

WEEK 3 PRACTICE PLAN

Repertoire:	Movement:
Ysaÿe Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, "Ballade"	Page 2, lines 10 - 13
Bruch Scottish Fantasy	Adagio cantabile: m. 38 - end
Kreisler Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6	Scherzo: Beginning - m. 49

[Click here for marked parts](#)

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YSAÿE:

- ☐ **Accentuate the accents:** In this type of chord-heavy piece, it's easy to get into the habit of unintentionally accenting the chords and down-bows, and thus killing any musicality that could happen. Thankfully, Ysaÿe has been very intentional with his accent markings.
 - ☐ Note that in the first measure of the tenth line, the only accent appears at the end of the first beat. This may be, in part, a reminder not to let that note get lost in the phrase.
 - ☐ Also, in the second measure, there's no accent on the downbeat, so take care not to put one there – save it for the short, marked notes, and feel free to let the up-bow accent whip.
 - ☐ In the first measure of line 11, consider the accents another reminder not to let those notes get lost – give them importance, but not separation.
- ☐ **The spacing guild:** As in the first week, the double-stops here are an opportunity to keep thinking in terms of finger spacing.
 - ☐ The first group of double-stops on line 10 is all in first position, so avoid moving the left hand around within this position. In particular, for the minor third in this first measure, don't move the hand back for the F – just reach back with the first finger, feeling the large space between the first and third fingers (spanning the distance of a major third).

- ☐ In the second and third measures of line 10, the hand will need to move, but the finger spacing will not change.
- ☐ Keeping the first finger down after the chord in the last measure of line 10 is a good way to prevent the hand from moving when it doesn't have to.
- ☐ The hand also won't move between the first and second measures of line 11; the second finger will just slide upward within the hand frame.
- ☐ As before, with the double-stops and chords in this week's material, always keep in mind what position you're in and the spacing of the fingers, and you'll keep the intonation consistent.
- ☐ **Dynamic pacing:** Paying attention to the written accents, as mentioned above, is a good way to avoid letting the dynamic get into the red zone – the point where you're already as loud as you can get, and any more bow pressure will just cause the sound quality to suffer.
 - ☐ Also important is to consider the musical shapes of the piece, both micro (the shape from one note to the next) and macro (relationships between, for instance, repeated shapes and patterns). In a solo piece such as this, fortunately, you're in control of all this shaping, and you'll accomplish it with the bow.
 - ☐ Taking the crescendo from the first measure of line 10 to the second as an example, you'll want to plan your bow distribution accordingly. This will involve using the greatest amount of bow on the last beat of the measure, increasing bow speed within that bow.
 - ☐ You'll use the same approach with the second and third measures of that line, increasing bow speed to achieve the crescendo and remembering not to accent the second beat.
 - ☐ A common pattern in this piece is starting with a quick bow, relaxing it toward the middle, and speeding back up at the end to anticipate an accent. Among other places, this occurs in the first measure of this page.

- ☐ The beginning of the twelfth line is a high point dynamically, so you'll have to decide how you want to relax after that chord, and how long the relaxation lasts.
- ☐ Also, take note of the "whole bow" markings at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth lines.

for more...

[The Three Bow Variables](#)

BRUCH:

- ☐ **Musical phonetics:** Most of the bows will connect without a marked rearticulation between them – they will more or less flow into each other as words in spoken sentences.
 - ☐ By way of example, the phrase at measure 38 should happen without "bumps" between the notes. In general, these bumps can be caused by string crossings or shifts.
 - ☐ Shifts can bump if the instrument drops during the shift. To remedy this, support can come either from the chin on a shoulder rest or support from the left hand, keeping the thumb and side of the first finger in contact with the instrument. To test for bumps, try slurring the notes of the slide together.
 - ☐ The other bump factor can be a mismatch on one or the other sides of a bow change. At the tip, this can occur with a loss of bow pressure at the end of the bow. At the frog, it's usually caused by an imbalance in the right hand – the weight should be distributed more towards the pinky side of the bow.
 - ☐ After the first note in measure 45, there is a slight natural rest in the phrase, like a comma in a sentence, of not a full period. When you're choosing articulations this week, be aware also of these little natural breaks in the flow.
- ☐ **Vibrating double-stops:** To gauge the left-hand and arm position for vibrating double-stops, place all four fingers down on the same string (since this week's double-stops start in measure 53, third position on the D string is a good place to start). Vibrate with all four fingers down.

- ☐ Observe the angle of the fingers and the placement of the left arm (which may be further to the right than you'd think). As you pick fingers up off the string to vibrate with the third, second, and first fingers, see if you can maintain that same arm position. Watch out for a tendency to let the arm drift over to the left. This tendency may inhibit your ability to vibrate the double-stops.
- ☐ **And now for some octaves:** Use the principle above to start practicing the octaves at measure 71. Make sure your hand and arm position are adequate to vibrate the octaves.
 - ☐ Then work on minimizing the number of times you move the hand in this passage. The hand doesn't need to move, for example, between the E-flat and F octaves in measure 73 – the fingers just slide up and back. It doesn't even really need to move for the D octave, either. So that's three octaves in a single hand position.
 - ☐ In the same way, you only need a single shift down to first position to reach both the C and B-flat octaves. Make sure to move the arm over to the right to make room.
 - ☐ The same applies for most of measure 74. Once you reach the G octave, all the octaves can be accomplished by sliding the fingers. There's really nowhere for the thumb to go, in any case!

for more...

[Octaves](#)

KREISLER:

- ☐ **Oh hi markings:** The Scherzo provides ample opportunities to interpret how the various dots and lines over notes are to be played. Of course, these markings vary from piece to piece and composer to composer, so you'll have to decide how to play them based on context.
 - ☐ Though the first two notes of the movement are dotted, you may not find it stylistically appropriate to play them as short as the following similarly marked notes. The same applies to the first two notes of the second measure – it may not be necessary to let the bow leave the string.

- ☐ The eighth note passage starting in the third measure could definitely be played off the string, but it may be desirable to play more on the string as the run increases in dynamic. Keep these interpretive decisions in mind throughout this movement.

for more...

[Spiccato; Bouncing Bow Strokes](#) (WO4)

- ☐ **Three-note chords:** In order to keep the scherzo character of the movement, the chords starting in measure 10 should probably not be rolled in general. Instead, keep the bow on the level of the middle of the three notes, with a contact point of 4 or so, a lot of bow, and a good amount of weight to play the three notes simultaneously.
- ☐ In the transition back to tempo, put the energy into the eighth notes instead of accentuating the quarter notes.

for more...

[Dont #1](#)

- ☐ **Two more special techniques:** The technique of playing a line against an open-string drone is made a little more complicated in this piece by the fact that the drone is sometimes the upper of the two strings.
- ☐ In this case, as in measure 26, the fingers will need to be at a steep angle, and it helps to cover a fifth with the fingers on an unplayed lower string.
- ☐ Measure 30 is a place where you'll really need to bring your left arm over to the right in order to avoid hitting the upper string with the fingers. For contact point and other bow concerns, prioritize the lower string. If that makes the open A string sound a little shallow, it's a worthwhile trade-off.
- ☐ The left-hand pizzicato in measure 22 is difficult to sound in the best of circumstances. The fingers will have to be quite steep to keep them off the G string, and the fourth finger should be in place and ready to pluck in advance.