

WEEK 6 PRACTICE PLAN

Repertoire:	Movement:
Ysaÿe Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, "Ballade"	End of line 32 - line 45
Bruch Scottish Fantasy	Tanz (II): m. 137 - end
Kreisler Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6	Scherzo: m. 103 - end

[Click here for marked parts](#)

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

YSAÿE:

- ☐ **Make it make sense:** This week's material contains a lot of 32nd notes, and there's just a lot going on in general. So you'll have to find ways to make all of this comprehensible to the listener.
 - ☐ Starting in the second measure of line 32, it's the **top line that should be most audible**. Lean a little on these upper notes, and feel free to take a little time with them, de-emphasizing slightly the lower voices and the notes that serve more as fillers between the notes of the melody.
 - ☐ Starting on line 34, the tonality can be a bit hard to define. In general, **the harmony changes with every measure, but the phrases tend to be two measures long**. So let those distinctions guide how you shape this section.
 - ☐ The fortissimo at **the end of line 41 is the real arrival point for this section**. Although there's a mezzoforte marked on line 38, you can pace the journey from piano on line 32 to fortissimo on line 41 a little more proportionally. Use the "full bow" markings to help you take a bit of time during this sequence.
 - ☐ As before, lean on the upper note of the double-stops on line 40, which constitute the main melodic line.
-  This type of planning can just as easily be done away from the instrument as with it! Make whatever markings are helpful to let you know what's important in this section.

- ☐ **Quick and smooth slurs:** Smoothness in the slurred figures starting on line 34 is going to rely on a combination of two factors: getting the bow to the next string in advance and placing fingers in advance.
 - ☐ For the bow, you'll know you're getting caught up if you find yourself moving the bow to the next string quickly to catch up, trying to make up the difference with the right hand. Instead, use the "elevator" of the arm to bring you where you need to be.
 - ☐ The fingers will need to move in advance too. For instance, by the time you reach the open G at the beginning of line 34 with the bow, the first and second fingers should already be in place. In the second measure of that line, place the fingers so they cover the sixths. And in the second measure of line 35, place the first and fourth fingers simultaneously.
 - ☐ Throughout this section, after you've done some initial slow practice to figure out where the fingers and bow need to go, practice small sections quickly, aiming for smoothness in the gesture. Build up some quick bits that can then be chained together.

for more...

[String Crossings](#) (RTR)

- ☐ **Sixths and tenths redux:** At the end of line 40 there are some more sixths and tenths, though this time it's mostly tenths. As before, find the sixth first and then reach with the first and fourth finger for the tenth.
 - ☐ As is always the case in passages like this, it's important to keep track of which intervals are major and which are minor. In any sequence of two double-stops, focus on the finger that moves further – for instance, the first finger moving by a whole step from G to F in the last measure of line 40.
 - ☐ Practice this type of passage at a "mezzo" dynamic. This will ensure comfort and a good sound quality. It will also likely result in a medium bow pressure, so you can focus on the contact point you want without overplaying.

for more...

[Building Tenths from the Ground Up](#) (WO11)

BRUCH:

- ☐ **Liquid left hand, part 1:** The end of this movement relies heavily on an easily flowing left hand, like water bubbling over rocks in a highland (or lowland) stream. This kind of liquid left hand relies on all the fingers being available.
 - ☐ Take the triplet figure in measure 138 as an example. Find a position with the left arm such that all four fingers are available to be on the string at once. This is the position you'll need to be in, with the first finger down, after the open A string.
 - ☐ The same applies for the triplet figure in measure 140 – after the shift, you'll have to find an arm position that allows all four fingers to be placed on the string. This might mean making room with the left arm, bringing it further to the right.
 - ☐ Also pay attention to how much pressure you're using with the fingers, and only use as much as is absolutely necessary. A trill exercise can help establish the amount of pressure necessary for articulation, without too much noise of the fingers audibly striking the string.
 - ☐ In measure 153, you'll have to synchronize the bow with the lifting and dropping of the fingers. Kreutzer etude #10 can help even out the speed of the three kinds of note changes (i.e., lifting fingers, dropping fingers, and string crossing).
 - ☐ For a passage like the one at measure 179, practice quickly, position by position, ignoring the shifts.

for more...

[Trill Drill \(1/3\)](#) (YouTube); [Kreutzer 1, 10, and 34](#) (WO22)

- ☐ **Liquid left hand, part 2:** Now, it's time to add shifting to the liquid left hand concept. This happens right away at the entrance in measure 137, with a same-finger slide. The left hand will release just enough to shift smoothly, and don't feel you need to rearticulate the second note with the bow.
 - ☐ For the shifts involved in this section, the position of the first finger is of paramount importance (see measures 179-181) – don't lift it from the string

unless you absolutely have to. Even as you're shifting during rests, as in measure 144, keep the first finger on the string to shift.

- ☐ Also, don't shy away from using same-finger slides in passages like this. And remember that it's the bow that creates the interest in this type of shift, whether you come away a bit or grow during the slide.

for more...

[Introduction to Shifting](#)

- ☐ **Transition to the last movement:** The adagio section that serves as a transition to the third movement should have considerable weight to it, but also maintain a sense of flow. Don't feel you need to take the dynamics too literally; it's easy to end up at one level of intensity when you reach the forte.
 - ☐ The bow should really zing through the slide in measure 216, which means you'll have to save bow on the lower note.
 - ☐ For the (vocally styled) slide in measure 219, you'll want concentration on the first note, which means a slower bow. Then you'll be able to speed the bow up through the diminuendo.
 - ☐ The main goal in this section is to maximize the resistance you can get on each string, and find the places where that makes the most sense (the beginning of this section is one of them). From there, you'll be able to figure out where you're able to let off somewhat – for example, in measure 217, you're up on the E string, and you'll want bow speed rather than pressure, returning to resistance for the slide in measure 219.

for more...

[The Three Bow Variables](#)

KREISLER:

- ☐ **Spiccato, off and on:** The end of this piece contains a fair amount of spiccato, so to begin with, review the [Spiccato off and on](#) video. This will get you thinking about the relationship between on-the-string and off-the-string strokes, and hopefully disabuse you of the idea that there is only one "correct" spiccato stroke.

- ☐ In this section of the piece, for any place you want an off-the-string stroke, play it first on the string, getting it as close to the desired character as you can. That way, you'll get an idea of where the bow placement should be when you're ready to take the stroke off the string.
- ☐ For example, at measure 103, to achieve a menacing character, you'll likely find yourself in the lower part of the bow, so that's where the off-string version of the stroke should be, too.
- ☐ This approach even works for the ricochet chords at measure 119 – play them on the string first, slurring instead of ricocheting, and you'll get a good idea of how much bow you'll use and where the contact point is for the ricochet.
- ☐ The closer you can get to tempo with this type of practice, the more accurate you can be about the bow variables for the off-string version.

for more...

[Spiccato off and on](#) (YouTube); [The Three Bow Variables](#)

- ☐ **The most important thing is ti...MING! Ti-timing.:** Since this piece is unaccompanied, you have free reign as to the pacing throughout. So there are some decisions to be made regarding timing, especially in this last section.
 - ☐ The fermata at measure 127 is a big moment, so how should you lead into it? Will you just run into it full-tilt, or emphasize every successive *forzando* leading up to it? And how long should the last note of measure 126 be? These are all considerations worth experimenting with.
 - ☐ There's obviously a transition in sound at measure 131, going from *forte* to *piano*, but does that also necessitate a transition in time? And should the transitions be sudden, or gradual? Also, does the repetition of the motive call for a change in timing or emphasis?
 - ☐ The section at measure 139 is probably a good candidate for *not* taking any time. Also, there's a *senza accelerando* marked in measure 147, but leading up to that point, a little acceleration wouldn't go amiss.

- ☐ **Double-stops and double harmonics:** The double-stops at measure 147 are nothing you haven't encountered before – just remember that since the stroke is spiccato, you should place the fingers in advance while the bow is off the string.
 - ☐ The first double harmonic in measure 150 is the trickiest; you'll have to cover fifths between both the first and fourth fingers simultaneously, with a fifth between the fingers. Again, remember to set the hand before the bow arrives.
 - ☐ For the last double harmonic, lean more onto the E string and let the natural harmonic take care of itself.
 - ☐ The double up-bows in measure 149 should carry you into the lower part of the bow, which is the easiest place to play the harmonics. Also, use a medium bow pressure and relatively flat bow hair to get them to speak.