

Preface

WHY WRITING THE GUIDE

I consider practicing to be the second most important part of the instrumental learning process (the first being the lesson with the teacher) and the aim of this Guide is to tackle head-on the challenges of organising and structuring practicing - to making it more efficient in order to producing more effective results. The Guide was created as a response to that aim firstly, to making sure complicated tasks can be practiced step-by-step and remembered correctly by the students through the '3-Points Method'; and secondly, to structuring the home practice time into becoming a more productive and practical point-by-point learning routine.

THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY

A number of recent studies have shown that the average attention span of a person has dropped nowadays to about 10-15 minutes of 'focused' concentration in learning. Furthermore, the fact is that students need to also split up their attention between many daily activities at school and at home. Those present-day realities were a powerful enough motif which has led me to creating individual practicing routines for my students in order to concentrate their effort and attention into using consciously an already precious time of home practicing.

WHY SHOULD WE USE THE GUIDE

Teaching competently and making sure that students learn as well as possible during their lesson time is still of paramount importance. The fact is however, that most of that information is too often 'forgotten' – another recent study found out that students tend to forget in three days about 95% of the information which they learned in school. Adding to that the often-reduced practice availability, it leads to the student being ultimately disorganised and lacking clear direction of exactly what must, or how it should be done when practicing at home, which in turn, leads to unsatisfactory achievements overall. The Guide is therefore addressing precisely the student's need firstly, to being reminded of what to do step-by-step and how to learn things in detail, and secondly, to using purposefully and more efficiently their practice time by following a structured point-by-point plan.

CREDENTIALS

I have been fortunate enough to be taught by some great teachers and violinists such as *Erich Gruenberg* - pupil of *Max Rostal* and *Carl Flesch*, who was pupil of *Eugene Sauzey*, a pupil of *Pierre Baillot* who was a pupil of the great *Giovanni Viotti* – founder of the violin school, and also back in my native Bulgaria by *Ivan Zhergovsky* - pupil of *Leon Surojon*, a pupil of *Hans Koh*, who was a pupil of *Otakar Ševčík*. In addition, I was taught the basic practicing rules at home by my mother *Dora Koleva* who also studied with *Boian Danailov*, pupil of *David Oistrakh*, who was a

pupil of *Piotr Stolyarski*, and *Emil Mlinaryski*, pupil of *Leopold Auer*, a pupil himself of *Jacob Dont*, pupil of *Joseph Boehm*, and *Pierre Rode* who was also a pupil of *Giovanni Viotti*. I have intended therefore to following in the footsteps of the greatest violin pedagogues and to considering solid technical preparation in detail to be essential in order for a student to flourish musically. Combining my teaching experience of over 20 years with the knowledge of some of the most long-established violin methods as those written by *Leopold Auer*, *Ivan Galamian*, *Simon Fischer*, *Konstantin Mostras*, *Anton Hadjiatanassov*, and videos by *Egon Sassmannshaus*, and using also the scales and exercises methods written by *Carl Flesch* and *Otakar Ševčík*, I came up with the invention of the 3-points system - hence the name of the 3-Points Method.

WHAT IS THE 3-POINTS METHOD

The 3-points Method is a simple combination of a '*Learning-Action-Feeling*' set of tasks which is applied to any of the over 160 violin tips presented in this Guide. Furthermore, the tips are written out systematically and can be used either separately as 'one page' violin tips, or as tips grouped together by subject in chapters, and the learning process can be flexibly designed depending on each student's need at any one particular time.

WHAT WILL THE STUDENT ACCOMPLISH

The Method's purpose is to break up important and sometimes complicated technical tasks into simpler steps by using 'reminder' words and actions to memorising in the process, which are serving as a guarantee that the student wouldn't forget them too easily.

The overall aim for the student is to ultimately accomplish a better command of the violin – to be able to apply all the technical details described in Chapters 1 to 6 in this Guide freely in their playing while performing, and also after having learned and memorised the Guide's steps to practicing a piece in Chapters 7, 8, and 9 (addressing Performance), to be able to structure more efficiently their practicing routine.

ENCOURAGING FURTHER GROWTH

The Guide isn't the most comprehensive set of playing rules - its objective is primarily to be guiding the student through the major instrumental principles and to be reminding some of the basic or more advanced standards of the violin technique. It is however, also important to keep in mind the unique physical and emotional needs of each student individually. The information presented in the Guide aims to encourage a detailed approach to technique and to the learning process as a whole, which ideally would be supervised by a teacher and will be further expanded upon according to the individual needs of each student. Consequently, the student should acquire and convert 'as their own' the technical principles described in the Guide and upgrade them in the process according to their personal musical experience, which is ultimately our goal as musicians – to expressing and communicating our own musical 'voice' in a unique confident and artistic way.