

# ***Learn from whom?***

## **The violin**

The violin is the backbone of western classical music. It provides the main tune, air, melody, song and easily one of the most pleasing music instruments. However it is also a difficult instrument to start with, master and maintain over a period of years.

There is also another place for the violin. The fiddle. Fun, frolic and a part of the folk music in most countries and cultures of the world. It can also play the top line tune along with a guitar, keyboard or any other band for almost any music.

My programme explores as much of the above SECOND part as much as the FIRST.

## **The group or Strings family**

In a standard quartet the violin plays the “soprano”. The “alto” is played by the so-called second violin. The “tenor” is played by the viola while the “bass” part is played by the cello. In a string orchestra this joined by the double-bass which completes the string family.

Playing from day-one with other instruments of the string family and also where feasible and possible with other instruments and sections of the orchestra is a planned effort at Music International.

To this end the online subscription, digital library, intonation, minus-one, quartets are all a build up towards this ability of your violin playing from day-one of our programme.

## String Family



Note the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> violin is learnt with and uses the treble clef. The viola is played mostly using the alto clef. The cello mostly uses the bass clef as does the double bass. In the orchestra the double bass is mostly bowed. There are many bowing techniques including plucking with your fingers called pizzicato.

On the violin you will have to learn all of this and more. Mostly a person who learns the violin stays with the violin all their lives. May as well spend more time becoming a master of one than attempting to play other instruments in this family or any other music family.

If you are interested in learning the viola, cello or double bass please do talk to us. The learning method will be group oriented and backing a violin or being a part of a strings ensemble from a very early stage.

## Genre

### ***Approach 1 : Classical***

While the most obvious and systematic way of learning the violin is with the western classical music genre and repertoire. The vast amount of music available for the violin makes it easy to get music. There are also dozens of good violin methods. If one is not suitable there is always another. Many of them are free and available from and through our subscription.

The goal and aims are to play the violin as a solo instrument, lead instrument, with other instruments especially a string quartet OR string sections of an orchestra.

Jazz violin could also fall into this approach as you need to be able to read music and understand Jazz theory to be really effective as a jazz violinist.

### ***Approach 2 : Fiddle***

However ... we encourage the playing of popular songs. Hymns. Simple songs. Each could be accompanied by an interested guitarist or keyboard player – a family member to help you get out there and play more often – the music you like. The fiddle has a huge folk-lore touching almost every country & culture in the world. Irish, Hungarian, Roumania, Bluegrass, Western swing & more.

Broadly all modern violin playing including popular, blues, rock, electric & ghost instruments can be placed in this category of learning. Play-by-ear is essential.

## Teaching method

I am personally a firm believer in that music is a collaborative group activity. The violin and the strings section is the backbone of any good quality music in today's world as much as from year 1600's. It must be learnt together, played together and enjoyed together. This may be in unison, duets, trios, quartets, string-section, full-orchestra or air with accompaniment by piano, organ, classical guitar or other.

Learning the violin implies music notation learning, sight-reading and being able to play continuous ongoing music getting better all the time with practice and constantly expanding your repertoire.

If you ever want to move to the viola learning the alto clef can be a challenge. The alto and the bass clef is a full-time, life-time learning by itself if that is an option you want to take up.

The Double bass offers at least 3 clear genres/styles of music. The bowed method of an orchestra; the pizzicato in a jazz band and the slap in country and pop/folk music. You may also be an electric bass guitar player who wants to add this instrument to his or her playing abilities.

## I recommend

That you get started first. As you get better you can decide on how you would like to focus your further and on-going learning.

## Accessories to be added

- A Our annual online subscription digital resources library, practice companion & reference content is mandatory.
- B You should buy a music stand with the full intent of reading music, keeping you song books, chord or lead-sheets. A portable unit to carry to class sometimes becomes a consumable, lasts only for 2-3 years. A heavier more permanent one for home.
- C Keeping your music as a beginner the best available in the market is as in the figure below ...



Figure a : A portable music stand upright, once folded and in a carry bag.



Get about 30 of these sheets and place them in a light-weight folder that holds these. You can even buy 2 folders. Leave one at home. Bring one with the music we are doing at that time, this week sheet music only.

- D You can also pick-up a guitar tuner that shows and helps you tune strings. Some tuners also include a metronome and that can also be useful.
- E Other accessories may be a better or extra bow, Alternate rosin, shoulder rest.



Put together by ...

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