WEEK 11 PRACTICE PLAN

Repertoire:	Movement:
Ysaÿe Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, "Ballade"	Complete
Bruch Scottish Fantasy	**Finale (IV):** mm. 61 - 140
Kreisler Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6	Complete

Click here for marked parts
Click here for this week's videos

YSAŸE:

- ☐ **Famous trouble spot #1:** The first spot in the piece to focus on this week is the beginning of the allegro, specifically lines 10 and 11.
    - ☐ Play through the beginning of the allegro on the slow side. Use your desired phrasing and play the accents as they're marked. Any time you notice something "extra" in the sound, be it scratchiness, extra effort, or whatever, diagnose the problem and play it again.

        💡The idea is to **listen with your most critical ear to sound quality**, having already built some continuity in the previous weeks. This is the kind of granular work some people do at the beginning of learning a piece, but it can be more useful toward the end, when you've already developed some ease and awareness of the gestures.

        🤾For the moment, focus on sound quality and not pitch, unless something is really egregious. You can do another pass specifically for pitch after you've spent some time on sound quality.

    - ☐ Once you get through lines 10 and 11, play through again using the same process. Are you stopping for the same things this time, or different ones (or nothing)?
- ☐ **Famous trouble spot #2:** The next place to focus on this week is lines 25 through 29, which all revolve around the same technique.

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- ☐ A good approach for this section is fingering both strings involved while only playing one – in tempo, if possible. Do this for both lines. Among other things, this will help isolate the pitch of each line.

  🤌The even bigger benefit is to let you know if a finger is moving at the wrong time. You'll also be able to tell if a finger on one string is interfering with the sounding of the other string.

- ☐ **Famous trouble spot #3:** The third trouble spot for this week is from the second measure of line 51 to the end.

  - ☐ The alternation of double-stops with open strings in this passage can be tricky, since it involves having to shift without being able to hear the shift. The way to solve this problem is to just practice the slides, removing the open strings from the equation.

    - ☐ This will give you more of a frame of reference when you reintroduce the open strings.

  - ☐ For the shift up into line 51, you can keep the finger down on the E string for some added reference.

  - ☐ For the tenths starting on line 51, remember to keep in mind which finger moves further when applicable.

for more...

Finishing a piece (WO15)

BRUCH:

- ☐ **Scales and slides:** Measure 61 is a variation on what the orchestra has just played. Practice this passage slowly at first, reinforcing your desired phrasing.

  - ☐ Note that Nathan more or less ignores the staccato markings in measure 64. If you'd rather play the dots, hook the third and fourth sixteenth notes of the measure to stay in the lower half.

  - ☐ For the scalar passage starting in measure 65, the smoothness of the figure in first position (measure 66) is what you're aiming for throughout, even

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when shifting is involved. Phrase toward the top of these figures and then relax on the way down. This will be a matter of bow distribution, of course.

- ☐ For the shifts, allow the fingers to be more flat than upright on the string to facilitate smoothness. Also, isolating these exchange shifts and alternating between the two notes involved can help smooth things out.

- ☐ For the bigger slides, as in measure 74, make sure to feel and hear the moment of arrival, and match that moment to the start of the vibrato.

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The Three Bow Variables; Introduction to Shifting

- ☐ **Revenge of singing double-stops:** The singing double-stops at the pickup to measure 86 are familiar material, but this time they're in a more remote key.

  - ☐ It may take some getting used to for the hand to conform to these familiar double-stops in an unfamiliar key, so go slowly here at first.

  - ☐ The passage at the pickup to measure 99 is even nastier. The left arm may need to be a little further over to the right to make sure the fingers on the lower string (especially the fourth finger) don't interfere with the upper string.

  - ☐ In the chordal interjections after rehearsal [G], be sure to cover fifths wherever you can. At the end of measure 110, place the first finger on the F in advance, in anticipation of the octave.

for more...

Singing Double-Stops (WO16)

- ☐ **...And this is fast:** The section from rehearsal [H] to rehearsal [K] contains a few different technical challenges, from arpeggios to quick scales to octaves – all of which are fast.

  - ☐ At rehearsal [H], put some shaping into it, even while you're practicing slowly. As above, Nathan disregards the staccato dots in favor of the energy of playing on the string.

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- ☐ In this section, there should always be a finger down for reference – for instance, the first finger on the B-flat at the pickup to measure 123.

  ⚖️The fast scales in measures 128 and 129 will require setting multiple fingers at once and peeling them off quickly (see Scales: The Road to Repertoire for some advice on scale sprints). And with some shaping of the phrase, this can sound even faster.

  😅Measure 130 may look difficult, but it's really just a matter of same-finger slides.

  🤘In measure 133, set the fourth finger before articulating it to begin the downward scale. The same applies in measure 138.

for more...

Example Scale Routines (RTR)

KREISLER:

- ☐ **Harmonic structure week, part 1:** This week's first assignment is a rough harmonic analysis of the first page, which is solidly in d minor overall. You'll be looking for sections that depart from d minor, which will inform your shaping of the Recitativo.
  - ☐ Measures 4 through 9 allude to and eventually end up in a tonality centered around A, as you'd expect for a piece in d minor. Interpretationally, this means this section will have more tension than the opening of the piece.
  - ☐ Starting in measure 15, the tonality revolves around E-flat major, the Neapolitan, for a few measures, culminating in the highest register on the page. This dramatic stint in E-flat then leads back to A, the dominant
    - ☐ You'll want to take the resolutions at the beginnings of measures 15, 16, and 17 into account for reasons of pacing, as well as the climax in measure 18.
  - ☐ The deceptive cadence leading to D-flat major in measure 22 is also significant – it's surprising not only harmonically but texturally.

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- ☐ **Harmonic structure week, part 2:** The Scherzo is also relatively easy to understand harmonically. It begins in the relative major of the recitativo, F major, before cadencing in g minor in measure 18.
    - ☐ The g minor tonality lasts until measure 26, arriving in A major. These two sections, in combination, enforce the original key of d minor (measure 34).
    - ☐ F major returns in measure 50. It's also worth looking ahead to confirm that the piece actually ends in F major as well.
    - ☐ D minor returns in measure 71, followed by e minor, A major (measure 103), and d minor again – an overall i - ii - V - i progression. As a final surprise, F major returns in measure 127 and stays through the end of the piece.
- ☐ **Harmonic structure week, part 3:** This awareness of the harmonic structure will inform how you lead your listeners through the various arrivals and departures of the piece. This will start with the quality of the off-the-string strokes.
    - ☐ For example, the beginning of the Scherzo is surprising both in harmony and texture. For this reason, it won't do to follow the heavy ending of the Recitativo with a heavy, aggressive stroke. For this purpose you'll use a contact point further from the bridge and stay relatively close to the string.
        - ☐ Keep in mind the unpredictability and asymmetry in the accents in this section.
    - ☐ Conversely, the return to d minor in measure 42 does indicate a return to heaviness in the bow stroke. Also feel free to stretch the tempo in this section.
    - ☐ As you go through the rest of the key areas in the movement, it's important to decide how to arrive in each – whether you'll lean in or relax. For instance, the arrival in g minor in measure 18 could easily justify taking a little time there. And for measure 34's d-minor arrival, a diminuendo into piano, be sure to change the sound.

for more...

The Three Bow Variables; Bouncing Bow Strokes (WO4)

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