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# In Search of a Lost Language: Performing in Early-Recorded Style in Viola and String Quartet Repertoires

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# In Search of a Lost Language:

# Performing in Early-Recorded Style in Viola and String Quartet Repertoires

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The following work presented for this thesis contains, to the best of my knowledge, no material previously published or written by another person, nor submitted for the award of any other degree at this or any other university, except where due reference is made in the text.

This dissertation is written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree program docARTES of the Orpheus Institute and Leiden University. The remaining precondition consists of a demonstration of the research and its findings in the form of a lecture-performance.

## Table of Contents


| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 5 |
| 1) The Role of the Performer | 18 |
| 2) Recorded Sound and Recording Technique | 49 |
| 3) Early-Recorded Viola Analyses | 65 |
| 4) Early-Recorded String Quartet Analyses | 145 |
| 5) Developing an Early-Recorded Performance Style: Approach and Recorded Output | 175 |
| 6) Conclusion | 212 |
| List of Works and Recordings Cited | 226 |
| Appendix of Audio Materials and Annotated Scores | 238 |
| Summary | 244 |
| Samenvatting | 246 |
| Curriculum Vitae | 249 |
| Acknowledgements | 250 |

## Introduction

I first came across Lionel Tertis's recording of Benjamin Dale's *Romance* for viola and piano when I was a young viola student at the Conservatoire. What I heard at the time spoke to me more deeply than the performances of well-loved contemporary viola players I had heard in concert or on record. This marked the beginning of a period of dedicated listening to early recordings, and as a result, I carefully began imitating some of the things I heard in those performances. My sentiments about these early recordings, however, were not shared by my teachers, competition and exam juries, and later in my professional life, my colleagues. I was encouraged to conform to modern standards of performance, but from my perspective, I was tapping into our collective heritage of musical performance by imitating early recordings. Hence, I was reluctant to dismiss out of hand the practices of earlier generations that I found to be so compelling.

What I came to understand is that the negative reactions to my adoption of early-recorded performance styles from the 1880s to mid-1930s were the result of a profound incompatibility between this style and the underlying ideologies of today's Western Art Music performance.[1] These ideologies direct performers to adhere to the notated detail, time and structure of musical works, which, in combination with other textual-historical traces, are understood to disclose the enigmatic 'intentions of the composer.' Performers are expected to convey their professionalism by putting these ideologies into practice while demonstrating their technical proficiency. These ideologies, however, are so restrictive that they deter many forms of experimentation with canonic WAM repertoires, including adopting the approaches heard on early recordings. This is because these recordings capture numerous stylistic elements that are uncomfortable or confrontational for many contemporary musicians, as they evidence a performance ideology that was much less predicated upon adherence to the score and technical proficiency. As such, musicians in my immediate environment have described early-recorded performances as 'sloppy,' 'out-of-tune,' 'random,' and most commonly, 'charming but one cannot perform like that nowadays.' This last observation in particular has always fascinated me and has led me to ask: who is invested with the right to object to our use of these performance styles today, and why? And most importantly, by studying early-recorded style, what can we learn about our present culture of musical performance?

Philosopher Hubert L. Dreyfus describes our understanding of our own cultural context as necessarily limited by our immersion within that context: "Our understanding

[1] From here on referred to as WAM.

of our being is never fully accessible since 1) it is embodied in skills [and] 2) we dwell in our understanding like fish in water."[2] This insight can be aptly applied to contemporary musical performance—a set of skills and values in which practitioners are immersed in such an all-encompassing way that they often cannot fully grasp the environment in which they function. This immersion can lead modern performers to overestimate the degree to which their performances are intimate, unique, flexible and spontaneous, qualities that are still highly prized today, while achieving these qualities via strict standards of technical proficiency and score adherence. Defining elements of our current performance practices—elements like clarity, accuracy, structuralism, controlled use of tempo and rhythm, and verticality of ensemble playing—are simply taken for granted until they are juxtaposed with alternative ones, such as those heard on early recordings. Through close listening and analysis of early recordings, I have concluded that the qualities of intimacy, freedom, flexibility and spontaneity are conveyed differently in today's WAM performances as compared to those of the late-1880s to mid-1930s. These earlier performances convey such attributes through a lack of adherence to the notated score, seemingly uncontrolled flexibility of tempo and rhythm, and multi-layering or de-synchronisation of ensemble—all apparently at the discretion of the performers, regardless of the consequences for technical proficiency, intonation, verticality of ensemble and proximity to the notated score. To contemporary ears expecting performances that conform to today's WAM conventions, such characteristics are often interpreted as sloppy, slapdash and reckless. I argue, however, that early-recorded performances often express performers' personal, intimate and creative approaches to a work, resulting in a more moment-to-moment and communicative approach to music-making than that which is commonly heard today. This early-recorded communicative style is likely due to the more wide-ranging possibilities performers had within which to exercise their creativity. Indeed, imagine the kaleidoscope of performance practices that might be heard today if we dispensed with the obligations to follow the letter of the score and display our technical proficiency?

My focus on WAM refers to Western musical repertoires from the 18th to the mid-20th centuries, including both their notated scores and the performances derived from those scores—all of which has been colourfully described by philosopher Lydia

[2] Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-In-The-world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I* (Boston: MIT Press, 1990), 35.

Goehr as "the imaginary museum of musical works."[3] This museum or 'canon' houses the work of composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Johannes Brahms. For my own purposes, however, I deliberately exclude earlier repertoires from WAM's museum, such as the *Violin Sonatas* Op. 5 by Arcangelo Corelli for example, where the score functions as a rough guideline for ornamentation and improvisation. As musicologist Nicholas Cook points out, "Corelli's score is…[a] shared framework within which performers improvise," much like a jazz standard.[4] I also exclude avant-garde works of the 20th and 21st centuries, such as Earle Brown's *December 1952,* where the underlying relationship between a score and a performance is often itself questioned.[5] These exclusions cover a myriad of WAM works where scores function as rough outlines ripe for the creative intervention of performers in the form of composition, extemporisation or various aleatoric processes. My work here is concerned rather with canonic WAM repertoires composed from the mid-18th century until the mid-1930s. It is in performances of these repertoires that modern notions of fidelity to the notated score are most influential.

Score-based performances of such works are central to a broad spectrum of modern WAM practices, whereby performers are expected to literally adhere to notated pitches, rhythms, and expressive indications. For my purposes, this literal adherence is broadly defined as the tendency to treat every instance of notation as a prompt to *do* something and, most importantly, as essential to the work as a whole. Indeed, this meticulous attention to detail is also balanced by the obligation of making notated structure audible—what Cook calls the display of musical structure.[6] This structuralist approach to performance involves the hierarchical shaping of phrases, sections and movements, as well as their constitutive elements, relative to their notated formal significance within the work as a whole—all within a stable temporal framework. Modern performances that embrace this paradigm are said to successfully communicate clarity of line, proportionality and the division of sections within a work, and although early-recorded performances focus more on moment-to-moment attention to detail, like the unfolding of various events within a story, beginning in the late-19th century performers were increasingly encouraged to play in ways that reveal structure as

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[3] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 8.
[4] Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 231.
[5] For more information on *December 1952* see Earle Brown, "Folio and 4 Systems," The Earle Brown Music Foundation (AMP/G. Schirmer, 1954), accessed July 22, 2018, http://www.earle-brown.org/works/view/12.
[6] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 222.

elucidated by theoreticians' formal analyses—from Heinrich Schenker (1868 – 1935) to, more recently, Wallace Berry (1928 – 1991) and his book *Musical Structure and Performance*.[7] Cook calls this the 'page to stage' approach, distinguishing what he calls the Modernist/structuralist approach from the more Romantic/rhetorical one, with the former emphasising larger formal structures and the latter emphasising detailed local ornamentation.[8] Musicologist Daniel Leech-Wilkinson refers to this dichotomy in similar terms, contrasting the more literal and reserved approach of modern performance to the 'emotional-pictorial' playing heard on early recordings, with the latter often including widely-fluctuating tempi, unpredictable localised slowing and rushing (wild rubato), and disregard for notated rhythms, pitches, and expressive indications—all of which can undermine the audibility of notated structure.[9]

The main driver behind the literalist and structuralist performance paradigm underlying WAM's imaginary museum of works is a deep-seated need to convey the ever-ambiguous 'intentions of the composer' as encapsulated by the notated detail and formal arrangement of the score (or, as in the case of historically-informed performance, from both the score and other historical textual sources such as treatises). As a result, a degree of transparency is often expected of today's performers, allowing the composer's intention to supersede their 'ego.' Musicologists Mary Hunter and Stephen Broad summarise what they identify as the three main pillars of this ideology as follows:

> The verbal discourse of classical music quite routinely raises three issues peculiar to…this genre. The first involves the concern to divine from a printed score and then do 'justice' (or 'respect') to the composer's intentions…[testifying] to the fundamental sense of a coherent and ostensibly single intention behind the notation…Secondly, concern about the propriety of the overt intrusion of 'ego' in performance and interpretation is especially acute in classical music…Finally, using the score rather than other media or oral tradition as the primary repository of truth is also particularly characteristic of classical music.[10]

As I will show in later chapters, performing in early-recorded style in many cases runs contrary to these three concerns, all of which are of central importance to current WAM performance practices. Early-recorded performances are often not score-based, by which I mean that if one were to transcribe them, the resulting score would diverge

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[7] Wallace Berry, *Musical Structure and Performance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 10.
[8] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 33, 110.
[9] Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, "Recordings and Histories of Performance Styles," in *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook, Eric Clarke, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 252.
[10] Mary Hunter and Stephen Broad, "Reflection on the Classical Musician: Practice in Cultural Context," in *Musicians in the Making: Pathways to Creative Performance* ed. John Rink, Helena Gaunt and Aaron Williamson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3 - 4.

considerably from that notated by the composer in terms of both detail *and* structure. These performances also often emphasize the individual idiosyncrasies of the player, which is seen today as an overt intrusion of their personality or ego onto the intentions of the composer and the primacy of the score. And finally, using early recordings as the basis for one's performance style means privileging sound and oral tradition over the notated score: an approach that, as musicologist Kai Köpp suggests, may encourage "individual, artistic decision-making in performance."[11]

If our duty today is to be faithful to the 'intentions of the composer,' what better way to reinforce this claim than to believe, as many contemporary performers do, that they have inherited unaltered performing traditions that can be traced back to canonical composers. Pianist and pedagogue Megan Hughes, for example, does just that when she writes that her own musical lineage stretches back to Franz Liszt and Ludwig van Beethoven.[12] This is an appeal to authority meant to convey one's qualities as a teacher and performer, whereas the evidence of early recordings tells us that, given the vast stylistic changes that took place over the course of the 20th century, the notion of an unaltered, inherited performing tradition stretching back to Liszt and Beethoven is a myth. Early recordings demonstrate that composers such as Johannes Brahms, Edward Elgar, Claude Debussy and Igor Stravinsky played their own music in ways that differ widely from our own—challenging claims made by many performers and musicologists that our current approaches to these repertoires are in any way connected with 19th-century composers' expectations, no matter how closely we adhere to their scores.[13] Historical recordings also allow us to examine the performance practices of musicians who made their musical careers in the 19th century, giving us an opportunity to understand the stylistic contexts of many of today's most frequently played works. Indeed, if we truly prize fidelity to 19th-century composers and their works, early recordings suggest that we are under no obligation to continue performing canonic classical works in the score-based ways we do today: an approach that is at odds with the more performer-driven, moment-to-moment and communicative style familiar to many of the composers in our imaginary museum.

As pianist Neal Peres Da Costa has exhaustively illustrated, a significant gap also

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[11] Kai Köpp, forthcoming, "Historischen Interpretationsforschung: Von neuen Quellen zu neuen Methoden," in *Rund um Beethoven. Interpretationsforschung heute,* ed. T. Gartmann and D. Allenbach (Schliengen: Argus, 2019). Translation mine.
[12] Megan Hughes, "Beethoven, Czerny, Leschetitzky, Raab, Lehmann and Me," accessed July 22, 2018, https://meganhughesmusic.com/2011/08/19/beethoven-czerny-leschetizky-raab-lehmann-me/.
[13] Robert Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 140.

exists between modern understandings of textual evidence from the early-20th century and the actual sounding performances captured by historical piano recordings from the period.[14] Much like musical notation, modern interpretation of performance treatises often involves taking these texts literally and prescriptively by translating them into sound within the context of current pianistic performance practices. Just as it is often impossible to recreate a composer's score from repeated listening to an early-recorded piano performance, Da Costa's work proves that it would be just as impossible to arrive at the same sounds we hear on early recordings through the use of treatises alone. There is no reason to assume these gaps would be any smaller where 19th-century string playing is concerned. This dichotomy between texts and recordings also undermines certain claims to historical accuracy made by Historically Informed Performance (HIP)[15] practitioners who must rely on written documentary evidence in order to supplement their understanding of scores. While many HIP musicians now carefully refrain from calling their performances 'authentic,' organist, harpsichordist and conductor Ton Koopman's comments on the issue illustrate that claims of 'accuracy' are still not off limits:

> [J.S.] Bach's own students were not all the same…But they all knew the language of the time, and they were all recognisably students of Bach. When I consider this, I think we have a chance to play more authentically than people sometimes dare to believe: we can learn the language of the time...If I'm found wrong by somebody, I should honestly admit my mistake; and if I still believe that I am right, I should be able to defend my position, both musically and intellectually.[16]

If Koopman's goal is to 'learn the language of the time,' giving him a chance to 'play more authentically,' and if, as he is suggesting, we are able to judge HIP performances on the basis of whether they are 'right or wrong,' then the claim being made here is that some performances are simply more historically accurate than others. Given the substantial gap between current interpretations of turn-of-the-century performance treatises and early-recorded style, however, it strikes me that there is little reason to assume the gap between text and sound would be any smaller when it comes to 18th-century WAM repertoires.

In order for musicians to be successful in today's competitive environment, they are required to demonstrate professional skill to a high degree: in ideological terms, via

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[14] Neal Peres Da Costa, *Performing Practices in Late-Nineteenth-Century Piano Playing: Implications of the Relationships between Written Texts and Early Recordings* (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2001), 429.
[15] From here on referred to as HIP.
[16] Uri Golomb, "Interview with Ton Koopman," September 2003, accessed July 22, 2018, http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Articles/Koopman-Golomb.pdf, 16 – 18.

egoless adherence to the notated score and intentions of the composer as determined by preconceived notions of how a composer's works should sound, and in concrete terms, by displaying a high degree of accuracy with regards to parameters such as tempo, rhythm, intonation, quality of sound, and verticality of ensemble playing. Today, a confluence of ideological and practical requirements weighs so heavily on musicians that, as Cook observes, "modernist assumptions have boxed in performance [while] *different* performance options…have accordingly been ruled out."[17] Such modern standards of professionalism have also been hugely influenced by the sanitized, highly-edited digital recordings that make up the bulk of the music we hear today. By contrast, the more moment-to-moment communicative qualities of early-recorded style, qualities that often sound unprofessional to modern ears, were in large part made possible by the 'live' recording method and lo-fi technology of earlier recording processes, and in particular, by the mid-frequency range focus of the acoustic recording horn, which captures very different aspects of sonic information than modern microphones. Indeed, the ways in which recordings have effected changes in performance style have also recently become an object of study.[18] Early-recorded performers come from a culture where live performances were nearly the only means by which music could be heard, and the practices in which they engage precede the rise of recorded music as the ubiquitous and predominant form of musical consumption that it is today. This leads Cook to observe that early-20th-century recordings tend to sound more like live performances and contemporary live performances tend to sound more like recordings.[19] This means, then, that in order to inhabit early-recorded style today, performers will, to some extent, need to risk their professional reputations in pursuit of a more 'live' manner of playing.

Attempts to explore early-recorded performance style have been few and far between and are frequently limited by performers' and researchers' need to demonstrate their professionalism and skill in the context of current mainstream practices. Many have, as a result, taken what I call a 'pick and choose' approach, stopping well short of fully embracing the musical parameters evidenced by historical recordings. However, because these recordings question current narratives about our own performance practices, and because both personal and professional vulnerability are required in order to perform in early-recorded style, widespread adoption of the stylistic possibilities offered by historical recordings remains unlikely in the short term.

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[17] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 3. Emphasis added.
[18] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 8.
[19] Cook, *Beyond the Score,* 368.

Despite all this, however, what we hear on early recordings has the potential to open up new terrain for modern-day performance practices, allowing different possibilities for how WAM might sound to take shape. An early-recordings-derived performance style can allow musicians today to explore and express canonic works differently, in a style that is communicative on a moment-to-moment level, and that is more intimate, personal, and deeply connected with performer creativity. A few performer-scholars have used early recordings in such an all-encompassing manner, copying them in a way that is as informed and accurate as possible given their aims and the constraints of time (especially pianists Anna Scott and Sigurd Slåttebrekk).[20] I call this the 'all-in' approach, which results in fundamentally altering the way familiar musical repertoires sound while also challenging prevailing assumptions about our knowledge, beliefs and roles as WAM performers. Resistance to this approach is based on the view that it represents a hopeless attempt to either resurrect obsolete historical performance styles or escape the high standards of modern musical performance. The goal of the all-in approach, however, is not to 'resurrect' past performing styles but rather to use those styles to make music in an alternative and more personalised fashion; to focus on communicative, moment-to-moment music-making rather than on high technical standards (though, as discussed in Chapter Five, the 'all-in' approach itself presents significant technical challenges for the modern performer). I call this the 'all-in' approach, which results in fundamentally altering the way familiar musical repertoires sound, while also challenging prevailing assumptions about our knowledge, beliefs and roles as WAM performers. While selectivity is difficult if not impossible to avoid in this kind of work, the term 'all-in' is a relative one—referring to a no-holds-barred approach to copying early-recorded evidence as compared to the much looser approach that currently prevails in the field of recordings-informed performance (RIP). Resistance to this approach is based on the view that it represents a hopeless attempt to either resurrect obsolete historical performance styles or escape the high standards of modern musical performance.[21]

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[20] Scott copied recordings made by pianists from Brahms's inner circle and learned to inhabit this performing style in her own playing. See Anna Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms* (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2014). Slåttebrekk copied Grieg's piano recordings and integrated Grieg's performing style into his performances of the composer's piano works, Sigurd Slåttebrekk and Tony Harrison, *Chasing the Butterfly*, 2008, accessed July 25, 2018, http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no.

[21] The 'all-in' approach brings together two seemingly contradictory elements: on one hand, these are copies of highly personalized past performances in which the agency of performers is emphasised over adherence to composers' scores; on the other hand, striving to copy these performances could be seen as an activity that limits the agency of the performer doing the copying. Paradoxically, however, because these past performances are so far removed from the ingrained habits and roles expected of modern performers,

In light of these considerations, I feel that studying early recordings is of vital importance—not just for creating alternative-sounding performances of WAM but also for contextualising our current performance practices. Questioning some of the underlying tenets of these practices will likely lead to changes in our own attitudes to performance, thereby opening up the possibility for performers to change the musical content of their performances in unexpected ways—whether the direction taken is early-recordings-inspired or not. Altering how the WAM museum sounds is of crucial importance to rethinking the role of the performer: to moving away from an egoless, transparent, deferent, score-based and composer-intent-focused mode of music-making, and towards a more performer-driven, moment-to-moment, idiosyncratic and communicative one. This would allow us to re-envision these repertoires beyond the constraints imposed by mainstream performance practices and the pervasiveness of thoroughly-edited modern digital recordings, which have become the authoritative standard against which the professional and interpretive qualities of today's performers are judged.

While pianists have made gains in this direction in solo nineteenth-century keyboard repertoires, it is now necessary for string players to do the same, in both solo *and* chamber performance contexts. The question this project thus aims to answer is: how might viola and string quartet performances in early-recorded style be brought about today? Implementing early-recorded style as a string player involves physical and musical parameters such as portamento, vibrato and intonation, while performing with other musicians (in this case, with a collaborative pianist and string quartet) offers insights into issues such as multi-layeredness and the application of extreme non-score-based practices in group settings—an endeavour viewed by many as impossible and perhaps even fruitless. I am unaware at this stage of another project of this scope in which the 'all-in' approach to copying early-recorded viola solo, duo and string quartet playing has been taken: an approach that aims to create new performances that are recognisably derived from the same expressive language, and that create the same tensions with current norms of performance, as their early-recorded models. In the end, the hope is that these performances, the artistic outputs of this research project, capture a more performer-driven, moment-to-moment, and communicative approach to WAM.

The methods used to create these artistic outputs include carrying out historical

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the all-in approach to copying represents one of the few avenues open to those looking to circumvent such norms.

and biographical research into a selection of early-recorded performers, analysing these performers' recordings using sonic visualization software, creating detailed annotated scores based on the results of these analyses, and then using these scores as aids in the process of copying early-recorded viola solo, viola/piano and quartet performances. This last step also involved adapting my physical approach to performance as well as imparting the 'all-in' copying method to my colleagues in chamber music contexts. Finally, the sonic results of this process were recorded using lo-fi recording methods and technologies similar to those used in earlier acoustic recording processes: an approach whose artistic and technological advantages include the lo-fi microphone's focus on the mid-frequency range of sound (thereby focusing the player's attention on more local, gestural information), the non-transparency of the medium, and the intimate contexts in which acoustic recordings were made. Köpp relates this process to experimental archaeology, where researchers use raw materials and historical techniques in order to construct flint blades. This connects more broadly with what he calls "historical interpretation research," and the act of "studying the sounding past through the decisions of historical performers."[22] In my case, this understanding of the decisions of historical performers is gleaned first from gaining inside knowledge of individual performers' idiosyncratic approaches via copying, and second from contextualizing those approaches in relation to their immediate colleagues and historical contemporaries, also via copying.

The written component of this thesis, however, opens with Chapter One, The Role of the Performer, which reviews relevant literatures establishing the nature of WAM practices today in contrast to the performance styles evidenced by early recordings. Here, I examine the work of musicologists Cook, Leech-Wilkinson and Robert Philip, and philosopher Goehr, focusing on the concepts of mainstream musical practice, musical works, *Werktreue,* and moment-to-moment music-making. I explore the relationship between early recordings and HIP, and reflect on recent experiments in early-recorded performance practice in reference to the work of musicologist Clive Brown and pianists Scott and Slåttebrekk, while elucidating the pitfalls of recordings-inspired performance (RIP). I also reflect on existing literatures dealing with early-recorded viola and string quartet playing through the work of musicologists Brown and Köpp, historian Maurice Riley, violist Heng-Ching Fang and violinist David Milsom, and I explore the role of the performer in 19th- and early-20th-century music-making through the work of Hunter—

[22] Köpp, Forthcoming: "Historischen Interpretationsforschung." Translation mine.

with a particular focus on the concept of *Werktreue* or being 'faithful' to the work or composer in 19th-century contexts. This is all done with a view to establishing a warrant for my analysis and copying of early viola and string quartet recordings as a path towards a more performer-driven, moment-to-moment, and communicative approach to WAM.

Chapter Two, Recorded Sound and Recording Technique, discusses current mainstream hi-fi recording practices, critiquing them in light of the work of Cook and media philosopher Marshall McLuhan. This discussion focuses on how contemporary paradigms can work against the 'all-in' copying approach on both artistic and technological levels. I then examine the possible artistic and technological advantages of lo-fi recording technology through the work of engineer Andrew Simpson and recording engineer Geoffrey Miles in order to establish a warrant for the lo-fi recording approach adopted in my own artistic outputs. As part of my investigation into how recording techniques and recorded music itself impact performance practices, I chose to make experimental lo-fi recordings for these outputs using a mid-frequency-capturing microphone that mimics historical acoustic recording processes and that focuses the player's attention on local gestural information, all while engaging with the recording process in a more 'live-recorded' setting, similar to that encountered by the early-recorded performers I copy. I suggest that a rethinking of today's predominant WAM recording paradigm can yield creative and unexpected results.

Chapter Three, Early-Recorded Viola Analyses, examines all violists active pre-1930 who were recorded in either a solo capacity or with piano accompaniment, and reflects upon the stylistic relationships between them. Recordings by Oskar Nedbal, Léon Van Hout, Arthur Post, and Lionel Tertis are analysed and compared in detail here—including recordings that are as yet unpublished, unavailable and unknown to the wider musical community—and the relationship between early-recorded violists and singers is also discussed. This analytical and comparative work suggests a great distance between current and early-recorded practices, while also being later used as the basis both for my copying of early viola solo and viola/piano recordings, and for my extrapolating of this style to other works for which no early-recorded examples exist. Chapter Four, Early-Recorded String Quartet Analyses, then presents in-depth analyses and comparisons of historical string quartet recordings, including those of the earliest commercially-recorded quartet, the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet, as well as other prominent turn-of-the-century ensembles such as the Klingler Quartet, the Brüder-Post Quartett and the Czech String Quartet. These analyses demonstrate the wide-ranging

diversity that was typical within the context of early-recorded style, and this too serves as the basis for my eventual copying of diverse approaches, with a view to exploring their integration in chamber music contexts today.

In Chapter Five, Developing an Early-Recorded Performance Style: Approach and Recorded Output, I first examine the bodily and instrumental parameters of my own performance practice in relation to that of the early-recorded era. I then describe this project's recorded artistic outputs, noting their aims, findings, and observable connections between my own performances and their early-recorded models. These outputs include 27 recordings of solo viola, viola/piano, and string quartet works by canonical as well as lesser-known composers from Johann Sebastian Bach to Benjamin Dale. The majority of these recordings are copies of early-recorded performances, and the rest are wholly original extrapolations from early-recorded style. Most importantly, however, while this project is positioned within wider philosophical, historical, and musicological discussions as briefly outlined above and as discussed in detail in Chapter One, its main objectives and outcomes should be viewed through the lens of my own performance practice as a viola player. Because I am the subject of musical experimentation here, this study and analysis of historical recordings is undertaken not to describe these traces as fixed artefacts, but rather with the intention of exploring them from the inside out in order to influence my own performance practice. The final chapter, Conclusion, then reflects upon the outcomes of this project and discusses the future of early-recordings-inspired performance and its relationship to wider musical, cultural and political trends.

Creating performances in early-recorded style allows us to perform familiar musical works differently, focusing on more moment-to-moment communicative aspects of music-making while leaving behind concerns for notationally-, historically- or professionally-correct playing. This offers the possibility of opening up an alternative performance practice for WAM—a 'de-museumification' in both sound and ideology—giving musicians the opportunity to fundamentally change their relationships with instruments, scores, composers and audiences. A realignment of these relationships within early-recordings-inspired performance style, grounded in thorough analysis and practice, can create the foundations necessary for wider acceptance of a de-museumified approach to performance. My hope is that the performance practices I inhabit will one day be met with understanding rather than derision. After all, we may be surprised by

what we can learn about ourselves and about contemporary musical cultures when these are held up to the mirror provided by the sounding past.

## 1) The Role of the Performer

### 1.1) Introduction

The role that performers take on when approaching the WAM canon has changed from the dawn of recording up to the present day. While early-recorded performers often sound as though they are aiming at personalised performances of musical works, many contemporary performers adhere to a performance style that places them at the service of preconceived notions of how musical works should sound. In general terms, early recordings evidence a musical culture in which performers were given a central role in realizing musical works, while many contemporary performances are interchangeable, evidencing a culture in which performers are at times viewed as at best transparent and at worst immaterial. This is why I argue for an 'all-in' approach to copying early recordings as a means of achieving an alternative performance style unencumbered by the restrictive ideologies of today's mainstream performance practices (MSPs).[23] These contemporary ideologies include the views that musical works are Platonic objects that exist in-and-of-themselves and separately from their performances, that performers must be true to the letter of these works and by extension to the intentions of their composers (*Werktreue*), and that performers should display their professionalism via a 'neat and tidy' approach to realizing the notation of these intention-laden works which, in the worst case, entails mechanically following directions laid out in the score. In string playing, this generally results in MSPs characterized by adherence to notated detail and agreed-upon understandings of how specific repertoires should sound, making notated structure audible where detail is subordinate to form, a hierarchical and stable approach to rhythm where pulse is perceptible, togetherness of ensemble, clarity of articulation, precision of intonation, and abstaining from individualistic mannerisms such as ornamentation and portamento. This is not to say that all MSPs are exactly alike, however, as evidenced by the (extraordinarily subtly) varied ways in which this approach is applied in mainstream, historically-informed (HIP) and recordings-inspired (RIP) performance spheres alike.

[23] The abbreviation MSPs is used in reference to both mainstream performance practices and mainstream performances throughout.

Instead of dismissing the conception of *Werktreue* on which contemporary MSPs are built, however, I make an unconventional turn by suggesting that an alternative to MSPs can be achieved by resurrecting *Werktreue's* 19th-century practical realities as evidenced by early recordings. Indeed, while 19th-century performers too were expected to be faithful to scores and the intentions of composers, they demonstrated their deference and skill via highly personalised approaches characterised by the alteration of notated detail and structure, wild rhythmic flexibility, dislocation (or un-togetherness of ensemble), and frequent use of ornamentation and portamento. In other words, they too were beholden to the ideology of *Werktreue*, but achieved radically different sounding outcomes to their modern counterparts: outcomes driven by notions of performer centrality.

Performers today can attempt to inhabit the 19th-century practical realities of *Werktreue* by creating performances that sound like those of their early-recorded colleagues. As early-recorded performances are not restricted by the ideologies of today's MSPs, taking an all-in approach to copying them circumvents many of the predominant characteristics of today's prevailing practices. However, if performers 'pick-and-choose' only those elements of early-recorded performances that suit current ideologies and restrictions, the outcomes will not offer a substantive alternative to current practices and will ultimately not end up resembling early-recorded style. The likely reason some of today's performers take a pick-and-choose approach is that they are ensnared by practices of which they are unaware. As Hubert L. Dreyfus argues, we are immersed in our cultural context and therefore have a limited understanding of its practices.[24] Leech-Wilkinson, too, suggests that normative behaviour in WAM "has become internalized, usually to the extent that it is no longer recognized as a defined, stylized practice but is simply taken as natural."[25]

Hence, it is crucial to understand how we are embedded in MSPs before attempting to create alternative performance practices, so as not to end up picking and choosing only those elements suitable to current tastes.

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[24] Dreyfus, *Being-In-The-World*, 35.
[25] Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance: The Book*, chapter 10, "Normativities," 2019, https://challengingperformance.com/the-book-10/, accessed September 22, 2019.

## 1.2) MSP Ideology and Practice

### 1.2.1) Musical Works as Platonic Objects

Many performers today see musical works as objects-in-themselves, believing, in other words, that they are located somewhere other than in their particular performances. Nicholas Cook argues that seeing musical works as unchanging eternal forms, an approach he calls Platonic philosophical-musicology, largely dictates the role of the performer in today's MSPs.[26] In effect, performers in today's MSPs are like the group of men in Plato's story of the cave—the men are imprisoned in a cavern and believe that shadows projected on the cave wall are real objects, even though the shadows are caused by objects situated behind them that they cannot see.[27] Within this Platonic point of view, performances then are understood as mere shadows of idealised musical works that we cannot perceive with our senses—works unchanged since the composer imagined them into existence—while scores are the mechanisms by which these shadows are projected.[28]

According to Lydia Goehr, what follows from this view is the notion that musical works are "fixed in meaning before interpretation takes place."[29] As long ago as 1992, she critiqued the view of musical works as eternal forms in *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, examining the notion that musical works can be considered "historically and ideologically neutral," or eternal and unchanging, and concluding that because they are endowed with meaning by their historical and cultural contexts, any change in a work's context will change its meaning. What follows, then, is that works whose meanings are constantly changing cannot be regarded as fixed objects. Goehr argues further that the view of works as objects should be abandoned and replaced by the work-concept, "a complex structure of sounds related in some important way to a composer, a score, and a given class of performances," and that, "[t]o understand the idea of a musical work is to understand all the elements in their interrelations."[30] Adopting the work-concept perspective results in musical works being viewed as an evolving web of interrelationships between performers, sonic events, audiences, scores and composers, thereby invalidating the idea that musical works are Platonic objects. Unfortunately, her argument has had little effect as yet on the practical realities of MSPs.

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[26] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 3.
[27] Plato, *Republic*, from *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vols. 5 & 6, translated by Paul Shorey (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1969), Book VII, section 514a, accessed May 24, 2017, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0168%3Abook%3D7.
[28] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 3.
[29] Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 276.
[30] Ibid., 81, 20.

If we continue to believe that musical works are objects with fixed meanings, then a performance style that adheres strictly to the notated score is necessary because the score contains the mandatory instructions for projecting the shadow of the work-in-itself. In turn, if performers are true to the notated score, the work (*Werktreue*), and by extension, to the intentions of the composer, the hope is that their performance will be a representation (reproduction) of the eternal form of the work itself. Cook however warns us that continuing to view works as Platonic objects has resulted in dire consequences for the role of performers:

> [This] gives rise to…what I call the paradigm of reproduction: performance is seen as reproducing the work, or the structures embodied in the work, or the conditions of its early performances, or the intentions of the composer. Different as these formulations are…they all have one thing in common: no space is left for the creativity of performers.[31]

Cook, who is extreme in his critique, even goes so far as to doubt whether there is any space at all for performer creativity within this paradigm. He also notes that attempts at divining the early conditions of a work's performance, such as those undertaken within HIP spheres, only reinforce the view of musical works as Platonic objects, because they furnish performers with yet another set of instructions, in conjunction with the score, to be faithfully reproduced in the hope of projecting the shadow of the eternal work.

### 1.2.2) *Werktreue* and Composer Intent

If musical works are seen as Platonic objects and performances as their shadows, then in order for these shadows to adequately represent the original, fidelity to the work (*Werktreue)* must be observed. The score in today's conception of *Werktreue* is seen as a necessarily incomplete representation of the composer's intentions, to be used as a tool to delve into the mind of the composer who created the composition's eternal form. This focus on the composer's intentions is connected with the Platonic view of musical works as objects, because these objects are conjured into existence when the composer imagined their sounds. In theory, therefore, by being true to a composer's intentions, performers can reproduce the sounds the composer imagined when creating the work-as-object. Goehr however makes a compelling argument that the concept of *Werktreue* is philosophically incomprehensible in a world where "original examples [of the work]

[31] Cook, *Beyond the Score,* 3.

serving as the standard" cannot be compared to the non-standard.[32] Nevertheless, despite this intractable problem, a belief in the concept of *Werktreue* continues to be central to MSPs.

An example of *Werktreue's* continued influence today can be found in conductor Hartmut Haenchen's book *Werktreue und Interpretation: Erfahrungen eines Dirigenten* (*Werktreue* and Interpretation: Experiences of a Conductor).[33] Haenchen advocates going back to original sources and careful academic study of the score in order to achieve an interpretation in line with the composer's intentions.[34] He views textual sources, such as scores and historical performance treatises, as keys with which to unlock the intentions of the composer. Further, when those intentions are followed to the letter, performances will be faithful to the work.

Many performers and conductors who espouse these kinds of views, however, tend to ignore composers' recordings of their own works—especially when these are at odds with textual sources like scores and treatises. Haenchen was widely recognized for his performances of Richard Strauss's orchestral works, but comparisons between Haenchen's and Strauss's recordings of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, for example, show vast differences in style. These differences arise because Haenchen uses critical editions of scores edited by musicologists claiming that these scores accurately convey the composer's original notation (known as so-called 'urtexts') in order to achieve an 'informed' reading of Strauss's score. In so doing, Haenchen reinforces the idea that what is important about a work is contained in its notated score, as filtered through modern assumptions of how that score should sound, while the recording of the work by Strauss—with its un-notated tempo modifications and rhythmic flexibilities—is ignored because it cannot be mapped onto either the score or other textual sources.[35] Haenchen is not being true to the composer as subject, but rather to an abstract view of the composer's intentions as encoded in the work-as-object via the score. This is typical of the way MSPs favour textual sources over sounding ones, with the former understood as providing objective and verifiable data about a musical work and the latter as a subjective, trifling rendering of that work. This attitude perhaps also informs musicologist Michael

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[32] Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 259.
[33] Translation mine.
[34] Hartmut Haenchen, *Werktreue und Interpretation: Erfahrungen eines Dirigenten* (Friedberg: Pfau Neue Musik, 2013), 3.
[35] Richard Strauss, *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, recorded by the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Hartmut Haenchen, on *Richard Strauss,* Laserlight Classics, 2004, 24418/1 (CD). Richard Strauss, *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, recorded by the Wiener Philharmoniker, conducted by Richard Strauss, 1944, reissued Everest, 1980, SDBR 3475 (LP).

Musgrave's suggestion that Johannes Brahms's recording of his *Hungarian Dance* no. 1 is nothing more than "a hasty if enthusiastic response to the recorded medium."[36] Brahms's playing is difficult to map onto both his notated score and contemporary ideas of how it should be played, and its easy dismissal by Musgrave and others conveniently precludes questions about whether either can be said to truly align with his intentions.

Our shared certainty about the objectivity of works and the agreed-upon ways in which they should sound is the bedrock of MSPs. In the worst case, this relegates the performer to the role of automaton or, as composer Igor Stravinsky put it, a mere executor whose "input or interpretation is not required" and whose chief purpose is to follow the score.[37] While performers often object to the notion that they are mere automatons, citing the many expressive freedoms they believe they have (while still remaining true to work and composer), Cook nonetheless argues that, since the mid-20th-century, the player's role as a conduit for the composer's intentions has made performance an act of execution rather than a site for creative practice: "In short, expression remains, but it has been transformed into something objective."[38]

### 1.2.3) Practical Realities of MSPs

A wide variety of approaches, from HIP and RIP to so-called conventional, conform to the core principles of MSPs. These are characterized by literal adherence to texts (scores and verbal accounts) and agreed-upon understandings of style, neatness and tidiness, making notated structure audible, and clarity of pulse and rhythmic hierarchies. In the following section I define all of these features broadly. In specific terms, however, the pick-and-choose approach to early recordings, as is common in RIP spheres, is the outcome of these mainstream practices. My intention here is not to unduly dismiss the importance of MSPs, as they are central to the way that musicians today, including myself, function. Musicians who perform large numbers of works with many different colleagues need shared practices for music-making in order to quickly and efficiently reach performance decisions, and without these, the WAM industry would cease to function.[39] Despite their efficiencies, however, MSPs restrict the possible approaches open to performers, resulting in musical expression that conveys different qualities than those

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[36] Michael Musgrave, *Performing Brahms: Early Evidence of Performance Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 305.
[37] Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 163.
[38] Cook, *Beyond the Score,* 222.
[39] Western Art Music, as discussed in the Introduction.

heard in early-recorded performances. Below I discuss the restrictive effect of MSPs on WAM culture in order to make this effect visible and to consider its impact on alternative approaches to performance. While I focus here on string playing in chamber and orchestral contexts in particular, these are broadly representative of MSPs more generally.

*Literal Adherence*

If Cook is right when he observes that, "music affords an apparently unlimited variety of interpretive options," why do many of today's performances of canonic works sound so similar?[40] Indeed, for many of today's MSP performances, a musically-educated listener would be able to fairly accurately reconstruct the composer's written musical score given time and repeated listening. This is possible because agreed-upon ideas regarding how certain repertoires should be played, also known as 'style,' in combination with an attempt at literal adherence to the notated score, restrict performances to a narrow range of possible approaches. These agreed-upon ideas are widely shared and include, for example, playing the note after an appoggiatura more softly in Mozart's string quartets or sharply attacking the accents in Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Most professional musicians have either consciously or unconsciously assimilated these agreed-upon notions of 'style' and routinely apply them in practice. These shared ideas mean that, with a minimum of effort, musicians from around the world can play a wide variety of repertoires together with very little rehearsal, and that orchestras can play to a high standard with even the most incompetent of conductors. In addition to adhering to such agreed-upon stylistic parameters, performers also strive to literally follow the notated score by accurately reproducing notated pitches, rhythmic values, tempi, and dynamic indications. Exceptions are sometimes made in the case of notated dynamics, where performers will allow for changes in order to achieve clarity of balance between accompaniment and melody for example. Un-notated slowing is also allowed, provided that it serves to elucidate the topographical detail and structure of a score, and provided that these details are kept subordinate to the audibility of overall form. In short, both of these kinds of un-notated alterations are used to support neatness and tidiness while helping to make musical structure audible.

The results of this attempt at literal adherence to both score and style are performances that conform to a narrow range of possible approaches. This leads Daniel

[40] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 3. Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance*, "Part 1: Introduction and Examples," https://challengingperformance.com/the-book-1/.

Leech-Wilkinson to observe how mannerisms that have *not* been agreed upon for a particular WAM style (like portamento in Mozart or ornamentation in Brahms) tend to be excised in order to make performances more acceptable to critics and peers, with more significant departures from the notated score even less likely to be accepted.[41] If today's performances of canonic repertoires often sound alike, then, it is because they broadly conform to MSP's written and unwritten rules of law, including both notated scores and agreed-upon conventions of un-notated style. Abiding by these rules is what is often called 'playing by the book' or a 'textbook' performance style.

*Neatness and Tidiness*

MSPs today are sanitized, neat, and tidy: standards performers dare not defy if they wish to preserve their professional reputations. This clean performance style results from an emphasis on vertical togetherness in ensemble playing, rhythmic stability, and the clear elucidation of notated detail. Accuracy of intonation, cleanliness of tone quality, and clarity of articulation are also all expected.[42] Robert Philip discusses the sanitization of MSPs over the course of the 20th century:

> Ensemble became more tightly disciplined; pianists played chords more strictly together…acceleration of tempo was more tightly controlled...the tempo range within a movement tended to narrow; [and] the use of portamento became more discreet.[43]

While Philip acknowledges that when it comes to performance "the menu of possibilities, from current period and conventional practice, from new and old scholarship, and from a hundred years of recordings is vast," and that "we can pick what we like," he affirms the centrality of cleanliness when he adds "as long as we make it sound neat and tidy and sell it in an attractive package."[44] Leaving aside the bit about an 'attractive package,'[45] which, in our era of social media *chic* has more to do with looks than performance style, what Philip's 'menu of possibilities' actually describes is an illusion of choice—one captured by philosopher Slavoj Žižek's description of *choix forcé*:

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[41] Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, e-mail to the author, December 16, 2015.
[42] As Leech-Wilkinson has noted, the "characteristics of modern performance style therefore include reliability, blend, and synchronization." Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance*, "Part 2: The Fabulous Status Quo," https://challengingperformance.com/the-book-2/.
[43] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording,* 232.
[44] Ibid., 250.
[45] As an aside, violist Lionel Tertis's 1938 advice on hair style makes for interesting reading in light of some performers' visual packaging today: "Long hair and locks over the right or left eyebrow are nauseating to look at and utterly useless in furthering musical capability." Lionel Tertis, "Beauty of Tone in String Playing," in *My Viola and I* (London: Kahn and Averill, 2008), 147.

> In the subject's relationship to the community to which he belongs, there is always such a paradoxical point of *choix forcé*—at this point, the community is saying to the subject: you have freedom to choose, but on the condition that you choose the right thing."[46]

Today performers *do* have an overwhelming range of choices, which should in theory add to the range of performance practices one hears, "whether by provoking experimentation with unfamiliar historical styles, or simply the desire to do something different."[47] The operative word here, however, is *should*, as the disciplining effect of neat and tidy performance practice, combined with the attempt at literal adherence to scores and agreed-upon understandings of style, means performers are required to choose the right (and mostly, the same) thing.

*Audible Structure*

One of the forced choices imposed on performers is the requirement of making musical structure audible. If a work is seen as a Platonic object with an eternal form and a notated structure that lies at the core of its identity, then that form should be recognizable and reproducible in performance. *Werktreue* ideology posits that the sounds imagined by the composer, when the eternal form of a work was conjured into existence, are made audible in a performance that is true to a work's notated structure. As pianist Alfred Brendel writes, because "the form and structure of a piece are visible and verifiable in the composer's text," they should be readily audible as well.[48] Cook locates the origins of this transition in performance practice in the 1930s, relating it to parallel shifts in architecture, interior design and fashion, and arguing that our current, structuralist approach to performance practice has much in common with the geodesic dome of architect Buckminster Fuller (1895 – 1983).[49] He notes that, "Fuller's design translates to music" by virtue of its subordination of detail to overall structure, where "each event is uniquely positioned within an encompassing, architectonic structure," resulting in "the display rather than the concealment of structure." In terms of musical performance, this means that local details become subordinate parts of phrases, which are subordinate parts of sections, which are in turn subordinated to whole movements or works. In Cook's view, the result of this was that, "the elements of expression were regularised and rationalised, [and] relocated from the plane of moment-to-moment

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[46] Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ontology* (New York: Verso Books, 1989), 185 - 6.
[47] Cook, *Beyond the Score,* 207.
[48] Alfred Brendel, "An A - Z of the Piano: Alfred Brendel's Notes from the Concert Hall, " *The Guardian*, August 31st, 2013, accessed August 12, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/aug/31/alfred-brendel-pianists-a-z.
[49] For further information on Fuller's geodesic domes see "About Fuller," The Buckminster Fuller Institute, accessed June 6, 2019, https://www.bfi.org/about-fuller/big-ideas/geodesic-domes.

succession to that of structure."[50] Contrary to performances focused on 'moment-to-moment succession,' in which structure becomes subordinate to detail through the use of unsteady tempi and phrasing combined with heavy localised rushing or slowing, structuralist MSP performances subordinate detail to an overall structural hierarchy in which phrases become subordinate parts of larger sections, which in turn become subordinate parts of longer movements. Structuralist performances use steady tempi to create a sense of unity in longer works or movements in combination with un-notated slowing in order to elucidate structural joins between larger sections or phrases. Clarity of articulation, balance, tone and rhythmic detail then help to make audible a work's proportionality, construction, and the relationship of its individual parts to the whole.

*The HIP Approach*

For decades now, performers and musicologists of the HIP movement have carved out a space within MSPs, of which they have become an institutionalised part. Their success has been sufficiently significant to foster the adoption of many elements of their performance style across WAM performance practice, with HIP conductors regularly appearing with conventional symphony orchestras, and with many musicians playing on both 'modern' and 'period' instruments. The ease with which musicians move between HIP and so-called conventional practices demonstrates how HIP, with its focus on scores, texts, and agreed-upon understandings of style, is as much a part of MSPs as so-called 'conventional' practices. This belonging is further illustrated by gaps between sonic evidence of past performances in the form of early recordings and current HIP performance practices.

Cook situates HIP within modernist, structuralist practices and even connects it with the values and assumptions of Stravinskian ideology, in which performers are mere executors. He argues that the HIP movement reinforces knowledge about composers and their scores and polices the application of that knowledge in performance, not unlike conventional MSPs, resulting in a practice with written and unwritten codes based on agreed-upon understandings of how historical repertoires should sound.[51] Such internationally shared codes again have the advantage of allowing performers to quickly and efficiently reach performance decisions when rehearsing and performing together.[52]

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[50] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 216, 222.
[51] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 222.
[52] As Leech-Wilkinson notes in reference to HIP, but as equally applicable to MSPs more generally: "All these rules and beliefs could be seen as strategies for limiting the vast range of possibilities for performance

While HIP sets itself apart from conventional MSPs by exploring non-vibrato playing, *son filé*, and the use of 'period' instruments and bows, these elements have in many cases been applied within MSPs' existing ideologies without fundamentally challenging them. As a result, HIP performers, too, find themselves relegated to executive rather than creative roles, as the 'rules and regulations' of historical treatises are superimposed upon the structuralist, neat and tidy, and score-adhering approaches inherent to MSPs.

In order to inform themselves about historical performance styles, HIP practitioners rely on texts such as period performance practice treatises. These treatises have been used, however, to fashion new or at least updated agreed-upon understandings of style, like playing strong beats with greater emphasis than weak beats, or like swelling in the middle of long notes. HIP, however, has increasingly been challenged by gaps between period textual and sonic evidence, particularly where overlaps between turn-of-the-20th-century performance treatises and early recordings are concerned. As Neal Peres Da Costa observes:

> The comparison between written texts and early recordings often produced striking contradictions. Many texts fail to discuss the practices in question, or provide only cursory remarks about them. And where more detailed descriptions exist, they do not convey many significant features that can be heard on the recordings. Sometimes the written advice of particular pianists appears to conflict with their own recordings…In addition, many notational symbols and musical terms appear to have indicated something wholly different to the meaning that they now convey.[53]

That early-recorded performers routinely contradict their own written advice demonstrates how challenging it is to extrapolate information about period performance style from texts. Violinist David Milsom reflects on the gap between 19th-century performers' writings and recordings, concluding that, "common sense would suggest that theory is rarely carried out strictly in practice, and this general state of affairs might be said to apply here [with early recordings]."[54] One reason for the frequent contradictions that arise between theory (text) and practice (recordings) may be that, in their historical contexts, textual sources conveyed different meanings than they do now. As a result, by

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interpretation, whose variety I suspect musicians subconsciously recognise and, because of the extent and viciousness of performance policing, are terrified by." Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance*, chapter 6.7, "Music Makes Better Sense Performed 'Historically,'" https://challengingperformance.com/the-book-6-7/.

[53] Neal Peres Da Costa, *Performing Practices in Late 19th Century Piano Playing: Implications of the Relationships between Written Texts and Early Recordings* (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2001), 430.

[54] David Milsom, *Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth Century Violin Performance* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2003), 105.

adhering to contemporary understandings of historical texts, modern performers will end up sounding very different than the historical performers they wish to emulate.

This gap between text and practice in the early-20th century casts doubt on the historically-informed nature of modern HIP performances, as they are based heavily on textual sources in the absence of contextualising sonic evidence. Further, given the sheer width of this gap in relation to early-20th-century recordings, it is hard to imagine it being any narrower where 18th-century repertoires are concerned—as acknowledged by musicologists Clive Brown, Cook and Philip alike:

> The implications of these recordings for our approach to Classical performance practice are profound. They strongly reinforce the view that what we currently do in the name of historically-informed performance of this repertoire has only a tenuous connection with anything that might be considered a fine style by Mozart or his contemporaries.[55]

It is unsurprising, then, that many MSP-adherent HIP performances of 19th-century repertoires, as derived primarily from modern readings of 19th-century texts, point to a similarly 'tenuous connection' with the practices heard on recordings of the time—practices that, when found to be incompatible with MSPs and texts (scores and treatises), are often discarded or discounted, with the recording medium usually taking the blame.

*Rhetoric*

A central feature of HIP discourse is the desire to apply the rhetorical devices used in historical verbal oratory to musical performance, due in large part to the prominence given to rhetoric in period performance treatises.[56] Concerning the practical realities of the rhetorical approach to contemporary HIP, then, one of the central tenets of MSPs, HIP included, is that of discernible pulse, whereby rhythmic regularity and stability, and perceptibility of pulse, help convey neatness and tidiness while making notated structure audible. In HIP, an approach to rhythm known as *tactus* refers to a regular, underlying rhythmic orientation point that creates a hierarchy of beats. This hierarchy organizes the beats of a bar, dividing them into strong and weak beats, and suggests that each beat be given its appropriate emphasis with recurring regularity. *Tactus* does not mean that pulse is metronomic, but rather that it is discernable, audible, and

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[55] Clive Brown, "Performing Classical Repertoire: the Unbridgeable Gulf between Contemporary Practice and Historical Reality" in *Classical and Romantic Music* (London: Routledge, 2011) ed. David Milsom. Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 222. Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording,* 233 - 234.

[56] Uri Golomb, "Rhetoric in the Performance of Baroque music," *Goldberg Early Music Magazine* 51, no. 56 - 57, (April 2008): 2.

comfortingly regular. By providing the underlying scaffolding on top of which rhythmic freedom between strong beats can be taken on a surface level, *tactus* serves as a foundation for what is known in HIP as 'rhetorical' performance. This freedom between strong beats is meant to add an element of speech-like rhetoric to musical performance. According to musicologist Uri Golomb, the HIP approach to rhetoric is based upon interwoven patterns of hierarchies encompassing metre (strong and weak beats), harmony (stressing dissonance over consonance), rhythm (emphasising long notes on weak beats), and stressed melodic peaks, with articulation being the central tool for conveying meaning.[57] The *tactus* of modern rhetorical HIP performance, however, is wholly distinct from the more moment-to-moment playing heard on early recordings—playing that, while described by some as 'rhetorical' for its rhythmic freedom, lacks this underlying regularity of pulse. While it is eminently possible to play with a great deal of rhythmic flexibility within the context of a steady *tactus,* early-recorded performances convey this surface flexibility on top of a constantly varying, frequently indiscernible, pulse. According to Golomb, the HIP approach to rhetoric is as "incompatible with waves of rubato" (by which he seems to mean an irregularity or unpredictability of pulse) as it is with "large changes of pulse," because such rhythmic flexibilities are "not part of oratory." He goes on to observe that in HIP rhetoric, "performers also emphasise metric regularity—an alternation of weak and strong beats—which could be compromised by overdrawn rubati."[58] Indeed, as early recordings are often characterized by both irregular and indiscernible pulse, on both a surface and deeper level, they are as such incompatible with modern HIP approaches to *tactus* and rhetoric.

Despite Golomb's assertion that widespread flexibility of pulse is incompatible with oratory, however, Austrian actor Alexander Moissi's (1879 - 1935) early-recorded reading of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's poem *Erlkönig* provides a strong counterexample, demonstrating that the speech patterns upon which we base concepts like rhetoric have, like musical performance, evolved over time.[59] This suggests that early-recorded performances might be considered 'rhetorical' in the context of early-recorded oratory, with its frequent and unpredictable changes of pulse. As such, Cook's use of the term 'rhetorical' when describing early-recorded rhythmic freedoms may carry some weight. However, Cook then goes on to connect early-recorded style to modern HIP

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[57] Ibid., 8.
[58] Ibid., 8, 5.
[59] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Erlkönig*, Alexander Moissi, recorded 1929, Columbia 16073 (78rpm). This recording can be found here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhV2WwEQj7U (accessed September 22, 2019).

performance, positing a false equivalence between two utterly different approaches to rhetoric, with the former based on constant variation of pulse and the latter tied to a steady *tactus*. The connection Cook attempts to substantiate here, in this case between pianist Carl Reinecke's (1824 - 1910) early recordings and modern HIP fortepianist Bart van Oort's performances, is thus unfounded. Reinecke's extreme approach to tempo modification and rhythmic alteration fundamentally lacks a discernable pulse, while Van Oort's more controlled performance, despite demonstrating surface rhythmic flexibility, maintains a hierarchy of beats over an audible underlying pulse.[60] Here too, early recordings point to a sizeable gap: between the practical realities of rhetoric as used in modern HIP on one hand, and as applied by early-recorded performers on the other.

As rhetorical performance in modern HIP spheres is based on a hierarchical relationship of rhythm and meter, or surface flexibility, over an underlying discernable pulse, it has little in common with the rhythmically unpredictable and obscure performances heard on early recordings. Thus, despite HIP's embracing of surface rhythmic flexibilities, its adherence to an audible regularity of pulse situates its practices well within current MSPs, thereby restricting performers' choices with regard to rhythm and tempo. Modern HIP performers would do well to re-examine 18th-century writings on *tactus* in light of the gap Da Costa's work exposes between 19th-century texts, in which performers are instructed to maintain a strict sense of pulse, and early recordings, which evidence performers entirely disregarding such advice.[61]

*The Pick-and-Choose Approach*

Despite a growing body of research on historical recordings, few performers are willing to integrate early-recorded style into their performances when this is at odds with MSPs. There have been a number of experiments in recent years that make use of early recordings, in what I call recordings-inspired performance or RIP, with its practitioners often describing how this approach has opened up significant, alternative approaches to performance. Da Costa, for example, states that, "[h]aving experimented with [early-recorded style], it becomes almost inconceivable to play this music in the straightjacketed manner nowadays frequently heard."[62] Violist Heng-Ching Fang similarly views her research on early-recorded style as having helped her "to achieve an expressive

[60] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 4 - 5, 102.
[61] Da Costa, *Performing Practices in Late 19th Century Piano Playing*, 317 - 320.
[62] Neal Peres Da Costa, *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 310.

performance in an imaginative and creative manner," and "not to be bound by notation."[63] However, I question whether the results of such experiments convey the freedom and imaginativeness claimed by their practitioners, and whether such work has resulted in a true alternative to MSPs. Indeed, most of these performers end up adhering to Philip's 'menu of possibilities' for MSPs, with elements of early-recorded performances being chosen and applied in ways that conform to agreed-upon expectations of style, of neat and tidy playing, of making notated structure audible, and in ways that confirm modern understandings of historical performance treatises, with surface rhythmic freedoms being used on top of an underlying regular pulse. This 'pick-and-choose' approach, rather than elevating the performer, further constricts their role by adding elements of early-recorded style to the already constrained, execution-driven practices of MSPs. Such an approach is all the more surprising given the general incompatibility of the central elements of early-recorded performance style with MSPs.

Anna Scott claims that Da Costa's Brahms performances, which have been informed by early-recorded style, exemplify this pick-and-choose approach because they are bound by an aesthetic ideology of control. In current Brahms performance practices, this control functions like a magnified version of the MSP ideology underlying agreed-upon understandings of how Brahms's music should be played, that is, with an even higher degree of tonal, expressive and technical control, further amplifying elements like neatness and tidiness, the audibility of structure, and regularity of pulse. As Scott points out, "Da Costa's RIP Brahms performances, beautiful though they are, are perhaps an unwitting elucidation of the extent to which the aesthetic ideology of control continues to mediate such ventures."[64] Those who take a pick-and-choose approach are likely to disregard the un-notated, uncontrolled nature of early-recorded style, instead preferring neatness and tidiness, and adherence to scores and agreed-upon understandings of style. As Leech-Wilkinson has noted, again in reference to HIP but equally applicable elsewhere: "[O]nce recordings are available suddenly no one wants to know about the composer's expectations: they're simply too unlike current performance values to be borne…we clearly do not believe in the professed values of HIP when it comes to the uncomfortable truth of previous performance styles."[65] In the pick-and-choose approach,

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[63] Heng-Ching Fang, *The Twentieth-Century Revolution in String Playing as Reflected in the Changing Performance Practices of Viola Players from Joseph Joachim to the Present Day: A Practice-Based Study* (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2008), 89 - 90.
[64] Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms,* ix, 173, 115.
[65] Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance*, chapter 6.7, "Music Makes Better Sense Performed 'Historically,'" https://challengingperformance.com/the-book-6-7/.

recordings become 'additional evidence' alongside scores and performance treatises, yet unlike these textual sources, they are readily discarded when they transgress the boundaries of MSPs. This is similar to the way composers' recordings (like Richard Strauss's or Edward Elgar's) are dismissed when they are deemed incompatible with their scores and agreed-upon understandings of how those scores should sound. Recordings are problematic evidence for contemporary musicians because they are less malleable than texts when it comes to fitting them within the acceptable bounds of MSPs. Texts are much more open to varied interpretations, and can easily be brought in line with contemporary dogmas, while recordings can be analysed with great accuracy through repeated listening and with the help of software. A further reason some performers take a pick-and-choose approach is that a loss of professional esteem might result from an uncontrolled, unstructured, and non-score-based performance style, despite the vast amount of early-recorded evidence supporting such a style. As Scott notes, the importance attached to professional competence in MSP ideology, even in RIP spheres, can put performer-researchers' reputations at risk:

> Tensions between RIP style and modern expectations of competence also come into play in advanced artistic research spheres where, in the context of conferences for example, performers face pressures to perform in ways widely perceived as competent while demonstrating and disseminating their research outcomes, thereby confirming their authority as both expert performers and scholars.[66]

Although recordings are less malleable than texts when it comes to interpreting them within the framework of MSPs, it is notable that the pick-and-choose approach is also evident in analysis contexts. Early recordings are often subject to superficial examination and quickly dismissed when they are incompatible with contemporary norms. Superficial analysis usually involves listening to recordings a number of times and disregarding those elements that do not conform to MSPs as evidence of technological faults or performer incompetence and nerves. Thorough analysis, on the other hand, takes the recorded performance at face value, as a representative sound document—one that performers and producers deemed commercially viable at the time of its release.[67] This approach then proceeds through detailed annotated score and software analysis to map out the performance practices heard on these recordings, making a concerted attempt to understand these practices for what they are rather than judging them in the

[66] Ibid., 341 - 342.
[67] Obviously other considerations apply when analyzing historical recordings that were not released commercially such as discarded takes, amateur home records or investigative field recordings. All of the recordings analyzed as part of this project were commercially released.

framework of MSPs. While some early recordings may contain technological faults or performer mistakes, it is important to remember that they capture relatively 'live' unedited performances in stretches of up to four and a half minutes. Further, while early recordings contain surface noise and a narrower range of recorded pitch compared with their modern counterparts, all recording technologies, both early and modern, affect and transform timbre. Of course, there are examples of recordings where performers were required to rush in order to fit material within the timeframes imposed by wax cylinders and 78rpm records. Despite such technological restraints, however, the early-recorded evidence reveals that performers of the era shared a common stylistic language that was fundamentally at odds with MSPs: one involving un-notated and extreme modifications of tempo and rhythm, an unstructured approach to performance, and frequent de-synchronisation of ensemble. This observation holds for early-recorded performers and groups with international reputations that rehearsed diligently and had lengthy careers at the highest level. Ascribing these underlying performance elements to technological limitations or mistakes thus ignores the widespread commonality of these practices, the international reputations of the performers in question, and the professional standards of an era in which such recordings were deemed worthy of release.

An example of pick-and-choose analysis can be found in music historian Tully Potter's description of the recordings violist Oskar Nedbal (1874 - 1930) made in 1910 and 1911. Potter asks: "How much allowance must we make in Nedbal's case for nervousness and the alien surroundings of the cold, clinical studio?"[68] This is much like Musgrave's suggestion that Brahms's recordings are "a hasty if enthusiastic response to the recording medium."[69] Is Potter accounting for Nedbal's radically un-notated approach to rhythm and tempo by evoking 'nervousness' and 'alien surroundings,' rather than taking his performances as representative of his playing style? Bear in mind that in Nedbal's day, recordings were often made in informal settings, and many performers had the opportunity to record multiple takes before deciding which to release commercially.

Fang does some similarly partial analysis of the recordings violist Lionel Tertis (1876 - 1975) made for Vocalian between 1919 and 1924, arguing that Tertis went from a uniform, less expressive single-speed vibrato, to using a wide variety of vibrato speeds later in his career: "His speed of vibrato…remained the same almost without variation [and] several years later he gradually developed various kinds of expressive vibrato."

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[68] Tully Potter, "The Czechoslovakian Viola School," in *The History of the Viola Volume 2,* ed. Maurice Riley (Ann Arbor: Braun-Brumfield, 1991), 221.
[69] Musgrave, *Performing Brahms,* 305.

Fang's description of the development in Tertis's vibrato, made without the benefit of current technologies like software analysis, classifies his recordings as consistent with narratives about the rise of continuous vibrato in the early-20th century.[70] None of this is evidenced by close analysis of Tertis's recordings. Using software to measure vibrato width and speed, I could not detect any noteworthy differences between the recordings he made in 1919 and 1930.[71]

Fang also discusses Tertis's use of portamento in light of his written warnings against overusing the device. As Tertis writes:

> Portamento is another resource which, unless employed with the utmost discretion, can ruin the artistry of string playing. Incorrectly performed, or overdone in the slightest degree, it can make all the difference between sentiment and that horrid word 'sentimentality,' the latter in this case resulting in abominable vulgarity.[72]

Tertis, however, uses frequent and heavy portamento on nearly all of his recordings. On this, Fang only remarks: "[Tertis] basically followed his own indications. However he occasionally broke his own rules."[73] This seems an inadequate conclusion given that Tertis drastically breaks his own rules for portamento, contradicting his written advice on nearly all of his recordings.[74] That Fang points out a few examples of Tertis's portamento as exceptions to these rules, when his recordings break those rules far more often than they follow them, reflects how the analysis of recordings can be shaped by prior knowledge of contemporaneous writings, even when the link between practice and text is tenuous at best. This example thus illustrates both how unreliable written sources can be when seeking to understand how past musicians performed, and how unduly affected by contemporary readings of historical texts our hearing of recorded evidence can be.

Given the nature of her analyses, it is no surprise that in her performances Fang takes the pick-and-choose approach and ends up broadly adhering to MSPs. She uses light portamento and a degree of tempo and rhythmic flexibility inspired by the early recordings analysed, but her performances still conform to expected norms of neatness and tidiness, of making notated structure audible, and of maintaining a sense of

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[70] Fang, *The Twentieth-Century Revolution in String Playing as Reflected in the Changing Performance Practices of Viola Players from Joseph Joachim to the Present Day*, 68, 25.
[71] It is also notable that by 1919 Tertis was 43 years of age and an internationally recognized soloist. It seems unlikely that any successful performer would fundamentally alter their technique at this stage of their career.
[72] Tertis, "Beauty of Tone in String Playing," 148.
[73] Fang, *The Twentieth-Century Revolution in String Playing as Reflected in the changing performance practices of viola players from Joseph Joachim to the Present Day*, 79.
[74] For Tertis's rules see Tertis, "Beauty of Tone in String Playing," 149. My analysis of his portamento use can be found in Chapter Three.

underlying rhythmic pulse or *tactus*. As such, her performances fit well within current MSPs rather than capturing the style heard on the early recordings that inspired her.

Indeed, Fang suggests that contemporary performances can be 'enhanced' with early-20th-century stylistic elements, but she cautions that overuse of these elements may lead performers away from the intentions of the composer. This implies that the composer's intentions can be separated from the stylistic language of early-recorded performances, despite those intentions being situated in a performing context closer to that of the early-recorded era than our own.[75] By contrast, Scott questions our commitment to the intentions of composers when she asserts that, "once [performers are] armed with this knowledge [of early-recorded style] their acts will speak volumes about just how historically-informed they are prepared to be." She goes on to note that Brahms himself would be viewed as an uninformed, disrespectful Brahmsian pianist today, for his uncontrolled use of tempo and rhythmic flexibility and his unstructured, non-score-based performances.[76] Perhaps Haenchen similarly views Strauss as an 'uninformed' Strauss conductor, given that Haenchen's recordings of Strauss are based on critical editions of scores, which he values more highly than Strauss's own recordings. As mysterious or unknowable as composers' intentions may be, when presented with evidence of these composers (and the players of their time) actually performing their own works, contemporary musicians tend to pick-and-choose those elements that suit modern tastes and ignore those that do not.

While early recordings might help enhance our interpretations by increasing our vocabulary of expressive devices, how original and personal can our performances be if we continue to conform to MSPs by adhering to the notated detail and structure of scores, and by maintaining regularity of pulse and our neat and tidy standards of professionalism? Although there is nothing inherently wrong with picking and choosing how one applies stylistic elements from early recordings, this approach does not seem to result in the creative and imaginative performance practices that RIP performer-researchers claim to seek. At a fundamental level, their performances are neither far from conventional MSPs, nor close to the stylistic language of the early-recorded performances that presumably inspired them. By cherry-picking stylistic elements, musicians are left with plenty of room to fall back on safe habits, making it nearly impossible to create performances that sound like those of the early-recorded era. That

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[75] Fang, *The Twentieth-Century Revolution in String Playing as Reflected in the Changing Performance Practices of Viola Players from Joseph Joachim to the Present Day*, 90.
[76] Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*, 340, 115.

such performances fall within MSPs demonstrates the influence of contemporary performance paradigms, with the early-recorded evidence, when applied selectively, offering nothing more than the illusion of choice—a Žižekian *choix forcé*—to even the most experimentally-minded of modern performer-researchers.

While a pick-and-choose approach conforms to MSPs, an 'all-in' approach to copying early recordings results in alternative practices that give performers a central, creative role in realizing musical works. So far I have associated MSPs with contemporary HIP, where musical rhetoric is expressed as a function of surface rhythmic freedoms over an audible, underlying and regular pulse. These same HIP practices often also use performance treatises in ways that conform to MSPs, despite gaps between turn-of-the-20th-century writings and recordings. I have also defined structuralist performance as central to MSPs, HIP included, whereby detail is subordinated to structure with the help of neat and tidy parameters such as vertical togetherness of ensemble, controlled tempo, precision of intonation, and abstention from idiosyncrasies like portamento. In MSPs, these elements are used in an attempt to adhere literally to scores and agreed-upon understandings of style. This is the bedrock of contemporary conceptions of *Werktreue*, with score and style assumed to reflect composers' intentions in works that are fixed in form and meaning as objects-in-themselves.

### 1.3) *Werktreue* Reimagined

Today it is fashionable to call for doing away with *Werktreue* and, by association, with adherence to the intentions of the composer, especially in light of Goehr's, Cook's and Leech-Wilkinson's elegant demonstrations that the concept is philosophically incoherent. However, I argue that *Werktreue* can be reimagined in light of the way 19th-century understandings of the concept are put into practice on early recordings.[77] By taking an all-in approach to copying these recordings, we can come to view the concept of *Werktreue* from the point of view of performers and not musical works-as-objects.

#### 1.3.1) *Werktreue* Ideology in 19th- and Early-20th-Century Texts

More than a century ago, it was common for written texts to encourage performers to pursue personal expression either in parallel with, or as a means of

[77] Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works,* 259. Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 8. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Studying Recorded Musical Performance*, chapter 2.1, paragraph 9, accessed June 14, 2019, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap2.html.

adhering to, the intentions of composers. One of the prominent views in that era, as espoused by philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friederich Hegel (1770 - 1831), was that musical works were brought to life through the integration of the spirits of the composer, performer and listener. For Hegel, the existence of musical works relies on the interaction of a trinity of 'spirits': the literal, personal subjects of the composer, performer and listener. As Mary Hunter notes, "performance as a matter of spiritual self-transformation is an idea profoundly connected to Romantic notions of subjectivity [which] was considered to be both the true 'content' and the object of music."[78] Thus, the individual and personal experiences of composers, performers and audiences, as derived from their interaction with musical works, open up the possibility for self-transformation and development. In this way, transformative personal experience is the stated goal and outcome of musical works, and this experience is central to the meaning with which these works are endowed when interacting with them. This runs contrary to modernist notions of *Werktreue* where musical works are objects-in-themselves, relegating performers to reproductive roles and turning audiences into passive listeners. As such, neither performers nor audiences are able to influence the meaning or 'content' of musical works. Contemporary notions of *Werktreue* assume that fidelity to scores and other texts brings one closest to the intentions of the composer, quite apart from the personal experience of performer creativity or listener engagement. As a result, performers are required to become transparent, and to simply follow instructions contained in the score according to agreed-upon understandings of how works should be played—classic Stravinskian ideology.

Conversely, many 19th-century writers saw performers as an essential part of the creative process. Here, Hunter develops the argument that a transcendent and genius performer was central to 19th-century understandings of the meaning of musical works:

> Once the new aesthetics of music at the turn of the nineteenth century are considered from the perspective of performance, however—that is, partly from the perspective of the performer him- or herself, and partly from the perspective of writers who gave some thought to the role of the performer in the whole music-making nexus—it emerges that…the performer's role was considered to demand genius and…the performer—was regarded as a fully fledged artist on a par with the composer.[79]

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[78] Mary Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 58, no. 2 (Summer, 2005): 383.

[79] Ibid., 361.

Hunter quotes Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik* (1835), in which he describes the performer's role as follows: "In the matter not of technique but of the spirit, genius can consist solely in actually reaching in the [performance] the spiritual height of the composer and then bringing it to life."[80] For Hegel, the spiritual 'genius' of the performer is connected with personal expression on the one hand, and with the 'spirit' of the composer on the other. This results in a duality, where a performer's devotion to the 'spirit' of the composer reaches its pinnacle when music is transmitted through the lens of their own personal 'genius.' This genius is revealed, however, by nothing less than a highly personalised performance of a musical work, resulting from an individualized understanding of the 'spiritual height of the composer.' As Hunter puts it: "The job of the performer was understood to be about developing and displaying a unitary consciousness that merged his subjectivity with the composer's."[81] If we set aside the actual ghostly presence of the composer's 'spirit' or consciousness, what remains in practice is the performer's own understanding of what that consciousness might entail. This primacy of personal understanding where 19th-century performers are concerned is at odds with current demands for conformity to agreed-upon understandings of the style, meaning, and intention, of composers' works.

The performer's quest to reach the spiritual height of the composer is often described as a transcendental experience in contemporaneous texts, with the performer ascending into the realm of the 'spirit'. Tertis describes this process as follows: "The interpreter of music in its highest form must rise in his music-making above the levels of the everyday world, its commonness and its vanity, and hold himself apart, in an atmosphere of idealism."[82] This view combines transcendence, or rising 'above the levels of the everyday world,' with self-transformation, as the performer reaches 'an atmosphere of idealism' and is irrevocably changed by the act of performance before returning to the everyday. Violinist Leopold Auer (1845 – 1930) uses similarly idealistic language, focusing on the importance of the performer's personalised understanding of the composer's intentions:

> Concentrate quite simply and honestly on putting your whole heart and soul into the task of making the music you are playing live, expressing it as *you feel* the composer

[80] Georg Wilhelm Friederich Hegel as quoted in Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer," 362.
[81] Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer," 384.
[82] Tertis, "Beauty of Tone in String Playing," 155.

> meant it to be expressed. And do this with reverence and devotion…The worshipper [violinist] is approaching a new dispensation of musical beauty—and such are holy."[83]

The key points made by Auer are that it is the performer's personal understanding of the composer's intentions that matters and not the composer's intentions in-and-of-themselves, and that there is no contradiction between personal expression on one hand, and devotion to the composer's intentions on the other. A contradiction between individualism and fidelity is only implied if one takes a modernist view of musical works as Platonic objects that need to be shadowed or reproduced via performance. While today many musicians claim to play as *they* feel the composer meant their work to be expressed, their approach is more often than not guided by an attempt at literal adherence to the score and current agreed-upon notions of style. These tenets of MSPs can strongly affect even the most personally-felt interpretations of composers' intentions and scores, thereby constricting performer creativity. For 19th-century performers, personal expression no doubt similarly conformed to the stylistic conventions of their time. Both recordings and performers' annotated scores of that era, however, confirm that these boundaries were much wider than those enforced by today's MSPs.

When balancing written evidence of what 19th-century performers were called upon to do, one also comes across what seems to be a contradiction between adhering to the intentions of the composer as encoded in the notated score on one hand, and calls to alter the music using un-notated devices like portamento, tempo modification, vibrato, pitch ornamentation, improvisation, and even the wholesale re-writing of musical material on the other. Such evidence points to 19th-century performers frequently altering pitches and rhythms in scores as well as adding individual ornaments and cadenzas to musical works, some of which is reflected by their recordings. Kai Köpp refers to this state of affairs as the "complimentarity of the notated and the un-notated": an approach he notes has been lost in modern performance practices as a result of our emphasis on accurate, correct performance.[84] As Hunter points out:

> Romantic performance discourse sets up an opposition—in this case mighty composer and devout performer—and then promptly blurs or collapses it. The collapse here turns into a paradox: submission to the master magically produces a kind of empowerment of the performer, and his imagination is as necessary as that of the composer.[85]

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[83] Leopold Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It* (London: Duckworth, 1921), 188. Emphasis added.
[84] Kai Köpp, Forthcoming, "Das Nichtnotierte und das Nichtnotierbare," in *Musik aufführen, Kompendium Musik* Bd. 12, ed. Kai Köpp and Thomas Seedorf (Laaber: Laaber, 2019). Translation mine.
[85] Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer," 374.

Nineteenth-century performers' personalised alterations of scores follow logically, however, from an ideology that views their imaginations as necessary for expressing the intentions of the composer. Here, performer creativity is seen as integral to the musical work, with performance viewed as an activity demanding great artistry. Violinist Louis Spohr (1784 - 1859) encourages violinists to achieve this artistry by putting "beautiful performance ahead of correct performance," thereby allowing the listener to receive the intentions of the composer. Crucially, however, it is the performer's responsibility to achieve this 'beautiful performance' through the use of un-notated devices like rushing, slowing, portamento and vibrato. In Spohr's view, a beautiful performance results when a performer's well-developed taste in applying these devices is combined with spiritual self-transformation in the form of the "waking of their soul leading the bow and the fingers."[86] Here, Spohr links concrete tools for performer creativity with self-transformation, resulting in the violinist communicating the composer's intentions. Indeed, early recordings document the use of such tools, from rhythmic and tempo flexibility, ornamentation and portamento, to vibrato and the alteration of notated pitches and rhythms. For many performers of the early-recorded era, these un-notated devices were seen as fully compatible with the intentions of composers and were part of what Auer called "expressing the music as *you* feel the composer meant it to be expressed."[87]

Leech-Wilkinson convincingly argues that "music doesn't exist in works, works don't exist in scores, and neither does music, nor do scores represent composers' wishes, nor should composers' wishes necessarily be observed."[88] The inevitable outcome of this statement, as far as the performance of musical works is concerned, is a situation where 'anything goes.' Indeed, as Leech-Wilkinson argues in *Challenging Performance: The Book*, what all of this implies is that performers should be free to create any sort of performance of a musical work and that WAM culture should be open to a much greater range of possible performances.[89] In my experience, however, while some modern performances communicate more deeply, personally, and expressively than others, early recordings contain many more examples of such highly communicative performances

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[86] Louis Spohr, *Violinschule* (Vienna: Hasslinger, 1832), 195 - 196. Translation mine.
[87] Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It,* 188. Emphasis added. Auer made significant alterations to the pitches, rhythms and even structures of musical works in his published editions. His cuts in the final movement of Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto* are a notable example.
[88] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Studying Recorded Musical Performance*, chapter 2.1, paragraph 9, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap2.html.
[89] Leech-Wilkinson, *Challenging Performance*, "Part 1: Introduction and Examples," https://challengingperformance.com/the-book-1/.

within much wider boundaries, departing far more substantially from notated scores and agreed-upon understandings of style. Likely, these more communicative performances result from performers adopting a role on par with that of the composer and, as such, viewing musical works as sites for their own personal, creative input. I argue that performers wanting to take on this role today, thereby attaining the kind of communicative expressivity, individualism and freedom heard on early recordings, can engage in the all-in copying of these recordings in order to integrate the practical realities of this ideology into their own performance practices.

My unconventional turn thus calls for the adoption of a 19th-century view of *Werktreue,* which assumes that the content and goal of musical works is necessarily tied to the individual approach of the performer. Therefore, a performer's personal understanding is integral to the very existence and meaning of a musical work, and in this context, no original Platonic example of that work can be located. This overturns Goehr's argument against *Werktreue*. The work cannot be "fixed in meaning before interpretation takes place," because performance, which in this context is a personal realisation of a work, is an essential and integral part of its identity.[90] Both the performance and performer play a crucial role in filling a gap or absence written into the very fabric of a musical work. This approach is elucidated in Cook's paraphrasing of composer Brian Ferneyhough's idea that, "freedom of responsible performance lies not in executing a series of instructions, however impeccably, but in possessing one's own understanding of the music, and expressing that through performance."[91]

In order to realize 19th-century understandings of *Werktreue* and to achieve personalized performances of musical works, performers today need to take greater responsibility for their role in musical expression and integrate a wider range of concrete tools, like the kind described by Spohr, into their performance practices. One way to do this is through the all-in approach to copying early-recorded style, whereby tools for music-making that are performer-centered, non-score-based, and counter to modern standards of neat and tidy performance, are copied in full and without selectivity, allowing performers to circumvent the restrictive paradigms of MSPs. While Cook argues that pursuing the early (or earlier) conditions of a work's performance through treatises and scores restricts performers to a reproductive role, in my view this does not apply to copying early-recorded style—a context in which the conditions of performance were

[90] Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 276.
[91] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 283.

determined by performers' personalized understandings of musical works.[92] The all-in approach to copying early recordings allows today's performers to inhabit historical, personal performances and experiences with their own instruments, bows, arms, and fingers. The departure point for this approach is Leech-Wilkinson's view that, "meaning and expressivity is not inherent in the score [but] arises from performance," and that expressiveness, style, and communication belong to the performer's domain.[93] In using the all-in approach, we copy the messages, methods and tools of expressive communication; once armed with this newly-acquired knowledge, we can extrapolate this personalized approach to other repertoires, all while circumventing the limits of MSPs.

### 1.3.2) Early-Recorded Style

That the all-in approach to copying early recordings can result in circumventing MSPs has been demonstrated by pioneering research projects completed by Sigurd Slåttebrekk and Scott. Both succeeded in applying those elements of early-recorded style that are often ignored by the pick-and-choose approach.[94] Slåttebrekk's work focused on copying Edvard Grieg's 1903 recordings, while Scott devoted her attention to the 'Brahms-Schumann' circle of pianists, copying the performances of Ilona Eibenschütz and Adelina de Lara in particular. Both of these projects went beyond existing RIP performances by musician-researchers, as these pianists devoted considerable effort to copying the details of early-recorded style without regard for whether these elements fit within MSPs. Not content to simply select generalized elements and adopt them in their performances, both Scott and Slåttebrekk copied as many elements from early recordings as they could, attempting to fully integrate these elements into their playing, and placing them ahead of concerns for the primacy of the composer, score, and associated stylistic norms in their chosen repertoires. They each used close listening and analysis of recordings, followed by painstaking efforts to reproduce them at the piano, later extrapolating what they had learned during the copying process to works left unrecorded by their chosen performers.

At first Slåttebrekk attempted to copy Grieg's recordings with total accuracy of detail through the use of editing. He quickly realised, however, that in order to copy the longer line of Grieg's performances as well as the details, he needed to achieve a more

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[92] Ibid., 3.
[93] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Studying Recorded Musical Performance*, chapter 8.1, paragraph 10 and paragraph 13, www.charm.kcl.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap8.html.
[94] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, *Chasing the Butterfly*. Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*.

'live' performance feel, meaning that longer takes had to be recorded and that simply piecing together accurately-copied minutiae through editing was not enough.[95] Scott focused instead on making live takes of entire works, which she found to be the only adequate method for capturing the improvisatory feel of the originals. For both performers, however, achieving an unpredictable, early-recorded performance style meant putting the control, competence, and accuracy central to current MSPs at risk. Here, Scott describes the way these performances should be viewed: "As such, it is imperative that modern RIP Brahms style, live or recorded, be judged along similar lines as early-recorded Brahms style: as one that is quintessentially 'live,' casual, unpredictable and very nearly improvisatory."[96] Thus, in order to approach early-recorded performance style, musicians will need to go further (from the score, from agreed-upon understandings of style, and from neat and tidy notions of professionalism) than most have been willing to venture thus far. The all-in approach can be a crucial aid here, however, as it allows many central but foreign elements of early-recorded style—like de-synchronisation, heavy portamento, un-structured large-scale gestures, and extreme tempo flexibility—to become absorbed both consciously and unconsciously by the performer. By contrast, the pick-and-choose approach tends to discard or downplay these elements, as they clash with MSPs. Indeed, as Brown notes: "The possibility that we might more creatively use [early-recorded] evidence to attempt to recapture something of the spontaneity and freedom of classical performance is exciting."[97]

While this may be both exciting and creative, fully inhabiting the communicatively expressive approach evidenced by early recordings is a difficult and laborious path to follow. My work engages directly with early recordings in order to achieve a greater understanding of viola and chamber music performance practices in the early-20th century. I take a no-holds-barred approach to copying early-recorded performances, to offering an alternative to MSPs, and to exploring the rugged terrain where the hygiene and professionalism of my performances may be called into question.

The sense one gets from many early-20th-century recordings is that these performers, even the most virtuosic and skilled among them, are willing to radically depart from standards of neatness and tidiness in order to get their message across. Even pianist Alfred Cortot (1877 – 1962), having lived through the era of increasingly sanitized

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[95] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "Prelude and Trouble at Troldhaugen," from *Chasing the Butterfly*, http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=1233.
[96] Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*, 341.
[97] Brown, "Performing Classical Repertoire," 42.

performance practices as documented by Philip, instructed his students to "leave the problems of technique where they belong, in a place of secondary importance, and…place [their] imagination rather than [their] fingers at the service of the inner significance of the music."[98] Indeed, the stylistic attributes associated with early-recorded performances work against neat and tidy playing because they often result in a blurring of musical material or a lack of clarity. Heavy portamento, for example, can obscure rhythmic hierarchies by muddying the attack of the arrival note and its metric placement within the bar. This is likely why many of today's string players view portamento as dirty or nebulous, reserving its occasional use for turn-of-the-20th-century repertoires, jazz, gypsy, or tango music. De-synchronisation similarly blurs the neat and tidy vertical togetherness expected in ensemble performances today, where a lack of alignment between musicians is viewed as a serious technical flaw. In early-recorded style, however, these asynchronous textures result in a rich interaction between musical lines and highlight the independent personalities of various performers. Philip summarises the distinction between contemporary and early-recorded ensemble performances as follows: "A century ago ensemble was looser, pianists arpeggiated and dislocated, there was much overdotting, hurrying of short notes, accelerating and portamento."[99] These un-notated devices each work against values of neatness and tidiness, where controlled use of tempo and rhythm, adherence to notation, and verticality of ensemble playing are expected.

While MSPs focus on making notated structure audible, early-recorded performances generally emphasise expressive gestures through heavy tempo modification and rhythmic flexibility, highlighting expressivity on a more moment-to-moment basis. As Leech-Wilkinson points out, early-recorded musical gestures were large, while in our era they are often "barely noticeable in casual listening."[100] While these large local gestures in early-recorded performances may work on a 'moment-to-moment' level, this does not imply that they are directionless or that they detract from a sense of large-scale narrative. What such gestures point towards is a performance practice that shares much with the concept of storytelling. On early recordings, localised moment-to-moment shaping is often integrated into longer sections through un-notated tempo modification, which is used to distinguish the character of one section of a work from another. These sections are then often tied together by un-notated rushing, a practice largely banished

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[98] Alfred Cortot, translated Cyril & Rena Clarke, *In Search of Chopin* (London: Nevill, 1951), 58.
[99] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 232.
[100] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Studying Recorded Musical Performance*, chapter 8.1, paragraph 14, www.charm.kcl.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap8.html.

from contemporary MSPs. This rushing allows early-recorded performers to shape local details with a great deal of flexibility without these moments sounding as out of context as they might do in a contemporary performance with a steady tempo. The result of this approach is not the audibility of notated musical structure, but rather a sense of sweeping narrative, built through the momentum created by rushing between sections of a work. The continuous tempo flexibility of early-recorded performances also frequently undermines an audible sense of pulse, negating the sense of unity this stability is meant to create within MSPs. This continuous rushing and slowing also works against the idea of a regular *tactus*, which holds together surface beat-to-beat flexibilities in modern HIP contexts, thereby undermining any connection to HIP rhetoric as currently understood and performed. At the same time, however, rhythmic and tempo flexibility as heard in early-recorded musical contexts is similar to that used by early-recorded actors such as Moissi and Joesph Kainz (1858 - 1910), where sudden shifts of tempo are used to highlight changes of mood, and unexpected flexibilities on a localized word-to-word or moment-to-moment level are used to either dwell upon or skim over details. In Philip's view, the main difference between early-recorded practices and MSPs is that neatness and tidiness are central today, while in the past, expressive communication as heard on the recordings of actors like Moissi and Kainz was the main driver of performance: "[With the] Busch Quartet playing late Beethoven, or Casals playing Bach, [we] hear the sound of musicians who despite their masterly technical command, were uninterested in the smooth perfection of today, and were anxious only to make the music 'speak.'"[101]

When we listen to early recordings of composers like Grieg, Elgar, and Sergei Rachmaninoff, there are non-score-based forces at work in their performances that we could not have surmised by studying their scores or written accounts of their intentions. In this way, early recordings run counter to modern notions of literal adherence to texts, while at the same time demonstrating the surprising differences between canonical composers' performances of their own works and our own agreed-upon understandings of how those same works should sound. For today's performers, approaching scores as sites for personal, creative practice can be a means of bridging this gap.

As such, the all-in approach to copying early recordings has ramifications for the role of the performer, placing them at the centre of musical expression and substantially bypassing restrictions on their practice as imposed by MSPs. What this also means, however, is that when performers occupy this central role we learn as much about their

[101] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 249.

understanding of the music through their playing, as we do about their physical bodies, personalities and competencies—just like when we listen to early-recorded performers. For example, compare conductor Willem Mengelberg's (1871 – 1951) recording of Gustav Mahler's *Symphony* no. 4 with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in 1939, with conductor Daniel Harding's recording of the same work with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra in 2004.[102] Harding and company adhere closely to the notated score, ironing out tempo differences and eschewing sliding between notes, while Mengelberg and company engage in wild, un-notated fluctuations in tempo, frequent, heavy portamenti and de-synchronisation—all of which heightens the expressivity of the music on a moment-to-moment level, emphasizing the individuality and physical presence of performers who are playing together. The playing on the 2004 recording renders the performers transparent, with thorough editing further sanitizing all traces of wind players breathing or string players sliding up and down the fingerboard. Because they are unburdened by the prerequisite of neatness and tidiness, early-recorded string players often take substantial risks, resulting in poor intonation and articulation, and a lack of clarity. This may lead some listeners to doubt their technical competency, but as discussed in chapters three and four, their use of devices like portamento, vibrato and speech-like rhythmic flexibility often creates a sense of 'vocality,' replete with all the cracks and warbles of an impassioned speaker.

Contemporary MSP culture is grounded in Platonic notions of works with fixed meanings embedded in their scores to which performers strive to conform. This is evidenced by the practical realities of MSPs, including adherence to agreed-upon understandings for how works should sound, neatness and tidiness, audibility of notated structure and regularity and discernibility of pulse. In this chapter I have reimagined *Werktreue* in the context of 19th-century understandings of performer centrality, making a connection between this centrality and the highly individual and communicative performances heard on early recordings, with their large gestures, moment-to-moment expressivity, and radical departures from the notated score. These early recordings expose the more personalised aspects of performers' approaches, including their struggles, the risks they are willing to take, and their physical bodies—elements that are minimized in performance today and then further sanitized in contemporary recording and editing processes. Thus recording techniques, like performance practices, can work

[102] Gustav Mahler, *Symphony no. 4*, recorded by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, conducted by Willem Mengelberg, AVRO Hilversum, 1939 (radio broadcast). Gustav Mahler, *Symphony no. 4*, recorded by the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Harding, Virgin Classics, 2004, 724354566523 (CD).

either for or against 19th-century notions of *Werktreue* as revived through an all-in approach to copying early-recorded style. As modern recording paradigms are shaped by MSPs and vice versa, exploring alternative recording methods and technologies, like those offered by a more 'live' and lo-fi approach, could substantially aid performers looking to take on the role associated with expressive music-making over a hundred years ago.

## 2) Recorded Sound and Recording Technique

### 2.1) Introduction

This chapter makes the case for the use of lo-fi recording techniques in order to support the all-in approach to copying early recordings. I first explore the ideology underlying what I call the mainstream recording paradigm, which attempts to create the illusion of idealised, live performances. This runs counter to a lo-fi approach, whereby limited-frequency microphones focus on the mid-range of the sonic spectrum capturing moment-to-moment gestural information. I follow this with a discussion of how lo-fi recording affects performers, encouraging expressive gesture and de-emphasising neatness, tidiness and precision. I then examine lo-fi's technological specifications, focusing on the advantages derived from circumventing intermodulation distortion and achieving time domain blurring.

### 2.2) Mainstream Recording Paradigm

Many musicians and musician-researchers view the recording medium used to document their performances as 'transparent' or perhaps even 'objective.' In many musical research projects, the technological choices underpinning documentation do not even merit discussion. Similarly, a great number of performers often pay little attention to the role of technology when recording albums or concerts, leaving fundamental decisions about how they will sound on record to producers and engineers. This state of affairs has been thoroughly discussed by musicologist Amy Blier-Carruthers in *The Performer's Place in the Process and Product of Recording*.[103]

The goal of recorded music in the framework of today's MSPs is to create what culture and technology professor Jonathan Sterne calls "a realism that holds the place of reality without being it."[104] In other words, the recording medium itself is meant to become a transparent carrier of a virtual sonic reality. This view of recording has far-reaching consequences for the way recordings and performances influence one other. Because recordings represent a virtual reality, Nicholas Cook notes: "This helps to explain how recorded music can sound more like live performance than live performance

[103] Amy Blier-Carruthers, "The Performer's Place in the Process and Product of Recording," CMPCP Performance Studies Network International Conference, University of Cambridge, April 6, 2013, accessed July 4th, 2018, http://www.cmpcp.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/PSN2013_Blier-Carruthers.pdf.
[104] Mainstream performance practices as described in Chapter One. Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 245.

does. It creates the sound image against which audiences measure live performance, driving the tendency…for concerts to increasingly resemble recordings."[105] This symbiotic relationship between performances and recordings is prevalent in WAM[106] culture, where the realism of recordings is the benchmark by which both musicians and audiences judge live performances that have been shaped by recordings, which in turn set the standard for future recordings. Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* illustrates the shortcomings inherent in viewing recordings as transparent placeholders of reality:

> In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium-—that is, of any extension of ourselves—result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology.[107]

Recorded sound can rightly be viewed as an extension of ourselves as performers—one that carries consequences in terms of how we create, listen to, and understand performance. If we view recorded music as an extension of ourselves, as McLuhan does, then the recording technologies and methods used are embedded in the content communicated by our recordings. In fact, the far-reaching personal and social consequences of recorded music have been central to the development of MSPs during the 20th century.[108] Acknowledging that the way we as musicians extend ourselves through recording has an impact on what we communicate *with* our recordings leads us to realise that the recording process itself is responsible for shaping what is communicated by the music recorded. The recording medium is thus tied to the communication of musical content and cannot be viewed as objective or transparent.

Both Robert Philip and Cook argue that recording technologies and processes are not transparent, and both authors have articulated the idea that the recording medium has had a profound and irreversible effect on musical culture and performance style. Cook argues that the mainstream view of the medium as a transparent conveyer of sound is central to WAM recording culture, where the success of a recording is contingent on the degree of transparency it achieves. Cook calls this attitude the 'Best Seat in the Hall' ideology and claims it has impeded the development of alternative,

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[105] Cook, *Beyond the Score,* 368.
[106] Western Art Music as discussed in Chapter One.
[107] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), 7.
[108] See Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 25.

experimental recording practices.[109]

The view that the recording medium should be a transparent carrier of musical sounds is similar to MSP ideology (discussed at length in Chapter One), in which performers are required to reproduce musical works by attempting literal adherence to their notated scores and agreed-upon understandings of musical style. The result is that both performers and recordings become tools with which to convey the fixed, eternal 'intentions' of the composer. By pretending that the recording medium is transparent, we ignore both the sound and experience that modern 'Best Seat in the Hall' recordings are designed to create, much as we are unaware of how MSPs require performers to become transparent executors of musical scores. The desire for transparency, which is a central part of current mainstream recording practices, is expressed in award-winning sound engineer Morten Lindberg's view that:

> There is no method available today to reproduce the exact perception of attending a live performance. That leaves us with the art of illusion when it comes to recording music. As recording engineers and producers we need to do exactly the same as any good musician: interpret the music and the composer's intentions...Sometimes a lie can be more beautiful than the truth![110]

Lindberg's ultimate goal is thus to give us an illusion resembling a live performance, similar to what Sterne calls "realism that holds the place of reality."[111] In this way, if the recording medium is a discernible part of the end product, the illusion of reality will be destroyed. Although Lindberg recognises that recordings cannot reproduce the experience of hearing a live performance, he hints that they can improve upon this experience by way of the record producer's interpretation of the music. It is telling that, in this paradigm, representing the opaque intentions of the composer becomes the domain of the producer, who needs to make up for the fallibility of performers. In this way, the producer becomes responsible for creating an idealised realisation of the musical work-in-itself, the Platonic object, whereby his or her insight is required in order to lead ignorant performers towards the objective truth.[112] Lindberg further claims that new hi-fi surround-sound technology offers an unprecedented opportunity for creating an idealised performance on record, which can even exceed the experience of a live

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[109] Cook, *Beyond the Score,* 354*,* 376.
[110] Morton Lindberg, "2L - The Nordic Sound," 2009, accessed June 14, 2018, http://www.2l.no/pages/about.html.
[111] Sterne, *The Audible Past*, 245.
[112] The intentions of the composer and musical works as Platonic objects are discussed at length in Chapter One.

concert.[113] This represents the view of many record producers who strive to make the medium transparent, using their position in the control and editing rooms to improve upon what they see as the imperfect, inadequate music-making of performers.

However, it would be naively reductionist to argue that there is a single approach within mainstream WAM recording paradigms today. Some recording sessions are completely controlled and supervised by the producer, while others are less hierarchical, with musicians taking a more active role in the recording process. Sometimes, musicians even take the lead in telling producers and engineers how to shape their recordings. At the intersection of ideology, technology, media and messages, however, any decisions musicians, producers and engineers make about the recording process are ultimately decisions about what the music they record will mean. The acquiescence of musicians to engineers and producers, common in today's practice, will often result in recordings that fit a recording paradigm that values technological transparency. Due to our immersion in this culture of recording, however, many of us are unaware of the artistic and technological drawbacks of our approach. The result is that our recordings are likely to be less communicative, expressive and creative than they could otherwise be. Due to the technology we use, and the prevailing producer-dominated paradigm, thoroughly edited recordings continue to push performers towards the pursuits of transparency and conveying the intentions of the composer via literal adherence to the notated score.[114]

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[113] Lindberg, "2L - The Nordic Sound."

[114] I am also mindful of cases where producer-led, transparent recordings go against adherence to the notated score. For example, I have often been involved in recording sessions where producers pursue neatness and tidiness at the expense of adherence to the notation. Such examples, however, only support my point about modern recordings often being less creative and expressive than they might otherwise be.

## 2.3) Choosing a Lo-fi Approach

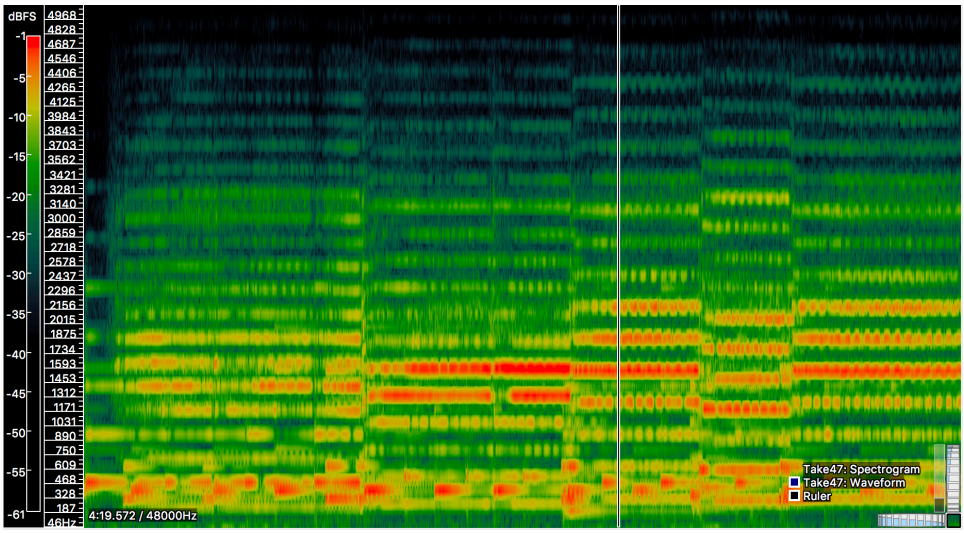


**Figure 2.1: Spectrogram of the opening bars of my recording of Schubert's *Du Bist die Ruh* (Appendix I - Recording 5.4.1) made with the lo-fi microphone.**

Together with sound engineer Geoffrey Miles of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK), I have taken an unconventional approach to recording in the documentation of this project. My recorded portfolio was made using Miles's self-built, limited-bandwidth microphone, which approximates the acoustic recording process by exclusively capturing the mid-frequency range of the sonic spectrum. I refer to this approach to recording as lo-fi because of the limited-frequency bandwidth that the microphone registers. The range recorded by the lo-fi microphone can be seen in the spectrogram of my recording of the opening bars of Schubert's *Du Bist die Ruh* (Figure 2.1). The vertical axis represents frequency in Hertz, while the horizontal axis represents the recording unfolding over time in seconds. The majority of the audio material recorded originates from fundamental pitches and lower harmonics (in red) between 500 and 2000hz, with fairly prominent lower harmonics between 2200 and 4500hz and higher harmonics above 4500hz barely registering at all. By contrast, Figure 2.2 is a spectrogram of a hi-fi recording of the piano quartet arrangement of Gustav Mahler's *Symphony* no. 3, from my CD *Symphonic Intimacy* with the Ysaÿe Trio and pianist Hanna Shybayeva.[115] Here, high audio energy is visible and quite evenly distributed up to 21.400hz and beyond, even after audio compression has been applied in order to format the recording for CD. The high amount of audio energy visible in the low frequency range below

[115] Gustav Mahler, *Symphony no.* 3, arr. Vassily Lobanov, recorded by the Ysaÿe Trio with Hanna Shybayeva, on *Symphonic Intimacy,* Dutch Record Company, 2015, DRC 15101501 (CD).

100hz is also notable when compared with the spectrogram of the lo-fi recording where the mid-frequency range is most prominent (Figure 2.1).

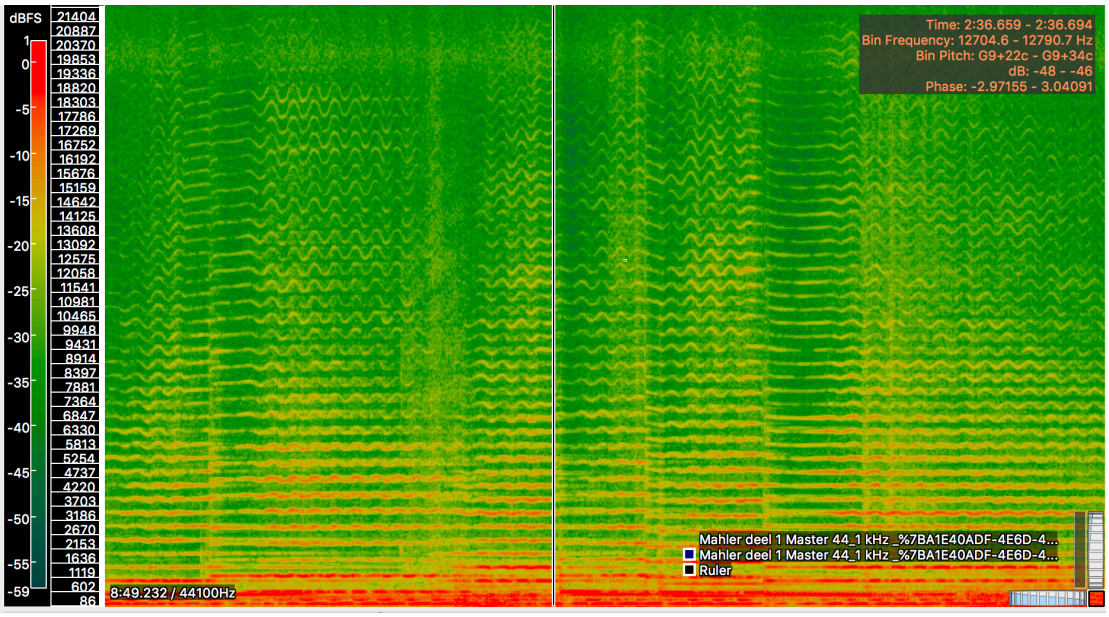


**Figure 2.2: Spectrogram from the hi-fi recording of the piano quartet arrangement of Mahler's *Symphony* no. 3.**

Due to its limited frequency range, lo-fi recording will not be perceived as transparent and, as such, it supports the all-in copying of early recordings: a process in which factors like neatness and tidiness (as emphasised in hi-fi settings) become necessarily subservient to elements of early-recorded style like portamento and un-notated tempo and rhythmic flexibility. I chose this medium for my recorded output because of its non-transparent sound, as well as its connection to historical acoustic recording. While lo-fi recording is not intended to be an accurate reconstruction of early-acoustic recording techniques, the sonic results attained convey information similar to that captured by the acoustic recording horn; the major difference being the absence of surface noise on our recordings. Not only does the unusual sound of these limited-frequency recordings make the listener aware that the recording medium is not transparent, but the recording process itself affects musical expression in a way that is fundamentally different from mainstream recording paradigms.

Both Miles and his late colleague, recording engineer Tony Harrison, were fascinated by how the audio feedback received during the recording process affected musicians. They realised that for most musicians, encountering their own recordings had a strong impact on their performance practice—one that could alter their approach to making music. They felt that mainstream recording, with its emphasis on transparency

and a large number of microphones recording ever-greater ranges of frequency, 'dehumanised' recorded sound and caused performers to emphasise neatness, tidiness, and notated detail. Miles observed that, as a result of listening-back to their recordings during mainstream contemporary recording sessions, musicians tended to pursue a clean and tidy performance style, focusing on precision, clarity, and unblemished purity of sound.[116] He felt that in such recording sessions, performers were under-emphasising momentary gestural information of the kind Daniel Leech-Wilkinson refers to as 'emotional-pictorial,' which he considers crucial to communicating music.[117]

Miles was thus encouraged to develop limited-frequency microphones in part because audio feedback from the mid-frequency range conveys different kinds of information to performers than hi-fi audio feedback. Miles observed that mid-frequency range feedback helped musicians focus more on shape, gesture, and musical character. My own experiences in working with the lo-fi medium has confirmed this.

### 2.4) Listening-Back

For this project, Miles and I focused on copying early-recorded style; that is, we concentrated on capturing the sound and atmosphere heard on the original historical recordings. Pioneering recording expert Fred Gaisberg (1873 - 1951), who made many of the early Edison recordings, was an inspiration for Miles's exploration of lo-fi recording technique. Gaisberg realised, in the early days of recording, that the atmosphere of the recording session had a significant effect on the sounding result.[118] Specifically, a single musician or group of musicians gathered around an acoustic recording horn in an intimate setting created an atmosphere that encouraged the intimate music-making we hear on many early recordings. Miles and I created a similarly intimate atmosphere around his lo-fi microphone in intimate spaces at the NRK studios and in several domestic music rooms in The Netherlands. Our goal was to achieve a similar atmosphere to an early recording session by using small spaces that emphasised physical closeness. I also wanted to better understand how the recording environment might have influenced the playing of early-recorded performers, and I documented how the process changed my own approach, as discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

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[116] Geoffrey Miles, e-mail to the author, January 9th, 2018. See Blier-Carruthers, "The Performer's Place in the Process and Product of Recording," for further discussion of this phenomenon.
[117] Leech-Wilkinson, "Recordings and Histories of Performance Styles," 252.
[118] Fred Gaisberg, *The Fred Gaisberg Diaries Part 1, USA and Europe 1898-1902* (Recordingpioneers.com, 2010), accessed June 14, 2018, http://www.recordingpioneers.com/docs/GAISBERG_DIARIES_1.pdf.

Our recording process involved listening-back, comparing my recordings to the originals, and experimenting with my approach to sound production, with proximity to the microphone and, with performance style. This was followed by further listening-back, leading to further adjustments and a deepening focus on the general atmosphere of the performance. Miles's verbal feedback directed my attention towards the atmospheric features of the original recordings, encouraging me to focus on expressivity rather than accurately copying details. Ironically, by broadly focusing on expressivity during the copying process, I often ended up copying details such as phrasing, portamento, and rhythmic flexibility more accurately than when my focus was directed to such details.

Generally I found that the mid-range-frequency feedback from the lo-fi microphone overturned the customary approach to making recordings, with elements like phrase shape and rhythmic flexibility becoming the central means of expression because other elements, like dynamic range and nuances of timbre, were captured more narrowly. For the recorded portfolio I often chose second or third takes of works, made after my performances had been influenced by listening-back, reflection, and adjustment. By contrast, the feedback I tended to receive when recording in mainstream modern settings encouraged me to focus on accuracy and precision of intonation, articulation, purity of sound, and preciseness of ensemble. Here, details of intonation and small blemishes in tone tended to take on great importance, with the microphones creating the impression of 'objectivity'—thereby further heightening my concerns for accuracy.

My copies of historical recordings include stylistic materials typically excluded from mainstream recordings, as well as RIP and HIP performances, and as such, go beyond the pick-and-choose approach of some performer-researchers. At the same time, they can be heard as 'spiritual' reproductions rather than literal copies, and I acknowledge that even if my goal were to create carbon copies of early recordings, this would be impossible. While my performances may depart in some ways from the originals, the central elements of early-recorded performance style are captured.

My goal throughout the recording process was to inhabit the communicative expressivity of the originals, regardless of whether the details of my copies precisely matched their source material. While the exact tempo, timing and timbre of my recorded copy might not literally match Oskar Nedbal's performance of *Du bist die Ruh*, it does convey a sense of intimacy and freedom similar to that of the original. Although the main focus was on expression, I made sure that my recordings also demonstrated clear

use of early-recorded stylistic devices like tempo and rhythmic flexibility, portamento and rubato, thereby ensuring that my performances were not held back by the ideologies of MSPs.

The lo-fi approach to recording can be viewed as a rejection of the mainstream recording paradigm, where the record producer's goal (as stated by Lindberg above) is to defend the composer's intentions. As Miles describes it, his goal is to instead capture the 'possibilities' contained in a musical event. He compares the musical event to a river and conventional recording approaches to cartography, in which the sketch of a river ignores the possible paths it might otherwise have taken. Instead, as Miles insists, the flow of the musical event should be viewed as consisting of an infinite number of points, whereby in each fraction of a moment a different perspective on its possible paths might be experienced. This metaphor is rooted in the belief that the power of acoustic music resides in its potential to diverge at any moment. This has an analogy in early-recordings-inspired performance practice. Early recordings often sound like live, one-off performance events, precisely because of this sense that what is recorded is but one of a myriad of possible directions a performance might take. This then gives the listener the sense that the next performance by the same performer(s) would likely take a different path. This is also what Leech-Wilkinson means when he describes early-recorded style as moment-to-moment, because the style is open to divergent possibilities at each moment in time.[119]

As the aim of this project is the all-in copying of early-recorded style, the lo-fi recording process has been instrumental in guiding my performances towards gestural, moment-to-moment expressivity.

### 2.5) Technical Specifications

The whole of the recorded portfolio was made with Miles's lo-fi, self-built microphone. This microphone, which captures frequencies up to 4000hz while focusing strongly on the mid-range from 500 to 2000hz, was paired with two simple stereo microphones (miniature DPA 46D electric microphones), which capture a conventional frequency range up to about 18000hz in order to also create full frequency versions of the recordings. The whole recorded portfolio can thus be heard in two versions: Appendix I contains the 'raw lo-fi' version (lo-fi microphone only) and Appendix II

[119] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music*, chapter no. 8, paragraph no. 6, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap8.html.

contains the full-frequency version (lo-fi microphone mixed with audio from two DPA 46D microphones). The full-frequency mix was created by removing the mid-frequency range from the DPA microphones and then adding this information back in from the lo-fi microphone. This allows the listener to compare a more modern sounding version of the recordings with the lo-fi version. The mixed versions are also meant to give a sense of what the early recordings I copied might have sounded like had they been recorded with modern, full-frequency microphones.

As the entire recorded portfolio was made using feedback from the lo-fi microphone, however, the playing heard on both versions captures adjustments made for the 'raw' version. For example, on our recording of Tchaikovsky's *Andante cantabile* from his *String Quartet* no. 1, the cello pizzicati had to be played forcefully in order to be heard at all on the raw, lo-fi version and, as a result, in the full-frequency mix, these pizzicatti sound far too loud in the overall balance.

### 2.6) Technological Value of Lo-fi

While lo-fi recording can help create artistically compelling results, the approach also has clear technological benefits. Modern microphones are compromised in their fidelity to the mid-frequency range due to the need to reduce noise interference. A modern condenser microphone's back-plate is constructed close to the diaphragm in order to reduce this noise interference, which results in distortion in the mid-frequency range. Physicist Andrew Simpson describes this process as follows:

> The wide-bandwidth small diaphragm condenser microphone represents a fundamental compromise between noise performance and linearity, where the designer must decide whether noise performance or linearity is the priority. Commonly, as in cases where noise performance is critical, linearity is necessarily compromised by increased back-plate proximity.[120]

The process that Simpson refers to as 'compromised linearity' happens when the diaphragm of a modern microphone is operating at full frequency and hi-range frequencies (above 5000hz) interact with lower frequencies, creating what is called intermodulation distortion. This distortion is particularly harmful to the mid-frequency range (500 - 2000hz) where human hearing is the most sensitive. The higher the frequency range captured by the microphone, the worse this problem gets. According to

[120] Andrew Simpson, "Implications of Nonlinear Distortion in the Ultrasonic Capacitive Microphone, Why is the Wide-Bandwidth Condenser Microphone a Bad Idea?" (Poland: Simpson Microphones, 2009), 2.

physicist John Willet, "typically in the best-case scenario [such as a well-designed modern microphone] this approximately entails a doubling of nonlinear distortion for every doubling of frequency."[121] In other words, the higher our hi-fi becomes (in terms of frequency range), the worse this intermodulation distortion gets.

What Simspon argues is that the low-bandwidth microphones of the past, which captured a smaller range of frequencies, actually show a significant and measurable advantage over the modern, wide-bandwidth condenser microphone. This is because low-bandwidth microphones lack the audible-band non-harmonic products of ultrasonic intermodulation distortion. To better understand how non-harmonic intermodulation distortion works, Miles provided me with the example below, which is a spectral analysis of a typical orchestral recording done at the NRK using contemporary wide-bandwidth microphones.

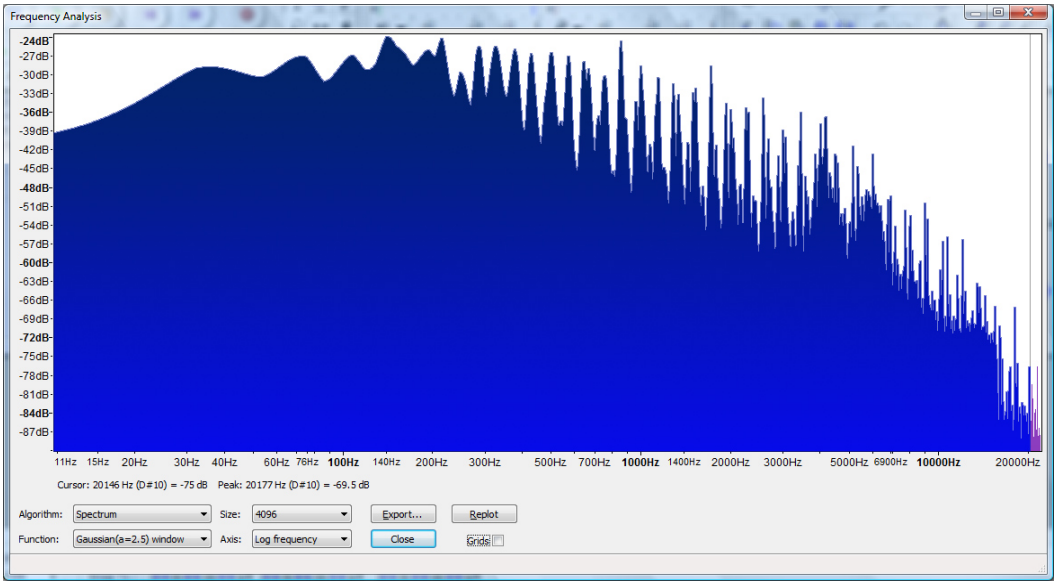


**Figure 2.3: Recording at the NRK of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra by Geoffrey Miles.**

The vertical axis represents loudness in decibels, and the horizontal axis represents frequency range in Hertz. The graph allows the reader to track relative loudness (coloured in blue) at each given frequency, as shown by the pitch events registered by the vertical lines. It is apparent that the bulk of the audio recorded is below (to the left of) 1000hz (in the form of fundamental pitches). This however is not the frequency range where the human ear gets most of its information. If one cuts off frequencies above

[121] John Willet, "The Symmetrical Microphone Capsule and the Quest for the Perfect 'Acoustic Window,'" AES UK 13th Conference: 'Microphones & Loudspeakers,' Paper Number: MAL-02, March 1998.

1000hz, the resulting audio becomes unclear and muddy, pitches are difficult to discern, and very little phrasing or rhythmic detail is audible. Contemporary microphone diaphragms, which are constructed to be equally sensitive to frequencies above and below 1000hz, have trouble representing the finer detail that occurs at mid-range frequencies (between 500 - 2000hz).

Contemporary microphones lose detail at mid-range frequencies due to intermodulation distortion that is caused by the capture of a great deal of low frequency information below 1000hz. Acoustically, a microphone diaphragm that is moving at a high amplitude and low frequency (i.e. loud, low audio input) will misrepresent low-amplitude, higher-frequency information (i.e. soft, high audio input) causing intermodulation distortion. This distortion results from the high-level (loud), low pitch frequencies modulating the higher frequencies and creating distortion side bands. Side bands are related to the distance between two frequencies and not the fundamental, therefore the distortion created is non-harmonic or 'out-of-tune.' While in a good quality microphone this distortion is low-level, Simpson, Willett and Miles all argue that it is highly significant because it interferes with detailed information in the mid-frequency range.[122]

Miles's self-built microphone solves the problem of intermodulation distortion by turning a dynamic microphone up and horn-loading it, making the microphone insensitive to low frequencies. Horn loading refers to the process of applying an acoustic horn to a diaphragm or membrane in order to transmit air vibrations. Figure 2.4 shows Miles's lo-fi microphone with its acoustic horns attached. As a result of this, the mid-range frequency information becomes clearer. This effect cannot be achieved electronically in post-production by selectively filtering out certain frequencies, because the mechanically-induced intermodulation would still be present in the filtered signal. An example of such an attempt at electronic filtering can be heard in singer Sarah Potter's recordings that were made with conventional hi-fi technology and later filtered in post-production to resemble early recordings.[123] Here, the mid-range frequency information remains distorted, and the result sounds more like a conventional recording post-compression than an acoustic recording. This demonstrates how the lo-fi microphone, with its lack of intermodulation distortion, records mid-range frequencies in a more detailed way than a conventional modern microphone.

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[122] Simpson, "Implications of Nonlinear Distortion in the Ultrasonic Capacitive Microphone," 3.
[123] Sarah Potter, *Changing Vocal Style and Technique in Britain During the Long Nineteenth Century* (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2014), 151.

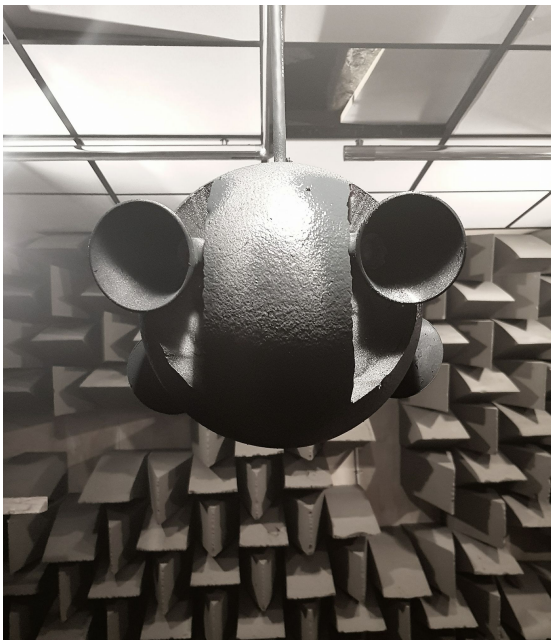

**Figure 2.4: Geoff Miles's self-built horn-loaded lo-fi microphone.**

Simpson equates the result of a lo-fi microphone's more detailed recording of mid-range frequencies with what he calls 'musicality.' He argues that the absence of non-harmonic components in the audible band makes historical recordings sound more 'musical' than contemporary recordings, and he believes that this musicality is achieved, not because historical recordings are altered by 'euphonic distortion' as is commonly believed, but because they are free of the non-harmonic distortions caused by intermodulation distortion.[124]

## 2.7) Time Domain Blurring and Depth

While these principles of acoustic science show that lo-fi recordings have demonstrable technological advantages, lo-fi recording is also based on making decisions about what information is important or meaningful to record in order to convey what Leech-Wilkinson calls the 'emotional-pictorial' elements of musical expression.

The acoustic recording horn has a strong resonance of its own, which produces 'ringing' or time-domain blurring. As Miles's lo-fi microphone is connected to an acoustic horn, it captures this effect. Time-domain blurring conveys information about

[124] Euphonic distortion refers to the theory that certain technological components of recording or playback distort the audio material and therefore add 'musicality' to the final result. For more information see Keith Howard, "Euphonic Distortion: Naughty but Nice?"*Stereophile*, 2006, accessed June 14, 2018, https://www.stereophile.com/reference/406howard/index.html. Simpson, "Implications of Nonlinear Distortion in the Ultrasonic Capacitive Microphone," 3.

depth and velocity in much the same way as an analogue colour photograph taken at a slow shutter speed does. The blurring colouration in these analogue photographs is like the sound the acoustic horn produces on early recordings. To illustrate, imagine photographing a scene where a large amount of red light is present, but there is a small amount of detail in blue light that is moving. The goal is to capture the motion of the blue light in as much detail as possible. Therefore, by taking a picture where the red light is filtered out and the blue light is blurred, the desired information will be captured. In this way, the lo-fi microphone cuts out the red light of low frequencies, shutting off information that prevents us from observing the blue mid-frequency information. The blurring resonance of the acoustic horn then helps us to better perceive the blue light or mid-frequency information in motion.

The musical result of this is the ability of the microphone to capture a great deal of information concerning gesture and phrasing, which is what I experienced while listening-back to my recordings. What follows then is that it is the mid-frequency range that conveys audio information that we perceive as gestural. Thus, the lo-fi recordings with their detailed mid-frequency information, and less-detailed lower and higher frequency information, engage the listener in a ways that are different from hi-fi recordings. McLuhan provides a theoretical framework for this process in his distinction between hot and cold media. McLuhan's idea is that a medium with more restricted information (for example, Miles's lo-fi microphone) engages an audience in a way that a medium with a high amount of definition cannot:

> There is a basic principle that distinguishes a hot medium…from a cool one...A hot medium is one that extends one single sense in high definition. High definition is the state of being well-filled with data…Telephone is a cool medium, or one of low definition, because the ear is given a meagre amount of information. And speech is a cool medium, of low definition, because so little is given and so much has to be filled in by the listener. On the other hand, hot media do not leave so much to be filled in or completed by the audience. Hot media are therefore low in participation and cool media are high in participation, or completion by the audience.[125]

In the context of our recording process, lo-fi recordings can be viewed as cool media, because they lack frequency bandwidth (data) and therefore encourage the listener to engage with them by filling in the 'missing' bandwidth with their inner ear. Hi-fi recordings can be viewed as hot media, because more frequency range is provided, leaving little to the listener's imagination. When listening to lo-fi recordings, we are

[125] McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 22.

invited to imagine the frequency range of the live performance that became the recorded performance; what we are imagining, then, is not a hi-fi version of the same recording, but rather what its living reality might have sounded like. With a 'hi-fi' recording, however, the listener is bombarded by large amounts of sonic information, leaving little to be filled in by the imagination. Following McLuhan, the listener may be reduced to a state of apathy or low participation by a hi-fi recording. The effect of hi-fi therefore is impressive, big, and hyper-real, much like 4DX cinema, where the viewer is overloaded with impressions and easily reduced to a passive recipient of the experience. By contrast, lo-fi can trigger listener engagement by requiring them to imaginatively fill-in unrecorded sonic information.[126]

### 2.8) Using Technology to Problematize Technology

While the role recording technology plays in MSPs often goes unrecognized, I have attempted to use recording technique to problematize the relationship musicians have with technology. As the recorded portfolio demonstrates, lo-fi technology has advantages that, when used to further research and performance practices, can lead us away from MSPs and towards an early-recordings-inspired performance style. Imagine how different the recording of our emulation of the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet playing Tchaikovsky's *Andante cantabile* from his *String Quartet* no.1 might be had it been made in a modern studio (Appendix I - Recording 5.4a19). The recording medium would have encouraged us to be more reserved in our use of the wild expressive devices central to the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet's performance, and we would have likely been much more concerned with accuracy and cleanliness. The technology with which performer-researchers choose to record their artistic outputs thus plays an important role in encouraging them to either take a pick-and-choose approach to early-recorded style, or to fully embrace expressive devices that may sound professionally incompetent when compared to modern practices. Lo-fi helps liberate performers from these concerns, because the sounding results place far greater emphasis on gestural information than on neatness and tidiness.

The nature of lo-fi technology helps us better understand how historical recordings were made and offers us alternative possibilities for non-mainstream recording practices, while at the same time its technological advantages can engage

[126] "4DX Cinema," Cineworld, accessed August 11, 2018, https://www.cineworld.co.uk/4dx#more-about.

listeners' imaginations in a vibrant fashion. From my own recording process I have learned that the ways in which early recordings 'speak' to us reflect both the playing styles they capture, as well as the ways the recording medium focuses our ears on moment-to-moment gestural information. In sum, we as performers should be mindful that the recording medium we choose actively guides the message conveyed by our practice.

## 3) Early-Recorded Viola Analyses

### 3.1) Introduction

Performers today are increasingly aware of the importance of historical recordings as documents of the stylistic contexts of canonical 19th-century composers. However, historical recordings have had little impact on MSPs,[127] which are restricted by the need to be neat and tidy, to conform to expectations of how particular repertoires should sound, and to adhere to the structure and notated detail of scores. Often those that do make use of early recordings are performer-researchers who take a pick-and-choose approach to applying elements from early recordings, leaving out de-synchronisation, continuous rushing and heavy portamento in order to preserve a modern veneer of professionalism. However, I find this approach inadequate for achieving a performance style that either conveys the atmosphere of early-recorded performances, or that circumvents MSPs' constraints, or both.

I argue that familiarity with early recordings allows us to question some of the fundamental assumptions underlying our current performance practices. Why do we feel the need for a steady tempo? Is playing the notated pitches and rhythms obligatory? Why are we so reticent about making use of varied, frequent and heavy portamento? And finally, why do we not embrace the richness inherent in multi-layered untogetherness-of-ensemble in our performances? As I have argued in Chapter One, the 'all-in approach' is a useful method for unlocking the answers to some of these questions as well as for creating performances rich in moment-to-moment expressivity. The all-in approach refers to creating live or recorded performances that are copies of early recordings and that are as informed and accurate as possible for the performer(s) given their musical and technical abilities and the constraints of time. These copies attempt to capture the detail and overall atmosphere of the original recordings. In order to create all-in copied performances, I have undertaken detailed analysis of historical recordings. The goal of this analysis is to understand the physical (bodily) and musical approaches taken by violists of the early-recorded era. These analyses will show how early-recorded violists approach performance through a similar stylistic language, albeit in different dialects, which is closely related to the approach of early-recorded singers, and which is fundamentally at odds with today's MSPs. The process of analysis has helped increase my understanding of early-recorded style in general and has served as the basis for creating

[127] Mainstream performance practices as discussed in Chapter One.

annotated scores that function as the starting point for my own recordings. These recordings are discussed in Chapter Five.

Before proceeding with this detailed analysis, however, I briefly discuss the issue of tuning, which varies substantially from recording to recording. I also explain the labelling system used for portamento techniques in my analyses with reference to Kai Köpp's list of portamento types. My approach to the analyses themselves then applies Daniel Leech-Wilkinson's concept of 'close-listening,' or "focusing one's full attention on the sound of the performance," and expands on this method through annotated scores and software analysis using Sonic Visualiser.[128] The end goal of this analytical process is to achieve an understanding of the recordings by generating evidence that can support broader conclusions about stylistic practices in the early-recorded era. The analyses examine tempo modification, i.e., change in the average speed of the music; rhythmic flexibility, i.e., divergence from the notated rhythms and detailed beat-to-beat changes of speed that do not substantially affect the average tempo of a musical phrase; and elements related to pitch like vibrato, portamento and timbre. I also explore multi-layering created through arpeggiation, dislocation and other non-notated practices that affect the relationship between multiple voices, resulting in the non-simultaneous sounding of notes that are notated as vertically aligned. Sigurd Slåttebrekk and Tony Harrison referred to multi-layering as "the presence of two or more directional tendencies, acting simultaneously," and, in my work, I examine the multi-layering that results from varying elements of a musical texture pulling in different directions, most often as a result of dislocation.[129] These stylistic devices are used in noticeable and often drastically different ways on the recordings studied here as compared to how they are applied (or neglected) in contemporary MSPs, including RIP.[130]

This is the first comprehensive analysis of the early-recorded performance practices of violists who were active before 1930 and who were recorded in a solo capacity.[131] A selection of these recordings includes overlapping repertoire, allowing for a close comparison between players in order to examine both their individual idiosyncrasies and their stylistic commonalities. Because Lionel Tertis's prolific output encompasses more than 100 recordings, only a handful of key recordings have been

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[128] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music,* Chapter 8.2 paragraph 19, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap8.html.
[129] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "Ambiguity and Multi-layeredness" from *Chasing the Butterfly*, accessed January 2, 2019, http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=207.
[130] Recordings Inspired Performances as discussed in Chapter One.
[131] By solo capacity, I refer to recordings for viola alone or viola with piano or orchestral accompaniment.

included here. My selection of Tertis's recordings includes some of his earliest recordings, recordings of his own compositions, and recordings of canonical repertoire, such as Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 and Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*. The other performers examined here are Oskar Nedbal, Léon Van Hout, Arthur Post, Pierre Monteux, Maurice Vieux, and an anonymous American viola player. In addition to comparing and contrasting these violists' performances, I also examine the relationship between early-recorded string playing and singing. I argue that strong correlations between the two suggest an attempt on the part of string players to copy singers. My analyses demonstrate that Tertis's recordings are often closer to those of the early-recorded singers studied than those of other pre-1930 violists. The analyses also reveal variations of style in early-recorded performances, with performers separated by generation, national school or character taking divergent approaches. On one hand, these performers share a common expressive language, while on the other, their regional dialects or preferences lead to varied outcomes.

### 3.2) Issues of Tuning and Pitch on Early Recordings

While many musicians assume that the modern tuning standards of A=440hz or A=440hz+ (441,442), as commonly used by today's symphony orchestras, have been around for at least a century, historical research shows just how recently this international standard was adopted. The A=440hz standard was not agreed upon until 1939 at an international conference in London and had to be reaffirmed in both 1955 and 1975. This reaffirmation was the result of the persistence of deviations in standard pitch worldwide. It seems that the A=440hz standard represented a kind of "compromise between two important traditions: the pitch level favoured by composers of eighteenth-century music [around A=415,3hz] and the more brilliant pitch levels introduced by the makers of nineteenth-century wind instruments [up to A=450hz]." There was also a nineteenth-century French standard of A=435hz, as decreed by law in 1859.[132]

In the 1980s, political activist Lyndon H. Larouche campaigned internationally to have the tuning standard lowered to Giuseppe Verdi's favoured A=432hz, arguing that,

[132] Lynn Cavanagh, "A Brief History of the International Establishment of International Pitch Standard A=440hz," 1999, accessed September 14, 2016, http://wam.hr/sadrzaj/us/Cavanagh_440Hz.pdf, 3, 4, 2. While A=415,3hz may have been a kind of average pitch in the 18th century, it was by no means standard. There were a wide variety of tunings used at the time, with lower pitches favoured for chamber music contexts, and higher pitches for church contexts due to shorter organ pipes being cheaper and thus higher in pitch.

"the great Cremona string instruments show conclusively that they were constructed to be in agreement with [A=432hz]."[133] Studies conducted at the time by Bruno Barosi, an acoustic physicist in Cremona, showed that the sound of the violin was "distinguished by [an] abundance of overtones" in both quantity and volume, with the 'Omobono' Stradivarius displaying "its best resonance at [A=432]."[134] Whether A=432hz can be said to be scientifically supported as the ideal A for all string instruments remains an open question.[135]

It is important to be aware of such issues, because it seems likely that many early recordings of viola players and string ensembles were made at lower tunings than today's standardised pitch. However, because the playback speeds of record players vary, it is nearly impossible to determine the exact pitch used on any given recording. With any wax cylinder or shellac record, the quicker the playback device turns, the higher the resulting pitch. Further, as pre-World War II settings of record players were far from standardised, mechanical setup or even listeners' choice of speed was responsible for the pitch at which a recording would be played.

Consequently, sound engineers today who make transfers of early recordings need to make their own choices about the speed and pitch of playback, because the digital media to which we now transfer these recordings have a single unvarying pitch. David Hermann, who transferred the majority of Tertis's 78rpm discs to CD, chose to transfer the Vocalian records made between 1919-1924 at about A=437hz, while transferring Tertis's Columbia discs made between 1924-1936 at A=440hz. Hermann's rationalisation for these choices was his theory that Tertis may have played with a lower A in the early 1920s and that the A=440hz standard became more widely adopted by the early 1930s.[136] This is all a matter of speculation, and as such, any decisions about pitch height in digital transfers remains somewhat arbitrary. For my copies of early recordings,

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[133] Lyndon Larouche, "The Power of 256," *Executive Intelligence Review* 17, no. 24 (June 8, 1990): 67.
[134] Hartmut Cramer, "Experiment Proves Music Sounds Better at Low Tuning," *Executive Intelligence Review* 15, no. 48 (December 2, 1988): 58 - 59.
[135] However, it could be fruitful to consider the possibility of experimenting with lower tunings in current performance practices, as these may be better suited to string instruments, especially those with gut strings. Perhaps string players would do well to question today's orchestral As, which are often well above A=442hz in common practice, and which may serve wind instruments while doing little for the warmth of sound of string instruments.
[136] David Hermann, e-mail to the author, March 12, 2016. While playback speed on wax cylinders and records of course affects the tempo and pitch at which the music is heard, in the context of the early recordings examined here, where the deviation in tuning is at most 8hz or approximately 1/3 of a semitone, these tempo differences will be minimal. The approximate tempo deviation based on playback speed can be calculated by multiplying the tempo in beats per minute by 0.555555. Depending on the speed, this means that for many of the recordings studied here with a tempo between 60 bpm and 120 bpm, a range of speeds of less than 5 bpm (depending on their playback speed) can be assumed.

I was forced to adhere to an A=440hz tuning in order to fit with available pianos. I did experiment with lower tunings in the practice studio, however, and found that they added richness to the tone. As a result, I believe performances on stringed instruments at a lower tuning are worthy of future study.

### 3.3) Portamento

Portamento is prominent throughout early recordings of singers and string players. Leopold Auer's (1845 - 1930) advice to violinists that, "in order to develop your judgement as to the proper and improper use of the portamento, observe the manner in which it is used by good singers and by poor ones," reflects the intimate connection between its use by singers and string players of the era.[137]

While portamento is rarely used in MSPs and is today considered by many to be 'messy' or 'overly sentimental,' Leech-Wilkinson links the device to communicative performance practices of the early-recorded era, arguing that, "portamento…seemed to signal empathy [and] a willingness to be moved by the feelings being portrayed in music."[138] Soprano Adelina Patti's 1905 recording of Mozart's *Voi che sapete* from *Le Nozze di Figaro* showcases many of the kinds of portamenti prominent in early-recorded vocal style and amply illustrates Leech-Wilkinson's claim that the device signals empathy. Köpp's thorough study of this recording documents the six different types of portamento Patti uses and argues that the recording can be viewed as a kind of masterclass in the use of 19th-century portamento technique.[139] Köpp's classification of these six types of portamento, which I have translated and included below in its entirety, explains how each type can also be executed by string players. Köpp's list makes reference to violinist Louis Spohr's (1784 – 1859) preferred use of these various types, as explicitly detailed in his 1832 *Violinschule*:

**Portamento Techniques in 19th-Century String and Vocal Practice[140]**

- PL: (*Portamento Langsam*) Sliding with one finger during a slur
  (Small intervals up to a perfect fourth, according to Spohr)

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[137] Auer, *Violin Playing as I Teach It*, 63.
[138] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music*, Chapter 7, paragraph 6 http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap7.html.
[139] Kai Köpp, "Hohe Schule des Portamentos," (Bern: Kai Köpp, 2015), 6.
[140] Spohr, *Violinschule*, 120, 126 and 196. Köpp, "Hohe Schule des Poramentos," 9 - 10. Translation mine.

- PS : (*Portamento Schnell*) Sliding with two different fingers during a slur
  (Large intervals of a perfect fifth or greater; Spohr prefers sliding with the guide finger rather than with the arrival finger)[141]

- I: (*Intonazione)* Sliding into the beginning of a phrase
  (Small intervals, sliding with the arrival finger)

- C: (*Cercar della nota)* Sliding with the arrival finger after a bow change
  (Small intervals)

- A: (*Anticipazione della nota)* Sliding with the arrival finger before the bow change
  (Small and large intervals)

- L: (*Librar la voce)* Changing fingers on the same note
  (Small intervals)

I use the abbreviated capital letters on the left side of this list to classify portamento types used on many of the recordings analysed below. The list is also a practical tool that string players can use to hone their portamento skills because of the clear guidance it provides in executing the various types. However, in the context of early recordings, there are some shortcomings in Köpp's portamento list: his so-called 'fast' PS and 'slow' PL portamenti are not necessarily either fast or slow, as both are executed at varying speeds on early recordings, with the 'fast' portamento tending to sound lighter than the 'slow' portamento because of the change of fingers. On early recordings, performers also make use of both devices outside of the intervallic boundaries preferred by Spohr. While the PS or 'fast' portamento describes a slide using either the guide finger or the arrival finger under a slur, these two slides sound quite different in practice. Likewise, a version of both the C and A portamenti executed with the guide finger sometimes creates a kind of pitch ornament after or before the bow change, even though this type of portamento is not described in the list above. Despite these shortcomings, this list is the most thorough classification of portamento types to date. In Clive Brown's writings by contrast, portamento techniques are vaguely classified as either 'French' (using the arrival finger) or 'German' (using the guide finger)—inadequate descriptors in the context of early recordings where French and German players use both the guide and arrival fingers to slide interchangeably. While Köpp interprets Spohr as preferring the

[141] The guide finger refers to the finger used on the note from which a portamento departs, while the arrival finger is the finger that will be used to play the note following the portamento.

guide finger, Spohr does not exclude the possibility of using the arrival finger. This is at odds with Brown's view that Spohr saw the use of the arrival finger as a pernicious French technique.[142]

Both the frequency and diversity of portamenti in today's MSPs have been severely curtailed. Sliding between notes often results in rhythmic dislocation and softens attack, thereby obscuring the clearly defined moment when one note begins and another ends. As a result, portamento challenges the framework of neatness and tidiness considered desirable in MSPs. Teachers, juries and conductors have told me on numerous occasions not to use portamento in my performances, even in repertoires where historical evidence shows that portamento was used frequently by musicians closely associated with those works.[143] Despite the current lack of sympathy for portamento in MSPs, early recordings demonstrate that the technique, along with devices like tempo and rhythmic flexibility, was widely used by string players and singers connected with late-19th and early-20th-century repertoires. The analyses of historical viola recordings below, alongside the annotated scores found in Appendix III, demonstrate how these 19th-century portamento techniques were used in practice.

### 3.4) Oskar Nedbal's Pioneering Solo Recordings

According to Tully Potter, Oskar Nedbal (1874 - 1930) is the first violist to have been featured as a soloist on a recording.[144] Nedbal's historical importance as a musician is however little acknowledged today outside of his native Czech Republic. Born in Tabor, he studied composition with Antonin Dvořák and was the violist in the Czech String Quartet with Karel Hoffmann, Josef Suk, who was married to Dvořák's daughter, and Otto Berger. Nedbal was also well established as both a conductor and a composer: he led the Czech Philharmonic on occasion, and his ballets and operettas were regularly performed throughout the Austro-Hungarian empire. The two recordings Nedbal made coincided with a productive and happy period in his life, during which he gained recognition as a composer and was promoted by Gustav Mahler, who conducted a

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142 Clive Brown, "The Decline of the 19th-Century German School of Violin Playing," CHASE 2011, accessed May 25, 2017, http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/article/the-decline-of-the-19th-century-german-school-of-violin-playing-clive-brown/.

143 For period performances of late-19th and early-20th-century repertoires, we can turn to recordings of the leading string players of the time like Joachim, Ysaÿe, Auer, Casals and Tertis.

144 Tully Potter, liner notes to *The Recorded History of the Viola Volume 1*, 1995, Pearl Records, GEMMCDS9148.

number of his works in Prague and Vienna.[145]

Nedbal made two 78rpm discs: the first in 1910 of his own composition *Romanticky Kus,* and the second in 1911 of Franz Schubert's lied *Du bist die Ruh*. Although he was born in 1874, just one year prior to Tertis, Nedbal's playing style is close to that of his generational predecessors. As David Milsom notes, his playing style is "directly comparable (in spite of the fact that Nedbal was born more than forty years later) with the sound world of [violinist] Joseph Joachim [1831 - 1907]."[146] Indeed, what we hear on Nedbal's recordings is frequent and nuanced rhythmic flexibility, ornamentation of pitch (adding non-notated pitches often in the form of trills or grace notes), and a non-continuous ornamental approach to vibrato (an uneven, irregular, and non-continuous use of the device)—making his playing style comparable to Joachim's recordings of Johannes Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* no. 1 and 2 and of his own *Romance* in C major.[147]Nedbal and violinist Marie Soldat-Roeger's (1863 - 1955) recordings demonstrate that in some cases the ornamental approach to vibrato of Joachim's era was carried over across generations, while other performers of the time, like Tertis and violinist Fritz Kreisler (1875 - 1962), made use of wider, more continuous vibrato.[148] This demonstrates that the phenomenon of performance style change was not only influenced by generational trends, but that a wide variety of styles coexisted in the early-20th century.

### 3.4.1) Oskar Nedbal and Unknown Pianist: *Du bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3 by Franz Schubert (recorded 1911)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.4.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.4.1.

Nedbal's recording of his own arrangement of Schubert's lied *Du bist die Ruh* is remarkable for its freedom of ensemble playing, wide-ranging rhythmic flexibility, heavy portamento, and the diversity of arpeggiation used by his pianist—all of which are currently considered impermissible within today's MSPs. As far as Nedbal's arrangement

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145 Lyudmila, Peřinová, "Oskar Nedbal and Vienna," Tabor, 2010, International Oskar Nedbal Society, accessed July 18, 2018, http://www.oskarnedbal.cz/dokumenty/clanky/O.Nedbal%20and%20Vienna.pdf.
146 David Milsom, liner notes to *A - Z of String Players,* 2014, Naxos, 8.558081-84.
147 Johannes Brahms, *Hungarian Dance* WoO 1/1 and WoO 1/2, Joseph Joachim, *Romance in C major*, Joseph Joachim (violin), recorded 1903 by The Gramophone and Typewriter Ltd., and reissued 2004 on *The Great Violinists: Recordings from 1900 - 1913*, Testament 749677132323.
148 Marie Soldat-Roeger was a pupil of Joseph Joachim. For more information on her performance style, see: David Milsom, "Marie Soldat-Roeger (1863 - 1955): Her Significance to the Study of Nineteenth-Century Performing Practices," 2007, accessed July 21, 2018, http://www.davidmilsom.com/AHRC.html.

for viola is concerned, he plays the first strophe an octave lower than indicated in the vocal score and takes the final strophe up an octave, resulting in a transformation of both sound and character. Exposing the special sound qualities of different registers of the instrument in this way was common practice in arrangements of vocal works for stringed instruments in the early 20th century. Tertis uses this technique in many of his notated transcriptions, as do violinists Kreisler and Auer and cellist Pablo Casals (1876 - 1973).

*Tempo Modification*

Nedbal makes extensive use of tempo modification here, a central characteristic of many early-recorded performances, to an extent that would be frowned upon today. His approach to tempo closely mirrors that of a number of early-recorded singers (several vocal recordings are examined below), with broad slowing at the start of each strophe and the pianist rushing the introduction (m. 1 - 7) and interlude (m. 49 - 53). This separates the viola/piano sections from the sections with piano alone. The tempo graph below (Figure 3.01) illustrates this phenomenon, with tempo in beats per minute appearing along the vertical axis and the recording unfolding over time in seconds along the horizontal axis. Here, we see the pianist setting a quicker tempo in the introduction, which Nedbal then slows with his entrance in m. 8. The graph shows Nedbal's broad slowing at the endings of phrases, for example, in m. 11 and m. 25, followed immediately by a spike in tempo—especially where the pianist rushes in the interlude at m. 49 (here m. 49 follows the cut made at the end of m. 25).[149]

[149] As shown in the annotated score in Appendix III, Score 3.4.1, Nedbal cuts the second strophe of the work (m. 26 - 48), leaving his performance structured as follows: piano introduction m. 1 - 7, strophe 1 m. 8 - 25, interlude m. 49 - 53, strophe 2 (originally strophe 3) m. 54 - 82.

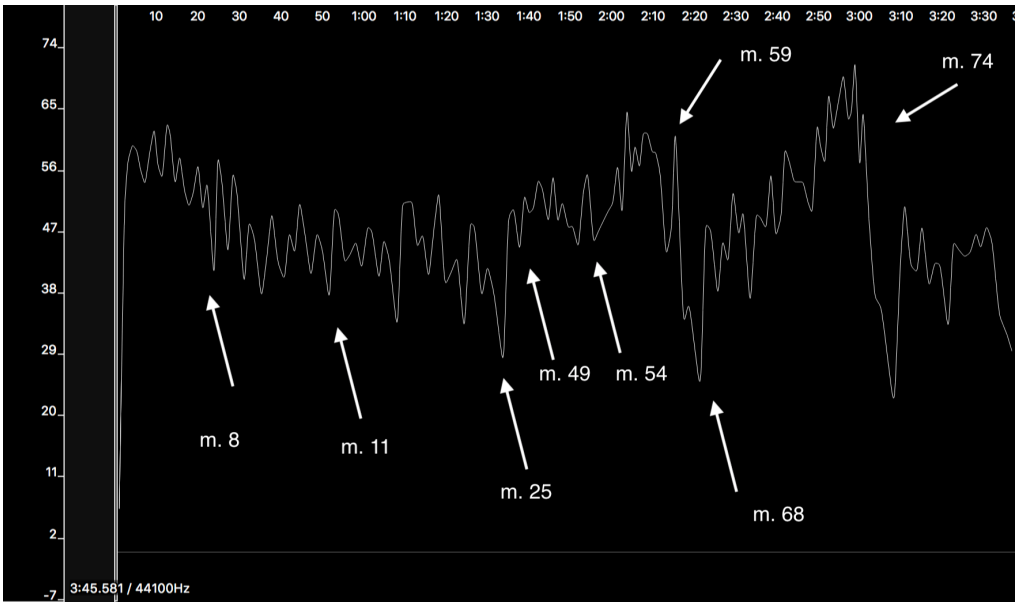


**Figure 3.01: Tempo Graph of Oskar Nedbal's recording of Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh*.**

The graph further shows how the final section, with its rising pitch, is divided by tempo into two phrases, m. 54 - 65 and m. 68 - 74, both of which contain the same material in the viola part. Nedbal rushes towards the top two notes (m. 59 - 60), which he broadens, thereby creating a sense of arrival on the highest pitch. The tempo graph shows that this same shaping through tempo modification is even more pronounced during the second iteration of the phrase (m. 68 - 74). Here, Nedbal stretches the top notes even longer before returning to a slower tempo in the final bars that more closely matches his tempo in the opening phrase.

Nedbal's beat placement is often early or late in relation to the pianist, and this unevenness is reflected in the jaggedness of the tempo graph. This beat placement, however, also plays a part in both rushing and slowing on a larger scale throughout the recording. Nedbal places beats slightly behind the pianist in the opening section, which slows until m. 25, before placing them slightly ahead in the final section, which rushes to m. 74, suggesting that he is using these placements to signal what kind of tempo flexibility he desires to the pianist. This also holds true for the approach many early-recorded singers take with this work, including Lilli Lehmann and John McCormack.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

Nedbal's rhythmic alteration here involves multi-layering caused by dislocation and arpeggiation in the piano part and more frequent variation in the lengths of notes compared to the notated score. This looseness means that Nedbal's and his pianist's

approach to the notated rhythms is inexact, another feature of their performance that would be frowned upon in the context of MSPs.

I classify dislocation and arpeggiation as a form of rhythmic flexibility because of the way these techniques undermine a clear location of the beat. These continual variations of rhythm give this performance its characteristic rhapsodic quality. The purple markings in Figure 3.02 show the dislocation between the left and right hands of the pianist, who spreads beats throughout, thereby undermining a clear sense of beat location—a feature emphasized by Nedbal's placement of his notes slightly ahead or behind the pianist's as described above. When Nedbal does play the chord in m. 59 precisely together with the pianist, therefore, the result is a special effect. On this chord, the pianist also refrains from arpeggiating, as it coincides with a sudden change in harmony over the German word *erhellt* in the original vocal text, which translates, remarkably, as 'clarified.'

This loose approach to rhythm gives the whole performance an improvisatory feel as if the rhythmic figures could be performed in any number of ways. The arpeggiation in the piano also de-emphasises any sort of firm accented beat where rhythmic synchronisation or continuity of pulse might be expected in MSPs.

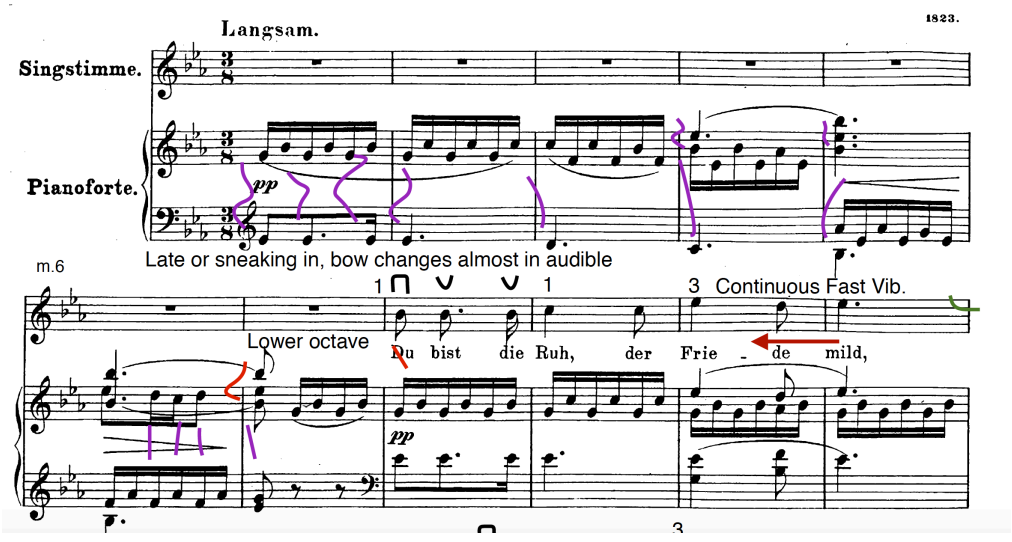


**Figure 3.02: Dislocation in Oskar Nedbal's recording of Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh*.**

Dislocation and arpeggiation aside, Nedbal's frequent variation of note lengths results in a notable example of rhythmic alteration on the long final note of the piece, which is held through the second beat of m. 81—well past the length notated in Schubert's vocal part, which directs the singer to stop on the third beat of m. 80. This

lengthening of final notes beyond their notated length seems to have been a common practice amongst singers on early recordings, and a particularly striking example is found on Lilli Lehmann's recording of *Isolde's Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde* by Richard Wagner—the first known recording of the *Liebestod*—in which she extends the final note on the word *Lust* several bars beyond Wagner's notated length in the score.[150] In *Du bist die Ruh,* Nedbal similarly holds the note at the end of the phrase in m. 19 straight through the rest. In many of his recordings of lyrical works, Tertis similarly negates rests in favour of sustaining the sound: examples of this practice can be found on his recording of John Ireland's *The Holy Boy*, which is analysed below. Nedbal's lengthening and shortening of notated rhythmic values in *Du bist die Ruh* is also heard in his continuously varied execution of dotted rhythms: for example, he lengthens/underdots the notes in m. 8, 12, 16 and 18, while overdotting the thirty-second notes in m. 22 and 24. The effect of these dottings is to create variation: the lengthening in m. 8 sounds calming, while the overdotting in m. 22 signals a more driven approach.

*Portamento*

Nedbal uses heavy portamento throughout this recording, with a frequency and placement that, on one hand, resembles the six early vocal recordings discussed below, and on the other hand, would be deemed excessive by the standards of today's MSPs. Indeed, Nedbal's portamento often appears in every bar, for example, between m. 76 and 78, and at times in every two or three bars. He uses predominantly PL (as in m. 18 and m. 22) and PS (as in m. 25) types,[151] with the finger fully connected to the string throughout the slide and with the bow sustaining the sound to create a heavy sliding effect. All six of the early-recorded singers studied apply the same PS portamento as Nedbal on the long downwards intervals in m. 23 and 25, while John McCormack and Johanna Gadski are the only two to apply portamento at m. 18 in the same way as Nedbal. Both John McCormack and Elena Gerhardt use a portamento similar to Nedbal's in m. 70. This illustrates a broader connection between the portamento use of early-recorded singers and string players: a theme that will reoccur throughout these analyses.

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150 Richard Wagner, *Isolde's Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde*, Lilli Lehmann, Orchestra, conducted by Fritz Lindemann, recorded July 2nd, 1907*,* reissued 1993, *Lilli Lehmann: The Complete Recordings,* Symposium 1207/8 (CD).

151 These Portamento types are discussed above: PL is Portamento Langsam (slur, sliding with the same finger) and PS is Portamento Schnell (slur, sliding with two different fingers).

*Vibrato*

While I discuss Nedbal's vibrato at length in the analysis of *Romanticky Kus* below, it is apparent that he uses the device more frequently on his recording of *Du bist die Ruh*. In m. 10 - 11 there is a striking instance of fast continuous vibrato, which shows that Nedbal was indeed capable of vibrating in this manner despite his general propensity for a slow, ornamental vibrato that often tapers off or starts part way through a note rather than being fully present throughout an entire note length. This is part of the Joachim-like approach to vibrato that Milsom ascribes to Nedbal: an approach that may sound odd to modern string players, who generally play late-19th-century music with wide and continuous vibrato.[152] A further element connecting Nedbal to Joachim is his timbre, which comes across as robust due to his continuous legato. By contrast, the Franco-Belgian violists discussed below, Léon Van Hout and Maurice Vieux, have a more nasal sound coupled with a quick and narrow vibrato.

*Pitch Ornamentation*

Nedbal's approach to pitch ornamentation (adding non-notated pitches mostly in the form of grace notes or trills) resembles that of early-recorded singers, and while none of those surveyed use the practice in *Du bist die Ruh,* there are numerous instances in Patti's recording of *Voi Che Sapete,* for example, where added grace notes are often combined with portamento.[153] For his part, Nedbal uses pitch ornamentation in *Du bist die Ruh* by adding grace notes to the motives in m. 18, 22 and 64, and in the latter, his added notes sound remarkably like the 'cracking' of the human voice. In early vocal recordings as well, one often hears the singer, overcome with emotion, overshooting the intended pitch and thereby creating a kind of ornament. Leech-Wilkinson describes this ornament as the 'Italian sob,' in relation to how integral speech sounds that signify emotion were to early-recorded singing.[154]

### 3.4.2) Lionel Tertis and Arnold Bax, piano: *Du bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3 by Franz Schubert (recorded 1927)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.4.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.4.2.

Below I compare Nedbal and Tertis's recordings of their viola/piano

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[152] Milsom, liner notes to *A - Z of String Players.*
[153] Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Voi che sapete* from *Le Nozze di Figaro,* Adelina Patti, recorded 1905, reissued 1993, *The Era of Adelina Patti,* Nimbus Records, NI 7840/41 (CD).
[154] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music*, Chapter 8.3, Paragraph 78, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap8.html.

arrangements of Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh,* examining some of the similarities and differences between the two, and illustrating the common stylistic language shared by both performers as well as the diversity they achieve within that language. Both performances share a propensity for tempo modification, with quicker piano solo sections contrasted with slower piano/viola sections, frequent and heavy portamento, and rhythmic alteration. Nedbal and Tertis diverge, however, in their use of vibrato, their placement of portamento, and the extremity of their tempo modification.

The two performances also make cuts in different places. Nedbal cuts the second strophe at m. 26, therefore in his version we hear the upper octave for the first time in m. 54, along with the final strophe's more dramatic change of harmony. However, Tertis plays the second strophe, delivering it an octave higher than the first, before making a cut in the final strophe from m. 61 to m. 76, using the empty bar in m. 61 to jump to the next section. Unlike Nedbal, Tertis arrives at the final strophe already playing in the upper octave, emphasizing its more dramatic harmony by expanding his dynamic range, starting softly and building up to a loud climax in the final section. It is notable that Tertis's pianist, Arnold Bax, adds an extra bar to the piano part in m. 28 and m. 51, thereby mirroring the material in m. 27 and extending the phrase. It is highly likely that Bax, who was an accomplished composer in his own right, felt that such alterations to Schubert's notation were fully permissible.

*Comparing Tempo, Rhythm, Portamento and Vibrato*

Tertis's tempo is in the m.m.♩ = 80 range, while Nedbal's is much slower—mostly between m.m. ♩ = 40 - 58. Both recordings share a pattern of slowing throughout the first strophe after a quicker piano introduction, with the pianist rushing in the interludes. On Tertis's recording, pianist Arnold Bax plays with his 'hands together' throughout, making little or no use of the prominent arpeggiation and dislocation heard on Nedbal's recording. Bax uses rubato in the form of beat-to-beat variation and by dislocating the piano accompaniment from the viola, whereas Nedbal's pianist creates a more multi-layered texture through arpeggiation and dislocation. As a result, Nedbal's recording sounds far more extreme in its layering than Tertis's.

Nedbal uses mostly PL and PS portamento types, while Tertis uses a wider range of types such as L portamento in m. 35, where he changes from the A to the D string, creating a warm timbre. Remarkably, both players apply portamento at nearly identical locations throughout, however Nedbal's are more drawn out than Tertis's, which tend to be quicker. Tertis's use of a wider variety of portamento types results in greater contrast

when compared with Nedbal's more monotonous approach. However, both recordings use portamento with a frequency and heaviness that would be frowned upon in today's MSPs. Tertis's wider, more prevalent vibrato is also apparent throughout, and he uses a greater dynamic range than Nedbal. Tertis, unlike Nedbal, does not however add any pitch ornaments. Tertis's approach to rhythmic flexibility sounds more smooth and shaped than Nedbal's, which comes across as unyielding.

### 3.4.3) Violists and Singers: *Du bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3 by Franz Schubert on Early Vocal Recordings

The recordings can be found in Appendix II - recordings 3.4.3.1 – 3.4.3.6 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.4.3.

Nedbal and Tertis's recordings of their own viola/piano arrangements of Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh* can be fruitfully compared with recordings of the lied by early-20th-century singers. This was a popular work at the beginning of the 20th century, judging from the sheer number of recordings of it that were made. Here I have examined six vocal versions—those of Johanna Gadski (1903), Lilli Lehmann (1907), Elena Gerhardt (1911), Julia Culp (1910), Karl Erb (1911) and John McCormack (1924)—looking at similarities and differences between them while also comparing them to the recordings by Nedbal and Tertis.[155] In so doing, what becomes clear is that Nedbal's and Tertis's general approach to tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility, and portamento is similar to that of the early-recorded singers, despite the striking differences observed on a detailed level between the two violists' recordings as examined above. Perhaps it could be said that both violists were attempting to emulate singers.

*Tempo and Rhythm*

All six of these vocal recordings, just like the two viola recordings, show variation in tempo between quicker piano solo sections and slower sung sections. Some performers, however, exaggerate these tempo modifications more than others: while all rush over the rising line from m. 54 - 60, for example, Lehmann and McCormack do so to a much greater extent, and in ways more similar to Nedbal's pronounced rushing than to Tertis's. There are also a wide variety of approaches to the piano accompaniments

[155] Franz Schubert, *Du Bist die Ruh,* Johanna Gadski, 1903, Victor 85025, Lilli Lehmann, Fritz Lindemann (piano), 1907, Columbia S 9001-B (78rpm), Elena Gerhardt, Arthur Nikisch (piano), 1911, ac 5105f (78rpm), Julia Culp, Otto Bake (piano), 1911, 04853 (78rpm), Karl Erb, Eduard Künneke (piano) 1911, xB 5456 (78rpm), John McCormack, Edwin Schneider (piano), 1924, Cc5030-2 (78rpm).

here, with highly arpeggiated versions heard on Nedbal's and Gadski's recordings, and with more vertically synchronised versions heard on Bax and Tertis's, Edwin Schneider and McCormack's, and Arthur Nikisch and Gerhardt's recordings. Nikisch, however, makes prevalent use of 'swung' or dotted notes in his sixteenths even though he plays without arpeggiation. The singers, just like the violists, also use a variety of over- and underdottings, some of which are connected with long portamenti that affect rhythmic texture, thereby demonstrating these performers' loose yet shared approach to the execution of notated rhythms.

*Portamento*

All of the singers use portamento frequently by the standards of MSPs, as do Tertis and Nedbal, albeit in varied ways. Figure 3.03, excerpted from the full annotated score comparing early-recorded singers of *Du bist die Ruh*, uses colour coding to show the location of portamenti used by each singer. Here, we can see that all of the singers used portamento on long descending intervals such as in m. 23, as do Tertis and Nedbal, while various approaches were taken to the placement of upward portamenti. Culp uses heavy downward portamenti but no upward sliding at all, while McCormack uses lighter downward slides and subtle upward L and A portamenti—his slides generally being quick yet highly varied. While nearly all of the singers slide to the top note in m. 60, Lehmann does not and instead slides one note earlier. The short slides used by both Tertis and Nedbal at m. 18 (and in analogous places) are used only by Gadski, Gerhardt and McCormack, while the others sing legato without using portamento. In general, however, singers are not limited by issues of fingering, bowing, string-crossing and hand position, and therefore tend to use a somewhat greater range of portamento types than either Nedbal or Tertis, sliding both before and after consonants with great freedom. These recordings all demonstrate the extent to which portamento was a routine part of the era's performance style.

*Vibrato*

While the vibrato width of the singers surveyed here is varied but generally quite narrow when compared with many of today's singers performing 19th-century repertoires in MSP style, all use frequent and continuous vibrato in the style of Tertis, with none using Nedbal's more ornamental approach. The width of the various singers' vibrato is also quite comparable to Tertis's and far wider than Nedbal's. Perhaps Nedbal's vibrato more closely matches the style of a much older generation of singers

like Patti who, instead of making the device integral to their timbre throughout, used a straight tone on some notes while ornamenting others.

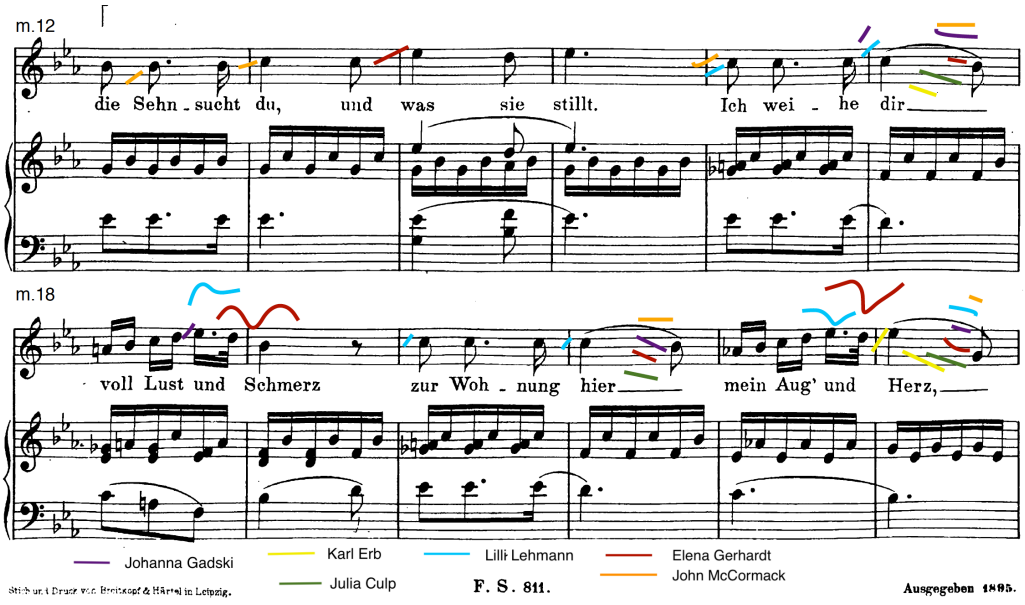


**Figure 3.03: Singers' portamento use in Franz Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh*.**

These recordings show that while both Nedbal and Tertis use tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility and portamento in ways similar to early-recorded singers, Tertis's continuous and wider vibrato is closer to that of the early-recorded singers surveyed above than Nedbal's more ornamental use of the device. Nevertheless, early-recorded violists and singers shared a common stylistic language—one substantially different from today's MSPs.[156]

### 3.4.4) Oskar Nedbal and Unknown Pianist: *Romanticky Kus* Op. 18 by Oskar Nedbal (recorded 1910)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.4.4 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.4.4.

Oskar Nedbal's recording of his own composition, *Romanticky Kus*, demonstrates ornamental use of vibrato, heavy portamento, arpeggiation/dislocation, as well as a flexible approach to tempo that belies his notation. These gaps between notation and

[156] It should be noted that Kristine Healy has recently examined how both historical and modern instrumentalists purport to use singing as a model for their performances in her PhD dissertation *Imagined Vocalities: Exploring Voice in the Practice of Instrumental Music Performance* (University of Huddersfield, 2018). I leave it to the critical reader to decide whether my analyses demonstrate a strong relationship between early-recorded singing and viola playing or whether they are an example of the 'constructed vocality' (196) to which Healy refers.

performance in Nedbal's approach to tempo are notable, given that he is both the performer and composer of this piece—indeed, nearly all of his tempo choices are at surprising odds with the notated score. This is striking given the assumption in MSPs that adhering to a composer's notated performance directions is both necessary and desirable.

*Ornamental Vibrato*

Nedbal's ornamental approach to vibrato sounds both infrequent and non-continuous. However, examining spectrograms of Nedbal's recordings reveals a more frequent use of vibrato than may be, at times, audible to the naked ear. Vibrato speed is measured by analysing the number of cycles of pitch undulation per second and width is measured by adding the total span of the pitch oscillation from the lowest point below the note played to the highest point above it. Using a spectrogram as a tool for visually portraying vibrato speed allows for accurate measurements of a performer's vibrato regardless of how our perception of this vibrato may be affected by surface noise. In contemporary viola playing, vibrato speed tends to be in the range of 5 - 7 oscillations per second, while width often varies depending on pitch height and string: as wide as approximately 2 semitones on the C string and as narrow as 1 semitone or less for higher A string pitches.

Nedbal's vibrato speed on this recording is slow by any standard—sometimes as slow as 4,6 oscillations per second in the low register and even as slow as 5,6 oscillations per second in the higher register, which is slower than Tertis's vibrato at its slowest in the low register (see section 3.10.7 for more on Tertis's vibrato speed). The width of Nedbal's vibrato is also surprising, extending over 2.5 semitones at times. When analysed closely, it is also apparent that Nedbal's vibrato is uneven, in that it is often interrupted multiple times over the course of a single note. The spectrogram image below (Figure 3.04) shows the pitch vibration of recorded frequencies on the vertical axis and the recording over time represented by bar numbers on the horizontal axis. The darker red colours represent the fundamental pitches of the piano and the viola, the lighter green colours represent overtones, and the yellow colouring represents pitch oscillation. Gaps in vibrato can be seen in *Romanticky Kus* on the first beat of m. 28 (28.1) where pitch oscillation is no longer visible.

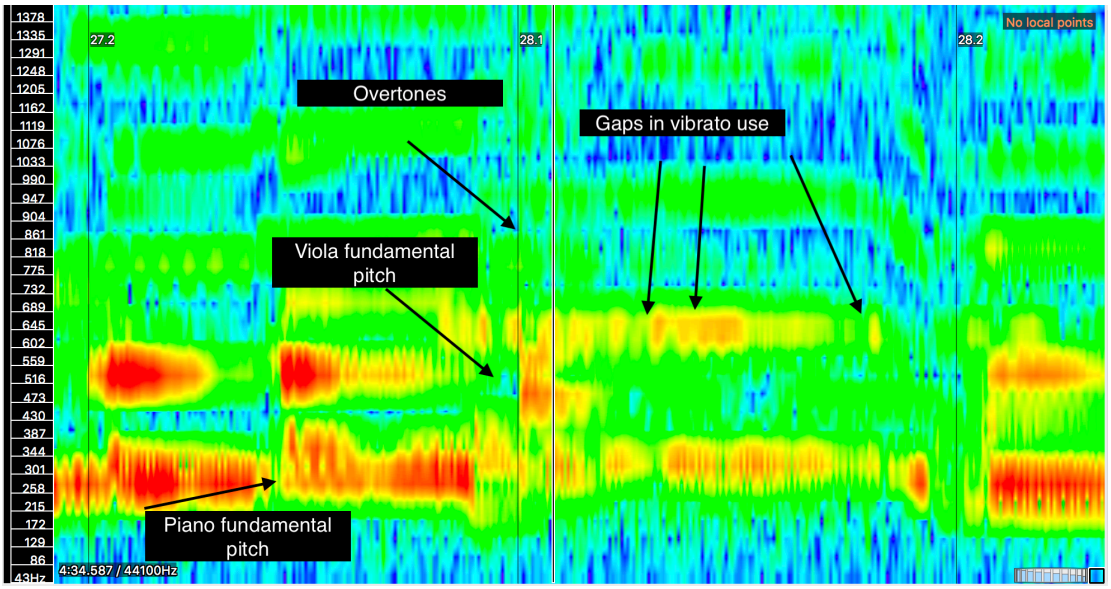


**Figure 3.04: Vibrato gaps and unevenness in Oskar Nedbal's recording of *Romanticky Kus* m. 27 - 28.**

I have marked Nedbal's use of vibrato graphically in the score example below (Figure 3.05), with yellow lines showing on which notes he uses the device and where in the note it appears.

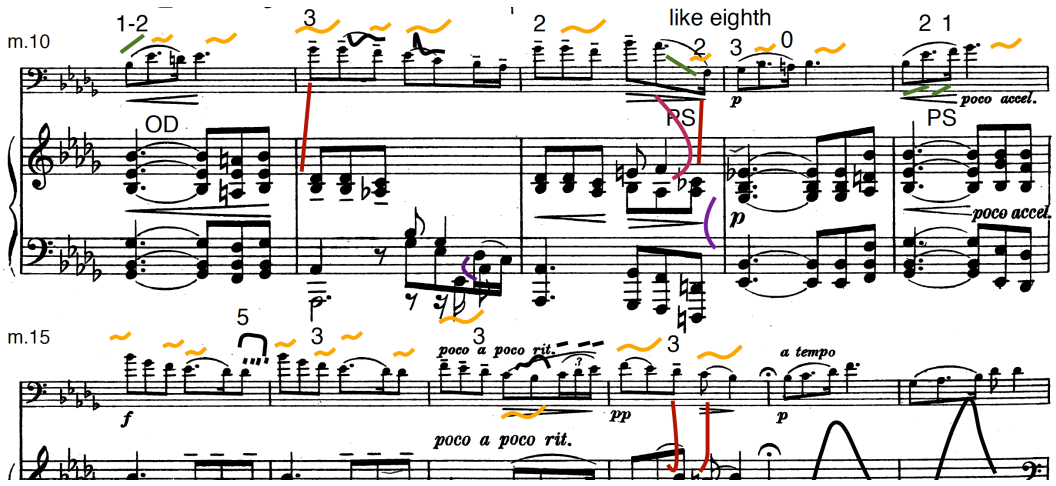


**Figure 3.05: Nedbal's use of Vibrato in *Romanticky Kus*.**

Between m. 15 - 18, Nedbal uses vibrato on 16 out of 19 eighth notes. As my analysis of the recording shows, he applies vibrato on the majority of longer melodic notes. It is notable, then, that from m. 40 - 42 and between m. 84 - 89 he uses no vibrato on the long notes where the viola plays the bass line. Vibrato is thus more pronounced in melodic material and not used when accompanying. This is similar to the use of vibrato

by some early-recorded string quartets, where middle voice or accompanying performers use less vibrato than melodic players. Nedbal's use of vibrato is remarkably similar to that of Jirí Herold, the violist who replaced him in the Czech String Quartet. Both players often refrain from vibrating bass lines or accompaniments while using vibrato more heavily in melodic lines. Herold takes this approach, for example, in the Czech String Quartet's recording of Antonin Dvořák's *'American'* quartet, which is discussed in Chapter Four.

Another feature of Nedbal's vibrato is the way he uses the device to ornament individual notes. On most vibrated notes, he starts vibrating either at the beginning of the note or uses the device in the middle of the note, allowing it to taper off towards the end so that each note is vibrated separately. The slowness and thinness of Nedbal's vibrato is striking when compared with the greater speed and width of Tertis's vibrato. A constrained ornamental vibrato, rather than a continuous and prominent one, is a feature of Nedbal's recordings, yet this vibrato is also applied in varied ways to beginnings, middles, and endings of notes. Nedbal's uneven approach to vibrato is thus at odds with contemporary MSPs where string players often take an all or nothing approach, using vibrato either continuously or not at all (like when playing 18th-century works, for instance, where vibrato is considered by many to be stylistically inappropriate, even though period treatises often describe vibrato as an ornament).

*Portamento*

Nedbal's portamento in *Romanticky Kus* is both slow and heavy, with PL portamenti resulting from the use of the same finger for sliding between notes, as in m. 41, 71, and 73. The PS portamenti in m. 3, 4, and 7 are also heavy and prominent. Nedbal's choice of fingerings remains relatively simple and centred around first position, while in similar works (like Grieg's *Jeg elsker dig*, analysed in section 3.10.7), Tertis uses technically challenging fingerings resulting in varied portamenti that are more similar to those heard on early vocal recordings. Nedbal's simpler approach here, however, means he often changes positions only where necessary or convenient, further implying that his use of portamento was not only part of an aesthetic approach to the instrument but was also part of the standard technical approach to changing positions. This makes it difficult to pinpoint whether portamento results from his left-hand technique or from an aesthetic approach to fingering choices, as seems to be the case with Tertis. Slides like Nedbal's, which inevitably result from routine changes of left hand position, were

derogatorily referred to by violinist and pedagogue Carl Flesch (1873 - 1944) as 'omnibus' portamenti, and this kind of routine sliding is naturally frowned upon in today's MSPs.[157]

*Arpeggiation, Dislocation*

There is continual dislocation between Nedbal and his pianist on this recording, creating rhythmic ambiguity. In the piano, the majority of the chords are arpeggiated, and most of the playing between the left and right hand is dislocated. There are some notable exceptions, however, such as in m. 5 - 6, where not dislocating the hands creates contrast with the preceding bars. This demonstrates how playing 'hands together' can sound like a special effect when dislocation is the default approach, similar to the '*erhellt* moment' in m. 59 of Nedbal's recording of *Du bist die Ruh*. M. 7 is also notable for a combination of dislocation in the piano part and de-synchronisation with the viola line, creating a multi-layered texture where four different voices (viola melody, two layers of counterpoint in the piano, and harmony) move independently of one another. [158] This is a striking example of how multi-layering can reveal the simultaneous movement of different lines in different directions at the same time. At other moments, the pianist plays the chords strictly together when the viola is dislocated from the piano, as for example between m. 63 - 66 where the viola plays broken chords, and from m. 51 onwards where the viola plays grace notes. Generally, however, a lack of an overall sense of rhythmic steadiness or pulse results from the continual use of dislocation throughout. By contrast, expectations of 'tidiness' in today's MSPs preclude desynchronised playing of this nature.

*Tempo*

One of the most remarkable features of this performance is the relationship of the chosen tempi to the notated score. From m. 40 Nedbal totally ignores his own suggested m.m. ♩=108 for the middle section marked Un poco piu mosso. Rather, his tempo is radically slower, at somewhere between m.m. ♩=45 - 60. Taking this middle section at half tempo is a notable decision, given both the time limitations of a 78rpm record (around 4'30) and the fact that nearly a third of the piece had to be cut to fit the recording on a single side. At the poco meno mosso in m. 85, rather than slowing, Nedbal and his pianist push the tempo forward to m. 95, where the pianist cuts the lengths of the chords, maintaining a sense of momentum towards the conclusion. The

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[157] Carl Flesch, *Violin Fingering: Its Theory and Practice* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1966), 52 – 53.
[158] I borrow the concept of 'multi-layeredness' from Slåttebrekk and Harrison. This refers to multiple layers in the music pulling in different directions. See Slåttebrekk and Harrison, *Chasing the Butterfly*, http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=207.

recording lasts 4'27, which means that the performers may have run out of space on the one side and had to finish quickly. In any case, the performance shows total 'infidelity' to the literal notation of Nedbal's own score. Why does Nedbal take such a slow tempo for the middle section and then rush at the end, when precisely the opposite is indicated in the score?

Nedbal's total disregard for his own notated metronome markings and verbal tempo indications is unusual even by the standards of the day. The proportionality that these indications in the score set out for the work is shifted on this recording, with the middle section becoming longer and weightier than it might be in a quicker tempo. Nedbal's choice of tempi as a performer of his own piece could not be deduced from the notated score, showing how unreliable scores might be as indications of how composers may have performed their own works. It is remarkable, too, that even seemingly empirical performance directions here, such as metronome markings, are utterly ignored by the composer whilst playing. This phenomenon is fascinating in light of Köpp's assertion that many early-20th-century performers wilfully ignored and even sought to overturn performance directions in notated scores, as a result of the perception that scores were over-notated.[159] The numerous examples of composers taking this route when recording their own works suggests a culture of performance in which adherence to notated detail was of little concern.

*A Contemporary Comparison*

Currently, the only commercially available recording of this piece is a 1996 Panton recording by cellist Michal Kaňka and pianist Jaromír Klepáč. Comparing this recording with Nedbal's shows how large the gap is between the composer's approach and a contemporary version rooted in MSPs. Arpeggiation, dislocation, multi-layeredness, portamento and ornamental vibrato are all absent, as one might expect, from the modern recording.[160] The tempo and metronome indications are also strictly followed, and a regular pulse is maintained throughout—further demonstrating the wide gap between MSPs and Nedbal's early-recorded approach.

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[159] Köpp, "Das Nichtnotierte und das Nichtnotierbare."
[160] Oskar Nedbal, *Romanticky Kus*, Michal Kaňka, Jaromír Klepáč on *Famous Czech Miniatures for Cello and Piano,* Panton 710370-2, 1996.

### 3.5) Léon Van Hout

The Belgian violist Léon Van Hout (1864 - 1945) was born in Liège and died in Brussels after a career as Principal Violist at the Theatre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, and as violist in the Ysaÿe Quartet. He also taught at the Brussels Conservatoire, where he was responsible for the education of a generation of Belgian violists.[161] Only recently have two 78rpm discs from Van Hout's recorded output come to light. They feature Nicolas Gervasio's *Feuille de printemps* and Robert Schumann's *Abendlied*. Three additional records listed in the Odeon catalogue dating from 1905 - 1906, including *Sarabande* by Béon (first name unknown), *Plaisir d'amour* by Jean Paul Égide Martini, and *Romance* by Karl Davydov, are presumed lost.[162] These dates suggest, however, that the two recordings of works by Gervasio and Schumann for the same label were likely made at or around same time. Like many other early recordings, Van Hout's lost 78s were likely victims either of the two world wars that ravaged the European continent or of the fast pace of technological obsolescence. To my knowledge, I am the first to analyse or comment on the two recently discovered Van Hout recordings, as they have yet to be released publicly in digitally-remastered form.[163] Van Hout is the oldest violist of the Franco-Belgian school to have left behind recordings, and his quick vibrato, dislocation around the beat, and varied use of portamento are reminiscent of violinist Eugène Ysaÿe's (1858 - 1931) recordings—unsurprising, given Van Hout's career as the violist in the Ysaÿe Quartet.

#### 3.5.1) Léon Van Hout and Unknown Pianist: *Feuilles de printemps 'Bluette'* by Nicolas Gervasio (exact recording date unknown; likely 1905-1906)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.5.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.5.1.

Van Hout recorded a work entitled *Feuilles de printemps 'Bluette'* by a little-known French composer named Nicolas Gervasio. A number of Gervasio's works can be found in the National Library of France, but scant information on his background is available. This small salon piece is an example of the kinds of works that were popular at the turn of the 20th century, with their relatable melodies embedded in an accessible harmonic

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[161] Maurice Riley, *The History of the Viola Volume I* (Ann Arbor: Braun-Brumfield, 1993), 259.
[162] Henry König, "Labelliste von Odeon 'B'," *Musiktiteldatabas*, accessed November 16, 2017, http://www.musiktiteldb.de/Label/Ode_x42.html.
[163] I am indebted to Tully Potter for making these recordings available to me.

language. In today's MSPs, the focus is often on canonic masterworks, and as a result many of these pieces have been forgotten and are no longer performed. In any case, the recording starts with a spoken introduction, common for many Pathé records, where the title of the work and Monsieur Van Hout's name are announced in French.[164]

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

One of the key features of this recording is Van Hout's continuous dislocation from the piano accompaniment. He allows the melody line to follow its own direction and continually places notes early or late in relation to the piano accompaniment, creating exactly the kind of multi-layering that is so common in early-recorded style, yet deemed so 'untidy' in the context of MSPs. An example of this is Van Hout's early arrival in m. 17, before the pianist reaches the downbeat. Likewise, going into m. 20, Van Hout creates extra layering by arriving well ahead of his pianist while at the same time the pianist dislocates basses from the right-hand melodic material, creating three separately-timed arrivals on the same downbeat. During the middle section of the piece, in m. 28, Van Hout's timing on the second-beat eighth notes is late, placing them behind the piano. In the following bar, however, he places the same motive early, ahead of the piano. From m. 35 as shown in Figure 3.06, Van Hout places his melody line ahead of the piano accompaniment so that even his elongated C sharp does not give the pianist enough time to catch up. He approaches m. 37 in a similar manner with a long C sharp, and his entrance is again early. He then continues to rush and is constantly ahead of the pianist through to m. 42. Generally, one gets the impression that Van Hout is both continuously and deliberately placing his notes around rather than with the piano accompaniment.

[164] Van Hout makes three small cuts on his recording of this work to: the opening eight-bar piano introduction, the section from m. 44 - 49, and the piano interlude m. 55 - 57.

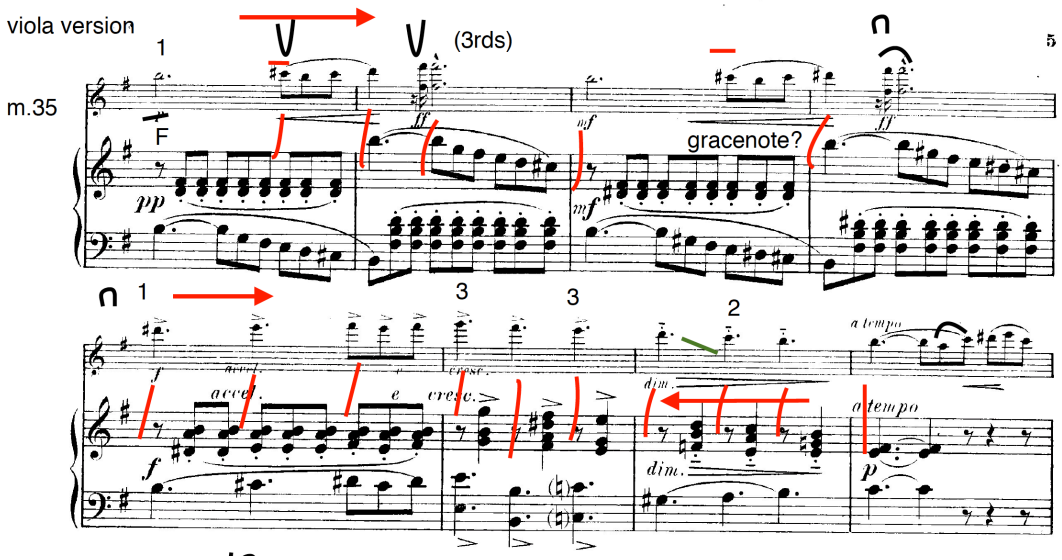


**Figure 3.06: Leon Van Hout's dislocation in Gervasio's *Feuille de printemps*.**

There are also some instances of rhythmic flexibility here that are connected to early-recorded vocal style. In m. 54, for example, Van Hout slows broadly and the pianist places his chord late on the fermata, much like an orchestra slowing into a long fermata in an opera aria. The dislocation in m. 73 and 74 between the right hand of the piano and the viola is also reminiscent of early-recorded operatic duets, where two voices have parallel melodic material yet follow their own path in relation to one another, creating a multi-layered texture. An example of this technique in operatic repertoire can be heard on Enrico Caruso's and Antonio Scotti's recording of Verdi's *Solenne in questa'ora* from *La Forza del Destino*.[165] This parallel but not synchronous style of melodic playing is a remarkable quality of Van Hout's approach and is similar to that of Ysaÿe's on many of his recordings.

*Vibrato*

If we recall that Nedbal uses sparing ornamental vibrato and that Tertis uses frequent continuous vibrato, Van Hout uses a vibrato that is more continuous and frequent than Nedbal's. Unlike Tertis, Van Hout is also prone to playing both longer notes and individual notes within a melodic phrase without any vibrato. Vibrato is however present for the entire duration of the long notes in m. 11, yet Van Hout uses no vibrato on most moving eighth notes, nor on the long harmonic high A mid-melody in m. 28, nor on the lower octave A in m. 30, nor on the top B in m. 32—to which he slides

[165] Giuseppe Verdi, *Solenne in questa'ora* from *La Forza del Destino,* Enrico Caruso and Antonio Scotti, recorded 1906, reissued 2000, *Enrico Caruso: The Complete Recordings vol.3 1906 - 1908*, Naxos 8.110708 (CD).

with the fourth finger. Much like Ysaÿe's vibrato, Van Hout's is also quick and intense, resulting in vibrancy and brilliance of tone—with notable examples on the high Bs in m. 50 and m. 72—in contrast to the slower and less shimmering vibrato of Nedbal, Tertis, or German violist Arthur Post, once again demonstrating the diversity of approaches amongst string players of the era.

*Portamento*

Van Hout's portamento is frequent, varied, and often quick, with prominent use of the C type throughout.[166] He frequently changes bow before or after sliding, which adds contrast to his portamenti. For example, in m. 15 he creates a kind of ornamented PS portamento by first changing the bow, resulting in the open A string being repeated before he slides upwards. Further examples of portamento after bow changes occur in m. 64 and 70. He also uses this technique a number of times on his recording of Schumann's *Abendlied,* resulting in grace notes followed by portamenti similar to those heard on Patti's recording of Mozart's *Voi che Sapete.*[167] Van Hout also uses slower, heavier portamenti here, such as the C portamento in m. 72 and the downwards PS slide in m. 76. The result is a diversity of portamento types, adding to the vibrant brilliance of Van Hout's tone. Like Nedbal and Tertis, however, Van Hout's portamento is frequent and heavy by MSP standards.

*Van Hout and Ysaÿe*

One of the most interesting aspects of this recording is its similarity to Ysaÿe's recorded output in terms of rhythmic flexibility, portamento, and vibrato. The way Van Hout times his melodic material around the piano accompaniment on this recording also resembles the approach taken by Ysaÿe on many of his own recordings.[168] By comparing Van Hout's recordings with Ysaÿe's, it is possible to speculate about the ways in which the two musicians may have functioned together in the context of the Ysaÿe Quartet. Based on the dislocation, portamenti, sound, and vibrato one hears on their solo recordings, one might expect the quartet to have made frequent use of the same devices. PL portamenti might have been used often between adjacent notes, with PS and C techniques applied to longer intervals. Likely, the sound of the quartet was based around

166 C portamento refers to the *Cercare la nota* type discussed above in section 3.3.
20 Mozart, *Voi che sapete,* Patti (78rpm).
168 Philip analyses this phenomenon on Ysaÿe's recording of Henri Vieuxtemp's *Rondino.* Robert Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 66.

a quick, narrow, and intense vibrato on long melodic notes, with shorter notes left unvibrated, and with the occasional open string, harmonic, or unvibrated motive creating distinct non-vibrato timbres within melodic lines. In Chapter Four I go on to examine some early-recorded string quartets in greater detail, pointing to broadly overlapping stylistic approaches with the string players examined in the current chapter. In any case, the soloistic approach displayed by Van Hout's dislocation, shimmering vibrato and varied portamento reveals him to have been a confident and imaginative performer, and his skill likely played a role in encouraging composers of his day to reimagine the viola's possibilities. It is no coincidence, then, that composer Claude Debussy wrote a prominent viola part for his string quartet, which was dedicated to the Ysaÿe Quartet.[169]

### 3.5.2) Van Hout (recording date unknown), Tertis (recorded 1920), and Ysaÿe (recorded 1912): *Abendlied* Op. 85 no. 12 by Robert Schumann

The recordings can be found in Appendix II - recordings 3.5.2.1 – 3.5.2.3 and the annotated scores are in Appendix III – scores 3.5.2.1 – 3.5.2.3.

The second of Van Hout's recently-discovered recordings is of Robert Schumann's *Abendlied*, an often-recorded work at the beginning of the 20th century. Ysaÿe, Van Hout, and Tertis all recorded the piece, offering a direct opportunity to compare their various performing styles. All three performances make use of similar expressive devices, including wide fluctuations of tempo from beat to beat, rushing, slowing, frequent portamento, and significant use of dislocation by their accompanying pianists. This supports the view that while there may be wide differences of approach between individual early-recorded performers, the expressive tools they use come from a shared performance style—one substantially different from today's MSPs.

*Vibrato*

There are some significant differences in vibrato use between the three performers. Van Hout's vibrato can be characterised as quick compared with Tertis's, with Tertis's vibrato speed averaging 6 cycles per second while Van Hout's reaches 6,75 and at times 7 cycles per second. The narrowness of Van Hout's vibrato is also notable when compared with Tertis's. To illustrate, on the fourth beat of m. 4, Van Hout's vibrato covers a range of less than a semitone, while Tertis's covers more than a

[169] David Code, "Debussy's String Quartet in the Brussels Salon of 'La Libre Esthetique,'" *Journal of 19th-Century Music* 30, no. 3 (Spring 2007): 257 - 287.

semitone; incidentally, Ysaÿe uses no vibrato on this note. Moving between vibrated and unvibrated notes is a characteristic of both Ysaÿe and Van Hout's recordings. Van Hout sets up his open G-string in m. 15 by transitioning to non-vibrato in the previous measure before slowly applying vibrato in m. 16 and widening its range. Van Hout applies the same technique to the long A flat in m. 16, starting without vibrato then slowly adding vibrato towards the middle of the note before tapering it off: an approach that can be heard on Adelina Patti's recording of Vincenzo Bellini's *Ah non credea.*[170] In m. 4, Ysaÿe uses the same technique, increasing his vibrato before letting it taper off completely on the last note of the bar. Ysaÿe uses the quickest and narrowest vibrato of the three (which is no surprise given he is playing the violin), Van Hout's vibrato is a little wider but still quick, and Tertis uses wide, slow and continuous vibrato.

*Tempo Modification and Rhythmic Flexibility*

There are wide modifications of tempo on all three recordings as well as nuanced flexibilities of rhythm. While all three performances reach m.m. ♩=30 at their slowest points, Ysaÿe's quickest moments only reach m.m.♩=52 while Tertis's and Van Hout's reach m.m.♩=70. On all three recordings, the pianist rushes from m. 18 to 19, placing each successive chord earlier, with Tertis's recording being the most extreme in this regard. This rushing through a moment that might otherwise seem static because of the long trills thus holds the listener's attention and propels the music forward, whereas simply relying on a regular pulse as a performer in MSP style might do could cause these bars to sound directionless. Generally, all three of these recordings use a range of tempi much wider than would be considered proper in today's MSPs. These performances also feature dislocation between melody and accompaniment, though in Van Hout's version this is most pronounced, with Ysaÿe's being somewhat less so and Tertis's even less still. Van Hout's recording combines dislocation in the piano part coupled with the placement of the viola notes around the piano chords, as in m. 6, and from m. 24 all of Van Hout's notes are dislocated from the piano accompaniment. In m. 9 and 10 the consistent placement of the piano chords either before or after the viola creates a multi-layered effect. Van Hout also makes use of swung eighth notes, such as on the third beat of m. 6 and in m. 21. This is in line with Van Hout's propensity for multi-layered playing as demonstrated on his recording of Gervasio's *Feuilles de Printemps*.

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[170] Vincenzo Bellini, *Ah non credea* from *La Sonnambula,* Adelina Patti, recorded 1906, reissued 1993 on *The Era of Adelina Patti,* Nimbus Records, NI 7840/41 (CD).

*Portamento*

All three recordings feature frequent portamenti, with Van Hout using 27 instances of the device, Tertis 40, and Ysaÿe 35, in a piece that lasts a mere 30 bars. This is a remarkable amount of sliding by MSP standards. Despite using portamento less often than Tertis, however, Van Hout applies the technique in a highly audible manner. His slides are long and drawn out, and he maintains bow contact with the string at all times while sliding, making portamento a highly recognisable component of his performance. All three performers also use multiple portamento types, thereby creating variety, with Tertis using C, PS, and A types in m. 26 and 27. In all three recordings, rarely a bar goes by without at least one slide.

*Commonalities and Differences in Schumann's Abendlied*

Comparing Van Hout's recording with Ysaÿe's reveals commonalities between the two musicians with regards to a narrow and quick vibrato, combinations of vibrato and non-vibrato, varied portamento, and frequent dislocation around the piano accompaniment. These commonalities likely result from both players' inculcation in the Franco-Belgian culture of string playing, as supported by other early recordings of performers from this school.[171]

There are also some pronounced differences between Ysaÿe and Van Hout, with Ysaÿe using the A portamento regularly, whereas Van Hout does not.[172] However, Van Hout does use the A portamento frequently on his recording of *Feuille de printemps*. Like Tertis, Ysaÿe often stays on one string for whole passages, playing high up on the A string, as for example at the end of m. 20. Ysaÿe also makes more frequent use of swung notes than Van Hout. Tertis's vibrato is wider and used continuously throughout; he does, however, use varied portamento and more discrete dislocation.

While there are pronounced differences between the three recordings, they all feature widespread use of portamento, tempo flexibility and dislocation, in ways that lie far outside of the boundaries of MSPs. All three players thus share a common expressive language in the way these devices are used, with each speaking their own particular dialect *of* that language.

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[171] For an extensive overview on the topic, see David Milsom, "The Franco-Belgian School of Violin Playing: Towards an Understanding of Chronology and Characteristics, 1850-1925," *Ad Parnassum* 11, no. 21 (October 2014).

[172] A portamento refers to the *Antizipazione* type, where the slide takes place before the bow change as discussed above in section 3.3.

### 3.6) Arthur Post

While Van Hout can be viewed as a representative of turn-of-the century Franco-Belgian viola playing, Arthur Post (1869 - 1936) comes from a distinctively German background. The two performers demonstrate stylistic differences related to their respective national traditions on their recordings while also evidencing period-based commonalities. Post's 'German' approach can be heard in his sparing, wide and ornamental use of vibrato, and the heavier quality of timbre he obtains from the viola, as compared with Van Hout's quick, continuous vibrato and shimmering, brilliant timbre.

Post was a graduate of the conservatoire in Berlin and obtained his first teaching position in the 1890s at the conservatoire in Mannheim, where he taught his younger brother Willy Post.[173] The brothers, along with siblings Max and Richard, went on to found the Brüder-Post Quartett in 1911. The group played throughout Germany until Arthur's death in the 1930s. The Brüder-Post Quartett was one of the first German quartets to make recordings, one of which is analysed in detail in Chapter Four. Arthur Post also made two recordings for viola and piano: one of Bach's famous *Air* and the other of Jan Kalivoda's *Nocturne*.

#### 3.6.1) Arthur Post (recording date unknown) and Lionel Tertis (recorded 1919): *Air* from the *Orchestral Suite* no. 3, BWV 1068, by Johann Sebastian Bach

The recordings can be found in Appendix II - recordings 3.6.1 – 3.6.1.2 and the annotated scores are in Appendix III – scores 3.6.1 – 3.6.1.2.

The *Air* from Bach's *Orchestral Suite* no. 3, popularized by violinist August Wilhelmj (1845 - 1903) as 'Air on the G String,' was an often-performed piece at the turn of the 20th century, and Tertis's 1919 recording of the piece allows for a direct comparison with Post's.[174] In general, Post's recordings feature infrequent and slow vibrato, a great deal of rhythmic flexibility, simple fingering choices and heavy portamento, as compared with Tertis's continuous, quick vibrato and varied portamenti resulting from complex fingering choices.

*Vibrato*

Post's vibrato in Bach's *Air* is slow, averaging 5,5 cycles per second, compared

[173] "Biographische Notizen zur Familie Willy und Christel Post," Stadtarchiv Frankfurt an der Oder, 2004, accessed December 27, 2017, http://www.stadtarchiv-ffo.de/aktuell/2011/w_post/pdf/w_post_biogr.pdf.

[174] Interestingly, a number of cylinders attributed to August Wilhelmj have recently been discovered at the British Library. See "Wilhelmj Cylinders," Sounds British Library, https://sounds.bl.uk/classical-music/wilhelmj, accessed February 1, 2019.

with Tertis's average of 6 or higher. Despite Posts's slow vibrato speed, it is far narrower than Tertis's, and like Nedbal, Post leaves many shorter notes unvibrated. In sum, therefore, his vibrato can be described as slow, narrow, and ornamental. The majority of his 16th notes are played without vibrato, and he also makes frequent use of the open G string, as in m. 2 and 6. By comparison, Tertis vibrates most of the 16th notes and avoids the open G string in order to vibrate the long Gs. Tertis also makes use of fingerings high on both the G and C strings, while Post uses fingerings that are in the lower positions. Post also creates greater contrast between vibrato and non-vibrato notes by not tapering his vibrato off during notes in contrast to Nedbal and Van Hout.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

Post's performance makes frequent use of dislocation and rhythmic flexibility, which, alongside both arpeggiation and dislocation of melody from accompaniment in the piano part, creates multi-layering—with different layers of counterpoint moving in independent rhythmic directions. A notable example of this occurs in m. 5, where the top voice of the piano line is dislocated from both its accompanying harmony as well as the viola line, creating an audible three-layered texture. Such de-synchronisation, along with moments of extreme slowing and rushing, obscure the continuity of pulse, making Post's performance at odds with MSPs in general and with contemporary performances of 18th-century works in particular. Examples of heavy slowing take place at the first and second endings of the A section in m. 6 as well as at the end of m. 20, while extreme rushing can be heard throughout the rising sequence in m. 19. In fact, Post generally tends to rush when pitches rise, and to slow when highlighting phrase endings and cadential harmonies—as does Tertis.

*Portamento*

The heavy portamento used here by Post closely resembles that generally used by other early-recorded violists, surprising though it may sound to modern ears not used to hearing the device in works by Bach. There are PS, PL, and C portamento types on this recording, including some long slides on the G string. Tertis, likewise, uses plenty of portamento on his recording of this same work, though his slides are often somewhat less drawn-out and languishing than Post's.

*Timbre*

Post's timbre sounds smooth and rich even though he uses a generally softer volume and wider dynamic range than Tertis, who plays in a hefty forte throughout. This

is interesting in light of Tertis's student Eric Coates's remark that Tertis's notorious pianissimo playing "carried to the farthest corner of the building."[175] Likely, Tertis's pianissimo was quite voluminous under the ear or in the range of the recording horn, resulting in a pianissimo character at a greater distance in a concert hall. We also should not rule out the possibility that Tertis made a conscious choice to use a full-bodied tone on his records in order to cut through the surface noise of the recording medium. This observable difference between Tertis and Post, given that they were working with the same type of recording technology, is nonetheless notable. Generally, the recordings discussed here reveal that Post's timbre can be characterised as rich yet soft, distinguishing his approach to tone production from that of Van Hout, Tertis, and Nedbal: Van Hout's tone is nasal, penetrating and bright, Tertis's is full and vibrant, and Nedbal's is rich while at the same time dark.

### 3.6.2) Arthur Post and Unknown Pianist: *Notturno* Op. 186 no. 1 by Jan Kalivoda (recording date unknown)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.6.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.6.2.

The second recording by Arthur Post is of the *Notturno* no. 1 by Czech-born Jan Kalivoda (1801-1866), who made a career as a composer, conductor and violinist. He held a long-term post at the court of Donaueschingen, allowing him to produce a prolific quantity of orchestral, choral and chamber music.[176] Kalivoda's music is only known to me, however, through this set of *Nocturnes*, which are often assigned to beginning viola students owing to their low degree of technical difficulty. That Post chose to record one of these works, however, suggests that they were likely fully accepted as concert pieces in the early-20th century. The characteristics of Post's playing here include narrow yet slow vibrato, frequent unvibrated notes, heavy portamento, and tempo and rhythmic flexibility.

*Portamento*

While Post uses relatively simple fingerings in this performance, his portamenti tend to be heavy, with plenty of the PL type owing to his frequent shifting with the same

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[175] Eric Coates quoted in John White, *Lionel Tertis: The First Great Virtuoso of the Viola* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2006), 15.

[176] John Daverio and Alena Nemcova, "Johann Wenzel Kalliwoda" in Stanley Sadie, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Second Edition*, Volume 13, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 330 - 331.

finger. PL slides can be heard in m. 6 and during all analogous moments, such as in m. 11, where Post makes use of several portamenti in a row. The use of such back-to-back portamenti, while frequently heard on early recordings, is very uncommon in today's MSPs. In m. 33 and 35, PL portamento is again used, and there is a remarkable physically uncomfortable 4 - 4 PL slide in m. 65, in what would be considered a crude fingering choice by today's standards. Playing these two notes in third position would allow the violist to shift imperceptibly back to the first position during the bow change, thus circumventing this heavy slide. Generally, Post's fingers seem to be stuck to the fingerboard and this, combined with his legato bow stroke, results in heavy sliding.

*Tempo Modification*

Post's use of tempo modification is prominent and extreme by the standards of MSPs and can be heard in his heavy slowing at the ends of phrases, as from m. 11 into 12, and at m. 58 and 65. While slowing to mark phrase endings and new sections is common in MSPs, many would likely view Post's slowing, through which he structures his performance, as out of context in relation to the overall tempo. Post's structured approach to slowing is clearly shown by the three equal, radical dips in tempo in m. 12, 58, and 65, with the first being around m.m. ♩= 34 and the latter two around m.m. ♩=30. The middle section of the piece is then played at around m.m. ♩=55. Post also rushes throughout this middle section, gradually gaining speed until m. 40. In the outer sections, there is observable slowing within each phrase interspersed with moments of pronounced rushing, as in m. 59 and m. 66 for example.

Like the recordings of Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh* discussed above, the piano introductions and interludes here are played at a faster tempo than the viola/piano sections. For example, from m. 2 into m. 3, the pianist reaches a quick tempo before slowing into Post's entrance. The pianist also rushes at m. 29, m. 31, and 33, each time pushing forward into Post's entrances. In m. 37, Post's heavy slowing is followed by rushing in the piano. This supports the general trend on early recordings where solo piano sections are rushed, while sections with solo instrument (or voice) and piano are often performed more slowly.

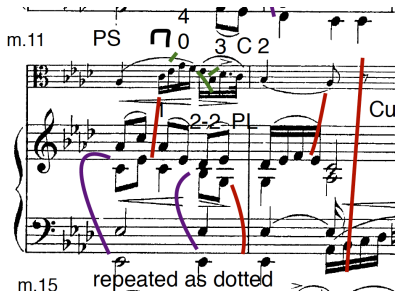


**Figure 3.07: Notable multi-layeredness in m. 12 by Arthur Post in Kalivoda's *Notturno*.**

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

On a local level, there are notable moments of multi-layeredness caused by dislocation in this performance. The most intriguing of these occurs in m. 12 (Figure 3.07), when the pianist plays the last sixteenth of the first beat after Post's resolution to the A flat on the second beat, creating a moment of dissonance during a standard dominant-tonic resolution. This is perhaps not coincidental, as this is also the moment where the performers cut to the upbeat of m. 29. Perhaps, then, the pianist was preoccupied with searching for the end of the cut and was thus unable to devote full attention to Post's unpredictable slowing.

There are also some jagged stops and starts, such as in m. 46 and 47, where Post slows the first beat while speeding up the third beat of the bar. Throughout the performance, swung sixteenth notes and frequent over- or under-dotting of rhythms can be heard. In m. 60 and 62, for example, Post underdots his sixteenth notes, placing them before the fourth sixteenth note in the piano while the pianist swings the sixteenth notes and dislocates the chords underneath them, creating a layered and somewhat chaotic texture. In the final seven measures of the piece, rather than slowing gradually as an MSP performer might do, Post slows suddenly in m. 73 but then rushes the second beat of m. 74, slows again, then rushes in m. 76, and only then slows definitively for the final chords. The result is that slowing is achieved here through a series of stops and starts. These kinds of sudden, jagged transitions between rushing and slowing are a characteristic of many early recordings and can be found in many of both Van Hout and Tertis's performances. The general result of all of these rhythmic flexibilities is that the viola and piano, while linked, are almost never entirely rhythmically synchronised.

### 3.7) Maurice Vieux, Jean Batalla piano: *Arioso et Allegro de concert* by Stan Golestan (recorded 1933)

The recordings can be found in Appendix II - recordings 3.7a – 3.7b and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.7.

The French violist Maurice Vieux (1884-1951), who came from a subsequent generation than Van Hout and Post, plays in a much more streamlined way, making his performances closer to today's MSPs. I have included Vieux here, however, in order to make a comparison with his older colleagues. While Vieux retains some traditional characteristics of the older Franco-Belgian style (as represented by Van Hout), like quick and narrow vibrato, he performs in a much cleaner and tidier style than his predecessors, using infrequent portamento and playing in a stable tempo.

Vieux was a student of Théophile Laforge, the first professor whose position was dedicated exclusively to the viola at the Paris conservatoire. Laforge was the dedicatee of Georges Enescu's (1881 - 1955) *Piéce de Concert*, which I have included in my recorded portfolio (in Chapter Five I discuss my approach to this piece). Vieux himself was the dedicatee of Max Bruch's *Romance* for viola and orchestra, along with a number of other contemporaneous compositions.[177] The only viola/piano recording of Vieux's currently available is of the *Arioso and Allegro de concert* by Stan Golestan. Golestan (1875 - 1956) was a Romanian-born composer who studied in Paris with Vincent d'Indy, Albert Roussel and Paul Dukas.[178] His *Arioso et Allegro de concert* of 1932 was a 'morceau de concours,' meaning it was the obligatory new composition students played for their exams at the conservatoire in Paris that year, and it too was dedicated to Maurice Vieux.

Below I examine Vieux's continuous vibrato, timbre, portamento, streamlined use of tempo, rhythmic flexibility, and articulation. His use of many of these devices is much more in line with current MSPs than any of the performers surveyed thus far.

*Vibrato and Timbre*

Vieux's vibrato is continuous but narrower than Tertis's, yet he vibrates more frequently and continuously than either Ysaÿe or Van Hout, leaving almost no notes unvibrated in lyrical passages. The general timbre produced by Vieux, which in part

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[177] Pierre Breton, "Maurice Vieux (1884 - 1951)" in *Encyclopædia Universalis*, accessed February 3, 2018, http://www.universalis.fr/encyclopedie/maurice-vieux/.
[178] "Stan Golestan," Bibliothèque Nationale de France Catalogue General, accessed February 4, 2018, http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb147920248.

results from his narrow and quick vibrato, is comparable to Van Hout's more penetrating, nasal approach and thus is unlike the more mellow tone of Nedbal and Post.

*Portamento*

Vieux uses some portamenti on this recording, although these slides are much lighter than those of his predecessors, which fits well with the general taste for lighter portamenti in the 1930s. By this time, many string players had become more sparing in their use of slides, taking pains to avoid what was often viewed as the 'romantic excesses' of the previous generation. Perhaps, however, the Eastern European 'Romanian' flavour of this piece influenced some of Vieux's portamenti, like the slides in m. 25 and 26, as well as his portamenti in the passage from m. 117, with its augmented seconds. The use of light, infrequent portamento of this kind is often accepted in performances of genre pieces like Golestan's *Arioso et Allegro de concert* within today's MSPs.

*Tempo Flexibility*

This recording demonstrates a structured and rigid approach to tempo over an underlying pulse, similar to that favoured by contemporary MSPs. There are a few noteworthy exceptions detailed below, but generally the performance is rhythmically predictable.

In the opening arioso, Vieux follows the accelerandi and ritardandi indicated in the score, especially in the cadenza-like passage marked ad libitum in m. 8. I imagine the older generation of violists might have taken greater freedoms with such a passage, perhaps merging the sixteenths and eighth-note values together at the end of the bar and rushing wildly through the sixteenth-note figures. At m. 16, Vieux does slow somewhat earlier than indicated in the score, and at m. 21 this slowing continues over the bar line into the start of the Tempo I—an approach more like that heard on earlier recordings, where performers often slow or rush prior to notated accelerandi and ritardandi. In the passage marked poco a poco agitando at m. 25, Vieux makes a steady accelerando, before slowing a little in m. 31, allowing space for further rushing in the following bars. The poco lento section at m. 117 is played at a slower tempo of around m.m. ♩ = 70, down from the average of m.m. ♩ = 170 in the preceding section. This too seems to be generally in line with the expectations of MSPs.

Vieux then plays the Allegro section steadily, with some slight rhythmic dislocations between viola and piano—the most obvious of which occurs at the return of the opening material at m. 145, with the two performers unaligned for an entire measure.

It is likely that Vieux forgot to clearly cue his pianist here. At m. 139, where agitando is indicated in the score leading into the cadenza, Vieux ignores what could be seen as an indication to speed up and stays in his previous tempo, even slowing towards the end of the section: a rare moment where, like his older colleagues Nedbal, Van Hout, Post and Tertis, he ignores notated performance directions.

*Articulation*

The cadenza showcases Vieux's virtuoso up-bow staccato technique and includes some expressive intonation: notably, the very sharp E flat in m. 118, which seems to belong to the sound world of Romanian folk musicians and Romanian violinist Enescu, who often sharpened or flattened melody notes for expressive effect. The deliberate sharpening or flattening of melodic notes for expressive purposes was common among some early-recorded performers and is often viewed unfavourably in today's MSPs. Another interesting feature is the spiccato technique Vieux uses in m. 98, which is wild and springy, and executed in the upper half of the bow in a style heard on many early recordings; Tertis, too, often uses this kind of spiccato.[179] Contemporary players by contrast tend to prefer a more controlled, clean, and tidy spiccato played in the lower half of the bow close to the string. This results in more evenness of rhythm, articulation, and bow control, whereas throwing the bow at the string in the upper half leaves more to the forces of gravity and can result in an uneven, unpredictable, and uncontrolled bouncing. This difference between spiccato in the upper and lower halves of the bow is illustrative of the evolution of string playing from a more uncontrolled, wild style in the early-20th century to the controlled cleanliness expected today.

In sum, Vieux generally takes a controlled and steady approach to rhythm and tempo, and a light approach to portamenti, placing his style closer to our own than to the other violists examined here. Missing from Vieux's recording are many of the central elements of early-recorded performance practice such as multi-layeredness, tempo modification, and heavy portamento. At the same time, some elements, such as his thrown spiccato and quick vibrato, do place him within historical traditions and closer to the recordings of Van Hout.

[179] There is a notable example of this in the 4th movement of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1 on both of Tertis's recordings, starting at m. 11.

### 3.8) Early recordings of Meyerbeer's *Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine*

Below I examine early recordings of violists performing together with singers. These recordings showcase a broadly shared performance style between violists and singers centred around widespread rhythm and tempo flexibility, heavy and frequent portamento, and unnotated ornamentation. The approaches taken by the singers examined here can be connected with those heard on the viola/piano recordings studied thus far.

#### 3.8.1) Albert Vaguet (tenor), Pierre Monteux (viola) and Pianist (unknown): *Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine* from *Les Huguenots* by Giacomo Meyerbeer (recorded 1903)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.8.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.8.1.

Tenor Albert Vaguet (1865 - 1954) and violist Pierre Monteux (1875 - 1964) recorded the aria *Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine* from Meyerbeer's opera *Les Huguenots* in 1903. This may well be the earliest surviving recording of a viola. Monteux was a renowned conductor who premiered Igor Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, and who enjoyed an international career spanning over six decades as one of the leading conductors of the first half of the 20th century. Monteux, however, began his career as a violist, playing in various orchestras throughout France and performing chamber music with Gabriel Fauré and Camille Saint-Saëns.[180] This is Monteux's only recording as a violist, and as such, it can add to our understanding of how 19th-century French viola playing sounded. Vaguet's approach then displays many elements of early-recorded vocal style such as pitch ornamentation and multi-layered rhythmic dislocation with both Monteux and the pianist.

The aria *Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine* as notated begins with the viola alone for 18 bars before the entrance of the singer at the Andante Cantabile, with the words '*Plus blanche.*' This opening solo was cut from Monteux's recording, likely due to the time limits imposed by the wax cylinder. By contrast, on tenor Enrico Caruso's recording (examined below) this introduction was recorded in its entirety. For Monteux's recording, I have indicated m. 1 at the start of the Andante Cantabile.

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[180] John Canarina, *Pierre Monteux, Maître* (Pompton Plains: Amadeus Press, 2003), 22.

*Rhythmic Layering*

Vaguet, Monteux, and their pianist create multi-layering between the work's piano, viola, and voice parts, with each musician following an independent path: a kind of layering that is characteristic of early recordings, and that begins in this performance in the opening bar, where the piano chord on the downbeat of the Andante Cantabile is played before Vaguet's late entrance, and where Monteux's even later entrance is played an eighth note after Vaguet's. Vaguet then stretches his opening half note, allowing Monteux to catch up on the third beat of the bar. The fact that such pronounced dislocation at the beginning of the recording was not corrected likely indicates that the performers found it normal and not disturbing to the overall effect of the performance; otherwise, they could simply have re-recorded the aria. Within today's MSPs, such dislocation would be viewed as a fault.

Further multi-layeredness as a result of rhythmic flexibilities occurs in m. 3, where Vaguet takes time for the octave portamento on the word '*blanche*' bringing the tempo to a near standstill at the end of the bar. Monteux then reacts in m. 4 by rushing, before slowing into Vaguet's entrance. Vaguet again engages in extreme stretching towards the end of m. 7 and, as a result, in m. 6 - 7 Monteux delays a number of his eighth notes preventing him from getting too far ahead of the singer. The way he does this is surprising, however: he swings the last eighths of m. 6 unevenly, and in m. 7 he plays the first five eighths of the measure in a quick tempo before lengthening the sixth and seventh notes of the bar. As a result, none of Monteux's eighth notes are synchronised with Vaguet's. Despite this, the two meet on the downbeat of m. 8, and Vaguet then overdots the final eighth of the bar, creating dislocation with Monteux.

After Monteux's entrance in m. 26, Vaguet delays his entrances on each of the proceeding figures, and as a result, the two voices never overlap so that both remain continuously audible. The two parts are notated as overlapping but if they are performed in this way, the volume of the tenor in such a high register on a wax cylinder will naturally push the viola solo to the background. This kind of dislocation thus serves a practical purpose, allowing for greater clarity of melodic textures as a result of their independent placement and ultimately resulting in greater ensemble balance. In sum, all three performers allow their parts to proceed independently, connecting vertically at critical points such as climaxes and on changes of harmony.

*Tempo*

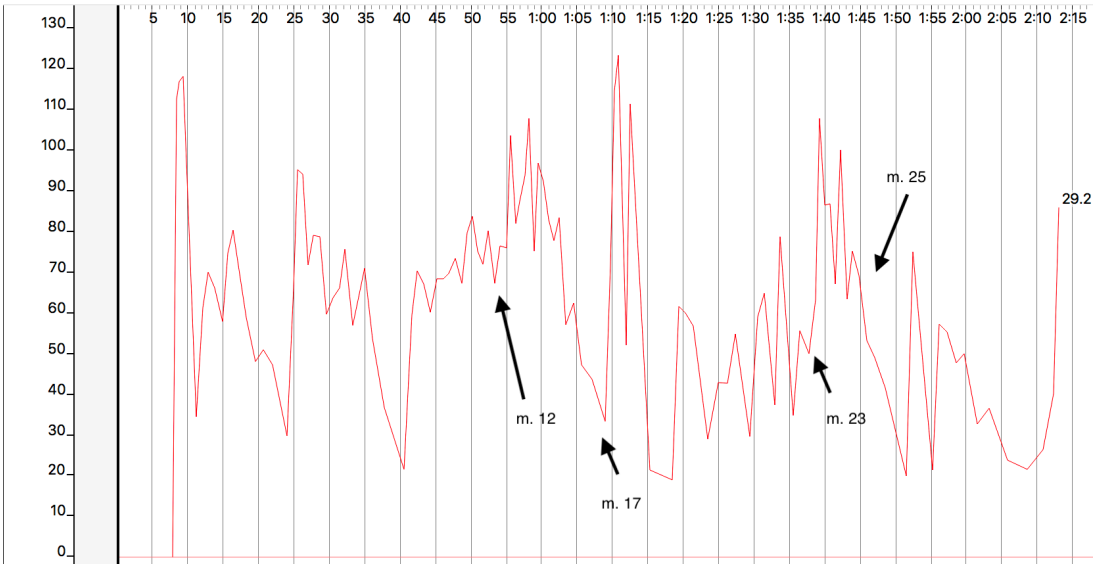


**Figure 3.08: Tempo graph of Vaguet and Monteux's recording of Meyerbeer's *Plus Blanche*.**

The tempo graph above (Figure 3.08), with beats per minute along the vertical axis and the recording over time along the horizontal axis, shows a wide range of tempi from beat to beat with almost no moments of rhythmic steadiness. This is radically at odds with the MSP notion of an audible continuity of rhythmic pulse and is demonstrative of the extremes of tempo flexibility attained in early-recorded practice. In m. 12, for example, Monteux starts rushing, giving momentum to the phrase before slowing in m. 15, contradicting the strongly-worded indication s'animant toujours d'avantage. From m. 17 Vaguet starts to rush, and after taking time between m. 19 and m. 22, he lurches abruptly forward with his '*toujours*' in m. 23 and m. 24. This is followed by dramatic slowing in m. 25 and m. 26, resulting in extreme tempo modification throughout this phrase.

*Portamento*

Given that the musical material moves quite quickly here, there are few obvious opportunities for portamenti in the viola part. Vaguet, however, makes frequent and prominent use of a variety of portamento types throughout, well in keeping with early-recorded vocal style. He uses an I portamento into '*un*' to start the phrase at the end of m.

8, which is echoed by Monteux's slide in m. 10.[181] Vaguet then cuts the C sharp in m. 11, allowing him to take in more air for the two consecutive portamenti into the third and fourth beats of the bar. In m. 15, he then adds variety to the repeated ascending fourth by using an A followed by a PS portamento. He slides up to the high G in m. 19, lingering on the slide and the high note, then breathes before starting m. 20 and takes yet another quick breath after the first '*re-ine,*' which comes across as breathless and passionate. In the second '*re-ine*' and the '*des*' of '*des amours,*' he slides heavily between the two notes. In m. 21, Vaguet uses three different types of portamento, starting with the C type followed by PS and PL slides. Tertis similarly uses three portamento types in close succession on his recording of Benjamin Dale's *Romance* (discussed below). In both cases, this confluence of portamenti is connected with climactic tension and general slowing over the phrase. The frequency and diversity of portamenti on this recording show how central the device was to Vaguet's performance practice.

*Ornamentation*

Vaguet follows in the tradition of early-recorded singers like Patti, Frida Hempel (1885 - 1955), and Nellie Melba (1861 - 1931), who frequently use pitch ornaments in both cadenzas and arias. Vaguet's version of the cadenza varies considerably in pitch from Meyerbeer's notated score: an individual approach to ornamentation that is prominent on early recordings of opera arias and shows the willingness of singers like Vaguet to adjust pitches to their own voice and expressive vision. Vaguet also adds ornaments in m. 17, 25, and 28, while in m. 19 he adds an extra D upbeat, repeating the word '*bel*' of '*bel ange.*' This results in greater clarity, with the two words becoming connected rather than separated, as they would be if the notated fermata between them were observed.

*Monteux's Viola Playing*

This recorded excerpt of Monteux playing the viola gives us a fleeting glimpse of his playing style. He uses vibrato only on longer notes, such as in m. 25 and m. 26 at the top of the arpeggios, and does not vibrate the opening eighths except in m. 7 and m. 8 on the elongated first notes of the bar. Like Van Hout's recordings, vibrato is used mostly on longer, lyrical notes here. The tone Monteux produces is powerful and sustained, allowing him to be heard at all times alongside Vaguet's substantial operatic voice. It is possible that Monteux is playing on a Stroh viola here, which would go a long

[181] The I portamento refers to the *intonazione* type, sliding into the first note of a phrase, as discussed above in section 3.3.

way towards explaining his greater audibility and powerful timbre on this recording. Stroh instruments, featuring a metal resonating horn attached to the body of the instrument, are self-amplified and often characterised by a direct, powerful, and narrow-bandwidth tone. This powerful timbre is unlike the rich, warm sound of Nedbal or Post, or the shimmering, nasal sound of Van Hout. However, Monteux's overall rhythmic approach is much like Ysaÿe and Van Hout's, favouring dislocation between interrelated voices and fitting him within the stylistic context of the early-recorded Franco-Belgian school.

### 3.8.2) Enrico Caruso (tenor), Violist (unknown), and the Victor Orchestra: *Bianca al par* from *Les Huguenots* by Giacomo Meyerbeer (recorded 1909)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.8.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.8.2.

A direct comparison can be made between Vaguet and Monteux's recording, and tenor Enrico Caruso's second recording of Meyerbeer's *Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine*. Caruso recorded the aria twice in Italian (now titled *Bianca al par*): first in 1905 with piano accompaniment, and second in 1909 with both a viola soloist and orchestra. Caruso's recording also includes the recitative preceding the aria where the viola solo begins, which was cut in Vaguet and Monteux's recording. The Italian translation of the text Caruso recorded is not the standard 'Royal Edition' published by Boosey and Co. in 1870, nor is it the earlier 1848 version translated by Manfredo Maggioni and published by Addisson Publishing. Whatever translation Caruso is using, however, it is worth bearing in mind that it has implications for the rhythm of the vocal line. The viola soloist on this recording unfortunately remains unknown, while *The Discography of American Historical Recordings* reveals that the recording was made in Camden, New Jersey with the 'Victor Orchestra' and that the disc is a first take.[182] The Victor Orchestra made use of freelance musicians in the New York area, but unfortunately information on the viola soloist on this recording was not preserved.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

The opening viola solo on Caruso's recording is notable for its dislocation

[182] "Bianca al par," The Discography of American Historical Recordings, accessed July 3, 2018, https://adp.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/matrix/detail/200008422/C-8351-Bianca_al_par_di_neve_Alpina.

between the upper and lower parts of what should be double stopping in m. 2.[183] This suggests that this difficult and uncomfortable double-stopped passage (especially in this Italian version, which is in D flat major, thereby eliminating the possibility of using open strings) is played by not one, but two players. The same holds true for the double-stopping in m. 10 and m. 11, where the second violist inadvertently holds the lower D flat in m. 11 a little longer than his colleague, thereby revealing the strategy used.

The viola soloist follows Caruso's flexibility, however, rather than pursuing a multi-layered texture the way Monteux does with Vaguet. An example of this can be heard in m. 18, where Caruso takes time over a portamento and is followed by the solo violist, whereas Monteux stretches here by lengthening a number of notes resulting in his eighths becoming dislocated from the voice.[184] Caruso however uses rhythmic flexibility in a smoother way than Vaguet, taking time over multiple beats and measures together with the violist and orchestra rather than dwelling on specific notes or fermatas. Caruso also often rounds off phrases by slowing before rushing to propel the material forward.

On a smaller scale, Caruso both lengthens and shortens notes, as in m. 31 for example, where he dots the first motive before singing the following bar in straight eighths. The high A in m. 36 is then sung as a fermata, with Caruso creating a particularly steely timbre. Caruso likewise impressively retains enough air in order to hold the final high A through the entire first bar of the orchestral tutti—a full bar longer than notated. This addition of unnotated fermatas to lengthen high notes is a characteristic of early vocal recordings.

Like Vaguet, Caruso rushes in m. 38 and 39 (m. 23 and 24 in Vaguet's version), however unlike Vaguet, who overdots each of these motives, Caruso lengthens the rhythmic figure on '*o-gnor*' so that his upbeats sound more like triplets. Thus while both singers take broad liberties in rhythmic matters, they approach this flexibility in different ways: Caruso uses sweeping full-measure rubatos, while Vaguet dwells over multiple high points within a measure, making the flexibilities of the former singer sound smoother, more rounded off, and less unpredictable, than the latter. As a result, Caruso's performance can be described as somewhat closer to MSPs than Vaguet's, while both clearly belong to an early-recorded stylistic tradition owing to their broad rhythmic and tempo flexibilities.

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[183] Double stopping refers to playing on two strings at the same time. The term is derived from the 'stopping' of two strings with the fingers of the left hand.

[184] The bar numbering for the Caruso recording starts with m. 1 at the Andante and is therefore different to the annotated score of the Vaguet/Monteux recording, where m. 1 is marked at the start of the Andante cantabile section.

*Portamento*

Portamento is prominent and heavy in both the viola and vocal parts here. The viola soloist uses plenty of sliding in the opening recitative, including during the arpeggios in m. 6, 7, 11, and 12, where heavy portamenti are combined with quick vibrato on the long notes at the ends of the arpeggios. Caruso uses both the I and C portamento types frequently, with instances of the I type occurring in m. 20, 21, 23, and 25, and his conclusion of m. 26 is remarkable for its PS portamento, which is combined with trembling vibrato and an expressive cracking of the voice. There is also some marked variation of portamento in repeated motives in m. 28 and 29, where Caruso uses four different portamento types (A, I, PL and PS) in the space of two measures, thereby creating contrast. His special emphasis on C and I portamenti types separates his recording from Vaguet's, where PS and PL slides are more prominent. Both tenors are however proficient in using multiple portamento types to create colour and variety.

*Vibrato*

While both Vaguet and Caruso make prominent and continuous use of vibrato, there are some differences between the approaches of the viola soloists. The solo violist on Caruso's recording uses vibrato more frequently and continuously than Monteux, as for example on the moving eighths from m. 16 (m. 1 in Vaguet's version) where Monteux plays non-vibrato.

*Ornamentation*

As on the Vaguet recording, pitch ornamentation is used prominently by Caruso, who performs his own version of the cadenza in m. 43. He starts with a long virtuoso fermata on the high B and, unlike Vaguet, ends in the higher register with a G sharp fermata. Comparing Caruso and Vaguet shows the extent to which sounding outcomes can vary when personalised ornamentation is used by different singers: an approach heard sparingly if at all in 19th-century opera repertoire performances today.

In sum, Caruso and Vaguet share a musical-expressive language that makes broad use of portamento, flexibility of rhythm and tempo, and ornamentation, but they differ in the ways they use these devices—demonstrating how the expressive tools commonly used in early-recorded performances can result in highly varied and personal approaches to the same musical material.

*Three Russian Records*

Three additional early recordings of the aria *Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine* have

recently come to light, all of which were recorded in Russia in the early-20th century. These recordings, with tenors Andrej Labinsky (2-22775) in 1905, Leo Klementyev (022130) in 1909, and Dmitry Smirnov (022338) in 1913, were all released by the Gramophone Co.[185] The Labinsky recording names the viola soloist as N.T. Manasevich, who also made a number of recordings on the violin. All three performers make frequent use of tempo modification, rhythmic dislocation, portamento, and pitch ornamentation. The Smirnov recording is particularly notable for its extended cadenza, to which the viola player contributes his own composed (or improvised?) harmonic material.

The stylistic approach taken by Vaguet, Caruso, and the three Russian singers in this aria by Meyerbeer, demonstrates a broadly similar approach to that of the early-recorded violists examined here. The overlapping approaches of violists and singers of the early-recorded era can thus be a source of inspiration for string players today who wish to adopt an early-recordings-inspired style. In particular, Tertis's integration of many early-recorded vocal techniques within his own playing style (as examined below), serves as an example for how string players might adapt the approach of early-recorded singers to their own instruments.

### 3.9) Early-recorded Singers and String players: Portamento and Layering

As we have seen, multi-layeredness is central to the performance style of string players performing alongside singers on early recordings. Robert Philip observes that on Fritz Kreisler and John McCormack's recording of Schubert's *Ave Maria*, the two musicians achieve this layering through their divergent placement, timing, and execution of portamenti when performing the melody in unison. Even when the two slide over the same intervals, they do so in different ways.[186] This allows the two unison voices to be heard as separate, demonstrating how multi-layeredness can result in clarity of melodic texture and how the independent placement of voices can allow for greater balance of ensemble. This layering, and the de-synchronisation that results, thus cannot be simply derided as sloppiness, as it functions as a device for allowing the expression of multiple individual performers to be heard simultaneously.

Following his observation of this layering, Philip argues that, "in practice, singers

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[185] These recordings can be found at "Russian Records," accessed July 3, 2018, https://www.russian-records.com/search.php.
[186] Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 178.

and string-players used portamento in rather different ways."[187] While this is the case for the small sample size of recordings Philip uses to draw this conclusion, I find that the diversity of portamento types used on early recordings by singers and string players shows considerable variety *and* overlap, both within *and* between the two groups. The violists examined here, including Nedbal, Van Hout, Post and Tertis, all use the device differently, and the same holds true for the singers whose recordings I have studied. At the same time, connections can be made between portamento types, placement, and frequency used by these violists and singers. What also makes Philip's argument problematic is that he compares string players to Richard Tauber (1891 - 1948), Rosa Ponselle (1897 - 1981) and Maggie Teyte (1888 - 1976)—rather than to these singers' predecessors, like Caruso (1873 - 1921), Vaguet (1865 - 1943) and Patti (1843 - 1919). Much like the violists examined thus far, the latter group of singers use a far greater diversity and frequency of portamenti than their successors. Comparisons between singers like Vaguet and Caruso, and violists like Tertis, clearly evidence a shared approach to portamento.

### 3.9.1) Zoia Rosovsky (mezzo soprano), Lionel Tertis (viola), and Unknown Pianist: *Extase* by Henri Duparc (recorded 1921)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.9.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.9.1.

The proximity of Lionel Tertis's recordings to those of early-recorded singers is demonstrated by the three recordings he made with mezzo-soprano Zoia Rosovsky, who was a well-known singer of Russian origin. Rosovsky received mixed reviews in her era: after a Queen's Hall concert in 1918, for example, she is described as having "a fine voice and an effective if not a great dramatic style."[188] Poet Ezra Pound wrote too that, "if it was Zoia Rosovsky as announced in the programme, then let us pray that she will continue to sing behind a curtain and that she will keep to the Spanish mode; for the effect was infinitely preferable to anything she has given us on the concert platform."[189] This backhanded compliment from the ever-critical Pound for her 1919 London performance as part of Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* suggests that Rosovsky was at least a singer of some repute in her day. Despite this, however, little information has come

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187 Ibid., 174.
188 "London Concerts," *The Musical Times,* 59, no .900, (February, 1918): 82.
189 Ezra Pound, *Ezra Pound and Music: The Complete Criticism* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 2008), 190.

down to us about Rosovsky's life or professional career. It is notable that Rosovsky was criticised for lacking 'dramatic style' in the press, given that her recordings evidence a wild approach to tempo and portamento by the standards of today's MSPs. Her approach is, however, at the same time somewhat more restrained than that of other singers of her era like Melba and Luisa Tetrazzini (1871 - 1940).

Rosovsky's recordings with Tertis convey a sense of intimate interaction between the viola and the voice. Tertis transcribed Duparc's song *Extase* (originally for voice and piano) for voice, piano, and viola, performing most of the piano's right-hand melodic material on the viola. Adding an obbligato string instrument to songs was common practice in the early 20th century. There are a number of prominent recordings that document this practice, such as Kreisler and McCormack's 78rpm records, which include no fewer than 22 songs, as well as two records made by Mischa Elman and Caruso.[190] In the early-20th century, string players frequently toured with singers, playing pieces with piano to allow the singers to rest their voices during concerts, as well as accompanying arias and songs.[191] The connection between Tertis's playing and early-recorded singing thus has a basis in his performing experience. He toured widely with a number of the most prominent singers of his era and received the following letter from Melba in 1926:

> My dear Lionel, I am delighted that you honour my farewell tour in England by playing for me. We must do the Mozart Aria. I wonder if you have a copy of my cadenza. I can't find mine (so like me). I return to England about 17th September, so do ring me up…and we might have a little rehearsal and then you could give me the song.[192]

The familiarity of this letter speaks not only to Tertis's connection with Melba but to the stature he achieved as a violist in his time.[193]

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[190] John McCormack, Fritz Kreisler, recorded 1919 -1924, reissued 1991, *The Kreisler/McCormack Duets,* Pearl 9315. Enrico Caruso, Mischa Elman, recorded 1914, *Elegie - Melodie*, Victor 89066.
[191] Edward F. Kravitt, "The Lied in 19th Century Concert Life," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 18, no. 2 (Summer, 1965): 208.
[192] Nellie Melba, quoted in White, *Lionel Tertis,* 85.
[193] It is notable too that in the letter quoted above Melba is searching for a copy of her own personal cadenza for the aria, giving us another example of singers creating their own cadenza for an aria—a standard practice at the time.
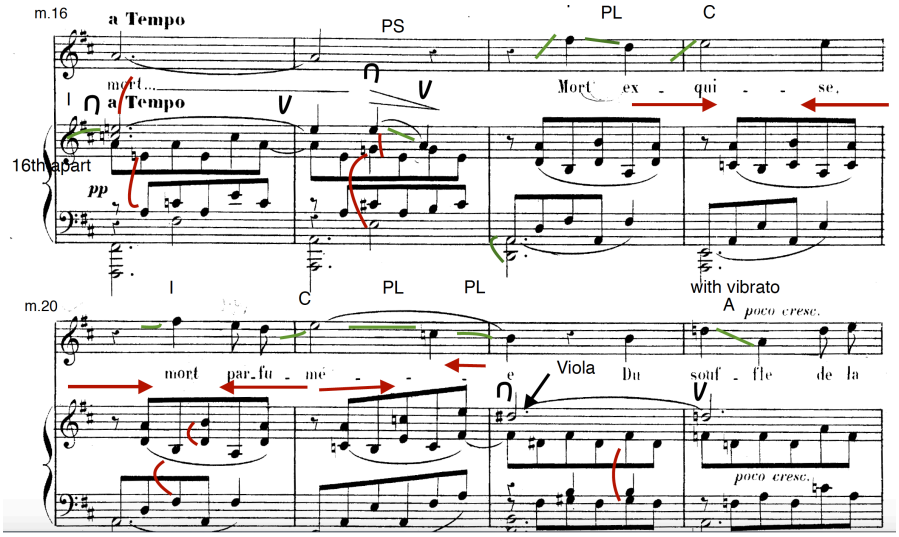
**Figure 3.09: Rosovsky's use of portamento in Duparc's *Extase*.**

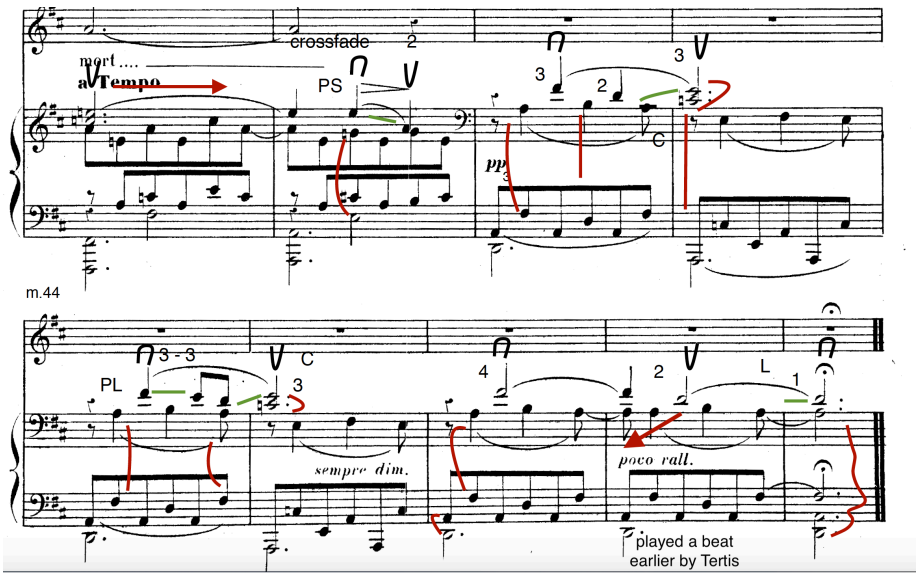


**Figure 3.10: Tertis's use of portamento in Duparc's *Extase*.**

*Portamento*

Rosovsky and Tertis use portamento in similar ways, contradicting Philip's assertion that early-recorded singers and string players used the device differently.[194] In *Extase*, between m. 5 and 7 for example, Tertis uses four different types of portamento, while in the analogous melodic material in m. 20 - 22, Rosovsky uses three. Tertis's portamento in the closing melody in m. 42 also resembles Rosovsky's in m. 18, where he uses a C portamento into both of the E flats. The one notable difference in their

[194] Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style,* 174.

treatment of this passage is Rosovsky's I portamento into her high Fs in m. 19 and 20.

It is also remarkable that Tertis chooses complex fingerings that facilitate additional portamenti, such as the awkward change to a first and then a second finger in m. 6, where he could easily have stayed in the 4th position thereby avoiding three slides. This suggests that Tertis's fingering choices may have been led by a desire to more closely match the frequency, location, and weight of Rosovsky's portamenti.

*Vibrato*

Rosovksy and Tertis use remarkably similar vibrato as shown by the spectrogram below (Figure 3.11), with pitch in Hertz along the vertical axis, the recording unfolding over time in seconds on the horizontal axis, and the layers of yellow lines depicting the overtones of the fundamental frequencies. The fundamental frequencies are all below the 1000hz range and somewhat blurred by their proximity to one another in the spectrogram, however the higher overtones in the 1500 – 1800hz range give a clearer picture of vibrato width and cycles per second. In m. 22 for example, Rosovsky's final B and Tertis's D sharp both have a vibrato speed of 5,5 cycles per second, while Rosovky's vibrato width encompasses 1,5 semitones and Tertis's covers 1,25 semitones. This shows just how similar their vibrato speed and width is here. In fact, the second beat of m. 24 is a remarkable moment where both the speed and width of their vibrati end up being nearly identical. The result is an intimate connection in timbre between voice and viola.

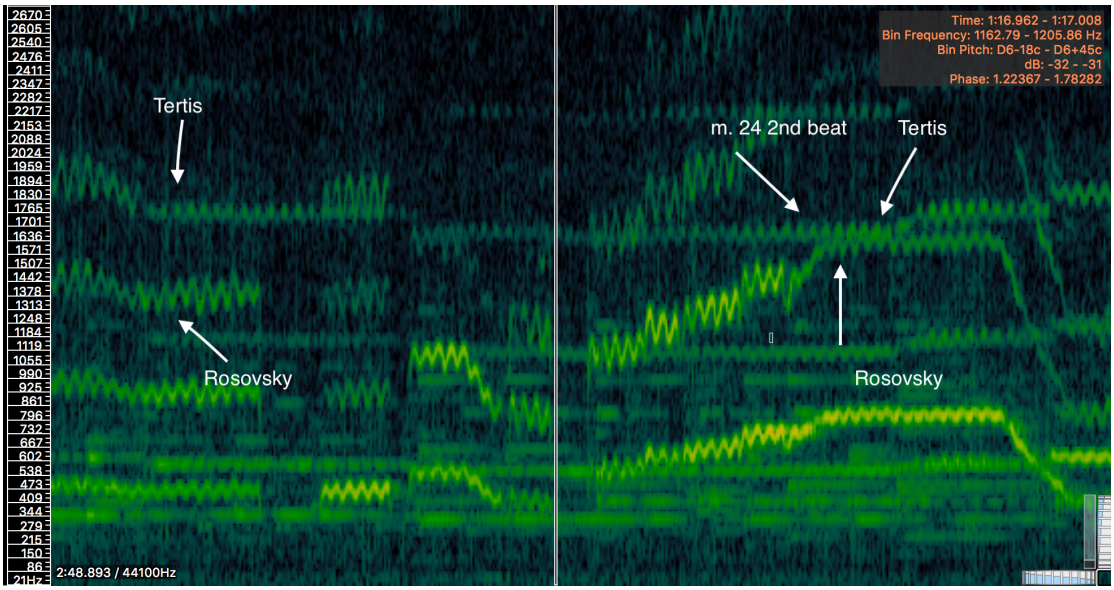


**Figure 3.11: Vibrato used by Rosovsky and Tertis in m. 24 of Duparc's *Extase*.**

*Tempo and Rhythm*

Arpeggiation and dislocation in the piano part is used throughout here, as in m. 42 for example, where the pianist layers the bass notes and middle-voiced chords in the left hand and right-hand countermelody, timing each of these separately. This continual arpeggiation, combined with the frequent portamenti used by Rosovsky and Tertis, creates a fluid rhythmic context, obscuring the clear location of the main beats of the bar.

Rosovsky also uses heavy slowing at phrase endings, especially in the final verse, where her entrance at '*sur ton sein pâl*' in m. 34 is taken at a slower tempo. As found on the recordings of *Du bist die Ruh* examined above, the tempo of the sung sections here is slower than the instrumental introduction and interludes; Tertis also copies this approach on his recording of Grieg's *Jeg elsker dig* (analysed below).

Tertis's vocal approach to rhythmic flexibility in *Extase* can be heard in m. 25, where he rushes to the climax of the phrase on the high D in m. 29 and broadens the top note much like Caruso does in m. 36 of *Bianca al par,* before restoring tempo by rushing. Indeed, Tertis's proximity to early-recorded vocal style is demonstrated by the similarity of his timbre, vibrato, portamento, and use of rhythmic flexibility to Rosovsky's: both here in *Extase,* as well as in Tchaikovsky's *None but the lonely heart,* as discussed below.

### 3.9.2) Zoia Rosovsky (mezzo), Lionel Tertis (viola), and Unknown Pianist - *нет только тот, кто знал (None but the lonely heart)* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (recorded 1921)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.9.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.9.2.

Tchaikovsky's song нет только тот, кто знал, translated as *None but the lonely heart*, features Rosovsky in her native Russian. Tertis created an expanded viola obbligato for this song, using melodic material from the right hand of the piano part and adding to this his own countermelodies.

*Multi-layeredness*

The three performers again create an ambiguous, multi-layered texture here using dislocation and continual rushing and slowing throughout phrases. This layering is somewhat similar to that heard on Vaguet and Montexu's recording of Meyerbeer's *Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine,* as discussed above. The pianist's placement of harmonic changes on the downbeat with the left hand, such as in m. 3 and m. 11 for example, are early and thus propel the music forward. These early beats counteract Rosovsky and

Tertis's frequent slowing, which stretches against the push of the pianist's harmonic motor. From m. 21 - 27, the rising figures rush forward to the climax before slowing abruptly into the second verse. In m. 38, both Tertis and Rosovsky deliver the same melodic line, and like McCormack and Kreisler in the *Ave Maria* example described above, they use variations in portamento and timing allowing both lines to be audibly distinguishable throughout. To illustrate this, in m. 39 Rosovsky overdots the last beat while Tertis plays straight quarter notes, and in m. 40 Tertis sustains the tone while Rosovsky considerably shortens her last note before entering early in m. 41 and delaying the fourth beat. The pianist then rushes into m. 42 and arrives before Rosovsky, who arrives before Tertis, creating dislocation between the three performers at this climactic moment. This kind of de-synchronisation at such a key moment would be frowned upon in today's MSPs, yet here, each of the three performers pursues their own direction with great abandon, ultimately adding weight to the climax. The relationship between Tertis's line and the piano in the final bar is unclear: it seems they are widely dislocated around the first beat of the final bar and that the pianist, rather than finishing the performance by playing the notated syncopations, opts to play two chords in their place. This general approach to dislocation throughout adds complexity and ambiguity to the performance, with its variegated layers divided between the harmonic-rhythmic motor of the piano, the vocal melody, and the viola countermelody.

*Portamento*

Much like in Duparc's *Extase* as discussed above, here Rosovsky and Tertis use portamento in similar ways, with one of the few notable differences being Tertis's clean start at the opening and Rosovsky's I portamento at her entrance in m. 9. Tertis uses the I portamento more infrequently than many singers of the era, although violinist Albert Sammons uses it a number of times on his recording with Tertis of the second movement of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante,* as discussed below.

The rest of the portamenti used by Tertis and Rosovsky are closely interrelated. For example, Tertis's PS slide in m. 18 is echoed by Rosovsky's on the same motive in m. 22; in m. 28, Rosovsky's C portamento is followed by Tertis's. As a result of his imitation of Rosovsky's portamento, however, Tertis falls behind the pianist going into m. 29, resulting in an unusually large dislocation of almost a beat between the two players. Elsewhere, in m. 46 Rosovsky uses a C portamento followed by a PL portamento on a descending major second, while Tertis uses portamenti on descending major seconds multiple times, as in m. 5, 6, 49, and 50.

In sum, these examples support the claim not only that Rosovsky and Tertis inhabited a similar stylistic world—one at odds with today's MSPs and their curtailment of portamento, dislocation, and ornamentation—but also that Tertis's performance style throughout his recorded oeuvre was indeed close to that of the singers of his time.

## 3.10) Lionel Tertis: Selected Recordings (1919 - 1933)

### 3.10.1) Lionel Tertis: *The Holy Boy* by John Ireland, arr. Lionel Tertis (recorded 1921)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.1.

Lionel Tertis's output of over 100 78rpm discs underscores his stature as an international soloist in the early-20th century. Among those recordings, two stand out as featuring the viola alone: the first, of John Ireland's Christmas carol *The Holy Boy,* and the second, of Johann Sebastian Bach's *Chaconne*. Tertis wrote a harmonised piano accompaniment for *The Holy Boy*. Why he decided to record the piece without a pianist thus remains a mystery. Perhaps a pianist was unavailable for the recording session, or perhaps he simply felt inspired to play it alone. In any case, the piece is a transcription of a song, and Tertis's use of portamento and tempo flexibility here further demonstrates how comparable his performance style was to that of the early-recorded singers discussed above.

*Timbre and Vibrato*

Tertis uses sustained legato and uniform timbre between the strings and registers of the instrument. He sustains the bow throughout using an even bow-speed, while vibrating continuously on all notes. His fingerings allow the majority of the phrases to be played on the same string, resulting in a more unified timbre within phrases. He uses the D string for the opening, moving to the A string for the first time at the end of m. 12. A combination of portamento, seamless legato and continuous vibrato, however, make the difference in timbre between the A and D strings nearly indistinguishable. The result is that the four strings, the bow, and the fingers, seem to vanish into a continuous spun-out legato. The outcome of this is what I call a 'singing performance style,' where delivering the contours of the melody takes precedence over the physical limitations of the viola.

*Portamento*

Tertis uses a wide variety of portamenti with great frequency, which helps to sustain his continual legato and develop tension through the phrases. He makes frequent use of PL portamenti, as in m. 1, but also connects bow changes together with C portamenti, as in m. 7. Alongside the frequent PL and PS portamenti, Tertis uses the C and A types as well, as in m. 3, and the L type, as in m. 51. In fact, each of the different portamento types except for the I portamento, to which Tertis turned infrequently, can be found on this recording—with the device being used at least once per bar and as often as four times in m. 43.

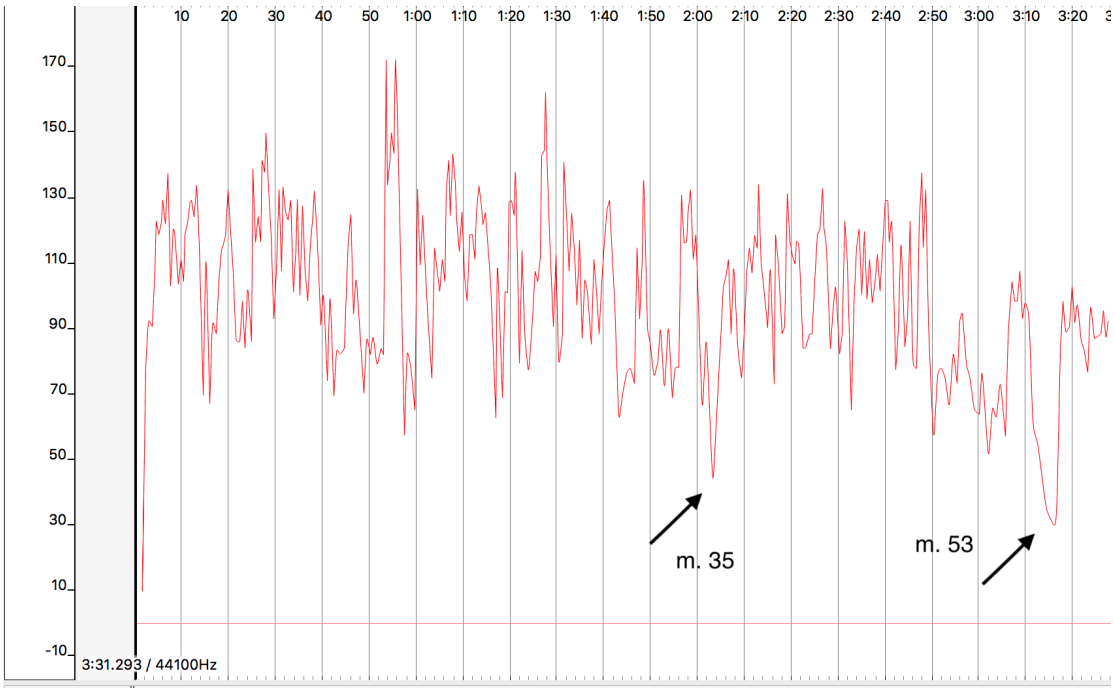


**Figure 3.12: Tempo graph of Tertis's recording of the *The Holy Boy* by John Ireland.**

*Tempo Flexibility*

The tempo graph above (Figure 3.12), with beats per minute on the vertical axis and the recording over time on the horizontal axis, shows massive flexibility in tempo from beat to beat. The eighth notes are played with continual rhythmic variation, often moving forward or slowing down. Tertis shapes the rising and falling melodic line with tempo much like an a cappella singer might, given that the melodic line is free from rhythmic restraints of harmonic accompaniment. His tempo varies widely, from under m.m. ♪=24 at the end of m. 53, to quicker than m.m. ♪=150 in m. 16, which is an extreme variation by any standard. There are some pronounced moments of slowing at

the end of m. 35 and again in m. 53 at phrase ends, with m. 36 slowing so much it sounds as if the piece has come to an end. This underlines Tertis's proximity to early-recorded singers like Vaguet, as examined above, who also sing with a great deal of rhythmic flexibility on a beat-to-beat level.

### 3.10.2) Lionel Tertis: *Chaconne* from the *Partita* no. 2, BWV 1004, by Johann Sebastian Bach (recorded 1924)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.2.

Tertis's November 25, 1924 Columbia recording of the *Chaconne* from Bach's *Partita in D minor* was the second-ever complete recording of the piece, made just months after violinist Isolde Menges's (1893 - 1876) world premiere recording of the work on April 7, 1924.[195] The performance of a violin piece as difficult as Bach's *Chaconne* on the viola had been unheard of until Tertis's pioneering effort. As Tertis wrote: "I had taken my courage in both hands in 1911 and given the first performance in public of the *Chaconne* on the viola."[196] Much to his consternation, however, his efforts were almost entirely ignored in the press. Violist John White quotes from a review in *The Strad,* which remarks only that, "Mr. Tertis made the experiment of playing Bach's "Chaconne" on the viola—as someone said it is better so than as a pianoforte piece."[197] Such less than jubilant reactions to his efforts underscore the difficulties Tertis faced in winning recognition for the viola as a solo instrument. Given the sluggish response of the low C string, the chords and arpeggios in the *Chaconne* are awkward and difficult to play, and I can attest to the fact that learning this piece on the viola requires both dedication and virtuosity. No wonder Tertis's consternation at such a lukewarm reception in the press was so great. By 1916, however, the *Musical Times* wrote that, "Mr. Tertis amazed his audience by his virtuoso playing on the viola of the famous *Chaconne* written by Bach for the violin." By the 1930s, Tertis's reputation was clearly established, with reviewers using many superlatives—often underlining the ideology of fidelity to the composer—in reference to Tertis's performance of the piece. In 1935, a review in the *Musical Times* appeared stating that Tertis:

> [P]erformed the amazing double feat of transferring Bach's Chaconne to the viola, note for note, and of restoring it, so far as possible, to bowing and phrasing Bach himself

[195] J.S. Bach, *Chaconne* from *Partita* no. 2 BWV 1004, Isolde Menges, recorded 1924, HMV D875-6 (78rpm).
[196] Lionel Tertis, *My Viola and I*, 43.
[197] White, *Lionel Tertis,* 21.

> must have known when he wrote it for violin and out-curved bow of his day. The experiment was a noble success…Tertis always does seem to get close to the mind of any composer whose music he plays.[198]

A quick glance at my annotated score, however, (see Appendix III, Score 3.a10.2) shows that Tertis delivers the *Chaconne* in a highly individual style, with numerous additions of bowings, rhythmic alterations, tempo flexibility, and ornamentation. It is hard to imagine that Tertis's interpretation of this piece, one he had played on numerous occasions for four decades, had altered greatly between 1924 and 1935. The opinions espoused by the *Musical Times's* author about the bowing and phrasing of 'Bach himself' and the 'mind of the composer' were thus far removed from how many HIP performers approach Bach today. A second review of the same 1935 recital even took Tertis's performance to be an *improvement* upon Bach's work, with Edwin Evans of *The Daily Mail* writing: "On the musical side, it struck me, with listening, that in sonority it was a distinct improvement on the original…the chords and arpeggios spread across the strings gain much in dignity by starting from a deep foundation."[199] This evidences two competing understandings of the role of the performer in reviews of the same performance by Tertis. While Evans focuses on Tertis improving the piece by making it his own, *The Musical Times* author focuses on Tertis's fidelity to the composer. While these two ideas may seem to be in conflict, in the context of the 19th-century role of the performer as laid out by Mary Hunter and discussed at length in Chapter One, making a work one's own (including personal alterations or improvements) was seen by many as the best way of being faithful to its composer.[200]

*Portamento and Controversy*

The *Chaconne* was Tertis's first recording for the Columbia Graphophone Company in fulfilment of his newly-signed contract in 1924. As Potter writes: "He turned in a terrific performance, although in later years he regretted having indulged in so many portamenti."[201] Potter refers here to anecdotal conversations with Tertis's former students, but whether this is accurate or apocryphal remains uncertain.[202] If Tertis did indeed feel this way about his recording in later years, it may say more about changing attitudes towards portamento than about his 'indulgence' in the device in 1924.

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[198] Quoted in White, *Lionel Tertis,* 31, 138.
[199] Ibid., 137.
[200] Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer," 361.
[201] Tertis, "Beauty of Tone in String Playing," 148. Tully Potter, liner notes to *Lionel Tertis the Complete Columbia Recordings (1924 - 1933)*, reissued 2006, Biddulph 80216-2 (CD).
[202] Tully Potter, e-mail to the author, April 16, 2016.

Continuous sliding between notes was central to his playing style, and this came to be seen as excessive in the context of increasingly 'clean and tidy' performances in the 20th century—especially in what were thought to be 'pure' 18th-century repertoires. Tertis's own admonitions against the overuse of portamento in *Beauty of Tone in String Playing* from 1938 underscore the style change and growing aversion to 'indulgence' and 'messiness' that took place throughout the 1930s.[203]

Seen in the context of recordings by Tertis and others from the era, however, the use of portamento here is no more frequent and heavy than one might expect. Tertis certainly uses some long portamenti on this recording, connected with his frequent use of high positions on the low strings, where the slides function as a tool for keeping whole passages on single strings. The slide from the D up to the B flat on the G string in m. 36 is a notable example, as is the portamento up the C string in m. 26 and the consecutive slides in m. 27 and 28. In each of the slower sixteenth-note sections, Tertis also uses frequent portamento, such as those from m. 77 - 83 and m. 210 - 224. Generally, his frequent and heavy portamenti here would be considered tasteless within today's MSPs in works of Bach, which is perhaps why Tertis himself was keen to denounce his own portamento use on this recording in his later years.

*Tempo and Rhythmic Flexibility*

Tertis makes great use of tempo flexibility here, structuring the development of the performance through individual sections, which are in turn separated by varying approaches to tempo—in stark contrast to today's tendency to create structural coherence via adherence to a steady tempo. The tempo graph below (Figure 3.13), with beats per minute along the vertical axis and time in seconds along the horizontal axis, lays out the tempo structure of Tertis's performance. Of the four sides, numbers 1 and 2 (which starts in m. 65) start slowly and rush towards their middles before slowing at their endings, as illustrated by the curved tempo arch. Sides 3 (starting in m. 133) and 4 (starting in m. 209) generally build in tempo, rushing continually to their final cadences before slowing heavily.

[203] For an overview of this phenomenon see Bruce Haynes, *The End of Early Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 32.

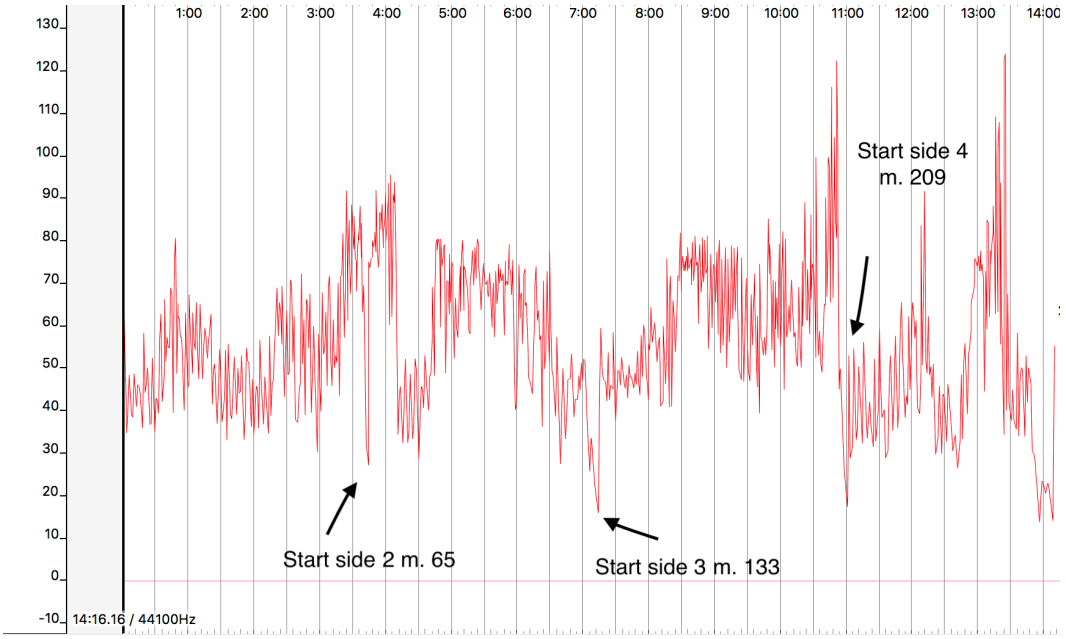


**Figure 3.13: Tempo graph of Lionel Tertis's recording of Bach's *Chaconne*.**

This general shaping of tempo is then combined with irregularity of rhythm within sections, caused by the spreading of chords and localised rushing and slowing. As a result, despite the general sweep created by tempo modification, throughout the performance there are frequent, jagged irregularities caused by stops and starts on a localised level. For example, the opening statement on the first side of the recording is irregular in tempo, with slowing on the first beat of m. 13 followed by rushing on the second and third beats of the bar. Similarly, Tertis stretches the beats over the long portamenti from m. 25 while rushing between them, and in m. 49 he starts the section at a slower tempo and gradually rushes towards m. 64 before slowing into the final cadence of the side.

The second side then starts in m. 65 with a quick tempo. Here Tertis accents and lengthens the basses, giving a greater sense of harmony to the texture. At the end of m. 76 he slows to a broader tempo with plenty of stops and starts, before rushing again from m. 84 - 89. The tempo is varied throughout the arpeggio section with slowing used to emphasise harmonic shifts and bass notes, such as on the first beat of m. 118. From m .120 Tertis slows, rounding off the section and the side. The third side, with the G major section of the work, then starts slowly before Tertis creates a large-scale build-up of tempo, rushing through m. 208. There is, however, also jagged slowing and rushing within this section, such as from m. 175 - 176.

The final side then starts slowly and rushes through m. 227. Tertis slows again

into m. 235 before rushing forward to m. 248. Here, the return of the theme is played in a slower tempo, much like the opening. Tertis then slows for the long portamenti in m. 255, further broadening towards the end. The close relationship of the tempo of the final appearance of the theme in m. 249 and the opening (around m.m. ♩=40) is demonstrative of the way Tertis's tempos are interrelated, revealing structural connections on a large scale.

While there is indeed a sense on this recording of what Leech-Wilkinson refers to as a 'moment to moment' rhythmic approach, my analysis shows how tempo modification can create a grand, sweeping, and ultimately unified performance structure, where both small- and large-scale flexibilities (the improvisatory feel of jagged localised changes and the overall sweep of rushing and slowing) rely on and relate to one another.[204] Structure is thus revealed here by flux, rather than by the steady unified tempos so characteristic of MSPs.

*Ornamentation and Articulation*

Tertis ornaments, adds and changes pitches, and uses varying bow strokes to create varied articulation, resulting in a highly idiosyncratic approach. His use of ornamentation includes the addition of a repeated C and B flat in m. 10 and m. 11, as well as the double-stopped thirty-second notes at m. 236. Tertis also uses his own characteristic rhythms, repetitions of notes, and double-stoppings at m. 89 and m. 202, where the notated score contains a number of chords marked 'arpeggio.' Examples of varied articulation, on the other hand, include the upper-half spiccato used at m. 75 and m. 153, the ricochet bowing in m. 118, and the combination of long and short articulations used to differentiate the voices in m. 161.[205] Here, Tertis plays the repeated Gs long and the other notes short, creating voicing. Tertis also spins out a seamless legato texture by using uneven slurrings, such as in m. 30 - 32, where he often slurs five notes together creating a legato texture that negates the main beats of the bar.

In sum, Tertis's recording of the *Chaconne* is both a technical and musical tour-de-force. His expressive tools include a large-scale tempo modification strategy combined with detailed localised rhythmic flexibilities. A full range of articulation and portamento techniques, combined with a robust timbre, creates a sense of narrative throughout the *Chaconne's* vast structure. This performance brings together Tertis's

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[204] Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Studying Recorded Musical Performance,* Chapter 8.1 paragraph 6, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap8.html.

[205] Ricochet bowing refers to throwing the bow at the string (usually in the upper half) and allowing it to bounce back producing a rapid series of notes.

creative compositional alterations with his virtuosic approach to the viola, resulting in a highly distinctive performance.

### 3.10.3) Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday piano: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1 by Johannes Brahms (recorded 1924)

Tertis recorded Brahms's *Sonata* in F minor twice with very different pianists: first for Vocalion with Ethel Hobday (1872 - 1947) in 1924, and again for Columbia with Harriet Cohen (1895 - 1967) in 1933. These two recordings underline the ways in which performance practice changed more generally in the early-20th century, while at the same time illustrating changing attitudes to Brahms's music. Anna Scott focuses on the "underlying aesthetic ideology of control" and the "hyper-controlled…agenda-laden accounts of [Brahms's] musical contexts" that currently justify the approach to Brahms's music in today's MSPs.[206] As such, Tertis's 1933 recording illustrates a controlled performance more in line with contemporary approaches, while the 1924 version is closer to the early recordings of the Schumann-Brahms circle of pianists as copied by Scott.

*Two Approaches to Op. 120 no. 1*

Of Tertis's two recordings of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, the first demonstrates what Scott terms "uncontrolled playing of detail and structure," while the second evidences a more controlled, detailed, and streamlined approach.[207] This is largely the result, however, of the differing approaches taken by the two pianists and not an indication that Tertis made drastic changes to his performance style. Other recordings made by Tertis in the early 1930s, like of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* (examined below), which was recorded only two months after the second recording of Brahms's *Sonata*, feature more unrestrained, rhapsodic playing. Furthermore, Tertis used most of the same fingerings, bowings, and portamenti on both Brahms recordings. It is largely the unnotated use of tempo modification and rhythmic flexibility that sets the first recording with Hobday apart from the more streamlined, steady approach to tempo on the second recording with Cohen. Cohen, a generation younger than Tertis, exemplified the new wave of 20th-century pianists who preferred a more controlled approach to tempo and rhythm, while the older Hobday takes a frenzied and at times disorderly approach. Hobday however "enjoyed the friendship of Brahms and other notable musicians"

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[206] Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*, 331.
[207] Ibid., 338.

during her time in Vienna, and she shares her birth year with Ilona Eibenschütz, the Brahms-circle pianist central to Scott's 'romanticized' copied performances of Brahms.[208] Ethel was also the wife of Alfred Hobday, principal violist of the Queen's Hall Orchestra, and was the pianist on the debut recording of Edward Elgar's *Piano Quintet.*[209] Below I have chosen to discuss the Hobday and Tertis recording of Brahms's *Sonata*, as its unpredictable and highly-charged nature more clearly demonstrates those elements of early-recorded performance style that are most at odds with MSPs than the second recording with Cohen.

**Movement 1: Allegro Appassionato**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.3.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.3.

*Tempo Modification*

One of the main means of expression used by Hobday and Tertis in the work's first movement is large-scale tempo modification. Much like Tertis's recording of Bach's *Chaconne,* the movement is divided into larger tempo areas, which are distinguished by slowing at their outer ends and rushing throughout their middles.

The tempo graph below (Figure 3.14) shows a large variation in tempo, from m.m. ♩=50 in the closing section of the piece to m.m. ♩=170 in m. 190. By the standards of MSPs, this represents a massive variation in basic tempo within a single movement in which the only notated tempo indications are allegro appassionato and sostenuto ed espressivo for the final section. This recording supports Philip's observation that early recordings feature great flexibility of tempo within single movements, while in fact going far beyond a tempo variation from m.m. ♩=84 to m.m. ♩=148 in Alfred Cortot's recording of Chopin's *Piano Sonata* no. 3, which Philip cites as an extreme example of this phenomenon.[210]

I can also relate a personal experience connected to tempo modification in this movement, having performed it at the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition on the Isle of Man in 2010. Inspired by Tertis's performance, I slowed heavily for the second theme and as a result I was eliminated from the competition and told by one

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[208] Eric Blom, "Ethyl Hobday," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Volume IV* (London: Macmillan and Company Ltd., 1954). Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*, 338.
[209] Edward Elgar, *Piano Quintet,* Ethel Hobday, Spencer Dyke Quartet, recorded 1926, National Gramophone Society NGS 1-10 (78rpm).
[210] Philip, *Early Recordings and Music Style*, 36, 19.

juror that such tempo variation in a single movement when not marked by the composer was unacceptable. This anecdotal experience demonstrates the extent to which MSPs mandate a steady approach to tempo within single movements of musical works as well as the extent to which adhering to the notated score is given precedence over other forms of expression in MSP culture.

As shown in the tempo graph (Figure 3.14), Tertis and Hobday's tempi divide the movement structurally by thematic groups. The first section runs to m. 37 and is followed by the second thematic group played in a slower tempo until m. 53. Hobday and Tertis then rush after m. 53, before slowing into a new tempo area at m. 90, where the thematic material of the second subject group returns. They gradually rush throughout the development section before slowing for the recapitulation at m. 135. Here, the second subject group at m. 153 is again taken slower but not as slowly as in the exposition at m. 36. The section from m. 168 rushes heavily and in m. 206, where the opening theme again returns, rather than slowing down in order to emphasise this structurally, Tertis and Hobday rush through it, slowing abruptly and without warning for the final sostenuto ed espressivo section before slowing gradually from m. 231 onwards. Generally, however, sections here are rushed to their middles before slowing at their outer ends. This continuous rushing throughout each of the main sections of the movement creates an appassionato character, while tempo flexibility also results in a general sense of direction that conveys the movement's structural form. As a result, this performance is detailed and impetuous on a moment-to-moment basis while still conveying a sweeping sense of overall structure.

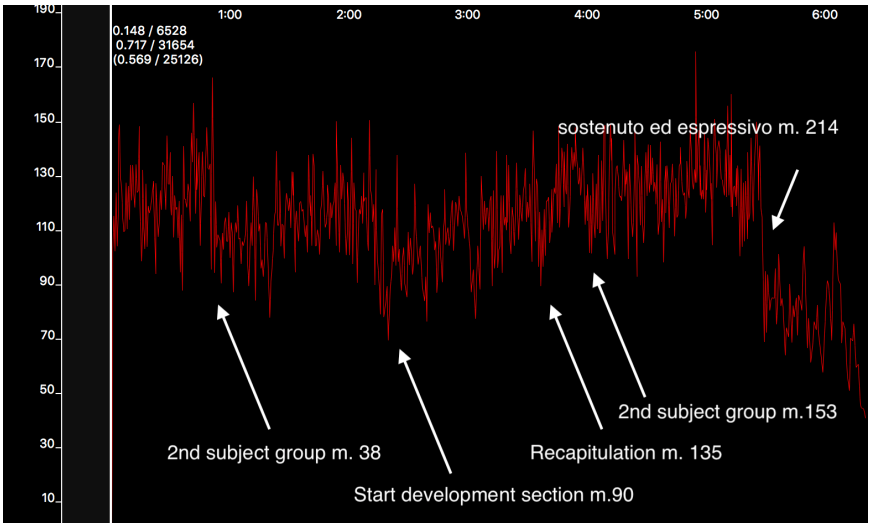


**Figure 3.14: Tempo graph Hobday and Tertis, Brahms's *Sonata* Op.120 no.1 Movement 1.**

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

On a localised level, rhythmic flexibility gives expression to individual phrases throughout the performance, with lengthening and shortening of notes creating direction and variation. For example, in m. 112 the same motive is repeated twice, with the harmony altered the second time: the first time Tertis rushes forward, while the second time he starts quickly and slows abruptly. The decisive chords in a quicker tempo in m. 116 then come as a shock, demonstrating how rhythmic flexibility can add a sense of unpredictability to a repetitive phrase and aid abrupt changes of character. There is a sense of flux throughout the movement created by the continual unevenness of the beats, such as the lengthening of the second beat and shortening of the first beat in the opening theme from m. 6.

Another example of this is Hobday's wild approach to the opening bars: she rushes through m. 3 and 4, well beyond the general tempo Tertis takes for the opening theme, resulting in a breathless, impetuous character. Cohen's performance of the introductory bars in a steady tempo on Tertis's 1933 recording is strikingly different. The contrast between the two pianists is further evident in matters of dislocation and arpeggiation. Hobday uses these devices frequently while Cohen does not, as can be heard in the passage from m. 192, where Hobday arpeggiates and dislocates every chord. The continual dislocation used by Hobday is further evidence of her proximity to the recordings of an older generation of pianists like Carl Reinecke, who was an illustrious representative of the so-called Leipzig School, of which Clara Schumann was also said to be the exemplary proponent.[211]

*Portamento*

Tertis's portamenti often follow from his complex fingerings in phrases where simpler fingerings would have allowed him to avoid sliding altogether. This approach allows Tertis to use frequent portamenti, as early-recorded singers do, even in passages that are awkward on the viola. His use of these unorthodox fingerings sets him apart from other early-recorded violists like Post, Nedbal, and Van Hout, who favour simpler fingerings and generally use portamento when it is more readily at hand. A noteworthy example of this takes place in m. 7, where Tertis uses a 2 - 2 fingering rather than an extension over the interval of a diminished fourth, resulting in a heavy slide. Tertis uses five portamenti in the opening theme alone and a further five in the second theme,

[211] For a detailed discussion of Reinecke's place within the Leipzig School of pianists see Neal Peres da Costa, *Off the Record*, 162.

including a C portamento into the D flat on the first beat of m. 41. This C portamento is notable because it is deliberately added without a change of left-hand position. In the sostenuto ed espressivo section (from m. 214), Tertis uses similarly unorthodox fingerings, like the 1 - 1 slide in m. 215 and the awkward jump to a 2nd finger on the F in m. 216 on the D string, as well as the awkward jump to a first position G on the third beat in m. 217. Each of these fingerings allows him to add portamenti that would not be possible with more conventional in-position fingerings: for example, playing m. 215 in the first position would result in two fewer portamenti, but by sliding up on the G string, Tertis not only adds portamento but keeps the whole motive within the timbre of a single string. Tertis also uses two subtle L portamenti in the final four bars, changing from the A string to the D string three measures from the end, and changing from the 3rd to the 2nd finger in the penultimate bar. This fingering results in each of the three notes being re-articulated and played with a different sound colour. Fingerings of this kind, where portamenti are created while adhering to the timbre of a single string within melodies, are a central part of Tertis's style.

**Movement 2: Andante un poco adagio**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.3.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.3.

*Timbre and Portamento*

Tertis's use of continuous and wide vibrato, frequent long and short portamenti, and sustained legato, is similar to the approach of early-recorded singers like Rosovsky and Caruso. As in the first movement, there are further examples here of how Tertis's physically awkward fingerings increase the possibilities for voice-like portamento, such as in m. 28 - 29, where the 2 - 2 slide in m. 28 could easily have been avoided by staying in position. Similarly, sliding to the 3rd finger on the first beat of m. 29 on the D string creates a colour change where Tertis could also easily have stayed in position.

*Tempo and Rhythmic Flexibilities*

The variation of tempo in this movement is broad, from around m.m. ♩ =30 at its slowest point and up to m.m. ♩=85 at its quickest, with exaggerated slowing at phrase ends, and especially at the transitions into m. 23 and m. 41. Hobday and Tertis tend to create more variation within individual bars or smaller groups of bars rather than continually changing the overall tempo as they do in the first and last movement of the sonata. An example of this tempo flexibility within smaller groups of bars occurs in m. 7

and 8, where they rush the rising melodic line and slow the descending line in m. 9 and 10, much as the early-recorded singers discussed earlier do in Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh*. From m. 17 into 19, Tertis and Hobday rush to the high B flat, the top note of the phrase, in a way similar to the flexibility used by Caruso in *Bianca al par,* where he rushes through the rising line before slowing as the melody descends. Continual dislocation between the piano and viola here creates a general sense of ambiguity as far as the location of the main beats of the bar are concerned. An example of this occurs in the opening measures, where Hobday's left-hand eighth notes are ahead of Tertis's, which are stretched over the bar line, creating dislocation throughout the opening melody. From m. 35, Hobday also plays swinging, uneven sixteenths, in contrast to the straight and measured sixteenths played by Cohen in this passage. In m. 61 Hobday swings sixteenth triplets unevenly into the second beat of the bar, which is then echoed by Tertis's swinging thirty-second note upbeats from m. 64 - 66.

**Movement 3: Allegretto grazioso**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.3.3 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.3.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

Tertis and Hobday take a lilting dance-like approach to this minuet-inspired third movement. The tempo is much steadier here than in the other movements, with the exception of the middle section from m. 47, which Hobday starts in a quicker tempo before slowing abruptly in m. 63. While the general tempo of this movement is quite steady, Tertis and Hobday use localised flexibility to create unevenness and swing that contributes to the dance-like character of their performance. This continual unevenness stands in stark contrast to the solid and assured approach to rhythm characteristic of performances of Brahms's works today. Examples of this unevenness can be heard in the way Hobday swings the two eighth-note figures in m. 3 and 4, which are characteristic gestures of this movement, and the way she plays uneven syncopations in the middle section from m. 55. Her melody in m. 125 then combines swing and dislocation, creating complex layering. The section from m. 63 features some abrupt rhythmic flexibility, with rushing from m. 66 into m. 67 followed by abrupt slowing.

*Portamento*

Tertis's use of portamento in this movement creates a folk-like character, as in m. 4 and 8 for example, where he slides on the second of the repeated motives. He slides up

to the C in m. 34, resulting in both slowing and dislocation of the viola line from Hobday's right hand material. The portamento here is created by a change of bow before sliding from the lower F, creating a 'yodelling' effect that gives the performance a touch of Austrian folk character. This tongue-in-cheek approach to portamento is at odds with how many performers might approach such a serious canonic work in MSP style today.

**Movement 4: Vivace**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.3.4 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.3.

*Tempo Modification*

The finale of this work features some wild, rushed, and uncontrolled playing that would be considered sloppy and inaccurate by the standards of MSPs. Rushing occurs both within and across sections of the movement, and it is this overall forward movement throughout that results in an exciting performance.

The two players treat moving eighth notes throughout the movement in an off-the-cuff fashion. They continually rush—especially in the recurring motive from m. 3. Tertis also approaches the eighth notes marked with dots with a thrown spiccato in the upper half of the bow, creating the uncontrolled rushing heard in m. 11 - 12 for example. He also takes the triplet eighths at a remarkable speed in m. 216 and m. 217. These arpeggios are difficult to play because of the string crossings, yet he virtuosically rushes through them with great clarity and accuracy. Hobday's similarly daredevil approach in the opening four measures demonstrates that she seems willing to sacrifice accuracy for speed. From m. 66, she also rushes despite grasping at handfuls of wrong notes, conveying an impression of enthusiasm. In m. 104 and m.159, a technically awkward bit of piano writing, Hobday again rushes forward, once again neglecting accuracy in favour of speed.

While continuous rushing is a feature of this performance, so too is the use of moments of slowing—in order to facilitate further rushing. For example, while the entire opening passage rushes, the slowing at m. 17 for the return of the opening theme creates an opportunity to again push forward. This occurs in m. 107 - 108 too, where Hobday slows the tempo slightly only to then rush in the following section. Another example of this takes place in m. 163, where Tertis slows his theme before rushing in m. 174.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

Rhythmic flexibility also adds to the exuberant and enthusiastic character of this performance, as for example from m. 123, where Tertis's uneven approach to dotted rhythms creates a Hungarian Gypsy-like flavour. Prior to this, in m. 121 - 122, Hobday arpeggiates the fourth-beat quarter note in the left hand while arpeggiating the second half of m. 134 to emphasise the top E of her right-hand melody, creating a lilting and rhapsodic effect.

In sum, this performance of the fourth movement of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1 by Tertis and Hobday is characterised by continuous rushing, an improvisatory approach to rhythmic detail, and a lack of adherence to the details of the notated score.

*A Connection From Brahms to Tertis?*

This recording evidences a possible link between Hobday's performance style and her acquaintance with the Brahms circle of pianists at the end of the 19th century. Her approach is similar here to the recordings of Ilona Eibenschütz and Adelina de Lara, pupils of both Clara Schumann and Brahms. Scott found Eibenschütz and De Lara to be most at odds with current practices amongst the pianists closely associated with Brahms.[212] Hobday shares her propensity for constant rushing, dislocation, arpeggiation and extreme slowing with both of these pianists. That Hobday and Tertis's recording so closely resembles the performance style of the 'Brahms circle' pianists like Eibenschütz and De Lara, suggests that this approach to Brahms's music existed beyond the confines of the composer's inner circle in the early-20th century. As Potter notes:

> [S]ome critics today—and even string players, who should know better—turn their noses up at the slides and scoops of portamento affected by Tertis and his contemporaries. But all the late-Romantic composers represented here would have expected to hear exactly this style of playing.[213]

If Tertis indeed understood Brahms's style, then it was a very different style to that expected in today's MSPs. Far from controlled, Brahms as played by Tertis and Hobday is unpredictable, petulant, wild, and humorous.

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[212] Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*, 330.
[213] Tully Potter, liner notes to *Lionel Tertis*, *The Complete Vocalion Recordings (1919 - 24)*, reissued 2006, Biddulph 80219 (CD).

### 3.10.4) Lionel Tertis and Frank St. Leger piano: *Romance* from the *Suite* Op. 2, by Benjamin Dale (recorded 1920)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.4 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.4.

Composer Benjamin Dale (1885 - 1943) was not only closely associated with Tertis but also wrote the *Suite* Op. 2 for him. Tertis's recording of the second half of the work's second movement, *Romance*, starting with the return of the opening material at m. 109 on a single side of a 78rpm record, gives us both an idea of what his performances of the whole work may have sounded like and also sheds light on his approach to the works of composers with whom he was personally associated. In this case, Tertis seems to be even less concerned with adhering to the notated detail of the score than he is in works by Brahms or Mozart. Given that Tertis edited the viola part, adding bowings and fingerings to the published edition of the work, it is notable that it would be very difficult to reconstruct Dale's notation through repeated listening to his performance. Tertis's unnotated approach to tempo and rhythm departs from the score to such a considerable degree that it is well outside what might be considered acceptable within MSPs.

According to White, Dale's *Suite* was commissioned by Tertis and premiered in 1906. Tertis requested an orchestration of the final two movements by the composer, which he premiered on May 18, 1911.[214] Tertis remembers the orchestral premiere at the Royal Philharmonic Society with conductor Arthur Nikisch as somewhat disastrous: "The famous conductor, secure in his immense reputation, had not taken the slightest trouble to acquaint himself with the work, such was the attitude, still tolerated in 1911, of a lordly foreigner towards the native muse."[215] Despite a less than ideal premiere, Tertis went on to give numerous performances of the piece. As a 1922 review in *Musical Opinion* states: "Dale has scored [the *Romance* and *Finale*] and it has been performed in London under Nikisch, at The Hague under Mengelberg, and at Glasgow under Ronald."[216] Notably, the original orchestral parts of the *Suite* were aboard the Titanic when it sank in 1912.[217] Dale is now little remembered as a composer and few of his works are performed with any regularity.

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[214] White, *Lionel Tertis*, 17.
[215] Tertis, *My Viola and I*, 34.
[216] Quoted in White, *Lionel Tertis*, 304.
[217] Ibid., 17.

*Tempo Modification*

Even though the notated score encourages a degree of flexibility with markings like con anima, accelerando, and piu lento, Tertis's use of tempo modification is nonetheless extreme, ranging from about m.m. ♩=30 to m.m. ♩=128. An example of this can be heard in m. 141, where Tertis starts a gradual accelerando eight measures before the notated con anima. Tertis's continual rushing and slowing in advance of notated ritardando and accelerando markings is similar to Edward Elgar's on the recording of his *Enigma Variations* from 1926 and is demonstrative of an approach that can be heard frequently on early recordings.[218]

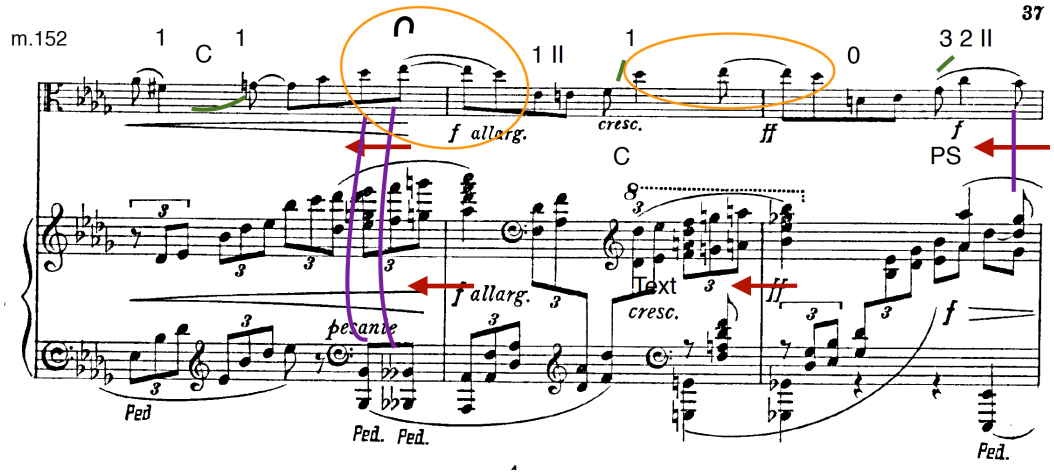


**Figure 3.15: Tertis plays rhythms notated differently the same way in Dale's *Romance*.**

Tertis also engages in jagged rushing and slowing, like in m. 154, where he stretches the high C before abruptly continuing in a quicker tempo in m. 155. This lengthening of specific notes before abruptly returning to tempo in sudden starts and stops is also at odds with contemporary MSPs, where the tendency is to use gradual slowing before a gradual return to tempo.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

Tertis also uses extreme flexibility on a beat-to-beat level, which contrasts strongly with the audible pulse expected in MSPs. He approaches the opening section from m. 112 much in the style of an operatic recitativo. The notated lento quasi fantasia suggests a certain freedom of rhythm, and Tertis remembers the *Romance* as a movement in which "rubato is of such cunning and so incessant that it requires a conductor of very

[218] Edward Elgar, *Enigma Variations* Op. 36 on *Elgar Conducts Elgar*, Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, Edward Elgar, recorded 1926, reissued 2005, Naxos 8111022 (CD).

considerable experience to follow and be on spot."[219] Tertis's flexibilities go well beyond the freedoms that might be expected in contemporary MSPs, as heard in his variation of the repeated motives from m. 112 - 114 for example, where each of the upbeats are played with an elongated A with the following notes accelerating quickly into the next bar. In m. 152 - 153 he lengthens the first D flat before rushing the D flat in the second measure, and while both bars are notated differently, they end up sounding rhythmically identical (see Figure 3.15).

From m. 120 - 124 he also rushes by shortening the fourth beat of every bar. One of the most extreme examples of rhythmic alteration here, however, takes place from m. 135 - 136, where Tertis plays the notated sixteenths as eighth notes. Similarly, in m. 159, extreme stretching occurs on both the first and fourth beats of the bar, where no notated slowing is suggested, further underlining the rhapsodic flexibility of his performance.

*Portamento*

Tertis's long, heavy, and varied portamenti here are close to those of early-recorded singers like Patti, Caruso, and Melba. Tertis frequently uses high positions on the lower strings, like for the portamenti between the octave A flats from m. 127 - 129, where the entire passage is played on the G string. Similarly, from m. 146, he plays the high D flat on the C string and the high A flat in m. 149 on the G string. The result is a uniform timbre with large parts of the melody played on single strings, allowing for long downwards portamenti afterwards. In the main theme, from m. 130, all of the long intervals are connected with portamento, while the multiple portamenti in m. 133 help maintain a continuous legato over the bow change. In m. 137, Tertis uses L, PL, C and PS portamento types in close succession, perhaps inspired by the notated con tenerezza. Interestingly, although the fingerings Tertis uses on his recording are the same ones he marked in the published viola part, these fingerings still give little indication of the frequency of his portamento use nor do they indicate the different portamento types he uses.

In sum, Tertis's recording of Dale's *Romance* demonstrates the use of extreme tempo and rhythmic flexibility, and in so doing departs radically from the notated score. At the same time, his frequent, heavy portamento is similar to that used by early-recorded singers.

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[219] Tertis, *My viola and I,* 34.

### 3.10.5) Lionel Tertis and Ethyl Hobday piano: *Sunset* by Lionel Tertis, (recorded 1922)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.5 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.5.

*Lionel Tertis as Composer and Performer*

Most 19th-century virtuoso performers were adept at composing original, well-crafted compositions and were also expected to be able to transcribe, ornament, and improvise (in the form of preluding). As Charles de Bériot writes in his *Méthode* of 1870: "We address ourselves here to the violinist who would like to give his talents the highest possible direction: that of violin composer."[220] Tertis's small compositional output, combined with his large numbers of transcriptions and arrangements, place him within this 19th-century tradition. I have analysed his recordings of two of his own compositions here, beginning with *Sunset* and then moving on to *Hier au soir*. Tertis was however far less prolific as a composer than his hero Kreisler, or than pianist Sergei Rachmaninoff, both of whom are among the few performer-composers in this tradition whose works have been accepted into the WAM canon. It is unclear when Tertis composed *Sunset* but the manuscript bears a dedication to his first wife Ada, whom he married in 1913.

*Portamento*

This recording is notable for the sheer quantity of portamenti used. Tertis's fingerings were present in the manuscript that was used for the published edition of the score and he again adheres to these fingerings on his recording. While the notated fingerings hint at portamento use, it is again unlikely that a performer today, having never heard his recording while adhering to the tenets of MSPs, would have any idea of the extent to which Tertis uses the device. In total, he makes 70 slides in a piece consisting of only 54 bars. Intriguingly, Tertis marked 'glissando' in the penultimate bar: an awkward compositional choice in light of his own continual sliding throughout the piece on his recording. The recording also includes all of the portamento types, showing how prevalent and diverse Tertis's use of the device was. As a result, the printed score seems inadequate when drawing conclusions about how the composer played his own

[220] Charles de Bériot, *Méthode de Violon,* Paris, 1870, 176. "Nous nous adressons ici au violoniste qui voudrait donner a son talent la plus haute direction: Celle de violon compositeur." Translation mine.

work, even though it includes his own fingerings and bowings. This demonstrates the important role early recordings play in understanding the historical use of portamento, as in this case the fingered score proves to be a wholly inadequate predictor of parameters such as frequency, diversity, and audibility.

### 3.10.6) Lionel Tertis and Unknown pianist: *Hier au soir* by Lionel Tertis, (recorded 1925)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.6 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.6.

Another of Tertis's compositions called *Hier au soir* was recorded in 1925 for Columbia in the early days of his contract with the label. Both the date of composition and the dedication to 'Mache' in the published score remain a mystery. Tertis adds a repeat on his recording at m. 22, allowing him to both fill more of the side of the 78rpm record, and to play con sordino the second time through. Tertis's performance of this work contains extreme rhythmic flexibility and frequent, varied portamenti, and it would again be difficult to reconstruct the notated score from repeated listening to his recording, and vice versa.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

There is a wide-ranging and continuous flexibility throughout this performance, with frequent dislocation between the left hand of the piano and the viola. Tertis exaggerates these flexibilities the second time through, as for example in m. 12, where he rushes forward. Wide variation from beat-to-beat can also be heard in m. 10 - 11. This extreme flexibility is similar to that heard on Tertis's recordings of Dale's *Romance* and Ireland's *The Holy Boy*.

*Portamento*

Tertis uses frequent portamenti here, like at the entrance of the viola in m. 7 for example, which starts with three portamenti in a row, while m. 17 - 19 contain no fewer than six slides.

In sum, in recordings of his own works, Tertis departs radically in terms of tempo and rhythmic flexibility from his own notated scores. This flexibility was central to Tertis's performance style, and he shares the ability to create continual flux in melodic lines with singers such as Vaguet and Caruso, as demonstrated by the analysis above of the aria *Plus blanche que la blanche hermine*. At the same time, his portamento use is heavier, more frequent, and more varied than may be deduced from his notated fingerings. The

irreproducibility of the notated score from these performances, and vice versa, demonstrates the distance between Tertis's performance practice and today's MSPs.

### 3.10.7) Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday, piano: *Jeg elsker dig* by Edvard Grieg, arr. Lionel Tertis, (recorded 1922)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.7 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.7.

Among the numerous discs of short works recorded by Lionel Tertis is his own transcription of the song *Jeg elsker dig* by Edvard Grieg. His performance here is closely connected with early-recorded vocal style, as his approach to tempo, frequent and varied portamenti, and continuous vibrato, is similar to the recordings of *Du bist die Ruh* analysed above.

*Tempo and Rhythmic Flexibility*

Here Hobday plays the piano introduction and interludes faster than the viola/piano sections with Tertis, much the way pianists and early-recorded singers do in Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh*. Tertis and Hobday also use much rhythmic flexibility, such as frequent over- and under-dotting. Hobday's piano introduction and interlude are also remarkable, however, for their combination of swung rhythms, arpeggiation and dislocation, such as from m. 2 - 4 and m. 21 - 24 for example. She also fills the gap between viola/piano sections by rushing over Tertis's conclusion of the initial phrase in m. 11. The solo viola double stops in m. 41 - 42 then repeats the piano material from the opening, and Tertis performs this phrase freely and slowly as a kind of cadenza—taking time to emphasise the dissonant final chord of m. 41 through lengthening before rushing forward in m. 43. From m. 43, Tertis takes over material from the original piano part on the viola, playing this material in a less vocal way—both in a quicker tempo and almost pianistically—before rushing through to the final bar.

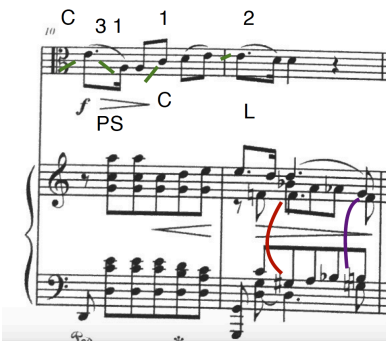


**Figure 3.16: Portamento types used by Tertis in Grieg's Jeg elsker dig.**

*Portamento*

Tertis uses frequent and varied portamento here, often multiple times in a single bar, as in m. 19 and between m. 10 - 11 (Figure 3.16), where he uses the C, PS and L types in quick succession. Surprisingly, the climax in m. 39 is played without portamento, yet, as if to compensate for this, Tertis uses a C portamento on the last eighth of the bar before using a downwards PL portamento to round off the phrase in m. 40. In general, Tertis's frequent, varied use of portamento here closely resembles that of Rosovsky in Duparc's *Extase,* as discussed earlier.

*Vibrato Range*

While vibrato speed on Tertis's recordings of *Sunset* and *Hier au soir* tends to be more uniform, here it covers a wider range (from 6,32 to 8,1 cycles per second), with slower vibrato in the lower register and quicker vibrato in the higher. His range of vibrato speeds is thus similar to that of early-recorded singers, whose vibrato is often attuned to their vocal register.

### 3.10.8) Lionel Tertis and Albert Sammons violin, London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hamilton Harty: *Sinfonia Concertante* KV 364 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (recorded 1933)

Tertis, Sammons, and the newly-founded London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hamilton Harty, made the first recording of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* K. 364 in 1933. This recording is the only available opportunity to hear Tertis as a soloist with orchestra and includes Tertis and Sammons's reworked version of violinist Joseph Hellmesberger Jr.'s first movement cadenza. Joseph Hellmesberger Jr. (1855 - 1907) was a renowned Viennese violinist, conductor, pedagogue, and an early director of the Vienna Conservatoire. He composed a number of often-played cadenzas that were

widely circulated in the 19th century.[221] His cadenza for Bach's *Concerto for Two Violins* also appears on Arnold and Alma Rosé's 1928 recording of the piece, and it is therefore interesting to note contemporary musicologist Michael Sternberg's reaction to that cadenza here:

> If you have a taste for the bizarre, you might want to check out the 1928 recording [of the Allegro finale] by Arnold and Alma Ros[é]...Twenty measures before the end, the music screeches to a halt, whereupon there follows a nearly two-minute cadenza by the famous 19th-century quartet-leader Joseph Hellmesberger. Its general clumsiness and howling grammatical indiscretion are perfect examples of the sort of thing Mozart was sending up in his Musical Joke, K.522.[222]

Surprisingly, Tully Potter—an early recordings enthusiast and admirer of Tertis—also brings similarly judgmental language to bear when describing the Tertis and Sammons recording of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*:

> Tertis played Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante with Ysaÿe, Thibaud, Primrose (a performance in Paris which stimulated that great player to take up the viola), Goldberg, Busch and Kreisler, but his most frequent partner was Sammons. Their recording, the first to be made of this beautiful work, featured Beecham's new London Philharmonic with Sir Hamilton Harty conducting. Although he was a devoted Mozartian, Harty did not think to remonstrate with Tertis over the changes that the violist made to the score. The most radical was to throw out Mozart's cadenza for the first movement and replace it with Tertis's own, based on one by the older Joseph Hellmesberger, who composed an equally ill-judged cadenza for the last movement of Bach's Double Concerto. Despite the tamperings, and the soloists' all-pervasive portamento, the performance has always been valued for the superb interplay between Sammons and Tertis and the stylish accompaniment."[223]

In sum, Potter views this recording as excellent with the exception of the cadenza and the overuse of portamento, and notes that a conductor of Harty's reputation should have taken Tertis to task for his outrageous rewriting of Mozart's score. I argue, however, that Tertis's changes to the score follow one interpretation of the 19th-century ideal of the performer (as discussed in Chapter One), with Tertis understanding and being faithful to Mozart's music through his own personal, social, and historical lens—his alterations to the score included. Steinberg's and Potter's attacks, however, show just how deeply current beliefs about the way canonic WAM masterpieces should be performed are embedded in musical discourse. Even writers with a great interest in early recordings, like Potter, feel required to attack performance practices like portamento that fall outside of the bounds acceptable in MSPs of Mozart's music today. Portamento

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[221] "Obituary Joseph Hellmesberger," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 34, no. 609 (Nov. 1st, 1893): 664.
[222] Michael Sternberg, *The Concerto: A Listener's Guide*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 19. J.S. Bach, *Concerto for Two Violins* BWV 1043, Arnold Rosé, Alma Rosé, Orchestra, 1928, Victrola M 123.
[223] Potter, liner notes to *Lionel Tertis the Complete Columbia Recordings*.

itself, while clearly embedded in a 19th-century approach to music-making, may stem from even older historical approaches. How are we to know that it is these early recordings rather than our own MSPs that are incongruous with the performance practices of Mozart's era? It seems even more odd that some writers object to early-recorded cadenzas on the grounds that they do not fit the stylistic parameters of the work in question. If the 'intentions of the composer' are important to today's musicians, then surely the cadenza can be viewed as a moment in a work where the performer is expressly requested by the composer to either compose or improvise in their own style. Or, as philosopher Peter Kivy puts it:

> The cadenza is the most obvious instance, in the modern concert repertory, where the composer has mandated a completely empty space in which the performer is free to 'do her own thing' it is an *intended* gap in the 'text.' And intentional authenticity would lie in the performer, if she can, doing her own thing, not slavishly imitating the composer's style. For *that* is not what the composer intended.[224]

How strange, then, that contemporary musicologists like Steinberg and Potter are so negative about these early-recorded cadenzas, given that they are a realisation of what might be called the 'intentions of the composer.' Their attacks on these performances could be viewed as having little to do with respecting composers' intentions and much more to do with reinforcing mainstream judgements about what constitutes 'serious' music-making.

**Movement 1: Allegro maestoso**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.8.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.8.

*Tempo Modification*

Potter remarks on Harty's 'Mozartian credentials' as a conductor, and therefore one might expect him to conform more readily to the unwritten rules of MSPs for how Mozart's music should be performed by not engaging in unnotated slowing or rushing.[225] Harty however indeed makes tempo modifications, by slowing during the orchestral tuttis. While broad slowing at the ends of sections or phrases is still used today in 19th-century repertoires to highlight structural boundaries, this is not an accepted approach for MSPs of 18th-century repertoires, so even the few tempo modifications heard here are bound to sound extreme to some.

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[224] Peter Kivy, *Authenticities, Philosophical Reflections on Musical Performance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 274.
[225] Potter, liner notes to *Lionel Tertis the Complete Columbia Recordings.*

Examples of these tempo modifications include slowing and rushing in m. 25 - 26 and rushing through the crescendo from m. 54, slowing during the closing tutti section at m. 344, and the pronounced slowing from m. 62 - 64, which leads to a slower tempo area in m. 72 where the soloists enter. Like the early-recorded singers in Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh,* Tertis and Sammons take their solo sections at a much slower pace here than the orchestral tuttis. Another example of the use of slower tempi for solo sections can be heard at Sammons's entrance in m. 172, which slows further into m. 176. Sammons follows this by rushing back into the orchestral tutti in m. 180. Tertis then takes a similar approach to his solo section from m. 187. Tertis and Sammons also slow broadly in m. 222, emphasising the structural boundary at the return of the recapitulation.

*Portamento*

Heavy portamento is prevalent here in both the orchestral and solo parts; its use is often also connected with both unnotated slowing and lyrical passages. For example, there is the pronounced portamento in the first violin group at m. 18 coupled with broad slowing at the end of this phrase, which sounds thoroughly 'un-Mozartean' in the context of MSPs. There are further orchestral portamenti into m. 93 and m. 346, connected each time with unnotated slowing. Tertis and Sammons also use pronounced portamento over the motive in m. 76 and 77 as well as in lyrical passages, such as at m. 143.

*The Cadenza*

Tertis's arrangement of Hellmesberger's cadenza exemplifies his compositional creativity. Just prior to the cadenza, in m. 317, Tertis alters Mozart's score by playing an octave higher, resulting in greater projection of the viola part. Tertis's compositional rearrangement can be heard at the end of m. 29 of the cadenza, where he cuts six bars from Hellmesberger's notation and adds his own lyrical material based on Mozart's phrase material from m. 143 of the main movement. Tertis also alters the double stops in m. 39, changing the harmony to a diminished chord that moves through several inversions. At m. 68, Tertis cuts the Adagio and substitutes in three of his own bars with moving parallel chords, before adding his own virtuosic scale and double-stopped chords with trills to finish the cadenza. These final added bars are remarkable given how harmonically out of place these chords sound in the context of both Hellmesberger's chromatic cadenza and Mozart's harmonic language—chords that would not sound out

of place, however, in 1930s jazz. This jarring harmonic sequence is thus perhaps most in the spirit of Kivy's conception of 'intentional authenticity,' where the performer of a cadenza is given free rein to do 'their own thing.' Tertis's approach also reminds me of a more contemporary example of a Mozart cadenza as performed by violinist Gilles Apap, which incorporates blues and Americana in its rhythmic, harmonic and melodic material.[226]

**Movement 2: Andante**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.8.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.8.

*Portamento*

Heavy orchestral portamento is present in each of the string sections. Indeed, the broad portamenti in the celli in m. 38, and the two successive portamenti in m. 61 in the violins, are noteworthy examples of how the device was used in orchestral settings. Tertis and Sammons then use a wide variety of portamento types in this lyrical movement: Sammons's opening phrase from m. 8 makes frequent use of I portamenti, much like Patti on her recording of Mozart's *Voi che sapete,*[227] while in m. 22 there is a prominent example of Tertis using the L portamento type to play the two Fs on different strings, thereby creating a change of colour. This is another example of a technically-awkward fingering that seems expressly engineered in order to add portamento.

*Tempo Modification*

The movement is structured into tempo areas, with gradual slowing and rushing used to connect these sections—much like Tertis's approach to Brahms's *Sonata* op. 120 no. 1 with Hobday. The opening tempo of about m.m. ♩= 55 is followed by slowing until m. 24, where Tertis's melody ends at around m.m. ♩=35. This follows the pattern of slower soli and quicker orchestral tutti used in the first movement. At m. 35, the orchestra takes a quicker tempo, which the soloists maintain for the major key section that follows. This is followed by gradual slowing by Tertis from m. 67, where the material modulates to G minor. At m. 96, the soloists rush to a new tempo area which they reach in m. 104, and which the orchestra maintains through to the conclusion. In

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[226] Kivy, *Authenticities, Philosophical Reflections on Musical Performance*, 274. In addition to 'intentional authenticity,' Kivy also discusses authenticities of concept, sound, and practice, among others. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Concerto in G Major* K. 216, Gilles Apap, 2011, accessed March 18, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmjGDBWZZFw.

[227] Mozart, *Voi che sapete,* Patti.

sum, the solo and minor key sections are played slowly here, while orchestral tuttis and major key sections are quicker.

**Movement 3: Presto**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 3.a10.8.3 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.8.

*Tempo Modification*

The tempo of the final movement adheres to a relatively narrow range from between m.m. ♩ =140 - 170. Here, tempo modification is used within individual phrases, as heard in the rushing over rising materials in m. 3 - 4, or in the slowing over falling phrases in m. 16 where the oboes and horns take up the melodic material. The violins rush the rising sixteenth notes enthusiastically in m. 33, much like Tertis and Sammons later do in m. 132. As with Tertis's recording of Dale's *Romance*, slowing begins several bars prior to indications in the score, in this case at Mozart's calando poco a poco in m. 196. Tertis and Sammons follow this slowing, however, with a jarringly abrupt a tempo in the following measure. The approach to this phrase in many MSPs (including that taken when I performed this piece) is to slow slightly until m. 202 before gradually accelerating to restore the movement's main tempo so as not to confuse the orchestra with an abrupt change of tempo. Tertis and Sammons, however, are much more daring here, slowing until the end of the phrase and suddenly returning to tempo without preparation.

*Articulation*

Throughout the movement there are moments of what Philip describes as "startling contrasts between two or more musicians playing together," which he notes are defining features of early-recorded style.[228] In many cases, this results from Sammons and Tertis playing the same motives with varying approaches to articulation. For example, Tertis plays the triplets broadly and on the string in the upper-half of the bow, while Sammons plays the triplets sharply, briskly, and off-string in the lower half of the bow, resulting in contrasting timbres. These striking differences of articulation are maintained throughout and show how Sammons and Tertis, who performed and recorded together over the course of many years, adopted and accepted independent approaches to the same motivic material within the same piece.

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[228] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 105.

*Ornamentation*

Tertis's compositional creativity is again evident in the alterations he makes in this movement. In m. 247, for example, he plays the entire passage an octave higher, resulting in greater audibility and brilliance. In m. 444, he composes his own line a third and then a sixth below the violin, allowing him to finish the movement together with Sammons, rather than giving the violin the final say. These alterations give a more prominent role to the solo viola.

*Slapdash?*

Because of an array of wrong notes, a loose approach to vertical togetherness, and frequent tempo modifications, this recording may come across as slapdash. For example, in m. 137, Sammons plays a jarring A flat that falls outside of the F major chord instead of Mozart's notated A, later repeating this mistake by adding a strange D flat to the parallel passage in m. 304. It is remarkable that neither Tertis nor Harty corrected him, as Tertis does not echo this mistake in the viola iteration of this passage. There are also a number of glaringly wrong notes in the woodwinds, which, taken together with Sammons's errors, may make this performance seem unkempt. However, it is important to remember that the performers and recording company found the result acceptable for commercial release. The quality of this performance is not found in precise attention to notated detail but rather in its overall sweep and moment-to-moment, unstructured approach.

In sum, this recording of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* shows how tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility, and portamento were applied to large-scale works with soloists and orchestra in the early-recorded era. Furthermore, the alteration of notes and ornamentation heard throughout the work, and especially in its cadenza, evidence a 19th-century understanding of the role of the performer, supporting both Hunter's and Kivy's arguments concerning the empowerment and authenticity of individually creative players.[229] Following this approach can allow contemporary performers to bypass the restrictions of MSPs, fundamentally altering the way Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* sounds today.

[229] Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer," 374. Kivy, *Authenticities, Philosophical Reflections on Musical Performance*, 274.

**Conclusion**

While adherence to notated detail and structure and a 'neat and tidy' approach are central parameters of today's MSPs, detailed analysis of early recordings by violists reveals that Oskar Nedbal, Léon Van Hout, Arthur Post, Pierre Monteux, and Lionel Tertis operated well outside these narrow parameters. Instead, their performances are embedded within the culture of their time, as evidenced by their use of tempo and rhythmic flexibility, multi-layering, varied and heavy portamento, vibrato, and ornamentation—an approach echoed by early recordings of violinists, cellists, conductors, pianists, and singers. The relationship between viola playing and singing practices of the era has also been demonstrated here, especially where shared approaches to portamento and vibrato are concerned. All of the performers studied here take a non-literal approach to the notated score, with plenty of instances of ornamentation, re-composition, or performance decisions that ignore or conflict with the notated score. Despite these broad commonalities, however, there is also great diversity here—often according to national school. Nedbal and Post can be viewed as 'German' players, using less frequent, slow, and narrow vibrato, along with wild tempo and rhythmic flexibility; Van Hout, Vieux and Monteux can be viewed as representatives of the Franco-Belgian school, with their more frequent, fast, and narrow vibrato, and tendency to play melodic material dislocated around a steadier accompaniment. Tertis, who is neither Franco-Belgian nor German, often sounds closer to early-recorded singers than his colleagues because of his use of continuous, fast, and wide vibrato and portamento. While all the violists examined above use frequent portamento, Tertis uses complex fingerings in order to increase the frequency and diversity of his slides. Together, these commonalities and diversities amongst performers are what I refer to broadly as the 'early-recorded approach': one equally evidenced by string quartet recordings of the time, as examined in the following chapter.

## 4) Early-Recorded String Quartet Analyses

### 4.1) Introduction

Before Lionel Tertis achieved international fame as a soloist at the beginning of the 20th century, the viola was largely consigned to a collaborative role within orchestral and chamber music spheres. The leading players of the instrument were often active in string quartets, an ensemble setting within which the technical demands on violists, set by the repertoire composed, were steadily increased throughout the 19th century. Lionel Tertis, Oskar Nedbal, Arthur Post, Léon van Hout, and even Pierre Monteux spent all or part of their careers performing in professional string quartets, and a number of the quartets in which they played, like the Czech String Quartet and the Ysaÿe Quartet, were considered to be the foremost ensembles of their time.

The beginning of the 20th century was also a time when a great number of string quartets rose to fame by releasing recordings. The result was a kind of golden age for the professional string quartet, with dozens of ensembles achieving international acclaim. Thus, while I might have included the London, Busch, Flonzaley, Musical Art, Rosé, or Wendling Quartets in this study, I have focused on the first commercially-recorded ensemble, the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet (referred to as the HTK), and two quartets with concrete connections to the violists studied in Chapter Three—the Czech String Quartet with whom both Tertis and Nedbal were associated, and the Brüder-Post Quartett founded by Arthur Post. Finally, I have also included the Klingler Quartet due to the group's connection to violinist Joseph Joachim and their association with wider 19th-century German traditions. I also make reference to recordings by the Capet and Budapest quartets, but I do not examine these in great detail.

I explore the performance practices of these early-20th-century string quartets through a 'close-listening' analysis of their recordings, following the method used in the previous chapter.[230] String quartet performance practices, like other aspects of WAM[231] practice, have changed drastically over time. In reference to the Capet Quartet's 1928 recording of Debussy's *String Quartet* Op. 10, music critic James Leonard writes:

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[230] Close listening, examined in Chapter Three, is a term coined by Leech-Wilkinson, and refers to detailed analysis of recordings. See *The Changing Sound of Music,* Chapter 8.2 paragraph 19, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap8.html.

[231] Western Art Music as discussed in Chapter One.

> These recordings were as good as it got, and just because we hear and perform music differently, doesn't necessarily mean that we hear and perform it better…[The Capet Quartet] articulated their understanding in a thoroughly compelling performance that will convince even those who came to musical maturity after 1928.[232]

A *Musical Times* review describes the Capet Quartet's London debut stating that, "the playing was remarkable for its smoothness, admirable balance, and refined quality of tone."[233] As Leonard rightly observes above, for those open to absorbing early-recorded chamber music performances, the experience can be compelling. This is certainly the mind-set that has guided both the close-listening analyses below, as well as my own experimental quartet performances discussed in Chapter Five.

As discussed in Chapter One, MSP ideology emphasises standards of discipline, control, and clarity, with contemporary chamber music performers striving to synchronise their approaches to sound, expression, and rhythm, while brushing aside the complexity and dimensionality achieved by multi-layeredness as sloppy and de-synchronous. Robert Philip, however, offers a general overview of numerous aspects of early-recorded chamber music performances in *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*.[234] He argues that on early recordings we hear musicians (even those in ensembles that played together daily) tackling parameters in strikingly independent ways within single performances. Here, one notices differences between individual players in vibrato, portamento, note lengths, and articulation—all in a temporal context marked by rhythmic flexibility within individual lines and wide tempo fluctuations across entire movements. The result of individual performers' de-sychronised approaches, while playing together, is multi-layeredness, an effect whereby elements of the musical texture pull in different directions simultaneously. I have examined multi-layeredness in the context of viola solo and viola/piano duo recordings in the previous chapter, discussing its prominence in early-recorded style as well as the depth and complexity it adds to performances. Whereas the multi-layeredness that can be achieved by an individual pianist or string player multiplies in the context of duo performance, this effect can be further increased in quartet settings, as is readily heard on the early recordings examined in this chapter.

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[232] James Leonard, review of *Capet String Quartet 5,* Opus Kura OPK2057, accessed December 27, 2017, https://www.allmusic.com/album/string-quartets-by-ravel-debussy-schumann-mw0001423903.
[233] "London Concerts," *The Musical Times* vol. 46, no. 746 (April 1, 1905): 261-62. Accessed December 27, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/905266.
[234] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 104.

The various string quartets studied here share an approach to tempo modification, rhythmic alteration, portamento, and multi-layering with early-recorded violists and singers, and as has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, the use of such parameters is broadly incompatible with MSPs. Although this chapter takes this viewpoint as established, striking cases of distance from MSPs are at times highlighted to show similarities and differences between these quartets. While such early-recorded stylistic parameters are generally shared amongst early-recorded string quartets, they are not used in a streamlined fashion, and there is great diversity in the way they are negotiated amongst various groups—the wide variety of approaches to multi-layering heard on these recordings serving as a case in point.

In an attempt to make sense of this stylistic multiplicity, one might be tempted to group the quartets studied below according to national styles—the HTK as Dutch, the Klingler Quartet as German and the Czech Quartet as Czech—but I fear this would lead to an oversimplification of the diversity represented by these groups, and in some cases, it might contradict the evidence presented by their recordings. While there are similarities within these groupings with regard to timbre, tempo modification, and multi-layeredness, simply noting them does little to describe the rich diversity of their performances. What this chapter sets out to do, therefore, is to chart the diversity of a number of early-recorded string quartets and point to factors that might explain the rich complexity characterizing these quartets' performances while at the same time noting any striking similarities among them. Ultimately, this analysis aims to identify how early-recorded performance practices function in chamber music contexts—insights that can inform their application in contemporary settings.

## 4.2) Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet: Forgotten Pioneering Recording Artists

REPERTOIR
van het
HAAGSCHE TOONKUNST KWARTET
Bestaande uit de Heeren:
HENRI HACK, 1e viool;
H. VOERMAN: 2e viool;
BART VERHALLEN, alt;
en CH. VAN ISTERDAËL, violoncel.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| G.I.D. | 30440 | Romance | E. GRIEG. |
| G.I.D. | 30441 | Menuet | BOCCHERINI. |
| G.I.D. | 30442 | Adagio | SCHUMANN. |
| G.I.D. | 30443 | Sferenmusik | RUBINSTEIN. |
| G.I.D. | 30444 | Andante Cantabile | TCHAÏKOWSKI. |
| G.I.D. | 30445 | Presto (G. dur Kwartet) | JOS. HAYDN. |
| G.I.D. | 30446 | Menuet | BART VERHALLEN. |

**Figure 4.01: Pathé catalogue listing for the HTK's recordings.**[235]

On November 2, 1905, the four gentlemen of the HTK sent a letter to Mr. Charles Pathé, founder of the legendary Paris-based recording company Pathé Frères, thanking him for recording the quartet. This letter, an entry in Pathé's Dutch-language catalogue from the same year, and two of the original recordings, are all that remain of these pioneering efforts in commercial string quartet recording. The HTK, a now-forgotten Netherlands-based ensemble, was given the honour of releasing the first seven commercial recordings of a string quartet. The members of the quartet listed in the catalogue and in the letter sent to Mr. Pathé were Henri Hack (first violin), Herman Voerman (second violin), Bart Verhallen (viola), and Charles Van Isterdael (cello). Of the seven recordings listed in the catalogue, two have been located. Both include a Dutch-language introduction spoken on record by the producer. These recordings are of the *Andante Cantabile* from the *String Quartet* no. 1 by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Pathé 30444) and the *Presto* from Joseph Haydn's *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1 (Pathé 30445). The letter written by the quartet to Pathé reads as follows:

*Dear Mr. Pathé*

*Your phonograph is certainly to be recommended, also for the artist, if needed for self-criticism,*

[235] Rolf den Otter, Facebook message to author, July 1st, 2015.

*because upon hearing such a complete and true reproduction he is given the opportunity to form an exact judgment of himself. For us it was a revelation.*

*Sincerely yours,*

*The Toonkunstkwartet*

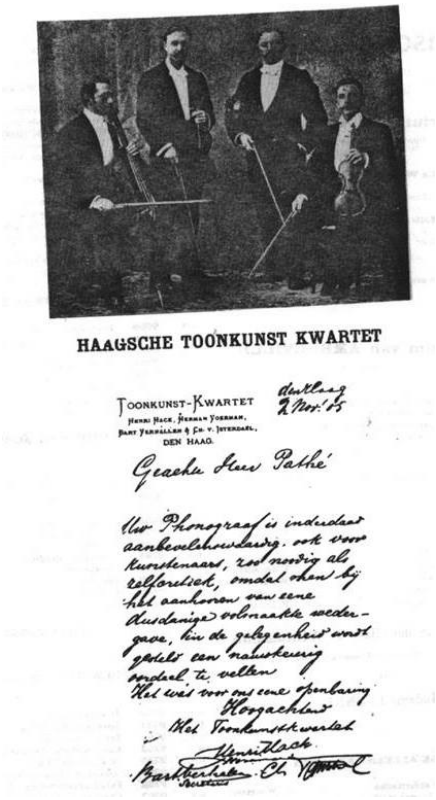


**Figure 4.02: Letter from the HTK to Pathé.**[236]

Starting from the mind-set of MSP ideology, it may be difficult to hear the two surviving recordings by the HTK as 'complete and true reproductions,' as the quartet describes them in their letter. The surface noise is immense and the acoustic range of the recording is limited. That the members of the quartet perceived these records as hi-fi, however, connects well with Nicholas Cook's observation that, "we hear the same technology quite differently from how it was heard in the early years of the twentieth century."[237] Cook illustrates this point by referring to the tone tests conducted by the Edison record company from 1915 onwards, where live performances and recordings were alternated in a dark concert hall, and audiences were unable to tell the difference.[238] However, it is worth noting that librarian Jan McKee has shed light on the manipulation of these tests by Thomas Edison, who used special equipment and carefully selected

[236] Ibid.
[237] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 361.
[238] Ibid., 362.

singers who could imitate their own recordings.[239] Nonetheless, early-20th-century listeners' well-documented amazement at the fidelity of recordings was reason enough for Jonathan Sterne to conclude that, "every age has its own fidelity."[240] These recordings underscore the differences between our current understanding of the concept of fidelity and how it sounded and signified over a century ago. The very existence of audio recording technology was considered nothing short of miraculous at the time. The HTK's letter also provides a sense of how performers were affected by the advent of recording technology. For the first time, they were suddenly able to hear themselves as an audience might, and this, along with changes in the medium itself (as discussed in Chapter Two), was one of the most influential factors in the transformation of WAM performance practice, eventually leading to today's 'clean and tidy' approach. The two HTK cylinders were made available to me by record collector Rolf den Otter, who made digital transfers. At the present moment, they are unavailable publicly and known only to a small group of collectors. Below, I undertake the first detailed analyses of these recordings.

### 4.2.1) Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet: *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1: IV *Presto* by Joseph Haydn (recorded 1905)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 4.2.1 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.2.1.

On first hearing, this recording can sound jarring and unfamiliar even to the most unschooled of listeners. While in MSPs, 'Papa' Haydn's works are often performed with grace and nobility, the HTK's approach to tempo and rhythmic dislocation gives the impression of haste and disjointedness. Perhaps the 'self-criticism' the group describes in their letter to Mr. Pathé was connected to their hurried approach, leaving us wondering if the HTK were pleased with what they heard. Further, were the sound engineer and the recording company pleased? We can only assume that they were, because a whole set of recordings of different works were made by the group and released as commercially-viable products. Regardless of how jarring these recordings may sound to some of us today, therefore, they represent a professional quartet at the beginning of the 20th century that was deemed fit to make the first commercial recordings in this genre. It is possible that the first violinist or perhaps even the whole quartet may have used Stroh

[239] Jan McKee, "Is it Live or is it Edison," Blogs, Library of Congress, accessed February 12, 2019, https://blogs.loc.gov/now-see-hear/2015/05/is-it-live-or-is-it-edison/.
[240] Sterne, *The Audible Past*, 222.

instruments for this recording of Haydn's Op. 54 no. 1 and for their recording of Tchaikovsky's Op. 11 no. 1 (discussed below). As explained above (page 105), this might account for the overall timbre and audibility of the group's sound.

*Tempo Modification and Rhythmic Flexibility*

The HTK's wild approach to tempo and rhythm causes a general blurriness and lack of clarity in texture, which results in a performance that sounds enthusiastic but exceedingly quick and uncontrolled. This underlines features such as unpredictability and fluidity—features that my colleagues and I explore in our experimental recordings discussed in Chapter Five. These features mainly result from the quartet's continual tendency to rush. Given the time constraints of the phonograph (about 2 - 2.5 minutes), the quartet forgoes all repeats and has to end the piece in m. 150 (just before the final occurrence of the rondo-form's A section). Perhaps then, their choice of a quick tempo is related to the limitations of the medium. However, why allow for the long announcement at the start of the recording (approximately 8 seconds)?

The HTK creates fluidity by subverting notated structure on a phrase-by-phrase level. They accomplish this through shortening long notes, rushing through phrase endings, and rushing sixteenth notes. First violinist Henri Hack shortens nearly all of his dotted notes, as can be heard in m. 5, where he hastily moves on ahead of his colleagues before rushing through the end of the phrase. The whole quartet also blurs phrase boundaries by rushing into the start of a new phrase in m. 40. Another example of this can be heard in m. 50, where Hack enters early and forcefully on the second beat. The HTK rushes nearly all of the sixteenth notes throughout, such that they often sound like 32nds. An especially jarring example of this can be heard in m. 37 - 38, where Hack blurs his passage, aligning the second sixteenth of m. 38 with his colleagues' downbeats.[241] As a result, he ends up with 7 sixteenths in the bar, yet somehow the quartet more or less synchronises to finish the phrase together in m. 39. In addition to these radical alterations of rhythm, there is the continual de-synchronisation of the three-eighth-note motive heard in m. 16, which sounds jarringly unprofessional by contemporary standards. The general effect of the HTK's quick tempo, shortening of long notes, and rushing of phrase endings and sixteenth notes is to undercut the sense that the work's musical structure is divided into phrases, sub-phrases, and longer sections. This, combined with de-synchronisation, lends the performance a kind of slapdash feeling and continual sense of forward movement.

[241] For readers familiar with the Dutch language, a pun on the word '*gehakt*' comes to mind.

*Vibrato and Ornamentation*

The HTK's use of vibrato is ornamental, in that it is applied unevenly to the beginnings or middles of particular notes, much like Oskar Nedbal's as discussed at length in Chapter Three. While the speed of this performance and the paucity of longer note values gives the players few opportunities to use vibrato, examples of ornamental vibrato can be heard on Hack's long notes in m. 1 and 5, as well as on the entire quartet's longer chords in m. 16.

Concerning ornamentation, Hack changes several pitches in m. 130 and m. 147. I am unable to tell whether these are deliberate ornamentations or simply reading errors. In either case, this general lack of adherence to the detail of the notated score is not only noteworthy, given that this recording was viewed as a viable commercial product, but it also results in a highly individual approach to the work.

*The Budapest Quartet: An Early-Recorded Comparison*

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 4.2.1.2.

That wide-ranging stylistic changes in WAM performance practices took place over the course of the 20th century is evidenced by comparing the HTK (1905) and the Budapest String Quartet (1935) in their respective recordings of this final movement of Haydn's *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1.[242] Interestingly, the Budapest String Quartet's international reputation was due to the widespread availability of their recordings, while the HTK had a local reputation that largely pre-dated the recorded era. While an MSP ideologue might think the Budapest String Quartet sounds 'old fashioned' because of their portamento-laden early-recorded sound, they would likely agree that their recording conveys nobility and grace through its neatness and tidiness, steadiness of tempo, and adherence to notated rhythmic values. The same ideologue, however, would likely be appalled by the HTK's rushed approach to tempo, rhythmic alteration, dislocation, ornamental vibrato, and pitch ornamentation—all of which fall far outside the bounds of MSPs. In sum, the HTK's recording of Haydn's *Presto* demonstrates a wild, haphazard approach to rhythm and tempo, in which rushing is a central feature.

[242] Joseph Haydn, *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1, Budapest String Quartet, 1935, HMV DB 2906 (78rpm).

### 4.2.2) Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet: *String Quartet* Op. 11 no.1: II *Andante Cantabile* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (recorded 1905)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 4.2.2 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.2.2.

The HTK's recording of Tchaikovsky's *Andante Cantabile* from his *String Quartet* no. 1 gives us a sense of how the group approached more lyrical repertoires. The movement had to be heavily cut in order to fit it within the time frame of just over 2 minutes allowed by the phonograph. Thus, the recording starts from the middle section at m. 56 with the material between m. 105 and m. 172 cut out, thereby connecting the return of the A section to the final measures. Much like the recording of Haydn's *Presto* discussed above, however, this recording can be jarringly unfamiliar to those whose expectations are tied to MSPs due to the near-constant occurrence of dislocation and rhythmic alteration, demonstrating just how central these features were to the HTK's playing style.

*Tempo Modification and Rhythmic Flexibility*

Rhythmic flexibility is frequent as well as highly varied on this recording; multi-layering can be heard throughout, resulting from the de-synchronisation of the melody from the accompanying cello pizzicati. Cellist Charles Van Isterdael's pizzicati also create beat-to-beat variation, which cycles between rushing and slowing, as shown in the tempo graph (Figure 4.03).[243] The vertical axis represents tempo in beats per minute, the horizontal axis represents the recording over time, peaks in the graph show early beats, and troughs show late beats. The time signature is 2/4, with each peak and trough covering two measures up until 1:20. Here, we see cellist Van Isterdael creating peaks and valleys in speed, and shifting patterns over a bar and a half to two bars throughout the movement's middle section, causing a kind of regular, irregularity of tempo. While there is regularity in this approach, it is not of the metronomic variety common in MSPs.

[243] I choose to follow the cello line when marking beat placement in my analysis.

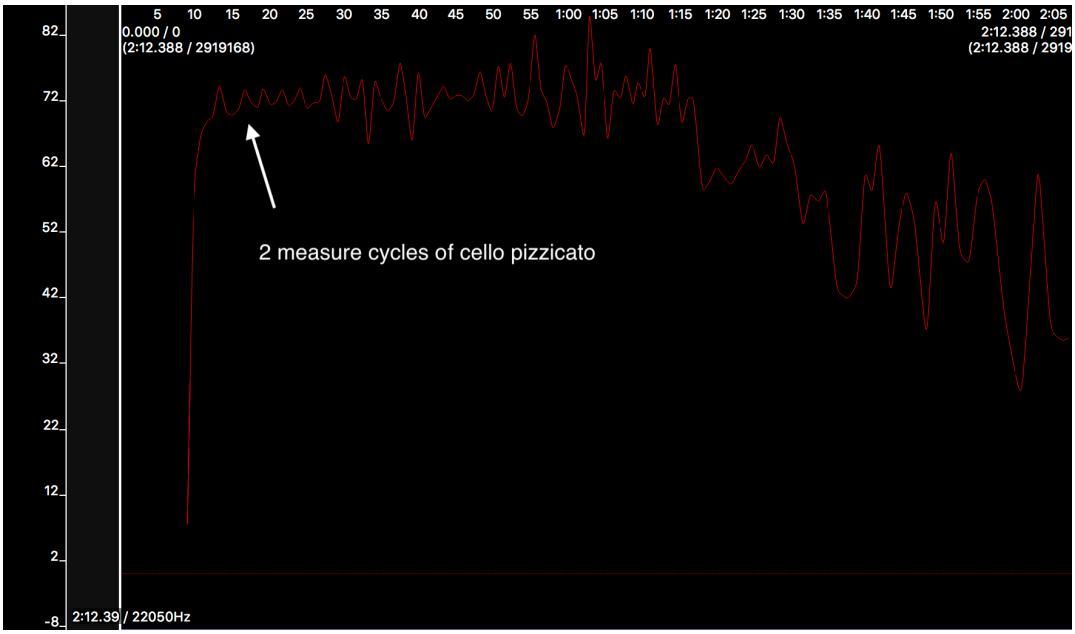


**Figure 4.03: Tempo Graph of the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet's Tchaikovsky recording.**

The first violinist, Hack, frequently departs radically from the detail of the notated score in his use of rhythmic alteration. He alters all of the dotted notes and constantly gives repeated figures varied rhythmic treatment. For example, the dotted rhythm in m. 57 is overdotted while in m. 58 it is not. The same applies to his agogic lengthening of the first note of the triplet figure in m. 60, which creates variation after the straight triplet in m. 59. Hack provides yet another example of agogic lengthening in m. 64, where portamento lengthens the second beat of the bar before a broadening of the first beat of m. 65. This broadening is so pronounced that Hack reaches the second beat of m. 65 after the third eighth note of the cello accompaniment, creating wide dislocation. As David Milsom points out, this practice of agogic lengthening can be traced to 19th-century writings on melodic delivery, with Louis Spohr (1784 - 1859) indicating that, "[the figure] is to be played so that the first notes obtain a little longer duration than their value warrants"—a practice that Joachim (1831 - 1907) calls an "imperceptible dwelling on principle notes in the *cantilena*."[244] Tertis also uses this type of agogic lengthening, most notably on his recording of Benjamin Dale's *Romance*, as does Nebal in Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh* (both recordings are discussed in detail in Chapter Three).

As mentioned above, one of the outcomes of Hack's rhythmic alterations is

[244] Milsom, *Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth-Century Violin Performance*, 36.

prominent dislocation between voices. Dislocation is also caused, however, by portamento use in the different voices and arpeggiation. An example of the former occurs in m. 83 where the two violins play the theme in octaves, with second violinist Herman Voerman using portamenti in his triplet figures, lengthening the transition from the second to the third note of the figure, and Hack playing without portamento, ending up slightly ahead of his colleague as a result. It is also worth noting the flatness of Voerman's intonation, especially on the top D flat in m. 84 and 85, which comes across as eerie. Arpeggiation then causes dislocation in m. 173 - 174, where the first pizzicato is started by second violinist Verhallen and the remaining chords by cellist Van Isterdael. The wide variety of dislocations and rhythmic alterations heard throughout the performance reveal a playing style that is rhythmically highly variegated and departs radically from the verticality laid out in Tchaikovsky's notated score.

*Portamento*

While portamento impacts dislocation as shown above, the quartet uses frequent and both synchronised and unsynchronised portamento with regularity in lyrical passages throughout the recording. Notably, between m. 93 - 95, first violinist Hack uses four portamenti in a row, which all run over the interval of a fifth. He however varies the fingering and colour of each repetition, sliding both from and to notes, as well as during, before, and after bow changes. The effect created by continuous sliding is often heard on early orchestral recordings and results from individual players using the device in different places as well as one after the other.[245] The HTK does this in m. 97 (see Figure 4.04), where Hack slides from the F to the G and Verhallen slides from the G to the A, and in m. 100, where Hack, Voerman, and Verhallen synchronise the placement of their portamenti over the rising fifth and descending fourth.

[245] *Nimrod* from Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, with the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra conducted by Edward Elgar in 1926, is a notable example of different string players sliding in different places creating a continuity of portamento. Edward Elgar, *Enigma Variations* Op. 36 on *Elgar Conducts Elgar* (CD).
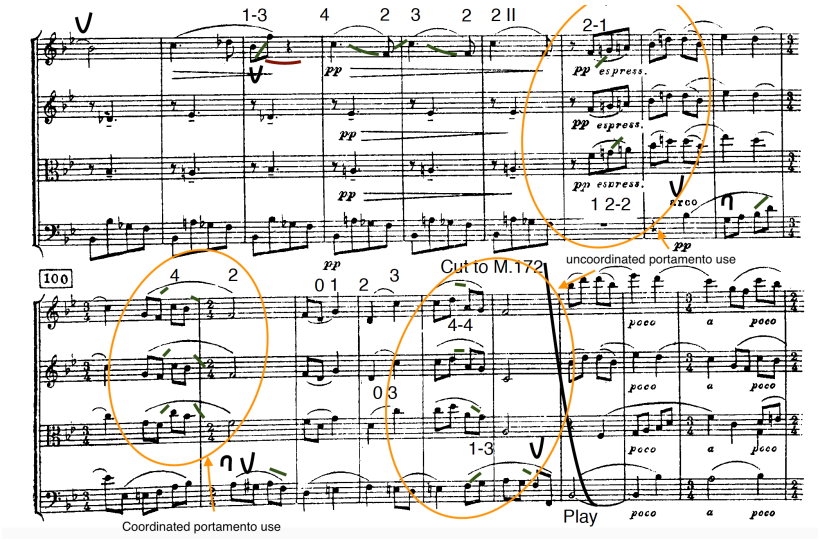
**Figure 4.04: Synchronised and unsynchronised use of portamento by the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet in *Andante Cantabile II* from Tchaikovsky's *String Quartet* Op. 11 no.1.**

In sum, there is a richness of detail on the HTK's two recordings, featuring rushing, continual rhythmic alteration of motives, layering resulting from the dislocation between melody and accompaniment, and heavy and frequent portamento. While their approach may make for uncomfortable listening for those who prefer neat and tidy MSPs, these recordings demonstrate a variegated, moment-to-moment form of music-making from over a century ago.

### 4.3) The Klingler Quartet: *String Quartet* Op. 127: I *Maestoso, Allegro* by Ludwig van Beethoven (recorded 1935 – 1936)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 4.3 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.3.

Clive Brown observes that Karl Klingler (1879 - 1971), founder and first violinist of the Klingler Quartet, was among Joachim's most beloved pupils—so much so that Joachim invited him to join his quartet.[246] Karl's elder brother Fridolin was the Klingler Quartet's violist and worked as principal viola of the Berlin Philharmonic at the same time that Karl played viola in Joachim's quartet during its final season (1906 - 1907). The original second violinist in the Klingler Quartet, Josef Rywking, had also been a student

[246] Brown, "Performing Classical Repertoire," 41.

of Joachim, while cellist Arthur Williams had been a student of Robert Haussmann (the cellist of the Joachim Quartet). Williams, like Haussmann, played without an end-pin. By the time the quartet got around to recording Beethoven's *Quartet* Op. 127 in 1934 - 1935, however, the two non-Klingler members had been replaced by Richard Heber (violin) and Ernst Silberstein (cello) as a result of the turbulence surrounding World War One.[247] The Klingler Quartet's recording of Beethoven's Op. 127 is a compelling example of their approach: one based on broad un-notated tempo modification and rhythmic flexibility, which has much in common with written descriptions of Joachim's performance practice. In contrast to the HTK's more haphazard approach, however, these flexibilities are applied with consistency throughout the Klingler Quartet's performance.

*Tempo Modification*

As with a number of recordings of longer movements studied in Chapter Three, like Tertis and Ethyl Hobday's recording of the *Sonata* Op. 120 by Brahms for example, the Klingler Quartet approaches the first movement of Beethoven's Op. 127 by giving different themes or thematic groups their own individual tempi and treating tempo flexibility within these themes in an individualised manner. This approach is maintained consistently wherever these materials appear in the piece, revealing a carefully crafted tempo plan. Rather than merely following the notated tempo indications, like the opening Maestoso and the Allegro at m. 7, the quartet starts the Allegro slowly and rushes throughout. Likewise, with the return of the Allegro material in G major at m. 81, a similar pattern of rushing is followed. At m. 22, a quicker tempo area is reached for the thematic material marked forte, and they then slow into m. 40, which leads to a slower tempo area at m. 41 for the G minor theme. This pattern of tempo modification is repeated in the recapitulation from m. 180, demonstrating that this was part and parcel of how the quartet approached this musical material rather than an accidental occurrence.

Tempo is also used to distinguish characters between an enthusiastic group statement and a more majestic and reflective statement on a single instrument, such as when the quartet rushes into m. 66 followed by tenuto chords, starting in the viola, which are delivered at a slower tempo. Longer phrases are also structured through tempo modification, with rushing towards the middle of a phrase followed by slowing. For example, the rising sequences in the middle voices from m. 89 rush forward, while the

[247] Tully Potter, liner notes for *The Klingler Quartet 1905-1936, the Joachim Tradition*, Testament, 1998, SBT 2136 (CD).

falling material from m. 94 slows down, thereby shaping the phrase so that its climax coincides with the quickest tempo. This un-notated approach to tempo is used in order to both give direction to musical material and to structure moment-to-moment events within a broader framework. It is substantially at odds with today's requirements of fidelity to the notated detail of the score, a discernible sense of pulse, and an underlying continuity of tempo.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

One of Joachim's American pupils, Marion Bruce Ranken, described her teacher's approach to rhythmic flexibility as follows: "In long florid passages…there seemed in Joachim's playing to be no attempt at exact ensemble [or] any attempt to synchronise regularly with the beat." She goes on to state that as a student:

> [N]ot only were you 'allowed' this freedom from the beat, but if you did not take it, you were at first looked upon as a novice who required instruction and later on as an unmusical person whom it was not worth instructing.[248]

This written documentation, when combined with the Klingler Quartet's recordings, gives us a sense of how these localised rhythmic flexibilities, as instilled by Joachim in his pupils, were put into practice. The use of arpeggiation, agogic lengthening, swinging, rushing over crescendo, and multi-layering, results in a blurring of the continuity and regularity of pulse; this phenomenon is so central to the Klingler Quartet's recording of Beethoven's Op. 127 that it must be a deliberate part of their practice. Their arpeggiation of the opening Maestoso chords, as well as the return of these chords in m. 74 and in m. 135, stands in stark contrast to most other recorded performances of this piece, either historical or contemporary, where these chords are typically played as solid Teutonic blocks. The arpeggiation softens the verticality of the material, building in a sense of dynamism and forward movement—much like the effect of a pianist arpeggiating chords. In m. 6, Karl Klingler (first violin) further blurs the sense of pulse, which was already weakened by the preceding arpeggiation, by playing the sextuplet and 64th notes at a nearly identical speed. This too goes against a literal delivery of the notated structural and vertical divisions.

Agogic lengthening also plays a significant role here, as for example in the

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[248] Marion Bruce Ranken, "Some Points of Violin Playing and Musical Performance as learnt in the Hochschule für Musik (Joachim School) in Berlin during the time I was a Student there, 1902-1909" (Edinburgh: Privately Printed, 1939), 79. Cited in Robert W. Eshbach, "Der Geigerkönig, Joseph Joachim as Performer," *Die Tonkunst*, Vol. 1, no. 3 (July 2007): 205 - 217, 76.

opening theme from m. 7 where Karl Klingler broadens the F over the interval of a fourth. This interval is a key facet of the main theme and is subsequently broadened by the entire quartet throughout the movement. There is also a tendency here for the players to lengthen notes for emphasis using time rather than dynamic, as in m. 28 - 30 for example, where the sforzando first eighth of the bar is lengthened rather than emphasised with volume. As shown in Figure 4.05, the cellist also uses agogic lengthening on the first eighth of the two-bar motive at m. 33, followed by rushing then slowing: a pattern the other players then repeat at each reoccurrence of this motive. Similarly, the descending minor second motive on the third beat of m. 57 is always played with an early agogic lengthening of its first note.
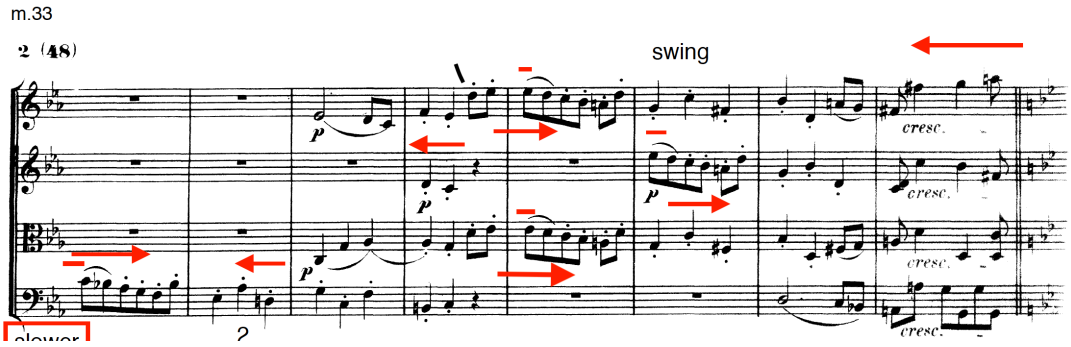
**Figure 4.05: Motivic use of agogic rhythmic flexibility in Klingler Quartet's recording of Beethoven's Op. 127.**

In addition to arpeggiation and agogic lengthening, there is also a prevalent tendency to unevenly 'swing' thematic eighth notes here, as heard in m. 9 and in parallel passages throughout. First violinist Karl Klingler uses this approach starting at m. 146, where the same rhythmic material is repeated over 20 bars of changing harmony. Here, the entire quartet lengthens the second beats in a waltz-like fashion, separating the first and second beat every four bars starting in m. 154, thereby structuring this section into four-bar phrases.

They create a sense of excitement and expectation by pushing tempo forward during most crescendi, such as in m. 20 - 21 and m. 119 - 125. As well, on an even more local level, multi-layering can be heard throughout this recording, with individual voices moving independently due to the rhythmically flexible delivery of motivic materials. The most notable example of this multi-layeredness takes place starting in m. 106, where the cellist places downbeats ahead of the first violin and the viola. Notably, however, it is the

context of overall tempo modification on a larger scale that helps tie these individual, multi-layered voices together.

*Portamento*

There is plenty of heavy portamento throughout this recording: for example, in addition to the agogic emphasis described above, Karl Klingler slides between the first two quarter notes of m. 7, emphasizing the thematic interval of a rising fourth—an approach all four players then apply to this theme throughout.

The majority of the portamenti on this recording, however, are found in the violins. Both second violinist Heber and Karl Klingler slide over nearly all long intervals as well as on nearly all of the ascending and descending intervals of a perfect fourth. There are also prominent moments of portamento in the violins between smaller intervals, as well as a few uses of the L portamento when changing strings to give a repeated note a different colour, as heard in m. 173 for example. In general, portamento seems to be a key part of the quartet's legato technique, particularly as related to their preference for adhering to one string, thereby preserving a uniform colour within a given melody. The heaviness and frequency of portamento use here, much like with the HTK, again transgresses MSP boundaries of neatness and tidiness.

*Vibrato*

The Klingler Quartet's proximity to descriptions of Joachim's performance practice in terms of tempo modification, rhythmic alteration, and portamento stands in stark contrast to the frequency of the quartet's vibrato, given Joachim's narrow, more ornamental approach to vibrato on his recordings. On other recordings of the Klingler Quartet, such as their 1912 recording of Beethoven's *Alla Tedesca* movement from Op. 130, for example, prominent use of vibrato on long notes can be heard.[249] In their recording of Op. 127, non-vibrato playing in accompanying voices contrasts with quick, wide vibrato on most long notes in melodic lines. The inner and accompanying voices often refrain from vibrating, however: for example, violist Fridolin Klingler uses vibrato sparingly and only for melodic materials, such as in m. 15. This is similar to the Czech String Quartet's approach to vibrato (discussed below) as well as Nedbal's approach as described in Chapter Three.

In sum, the Klingler Quartet's recording demonstrates features closely connected with descriptions of Joachim's performance practice such as un-notated tempo flexibility,

[249] Ludwig van Beethoven, *Alla Tedesca* from *String Quartet* Op. 130, Klingler Quartet, 1912, *The Klingler Quartet 1905 -1936, the Joachim Tradition*, Testament, 1998, SBT 2136 (CD).

which differentiates sections of the movement, and rhythmic alterations, which are consistently applied to thematic motives. This is then combined with heavy, frequent portamento and prominently vibrated melodic materials. The Klingler's approach sounds as though it is based on a structured use of these un-notated devices, given the consistency with which they are used by all four players. By contrast, the HTK seem to use such un-notated devices in a much more haphazard, spur-of-the-moment style.

### 4.4) Brüder-Post Quartett: *String Quartet* KV 458: I *Allegro vivace assai* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (recorded 1921)

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 4.4 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.4.

The brothers Post founded their string quartet in 1911.[250] While the Klingler Quartet had two brothers as part of their roster, Karl and Fridolin, the Brüder-Post Quartett was made up of four brothers. Arthur, whose recordings were examined in the previous chapter, played the viola, Max and Willy were the group's first and second violinists respectively, and Richard was the cellist. Arthur had also been Willy and Max's first violin teacher. Not only did the brothers found their own widely respected quartet, they also created the Brüder-Post Conservatorium in Frankfurt am Main, which operated from 1902 - 1921. By the time the brothers quit their teaching duties in order to focus on a career touring with the quartet, the conservatory had over 1000 students. The group performed regularly throughout Germany in the early 1920s and made a small number of records including Mozart's 'Jagd' *Quartet* KV 458. Due to the time limitations of the 78rpm disc, they cut almost the entire recapitulation of the work, from m. 142 to m. 271. This however does not diminish the recording's uniqueness as documentation of one of the earliest German string quartets on record. Notably, the Posts' recordings of the other movements of the quartet reveal a similar stylistic approach to that heard in the first. In fact, their recordings of a number of quartets by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Boccherini are highly similar, evidencing agogic lengthening, rhythmic alteration, prominent vibrato in the first violin, and heavy portamento in slow movements. All four Post brothers were trained and launched their performing careers in late-19th-century Germany and, as such, their recordings—much like those of the Klingler Quartet—can be seen as representative of aspects of the broad and variegated German tradition,

[250] "Biographie Willy Post," in "Biographische Notizen zur Familie Willy und Christel Post," Stadtarchiv Frankfurt an der Oder, http://www.stadtarchiv-ffo.de/aktuell/2011/w_post/pdf/w_post_biogr.pdf.

featuring heavy portamento and frequent use of agogic lengthening creating rhythmic flexibility. While the Brüder-Post Quartett uses these devices less consistently than the Klingler Quartet, they are not as haphazard in their approach as the HTK.

*Tempo Modification*

The Post Quartett's approach to tempo is generally straightforward, with an average tempo of around m.m. ♩.=105, which to some may sound quick to the point of becoming frivolous. Nevertheless, there is some prominent slowing at the ends of phrases throughout, which deviates from MSP norms for Mozart's works. Examples of this slowing occur at the end of the exposition (m. 89 - 90) and in the lead-up to the recapitulation (m. 128 - 136). Furthermore, while the start of the development section at m. 91 is taken at a notably slower tempo, first violinist Max Post rushes forward in m. 93 to restore the general tempo. This approach, with a quick overall tempo and slowing at structural boundaries, is similar to that heard on Tertis and Sammons's recording of Mozart's *Symfonia Concertante*. Although these tempo modifications are relatively mild compared with the recordings of the HTK and Klingler Quartet examined above, rhythmic flexibility plays an important role in shaping the performance.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

The Brüder-Post Quartett's approach to rhythmic flexibility makes frequent use of agogic lengthening, swinging, and rushing. Their approach to agogic lengthening is exemplified by Max Post's lengthening of the top note in the middle of m. 31. From m. 32, he then lengthens the second sixteenth note of the bar in addition to the lengthened top notes while rushing between them. This creates a strange asymmetry, whereby the chord tone is emphasised rather than the appoggiatura (see Figure 4.06). Often in MSPs, it is the non-chord-tone appoggiatura that is emphasised in such passages. Even more strangely, perhaps, in m. 35 Max Post plays a dotted quarter G in the first half of the bar, omitting the other notes.

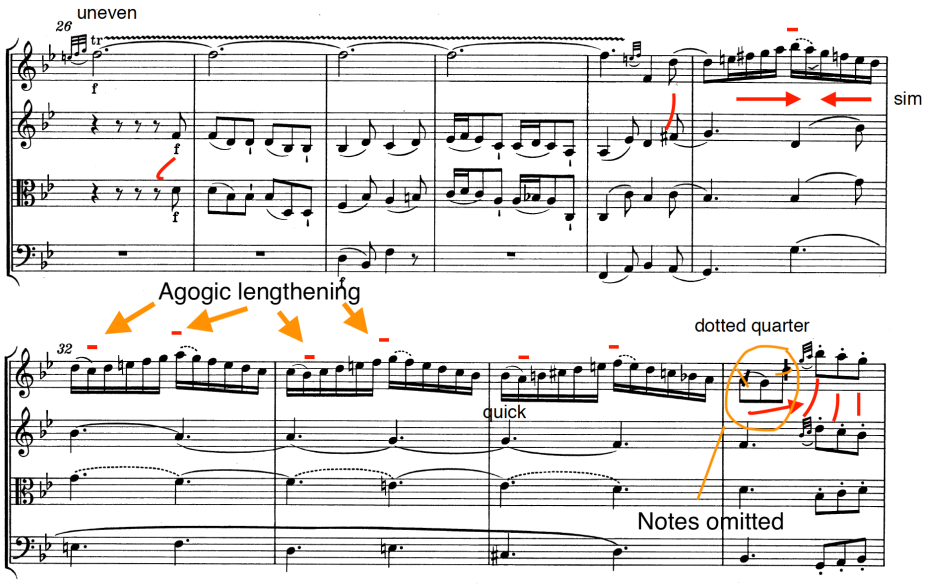


**Figure 4.06: Max Post's use of agogic lengthening in Mozart's *String Quartet* KV 458.**

Swung or uneven eighth notes also play an important role in the quartet's performance. The opening upbeat is played with a slight separation from the downbeat, creating a sense of swing. This is aided by a slight de-synchronisation between the two violins, because they each swing the opening beat slightly differently. The placement of Arthur Post's viola motive at the end of m. 10 is another example of this, as he places his first eighth note behind the beat before rushing the second eighth note into the next bar while Max Post squeezes his upbeat between the two viola eighths and lifts his bow, swinging into the next bar. Dotted rhythms are also continually over-dotted and rushed towards the following beat throughout this performance, but the occurrence of this phenomenon at both m. 5 and then again in the recapitulation at m. 140 demonstrates the consistency with which it is applied.

Localised rushing is also used here, as for example in m. 45 - 46, where the quartet pushes forward as they exchange and compress the motive and, in the sixteenth-note note passage in m. 15, where Max Post rushes each of the successive scales upwards, then broadens the top note before starting the next grouping, creating unevenness between the two halves of the bar. This seesawing between rushing and slowing results in the jovial and engaging atmosphere of this recording and leaves an impression of spontaneity in much the way the Klingler Quartet's continual rhythmic flexibility does.

*Vibrato*

Like all of the quartet recordings examined in this chapter, there is a discrepancy

here in the use of vibrato between the first violin and the rest of the Brüder-Post musicians. While Max Post (first violin) vibrates on most long note values (except in m. 48 where the stopped F precedes the open E string), the other three members of the quartet are much more sparing in their vibrato use, allowing Max's lyrical lines to stand out from the main harmonic texture. M. 71 is a good example of this, with the first violin using a great deal of vibrato and the other instruments using very little or none. When the inner voices have melodic material, however, they do sometimes use more vibrato, as in m. 122 for example. In m. 130, the two violins vibrate equally widely and continuously. This is quite similar to the approach taken by the Czech String Quartet in their recording of Dvořák's 'American' *Quartet* as discussed below.

*Portamento*

Given both the lively tempo taken by the Brüder-Post and the fragmentary nature of the movement's motives, there are few opportunities here for drawn-out portamenti. That being said, the device is nevertheless present: in the second violin line at the beginning of m. 10, for example, as well as in the slower lyrical lines of m. 92, 96, 98, and 99, where colour is added to this theme through clusters of slides in a manner quite unlike that used in any other passage of the movement. This heavy approach to portamento between m. 92 - 99, however, coincides with a theme Mozart notates only once in the whole movement, thereby emphasising its unique character. Elsewhere, Max Post also makes ample use of portamento in the lyrical material in m. 66 and 69—demonstrating how integral it was to both his, and the quartet's, melodic legato playing.

In sum, the Brüder-Post's approach to rhythmic flexibility with frequent agogic lengthening is similar to that of the Klingler Quartet and may represent a characteristic typical of German performance practice of the time. However, the Brüder-Post Quartett uses these rhythmic devices with less consistency than the Klingler Quartet and, as such, their performance sounds less thoroughly planned out. The Brüder-Post's heavy portamento and their use of vibrato on melodic materials and non-vibrato for accompaniments, however, is broadly similar to all of the other early-recorded string quartets discussed here.

**4.5) Czech String Quartet: *String Quartet* Op. 96 no. 12 *"The American"*: I *Allegro ma non troppo* by Antonin Dvořák (recorded 1928)**

The recording can be found in Appendix II - recording 4.5 and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.5.

The Czech Quartet, also known as the Bohemian Quartet prior to 1918, was the first Czech ensemble of international repute. The group had a career spanning over 40 years, performing close to 4000 concerts.[251] Three of the four members studied composition with Antonin Dvořák, while Josef Suk, the ensemble's second violinist, went on to marry Dvořák's daughter. The members of the quartet (at the time they made recordings in the late 1920s) were Karel Hoffmann first violin (1872 - 1936), Josef Suk second violin (1874 - 1935), Jeří Herold viola (1906 - 1934) who replaced Nedbal (as well as Tertis, who temporarily replaced Nedbal in 1906), and Ladislav Zelenka (1914 - 1934) cello. The group was rapturously received in London at their debut in 1897, with *The Musical Times* noting that their "interpretations of...particularly Dvořák's quartet showed them to be exceptionally finished ensemble players."[252] In fact, their London debut was so successful that they were booked for no fewer than five subsequent concerts during their tour in London alone. Two of these concerts included pianist Fanny Davies, a renowned pupil of Clara Schumann. *The Musical Times* lauded the quartet's concerts with Davies, remarking on their "interpretation of Slavonic music, the fervour and rapid changes of sentiment and tempo [all of] which were expressed with unsurpassable fidelity and perfection of detail." This same reviewer then went on to credit "the many beauties which were set forth with unsurpassable fidelity and comprehension of their character," noting that, "the ensemble playing was very fine."[253] It is certainly interesting to consider what to make of these superlatives in light of the quartet's recordings. Their close association with Dvořák and their reputation as the leading professional exponents of his chamber music certainly puts them at the centre of the composer's sound world. There is however a whiff of discomfort in musicologist Jan Králik's CD liner notes for the quartet's digitally-re-mastered recordings released in 1994. On one hand, he notes that, "the quartet refined their interpretative style around a firmly defined groundwork which has continued to be respected by the domestic [Czech] performing tradition to this day," suggesting the existence of a mythical continuity in the Czech tradition of string quartet

[251] Jan Králik, liner notes for *The Czech Quartet Tradition*, Biddulph Recordings, 1994, 09192 (CD).
[252] "The Bohemian Quartet," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* vol. 38, no. 650 (April 1, 1897): 243 - 244. Accessed December 29, 2017, www.jstor.org/stable/3367724.
[253] Ibid., 243 - 244.

performance from the Czech Quartet down to the present day.[254] On one hand, a casual listen to any of the Czech Quartet's recordings is enough to demonstrate the gap between the quartet's performances and their supposed modern successors, like for example the Smetana, Janáček, Prague, Pražák and Pavel Haas Quartets.[255] The latter quartets follow the notated detail of the score, perform larger movements within uniform tempi, generally do not rush, and use little or no portamento and continuous vibrato throughout all four voices, which all fits within current MSP standards. The Czech Quartet's approach, by contrast, and as shown in the analyses below, diverges from those of their contemporary Czech successors in all of these areas. This is likely why Králik goes on to offer a number of caveats for the evaluation of their recordings:

> Historical recordings…capture the legendary chamber ensemble in the final years of its public productions. Attesting to a zenith that had by then been passed, these tracks exude a peculiar atmosphere, as well as a sense of suspense and depth…At the same time, they also betray the players' advanced age [sic], and offer today's listener the chance to detect certain features typical for the standard performing practice of the period (e.g. the presence of glissandi, or the occasional intonational benevolence), which have since been largely eliminated from concert halls and studios.

I argue that Králik's text can be interpreted in a number of ways. First, one could conclude that having sat down to scrape out a few final records for posterity in 1928 (all four players were born in the 1870s), the Czech Quartet's recordings are not representative of the quality of their performances when they were in their prime. Why then would these four aged veterans of the concert stage have allowed such 'unrepresentative' recordings to be publicly released? Second, Králik might be suggesting that the Czech Quartet were founders and pioneers of a Czech string quartet performing tradition: one improved upon by later generations of ensembles such as the Smetana, Janáček, Prague, Pražák, and Pavel Haas Quartets—groups whose performance styles banished earlier idiosyncrasies of intonation, rhythm, and portamenti. No doubt many ascribe to this notion of 'progress' in musical performance over time, caused by ever-rising standards of technical cleanliness. And third, perhaps Králik is searching for excuses for why a group of such historical import does not fit the standards of contemporary MSPs. In my view, the Czech Quartet's recordings are most probably fully representative of their approach as heard for four decades on the concert stages of

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[254] Králik, liner notes to *The Czech Quartet Tradition.*

[255] Antonin Dvořák, *String Quartets Op. 106 and 96*, Pavel Haas Quartet, recorded 2010, Supraphone B0043XCKJO (CD). Antonin Dvořák, *String Quartets No. 14 and No. 12*, Pražák Quartet, recorded 1999, Praga Digitals PRD 250 136 (CD).

Europe: an approach Dvořák heard during his lifetime, and one whose 'peculiar atmosphere' represents 19th-century performance practice in all its guts and glory. The wild tempo modifications, rhythmic flexibilities, multi-layeredness, and heavy portamenti of their recorded performances are all wholly typical of their generation, and the consistency with which the Czech Quartet uses these devices is similar to the Klingler Quartet. As such, the Czech Quartet shares much in common with quartets connected to the 'German tradition,' with their more radical approach to over- and under-dotting perhaps aligning them with characteristics of what might be described as the 19th-century 'Czech tradition.' While a thorough study of the entire recorded output of the Czech String Quartet would likely yield more detailed insights into the quartet's style, below I examine their performance of the first movement of Dvořák's 'American' *String Quartet* Op. 96—not only because it is one of the most frequently performed string quartets today, but also because if 'performing in the style of the composer' is still the ideological goal of many of today's performers, then the Czech Quartet's proximity to the composer poses significant challenges to agreed-upon understandings in MSPs about the performance style appropriate for Dvořák's works.

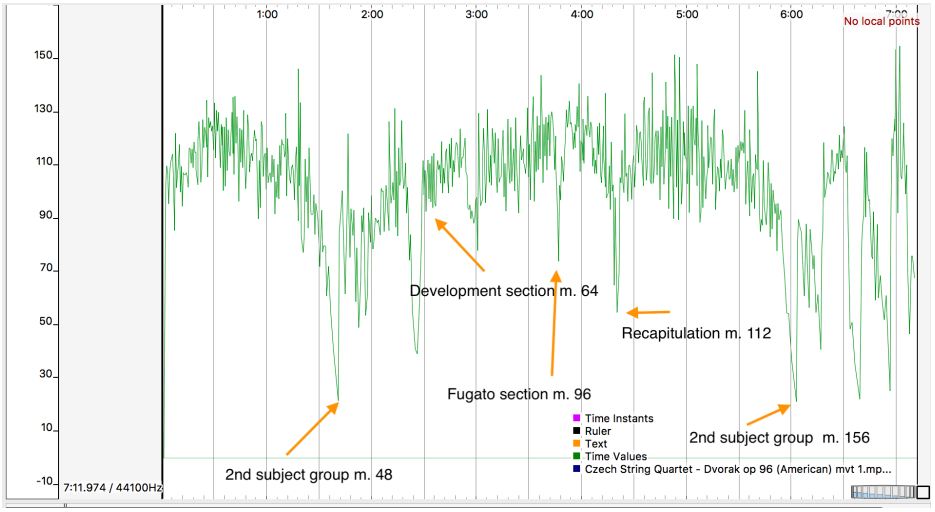


**Figure 4.07: Tempo graph of the Czech Quartet's recording of Dvořák's 'American' *Quartet*, Op. 96, first movement.**

*Tempo Modification*

Elasticity of tempo is the core stylistic feature of this performance. Time is in almost constant flux here, with either radical rushing or slowing throughout. The quartet effectively grinds the music to a halt before bringing it back up to speed on a number of occasions, as for example into the second subject group at m. 40, where amidst heavy

portamento in m. 41, time nearly stops—despite the fact that the notated ritardando marking only appears in m. 43. This slowing, however, is preceded by a good deal of rushing in the thematic material starting from m. 11: a process mirrored in the recapitulation, with rushing in m. 149 again followed by heavy slowing into the second subject group. The tempo graph in Figure 4.07, with beats per minute on the vertical axis and the recording unfolding over time on the horizontal axis, reveals that the slowing into the second subject group in both the exposition and the recapitulation are a close match. Notably, both sections are played at the same tempo despite being recorded on different sides and separated by several minutes of music—further evidence for how such seemingly sudden and moment-to-moment tempo decisions can also be structural in nature, mapping out tempo relationships over long movements. These matching tempo relationships over long spans of music and multiple sides are similar to those mapped out by Tertis on his recording of Bach's *Chaconne* as discussed in Chapter Three.

Continual rushing and slowing, precluding moments of regularity of pulse as illustrated by the tempo graph in Figure 4.07, is a hallmark of this performance. Examples of this can be found in the push-pull of tempo coming out of the second subject group in m. 52, where the quartet presses forward only to slow massively in m. 58 and 59. The events of the development section are also divided by rushing and slowing, like for instance at m. 72, where the quartet slows into Karel Hoffmann's (first violin) iteration of the opening motive in C sharp minor. Coming out of this at m. 76, they rush forward, building tempo through m. 94. Here they then slow into Suk's (second violin) start of the fugato section at m. 96. In m. 97, however, Suk suddenly rushes forward, his hurrying continuing until m. 102, where Zelenka (cello) enters early, creating an intensified sense of urgency. In m. 106, the quartet then slows to set up the recapitulation in m. 112. Herold (viola) starts the return of the theme at a slow tempo, before rushing into the next bar. The tempo graph (Figure 4.07) amply illustrates how this push-pull of slowing and rushing becomes compacted in the closing section of the movement, with the quartet slowing dramatically at Dvořák's poco rit. marking before rushing to the end.

*Rhythmic Flexibility*

The Czech Quartet's flexibility results in rhythmic looseness through the use of swinging, over-dotting, multi-layering, and agogic lengthening and shortening. One example of uneven swing can be heard in the sixteenth notes in the violins in the opening bars. Another can be found in Hoffmann's (first violin) approach to the second

theme in m. 44 where he combines lifting the bow with short non-vibrato articulation, swing, and the lengthening and shortening of notes, which results in a kind of 'spoken' effect. The notes in m. 45 are then particularly swung, before Hoffmann rapidly accelerates towards the downbeat of m. 47. In the following passage from m. 52, the eighths and sixteenths are also swung, with further examples found in m. 106 in the first violin line and in the ricochet of both violins in m. 121.

Regarding over-dotting, Herold (viola) can be heard significantly lengthening the longer note values of the opening melody. The figure in m. 24 is also over-dotted, with the sixteenth notes being played almost as 32nds both here and in all parallel iterations of this motive (an eighth note followed by two sixteenths). Over-dotting also sometimes creates instances of multi-layeredness: for example, while the notated score (see Figure 4.08) has the dotted rhythms in m. 15 and 16 in the viola and cello lining up with the continuous sixteenth notes in the violins, the Czech Quartet overdots these figures, resulting in dislocation. A similar example can be found in m. 93 - 94 of the development section, which resembles the HTK's over- and under-dotting of notes on their recording of Haydn's *Presto* from the *String Quartet* Op. 54 No. 1.

The Czech Quartet is also able to deliver highly contrapuntal music in a way that allows for all voices to be heard simultaneously, usually as a result of both multi-layering and varied articulations. For example, a variegated texture at m. 80 is notable with its over-dotted viola solo, the upper half spiccato in the second violin, long sustained notes in the first violin, and cello pizzicati. A similar moment occurs at m. 123, with divergent articulations and rhythmic flexibilities resulting in each voice individually proceeding in an independent direction.

Finally, agogic lengthening is also frequently used here, such as in m. 9 where Hoffmann (first violin) uses lengthening rather than volume and attack for the notated sforzando before rushing the sixteenth notes that follow. In m. 22 - 23, he again uses agogic lengthening on the first and second beats of the bar, and then compensates by rushing the third and fourth beats. A further example can be found in m. 30 where the third beat is lengthened and the fourth beat is hurried: an approach applied by the quartet to all further occurrences of two eighths followed by a quarter note in this movement. The delivery of the second violin and viola lines in m. 55, however, is a particularly striking example of agogic shortening, with the two sixteenth notes rushed and played spiccato in the upper-half of the bow, giving the motive a lightness of character. Hoffmann (first violin) then takes a similar approach to the triplets in m. 56,

where he lengthens the first note and rushes the second and third. Not only are such rhythmic flexibilities passed from player to player, those heard in the exposition are repeated in the recapitulation, leaving no doubt as to the consistency of the quartet's stylistic approach. As with the Klingler and Brüder-Post quartets, this smaller-scale rhythmic flexibility is at the heart of the Czech Quartet's style.

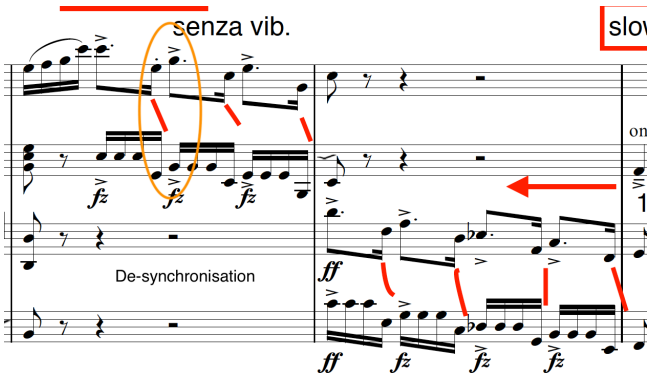


**Figure 4.08: Over-dotting creating dislocation in the Czech Quartet's recording of Dvořák's 'American' *Quartet* Op. 96, first movement.**

*Vibrato and Portamento*

While the players of the Czech Quartet share a general approach to rhythmic flexibilities, they use vibrato in highly individual ways throughout. Hoffmann (first violin) uses slow and wide vibrato, as for example at the second theme in m. 44, while Suk (second violin) uses narrow and quick vibrato throughout. A striking example of different approaches to vibrato speed and width can be heard in m. 69 - 71, where Suk and Hoffmann pass the same motive back and forth. Both Suk and Herold play accompanying figures non-vibrato or with narrow vibrato. Herold (viola), however, also uses very limited vibrato in melodic materials and only on longer notes, while Zelenka (cello) uses quick vibrato on melodic material, as for instance at m. 160, and little vibrato on bass notes.

All four players, however, make frequent use of heavy portamento throughout the movement for lyrical materials. Similar to Philip's observation that the quartet's use of portamento emphasises contrapuntal materials in the slow movement of Bedřich Smetana's *String Quartet* no. 1 in E minor,[256] here in Dvořák's Op. 96, a similar approach

[256] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 118.

can be heard. For example, in m. 74, Suk (second violin) uses an I portamento[257] into the first beat of the bar, drawing attention to his inner voice syncopations. In m. 84, Hoffmann emphasises the melodic nature of the double-stopped thirds on the A and D strings, which might otherwise be lost in the contrapuntal texture, by using a long downwards portamento. The fingering he chooses here is technically quite difficult in a passage where most contemporary violinists would chose to remain in first position (as heard on recordings by the Pražák and Pavel Haas Quartets)—clear evidence that the slide is the desired effect here.[258] This is similar to Tertis's frequent use of awkward fingerings resulting in portamento, as discussed in Chapter Three. Hoffmann's slow octave portamento on the D string, in m. 111 before the recapitulation, is also notable for its length and audibility. Here, his portamento ties together the wide interval, continuing the legato line. Similarly, in m. 159 he risks it all by taking the high D on the D string before sliding down: a move that does not pan out brilliantly in terms of intonation on this recording. There are also many more routine examples of the device applied within melodies, as for instance in Herold's delivery of the opening melody or in Suk's and Herold's use of it to draw attention to the countermelody in the inner voices in m. 40 - 42. This recording thus shows the centrality of portamento to the Czech Quartet's approach to lyrical passages, allowing them to emphasise wide intervals, create legato lines, and bring out inner voices.

In sum, on this recording by the Czech String Quartet there is a great deal of rhythmic freedom in the individual approach to dotting the motivic materials and creating layering as well as in the group's continual tempo flexibilities throughout the movement as a whole. While their consistent use of unnotated tempo flexibilities and rhythmic alterations is similar to that of the Klingler Quartet, the Czech Quartet's widespread use of over- and under-dottings is more diverse than that of the Klingler Quartet, making this a central, characteristic feature of their style.

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[257] Intonazione refers to sliding into the beginning of a phrase as discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.3.
[258] Dvořák, *String Quartets Op. 106 and 96*, Pavel Haas Quartet. Dvořák, *String Quartets No. 14 and No. 12*, Pražák Quartet.

### 4.6) Conclusion and Context

While the Czech Quartet may strike listeners accustomed to MSPs as extreme, slapdash, and improvisatory in its use of portamento and rhythmic and tempo flexibility, much of what can be heard on their recordings can also be heard on those of the Klingler, Post and HTK Quartets as examined above. Indeed, not only did the players within these quartets regularly perform and rehearse together over many years but all the quartets examined here share an approach to both rhythmic and tempo flexibility as well as multi-layering, broad portamenti, and varied use of vibrato. This shows just how central, rather than accidental, these flexibilities were to their performance practices. Philip argues that quartet playing at the time was characterized by a great deal of independence between individual performers, and in reference to the Czech Quartet he remarks: "There is the impression that each player is functioning as an individual, they have simply got used to each other's behaviour and have learned to live with it…they were simply not aiming for our modern notions of ensemble."[259] Indeed, what we hear across the performances studied here is that each player functions as an individual, pulling the performance in various directions, sometimes leading and sometimes following. Still, the performances cohere as a whole, communicating the particular atmosphere of each section—often with the help of tempo modification. This independent individuality is such a central part of these quartets' performance styles that it seems to take precedence over concerns about the kind of clean and tidy togetherness of ensemble fundamental to MSP ideology. In sum, the performances studied here are broadly representative of turn-of-the century understandings of expert ensemble playing and perfection of detail, as described by contemporaneous reviewers.

Despite these broadly shared traits, however, the ensembles examined above demonstrate great diversity in the ways in which they use them in their performances. While the Klingler and Brüder-Post quartets share the frequent use of agogic lengthening and a rich timbre as part of what might simplistically be called the 'German tradition,' the Klingler Quartet uses rhythmic alteration in a more consistent fashion, especially where motivic materials are concerned. In this regard, therefore, the Klingler Quartet is closer to the Czech Quartet, who use un-notated rhythmic and tempo flexibilities with great consistency, resulting in these features becoming structural parts of their performance practices. This is evident for example in the frequent recurrence of these rhythmic

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[259] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 120.

alterations in all four voices, as well as upon repetition across the formal plans of musical works in the Czech Quartet's recording. The Klingler and Czech quartets also share the use of radical, four-voice multi-layering, whereby each of the four players pulls in a different direction at the same time. However, the Czech Quartet's heavy alteration of dotted rhythms and persistent use of swing set them apart from the Klingler Quartet, who favour agogic lengthening and detailed tempo flexibilities for individual motives. The Czech Quartet's unique approach to dotting might thus be described as a characteristic of the 'Czech tradition.' Finally, while the HTK share the use of heavy swing, over- and under-dotting, and multi-layering created by portamento placement with both the Czech and Klingler Quartets, in contrast to these two ensembles, the HTK's recordings sound wonderfully improvisatory and radically uncontrolled as a result of their constant rushing, heavy and continuous use of portamento, wide dislocation, and incongruous intonation.

Studying these four early-recorded string quartets demonstrates just how widely divergent performance styles could be in the context of musical practices featuring un-notated rhythmic and tempo flexibilities, portamento, and multi-layering. The HTK, Klingler, Brüder-Post and Czech quartets all took highly individual approaches to this shared language of musical performance, and this diversity is clearly too complex to be explained solely by national school. While these quartets' approaches are all distant from MSPs, the HTK's recordings are even more so as a result of their radical, slapdash approach. The Czech Quartet's recordings, with their wide-ranging rhythmic alterations, demonstrate the tenuousness of connecting them with the 20th-century Czech tradition of string quartet playing. The Klingler Quartet's consistent use of rhythmic flexibility, when combined with written documentation from the period, sheds light on the performance practices of Joseph Joachim and his pupils. Finally, the Brüder-Post Quartett takes an approach midway between the consistency and deliberateness of the Klingler Quartet and the haphazard freedom of the HTK.

Importantly, the recordings studied here offer concrete tools and techniques for modern performers looking to experiment with this style: an opportunity to connect overplayed canonic works like Dvořák's 'American' *Quartet* with the sound world and atmosphere from which they sprang. Experimenting with the performance practices analysed here can help today's musicians achieve the intimacy and atmosphere present on early-recorded quartet performances, while allowing them to take comfort in the weight of historical evidence linking these practices to the musical performing cultures of 19th-

century composers. Much like Brown in his article "Performing Classical Repertoire," I too am left wondering how many of these practices may be holdovers from the late-18th century (or even the 17th century) and whether this kind of approach might have been recognisable in Mozart's time?[260] Although many of these practices are foreign to today's musicians, the great diversity with which they were once used points to an immense richness of possibilities for performances of canonic string quartet repertoires today.

[260] Brown, "Performing Classical Repertoire," 41.

# 5) Developing an Early-Recorded Performance Style: Approach and Recorded Output

## 5.1) Introduction

The early recordings of violists and string quartets studied in Chapters Three and Four illustrate how a moment-to-moment approach to music making is conveyed through personalised approaches to un-notated flexibility of tempo and rhythm, multi-layering, dislocation, portamento, ornamentation, vibrato, and timbre. The recordings examined illustrate both a shared language of performance as well as great diversity in the way this language was used by different performers. I have followed an 'all-in' approach to copying early-recorded performances in order to integrate these tools into my performance practice with the goal of achieving sounding outcomes similar to the originals, and as such, my recorded portfolio demonstrates that it is indeed possible to rejuvenate this performance style today. In addition to these more direct copies, I have also made recordings of works for which there is no original early recording available to copy, by extrapolating my approach from other closely related early-recorded performances. In this chapter, I discuss both the contents of my recorded output as well as the processes leading to its creation. Here, attention is paid to preparatory study, rehearsal, and recording, as well as to the physical and instrumental parameters of viola playing. My personal process can serve as a guide to inhabiting early-recorded style, with a special focus on the elements of that style that differ from the general approach inherent in today's MSPs.[261]

## 5.2) The Copying Process: From Practising Through Copying and Recording

### 5.2.1) Approaches to Copying

Anna Scott and Sigurd Slåttebrekk set out varying possibilities in their artistic research projects for copying early recordings as a modern-day performer.[262] Slåttebrekk and Tony Harrison copied Edvard Grieg's recordings with the goal of capturing what

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[261] Mainstream performance practices as discussed in Chapter One.
[262] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "Recreating Grieg's 1903 Recordings and Beyond," from *Chasing the Butterfly*, http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=75. Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*.

these recordings may have sounded like had they been recorded with modern equipment. In order to do this, the two painstakingly pieced together Slåttebrekk's recorded copies of the originals over many months, combining multitudes of takes with judicious editing decisions. Slåttebrekk and Harrison discovered early on in their working process that although their recorded copies resembled Grieg's originals on a detailed level, they needed to return to longer takes in order to "capture the most important things happening at the root level of [Grieg's] playing." They concluded that using precision editing to create a detailed copy of an historical recording was inadequate for capturing a performance style that was recorded in whole live takes. The outcome of their work is however an impressive recorded portfolio, which deeply affected Slåttebrekk's performance practice; however, the detailed recording method they followed made Slåttebrekk unwilling to perform his copies in live concert situations.[263]

By contrast, Scott copied early recordings of Brahms's late piano works by making unedited complete takes. Scott's goal was to convey the musical and technical sweep of the copied early recordings both in the studio and in live performances. Her approach to recording also reflects the way early recordings were made, with performers playing through a piece several times and choosing the version they most liked for release (barring any technical problems with the recording equipment).[264] Scott felt that by performing detailed copies of early-recordings, she could sense how the original performer might have approached the instrument physically; this allowed her to reflect on the bodily implementation of elements of early-recorded style that are uncommon in today's MSPs.[265]

If my copied performances are to challenge the existing MSP paradigms, they need to be compelling in their own right and performed like the originals with conviction and spontaneity, otherwise these copies risk sounding like the outcome of a mechanical exercise. In Scott's copied performances, it is as if one hears her personality superimposed upon the personality of the early-recorded performer, adding a layer of richness to the performances. In my own experience, copying recorded performances is closely tied to my emotional and psychological state, and I have often felt that I was communicating in an early-recorded musician's language as filtered through my own

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[263] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "What is this,?" "Recreating Grieg's 1903 Recordings and Beyond," and "Sigurd Slåttebrekk a Personal View," *Chasing the Butterfly*, http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=257. http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=75. http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=79.

[264] For more information on how early recordings were made, see: Leech-Wilkinson, *The Changing Sound of Music*, chapter no. 3.1, accessed July 24, 2018, http://www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap3.html.

[265] Scott, *Romanticizing Brahms*, 184.

convictions.

My path to copying recordings, like Scott's, has been focused on copying whole performances in order to be able to play my copies live in a concert setting. The recorded portfolio was created by using whole takes of the shorter pieces and takes of between four and five minutes in length for the longer pieces. Geoffrey Miles and I edited these recordings sparsely, guided in the editing process by the extent to which the atmosphere of my recorded copies matched that of the originals. I have on occasion performed these copies for a live audience, and much like in my recorded portfolio, there are always details that I do not copy with perfect accuracy. Generally, I have had to make trade-offs between capturing the overall sweep of the originals in a live performance or complete take and adhering to accuracy in the copying of details. However, I feel confident that the overall sweep of the early-recorded performances, or what Slåttebrekk called "the important things happening at the root level," were captured on my recordings.[266] My recorded portfolio evidences the use of elements like tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility, portamento, vibrato, arpeggiation, and dislocation. The recordings thus sound substantially different to today's MSPs. I would argue that my copies, conveyed through my own convictions, evoke the moment-to-moment approach heard on early recordings as well as highlight tensions between this style and today's mainstream norms and expectations.

### 5.2.2) Process

The recordings I chose to copy cover all of the violists pre-1930 who made viola/piano recordings, as well as some early-recorded string quartets. I copied all of Oskar Nedbal, Léon Van Hout, and Arthur Post's available recordings and representative recordings by Tertis of canonical works, his own compositions, and works that he arranged or that were written for him. In order to copy these early recordings, I began with analysis of the originals as described in Chapters Three and Four in order to create annotated scores (these scores can be found in Appendix III) for each of the recordings. My annotations focus on tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility, portamento, vibrato, arpeggiation, and dislocation. They also include carefully considered annotations of the fingerings and bowings used on the original recordings, and I have marked all instances of portamento, noting the type of portamento used when this was not obvious in the context of the bowings and fingerings. For example, a 1 - 1 fingering between different

[266] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "Recreating Grieg's 1903 Recordings and Beyond," http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=75.

notes under a slur can only be a PL portamento, while an unslurred 1 - 3 fingering between different notes might be either an A or C portamento.[267] These annotations aided me in mastering a variety of portamento techniques and helped me copy portamento types and locations with greater accuracy. I also marked instances of un-notated ornamentation of pitch and rhythm. I then proceeded to work with Sonic Visualiser software, marking all of the beats on the recordings using the 'time instants' layer in order to construct tempo graphs. These graphs were used to better understand flexibilities of tempo and rhythm, allowing me to focus on both the general shape of the performance as well as the detailed beat-to-beat timings. For each of the violists copied, I also created a spectrogram of at least one of their recordings in order to analyse vibrato speed, width, and location. Spectrograms were also used for determining fingerings and changes of bow when these were not fully discernable to the naked ear, as was often the case with Lionel Tertis's recordings.

I then practiced from the annotated scores with the audible beat generated by the 'time instants' layer in Sonic Visualiser. I refer to this beat as the 'anti-metronome' because of the way it conveys the generally unsteady beat-to-beat timings heard on early recordings. This tool allowed me to practice the tempo and timing of each beat and to physically internalise wild modifications of tempo and flexibilities of rhythm from the early recordings studied. While practicing, I worked on most of the repertoire one phrase at a time before 'zooming out' and working through longer sections, in an approach similar to Slåttebrekk and Harrison's recording method.[268] I also did some playback while listening to the original recordings through headphones in order to check whether the width and speed of my vibrato matched that of the original. In the final stages of practicing, I went back and forth between playing with and without the 'anti-metronome,' shifting my focus between tempo, rhythm, vibrato, portamento, timbre, and phrasing until I could reasonably copy the majority of these elements from the originals in a single run through.

For the two solo works I copied, Bach's *Chaconne* and Ireland's *The Holy Boy*, the method described above was sufficient preparation for the recording process. For the other pieces, I rehearsed with pianist Shuann Chai as well as with a string quartet made up of Joan Berkhemer (1st violin), Rada Ovcharova (2nd violin), and Willem Stam (cello).

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[267] For a detailed discussion of portamento types see Chapter Three.
[268] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "Recreating Grieg's 1903 Recordings and Beyond," http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=75.

While pianist-researchers such as Scott and Slåttebrekk had only themselves to focus on during the copying process, I needed to focus on my own copying as well as that of my colleagues, all while relating their copying to the musical material I was playing. These collaborative rehearsals involved working with the 'anti-metronome,' as well as rehearsing section-by section in detail and continually listening back to the originals. We played, listened, discussed, and played again, building up our performances by deepening our focus on elements like tempo modification, rhythmic flexiblity, timbre, phrasing, and layering. One of the central challenges in collaborative copying was achieving dislocation between voices in a way that remained connected to the overall expressive atmosphere of the performance. Another challenging aspect involved encouraging my colleagues to perform in ways that they sometimes felt to be counterintuitive or aesthetically displeasing.

When making recordings of our copied performances, we focused on recording complete takes of shorter pieces. This involved playing, listening-back, re-recording, and frequently consulting the original recording that we were copying. Longer pieces, like Bach's *Chaconne* (solo) and Dale's *Finale* (viola/piano), were recorded in takes of 4 - 5 minute sections. The atmosphere during the recording sessions was of critical importance: early on in the process Miles and I found that non-musical factors like lighting played a non-trivial role in affecting recorded outcomes, and as a result, we endeavoured to create a visual atmosphere that fostered intimate music-making, often working with dimly lit lamps or in near darkness. We felt that the surrounding atmosphere in which we recorded could be used to foster a sense of calm, focused listening, unencumbered by visual distractions.

With the early viola recordings, I found it challenging to copy a variety of violists, given the significant differences in playing style between Nedbal, Post, Van Hout and Tertis. I endeavoured to the best of my abilities to capture some of the varying qualities of these violists on my recordings, yet the personal imprint of my own technique and sound production remains superimposed on my copies in a way that sometimes glosses over these differences. No early-recorded performer would have considered performing in such an array of styles, not only because the musical culture of the era placed a high value on a performer's individuality, but also because the style and sound production of the violists studied were intimately connected with their physical and cultural approach to the instrument and to music-making.[269] I however chose to copy a variety of violists for

[269] Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer," 361.

this project, because in doing so, I could explore a greater palette of expressive approaches that I could then integrate into my own performance practice.

### 5.3) Physical Parameters of Early-Recorded Viola Playing

My copying of early-recorded performance practices extended beyond focusing solely on the sounds of the recordings and involved re-examining my physical approach to the instrument. As Clive Brown has shown, the physical approach to string playing, much like the stylistic parameters of performance practice, has changed over the course of the 20th century. Brown's "Physical Parameters of 19th and Early 20th Century Violin Playing" demonstrates how different the bodily approach to the instrument was over a century ago. Both the violin and viola were historically played without a shoulder rest and with a low and relatively flat chin rest. The instrument was supported by the thumb of the left hand, as well as by contact between the chin and the top of the instrument and between the bottom of the instrument and the collarbone. Nineteenth- and early-20th-century photographs of performers like Tertis and violinists Fritz Kreisler and Joseph Joachim, along with historical treatises from the time, all illustrate how the instrument was positioned towards the centre of the neck (see Figure 5.5).[270] The bow grips of the era also tended to be looser and rounder, as exemplified by the Franco-Belgian grip (Figure 5.1), with most of the pressure concentrated in the index finger.[271]

At the start of this project in 2014, I placed the viola quite far to the left and had the tendency to use a relatively quick bow speed coupled with an even and continuous vibrato. At the time, I also made occasional use of portamento in an ad hoc manner. I had been trained to use violin pedagogue Ivan Galamian's prescribed bow hold, with a relatively flat and straight hand and curved fingers (Figure 5.2). Galamian's technique calls for the fingers to straighten when bowing towards the tip, while curving when bowing toward the frog.[272] Figure 5.2 shows the claw-like grip of the Galamian-style bow hold I used. As it was taught to me, the Galamian bow hold is used to exploit the movement of the right hand fingers in order to sharply attack the beginnings of notes. Teachers in the Galamian tradition prescribe a number of etudes and exercises (often

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[270] Clive Brown, "Physical Parameters of 19th and Early 20th Century Violin Playing," 2016, accessed November 24, 2017, http://chase.leeds.ac.uk/article/physical-parameters-of-19th-and-early-20th-century-violin-playing-clive-brown/.
[271] Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing, Volume 1* (Voorhees: Charles Dumont and Son Incorporated, 2000), 35.
[272] Ivan Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1962), 46.

Rodolphe Kreutzer's legendary *Etude* No. 7) in order to practice this sharp attack, which forms the basis of a robust style of string playing developed in the 20th century and helps performers to project in large concert halls and overtop of modern symphonic orchestras.

In order to inhabit early-recorded performance practice, I found it helpful to adopt a physical approach similar to that taken by early-20th-century performers to both understand and mimic the physical gestures they might have used when playing the instrument. To do this, I altered my physical approach to the instrument, moving the viola further to the centre of the neck (towards the Adam's apple), while resting the back of the instrument on the collarbone. Figure 5.4 depicts this adjustment in the position of the viola, with my past positioning seen on the left and current positioning on the right. I reduced the role of the left shoulder in supporting the instrument by favouring the weight of the head to facilitate downward shifts and by using the left hand to support upward shifts. For longer shifts, support from the left shoulder proved to be helpful, especially when moving the left hand around the instrument from the 5th position upwards. The overall result of these changes is that my relationship with the viola has become more relaxed and fluid.[273] As my playing style continues to evolve, I find myself moving the instrument even further to the centre of the chin than depicted in Figure 5.4, resulting in more ease and relaxation.

I also altered my bow grip to resemble the old Franco-Belgian angled grip, as shown in Figure 5.3. This older, rounder bow hold put less emphasis on sharpness of attack and results in the majority of the friction felt in the right hand being directed to the index finger, which is counterbalanced by the thumb. The other fingers and the hand remain loose throughout the bow stroke, which may explain why this hold is less congenial to robust articulation. This bow grip shows the right hand angled towards the index finger with the other fingers rounded, and with the pinkie finger making minimal or no contact with the stick. These adjustments have aided me in developing an uneven, ornamental (non-continuous) vibrato technique, and an expressive arsenal of portamento techniques, along with a generally sustained, slower bow speed.

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[273] Clive Brown shares a similar experience in "Physical Parameters of 19th and Early 20th Century Violin Playing."

Figure 5.1: Franco-Belgian bow grip.[274]

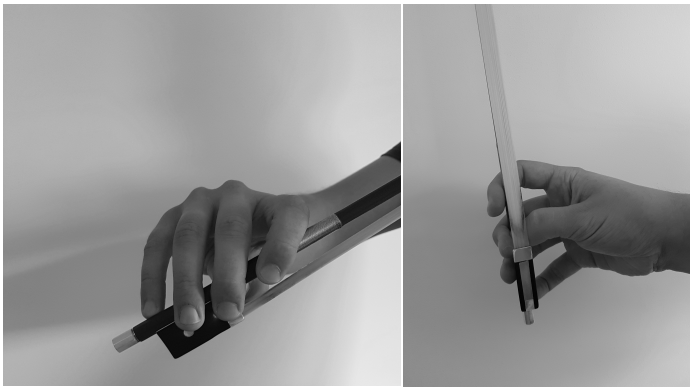

Figure 5.2: My previous bow grip.

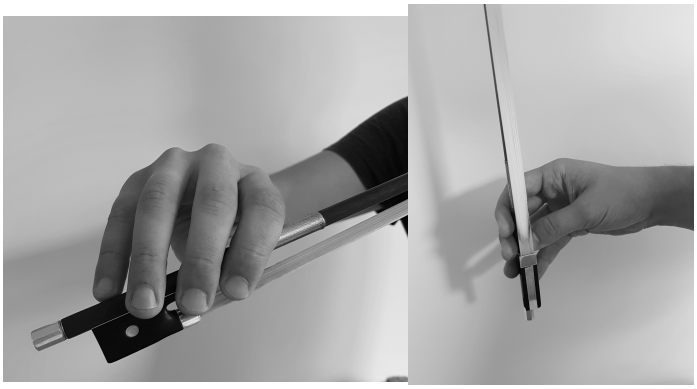

Figure 5.3: My current bow grip inspired by an early-20th-century approach.

[274] Ibid., 35.

**Figure 5.4: My previous viola position on the left, and my early-20th-century-inspired position on the right.**

**Figure 5.5: Lionel Tertis's viola position and bow grip in the 1930s.**[275]

Adjusting my playing technique to fit early-20th-century parameters was relatively straightforward, given that I have always played without a shoulder rest, but for violinists and violists learning to play without a shoulder rest for the first time, this process will likely be more challenging. As violinist Pinchas Zukerman was fond of saying: "The Kun [shoulder rest] is the worst thing ever invented in Canada."[276] The reason both Zukerman and I dislike the device is that playing with a shoulder rest puts the instrument in a fixed, inflexible position and interrupts direct contact between the vibrations of the instrument and the body.

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[275] Tully Potter, liner notes to *Lionel Tertis: The Complete Columbia Recordings*.
[276] Pinchas Zukerman frequently said this during masterclasses in the early 2000s at the National Arts Centre Young Artist's Program, where I was a student. The Kun was the first modern, detachable, and adjustable shoulder rest and was manufactured in Ottawa starting in 1968. See "History," Kun Shoulder Rest, accessed July 6, 2018, https://www.kunrest.com/about/history/.

*String Choice*

Parallel to these changes in their physical approach to the instrument, the majority of string players also switched from using gut to synthetic strings over the course of the 20th century. Gut strings tend to have wide-ranging timbres while being unpredictable in their responses and unstable in their tuning, whereas synthetic strings are both reliable and stable. As a result, it is easy to understand why synthetic strings are favoured for MSPs, where stability of tone and tuning are expected. In recent years, there have been various adaptations of gut strings such as Pirastro's *Passione,* marketed as "the gut string with increased tuning stability," where a gut core is wound with synthetic material—representing something of a compromise between the two string types. In my experience, however, these types of strings sound more like synthetic, rather than gut, strings. For this project, therefore, I used unwound gut A and D strings and wound gut G and C strings, which is rare amongst violists performing 19th- and early-20th-century repertoires today. Gut strings, which are unpredictable and uneven, share these traits with many early-recorded performances and can therefore help string players embrace these qualities in their own playing.

*Physical Parameters and Stylistic Adaptations*

While adapting both my physical approach and my instrumental setup were helpful for copying early-recorded style, these changes had a minor effect on my performance practice as compared with the effect that resulted from copying early-recorded performances. The limitations of an approach focused mainly on physical and instrumental parameters is demonstrated by the stylistic gap between HIP performances using 'period instruments' in late-19th- and early-20th-century repertoires and the actual performance practices of the era as evidenced by early recordings. As Robert Philip argues: "The fundamental ethos of [modern] period performance has far more in common with conventional modern music-making than with the past."[277] Philip compares three performances of the same work—an HIP performance, a mainstream contemporary performance, and an historical recording—and identifies the historical recording as most unlike the two contemporary versions. While the HIP movement has advanced since Philip's 2004 critique, in order for HIP practice to achieve sounding outcomes that resemble late-19th- or early-20th-century performance styles, performers will need to do more than adapt their instruments and playing techniques if they hope to

[277] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recordings*, 233.

bridge the gap between contemporary mainstream practices and early-recorded ones. The discussion of my own experiences in Section 5.4 highlights how the 'all-in' approach to copying early recordings can bridge this gap.

### 5.4) Recorded output

In this section, I reflect in detail on the process of copying early recordings and on my recordings of works for which there is no original early recording to copy (I refer to the latter as 'extrapolations' from early-recorded style). These extrapolations have been made by referring to closely related early recordings and completing fragmented originals. As such, they are wholly informed by the early-recorded practices of the period. My recordings, much like the originals on which they are modeled, operate outside of the bounds of 'neatness and tidiness' expected in MSPs. I copy the period's general use of tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility, and heavy and frequent portamento and ornamental vibrato, while also aiming to capture some of the diversity of stylistic approach between 'German-style' players like Nedbal and Post, the 'Franco-Belgian' player Van Hout and the idiosyncractic approach of Tertis.[278]

I also discuss how the copying process and my interaction with lo-fi recording technology (as discussed in Chapter Two) resulted in some new insights on the original recordings. My recorded portfolio can be found in Appendix I, where the numbering of the sound recordings match the subheadings of their corresponding descriptions in the text. All of the recordings are available in both 'raw lo-fi' and 'full-frequency' versions. The 'raw' version uses the sound from the lo-fi recording horn, built by Miles and discussed in Chapter Two, which mimics the effect of an acoustic recording horn from the 1920s. The 'full frequency' version is a mix of the lo-fi horn sound with the recorded sound from two stereo microphones. The 'raw' version presents something approaching 'early-recorded sound,' while the 'full frequency' version gives the listener an idea of what these recordings sound like in a modern recording context.

[278] All of my copies were made at the speed of the early-recorded models I used, based on digital transfers of wax cylinders and 78rpm records. Copying these recordings using a slower playback speed, to account for a possible lower tuning pitch than A=440hz for example, would have resulted in only minutely slower tempi. See footnote 136 on page 68 for more detailed information on this issue.

### 5.4.1) Copy: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3 by Franz Schubert, as recorded by Oskar Nedbal, 1911

My recording with pianist Shuann Chai can be found in Appendix I - recording 5.4.1, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.4.1, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.4.1.

I discovered during the recording process that by copying Nedbal's intimate timbre, I was most aptly able to convey the character of his recording of Franz Schubert's *Du Bist die Ruh*. I can best describe this tone in terms of its rich but grainy quality. I was able to copy it by standing about a meter and a half from the lo-fi microphone, while bowing near the fingerboard with a slow bow speed. I also copy Nedbal's ornamental vibrato, which tapers off at the ends of notes and is often used only in the middle of notes, as well as his long audible portamenti, by dragging the fingers of the left hand between notes while sustaining the bow, as can be heard in m. 63 and 65. Further, I had to focus quite deliberately on reproducing Nedbal's heavily accented phrase endings, such as in m. 25: a practice which sounds unrefined in the context of the smooth phrasing expected in MSPs. Pianist Chai copies the arpeggiation and dislocation in the piano part, and we also copy the quick tempo in the piano introduction and interlude before slowing for the viola/piano sections. I found myself embracing the simplicity of Nedbal's approach, with its long, drawn-out portamenti, uneven vibrato, and intimate tone—an approach that differs from the robust clarity I often seek in my regular performance practice.

### 5.4.2) Copy: *Romanticky Kus* Op. 18 by Oskar Nedbal, as recorded by Oskar Nedbal, 1910

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.2, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.4.4, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.4.4.

Nedbal's performance struck us as slow, plodding, and flat at times, due to the evenness of his tone throughout. I copied this approach by letting go of my instinctive desire to give a more fluid, dynamic performance of the piece. The 'anti-metronome' was particularly useful for reproducing Nedbal's sluggish approach to rhythm. Throughout the process, I grew to appreciate the humility and simplicity conveyed by Nedbal's recording and found I could copy his timbre by using a slow, even bow speed near the fingerboard throughout.

I also copy Nedbal's slow, narrow vibrato, using the device in the middles of notes and tapering off at note endings, as can be heard in m. 7 - 8. Similar to Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh*, I emulate the heavy, drawn-out portamenti, such as in m. 12 and 14. Chai copies the dislocation and arpeggiation of Nedbal's pianist, and I rush shorter note values in the middle section from m. 47 while slowing at phrase ends such as in m. 50, reproducing the flow of Nedbal's rhythmic flexibility. Like Nedbal, we play the middle section slowly, while rushing through the meno mosso at m. 85, ignoring the notated tempo indications.

We included the material Nedbal cut from his recording (m. 19 - 28, 34 - 39, 44 - 46, 67 - 71, and 75 - 85) by extrapolating from his stylistic approach. I do this by maintaining an ornamental approach to vibrato and using heavy PL and PS portamenti in m. 25 and 28, as well as a prominent PS slide at the end of m. 35 (much like Nedbal's slides in m. 14, 29, and 98).[279] We disregard the tempo markings in the notated score (as Nedbal does in m. 41 and 47) by rushing in m. 21—a full bar before the accelerando marking. In m. 38, I ignore the poco a poco ritardando marking and meld the first two eighth notes of m. 39 into the following sixteenths so that the difference in notated note values becomes inaudible, before stretching the last eighth note of m. 39 into m. 40. Chai similarly blurs the distinction between eighths and sixteenths by ignoring the poco a poco ritardando marking between m. 44 - 46. Together, we create multi-layeredness in m. 37, where the viola line is dislocated from the piano by a sixteenth note, extrapolating from Nedbal's layering in m 59. From m. 75 - 86, we then copy Nedbal's approach to this material in the opening half of the piece (m. 14 - 18).

### 5.4.3.) Copy: *Feuilles de printemps, Bluette* by Nicolas Gervasio, as recorded by Léon Van Hout, date unknown

My recording is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.3, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.5.1, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.5.1.

In Gervasio's *Feuilles de printemps,* I struggle to copy Léon Van Hout's quick, narrow vibrato, which is central to the quality of his timbre. At times, my vibrato is wider and slower than Van Hout's, despite my attempt at a quick wrist vibrato. Generally, though, my timbre does capture something of Van Hout's shimmering, bright, 'Franco-

[279] Ancitipazione refers to sliding with two different fingers under a slur, and Portamento Langsam refers to sliding with one finger under a slur as discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.3.

Belgian' sound. My approach involved combining quick, narrow vibrato with a relatively quick bow speed close to the bridge. I also copied Van Hout's frequent A portamenti, such as in m. 13 and 15, which help dislocate the arrival note from the piano accompaniment. [280] Another central element of Van Hout's style is his unyielding dislocation, achieved by placing his melody notes around the piano accompaniment. I reproduce this from m. 28 - 42, dislocating all of my notes from the piano, and I similarly dislocate notes on the main beats of the bar throughout the opening melody starting in m. 10. I also copy Van Hout's rhythmic alterations by doubling the length of the A in m. 74, which displaces the viola line in relation to the underlying piano chords. The key to copying Van Hout's dislocation was for Chai to continue the accompaniment in her own tempo without adjusting to my dislocated timing. This took some practice, but it felt quite natural to us after performing the piece several times, and through this process we learned how to time our musical lines independently while continuing to listen to each other.

We also recorded the material cut from Van Hout's recording—namely, the passage from m. 43 - 49, and the piano solo materials in the opening bars and at m. 55. From m. 43 - 49, I extrapolate from Van Hout's style by rushing to the top note in m. 44, before slowing at the end of the phrase, dislocating my line from the piano in the process. In the appassionato melody from m. 46, I again dislocate my line from the piano accompaniment. Here, Chai dislocates her moving eighth notes in the right hand from the left, creating layering like Van Hout's pianist does in m. 27.

### 5.4.4.) Copy: *Abendlied* Op. 85 no. 12 by Robert Schumann arr. Léon van Hout, as recorded by Léon Van Hout, date unknown

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.4, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.5.2.1, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.5.2.1.

Our first attempt at recording this piece was in the large 'Store Studio' at the Norwegian Radio (NRK) with a modern Steinway. We felt after several attempts that our sound lacked intimacy, and as a result, we decided to move to the much smaller Studio 3 with its rickety, old Schimmel grand piano. This helped us immediately change our sound and approach, capturing a more intimate atmosphere. We concluded that the intimacy we

[280] As discussed in Chapter Three, Anticipazione refers to sliding with the arrival finger before a bow change.

associate with early recordings was likely in part created by the small rooms in which such recordings were made and the close proximity of the performers to one another and to the recording horn. Early recordings often capture performers in something resembling an intimate house concert setting, and by contrast, modern recordings often convey the atmosphere of the concert hall through their spacious reverb.

I copy Van Hout's bright timbre by using narrow, quick vibrato contrasted with unvibrated long notes, such as in m. 6 on the first beat and in m. 9. I also reproduce Van Hout's use of multiple portamento types, such as in m. 9 and 10. Much like on Van Hout's recording of Gervasio's *Feuille du printemps,* we imitate his continuous dislocation between viola and piano, such as in m. 6 and 7. Chai and I had to continually time our notes around each other, avoiding the ingrained urge to synchronise beats, which was especially difficult given the slow tempo of the piece. We overcame this urge by focusing more strongly on the relationships between beats in our own musical lines.

### 5.4.5) Copy: *Orchestral Suite* no. 3 BWV 1068: II *Air* by Johann Sebastian Bach as recorded by Arthur Post, date unknown

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.5, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.6.1, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.6.1.

Copying Post's recordings involved a search for a humble, intimate sound world, much like copying Nedbal's recordings. This introverted simplicity seems to have been a hallmark of the 'German school' players I have studied. Using a slow bow speed close to the fingerboard, I was able to copy Post's dark, fragile timbre. I also reproduced his narrow, slow vibrato, leaving the sixteenth notes unvibrated, and creating a clear distinction between vibrato and non-vibrato notes while avoiding the tapering vibrato used by both Nedbal and Van Hout. This distinct on/off approach to vibrato distinguishes Post's tone from his colleagues. I also imitate his heavy, downward portamento over long intervals, such as in m. 7 and 12. Chai copies the continuous dislocation and arpeggiation in the piano part, creating layering between her left and right hands and my viola line. I recall Chai working to incorporate the plodding slowness of her eighth note basses with a fragile approach to the melodic line in the right hand of the piano. We copy the heavy slowing at phrase ends, such as at m. 6, 14, and 18, and I emulate the multiple rhythmic alterations—playing grace notes as sixteenths in m. 9 and

12 and changing the figure on the seventh eighth note of m. 17 to a triplet. We also reproduce Post's tempo modification by rushing slightly in m. 13 with the rising line before slowing at the end of m. 14.

### 5.4.6.) Copy: *Notturno* no. 1 by Jan Kalivoda as recorded by Arthur Post, date unknown

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.6, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.6.2, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.6.2.

I discovered during the recording process that in order to copy Post's timbre, I needed to use a very slow bow speed close to the fingerboard, resulting in a grainy quality of sound. This creates an intrusion of noisiness in the sound, which is at odds with the clear resonance I normally cultivate as a modern performer. I reproduce Post's slow, narrow, and infrequent vibrato, using almost no vibrato in the middle section from m. 31. I also copy his heavy portamenti throughout, as in m. 5 and m. 11, where several slides in a row are heard. To copy the heaviness of the portamenti, I maintain continuous contact with the fingerboard with the left hand throughout shifts, while slowing the bow speed to allow the slides to be fully audible.

Further, I copy Post's numerous rhythmic flexibilities, sustaining the long C in m. 48 through the rest and creating uneven beat-to-beat changes of tempo in m. 50 before the return of the opening theme. Chai and I also copy the jagged, uneven rhythmic flexibility throughout, for example by rushing and slowing in close proximity from m. 66 to the end. We emulate the dislocation caused by the over-dotting of the first beat in m. 60 and 62, with Chai's last sixteenth placed late after mine. We ended up not reproducing the dislocation between Post and his pianist that resembles a mishap in m. 12 very faithfully, but in the material we recorded that Post cut (from m. 13 - 28), we extrapolate from this mishap, achieving wide dislocation in m. 26 and 27. Here, I rush while Chai slows, resulting in the viola and piano parts being more than one and a half sixteenth notes apart. Notably, this incongruity did not result from a deliberate decision to pull apart, but rather from a layered approach where the two of us push and pull our material in opposite directions.

**5.4.7) Copy: *The Holy Boy* by John Ireland arr. Lionel Tertis, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, 1921**

My recording is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.7, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.a10.1, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.1.

One of the most prominent characteristics of Tertis's playing is his continuous, quick, and wide vibrato. I mirror this here, taking care to continue my vibrato up to the last moment before the portamenti and then resuming vibrato immediately afterwards, following Tertis's advice to "KEEP YOUR FINGERS ALIVE!"[281] I also reproduce Tertis's frequent portamento, which is aided by adherence to his notated fingerings. I found while recording that using a relatively quick bow speed close to the bridge resulted in a 'grainy' timbre much like Tertis's characteristic sound. Because Tertis's timbre on recordings tends to sound rich and weighty, I was surprised at how much this quicker, lighter approach to bowing at close proximity to the lo-fi horn resembled his tone. Perhaps the weightiness I perceive in Tertis's recorded tone results from his sustained legato, heavy portamento, vibrato, and proximity to the recording horn, rather than from a heavy approach to bowing.

The greatest challenge I faced in the copying process here, however, was emulating Tertis's extensive rhythmic flexibility. His performance sounds free of any sense of pulse or tempo, much like that of an a cappella folk-singer. It cost me a good deal of practice to internalize the shifting combinations of rushing and slowing he uses throughout this piece. Examples of this include the forward direction I copied in the first bar, as well as the heavy slowing in moments, such as m. 17 and 34, where the whole piece nearly comes to a standstill. I also emulate Tertis's massive variation of overall tempo, playing quickly into m. 16 and slowing in m. 35 and 53. By copying this recording, I came to the realisation that Tertis's constant pushing and pulling of eighth notes throughout the piece creates a complex ambiguity of rhythm, giving character and depth to his performance.

[281] Tertis, "Beauty of Tone in String Playing," 147.

**5.4.8) Copy: *Partita* no. 2 BWV 1004: V *Chaconne*, by Johann Sebastian Bach as recorded by Lionel Tertis, 1924**

My recording is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.8, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.a10.2, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.2.

Performing Bach's *Chaconne* on the viola is already challenging due to the difficulty posed by playing chords and double-stops on the instrument's thicker strings, which respond more sluggishly than those of the violin. While copying Tertis's recording, however, I was faced with the additional challenge of internalizing his unorthodox fingerings, as well as reproducing his continuous rushing through technically demanding sections of the piece. This rushing over virtuosic sections of the piece makes it even more difficult to play, and I often felt like I was pushed to the very limits of my technical capabilities. For the recording process, I divided the *Chaconne* into four sections, following Tertis's division of the piece onto four sides of a 78rpm record.[282] This gave me the opportunity to focus on one quarter of the piece in each take, rather than trying to copy the whole 14 minutes in one go.

I copy Tertis's quick, wide, and continuous vibrato throughout on long notes, while using vibrato on slower sixteenth notes. I also copy Tertis's non-vibrato approach to the beginning of the major section at m. 133, creating a contrasting quality of sound. I use Tertis's awkward, unorthodox fingerings, helping me to create heavy, long portamenti throughout, such as the slides on the G and C strings in m. 26 and 27. When practicing, I struggled here to combine heavy portamento with good intonation and continuity of phrasing. As a result, some of these long slides come across as slightly self-conscious on my recording and sound less spontaneous than those in Tertis's hand, as for example in m. 33 - 35 and in the section from m. 210. Because Tertis slows down a great deal, adding emphasis to these slides, his performance became somewhat controversial as modern MSPs were established, and I expect my portamenti here will be viewed as similarly contentious in some quarters.

Elsewhere, I copy Tertis's ornamentations, repeating the middle note in m. 10, 11 and 14. I also emulate his arpeggio variations from m. 89, repeating the top notes from m. 97 and copying his broken double-stops from m. 105. I reproduce his broken thirty-second double-stopping from m. 236. Copying Tertis's variations in the arpeggio sections

[282] These sections are marked as side joins in the annotated score in Appendix III - score 5.4.8 as follows: side 1 m. 1 - 64, side 2 m. 65 - 132, side 3 m. 133 - 208, side 4 m. 209 - 257.

helped me to convey the overall build up of intensity heard throughout these sections.

To reproduce Tertis's timbre, I create a grainy, sustained tone, combining a slow bow speed with heavy legato. During the recording process, I had to play the double stoppings and chords much farther from the bridge than I expected in order to emulate the warmth of Tertis's tone. My initial approach of bowing heavily and close to the bridge sounded both too harsh and too concrete to resemble Tertis's tone. I also mimic Tertis's varied articulations, such as the ricochet bow stroke in m. 120, as well as his thrown spiccato in the upper half of the bow, which sounds rather uncontrolled from m. 153 and forms a contrast with the long, accented notes from m. 161, where the repeated Ds and Gs are given prominence in the texture. I needed to start this thrown upper-half spiccato well above the string, giving the bow a good deal of bounce, unlike the controlled lower half spiccato closer to the string that I have cultivated for MSPs. Unlike Tertis, however, I was unable to play all three strings together in m. 253 – 254 and ended up arpeggiating these chords, due to the curvature of my bridge.

I copy Tertis's use of tempo modification to structure sections of the piece, while rushing to maintain flow throughout longer sections: for example, from m. 65, I take a noticeably quicker tempo and rush through m. 76. From m. 81, I then rush gradually through to the arpeggio section in m. 98. Tertis plays the passage starting at m. 73 and the arpeggio section from m. 89 so quickly that I found this material virtually unplayable at his tempo. By lightening the contact of the bow with the string and through judicious practising, however, I was able to play in his tempo without losing too much clarity. I also emulate Tertis's slow tempo in the G major section at m. 133, rushing in m. 176 and 183, as well as from m. 205 to the cadence in m. 209. The end of this second arpeggio section from m. 205 is so quick that my left hand chord changes could barely keep up with the bow. Finally, I copy Tertis's heavy slowing over the long portamenti in m. 255 at the end of the piece.

I imitate Tertis's localised rhythmic flexibility throughout, using uneven timing for the chords of the main theme and rushing in m. 11, thereby undermining a continuous sense of pulse. Initially, I felt somewhat adrift in the opening of the *Chaconne,* without a continuous pulse to tie this opening statement together, and I continually had to fight against the urge to play in a rhythmically regular fashion. I also copy Tertis's varied timing of sequential material throughout, such as from m. 221 – 223 and in the sections starting at m. 26 and m. 209, where I reproduce the time he takes over the long portamenti before rushing the sixteenth notes between them.

### 5.4.9) Copy: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1 by Johannes Brahms as recorded by Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday, 1924

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.9.1 to 5.4.9.4, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.a10.3, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.3.

In the *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1 by Brahms, we copied sweeping tempo structures in the outer movements, as well as detailed dislocations and rhythmic flexibilities on a local level. Our goal was to capture the sense of unpredictability and spontaneity conveyed by Tertis and Hobday's performance, and we found that we achieved this most successfully when we were able to forget our focus on detailed copying and approach longer sections of the piece with a sweeping sense of flow.

*Movement 1 - Allegro Appassionato*

While I copy Tertis's portamento, following his complex fingerings from m. 215 - 219, I struggled to replicate the heaviness inherent in his use of the device in the opening theme from m. 5 with its awkward intervals. In the opening bars, I was somewhat risk averse and ended up sacrificing portamento heaviness for the sake of good intonation, in a demonstration of the way my ingrained MSP habits could at times creep back into my playing. Chai however emulates Hobday's wild opening bars; rushing beyond the tempo I take for the theme in m. 4. We also copy Tertis and Hobday's jagged, localised rhythmic flexibilities, such as the rushing and slowing from m. 112, and we reproduce their tempo modification, structuring the piece by rushing through transitional sections such as in m. 25, before slowing for the lyrical second subject group in m. 38. We then duplicate the drastic rushing from m. 197, followed by sudden slowing in m. 213 into the Sostenuto ed espressivo section, which initially felt abrupt and unnatural to us. Applying rushing and slowing at all times throughout the movement became a central part of our performance, and today I would have great difficulty playing this movement without it. Copying Tertis and Hobday's approach to tempo here revealed to me the way in which large scale tempo flexibility can give a sense of narrative to the performance of a longer work or movement.

*Movement 2 - Andante un poco adagio*

In the slow movement I copy Tertis's wide, quick, continuous vibrato and combine this with a sustained, slow bow speed. Initially, I felt somewhat uneasy emulating Tertis's forceful opening statement, given what I felt to be the possibility for a

more tender approach to this phrase. However, imitating Tertis's softer timbre from m. 21 by bowing near the fingerboard helped me understand how his heavy approach to the opening could create greater contrast here. I tried to reproduce the warm intimacy of Tertis's tone in the hopes of learning to master his 'stage-whispered' pianissimo that "carried to the farthest corner of the building."[283] In reproducing Tertis's approach to sound here, I discovered that my viola resonated fully when played with wide, continuous vibrato and a slow bow speed near the fingerboard. I also copy Tertis's rhythmic flexibility in the passage from m. 63 by rushing through the crescendo in order to lengthen the top note of m. 67. Chai, too, reproduces Hobday's uneven sixteenths from m. 61, so that they resemble a slow arpeggio rather than a rhythmic figure, and then from m. 64 I copy Tertis's swung thirty-second notes.

*Movement 3 - Allegretto Grazioso*

We copy Tertis and Hobday's dance-like approach to this movement by continually rushing the first beats towards accented second beats of the bar. We also reproduce their dislocation, which gives the whole performance a feel of rhythmic looseness. I copy Tertis's yodelling portamento from m. 123 - 126 by sliding after the bow change, and I also imitate his hefty tone, ignoring the many notated piano dolce markings—especially in the bass line from m. 47. We reproduce the beat-to-beat flexibility heard from m. 63, with both of us slowing and rushing in different directions at different times, thereby creating multi-layering. Chai also copies Hobday's complex combination of swing and dislocation in her piano solo at m. 99. This passage was particularly complex for her to reproduce given the confluence of dislocation, arpeggiation, and rhythmic flexibility. This revealed the technical challenges of performing in early-recorded style, given its characteristically complex combinations of un-notated rhythmic flexibilities.

*Movement 4 – Vivace*

During the recording process, we struggled to duplicate the wild approach to tempo and rhythm heard on the original while conveying an overall impression of enthusiasm rather than one of sheer panic. The quick tempo made it technically difficult to navigate the piece while also continuing to rush at the same time. We discovered, however, that by taking advantage of moments of slowing, such as in m. 24 or 62, we could prevent our rushing from spinning out of control. We may have taken this too far,

[283] Eric Coates, quoted in White, *Lionel Tertis*, 15.

as there are moments where we slow more than Tertis and Hobday, such as at m. 76 and 87 for example. Chai felt that Hobday sounded uncomfortable with the tempo on the original recording and that the choice of tempo was likely Tertis's. I am not convinced of Chai's view, however, given Hobday's continual rushing throughout her solo passages, which Chai copied—admirably succeeding in playing far fewer wrong notes than Hobday. From m. 119, we also copy Tertis's and Hobday's swing and dislocation, creating a 'Hungarian' gypsy-like character, and from m. 204 we rush forward relentlessly, building excitement towards the end. I emulate Tertis's enthusiastic and heavy-handed approach to accentuation and dynamics, such as in m. 20 and 42, thereby ignoring the notated piano. I also copy his articulation, especially the wild spiccato bow stroke heard in m. 11. Reproducing this hurried recording gave me a more generalized understanding of how pushing up against the limits of one's technical capabilities through rushing, while ignoring notated detail and structure, can indeed result in sweeping, enthusiastic, and exciting sounding performances.

### 5.4.10) Copy: *Suite* Op. 2: II *Romance* by Benjamin Dale as recorded by Lionel Tertis and Frank St. Leger, 1920

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a10, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.a10.4, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.4.

We reproduce Tertis's and pianist Frank St. Leger's recording of the final section of the *Romance* starting in m. 109, extrapolating it to the rest of the movement, which they left unrecorded. Due to the work's ternary form, the opening section (m. 1 - 60) closely resembles the final section (from m. 109 to the end), and as a result, we were able to copy many elements from the original recording while recording the opening section. In his autobiography, Tertis refers to the "intricate rubato" that tripped up conductor Arthur Nikisch in the middle section of the work, and I took this description as a starting point for my use of wild tempo modification and rhythmic flexibility.[284]

I also follow Tertis's notated fingerings here, as he does on his own recording, using them as a guide for the locations and types of portamento I apply in my style extrapolation in the rest of the movement. The groups of portamenti I copy from Tertis,

[284] Tertis, *My Viola and I*, 34.

such as between m. 41 and 43 for example, help to give my playing a lyrical quality.

Chai and I make use of un-notated, rhythmic flexibility in the middle section of the piece, as for example from m. 67, where I rush the sixteenth notes and lengthen the eighth and quarter notes. From m. 92 I exaggerate this effect, creating unevenness from beat-to-beat. I also exaggerate the notated pochissimo ritardando in m. 94 and 96 by rushing the first three beats of the bar and drastically slowing the fourth beat. I also rush through the tempo notation in m. 95 and 97, rather than returning to an original tempo. From m. 140 - 152, we make use of jagged, localised tempo flexibility by rushing and slowing on a beat-by-beat basis. We use a similar approach from m. 82 - 90, where instead of making a gradual accelerando, we slow on some beats while rushing others. We also make frequent use of dislocation between the viola and piano parts, such as from m. 44 - 46.

In addition, we create larger scale tempo modification, rushing through longer phrases to build tension between m. 37 - 44 and between m. 71 - 75. We then perform the middle section in a quicker tempo in order to achieve a light scherzando character and contrast it with the lyrical, outer sections of the work. Furthermore, we rush throughout the opening recitativo in order to build tension from m. 4 - 21, whereupon we slow for the main theme. These tempo modifications are extrapolated from Tertis and St. Leger's recording of m. 112 - 130 of the piece. In the middle section, I also use an uncontrolled, thrown spiccato in the upper half of the bow, of the kind Tertis uses on his recordings of Bach's *Chaconne* and Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1. It would be difficult to reconstruct the notated score using our performance or vice versa, much as is the case with the original recording from which our performance is extrapolated.

### 5.4.11) Copy: *Sunset* by Lionel Tertis as recorded by Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday, 1922

Our recording is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a11, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.a10.5, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.5.

I tried to capture the intimate atmosphere conveyed by Tertis's recording, yet despite the simplicity of the piece, I struggled to reproduce the intricate detail of his continuous, beat-to-beat flexibilities. My performance ended up sounding slightly heavier in both tone and timing than the original. I do however copy Tertis's varied vibrato widths by using wider vibrato on lower pitches and narrower vibrato for higher pitches,

such as the high B in m. 28. I also emulate his portamento, making audible slides in every bar and alternating between PL, PS, and C types. This prevalent and continuous sliding became a natural part of my legato tone in the course of the copying process, and I am now unable to imagine playing this piece without it. In order to more closely mimic Tertis's intimate timbre, I ended up using a contact point (between the bow and the string) halfway between the bridge and the fingerboard. Chai copies Hobday's dislocation throughout, separating the moving eighths in the countermelody from the harmony, such as in m. 4 and 8. We also reproduce rhythmic flexibilities, like the rushing and slowing in m. 19 and between m. 24 and 26.

### 5.4.12) Copy: *Hier au Soir* by Lionel Tertis as recorded by Lionel Tertis, 1925

Our recording is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a12, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.a10.6, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.6.

In this piece, I copy Tertis's 'whispering' timbre by standing at a distance of about 20 cm from the lo-fi microphone and pointing the contact point towards the microphone's horn. This results in a timbre that Miles felt sounded similar to the 'whispering' baritone Jack Smith, who was famous in the 1920s for his understated style, created by singing into the microphone at close proximity.[285] Perhaps Tertis was familiar with Smith's recording technique, as he likely stood close to the recording horn in order to create such a veiled timbre. Like Tertis and his pianist, we repeat the piece a second time, returning from m. 22 to the beginning where I play con sordino.

Despite the simplicity of the musical material, I found it difficult to reproduce Tertis's intricate rhythmic flexibility. While recording, I discovered that I could most convincingly imitate his timing by turning my attention to rushing between the various elongated notes in each phrase. We also copied the dislocation in the melody, which is played in octaves between the viola and left hand of the piano, resulting in a layered approach.

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[285] BG, "The Legend of Whispering Jack Smith", Geezer Music Club, accessed July 20, 2018, https://geezermusicclub.wordpress.com/2015/01/24/the-legend-of-whispering-jack-smith/.

### 5.4.13) Copy: *Jeg elsker dig* by Edvard Grieg arr. Lionel Tertis as recorded by Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday, 1922

Our recording is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a13, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 3 – 3.a10.7, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 3.a10.7.

On this recording, I copied Tertis's heavy timbre by maintaining intense contact with the string near the bridge throughout and ignoring notated piano or pianissimo dynamics. Having imitated Tertis's tone here, I am left wondering whether his robust approach was the result of his trying to overcome surface noise on the recording or if it was connected with the kind of sound projection he may have routinely used on the concert stage. I also copied his wide, quick, and continuous vibrato as well as his use of portamento types, such as in m. 10 - 11, where the PS, C, and L types appear back-to-back. I reproduce his approach to the final phrase from m. 43 as well, playing in a 'pianistic' way by narrowing my vibrato and playing without portamento.

In addition, I emulate Tertis's over-dotting, as can be heard in m. 15 and 16, as well as his agogic lengthening on the first G in m. 5. Chai too copies Hobday's combined dislocation and arpeggiation, while rushing and slowing, in the first four measures. We also reproduce their approach to tempo modification by playing the piano introduction and interlude more quickly than the viola/piano sections.

### 5.4.14) Extrapolated Recording: *Piéce de concert* by Georges Enescu

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a14, and the score is in Appendix III – score 5.4.a14.

Romanian composer, conductor, and violinist Georges Enescu (1881 - 1955) wrote his *Piéce de concert* for the annual viola exams at the Conservatoire de Paris in 1906. The work is dedicated to Théophile LaForge, who was professor of viola there at the time and who taught violist Maurice Vieux (Vieux's recording of Stan Golestan's *Arioso et Allegro de concert* is discussed in detail in Chapter Three).[286] Although Enescu recorded this piece at the piano with violist Alexandru Radulescu in 1943, we do not use their recording to inform our performance because of its proximity to MSPs. Radulescu and Enescu achieve vertical togetherness of ensemble and steady tempi, all with barely a trace

[286] Georges Enesco, *Concertstück*, (Paris: Enoch and Cie, 1957), 1.

of portamento.[287] Their recording is thus likely very different from the way the work would have been performed in 1906.

On our recording, then, we make use of stylistic elements from early recordings such as frequent and heavy portamento, tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility, multi-layeredness, and agogic lengthening. I extrapolate from Van Hout's recordings in order to take a 'Franco-Belgian' approach to this piece. My homage to this style can be heard in my use of unyielding dislocation from the piano and fast, narrow, non-continuous vibrato. For example, from m. 4 - 6, I use narrow, quick vibrato while the whole of m. 7 is left un-vibrated.

I make frequent use of portamenti, aided by following Enescu's notated fingerings such as the 4 - 4 - 4 - 4 notated fingering from m. 7 - 8, where I use four portamenti in a row. Similarly, in m. 65, I use two heavy portamenti in a row, inspired by Enescu's notated fingering. These awkward fingerings on single strings result in frequent portamento and remind me of Tertis's approach in Dale's *Romance* and Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1.

I also use portamento, however, in ways that cannot be connected to Enescu's notated fingerings, such as my C portamento in m. 57 or my A portamento in m. 62, which is similar to the kind Van Hout uses in Gervasio's *Feuille de printemps*. Notably, Radulescu uses almost no portamento on his recording with Enescu, despite Enescu having used the device frequently on his violin recordings throughout his career. Indeed, Radulescu ignores Enescu's awkwardly notated fingerings, such as in m. 7, thereby avoiding portamento and demonstrating how reticent he was towards using the device in a mid-20th-century recording context.

By extrapolating from Van Hout's unyielding approach to dislocation in *Feuille de printemps*, as for example between m. 21 - 24, I dislocate my line from the piano accompaniment by lengthening my first downbeat. Chai creates layering through her continual use of dislocation and arpeggiation, as in m. 9 for example, where she arpeggiates her chords while at the same time dislocating them from my viola line. The layering from m. 60 - 63 results from Chai slowing while I push forward, resulting in my second beat of m. 61 arriving nearly an eighth note ahead of the piano. We then create another moment of layering between m. 156 - 159, where Chai dislocates multiple voices in the piano part as well as arpeggiates her chords under the viola line. We also make

[287] Georges Enescu, *Piesa de Concert*, Alexandru Radulescu (viola), Georges Enescu (piano), recorded 1943, reissued Electrerecord ECD95, 1960 (LP).

frequent use of agogic lengthening here, such as in m. 18, where I lengthen my quarter note before rushing the eighth notes that follow and, similarly, in m. 98, where I lengthen my two-eighth-note upbeat.

On a local level, we use rhythmic flexibility by rushing to the middles of phrases and by slowing at phrase endings, such as in m. 12, where I rush towards the third beat of the bar before slowing, or in m. 42 - 43, where I rush towards the A flat before slowing at the end of the bar. Chai and I also used tempo modification to create tempo areas for different sections of the piece, extrapolating from Tertis and Hobday's recording of the first movement of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1. At the beginning of the development section in m. 74, we start in a slow tempo and rush forward to a new tempo area in m. 99. Similarly, we play the lyrical second theme at m. 55 and m. 172 in a slower tempo than the first subject group material. Throughout longer sections we rush forward continually, extrapolating from Tertis's approach in Bach's *Chaconne*. While recording this piece, I felt I could play my material very freely while still maintaining a relationship to the piano part. Our un-notated approach to rhythm and tempo flexibility allowed us to play in a lively, spontaneous, and unpredictable fashion.

### 5.4.15) Extrapolated Recording: *Märchenbilder* Op. 113 by Robert Schumann

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a15, and the score is in Appendix III – score 5.4.a15.

No early recordings of Robert Schumann's *Märchenbilder* Op. 113 are known to exist. Our performance thus conveys our vision of what an early recording of the piece might sound like. I attempt to take a 'German school' approach, extrapolated from Post's and Nedbal's recordings, by using narrow, ornamental vibrato combined with heavy and frequent portamenti. We also use localised, rhythmic flexibility and multi-layeredness in each of the movements.

*I Nicht schnell*

In the first movement, we demonstrate what Philip calls "each player functioning as an individual," when playing the same motivic materials, much the way Tertis and Sammons do on their recording of the 3rd movement of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante,* as discussed in Chapter Three. [288] For example, in m. 9, Chai plays her motive in a slow, broad manner, whereas in m. 11, I rush each of the second beats to the middle of the bar

[288] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording,* 120.

when playing the same motive. Similarly, from m. 14, Chai uses agogic lengthening on the top sixteenth note, but in m. 15, I rush through the top sixteenth note and lengthen my quarter note when playing the same motive. I use agogic lengthening on the first of my sixteenth notes in m. 20 and 21, and we create multi-layeredness in our overlapping motives m. 30 and 31, where I slow down while Chai rushes each of her sixteenth note figures. This approach is extrapolated from some of the more exaggerated dislocation heard on Arthur Post's recording of Kalivoda's *Notturno* no. 1.

*II Lebhaft*

I thought of this movement as a wild march, interrupted first by fleeting and strange harmonic material in m. 51 and later by a heavy peasant dance in m. 119. To evoke the wild character of the march, we play the first two bars slowly, as if they are a majestic fanfare, before proceeding to rush in an enthusiastic manner throughout the opening section, especially towards top notes, such as in m. 38. Here, we extrapolate from the atmosphere created by Tertis and Hobday in the fourth movement of their recording of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1.

In the strange, fleeting section from m. 51, we start slowly and rush through the ends of phrases. Here, I use an intimate, flautando timbre by bowing over the fingerboard. For the peasant dance from m. 119, we use agogic lengthening on the first sixteenth note of each of the motives, creating heaviness. This dance section sounds slightly uncontrolled as a result of our continual rushing and the dislocation between the right hand of the piano and the viola line. Chai furthers this impression by arpeggiating her left-hand chords, creating an overall impression of drunken enthusiasm. We exaggerate the etwas zurückhaltend in m. 192, reaching a much slower tempo in m. 194 and ignoring the notated im tempo marking. This approach to ignoring notated tempo indications we extrapolate from Nedbal's recording of *Romanticky Kus*.

*III Rasch*

In the third movement, I attempt to create a shadowy, fleeting, and anxious character. To do this, I create a 'whispered' timbre, playing close to the microphone and bowing over the fingerboard, which I extrapolate from Tertis's recording of *Hier au Soir*. We use localised rushing throughout, as for example in m. 4 and m. 19, where we hasten to the top sixteenth note of each bar. We also rush motives, such as in m. 13, resulting in a sense of impatience and hurriedness.

In the major key section, which appears without warning in m. 37, we create

contrast by taking a slower tempo and prominently dislocating the piano and viola lines in m. 41 and 46. Chai's short articulation contrasts with my heavy portamento and slowing in m. 49. We extrapolate this approach from m. 110 of Tertis and Hobday's recording of fourth movement of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1.

*IV Langsam, mit melancolischem Ausdruck*

I think of the outer sections of this movement as a lullaby, and the middle section from m. 31, with its sudden shifts of tonality, as the return of distant memories. I use a 'grainy' sound, extrapolated from Post's recording of Bach's *Air* and Nedbal's recording of Schubert's *Du Bist die Ruh,* by bowing slowly near the fingerboard. I also use frequent, heavy PS and PL portamenti as both Post and Nedbal do on their recordings, such as in m. 1, 2, 6, and 7. I add my own pitch ornaments, extrapolated from Nedbal's recording of Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh,* by changing the bow before placing the fingers of the left hand on the next note in m. 10, 82, and 83. Chai and I create a multi-layered texture throughout by dislocating the melodic material in the right hand of the piano from the viola line, which is further dislocated from the piano's left hand bass notes. In the middle section from m. 31, I also dislocate my accompanying triplets from the piano melody.

We make use of tempo modification by rushing to increase tension as the harmonies become more fraught in m. 10 - 11 and m. 17 - 18. Similarly, we build tension in the middle section by gradually rushing from m. 35 until m. 46, much the way Post does in Kalivoda's *Notturno I*. We also slow heavily at the ends of sections, such as in m. 30 and m. 61 - 62, where we allow the middle section to fade away as the opening lullaby returns.

### 5.4.16) Extrapolated Recording: *Suite* Op. 2: III *Finale* by Benjamin Dale

My recording with pianist Chai is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a16, and the score is in Appendix III – score 5.4.a16.

Dale's *Suite* Op. 2 was written for Tertis, and therefore we extrapolate from his recordings in our performance of the *Finale* by using wide, fast, and continuous vibrato, varied and frequent portamenti, and wild rhythmic flexibility. The sources used to inform our approach to tempo and rhythm here were Tertis and Hobday's recording of the fourth movement of Brahms's *Sonata* Op.120 no. 1, Tertis and Sammons's recording of the third movement of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante,* and Tertis and St. Leger's recording

of Dale's *Romance*.

I use Tertis's notated fingerings as a guide for finding locations for portamento, much like in my copy of his recording of Dale's *Romance*. For example, in m. 87 - 89, I use a number of PS and PL portamenti. However, like Tertis, I also use portamento where the device is not suggested by notated fingerings, as in m. 166 and m. 170. I also use a wild, thrown spiccato in the upper-half of the bow whenever the march-like material from the opening appears, as copied from Tertis's use of this technique in the last movement of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1.

A performer adhering to MSPs would likely take the indication in the score to play 'very rhythmically' as an admonition to play the rhythms as notated with a regular sense of pulse. Extrapolating from an early-recorded context, however, where such indications were often ignored and where un-notated tempo modification and rhythmic flexibility were the norm, we take a flexible approach to rhythm throughout the movement. During the opening march-like material (m. 1 - 75), for example, I start my sixteenth notes consistently late after the preceding eighth notes and rush them to catch up to the piano, as can be heard in m. 6. Chai and I over-dot the 'hunting horn' theme in the development section from m. 256, while lengthening our eighth and quarter notes and shortening our sixteenth notes throughout this section. The rubato section from m. 280 resembles the middle section of the *Romance* movement, and I approach it in a similar way by rushing my sixteenth notes and lengthening my quarter notes, all while varying the tempo from beat-to-beat. Chai too rushes her right-hand figures from m. 652, extrapolating from Hobday's rushed eighth notes in the fourth movement of Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1.

While the notated tempo marking is m.m. ♩ = 116, we take a quicker average tempo of around m.m. ♩ = 130 in the first section in order to create an impression of enthusiasm. On many early recordings, performers slow down in lyrical passages, yet in this piece the second subject group from m. 78, with its long note values, sounds much slower than the opening material when played in the same tempo. As a result, we chose to modify the tempo by rushing and slowing within sections, rather than assigning tempo areas to different parts of the movement. This approach is demonstrated by our rushing throughout the opening section from m. 1 - 75 and our exaggerated slowing prior to the poco ritardando marking in m. 122. Similarly, we start rushing four bars before the notated accelerando in m. 131, as extrapolated from Tertis's rushing on his recording of Dale's *Romance*. In m. 172 - 173, I slow heavily before the sempre stringendo marking in

order to make room for further rushing afterwards, extrapolating from Tertis and Sammons's slowing before the calando poco a poco in m. 194 of the third movement of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*. We then take a slow tempo in the Lento non troppo section from m. 409, before gradually rushing from m. 548. In the final section from m. 625, we rush forward until m. 684, where we reach a tempo at which the piano part is virtually unplayable. As a result, from m. 688, Chai leaves out notes in order to facilitate further rushing. While I feel something of Tertis's singing and virtuosic approach can be heard in my continuous vibrato and heavy, varied portamento, it is our approach to un-notated rhythm and tempo flexibilities that help link our performance style with that of the early-recorded era.

### 5.4.17) Copying String Quartet Recordings

Using early-recorded style as the basis for modern string quartet performances is still a rarity in both research and performance circles. This is likely because MSP string quartet playing, is based upon a great deal of unanimity of bowing, phrasing, intonation, and synchronisation. One exception to this, however, is violinist Johannes Gebauer's efforts with the Camesina Quartet to copy early string quartet recordings at the Hochschule der Künste in Bern.[289] Copying recordings can be difficult for a solo performer, but complexities multiply when a group of musicians is tasked with absorbing and inhabiting unfamiliar, historical performance styles.[290] Additionally, it is difficult to find high calibre musicians who are open to performing or recording in a style that many deem 'unprofessional.' Indeed, early-recorded chamber ensembles played in a way that "was, by modern standards, very loose [with] untogetherness [and] startling contrasts between two or more musicians playing together." As Philip remarks:

> Generally speaking, the best ensembles of today rehearse so that everyone agrees, not just about tempo but also about detail…if a theme passes from one instrument to another, it will not be played in a radically different way by each player. [291]

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[289] Johannes Gebauer, "Verkörperte Traditionen der romantischer Musikpraxis" (forthcoming), accessed September 8, 2016, http://www.hkb-interpretation.ch/projekte/verkoerperte-traditionen-romantischer-musikpraxis.html.
[290] Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "*Prelude and Trouble at Troldhagen"* from *Chasing the Butterfly,* http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=1233. Kai Köpp, "Musikalisches Körperwissen: Embodiment als Methode der (historischen) Interpretationsforschung," *dissonance* no. 135 (September 2016): 14 - 18.
[291] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording,* 125, 105.

This description amply summarises some of the central tenets of chamber music performance in MSPs. Contemporary string quartets seem to be especially zealous about attaining vertical precision as well as unanimity of phrasing, bowing, and intonation, while recordings of their predecessors from a century ago evidence little precision or unanimity of this kind. Today, financial pressures often mean that rehearsal time is limited, but the pervasiveness of MSPs means that musicians can quickly establish an overriding idea about how things should sound, allowing them to spend their finite rehearsal time coordinating the decisions that make up that overall vision. This is an apt description of the way my colleagues and I function in our professional practice, and as a result, copying early-recorded string quartet recordings required us to adopt a radically different mind-set.

As early string quartet recordings are rarely copied, we were uncertain what the results of our efforts might sound like; most reproduction to date has been done in solo contexts, with some critics of the copying method claiming it is not possible with groups of musicians. However, our recordings demonstrate that copying early-recorded string quartets is indeed possible and can result in performances that are both artistically interesting and wholly unlike MSPs. Our copies also capture the wide diversity of stylistic practices heard on the originals, from the more freewheeling approach of the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet to the intricate consistency of the Klingler Quartet. We feel that our recorded copies also convey a sense of the humility and intimacy we associate with the originals. Copying the multi-layering resulting from players' individual lines moving in opposing directions while still connecting to a shared musical vision proved to be one of the most challenging aspects of this performance style to master. Our hope is that these copied quartet recordings will strike listeners as compelling and that they will serve to stimulate discussion about the kinds of chamber music performances we might create today, if, of course, we are open to letting go of modern demands for synchronisation.

### 5.4.18) Copy: *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1: IV *Presto* by Joseph Haydn as recorded by the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet, 1905

My recording with violinists Joan Berkhemer and Rada Ovcharova and cellist Willem Stam is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a18, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 4 – 4.2.1, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.2.1.

While some might call the Haagsche Toonkunskwartet's recording of the fourth movement of Haydn's *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1 'unprofessional,' I came to appreciate

the enthusiasm and zeal it conveys. First violinist Joan Berkhemer noted during our recording session the irony in the HTK playing with as much synchronisation as they could muster, while in a reverse process, we were attempting to play with as much dislocation as we could stomach. Recording our copy meant admitting a degree of chaos into our playing that none of us would have found comfortable in the context of a regular public concert. While copying the HTK's uncontrolled rushing and jarring dislocation, however, we came to the realisation that their performance communicates much more than 'sloppiness.' A modern string quartet performing in an utterly sloppy fashion would do so in a very different way compared to the HTK and would be unlikely to engage in constant rushing and exaggerated dislocation. We copy the HTK's ungraceful accentuation at the ends of phrases, such as in m. 16, which felt to us like accenting the wrong syllable of a word, given the rules we had internalized for performing 18th-century repertoires in the context of MSPs. We also reproduce the HTK's dislocation of the three-eighth-note motive, such as in m. 61, by timing our attacks differently and doggedly ignoring one another. The copied dislocation in m. 119 is particularly jarring, as is the blurring of notes by Berkhemer in m. 37 - 38. I recall him repeatedly practicing this passage during the recording session, rushing through his sixteenth notes in such a way as to blur a number of the pitches. We also copy the HTK's general rushing throughout, allowing the tempo to get faster and faster up to m. 140. Our whole performance results in a kind of 'snowball effect,' with rushing leading to further rushing as the tempo continues to increase. We also include the final 30 bars of the piece, which were cut from the HTK's recording. Here, we extrapolate from their style by rushing towards the final cadence, as well as jarringly dislocating the three-eighth-note motive in the final eight bars. Copying this performance gave us a sense of freedom and a mischievous joy in disregarding the ingrained rules of MSPs in Haydn's works.

### 5.4.19) Copy: *String Quartet* Op.11 no.1: II *Andante Cantabile* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, as recorded by the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet, 1905

My recording with violinists Berkhemer and Ovcharova and cellist Stam is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a19, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 4 – 4.2.2, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.2.2.

Although the HTK recorded only the middle section and the final bars of Tchaikovsky's *Andante Cantabile*, we extrapolate from their approach by applying uneven,

ornamental vibrato, heavy portamento, and dislocation to our recording of the entire movement. We discovered that Stam, the cellist, had to sit quite close to the lo-fi microphone in order for the cello pizzicato to be distinctly audible the way it was on the original recording. We concluded that the HTK's cellist likely sat closer than the other players to the recording horn in order to create this balance. Throughout our performance, we often play without vibrato, and when we do use the device, it is often slow and discontinuous. We focused on adding heavy portamenti to both melodic and accompanying voices, and while some listeners may find the frequency and weight of our slides to be exaggerated, we feel that our approach is closely related to that of the HTK. We also copy the HTK's dislocation of melody and accompaniment as well as their use of over- and under-dotting and agogic lengthening in melodic materials. We similarly feel that our exaggerated dislocation throughout is entirely in keeping with the HTK's approach. We also reproduce the incongruous intonation between the violins at m. 80, with second violinist Ovcharova playing her flats much flatter than first violinist Berkhemer. We then further extrapolate this approach, using flatter intonation in the second violin from m. 110. We imitate the HTK's arpeggiation of the pizzicato chords from m. 137, capturing the varying directions of arpeggiation between the second violin, viola, and cello. As is the case with Haydn's *Presto* as discussed above, we feel that a performance in this style could not be achieved by a modern quartet simply trying to perform in a 'sloppy' and unpolished manner. This is because such efforts would invariably involve an attempt to play less in tune and less together within an MSP framework, and as such would likely not end up using the wide-ranging tempo and rhythmic flexibilities and varied portamenti so consistently used by the HTK as part of their natural performing style. From copying the HTK's recordings, we learned just how far we could go in casting off the restraints of MSPs, while still achieving a communicative and meaningful performance.

### 5.4.20) Copy: *String Quartet,* Op. 127: I *Maestoso, Allegro* by L. van Beethoven as recorded by the Klingler Quartet, 1934 – 1935

My recording with violinists Berkhemer and Ovcharova and cellist Stam is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a20, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 4 – 4.3, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.3.

Listeners accustomed to neat and tidy, score-based performances of Beethoven's String Quartets are likely to experience some discomfort when listening to our copy of

the Klingler Quartet's recording of the first movement of Op. 127, particularly as a result of our use of dislocation and tempo modification. We discovered while recording that we were able to copy the Klingler Quartet's intimate, legato tone by using a slow, continuous bow speed while avoiding playing close to the bridge, and we copy the Klingler Quartet's heavy portamento by maintaining left hand contact with the string for the duration of slides.

The Klingler Quartet shapes the opening chords and the recurrence of this material throughout the movement with arpeggiation, which we reproduced. In the process, we discovered that we needed to individually arpeggiate our double stops in addition to entering in a staggered fashion in order to achieve this effect, much like a pianist rolling chords in an uneven manner. We felt that this approach to the opening chords created a sense of forward momentum when combined with light swelling on the quarter notes in m. 2 and 4. We also discovered that swaying with the upper body, to the left on the quarter notes and to the right on the eighth notes, helped us to copy this swelling while maintaining a sense of coordination, in spite of the arpeggiation and uneven pulse. We felt that the Klinger Quartet likely moved in a similar manner when playing in this passage, which may explain the slight swells.

The most difficult element to copy here, however, was the Klingler Quartet's multi-layeredness. We had to rehearse, record, and listen back numerous times to passages, such as m. 212 - 222 and m. 55 - 57, in order to internalize this layering. For example, in m. 55 or m. 215, where the second violinist pushes ahead while the first violinist slows at the same time, this pushing and pulling in opposite directions was difficult to maintain without having the performance come apart entirely. The layering we copy at m. 107, then, involves all four of us playing in different rhythmic directions: Stam (cello) plays the first beats of the bar early, my viola double stops are later, Ovcharova (second violin) rushes her eighth note figures, and Berkhemer (first violin) places his notes somewhere between the cello and viola lines. While learning to imitate the Klingler's layering was difficult, it began to feel intuitive once internalized, resulting in a rich complexity of polyphony with different voices pulling in different directions.

We also reproduce the Klingler Quartet's tempo areas for different themes, surging forward suddenly to new tempo areas, such as at m. 21 and m. 120, or slowing just as suddenly in m. 40 and m. 215. These sudden tempo changes were also difficult to internalize, especially the abrupt accelerandi, as in m. 21, where we initially struggled to push forward in a coherent way. In the end, however, it was through frequent repetition

with the 'anti-metronome' that we succeeded in mastering these sudden, counterintuitive shifts of tempo. Copying the Klingler Quartet gave us an opportunity to learn from musicians who created sweeping, communicative performances by meticulously applying their non-notated rhythmic and tempo flexibility, layering, and portamento. This process helped us explore ways in which Beethoven's canonic string quartets might be approached anew, outside the confines of MSPs.

**5.4.21) Copy: *String Quartet* KV 458: I *Allegro vivace assai* by W.A. Mozart as recorded by the Brüder-Post Quartett, 1921**

My recording with violinists Berkhemer and Ovcharova and cellist Stam is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a21, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 4 – 4.4, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.4.

Our copy of the Brüder-Post Quartett's recording of the first movement of the *String Quartet* KV 458 by Mozart sounds distinctly 'un-Mozartean' by the standards of MSPs, because of our localised rushing, dislocation, agogic lengthening, and heavy accents at ends of phrases. Although the Brüder-Post Quartett cut most of the recapitulation from their recording, we recorded the entire piece, extrapolating from their approach to the exposition when playing the recapitulation.

We discovered we could copy the Brüder-Post's understated and intimate timbre by using a slow, even bow speed and playing near the fingerboard. We copy the Brüder-Post's distinction between vibrated melodic material and unvibrated accompanying lines, while using the device more frequently in the violins than in the viola and cello. We also copy their heavy portamenti in the lyrical materials, such as in m. 95 and 98, as well as their heavy accents at the ends of phrases, such as in m. 24, at the ends of the motives from m. 114 - 116, and from m. 135 - 137. While our instincts, steeped in MSPs, prevented us from falling from one phrase into the next the way the Brüder-Post Quartett does, we do manage to copy their rushing through the ends of phrases, such as in m. 17 and m. 24. As a result, we capture the sense of haste and joviality conveyed by the Brüder-Post's rushing, but we end up sounding a little more constrained in our approach than we would have liked.

**5.4.22) Copy: *String Quartet* Op. 96 no. 12 *"The American"*: I *Allegro ma non troppo* by Antonin Dvořák as recorded by the Czech String Quartet, 1928**

My recording with violinists Berkhemer and Ovcharova and cellist Stam is in Appendix I - recording 5.4.a22, the analysis of the original recording is in Chapter 4 – 4.5, and the annotated score is in Appendix III – score 4.5.

Due to the consistency with which the Czech String Quartet uses extreme tempo modification, rhythmic flexibility, multi-layering, and heavy portamento, copying their recording meant learning their approach to particular themes, motives and sections, and then applying this throughout the movement. Berkhemer (first violin) copies Hoffman's wide and slow vibrato and his swelling in the middles of long notes, such as in m. 7 and 8, as well as his very heavy portamento, such as over the thirds in m. 86.

We also reproduce their approach to rhythmic flexibility on particular motives throughout, such as in m. 31, where the two eighth notes rush and the sixteenth notes on the second and fourth beats are played slowly. Further, we copy how the general shape of their performance is created through tempo modification, slowing drastically into the second subject group in the exposition in m. 44 and in the recapitulation in m. 156, as well as rushing forward from m. 88 - 95. However, it required detailed rehearsal to master some of the more sudden starts and stops, like in the fugato section from m. 96. These jagged tempo flexibilities eventually became a natural part of our performance, and early on we were forced to abandon any desire to keep a continuous, underlying pulse. We also copy the Czech Quartet's multi-layering in m. 123 by using individualized articulation and timing in each voice. To reproduce this layering, each of us needed to strongly commit to our own direction, while still listening to the group and relating our material to the other voices. Copying the Czech String Quartet allowed us to experience the great detail inherent in their un-notated approach to tempo and rhythm, as well as the consistency with which this approach is used in order to give shape to motives and themes. This is interesting in light of the Czech Quartet's relationship to the composer, revealing how a more literal approach to the notation as desired in MSPs can end up taking performers farther away from the very performance practices with which Dvořák would have been familiar.

## 5.5) Conclusion

Throughout the process of creating this recorded portfolio, my colleagues and I were challenged by the unpredictability of early recordings. As neat and tidy, score-based music-making was nowhere in evidence on the recordings we copied, we were able to focus fully on learning to use the flexibility of tempo and rhythm, multi-layering, portamento, ornamentation, vibrato, and timbre that we *did* hear on those recordings. In the process, we had to be open to the musical, personal, and professional vulnerability resulting from creating performances that sound aesthetically strange and musically unprofessional in the context of MSPs. This meant discarding the attempt to accurately convey the notated score and our agreed-upon understandings of how such scores should sound.

One of the greatest challenges we faced was to inhabit nuances of rhythmic flexibility, where early-recorded performers rush and slow unpredictably, all while modifying note lengths to suit the character of their performance. In the realm of MSPs where we earn our living as musicians, non-notated slowing is primarily used to illustrate structural points of emphasis, while non-notated rushing is practically banned as an expressive device. Reproducing early-recorded rhythmic and tempo flexibilities meant understanding them on an intellectual level before internalizing them to the point where they became physical habits. The replication process I followed has much in common with the way many jazz musicians transcribe, rehearse, and memorise solos from recordings. When multiple musicians copy a recording together, a complex relationship emerges between their musical voices and the original recording. Throughout the process, our goal was to learn how to perform in an early-recorded style in real time, and as such, achieving the overall expressive effect of the original recordings took precedence over the detailed accuracy of our copying. I believe that most of the reproductions and style extrapolations in the portfolio have captured the general spirit of the early-recorded performance styles I analysed. I hope in turn that listeners will be affected by these performances in the same way they might be affected by early recordings. It is the listener's response to the recorded portfolio, however, that will ultimately reveal whether my attempts have succeeded, and whether I have convincingly demonstrated that early-recorded style can live on in modern performances.

## Conclusion

*Context of Current Practice*

My recorded portfolio, precisely because of its expressive qualities, does not conform to modern standards for performance. Rather, its value is derived from the attempt to breathe new life into the distant, century-old practices heard on early recordings. In creating the portfolio, I was deeply affected by my physical, psychological, and emotional connections to these sounding documents and, as a result, early-recorded performance style became an integral part of my identity as a musician. Where early in my career, experimentation with elements of early-recorded style provoked scorn and derision, and perhaps even held back my professional advancement, today my growing knowledge of these same elements allows me to communicate music differently and with a strong sense of moment-to-moment gesture.

As Robert Philip, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, and Nicholas Cook have argued, early-recorded practices are largely excluded from Western Art Music's (WAM) Mainstream Performance Practices (MSPs), because they run counter to the 'neatness and tidiness,' regularity of pulse, and clarity of notated detail and structure that are viewed as necessary elements of current professional performance practices.[292] Consequently, because early-recorded practices are excluded from MSPs, creating new performance practices that copy them will be viewed by some as laughable or unprofessional. What this project set out to demonstrate, however, is that the very elements derided as 'unprofessional' on early recordings—elements such as rhythmic and tempo flexibility, portamento, vibrato, pitch ornamentation, and multi-layering—can themselves be the foundations for different kinds of performance practices: practices that break the constraints of MSPs.

Today's MSPs are restrictive in nature, requiring adherence to the detail and structure of notated scores and agreed-upon understandings for how repertoires should sound, all while conforming to professional standards of neatness and tidiness. Hence, cultivating divergent performance practices can be seen as a desirable goal. I have argued that MSPs are a broad, international range of practices (to which parts of my own professional practice belong) centred on a canonic repertoire housed in a 'museum of musical works' (to paraphrase Lydia Goehr), along with strong agreed-upon

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[292] Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, 250. Leech-Wilkinson, "Recordings and Histories of Performance Styles," 252. Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 3.

understandings for how these repertoires should sound.

MSPs are sufficiently broad, however, to include substantial parts of current Historically Informed (HIP) and Recordings Informed (RIP) Performance practices. Specifically, the latter practices adhere to regularity of pulse in the context of *tactus* and 'rhetorical performance' and by what I have referred to as a 'pick-and-choose' approach to early-recorded practices, where some elements are used as long as they do not disrupt the norms of MSPs. Performers who use features from early recordings such as portamento, dislocation, and tempo flexibility, albeit in MSP-conforming ways, end up remaining well within the range of currently acceptable practices. Many times, research into early recordings retains a bias towards MSPs, as for example, when researchers dismiss practices they find displeasing, distasteful, or jarring on historical recordings by pointing to the advanced age of the performer in question, period technological limitations, or the nervousness historical performers are said to have experienced in recording environments. Nonetheless, the collective weight of thousands of early recordings, and the radically different performance approaches they preserve, are much harder to dismiss as instances of technological or performer deficiencies. By picking and choosing those elements that suit MSP standards, RIP ends up presenting historical performance styles in ways that are both palatable and uniform, while ignoring the more extreme and idiosyncratic elements heard on early recordings. The relatively safe nature of such an approach thus provides a warrant for more exact copying of early recordings, according to what I have called the 'all-in' method, as well as for more detailed study into the diversity of performance practices these recordings convey.

What early recordings fundamentally reveal is a wide gap between the performance practices of a century ago and those of today. Acknowledging this gap means questioning current beliefs about conforming to composers' intentions, our understandings of period texts, and prevailing, agreed-upon ideas for how certain repertoires should sound. While many contemporary musicians claim fidelity to composers' intentions, numerous recordings by these same composers and the musicians of their era are often ignored when they conflict with the parameters of MSPs and audience expectations. Many of today's musicians clearly prefer to avoid the risks associated with playing in ways familiar to the very composers to whom they pledge fidelity in order to conform to MSPs. At the same time, early recordings also reveal a gap between our understandings of period writings on music, on one hand, and the actual musical sounds of the period on the other. In previous chapters, I have highlighted

numerous examples of composers and performers broadly ignoring their own written instructions for performance, for example, Lionel Tertis's recording of *Sunset* or Oskar Nedbal's recording of *Romanticky Kus*. Systematic analysis of early recordings demonstrates that wide-ranging, radically-differentiated performances of canonic works were the norm a century ago: a state of affairs that is wholly antithetical to our shared understandings for how certain works and repertoires should sound within the context of MSPs.

*Method and Approach*

In order to circumvent the restrictiveness of MSPs and close the gap between current and early-recorded practices, I formulated the following research question: how might viola and string quartet performances in early-recorded style be brought about today? In order to answer this question, I studied relevant literatures on early-recorded style, as well as other attempts to incorporate this style into contemporary performances. I also carried out historical and biographical research on early-recorded performers, contacted collectors and transfer engineers, and delved into recording archives. Most importantly, however, I created my own performances in early-recorded style by using the all-in method of copying historical viola and string quartet recordings. This involved the detailed analysis of early recordings and resulted in richly annotated scores, which were then used to imbed as many elements as possible from these recordings into my own performance practice. At the same time, I also adapted my physical approach to the instrument, bringing it more in line with early-20th-century parameters. This helped me learn to use a wider range of techniques than might otherwise have been possible, including portamento, ornamental vibrato, tempo modification and rhythmic flexibility, and pitch ornamentation. I then imparted this all-in copying method, along with the aforementioned techniques, to my colleagues in order to be able to apply it in chamber music contexts, resulting in a recorded portfolio that includes solo, viola/piano and string quartet recordings.

I also used a lo-fi recording method to create the recorded portfolio. This recording technique has many advantages, including its similarity to acoustic, recorded sound, and its non-transparency as a medium. Importantly, it eliminates intermodulation distortion, which frequently afflicts mid-range frequencies in music recorded with contemporary microphones, resulting in the flattening of a great deal of local gestural information conveyed by the mid-frequency range in favour of a more highly defined picture of a broader frequency range. Lo-fi recording thus helped me focus more on the

moment-to-moment, gestural aspects of performance, while de-emphasising my more habitual focus on elements such as purity of sound and precision of intonation. The process of recording itself was also very different from that which typically characterizes conventional, contemporary, hi-fi recording environments, given that my recordings were made using long, live takes in small rooms. As such, the recording process yielded significant insights, both artistic and reflective, into how early recordings were made and how the styles they convey might be brought to life today.

Accompanying this recorded portfolio is a written thesis consisting of five chapters. In Chapter One, I dealt with the restricted role of the performer in the context of MSPs. I noted that this role was defined by its relationship to current conceptions of *Werktreue* and preferences for neatness and tidiness, rhythmic regularity, and highly detailed and structural playing. I also discussed how these forces influence both HIP and RIP performances today. I then juxtaposed this paradigm with 19th-century textual descriptions of a more performer-centred conception of *Werktreue,* whereby players were expected to take on a creative role on par with that of composers: a role that *necessitated* radical alterations to the rhythm, detail, and structure of those composers' scores. I then connected these 19th-century descriptions with the practical realities heard on early recordings and argued that an all-in approach to copying early recordings could circumvent the limitations of MSPs, thereby elevating and emancipating the role of the performer.

In Chapter Two, I discussed how mainstream hi-fi recording paradigms work against the all-in approach to copying early recordings on both technological and artistic levels, through the loss of gestural information caused by intermodulation distortion, and the resulting focus on precision of intonation, synchronisation, and unblemished purity of tone. I then considered how the lo-fi approach that I developed with Geoffrey Miles was used to create the recorded portfolio and how this approach supported the performance practices I copied from early recordings: practices that were similarly oriented towards moment-to-moment gesture and away from precision, synchronicity, and purity of tone.

Chapter Three was devoted to the detailed analysis of early viola recordings. I studied recordings by all violists known to have made solo and viola/piano duo recordings prior to 1930. This analysis demonstrated the huge distance between these performances and those shaped by MSPs in terms of rhythmic and tempo flexibility, portamento, vibrato, pitch ornamentation, and multi-layering. Far from treating these as

mere superficial adornments or sloppy mistakes, I discussed how these techniques led to the blurring of structural boundaries, wide fluctuations in pulse, frequent de-synchronisation, and the alteration of notated rhythms and pitches, thereby fundamentally transgressing contemporary notions of *Werktreue*, which privileges the parameters of neatness and tidiness, steadiness of pulse, and clarity of detail and structure. These analyses also substantiated differences and commonalities in style between individual players, with Nedbal and Arthur Post connected by their use of ornamental vibrato, dark timbre, and heavy portamento, and Léon Van Hout and Pierre Monteux sharing quick vibrato, varied portamento, and radical dislocation. Further, I explored how Tertis closely replicated the wide vibrato, heavy and frequent portamento, and rich timbre of many singers of the period. The wide-ranging performance practices examined in this chapter can be described as variable, erratic, and highly personal, thereby illustrating the stark contrast between early-recorded performances and their much more uniform, predictable, and palatable modern HIP and RIP counterparts.

Chapter Four dealt with the detailed analysis of five recordings by four of the earliest-recorded string quartets. Here, I examined the wide range of stylistic approaches taken by the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet and the Brüder-Post, Klingler, and Czech Quartets to elements such as multi-layering, tempo and rhythmic flexibility, portamento, and vibrato. As in Chapter Three, the analysis revealed an enormous gap between these ensembles' performances and those of today and a dizzying array of approaches that constituted the language of early-recorded style. The Klingler and Post Quartets use frequent agogic lengthening, the Klingler and Czech Quartets use highly-consistent rhythmic and tempo flexibilities, and the HTK take a more risky, haphazard approach to rushing.

In Chapter Five I examined the physical parameters of viola playing in the early-20th century, as well as the adaptations I made to my own practice in order to emulate this performance style, including moving the instrument towards the center of the neck and adopting a 'Franco-Belgian' bow grip. I also discussed the process of making the recorded portfolio, including my all-in copies of early recordings as well as my extrapolations from early-recorded style in works for which there was no historical original to copy. In order to break free of the bounds of MSPs and reclaim a creative role more on par with the composers of the works I performed, I focused specifically on stylistic parameters such as rhythm and tempo flexibility, ornamentation, vibrato, portamento, and multi-layering, allowing these techniques to take precedence over

notated detail, structure, and rhythm, along with modern preferences for neat, tidy, and deferential professionalism.

Together, the written thesis and recorded portfolio demonstrate how copying early-recorded performances that are idiosyncratic or extreme, in full and without selectivity, opens up new paths for violists, other string players, and chamber groups, who wish to explore radically alternative approaches to WAM repertoires well outside the confines of MSPs, or to narrow the gap between their performances and those of the late-19th and early-20th century, or, as in my case, both. The all-in approach to copying early recordings is as useful for challenging the default parameters of MSPs and reimagining how WAM repertoires sound as it is for rejuvenating lost historical playing styles: copying early-recorded rhythmic and tempo flexibilities breaks our habits of playing with a steady pulse and the structural ordering of sub-phrases and phrases within larger sections; portamento and vibrato disrupt modern preoccupations with precision of intonation and unblemished quality of tone; pitch ornamentation can be a gateway to the further erosion of modern conceptions of *Werktreue*; and multi-layering makes neat and tidy vertical synchronisation nearly impossible. As the goals of this project were to revitalise historical performing approaches and find an alternative to MSPs, in the next section, I summarize the central elements of early-recorded performance style, as demonstrated by my analyses, for other musicians wishing to pursue similar aims.

*Elements of Early-Recorded Style*

First, wide-ranging un-notated tempo flexibility was shown to be present generally, demonstrating that performers of the era often used multiple groupings of irreulgar tempi across single works or movements. Rhythmic detail was also often performed quite differently than notated, with notes under- or over-dotted or played with swing and quicker note values shortened and sped up.

Second, portamento was used frequently in a highly audible manner. Kai Köpp's portamento list proved a helpful tool for labelling, deciphering, describing, and playing the myriad portamento techniques heard on the recordings studied. While many of the portamenti on these recordings seem to result from routine changes of position combined with legato slurring, I suggested that others were added for deliberate effect. In many cases, such as on the recordings of Tertis and Van Hout, awkward choices of fingering were shown to create portamento where simpler non-portamento fingerings would not, pointing to these players' conscious use of the device.

Third, the recordings studied also demonstrate a great deal of variation in the use

of vibrato: while Tertis uses continuous vibrato, for example, violists like Nedbal and Post, and the HTK, Czech, and Brüder-Post Quartets, all use the device in an ornamental, uneven manner. While vibrato is a regular part of these performers' practices, however, the pitch variation is often small and uneven by modern standards. In my recorded portfolio, I was committed to capturing these varied approaches to vibrato.

Fourth, ornamentation in the form of altered and added pitches is present on recordings by Tertis, Nedbal, and Van Hout. Examples of this technique also vary, from Tertis's reworked cadenza for Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* and his individual arpeggiation in Bach's *Chaconne,* to Nedbal's grace notes in Schubert's *Du Bist die Ruh*. These uses of ornamentation show a flexible attitude with regard to notated scores, illustrating the ways in which individual, personalised performances of works were central to the style of the period.

Fifth, and finally, multi-layering played an important role in both the viola/piano duo and string quartet recordings studied. Multiple voices often moved in rhythmically divergent ways, illustrating the contrapuntal nature of the musical texture and the individual direction of its constitutive musical voices. In order to achieve this kind of layering, a high degree of de-synchronisation is required, as demonstrated on the Klingler Quartet's recording of the first movement of Beethoven's *String Quartet* Op. 127.

While these early-recorded practices diverge radically from modern MSPs, they also result in a sense of moment-to-moment vivacity, through which performances take on more evocative, gestural qualities. The performers on these recordings sound as though they accept or possibly even embrace the technical faults and asynchrony that result from extreme risk-taking, for example, drastic rushing and slowing, giving their performances a distinctly 'live' quality. The deeper one delves into the recordings studied here, the less these practices sound random or unrehearsed, and the more they begin to resemble deliberate and studied performance strategies. The detailed, all-in copying process helped me to internalize such performance strategies, resulting in the closeness of my recorded portfolio to early-recorded style.

*Contributions*

The main contribution of the present study is that it is the first, documented attempt at the all-in copying of early-recorded performances in viola solo, viola/piano duo, and string quartet repertoires. While many have expressed doubts about whether multi-performer copying of early recordings was even possible, my portfolio of 28

recordings demonstrates that it is indeed both a possible and viable method. These recordings also demonstrate how early-recorded style can be used to substantially expand the range of WAM performance practices. For example, my extrapolations from early-recorded style (recordings of works for which there is no historical original to copy) show how this approach can inform personal and unconventional performances that diverge from MSPs in the same significant ways as their early-recorded models. The portfolio also shows that, through a combination of research and practice, early-recorded style can be given new life in contemporary performances in ways that sound intimate, personalised, and expressive.

The written thesis also sheds new light on both the commonalities and wide-ranging diversities of early-recorded viola and string quartet performance practices. On one hand, turn-of-the-century performers played in ways that were extreme, idiosyncratic, and wholly lacking in the kind of uniformity common within MSPs; on the other, this diversity flourished despite, or perhaps precisely because of, a shared musical language that included un-notated rhythmic and tempo flexibility, portamento, vibrato, pitch ornamentation, and multi-layering.

This study also contributes to existing literature on historical viola and string quartet recordings. It is the first detailed, comprehensive analysis of early-recorded viola playing and, as such, contributes to a general understanding of viola playing at the beginning of the 20th century through detailed descriptions of the performance styles of Nedbal, Van Hout, Post, and Tertis. The overlap in performance style between early-recorded violists and singers of the period that I have demonstrated also adds to our understanding of how string players and singers influenced one another—providing support for the frequent exhortations in historical treatises for string players to copy singers. My detailed analysis of the HTK's pioneering recordings and a selection of recordings by the Brüder-Post, Klingler, and Czech Quartets is also the first of its kind to be undertaken, thereby adding to our understanding of the diversity of approaches taken by early-recorded string quartets.

Finally, my rehabilitation of the concept of *Werktreue,* putting into practice the recent re-thinking of the concept undertaken by scholars like Mary Hunter, connects seemingly contradictory 19th-century descriptions of the centrality of the performer, on one hand, and their fidelity to composers and works, on the other, to early-recorded practices.[293] I have argued and demonstrated that adopting early-recorded style can be a

[293] Hunter, "To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer."

step towards re-imagining rather than abandoning the concept of *Werktreue,* as this style was predicated upon the notion that 19th-century performers enacted their fidelity by creating altered and highly personalised versions of composers' works—rendering performance a much more co-creative and performer-centered act than it is today.

*Limitations and Future Directions*

One of the key limitations of this study, however, involves the sheer quantity of recordings that could have been discussed, with only a small part of Tertis's large recorded output and a select handful of early string quartet recordings being analysed, copied, and extrapolated. While my overview of early-recorded viola playing is quite thorough in nature, examining a much wider diversity of early string quartet recordings could have allowed me to draw more nuanced conclusions about the quartet playing of the period. For example, although my selection covered some of the earliest-recorded groups across diverse national origins, due to constraints of both time and scope, I was forced to leave out quartets connected with the Franco-Belgian, American, and English traditions, in whose recordings divergent approaches to vibrato and rhythmic and tempo flexibility can be heard. Further analysis of a broader range of early-recorded string quartet and chamber music recordings is thus needed, particularly where the ecology and idiosyncrasies of ensemble playing in the early-recorded era are concerned. That being said, any such wide-ranging analysis would inevitably find frequent and varied use of elements such as rhythmic and tempo flexibility, portamento, vibrato, pitch ornamentation, and multi-layering, while the copying and extrapolation of a wider sample of early string quartet recordings would likely lead to similarly artistically meaningful results.

Given that my recorded portfolio demonstrates the viability of copying early multi-performer recordings, further avenues for future work include the all-in copying of late-19th- and early-20th-century orchestral and opera recordings. Having observed the close connection between early-recorded singing and viola playing, working together with singers to copy early recordings and then extrapolating this approach to works such as Brahms's *Zwei Gesänge* Op. 91 and Frank Bridge's *Three Songs for Medium Voice, Viola and Piano* could also provide valuable, further insights into this historical relationship. Where the early-recorded viola in particular is concerned, a broader analysis of Tertis's recorded output is needed, including some important turn-of-the-century works he recorded such as Frederick Delius's *Violin Sonata* no. 2, Edvard Grieg's *Violin Sonata* no. 3, and Ernö von Dohnányi's *Sonata* Op. 21. Tertis's recorded output of chamber music is also worthy

of further study, such as his recordings of Felix Mendelssohn's *Piano Trio* no. 2, Franz Schubert's *Piano Trio* no. 1, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *'Kegelstatt' Trio* KV 498 with violinist Albert Sammons and pianists Ethyl Hobday and William Murdoch. Subsequent studies of this material would allow for greater insight into Tertis's performance practices as a chamber musician. As part of this project, previously undiscovered recordings by Van Hout and the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet also came to light, and historical catalogues show that both Van Hout and the HTK made more recordings now considered lost. A continued search for these catalogued, but lost, early viola and string quartet recordings is thus important, given the wealth of information they might contain.

And finally, as my recorded copies were limited by working with digital technology, albeit of the lo-fi sort, repurposing or recreating historical recording equipment in order to press 78rpm shellac records could add further information to the copying process, including a deeper understanding of the conditions under which early recordings were made. Amy Blier-Carruthers undertook just such a pioneering project with students from the Royal College of Music in an orchestral context by making wax cylinders.[294] Similarly, the Public Broadcasting Service in the United States created the 'American Epic' series about the history of recorded 'roots music,' in which they engaged contemporary performers to make 78rpm records.[295] While simply using historical recording technologies can lead to useful insights, however, further research using the all-in copying method where both technology *and* performance style are concerned is needed in order to attain a deeper understanding of the processes and practices of the early-recorded era.

My copying of early recordings questions underlying assumptions about how canonic WAM repertoires can or 'should' be performed. The recorded portfolio implies that a far greater range of possibilities than those currently permitted within the context of MSPs should be considered. As the early recordings I copy are vestiges of 19th-century historical performance practices, and as such are connected to the performing traditions familiar to many canonic composers, the styles they capture deserve to be taken seriously by WAM's major institutions, including conservatories, orchestras, music

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[294] Amy Blier-Carruthers, Aleks Kolkowski and Duncan Miller, "The Art and Science of Acoustic Recordings: Re-enacting Arthur Nikisch and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra's landmark 1913 recording of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony," *The Science Museum Group Journal*, 3 (April 21, 2015), accessed July 23, 2018, http://journal.sciencemuseum.ac.uk/browse/issue-03/the-art-and-science-of-acoustic-recording/. Similarly, pianist Inja Stanovich has undertaken a research project focused on making recordings with wax cylinders. Inja Stanovich, "The Creative Processes in (Re)construction of Early Recordings," accessed May 30, 2019, http://tcpm2019.fcsh.unl.pt/inja-stanovic/.

[295] "American Epic," PBS, accessed July 23, 2018, http://www.pbs.org/wnet/american-epic/.

competitions, and record labels. The gatekeepers of these institutions would do well to embrace performers who explore the ways in which the historical realities of early recordings clash with contemporary performance expectations. Conservatoires too should do more to encourage interest amongst students in the musical heritage represented by early recordings, thereby fostering a greater understanding of the history of our current performance practices. Better yet, they could give students the option of exploring early-recorded style in their performances as a way of diversifying their musical vision. While some conservatoires have dedicated 'early music' programs, such trajectories tend to focus on playing historical instruments and repertoires from the pre-1800 era. Such programs should be expanded to include a focus on the era of early recordings where actual sonic traces of historical performances can serve as a guide for inhabiting past performance styles.

The culture of WAM performance practice at large would benefit from making more space for performances with different aims than those represented by MSPs. The growth of an early-recordings-inspired performance style can facilitate connections between audiences and performers, especially if concerts of canonic repertoires are allowed to become unpredictable and surprising events. The personalised, intimate practices heard on early recordings would fit well in numerous settings in which WAM is performed, such as group-muses and salon concerts for example.[296] Indeed, these performance settings are broadly similar to many of those encountered by 19th-century performers and lend themselves readily to the more intimate, communicative, and individualized performance style of the early-recorded era. Given the recent growth of freely available, highly-edited recorded music, a return to a more intimate, personal style of music-making, one emphasising human-to-human contact, might inspire larger numbers of enthusiastic listeners.

While studying early-recorded performances is a celebration of our shared history, there is a growing danger that such nostalgic connections with the past might be seized upon in order to bolster ascendant far-right nationalistic currents. The growing interest in historical fashions, hairstyles, home gardening, and local farmer's markets already demonstrates a certain contemporary nostalgia for cultures of the past. However, this kind of nostalgia has become increasingly associated with the nationalism,

[296] Group-muses are informal house concerts popularized in the United States, where WAM chamber music is played, and for which the host provides a venue and sends out public invitations on social media. The audience is expected to bring their own food and drinks and provide donations to pay the performing musicians.

xenophobia, racism, and sexism of far-right political movements. For example, the revival of literary Romanticism in Germany has been associated with anti-democratic ideology, a perceived superiority over non-Western cultures, and the idealization of strongman leadership.[297] At the same time, populist political movements like Thierry Baudet's Forum for Democracy in The Netherlands promote naive nostalgia for a Romantic European past, untroubled by immigration, refugees, multiculturalism, women's liberation, or LGBTQI rights. Baudet, a pianist of some skill, is often photographed at his instrument, and he frequently speaks at length about canonic composers like Franz Schubert, connecting 19th-century WAM with what he terms the "greater individualism and freedom of the past."[298] The early-recorded performance style that I pursue likewise advocates for increased individualism, through a more performer-centred paradigm, and for more freedom, through the use of multi-layering, de-synchronisation, and rhythmic and tempo flexibility. As such, the romanticising of a more 'authentic' past by Baudet and others, one that happened to be more mono-cultural and less democratic, can be easily tied to the work I have done on performance practice. I however strongly disavow this kind of nostalgia for the Western Europe of a century ago, which was the site of inequality, discrimination, war, and substandard medical care (to say nothing of dentistry). My use of early recordings is not meant to romanticise or return to the past, but rather to create more invigorating performances for diverse, contemporary audiences.

At the other end of the spectrum from those who promote nostalgia for the past are those who believe uncritically in human progress, as illustrated by psychologist Steven Pinker's statement that, "[t]here can be no question of which was the greatest era for culture; the answer has to be today, until it is superseded by tomorrow."[299] This ideal can be found amongst WAM practitioners, many of whom believe that our performance practices are on an upward trajectory, becoming ever cleaner and tidier—and thus closer to the intentions of canonic composers. This view posits that early recordings are documents of the less-than-perfect music-making of ignorant, past generations.

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[297] Philip Oltermann, "Germany's Romantic literary revival built on Blade Runner and seven deadly sins," *The Guardian*, November 10th, 2017, accessed December 27, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/10/compromises-compromise-merkel-generation-reinvents-german-romanticism.

[298] Arjen Korteweg, "Wie nog twijfelt aan de potentie van Forum voor Democratie was niet op het partijcongres," *Volkskrant*, November 25th 2017, accessed December 27, 2017, https://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/wie-nog-twijfelt-aan-de-potentie-van-forum-voor-democratie-was-niet-op-het-partijcongres~a4541604/.

[299] Steven Pinker, *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress* (New York: Viking Press, 2018), 261.

However, despite this faith in continued human progress, technological advancement is increasingly surpassing the skill of performing musicians today, all while we are being outpaced by the perfection of digital recordings. What will be left of our practice in the future if our focus is on ever-increasing degrees of neatness and tidiness? The early decades of the 20th century were the last moments in Western history where human-to-human musical contact was unaffected by recorded music. This is why the recordings of the era evidence personal, human, and thus imperfect, performance approaches. My work with early recordings is meant to reinvigorate music-making of this kind, by juxtaposing human-centred playing with the demands for technical perfection as driven by technology in WAM performance today, and by questioning assumptions about progress in our performance practices. Essentially, I aim to forge possible paths for the future that accommodate individualised musical communication, while questioning both reactionary nostalgia for the past, on one hand, and unbridled optimism about our hyper-connected, digitally-saturated culture of media consumption, on the other.

What this project has made clear to me is that creating performances today in early-recorded style requires both detailed study and determined effort. Once learned, the style can be used with a great deal of personal creativity, in ways that both reveal and narrow gaps between current and past practices and offer a radical alternative to MSPs. While I have internalized this style, there are still numerous professional contexts in which I refrain from using elements of it. In such cases, I often feel as though something is missing from my performances, and I look forward to those occasions when, with like-minded colleagues, I can allow myself free rein. One of the greatest transformations in my practice as a result of this project has been a newfound ability and desire to prioritize moment-to-moment narrativity (the need to tell a story) over pre-planned conceptions and adherence to the printed page. Learning from early recordings is rather like learning to speak a foreign language: it is a process where, through trial, error, and cultural immersion, one slowly gains one's footing in the unfamiliar. In the end, however, meaning ultimately emerges out of the physical effort needed to perform. As Tertis put it: "[T]he overcoming of difficulties, the struggle with the recalcitrant instrument, the wringing of beauty from contraptions of wood, hair, gut and metal—all this is something that makes life worth living."[300] My experience has taught me that this struggle can indeed lead to a richer performance practice and a deeper understanding of our place within our shared musical history.

[300] Tertis, *My Viola and I*, *Foreward.*

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Grieg, Edvard. *Jeg elsker dig.*
Recorded by Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday in April 1922. Vocalion R-6096 (02757) (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis the Complete Vocalion Recordings (1919 – 24)*. 80219-2 (CD), 2006.

Haydn, Joseph. *String Quartet* Op. 54 no.1, *IV Presto.*
Recorded by the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet in 1905. Pathé 30445 (Wax cylinder).

Recorded by the Budapest String Quartet on April 24, 1935. HMV DB 2905-06(2EA 3608-11) (78rpm).

Ireland, John. *The Holy Boy.*
Recorded by Lionel Tertis in November 1921. Vocalion K-05144 (03300) (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis the Complete Vocalion Recordings (1919 - 24).* 80219-2 (CD), 2006.

Joachim, Joseph. *Romance in C.*
Recorded by Joseph Joachim in 1903. Gramophone and Typewriter 218y/047906 (78rpm). Reissued on Testament, *The Great Violinists: Recordings from 1900 – 1913.* 749677132323 (CD), 2004.

Kalivoda, Jan, *Notturno* Op. 186 no. 1.
Recorded by Arthur Post, year unknown (78rpm).

Mahler, Gustav. *Symphony no. 3.*
Recorded by Hanna Shybayeva and the Ysaÿe Trio in 2015. Dutch Record Company, DRC 15101501 (CD).

—. *Symphony no. 4.*
Recorded by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg in 1939. Broadcast AVRO Hilversum. Reissued Grammofono 2000, 78844 (CD), 1998.

Recorded by the Mahler Chamber Orchestra conducted by Daniel Harding in 2004. Virgin Classics, 724354566523 (CD).

Meyerbeer, Giacomo. *Les Huguenots: Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine (Bianca al par).*
Recorded by Albert Vaguet and Pierre Monteux in 1903. Pathé 3844 (29792) (Wax Cylinder). Reissued on Marston, *Meyerbeer on Record 1899– 1913.* 53009-2 (CD), 2009.

Recorded by Andrej Labinsky and N.T. Manasevich, conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler in 1905. Gramophone Co. 2-22775 (2975L)(78rpm). Available at https://www.russian records.com/details.php?image_id=46160 (accessed June 13, 2019).

Recorded by Enrico Caruso and The Victor Orchestra on November 7, 1909. Victor 88210 (C-8351) (78rpm). Reissued on Naxos, *Enrico Caruso Complete Recordings, Vol. 4.* 8110719 (CD), 2001.

Recorded by Leo Lementyev in September, 1909. Gramophone Co. 022130(406s) (78rpm). Available at https://www.russian-records.com/details.php?image_id=23822 (accessed June 13, 2019).

Recorded by Dmitry Smirnov on October 15, 1913. Gramophone Co. 022338 (2857c) (78rpm). Available at https://www.russian-records.com/details.php?image_id=46143 (accessed June 13, 2019).

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *Concerto in G Major* KV 216.
Recorded by Gilles Apap in 2011. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmjGDBWZZFw (accessed March 18, 2018).

—. *Le Nozze di Figrao, Voi Che Sapete.*
Recorded by Adelina Patti in December 1905. Gramophone 03051(78rpm). Reissued on Nimbus Records, *The Era of Adelina Patti.* NI 7840/41 (CD), 1993.

—. *Sinfonia Concertante* KV 364.
Recorded by Albert Sammons, Lionel Tertis and the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hamilton Harty on April 30, 1933. Columbia DX 478/81 (CAX 6824/31) (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis the Complete Columbia Recordings.* 80216-2 (CD), 2005.

—. *String Quartet* KV 458, *I Allegro vivace assai.*
Recorded by the Brüder-Post Quartett in 1921. Parlophone, (78rpm).

Nedbal, Oskar. *Romanticky Kus,* Op. 18.
Recorded by Oskar Nedbal in 1910 (78rpm). Reissued on Pearl, *The Recorded Viola Volume I.* 9148 (CD), 1995.

Recorded by Michal Kaňka and Jaromír Klepáč. On Panton, *Famous Czech Miniatures for Cello and Piano.* 710370-2 (CD), 1996.

Schubert, Franz. *Ave Maria.*
Recorded by John McCormack and Fritz Kreisler on March 25, 1914. Victrola 8033. Reissued on Pearl, *The Kreisler/McCormack Duets.*9315 (CD), 1991.

—. *Du Bist die Ruh,* Op. 59 no. 3.
Recorded by Johanna Gadski on November 11, 1903. Victor 85025 (C-696/1) (78rpm). Reissued on Marston, *The Complete Johanna Gadski (Volume 1: The Victor Recordings 1903 - 1909).* 52002-2 (CD), 1997.

Recorded by Lilli Lehmann and Fritz Lindemann on July 2, 1907. Columbia S 9001-B (XB 3137) (78rpm). Reissued on Nimbus, *LilliLehmann.* NI7921 (CD), 2005.

Recorded by Elena Gerhardt and Arthur Nikisch on June 30, 1911. HMV 043201(5113f) (78rpm). Reissued on EMI, *A Centenary Tribute to Elena Gerhardt.* HLM 1436031 (CD), 1983.

Recorded by Karl Erb and Eduard Künneke in December, 1911. Odeon X 9854 (XB 5456) (78rpm).

Recorded by Oskar Nedbal in 1911 (78rpm). Reissued on Pearl, *The Recorded Viola volume I.* 9148 (CD), 1995.

Recorded by Julia Culp and Otto Bake in 1915. Anker Record 04853 (E 9 9509-II) (78rpm). Reissued on Symposium, *An Anthology of Song vol. 6.* 1427 (CD), 2013.

Recorded by John McCormack and Edwin Schneider on September 4, 1924. HMV DB 766 (Cc5030-2) (78rpm). Reissued on Pearl, *John McCormack – Lieder and Art Songs*. 9343 (CD), 1993.

Recorded by Lionel Tertis and Arnold Bax on June 17, 1927. Columbia D 1 1637 (WA 7515) (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis the Complete Columbia Recordings*. 80216-2 (CD), 2005.

Schumann, Robert. *Abendlied*, Op. 85 no. 12.
Recorded by Léon van Hout, year unknown (78rpm).

Recorded by Eugène Ysaÿe and Camille De Creus on December 24, 1912. Columbia (36515) (78rpm). Reissued on Symposium Records, *Eugène Ysaÿe*. 1045 (CD), 1986.

Recorded by Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday in April, 1920. Vocalion R-6078 (01769) (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis the Complete Vocalion Recordings (1919 – 24)*. 80219-2 (CD), 2006.

Strauss, Richard. *Also Sprach Zarathustra*.
Recorded by the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by Richard Strauss on June 13, 1944. VEP Deutsche Schallplatten Berlin (LP). Reissued on Preiser Records, *Richard Strauss Dirigiert Eigene Tondichtungen vol. 2*. 90216 (CD), 1994.

Recorded by the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hartmut Haenchen in 2004. Laserlight Classics 24418/1 (CD).

Tchaikovsky, Pyotr, Illyich. *нет только тот, кто знал*.
Recorded by Zoia Rosovsky and Lionel Tertis in May 1921. Vocalion C-01023 (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis the Complete Vocalion Recordings (1919 - 24)*. 80219-2 (CD), 2006.

—. *String Quartet* Op. 11 no. 1, *II Andante Cantabile*
Recorded by the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet in 1905. Pathé 30444 (Wax cylinder).

Tertis, Lionel. *Hier au soir*.
Recorded by Lionel Tertis on December 9, 1925. Columbia L 1761 (WAX 1199) (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis the Complete Columbia Recordings*. 80216-2 (CD), 2005.

—. *Sunset*.
Recorded by Lionel Tertis and Ethel Hobday on November 27, 1922.Vocalion X-9696 (03001X) (78rpm). Reissued on Biddulph, *Lionel Tertis, the Complete Vocalion Recordings (1919 - 24)*. 80219-2 (CD), 2006.

The "Wilhelmj Cylinders," available at https://sounds.bl.uk/classical-music/wilhelmj (accessed February 1st, 2019).

Verdi, Giuseppe. *La Forza del Destino, Solenne in questa'ora*.
Recorded by Enrico Caruso and Antonio Scotti on March 3, 1906. Victor 89001 (78rpm). Reissued on Naxos, *Enrico Caruso: The Complete Recordings vol. 3 1906 - 1908*. 8.110708 (CD), 2000.

Wagner, Richard. *Tristan und Isolde, Liebestod.*
Recorded by Lilli Lehmann, conducted by Fritz Lindemann on July 2, 1907. Reissued on Symposium, *Lilli Lehmann: The Complete Recordings*. 1207/8 (CD), 1997.

**Appendix I: Recorded Portfolio**

Performers: Emlyn Stam, viola; Shuann Chai, piano; Joan Berkhemer, violin; Rada Ovcharova, violin; Willem Stam, cello.

Producer/Sound Engineer: Geoffrey Miles.

Note: All of the recordings can be heard in two versions: a) lo-fi microphone only and b) full frequency range mix of lo-fi microphone with two DPA 46D microphones

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|---|---|
| Recording 5.4.1: | Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3 |
| Recording 5.4.2: | Oskar Nedbal: *Romanticky Kus,* Op. 18 |
| Recording 5.4.3: | Nicolas Gervasio: *Feuilles de Printemps, Bluette* |
| Recording 5.4.4: | Robert Schumann: *Abendlied,* Op. 85 no. 12 arr. Léon Van Hout |
| Recording 5.4.5: | Johann Sebastian Bach: *Orchestral Suite no. 3*, BWV 1068, *II Air* |
| Recording 5.4.6: | Jan Kalivoda: *Notturno no. 1* Op. 186 |
| Recording 5.4.7: | John Ireland: *The Holy Boy* arr. Lionel Tertis |
| Recording 5.4.8: | Johann Sebastian Bach: *Partita* no. 2, BWV 1004, *V Chaconne* |
| Recording 5.4.9.1: | Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *I Allegro Appassionato* |
| Recording 5.4.9.2: | Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *II Andante un poco Adagio* |
| Recording 5.4.9.3: | Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *III Allegretto Grazioso* |
| Recording 5.4.9.4: | Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *IV Vivace* |
| Recording 5.4.a10: | Benjamin Dale: *Suite* Op. 2, *II Romance* |
| Recording 5.4.a11: | Lionel Tertis: *Sunset* |
| Recording 5.4.a12: | Lionel Tertis: *Hier au Soir* |
| Recording 5.4.a13: | Edvard Grieg: *Jeg elsker dig* arr. Lionel Tertis |
| Recording 5.4.a14: | Georges Enescu: *Piéce de Concert* |
| Recording 5.4.a15.1: | Robert Schumann: *Märchenbilder* Op. 113, *I Nicht Schnell* |
| Recording 5.4.a15.2: | Robert Schumann: *Märchenbilder* Op. 113, *II Lebhaft* |
| Recording 5.4.a15.3: | Robert Schumann: *Märchenbilder* Op. 113, *III Rasch* |
| Recording 5.4.a15.4: | Robert Schumann: *Märchenbilder* Op. 113, *IV Langsam mit melancolischem Ausdruck* |
| Recording 5.4.a16: | Benjamin Dale: *Suite* Op. 2, *III Finale* |

Recording 5.4.a18: Joseph Haydn: *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1, *IV Presto*

Recording 5.4.a19: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *String Quartet* no. 1 Op. 11, *II Andante Cantabile*

Recording 5.4.a20: Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartet* Op. 127, *I Maestoso, Allegro*

Recording 5.4.a21: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *String Quartet* KV 458, *I Allegro vivace assai*

Recording 5.4.a22: Antonin Dvořák: *String Quartet* Op. 96 no. 12, "*The American," I Allegro ma non troppo*

5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.5, 5.4.6, 5.4.9, 5.4.11, 5.4.12, 5.4.13: Recorded April 15 -16, 2018, Andriessen Vleugels, Haarlem. Piano: Bechstein, 1890.

5.4.3, 5.4.4, 5.4.10, 5.4.14, 5.4.15: Recorded May 12 – 13, 2018, Norwegian Radio, Studio 3, Oslo. Piano: Schimmel.

5.4.7, 5.4.8: Recorded May 28 – 29, 2018, Norwegian Radio, Drama Studio, Oslo.

5.4.18 – 5.4.22: Recorded June 6 – 7, 2018, Leuvensestraat, Den Haag.

5.4.16: Recorded June 8, Hooftskade, Den Haag.

**Appendix II: Early Recordings**

Recording 3.4.1: Oskar Nedbal, 1911. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3

Recording 3.4.2: Lionel Tertis, Arnold Bax, 1927. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3

Recording 3.4.3.1: Johanna Gadski, 1903. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no.3

Recording 3.4.3.2: Lilli Lehmann, Fritz Lindemann, 1907. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3

Recording 3.4.3.3: Elena Gerhardt, Arthur Nikisch, 1911. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3

Recording 3.4.3.4: Julia Culp, Otto Bake, 1915. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3

Recording 3.4.3.5: Karl Erb, Eduard Künneke, 1911. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3

Recording 3.4.3.6: John McCormack, Edwin Schneider, 1924. Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3

Recording 3.4.4: Oskar Nedbal, 1910. Oskar Nedbal: *Romanticky Kus,* Op. 18

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| Recording 3.5.1: | Léon Van Hout, year unknown. Nicolas Gervasio: *Feuilles de Printemps, Bluette* |
| Recording 3.5.2.1: | Léon Van Hout, year unknown. Robert Schumann: *Abendlied,* Op. 85 no. 12 arr. Léon Van Hout |
| Recording 3.5.2.2: | Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1920. Robert Schumann: *Abendlied,* Op. 85 no. 12 arr. Lionel Tertis |
| Recording 3.5.2.3: | Eugène Ysaÿe, Camille De Creus, 1912. Robert Schumann: *Abendlied,* Op. 85 no. 12 arr. Eugène Ysaÿe |
| Recording 3.6.1: | Arthur Post, year unknown. Johann Sebastian Bach: *Orchestral Suite no. 3*, BWV 1068, *II Air* |
| Recording 3.6.1.2: | Lionel Tertis, Frank St. Leger, 1919. Johann Sebastian Bach: *Orchestral Suite no. 3*, BWV 1068, *II Air* |
| Recording 3.6.2: | Arthur Post, year unknown. Jan Kalivoda: *Notturno* Op. 186 no. 1 |
| Recording 3.7a: | Maurice Vieux, Jean Batalla, 1933. Stan Golestan: *Arioso et Allegro de Concert (Arioso)* |
| Recording 3.7b: | Maurice Vieux, Jean Batalla, 1933. Stan Golestan: *Arioso et Allegro de Concert (Allegro)* |
| Recording 3.8.1: | Albert Vaguet, Pierre Monteux, 1903. Giacomo Meyerbeer: *Les Huguenots: Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine* |
| Recording 3.8.2: | Enrico Caruso, The Victor Orchestra, 1905. Giacomo Meyerbeer: *Les Huguenots: Bianca al par* |
| Recording 3.9.1: | Zoia Rosovsky, Lionel Tertis, 1921. Henri Duparc: *Extase* |
| Recording 3.9.2: | Zoia Rosovsky, Lionel Tertis, 1921. Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky: *нет только тот, кто знал* |
| Recording 3.a10.1: | Lionel Tertis, 1921. John Ireland: *The Holy Boy* arr. Lionel Tertis |
| Recording 3.a10.2: | Lionel Tertis, 1924. Johann Sebastian Bach: *Partita* no. 2, BWV 1004, *V Chaconne* |
| Recording 3.a10.3.1: | Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1924. Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *I Allegro Appassionato* |
| Recording 3.a10.3.2: | Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1924. Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *II Andante un poco Adagio* |
| Recording 3.a10.3.3: | Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1924. Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *III Allegretto Grazioso* |
| Recording 3.a10.3.4: | Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1924. Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, *IV Vivace* |
| Recording 3.a10.4: | Lionel Tertis, Frank St.Leger, 1920. Benjamin Dale: *Suite* Op. 2, *II Romance* |

Recording 3.a10.5: Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1922. Lionel Tertis: *Sunset*

Recording 3.a10.6: Lionel Tertis, 1925. Lionel Tertis: *Hier au Soir*

Recording 3.a10.7: Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1922. Edvard Grieg: *Jeg elsker dig* arr. Lionel Tertis

Recording 3.a10.8.1: Lionel Tertis, Albert Sammons, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Hamilton Harty, 1933. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Sinfonia Concertante* KV 364, *I Allegro maestoso*

Recording 3.a10.8.2: Lionel Tertis, Albert Sammons, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Hamilton Harty, 1933. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Sinfonia Concertante* KV 364, *II Andante*

Recording 3.a10.8.3: Lionel Tertis, Albert Sammons, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Hamilton Harty, 1933. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Sinfonia Concertante* KV 364, *III Presto*

Recording 4.2.1: Haagsche Toonkustkwartet, 1905. Joseph Haydn: *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1, *IV Presto*

Recording 4.2.1.2: Budapest String Quartet, 1935. Joseph Haydn: *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1, *IV Presto*

Recording 4.2.2: Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet, 1905. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *String Quartet* no. 1 Op. 11, *II Andante Cantabile*

Recording 4.3: Klingler Quartet, 1935 -1936. Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartet* Op. 127, *I Maestoso, Allegro*

Recording 4.4: Brüder-Post Quartett, 1921. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *String Quartet* KV 458, *I Allegro vivace assai*

Recording 4.5: Czech String Quartet, 1928. Antonin Dvořák: *String Quartet* Op. 96 no. 12, "*The American," I Allegro ma non troppo*

**Appendix III: Annotated Scores**

Score 3.4.1: Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3, as recorded by Oskar Nedbal, 1911.

Score 3.4.2: Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Arnold Bax, 1927.

Score 3.4.3: Franz Schubert: *Du Bist die Ruh* Op. 59 no. 3, comparison of recordings by Johanna Gadski, 1903; Lilli Lehmann, Fritz Linderman, 1907; Elena Gerhardt, Arthur Nikisch, 1911; Julia Culp, Otto Bake, 1910; Karl Erb, 1911; John McCormack, Edwin Schneider, 1911.

Score 3.4.4: Oskar Nedbal: *Romanticky Kus,* Op. 18, as recorded by Oskar Nedbal, 1910.

Score 3.5.1: Nicolas Gervasio: *Feuilles de Printemps, Bluette,* as recorded by Léon Van Hout, year unknown.

Score 3.5.2.1: Robert Schumann: *Abendlied,* Op. 85 no. 12 arr. Léon Van Hout, as recorded by Léon Van Hout, year unknown.

Score 3.5.2.2: Robert Schumann: *Abendlied,* Op. 85 no. 12 arr. Lionel Tertis, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1922.

Score 3.5.2.3: Robert Schumann: *Abendlied,* Op. 85 no. 12 arr. Eugène Ysaÿe, as recorded by Eugène Ysaÿe, Camille De Creus, 1912.

Score 3.6.1: Johann Sebastian Bach: *Orchestral Suite no. 3*, BWV 1068, *II Air,* as recorded by Arthur Post, year unknown.

Score 3.6.1.2: Johann Sebastian Bach: *Orchestral Suite no. 3*, BWV 1068, *II Air,* as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Frank St. Leger, 1919.

Score 3.6.2: Jan Kalivoda: *Notturno no. 1* Op. 186, as recorded by Arthur Post, year unknown.

Score 3.7: Stan Golestan: *Arioso et Allegro de Concert,* as recorded by Maurice Vieux, Jean Batalla, 1933.

Score 3.8.1: Giacomo Meyerbeer: *Les Huguenots: Plus blanche que la blanche Hermine,* as recorded by Albert Vaguet, Pierre Monteux, 1903.

Score 3.8.2: Giacomo Meyerbeer: *Les Huguenots: Bianca al par,* as recorded by Enrico Caruso, The Victor Orchestra, 1905.

Score 3.9.1: Henri Duparc: *Extase,* as recorded by Zoia Rosovsky, Lionel Tertis, 1921.

Score 3.9.2: Pyotry Illyich Tchaikovsky: *нет только тот, кто знал,* as recorded by Zoia Rosovsky, Lionel Tertis, 1921.

Score 3.a10.1: John Ireland: *The Holy Boy* arr. Lionel Tertis, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, 1921.

Score 3.a10.2: Johann Sebastian Bach: *Partita* no. 2, BWV 1004, *V Chaconne,* as recorded by Lionel Tertis, 1924.

Score 3.a10.3: Johannes Brahms: *Sonata* Op. 120 no. 1, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1924.

Score 3.a10.4: Benjamin Dale: *Suite* Op. 2, *II Romance,* as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Frank St. Leger, 1920.

Score 3.a10.5: Lionel Tertis: *Sunset,* as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1922.

Score 3.a10.6: Lionel Tertis: *Hier au Soir*, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, 1925.

Score 3.a10.7: Edvard Grieg: *Jeg elsker dig* arr. Lionel Tertis, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Ethel Hobday, 1922.

Score 3.a10.8: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Sinfonia Concertante* KV 364, as recorded by Lionel Tertis, Albert Sammons, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Hamilton Harty, 1933.

Score 4.2.1: Joseph Haydn: *String Quartet* Op. 54 no. 1, *IV Presto,* as recorded by the Haagsche Toonkustkwartet, 1905.

Score 4.2.2: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *String Quartet* no. 1 Op. 11, *II Andante Cantabile,* as recorded by the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet, 1905.

Score 4.3: Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartet* Op. 127, *I Maestoso, Allegro,* as recorded by the Klingler Quartet, 1934 - 1935.

Score 4.4: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *String Quartet* KV 458, *I Allegro vivace assai,* as recorded by the Brüder-Post Quartett, 1921.

Score 4.5: Antonin Dvořák: *String Quartet* Op. 96 no. 12, "*The American," I Allegro ma non troppo,* as recorded by the Czech String Quartet, 1928.

Score 5.4.14: Georges Enescu: *Piéce de Concert.*

Score 5.4.15: Robert Schumann: *Märchenbilder* Op. 113.

Score 5.4.16: Benjamin Dale: *Suite* Op. 2, *III Finale.*

**Summary**

Early recordings made between the 1880s and mid-1930s reveal a wide gap between the performance practices of a century ago and those of today. Acknowledging this gap means questioning current beliefs that performers should conform to composers' intentions as represented by their scores and prevailing agreed-upon ideas about how those scores should sound. Early recordings also call into question our understanding of period texts, preserving numerous examples of musicians ignoring their own written performance directions. Furthermore, the practices heard on early recordings run counter to the 'neatness and tidiness,' regularity of pulse, and clarity of notated detail and structure that are viewed as integral to current professional performance standards. What these recordings also convey, however, is a more performer-led, communicative and moment-to-moment style of performance, like the unfolding of various events in a story, resulting from the wider-ranging creative possibilities historical performers had at their disposal. Though contemporary musicians often claim fidelity to composers' intentions, numerous recordings by those very composers and the musicians of their era are ignored when they conflict with modern performance norms. Many of today's musicians clearly prefer to avoid the risks associated with playing in ways familiar to the very composers to whom they pledge fidelity. Even historically-informed performers who take inspiration from early recordings often only apply early-recorded practices selectively, dismissing those they find displeasing, distasteful or jarring by pointing to the advanced age of the performers in question, period technological limitations, or the nervousness historical performers are said to have experienced in recording environments. This 'pick-and-choose' approach to applying early-recorded evidence results in playing that conforms more closely to current paradigms of score-adherent, structuralist and neat-and-tidy performance than it does to the evidence itself.

This thesis, together with its accompanying recorded portfolio, aims to circumvent the restrictive nature of modern performance practices while closing the gap between these practices and those heard on early recordings of viola solo, viola/piano and string quartet repertoires. The question this project thus aims to answer is: how might viola and string quartet playing in the performer-centered, moment-to-moment and communicative style heard on early recordings be brought about today? In order to achieve this aim, the study of relevant literatures on early-recorded style is combined with historical research and the detailed analysis and 'all-in' copying of early recordings—the latter of which involves

learning historical playing techniques on the viola, adjusting one's physical approach to the instrument, and imparting the 'all-in' copying method to colleagues in chamber music settings. The recorded portfolio uses a 'live' experimental lo-fi recording method similar to that encountered by many of the historical performers copied, in order to gain insights into how the original recordings were made, and how recording technologies and methods impact the decisions they, and we, make. This study is the first documented approach, in both kind and scale, to copying early-recorded viola solo, duo and string quartet performances, demonstrating the viability of incorporating extremely idiosyncratic and non-score-based practices in single- and multi-player contexts alike.

This text and recorded portfolio point to a re-thinking of the concept of *Werktreue*, predicated upon the notion that 19th-century performers enacted their fidelity to works and composers by creating altered and highly personalized versions of the detail, structure and time of composers' works. This re-thinking of *Werktreue* aims to circumvent current performance practices by giving players a theoretical framework within which to revitalize early-recorded style. Chapter One first contrasts the role of the performer today with that of the early-recorded era. Chapter Two then weighs 'live' lo-fi recording practices against modern hi-fi recording paradigms, pointing to the far-ranging effects that recording method and technology can have on performance style. Chapter Three analyzes recordings by all violists known to have made solo and viola/piano recordings prior to 1930, outlining the distance between modern expectations and the practices of Oskar Nedbal, Léon Van Hout, Arthur Post and Lionel Tertis, while also pointing to the similarities in approach between these violists and contemporaneous singers. Chapter Four analyzes the recordings of the Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet, and the Brüder-Post, Klingler and Czech Quartets, illustrating the wide-ranging stylistic diversity of the early-recorded era. Chapter Five then discusses the process of making the recorded portfolio, which includes 27 copies of historical recordings and extrapolations of early-recorded style in works for which no original exists. The resulting portfolio demonstrates a number of radically alternative approaches to canonic Western Art Music repertoires, thereby circumventing current restrictive performance paradigms, closing the gap between viola and string quartet practices both past and present, and rejuvenating the more personal, intimate and communicative playing styles heard on early recordings.

**Samenvatting**

Historische muziekopnamen uit grofweg de periode vanaf 1880 tot en met het midden van de jaren dertig van de vorige eeuw onthullen dat er een brede kloof bestaat tussen de actuele muzikale uitvoeringspraktijk en die van rond een eeuw geleden. De erkenning van deze verschillen leidt tot het in vraag stellen van de heersende opvatting dat (uitvoerende) musici zich conformeren aan de bedoelingen van de componist zoals die in de partituur gedrukt staan, en van allesoverheersende algemeen geaccepteerde ideeën over hoe die partituren zouden moeten klinken.

Genoemde opnames stellen ook vragen over hoe wij tekstmateriaal uit de desbetreffende perioden moeten begrijpen, aangezien we beschikken over talrijke voorbeelden van musici die hun eigen geschreven speelaanwijzingen niet in praktijk brengen. Daarenboven laat het spel op historische opnamen horen dat het ingaat tegen de 'netheid en schoonheid', tegen ritmische regelmaat, en tegen de gedetailleerdheid van de notatie, b.v. ten aanzien van de structuur van een compositie, aspecten die kenmerkend zijn voor de standaarden die binnen de huidige professionele uitvoeringspraktijk als algemeen geldig worden beschouwd.

Wat deze opnamen evenwel ook aantonen is dat uitvoeringen meer vanuit de speler komen, communicatiever zijn en in een stijl die als het ware ter plekke tot stand komt. Dit geeft de indruk dat zoals in een verhaal verschillende gebeurtenissen elkaar opvolgen, als waren zij het resultaat van breder aanwezige creatieve mogelijkheden die uitvoerende musici in de relevante perioden tot hun beschikking (zouden) hebben gehad.

Hoewel musici tegenwoordig vaak beweren trouw te zijn aan de bedoelingen van de componist, laten zij wat te horen is op de talrijke originele opnamen van componisten en uitvoerders uit de relevante tijdvakken buiten beschouwing wanneer en indien dit naar hun mening in strijd is met de normen van de huidige uitvoeringspraktijk.

Vele muzikanten geven er in de huidige tijd de voorkeur aan om de risico's die verbonden zijn aan historische speelwijzen te vermijden, hoewel zij er anderszins voor pleiten trouw te willen zijn aan een historiserende aanpak. Zelfs protagonisten van de historisch geïnformeerde uitvoeringspraktijk die zich hebben laten inspireren door de in dit proefschrift behandelde opnamepraktijk gebruiken haar selectief, waarbij ze aspecten die ze onaangenaam, smakeloos of slecht klinkend vinden buiten beschouwing laten, verwijzend naar de gevorderde leeftijd van de spelers, de beperkte technologie van die

tijd en het feit dat musici regelmatig aangaven erg nerveus te zijn geweest toen de opnamen gemaakt werden.

Dit leidt tot een wat willekeurige benadering bij het toepassen van hetgeen op historische opnamen te horen is en het resultaat is dan meer in overeenstemming met de gangbare paradigma's van de *Ur-text*-benadering als het gaat om structuur, 'netheid en schoonheid' dan dat het recht doet aan het bewijs dat op dergelijke opnamen te vinden is.

Dit proefschrift beoogt, samen met de speciaal vervaardigde en hierbij gepresenteerde geluidsopnamen, het beperkte karakter van de hedendaagse uitvoeringspraktijk aan de kaak te stellen en zodoende te omzeilen, in een poging de kloof tussen deze praktijk en hetgeen gehoord kan worden op historische opnamen van het solo-repertoire voor altviool, dat voor altviool en piano, en strijkkwartet te overbruggen.

De vraag die dit onderzoeksproject probeert te beantwoorden is: hoe kan altviool- en strijkkwartetspel in een communicatieve stijl, waarin de uitvoerder centraal staat en die gebaseerd is op spontaniteit, het beste aan de orde worden gesteld. Teneinde dit te bereiken is enerzijds de relevante literatuur over historische opnamen bestudeerd; anderzijds is historisch onderzoek gedaan, naast het gedetailleerd analyseren en nauwgezet kopiëren van historische opnamen, inclusief het aanleren van historische speeltechnieken op de altviool, waarbij het aanpassen van de fysieke benadering van het instrument een belangrijke rol speelt. Daarnaast gaat het ook om het delen van deze nauwgezette 'kopieer'-activiteiten en –methodes met collega's in het domein van de kamermuziek.

Bij de opnamen is gebruik gemaakt van een experimentele *'lo-fi'*-methode, die identiek is aan de werkwijze waarmee de uitvoerenden destijds werden geconfronteerd. Hiermee kan inzicht worden verworven in hoe deze oorspronkelijke opnamen zijn gemaakt en hoe (deze) technologie de beslissingen die zij toen, en wij nu, nemen, heeft beïnvloed. De resultaten van dit onderzoek laten voor het eerst op deze schaal zien hoe historische opnamen van kamermuziek voor altviool en strijkkwartetliteratuur kunnen worden gekopieerd. Hiermee wordt tevens de levensvatbaarheid van deze eigenaardige en niet uitsluitend op een precieze uitvoering van de partituur gebaseerde speelstijl over het voetlicht gebracht, zowel solistisch als in het ensemblespel.

De discursieve en artistieke resultaten van dit onderzoek leiden tot een herdenken van het begrip *Werktreue*, gebaseerd op de notie dat musici in de 19e eeuw hun trouw aan

componisten en hun werk vorm gaven door middel van het en detail scheppen van alternatieve en uiterst persoonlijk versies van de stukken die men ter hand nam. Het onderzoek geeft een nieuwe betekenis aan deze zg. *Werktreue* en bekritiseert daarbij de huidige standaard-uitvoeringspraktijk o.a. door musici een theoretisch kader te geven, waarbinnen men geïnspireerd kan worden door de stijl die spreekt uit historische opnamen.

Hoofdstuk I toont de contrasten tussen rol van de speler anno nu met die uit de periode waarin historische opnamen werden gemaakt. Hoofdstuk II vergelijkt de live *'lo-fi'*-opnamepraktijk met de paradigma's van de moderne *hi-fi*-opnametechnieken, waarbij de effecten die opnamemethoden en –technologie op uitvoeringsstijlen kunnen hebben duidelijk werden gemaakt. Hoofdstuk III analyseert opnamen van vóór 1930 door alle altvioolspelers die zich bezighielden met muziek voor altviool solo, en altviool en piano. Deze tonen het grote verschil aan tussen verwachtingen die wij nu hebben en de speelpraktijk van Oskar Nedbal, Léon van Hout, Arthur Post en Lionel Tertis; daarbij wordt tevens aandacht besteed aan overeenkomsten tussen deze altisten en zangers uit die tijd. Hoofdstuk IV analyseert de opnamen van het Haagsche Toonkunstkwartet en het Brüder-Post Kwartet, het Klingler Kwartet en het Tsjechisch Kwartet, hetgeen ook inzicht geeft in de grote stilistische verscheidenheid die in de desbetreffende periode waarneembaar is. Hoofdstuk V behandelt het proces dat ten grondslag heeft gelegen aan de speciaal in het kader van dit onderzoek gemaakte opnamen; dit corpus omvat 27 kopieën van historische opnamen en bewerkingen in historische opnamestijlen van stukken waarvan geen originele opnamen bestaan.

Het eindresultaat toont een aantal radicale alternatieven ten opzichte van gebruikelijke uitvoeringen binnen de canon van de 'westerse kunstmuziek'. Het stelt daarbij beperkende paradigma's binnen de thans bestaande uitvoeringspraktijk krachtig ter discussie; maar ook tracht het de kloof te dichten tussen altviool- en strijkkwartetspel in heden en verleden. Daarbij draagt het bij aan de verjonging van de meer persoonlijke, intieme en communicatieve speelstijlen die men op historische opnamen kan waarnemen.

**Curriculum Vitae**

Violist Emlyn Stam (born 1984 in Calgary, Canada) is active as a chamber musician, soloist, conductor, pedagogue and performance researcher in the Netherlands and internationally. Since 2014 he has been artistic director of the New European Ensemble an international ensemble for contemporary and 20th-century music.

As a soloist Emlyn made numerous appearances for Dutch radio and television. He performed concertos with the Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra d'Espinho (Portugal) and the Schönberg Ensemble (NL). He also performed at numerous festivals such as Festival Vlaanderen, Kuhmo Festival (Finland), Beijing Contemporary Music Festival, Shanghai New Music Week, Sound of Stockholm, Connect Festival, Giverny Chamber Music Festival, International Chamber Music Festival Utrecht and Grachtenfestival Amterdam. His many chamber music performances have included concerts with the Parkanyi Quartet and regular appearances with the Ysaÿe Trio of which he is a founding member. The trio released two CDs for the Dutch Record Company.

As a teacher Emlyn regularly gives masterclasses in both viola playing and chamber music. He gave masterclasses at numerous conservatories in the Netherlands, Estonia, China and Sweden. Emlyn is an active music researcher, focusing on late 19th and early-20th-century performance practices. He gave lectures on his research at the University of Leeds, the Hochschule der Künste in Bern, Codarts Rotterdam, the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague and for Juventus Lyrica in Buenos Aires. He is currently coordinator of the research program for the Master of Music at Fontys University for the Arts in Tilburg.

Emlyn obtained his Bachelor's degree in 2006 and his Master's degree in 2008 at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. His teachers were Ferdinand Erblich and Vladimir Mendelssohn. Further studies included masterclasses with Pinchas Zukerman, Michael Tree, Yuri Bashmet, Roberto Diaz, Tabea Zimmerman, Kim Kashkashian and Gerald Stanick. His doctoral research was conducted at Leiden University as part of the docARTES programme.

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My thanks go out to fellow spirit and all-round musician Joan Berkhemer who taught me, after 20 years of playing, how to hold the viola properly. Not only did he turn in wonderful performances as part of my recorded portfolio, he spent hours with me discussing early recordings, style change over time and other wild ideas over a few glasses of red wine with a side of kaasstengels. To this day, I have never heard a violinist turn a phrase in quite the same way Joan does. Thanks too to my promoter Frans de Ruiter whose reflective wisdom encouraged me to keep re-thinking my work for the better throughout the process. From our initial conversations on the nature of artistic research through deeper discourse on performance practice, he encouraged me to look at music from all angles and to see things not only in a linear fashion but also backwards and upside down.

I cannot thank Shuann Chai enough for her dedicated collaboration with me at the piano. Her intuitive, spirited and flexible approach allowed me to go as far as I could in copying recordings and I found her playing truly inspiring. I look forward to our future performances together. My dear friend Geoffrey Miles was truly central to this work. His innovative, lo-fi approach to recording and his personal, sensitive and dedicated attitude to the process helped create a recording environment unlike any other I have experienced. Geoff taught me more than I cared to know about recording technique, recording psychology and Jonathan Swift with the help of a few glasses of scotch.

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my friend and collaborative colleague Hernán Schvartzmann. Together we put some of my findings into practice in opera productions and masterclasses for singers, in what I hope was the first step on the road to future discoveries. Thanks to Job Ter Haar not only for his critical feedback and for informing me about the latest in 19th-century performance studies but especially for his inspired playing during our concerts together. Many thanks to my dear friend Stefan Petrovic who has shared many wonderful insights about research and music-making with me over the years. Thanks also to Bobby Mitchell for commiserating with me about PhD life and for teaching me RATS and everything I know about pinot noir. I would also like to acknowledge my former viola teacher Ferdinand Erblich who sadly passed away this year. His committed, fervent style of performance made me the musician I am today.

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