


reviews
VIOLIN**'Scales' Two, Three and Four Octave for Violin****Antoni Cofalik,**Published by PWM edition 2012 :PWM11287010
£14.95

What, another scale book?

Those of you who followed with enthusiasm the recent lively correspondence over Flesch vs. Guilamian scale fingerings will be salivating at the thought of more of the same.

However, this edition of scales by Antoni Cofalik offers a rather different product, and therefore an alternative approach in reviewing. Postpone the Gladiatorial ...

Whilst there are indeed some fingerings which will cause gnashing of teeth, this volume does not stray too far from Flesch's principals.

Good points first: My pupils liked the larger print utilized for the two octave scales. They also appreciated the five variations above each of the two octave scales, although for my liking I would prefer these printed just once, and the student reminded (as in the introduction) of the need to practice from memory as quickly as possible. If the groove of monotony be the biggest foe of scale practice, why add more visual repetition on the page?

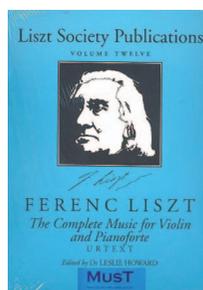
On the same issue later on in the book, the repeated variations become page consuming, without any relief: of the two pages allotted to each scale, half the page is dedicated to the same variants: It's a scale book, not Sevcik!

Some of the fingerings I found enlightening. The four octave fingerings in particular have a flow, and as a teacher I appreciated the reminder in the introduction to keep fingers low through shifts when performing double stopped scales.

Whilst well printed, I feel this volume falls well short of Carl Flesch's Das Skalensystem – confession: I love it – or

the recent Mark Knight editions. That said, it provides a good bridging option for pupils who, once engaged seriously in the early part of the book, will want to explore the more dexterously demanding areas of the violin.

Reservations: Both the aforementioned Flesch's Das Skalensystem and Mark Knight editions have clear and concise introductions, whereas I found the English translation in this volume quite frankly baffling. Example: "Chromatic scales and those in harmonics, as optional, have been written after double stopped scales. If a player selects the chromatic scale they should place it as the last way, i.e. before the passages, and if harmonics – at the end, so after the double stops." A later edition would do well to address this particular point. GWILYM HOOSON 2013

**The Complete Music for Violin and Pianoforte****Ferenc Liszt**The Hardie Press (www.hardiepress.co.uk)
£59.95, Grade 3 to professional

This 200-page compendium of original music for violin and piano is Volume Twelve in the Liszt Society Publications.

Edited by the president of the society, Dr. Leslie Howard (described by one critic as 'the finest living exponent of Liszt'), it marks the largest collaborative venture ever undertaken by both the Society and the Hardie Press.

There is a scholarly critique and a comprehensive appreciation of each piece in the opening pages of the piano part. Sources and supplementary sources are

compared and notes/variations carefully and usefully listed.

In the words of Dr. Howard, 'These works traverse Liszt's entire composing life, encompassing great virtuoso concert pieces and wonderfully intimate miniatures.'

The typically Lisztian virtue of revisiting previous works in other guises is manifest in the way he transfigures these pieces of chamber music, never directly transcribing but using his original ideas from songs and piano works to develop a different point of view in this new medium.

Friendships during these compositional years with distinguished performers such as Charles-Philippe Lafont, Joseph Joachim, and Ede Remenyi furthered the composer's appreciation of idiomatic violinistic language. But overall it is his highly individual and romantic Hungarian manner and a keen ability to share both virtuosity and grand gesture between the performers that marks each work with such distinction.

The volume opens with Zwei Walzer (S126b), charmingly guileful accounts in A major, written as part of a collaborative collection by the eleven year old musician.

The following fourteen works : Duo (S127), Grand Duo concertant (S128), Rapsodie hongroise X11 (S379a), Die drei Zigeuner (S383), La notte (S377a), Benedictus und Offertorium (S381) [for violin and pianoforte], Offertorium und Benedictus (S678) [for violin and organ or harmonium], Epithalam (S129), Walther von der Vogelweide (S345/3a) [for tenor and piano with violin obbligato]*, Premiere Elegie (S130ter) [with harmonium or organ ad lib], Zweite Elegie (S131bis) [with organ or harmonium ad lib]**, Romance Oubliee (S132ter), Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth (S382bis)*, and La lugubre gondola (S134bis) seldom have fingering or bowing indications (long slurs are used to impose a sense of musical line), but there have been useful contributions in this respect from Ania Safonova (associate concert master of the orchestra of the Royal Opera House) and Benjamin

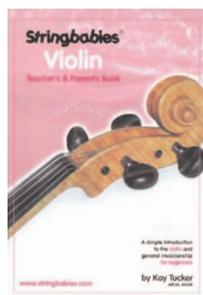
Nabarro (Internationally renowned first violinist of ensemble 360).

Both Rachel Barton Pine and Barnabas Keleman contributed helpful observations about the pieces, and made fine recordings of many of the works, especially the Duo (S127).

This would seem a worthwhile purchase, especially for aficionados of Liszt, but also for those of you who wish to explore further styles and incorporate greater flexibility in your own and your pupils' expanding repertoire.

*First publication **First complete publication

BRIGID KIRKLAND-WILSON



Stringbabies Violin

Kay Tucker

www.stringbabies.com

Pupils book with CD £12

Teacher and Parents book £15

Within her latest edition of Stringbabies, Kay has developed her initial work based on the expectation that reading and composition is introduced alongside the earliest experience of creating string sounds.

It is aimed initially for beginner pupils from the age of 3 years, in an updated edition to include CD. With great relevance for teaching of reading generally, or to support remedial issues, the latest edition was published in February 2013 as the result of a request from Surrey Arts. As the National Plan for Music emerges to provide for the youngest pupils from Yr 1, Kay's system developed through her teaching over the last 8 years seems very relevant. In fact as music services and private teachers

explore the strategies available for this age group, the framework is being extended and trialed in versions for recorder and very soon the flute under the collective title of Musicbabies.

In her forward, Pat Legg describes the approach as 'an educationally well thought out and fun way of teaching little ones which systematically gives them the skills they need to read music and become musicians'. She also comments on the success Kay has had with teaching this method and how parents and pupils can 'enjoy the journey of discovery and see how the reading of music opens up so many musical delights'.

Using experts for each instrument the framework for notation recognition uses a simple system of magnetic symbols to match open strings or starting sounds for each instrument by shape. This enables pupils to identify and control the choice of sounds from the very beginning. It is expected that the pupil becomes a composer alongside being a reader and player. It is not a chore but a creative discovery.

Rhythms are taught initially using Ta, Te Te, Ta- a extending to Ti-ka Ti-ka, Te-ti-ka and Ti-ri-li is introduced for compound time.

Using the original symbols the range is then extended up each string through simple progressive tunes. The notation is transferred on to 2 and then 3 line staves which are then extended to the conventional 5 lines as the understanding develops; (harder for the teacher than the pupil!) By the end of the book notated tunes on 5 lines covering 3 finger patterns on each string have been secured and a framework for G, D and A majors covered.

There are some nicely spaced blank user friendly staves in the pupils book for original compositions and explorations with newly discovered pitches and rhythms.

The memorable tunes; a mixture of original favourites such as Kippers and Custard and Hello song are introduced

by singing and are reinforced by the Kodaly principles of hand signals. Jimmy Giraffe takes us effortlessly to 6/8.

NINA PAKENHAM

CELLO

Stringbabies Cello

Kay Tucker

www.stringbabies.com Pupils book with CD £12

Teacher and Parents book £15

The new Stringbabies 'cello pupil's workbook and parent's/teacher's book are simple to follow and well laid out. They feature an eye catching cover design which replaces the previous version. The new 'cello pupil's workbook also comes with a CD of piano accompaniments which features both practice and performance tracks. Each piece in the pupil's workbook is presented in large print using the unique Stringbabies notation system. It is clear, easy to follow and very accessible for young children. Each piece builds on skills already learned, and the book takes a child from using open strings to the beginnings of fourth position. Rhythms and bowing are also addressed, and children are encouraged to write their own pieces.

While this book is aimed at the younger child, the Stringbabies system can also be used to help those with learning challenges, dyslexia and also adults who are new to reading music and learning an instrument.

Stringbabies aims to give a simple and clear introduction to the cello and general musicianship and achieves just that. It gives an effective and secure framework within which to work, and the pieces can be supplemented with other beginner repertoire. Having used this system with pupils for 6 years, the benefits are clear. Pupils understand what they are doing and why they are doing it which gives them confidence. They learn while having fun and in a natural way. ALLYXA RUBY


reviews
ENSEMBLE**Tango Trio**

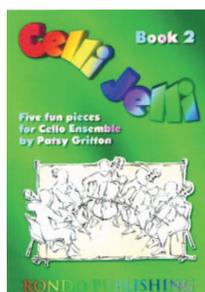
Carlos Gardel, arr. Diego Collatti
Violin (flute), Cello and Piano
 Universal, £15.50 (World Music series)
 Advanced

Gardel is a seminal name in the composition of tangos, and here we have some of his most popular examples arranged by the Argentinean composer and pianist Diego Collatti. Rhythmic and other technical challenges (twos against threes, pizzicato, harmonics, a wide range across the stringed instruments, octaves, triplets in 6ths) appear on every page – but so rewarding for a senior group. Good festival material! Piano parts are manageable for a decent second instrument pianist. Spacious, generous printing. It's terrific to be able to access this specialist world and this is a good buy. ANNE INGLIS

Celli Jelli**Book 2**

5 Fun Pieces for Cello Ensemble
Patsy Gritton
 Rondo
 £15.50
 Approx. Grades: 5-7+

Here are five pieces for a 4-5 cello ensemble. This is music with a swing and contains various jazz influences. The top two parts are difficult (Grade 7 would be the minimum) and the rest of the ensemble requires experienced practitioners with decent reading skills. In the first piece Slinky Black Cat there are several 'cat' instructions, eg "they start



chasing each other' or 'Ebony stalks along looking for some fun'. Not quite sure that these slightly juvenile instructions lie comfortably with the difficulty of the music. Cellos 1 and 2 have a mass of technical challenges. Sometimes these are echoed in the other parts, though generally cellos 4/5 have a more straightforward rhythmic contribution. Other pieces carry titles such as La Chasse in four parts (cello 5 has a break in a couple of these), Wiggle Woggle Rag, and Rumbananas. This is music that has been well thought out to test areas of technique with good tunes. Tricky, though. Buy if you have a bagful of able players. ANNE INGLIS

Grooves for Strings

Jürgen Bröhl
1-2 Violins and Piano
 MP3 files to download
 Doblinger
 £16.95
 Approx. Grade: 5+

How many of us feel the gap between the world of classical music and another musical world inhabited by our students in their spare time? Jürgen Bröhl tries to address this divide in this volume: the aim is to provide interesting little encore and concert pieces without the need for percussion of electric guitar to spice up the offerings.

In order to achieve this, Bröhl provides plenty of rather interesting duetting. In Ska-Race the rhythm in both parts is identical. In Little Tricky groove the parts are independent with

the second part harder to maintain. In Sleepy Pavane (C minor) the parts sit happily together, and there's a snappy interchange of time signatures in Viva-Switch. Fun. ANNE INGLIS

60 Easy Duets of Famous Songs and Tunes from Around the World - Violin edition

Arr. H.W Ledger
 Publisher: String Tracks
 Standard: Grade 0-1

This is a fabulous collection of short pieces that are particularly useful with very young pupils. Rather than focussing on Nursery Rhymes, as many collections do, this collection contains a wide range of traditional tunes including 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor', 'Oh Susannah', 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Cockles and Mussels'.

Most of the arrangements are only 3-4 lines long, staying in G, D and A majors, with only a few straying into C major. However, by keeping the notes easy and using well-known tunes it is a perfect way to introduce technical concepts early on, including more complex dotted rhythms and different playing styles, such as legato for "My bonnie lies over the ocean" or a quick staccato for "Campdown Races".

The duets are well crafted with both parts equally easy to play so that pupils can play together. The harmonies have also been well chosen to add real depth to the melodies.

One of the greatest strengths of this collection is the sheer number of melodies to choose from. It makes it a useful book to dip into when you want to re-enthuse younger players, finding a tune they know for some fun after a particularly hard challenge has been overcome. They can quickly master pieces and perform them to family and friends at home for sing-alongs. The brevity of the pieces also makes it useful as enjoyable end-of-lesson sight-reading, using the duet part to keep the pupil going. ANNA-MARIA LUTON.