

WEEK 4 PRACTICE PLAN

Repertoire:	Movement:
Ysaÿe Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, "Ballade"	Pickup to line 14 - line 26
Bruch Scottish Fantasy	Tanz (II): mm. 19 - 71
Kreisler Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6	Scherzo: mm. 42 - 71

[Click here for marked parts](#)

[Click here for this week's videos](#)

YSAÿE:

- ☐ **Smoooooooooth:** The way the double-stops are written in this piece, it's almost always possible to allow the fingers to move smoothly from one to the next.
 - ☐ For instance, in the first measure of line 14, make sure the second finger slides up smoothly from C to C#. Then the second finger can slide up again in the exchange shift between the tritone and the sixth.
 - ☐ There's another exchange shift in the same measure from E to F. For any of these exchange shifts, you can accelerate the feeling of smoothness by practicing them quickly back and forth in isolation, moving the fingers but not the thumb.
 - ☐ Move the fingers in advance and slide whenever possible in these passages. Spend more time on slow practice with these double-stops than you might normally – it's important to build the smoothness in early if you want it to work at tempo.
- ☐ **Isn't it chromatic:** The passage on the 19th line, at its essence, is a chromatic scale involving a series of exchange shifts.
 - ☐ Practice this first without the fourth finger, just focusing on the exchange shifts between the first and second. Add the fourth finger when you feel comfortable enough with the shifts. This is another good foundational technique with application in lots of other repertoire.

- ☐ **Super Marpeggios:** Though the arpeggios on line 21 are fairly conventional, it's worth noting that, as above, they still depend primarily on exchange shifts.
 - ☐ The second measure of line 21 involves reaching back instead of shifting, so make sure the second finger is in place on the G before the fourth finger lifts.
 - ☐ The arpeggios starting two beats before line 23 are a little different than normal arpeggios. If the descending ones don't sound as smooth as the ascending, it's likely a matter of the fingers not getting over early enough, coupled with the bow not moving as smoothly in that direction.
 - ☐ Also note that for the tritone figure on line 24, the finger pattern remains the same throughout.

for more...

[Arpeggios](#)

BRUCH:

- ☐ **To find the string, or not to find the string:** This movement contains several different flavors of off-the-string stroke. The first one occurs with the quarter notes at the first entrance, in measure 19. For these, try to "catch" the string for each one, as opposed to just rebounding off the string (for practice purposes, you can leave out the double-stops for now).
 - ☐ In contrast, there won't be enough time to find the string for the eighth notes starting at rehearsal [B]. The fingers of the right hand are the key here – instead of letting the arm do the work, find the correct double-stop level between the two strings with the arm and let the fingers alternate between the two from there. Make sure you do this even in your slow practice, so that the technique is baked in by the time you play it up to tempo.
 - ☐ The similar stroke at measure 56 will be quite low in the bow – a little below the middle at tempo – in order to get the appropriate bite. The bow hair will barely leave the string, and the stick will be directly over the hair.
 - ☐ In measure 58, although the notes have dots, don't worry about letting the bow leave the string here. You'll get more style with the bow on the string.

for more...

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

- ☐ **Double-stops and fingering:** At measure 19, since the stroke is largely off the string, you'll have to set each double-stop before the bow arrives. For example, since the second and third double-stops occur after a shift, you'll want to be in position before the bow touches the string for the second.
- ☐ Get in the habit of setting the fingers in advance early in your work on this section, so it will be second nature at tempo.
- ☐ At rehearsal [B], practice the passage in double-stops without the alternating strings at first.
- ☐ At measure 62, as at measure 19, set the double-stops in advance of the bow. Many of these chords contain fifths, so get used to covering those with a single finger whenever you can.
- ☐ Note the fingering in measure 67 and 69 – it's a little unorthodox, shifting up for the sforzando and then leaning the fingers back for the very next third.

for more...

[Double-Stops](#) (WO8)

- ☐ **Quick scales and arpeggios:** The key to the scales in measure 36 is setting the fingers in advance. Practice them like the sprints in the scale book, setting the fingers in the right pattern for every group. Then chain the groups together. Note that for the very first grouping, the third finger will have to move back by a half step for its second appearance.
- ☐ There are only two shifts in the ascending scale if you're using the marked fingerings. Practice in groups – up to the first shift, from the first shift to the second, and then the ending after the second shift. Importantly, make sure to practice the end with no delay into the bow change.
- ☐ It's useful to practice the arpeggios, starting in measure 31, from the end and working backward. Playing them fast and smoothly involves getting into every position early enough.

- ☐ For the triplets at measure 26 and measure 34, place an accent on the first note.

for more...

[Arpeggios](#)

KREISLER:

- ☐ **Spiccato coordination:** In a slurred or détaché passage, it's the left hand that controls the timing: the note changes when a finger of the left hand drops or lifts. But with spiccato, there's time to place the appropriate finger while the bow is off the string; hence, it's the right hand that controls the timing. So it's the job of the left hand to prepare early in these passages.
- ☐ One way to practice a section like measure 56 is by playing détaché, but placing the fingers early as you would with spiccato.
- ☐ Finger placement in advance is especially important in spiccato passages involving double-stops, such as at measure 52 – the main cause of messiness in these passages is that the left hand is slightly late in placing one or both notes of the double-stop.

for more...

[Spiccato coordination](#) (YouTube); [The Goldilocks method](#) (YouTube)

- ☐ **Ricochet chords:** Success with the off-the-string chords starting at measure 42 depends on a slightly different set of three bow variables than usual.
- ☐ Start by practicing the stroke on a single open string, with the bow stick directly above the hair. Use a part of the bow that will allow it to bounce quickly; which is to say, more or less in the middle.
- ☐ The height of the bounce will be quite high above the string, probably between four and six inches above; you'll really throw the bow at the string from there.
- ☐ The second factor is contact point. For this, experiment with three open strings at first. If the sound is too sul ponticello-ish, move the bow away from the bridge. If it's too crunched and noisy, move it towards the bridge.

- ☐ The final variable here is bow speed. If the sound you're getting is too small, use more bow while dropping it from the same height. If it's not focused enough, use less bow.

for more...

[Violin ricochet stroke: The Way of the Fist](#) (YouTube)

- ☐ **Fingering with triple-stops:** For optimum triple-stops, like the ones at measure 42, covering fifths wherever possible is the key.
 - ☐ For instance, for the first triple-stop in measure 42, use your second finger to cover both the F and the B-flat on the lower string. The B-flat won't be audible, of course, because the fourth finger will also be down.
 - ☐ In the same way, you can also cover a fifth with the first finger at the start of measure 43. This is a good habit to get into, and will transfer well to all sorts of other repertoire.