this passage from the second movement, the first violin has sextuplets against sixteenth notes in the other voices. Practice placing a little accent on each beat. Also, take note of the differences in articulation between the lower three voices. **Challenge:** Can you walk in two while clapping in three?

Violin I  
Violin II  
Violin III  
Violin IV  
*pp*

**Exercise 2:** This concerto is full of sixteenth notes. Here are some suggestions for individual practice

- Practice rhythms: Practice holding the first note of each group of four sixteenths. Then play the passage again holding the second note, ect.
- Practice doubles: Practice quickly with very little bow, playing each note twice.
- Practice string crossings: Play the pattern on open strings with no left hand to isolate the string crossings.
- Practice bowing: Play complicated slurred passages using up and down bow staccato.

**Activity:** The melody in this piece passes through all four voices frequently. Sit down with your score and highlight who has the melody. Then, write their name in your part so you can remember to listen to them.



# Carl Bohm: Quartet for Four Violins

## Exercise 1: Thirds and Fourths

Practice the following exercise individually to prepare for the thirds and fourths found in this quartet. Make sure you always practice double stops with good tone. You may shift into second position or third position or practice both ways.



After learning this exercise with long bows, practice with four off-the-string strokes per note.

**Exercise 2:** Practice this exercise based on the opening measures as an ensemble. First, sing as a group with your intended phrasing. Answer the following questions:

- Are we breathing together before the first note?
- Are we playing the eighth note in measure 1 with the same amount of space?
- Are we holding the half note in measure 2 long enough and cutting off together?
- What bow stroke will we use for the piano eighth notes in measure two?

## Ladislav's Suite for Four Violins

**Exercise 1:** Practice scales with the following bowings that appear throughout the piece first individually and then as an ensemble. Scales can be two or three octaves. Play in the middle of the bow.

a.

Two staves of musical notation in treble clef, key of D major (one sharp), and common time (C). The first staff contains a scale starting on G4, with a bowing symbol (a small square) above the first note. The second staff contains a scale starting on B4, with a bowing symbol above the first note. The second staff also includes a triplet of eighth notes, a fermata over a half note, and the word "etc." at the end.

b.

A single staff of musical notation in treble clef, key of D major (one sharp), and common time (C). It shows a scale starting on G4 with a bowing symbol above the first note. The word "etc." is written at the end of the staff.

**Exercise 2:** The following melodic fragment appears throughout the first movement of this quartet. Due to the thick texture of this piece, it is easily lost. Go through the score and make a note of when each voice plays this melody. Then practice it as a group. What can you do to help the person with this melody come out of the texture?

A single staff of musical notation in treble clef, key of D major (one sharp), and common time (C). It shows a melodic fragment consisting of a dotted quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5, all beamed together. This is followed by a half note G4 and a quarter rest.

## Johann Sluníčko: Stimmungsbilder

**Exercise 1:** Practice the following scale individually using only the first finger to prepare for the higher positions found throughout this quartet. Then practice the same pattern on the E, D, and G strings.



**Exercise 2:** Practice the following scale individually starting on the second finger to prepare for the higher positions found throughout this quartet. Then practice the same exercise beginning on the third and fourth fingers, and on all four strings.



**Ensemble Activity:** Practice the following passage, alternating parts to give each person a chance to play the fourth violin part. What role does the fourth violin play in this passage and throughout the movement? How can the upper voices highlight that role?

# A Musical Journey: Dancla's Three Pieces for Four Violins

## The Journey:

Dancla titled the movements of this piece *The Departure*, *The Arrival*, and *The Return*, describing a journey. Do you think this piece sounds like a journey?

Why or why not?

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## Did you know???

Charles Dancla (1817-1907) was a French violinist and composer who lived during the Romantic Era. Although he was a prolific composer and had an established career as a violinist, he never toured and often lacked confidence in his playing abilities.

## The Departure

What techniques does Dancla use to make this piece sound like a departure? What can you do as the performer to bring out those ideas?

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## The Arrival

What kind of place do you think Dancla intended for this music to arrive at? How can you bring your audience into that place?

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## The Return

We can hear in this movement that the person or place is different upon returning, as often happens after a journey. What do you think has changed in the music since our departure? Has anything stayed the same?

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## Romanze, Joseph Hellmesberger Jr.

**Exercise 1:** It is very important to discuss and match articulations when playing chamber music. In this piece, there are notes marked staccato and other notes marked with a dash, with and without slurs. Discuss what kind of sound you would like from each of these articulations and practice matching articulation on scales. Remember that staccato dots mean separated, not necessarily short!



What does *flautando* mean?

This Italian word means “flute-like” and describes a sound created by moving the bow lightly and close to the fingerboard. What would the final passage sound like if it were performed by four flutes rather than four violins?

## Richard Hofmann: Quartet for Four Violins, 3<sup>rd</sup> mvt.

**Exercise 1:** Practice the following exercise on a three-octave scale with a spiccato stroke, first forte with accents on the first and fourth eighth notes, then piano without accents. You may also perform the scale in a round. Then, apply the bow stroke to the opening of the third movement.

etc.

*f*

etc.

*p*

**Exercise 2:** Practice the following exercise to prepare for the development section of this movement. Pay careful attention to the slurs and hooks and to the articulation of the eighth notes.

8

## Charles Dancla: Le Carnaval de Venise

**Exercise 1:** Practice the following exercise individually to prepare for the broken octaves in this piece. After the exercise feels comfortable, practice without the half notes.



**Exercise 2:** Below are suggestions for learning all of the many arpeggios such as this one found throughout this piece in all voices.



Arpeggio practice:

- Play slowly with a drone tone, making sure you are comfortable with your fingering and playing with clear intonation. When practicing slowly, play with separate bows and a steady tempo.
- Practice with practice rhythms, holding the first note of each set, then the second, ect. Passages in 6/8 like the one above should first be practiced in groups of three, then in groups of six. This exercise can be practiced with and without slurs.
- Practice doubles. Play each note twice quickly with very little bow.
- Practice with up and down bow staccato, rearticulating each note.

**For Discussion:** Many composers use theme and variation forms to highlight a different character or emotion in each new variation. What can you do to bring out the different characters in this piece?

**Did you know?** This piece is based on the popular Venetian folk tune, *O Mama Mia*. Other famous composers of violin music, such as Paganini, also composed pieces based on this tune.

## Friedrich Hermann: Burlesque for Three Violins

**Exercise 1:** In the opening of this piece, each violin enters in canon, one measure after the next. What effect do you think this compositional technique has on the music? Practice it as written below without the other notes, careful to match articulation. Invite each new voice to take over the theme.

Violin I  
Violin II  
Violin III

**Exercise 2:** Practice passages such as the one below with the left hand only, shaping the line as an ensemble without the bow.

Violin I  
Violin II  
Violin III

**Definition:** A Burlesque is a work that creates its humor by caricaturing the manner of something serious. The term can apply to pieces of music, art, dance, or literature. It is derived from the Italian word *burla*, meaning ridicule or mockery.



The purpose of this chapter is to provide teachers with ideas on how to coach students who are learning these pieces, particularly for students who are new to the study of chamber music. The exercises were created from potential teaching points or pitfalls in each piece, but every student group is different, and each group will require different exercises and practice ideas from their coach. The exercises point out and break down a few of the tricky ensemble spots, and aim to be a starting place for teachers embarking on the highly improvisatory and inexact science of chamber music coaching.

Studying chamber music can be very rewarding for both students and teachers. Chamber music creates a kind of community not found in large ensemble or solo playing and is unmatched in improving students' listening and communication skills. This document aims to provide inspiration for teachers to begin chamber music programs, repertoire options for teachers with an unbalanced number of violinists, and exposure for a few wonderful, rarely performed works.

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