A Contemporary Approach to Orchestral Bowings for the Concertmaster

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A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH TO ORCHESTRAL BOWINGS FOR THE CONCERTMASTER

By

Daniel Andai

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

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A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH TO ORCHESTRAL BOWINGS FOR THE CONCERTMASTER

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The concertmaster position has evolved into one of the most essential positions in an orchestra. The demands associated with the position make it a rigorous chair to occupy. The concertmaster is responsible for a number of duties that are critical for an orchestra’s success. These duties include serving as a liaison between the orchestral musicians and the conductor, being in excellent form as a violinist, and being prepared to lead any score and play any solos in the pieces being performed. A vast knowledge of string instruments and an understanding of an orchestra’s capability is also important. These are key factors for teaching specific techniques and clearly interpreting the composer’s and conductor’s interpretive wishes.

Interpretive ideas are unified throughout a string section using specified bowing techniques. Bowings solidify musical ideas for the entire string section. Concertmasters decide bowings primarily based on the first violin part. Subsequently, the bowing decisions are distributed to the other principals. Through the specification of bowing, concertmasters define articulations and other important elements of bowing to shape musical phrases. Concertmasters are relied upon for careful consideration of bowings that will obtain appropriate
results, based on knowledge of a bow’s physical qualities and its relationship to various musical styles.

Bowing challenges for a concertmaster involve coordinating orchestra members’ inherently different styles of string playing and musical interpretations. Concertmasters, like orchestras, are unique and must adapt to diverse situations. In addition to determining bowing, the concertmaster leads the string section from the front desk through his/her sound and through gestures, which communicate musical intent.

This essay presents various approaches for bowing different styles of music. One chapter provides an overview of the concertmaster position. The second chapter concentrates on the various bow strokes required in a score, each accompanied by brief descriptions. Finally, the third chapter explores different ways to play a variety of musical examples ranging from the classical era to modern day compositions. Each example demonstrates multiple approaches for deciding on reasonable bowings. The Appendix consists of bowings of major compositions that were used in performances. A glossary of terms every concertmaster should know is also included.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to provide a modern resource approach for classical violinists aspiring to become prepared orchestral concertmasters. The ability to determine optimal bowings for a string section requires a clear understanding of the concertmaster’s role and an intimate knowledge of the features of the bow. The essay is divided into three main sections.

The first section contains historical background on the role of the concertmaster. The second section contains technical and historical information about the bow, as well as descriptions of common bow strokes found in orchestral settings. The uses for different bow strokes and methods for achieving them diplomatically among members of a string section is discussed. The third section is an examination of bowing scenarios in standard repertoire and an interpretational description of their execution through the analysis of musical notation. The goal of the third chapter is to offer new ideas on how to approach concertmaster bowings.

This essay is intended to provide useful information for the young concertmaster. Where most of the literature available to concertmasters tends to be inundated with personal remarks and/or anecdotes, this author has endeavored to create an objective study. As every concertmaster is different, each individual’s approach to reading this essay may differ significantly. The objective of this essay, however, remains constant in assessing the variables associated with the bow and how to reach thoughtful and educated decisions for bowings.
Need for the Study

Young aspiring concertmasters must understand the challenges of bowings and how they affect the orchestra’s sound. This study focuses primarily on the importance of bowings and the major factors that influence bowing choices. Glenn Dicterow acknowledges that “like many of his older colleagues...he learned orchestral technique on the job. But seat-of-the-pants is no longer a recommended mode of career training. Times are getting tougher [and] kids must gear themselves for a practical life.”¹ Dicterow’s colleague, Michael Gilbert, a Galamian/Delay student, “remembers that in his student days ‘there was simply no thought of studying an orchestra part.”²

In the early 1990s STRINGS Magazine published an article stating that “no schools or courses exist for the aspiring concertmaster, with the result that, as Gustav Mahler said...‘the novice has to plunge in and see what happens.”³ Norman Carol stated that he “stayed with the B.S.O. for three years and learned a vast amount of repertoire which [he] had never known before. The first time [Carol] ever played the Bruckner Fifth was the first time [he] ever heard the Bruckner Fifth.”⁴

The concertmaster position is one of the most essential elements of a successful ensemble. One might ask if an orchestra is capable of performing without a concertmaster, and conclude that this is simply not the standard case.

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² Ibid.
Concertmaster and conductor Joseph Silverstein says “the concertmaster is the key to an orchestra’s quality and success on many fronts, the most important of which are music making [and] sorting out bowings with the conductor and making sure the parts are properly marked.”\(^5\) Soloist Julia Fischer says that concertmasters “are the most important people in a soloist’s life. If an orchestra plays really fantastically, it’s fifty percent the concertmaster and fifty percent the conductor-especially in the case of guest conductors.”\(^6\) Concertmasters who accompany solo artists must search for a general dynamic and tempo balance among the conductor, the orchestra and the soloist. Often times, a concertmaster may have to change a desired bowing to match that of a soloist. If a soloist’s bowing exceeds the orchestra’s capabilities, it is the responsibility of the concertmaster to suggest an alternate bowing.

The concertmaster role carries many responsibilities and privileges. In addition to the inherent duties of the position, there are extreme pressures from demanding pieces, conductors, and fellow musicians who rely on a prepared concertmaster for help dealing with unexpected challenges. A concertmaster is constantly anticipating “the needs inherent in each situation, calibrating quality and levels of sound, adjusting and reacting with a large awareness…. He must listen to the whole product in rehearsal.”\(^7\) New York Philharmonic violinist


\(^{6}\) Ibid.

Yoko Takebe believes that a concertmaster, as an orchestral player, “must know the music as a whole” since he is not just dealing with his part alone.  

In the course of researching how a concertmaster manages the roles and duties of this craft, this author found very little evidence to support how and why certain decisions are made for orchestral bowings. It is understood that bow management must be mastered in order to be a secure concertmaster. While there are many treatises on bow technique, and others that discuss phrasing, this author found very little information on the art of linking the two together.

The exhaustive research done for this project reveals that being a great concertmaster seems possible only by gaining years of experience and/or traditional orchestral exposure. It is not uncommon for orchestral musicians to take orchestral policies and etiquette for granted, which can lead to disrespect of the concertmaster position. Many concertmasters have therefore relied on their artistic abilities for success. This study links the artistic and technical worlds in an approach for determining optimal leadership in an orchestra.

In 2006, Dr. Anne Mischakoff Heiles wrote a tribute book honoring her father, entitled *Misha Mischakoff: Journeys of a Concertmaster.* In this document, Heiles interviews concertmasters and gathers information on how they do their jobs effectively. Her primary objective appears to be to pay homage to the concertmaster position as a whole, and to her father in particular. Heiles describes the personal differences between many concertmasters in the United States and their approaches to the position. Other than this, publications and

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websites of professional orchestras generally lack detailed descriptions of concertmaster bowings. This essay is intended to provide solutions for bowings using clear examples of orchestral excerpts that will educate violinists and help them to be successful concertmasters.

**Historical Background**

The concertmaster role has enjoyed an interesting evolution. Deriving its name from the German word, *Konzertmeister,*¹⁰ “the title concertmaster recognizes a significant measure of innate and achieved authority on the part of its holder and confers an even greater measure of authority over the ensemble and its interpretations.”¹¹ The concertmaster is the “principal first violinist and as such the person responsible for coordinating the bowing and attack of all strings.”¹² Preoria Symphony concertmaster Marcia Liebenow adds that “the concertmaster is the lead violinist. As the violinist with the highest rank s/he sits in the first chair, right next to the conductor’s podium”¹³ providing the orchestra’s musicians a peripheral view of the concertmaster’s bow.

Concertmaster Scott Flavin shares that “historically, the concertmaster, or ‘first violinist’ would lead or conduct the whole orchestra (in the days before

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conductors).” Hanani describes the concertmaster role:

Concertmasters played important roles in the development of some of the most noted early orchestras. The Mannheim Orchestra, for example, was led by two concertmaster-conductors, Johann Stamitz and Christian Cannabich. In Beethoven’s Vienna, there were two outstanding concertmaster-conductors – Ignaz Schuppanzigh and Franz Clement. Earlier, Mozart had written from Paris about a rehearsal of one of his symphonies that had gone so badly he wished he had been present to conduct it with the violin himself.

In a Baroque chamber orchestra, “the concertmaster would usually lead the group from the first chair position by means of waving his bow and nodding vigorously with his head and violin at key moments.” Concertmasters must “lead without remorse and lead the section toward a musical end… accomplished through the composer’s decisions [and] the conductor’s,” says concertmaster Jorja Fleezanis.

Intricate compositions require the use of a conductor regardless of a concertmaster’s skill to lead from the chair. Former Metropolitan Opera conductor Erich Leinsdorf attributes the necessity of an orchestral conductor to Beethoven’s Symphony No. 3, “Eroica.” He states that “whereas every simple metric division can certainly be rendered perfectly without a standup conductor, no composite meter can be so rendered unless there is a standup conductor. The ‘Eroica’ symphony might be credited for bringing the concert conductor into the

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world. “According to a quote in the *New York Times*, Clemens Hellsberg, president of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra stated that a concertmaster must know when “to react at the moment in relation to the conductor.”

Concertmasters, or in British organizations, *leaders,* are diplomatic liaisons between the conductor and the orchestra. Minnesota Orchestra music director Osma Vanska affirms that the concertmaster “is an important link between the orchestra and the conductor.” The concertmaster “should help the conductor communicate and clarify his ideas.” Arnold Steinhardt of the Cleveland Orchestra is an important example of a concertmaster who was known for his ability to lead the violin section and serve as a liaison between orchestra and conductor. Joseph Silverstein believes that a conductor requires a strong concertmaster who responds “to the conductor as if the conductor has presented an absolutely infallible idea. Then, the concertmaster is doing his job.” Donald Rosenberg credits James R. Oestreich from the *New York Times* with the observation that for a music director, “the choice of a concertmaster is analogous to a President’s choice of a Supreme Court Justice, since the appointee may continue to shape the orchestra’s style long after the music director is gone.”

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Concertmasters interpret conductors’ musical wishes, translating them into technical commands for the rest of the string section, and present bowing solutions that effectively portray musical ideas. “Sorting out bowings with the conductor and making sure the parts are properly marked” is a major function of the concertmaster. Flavin says, “the concertmaster … helps establish and coordinate bowings for the string section, which affects musical phrasing as well as technique and ensemble.” Joseph Gingold explains that George Szell held extra rehearsals with just himself and the principal string players to decide upon the bowings and articulations for the pieces they would perform. This rehearsal method “was one of the primary reasons the Cleveland Orchestra, which still has key players who were trained in the Szell days, sounds like a large chamber music ensemble, always playing with incredible precision.”

Knowing the tendencies of a conductor and string section helps a concertmaster to ably bow music scores. A concertmaster must know his or her section well enough “to bow for the weakest members,” explains Ken Goldsmith, professor of violin at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music. A conductor may want the orchestra “to come in like a powerhouse right on the beat and another might want a rounded, less precise entrance where the accent is not etched. In the typical career of a concertmaster, he will be called on to perform any one of the orchestral staples repeatedly, under a whole array of guest conductors each of whom will have his own concept of the work.”

Flexibility and “common sense decision based on the ability of the players, the

26 Mischakoff Heiles, America’s Concertmasters, 334.
27 Flavin, The Role of the Concertmaster.
29 Vitte, Best Seat in the House: So You Wanna Be a Concertmaster?
size and balance of the string section, and the musical judgments of the conductor” 31 will decide specific bowing choices. Therefore, the bow is a major “key to … mastery in expression [and] interpretation.” 32

Bowings should enhance a concertmaster’s cues for dynamics, articulation, style, tempo, placement and directional bow use. A concertmaster’s technical and emotive gestures must be clear to the entire section in order to achieve a united string section. Only when a symbiosis between conductor and concertmaster is achieved can a string section achieve comprehensible and inspirational performances.

Unstable relationships can often occur between great artists. The case of concertmaster Mischa Mischakoff and conductor Leopold Stokowski with the Philadelphia Orchestra is a prime example. Mischakoff’s daughter, Anne Heiles, says that “of all Stokowski’s many experiments, however, the one that most affected the conductor’s relationship with concertmaster was the advocacy of ‘free’ bowing.” 33 Records show that Stokowski preferred his string section to play with bogen frei, meaning free bowing. Stokowski preferred they watch for a cue to change notes rather than synchronizing bow changes together.

“Stokowski maintained almost mesmerizing eye contact with orchestra members; watching a concertmaster for bowing could undermine this eye contact and total control from the podium.” 34 Mischakoff, being a purist for

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33 Mischakoff Heiles, Mischa Mischakoff, 91.
34 Ibid.
uniform bow changes and matching bow distribution, found this artistic relationship challenging.

Today, there are instances of orchestras that perform without a conductor. Examples include the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra in New York City and the New Century Chamber Orchestra. A concertmaster “can be expected to conduct in the absence of the conductor and assistant conductor”35 from the concertmaster’s chair. As late as 1878, French violinist, composer, and conductor Edouard Deldevez specified “that he preferred direction with the bow to that with the baton, claiming that ‘the violin is the natural instrument of the orchestra director.’”36 Concertmasters in such orchestras are charged with leading the group by initiating tempo and character, by gesturing with their bows to give cues.

One challenging responsibility of the concertmaster is to know each score as thoroughly as the conductor with whom he or she is working. Isidor Saslav notes, in Chapter Three of Anne Mischakoff Heiles’ *America’s Concertmasters*, that according to Mischa Mischakoff, “the most important aspect of the concertmaster job is to know the score in its entirety.”37 To illustrate how completely a conductor must know a score, Steinhardt recalls George Szell, whose “knowledge and understanding of the classical and romantic Central European repertoire was complete. He could sit down at the piano and read a complex Richard Strauss score and transpose it into other keys at will.”38

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35 Flavin, *The Role of the Concertmaster*.
San Francisco Opera concertmaster Kay Stern shares that

A lot of [his] job is not just leading, but listening to what’s happening, and what’s not. Things can vary from night to night, an understudy can take over at the last minute and alter a tempo. There may be times when the conductor is busy with the stage and in some way [he] as the concertmaster must take over some of the decision-making in the pit, communicating through body language.\(^{39}\)

A concertmaster is therefore expected to be aware of what is occurring in the score and when applicable, on the stage at all times.

A concertmaster also must have a commanding knowledge of the performance practices and notational idiosyncrasies associated with each historic and compositional style period. For example, it is useful for a concertmaster to know that in the Baroque Era “dots and dashes were used interchangeably, where they were used at all, and that these decisions as to bow stroke and playing style were almost always left to be taken not by the composer…but by the performer.”\(^{40}\) Some concertmasters seem to find the artistic aspect of marking bowings cumbersome. Concertmaster Emmanuell Boisvert describes conflicts when discussing her bowing choices. “Decisions cannot be perfect. Everybody would like to do bowings differently. I’m stuck with the hours of work that it takes marking the bowings. The way I see it is that bowing is a chore that has to be done; I do it and it’s done.”\(^{41}\)

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\(^{39}\) Vittes, *Best Seat in the House.*


\(^{41}\) Mischakoff Heiles, *America’s Concertmasters,* 237.
Concertmasters “should never wait for expression marks to appear in the notation”\textsuperscript{42} when marking bowings. Inspiration must come from within the nature and style of the music. Documentation from 1846 explains that Mendelssohn seldom beat more than the first few phrases in a symphony, only utilizing the baton to elicit dynamics that were not already present in the score.\textsuperscript{43}

Orchestra of St. Luke’s co-concertmaster, Krista Bennion Feeney, singles out the importance of “stylistic dexterity”\textsuperscript{44} as a primary skill. Philharmonia Baroque’s concertmaster, Elizabeth Blumenstock, feels that her “music director, Nick McGegan, physically conveys a lot about the music. He also likes a loose and physically responsive band; he gains strength from it and feels it enhances performances. [She] essentially functions as a physical transmitter of his expressive gestures.”\textsuperscript{45} Each gesture that is made in relation to “style, is inseparable from technique.”\textsuperscript{46}

In today’s orchestras, it is apparent that a conductor depends on a well-prepared concertmaster to share in the task of elevating an orchestra’s technical and stylistic abilities to great heights. Mischakoff remembers that his virtuosic string section allowed him to mold, create and propel them toward amazingly detailed performances. He was known for laboring intensively over bowings and articulations, always searching for perfection. To describe the feeling of high artistic achievement within an orchestra, Steinhardt recalls

When Szell loosened the reins of control just enough to allow the orchestra to broaden as it crested the great climax of the first

\textsuperscript{44} Vittes, \textit{Best Seat in the House}.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{46} Donington, \textit{String Playing in Baroque Music}, 44.
movement of Beethoven’s ‘Eroica’ Symphony, the feeling was oceanic – what Sigmund Freud described in another context as ‘a feeling of an indissoluble bond, of being one with the external world as a whole’. 47

This sort of meticulous preparation helps to build a bond of trust between a conductor and the orchestra. Los Angeles Opera concertmaster Stuart Canin believes that if concertmasters help the conductor “make suggestions that save even 15 to 30 seconds of rehearsal time,” 48 they are doing their job.

According to Chicago Symphony’s Civic Orchestra conductor Cliff Colnot, a major role of the concertmaster involves encompassing technical mastery of the music and being prepared to demonstrate any passage for the sections in rehearsal. “The greatest players are those with the finest right arms.” 49 Concertmasters must be excellent violinists and soloists. With the use of the bow, they must “demonstrate that [they] are as good as or better a player than...the individual players in the section...to be a convincing leader.” 50 In a letter to Toscanini, Artur Rodzinsky wrote, “Mischa Mischakoff, who is now the concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony...is also a first-rate soloist.” 51 Rochester Philharmonic’s concertmaster, Juliana Athayde, expresses that as a concertmaster she is called upon weekly for “something big to do, whether a concerto, chamber music, a recital, or a big orchestral solo. This has probably put [her] playing in the best shape it’s ever been.” 52 St. Louis Symphony concertmaster David Halen

47 Steinhardt, Indivisible by Four, 65.
48 Vittes, Best Seat in the House.
50 Mischakoff Heiles, America’s Concertmasters, 60.
51 Mischakoff Heiles, Mischa Mischakoff, 135.
52 Vittes, Best Seat in the House.
insists that concertmasters must “become the best soloists” possible. As concertmasters work in “a very exposed position, [they] have to be not just a good reader and leader, but have to have a solo sound – in essence be a soloist” says Kansas City Symphony’s Tibor Klausner.

For many, the greatest challenge lies in the symphonic solos. A “concertmaster plays any violin solos that occur” in orchestral pieces. Glenn Dicterow, New York Philharmonic’s concertmaster explains that

when you’re blending in the section and you see the word ‘solo’ written on the top of the right page, and for three bars you have to become a soloist and make it sound solo caliber, this is even more difficult than playing a concerto. When you’re playing in the orchestra and you see that word, and you know you’re carrying the ball by yourself, very often with no accompaniment; now that takes a lot of confidence.

Dicterow’s personal emphasis on the subject demonstrates that there is more than one type of bowing is often needed in an orchestral setting. He describes one approach for blending into the orchestra’s sound and another as a soloist.

“There are essential differences between solo or chamber music bowing styles and orchestral bowing styles. Orchestral bowings require a more articulated or marked style...largely because of the number of players in the orchestra string section.” Whereas concertmasters can decide for themselves what a bowing will be for their individual solos, they often have to lead the first violins in soli sections. This occurs when a solo is written to be played by the violin section and as a result, the concertmaster must ask the musicians to phrase the music with a soloist’s approach, while still blending with one another.

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53 Ibid.
54 Hanani, “The Concertmaster,” 44.
55 Flavin, The Role of the Concertmaster.
56 Hanani, “The Concertmaster,” 44.
“The combination of strings with woodwind, brass, and percussion sections often necessitates a different bowing style in certain passages.”\(^{58}\) Having an understanding of the mechanics and acoustical challenges of the other instruments in the orchestra helps the concertmaster bow sections properly, especially during exposed solo sections. An example of this is found at the end of the second movement of Brahms’ first symphony when the concertmaster and principal horn play a duet over the orchestra. The combination of a brass instrument and a string instrument sitting on opposite sides of the stage must work together to create a unified musical passage. The bowing should acknowledge and reflect the duet by permitting the phrasing to work with an instrument that requires breathing. Finding a common, collaborative phrasing with the bow is therefore necessary to play the duet successfully.

Conductor Lawrence Foster delineates the concertmaster as a “totally cultivated musician, a fine chamber music player, [who plays] the violin equally well or better than anyone in the section.”\(^{59}\) From a soloist’s perspective, prodigious violinist Joseph Szigeti told Steinhardt that his progress would “be made simpler if [he] study ... string quartets.”\(^{60}\) Steinhardt also commented on Szell’s ability to “identify any passage from any [Mozart] quartet.”\(^{61}\)

The acquisition of chamber music skills adds another facet to a concertmaster’s attributes. David Halen feels that “Chamber-music experience and being a concertmaster go hand in hand. An orchestra is really no different than any chamber music ensemble, just much larger. It has many of the same

\(^{60}\) Steinhardt, *Indivisible by Four*, 69.
\(^{61}\) Ibid., 67.
issues, and, in some ways, more solutions.”  

Arnold Steinhardt, first violinist of the Guarneri String Quartet, writes that “a quartet led by the first violinist was the rule rather than the exception until well into this century.”  

When referring to second violinist John Dalley, he says “we two violins have to be perfectly together, like twins in matching outfits.”  

John Dalley gives emphasis to the first violin position by expressing that “a lot of the success of the second violin depends on the first violin.”  

He also shares that violinists “have to be ready to adjust to [their] colleagues’ phrasing even if this entails unexpected bowing changes.”  

The importance of matching bowing is implied in this statement.

Appropriate bowing and articulate phrasing are always expected of a concertmaster. It is considered good practice for a concertmaster to think as a member of the section to find commonality. In Daniel Levitov’s *Playing from the Back*, he writes that “if the concertmaster is playing at the very tip, ask yourself if your music matches the first violin part, and look to see that the front stands are also playing at the tip. The same is true for articulation. As you play, listen to your section and match it. Mirror the physical gestures that you see to create sound that will blend and contribute musically.”  

Former Philadelphia Orchestra concertmaster Norman Carol sums up the importance of the position by stating that

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62 Vittes, *Best Seat in the House*.
63 Steinhardt, *Indivisible by Four*, 94.
64 Steinhardt, *Indivisible by Four*, 3.
66 Ibid.
The concertmaster must be prepared to make a great many split-second decisions. Of course, he must set the standard of bowings for the whole string section, in consultation with the other principals. He is responsible for playing all the incidental solos in the repertoire. He has to be a mind reader and know what a conductor wants – sometimes before the conductor realizes it. And at times he is also called upon as a ‘father confessor’ or a go-between.  

There is ample evidence to demonstrate the complex and vital role of the concertmaster in an orchestra. Relationships are created based on respect and trust, and a high level of commitment is essential. The position requires qualities from the violinist that distinguishes his or her position from the rest of the section. These unique responsibilities are the components that formulate the special musician a concertmaster must be.

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Chapter 2

THE BOW AND THE CONCERTMASTER

The bow is the apparatus used most commonly to produce sound from a stringed instrument. Bowing is often described as an “art of producing sound from a string instrument.”

The bow acquired its name primarily from the fact that it was shaped like a bow used in archery. Although there is “slight mention of it in the Sanskrit, and from East Indian tradition…we do know of its existence from many drawings and pictures dating back as far as the Eighth Century…. Its development from that period, through the…end of the Sixteenth Century…, has remained a mystery.”

The modern bow’s materials and construction are fairly simplistic. Designed by Francois Tourte (1747-1833), it has a “long tapering and slightly inward curving stick, made from the Pernambuco wood in South America, and a screw mechanism for the adjustment of the tension of the horsehair” similar to the seventeenth century German-type bows.

The bow functions by exciting the string “to lateral vibrations; or in other words, the bow must cross the strings at right angles.” These vibrations must be drawn out from specific points of contact, near or away from the bridge, between the bow hair and the strings. For concertmasters, good bow control can “widen [their] repertoire of bowing to gain greater freedom as an

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70 Erdlee, The Mastery of the Bow, 13.
71 Ibid.
The vibrations create tone color, which is the “tonal quality of music pitches and the many available ways the tonal characteristics change for expressive purposes.”

In Emory Erdlee’s book, *Mastery of the Bow*, the author quotes the 1740 Method of Bowing, written by Francesco Gemianini: “Tone of the violin depends principally upon the right management of the bow…. For on this principal, keeping it always parallel with the bridge and pressing it only with the forefinger upon the strings with discretion depends the fine tone of the instrument.” Good tone is described as “the development of a conception of tone and the training of the muscles. Listen, always listen!”

Franz Kneisel states that “each section of the string vibrates with a different quality of tone. Most [violinists] think that a big tone is developed by pressure with the bow, yet much depends on what part of the string this pressure is applied. The great art is the art of the bow.”

Numerous methods of bow technique describe the procedure for creating a sound using the correct “action of the muscles…that influence the stroke.” Many of these approaches are found in treatises dating back to prominent violinist Ferdinand David and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s father, Leopold Mozart. This author recommends to concertmasters that they study these documents for historical and practical insights, as tone production is discussed at length in each of these treatises.

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74 Berman, Jackson, and Sarch, *Dictionary of Bowing and Pizzicato Terms*, 54.
76 Ibid., 51.
In order to create an even tone on the violin, “the bow should not...change the location of the point of contact with the strings; it must not be jostled or shoved to one side while sounding a tone.”

The point of contact upon the strings is not a fixed one. Erdlee says, “audiences listen to the violin for tonal beauty first, and to technical efficiency last.” Concertmasters are held accountable for using the bow accordingly, and for producing a beautiful tone. They are responsible for the sound a string section produces, and must realize that “unless the strings are getting more or less the right sonority and the right articulation, nothing else can be got to sound quite right where they are involved. [It is] a matter of...technical detail.” Erdlee observes that “a violinist’s entire expression, a violinist’s individuality, speaks through the bow arm. Through the bow arm he expresses his innermost feelings and emotions.” Therefore, good bow technique should be recognized as an essential tool for shaping a phrase, engineering dynamics and pronouncing articulations.

The concertmaster must also consider how best to incorporate tone graduation, which requires subtle accentuation, in order to provide the listener with a sense of the pieces rhythm, whether or not the score includes marks by the composer. This concept is more complex than simply increasing or decreasing volume in sound. Since the bow is responsible for dynamic variation, conveyed as “the most potent medium of musical expression,” finding the best angle for the bow on the strings is important. In soft passages for instance, “the edge of the hair only should touch the strings...by tipping the bow forward, or toward

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79 Courvoisier, The Technique of the Violin Playing, 30-36.
80 Erdlee, The Mastery of the Bow, 49.
82 Erdlee, The Mastery of the Bow, 152.
83 Courvoisier, The Technique of the Violin Playing, 38.
the finger-board." Conversely, for loud passages, more of the hair on the bow is required to touch the strings.

Bowings in general provide a “wide range of options...[so] the personality of the performer can rightly be expressed...using historical information...the skill, and insight to make great music.” Concertmasters use exaggerated gestures of the bow to effectively dictate cues and phrasing intentions to the string section. All of the technical and musical elements a concertmaster emotes with the bow must be performed successfully in order to be understood clearly and conveyed similarly by the rest of the orchestra.

Some artists believe that “it is not the bow, which is going to make the crucial difference. It is the player; his understanding of the style; his use of appropriate techniques; his trained musicianship.” In an article from the Music Associates of America, Norman Carol, former concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra under conductor Eugene Ormandy, cites a characteristic of the orchestra’s sound known as the Ormandy sound. “Not only did he have a certain string sound in his [Ormandy’s] ear but, more important, he knew how to get it.” One must have a specific concept of a desired sound to begin with, before one is able to draw out unique sounds from an orchestra.

Comprehension of stylistic tendencies and performance practices of different style periods, as well as projection of the appropriate sound quality for each period, inevitably affects technique. Acquainting oneself with different schools of bowing, including German, Franco-Belgian, English, Russian and

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84 Courvoisier, The Technique of the Violin Playing, 34.
85 Donington, String Playing in Baroque Music, 7.
86 Ibid., 24.
87 Strum, “Norman Carol.”
American, is necessary for anyone who hopes to achieve stylistically convincing performances. Artistic association with a piece or a composer is also helpful in the creation of bowings. Moreover, bringing historical references to a string section, and ultimately involving them in the same vision as the concertmaster in terms of interpretation and stylistic approach, will undoubtedly yield positive results.

Stylistically, for example, the quality of sound for a soft passage in Debussy’s *Afternoon of a Faun* should differ from that of a Mozart Symphony. The use of the bow must reflect this difference by either changing the speed of the bow or applying less weight to the bow to create an “airy” sound, or more weight with less amounts of bow to achieve a soft, rounded sound with “core” or substance. Character and phrasing within pieces are important factors to consider when bowing parts as well, as they may influence one’s choices of bowing technique and direction.

“Detailed applications of these general qualities have naturally to vary according to the situation. The mere gap in technique between average orchestral players…and the brilliant virtuosi…[is] wide.”\(^{88}\) In many cases, the “psychological aspect also has to be taken into account”\(^{89}\) in order to narrow the gap between the musicians’ capabilities. Only then will higher artistic standards become attainable.

\(^{89}\) Blum, *The Art of Quartet Playing*, 137.
Bow Strokes in an Orchestra

Bow strokes are defined by their characteristics and physical motions. Concertmasters are expected to make “the importance of the activity of the bow...obvious.”90 The most common direction for a bow to travel on a stringed instrument, for a healthy tone, “produced solely by bow,”91 is perpendicular to the strings and “parallel to the bridge.”92 Before discussing the specific strokes and their definitions, one should understand the physical bow control that is required to make each bow stroke unique.

Bow Control

According to Robert Donnington, the “sound of a bowed instrument varies through two distinct though connected causes: (i) right-hand technique, i.e. basically bow-strokes; and (ii) left-hand technique, i.e. basically finger-work.”93 Albeit this essay focuses on the bow and the many ways a concertmaster uses the bow, attention must be given to the left hand’s ability to influence the sonority produced by the right hand. Skilled concertmasters who are preparing bowings for complicated works need to possess “a certain amount of bow control...secured before the left hand is allowed to be brought into play at all.”94 A concertmaster must acknowledge that there are physical limitations and “certain bowings are impossible.”95

90 Erdlee, The Mastery of the Bow, 57.
91 Ibid., 49.
92 Ibid., 47.
93 Donington, String Playing in Baroque Music, 27.
94 Erdlee, The Mastery of the Bow, 58.
Dynamics and the Bow

“One of the most important results of a fine bow arm [for a concertmaster] is the ability to perform dynamics.”\textsuperscript{96} It is not sufficient to know, for instance, that “for less tone –power, a smaller fraction of the bow…is to be used.” \textsuperscript{97}

Sonority caused by a bow stroke results from a combination of factors, closely related to one another. The greater the speed, the louder the volume up to a certain point of diminishing returns, beyond which the hair cannot bite the string firmly enough to impart full energy. The less the speed, the less the volume, down to a point at which there is not enough energy being generated to keep the string in continuous vibration, even if the bow hand could control a motion so excessively slow. Moderate speeds are normal speeds: very great speeds and very small speeds of bow strokes are more or less special effects. The greater the pressure, the greater the amplitude of vibration and the louder the volume, up to a point...The less the pressure, the less the amplitude of vibration and the softer the volume, down to a point.\textsuperscript{98}

The concertmaster must understand the following combinations that influence the dynamics and the health of a tone in accordance with the energy he generates.

Articulation and Notation

To create proper tone with variation in rhythm and sound quality, the proposition of articulation is imposed by the composer. “Different bowing styles can produce a variety of tonal effects and articulations. Consequently, the uniformity of bow directions, bow articulation on- and off-string, duration of notes, dynamics, rate of bow speed, and bow distribution are all involved in any effective performance.”\textsuperscript{99} If a score is insufficiently edited by the composer or the

\textsuperscript{96} Erdlee, \textit{The Mastery of the Bow}, 134.
\textsuperscript{97} Courvoisier, \textit{The Technique of the Violin Playing}, 42.
editor, it becomes the duty of the concertmaster to designate articulations to the section, after consulting the conductor. Many articulations that appear to be identical on the page are played differently according to the performance practices of various style periods. “The period and style of the music influence the interpretation of bowing marks. For example, dots over the notes in passage by Haydn might call for one type of bowing, whereas the same indication in a contemporary score might suggest another type.”

In the classic style, “Leopold Mozart used dots to show ‘that the notes under the slur are not only to be taken in one bow-stroke but have also be separated from each other by a slight pressure.’” The same is true for Handel oratorios, in which successive notes appear under a slur, separated by dots. Correct Baroque performance practice is to use the bow vibrato technique (a waving motion executed by the bow arm) for this articulation. During Beethoven’s lifetime and throughout the romantic era, dots began to have new meaning. Due to the increased complexity and density of nineteenth-century music, dots need to be played heavier, also depending on the character and tempo of the phrase. In turn, this forces the concertmaster to change bow direction for musical purposes. As a result, notes under a slur with dots become an indication for phrasing or articulation more than for bowing.

Bowing styles and bowing strategies are key elements to achieving a musical and stylistic performance. Artistic performance of orchestral music from

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all style periods depends extensively on the use of the bow for phrasing, articulation, and dynamics.

**Division of Chords**

Another important technical element for which the concertmaster must determine execution in the orchestra is chords. Primarily, two types of chords appear in symphonic repertoire: the divided chord or broken chord, and the unbroken or blocked chord. A chord, meaning more than one pitch sounding on a single, horizontal beat, must either be divided by a section or played in full by each player in the section. Usually the concertmaster decides if a chord will be divided, and if so, designates the division within the section. Traditionally, the outside players in a section, or those seated in odd numbered chairs, play the higher pitches, while those seated in even numbered chairs play the lower pitches. More precisely, in the case of a *divisi* the “outside players are those closest to the audience.”

There are instances in Debussy’s music, for example, of the music for one section being notated on two separate staves on the page, signifying that there are two or more separate parts. In this case, the concertmaster must specify how he wishes the division to take place. Every concertmaster has his/her personal preference for such occasions; however, one should keep in mind that balance and psychological factors may affect the types of decisions. While there are different schools of thought on the subject of chord division, two possibilities can

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be viewed as safe solutions for a string section: the divisions can be created by chair, or by stand. Creating a division by chair signifies that the chord is to be outlined in consecutive numerical order, the numbers representing the chairs, moving from high pitches to low pitches. In this scenario, each person plays an individual line that does not necessarily line up with what his/her stand partner is playing. If the division is made by stand, every line, or pitch is also played in numerical order, with the numbers representing the stand occupied. In this scenario, every player is playing exactly the same line his/her stand partner is playing. Both scenarios have pros and cons; it is up to the discretion of the concertmaster, unless otherwise imposed upon by the conductor, which division works best for a particular string section.

Whether or not to break a three or four-note chord “would depend on the experience, musicianship and the personal taste”\(^\text{103}\) of a concertmaster, who must keep the capabilities of the string section in mind. “It is important to realize that ‘no string player can obtain effects with equal effectiveness in any one part of the bow.’\(^\text{104}\) Another factor to consider when playing a chord is traditional stylistic practices. Even more important is deciphering which note of the chord is melodic and which is functioning as part of the harmony. This decision will determine the timing, length and speed with which a chord is played. Regardless of how chords are divided or played, they are generally tuned and balanced to the lower pitches of the chord.

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\(^{103}\) Erdlee, *The Mastery of the Bow*, 130.
In order to play more than one pitch simultaneously, proper balance of the bow is required technically. To play a full chord, principally in a downward motion of the whole arm, “the whole bow is used from extreme frog to extreme point, with a full movement of the whole arm for whole, half or quarter notes. This kind of bowing is the most used in all compositions. The important point in this is to keep the bow on the string, the tone being continuous and flowing."\textsuperscript{105} It is important to remember that the “main thought in the player’s mind should always be that of drawing the bow, just as he would do if he wished to produce a fine singing tone on one string.”\textsuperscript{106}

\textit{Arpeggio}

An \textit{arpeggio} is a rhythmically notated broken chord. \textit{Arpeggios} can be played either on or off the string. When an \textit{arpeggio} is notated in a uniform rhythm, beginning with the bottom note of the chord for example, “the bow arm should be raised accordingly with a slight attack on the [lower string] as you start the stroke, lowering the arm slightly as you reach the A and E strings.”\textsuperscript{107} The bouncing \textit{arpeggio} is achieved by “attacking the lower note first (like an accent) with an elastic wrist stroke in the down bow, so that it will come off as it should, the up bow should become the rebound.”\textsuperscript{108} Naturally, faster \textit{arpeggios} require less bow and movement of the arm, relinquishing the majority of the gesture to the raised wrist.

\textsuperscript{105} Erdlee, \textit{The Mastery of the Bow}, 129.
\textsuperscript{106} Erdlee, \textit{The Mastery of the Bow}, 129.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 126.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
String Crossing

The subject of arpeggios with the use of string crossing should be covered briefly. String crossings can be achieved with the bow either on or off the string. “There are three ways by which to transfer playing from one level to another.” These are done by the hand for a temporary crossing. In the case of a more substantial period of time on different strings, the maneuver is performed by arm and by the hand and arm. Each string requires its own arm level, which must feel comfortable. Playing broken chords changes the arm level, as one must find the correct position among the four levels of the single stringed positions. Awareness of an orchestra’s ability to cross strings can aid a concertmaster in determining bowings more efficiently. In other words, a concertmaster may need to consider a particular fingering to stay on one string in order to avoid string crossings if the section is weaker in this technique. Although remaining on one string can change the effect if a string crossing was indicated by a composer, it will sacrifice much less of the rhythmic integrity of the piece.

Spiccatto, Staccato and Sautillé

A technique that requires a smaller execution of motion in the bow and the hand is spiccatto bowing, which is not to be confused with staccato. Staccato notes are intended to be played short, crisp and separated on one bow. This stroke requires the hair of the bow to remain on the string and is not used as commonly as the spiccatto in orchestral literature. This stroke falls in the category

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of “off-string” bowing, and differences are determined by the tempo. In Baroque music, Donnington states that “the duration of notes which can be taken as spiccato reiterated within the stroke ranges from moderate to very short…[Sections executed in] Piano and Forte are excellent; pianissimo is doubtful, and fortissimo is impossible.”\textsuperscript{110} While the staccato stroke requires the bow to remain on the string, and the spicatto stroke requires the bow to rebound off the string, sautille is the bow stroke that combines the two together. Also commonly found in orchestral literature, the sautille stroke works through a “skipping motion, [like] fast spicatto, [where the] bow does not really leave the string, sort of half on and half off. The tone quality [is] similar to spicatto, but with a faster tempo. [It is] another type of jumping bow, accomplished by the resilience of the stick.”\textsuperscript{111} In American vocabulary, the terms which are associated loosely with the sautille stroke are “on-ish” and “off-ish.” This stroke is used primarily when “the tempo is too fast for controlled spicatto. The bow hair remains on the string” generally.\textsuperscript{112}

\textit{Legato}

\textit{Legato} bowing, meaning “bound together (literally, ‘tied’),”\textsuperscript{113} is one of the most commonly found bow strokes in the orchestra. It is typically the best understood and most easily executed stroke for all orchestral levels and capabilities. Here, “notes under a slur are taken in one bow, except when the

\textsuperscript{110} Donington, \textit{String Playing in Baroque Music}, 53.
\textsuperscript{111} Erdlee, \textit{The Mastery of the Bow}, 110.
slur is so long that an imperceptible change of bow is necessary or at least desirable. In that case, the slur is showing its other function, as a phrase marking rather than as a bowing; but the effect to the ear should be indistinguishable.”\textsuperscript{114}

Elements of string crossing, played on the string, are to be considered for the \textit{legato} stroke. In \textit{legato} bowing, notes are played “without interruption…smoothly connected, whether in one or several bows.”\textsuperscript{115} Also noteworthy is the use of expressive or inflected \textit{legato}, in which slurred notes are “gently pulsed with bow pressure to bring them into expressive prominence…When there is a very perceptible degree of pulsation…in the sound, the bowing becomes a \textit{loure}”\textsuperscript{116} (See Glossary).

\textbf{Martelé}

\textit{Martelé} requires playing short single strokes, defined as “one [note] per bow, with stops between notes and with the bow remaining on the string.”\textsuperscript{117} Any amount of bow can be used for this stroke, depending on the tempo.

\textbf{Slurs}

Playing slurred notes correctly requires two or more notes to be played in one bow without interruption. A whole bow or any part of the bow may be indicated. “Slurs…which join the notes under them are part of the basic string technique of the baroque period, as of other periods.”\textsuperscript{118} “Many

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 27.
\textsuperscript{117} Australian Music Examinations Board.
passages…where there is a continuous succession of moderate or short notes wholly or mainly of the same value, do not imply or require slurs at all.”\(^{119}\)

**Tremolo**

The *tremolo* bow stroke is another commonly used technique in orchestral playing. The *tremolo* stroke can be defined as rapid repeating notes, generally played at the tip of the bow. The dynamic range of the tremolo extends from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*.

**Bow Variation**

The bow can be used in various ways. The length of the bow allows for different techniques. Each technique is affected by altering the elements that define the different bow strokes. Bow distribution is a common area of interest for most concertmasters. The bow can be divided into various intervals and each division of the bow is subject to the laws of physics. The variation in sound with regard to bow distribution is reliant on the quality of the bow, the musician’s technique and one’s ability to manipulate the different bow strokes.

A concertmaster should be prepared to play both even and uneven strokes. These strokes are subject to the distance the bow travels along the string in relation to time and weight. String players refer to this concept as “speed of bow.” Depending on the musical excerpt, a concertmaster must decide whether...

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\(^{119}\) Ibid., 49.
to play it in the upper half of the bow, the middle, at the frog, or expend the entire bow.

The placement of the bow on the strings can also vary the options available to a concertmaster even further. Although the gamut of choices continues to expand as new generations of composers seek innovative sounds from the instrument, the majority of orchestral pieces call for violinists to use the bow at the sounding point between the bridge and the fingerboard, over the fingerboard, or on the bridge. This concept also relates to the balance point of the bow, where the right hand is positioned to balance the bow over the strings.

There are at least seven positions of the right arm to consider when playing the violin. Four involve the balancing for each individual string while three others are the intermittent degrees of placement needed to execute chords. The science is not a perfect one as each individual has a unique way of playing the instrument, however, the approach works in general.
Chapter 3

THE APPROACH

Preface

This chapter is a step-by-step approach that is intended to aid a concertmaster in effectively bowing a music score for a string section. This chapter includes ideas and artistic examples for how to best approach different musical excerpts. The works analyzed in the guide are four masterpieces from the standard orchestral literature: Mozart’s Symphony No. 40, Beethoven’s Symphony No.9, Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5, and finally Higdon’s Concerto for Orchestra. These works were selected because they each represent an important era in the history of orchestral literature. Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 was selected for example, because it illustrates many of the bowing devices necessary for stylistic performance of compositions from the Baroque to the Contemporary era. 

A fundamental goal of this approach is to broaden the reader’s awareness of all the considerations that are required to bow string parts effectively. Increasing one’s knowledge of bowing techniques and their importance can and should become a part of a string players’ growth as a soloist, a concertmaster or an orchestra member. Exploring different styles of music will enhance one’s awareness of different bowing possibilities.

This approach incorporates the knowledge and experiences of this writer and a number of other significant violinists to create this methodology. Every concertmaster, conductor and orchestra experiences the advantages of effective bowings. Having an understanding of basic concepts and how they are applied

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should serve as a good starting point. The author’s hope is that concertmasters who read this approach will use it as a catalyst for new ideas or at least as an affirmation of their own beliefs throughout their own musical journey.

In no way does this approach mean to suggest that this is the only or even the most appropriate way to bow parts for an orchestra. Countless factors affect bowing in subtle ways, ranging from the use of vibrato to the varying energy of individuals as performers. Other factors include the inevitable unexpected occurrences in performances, such as acoustic problems, as well as the management of these occurrences using the bow. The artistry of the individual in conjunction with personal musical conviction are key elements in bringing a performance to life.

Orchestra members must work together on many fronts and the subject of bowing is no exception. Each stroke of the bow, in combination with the character of a section, requires specific body movements and cues that are basic skills a concertmaster must learn. Concertmasters should work with their librarians to set up a system that allows the concertmaster ample time to receive a score, decide and mark the bowings and submit it back to the librarian prior to distributing it among the other string principals. Rental parts often pose a challenge if they do not arrive far enough in advance for this distribution system to operate effectively. After all the string principals bow their parts, the arduous task of duplicating all the bowings into the section players’ parts by the librarian begins. This job is extremely important as it separates the artistic choices of an orchestra from material that is protected by copyright. Maintaining an orchestra library also serves as a historical tool with regard to other bowing possibilities in the same score. For example, there are occasions when a concertmaster may
wisely call upon a bowing already worked out by an experienced concertmaster, if it suits the orchestra. William Preucil, concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra, shares the following on his recent bowing practices:

When I first started in this orchestra, we were using the same parts that they got when they first formed the orchestra. And then lately conductors have been interested in upgrading some new scholarship, which means rebowing all that, and that’s fine. I do all that. But there are a lot of pieces that we have that we just take out of the archives, and then I’ll make changes depending on who’s conducting what. And then, it seems like every concert there’s one rental piece that’s either clean or needs bowings or was played somewhere that’s been played by a professional orchestra and the bowings are pretty good and I change a couple of things or whatever. If it’s been played by a youth orchestra somewhere then I have to totally redo it!121

The well-established music library in Cleveland allows Preucil to spend his official time as concertmaster attending to other significant aspects of the job rather than organizing every bowing for his section, which is an extremely time-consuming task.

**Appropriate Thoughts for Bowing**

“A concertmaster’s decisions will reflect style, period, personal taste and musicianship as well as the level of the players in the ensemble. Good bowings can make a section feel comfortable; unsuitable ones will make them work too hard.”122 As the leader of the string section, the concertmaster should always seek artistic achievement when initiating bowing decisions. Mischakoff would often joke that he had “a lot of bowings that [his] partner, Mr. Krips, used to refer to as defensive bowings. They were bowings that would avoid gratuitous accents or

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assure certain dynamis and phrasing.”123 Defensive bowing refers to bowings that are chosen to protect the sound from an anticipated problem. This can affect tone production.

The concertmaster actually infuses his tone into the section. Phillip Ruder finds that an effective concertmaster will project a feeling or concept of sound – transmitted by the conductor – to which the players around him will respond. That could be big and husky, transparent and delicate, warm and romantic or lean and rhythmic. These are the underpinnings onto which other elements of performance will be grafted.

Bowings should reinforce idiomatic writing for the instrument when played by a string section. A concertmaster’s artistic accountability requires presuming the tempo of a phrase, the dynamics of a section, the articulation notated by the composer and stylistic trends of a specific period. ‘The best bowing for any given note depends on the notes that surround it. Also, a good bowing is one that feels natural; it must allow the performers to play with the necessary expression and dynamics, having considered the needs and limitations of the bow distribution. The next step in determining a bowing is to consider the execution of the maneuver as well as any other questionable elements or challenges in the section to be bowed.

For a concertmaster, “The first thing to be noted in a passage is: whether it is slow enough to admit of the use of the whole bow; if not, a fraction of the bow will suffice. Secondly, the style of the succession is to be considered; are the notes to be slurred or detached?”124 Therefore, one must distinguish between whole bows playing slurred tones and whole bows playing detached tones. After

123 Mischakoff Heiles, America’s Concertmasters, 63.
making the distinction between slurred or detached tones, one must give careful attention to “what fractions of the bow can be used in bowing?”

When sharp accentuation is desired, it has become customary in orchestras to play syncopated notes with the down-bow, even if the preceding stroke was the same. When the bowing threatens to become embarrassingly inconvenient, the corrective consists in an application of the bow in the same direction…done in three ways, viz: 1. By breaking off the stroke and returning to the beginning. 2. By stopping and starting again from the point reached. 3. By momentarily lifting the bow from the strings while continuing the stroke. This latter method is very difficult, but is productive of beautiful effects in appropriate cantabiles.

Cautious consideration of the final two steps in the bowing process will allow the concertmaster to bow more accurately for a specific string section. It is the duty of the concertmaster to decipher which options available to him are the most effective choices for a particular string section and to facilitate the most productive and efficient rehearsal process possible. Finally, if a compromise is unavoidable, the concertmaster must choose between a musical sacrifice and a sacrifice of convenience.

Unquestionably, music is an interpretive and subjective art form, and it would be overly simplistic to assume there is only one way to bow a given passage. The music included in this essay is the result of an effort to present examples from the standard repertoire that can potentially be applied to one’s playing in most style periods. Prerequisites for success with this approach are a proper though process, well-equipped colleagues, and the imagination to alter the concepts to fit each concertmaster’s specific needs. The following suggestions are based on the writer’s interpretation of the music and recommendation for traditional bowings that can be executed by players of all

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125 Courvoisier, The Technique of the Violin Playing, 41.
126 Ibid., 38.
levels. As there can be more than one possible choice of bowing for a given passage, a section of alternate bowings follows each example.

Tempos are frequently non-specific and can vary from performance to performance – how to handle a bowing that must be altered due to a sudden or an unexpected tempo change must be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Fortunately for the music, the performers, and the audience members, there are a number of ways to handle unexpected situations.

**Tips for the Approach**

The challenge of this approach is that different elements of bowing appear in each example. As there is almost always more than one good bowing for a phrase, it is the consideration of the music, the ability of the performer, and sensitivity to the conductor that helps a concertmaster find the best option in each situation. This approach is intended to offer examples on how to approach bowings for an orchestra and to guide the reader toward different ways to think about passages. Each example can be regarded independently or as a cooperative suggestion with thought to another example. This approach is not intended to categorize bowings for specific phrases, as that would limit the artistic possibilities for a performer. Neither is it to classify a specific order in which to realize bowings, since every concertmaster’s situation is unique. Lastly, this approach does not presume to exhaust the myriad of examples that exist for bowing possibilities.

There are countless measures of music that require bowing from an artistic standpoint. These examples are included to demonstrate the possibilities for approaching bowings objectively. The concertmaster must be willing to
experiment with new bowing probabilities to find the best choice. As this write believes there is no specific order for creativity, bullet points are used to explain the bowing for each example rather than numerically ordering a hierarchy of importance. Each bullet point encompasses an idea that should be considered during the bowing procedure.

**Down-Bow, Up-Bow and Articulations**

Deciding whether a note should be played on an up-bow or down-bow requires careful attention. Bowings can affect an orchestra rehearsal positively or negatively, and a concertmaster must be very careful to avoid bowing a part without sufficient thought, as such unprofessional practices could cost him his job. Another important factor to keep in mind is the rhythm of the section as well as the general pulse surrounding a passage. One should keep in mind that for string players, articulation and rhythm are inseparable musical elements. For Mischakoff, “Rhythm and intonation are already the stuff of legend. It was a relentless standard.”

Every part of the bow serves a specific function, and often, one part of the bow can serve more than one function. For example, the middle of the bow could be used to play a legato passage as well as a very fast and short spiccato passage. The better a concertmaster is at leading the string section, the more possibilities for flexibility in bowing and artistry are available.

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Important Questions to Consider for Bowing

1. What is the *tempo* of the passage?
2. What is the dynamic of the passage?
3. What is the articulation indicated by the composer? If there is no indication, what are traditional performance practices of the style period?
4. What is the character of the passage?
5. What is the most effective way to bow the passage?
6. What is a reasonable alternative for bowing the passage?

Adding Articulation and Bowing to a Published Score

Producing consistent results in one’s artistic and musical pursuits presents many challenges. First, “orchestral scores often do not include appropriate bowing and articulations. Many editions, especially school editions, require bowing modifications for improved musical results.”\(^{128}\) Since bowing is a critical factor in phrasing and style, “bow markings should be clearly indicated on the score of each of the individual parts of the string section.”\(^{129}\) A useful tactic is to “insert only those bow indications that are absolutely necessary to establish the sequence of the patterns. Bowings that follow a normal sequence Π V on consecutive notes are not marked for each note.”\(^{130}\)

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\(^{129}\) Ibid., 3.

\(^{130}\) Ibid., 5.
Marking parts is an art in itself that if done well and consistently, can yield excellent results. Marking parts should be done with a dark, soft lead pencil because of the potential for erasures that are commonly needed. The markings should be neat and not blemish the page. Marks of articulation, such as accents and dots, should be placed closest to the note heads. Fingerings are to be placed above the notes for those sitting on an “outside” chair and beneath the note for players sitting on an “inside” chair. The symbols for bow direction are placed above the notes unless a “staggered” bowing is indicated. In this case, the bowing played by the outside musician is written above the notes and the bowing played by the inside musician is written below. “There are instances in which the marking of the part of the bow to be used (UH, M, LH) can be beneficial for indicating the placement of the bow on the string.”\textsuperscript{131} Beginning with the bow direction, a concertmaster begins adding to and changing the score as needed.

**Examples**

In the following examples, a brief overview of the different questions a concertmaster should ask of himself when bowing a score is presented. Each of the examples in this approach should require similar thoughts. Some bowings are more obvious than others, making the bowing process faster and easier, while others require more time and contemplation. Regardless of how quickly concertmaster’s thoughts for bowing are brought to order, all of the following examples demonstrate relative and important facets of bowing.

This section begins with the task of choosing a down-bow versus up-bow, and any articulations that support the decision. On occasion, articulations are given by the composer, and at other times they are requested of the concertmaster or the conductor. In the examples that follow, this author shows suggested approaches to bowings and bowing options in selected works. In some cases these suggestions are different to editorial markings in published parts. The full parts in the appendices incorporate what is shown in the examples.

Example 1

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Allegro ma non troppo (m. 3)

What is the tempo of the section?

- Quarter note is approximately 88 beats per minute

What is the dynamic of the section?

- *Sotto voce* is Italian and means under the breath. It is an indication to play softly, or *piano*.
What is the articulation indicated by the composer? If there is no indication, what are the traditional performance practices of the style period?

- There are 32\textsuperscript{nd} pick-up notes to a quarter note downbeat, successively. The down-beat indicates a full quarter note length to be sustained for the entire first beat of the measure. The 32\textsuperscript{nd} note falls into a very quick subdivision for the tempo indicated. It is important to maintain a \textit{piano} dynamic, to play a very short and quick 32\textsuperscript{nd} note, and then to sustain the quarter note for an entire beat.

What is the character of the section?

- “Still” in nature and rhythmical

What is the most effective way to bow this section?

- Place the bow at the very tip (the lightest part of the bow) to achieve the \textit{piano} dynamic. The tip also offers rhythmic clarity and precision in a \textit{piano} dynamic.
- Sharply and delicately place the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note in its proper subdivided moment on a down-bow, without using more than half an inch of bow.
- The up-bow should be a reflex of the down bow and sustained, using no more than two inches of bow.
- Since the very next measure calls for an identical execution, it is important that the up-bow not travel too far away from the tip. Replace the bow at the tip for the next entrance. This will ensure a
timely entrance with the correct dynamic and equal attack of the bow for each like passage.

- The bowing reflects a convincing character of the notes.
- The appropriate strings to use here are the A and D strings. The combination of the A and D strings creates a more muted sound than the combination of the open A and E strings. This choice of strings also provides the option of vibrato as opposed to the open A and E strings. Therefore, fingerings using the A and D strings are preferred.
- There are two choices for the fingerings used in the opening measures. The first is to use the first, second, third or fourth finger, followed by the open A string. This keeps the bow from changing strings. Here, the left and right hands share the responsibility for rhythmic precision. The other fingerling utilizes the interval of a fifth played by holding either the first, second, third or fourth fingers down on both the A and D string. This mandates the bow to make a change of string. Here, the right hand has the sole responsibility for rhythmic precision.
- To maintain consistency with the D string sound from measure two, the more appropriate bow placement for the third measure, into the fourth, would be to remain on the D string. Therefore, the use of first position is necessary. This allows the responsibility of the rhythm to be shared simultaneously between the bow and the left hand. The same principle for bowing is applied to the following entrance beginning with the pick-up note to measure 7.
Indicate the type of articulations desired by writing them over the notes, as is done in measures six through eight of the example. The accent adds clarity to the 32\textsuperscript{nd} pick-up note while the \textit{tenuto} indicates the quarter note is to be held its full length.

**What is a reasonable alternative to bowing this section?**

- This passage could be started either down-bow or up-bow, in the middle of the bow, or at the frog.

- “When the bow is on the string at the frog, it has the weight of the entire bow and the arm.”\textsuperscript{132} Therefore, the frog is the heaviest part of the bow, making the \textit{piano} effect more difficult to execute well, individually and moreover, as a section.

- Starting up-bow at the frog may cause the bow to lift from the string and create a gap between the thirty-second note and the quarter note, resulting in a late attack of the down-beat with a possible accent.

- Starting down-bow in the middle of the bow may cause the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note to be unclear since that part of the bow is the most flexible. Also, this bowing may cause a \textit{crescendo} due to the natural weight of the bow at the frog.

- Starting up-bow at the tip will allow for a \textit{piano} dynamic and clarity for the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note, however it may cause the quarter note to run out of bow making it difficult to sustain the quarter note for its full length.

\textsuperscript{132} Erdlee, \textit{The Mastery of the Bow}, 50.
A possible flaw to be aware of when making the decision for bow placement at the frog of the bow, is the hair located at the frog. The hair at the frog of the bow is habitually vulnerable to being touched by the thumb of the right hand due to the position of the hand. “The natural oil in your fingers will cause the hair to turn black at the very same spot where it was touched. No sound or tone will be the result at the black spot.”\textsuperscript{133} This may cause an undesirable, inconsistent sound and loss of dynamic control.

Example 2

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Allegro ma non troppo (m. 13)

What is the tempo of the section?

- Quarter note is approximately 88 beats per minute

What is the dynamic of the section?

- Crescendo indication in measure thirteen indicates a four-measure crescendo arriving at fortissimo in measure seventeen. Each note in this passage is louder than the preceding note.

\textsuperscript{133} Erdlee, \textit{The Mastery of the Bow}, 16.
What is the articulation indicated by the composer? If there is no any indication, what are the traditional performance practices of the style period?

- Three 16\textsuperscript{th} notes follow a 16\textsuperscript{th} rest in a successive pattern, which requires strict rhythmical placement of every note and every rest. The first of the three notes is separate with the following two notes being slurred. “An important aspect of articulation is the enunciation of the first note of a phrase. Casals insisted, ‘The first note must always be heard.’ When the first note is quick or comes on an offbeat it needs special attention.”\textsuperscript{134}

- The \textit{staccato} wedge on the first note of every beat indicates a sharp accent followed by a slur over the following two notes.

- The pick-up 32\textsuperscript{nd} note in measure seventeen should be placed precisely in proper subdivided time, at the frog for the \textit{fortissimo}, and should portray a similar character to that at the beginning of the movement, although in \textit{piano}. The 32\textsuperscript{nd} note, “an anacrusis (up-beat) phrase or note is generally played with an up-bow.”\textsuperscript{135}

What is the character of the section?

- “Stern and authoritative” that builds until the \textit{fortissimo} is reached.

The \textit{fortissimo} section, beginning with the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note pick-up in measure 17, should be played precisely in its proper subdivided time and should convey a similar character to that of the beginning of the

\textsuperscript{134} Blum, \textit{The Art of Quartet Playing}, 139.
movement. Even though the dynamic level is different, the character of the notes remains similar, stern and confident.

**What is the most effective way to bow this section?**

- For this passage, contemplating the bowing works best by starting at the end of the passage and working backwards.

- *Fortissimo* is indicated for the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note pick-up into measure 17 and the following dotted quarter note on the down-beat. The proper placement for the bow is at the frog.

- The following measure contains an identical articulation. Playing the down-bow in measure 17 should be equaled by the up-bow in measure 18. An artist must be capable of playing a passage practiced by starting with a down-bow with equal execution on an up-bow, regardless of the comfort factor.

- Once the bowing for measure 17 is established at the frog, count backwards so that the last two slurred notes in measure 16 end on an up-bow to set up the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note pick-up at the frog. Therefore, the passage in measure 13 must begin on an up-bow.

- The *staccato* wedge above the isolated 16\textsuperscript{th} note at the beginning of the passage is to be played swiftly, utilizing sufficient bow and vibrato. Place the bow a minimum of three to four inches from the extreme point of the frog. This will provide sufficient bow for an up-bow on the note with a wedge over it. Without traveling past the middle of the bow, emphasize each of the bow changes to convey the articulation.
• Make a sharp up-bow, forcing the bow to detach itself from the string after enough of the bow has been applied for the first 16\textsuperscript{th} note. Land on the string with precision for the down-bow. The down-bow should land forcefully and controlled onto the string, after the articulated \textit{staccato} has been created by lifting the bow from the string. The down-bow should feel like a reaction to the up-bow, in tempo. The rhythm for the first up-bow note (A) and down-bow note (A) is delegated to the bow primarily. During the two slurred notes, the two hands share the rhythm, as the left hand must change pitches in rhythm while the right hand supports the sound.

• The fingering works best starting on the E string for the first 16\textsuperscript{th} note and working its way to the D string by the end of measure 14. This indicates a string crossing during the first set of slurred notes. Afterward, staying on the same string is preferred, even if it means to use the open A string briefly.

• Measure 13 begins the \textit{crescendo}. Position the bow on the A string at first. Then during the \textit{crescendo}, utilize a fingering allowing the bow to travel to the E string. The E string, the loudest string, assists with the \textit{crescendo} two and three measures after the \textit{crescendo} begins. This fingering will also split the responsibility of rhythm between the right and left hands.

• Each slur should contain a slight emphasis for every bow change to assist in the \textit{crescendo}. 
- Written articulations, as in measure 18 on the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note pick-up, assist in making the stroke clear for a section player. The suggested bowing in measure 17 can seem misleading. When a slur is written over two notes and one doesn’t know the traditional style for a given phrase, it would not be entirely incorrect to interpret the articulation differently. One may conceive the bow changes to be smooth between the end of one slur and the beginning of a new slur.

- Addressing the section as to the slight emphasis for each bow change is a positive way to cement a unified articulation.

- Writing an accent over the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note in measure 18 will solidify its importance to the string section and require the down-bow, at the upper part of the bow, to articulate the note equally to the up-bow performed at the frog in measure 17.

What is a reasonable alternative way to bow this section using supporting evidence?

- Starting the passage down-bow in the middle would force the attack to be weak.

- Starting down-bow at the frog may cause the bow to leave the string, potentially sacrificing quality and clarity.
Example 3

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Allegro ma non troppo (m. 49)

- Starting this exception down-bow towards the tip places the bow at the frog for the powerful 32nd note pick-up into the downbeat of measure 51.
- Since this example begins on the E string, the likeliness of a stronger emphasis on the first note may cause an undesired diminuendo as the tesatura, or the octave range of the notes, drops two octaves to the D string. Therefore, a concertmaster or conductor may request to delay the crescendo until the notes in the lower range are played. This enforces an even dynamic level at the beginning of the measure and allows for an even and gradual crescendo.
- Give slight accents to every bow change in order to articulate the rhythm and differentiate the octaves.
- For clarity, as the passage is played at a softer dynamic than the fortissimo in measure 51, the placement of the bow will serve one best in the upper half of the bow. This will provide for adequate bow in the crescendo.
- With regard to notation, placing a small dot below the 32nd note in measure 52 demonstrates the need to articulate each note.
• An accent placed under the note as described in measure eighteen in the original example solidifies the character of the note.

Example 4

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Allegro ma non troppo (m. 197)

• The articulation is similar to that of Example 3 in measure 51. The difference here is the piano dynamic.

• The orchestra can take advantage of a more expressive and lyrical approach in the soft passage, while maintaining the clarity of the rhythm. The notation is the same; however, the staccato dots are absent from the 32$^{nd}$ notes and a tenuto line over the longer notes serves to keep the sound lyrical. Observing the tenuto will ensure a smoother attack with the bow.

• The placement of the bow is also different because of the dynamic marking. In order to play this passage lyrically, the bow placement works best in the upper half of the bow, closer to the tip.

• Adding the slurs helps “to round off…changes in bowing”$^{136}$ even if the articulation calls for a space between the notes under the slur.

$^{136}$Courvoisier, The Technique of the Violin Playing, 40.
Example 5

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Allegro ma non troppo (m. 259)

- Example 5 is a common stroke that divides the bow stroke into two main movements. They are the down-bow and up-bow at the beginning of the first two measure of this passage.

- The down-bow is to be played to the tip of the bow, although not necessarily starting from the frog. The last two 16\textsuperscript{th} notes of the measure are to be played on the string and at the tip of the bow. These smaller notes serve the arm as a reaction to the end of the longer down-bow.

- The up-bow is played until the middle of the bow in order to be able to articulate, not harshly, the two 16\textsuperscript{th} notes at the end of the measure.

- The challenge is to play the 16\textsuperscript{th} notes equally in different parts of the bow.

- The bowing for this passage allows the final note to end on a down-bow and be sustained its full length in one bow since it will be played beginning in the middle of the bow.
Connected Notes

The subject of connection in this study focuses on notes that are played consecutively in a bow traveling in one direction, regardless of pitch or rhythm that requires a re-articulation of any sort. The idea of connecting notes needs to be approached with flexibility. Notes can be connected by a smooth bow change or by playing them in one bow. If, however, the bow needs to articulate a single repeated note for rhythmic purposes, one may argue that the notes are then no longer connected. Likewise, notes whose function is to connect phrases can potentially be categorized similarly.

Example 6

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Andante cantabile (m. 24)

- In Example 6, two groupings of 8th notes are connected at the Con moto section. Each grouping consists of a down-bow and an up-bow. The composer has allotted six repeated notes for each down and up-bow direction. The dots indicate a separation between each note.
- The notes can be articulated shortly since the use of a tenuto is not present in this passage. If a tenuto marking was included, the articulation required, without any doubt, would be to separate the notes but less than notes without the added tenuto possibility. Although a tenuto can be implied artistically, a conductor or concertmaster would need to make
such a decision and convey it to the string players to insure a cohesive sound.

Example 7

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Allegro con anima (m. 128)

- Example 7 can be viewed as one of connected notes because the bow travels in the same direction for at least two notes with a slight re-articulation on the up-beat to measure 129.

Example 8

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Allegro con anima (m. 126)

- Example 8 demonstrates how connecting the final eighth note in the measure on a down-bow to the preceding held note played sforzando, can place the bow at the upper half for a crescendo on an up-bow in the following measure.
Example 9

Higdon Concerto for Orchestra – I (m. 80)

- Example 9 shows the beginning of the measure played down-bow in a *diminuendo al niente* (gradually softer until no more sound is produced). Re-articulating the bow may cause an interruption in the sound that is not intended by the composer.

- Since the notes are articulated by the right hand at a very fast speed, a bow change would interrupt the evenness of the left hand *tremolo*, therefore, notating a slur to indicate a connection makes this bowing more effective.

Hooked Bowing (\(\text{ό}, \text{ό}\)) (\(\sqrt{\text{ό}}, \sqrt{\text{ό}}\))

A hooked bowing can be conceived in several ways. Any bowing with notes articulated in one bow can be considered to be a hooked bowing. For this study, a hooked bowing will require at least two notes, played in different parts of the bow that travels in one direction, in which a specific rhythm requires placing a space, or rest, between the notes. Examples 10 through 18 demonstrate a hooked stroke between a note of longer duration and one of shorter duration, separately by a rest, culminating with the change of bow on another note of
longer duration. Hooked bowing is also a visually important signal for helping to keep the larger pulse easily understood. In other words, the larger pulse of a passage takes musical precedence while the smaller notes which are hooked into the larger notes are placed accordingly. Example 13 demonstrates a stroke where each of the notes in the hooked bowing has equal length.

Example 10

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – *Andante, Allegro con anima* (m. 101)

Example 11

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – *Allegro con anima* (mm. 63)

- Examples 10 and 11 demonstrate the use of hooked bowing. To have a hooked bowing, two notes are played separately, in the same bow, at different parts of the bow, and the main emphasis falls on the notes played at every change of the bow.
- In Example 10, the hooked bowing does not continue into the rest of the passage.
In Example 11, the main beats and preceding pick-up notes are played using a down-bow followed by an up-bow successively.

The use of the dot over the 16\textsuperscript{th} notes emphasizes the need for those notes to be played short.

In deciding how to play the last two pick-up notes of Example 11 at the frog for articulation, working backwards will help to establish a good bowing. In order for these two pick-up notes to be played at the frog, the use of an up-bow is required of the previous 8\textsuperscript{th} note. Therefore, working out the bowing to start this example on a down-bow is the solution. However, the concept of making a crescendo on an up-bow does not apply in this example.

Playing the rhythm in Examples 10 and 11 in a fast tempo requires that the 16\textsuperscript{th} notes be played as close to the change of bow as possible. Some concertmasters express this execution by articulating a “crunched note.”

Example 12

\textit{Higdon Concerto for Orchestra - II (m. 34)}

Example 12 presents a rhythmic figure similar to the rhythm of the Tchaikovsky Symphony excerpt given in Example 10. This shows that
bowing is not necessarily confined to a specific style or period. A similar stroke may be executed in works that were written generations apart.

- Differences may be evident through interpretation on the energy required for the passages, but the bowing remains similar.

Example 13

**Higdon Concerto for Orchestra - II (m. 90)**

In Example 13, a similar bowing to the bowing recommended in Example 11 for Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5 is evident. The bowing utilizes the hooked bowing with the principle that every beat is played with a down-bow followed by an up-bow, successively.

Example 14

**Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Adagio ma non troppo (m. 777)**
Example 14 shares a similar approach to bowing as seen in Examples 10 and 11. The main difference is the augmented notation; the movement of the arm remains similar, without the need to lift the bow from the string.

Rather than every beat getting a down-bow or an up-bow, this example shows a change of bow for every measure.

Placing a tenuto mark over the half note and a dot over the quarter note helps to further distinguish the difference in length between the two notes.

The comma between two long notes indicates a space which is required to re-articulate the second of the two notes.

Although the word crescendo is printed in the score, often times, drawing a long crescendo wedge marking under the bowed section helps a player visually in distributing the right amount of bow for a passage.

The following examples share a similar principle of hooked bowings.

Example 15

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Allegro assai vivace (m. 491)
Example 16

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Molto vivace (m. 1)

Example 17

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Allegro ma non troppo (m. 188)

Example 18

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Andante (m. 278)

Up-Up Bowing

Example 19

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 - Allegro ma non troppo (m. 225)
- Example 19 is to be executed near the frog of the bow. The tied half notes are to be played down-bow and should not travel further than the middle of the bow.
- Each up-bow should be emphasized for rhythmic and expressive clarity. The articulation for the up-up bow should resemble the up-down-up stroke used in measure 228.

Example 20

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Molto vivace (m. 452)

- Example 20 only introduces the up-up stroke at the end of the phrase. The purpose of this stroke is to avoid a possible accent on the final note.

Example 21

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Allegro ma non troppo (m. 250)

- Example 21 uses the up-up bowing to insure the two eighth notes are equal in length.
Example 22

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Allegro ma non troppo (m. 63)

- In Example 22, the stroke Beethoven most likely desired for this passage is the *martelé* stroke. The *martelé* stroke is “a more ponderous and percussive manner of attack than any other, and when held pressed into the string during the moments of separation, produces a harsher staccato.”

The dynamic is *forte* and requires a hammer-like approach that offers length and separation to each eighth note. The bow will start at the frog, travel to the extreme point at the other end, then stop for a brief moment. Since the final two eighth notes of the measure work best at the frog, two consecutive up-bows are required to guide the bow to this part of the stick. Measure sixty-three serves the music best by starting at the frog and expending the entire bow.

Example 23

Mozart Symphony No. 40 K. 550 – Molto Allegro (m. 38)

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In Example 23, the half notes are to be sustained and played beginning at the frog. Therefore, two up-bows facilitate in making the notes shorter than usual as well as allow for the musicians of the orchestra to phrase the passage evenly.

Example 24

Mozart Symphony No. 40 K. 550 – Molto allegro (m. 2)

Example 24 demonstrates a bowing that will help to make the phrase easier to execute. Another option would be to begin the passage with the pick-up notes on an up-bow, bowing the rest “as it comes,” or in other words, down-bow then up-bow, with no preference for which comes first.

The reason for this particular choice for bowing lies in the harmony. The pick-up note and quarter note are a sub-phrase of a larger phrase that spans the entire measure and into the third measure. Harmonically, the E-flat resolves to the D, the fifth of the tonic chord of the piece, which is G minor. In consideration for the pattern of tension and resolution in this passage, the concertmaster should demonstrate this through the use of bowing.
- Playing the non-harmonic E-flat note on an emphasized down-bow in the upper half of the bow helps the resolution on the down-beat, played on a less weighted up-bow, by traveling away from the tip.

- The sub-phrase is repeated three times, and terminates on the highest note thus far, the B-flat. A concertmaster may feel the phrase leading toward the down-beat of measure 3. Therefore, a slight, subtle crescendo, then diminuendo, is implied in the opening three bars of the passage.

- The two up-bows help the bow travel to the lower part of the stick to help the phrasing and allow room for the use of more bow. Therefore, the bowing becomes an up-up, in which the first part of the up-bow is played in the upper half of the bow and the second in the middle.

Example 25

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Allegro ma non troppo (mm. 233-234)

- In Example 25, the stroke is to be played at the frog. The slurred notes are played down-bow and the recovery to execute another down-bow for the following slur occurs on the first two of the separated notes. The staccato wedges indicate that these notes are to be heavily articulated, using weight of the bow and arm. Contact between the
bow and string should be deliberate and feel almost sustained, even though the notes are separate. In other words, they should not be played lightly and short.

- The first two of the separated notes require an up-up bowing to reset the hand at the frog for the remaining staccato notes. This also prepares the bow for a repeated stroke in the following measure. The concertmaster can choose any of the notes to reset the next measure for an appropriate articulation. However, it is customary to make this happen as immediately as possible. In this example, immediately after the slur has been played is best.

Example 26

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Allegro assai vivace (m. 420)

- In Example 26, the bow lifts from the string on the up-up bowing in the lower part of the bow.

Re-articulated Down-Bow

The following examples demonstrate a bowing that requires at least two successive down-bows. Each example shares a similar stylistic articulation incorporating a separation between the first and second down-bow.
Example 27

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Finale (m. 474)

- In Example 27, a concertmaster should place two successive down-bows to give clarity to the rhythm and articulation. By not adding a slur or legato to indicate bowing, this example confirms that the second down-bow requires an articulated emphasis by creating a slight space between the two. The bowing is made possible by playing the first down-bow at the frog and replacing the bow at the frog for the second down-bow.

Example 28

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Allegro ma non troppo (m. 21)

- In Example 28, the down-bows indicate a replacement of the bow so that the beginning of each chord takes place at the frog.
- The tenuto mark indicates for each chord to be played its full duration.
Example 29

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 - Allegro con anima (m. 265)

- In Example 29, the down-bows are to be executed in different parts of the bow. The first eighth note is to be played at the frog, using enough speed to reach the middle of the bow at its termination. At the middle of the bow, after a slight separation indicated by the 16th rest is made, the second down-bow is to be played. The up-bow follows the successive down-bows.

Bowing Backwards

In accommodating dynamics, pizzicato and mutes, “occasional editing may need to start from a specific point and then work in a backward direction in order to achieve the desired bowing for a given note or phrase.”

Example 30

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Andante cantabile (m. 10)

• The opening remarks made by the 1st violin section in measure 10 indicate a *pianissimo* dynamic. The down-beat of measure 11 begins a slight *crescendo*, throughout the measure, until the beginning of measure 12. Measure 12 begins the *diminuendo*.

• Using “the weight of the bow, the crescendo is most easily executed with the up-stroke, the diminuendo, with the down.”¹³⁹ For this reason, working backwards aids in creating the bowing for this passage. Using a down-bow for the diminuendo in measure 12, measure 11 naturally corresponds with an up-bow, for a *crescendo*.

Example 31

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Finale (m. 1)

• The opening of the Finale requires a freer approach to bowing, demonstrating exceptions to the so-called rules of bowing. In

searching for articulations and dynamics for the following passage, it can be noticed that the dynamic range is large. Within the first 13 measures, the dynamic gamut ranges between piano to fortissimo, and is accompanied by tenuto marks and accents. Therefore, searching for the most contrasting points of the passage can aid in finding a good solution. This example offers an exception for consideration, requiring flexibility of the string section for an overall sense of proper bowings.

- Measure 9 is the most dynamically contrasting point of the passage. The material that precedes and follows it is louder, between the range of mezzo forte and forte.

- An ideal bowing would be to make a big diminuendo from forte to piano on a down-bow. This way the piano in measure 9 can start at the upper part of the bow. Therefore, working backwards from measure 9 is a good idea.

- Taking into account the articulations preceding measure 9, one should notice the need to keep the bow glued to the string for the most part.

- In measure 5, the desire to make a down-bow on the diminuendo is achieved while the two pick-up notes into measures 5 and 7 are mirrored for phrasing purposes.

- The exception to the rule presents itself in measures 6, 10 and 12. Here, the musicians are asked to make a crescendo on a down-bow. The technique is more difficult than usual as one traditionally makes a crescendo on an up-bow since the bow is traveling away from the heaviest part. However, taking into account the rewards of the other
bowing elements in the passage, it can be considered acceptable to make this unconventional request of the string section.

Example 32

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Valse (m. 37)

- Measure 37 can be started either up-bow or down-bow. Because the dynamic is piano, it should be played at the tip of the bow. Every measure should have its own bow direction, in the opposite direction of the previous measure, not affecting the dynamic level.
- Looking at where the dynamics change, the articulation is to play three notes for every measure (as in the section beginning at Letter B).
- Because a subito mezzo forte in measure 52 is preceded by a forte measure, the bowing should broadcast this dynamic effect. Therefore, playing measure 51 forte at the frog works best. As the bow travels toward the tip, which is the lighter part of the bow, the forte sound should be sustained forte, as there is no indication for a diminuendo,
hence, the *subito mezzo forte*. Once the bow has been terminated at the tip, the weight used to sustain the *forte* sound should be eased, and the next attack of the up-bow should be significantly less in volume for the *mezzo forte* down-beat.

- Since the *subito mezzo forte* occurs 16 measures after Letter B, the bowing must be coordinated from this point, working backwards. The composer’s bowing remains intact and the bow direction is the only detail worth changing by the concertmaster.

**Example 33**

*Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Valse (m. 161)*

- In Example 33, a *pizzicato* note is to be played by the right hand. The placement of the right hand is very similar to the position of the hand at the frog of the bow. Therefore, traveling up-bow to the frog on the previous note to arrive at the *pizzicato* can help a section play rhythmically accurately and together.

- The principle of moving the hand toward the frog to maneuver either a *pizzicato* or to place the mute on the bridge quickly is considered thoughtful practice toward the musicians of the string section. If
necessary, the left hand can accommodate a *pizzicato* or placing the mute over the bridge.

**Turning a Composer’s Bowing Marking Into Phrase Markings**

**Example 34**

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Allegro con anima (m. 81)

- In Example 34, the purpose for breaking the bowing one measure after letter F, is to achieve the *crescendo*. At letter F, the bowing breaks in the middle of the measure, signifying an even distribution of bow. If the same pattern is followed in the next measure, the *crescendo* may not be as effective. Slurring the first part of the measure, then breaking the bow for each of the final two beats, offers the best chance for a successful *crescendo*. The broken bow allows for more use of the bow, which will aid in increasing the dynamic level of the measure.

- Starting up-bow at letter F will help players increase the volume in the second measure. Breaking the bow from a down-bow to an up-bow at the end of the measure, one bar after letter F, sets up a strong down-bow for the down-beat of the next measure.
Example 35

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Adagio molto e cantabile (m. 3)

- At first glance, the bowing in Example 35 seems simple and straightforward. However, once it is played, the concertmaster will quickly realize that the composer was probably referring to the legato markings as phrases more than bowings.

- Looking at the tempo indication of a quarter note equaling 60 beats per minute, as well as the dynamic level of the passage, one can see that the physical attributes of a bow can allow for no more than one measure to be played in one single directional stroke of the bow. Therefore, the first two measures require a new bowing.

- Further evidence of the need for more bowings is that this passage states the principal melody of the movement. It should not be played too quietly as it may get lost in the texture of the orchestra’s sound. It may also lack the singing quality indicated by the cantabile direction.
Determining the placement of the bow for specific notes is the key factor in bowing this passage. In the interest of visual and audible clarity, all of the pick-up notes in this passage will be played up-bow.

The end of each phrase will be played on a down-bow, to finish closer to the tip. Ending towards the upper half of the bow allows for notes to be sustained their full length, with the use of vibrato to maintain a singing quality to ends of the notes. The sound should be spun very softly, in transferring the line to the other instruments of the orchestra.

Measure 8 is a classic example for insisting the section remain in the upper half of the bow. This is done by playing measure 8 at the upper half of the bow and dividing the measure into two bows. The up-bow into measure 8 should be played using a small amount of bow, to remain quiet and with no crescendo, so that the down-beat of measure 9 can also be played in one stroke, at the tip, using a small amount of bow. This allows the remaining 3 beats of measure 9 to be played on an up-bow, setting up measure 10 for a down-bow.

Breaking the bow into two bows in measure 10 will help the player emphasize the rhythm with both the left hand and the bow. This also serves as a visual aid for the other musicians, as they can see when the concertmaster has reached the third beat of the measure.

The bowing for measure 14 must differ from that of measures 8 and 9 in order to observe the crescendo. In this case the bow must travel, without the restriction imposed upon the bowing in measure 9, to create the
indicated dynamic contrast. This will also help the bowing to remain consistent in tapering off the phrase on a down-bow.

- Measures 19 and 20, although simple in notation, require special attention. Measure 19 works well up-bow because it implies that the bow should be at the very tip, to play the note softly. If a down-bow is written, the exact placement of the bow will differ from player to player which will affect the overall dynamic level and the length of the note.

- Measure 20 works well being played in the upper half of the bow, using two down-bows in an attempt at equal length for each 8th note and insuring that a crescendo will not occur. This way, the following 8th note with the crescendo can be played up-bow, providing access to more bow use for executing the proper length of the note.

Example 36

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 op. 125 – Molto vivace (m. 491)

- Example 36 is an example of a very long set of tied notes. It would be nearly impossible to sustain this note for as long as the composer has
indicated while trying to achieve a healthy crescendo to forte 13 measures after the beginning of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} ending.

- It is considered healthy practice to write in bow changes in measure that suit the dynamics. For instance, the first bow change occurs four measures after the 2\textsuperscript{nd} ending. In that measure a crescendo begins that should span nearly eight measures. The bow change serves two purposes. The first is to give the section a visual reference to align with the concertmaster 4 measures after the 2\textsuperscript{nd} ending. The second is to deter the section from beginning a long crescendo too soon. The concertmaster should consider a change of bow as late in the passage as possible.

- In this example, the next bow change occurs approximately 4 measures after the crescendo begins and is followed by bow changes occurring every 2 measures to comfortably create a substantial dynamic contrast with the music in the previous measures.

- For notation purposes, writing the change of bow in the middle of a measure promotes staggered bowing, in an effort to avoid a communal accent that is not desired by the composer.

Example 37

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Allegro con anima (m. 262)
In Example 37, the bowing is broken between the second beat of measure 262 and the down beat of 263 to set up the bow at the frog for a powerful down-bow. The hooked bowing is applied to this example in measure 263. The following measures are bowed identically for consistency in the phrasing and musical intention.

Example 38

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 op. 64 – Allegro con anima (m. 347)

Example 38 requires a hooked bowing at the beginning of the measure to prepare the long bow over a dynamic arch at the frog. The speed of the bow must be slow to begin the crescendo, gradually moving the bow faster as it approaches the middle of the bow to compensate for the bow’s flexibility, terminating with the softer extreme of the diminuendo once again at the tip of the bow.

The bowing is broken in the middle of the longer bow to accommodate the sound and bring the bow back to the middle for the up-up bowing.
Example 39

Mozart Symphony No. 40 K. 550 – Molto allegro (m. 48)

- In Example 39, the composer’s suggested bowing is considered and enhanced by playing the final note of the phrase in an appropriate placement of the bow. Since an accent is not indicated on the final note, avoiding the heavier part of the bow is preferred. Therefore, ending at the upper half of the bow is optimal.
CONCLUSION

Concertmaster bowings require extensive thought, care, and research. There are endless bowing possibilities for any given passage; the concertmaster’s ultimate goal should be to insure that through his work, the musical intention of a piece is accomplished. Rhythm should always be of the utmost importance to a concertmaster, a conviction that is supported by Mischakoff’s “rhythm and intonation are already the stuff of legend. It was a relentless standard.”

Concertmaster Norman Carol sums up the life of a concertmaster beautifully. He surmises, “the wonderful thing about music is the learning process. It doesn't matter how long you’ve been playing it, over and over again, it's always different, always unusual, always new, always magic.”

Joseph Silverstein, who was a student of Mischakoff, describes the concertmaster’s approach to orchestral style and bowing in comparison with another of his previous teachers, Josef Gingold: “Mischakoff was straightforward, very classic. Gingold, in contrast, was always looking for a clever or an innovative solution or way of doing something. ...Sustaining the sound and keeping the long line was the main concern in [Mischakoff’s] approach to bowing.”

Boris Schwartz observed that Silverstein is “an artist who can deal with any musical problem and whose quiet dignity commands respect and admiration.” Isidor Saslav, concertmaster of the Baltimore Symphony, commented, “one of the valuable

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141 Strum, “Norman Carol.”
things [he] got from Mischakoff [was] to be prepared and to pay attention to all the details beforehand… and to study those scores very carefully.”¹⁴⁴

This approach is meant to provide the reader with thought-provoking ideas and musical examples. It is the responsibility of the artists to combine these examples to formulate bowings that artistically express the desire for communicating correct musical intention in an orchestra’s performances.

Appendix A

L. v. Beethoven - Symphony No. 9 op. 12
Adagio ma non troppo, ma divoto \( \text{d. \text{so}} \)

Allegro energico, sempre ben marcato \( \text{d. \text{sa}} \)
Appendix B

W. A. Mozart – Symphony No. 40 K. 550
Appendix C

P. I. Tchaikovsky – Symphony No. 5 op. 64
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Symphony No. 5 in E Minor, Op. 64

Violine I

Andante

Allegro con anima

[Musical notation image]
Violine I

molto express.

Poco meno animato

Un pochettino più mosso

Molto più tranquillo come sopra

Tempo I
Appendix D

J. Higdon – Concerto for Orchestra
violin 1

115

119

123

126

pizz. (SNAP PIZZ.)
TACET Movement IV

\( J = 90 \)

\( \text{SNARE ENTERS 5 BARS BEFORE MVT. 5} \)

4
GLOSSARY

List of Terms for the concertmaster

Below is a list of terms that could be found in standard repertoire, in different languages, that affect a concertmaster’s use of the bow. This list is created to inspire concertmasters to seek new meanings for the terminology, as every composer had their own unique meaning, or idea, for every description. The following terms can be found in music dating back from the Baroque era, well into the twenty-first century.

Accelerando: Italian, Moving the tempo forward
Am Frosch: German, Bow at the Frog
Apunta d’Arco: Italian, At the tip of the bow
Archet: French, Bow
Arco: Italian, Bow
Au Chevalet: French, Bow near the bridge, producing a glassy tone
Au Talon: French, Bow at the frog
Aufstrich: German, Up-bow
Bariolage: French, Frequent crossing of two or more strings
Battuta: Italian, Vertically applied percussive stroke.
Cantabile: Italian, Singing tone
Col legno: Italian, With the wood. Strike strings, sideways, with the wood of the bow.
Coll Arco: Italian, With the bow
Colla punta d’Arco: Italian, With the point of the bow.
Collé: Italian, Bow placed on string and lightly pinched, before string is released.
Detache: Italian, Separated bow stroke, smoothly.
Down-bow: English, The direction of bow’s frog, moving away from the violin
En tire: French, With the down stroke.
Fermata: Italian, To stop or hold.
Flautato: Italian, Bowing lightly over the fingerboard (Sul tast).  
H.B.: English, Half-Bow
Heel: English, Frog
Hooked: English, Patterns of two or more uneven note values in portato style and one bow direction.
Legato: Italian, Smooth, round tone, with detached bow strokes, no perceptible bow change.  “Bound together (literally “tied”).
Legatura: Italian, Slur
Legno: Italian, Wood
L.H.: English, Lower Half of the bow
Linked: English, Patterns of two or more even note values in portato style and one bow direction.
Loure: French, A short series of gently pulsed legato notes executed in one bow stroke.
M.: English, Middle of Bow.
Marcato: Italian, Accented, emphasized, separate bow stroke (Martele).
Martelé: Italian, Hammered, detached stroke, upper half of bow.
Martellato: Italian, Hammered, detached stroke, upper half of bow.
Mitte: German, Middle of Bow.
Nicht: German, Not
Nut: English, The bottom or frog of the bow.
Ohne: German, Without
Otez: French, Take off
P.T.: English or French, Point or tip of the bow.
Parlando: Italian, To speak, repeated smooth pulsation, express declamation.
Peu d’archet: French, With a small amount of bow.
Pesante: Italian, Heavy
Piqué: French, Similar to colle stroke.
Ponticello: Italian, Bow near bridge producing glassy tone.
Portato: Italian, Series of notes in a single bow direction, pulsed with continuous tone.
Punta: Italian, Point
Ricochet: Italian, Thrown Bow, rebounding, executed nearer the tip.
Saltando: Italian, Jumping, bow leaves string by reason of elasticity rebound.
Saltato: Italian, Thrown staccato, upper half of bow, down-bow thrown.
Sans: French, Without
Sautillé: French, Rapid bounce, half on and half off string, relies on natural rebound.
Schwarmer: German, Tremolo
Segue: Italian, When applied to bowing, has same meaning as simile (same).
Sforzato: Italian, (SF) With a strong accent, suddenly accented.
Simile: Italian, Same as before, same bowing.
Slur: English, Curved line connecting two or more notes of different pitch.
Sonore: Italian, Sonorous, with full tone.
Sostenuto: Italian, Sustained
Spiccato: Italian, Springing sound in which bow leaves string at each stroke.
Spitze: German, Tip, at the tip.
Springbogen: German, Bouncing bow.
Staccato: Italian, Detached, separated, short, abrupt.
Staccato Volante: Italian, Series of spiccato notes in a single bow.
Steg: German, Bow near bridge, producing glassy tone.
Strich: German, Bow
Sul G: Italian, All on the G string.
Sul Ponticello: Italian, Bow near bridge, producing glassy tone.
Sul Tasto: Italian, Bow lightly over fingerboard (flautando).
Sur II: French, On A string for the violin (the second string on an instrument in the direction from the highest pitch to the lowest pitch).
Sur la pont: French, Bow near the bridge.
Sur la Touche: French, Bow lightly over the fingerboard.
Tallone: Italian, Frog
Talon: Italian, Frog of the bow.
Tastiera: Italian, Fingerboard
Tenuto: Sustained, held
Tie: English, Curved line connecting two or more notes of a similar pitch.
Tip: English, the extremity of the bow opposite the frog, or heel.
Tirato: Italian, Down-Bow
Touche: Italian, Fingerboard
Tremolo: Italian, Repeated same tone by rapid up and down of bow.
U.H.: English, Upper half of bow.
V: Symbol, Up-bow (can originate in any part of the bow)
W.B.: English, Whole bow
`: Symbol, Down-bow (can originate in any part of the bow)
¥: Symbol, Staccato, short or separated (depending on the style period).
Up-Bow: English, The direction of bow’s frog, moving toward the violin.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The concertmaster role has many responsibilities and privileges. Accompanied by some of the duties are extreme pressures from the demanding pieces, conductors and fellow musicians that count on a concertmaster to be prepared for both the expected and the unexpected. There are many musical and technical components needed to be mastered for a secure concertmaster. Technical components include high level of proficiency on the violin, as a chamber and orchestral musician as well as being a diplomatic liaison between the orchestra and the conductor. Musical components include artistry, imagination and a sensitive awareness towards atmosphere within the music and the ensemble. Ethics is another key factor in striving for excellence as a concertmaster.

In 2006, Dr. Anne Mischakoff Heiles wrote a tribute book honoring her father in *Misha Mischakoff Journeys of a Concertmaster*. He was considered one of the world’s finest concertmasters in the mid-twentieth century by critics and conductors alike. This book highlights experiences that made Mischakoff an exceptional concertmaster. Included is a first-time published marked part to the solos in Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben* as well as two cadenzas written for him by Arturo Toscanini. Having these two manuscripts published proves the importance of the works while possibly stapling them as part of standard repertoire. Many of the passages within the book are written in his words. This book studies the concertmaster role from the prospective of Misha Mischakoff as

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145 Mischakoff Heiles, *Mischa Mischakoff: Journeys of a Concertmaster*
he describes his personal admiration with the post. Mischakoff sparks an inspiration that makes this source vital for the study. There is commentary about his views on how to serve a conductor along with this. Finally, the book offers the opportunity to know how he musically interpreted a piece by displaying his orchestral markings in solo examples of orchestral literature.

Another source authored by Anne Mischakoff Heiles is America’s Concertmasters, written in 2007. In this book, over 180 concertmasters are interviewed and asked to give their opinions on the position and the duties assigned. The evolution of the concertmaster is discussed by numerous musicians occupying the first chair position. The book highlights various top-10 major orchestral concertmasters in the United States and Canada. Many of the topics covered remark on music making decisions, advocacy, and a yielded authority to conductors. Reactions in crisis situations and practical ways of dealing with the pressures of performing solos are also shared.

Mastering solos, chamber and orchestral skills as well as diplomacy are essential characteristics for a concertmaster to have. Over a dozen concertmasters ranging from the symphonic, operatic and baroque styles were interviewed in a Strings Magazine publication authored by Laurence Vittes entitled Best Seat in the House: So You Wanna Be a Concertmaster. Each participant presented a personalized rendition of important topics they felt were highlights of a concertmaster’s role and privileges. Important topics included the consideration of good relationships between concertmaster, conductor and orchestra members.

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146 Mischakoff Heiles, Mischa Mischakoff: America’s Concertmasters
147 Vittes, Best Seat in the House.
One important topic discussed was duty of clarifying technically proficient and artistic bowings to result in unified precision musically and articulately.

Another important source for this study is Arnold Steinhardt’s biography, *Indivisible by Four: A String Quartet in Pursuit of Harmony*, published in 1998. Arnold Steinhardt recalls his days as Cleveland Orchestra’s assistant concertmaster to Joseph Gingold and conductor George Szell. He discusses what his duties were when Gingold wasn’t available and remembrances about fellow colleagues in the orchestra. Score preparation was an important subject in a chapter as well as his days as soloist with orchestras and the pressures of performing in chamber music settings as well. Soloistic, orchestral and chamber music bowings, articulations, musical style, intonation, diplomacy, and personal conviction were compiled to demonstrate a well rounded musician, precisely the goal expected to be a successful concertmaster.

In 2007, the American Federation of Musicians published an interview entitled *The Role of the Concertmaster* with Florida Symphony’s concertmaster Scott Flavin where important questions regarding the role of a concertmaster were stressed. In the interview, Flavin shares his personal views about past experiences with famous conductors and concertmasters. He touches upon the practicality of bowings, tactful rehearsal practices and personal thoughts that can be related to other concertmasters in the field. The article is straightforward and can be easily understood by concertmasters and enthusiasts alike.

To understand soloists more extensively Strings Magazine publisher David Lusterman released a book called *Violin Virtuosos* in 2000. It exemplifies

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148 Flavin, *The Role of the Concertmaster*.
149 Lusterman, *Violin Virtuosos*. 
the solo and chamber musician at work. Several reputable artists interviewed share their keen knowledge regarding details of their career. Since Anne Mischakoff’s *America’s Concertmasters* describes one of the responsibilities of a concertmaster to be a soloist, this book can guide explanations of the technical, personal and psychological aspects of their lives in music, including how to interpret repertoire and the factors that unite the artist to their audiences. The book ranges from musicians engaged as soloists to orchestral leaders. It also reveals questions that are used in live interviews.
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