

Martin Wulfhorst

The Orchestral Violinist's Companion

a comprehensive
guidebook
with hundreds of excerpts



Bärenreiter

The Orchestral Violinist's Companion

This book is a guide to the art of playing the violin in a professional orchestra. It is a workbook, reference tool, and textbook for:

- conservatory and college students who are preparing for an orchestral career
- audition candidates at the beginning or at later stages in their careers
- string teachers, conductors, and composers
- classes at conservatories, universities, and summer programs.

The Orchestral Violinist's Companion

provides a comprehensive survey of the vast range of skills and knowledge an orchestral player needs: strategies for practicing and sight-reading, bowing and left-hand technique, *pizzicato* and other special techniques, ensemble playing and command of complex rhythms, knowledge of notation and performance practice, familiarity with a core repertoire of orchestral works, audition preparation, and strategies for coping with career issues including the physical and mental stresses of long-term orchestral work.


1 Training as an Orchestral Violinist – History, Challenges, Concepts

A brief historical sketch of orchestral training, a critical analysis of the current state of orchestral training, and a proposal for an original system for comprehensive orchestral training.

2 The Orchestral Mode

What is the essence of orchestral playing? And what are the musician's priorities when playing in an orchestra? There is a particular mindset that is specific and essential to orchestral playing.

3 Learning, Practicing, and Sight-Reading

- A comprehensive learning system covering: goal setting, self-assessment, planning, mental and physical practice, self-monitoring, and strategies for coping with performance anxiety
 - Practice strategies for learning orchestral repertoire
-  *sample page 47*
- Strategies for sight-reading, learning “impossible” pieces, and learning repertoire under time pressure

4 Basic Orchestral Technique – Principles, Routines, and Maintenance

- Daily practice routines for orchestral violinists:
bowing, shifting, scales, arpeggios, double stops, and chords
- Strategies for improving ease and endurance

5 Bowing Technique, Sound Production, Coordination

- Blending within the violin section
- Adapting to the conductor's interpretation
- Great variety of strokes from *legato* to *ricochet*, fast repetitions and *tremolo*, numerous bowing patterns, articulations, dynamics (including

Excerpts

from more than 340 works
by 87 composers
are provided with bowings,
fingerings, metronome
markings, stylistic suggestions,
and tips for practicing.

These excerpts represent a variety of genres: symphonic repertoire, operas, operettas, ballets, and oratorios.

pp *Allegro molto con brio* $J = 84$

Strauss, *Dan Juan* (Ex. 3.4b)

qq One-plus-two patterns:

rr One-plus-five patterns (Only two of six possibilities are shown.)

ss 23

tl 23

"Siciliano" patterns:


(5) Inserting rests or fermatas between segments played at full speed—another type of combining slow and fast practice—is perhaps one of the most efficient methods for learning fast passages with difficult pitch patterns: "The added fermatas provide the time to judge the correctness of the previous passage, to think of the next passage in all its detail, and to formulate the next outgoing command in its entirety" (Gerle 1983, 15). Choose segments of appropriate length.

uu • Divide any passage into consecutive segments of two, three, four, six, or eight notes and shift the pattern note by note or beat by beat. Grasp and then play each segment as a single unit: "It feels as if one single action plays all the notes of the group together" (Fischer 2004, 24).

vv • Overlapping segments are very useful for covering the "seams" but are a little awkward because of the continuous bow retakes.

Consecutive segments with added fermatas: Strauss, *Dan Juan* (Ex. 3.4b)

Overlapping segments with added fermatas:

uu. • Divide any passage into *consecutive segments* of two, three, four, six, or eight notes and shift the pattern note by note or beat by beat. Grasp and then play each segment as a single unit: “It feels as if one single action plays all the notes of the group together” ( Fischer 2004, 24).

VV • *Overlapping segments* are very useful for covering the “seams” but are a little awkward because of the continuous bow retakes.

6 Left-Hand Technique

- Orchestral intonation and fingering
- Particularly tricky pitch patterns: diatonic and chromatic scale patterns, arpeggios, leaps and silent shifts, extremely high passages, remote keys, whole-tone motion, free tonality and atonality, trills and other ornaments, *portamento* and *glissando*, harmonics

9 Decoding and Marking Orchestral Parts – A Manual of Orchestral Notation and Performance Practice

- Specific suggestions for marking your part
- Detailed discussion of all aspects of notation and performance practice

10 Repertoire and Style

- A suggested core repertoire of orchestral works
- A guide to building this core repertoire and creating a style grid
- Different styles and their unique challenges

11 Profession and Career

- Career planning
- Setting goals (profiles of various orchestra types and various orchestral positions such as concertmaster and section player)
- Auditioning
- Orchestral life
- Long-term work in an orchestra

12 Resources available at <http://www.orch.info>

- A list of published excerpt collections
- A guide to additional resources: websites, technical studies, articles, books, recordings, and software
- Introductory videos

140

5 Bowing Technique, Sound Production, Coordination • 5.17 Repetitions of Pitches

[C-E] • [OM6] Ease and endurance are challenges in many passages with extremely fast repetitions. To play all notes with the same intensity is difficult or impossible (and often not even desirable). Play with the "curves" or "waves" described in Chapter 4.14/(11). Follow the contour and metrical stresses of the phrases with the dynamics and, at an extreme pace, even with the speed of your motion. Intensify the dynamics and

speed on the moving notes, toward the melodic high points, and on the accented notes. Relax on the longer notes or pedals with repetitions: play more softly and, as necessary, even use a stroke that is slower than the notated values.

(1), (b), (1) • Practice displaced repetitions.

(b), (1) • Practice the repetitions by starting on the beat.

Allegro $\text{♩} = 92+$

[C] (76) START POCO PONTICELLO

Donizetti
L'Elisir II/12

2nd x: cresc.

Presto $\text{♩} = 116$

Beethoven
Symphony 3/iv

437 vn. 1-2

437 vn. 1

442

Più vivo $\text{♩} = 100+$

Crieg, *Peer/S*
(- Suite I/v)

66/70

75

80

stringendo al fine 1

Ex. 4.10a
 $\text{♩} = 100 \rightarrow 160$

Displaced repetitions

Practice:

8 Rhythm and Ensemble Playing • 8.6 Irregular Off-Beats and Syncopations, Off-Beat Accents

The following challenges are related to the rhythmic patterns included in the previous Chapter.

[a-b] • Irregular off-beats and irregular syncopations • Practice with a partner or a click track. Where appropriate practice the off-beat patterns with sustained notes instead of rests.

All.o vivace $\text{♩} = 84-100$

Rachmaninoff
Dances/iii

Allegretto $\text{♩} = 116$

Shostakovich
Cello Concerto 1/i

Ex. 4.10a (Practice also on the same pitch.)
 $\text{♩} = 80 \rightarrow 100+$

Off-beat accents

Allegro $\text{♩} = 132$

Vardi
Trostatore II/4

Allegro $\text{♩} = 100+$

Brahms
Symphony 3/iv

[1] • Practice ostinato patterns in displaced form at full speed.

7 Pizzicato and Other Special Technical Issues

- Basic and advanced *pizzicato* techniques required for repertoire of the 19th and 20th centuries
- Switching between *pizzicato* and *arco*
- Techniques specific to the playing of contemporary music

8 Rhythm and Ensemble Playing

- Two-part exercises and excerpts for partner practice or for string classes
- sample page 301
- Basic conducting technique
- Counting
- Syncopation, tuplets, cross-rhythms
- Irregular meters
- Rubato* and accompanying
- Ensemble playing

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The Orchestral Violinist's Companion

Vol. 1: Training · Practicing and Sight-Reading · Basic Orchestral Technique · Bowing Technique and Sound Production

Vol. 2: Left-Hand Technique · Pizzicato and Other Special Techniques · Rhythm and Ensemble Playing · Notation and Performance Practice · Repertoire and Style · Profession and Career · Resources

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Approx. 1,000 excerpts from 340 works by 87 composers;
approx. 30 illustrations, diagrams, and tables.

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The volumes cannot be purchased separately.

The Author

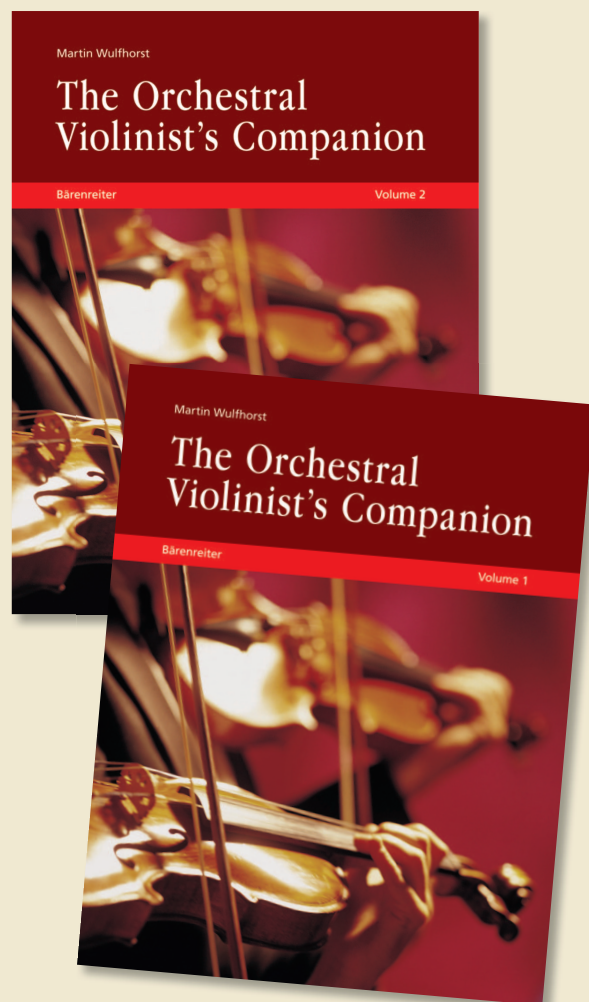
Prior to joining the Hamburg Symphony as Associate Concertmaster, Martin Wulfhorst was a member of the Berlin Deutsche Oper Orchestra and served on the faculty of Colgate University (NY), teaching violin and chamber music.

His CDs include world premiere recordings of chamber music from the circle of Brahms and by contemporary American composers, issued by Jambus and Spectrum/Innova.

He studied with Ernő Sebestyén in Berlin and with Masao Kawasaki and Itzhak Perlman at Brooklyn College, and received a Ph. D. in musicology from the City University of New York.

In addition to publishing numerous journal and encyclopedia articles, he has contributed to performing editions of Bach's orchestral violin solos, Mozart's concertos and sonatas, Mendelssohn's Concerto in E minor, and cadenzas for Beethoven's Concerto, all published by Bärenreiter.

www.martin-wulfhorst.com



Resources available at <http://www.orch.info>

Irvine Arditti, Robert HP Platz

The Techniques of Violin Playing

In English and German (2013)
128 pages, with a DVD; paperback
ISBN 978-3-7618-2267-8

Irvine Arditti who is an extraordinary violinist and a specialist for contemporary music, worked together with the composer and conductor **Robert HP Platz** to produce this book on contemporary violin technique. It presents detailed explanations of the technical possibilities of the violin for performers and composers.

This publication takes into account the virtuosity of a new generation of soloists. These are soloists who with their exceptional ability, have succeeded in paving the way for a greater understanding of classical and contemporary music.

The chapters on bowing techniques, *vibrato*, *pizzicato*, *glissando*, harmonics, tablatures, rhythm, and electronic sound production are illustrated with numerous musical examples and diagrams.

Particularly helpful is the accompanying **DVD**, on which Irvine Arditti demonstrates and explains the described techniques. Chapters on



the basics of violin technique and on Arditti's personal experience with notable composers make the book equally interesting for non-violinists.

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