

Cello Masterclass
With Dr. Eric Kutz
IIMIF 2020 - July 8

Luke

Bach Suite No. 3 Bourree #1

- Where is the punctuation/impulse?
 - You've got the spelling and the words, but now where do the commas go?
- A bourree is French, but written by a German composer (Bach)- the stereotype is that a German would consider the French to be lighter, on the balls of the feet, etc.
- Question and answer phrasing
 - There are places where you want to string it together and places where you don't want to string it together
 - Questions lead to someplace new, answers lead you home. Be aware of this to properly emphasize the punctuation
- Be aware of multiple voice lines (ex: upper and lower voices)
 - When the spacing between the two voice lines gets closer together, that's your cue to crescendo/move forward
- Find the dynamic 'high point' of whatever you are playing
- Not everything can be in the foreground or else it would lack depth
- Imagine as if you are singing/speaking phrases (ex: a repetitive idea can be thought as telling someone something then telling them again and again for each repetition)
- Reflect the change into minor with timing
- The spacing of the intervals tell you the direction of the phrase
- Be mindful not to "blast through" things or else we won't have the chance to enjoy everything.
- Read this bourree like a piece of text. "What size is the interval? Major or minor? Where are the cadences? How many notes are in a sentence/phrase?"

Bach Suite No. 3 Bourree #2

- To make a more drastic tone color change, you can do something similar to ponticello, as if you are playing lightly and using too much bow (in the upper half of the bow)
- Are the notes going up or down? Inflect the line accordingly
- Make m. 18 weirder! The half note stands out...imagine that you're speaking and mid-sentence take a long pause! Make it a moment of wonder.
- Don't be shy about showing off when the music does something unusual!

Bailey

Beethoven Sonata in A Major, third movement

- Since the opening is supporting the piano's melody, use less bow hair, lighter bow, faster bow and have sound rooted in the vibrato. So it doesn't get louder, change the bow placement (closer to fingerboard) and use less hair.
- Start with a slower bow, and speed up into the changing note to make the note changes legato
- To transition into putting the spotlight on the cello, use wider vibrato and all bow hair
- Take more time and create a bigger crescendo into the subito piano to create a greater musical moment

Fourth movement

- There is a lot of humanity and warmth packed into the first 9 measures - don't blast through them
- One should only practice slowly in the same way that they want the music to sound at tempo
- Vibrate the whole notes in the same manner that you would play the sixteenth notes (like someone is tickling the bottom of your foot with a feather) to prepare for the sixteenth notes that kind of come out of nowhere
- Use the *dolce* (sweetly) as a hint - the grace note is not a "ka-zam!" but is rather lyrical and operatic
- Find the key note that sets the mood, play it as beautifully as you can, then use that standard as a baseline for the rest of the section

Brittany

Lalo Concerto in D minor Mvt. 3

- Try practicing completely legato to ease tension in the right hand - elbow and wrist should move about the same amount
- Wrist is flexible and accommodates but it shouldn't be floppy
- When moving from the D to A string, don't move your elbow/upper arm. Instead, change the bow angle (push the frog away from you). This makes it a lot easier to play on the A string for long periods of time because your upper arm can remain loose.
- When you see dots in the music, ask yourself, "how much do I need to lighten up to achieve this?" Don't jump off the string too much.
- "Tug and drift" articulation: tug the beginning of the note, then drift through the rest of it (the faster you get, the less bow you use)
- ELBOW controls the bow up until something like Elgar's 2nd movement (that's a tiny dribbling motion of the wrist)
- Lots of elbow, but with less bow when you increase the tempo

- Whatever is between the notes cannot be as loud as the actual notes
 - Do not speed up the shifts
 - LH needs to be lighter to avoid slurpy shifts
 - By keeping your finger lightly on the string, you can hear when it's in tune before you activate the note with the bow
- Think of the position you are in as a guide and be flexible when there are a lot of whole steps in a row
- You get in your own way when you tense up the LH
- Intensity does not equal tension. You can be intense without digging foxholes into the fingerboard!

Lindsey

Shostakovich Concerto No. 1 Mvmt. 1

- Tug and drift stroke at Rehearsal 3- legato with a burst of speed at the beginning
- At the beginning, keep the bow in the string instead of coming at it from above
- Make sure the elbow is controlling the stroke, not the wrist
- Start with very little bow then GRADUALLY increase until you find the amount of bow you need. This allows you to pack a ton of energy into a little bow
- Smiley face bowing- Imagine it is on the floor smiling at you then follow it with your bow. "Carving the smiley face on the floor"
 - Creates a consistent contact point
 - As you go from string to string, it is much easier to get the C string to speak
 - Smile will be lopsided on the outer strings (on the A string, the frog gets pushed away from you. On the C string, the tip gets pushed away from you)
 - Use the smile to stay close to the bridge
- Make sure the fastest part of the bow is when you're changing bow to maintain intensity and interest. "Relentless in a good way"
- Compare the general character with the specific markings
- Use more bow with more pressure to get a fuller/louder sound without crunching
- Don't be too 'slappy' in the LH (it undermines the sense of pleading) - LH doesn't have to come down with too much speed
- In m. 208, make sure to play all of the chords :)
- Rehearsal 36 - metronome work