

Viola Gauntlet: Day 7 (Sunday): Lyrical playing & repertoire

Key of the day: B flat major / G minor

A lighter, musical day: an aria, a 5/4 waltz and a sarabande, all original and all with a piano and string accompanist under you. Phrasing is the point today - shape every phrase like a breath, then close with quiet long tones on the C string.

About 19 minutes with the video.

Every exercise starts with 2 bars of count-in clicks. Stretch items are marked: aim at them, don't force them.

1. Open-string long tones ~3.3 min

One unbroken tone per bow, in tune with the drone; middle sounding point, softest possible tone that still speaks

Stretch: 12-beat bows with no audible bow change

♩ = 60
8-beat bows

13

23

36

12-beat bows: messa di voce pp < f > pp

2. Drone intonation ~1.7 min

Each note rings with the drone - no beats; thirds low, leading note high

♩ = 66
listen for the beats to stop

11

17

interval ladder: hold the tonic, place each note against it

colour note

3. Fifths across strings ~1.7 min

One finger flat across two strings: a pure fifth means the hand frame is right

$\text{♩} = 60$
 one finger flat across both strings - finger 1

finger 2 finger 3 finger 4 finger 2

finger 3 finger 4 finger 1 finger 2 finger 3

mp *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp*

4. Aria in B flat (cantabile) ~4.8 min

Sing through every phrase, breathe at the rests; the bow is your breath

Stretch: the climb to G5 in 3rd position at forte, in tune and still singing

Cantabile ($\text{♩} = 56$)
 singing

breathe

mp *mf* *mp*

breathe

mf *p* *mf*

breathe

f *mp* *p*

again: more bow, more freedom

pp *mp* *mf*

breathe

mp *mf*

breathe

p *mf* *f*

breathe

mp *p* *pp*

5. Waltz in five (G minor, 3 + 2) ~3.5 min

Feel 5/4 as 3 + 2: a long swing, then a short one - never count to five

Stretch: feel the 3 + 2 in the body, not by counting, both times through

$\text{♩} = 96$
3 + 2: a waltz with a missing beat

mp

8 *breathe* *mp* *mf*

16 *breathe* *mf* *f*

24 *breathe* *mp* *p* *pp*

33 *again: lean into each beat 1 and 4* *mp*

41 *breathe* *mp* *mf*

49 *breathe* *mf* *f*

57 *breathe* *mp* *p* *pp*

6. Sarabande with double stops ~1.9 min

Slow 3/4 that leans on beat 2; double stops ring with an open string

Grave ($\text{♩} = 56$)
weight on beat 2

mf

11 *breathe* *mp* *again, softer: dolce* *mf* *p* *p*

22 *breathe* *mp* *mf* *pp*

7. Cool-down: C string and a last scale ~1.4 min

Long, quiet bows on the C string, then let the scale come home to B flat

♩ = 50 *swell a little, then fade*
C string: long, still tones

slow scale down, let it settle

p > ppp