

Newsletter

Vancouver Cello Club



MAY 1993

Editor: Judith Fraser

President: Ian Hampton 939 Ioco Road, Port Moody, V3H 2W9
 Secretary: Ernest Collins 1407 Haywood Ave., West Vancouver, V7T 1V5
 Treasurer: Judith Fraser 210 - 235 Keith Road, West Vancouver, V7T 1L5
 Past President: Audrey Piggott
 Executive: Kristi Armstrong, Lee Duckles, Victor Chun, Catherine Carmack, Jean Ireland
 American Cello Council Delegate: Judith Fraser

NOTICES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - JUNE 14, 1993

7:30 PM

Room 22 B

Vancouver Academy of Music
 1270 Chestnut Street

Presentation of bursaries, election of officers, annual reports, refreshments

POSTPONED TO FALL 1993
 Sophie Willer in Recital. May 29th.

Sophie Willer has requested a postponement of her recital sponsored by the Vancouver Cello Club until sometime in the Fall or early Spring of 1994, due to the scheduling of auditions and summer work. Sophie recently performed the Dvorak Cello Concerto with the orchestra of the Cleveland Institute of Music.

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There is no application this year for the Caroline E. Riley Scholarship, so the \$1,500 will be re-invested after the Annual General Meeting.

GRADUATION RECITAL - MAY 20TH, 1993

VICTOR CHUN
 7:30 PM
 Koerner Recital Hall
 Vancouver Academy of Music

Program:	Suite No.6 for unaccompanied cello	J.S. Bach
	Prelude	
	Quintet for 2 violins, viola & 2 celli in C Major Op. 163	F. Schubert
	Scherzo	
	Sonata in C Major, Op. 118	S. Prokofiev
	Intermission	
	Concerto in B Minor	A. Dvorak
	Accompanist: Allen Stiles	

Victor will be joined by Warren Zielinski, Yan Yan Mok, violins, Aaron Oltman, viola and *Michael Olsen*, cello for the Schubert quintet movement.

The Schubert Quintet players were the winners of the Elsje de Ridder Armstrong scholarship of \$1,000 in the 11th annual Chamber Music Competition, April 2nd at the Vancouver Academy of Music.

Winners of the Friends of Chamber Music Competition included cellist *Emily Kyne*, in the junior award piano trio and cellist *Jecheon Kim* in the senior award string quartet.

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The American Cello Council has voted to award a \$1,000 prize to a semi-finalist at the Leonard Rose Cello Competition and Festival to be held at the University of Maryland, July 15 - 24, 1993. Since the American Cello Council was formed in 1982 at the 1st Cello Congress when Leonard Rose was the artist at the opening recital, this award will keep in mind, the importance of the ACC as an organization of cellists. Hopefully *Jason Duckles* will audit some of this competition and festival and send us a report.

Cello Club Chit-Chat

Awards Announcement - - - 31st Carnegie Hall Season
 1993 - 94
FIRST MUSIC 10

New York Youth Symphony - the 10th award-winning season
 of new works by the nation's best young composers.

Sean Anthony Varah

Age 24 Hometown: Vancouver, Canada premiere: 12/12/93
 Born: Madison, Wisconsin
 D.M.A. candidate, M.A. 1992 Columbia University
 B.A.: 1990 Stanford University
 Director of Columbia Composers, 1991 - 1993
 Fellow of the Faculty Scholarship, Columbia, 1991
 Studies with Mario Davidovsky, David Rabowski, Jody Rockmaker

Congratulations, Sean!

and we hope to see you during the 25th anniversary of the Vancouver Academy of Music in April 1994. Yes - it's a big year in '94 for the V.A.M. and hopefully many cellists will gather at the reunion for the big Orpheum concert April 19, 1994. There are many memories for Cello Club members - concerts and workshops in the science room of the old building - with *Zara Nelsova, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, Bonnie Hampton, Colin Hampton, Julian Lloyd Webber, Bob Bardston & Marcus Stocker*, (to name a few) - VCC/VAM cellists off to Victoria, Nanaimo, Vernon - workshops - train trips to Banff. Write some of yours to me (editor) and we can have a "memories" edition!

VAM - April 18 - May 8 - 25th anniversary
 Concerts April 19 - and many others

Pacific Rim Summer Festival

Ucuelet - Tofino

July 17-31 Chamber Music by the Sea (SR)

Heather Hay, Roger Maltz

Contact: (604) 726-7572 Box 617, Ucuelet, BC, V0R 3A0

The Chicago Cello Society in co-operation with Northwestern University is presenting a **Cello Competition** for cellists through age 30, Sept. 8-11, 1993 as part of the Chicago Cello Society's Fall Cello Festival Sept. 9-12.

Music in the Morning 1993-93 series at the V.A.M. will have 3 AMS for each concert. The opening performers Sept. 14, 15, 16 will be *Shauna Rolston* and Jane Coop in a program of Beethoven, Shostakovich and Debussy. Oct. 5, 6, 7 will feature the *Schubert Ensemble* from Britain and will include the "Trout" Quintet. The *St. Lawrence String Quartet* (cello *Marina Hoover*) will premiere a work by Composer-in-Residence John Oliver Oct. 19, 20, 21 and to finish 1993, Nov. 30, Dec. 1, 2, the Academy Strings and Ramsey Husser will spotlight "The Four Seasons" by Vivaldi. Contact: 736-5650.

Congratulations to *Amy Laing*, Ladysmith, who will represent Nanaimo in the Intermediate Strings class at the B.C. Provincial Festival in Trail later this month. Also *Justin Martyn* from Nanaimo in the Junior Strings; from the Vancouver Kiwanis Festival, *Jonathan Braunstein's* trio will be representing the Junior Chamber Ensemble class and *Timothy Bartsch's* trio, the National class.

I read recently in the National Capital Cello Club Newsletter that Clauden Press, 3935 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11229 - attention *Leon Block*, has issued 3 new volumes of excerpts from the cello parts to string quartets by Haydn, Beethoven and Mozart. An unnamed editor has selected the "knottiest" passages from these works and compiled them for ease of practicing. Volume 1 (\$3.95) cover 36 Haydn quartets. Vol. 2 (\$3.95) cover Beethoven Opus 18, Op.59 No. 1 and 2, and Vol. 3 (\$5.95) covers 10 Mozart quartets. There are no recommended fingerings in vol. 1 and few in vol. 2 and 3. Reasonably priced with adequate graphic quality, these volumes are recommended to cellists who do not own the complete quartets or who are new to chamber music and are looking for guidance. Include postage.

Marco Guidarini, the conductor (and cellist) of the Vancouver Opera's recent production of "Boheme" has once again contributed to our summer bursary fund and at the AGM we will present \$125 to assist a student to a summer music camp. Thank you, Marco!

"Music Europe '93: an Encore for Mozart" is a special European travel itinerary for music lovers, inspired by the life of Mozart - July 25 - Aug. 11 '93. another "musical" tour is planned for the summer of '94. contact: Dianne Globe (604) 434-0857.

Many of you know Dianne Globe through the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto, as their resource and information person, who for many years has served this area for the RCM beyond the call of duty. She worked tirelessly to bridge the ever-widening gap between the Conservatory and Western Canada. Unfortunately, Feb. 10th with no reasons given and no warning, Dianne Globe's employment with the RCM was terminated in a brief message. From the cellists, Dianne, thanks a million for all your help and support!

Buy & Sell**For Sale:**

lovely English cello 4/4
 Annelies Reeves

(604) 736-6926

Czech (1950) 3/4 \$1800
 Bob Kelly

(604) 263-1355

Chinese 3/4 \$ 450 (604) 926-2648
 Judy Fraser 734-2301

1/2 Skylark \$ 385
 Judy Fraser

(604) 926-2648
 734-2301

3/4 German \$2400

(604) 876-0056

3/4 German \$1100

876-4317

To Buy:

Jennifer Gorman
 4/4 circa \$5000

(604) 768-4151

Reprinted from "WolfNotes" - the literary organ of the Los Angeles March '92 Violoncello Society, Inc. - Editor: Roger Labow

«Chairs 1, Backs 0

At our last Cello Society meeting on December 5 at Dr. Burner's home, much of the medical discussion related to lower back problems. At the time I refrained from offering myself as Exhibit A, but I thought my experience might be helpful to other players.

After many years of symphony rehearsals on folding chairs that left me and my colleagues with back pains which we accepted as part of the procedure, I wound up at Loma Linda Hospital for ten days of traction. I was not willing to agree with

my family that my troubles were caused by my gardening activities. Instead I asked one of the doctors to interpret a paragraph or two in Claude Kennison's *A Cellist's guide to the New approach*.¹ I had remembered Kennison's remarks at a Kato Havas workshop: "If you hold the cello right, you do not know it is there; if you hold the bow right, you do not know it is there; and if you sit on the right chair right, you do not know it is there."

The doctor's response to my request was to bring in a skeleton, which he adjusted over a chair in a way fitting Kennison's description. The level of the chair's seat was higher than normal, at a point just above knee level.

Several months later at an ASTA-MENC convention at Anaheim I saw special cello chairs made by Wenger of Minneapolis, Minnesota, which met Kennison's requirements. I purchased one - no more problems. Wenger's telephone number is (800) 325-8373, x. 209. [A call to Wenger told me that the current price of the cello chair is \$149.---ed.]

¹ This book, which according to Margaret Rowell "should be in every cellist's library," is published by Exposition Press Inc., 900 S. Oyster Bay Rd., Hicksville, NY 11801.

NEW RECORDINGS

Hard-core record junkies (you know who you are) may remember the privately-issued compilation of historical cello recordings assembled by record collector Tom Clear almost 20 years ago. There were very few pressings, and I seem to remember that they went for about a hundred bucks a copy then (later they were, of course, far more costly in the used record shops -- if you could even find a copy). Now the estimable Pavilion Records of England has released *The recorded Cello*, a two-volume, six-CD survey of historical recordings on its Pearl label, a collection selling for about the same amount of money as Clear's, but far surpassing it in every way.

This is a collection that pretty much every lover of the cello would enjoy. *The Recorded Cello* is a delight in every way, remarkable for its breadth, representative and novel repertoire, documentation, and technical excellence.

This is a comprehensive history: practically every cellist you've ever heard of is represented here - and practically every one you haven't, as well! There are one or two fine players missing in action: the late William Van den Burg was, for example, a greater player than many found here, and made a number of excellent records; Janos Starker isn't represented (probably on historical grounds); and I'm sure you too would have your own favored players who might not have made the cut. But not only do we get the predictable supernovae - Casals, Cassadó, Feuermann, Piatigorsky, for example -- but a minor galaxy of lesser lights too: the Lebells, Sharpes, Marchésinis and Aldelescus who also populated the cellistic firmament.

And there are some real finds here: to choose almost at random, the darkly expressive Gutia Casini, about whom nothing is known but several 1930-vintage recordings; the pointed, immaculate playing of Hugo Becker; the startling clarity of the young Cassadó; Daniel Shafran's preternatural agility (and the welcome realization that his youthful playing was not marred by that ... that ... vibrato); and the powerful performances of the Czechs Sádlo and Vera. Štormov.

Even the impressions left by the lesser-known cellists are compelling. In the light of their performances we can form a strong, if imperfect, picture of the state of the cello at the turn of the century. The earliest recordings here date from 1904; one cellist, Davidov's student A. V. Wierzbilowicz, was born in 1850; so was the Anglo-Belgian Auguste von Biene; and Joseph Hollman, whose

mustachioed countenance beams down on me from an ancient *Vanity Fair* print even as I type this, was born in 1852.

When you stack up the primitive vibratos, the rubber-fingered, artificial portamenti, and the rudimentary technical apparatus of some of these figures, the achievement of Casals, with his direct, unencumbered musicality and masterful technique, is thrown into the clearest possible relief. I won't generalize about the playing of that earlier day, but I will say that those of you who bemoan the modern paragons of emotional aridity and styleless, expressive overindulgence will probably find much to your liking in this collection.

Play It, Sam. Play *Comme au plus beau jour de Mai*.

As for the repertoire, there are many new ideas for your next recital. The unusual is well represented indeed: there are rarely played pieces by well-known composers (the Slovak Variations of Martinu, and sonatas by Saint-Saëns, Pfitzner, and Delius), and works by more ephemeral figures -- a sonata by one Pauer, *Simple Aveu* by Thomé, endearing pieces by Tessarini and van Biene and Fibich and Ganne, to mention only a few.

Included in each volume is a 30-page booklet providing scholarly, literate notes (often mentioning the instrument used by the player on the recording), a wealth of photographs, and complete recording information. In reading this lovingly assembled documentation I was again reassured that There Will

WARNING: if you're on a tight budget, skip this article!

Always Be an England.

The Achilles Heel of such an endeavor is inevitably its sound quality. After all, almost everything presented here is pre-1940 -- that is, from the 78 r.p.m. era. So be prepared for a few cuts with gruesome surface noise, some of which may have been lessened in the digital transfers. Pearl suggests using your tone controls to lessen the impact of the surface noise if you find it objectionable. Fortunately this set is free of the uglier attributes of digital sound. The only real casualty was Vilmos Palotai's recording of the Brahms E Minor: the transfer was done incorrectly and the pitch is a half-step too high (curiously enough, the same piece was botched in exactly the same way in the Pearl reissue of Feuermann's recording!). a piece by Servais on a theme by Schubert is erroneously listed as being by Schumann, arranged by Servais. But these are small cavils. And *The Recorded Cello* is undeniably worth the investment. »

Lee Duckles, principal cello of the VSO has told us that *Yo Yo Ma* will open the 1993-94 season of the VSO in October with the Elgar Cello Concerto. Unfortunately, Yo Yo Ma's schedule does not permit a workshop at the VAM which we had hoped, but we can attend the rehearsal and meet him afterward.

VSO Tschaikowsky's "Andante Cantabile", Elgar Cello Concerto
Oct. 1 (Fri.)

Feb. 19/21, '94/ Arto Noras will perform the Lalo Concerto

SUMMER CAMPS FOR CELLISTS 1993

West Coast Amateur Musicians

Shawnigan Lake Music Holiday
Bob Bardston
July 18-25 or & July 25 - Aug. 1st
Contact: Jack Downs: 980-5341

Fort Festival Summer Strings

Non-resident
Fine Arts School, 9096 Trattle St., Fort Langley
10 AM - 3 PM - July 26 - July 31
Ian Hampton Judith Fraser
Contact: LCMS 534-2848 or 888-1759

- UBC Summer Music Camp (string week)** UBC Campus
Ian Hampton
 July 4 - July 9
 Grade 5 (school grade) to Adult
 Contact: Martin Birnbaum 822-3113
- Richmond Community Music School** Non-resident
 Richmond Community Music School 6675 Lynas Lane
 10 AM - 2 PM July 12-16
 Grade 3 - Grade 10 (music grade)
 Contact: Lorraine Ovenell 277-3030 or 272-5227
- Okanagan Summer School of the Arts**
- 1) String Workshop
 July 5 - 9, July 12 - 16 9 - 12 PM; 1 - 3 PM
 String orchestra with baroque repertoire & chamber music *Kristine Bogyo*
 - 2) Suzuki Violin Institute
 July 11 - 16
 Twinklers to Book 6
 - 3) Haydn Strings Workshop
 July 19 - 23
 Contact: 493-0390
- Courtenay Youth Music Centre** Strings July 11 - Aug. 1 (orchestra July 18 - Aug. 1st)
Bryan Epperson; Thomas Weibe
 Contact: 338-7463 / Fax: 338-7480
- Summer Strings Academy** Mt. Royal College, Calgary, Alberta
 June 28 - July 16 (weekdays only)
John Kadz
 Billeting for out-of-town students
 Minimum Grade 6 (music grade)
 Junior & Senior Strings Academy
 Contact: John Kadz (403) 240-6832
- JISA** St. Michael's University School, Victoria
 July 7 - 27; July 29 - Aug. 18; July 7 - Aug. 18
Anthony Elliott; Desmond Hoebig; Harvey Shapiro; Harry Wimmer
 Advanced level
 Contact: 736-1611 (Vancouver) Fax: 736-8018
- Marrowstone Music Festival & Institute** Port Townsend, WA
 August
 Contact: S.Y.S. Orch, 11065 5 NE, Suite E, Seattle, WA 98125
Craig Weaver; Ron Leonard (Wk 2); Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi (Wk 3)

Printed from "Cello Scroll" - Chicago Cello Society, July 1991 — Editor: David Sanders

THE POPPER HIGH SCHOOL OF CELLO PLAYING by Charlotte Lehnhoff

Last year, on March 3, 1990, the Chicago Cello Society presented a concert at which all forty of the etudes from David Popper's *Hohe Schule des Violoncellspiels* were performed, in numerical order. This article is adapted from introductory remarks given before the concert as program notes. The use of the term "concert" or "the concert" in this article refers to this concert.

I don't know if Popper intended it, but the study of his *Hohe Schule des Violoncellspiels* has become a rite of passage for all cellists. Embarking upon the *Hohe Schule* in a cellist's course of study marks a major turning point. Its being studied serves as a public statement that the student has left the realm of beginning and intermediate studies and serves notice of a life-long commitment to the cello. By the time one begins learning the etudes¹ of the *Hohe Schule* - and in order to begin working on them - one was to have made a choice that this instrument, the cello, will be one's primary means of expression. Students begin looking forward to working on the etudes as their commitment increases, and they know the etudes are difficult. Yet when they get into them, the degree and extent of the difficulty sometimes comes as surprise. Nothing in the literature seems to offer such a challenge in so little space. The etudes seem so different from the etudes of Duport,² Franchomme,³ or Grützmacher,⁴ that students have perhaps already studied. Popper's etudes aren't melodic; there's also no contrasting thematic or melodic material. Rhythmic variety seems to be virtually absent because Popper keeps on using the same rhythmic pattern all the way through each etude.⁵ (The only other etudes that may share this quality of rhythmic invariance are those by Dotzauer [1783 - 1860].) The theme, if you can call it that, is repeated over and over, either in bits and pieces or repeated in full, and in strange and unexpected places (for example, an octave higher or lower, or in a different key). There's a lot of chromaticism, and our thumbs often feel like ground hamburger meat. I recall from my student days that whenever one of us had been able to play through an entire etude or a particularly thorny section, we were excited or perhaps even jubilant, and sometimes felt a sense of relief. (Rather than feel we had *done* Popper, we often felt we had been *done in* by Popper.)⁶

Popper's etudes are virtuoso etudes, as are those of Grützmacher, Duport and Piatti. Steven De'ak, Popper's biographer, in speaking about the *Hohe Schule*, said, "For many years preceding the publication of the [etudes] the technique of the violoncello had been passing through an evolution. Much of the fresh material which expanded the scope of cello technique, and which can be found in his most popular pieces are [sic] also discovered in broadly expanded form in the great etudes. His technical principles, innovations, and practical applications of the modern cello technique (of the late 19th century) were put down in these forty etudes."⁷ Everything De'ak says - other than the remarks about the "popular pieces" and his references to the time period and the late 19th century - is equally true of all other important sets of etudes, because each cellist-composer, through their etudes, "expanded the scope of cello technique", in their own day, respectively. That is, in fact, the mark of the great cellist-composer. Each of them has made an important and significant contribution to the development and expansion of technique.

Duport's *Essai* discussed advances in fingering. He has lengthy discussions about thumb position and double stops, gave alternative fingerings for scale passages, and suggested fingerings to avoid successive notes with the same finger. The

material for all of the neck positions and the double-stops are carefully fingered. No other composer, not even Popper, seems to have taken this kind of trouble. Duport's etudes often have contrasting thematic material and the rhythmic patterns are often varied within each etude. Musically, the contents reflect his understanding of the extent to which material at the end of the Classical period and the beginning of the Romantic can be pushed.⁹ Grützmacher's 24 etudes⁹ are uneven. According to Van der Straeten, the first volume is perhaps useful for "the student of moderately advanced technique". As for the second volume, it "is in many instances overlaid with difficulties of a transcendental nature" and much of the material in it comprises "Paganini-like feats" useful for the "virtuoso".¹⁰ Musically, the second volume reflects the musical values of the end of the 19th century, carried, perhaps, to a degree of excess. Grützmacher's etudes often strike us now as cloyed, full of boring conventions, or just plain old-fashioned. We can get weary of them before we have finished learning them. I know cellists who have put in long hours working on them, and who claim that their work wasn't wasted; I have also known cellists who have not spent any time with them at all, and I have heard an argument put forth against Grützmacher that the energy and effort needed for them is wasted because they are so complex that they aren't applicable to anything else.

By comparison, Popper brought the compositional gifts for melody, harmony, rhythm, and sense of structure and form that he used in writing his concert pieces to the organization and development of his etudes. Most of them were written during the years 1895-1898,¹¹ and his students began playing them in his classes long before they were published,¹² according to De'ak. Popper drew inspiration for his etudes, as he did with his concert pieces, from many sources. De'ak recounted that Popper once told him he got the idea for no. 36 from his many train trips during his touring days. The rapidly ascending and descending scales are a depiction of the train rolling along the track (page 262). The rhythmic pattern characteristic of *Die Walküre*, Act 3, Scene 1, forms part of the basis of no. 5, presented "in an intricate and agitated manner" (page 262).

De'ak said that Popper composed his set of 40 etudes to meet the needs of the virtuoso¹³ and to help his students deal with "the technical problems which Popper had met in the music of... Wagner, Liszt, Berlioz, Schumann, Saint-Saëns, and Volkmann" (page 262). (And, I would venture to add, Dvorak.) De'ak added that by writing these etudes as a response to technical problems he'd encountered, Popper created works in which the "technical innovations [required by works from the literature became] firmly established as part of standard equipment" (page 261). This statement answered a question I have had for quite some time. I noticed, and perhaps you have too, that on not frequent occasions within the etudes, the material bears a striking resemblance to something in another work from the cello literature. It could range in length from just a few notes to a full measure, and I often wondered if I was imagining the resemblance. I kept trying to decide if I was simply reading into the etude a similarity that wasn't actually there, or, possibly, if the resemblance was accidental nor coincidental. De'ak seems to be saying: No, we are not imagining the similarity, and it is neither accidental or coincidental. Aspects of the literature are embedded within the etudes.

If that's the case, then, even though De'ak doesn't say so, there's a common pedagogical principle at work. Often, when we encounter a problem, one way we solve it is to develop little on-the-spot exercises that are yet more complicated or difficult than the original problem. With these etudes, Popper, as composer, drew upon his fertile musical imagination, and as pedagogue, understood the needs of (his) students to go beyond writing down the short, brief exercises we all are capable of concocting. The composer in him directed him to come up with full-length, full-scale pieces that have embedded within them technical problems from the literature. This doesn't mean that one etude is better or more appropriate preparation than other one for a concerto or other work. Even though Popper composed no. 19 for the cello section to help them prepare for *Lohengrin*, the effort we put into that etude is applicable to many other situations. It is possible that Duport, Grützmacher or Francomme embedded passages from the literature into their etudes. If they did, they probably did so for similar sorts of reasons (although I have to confess I haven't come across such striking resemblances). It seems to me, moreover, that Popper probably had another goal in mind, which De'ak only hinted at, one more long-range in scope. I think Popper's use of passages from the literature was a device called borrowing, for the purpose of both *creating* and *solving* new - or newer - problems, problems that he, as composer, could imagine. His rich musical imagination, I think, led him to seek out new problems. Of course, this could also be said of all the other composers of etudes, but Popper was a far better composer, and it's this aspect of his multi-faceted life that's a major factor in trying to comprehend the power and authority of the etudes. We all know there's an intimate and intricate inter-relationship between what is known to be possible for an instrument and what is then composed, or viewed as compose-able, for that instrument. Most of the great composers, Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Bach, had the technique and tone of a particular singer, soloist or ensemble in mind when composing any given work. Those of us who've had the opportunity to work with the composer of a new work today have sometimes felt our own technique stretched in ways we alone could not have imagined. Sometimes we find ourselves having to instruct the composer about what is actually doable. At times, works are written that seem to be impossible, at least for their own day, yet, as technique expands, people become able to play the work.¹⁴ As a performer, Popper knew what was possible, because he'd done it. As composer, he had musical ideas requiring new - that is, expanded - technique. De'ak stated that many of Popper's concert pieces already express or explored his ideas of what he felt was possible, and said that these ideas are to be found in "broadly expanded form" in the etudes (page 260).

Many of us began studying the Popper etudes around the time we commenced working on our first major concerto, but the etudes were not assigned as adjuncts to the concerto. This presents us with an irony. Since, or if, passages from the literature are embedded within the etudes, does it make pedagogical sense to give students the solution to a problem long *before* they encounter the problem? Can - or should - the student view the etude as a solution to a problem is the student hasn't yet had that problem? Witness the composition of no. 19, intended to help a cello section contend with an opera they were to perform. Still, I think, in this day and age, the answer to this question is in the negative. I also have a suspicion that the question itself might be the wrong question. Popper's etudes serve as what we could perhaps call "preventive medicine", the early preparation of technical health and well-being so that when the student encounters a complicated problem, the left-hand technique has been strengthened and prepared. The student doesn't really need to know that a group of notes just played is identical to a passage, in, say, a Wagner, opera, a Beethoven string quartet, or one of Popper's concert pieces. But the teacher should know.

When a student comes to the etudes for the first time, what may be on the student's mind is to get the etude into her/his hands and brains. The student's view of Popper at this stage is as pedagogue. That is as it should be. Because students are so caught up with the daunting task of just getting through it all, they often don't think their technique has been stretched, increased or pushed further along. Students seldom experience growth. The teacher sees it, but not the student. The student's inclination is to try to get it over with as quickly as possible, and it is only later, with reflection, that we come to realize and appreciate what working on the etudes did for us. That is as it should be, and that was the spirit in which our Cello Society concert was given.

After we have mastered the instrument and come back to old and familiar music, we do so from the vantage point of experience, which gives us a capacity to understand that the organization of the piece plays a significant part in how we work on the piece. It becomes possible to see that hand of Popper as composer at work. All those elements that gave us grief as students start to make sense in a new and important way, and we can understand and appreciate why these etudes, as De'ak said, "expanded the *scope* [my emphasis] of cello technique" beyond what had been known up till then.¹⁵ The etudes are written in standard forms, such as A B A (e.g. no. 9); rondo (e.g. no. 21); song form A A B (e.g. no. 4); repeated internal A

A B B (e.g. no. 34); something I call modified rondo, with bridge sections and parts of the rondo itself repeated (e.g. no. 15); and free, or fantasia, from, with no repeats whatsoever (e.g. no. 2).

Even though each etude individually seems to have too much material crammed into it, each one is really quite sparse and spare, almost spartan-like. There is nothing extraneous about them. They have a feeling of openness, of fresh air being let in. No two are alike.¹⁶ Each etude explores just one problem - and nothing more - not necessarily from the literature. The problem might be one that Popper imagined all by himself, or it might be one that he'd encountered. This basic technical problem is always stated in a simple, direct, and unassuming way in the opening bars;¹⁷ Popper devoted the rest of the etude to a musical and technical development of the problem; he sought out as many ways and places on the cello as he, as composer, could imagine. The "expansion" that De'ak refers to is the constant restatement of the technical problem by increasing the musical complexity of the first bars. The compositional development to which he subjects his "theme" (I prefer to call it a problem), while it's not dissimilar to the kind of compositional development that Beethoven likes to engage in - making the theme ever more increasingly complex and convoluted - is motivated by his wish to devise all sorts of ways to play the same melodic/rhythmic pattern, in as many ranges and registers as possible. In this regard, the compositional development activity is inseparable from the technical problem, and it is this feature which differentiates these etudes from all others.

Duport wanted his etudes to be musically interesting, so he gave many of them full-blown expansive themes, occasionally in the style or manner of a sonata or concerto theme. As I already mentioned, he makes use of contrasting thematic material, providing a feeling of variety to the contents of his etudes, but his contrasting material has the effect of diluting or watering down the point he is trying to make. When I play Duport's etudes, I sometimes wonder just *what* the point is he's trying to make. Granted, each etude relates to a point he's raised in his *Essai*, but few, if any, of us ever read the *Essai* first and then play the etudes in accord with his written observations. Rather, we take the etudes at face value, and play them in whatever order of difficulty we decide upon. As for Grützmacher, perhaps he felt it necessary to write his second volume as full-scale pieces because that was the procedure he thought best for putting down on paper what he felt was needed for virtuoso command of the cello. There's a built-in dilemma about Grützmacher's virtuoso etudes: one cannot really work on them at all until one has a fair degree of virtuoso technique. Popper wrote his etudes as a means of acquiring virtuosity, and as such, they don't require mastery of the cello or of virtuoso techniques in order to learn them.

The length of each of Popper's etudes is another factor that contributes to their efficacy as training for virtuosity. Inseparable from the aspect of length is the factor of the relentlessness of each etude: they are as intertwined as the rhythmic pattern is with the theme/problem. In most works of the repertoire a specific problem can last only 1 or 2 bars. Each etude explores one problem, and lasts far longer than any passage in the literature. Table One, on page 15, lists the etudes by numbers of bars, starting with no. 17, with 30 bars, up to no. 36, which has 192 bars. In and of itself the number of measures isn't the sole criterion for determining the length of the etude. Other equally important factors are: how many notes there are in a bar; what the metric and rhythmic values are for the notes (the time signature); and the tempo, (whether the etude is to be played slowly, quickly, or somewhere in between). All of these elements combine to inform us of the amount of time it takes to play through the etude. (That is, once it's learned! How long it takes to learn it is quite another matter.) Once the etude gets started, there are few resting or pausing points. A few fermata are written in, as well as some written - in pauses - in nos. 26 and 36 - and there are a few places where a fermata sign might be missing (see Table Two, page 15). Other than what is shown in Table Two, there is simply no let-up in the etudes. This quality of not stopping is doubly reinforced by the absence of contrasting or differing thematic material. Not being able to stop, along with absence of contrasting or differing thematic material, provides another contribution to the development of virtuosity, namely the building-up of (the) stamina needed to play through an entire work. Witness etude no. 19; his goal was to help the cellists of his section survive the 111 bars of unremitting repetition in *Lohengrin*.

In virtually all of the etudes you'll find literal restatements that range in size and scope from one to many bars being repeated in many different ways.¹⁸ With some of these restatements, Popper left the fingerings and bowings aren't the same. It seems to me that, with the exception of an early stage when we're learning the notes of the etude, we should adhere to the slurs and bowings that Popper gives us. That is, we should not change the bowing so it all becomes uniform. Popper, after all, was a careful composer, and, I think, he served as his own editor. This means that the slurs, bowings, and fingerings on the whole reflect his ideas about how he wanted the music to be played. A change in bowing - and fingering - can alter the effect and character of a passage, making it less - or more - legato, which is what Popper intended when he altered the bowing. If we keep it all the same, we lose the change in character he was after.

The matter of what fingering to use is a question more complicated than that of bowing. Some of his fingering patterns are no longer in use today, such as 1-1-1 or 4-4, because tastes and styles have changed. Popper's choice of fingerings reflected the penchant for slides and portamento prevalent in his time. The practice today is, often to play minor 2nds with adjacent fingers, such as 1-2, 2-3, or 3-4. Where the minor 2nd occurs across the rhythmic pulse so that the second note occurs on a strong beat, then our usual guiding principle is to shift with the rhythmic accent, so the shift occurs between weak beat and subsequent strong beat and during the minor 2nd. Many of Popper's fingerings do not take matters of rhythm into account. What are we to do? Change his fingerings to reflect current practices and styles? That's what I learned when I was a student. I would not be surprised if that was the experience many of you had. If we alter Popper's fingerings to be in accord with current tastes, it would certainly seem we're not doing any violation to his intent which was to further develop cello technique. More cellists today are able to play music that only a few were able to play in Popper's own day. This dramatic change in overall facility is due, in no small part, to improvements in teaching methods and pedagogical understanding, and is also due to the continued efforts of cellists who continue Popper's endeavours at expanding technique. It makes sense that we should make as full use as possible of what is currently known.

On the other hand, I can think of an argument against changing his fingerings. Despite the fact that we may find his fingerings awkward, old-fashioned or out of style, the merit of using his fingerings arises out of the need to know where all the notes are on the cello no matter from where or how we approach the note. If we find his fingerings far more difficult and awkward than current practice, then we are using the pedagogical principle of making something much more difficult than it actually occurs in the literature, so that what's in the literature is easier; hence, learning and using Popper's fingerings is a useful pedagogical tool. When we consider that his bowings aren't all that optional because they are an integral part of each etude, despite the fact that fingerings are, to a very great extent, a highly personal matter, since/f if Popper provided his fingerings, the least we can do is try to learn them. Perhaps a two step or bi-level approach to the fingerings could be taken. At an earlier stage of development, the student might use modern fingerings. Then at a later stage, perhaps upon a return to the etude, we could learn Popper's fingerings. In that way, Popper's fingerings would offer a contrast and might even help strengthen the hand in ways that an easier fingering might not offer. [To be continued - next newsletter.]

