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An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Viola Works for Pedagogy of Contemporary Musical Styles and Techniques

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AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED VIOLA WORKS FOR
PEDAGOGY OF CONTEMPORARY MUSICAL STYLES AND TECHNIQUES

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This treatise would have been much more difficult for me to finish without the dedicated support of my family, my colleagues, my professors, and my friends. I would first like to thank my Major Professor, Pamela Ryan, for her continued mentorship and support of my research. I will always be grateful to her for extracting a public commitment from me to start writing in earnest. I thank my other committee members, Matthew Shaftel, Gregory Sauer, and Corinne Stillwell, for their constructive feedback, scheduling flexibility, patience, and encouragement. I would like to thank Molly Gebrian for giving me a copy of her newly-completed dissertation and for being willing to chat with me long-distance about our shared research interests. I would like to thank the staff at FSU’s Allen Music Library for dealing with the sheer volume of my interlibrary loan requests. Additional thanks go to the “ABD club” for their collegial advice. I would like to thank all of my family members for encouraging me in their various ways. Final thanks go to my husband, John, who has always provided a sympathetic ear even while engaged in his own doctoral studies.
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ABSTRACT

Over the last century, composers in the Western art music tradition have greatly expanded the variety and number of works available to string players. The viola repertoire in particular has benefited from increased interest in the instrument by composers; however, much of this repertoire was composed for concert artists and is too demanding for students to play without adequate prior preparation. Over the course of the last several decades, music educators have repeatedly noted a lack of appropriate pedagogical works addressing the unique demands of contemporary music. While this perception has persisted up to the present day, research has revealed over two dozen works that are ideally suited to introduce viola students at the upper-intermediate level to various idioms common to twentieth- and twenty-first-century music. Studying these works will better prepare violists to play contemporary solo repertoire and also will benefit their performance of contemporary chamber and orchestral literature.

This treatise provides bibliographic and discographic information on the selected contemporary works, as well as stylistic and technical commentary that may be of use to viola pedagogues looking for material for their students. In addition, it suggests sources where scores and recordings might be easily purchased. Chapter 1 outlines the background and scope of the project, and discusses criteria for selecting pieces. It also explains relevant terms and the organization of bibliographic entries. Chapter 2 lists selected etudes for violists, including those composed originally for the viola and also violin etudes that may be easily adapted to the viola. Chapter 3 lists works for solo viola. Chapter 4 lists works for viola and piano. Chapter 5 provides a summary and list of selected works organized according to the technique addressed.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Description of Purpose

This treatise was written to aid viola teachers in finding repertoire suitable for introducing students to idioms common to contemporary Western art music. I use the term “contemporary” here to refer to music composed between approximately 1900 and the present, focusing on works that exhibit a progressive approach to harmony, rhythm, and timbre. My research is intended to build upon the pedagogical foundation laid by Molly Adams Gebrian in her dissertation titled “Rethinking Viola Pedagogy: Preparing Violists for the Challenges of Twentieth-Century Music.” Gebrian’s excellent dissertation examines a few collections of etudes in detail, showing how specific etudes can be used to address a variety of technical problems posed by the standard twentieth-century viola repertoire. My treatise, by contrast, takes a broader view of the literature; my goal is to make readers aware that in addition to the etude books discussed in Gebrian’s paper, there are more etude books that serve a similar purpose, and also a number of student-level works for solo viola and viola and piano that can be used to further explore twentieth-century musical concepts (or used in place of etudes, if desired). Since many of these pieces are not well-known to violists, this treatise also lists information on available recordings. In this chapter, I will explain the background of my interest in the pedagogy of contemporary music, my criteria for choosing the works listed, and the layout of the bibliographic entries.

1.2 Motivation for Research

The twentieth century, moving into the twenty-first, has proved extraordinarily rich in terms of both stylistic diversity and the quality and quantity of music written for string instruments, from which the viola repertoire has benefited hugely. A detailed discussion of every trend represented in the contemporary viola repertoire is beyond the scope of this treatise (it could almost be argued that there are as many styles as there are composers), but a few examples

will give a general idea of the wide range of pieces available to today’s violists. The *Sonata for Viola and Piano* of Rebecca Clarke and Ernest Bloch’s *Suite for Viola and Piano*, both composed in 1919, contain Impressionist traits such as pentatonic and modal scales. Today all violists study the works of German neoclassicist Paul Hindemith, the prominent violist, composer, and theorist whose prolific output includes seven viola sonatas and also works for viola and orchestra, notably *Trauermusik* (1936) and *Der Schwanendreher* (1936). Serialist composers have also contributed works to the repertoire, for example Milton Babbitt’s *Composition for Viola and Piano* (1950) and George Perle’s *Sonata para viola sola* (1944). Béla Bartók’s *Viola Concerto* (1945), and Luciano Berio’s *Voci* (1984) for viola and chamber ensemble both combine rhythmic and melodic elements derived from the folk music of the composers’ respective cultures with atonal harmony, though their individual compositional styles are incredibly distinct from one another. Composers from the experimental and avant-garde movements have also produced substantial works for the viola, such as Morton Feldman’s cycle *The Viola in My Life I-IV* (1970-71) for viola and various chamber ensembles; *Prologue* (1976) for solo viola by spectralist composer Gérard Grisey; and *Embellie* (1981) for solo viola by Iannis Xenakis; all of these works are characterized by extreme metric ambiguity and explore the limits of the viola’s timbral capacity. In his *Sonata for Solo Viola* (1991-94), György Ligeti uses microtone notation to denote pitches derived from the overtone series. The *Concerto per viola ed orchestra* by Kryzstof Penderecki, composed in 1983, and concertos by composers John Harbison and Samuel Adler (published in 1990 and 2002, respectively) are more conventional in both harmony and texture but are still highly dissonant and rhythmically complex.

Despite the fact that so many prominent contemporary composers have written for the viola, most of the etude repertoire used by viola teachers is tonal and was composed in the nineteenth century or earlier. A representative sample of the core repertoire includes:

- Jacques Mazas (1782-1849) *30 Etudes Speciales*
- Jacob Dont (1815-1888), *24 Studies, Op. 37 (Preparatory to Kreutzer and Rode)*
- Antonio Bruni (1757-1821), *25 Studies*
- Rudolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), *42 Studies*
- Pierre Rode (1774-1830), *24 Caprices*

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2. See Gebrian, “Rethinking Viola Pedagogy,” 23-29, for a more in-depth history of viola etudes and violists’ reliance on violin transcriptions.
• Pierre Gaviniès (1726-1800), *24 Studies*
• Bartolomeo Campagnoli (1721-1857), *41 Caprices, Op. 22*

Of the collections listed above, those by Mazas, Dont, Kreutzer, Rode, and Gaviniès are transcriptions of violin etudes. All of these collections are excellent for developing students’ knowledge of the fingerboard and of basic bowing idioms such as martelé, spiccato, and legato, but not secondary techniques like ponticello or col legno, and certainly not mixed or asymmetrical meter.

The two best-known twentieth-century composers of viola etudes were renowned viola pedagogues Lillian Fuchs (1901-1995), who composed *12 Caprices for Viola* (1950), *16 Fantasy Etudes for Viola Solo* (1959), and *Fifteen Characteristic Studies for Viola* (1965); and Maurice Vieux (1884-1951), whose primary contributions to the etude repertoire are *20 Études* for viola solo (1927), *10 Études sur des traits d'orchestre* (1928), and *10 Études sur les intervalles* for viola solo (1931). Though composed in the twentieth century and at times highly chromatic, these etudes are still not ideal for training students to play a great deal of the contemporary repertoire because, like their nineteenth-century predecessors, they are fundamentally tonal and do not address secondary/extended techniques or complex meter.

In the introduction to his 2009 work *Viola Spaces*, violist, composer, and contemporary music advocate Garth Knox writes:

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

Knox’s observation certainly describes my own early experiences with contemporary music performance. Before my undergraduate studies began, I spent several years as a member

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3. A note on terminology: while Gebrian uses the phrase “extended techniques” to refer to the entire range of unusual instrumental effects used from the Baroque through Modern eras, I use it more selectively to denote effects developed in the twentieth century. Knox uses the term “secondary techniques” to refer to unusual effects (like sul ponticello) found in pre-twentieth-century music, in the context of pointing out that many “seemingly ‘new’ techniques … are so-called secondary techniques already present in classical music and are not actually new at all, just carried a little further.” See Knox, Introduction to *Viola Spaces, Book I*.


of the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra. This ensemble is one of the largest and most advanced youth orchestras in the Pacific Northwest, regularly and ambitiously programming professional-level works though its members are all of high school age or younger. Prior to joining the ensemble, I had studied pieces drawn almost exclusively from the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic repertoire (like many other viola students, I was trained using the Suzuki Method books, whose repertoire leans heavily toward Baroque style). Not surprisingly, the SYSO’s first rehearsal of Igor Stravinsky’s *Petrushka* ballet score (composed in 1910-11, revised in 1947) was a completely disorienting experience for me. I had never before encountered music that had elements like bitonality (exemplified by the famous “Petrushka Chord”: an F-sharp major triad combined with a C major triad), octatonic scales, or mixed meter. To my recollection I “faked” about half of the piece and probably played the other half out of tune with bad fingerings. Joël-François Durand’s work *Five Musical Tales*, which the orchestra premiered in 1998, was similarly disconcerting; it was atonal, dissonant, contained disjunct and unpredictable note patterns, and difficult-to-count measures in irregular meters such as 11/16.

My discomfort with contemporary musical idioms persisted throughout my formal schooling. For example, the program for my Junior Recital at the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2006 included Benjamin Britten’s *Lachrymae: Reflections on a song of John Dowland* (1950); while I had a decent grasp of it musically, this work presented a substantial technical challenge due to the number of variations featuring secondary techniques like pizzicato, sul ponticello, tremolo, and harmonics. Compounding factors adding to the piece’s overall difficulty were its length, at around fifteen minutes, and its pitch range, which requires the player to shift well into the second octave on each string. *Lachrymae* is a well-known work performed by concert artists and advanced students, yet few (if any) of the pieces and etudes I had previously studied prepared me for this piece as they did not focus on secondary techniques in any significant way.

I first became aware of Garth Knox’s work *Viola Spaces* while I was earning my Master’s degree and I delved into it seriously during my Doctoral studies. Each of the pieces in the set focuses on a particular secondary or extended technique. The pieces are fun to play and well-conceived compositionally; each one fits a thorough exploration of its respective technique into just a few minutes’ duration. Learning the pieces not only made me feel more comfortable with secondary and extended techniques, but my technical facility in general also improved. While preparing *Viola Spaces* for my Doctoral lecture recital at Florida State University, I
wondered how much better my junior performance of *Lachrymae* would have been if I had had the chance to study *Viola Spaces* first (it wasn’t published until 2009). I became convinced that every viola teacher should know and use Knox’s *Viola Spaces* collection, and started investigating the viola repertoire for similarly useful pieces.

### 1.3 Background Literature

As I discovered during my preliminary research for this treatise, string educators have long sought to draw attention to the need to specifically train students in the more progressive and technically challenging aspects of twentieth-century repertoire. Letters and articles on the topic appear in journal archives dating back to at least the 1950s; in regard to the violin repertoire, a number of projects were undertaken to address this perceived need. The articles mentioned below were drawn from extensive perusal of *American Music Teacher, American String Teacher,* and *Journal of the American Viola Society* archives and illustrate an ongoing desire of string teachers to better prepare their students to play contemporary music.

In his 1952 article, “Needed: More Good Music for the String Student,” Kenneth Byler suggests that ASTA commission a series of student-level works by active American composers. Viola teacher Frank W. Hill responds in “Needed: Solos for Viola” that contemporary composers may “regard their efforts wasted unless there is a possibility that their products will be performed by top-flight artists.” As part of his general complaint about the paucity of good intermediate-level viola repertoire, he bemoans the problem of the intermediate violist being “suddenly plunged into more transcriptions of pre-classical sonatas or hopelessly immersed in the intricacies of the modern idiom which, to the teenager, are musically incomprehensible.”

In his article “New Music and Old Technic,” Joachim Chassman (speaking as a violin teacher, but the warning applies also to violists) says, “A life long diet of Kreutzer, Fiorillo, 

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9. Ibid.
Rode, Dott and Paganini plus the solo repertoire of Bruch, Mendelssohn, Wieniawski and Lalo, derived as they are from traditional scale and arpeggio patterns molded into simple time forms of 4/4, 6/8 or 3/4, will not erase that look of helpless bewilderment when we’re face to face with Stravinski’s *Histoire du Soldat* or the Bartók *Concerto* for the very first time.”

Composer Philip Gordon continues in this vein a few years later, in his 1968 article “Composing for Strings,” relating his perception that string students were “unprepared to cope with anything ‘different,’ even so old a ‘difference’ as the whole-tone scale ... they seem lost in anything not based on the tonic-dominant relationship.” According to the same article, he attempted to address this problem by composing a set of short works for high school string orchestra.

In what appears to be an editorial article, titled “Contemporary Etudes Project,” published in the Winter 1982 issue of *American String Teacher*, the author (unidentified in the publication) describes a project to commission college-level etudes for violin and double bass focused on contemporary musical styles and techniques. The project was overseen by string educator Margaret Farish who was then the chairman of publications for the AST journal.

A 1985 article by Rebecca Henry describes working alongside well-known violin pedagogue Mimi Zweig in an ongoing (then six-year) commitment to commissioning and teaching level-appropriate contemporary-sounding pieces for young violin students.

A 1995 article by solo violist and pedagogue Patricia McCarty titled “American Miniatures” seeks to make readers aware of the relevant compositional and technical features of six student-appropriate unaccompanied works for solo viola by contemporary American


12. Ibid.


composers.\textsuperscript{15} (This article was very helpful to me in developing criteria for choosing pieces to include in this treatise and writing the annotations for the pieces.)

In the chamber music vein, one very recent and ongoing project is Geoffrey Hudson’s “Quartet Project”: a collection of short student pieces for string quartet utilizing contemporary idioms.\textsuperscript{16} A treatise listing string quartets that include extended techniques by American composers was published in 2002 by Katherine Jetter Tischhauser, titled “A Survey of the Use of Extended Techniques and their Notations in Twentieth Century String Quartets written since 1933 by American Composers with a Selected Annotated Bibliography and Discography.”\textsuperscript{17}

As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, my treatise took its current form in part due to the excellent work done by my colleague and fellow Rice University graduate Molly Gebrian in her doctoral dissertation titled “Rethinking Viola Pedagogy: Preparing Violists for the Challenges of Twentieth-Century Music.” Her paper was completed in 2012 while I was doing my own research, and reading it reinforced my enthusiasm for the topic and influenced my decisions regarding the approach I would take in my own paper. Her dissertation focuses on identifying aspects of contemporary music not addressed by the entrenched etude regime, and suggests how these components might be introduced to students through an alternate repertoire of etudes by Alfred Uhl, Bohuslav Martinů, Michael Kimber, and Garth Knox (and one etude by Lillian Fuchs which addresses playing in high positions on one string).

Gebrian’s dissertation is undoubtedly a helpful contribution to the field of new music pedagogy. However, as she describes, the focus of the second section of her paper\textsuperscript{18} is to “present exercises as well as the few etudes that exist which address issues of post-tonal music, with the aim of showing how they can help prepare students for this music, using specific

\textsuperscript{15} Patricia McCarty, “American Miniatures,” \textit{American String Teacher} 45, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 35.

\textsuperscript{16} Samples of the pieces are available at The Quartet Project’s website, www.hybridvigormusic.org/tqp.html (accessed Feb. 10, 2014).

\textsuperscript{17} Katherine Jetter Tischhauser, “A Survey of the Use of Extended Techniques and their Notations in Twentieth Century String Quartets written since 1933 by American Composers with a Selected Annotated Bibliography and Discography” (DM diss., Florida State University, 2002), http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5036&context=etd (Accessed March 19, 2014).

\textsuperscript{18} The first section is a historical overview of the development of the standard etude repertoire used by viola pedagogues.
examples drawn from our standard repertoire.”19 Gebrian’s treatise focuses on the application of a few selected materials in the studio; in it she provides suggestions for how to use the various etudes mentioned but the number of collections discussed in detail is limited to those by the composers listed above. (In fact, there are more than a “few etudes” useful for this purpose; I was thrilled to find four additional pertinent etude books beyond the ones she discusses.)

My paper takes a different yet complementary approach, providing readers with a longer list of etudes and concert studies to choose from in addition to lists of selected works for solo viola and works for viola and piano. Furthermore, it includes discographic information where applicable, and suggestions for where the various scores and recordings can be purchased.20

1.4 Criteria for Selecting Pieces

Pieces included under the umbrella term “contemporary Western art music” comprise a vast spectrum of compositional styles and techniques. However, there are many characteristics of the repertoire which appear frequently enough to warrant deliberate focus in pedagogical instruction. In choosing pieces for this treatise, I looked for the following:

Traits associated with post-tonal harmony

Examples:

- pentatonic, octatonic or modal scales
- unresolved and pervasive dissonance
- microtones
- non-diatonic pitch collections derived from the 12-note chromatic scale

Rhythmic/counting difficulties

Examples:

- mixed meter
- irregular meter
- free meter


20. I did not receive any compensation from any of the retailers listed; the ones I suggest were selected because they were either the only source for purchase, or a generally well-regarded and convenient source.
• irregular subdivisions of the beat
• irregular patterns of rests and/or ties

Secondary (pre-twentieth-century) techniques
Examples:
• glissando
• natural and artificial harmonics
• pizzicato (right and left hand)
• sul ponticello
• tremolo
• col legno

Extended (twentieth-century) techniques
Examples:
• Bartók (snap) pizzicato
• bowing behind the bridge or on the upper bout
• spazzolato (a bow stroke involving bridge-to-fingerboard motion; discussed on p. 30)
• plucking the string with a fingernail or scraping it with the screw of the bow
• bowing with too much pressure for the chosen sounding point such that a scratching sound is produced, instead of a pitch

The sound-producing methods listed above under “secondary techniques” can actually be found in works composed long before the twentieth century. “Winter” from Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*, for example, incorporates pizzicato, Hector Berlioz’s *Symphonie Fantastique* requires col legno and *Harold in Italy* sul ponticello. Bowed tremolo was used as early as the seventeenth century in the works of Monteverdi and Marini. However, in contemporary music these techniques are often used in greater abundance, in a more extreme fashion, and are more fully integrated into the composer’s musical language.

Microtones, pitches that lie between the notes of the Western chromatic scale, are common in the music of non-Western cultures such as India but microtonal music did not develop substantially in Western composition until the twentieth century. While not the first Western
composer to produce microtonal music, Czech composer and theorist Alois Hába (1893-1973) is
the best-known early proponent of microtonal composition for string instruments, using
microtones in his 1917 *Suite for String Orchestra* and in numerous later works including string
quartets and suites for various solo instruments.

Other so-called “extended” techniques were developed in the twentieth century as composers
began to push the boundaries of instrumental timbre. One of the most famous examples of a
work incorporating extended techniques is George Crumb’s *Black Angels* (1970) for electric
string quartet. In addition to all the secondary techniques mentioned above, the score directs
players to hold and play their instruments like viols; to rap on the body of the instrument with the
knuckles and tap the strings with glass rods or with thimbles worn on the fingers; to produce
“pedal tones” by pressing so hard with the bow that pitches lower than the open string are
produced; and to whisper or shout numbers in various languages. In addition, each player also
doubles as a percussionist, producing sounds using various objects like maracas, crystal glasses,
and tam-tams. Extended techniques are nearly limitless in their variety of sound and method of
notation, but Patricia Strange’s book *The Contemporary Violin: Extended Performance
Techniques* is an excellent and thorough guide.\(^{21}\)

Since the long-term goal of my research is to spare future generations of viola students from
feeling as overwhelmed by contemporary music as I did, I looked for pieces that took into
account students’ limited stamina and facility while still substantially incorporating idioms from
the domains listed above. The works included in this treatise will likely suit upper-intermediate-
level players who have already learned standard pieces such as the Romanze by Max Bruch, the
*Suite Hebraique* and *Meditation and Processional* by Ernest Bloch, and the *Concerto in C Minor*
by J.C. Bach/Casadesus. The pieces selected are roughly equivalent in difficulty to those found
in grades 3-5 of the 2009 American String Teachers Association (ASTA) String Syllabus or
grades 6-10 of the 2013 Viola Syllabus produced by the Royal Conservatory of Music in
Toronto, Canada.

In addition, I would recommend that students possess the skills listed below before tackling
the works listed in the treatise:

- Understanding of note values and their rests, down to the level of the thirty-second note

\(^{21}\) Patricia Strange and Allen Strange, *The Contemporary Violin: Extended Performance Techniques*
• The ability to read standard pitch notation in alto and treble clef, including sharps and flats
• The ability to play three-octave scales from C through F
• A consistent vibrato
• A grasp of basic bow strokes, particularly legato, spiccato, detaché, and martelé
• Ability to produce a range of dynamics from piano to forte

In my research, I encountered a number of works that would serve students’ overall musical development but which fall outside the scope of this treatise. The pedagogy of jazz, bluegrass, celtic fiddle, and other “alternative” styles is a topic unto itself and has its own body of teaching literature. In addition, there are a number of fine pieces that are potentially useful in the development of the ear but were not included because I found them too conservative in style or too technically difficult. For example, Elliott Carter’s *Elegy* (1943) for viola and piano, Walter Piston’s *Interlude* (1942) for viola and piano, and the Gordon Jacob *Sonatina* (1946) for viola and piano all incorporate some harmonic dissonance but not sufficient metric complexity or secondary/extended techniques. Joan Tower’s *Wild Purple* (1998), for solo viola, composed for renowned violist Paul Neubauer, was mentioned frequently in conversation during my research, but its length and virtuosic technical demands make it a less-than-ideal work for students. Those pieces, along with others that are similarly valuable for further study but are not included in the main annotated list, are mentioned in the References section at the end of this treatise.

1.5 Sources of Scores for Perusal

Finding works that incorporated the desired musical and technical features without exceeding the technical limitations of students was quite a challenge, akin to looking for needles in a haystack. I was fortunate to have access to the Allen Music Library at Florida State University, which has a large collection of contemporary works for viola. Another core resource was the most recent edition of the *American String Teachers Association (ASTA) String Syllabus*, published in 2009. The list, updated from 2003, includes a wide range of twentieth- and twenty-first-century works. Unfortunately, it does not include composition dates or stylistic commentary for the pieces listed; its primary value for my research was its organization of pieces.
by grade level. Other sources of pieces for perusal included dissertation abstracts, concert programs, and suggestions from my colleagues and professors.

1.6 Organization of Bibliographic Entries

The pieces in each chapter are listed in ascending order according to overall level of difficulty. Each bibliographic entry contains the following:

- Composer’s full name and dates
- Title of the piece, date of composition
- Title of a standard work similar in difficulty (etudes only)
- Publisher, date of publication
- Recommended source for purchasing the score
- Recording information: Title of album, release date, recording label, CD number, release date, name(s) of performer(s)
- Recommended source for purchasing the recording
- Approximate duration of piece
- General stylistic and technical commentary on the work overall
- More specific commentary on individual etudes or movements, if applicable

22. The websites recommended for purchasing scores and recordings are those accessible to individuals in the continental United States and may not be the best source in other areas.
CHAPTER TWO
CONTEMPORARY ETUDES AND CONCERT STUDIES

Uhl, Alfred (1909-1992)

Dreißig Etüden für Viola [Thirty Etudes for Viola] (1971)
Similar in difficulty to Mazas, 30 Etudes Speciales, Op. 36, Bk 1
Publication: Schott, 1973

Recommended source for purchase: Publisher website, www.schott-music.com, or www.halleonard.com

Recording: I did not find a formal recording of this collection. However, many of the etudes from both the Dreißig Etüden für Viola and Zwanzig Etüden für Viola were performed by Daniel Keasler (D.M., The Florida State University) in his 2009 Doctoral Lecture Recital. The recording is available at the FSU Allen Music Library, CD 20194.

Duration: Approximately 1-2 minutes per etude

These etudes are generally arranged in ascending order of difficulty. Each etude has a distinct harmonic, rhythmic and melodic character; however the overall compositional style is reminiscent of Paul Hindemith. An in-depth content analysis of Uhl’s viola etudes can be found in Daniel Keasler’s doctoral treatise, “Alfred Uhl’s (1909-1992) Viola Etudes: an analytic approach; and a discussion of three chamber works that feature the viola.”23 For suggestions regarding the use of specific etudes to address technical issues in the standard viola repertoire, see Part Two of Molly Adams Gebrian’s dissertation.24 Below I provide a listing and brief analysis of the etudes that feature secondary techniques such as pizzicato and harmonics; those that involve mixed or irregular meters and other complex rhythmic elements; and some that feature scale patterns not commonly found in tonal music. Bowings and fingerings are provided in the score.


No. 6: Animato (eighth note=152)

This etude is a good vehicle for introducing students to 5/8 meter. Rhythmic features include ties, rests and dotted rhythms. It utilizes primarily first and third positions, with a few natural harmonics in fourth position. Note patterns are occasionally chromatic but generally simple and readable. Traditional bowing elements include legato separate notes, and two- and three-note slurs. It is marked to be played entirely with mute, and the dynamic range extends from piano to forte.

No. 11: Andante (quarter note=92)

This etude introduces mixed meter, shifting frequently between 3/4, 4/4 and 5/4 meter; the predominant rhythmic patterns are made up of primarily quarter notes and eighth notes. It contains easy fingering patterns and only occasional sharps and flats. Traditional bowing elements include legato separate notes, and two- and three-note slurs.

No. 16: Tempo moderato (quarter note=88)

This etude involves perpetual motion in 4/4 meter with running sixteenth notes. It explores a variety of scale patterns, including fully chromatic, octatonic, and hybrid modal patterns, in first and second positions with minimal shifting. The original bowing is detache; some alternative bowing patterns are suggested for a further challenge.

No. 17: Comodo (half note=84)

The primary value of this etude lies in the rapid changes between arco and pizzicato required throughout. The harmonic language is highly chromatic, but the tonal center of C major is established at the end. The etude uses first through third position and includes a few double stops, primarily fifths, sixths, and sevenths. The arco sections of the etude contain spiccato and two-note slurs.

No. 30: Vivo (dotted quarter note=120)

This etude, composed entirely in 7/8 meter, not only introduces this asymmetrical meter but also explores a variety of rhythmic elements such as dotted eighth-note and quarter- and dotted-quarter-note rhythms, ties, and agogic accents. Its varied and unpredictable eighth note
groupings make it a good piece with which to challenge students’ sight-reading skills. There are some scalar passages that include sharps and/or flats, and the entirety of the etude can be played in half and first positions. The bowing patterns include various combinations of two-and three-note slurs and detaché eighth notes.

**Uhl, Alfred** (1909-1992)

*Zwanzig Etüden für Viola* [Twenty Etudes for Viola]

Similar in difficulty to Bruni, *25 Studies for Viola*, and Dont, *24 Studies Preparatory to Kreutzer and Rode*

Publication: Schott, 1975

Recommended source for purchase: Publisher website, www.schott-music.com, or www.halleonard.com

Recording: I did not find a formal recording of this collection. However, many of the etudes from both the *Dreißig Etüden für Viola* and *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola* were performed by Daniel Keasler (D.M., The Florida State University) in his 2009 Doctoral Lecture Recital. The recording is available at the FSU Allen Music Library, CD 20194.

Like *Dreißig Etüden für Viola* discussed on p. 13, these etudes are generally arranged in ascending order of difficulty. Each etude has a distinct harmonic, rhythmic and melodic character; however the overall compositional style is reminiscent of Paul Hindemith. An in-depth content analysis of Uhl’s viola etudes can be found in Daniel Keasler’s doctoral treatise, “Alfred Uhl’s (1909-1992) Viola Etudes: an analytic approach; and a discussion of three chamber works that feature the viola.” For suggestions regarding the use of specific etudes to address technical issues in the standard viola repertoire, see Part Two of Molly Adams Gebrian’s dissertation. Below I provide a listing and brief analysis of the etudes that feature secondary techniques such as pizzicato and harmonics; those that involve mixed or irregular meters and other complex rhythmic elements; and some that feature scale patterns not commonly found in tonal music. Bowings and fingerings are provided.

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No. 3: *Giusto* (quarter note=108)

This etude is useful for introducing octatonic and hybrid modal scale patterns. The scales are presented as short, rapid, slurred runs of five to nine notes per run. These gestures are similar to those presented in the etude “Irregular subdivisions of the beat” from Michael Kimber’s *Twentieth-Century Idioms for Violists* (see p. 19), but less varied and slightly easier technically. The meter is 4/4 with no other particular rhythmic challenges. The primary bowing challenges include accents at the end of slurs and accented martelé eighth-note motifs in between the slurred runs.

No. 6: *Allegro moderato* (measure=76)

Like No. 6 from *Drei ßig Etüden* by Alfred Uhl, the meter in this etude is 5/8 throughout, and similarly presents counting challenges in the form of rests, ties, and agogic accents. However, this etude has a more consistent eighth-note surface rhythm and the primary bowing pattern is five notes slurred over one measure.

No. 7: *Lento* (half note=72)

This etude is made up almost entirely of half-note double stops, beginning with octaves and working through various (some dissonant) intervals from the major second to the minor ninth. It provides an excellent opportunity to explore technical and ear-training issues related to intonation and voice-leading in a post-tonal harmonic context. The primary left hand challenge is accurately shifting from one double stop to another. There is one octave passage which reaches sixth position on the C and G strings but the remainder of the etude stays within the boundaries of first through fourth positions. There are no secondary or extended techniques; the pedagogical focus should be purity of tone and intonation.

No. 11: *Vivo* (dotted half note=80)

This etude is a good vehicle for practicing basic pizzicato technique across a wide dynamic range, as well as for practicing rapid transitions between pizzicato and arco. In addition, the note patterns exhibit non-diatonic voice-leading and there are a number of double-, triple-, and quadruple- stop chords that include perfect fourths and fifths. The primary rhythmic pattern consists of steady quarter notes in 6/4 meter.
No. 13: *Tempo ad libitum*

This etude’s focus is false harmonics and natural harmonics in a variety of positions. The primary rhythmic pattern is static half notes in 4/2 meter, allowing for greater concentration on getting each harmonic note to speak properly. The harmonics presented are primarily those found in the low-to-middle register of the viola, which when combined with the advantage of rhythmic simplicity, make it a better general introduction to viola harmonics than the “Harmonic Horizon” study from Knox’s *Viola Spaces* (discussed on p. 29 of this treatise).

No. 17: *Andante misterioso* (quarter note=88)

This etude is played entirely tremolo. It is useful for introducing both right and left hand tremolo and is also useful for teaching students how to correctly perform the related rhythmic notation. The phrases alternate between bowed tremolo (bowing back and forth rapidly on a single note) and fingered tremolo (where the left-hand fingers alternate rapidly between two notes). The etude is not overtly difficult in terms of note-reading or rhythmic counting but a student unaccustomed to playing long tremolo passages may find it a challenge to his or her physical stamina.

No. 20: *Agitato* (eighth note=200)

Although the meter of this etude is a simple 3/8 and the smallest subdivision is that of the sixteenth note, its presentation of dotted rhythms, hemiolas, ties, and rests, in combination with non-diatonic note patterns, make it challenging to read and perform correctly on a first reading.

Musser, Willard I. (b.1913), and Elliot Del Borgo (1938–2013)

*The Rhythm of Contemporary Music: A Collection of Melodious Studies Which Progressively Explore the Rhythmic Concepts of 20th Century Music*

Publication: Alfred Publishing Co., 1971

Recommended source for purchase: Unknown (out of print)—held by the libraries of Florida State University, University of South Carolina, Arkansas State University, Morehead State University, Missouri State University, and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Recording: None found

Duration: Approximately 30 seconds per etude
Playable by early-intermediate-level students, this book of fifty-six short etudes addresses a number of rhythmic difficulties common to contemporary music. There are two related books of etudes by the same authors, titled *The Tonality of Contemporary Music* and *Modes in Contemporary Music*, but I recommend this particular collection because it combines elements from all three books in one volume. In addition to developing students’ familiarity with a variety of rhythmic idioms, the collection also gradually incorporates scale patterns outside of traditional major and minor, including church modes, whole-tone scales and twelve-tone rows. All of the etudes are written to be played by any treble clef instrument and can be read by violists at pitch or transposed down a fifth. Topics are addressed under the following headings: “changing time signatures,” “five and seven beat measures,” “changes in pulse groups without signature alterations,” “unlike beat divisions” (duple versus triple beat subdivisions), “unlike beat divisions with change of time signatures, “changes of compound meter to quarter note units,” “the quarter note triplet,” “beat units containing five notes,” “fives and various threes,” “changes of meter with eighth note remaining constant,” and “the five-eight and three-eight changes.” The smallest rhythmic subdivision is the sixteenth-note quintuplet. All of the etudes can be played in first through fifth position on the viola when read at pitch in treble clef, and first through third position when transposed down a fifth. No extended or secondary techniques are used. No bowings or fingerings are provided.

**Martinů, Bohuslav** (1890-1959)

*Rhythmische Etüden für Violine und Klavier* [Rhythmic Etudes for Violin and Piano]

Similar in difficulty to Dont, 24 Studies Preparatory to Kreutzer and Rode

Publication: Schott, 1932, 1960, 1983

Recommended source for purchase: www.halleonard.com

Recording: Strauß, Martinu, Schuller, Hindemith (2010), Media Arte, Oliver Colbenton, violin, Erich Appel, piano

Recommended source for purchase: Mp3 download available at www.amazon.com (search for “Oliver Colbenton—Violine”)

Duration: Approximately 2 minutes per etude
These etudes are useful for helping students explore rhythmic elements such as mixed and irregular meter, isorhythm, cross-rhythms, and irregular subdivisions of the beat. The technical and harmonic elements of the etudes are conservative, featuring attractive modal harmony and simple piano accompaniment. Because most of the etudes can be played in first through fourth position, and the piano texture is light, a transcription of these pieces would be a welcome addition to the intermediate-level viola repertoire. A brief treatment of these etudes is also provided in Molly Adams Gebrian’s dissertation. The bowing focuses on traditional strokes such as detaché, legato, and spiccato. No bowings or fingerings are provided.

No. 1: Allegro
Rhythmic features: Syncopated and/or irregular patterns of eighth notes and sixteenth notes, groupings in 2, 3, and 4.

No. 2: in 5/8—Poco allegretto
Rhythmic features: Eighth- and sixteenth-note groupings, interspersed with more lyrical quarter-note and eighth-note passages. Bar divided in both 2+3 and 3+2.

No. 3: in 7/8, 10/8, 11/8
Rhythmic features: Various sixteenth note and eighth note groupings; piano part contains contrapuntal sixteenth notes against the violin part alternating with passages comprised of eighth note chords.

No. 4: Allegretto moderato
Meter: 4/8, 3/8, 2/4, 5/8, 6/8, 3/4, 7/8
Rhythmic features: Primarily eighth notes and quarter notes against staccato eighth notes in the piano; motivic groupings that go over the bar line.

27. The viola part and the piano part would both have to be transposed down a fifth, and the piano part potentially re-voiced.

No. 5: in 3/8—Andantino
Meter: 3/8(9/16)
Rhythmic features: Triple, quadruple, and quintuple subdivisions of the beat, also quintuple subdivision of the bar against triple subdivision in the piano (5 against 3).

No. 6: Jazzrhythmus--Allegro moderato
Meter: 4/4 or common time
Rhythmic features: Mostly sixteenth-note and eighth-note groupings; frequent use of syncopated and isorhythmic patterns.

No. 7: mit Pausen--Allegretto
Meter: 4/8, 5/8, 3/4, 2/4, 2/8, 1/8, 3/8, 3/16, 4/16
Rhythmic features: Various short groupings of eighth notes and sixteenth notes with varying amounts of rests in between entrances, filled in by the piano.

Kimber, Michael (b. 1928)
Twentieth-Century Idioms for Violists (2012)
Similar in difficulty to Bruni, 25 Studies for Viola
Publication: Self-published by composer, Soundpoint Music, 2012
Recommended source for purchase: http://m_kimber.tripod.com/soundpointmusic.html
Duration: Approximately 1 ½ minutes to 3 minutes per etude, with the exception of the “Aleatoric” and “Minimal” etudes for which the duration is determined by the performer
Recording: None found

Twentieth-Century Idioms for Violists is a collection of fifteen short etudes, each exploring a particular technical or musical idiom prevalent in contemporary music. Each study is preceded by a few paragraphs from the composer that provide a brief theoretical introduction to the concept being explored as well as suggestions for how to approach the technical challenges of the piece. The etudes use primarily first through third position, with occasional excursions to fifth position; the majority also include some double stops. With a few noted exceptions, the etudes contain familiar meters, such as 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8, and simple rhythmic subdivisions. The
bowing skills required are similarly basic; legato, spiccato, and detaché are the most common strokes indicated. Secondary bowing techniques appear in etudes 12-14 and include ricochet, tremolo, sul ponticello, and col legno. The title of each study is self-explanatory and I include the list of etude titles below. It is regrettable that the composer did not include a study exploring pizzicato technique; in its absence I strongly recommend the “Nine Fingers” study from *Viola Spaces* by Garth Knox (see p. 29 of this treatise) and two of the etudes from the Alfred Uhl etude books: No. 17 from *Dreißig Etüden für Viola* (see p. 14), and No. 11 from *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola* (see p. 16). For suggestions regarding the use of specific etudes to address technical issues in the standard viola repertoire, see Part Two of Molly Adams Gebrian’s dissertation.²⁹ Very thorough fingerings and bowings are provided by the composer.

*No. 1: Pentatonic*

*No. 2: Quartal*

*No. 3: Whole-tone*

*No. 4: Octatonic*

*No. 5: Polyharmonic*

*No. 6: Mixed Meter*

*No. 7: Irregular Subdivisions of the Beat* ³⁰

*No. 8: Secundal*

*No. 9: Chromatic*

*No. 10: Twelve-Tone*

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³⁰. For a similar etude that is slightly less challenging, see Alfred Uhl, *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola*, Etude No. 3, discussed on p. 16 of this treatise.
No. 11: Harmonics

No. 12: Various Techniques

No. 13: Aleatoric

No. 14: More Challenging Rhythms and Intervals

No. 15: Minimal

Wiener, Stéphane (1922-1998)

Dechiffrages Originaux pour Alto sans Accompagnement [Original Sightreading Exercises for Solo Viola]

Similar in difficulty to Kreutzer, 42 Studies

Publication: Édition Choudens, 1985

Recommended source for purchase: www.lmi-partitions.com (this website is French and does not appear to have an English-language option)

Recording: None found

Duration: Etudes range in duration from approximately 30 seconds to 1 minute 11 seconds, timed according to the composer’s metronome markings, although in my opinion some of the indicated tempi are too fast for a student to perform cleanly.

Although conceived as a series of sight-reading exercises, this set of eighteen short unaccompanied pieces also may be used as a book of etudes utilizing some of the more common twentieth-century idioms and secondary techniques. The pieces are arranged from easiest to hardest, becoming gradually more chromatic and using a broader range of rhythmic and technical devices. The harmonic language is highly idiosyncratic: while many passages imply tonal or extended tertian harmony, others incorporate whole-tone scales, chromatic scales, and various

31. I suggest this etude as a prerequisite to the “Harmonic Horizon” study from Garth Knox’s Viola Spaces, discussed on p. 29.

32. Techniques used include quartertones, tremolo, sul ponticello, ricochet, glissando, and complex rhythms.

33. Also composed using twelve-tone methods.
non-diatonic pitch collections. The highest left-hand position used is twelfth, but most of the pieces utilize first through fourth position. No bowings or fingerings are provided.

Degré élémentaire (1 etude)

This etude features easy mixed meter, primarily the compound meters 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8; mild chromaticism; and a few easy double stops.

Degré moyen (13 etudes) and Degré fin d'études (2 etudes)

The relevant modern elements of these etudes include disjunct melodic intervals, irregular meters such as 5/4 and 7/8, and metric subdivisions such as triplet quarter notes and quintuplet eighth notes. Left-hand elements include: Chromatic runs and whole-tone scales; extensions of a ninth in first position (in Etude No. 4); chromatic sequences of double-stops including perfect fifths, minor sevenths and octaves; occasional glissandi; and natural and artificial harmonics in a variety of positions.

Degré supérieur (2 etudes)

These final etudes are by far the most complicated, involving multiple secondary techniques and rapid dynamic changes.

No. 1

This etude features quintuple subdivisions of the beat at both the quarter-note and eighth-note level. The highest left hand position required is 12th (a harmonic A on the A string). There are many double stops, primarily perfect fifths, major seconds, and octaves (all of these are in first position). Secondary techniques used include left-hand pizzicato on open strings while also performing bowed tremolo.

No. 2

Left hand features: Rapid chromatic runs, frequent use of double-stops, (primarily perfect fifths, minor sevenths, and octaves), and disjunct melodic motifs requiring large shifts. Secondary techniques used include glissando from third position to fifth or sixth; left-hand
pizzicato on open strings; natural harmonic double-stops; and ponticello, col legno, tremolo, and ricochet bowing.

Harbison, John (b. 1938)

*The Violist’s Notebook (Books I and II), for solo viola*

Similar in difficulty to Campagnoli, *41 Caprices Op. 22*

Books I and II originally published separately in 2000 and 2002, respectively

Publication (both books combined): Associated Music Publishers, Inc. (Hal Leonard, distributor), 2006

Recommended source for purchase: www.amazon.com, halleonard.com

Recording: John Harbison: Piano Trio No. 2/Gatsby Etudes/The Violist’s Notebooks/

10 Micro-Waltzes (2007), Naxos “American Classics” series, CD# 8.559243, Anthea Kreston, viola

Recommended source for purchase: Available as audio CD at


Duration: Approximately 20 minutes (Book I and Book II combined); 1-2 minutes per etude

John Harbison’s *The Violist’s Notebook* is a collection of twelve brief concert etudes, each dedicated to a well-known viola player. As the composer’s introductory notes indicate, the project was inspired by the “inventive, musical, satisfying viola etudes” of Bartolomeo Campanioli, “who encouraged us to expand our technique by dangling an elegantly musical carrot on a stick.” The etudes tend toward the lyrical and expressive rather than the overtly technical. The compositional style is highly chromatic and largely atonal, but the musical gestures are attractive and each etude achieves musical unity through the composer’s use of sequences and motivic variation. The various pitch collections and primary motives lie nicely under the hand, although creativity in fingering may occasionally be necessary to accommodate passages involving large melodic leaps or frequent octave displacements. The primary usefulness


35. Ibid.
of these works lies in the composer’s use of non-diatonic pitch collections, disjunct melody, and enharmonic note-spellings. In addition, the majority of the etudes employ mixed meter and other rhythmic difficulties such as isorhythmic patterns (for example Book I, No. 6, “Marcus Thompson”), and frequent shifts between triple and duple subdivisions of the beat (for example Book II, No. 3, “Lenny Matczynski”). Multiple-stop chords are noticeably absent from most of the collection, with a major exception being Book II, No. 2 “Randy Kelly,” which is a polyphonic study in double-stops, primarily major and minor sixths. No bowings or fingerings are provided, but the printed typeface is very legible. A listing and brief description of the most useful etudes follows below.

**Book I, No. 3 (James Dunham)**

This etude is notable for its irregular eighth-note groupings and constantly changing meter in a quick tempo (quarter note=160). The dynamic range is *pp* to *ff*, involving both gradual crescendos and abrupt dynamic changes. There are no secondary techniques. Traditional bow strokes used include legato, legato with accented first note, and martellato or accented détaché.

**Book I, No. 6 (Marcus Thompson)**

This etude features driving syncopated and isorhythmic motifs. The harmony is predominantly quartal; largely static passages are alternated with chromatic sequences. A useful modern feature of this etude is its creation of compound melodies through the use of the intervals of the perfect fourth and major seventh. The chromatic sequences may pose a fingering challenge. String crossings, both slurred and separate, are a prominent component and they may feel awkward or counterintuitive due to their rhythmic placement.

**Book II, No. 3 (Lenny Matczynski)**

Marked *lamentoso*, this etude is built from short dramatic motifs which increase in length and complexity as the etude develops. Whole-tone scales, disjunct melodic motives and melodic perfect fifths feature prominently. The meter changes every bar, mixing short 3/8 measures with longer measures in meters such as 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4. There is a large dynamic range, from *pp* to *ff*, and there are frequent melodic sforzando accents.
Book II: No. 6 (Lynn [sic] Ramsey)

This etude features bitonal polyphony: in each phrase, the upper melodic voice(s) outline triads or motifs in one key while the lower voice(s) do the same in a key one semitone lower. While mixed meter is used throughout, the rhythmic motives are largely comprised of quarter notes, eighth notes, and dotted quarter notes. There are a large number of double stops, primarily thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and sevenths.

Adler, Samuel (b. 1928)
Meadowmountetudes: Four Studies of Twentieth-Century Techniques for Solo Violin (1988)
Similar in difficulty to Campagnoli, 41 Caprices Op. 22
Publication: Presser, 1996
Recommended source for purchase: Available for download from Classics Online, www.classicsonline.com
Duration: 8 minutes 32 seconds (all etudes combined); approximately 1-3 minutes per etude

This set of four etudes, while originally composed for violin, are also suitable to the viola. The left-hand finger patterns fit well in the hand and do not include many fingering extensions or prolonged passages in a high register. The harmonic language is atonal and makes full use of the chromatic scale; the pitch material is organized around recurring interval patterns (as opposed to strict twelve-tone serial rules). The interval of the perfect fourth appears prominently but all intervals from the minor second to the octave are used. Etude No. 1 and Etude No. 4 are characterized by driving rhythmic patterns and quick tempi. Etudes No. 2 and No. 3 are slower and more reflective. Minimal bowings are suggested, but no fingerings.
1: *Irregular meters*

There are no meter markings in this etude. Though the number of beats per measure varies throughout, the tempo of the eighth note remains consistent at 132 bpm. The etude features dissonant intervals such as the minor second, tritone, and major and minor sevenths. Note patterns based on perfect fourths also appear frequently. Double stops feature prominently, many of which include open strings.

2: *A waltz in fast shifting tonalities*

The main challenges of this etude are to avoid unwanted accents due to inconsistent or uneven combinations of slurred and separate notes, and accurately reading the chromatic passages. Most of the etude can be played in first position.

3: *Large skips and harmonics*

In addition to the wide intervals and use of harmonics indicated in the title, this etude also incorporates cross-rhythms and irregular subdivisions of the beat. Barlines are used but notated meter is absent, and the composer’s use of ties and varying note-lengths creates a sense of metric ambiguity. Students will also be challenged by the wide range of dynamic markings, from *ppp* to *fff*. This etude includes some high positions (up to sixth or seventh position) for stopped notes and natural harmonics. It also features double-stop harmonics and glissandi.

4: *A fast and furious “not too tonal” perpetual motion*

This etude requires more stamina than the others. It consists of constant eighth notes and sixteenth notes in a fast tempo with no rest for either of the player’s hands. It is highly chromatic and incorporates mixed meters, rapid changes of position, and some double stops, triple stops, and quadruple stops.

**Knox, Garth** (b. 1956)

*Viola Spaces: Contemporary Viola Studies, Volume I* (2009)

Similar in difficulty to Rode, *24 Caprices*

Publication: Schott, 2009

Recording: *Viola Spaces* (2009), Mode Records, Garth Knox, viola

Recommended source for purchase: Available as either an audio CD or mp3 download from www.amazon.com. Video performances of the composer playing all the etudes are available on the composer’s Youtube channel: www.youtube.com/user/evolvingstring

Duration: Pieces range in approximate duration from 2 minutes to 5 minutes

This collection of concert studies is a seminal work in contemporary viola pedagogy. As an aid to the performer, the composer provides an introduction to each piece consisting of several paragraphs explaining the technique and suggestions for practice, and ample fingerings and bowings are included in the printed score. To balance the difficulty of learning the techniques themselves, the pieces are structurally straightforward and combine atonal or modal harmony with clearly delineated phrases and memorable thematic motifs. There is a considerable range of difficulty in terms of the stamina and technique required to play the pieces. No. 1, No. 2, and No. 7 are the easiest pieces to grasp in terms of general coordination, technical demands and note-reading; No. 3 and No 4. are more challenging (No. 4 in particular because of the right hand/left hand cross-rhythms); and No. 5, No. 6 and No. 8 are quite strenuous to play in their entirety because of the constant bow motion required and the demands placed on the left hand. With the exception of No. 4, the pieces are metrically and rhythmically uncomplicated to allow for better focus on the techniques required; the most common meters used are 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8. For suggestions regarding the use of specific etudes to address technical issues in the standard viola repertoire, see Part Two of Molly Adams Gebrian’s dissertation.36

**No. 1: Sul ponticello – “Beside the bridge”**

This study is performed entirely sul ponticello and also contains a number of measures in which the player is instructed to bow on the near side of the string between the bridge and tailpiece. The highest left-hand position used is fifth (most of the piece is played in first through third position). There are some double-stops: primarily sixths, perfect fifths, and tritones. While the primary articulation is legato, there is also frequent use of detaché with rapid string crossings between adjacent strings.

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No. 2: Sul tasto – “Ghosts”

This etude is marked to be played sul tasto: over the fingerboard. The player is also instructed to bow on both sides of the upper bout. The highest position used is fifth position, and the piece occasionally requires the player to stay in that position on the G and C strings to perform bariolage effects.

No. 3: Glissando – “One finger”

The player must slide between notes in each phrase, using only one finger; the first phrase uses the first finger, the second phrase the second finger, and so on. One later passage requires the player to hold down all four fingers on adjacent strings and perform a glissando effect down the fingerboard.

No. 4: Pizzicato – “Nine fingers”

This study is played completely pizzicato, using all fingers on both hands with the exception of the left hand thumb. Individual notes, chords, tremolo, left hand pizzicato, slurs, and strumming the strings in both directions are explored, as well as cross-rhythms in which one hand plucks duple rhythms while the other plucks triple rhythms. Despite these complexities, the directions in the composer’s introduction show clearly how each passage is to be played, making the learning process less daunting for the player.

No. 5: Tremolo – “Rapid repeat”

This study is performed using bowed tremolo throughout, both measured and unmeasured, in varying parts of the bow. Tremolo is required across triple stops and quadruple stops, requiring the player to “fake” the effect of four notes sounding at once by slightly arpeggiating the chords. The piece is played scordatura, with the C string tuned down to B-flat, which changes the normal fingerings for that register. Multiple-stop chords involving tritones and perfect fifths feature prominently. The highest position required is third position.

No. 6: Harmonics – “Harmonic horizon”

To aid in learning the harmonic notation, an extra staff is provided above each line of music that shows the exact pitch that should sound when the harmonic is played correctly. The
piece requires a great deal of athleticism to master, exploring the entire range of the instrument on each string, and there is an extended high passage of rapid detaché with string crossings. The physically taxing features of the piece, in combination with the challenge of getting both natural and artificial harmonics to speak, make this study in my opinion the most difficult of the “Viola Spaces” and not necessarily a good recommendation for students (although the first two pages are not as challenging). An easier alternative is Michael Kimber’s “Harmonics” etude from his work Twentieth-Century Idioms for Violists (see p. 20 of this treatise for an overview of the collection).

No. 7: Quertertones – “In between”

The quartertones in this piece are presented as passing tones and neighbor tones to the other notes in the standard Western dodecaphonic scale to help the student grasp the sense of intonation (i.e., quartertones must be tuned in context and are not simply “out of tune” notes). A few passages include open-string drones as an additional aid in anchoring intonation. The highest position used is seventh, but overall, most passages are played in low positions and minimal shifting is required. There is one passage that features trills between notes a quartertone apart.

No. 8: Bow directions – “Up, down, sideways, round”

This study explores the kind of sounds made by dropping the bow on the string vertically (as in spiccato or col legno, for example). At one point, the player is instructed to drop the bow on the string between the bridge and the tailpiece, creating a pitchless, percussive sound. The piece also introduces a stroke the composer calls spazzolato (from the Italian spazzolare, “to brush”). As he explains, spazzolato is “moving the bow along the length of the string going from ponticello to tasto and back again (with no sideways pull), giving a “wiping” sound (very little pitch) much used by Italian composer Salvatore Sciarrino.”37 Another prominent technique used is so-called “circular” bowing, which is “like spazzolato but incorporating a little sideways pull (like a normal bowing) giving a circular movement to the bow and producing small accents, a little like a helicopter.”38 The traditional technical elements are not particularly challenging;

37. Garth Knox, companion booklet to Viola Spaces, 6.
38. Ibid.
though most of the piece is comprised of double stops, the note patterns are simple and repetitive and third position is the highest position used.

**Van de Vate, Nancy** (b. 1930)

**Six Etudes for Solo Viola** (1969)

Similar in difficulty to Campagnoli, *41 Caprices Op. 22*

Publication: Sisra, 1980

Recommended source for purchase: www.arsispublications.com

Recording: *Nancy Van de Vate II*, Vienna Modern Masters, CD# VMM 2003, Michael Davis, viola

Recommended source for purchase: www.arkivmusic.com (search for title “Nancy van de Vate: Chamber and Orchestral Works”)

Duration: 7 minutes 45 seconds (all etudes combined)

The etudes in *Six Etudes for Solo Viola* are short, dramatic, serial works, ranging in duration from 40 seconds to 1 minute 45 seconds. Each etude has its own musical character, but large disjunct leaps in the melodic material and sharp dissonances such as tritones and minor seconds are present in all. Notated meters and barlines are absent; the subsections of each etude are typically indicated by fermatas. Articulations such as staccato, ricochet, and slurs are clearly marked, as are tempo and phrasing indications, but no bowings or fingerings have been provided. The rhythms and pitches are easily decipherable. The two most obvious uses of these etudes are 1) to provide a vehicle for the student to develop the ability to hear and execute wide interval leaps in a non-tonal context and to play those intervals in tune, and 2) to provide an opportunity for the student to develop a rhetorically effective interpretation of each piece in the absence of familiar metric or harmonic structural cues. The etudes utilize primarily first through fifth position.

*No. 1* (quarter note=48-52)

The most salient musical feature of this etude is the frequent appearance of large, dissonant melodic intervals such as the major seventh and minor ninth.
No. 2 (quarter note=100)

The outer sections of this etude are played pizzicato, juxtaposing duple and triple subdivisions of the beat. The central section is faster and played legato with the bow. There are some awkward and un-idiomatic groupings of pitches involving perfect fourths and fifths.

No. 3 (Scherzando, quarter note=152)

The outer sections of this etude are built from three-note motifs played ricochet. The central section includes long legato phrases with large intervallic leaps, requiring the student to choose between shifting, extending, and crossing strings. The most commonly-featured intervals are the minor second and tritone.

No. 4 (Rather deliberately, quarter note=63-72)

The character of this etude is slow and marchlike, featuring a recurring dotted eighth-sixteenth rhythmic pattern. All the techniques required are traditional, but like the other etudes in the set, the melodic contour features large leaps and dissonant intervals. There are also a few double-stops involving tritones, major sevenths, and minor seconds.

No. 5 (eighth note=144)

This etude is quick and lively, featuring a constant stream of staccato eighth notes. There are frequent string crossings and some difficult double stops and triple stops containing tritones or major sevenths. The irregular rhythmic groupings of eighth notes create a bowing challenge because many of the notated accents will occur on an up-bow.

No. 6 (quarter note=60)

This etude consists of a series of brief gestures, with an abrupt change in character from one gesture or phrase to the next. The score includes helpful phrasing suggestions such as “not in strict time” and “pushing ahead.” Secondary techniques used are tremolo, ricochet, and left-hand pizzicato.
CHAPTER THREE

CONTEMPORARY WORKS FOR SOLO VIOLA

Kimber, Michael. (b. 1928)

Three Bagatelles (1997)

Publication: Self-published by composer, 1997
Recommended source for purchase: http://m_kimber.tripod.com/soundpointmusic.html
Recording: None found
Duration: Approximately 1 minute 30 seconds per movement

Michael Kimber’s Three Bagatelles is a set of three short pieces in different well-known twentieth-century styles. For each piece, the composer provides performance indications typical of the imitated style and period, such as “bien chante” or “au Mouvement.” The composer also provides a list of translations at the end of each piece. The register of the collection does not exceed fifth position; the chief technical difficulties lie in deciphering chromatic notes and effectively performing the written dynamics and gestures. Fingerings and bowings are provided by the composer.

Bagatelle (“Paris, 1901”).

This piece’s style is reminiscent of the style of Debussy; its character is tranquil and slow and the pitch material is derived primarily from the whole-tone scale. Left hand challenges include some chromatic scale runs, and occasional double stops (primarily sixths and tritones). Bowing challenges include sustaining a connected legato line, and producing a variety of colors within soft dynamics.

Bagatelle (“Wien, 1922”)

This piece is written in the style of German Expressionism, featuring short dramatic musical gestures and extreme dynamic contrast. Secondary techniques used are glissando, sul ponticello, and natural and artificial harmonics.
Bagatelle (“Berlin, 1928”)

This piece is composed in a German Neoclassical style reminiscent of that of Hindemith. It involves perpetual motion in eighth notes performed at a moderate tempo that features chromatic sequences of broken perfect fourths. The composer’s fingerings indicate second position for most of the piece. The bowing style is detaché throughout, with frequent string crossings.

Leduc, Jacques (b. 1932)


Publication: CeBeDeM, 1988
Recommended source for purchase: Publisher website, www.cebedem.be/en
Recording: Appears on the 2008 Doctoral lecture recital recording of Sally Barton, available at Florida State University’s Allen Music Library, CD 19586
Duration: Approximately 5 minutes

This work is memorable for the heartbeat rhythm (an eighth note paired with a dotted quarter note) which appears at the opening, later juxtaposed with lyrical, flowing, improvised-sounding sections. The piece features hybrid modes and octatonic and whole-tone scales. Frequently occurring double stops involving perfect fourths and fifths suggest a folk influence. The tempo is relatively slow at quarter note=60. The notes and rhythms in general are not difficult to decipher; however, metric notations such as $3^{1/2}/4$ (a version of $7/8$ time) may be confusing at first and students may accidentally misread enharmonic notes such as F-flat. The two main challenges of this piece are to play the various scale passages and double stops in tune and to accurately maintain the pulse through ties and rhythmic subdivisions ranging from triplet quarter notes to quintuplet sixteenth notes. Double stops used include major sevenths, major seconds, perfect fourths and fifths, and tritones; some may require awkward hand positions. There is also some use of left-hand pizzicato, performed on open strings while bowing and fingerling other notes. Some bowings are provided but no fingerings.

Mamlok, Ursula (b. 1923)

From My Garden (1983)
From My Garden is an attractive and idiomatically written twelve-tone work with an intimate and reflective character. Each pitch of the chromatic scale is introduced gradually as the piece develops. Though the work is published in a handwritten font and contains numerous florid grace-note passages, the note-heads are clearly readable and are accompanied by well-conceived fingerings and bowings provided by the editor. A wide overall dynamic range from $\text{ppp}$ to $\text{ff}$, along with abrupt dynamic changes, provides opportunity to develop control of bow placement, speed, and weight. While the grace-note decorations are to be played rapidly, the general tempo is quite slow (quarter note=48) and there are no rhythmic subdivisions more complicated than the occasional sixteenth-note grouping. Secondary techniques used include natural and artificial harmonics, left-hand pizzicato, glissandi, and tremolo performed sul ponticello.

Caltabiano, Ronald (b. 1959)  
Character Sketch No. 2 (2002), for solo viola  
Publication: Presser, 2009, PR.144404660  
Recommended source for purchase: www.sheetmusicplus.com  
Recording: None found  
Duration: Approximately 4 minutes

This brief but intense atonal piece is useful for developing familiarity with prolonged dissonance and for challenging a student’s left hand/right hand coordination. It is idiomatically
written for the instrument and avoids extensions and positions above fifth position. The piece juxtaposes reflective, lyrical and metrically ambiguous sections with more agitated passages that feature driving, accented eighth-note patterns. Most of the piece is written in 2/4 meter, with a passage in mixed meter near the end that includes measures of 3/8 and 5/8. Double stops involving minor or major seconds feature prominently. These double stops typically include a stopped note played against an open string, and changes between higher and lower stopped notes compared to the open string result in potentially confusing notation. Left-hand pizzicato also appears prominently, and is most commonly notated to be performed on the open A string while bowing and fingering a pitch on a lower string. No bowings or fingerings are provided.

**Drexler, David** (b. 1967)

*Improvisation* (2008)

Publication: Self-published by composer

Recommended source for purchase: http://drexlermusic.com

Recording: None found

Duration: Approximately 4 minutes 30 seconds

This atonal piece is useful for developing students’ familiarity with rhythmic patterns involving syncopation or isorhythm; with note patterns incorporating wide intervals (particularly sevenths and tritones); and with a number of secondary techniques (sul tasto, sul ponticello, left-hand and right-hand pizzicato, and harmonics). Many passages feature running sixteenth notes, played either detaché or slurred in groups of four or five, at quarter note=84. The most salient intervals used, major and minor sevenths, are presented both as broken intervals and as double stops. The prevalence of these wide intervals results in frequent string crossings and occasional left-hand fingering extensions. Syncopated patterns are made more challenging by the addition of left-hand pizzicato on a lower open string during tied notes. Secondary techniques affecting timbre, sul tasto and sul ponticello, are used to create rhetorical contrast and also to aid in building dynamic intensity. The piece can be played in first through fourth position. No bowings or fingerings are provided.
**Persichetti, Vincent** (1915-1987)

*Parable for Solo Viola (Parable XVI)* (1974)

Publication: Elkan-Vogel, 1975

Recommended source for purchase: Shar Products website, www.sharmusic.com

Recording: *Excursions* (2008), Musicaphon M55718, Jurgen Weber, viola


Recording: *Parables: Music for the Viola* (self published by Mr. Graham), John Graham, viola

Recommended source for purchase: Available as mp3 download and audio CD from www.amazon.com. See also the CDs webpage from Mr. Graham’s website, http://www.grahamviola.com/cds.html, for a longer list of preferred purchase sources

Duration: Approximately 8 minutes

*Parable XVI* is the longest and most challenging of the solo viola works listed in this chapter, incorporating nearly all of the contemporary features on my list of criteria. The piece is freely atonal and exhibits frequent changes in character, meter, and tempo. Traditional technical difficulties include rapid chromatic flourishes, polyphonic passages, large melodic leaps and string crossings, and irregular subdivisions of the beat. Secondary techniques used include harmonics, left-hand pizzicato, glissando, col legno, ricochet, tremolo, and sul ponticello. No bowings or fingerings are provided.
CHAPTER FOUR
CONTEMPORARY WORKS FOR VIOLA AND PIANO

Damase, Jean-Michel (1928-2013)

Ostinato (1988)
Publication: Billaudot, 1991
Recording: None found
Duration: Approximately 3 minutes

Ostinato is a light, cheerful, short piece composed entirely in 7/8, with a metronome marking of eighth note=168, and is a good basic introduction to this asymmetrical meter. It is harmonically tonal, based in the key of C major with excursions to other keys such as A major. Each measure (except for one passage near the end) is subdivided into eighth-note groupings of 2+2+3, and the consistent repetition will make it easier for students to learn to correctly perform the uneven large beats in 7/8 meter. It is technically very simple, rated “Degré élémentaire” by the publisher; the bowing is easy and it can be played in first through third position. No bowings or fingerings have been provided.

Beck, Conrad (1901-1989)

Sonatine für Viola und Klavier (1976/1977)
Publication: Schott, 1981, VAB 50
Recommended source for purchase: www.halleonard.com
Duration: Approximately 12 minutes
Recording: None found

Conrad Beck’s Sonatine für Viola und Klavier is a short three-movement work that will stretch the ears of students unacquainted with dodecaphonic or freely atonal music. While the most prominent intervals are the perfect fourth and fifth, the composer’s polyphonic treatment of
the various motifs results in frequent dissonance. The piece is conventional in structure and contains no irregular meters, difficult counting, or secondary techniques. The first two movements are slow and lyrical in character; the third movement is quick and features sixteenth-note detaché and lively syncopated rhythms. The highest position used is fifth/sixth position. The level of chromaticism in the outer two movements may pose a challenge to find appropriate fingerings, and there is an awkward double-stop passage near the end of the third movement. Some bowings have been provided but no fingerings.

Feldman, Morton (1926-1987)

The Viola in My Life (3) (1970)

Publication: Universal Edition, 1972, UE15402

Recommended source for purchase: Publisher website, www.universaledition.com

Recordings:

Morton Feldman: The Viola in My Life (2006), New World Records 80657, Karen Phillips, viola

Morton Feldman: The Viola in My Life (2001), ECM New Series 1798, Marek Konstantynowicz, viola

Cage and Feldman: In a Silent Way (2011), Stradivarius, Maurizio Barbetti, viola

Recommended source for purchase: All three titles are available as mp3 download or Audio CD at www.amazon.com

Duration: Approximately 6 minutes

The Viola in My Life (3), while not aleatoric in terms of metric notation, does exhibit many characteristics of aleatoric music in its avoidance of salient metric or tonal structure. The piece explores subtle variations in timbre, gesture, and duration; the tempo is slow, alternating between quarter note=66 and a brief recurring one-measure refrain in eighth notes at quarter note=80. Long notes in the viola are placed against soft tone-clusters in the piano. No dynamic markings are present in the score other than “Extremely quiet” at the beginning of the piece and expressive crescendi and diminuendi. The piece is to be performed entirely with mute. There are

39. Multiple recordings of this piece are available, exhibiting varying degrees of faithfulness to the printed score. The recordings chosen here include the recording made by the work’s dedicatee, Karen Phillips, and the two others I consider most accurate in their rendering of the composer’s tempo and expression markings.
a few artificial harmonics but no other secondary techniques are indicated. The highest position used is fifth position. No bowings or fingerings are provided.

**Bush, Alan** (1900-1995)


Publication: Simrock, 1980

Recommended source for purchase: www.boosey.com, catalog # M22111319, or www.schott-music.com, order #EE 3181


Recommended source for purchase: Audio CD available from www.arkivmusic.com

Duration: 16-17 minutes for total work; second movement is approximately 4 minutes, 30 seconds

Alan Bush’s *Sonatina for Viola and Pianoforte* is composed in a pastoral, largely tonal style similar to that of his fellow English composers Ralph Vaughan Williams and Rebecca Clarke. The outer movements are very difficult; the piece is rated “Artist Level’/Grade 6 in the American String Teachers Association syllabus. However, the central movement, *Quasi Menuetto*, contains useful twentieth-century musical elements and is much more technically manageable. Its chief value lies in its rhythmic patterns, where occasional measures of 5/8 meter are incorporated into longer passages of 8/8 meter whose measures are typically divided into eighth-note groupings of 3+2+3. These groupings give the impression of a slightly off-kilter waltz. Rather minimal fingerings and bowings are printed in the viola part edited by John White and reflect those used by prominent violist and dedicatee Cecil Aronowitz at the work’s premiere.

**Bryars, Gavin** (1943-)

*The North Shore* (1993)

Publication: Schott, 1995, publication #ED 12473

Recommended source for purchase: Available as mp3 download and audio CD from www.amazon.com
Duration: Approximately 12 minutes

*The North Shore* is a dark and emotionally evocative minimalist work. Starkly-textured pointillistic passages are juxtaposed with more flowing sections featuring gentle rocking eighth notes in the piano and rapid, slurred bariolage arpeggios in the viola. The harmony contains major and minor triads but the relationships between them are not classically tonal. The chief difficulties in performing the piece involve effectively shaping very long phrases and finding a comfortable left-hand position in the bariolage passages. The meter is 4/4 throughout and the rhythmic patterns in the viola part are primarily comprised of quarter notes, eighth notes and half notes (except for the bariolage sections which include sixteenth-note triplets). The highest position used is fifth position. There are a few bowings indicated in the score but no fingerings.

*Cerha, Friedrich* (1926-)

*Sonata für Viola und Klavier* (1951)
Publication: Doblinger, 1991, order #03 588
Duration: Approximately 13 minutes
Recording: None found

This concise four-movement sonata is useful for introducing students to bitonality and chromatic voice-leading. Though the piece’s composition predates the development of the American minimalist style of Steve Reich, Philip Glass, and others, its textural simplicity, use of ostinato, and non-traditional tertian harmony exhibit what one might term “proto-minimalism.” The first and third movements are somber in character, featuring slow tempi, minor triads, and frequent dissonance between the bass line and upper voices. The second and fourth movements are lighter in texture and feature quicker tempi and predominantly major triads. The fourth movement also incorporates mixed meter. The instrumental techniques used are mostly
traditional, with some occasional pizzicato chords. First through fifth positions are most commonly used, although the fourth movement requires positions as high as tenth position (a harmonic E on the A string). No bowings or fingerings are provided. More specific commentary pertaining to each individual movement is included below.

I. Adagio espressivo (quarter note=48)

The piano accompaniment in this movement is comprised of half-note and whole-note triadic chords over a low pedal E. The viola part includes quarter notes and half notes, but nothing smaller in duration. The meter is 4/4 throughout. The movement begins and ends on an E minor triad; harmonic tension is developed through increasingly chromatic voice-leading as the upper voices clash with the low E in the bass. The only articulation required in the viola part is legato, and the highest position used is fourth position.

II. Allegro molto, leggiero (dotted quarter note=126-132)

A lilting melody in the viola in 6/8 meter is accompanied by a flowing eighth-note accompaniment in the piano.

III. Largo (eighth note=52)

Long, expressive melodic lines in the viola are accompanied by a heavy chromatic bass line and steady dotted rhythm in the piano.

IV. Allegro con brio (quarter note=152)

This energetic movement features a steady eighth-note pulse in the piano. Most of the movement is in 4/4, but other meters such as 5/4, 3/8, 5/8, and 7/8 appear frequently. Sixteenth-note runs involving slurs and separate notes, and passages high on the fingerboard involving string crossings, present a challenge to right and left-hand coordination. There are a number of four-note pizzicato chords. A variety of traditional bowing techniques are required, including staccato or spiccato, legato, and sixteenth-note detaché.
McTee, Cindy (1953-)

*Circle Music I* (1988)

Publication: MMB Music, Inc., 1988

Recommended source for purchase: www.billholabmusic.com

Recording: A version of the piece for bassoon can be heard on *Bassoon Transcended: Contemporary Music for Bassoon and Piano by Women Composers* (2013), MSR Classics MS 1439, Christin Schillinger, bassoon, Jed Moss, piano

Recommended source for purchase: Mp3 download available through https://itunes.apple.com

Duration: Approximately 8 minutes

This piece is an appealing introduction to a musical style that incorporates indeterminacy into the formal structure. While the basic material of the piece is clearly and specifically notated, both the viola part and the piano part are split up into distinct fragments of a few notes each. The exact order and number of repetitions of each fragment is left up to the performers, although the composer does provide some basic guidelines for the general duration of the piece and the sequence of fragments. There are fermatas placed at various locations in each fragment, establishing a sense of open space and metric ambiguity. The most prominently heard intervals are the minor second, major seventh, and tritone. The overall texture is quite sparse and delicate. Most of the piece can be played in first through third position. Some of the fragments include chromatic note collections or runs, but the pitch material is easily decipherable. No bowings or fingerings are provided.

Driessler, Johannes (1921-1998)

*Fünf Stücke für Viola und Klavier, Op. 24/3b*

Publication: Baerenreiter, 1953, BA 2698


Recording: None found

Duration: Approximately 6 minutes for all movements combined, based on composer’s metronome markings; tempi for the fast movements may be too quick for both violist and pianist to perform comfortably
This set of short pieces also exists in a version for clarinet (as Op. 24/3a). The main pedagogical uses of the work are 1) to explore irregular meter in the outer pieces (the first piece is in 5/8 meter and the fifth piece is in 7/8 meter); and 2) to experience quartal and quintal harmony (chords built using fourths and fifths, instead of thirds). The rhythmic subdivisions generally fall into simple patterns of quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes. The writing is more idiomatic to the clarinet than to the viola; there are some rather long phrases that require the player to remain in fifth position across strings, although in my opinion these could be played an octave lower if desired without losing the character of the music. The highest position used is eighth. No secondary techniques are used; the primary bow strokes used are legato and spiccato. No bowings or fingerings are provided.

Eder, Helmut (1916-2005)
Sonatine für Viola und Klavier, Op. 34, No. 2 (1963)
Publication: Doblinger, 1963, order #03 575
Recommended source for purchase: www.di-arezzo.co.uk, item #DOBLI01019
Recording: None found
Duration: Approximately 5 minutes according to the score and 6 minutes according to the publisher website; the indicated metronome markings may be unrealistically fast for students

The Sonatine für Viola und Klavier by Helmut Eder could perhaps be called “Schoenberg for beginners.” It is a short twelve-tone work that exhibits clarity of form and economy of material. The composer’s arrangement of pitches results in frequent dissonance both in the piano accompaniment and in between the accompaniment and the viola part. The writing for the viola is not idiomatic for the left hand, requiring frequent leaps and changes of position, but it does avoid the use of very high registers and the double stops that are present are likely manageable by intermediate players.
I. Allegretto leggiero

While the metric divisions in this movement are relatively simple combinations of eighth notes and quarter notes (and their equivalent rests) in 2/4 and 3/4, the overlapping of rhythmic gestures between the viola and piano create challenges for correct counting and ensemble. There are a few double stops, including perfect fifths, tritones, major seconds, and octaves.

II. Adagio molto, quasi rezitativo

Dense, sustained chords in the piano support a freely expressive viola melody. Chromatic, disjunct note groupings require a good grasp of fingering patterns in various positions, and there is an awkward double-stop passage involving chromatic thirds and sevenths.

III. Allegro con spirito

This is a lively scherzo-like finale in 6/8 featuring driving eighth notes, dotted rhythms, and hemiolas. As with the first movement, overlapping rhythmic figures may cause ensemble challenges between the viola part and the piano part. A very large dynamic range, from p to fff, including accents and sforzandi, requires excellent bow control to execute effectively. Motivic material involving diminished triads may require the use of extensions for clean fingering, and chromatic note patterns require good knowledge of the fingerboard in all positions used. Secondary techniques used include tremolo, ponticello and Bartók (snap) pizzicato.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND TOPICAL GUIDE

In this treatise, I have provided an annotated list of etudes and pieces for solo viola and viola and piano that can be used to familiarize viola students at the upper-intermediate level with idioms and techniques common to contemporary Western art music. In addition to improving students’ skill and ease in performing contemporary solo literature, learning these works will also contribute to better performances of contemporary chamber and orchestral literature. While my research revealed that a diverse repertoire of pieces addressing secondary techniques, post-tonal harmony, and rhythmic difficulties now exists, there still appears to be a need for student-friendly works which more thoroughly address the unconventional notation practices and extended techniques used in experimental and avant-garde music.

The following list is comprised of pieces from this treatise which I consider most suitable for targeted, progressive instruction in specific techniques and idioms (most of the works in the treatise contain multiple idioms, but not all of them provide a thorough treatment of each idiom). The selected etudes and movements are arranged in order of difficulty from easiest to hardest under each heading.

**Pizzicato**
- Alfred Uhl, *Dreißig Etüden für Viola*, Etude No. 17
- Nancy Van de Vate, *Six Etudes for Solo Viola*, Etude No. 2
- Alfred Uhl, *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola*, Etude No. 11
- Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 4 “Nine Fingers”

**Harmonics**
- Morton Feldman, *The Viola in My Life (3)*
- Alfred Uhl, *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola*, Etude No. 13
- Samuel Adler, *Meadowmountetudes*, No. 3 “Large skips and harmonics”
- Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 6 “Harmonic horizon”
Sul ponticello
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 1 “Beside the bridge”
Michael Kimber, *Three Bagatelles*, “Bagatelle (Wien, 1922)”

Tremolo
Alfred Uhl, *Zwanzig Etüden für Viola*, Etude No. 17
Stéphane Wiener, *Dechiffrages origineaux pour alto*, Degré supérieur Etude No. 1
Ursula Mamlok, *From My Garden*
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 5 “Rapid repeat”

Glissando
Michael Kimber, *Three Bagatelles*, No. 2 “Wien, 1922”
Stéphane Wiener, *Dechiffrages origineaux pour alto*, Degré supérieur Etude No. 2
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 3 “One Finger”

Col legno
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 8 “Up, Down, Sideways, Round”

Sul tasto
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 2 “Ghosts”
Samuel Adler, *Meadowmountetudes*, No. 3 “Large skips and harmonics”

Mixed/Irregular meter
Jean-Michel Damase, *Ostinato*
Alan Bush, “Quasi menuetto” from *Sonatina for Viola and Pianoforte, Op. 88*
Alfred Uhl, *Dreißig Etüden für Viola*, No. 30
Willard I. Musser and Elliot Del Borgo, *The Rhythm of Contemporary Music* (all)
Michael Kimber, *Twentieth-Century Idioms for Violists*, No. 6 “Mixed Meter”
Bohuslav Martinů, *Rhythmische Etüden* (all)

**Extended techniques**
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 1 “Beside the Bridge”
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 2 “Ghosts”
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 8 “Up, down, sideways, round”

**Microtones**
Garth Knox, *Viola Spaces*, No. 7 “In between”

**Non-diatonic scales/Enharmonic note reading**
“Polyharmonic”
John Harbison, *The Violist’s Notebook, Book I*, No. 1 (Marcus Thompson)
Jacques Leduc, *Lamento pour alto solo*
David Drexler, *Improvisation*

**Serial/Twelve-tone techniques**
Michael Kimber, *Twentieth-Century Idioms for Violists*, No. 10 “Twelve-Tone”
Ursula Mamlok, *From My Garden*
Nancy Van de Vate, *Six Etudes for Viola Solo* (all)
Helmut Eder, *Sonate für Viola und Klavier, Op. 34 No. 2*

**Minimalism**
Michael Kimber, *Twentieth-Century Idioms for Violists*, No. 15 “Minimal”
Friedrich Cerha, *Sonate für Viola und Klavier*
Gavin Bryars, *The North Shore*

**Aleatoric techniques/Metric ambiguity**
Morton Feldman, *The Viola in My Life* (3)
Cindy McTee, *Circle Music I*
Samuel Adler, *Meadowmountetudes*, No. 3 “Large skips and harmonics”

**Multiple techniques and idioms**
Ursula Mamlok, *From My Garden*
Ronald Caltabiano, *Character Sketch No. 2*
David Drexler, *Improvisation*
Vincent Persichetti, *Parable XVI*
SOURCES

Articles/ Books/Dissertations


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**Scores for further study**

Note: During my research I discovered a number of pieces of musical and pedagogical value that were related to my primary topic but did not match the initial criteria for inclusion in the main text due to issues of style, instrumentation, or difficulty. I list them below as suggestions for further consideration.


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Emily Jensenius was born in 1984 and grew up in the Pacific Northwest. Before completing her Doctor of Music studies at Florida State University, she earned degrees in Viola Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music (B.M. '07), studying with Jeffrey Irvine and Lynne Ramsey, and Rice University (M.M. '09), where she studied with James Dunham. A dedicated advocate of music by living composers, she has given presentations on Garth Knox’s *Viola Spaces* at Florida State University and was a co-presenter at the 2012 ASTA National Conference, and has given public performances of works by Sofia Gubaidulina, Ladislaw Kubík, Karim Al-Zand, Paul Moravec, Jennifer Higdon, Elliott Bark, and Dan Visconti, among numerous others. Emily also performed for three years at Florida State as the violist of the Eppes Quartet, a resident graduate string ensemble mentored by renowned American composer Ellen Taaffe Zwilich. As an educator, Emily has served as a teaching assistant and chamber music coach for students at Florida State and members of the Tallahassee Youth Orchestra, in addition to teaching violin, viola, and piano in Tallahassee area schools. She performs regularly as a section member of the Tallahassee Symphony and the Columbus (GA) Symphony, and is currently Principal Viola of the Albany (GA) Symphony.