
ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DRAMA

# Improvisation and the Modern Orchestral Musician

## A Critical Analysis of the Performer's Agency in the Contemporary Concert Hall

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## ABSTRACT

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Improvisation is a critical skill for musicians across nearly all genres and eras, however, to the modern orchestral musician, it is mainly a lost art. A study into the history, techniques, and traditions of improvisation details not only new ways to explore and develop performance practice of the instrument itself but also to train the ears and sensibilities of a musician. Analyses of improvisatory traditions within Western classical music as well as in jazz and contemporary music highlight the importance of several skills not often considered in formal training for orchestral musicians. These include: heightened awareness of harmony, more intuitive communication between players and audience, increased mental and physical agility, and the ability to access flow and uncover one's true voice. A more intuitive, skillful, conscientious, and expressive musician emerges from such studies.

On a personal level, I want to approach classical music from new perspectives in order to regain my passion for music. After many years of institutionalized exploration of the Western tradition, I have developed a very critical and sometimes close-minded approach to music. The aim of this research is to further develop my skills on the violin while gaining a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the performer's individual voice and the agency as a musician to bring life to the music we play. Instead of directing my efforts on what an establishment has more or less subjectively deemed as perfection, my goal in studying improvisation is to develop my own concept of sound quality, freedom of expression and interpretation, as well as the ability to quickly understand a piece harmonically and to play intuitively in a group. This is a study in equipping an artist with the tools to bring unique, relevant, and meaningful ideas to many contexts.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Searching for My Voice in Classical Music

Before the long hours of etudes and orchestra rehearsals, score study and memorizing concertos, I was a precocious child looking for any way to express myself in the world. Enthralled with nature, movement, and story-telling, my curiosity was piqued one day at a local fair where I heard a fiddle duo. The frenetic energy of the music seemed to encapsulate all of my disparate interests, and I was lucky and privileged enough to pursue this magic and to ask my mother if I could learn to play the violin.

Today, as a somewhat accomplished violinist who has been playing for over twenty-five years, I find myself on a precipice, looking down at two distinct destinations: where I have always wanted to be as an expressive artist and where decades of formal training have delivered me. It is from this perspective that I search for the location in which these two points meet; where I can be a dynamic, relevant artist and also a refined orchestral musician.

### Perfection as Limitation

I have put in countless hours of listening to famous recordings, drilling passages with a metronome, and getting the opinions and advice of teachers and professionals from across the world. Especially when it comes to the orchestral audition climate, it seems as if every detail of playing can and should be boiled down to several digestible aspects of playing then to be perfected. The result is not only a growing field of blogs, camps, and other commercial ventures to this end, but also an inevitable engulfment in an ever-increasingly competitive culture.

To pick up my violin with the sole intention of winning an audition is a self-defeating purpose: For most, this process takes years of diligence, some workings of fate, and the ability to really say something as an artist with clear intention and impeccable technique. It is an unwieldy and arduous endeavor. And the more one obsesses over the time and financial commitments to this effort, the more stifling and anxiety-ridden the process becomes.

It is not only with the intention to win an audition that I play my violin; however, my practice and performance methodology has been completely focused on this singular task, and subsequently, my life has taken on various forms solely to meet this end. It is a noble effort to doggedly work to improve one's playing, but there is also a danger therein, in becoming lost in and losing intrinsic musical impulses to obsessive details. A close-minded practice regime leads to closed ears. And it is an impossible challenge to live as a musician much yet win an audition with closed ears.

I have come to my Master's degree to find that striving for perfection has become my limitation. My aim with this thesis project is to re-open my ears and reawaken my curiosity in order to uncover the deeper, fuller, more communicative, and more accurate expression of my playing through the exploration of improvisation.

## A Need for Reinvigoration

I grew up learning traditional bluegrass and American fiddle tunes alongside Mozart and Bach, and when I was young, I felt equally free in these styles. As I grew older and focused more on classical music, my perspective on what was correct drastically narrowed along with my musical taste. My aim changed from wanting to tell a story or share something I loved to wanting to impress my parents, teachers, or whatever audience I could

find. In the academic, competitive, and technically taxing nature of playing difficult classical music, I lost sight of the fact that "music is trading ideas through sounds."[1]

In my experience, I have observed that it can be difficult for classically trained musicians to accept that the canon is intrinsically malleable. Of course, traditions have changed, and the fact is, we do not strictly adhere to performance practice. Somehow, however, the institutional confines of our traditions fool us into thinking there are only a few correct options when it comes to musical decisions, and these options are very rarely self-generated. In this way, the music also seems not to belong to the musician his or herself, but to the composer, the tradition, or the establishment. This structure is very restrictive, and as I examine it, I see that I've grown within a system which "seems to create an unquestioning attitude towards music which will hinder the ability to improvise."[2]

I am not deterred, however, because I know that studies in improvisation will help me not only to promote self-discoveries in classical music, but will also widen my store of knowledge, enabling me to become the artist I desire to be. Many of the main skills in improvisation (not limited to but including: harmony, communication, rhythm, listening and reacting) overlap in the orchestral world. Better questions in my practice will lead to better results, and I believe that improvisation will help me find those questions. Many of my best conservatory teachers have shared their own discoveries and unique journeys, but to find them on my own is a new and necessary development I must make as a musician.

In the words of classical pianist and promoter of improvisation in classical music, David Dolan: "The art of improvisation is an aid to 'living interpretation.'"[3] In this way, improvisation keeps the music fresh as it requires interpretation in real time. This not only helps a performer bring life to the intentions of a composer, but it can also serve to provide moments of inspiration for the performer and audience. Instead of an act of replication, a living interpretation opens new windows of consciousness.[4]

## Why Improvisation?

I have worked to emulate the technique and style of others for many years, and now it is time for me to find my own voice. The crucial questions that spring from improvisation will help me to find that voice and true grow immensely as an artist. My aim is to achieve freedom from the written score and pedantic style rules, as well as to find new inspirations in different forms of music. I desire to have ownership of the music that I play and to feel that it is a part of me. This comes from understanding of the music on a deep level, and I believe developing skills in improvisation will help me to gain this.

Improvisation can be a daunting challenge for me as a classical musician. I am used to a highly controlled environment where tempi and notes remain nearly unchanged from one performance the next. Even the smatter of applause between movements is a spontaneous point of annoyance to performers in some contexts. In improvisation, though, the

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[1] Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

[2] Derek Bailey, *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music* (London: The British Library National Sound Archive, 1992).

[3] David Dolan, "Bringing Together the Instinct and the Flow," *Classical Piano*, July/August 2016.

[4] George E. Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives," *Black Music Research Journal* Vol. 22 (2002).

environment is one of expectation and surprise. It is a risky endeavor which rewards its risk takers. In this environment, one must search for the boundary of what is too much or too little, and one can quickly ascertain particular strengths and weaknesses of a player in this setting.

## Why Now?

The University of Gothenburg cultivates a very international atmosphere of musicians of all genres from around the world. Here it is evident that the aims of the musicians in the classical department are narrowly defined (to win a job) and subjectively outlined (play the "best"). Friends that I've made in other departments at school, however, have a different musical perspective. They aim to explore and to create something new. From these musicians, I have learned that music itself (not just the fact we are an international group) can be a cultural exchange, and in this way, "how we communicate, what we share, becomes the expression of the music."[5]

Gothenburg is also a place that is, perhaps, a bit more open-minded and less stress-inducing when it comes to putting on concerts. I find that audiences here are very welcoming and thankful for performances of many kinds, and that musicians, in turn, are very free to take chances and open up to different musical ideas. This makes for a more liberated process and brings forth new sounds and concepts. The resulting cacophony opens up the ears to different combinations of instrumentation, a myriad tools and techniques used, as well as differences in timbre, harmony, and much more. Every new experience helps me to not only realize what I do and do not like, but brings me closer to understanding why I am drawn to or repelled by certain characteristics of music.

I have also found that here I am drawn to and connect better with musicians in the improvisation and folk music departments, and this fact has also spurred my will to explore improvisation. I believe this connection comes from the fact that on average, musicians in these departments are more experienced than those in my classical program. They are also more willing to share ideas and to listen to the ideas of others.

With all of our resources in the classical world, we are rich in outside information (without having true ownership of it), and when it comes to performing music in this context, a typical orchestral experience—from practice room to concert hall— can often be void of an individual artist's personal interpretation. Many disadvantages to this nature of being an orchestral musician include but are not confined to: 1) the concertgoer wants to see a performance, not a rote recitation, 2) this lack of individual care defeats the purpose of music-making, because if all that mattered was the execution of ink blotches, technology be an easy replacement, and 3) practically speaking, an orchestral musician's own personal brilliance is the only thing setting him or her apart from the rest of a field of highly qualified musicians (even in an audition setting). To these ends and more, classical musicians can learn quite a bit from our colleagues in other departments.

## Ultimate Goals

In a lecture, renowned clarinettist and pedagogue Yehuda Gilad spoke on the topic of how to be a successful musician.[6] He outlined three important aspects in a musical

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[5] Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation.*

[6] Yehuda Gilad, "How to be a Successful Musician," Aurora Music Festival, Royal College of Music, Stockholm Sweden, August 2017, Lecture.

career which would result in success regardless of how each person defines success individually. The first point is to train at our instruments as if we are athletes. The second is to approach the world as a philosopher. The third is to be a relevant part of society by giving back our gifts to a community. How measly winning an orchestra job sounds when put in the perspective of providing something unique and critical to a community! This greater purpose of music is commonly lost in pedagogy and in professional practice, but it remains as the main function of art: to "unlock the potential of individuals and to combat oppression by hegemonic political and cultural systems."[7]

This true calling of a musician is the path that I seek. As classical music has become more rote, more institutionalized, and further removed from the pulp of our societies, this essence of music is at risk to be lost from this form. In many traditions of improvised music, however, "the possibility of internalizing alternative value systems is implicit from the start."[8] This is the key of what I aim to gain from my exploration of improvisation: the knowledge to take my music and make it meaningful, even in a classical realm.

Key questions to lead this research include:

1. How do I foster an open mind and really hear, examine, and question everything I play?
2. How can I regain music as a source of inspiration?
3. What methods can free me from defeatist self-critique and help me to open my ears?
4. How can I better approach music from the perspectives of others?
5. What are my goals as an artist in a greater context?

[7] George E. Lewis, "Interactivity and Improvisation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Computer Music,* ed. Roger T. Dean (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[8] George E. Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives."

## THE PROCESS

I caste my nets very wide in my research and found that my exploration can be divided into five main categories:

1. Learning from friends
2. Listening
3. Working on Improvisation in General
4. Exercises
5. Improvisation in Classical Music: The Mozart Cadenza

### Learning from Friends

#### A Step into Folk Music

My first experiment in improvisation was not any kind of high-minded social endeavor. I just wanted to play some fun music with good friends. The first opportunity came on a trip I was taking back to the United States. A good friend of mine and accomplished violinist, Suzanne Wedeking, had just bought a mandolin and was putting together a storm of tunes. Upon a trip to visit her, she had booked us some folk shows before I even know what we would be playing. This, to me, seemed a little crazy. She had been working on the stuff for weeks and had done some performances already, but she just expected me to jump in and be fine with no background in this style of music. She assured me she would teach me and all would be fine, and sure enough, after a quick day of going through tunes (looking at the melody, where to put the harmony, and even where and what to sing), we played our first show with enough material to fill an hour and a half. After our first show, I realized I had done the bulk of my playing away from the melody or any kind of predetermined material—I had just improvised (see Audio 01)!

In this first wave of playing, I was invigorated with this skill that I had let idle for so long. From my own moments of discomfort in the show, I quickly was able to realize my weaknesses and what to improve. Mainly, I was always on top of the beat in a style which is much more laid-back. In an orchestra, it is important in many cases to anticipate the beat, especially as a section violinist. I am always on my toes to play exactly with the leader or with the conductor, and that often means I must play before I hear, as sound travels somewhat slowly to the back of the section. Though this is all in an effort to play together, this habit can lead to anxious playing and rushing—big culprits of sloppy string sections. In my improvised solos in this folk music setting, I experienced discomfort when placing the beat too early or when I was ahead of the rhythm section during my solos (see Audio 02). I realized this is a big area in need of improvement in my overall playing.

This experience not only helped me find a major weakness in my playing, but it also helped me to better listen and react to what my friend was doing. Due to our lack of rehearsal time as well as the nature of the music, each performance was very unique. Whereas in the orchestral world, even if musicians are attentive to the interpretation of a conductor on a given night or, even more murkily, to that of my fellow players, the music itself remains by and large very much the same. In this new context, however, I was completely reliant on Suzanne to lead me through the harmonies and iterations that would change on any given night. It was of utmost importance and excitement to be on my toes for what she would do.

**Developing in the Jam**

A few months later, I landed in Gothenburg to start my Master's degree, and discovered there was a whole new world of musical friends to teach me how to improvise. These musicians hardly ever came from similar countries much yet musical backgrounds, so the many lessons I had over the course of hours of jamming with different friends yielded amazingly diverse results.

I learned quickly that with good musicians, the mix of instrumentation isn't usually so crucial, however, it does drastically affect the roles that any given person will fill in the ensemble. I was fortunate to play with many pianists who could provide a lot of rhythmic and harmonic support, and I found that depending on the role that they would to take, I had a variety of choices: I could assist in what they were doing, provide contrast, sit out and provide space, make sounds, tempt them to change direction, etc. What I found was the more aware I could be of what they were doing, the more I was able to choose a direction for myself, which in turn, would be processed by the group and develop further for me to reassess.

I found this kind of discourse extremely interesting, and it became a whole new area of exploration in music for me. While there are absolutely certain individual qualities of my classical colleagues that affect my way of playing, it is never to the level of reaction and infusion that I experienced while jamming.

In this practice, I also learned that I have a lot of interesting diverse skill sets to offer to my colleagues as well. I noticed that while I was playing Stravinsky's *Firebird* in orchestra, some similar intervals and harmonies would emerge from my violin in the jam. My love and affinity for French music was also evident in the style and harmonies which would come naturally to me (see Audio 03). This was a pleasant addition and surprise to everyone, including myself!

**New Approaches to Classical Music**

This synergy created in the basement of the music school is a noted function of improvisation "as a social location inhabited by a considerable number of present-day musicians, coming from diverse cultural backgrounds and musical practices, who have chosen to make improvisation a central part of their musical discourse. Individual improvisers are now able to reference an intercultural establishment of techniques, styles, aesthetic attitudes, antecedents, and networks of cultural and social practice."[9] This method of sharing and creating is one that I think should not be limited to improvisational music, but should also add to the richness of the classical tradition.

In fact, if the classical tradition continues on its academic and mainly inward-looking path, there is a risk of missing out on the main points of our own tradition, because we become blind to what music-making actually is and lost to the efficacy of that in society. It becomes more for museums than for everyday life. "The varied and subtle ways in which a music culture actually shape the sensibilities and skills of its members are not always apparent to the members themselves until they encounter individuals whose backgrounds differ from their own."[10] Interplay with other traditions, is in fact a vital part of our heritage, and one that we must pursue in order to rediscover our own voice and purpose.

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[9] George E. Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives."
[10] Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation,* 30.

Wynton Marsalis, the cross-genre musician who is a classically trained jazz legend, once noted, "change in self-perceptions also mark changes in the musical tastes of performers."[11] The more I noticed my new roles and my new culpability in the music I was playing in jams and also in the orchestra, the more I realized that what I crave is not a perfectly clean execution or any kind of hyper-accuracy which I was going for normally in the practice room. Instead, I found that performing means sharing an authentic moment. Improvisation really helps with this realization, as it forces me to constantly think and react in real time. In the classical world where accuracy and perfection are expected, this aspect often fades into the background.

Fostering a special attention for a specific moment is a new way to orient my listening to my own playing and to that of others. The experience helped me to develop more authenticity in my listening. "The value that the jazz community places on personal responsibility is especially appropriate for the artistic growth of initiates. Self-reliance requires the musicians to select their own modes for excellence and to measure their abilities against them. It enhances their powers of critical evaluation, cultivates their tastes, and provides them with an early sense of their own individuality."[12] The more I jammed with fellow improvisers, the more I was able to develop a unique self-awareness and to hear my playing and how it fit into different contexts. Instead of relying on a score, a teacher, leader, or conductor to dictate my volume, tone, pitches, when to play and when to relax, etc., the practice of improvisation offered new possibilities for me to figure out anew my role as a violinist (see Audio 04).

## Listening

Over time, I developed an awareness of presence while performing, and the more awareness I had in my own playing, the more I looked for it in others' performances and even in recordings. As a young child, I was a Suzuki student, so my first years of playing the violin relied heavily on learning from recordings. I always viewed the Suzuki method (also called the Mother Tongue method) as a great way for children too young to have learned to read words (much yet music notes) learn to play. As many note, however, the downside can be that since learners of this method rely so much on ear training, we are sometimes weaker note-readers. I have spent many years honing my sight-reading skills, however, I always viewed my strength at listening to learn as a kind of crutch. In improvisation, I realized this early aural approach to music is actually very beneficial in different genres of music. Studying a different genre of music is like studying a new language: Immersion is the best way to learn. Luckily, since the University of Gothenburg is home to a wide variety of musicians, I had many opportunities for this.

I was able to attend a few concerts of one artist who was particularly interesting and inspiring, Magda Mayas. With the medium of prepared piano, Magda Mayas explores space through sound, bringing forth many new colors, timbres, and characters that I never knew could exist in a piano. Her concerts were an exercise for me to give up a certain kind of anticipation or expectation for what is to come and to accept the music as it comes and to trust the performer to guide me through it. Since I am used to a more traditional concert setting

[11] Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation.*
[12] Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation, 59.*

where performers play written music (which is often over a hundred years old) and is to the desired effect of sounding like an old, famous recording, this letting go of expectation and anticipation was a very new way to enjoy a concert. I found myself putting off the hat of the critic and instead listening with real curiosity to what was happening in the moment.

What I find particularly delightful and refreshing about listening to improvisation concerts at school is that often a concert involves several students and therefore, several different sound worlds. The music is very personal not only in execution (as a classical concert might be) but in the entire presentation and characteristic of the music. In the many concerts which featured a variety of improvisers, I found that even the music that was not so pleasing to me had an important value in that it added something inherently unique. What a liberating discovery as an artist to find that even music that some might find unpleasant or confounding has an intrinsic value!

**Widening My Lineage**

As I start to consider my listening history as a palette from which I select the colors I use in my own playing, I must acknowledge the way that many musical traditions function, with a lineage we take from our teachers and contemporaries. As I have studied in some wildly different geographical locations, my own musical family tree has many divergent limbs. From my beginnings in the highly systematic Suzuki method, to my Bachelor studies with teachers who studied closely with the famous pedagogues such as Paul Kantor, Dorothy DeLay, and Josef Gingold, my musical heritage is very Western and highly structured. I believe my technique has greatly benefited from this system, as well as my appreciation of a certain accuracy and quality of classical music.

However, when it comes to expanding my scope as an artist, I realized quickly when studying in Germany, that there are many more opinions and methods to explore. In my lessons with several teachers in Germany, I found no unified vision of how to play Bach and Mozart (even though some teachers may think their own way is singularly correct). The bigger lesson was that I have many choices. I relearned the value of a teacher; They must not only be someone I must trust to help me with my technique, but I must also trust their musical sensibilities, and they must help me foster my own opinions. In Sweden, the style of teaching is much less pedantic. From my teachers here, I have learned that it is now time for me to take all of the information (which feels like too much at times) and synthesize it into my own unique way of playing. This requires a new kind of listening: listening carefully to myself, not with a sense of distrust or criticism, but to see what exactly comes across in my playing and to determine if what I intend is what I hear.

To put this into practice, I do record myself playing classical repertoire quite frequently, however, the practice of improvisation and pursuing new avenues of inspiration through listening to other genres has also expanded my aural skills in relation to my own playing. I have listened to a lot of jazz recordings and found that better manipulation of space and time in music is something that I would like to incorporate more in my playing. It is in these recordings that I can really hear the efficacy of a pause too long, a sudden change of character, or a charming interruption. The vernacular in this playing is less stiff than in classical music, and instead, is often more readily accessible for me to place in a mood, narrative, or to connect with what is being expressed.

**Finding A New Teacher via Recordings**

To make this listening even more applicable to my violin playing, I decided to really listen to some recordings of Stéphane Grappelli. He has always been a violinist I have enjoyed, but in my artistic research, I have taken a close listening to many of his recordings and have marveled at his use of space and interjection. Whereas so many violinists who attempt jazz just sound atrociously square, Grappelli achieves the simultaneous nonchalance and brilliance required in this genre. He sounds loose, both physically and mentally, and this is a quality that allows for his flexibility, his expression, and the joy in his music to emerge. When I sit down to play something difficult, stress is often my strongest feeling (not necessarily excitement), and this is far from the emotions that I actually wish to convey. It is obvious in Grappelli's playing that not only is this flexibility in expression possible, it is also absolutely necessary.

One of the best ways to learn from the Greats is to copy them, so I decided to transcribe one of Grappelli's solos, "Daphne." What I learned in this process, is that a solo does not actually have to be complex to sound complex. Even to my trained ear, his solo sounded very intimidating at first, but once I started to learn the notes, I realized the beauty of his simplicity (and admittedly the complexity that goes along with such simplicity). I was cruising learning this solo, but then I quickly realized with frustration after listening to several of my takes, that my playing remained stiff and etude-like. If I let the rhythm lose it's straight-edge, I couldn't knock the feeling that I would get lost in the greater schematics and cause chaos in my imaginary ensemble. I experimented letting go of that fear and trying to inject time in my phrasing and pauses, but my efforts here still sounded stiff and contrived (see Audio 05).

Finally, I realized the problem was not necessarily in my technique or playing but in my ears. When I would play, I had Grappelli's cool example playing along in my head, overriding my ability to perceive what I was actually doing. This kept me from hearing where exactly I was getting trapped. I needed to move away from my violin and immerse myself further in this style so that I could no longer be simply emulating Grappelli's playing in my head, but sharing something that I had personally inside myself—the innate knowledge of the style.

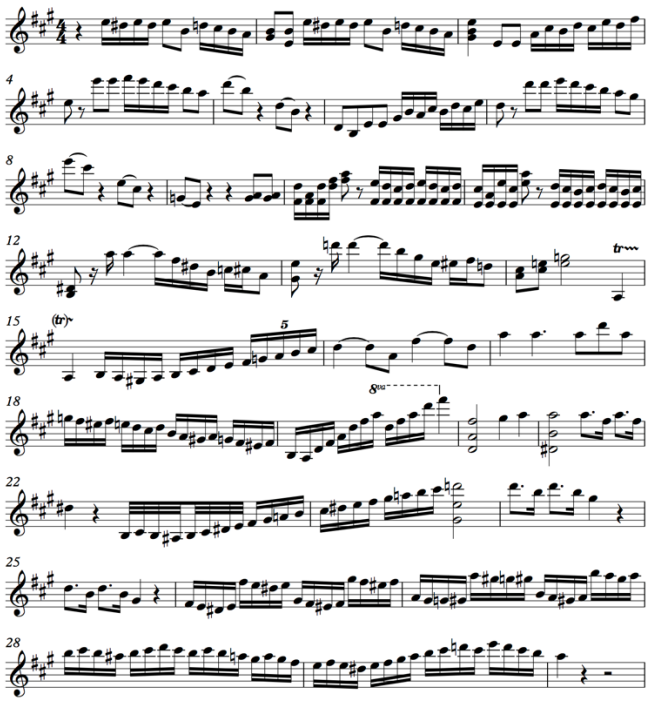
**Gaining Ears for the Classical Cadenza**

My artistic research also led me to listen to as many different classical cadenzas as possible. In an effort to develop my understanding of different styles and the current tradition of the classical cadenza, I have found a great many variations by mainly violinists and cellists from different backgrounds. As I listened to endless cadenzas for my Mozart concerto of choice (Concerto No. 5, K. 219[13]), I found two that were especially charming and decided to transcribe them.

First, Itzhak Perlman's cadenza is almost fiddle-like and very free. It has the same quality of Grappelli to charm by way of simplicity. It is a quality similar to Grapelli in

[13] Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Concerto No. 5 in A Major, K.219 for Violin and Piano*, edited by Ivan Galamian, cadenzas by Joseph Joachim (New York: International Music Company).

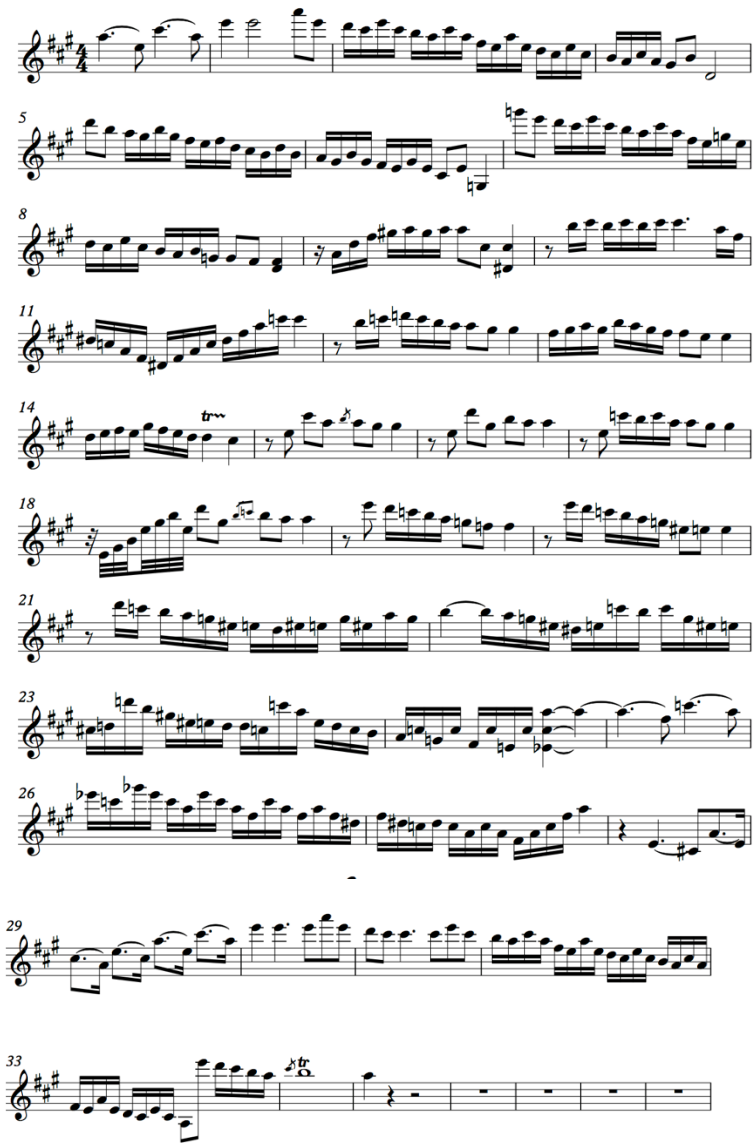
that the flash of Perlman's technique and nonchalance was very impressive sounding, but as one can see, in the technical realm, the cadenza itself is not so challenging:[14]



The second cadenza I transcribed was by Leonidas Kavakos. His is a little longer and more demanding. I appreciate the harmonic sequences in his cadenza and the way his winding phrases seamlessly deliver the listener with dramatic tension and release.[15]

[14] Itzhak Perlman with Wiener Philharmoniker and James Levine, *Violin Concerto No. 5 in A Major, K. 219,* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, recorded at the Musikverein in Vienna in June 1982, DG Masters 445535, compact disc.

[15] Leonidas Kavakos with Camerata Salzburg at Mozartwoche 2002, Unitel GmbH &Co.KG, A05510526, compact disc.



This in-depth listening was very informative on the many possibilities and freedoms I could also enjoy in my own cadenza. This research also revealed my desire to come up with many different variations for my cadenza, so that I could play the whole thing through in a very classical style on one day, and on another day, I could bring something out that is a little more like Itzhak Perlman's almost fiddle-like cadenza. I do love the romanticism in the oft-played Joachim cadenza, and that is what I'm most accustomed to, so this will influence my style as well. By transcribing others, I see my strengths and weaknesses in a new way, and can better determine which of these to rely on and which ones to develop.

**Smarter Listening**

It is, I think, quite obvious to see the great value of close listening in the classical realm. Anne-Sophie Mutter is one of my all-time favorite violinists. From

wunderkind to becoming one of the world's foremost soloists, she has all the liberty to play the way she sees fit, and she does. Her unique style is why I appreciate her recordings. The problem I have run into time and again, however, is that in my own playing, I borrow from her too much. I do have some liberty to play as I see fit, but I do not have the liberty to play like a fourth-rate Anne-Sophie Mutter. Often when I have borrowed from her, my teachers have been confused at my phrasing and tempi. I know that I should pursue my own impulses that are admittedly inclusive of my love for Mutter's playing, but I also see now that I must further explore whatever style I am wishing to achieve by means of immersing myself in other sources.

From this listening, I must synthesize my own version to find what I truly want to say and to be able to do that effectively. Just as in learning jazz, through "kaleidoscopic array of information, students glimpse varied elements as they appear and reappear in different settings and are interpreted by the performers whom the students encounter. Learners synthesize disparate facts in an effort to understand the larger tradition."[16]

This new approach to listening has helped me realize the error in earlier years to attempt to replicate the styles of famous violinists (Perlman, Mutter, even Ivry Gitlis) in my concerti. But rather than a failed endeavor, that was a part of a process which has added to my abilities and my color palette on the violin. The process has also taught me that I cannot stop with listening. "The enemy is mere imitation without imbibing the inspiration which makes the art a living thing." The result is merely derivative music.[17]

## On Improvisation in General

> "Improv is the process of failure and success in which both are equally valuable."[18]

It is difficult to pin down a singular concept of improvisation. Divergence and synthesis of various musical traditions has provided the overarching term with a myriad of expressions and methods. Coming from a more institutionalized, classical background, I have experience in the practice of interdeterminacy, chance operations, experimental music, and/or intuitive music which all closely relate to improvisation. (Some even argue that this is improvisation.) My experience with this concert music is that it provides an extra opportunity to assert my individuality or gives more license to interpret the necessities of the moment; however, it has never really seemed to encapsulate what it is to truly improvise. For example, in most of these pseudo-classical situations, (often in pieces by Cage or Reich) a score is provided with notes or specific instruction from the composer. The pieces are not ones that I have had familiarity with for years or that I have heard many times before. I might not even have complete grasp of the form and structure of the piece, depending on the work. All of these factors tend to make me feel as if I am in uncharted territory.

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[16] Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation, 51.*
[17] Bailey, *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music,* 52.
[18] Bailey, *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music, 10.*

I am more comfortable in fairly similar settings where the intention of the piece is to open up freely (and without notation) for improvisation which reflects on or develops the written music. In these situations, my feeling is that the training wheels are taken off—the basis of the piece are set, and we can finally branch out and be free. I have had the opportunity to play three such pieces here in Gothenburg by composers from the university, and in these situations, I have really felt the challenge and freedom to perform in a way, that in my opinion, is more improvisatory than what is traditionally offered to a musician in a concert setting.

**Synthesizing Disparate Skills**

Much improvisational instruction in what is considered Western concert music (which is would be a limb of classical music) derives from other traditions such as jazz and free forms rather than from the classical tradition. Though the classical tradition does have a heritage of improvisation (as I describe in my Mozart cadenza study), improvisational aspects in modern concert music pull more from Eastern or jazz influences, and perhaps my unfamiliarity with these forms or the fact that they are not explicitly cited gives me the feeling of lacking authenticity.

The step from classical music to improvisation is challenging, but my knowledge from one enhanced my abilities in the other. One of the most important effects of this exploration into improvisation was the reinvigoration of interpretation in my attitude towards the music I was playing. Jamming or practicing improvisation put me more in a performance mind-frame in which I did not feel the need to replicate perfectly certain standards in the repertoire, but to bring more of myself into them. And just like in listening to recordings of myself, improvisation revealed my specific weaknesses as a musician. Namely, I found new challenges to guide my personal development:

-To listen to myself in a different way
- To be open to experimentation
-To better tolerate and even embrace of surprise in a performance
- To be more interested in a role which is responsible for creating development

These challenges seemed to present many issues at odds with the methods of classical music to which I was accustomed. I have spent many hours over the last twenty-five years in practice rooms, judging myself pretty harshly, painstakingly adhering to the dictated notation, and measuring myself against a canonized collection of recordings. To be flexible, open-minded, and non-judgmental was not necessarily something I had developed in my relationship to music.

At first, flexibility seemed like chaos because I didn't have the right tools. In jams, it was a challenge to simultaneously listen and react to what was going on around me. I was processing very slowly or too heavily perhaps on what others were doing, and then I would play something and judge it in the moment. This way of thinking made some sessions

very clunky and uncomfortable. I found that I must calm down and accept unintended occurrences in order to properly participate in the creative process.

It helped to make "mistakes" or, in other words, to find the limits to a boundary and then going a little too far. I noticed that that is what many of my more seasoned colleagues would do. A common example, is to take a solo that is too long. I think that, in a jam session, this is an important process—to practice asserting yourself in different ways and to take the time it requires. Personally, I believe that in a performance, it is the time to be more deliberate, effective, and concise, and not take a solo which is too long; however, the way to find out how to do this is by breaking that rule in a non-performance setting. I learned that I could test many boundaries in this way. I led certain questions develop and lead my way:

-How much could I trust myself to execute technically challenging passages on the fly?
-How much could I do to enhance the playing of others without it becoming intrusive?
-What sounds are possible on my violin and how can they be appropriately incorporated?
-How much time is appropriate to sit out and let the music develop by others around me?

Factors change on any given day depending on the mood, the people, the collection of instruments, the style, etc. The very nature of this kind of practice demands flexibility. No notation could ever fit the ever-changing atmosphere necessary in this music.

**Active Listening**

> "Listening itself is an improvisatory act engaged in by everyone—an active engagement with the world, where we sift, interpret, store, and forget in parallel with other actions and intentions and fundamentally articulated with them." [19]

The key to this process of active participation in music is listening. Relying on my ears was crucial to finding the harmony, form, style, and endless other categories of information. Though classical musicians have theory classes in formal training, it rarely results in the ability to synthesize this knowledge well enough to put it to use in improvisation. The way we listen is just different than those musicians who are used to improvising. I found that a way to gain (and in some ways, regain) this skill, was to more specifically define what music I connect with personally. When I was inspired, my ears would be more open and my playing was freer. This endeavor not only helped me to more quickly understand music on a deeper level, it also led me on a path to find my voice by having more consciousness about what I connect and do not connect with in music.

After some time, I realized in jam sessions that I had a better ability to hear more of what I wanted before I would play it. This allowed me to free up mental space. Instead of trying to laboriously analyze everything, I was able to more organically fit into the music.

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[19] Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives."

This process of sitting in on jam sessions and also from researching the appropriate literature taught me to have a sense for and to grow bigger ears to hear more of what is happening in any given musical setting. To name a few, theme, tonality, form, timbre, texture, density, character, measure, rhythm, and tempo are all factors that can either be discussed and agreed upon, set up as boundaries, or evolve with the music.[20]

What was especially interesting to me were questions of dynamics. Dynamics in music can affect so much: tension, sense of duration, character, balance of ensemble, and more. In the orchestral world, we often see a *p* in our part and play softly without regard to intention. That singular notation doesn't represent fully the intention, so it is up to the group to commit to a unified idea. This happens in an ideal world, but in one full of repertoire, stress, and a need to just get through a piece, it can often be a missed opportunity for real music to happen in an orchestra. In improvisation, however, everyone takes extra care to commit to the character and let the dynamic follow. Improvisation turns the act of interpretation on its head. This was a major finding for me, and one that will always remind me to look for intention rather than merely reacting when I see notated dynamics in my orchestral playing.

Another aspect of my playing that I've further developed through improvisation is to always be searching for and fulfilling my role in the music. Deeper listening to music and playing in different improvisational settings helped my ears to become more curious at the interactions between musicians. I learned to ask:

- What is the balance between unity and diversity?
- What voice can I rely on to guide me rhythmically, harmonically, etc.?
- What kind of sound is complementary or clashing with the others?

These questions are also critical in the orchestra, but again, they are often left to individual orchestral musician to somehow develop on their own hopefully through diligence and score study. I found that improvisation makes the process of learning this more organic and fun!

**Honing in on My Weaknesses**

The other big lesson was that, in Jean Langlais' words, "improvisation cannot be improvised."[21] Ear training was, for me, a big part in learning how to better improvise, but I also found weaknesses in my technical playing in the process. The timing and coordination of my playing was often a bit tense and a bit too fast all around. The more I experimented in improvisation, the clearer my own skills became in accordance with what I could definitely rely on myself to do under stress and what I need to develop further to be able to perform certain things under stress.

In a notated, classical world, we don't have the option to pick and choose certain riffs or to have certain skills on which we can mainly rely. These factors are very much determined for us, and this can lead to some intimidation when it comes to learning a new piece. I often feel that I must drill even the difficult things that I am good at. Improvisation has taught me to better organize my practice time and to devote it to skills that actually need to be developed.

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[20] Naji Hakim, *The Improvisation Companion*, (London: United Music Publishers, Ltd., 2000).
[21] Hakim, *The Improvisation Companion*, 21.

All of this practice is to achieve the mental agility required for high level performance, no matter what the genre. One must have concentration on everything in the environment, not only what happens individually on one's instrument. One must take the opportunity to test that agility. Taking a passage too fast, too loud, too complicated, will always reveal where the boundary lies, and in this way, when it comes to performing, these developed instincts can lead the way to further and further development of the music and of the musician.

## Exercises

> "Being thoroughly prepared is the only way you can have the inner freedom to create a fresh interpretation while you perform." [22]

Major and minor scales along with triads have been a practice ritual since the beginning of my studies, and dozens of etude books help to zero-in on technical problems, but after all these years, my technical training needed a new perspective. As I drill exercises I have known for twenty years, I find my focus wandering and can tell they have less and less effect. It is one thing for a musician to dedicate his or her time to etude books, it is another thing to actually gain the skill of catering your technical weaknesses to a specific musical goal. Working in variations, progressions, and limitations is exactly what Kreutzer, Dont, Rode, and all of the classic pedagogues did to help their students confront weaknesses in their playing. Similarly, I decided to design my own etudes using improvisational techniques.

### Limitation

Instead of digesting convoluted etude after etude, I focused my technique work on only one or two skills, improvising my own studies in a way. In this process, I freed myself from the visual lock of a note-filled exercise and allowing myself the opportunity to simply and truly listen to my tone, execution, and expression.

To achieve this, I used an improvisational technique called limitation. Every few days I would devote a ten-minute slot of practice time to a specific limitation: artificial and natural harmonics (see Audio 07), isolation of the right hand in very high positions on the violin, wide vibrato vs. none vs. mixed, playing *sul ponto* and *sul tasto,* creating warm bell-like tones, developing my pizzicato (see Audio 08), forte banana-bow playing, three and four-note chord practice (which was especially useful for Ysaye and Bach), among others.

With some techniques, this was effective. Learning and focusing on new kinds of scales and skills such as harmonics was very beneficial. However, whenever I attempted to improvise by jamming on my own with no harmonic instruments, the result was always boring, repetitious, and oddly wandering without arriving anywhere. I faltered without limitation. In an attempt to amend this, I would come up with some material and prerecord it on a piano, to replay and jam on top of with my violin (see Audio 06). This proved to be a good exercise in composition as well as improvisation.

This endeavor to practice through improvisation provided a wider and more confident vocabulary for my playing, but the exercises would not serve as a performance themselves. They turned out to be more for drill than presentable material. This ability to use

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[22] Jessica Duchen, Interview with David Dolan, "Taking the Risk and Enjoying It," *Classical Piano,* March/April 1996.

improvisational tools and forms to create exercises and to listen differently to is a useful tool in the practice room, however, and one I can develop even more. It is a worthy effort in practice to explore specifically catered etude work in a new and individualized way.

**Scales Reworked**

Beyond "improvised" etudes, I also got to work on the very concrete scale patterns that don't often occur in classical music. I not only would play through my usual major and minor scales throughout the week, but I also played starting on different scale degrees and by practicing pentatonic scales in modulating sequence. This practice helped forge a mental and physical connection in moving between keys, and it also was very useful for ear training. The aspect of recognizing the scales was difficult at first, and I used some online ear-training tools which would play different scales for me to identify to help with the mental aspect of this exercise.

This development of my ear through exercises was key in allowing me to feel more flexible and confident while improvising. The more familiar I was in the harmonic language, the freer I could play. In an interview, Robert Levin describes this kind of third-eye mental state necessary for improvisation in real time: "It is involved in a yin/yang between the conceptual and the muscular. if the fingers get too much ahead of the mind—or vice versa—there is a calamity."[23]

The tradition of improvisation is rich and indisputable in jazz music. And while jazz was not necessarily the focus of my research, I wanted to develop at least a small vocabulary in this style. I consulted David Baker's exercise book for this. These exercises provided the opportunity to familiarize myself with kinds of chords, progressions, and rhythms often found in traditional styles of the genre. Daily practice of these scales and progressions was extremely helpful for my right hand to feel more at home with intervals and scales that I hardly play otherwise. Just as we must drill the common scales and techniques in classical music, jazz and other genres require similar diligence. "The most fundamental use of jazz vocabulary requires the ability to perform patterns in time and at various tempos. This in turn requires learners to cultivate various technical performance skills tied to physical strength and agility." [24]

**New Approaches to Rhythm**

One crossover skill that I wished to develop from improvisation practice was rhythm and timing. Pacing is important in all music and creates a kind of flow in which time itself can be experienced as subjective. This is one of the most magical qualities of an effective performance. As David Dolan writes, "motion and emotion" are closely linked, and this makes learning properly timed gestures which correlate to every day experiences very potent skills for the improviser.[25]

In my classical playing, this challenge is very present in playing certain orchestral audition repertoire. The common violin excerpt from the beginning of Richard

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[23] Robert Levin, *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 25, No. 5-6, 2006.

[24] Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation, 115.*

[25] David Dolan, "Back to the Future: Towards the Revival of Extemporisation in Classical Music Performance," in *The Reflective Conservatoire: Studies in Music Education* edited by G. Odam and N. Bannan (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing) 104.

Strauss' *Don Juan* moves at a fast pace and includes heroic flourishes and short ostinato passages of different rhythms in triple and duple.[26] To add to this, issues of intonation, tone quality, and nerves can also affect one's comfort level and ability to concentrate while playing this piece. With all of these factors, it is extremely difficult while in the moment of playing, to be able to track whether or not tempo is constant. Certain passages often rush ahead despite many efforts and mental notes not to do this. It is very difficult for me to recognize this occurrence in the moment, but of course it is very obvious to a listener or when listening to a playback. The big challenge is that the experience of time and pacing can differ greatly when one listens and when one performs.

I shared these frustrations with and even played this piece for a friend who has a more jazz/improvisatory background, and his suggestions were very helpful and applicable to finding a way around this problem. First, to play a passage of the piece in the correct rhythm but on a single note proved to be helpful: This limitation frees mental space to simply focus on the movement of my bow (how much bow to use, what kind of stroke, the speed of the bow, and the various pressure levels), and this helped me to more physically understand the rhythm. Another helpful exercise was to add a twist to normal metronome drilling and to play with the metronome clicking on beats two and four rather than one and three. I found that while I had no issues and no easily audible rushing when the clicks were on beats one and three, the offbeat metronome made my tiny micro-rushing very easy to detect and correct. In *Don Juan,* this is an especially interesting exercise as a single 3/4 bar will reset to the beats to one and three. One can start alternating on or off the beat and play the full piece, eventually feeling both metronomic emphases.

For the classical orchestral musician, quick and effective problem solving is the only way to prepare a vast amount of music at a high level. Making a list of the technical challenges or one's own weaknesses in any given piece makes it possible to creatively find solutions such as the ones above.

Developing a rhythmical sense and the ability to subdivide and feel different impulses while maintaining a tempo is key for an orchestral career. An orchestra made up of individuals who cannot control their own tempi results in a sloppy group who rarely plays together. The goal is to have control of tempi so much that reacting to someone else's interpretation is possible. This aspect of playing is sometimes lost to classical musicians and is an all too common deficiency of some orchestras. It is a disturbance to the audience to feel variation in tempi throughout a single orchestra, and for these reasons, it is important to correct this weakness in my own playing.

Pacing and rhythmic elasticity is also very much involved in creating musical space which is so necessary to the flow of a performance. It is sometimes very difficult for me to embrace an organic flow of music because my instinct is always for control, but the more I listened to other genres of music and tried to emulate their styles, I found that I can develop a sense of timing which then corresponds to classical style. In other genres, it can be a little clearer how music relates to the rhythm of our daily life events. Perhaps because of the institutionalization of classical music or the fact that it is a very old tradition, the beauty and subtlety of the interpretation of pacing can easily be lost, especially to music students who do not feel true ownership of the music they play.

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[26] Richard Strauss, *Don Juan*, (Munich: Jos. Aibl Verlag) 1.

**Playing Around**

My exercises extended into jam sessions as well. I started experimenting with certain repetitions. If I found a nice motif, I would see if I could make it into a longer tune. Then I would see if I could go back to the motif and develop a new one. Another exercise was to see if I could put my progression practice into effect in a more live setting. I would take a motif and see where I could take it harmonically within the group. This resulted in a lot of failed but interesting attempts. Sometimes while jamming, I would get the feeling that all I was doing was boring or tired. When this happened, I would experiment with some riffs and see where I could liven up my contribution to the group. Lastly, one of my favorite little exercises while jamming was to see if I could introduce new styles and influence my fellow musicians to adopt that style too. This was a fun interchange and often, they would catch along quickly and respond even with a stylistic suggestion of their own (see Audio 09).

I also tried to develop more of what I was naturally doing in the jams which my fellow non-classical musicians really loved: incorporating some of my favorite melodies from Stravinsky, Debussy, and others into my solos. These partial quotes or alternative dialogues to a melody enabled me to experiment with material bouncing around in my head. To juxtapose these fragments into this new setting was not only fun, but I believe, a good step in helping me find my voice. I would also practice taking the "best things" from other people's solos, alluding to related melodies, using rhythmic displacement, finding rhythmic reinventions, and spelling out new permutations. I would work on expanding phrases to make consecutive variations, perhaps even creating new motives or cleverly refering to others (this takes repetition). To do this, I would identify the contour of the initial pattern, then re-create the general shape. Other options would be to experiment with rhythmic ostinato, play with tonal range, mirror the phrase, change tonality, and find other ways to build tension or to create a tension and release. All of these interactions become tools to tell a story.

This experimentation was highly challenging, and I'm not really sure that anything I did was ever totally seamless in these jams, but what did help was to find areas on the instrument where I am most comfortable, so that I can show my strengths and concentrate on these other difficulties. It was also important for me to let go of my expectations for perfection. While I was developing a more discerning ear which could better guide me to hear what I wanted to play before I played it, I also had to learn not to let my mind linger on something that was unexpected or did not come out just right. This more patient reaction helped to avoid frustration and even boosted the creative process, as the unexpected or unintended figures often led to new and interesting places and served as inspiration rather than diminishment.

In sum, all of these different exercises have the potential to enrich and provide a wider vocabulary and greater flexibility in my classical playing. The more automatic these skills become, the freer my body and my ears are able to be reactive to what is going on around me.

## Improvisation in Classical Music: The Mozart Cadenza

To be flexible, open, and reactive to music is an obvious and crucial skill in improvisation, but it is equally (but perhaps less obviously) important in classical music as well. The act of performing is to give life to a piece in the moment; not to reiterate a notion from a hundred years prior, but to share something relevant. It was with this aim that I

approached the task of understanding the history and performance practice of Mozart cadenzas.

For a classical musician with the goal of winning a job in an orchestra, playing a Mozart concerto (often the first movement) is a must. This includes the cadenza. An audition setting makes for a very strange performance in many ways, but when it comes to a cadenza, the audition panel is often concerned with hearing that a potential section player can play with a flawless brilliance and accuracy. It is less important to an audition panel to play something original. This can depend on the country and the orchestra, however, it is generally not considered a great idea (and is certainly not required) to play one's own cadenza in this setting.

In spite of this ambivalence of audition panels, I still wanted to explore how improvisation could inform my understanding and interpretation of Mozart's music in a greater context.

With the excitement of approaching a piece I know so well from a different perspective, I of course got out my violin right away to see what would come. The result was, however, underwhelming. My fingers and brain seemed wired to return to the Joseph Joachim cadenza that I have played for years. When I forced myself to do new things, I was quickly frustrated because it was very obvious that my new material was messy, directionless, and certainly not showcasing my strengths as a violinist.

After trying a great many attempts in this vein, I felt like I was getting nowhere and that I had little focus. At this point, I decided to turn my efforts to the much more tangible goal of getting to know the methods of improvisation at the time of Mozart, the modern practices of solo musicians who play their own cadenzas today, and to form an opinion about how or if this should fit into my practice as a classical musician.

**The History of the Cadenza**

In the early 18th century, the cadenza was an "elaborate amplification of the cadence" that consisted "as a rule of arpeggios, virtuosic figuration, special effects, and so on," and from even earlier, "improvisation, especially in the sense of ornamental *passaggi* to slow movements made good sense as long as the performer was the composer or was blessed in musical taste and restraint."[27] Whereas classical musicians in the 21st century are very much reliant on the specifics of notation and mainly depend on this to gain stylistic accuracy, musicians of Mozart's day were more rooted and natural in a practice of playing which afforded them more freedom to improvise without the kind of concern for authenticity that modern musicians face. "Mozart's time was one when the composers still gave the performer license to make certain improvisatory additions to the written text."[28]

In fact, this attitude towards liberal freedom of interpretation for the musician hearkens back even further to the Baroque era when notation was more of an outline to be filled in by the performer. Most likely, Baroque musicians wouldn't have "separated it (skill to improvise) in their minds at all. It was all part of the performance."[29] The music would

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[27] David D. Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing From Its Origins to 1761, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).*

[28] Frederick Neumann, *Ornamentation and Improvisation in Mozart,* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), 179.

[29] Bailey, *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music, 21.*

include extra ornaments at the discretion of the performer, and this led to the practice in Mozart's time which resulted in the addition of "single pitches, especially appoggiaturas, or the insertion of other small ornaments—grace notes, slides, turns, trills, and the like—to larger additions of two distinct kinds: one, the florid elaboration of a written melody, the other, the filling in of empty spaces with transitional passages."[30]

One can still hear this stylistic ornamentation when listening to modern renditions of Mozart, and in fact, a variety of interpretations from a performance practice perspective to a more modern approach are available. This discourse on the differences in interpretation serve to enliven the performance aspect of Mozart's work. Pianist Robert Levin encourages creative license contending that "the survival of sample decorations does not free the lucid and articulate performer from the responsibility of finding similar solutions for pieces for which similar pedagogical evidence does not survive; nor does it bind such a performer to reproduce those sample decorations rather than inventing new ones."[31]

Levin's words are quite radical to the modern aesthetic. After Mozart's time began the era of God-composers and master conductors in which little artistic freedom was left to the musician. A new hierarchy was to blame. As the role of composer and then conductor grew, so seemingly, did the institutional ownership of this music (or of how it should be played). A mere musician (unless perhaps he or she was given special authority) would be likely to refer to these authority figures on the acceptable way to perform any given music. Levin calls out Beethoven specifically for "taking improvisation, a feature of the common dialect of the time, away from the performers and arrogating full responsibility to himself."[32] Beethoven's cadenzas were much harder than those previous, and it is this factor which started the Romantic era. Instead of granting performers the right to elaborate contextually in the music, composers would now challenge soloists to pedantic feats of technique.

**The Role of the Performer**

This issue of trust and power between composer and performer changes Western classical music as we know it. Perhaps as forms were developing and becoming more complex, trust was lost in the performer to deliver tactful elaborations. This begins a change in what improvisation and interpretation mean in the tradition, and it is a hotly debated subject still today. In his *Classical Style*, Charles Rosen very aptly explains this predicament:

> *"*Does the composer know how his piece should sound? The problem is a delicate one, and it lies at the heart of our conception of music. If music is not a mere notation on paper, then its realization in sound is crucial…a composer's idea of his work is both precise and slightly fuzzy: this is as it should be…but he performer's freedom is bound—or should be— in another way. The limits set by the composer belong to a system which is in many respects like a language: it has an order, a syntax, and a a meaning. The performer brings out that meaning, makes its significance not only clear but almost palpable*." [33]*

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[30] Neumann, *Ornamentation and Improvisation in Mozart*, 179.
[31] Levin, "Text and the Volatility of Spontaneous Performance."
[32] Levin, "Text and the Volatility of Spontaneous Performance."
[33] Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972), 195-196.

From this passage, we can see that the performer must not rely on his or her own flight of fancy necessarily, but must have a knowledge deeply rooted in the stylistic language of the piece. This was not a new concept for me, as I had been learning the ABC's of jazz and other improvisatory traditions in my research, however, I have been playing Mozart all of my life, and now it was necessary to go even more deeply into this tradition to explore how improvisation can or cannot fit.

**How-To**

When the orchestra falls silent and the conductor finally rests his or her baton, how does a soloist know what to do other than their learned-by-rote cadenza? A good place to start in preparation for this moment is to track the figured bass which provides harmonic structure. By outlining the harmonic rhythm in this way, it is possible to make a skeleton map of where to go in the cadenza. In Mozart it is simple, since modulating to outside keys is not only unnecessary but goes against the style. By sticking to the tonic, subdominant, and dominant of the home key in major and minor, one can get very far. And for the end, all that is required is a return to the tonic home key.

Once a harmonic progression is more or less established, one can pick and choose from any of Mozart's melodic figures. While it is most common to play with figures of the movement, many soloists allude to other works as well. With this borrowed theme, the soloist can then make it his or her own.

The beginning of a cadenza is often started with a call and response. The call hearkens back to the original theme, and the response echoes it in a new way and opens up the new development of the cadenza. Often, the cadenza starts in a coquettish manner, crescendos to a high point in the middle, and resolves victoriously by cuing in the orchestra. To show off virtuosity and to spice up the original themes, extended intervals, fast passagework, double-stops and other impressive techniques can be added. Some other ideas for proper stylings include:

-melodic figures should be short and varied
-sequences can be used to move harmonically and show off technical ability
-include a final turn before the ultimate tonic
-the last trill begins on the second scale degree
-minimal dissonance is preferred
-make good use of dominant seventh chords
-the length and character of the phrases can also be asymmetrical[34]

This might seem like a lot of rules to remember, however, as I learned in the free jazz jams, limitations actually help the creative process. It is also important to remember that a cadenza does not need to be too long. Many cadenzas of the romantic concerti are quite extensive, but in Mozart's time, a cadenza probably would not have extended beyond 50 measures. A good rule is to keep things simple. As Neumann says, "the peril of *too much* harbors an actual and a potential danger…overblown concerto cadenzas that are stylistic misfits" serve as annoyances to the listener.[35]

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[34] Samuel Karafolis, "The Composition and Performance Practice of the Cadenza in the Classical Era," in *McNair Scholars Research Journal*, Vol. 2, Issue 1, Article 12, 2010.
[35] Neumann, *Ornamentation and Improvisation in Mozart*, 179.

**My Progress**

Ultimately, the most important aspect to be retained when it comes to the cadenza in Mozart's time is the "sense of drama."[36] The goal is to charm the listener, show some inventiveness, and impress with a few technical highlights. Levin, who explores Mozart by way of his own cadenzas shares his understanding of the form as a major creative process:

> "It narrows to the vanishing point the distinction between spontaneous invention and what is on the page, because the act of improvisation makes one aware at every point that there is always a multitude of possibilities from which to choose…the piece could go in a different direction from the one on the page—the one we know, the one we may have heard hundreds of times—is as crucial, in my view, as it is in the theater…If this is missing from music, then it is merely gymnastics with the affectation of emotional content."[37]

While my understanding of the ingredients of a cadenza grew, I still struggled with the challenge of making something interesting in the moment. I would play around with themes in simple harmonies, but I never felt like I was achieving the kind of brilliance or seamlessness that would be required to supersede my playing of the Joseph Joachim cadenza which I have played for many years. I quickly became frustrated with this task, but found that listening to others play cadenzas and even transcribing these cadenzas helped in my effort to be inspired to dig deeper into the practice. I also put the skills I had used such as listening to different Mozart concerti featuring both Mozart's original piano cadenzas. When it came to working out a cadenza or ideas for a cadenza, this listening and transcribing really helped to get new musical ideas.

In the end, I am very happy to understand the inner workings of a cadenza and to theoretically have the tools to put one together. Sketching out some ideas did help the process, however, when it was up to me to improvise on the fly, I found that I am still very far away from having this ability in a performance situation. I do feel inspired to keep experimenting, but I will keep playing the Joachim cadenza (at least for auditions) in the near future.

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[36] Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*, 197.

[37] Levin, *Contemporary Music Review.*

## FINDINGS

### Playing Nicely with Others

Since embarking on this research, I have had various opportunities to work with different musicians and to improvise. It is always an eye and ear opening experience to try making new music with new friends, and I have learned a lot in every setting, be it an informal jam or a concert. The most rewarding part of this research has been to work with others and share in energy, ideas, and knowledge while we forge a journey of our own.

At first, stepping into jam sessions was very uncomfortable for me. I do not like to go into any musical situation unprepared, and as a classical musician, that means having a good understanding of the notes, rhythms, style, and context of the music. In a jam session, these factors are impossible to predict, however, I learned that that does not mean I am unprepared. My research has taught me to stand behind and have confidence in all of my training and experiences. With this attitude, jam sessions became a space where I could bring all my abilities and create, rather than show up and have nagging criticisms in the back of my head.

Getting rid of that criticism in my head not only made for an enjoyable experience, but helped me to be more aware and reactive to what was going on around me. On the recordings, I can hear that my sound opened up, I played more freely, and I disturbed the music much less. In some early jam sessions, a few nice minutes of music would happen, and then I would make a mistake, stop, and feel the need to explain and to shame myself. Over the months, though, I began to let these mistakes slide until they just did not register as mistakes. If something unexpected happened (whether I played something unintentionally or someone else did) this was just new material to work with or a funny moment that adds a kind of side story to the overall experience.

I have noticed a few consistencies when playing with others. One is that I need to remember to allow space to be a part of the music. I am constantly thinking of what to add or try or what I need to do to support another player, but often giving them a little space is a great way to support them. Space is also important in my own solos. This kind of patient searching seems to be at odds with something like on-the-spot creation, but it is actually what makes it possible. When my mind is too active and always searching for something new, there is no time for a release of the tension or a feeling of stability. I often hear, on listening back to my jams, that if something is working, I can let it work longer and give it time to develop.

### Learning by Performing

Two contrasting concerts which included improvisation provided much information on performing improvised music. The first consisted of a four-piece band with some music that was not through-composed and left a lot of room for solo improvisation. The group rehearsed quite a bit, and I had a lot of chances to try new ideas, record, and to get comfortable with the other players. As in the phenomenon that Berliner describes, we came together in a way that enabled freedom in the music: “Within their heightened state of empathy, improvisers not only respond supportively to their cohorts, they also stimulate one another’s conception of new ideas that grow directly out of the group’s unique conversational interplay.”[38]

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[38] Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation,* 390.

By the performance, I knew I was ready to go, but unlike a symphonic or classical solo concert, there was a definite excitement in the air before we began to play, because we did not know what exactly would happen. We had invested so much into the music and had so many ideas in the past weeks, but we could not say for sure what was about to transpire in concert. I was very energized by this and was very happy with the final result. (See Audio 10 and Audio 11 for nearly finished preparation of these pieces.)

In the second of my improvisational performances, I played in a duo with a jazz bassist at school. He was a part of the earlier band, so we had an idea for each other's playing, but the parameters in this situation were quite different than before. The goal was to play using drones and loops, not having too much that was rhythmic or necessarily harmonic. We had two fairly brief rehearsals which went well. In these, we had the chance to try out a few ideas, seeing what worked and what did not. (see Audio 12). The goal was to prepare about fifteen minutes of music, so this pair of hour-long rehearsals gave us a chance to explore the possibilities.

In the concert, we consciously decided to leave everything to chance: We did not do a sound check in the space, we did not have any written guidance, and we only had vague notions of two major ideas we wanted to convey. Honestly, this did not feel like adequate preparation, but I thought, perhaps that this is in the spirit of improvisation (to leave a lot up to chance), so I was curious to see what would happen. Unfortunately, I wasn't happy with the result. I sounded hesitant, unsettled, and my ideas were a bit unfocused. In the performance, I was doing less creating than trying to figure out what to do next. It didn't feel comfortable or free.

I do think that an improvisatory performance can be comfortable and successful without a lot of preparation, but I also know that I need more experience before that is possible. When working with other people, I think that minimal rehearsal time can be dangerous when no solid forms or written material are a part of the performance. This duo could have worked better if we knew each other's playing so well that we could sync our playing without stress or hesitation.

**Regaining Musical Appreciation**

For musicians and audience alike, a constant danger in classical music is to become too familiar with regular patterns of critique and constant canonized repertoire. It is so easy in this genre to become bogged down with technical minutiae and to become overworked and even apathetic due to all this stress. When we are forced into an improvisatory situation, we are reawakened to what is interesting in the music. We must become engaged and fully participatory. With ample preparation or not enough, it is impossible to exclude the notion of communication.

When it comes to playing with others, I have also learned that everyone has something unique and special to offer. We all have particular strengths and weaknesses. Since classical music seems to always hold a hierarchical structure, this richness in variety of skill and talent levels often gets boiled down to a construct of which person is better than another. This kind of direct comparison that we often find in classical music leads to much self-judgement and self-analysis that is not true, objective, or helpful.

While jamming from others, it was clear to see that I had much to learn from my colleagues and that they, in turn, had much to learn from me. We have a myriad of different skill sets and experiences in which to experiment, take joy in, and share. I have learned this

open-mindedness from my improvisation friends, and it is a lesson I will forever cherish. Now in orchestral, chamber music, and even when I'm alone in the practice room, my problem solving is more humane, more effective, and more creative.

## On Recording

The feeling of finite time and place of a performance greatly impacts the music. In group improvisation, this is a particularly obvious observance, as the factors of each musician's day will surely affect their mood, interest, patience, inspiration, and so on. I also noticed this difference in my own individual playing, as I was recording and journaling more and more both in practice and performance settings. What I noticed most was that days when I had a mixture of being calm and being inspired, my playing felt more natural and sounded more musical.

Recording for me is often a stressful process. It requires simultaneous focus and flow to perform well, while also requiring an often uncomfortable kind of self-awareness in the process of listening back. It also removes the performer from the audience and from a fixed moment in time. For instance, if a recording I am playing is going particularly well, I sometimes cannot help but have the thought pop in my head to wonder if this is "the take" or not. This kind of thinking pulls me away from the music and is a distraction. Practice in jam sessions, however, has helped to quiet this inner judge. Since I am constantly very aware and also must be accepting of my playing in this setting, I have found that that is a transferable skill into the recording context, and for many orchestra-hopeful musicians, this could also be helpful in audition settings which function in a similar way in that they are largely removed from an actual performance context.

I have also become more aware of these factors as a listener. This new understanding enriches both my experience in a live concert and while listening to a recording. In a live setting, I am more conscious of the overall energy and how a performer manipulates and synthesizes this. Since recordings can be either taken live or crafted in a studio, different samples have very different qualities to offer.

While a recording of an improvisation is admittedly removed from its original atmosphere and, therefore, perhaps even energy, some argue that it loses its substance. I would argue that the practice of listening to improvisation not only can be inspiring and a worthy endeavor in its own right as a way to enjoy music, but can also further develop this as a craft. Perhaps, as notation has tried to make it possible for classical musicians to recreate and develop our musical history, these recordings will can help us further that effort in a new way.

## On Notation

Goethe once said "music is liquid architecture."[39] According to Couperin, "What we write is different than what we play."[40] Concert pianist and musicologist David

[39] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Johann Peter Eckermann and Frederic Jacob Soret, *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann and Soret*, 1850 (London: Smith, Elder).
[40] Bailey, *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music.*

Dolan claims that "the text is only a kind of draft."[41] Musician and writer Bailey believes "a musician is the embodiment of music." And composer and scholar George Lewis states that "notions of personhood are transmitted via sounds, and sounds become signs for deeper levels of meaning beyond pitches and intervals."[42]

Music has infinite definitions. The illusion black dots on a page can be so limited and so limiting. It is so easy to get stuck in thinking, as a classical musician that our job is to interpret notes on a page when it is really our responsibility to bring life to sound. What seems so firm and tangible on paper results in a highly abstract art form: a vibration which soon fades from our senses, remaining only in memory.

**Learning Efficiently and Organically**

Even though I developed as a young musician within the Suzuki method, which is mainly focused on technique and ear-training in the early years, I still find that the way I conceptualize music is dominated by notation. When I hear a rhythm and am told to repeat it, I often envision bar lines and divisions. I also fall into the trap of equating dynamic markings with characteristics or colors of music which may not actually be my true intention or that of the composer. Because I see the same notations day after day (and have for many years), I am perhaps too quick to react. This can result in a shallow understanding of the meaning behind the notes unless I make sure to take the time to really consider a variety of factors which the traditional form of notation is not able to convey.

Another problem is that not all music is treated equally by notation. For example, Mahler's music contains many very explicit instructions, whereas early music such as that of J.S. Bach, does not contain a lot of instruction. Of course, the notes, rhythms, and tempo markings are present in Bach's music, but as far as articulation, dynamics, and style, a performer is responsible to make his or her own decisions. After my experience playing in improvisatory settings, I have come to see how important it is to develop an innate sense of style in whatever music I play.

In order to do this, incessant listening on a deep level is necessary and much more efficient than relying on a written guide. For instance, if I have a question about a certain aspect of one of my colleague's playing, I will simply ask him or her to play it for me until I understand the idea. I do not have that person write down what it is they want. That would be not only a huge waste of time but also a much more complicated process for me to interpret.

**A Return to Aural Roots**

Even the classical tradition is rooted in a history that relies much less on notation than we do today. Memorized dances and elaboration on themes in the early sixteenth century provided a foundation for early harmonies and ornamentation of what would eventually lead to the Western classical tradition. A violinist's job then was not to interpret from a composer's hand what to play, but to have a toolbox of playful passages and figures, echoes, accents, variations, and imitations. A famous violinist of the 17th century even, Bocan, could not read music, but instead used memory and aural training.[43]

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[41] Dolan, "Bringing Together the Instinct and the Flow."
[42] Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives."
[43] Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing From Its Origins in 1761.*

When I was a young violinist, I remember the sensation and excitement of aural learning. When I could finally start a new piece, I already knew it inside and out. My fingers, gaining more and more familiarity with the instrument, would follow my mind, as the music was firmly rooted there. Admittedly, it sometimes took me longer to learn this way (but this point must also include the fact that I was very young and still learning the basics of technique which demanded a slower process in which to learn new pieces), however, the feeling of the music living inside me from the moment I play a piece is one that I do not often experience today.

As I grew older, busier, and more advanced, I adopted a different way to approach a new piece. I would often page through the music to form a practice plan to determine the difficult technical passages, how dense the score is, rhythmic challenges, and what is simple or difficult to drill. This makes the work quick and efficient. However, with this method, the presentation of a piece as notation can become uninspiring, tiresome, and sometimes intimidating. Instead of being surprised by or anticipating a passage for its brilliance or beauty, this process makes it more likely for me to merely recognize mostly aspects that are difficult or time-consuming. Over the course of many years of this approach to music, I can see that my original excitement for a piece is nothing compared to when I was young and learning in a more aural method.

**Orchestra from a New Perspective**

Removal from notation is also beneficial in an orchestral setting. When I was in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Yo-Yo Ma was our mentor, and he suggested that to really learn a piece—even an orchestral piece—the music had to live inside of us. In his words, we had to "own every part of the music." He suggested that we take the year to memorize Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony No. 6 (Opus 68) and to play it without a conductor. At his proposal, the seventy or so young professionals in the orchestra had a variety of reactions. We started with the basic questions: Has this ever been done? Is it possible? Will we fall apart? How do we turn the process of learning a symphony on its head?

The process was long. Time and discipline was required to memorize the tricky passagework of our individual parts. Then it took many rehearsals in different small formations of instruments as well as score study to memorize the inner workings of all the voices. From this, we learned to appreciate the different roles of different instruments and also Beethoven's genius for orchestration and development. I felt very lucky, for instance, to be a part of the first violin section as opposed to the seconds, who had many intricate inner voice parts which were more challenging to fit together and memorize than the main melodies.

This project culminated in a final concert in which we played with music stands lowered (some not even bothering to open the score) and without a conductor. I remember the energy in the air, and the excitement to find out what would happen. This was not a regular orchestra concert where the performers play from A to B. This was scary, but with our preparation and depth of knowledge for the music, we were able to have a deep trust in our own abilities as individuals and to trust each other. Instead of staring into our music, we could pay more attention and react to each other. There was no need for a conductor, and once our knowledge of the score was adequate, playing without one was no challenge at all. The music came alive, reactive, and exuberant.

Though I try to retain this sense of really owning the music that I play, it can be very challenging, especially in the orchestra. I am very thankful for my research into

improvisation in these last two years for opening up this question and feeling of ownership of music in a new way, and of reexamining my relationship and ability to play music removed from notation. Bringing out the music as something living and breathing for the audience is my goal as a musician, and getting mired down in ink blotches does not help me to achieve success. I believe if more classical orchestral musicians also examined this aspect of playing, the music, attitudes, and success of reaching the audience in a concert would improve.

Liberation from notation is not only a practice for improvisers. Much of the foundation of our formal training as classical musicians is memorizing music, or more aptly put, "playing by heart." Why should orchestral repertoire be any different? My studies in improvisation have shown me more clearly what it is to play by heart and to know a piece or a concept or to have the conviction to extemporize in the present moment. As David Dolan laments, many classical musicians are "hiding behind the correct notes - but you, as a personality who should be entering into the spirit of the text, are not there."[44] The engagement of the spirit of the music is essential and the performer must traverse the space between notation and the imaginative performance to complete the artistic process.

## Breaking out from Restraint

Having spent most of childhood and adult life in pursuit of music and improving my musical skills, I am at the point where I need to move beyond excessive drilling and technique work in order to achieve contentment. While keeping my technique maintained, the next step is to free myself from the fears I have created when it comes to making music. In this way, my goal is to stop tying the practice of performance to specific expectations such as playing "perfectly" or winning a job and rather to shift my intention from recreating someone else's accepted version of certain music to inventing my own, even if I am playing a piece written three hundred years ago.

With the institutionalization of classical music came not only heightened skill levels and expectations, but the narrowing of what we consider these to be. In an effort to learn, students must gain an understanding of how others may play a piece or approach a problem, however, when we do this for years and years, the notion becomes ingrained that we do not own the music, but that it is an unreachable goal. This inevitably leads not only to unrealistic expectations but also to disappointment and the feeling of being stuck. Technique is the main focus to reach this impossible goal, but what happens when we are nearing our peak in this one aspect of our playing yet still have so far to grow in other ways? In the same way, why are orchestras and institutions of classical music in general revered almost as mere artifacts rather than a relevant part of who we are now as a culture?

I believe we can approach these two problems from the same starting point. The role of classical music today is to be clean, safe, and un-revelatory. What falls under the umbrella of classical music is by and large politically correct, non-threatening, and one could argue, very boring. The dull state of classical music is not the fault of the music itself but

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[44] Jessica Duschen, Interview with David Dolan, "Taking the Risk and Enjoying It," in *Classical Piano,* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing).

rather the smooth edges that we have created for it. We have removed the rawness, cut the risk, and separated it from the realm of the everyday person.

"The element of risk-taking, present in any extemporized situation, is a strong stimulant to active listening vital in order for a state of flow to exist and for an interactive chain of communication to work successfully." [45]What classical musicians can learn from traditions which still have improvisation intact is that a sense of anticipation, of relevance to a given time and moment, and of true freedom of expression are all necessary components of a musical dialogue. Our removal from this kind of musical experience robs us of a true voice.

**Embracing the Questions**

As Dolan states, this "fight against non-spontaneity is a fight against fear." Classical musicians are entertainers and must consider the value of a performance without risks. I argue that one of the best aspects of a live orchestra concert is that the audience is coming to see a feat close to the impossible. The difficulty of the notes themselves, of playing in a massive group, and of simply making vibrations which will literally shake some tiny bones in the ear and make the audience feel something are all miraculous aspects of a live concert. While we may like to feel on stage as if all the factors are accounted for and to feel very safe, the art of making music has a lot of other vital factors.

In improvisation where musicians are more invested in free expression shared in a specific moment in time (compared with the often replicatory process of performing a symphony), the risk is obvious and valuable. It gives meaning to the performance. Classical musicians should also embrace the fact that our music is, indeed, malleable and does belong to us uniquely and individually, not to the composer, the tradition, or the establishment.

Bailey writes that the current state of classical music education seems to "create an unquestioning attitude towards music which will hinder the ability to improvise,"[46] but I argue that this attitude also makes impossible the ability to achieve true musicality. If we want classical music to serve as a relevant dialogue in our society, we have to open up the methods in which we teach and the styles in which we play. If we want audience members to show up for more than superficial perfection, we must re-enliven the music with our own intentions, taking risks with creativity, skill, and courage.

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[45] Dolan, "Back to the Future: Towards the Revival of Extemporisation in Classical Music Performance," 95.

[46] Bailey, *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music.*

## RESULTS

In Western classical pedagogy, flawless replication is so often the ultimate goal, but what if this tradition could learn from the efficacy and necessity of expression present in so many other traditions? What if instead of borrowing from influences of the past or feigning the trends of other traditions today, we fully acknowledged them as part of an inclusive musical dialogue? The Western classical tradition seems so far removed and, in fact, separates itself from relevant traditions from which it actually borrows. Scholar and composer George Lewis notes: "The fact that these influences often remain unacknowledged and subterranean, even within experimental music, signals their status as deriving from an 'other' culture and the reluctance of the postmodern sphere of legitimate music to admit its indebtedness to the 'other.'"[47] (Lewis 2002)

If we are to communicate vibrantly, meaningfully to a diverse modern audience, we must reckon with the fact that we are playing Western classical music in a modern era. This means that we must acknowledge the world around us. I believe that my research shows that a resistance to this outside world of classical music works counter to the form and to students of it.

What if included in Western classical pedagogy was an attention to the "third ear" which would help us to accept our process and to hear more and to more quickly take in information which is not critical and condensing, but which expands our inspiration and our love of music? What if we were trained to play from a level of consciousness somewhat removed from the purely rational? What if we weren't afraid to take risks? What if in classical music, we were not afraid to spiritualize our practice and to own the music we play, removing it from a self-appointed authority which is actually arbitrary or counter to the point of art?

While my research has opened up more questions of the agency of the performer and of music, I have found some answers to my initial questions.

1. My musical practice is made effective by a tolerant and open-minded approach to problem solving and to accepting what I hear.
2. To find sources of inspiration and creativity, I must seek a greater dialogue and family of music.
3. Being tolerant of my mistakes not only helps me to better address them, but also enhances my ability to create and collaborate.
4. Embracing new and sometimes uncomfortable contexts of music help to expand my own understanding and enlarges my agency as an artist.
5. As an artist, I cannot gain validation by the approval of others, but by furthering my perspective, and growing into an agency of positive change in many contexts.

[47] Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives."

## CONCLUSION

The more I learn about myself, music, and how I can relate to the world, the more I see winning an orchestra job not as a destination but as one path to fulfilment out of many. Classical music can be a relevant and impactful part of society, but so often it is not. To work and toil for the means of being a part of a group with little impact would not be a satisfactory career path or destination. Before I started these two years of research, I very much wanted a place in an orchestra to call my own. Now, however, I see that my goals have expanded, and if in the future, I find myself in an orchestra, it will be as a different musician than I was before.

Whereas in the past I would have viewed improvisation as tangential to my musical abilities, I now realize it is a critical part of my musicianship. My research has inspired me to reach out into worlds new to me for greater knowledge on how to expand my vocabulary in this way. I would love, for instance to study for a short time with a kamancheh teacher or a traditional Indian violinist. The aural method of learning and playing in these traditions fascinates me and would provide a lot of inspiration and insight into what music means, what sound means, and what is a composition.

This is not to say that I have the desire to become a musician equally skilled in a different genre or instrument, but that I want to find new pathways for inspiration as a musician and to find a more effective form of dialogue. “If we wish to save our musical culture for future generations, we need to communicate to audiences a sense of immediacy in live performances.”[48] Through this research, I realize that this is my aim.

[48] Levin, “Text and the Volatility of Spontaneous Performance.”

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