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Photo on the e-journal's front cover –	
<u>Top:</u> <i>FesTaRi-2014 Rīga</i> (Piano trio: <i>J.Kimanen, P.Taniloo, G.Melbārde</i>); Masterclass by prof. A. Liepiņš Summer Master classes-2014 for young chamber musicians Dobeles: music making at the evening campfire After concert „For friends – from friends” at Birini Castle (international trio: <i>Evelīna, Emīlija/Rīga; Helis/Tartu</i>)	
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PROLOGUE

Dear colleagues!

We would like to dedicate this 9th issue to all teachers of chamber music, their students and friends! We are very grateful to our excellent “*Chamber Ensemble of 9th issue*” who was so kind giving again unselfish generous *performance!*

Since the last issue was published, it has been an eventful time: all kinds of festivals, competitions, master classes for teachers and young people, summer camps have been organised. All of them have provoked deliberations and discussions among both teachers and students of what exactly is “chamber music” and how it differs from the widespread term “collective musicianship”. Opinions are diverse.

In theory – collective is formed by and operates under the guidance of a conductor or an artistic manager who is not usually “the voice of the choir” himself. The musicians in these groups do not need their own personal initiative or their own ideas. The groups (orchestra, choir) that are managed by the conductor can achieve a very high artistic level. There is no room for any “self-activity”. There are people with such character traits who like to be managed.

However, sometimes the word “self-activity” can bring a completely different meaning when talking about the chamber music. This becomes particularly important if we expect that every member of the ensemble will come forward with their own initiatives. It is not only about the professional side of the performance. Chamber ensembles are small, mobile and self-sufficient units. Their musical life is not needed at a huge concert hall or the audience of thousands. They themselves choose (or reject) both their fellow members and the music they want to perform (the teacher plays only the role of an advisor). In chamber ensemble musicians and their music are managed by the performers themselves. Performing all they can see each other's eyes and *really* hear each other... It is a completely different level of communication and friendship relations between personalities.

"Symphonic music often sounds better than it actually is; chamber music is always better than it sometimes sounds".

I like to rephrase this way the ironic expression of the well-known music critic E. Hanslick (*p.38). I propose to continue this discussion and share the views in the pages of our journal!

Translated by *Anna Šuvajeva*



Sincerely,
your *Gunta*

We will make it – together with friends!

REVIEW, IDEAS, COMMENTS



Ekaterina Suvorova (1968), harpist, graduated from music school E.Dārziņa harp class by V.Katchalova (1987). 1992, graduating Dz. Brazhe harp class obtained bachelor's degree in Latvian Academy of Music. Participated in various projects with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, the Latvian National Opera Orchestra, with the choir "Kamer ...", Liepaja Symphony Orchestra, Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra, etc. 2008, graduating prof. Dz. Brazhe harp class in Latvian Academy of Music, received a master's degree in music. Works at JMR1.MS, A.Dombrovska MS, Latvian Academy of Music. Gives a lot of concerts both solo and chamber ensembles.

Winter master classes for chamber music teachers, which have become a tradition, have passed. This time (January 2015) we had the great opportunity to learn from exceptional musicians and teachers, like pianist professor **Normunds Vīksne**, violinist **Anna Spalviņa**, flutist **Dace Bičkovska** and cellist **Mārcis Kuplais**.

The profession of musician includes learn through all the lifetime. And if we stop, we degrade. Therefore any workshop is a great opportunity to acquire new skills, even if we talk about seemingly well-known things. A few simple truths, told a bit differently, reveals to us in completely different aspect, our eyes become open to something new...

I try to participate in various master-classes, whenever I can, as often as possible. It might seem – what is the connection between themes, such as “*Original repertoire for four-handed piano duets*” or “*The different roles of cellist*”, with harp playing, which is what I teach? It turns out – very direct! The making of phrase, form, style, etc., - and those are things common to all musicians. Besides that, during the lecture of Normunds Vīksne, I received sheet music for duets, which I will be able to arrange for my students. It is always useful to extend your library! As we know, it is very important in chamber music to select participants of the ensemble wisely, so that they are colleagues, accomplices, and not just a bunch of leaders. That (and not only that) was told in an interesting manner by Dace Bičkovska: the division of roles in the ensemble; how to work to improve intonation. Harp players do not have such problem as intonation, but the impact on the quality of music and ensemble by personal qualities of the participants – definitely!

A few words on the time selected for the Winter master-classes. It is great that they take time right after Christmas holidays. December has past with its Christmas celebration and the marathon of tests, but still there are a few days left off. That is just the right time to acquire new knowledge for ourselves and our students!

(Translated by Lauris Melbārdis)

AN ARTISTIC PORTRAIT

JUNIO KIMANEN, pianist. Studied the piano at the Sibelius Academy, received his diploma in spring 1996 with excellent credit. Junio has completed his studies in Paris under Konstantin Bogino in 1991-95. Junio Kimanen has performed both as a soloist and a chamber musician in Finland and abroad, as well as a part of a piano duo with Konstantin Bogino. He has appeared at several festivals playing with many of the top chamber musicians of our time. Teaches chamber music and piano at *Espoo and West Helsinki Music Institutes*. Kimanen's chamber music and piano students have both won many prizes in national and international competitions. He is also a board member of the Finnish Piano Teachers' association. Junio Kimanen has been the artistic director of *Kuhmo Chamber Music Courses* since year 2002, as well as one of the most active organizers and workshop leaders of the International Chamber Music Festival *FesTaRi*.



INTERVIEW with pianist, Chamber music professor Junio Kimanen

Gunta Melbārde: Dear colleague! We have known each other for almost ten years mostly because of the international project – chamber music festival FESTARI. Our collaboration has taken different kind of forms, including the creation of this magazine. In 2014 when FESTARI took place in Riga, we had a chance to perform together, which I must admit was really pleasant. Our colleagues would like to know more about you, your thoughts, observations and memories.

Junio Kimanen: Yes, it really was a joy to perform together with colleagues. I think it's important that teachers play and perform too and not only teach. It boosts the level of one's teaching and gives always a nice and important signal to the students. And playing chamber music with students is a very effective way of teaching too. This was my second time in Riga FEsTaRi and I have to say it's always a great pleasure. The enthusiasm towards music, hospitality, beautiful concert halls...

GM: I would like to compare you with a live and tenacious tree – the roots, the branches and the blossoming leaves are all filled with music. Do you feel that way?

Junio Kimanen: Well, I have always been surrounded by music and – why not – you could use a tree metaphor. However, I find music a way of communicating, so there should then be other trees too! It's nice that the word “play” in English means both a way of children having fun together by communicating (and often having different roles too) and playing an instrument. Playing chamber music is actually very much the both. I just saw my little daughter playing grocery store today. She had no trouble at all to play all the different roles simultaneously, the customers and their children cashier... She had fun playing and I had fun following her playing.

That was a solo recital. But seriously, I think playing music is ultimately simply a very sophisticated way of telling stories and a good storyteller has to throw oneself to it very much like my daughter did.

GM: You are a pianist but also you are Member of the Board of EPTA Finland. There is interesting and valuable information in the website. Do you get any feedback from colleagues?

Junio Kimanen: I think we have a great community of piano teachers in Finland. We give and get a lot of feedback all the time, which is nice and nearly all the feedback is positive or at least very constructive. At EPTA Finland we organize an annual national seminar with approximately 200 participating piano teachers. It has been a very interesting and educating task to organize and be a part of such a thing.

GM: Did the chamber music come into your life accidentally or was it a considerate choice?

Junio Kimanen: Chamber music has always been an important part of my life. My parents had founded the international Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival already before my birth, so for a long time chamber music was practically only kind of music I knew about!

GM: How long have you been the *captain* of the chamber music at the Espoo Music Institute? How many chamber music teachers are there at your school?

Junio Kimanen: I started at Espoo in 2008, first as a co-teacher with *Paavali Jumppanen* and then gradually took over his position as almost full-time chamber music teacher. I'm the only chamber music teacher in our school but many of my colleagues teach some ensembles every now and then.

GM: Is chamber music a compulsory subject at your school or can one chooses to study it among other optional subjects?

Junio Kimanen: Chamber music is an optional subject at our school. Some of the students study it regularly through the year and some of them only for certain projects, like FEStaRi for instance.

GM: What are the age children begin to study chamber music at the Institute? How do you decide on what principles the chamber music groups are formed?

Junio Kimanen: The youngest ones have been around ten years old. We try to find equally advanced students for each group, but sometimes it's a bit challenging. Most of the students sign up for chamber music teaching and some of them we ask to join a group if we need a certain kind of player.

GM: Who does decide the repertoire? Is it the official curriculum or is it a free choice by you and your students?

Junio Kimanen: Sometimes other teachers or even students choose the repertoire but most of the time it's me, who decides the pieces to play.

GM: Do specialty teachers help their students at studying their chamber music repertoire? How do you look at this kind of collaboration?

Junio Kimanen: Especially with the younger students I usually require some help from the students' own teachers, but with the most advanced ones help isn't needed. Sometimes we have a possibility to teach together with some of my colleagues. That's a very nice and educating way of teaching, I enjoy it a lot.

GM: What is the hardest part in your every day routine at work? How do you fight these problems?

Junio Kimanen: I find it time and energy consuming to organize teaching, concerts and chamber music groups. Chamber music teaching requires much more additional work than piano teaching. Sometimes it feels like another working day after teaching when I arrive home and begin to send all those emails, text messages and search for new repertoire. Like always, getting myself organized helps organizing other things. I use some modern technology like Excel-sheets, web-pages and *What-Sapp*-groups for keeping things in order, communicating and searching for information.

GM: What is your *credo* as a teacher?

Junio Kimanen: Motivation is at least as important factor as talent and high standard tuition. Teacher should always try to increase students' motivation. Only giving excellent guidance is not enough!

GM: For more than 40 years your family name has been associated with a huge project – *Kuhmo Chamber Music festival*. I must say with admiration that the program of the 2015 festival is a true musical universe!

Junio Kimanen: Well yes, my parents founded the festival but nowadays the artistic director is Mr. Vladimir Mendelssohn. The basic idea of the festival is still the same but I think the new director has extended the musical themes towards more generic cultural themes. Also the artist pool is a bit different from how it was earlier decades. You are welcome to visit Kuhmo! It's a very unique festival indeed!

GM: Please tell us more about the music camp that you are organizing as a part of this festival!

Junio Kimanen: The Kuhmo Music Courses is as old as the festival. Many of the festival artists have from one to three students, which means approximately 100 students and 50 teachers. Not only the classes but also the festival concerts, student concerts and chamber music workshops are an essential part of teaching. The general level is very high and most of the students are already at their professional studies.

GM: Do you have time for a hobby, too?

Junio Kimanen: I like to take photos and cook. I swim more or less regularly and sometimes go trekking in Lapland. Our two wonderful daughters keep me busy too.

GM: Imagine – you have to go to a lonely island. What kind of ensemble would you like to take with you? What kind of music would you play?

Junio Kimanen: All different chamber configurations are interesting and hard to compare. With duo it's easiest to achieve a perfect integrity. Piano trios, quartets and quintets are very challenging and interesting mixtures of soloistic and ensemble playing. Haydn, Schubert, Brahms and Shostakovich are among many others my

favorite chamber music composers. But I have to say I would definitely take some solo piano music to the island too.

GM: Do you have a dream you wish to pursue in the future (musical or educational)?

Junio Kimanen: I'm very happy with my current professional situation. I get to work with very motivated and talented young students. In the future I wouldn't mind playing a little more myself too.

GM: Is there something you would like to wish to your colleagues – teachers and young chamber musicians?

Junio Kimanen: I'm sure what we do is both fun and valuable. The numerous skills a good chamber musician needs can help us to be better in other ways too. I don't know anybody who would have become a worse solo player or nastier person for example while playing a lot of chamber music. It just doesn't work that way!

GM: Thank you very much for this conversation!

Junio Kimanen: My pleasure, looking forward to see you soon again!

(Questions translated by *Anna Šuvajeva*)

CHAMBER MUSIC: PEDAGOGY and PSYCHOLOGY



Petras Kunca – Lithuanian violinist, member of the Board of ECMTA. In 1965 Kunca graduated from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre and continued his studies at the Moscow Conservatory. He took further courses on violin and chamber music in Hungary (1968), Finland (1988), Spain (1992), Sweden (1998), Denmark (1999), Austria (2001). Awarded the National Prize of Lithuania (1979) and the Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas. For 31 years he performed with the *Vilnius Quartet*; now – with String quartet *Akademia*. 1964-1974 prof. Kunca taught at the National M. K. Čiurlionis School of Art. Became a professor at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre and 1996-2008 he was Head of Chamber Music Department. More than 200 chamber music students have graduated from prof. Petras Kunca class. Prof. Kunca – artistic director of International Chamber Music Camp in Birzhai.

Empathy Conception in Chamber Music Teaching and Learning

The idea about the topics raised in the article are from the experience of my personal life playing in chamber ensembles and from my 51 year teaching activities at different schools of music including the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater, Erasmus teachers' exchange program and also from experience of our own created organization European Chamber Music Teachers' Association (ECMTA). I have raised the psychological topics at the meetings of this Association in Gdansk, Rome, Tallinn and elsewhere. I would like to attract attention of chamber music teachers to the more concrete sphere of psychology, i.e. importance of development Empathy feelings in chamber music teaching and learning to reach higher artistic decisions in groups of this kind of music. The Empathy problem is rather complicated. It would be very desirable that more teachers and members of ECMTA start to analyze the possibilities of its broader application in chamber music teaching and interpretation.

In Lithuania we start teaching chamber music from a very young age when the students have already some individual playing skills. Then they develop the chamber music faculties at the Conservatoire or the Academy of Music. In this article I am ready to put forward the necessity for feeling of Empathy among interpreters of chamber music group from the very first start of the rehearsals. Each of us, we all have noticed that successful studies of each ensemble directly depend on interrelations of the members. The group psychology is characteristic of each chamber ensemble then cooperation and common work psychology, which are the objects of analysis for social psychology. The knowledge of the field helps the ensembles to exist and develop. If there arise differences of opinions or interests the conflicts are possible. If teacher want to preserve the artistic level of an ensemble he should strive for the stability of group and inner relations among the members themselves. One of the main reasons

of the most conflicts is not being able to evaluate the situation without predetermined attitude. Only profound psychological knowledge can help to find compromising decisions and assure further group artistic development. Empathy is a part and parcel of communication psychology, but going deeper into this concept we should notice it is closely connected with fields of psychological sciences. Empathy is to be found in each sphere of people communication. That is why I make concrete the heading of my article into „Empathy conception in chamber music teaching and learning“. It could be called „Entry on Empathy in chamber music teaching and learning“.

I would offer several common propositions on which the topic can be developed.

- The English word Empathy is derived from the Greek word *Empatheia*, “physical affection, passion, partiality” which comes from En, “in,at“ plus Pathos, “passion“ or „suffering“. The term was adapted to create the German word „Einführung“ (feeling into), which was translated into the English term „Empathy“.

The concept of the science of psychology is defined in the way: “Empathy is the capacity to recognize and share feelings that are being experienced by another sentient or semi-sentient being. Empathy is connected with self-understanding, recognition of your own feelings, applying them in communication with the others. People having feelings of empathy are able to define more exactly the way of thoughts of other individuals, their moods, the way of mentality“.

- Empathy feelings are not inborn, they must be grown.
- The opposite term for Empathy is egocentricity.

In the psychology three phases of Empathy can be defined:

1st phase is understanding. In the phase the other person’s emotional state is recognized and identified. It is not an easy task to identify the emotions for they are usually mixed.

2nd phase – experience of feeling. In the phase the feeling is experienced which has overtaken the other person.

3rd phase – transmission of feeling. In the phase the recognized and experienced feeling can be expressed in different forms and ways.

Without above mentioned phases to define the Empathy, different aspects and forms are used. *J.T.Hardee* (2003) offer these defining aspects for Empathy:

- a) Sensitiveness – the ability to share feelings with the others.
- b) Morality is defined as motivation to be looked for good in the others.
- c) Cognition aspect is defined having ability to recognize and understand the feelings of the others.
- d) Behavior – the ability to transmit clearly and directly that the feelings of others are understandable.

S.J.Tsirkin (1999) states that the form of empathy rests on the type and characteristics of interpersonal relations. If the cognitive and emotional empathy is possible where there is a variety of relations, in the way empathy of behavior is common among the people sharing close relations. Empathy is a socially accepted feature of a personality. It can have individual or

chosen character. This is that we should react sensitively not to the feelings of every person but only to the feelings of consciously selected important persons, for example, the feelings of a spouse or children.

The highest Empathy form is experienced being in complete interpersonal identification. At the same time not only cognitive (perceptual, recognition and understanding) and sensitivity aspects are being observed, but it also includes aspects of Behavior empathy.

We can trace several stages in chamber music studies, through which we encourage consciously the appearances of empathy feelings by students and using empathy in learning of various chamber music genres.

The 1st stage comprises the chamber music teaching for children (in music schools or elsewhere). This is the period when they acquire individual playing skills and they get together to have groups playing. The pupils from the very first rehearsal pay attention to the ability to get feeling into the emotional condition of other member of the ensemble. Each player responds to the instrumental phrase given by the other member. In this way he starts to react individually to the signs in the score and he also begins to comprehend that he should go further into the matter for desirable sound results in cooperation with other members of group.

The 2nd stage comprises chamber music studies in conservatoire or the academy of music. These are the maturity period of studies. At the time the student comprehends more the importance of empathic feelings in the interpretation of chamber music. At the time the emotions are more connected with the thinking art and motivation. People having feelings of Empathy can define more exactly the destination of thoughts about music and moods of other people.

In the 3rd stage the experienced ensemble members are coming into the complete understanding of importance of Empathy. Then they become the real members of a creative group.

Chamber music teachers' role comes out in the process of both first stages. The role has own specifics, i.e. the teacher becomes a new member of creative group in the time of teaching or in rehearsal. He has clearly expressed function of education and teaching what is why the problem of the teacher's self-realization in the meetings with students is important. In the time the ensemble extends temporarily. The attitude of the teacher to the students' ensemble acquires psychological importance; they become the example of empathic behavior and direct the thoughts of the students to main aim of existence of the chamber music ensemble, i.e. in the lectures and rehearsals to search and find the convinced means to the interpretation of chosen chamber music work and to give a sense to these means at public concerts.

Development of Empathy is a complicated process. Efforts are need from both a teacher and a learner. Prof. *A. Suslavičius*, a psychologist of Lithuania affirms that active listening and understanding of a problem by the eyes (for musicians - by the ears) of the other is not Empathy. You may understand the experience of feelings of the other, having the will to sympathize, but a topic which may excite one person can be unaccepted for the other. Empathic reaction needs similarity of orientation of value. Thus a human for the development of Empathy should be motivated have the will to get deeper into the problems of the others and be

able to see them from the perspective of the other. When working in a group and encouraging Empathy of the members *D.Stott* (2009) indicates several relevant components for empathy development: working in a group (at rehearsals), friendship, repeated activity, cooperation, which comprises active listening and understanding including positive encouragement.

All these features can be creatively applied in the development of chamber music group. ECMTA could intermediate offering the usage of Empathy skills in the European chamber music teaching process.

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Dace Bičkovska, flutist,

artist of Professional Wind orchestra "Riga",
lecturer in Riga Teacher Training and Educational
Management Academy, teacher of the Latgale
suburb music and art school.

2002 get a professional master's degree in music
at Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music. From

1998 to the 1999th g. continuing education by
prof. *R.Muller-Dombois* and doc. *H.Kreidler* in
Detmold School of Music (flute and flute quartet),

1988.- 1990. studio assistantship in Lithuanian
Academy of Music with prof. *A.Vizgirdas*

1982.-1987. studies at prof. *V.Strautiņš* in Jāzeps
Vītols Latvian Academy of Music.

Performances with Flute quartet *Flautissimo* and
4tune, participation in various chamber music

projects. 30 years of experience in teaching. Led
master classes in flute playing and ensemble
playing in Latvian, Germany, Austria.



Development of necessary skills and abilities in the classes of collective musicianship

There are deep traditions of collective musicianship in Latvia, though they are more related to choral singing and playing music in orchestras. Orchestras were the first musical education for many professional musicians of early 20th century in their childhood. One of such musicians is the professor of Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music – flutist *Vilnis Strautiņš*. It should be noted that musicians in the 20th century were also very interested in chamber music; one of the types of this music was playing music at home.

Thanks to the music education system, many children in Latvia nowadays have the opportunity to learn to play an instrument, and education has a professional basis, which gives the necessary knowledge and skills for gifted children to continue their studies in a music secondary school. When studying in a music school, all students have such subject as Collective Musicianship.

When looking at the study programmes of Latvian music schools, one can conclude that more and more attention is paid to collective musicianship in the recent years. Numerous competitions, festivals, summer camps and master classes show enthusiasm and activity, involving students in ensembles of different composition. The teachers, who encourage young talents to participate in collective musicianship and especially in chamber ensembles, must be mainly thanked for the said achievement.

When it comes to **collective musicianship** classes, there are **three basic types**:

- 1) orchestra (brass band or symphony orchestra),
- 2) large instrumental ensembles (violin ensemble, flute choir, ensemble of kokle players, guitarist ensemble), where individual soloists can be involved,
- 3) chamber ensemble.

In order to successfully fit in the respective collective, each of the said types requires different skills and abilities of the new musician. However, the unifying factor is a sufficient level of instrument playing skills. This article will examine the skills and abilities that are necessary to be developed in chamber ensembles, as ensemble classes are the place, where these skills and abilities are developed from the aspect of quality. In an ensemble, each participant has its own part and thus greater responsibility for the quality of musical performance of the composition.

What are skills and abilities? These are concepts that are often interpreted in various ways, but the science of pedagogy provides precise explanations of them.

Skill - the knowledge of how to carry out an action according to the required quality and scope; prerequisite of performance, such degree of acquisition of knowledge and ways of action that allows one to use the acquired knowledge for purposeful action. Some skills are acquired in the natural process of experience (for example, walking), while the other skills are acquired by consciously practising on one's own or under the guidance of a specialist (for example, computer literacy). Skills form in versatile, repeated exercises and can be perfected indefinitely.

Ability – the know-how acquired in a long-term process of practice and has been mastered to the extent that the activity is carried out automatically, it requires no conscious control and adjustment. It is an automated activity, mastered by repeating it many times. Ability only applies to the technical side of activity, and creates the basis of a skill together with knowledge. So the abilities acquired in hard work are the basis of our instrument playing skills and ensemble musicianship skills.

“**Chamber music** is a genre of classical music written for small formations of players, for playing for a little audience. Italian phrase *musica da camera* means playing music in a room. Chamber music is characterized by equality of all parts and equally great responsibility of all participants for musical performance, but different skills are required from the musicians than from the musicians playing solo or in an orchestra.” (quote from the music lexicon)

“**Chamber ensemble** is a group of performers performing as a united team and performing compositions of chamber music that are more extensive in form, such as sonatas, trios, quartets. The main condition is the equality of all parts.” (quote from the music lexicon)

The main realization for me was that, when playing in an ensemble, different skills are required from the musicians than from the musicians playing solo or in an orchestra. This means that in our work with chamber ensembles much attention must be paid to the skills and abilities that are not acquired in classes of the speciality and that can be understood and developed only by performing in an ensemble.

While working with ensembles of different composition, I have come to the realization that our chosen ensemble composition sets different tasks and directions for development of the required skills. The biggest difference is whether the ensemble includes piano or not. Piano is a tempered instrument that determines the intonation of the ensemble. (accordion, marimba)

When classifying ensembles, they are generally divided into three groups:

- **mixed ensembles** – ensembles with a piano;
- **mixed ensembles** – ensembles without a piano;
- **homogeneous ensembles** – ensembles composed of only one type of instruments, for example, a flute quartet, trio, etc.

Basic principles of creating an ensemble

In my work at the music school, the biggest problem is the creation of the composition of ensemble. In my opinion, the choice of instruments should not be the primary aspect – the students' musical talents should be the main thing. Ensemble gives the opportunity of achieving better results if the participants have similar musical talents: **musical hearing, rhythm and musicality**. The degree of development of the said talent for music is of equal importance in ensemble classes as in the speciality. The only thing that should be noted is that each instrument has its own specific character, and particular skills and abilities may be developed only by playing music in an ensemble. Here the most prominent example is the wind instruments that may not be played chord texture; pianists problem are accustomed to play alone.

- If a decision is made on a **mixed ensemble** with a variety of instruments, the most important condition is equally significant involvement of the teachers of the rest of students in work of the ensemble. Experience shows that the involvement of **speciality teachers** in ensemble work gives more rapid and sustainable results, especially if there is a pianist or string-players playing in the ensemble together with the wind instruments. When working with such an ensemble, it is important for the teacher to have a good knowledge of the methodology and techniques of playing of instruments that would help the students to learn the musical materials and specific character of performance more quickly and in a higher quality. Even more rapid development is possible, if the speciality teacher helps the student in preparation of ensemble parts.

Division of roles is important **in mixed ensembles without a piano**. When playing with a harp, it usually gives the harmonic foundation, like a piano. However, harp is not a tempered instrument; therefore tone has an important role. If it is a trio of a flute, violin, and cello, cello automatically fulfils the function of the bass and is also the intonative basis; violin and flute are solo instruments that lead the melodic line.



- **If piano is included** in an ensemble, the speciality teacher of the pianist must undertake an important role. In mixed ensembles, pianist undertakes the role of a conductor, (s)he has to know the whole score, and (s)he is the only person having the parts of other ensemble members in his/her notes. Pianos usually create the harmonic foundation, which, of course,

largely facilitates the playing of the other ensemble members. It is important to respect the development of various parts in the part of each instrument. Intoning in such ensemble is established by the piano.

- However, if the choice falls on **homogeneous ensembles**, the division of the roles of each member of the ensemble in the light of their abilities and skills is important. In these ensembles, each part has an important role, as the total harmonic plan is created by all the parts together. Greater attention should be paid to the intonation and intoning of the melodic line.

When creating such an ensemble, it is important to evaluate the abilities and skills of the students, as well as the compliance of characteristics with the fulfilment of certain functions. First part should be given to a talented, active and attractive student, as his/her function is leading the ensemble, showing the beginning and the end of the composition, as well as being responsible for the phrasing, dynamics and tempo. Second part should be given to a good, talented student, but not to a leader. His/her duty is to listen and support in playing; only sometimes taking the responsibility. Third part could be entrusted to a technically weaker member of the ensemble, but the most important skill of this person must be good harmonic hearing, as chord thirds in a four-part composition are often located in the third part. Fourth part is the most important, as it usually creates both the harmonic and rhythmical basis. Sonorous lower register, a good sense of rhythm, stability and perfected hearing are important prerequisites, as all the harmonies are made based on the fourth part.

Teaching methodology of ensembles

Similarly to playing of instruments, when working with ensembles it is essential to establish the necessary and most essential skills that must be developed in the students starting from the first lesson. The content of the teaching methodology of ensembles, of course, will be determined by the following prerequisite: each of the students should have already acquired the basics of playing their instrument. This means that the skills acquired during the speciality classes are further developed in the ensemble classes rather than acquired anew.

Not all students are secure and confident enough to be glad about the opportunity to perform in concerts on their own. Of course, a friend's shoulder on the stage is a good support, and nervousness and uncertainty are easier to overcome when performing in an ensemble. However, this does not mean that each member shall not be held liable for the accuracy of performance and quality of his/her part. On the contrary, **when working with ensembles, team spirit must be developed in the students as that imposes an additional responsibility for the performance of ensemble members and the overall result.** It must be admitted that the individual work of each student is much more productive and more accurate in ensemble, because the student learning process is driven by competition, example and responsibility that forces students to work harder and focus. Given that there is no concert master or conductor in ensemble that could help during the performance of a composition, students themselves must be the conductor, soloists and accompaniment. In order to successfully deal with all obligations, each musician's greatest treasure is a good ear for music that is tested for each student when applying for the studies in a music school.

Tuning

To get started with an ensemble, the most important part, of course, is **tuning** that is directly related to the hearing as a control function. Often it turns out to be a problem which has to be carefully worked on, especially if the ensemble consists of students who have not played together before. It takes time to learn how to listen to each other and achieve a good interplay. If the ensemble involves a piano, the problem is easier to solve as the tuning process is based on the tune of piano.. But what are the solutions in instrumental ensembles without a piano? Tuning of the instrument of one of the students may be the basis, but it is definitely not the best option. To greatly facilitate tuning and also the further work process, nowadays every teacher should have a tuner. When using a tuner, students' hearing for a particular pitch of sound is trained, which always sends the same impulse to our internal hearing. Currently, the tuning of 442 Hz is used as the basis in Latvia, but it does not always correspond to piano tuning.

All students are taught to evaluate the pitch of sound, allowing them to play the sound at first and then check whether intonation of the sound is accurate. If the process occurs vice versa, students often *adapt* their instrument to the required pitch of the sound, but the intonation is unstable when playing.

However, it is impossible to improve the intonation in ensemble only by using a tuner. Not only should ensembles have piano, but also the students should develop their harmonious and intonational hearing, which helps to build a common sound, creating a non-tempered harmony. **Important role in this process is played by harmonic analysis of the composition. Arrows may be drawn next to notes in a student's part, showing whether it should be intoned higher or lower.**

Warming up! Should there be warm-up playing at the beginning of each ensemble lesson? I believe that it is absolutely necessary, especially, if there is no piano in the ensemble. Warm-up exercise improves intonation, sound quality, precise execution of bowing, and playing together.

What skills and abilities should be developed in the ensemble classes?

Instrument playing skills

- Precise execution of one's part

It is essential for each of the ensemble members to want to play, train at home and prepare their parts in high quality, so that the other students do not have to be bored, while one of the students is learning his/her notes.

- Technical accuracy

Accurate finger technique, articulation and rhythmic precision is the basis for high-quality performance both when playing solo and performing in ensembles.

- Sound quality

When playing in an ensemble, timbre and tone quality of each instrument is important to play together with the other members of the ensemble. Sound can not be just an end in itself, but it is important to play with each other to reach a timbral harmony. It is not desirable to be a soloist with a highly personalized tone, but the members must seek to fit in the overall sound

- Intonation – intoning

Intonation is the sound quality of musical performance, accuracy in terms of pitch. When playing in an ensemble with a piano, intonation control against the harmony and piano tuning is essential, but if there is no piano in the ensemble, harmonic hearing and intoning plays an important role.

My work with an ensemble is based on essential requirements that are set for every student of the music school: **musical hearing, sense of rhythm, and musicality.**

Musical hearing

Musical hearing is a delicate instrument. Its development requires a long-term, patient practising. However, all experts agree that the musical hearing can be developed. Good hearing and focus are the foundation of development of all the other skills, because only with the help of hearing as a control apparatus it is possible to achieve an improvement in quality.

➤ Hearing as a control function

For me as a member of an ensemble it is always important to hear what is played by others, to respond to what I have heard. For example, if someone is playing too quietly, I must ensure a logical progress of thought, even though the notes might show something else. We must listen to be together rhythmically, musically and dynamically.

➤ Musically polyphonic hearing

It is necessary to be able to hear not only yourself but also the role of your part in the overall performance of the composition; to create a common phrase with a melody when playing accompaniment.

➤ Harmonic hearing

Even though students use a tuner, yet the intonation problem is not solved. When using sheet music material, much attention has to be paid to the chord structure and intoning of them. One must definitely analyse chord structure, especially in homogeneous ensembles that create chords in a non-tempered manner.

➤ Inner hearing

Inner hearing is closely related to musical memory. People with inner hearing are able to stimulate the higher hearing centre in the brain and thus create a sense of sound even without any real sounds. Internal hearing is essential part of the sound, dynamics and phrasing. When playing, one must train the internal hearing to implement what has been created before.

➤ Intonation

This skill coincides with the aforementioned skill of intoning, but it is implemented with the help of hearing.

Sense of rhythm

➤ Accuracy of the rhythmic performance of sheet music

It relates to the ability to precisely perform one's part that is also learned in the speciality classes.

➤ Rhythmic pulse

Here the most important thing is the work with a metronome. In order to avoid complications when playing in an ensemble, it would be important to agree on the tempo that will be used by everyone when learning at home.

- Basic principles of development of sound, articulation, bowing

Building the common sound of an ensemble is a lot of work, where it is essential to develop rhythmically accurate beginnings of sound, uniform execution of bowing and articulation, aligned beginnings of sound. If there are notes of different length for different parts in the text (sixteenth-notes, eighth notes, half-notes), it can cause rhythmic uncertainty.

- Increase and decrease in tempo

All increases and decreases in tempo (*ritenuto*, *sostenuto* *accelerando*) must be unified throughout the ensemble, and one of the members should be responsible for this.

When analysing the work with students in individual lessons, it can be concluded that the rhythm is one of the most important components of music, and it is carefully worked on. Situation in an ensemble is much more complicated, because a variety of students with a different sense of rhythm is playing together. **Metronome** is the best tool for musicians and teachers for solving the problems related to rhythm. For the students to know how to correctly work with a metronome, it should certainly be done in lessons. Experience shows that many students are using a metronome when practising at home, but they do not listen in the metronome beats and are not playing sheet music precisely. During the lessons, students should be taught that the beginning of the sound must coincide with the metronome beat. For this reason, students should be working with a metronome at an early stage of the learning process, where the smallest notes are taken as the basic unit, in order to teach all the musical passages more accurately in terms of rhythm.

Musicality

- Analysis of the musical material

When working on a new piece of music for ensemble, the most important part is its analysis – themes, accompaniment, dynamics, and phrasing – distribution of roles. Just like in a theatre.

- Uniform creation of a phrase

In Greek, '**phrase**' means an expression, saying, but in music it is a small, relatively closed part of a composition with a certain meaning [**Svešvārdū vārdnīca, Jumava, 1999, 879 pages, p. 238**].

When working on phrasing in an ensemble, it is essential to agree on a common concept of the composition, the culmination, dynamics, character, so that all members of the ensemble would create a uniform musical performance of the composition. When playing, a common phrase must be created, accompaniment goes with the melody. It is important to mark all of the said things on sheet music for each part – from whom I am taking over the phrase, whom I must hear which of the ensemble members will show the beginning and end.

- Creation of the common dynamics

When working with ensembles, one must pay close attention to the development of dynamics, so that the basic principles of creation of dynamics are clear when preparing a composition for ensemble. Ideally, all students note dynamic contrasts in their sheet music during the lessons. Melody and the leading part must usually play one dynamic gradation higher.

- Creation of musical thought

Melody is not the only thing that marks a character nuance; it may also significantly appear in the accompaniment.

- Creation of the balance of parts

'Balance' comes from the French word '*balance*' [Svešvārdū vārdnīca, Jumava, 1999, 879 pages, p. 90]. In music, it means the relationship or uniformity of parts of the ensemble. When working with ensembles, much attention should be paid to the balance of parts, as smooth sound is possible only if all the ensemble members are aware of the place of their parts in the overall context, they listen to and control the overall sound, as well as all together form the phrasing and dynamics.

Everyone should be aware of their role in the overall context, there must be coherence in chords both timbral and dynamic, a part can not dominate. Students must know, who has the leading melody (if I do not hear the melody, it means I am too loud).

- Imaginative thinking

Ideally, the ensemble agrees on the images and characters, or comes up with its own story.

Social skills

- The interaction skill

Every ensemble member must be well familiar with the score. Each phrase must be *handed* to the next musician: cannot make ending of phrase where the musical line continues in another part. Students must think not only of themselves, but also on the overall performance. When performing as ensemble, the dialogue between all the members of an ensemble is important.



- Leading skill

Given the fact that an ensemble is a small team, which performs without a conductor, one of the members of the ensemble must assume responsibility for the accuracy, phrasing, rhythm, dynamics, tempo and changes in the tempo. When playing, the leader must take into consideration other members – show the beginnings and endings of phrases, *ritenuto*, show the characters in a pronounced manner.

- Role playing games

Each ensemble member must be able to be the leader and leading part at one point and change to accompaniment at once.

- Taking other members into consideration

. The most important motto of playing in an ensemble: “No one will be the first to finish the composition!” All the members together are responsible for the musical performance and sound

of the composition. If someone messes up, always strive to help each other to achieve the desired result

➤ Reaction

Every time a composition is played, it is a one-off performance; even the musicians cannot play the musical materials in the same way twice. Therefore, when playing music, one must listen to the flow of the music and be able to respond to the manner of playing of others – the dynamics, phrasing, intonation, and even mistakes. If any mistakes have been made, one must react to deal with the situation.

➤ Collective responsibility and helpfulness

The motto of every ensemble should be “One for all, all for one.” Only by investing the skills and abilities together, musicians can achieve a high-quality musical performance. There should not be selfishness in an ensemble: the members should assess the overall sound instead of looking for a background to stand out on.

(Translated by *Fluent*)

OUR EXPERIENCE

Jūrate Bundzaite, pianist, organist.

1970. graduated from *M.K.Ciurlionis* School of Arts, Vilnius, majoring in piano. 1970 - 1975 studied piano with Prof. *S. Ziuraitiene* at the Lithuanian Academy of Music, Vilnius; awarded diploma of concert pianist. 1975-1982 studied organ with Prof. *Leopoldas Digrys* at the Lithuanian Academy of Music; awarded diploma of concert organist. 1984 - 1990 participated in Organ Master Courses in Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Czech Republic, Switzerland, and Austria with Professors *G.Litaize, G.Bovet, J.Guillon, M.Schneider, M.Schlechta, and A.Rösler*. In 1986 she gave solo recitals and appeared as soloist, premiering many works of Lithuanian composers in Organ Festivals and concert series organized by the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society. Appeared as a member of different chamber ensembles, has given concerts in Estonia, Russia, Ukraine, Austria, Germany, and Sweden. 1986 she became a head of the Piano and Organ Department at the Vilnius B. Dvarionas Music School.



Founder of the International festival-competition for young musicians „*Saskambiai*”.

“*Saskambiai*” (“*Consonance*”) in Vilnius

Great changes in our lives brought fresh breezes also to B.Dvarionas ten-year music school in Vilnius. Teachers were inspired to offer new initiatives and new ideas. As a result of this, our chamber music festival-competition for young performers “*Saskambiai*” (“*Consonance*”) was born.

We thought that it would be interesting and exciting for our young pianists to play together with their school mates and friends, and to hear simultaneous sound of different instruments. After all, it is completely different – to perform together, listen to each other in order to create common musical canvas. It can be described as helping them all communicate to each other using the language of music.

It was the winter of year 2000 when we organized the first chamber music festival for young performers from music schools in Vilnius, and we called it “*Saskambiai*”. Everyone who expressed the wish to play together was invited to participate in festival-contest. We were happy with all our hearts, because the festival was a true success, and especially because it had attracted attention of so many young musicians and their teachers. And so, the ice was broken...

Being pleased with success of the first festival, we decided to widen our offer, and to invite young musicians from other music schools in Lithuania and from other countries as well. We were very happy and proud about the notably increased number of participants from our regions as well as other countries – Estonia, Belorussia, Poland, Germany and Latvia. They remain our friends for many years.

The regulation of “*Saskambiai*”, rules of the festival cleared gradually. For the participants of the festival we offered to perform one composition of their own choice. For those who wanted to participate in the contest, we asked to prepare two compositions, each representing different period. After the first festival, slight changes were introduced for the age of participants. Younger participants did not possess the necessary musical skills, and it was



difficult to judge them. Therefore we decided to rise the entry age for the contest to ten years. We also broadened the requirements for contest program. Compulsory pieces representing the 20th century and different epoch's compositions were introduced. We wanted also to urge Lithuanian composers to write more chamber music for young performers, so that we could include it in the programs.

In 2005, young jazz musicians joined “*Saskambiai*”. There is a unique jazz department in our school, where children from early age learn to improvise. Older students perform in jazz ensembles. It was logical and natural to include them into the program of our festival-contest.

In 2009, we tried to include such ensembles where there is no piano involved, and also piano duets. The number of participants in this category is growing, which proves the necessity of it. We invited also teachers to come together to play and compete, but observations suggested that many are not ready for that yet. Apparently, they needed a little bit more courage...

Professors of the Lithuanian Music Academy were invited to judge the young performers: *Julius Andrejevas, Valentinas Gelgotas, Rimantas Armonas* and others were among them. We are pleased that these great Lithuanian musicians pay a great deal of attention to young generation and their music playing. For our teachers it is both celebration and opportunity to improve their knowledge, as they can listen to pedagogical readings during the methodical lectures of “*Saskambiai*” program.



It has been 15 years since the great family of young musicians are playing together. There have been many things to hear, see and to think about. We

are proud to be the pioneers of this tradition which is always supported by our teachers and administration. It is very rewarding that this beautiful idea has come to life and lives on. In 2013, more than 400 musicians altogether participated in various categories of “*Saskambiai*”. And it is great – so many adolescents playing music!

In 2015, 8th International festival-contest for young chamber music and jazz musicians “*Saskambiai*” will take place in March 20th to 21st. We already know that numerous young musicians will arrive. We hope that a magnificent festival will happen. We invite you all!

(Translated by *Lauris Melbārdis*)



Vida Apanavičiene, Zoja Šablinskiene, Juste Šablinskaite

Teachers of Vilnius Algirdas music school

„Muzikuokime drauge” in Vilnius

One more beautiful feast came to Vilnius Algirdas music school together with spring and joy of *Kaziukas Fair*. Ensembles from Lithuania and abroad gathered there. The festival “*Muzikuokime drauge*” („Play together”) has its own history. It was launched on the 7th of March of 2003, when Algirdas music school teacher methodologist Zoja Šablinskienė had the idea to organize a feast of chamber ensembles. She is the author, founder and organizer of this festival. As Prof. P. Kunca said: “Teacher Zoja Šablinskienė is doing a God-blessed work, organizing the festival.”

It was actively attended by students of that musical school. 18 ensembles were created from 37 students, playing various instruments. The festival was a huge success, so during the following years the amount of participants was rapidly increasing, especially when they started to invite guests from other music schools in Vilnius. In 2006, the festival became national so every spring, large group of 6-17 years old students of music schools, started participating in the event. Festival Regulations state that chamber ensembles must include a piano or an accordion, and they can perform freely any piece of any century. The objectives of the festival have given good results - students experienced enjoyable moments while playing in the ensembles. It also promoted creativity and artistic expression, and cherished culture of public performance as well as endurance.

2014 year's festival was really special – 63 different ensembles (237 students), which has been prepared by 87 teachers, took part in the event. They were brought together by the 10-th Anniversary of the “Play together” festival which became international for the first time.

Festival was outstanding not only because of the number of the participants but also because of wide geographical spread. Ensembles came from Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Alytus, Elektrenai, Biržai, Utena, Garliava musical and art schools. The festival has attracted guests from *Minsk* (Belarus) and *Olsztyn* (Poland). We had the opportunity to listen to a combination of different instruments, and great arrangements of a wide repertoire. Ensembles were evaluated by the Jury, as every year. It consisted of Vilnius Algirdas music school director S.Strička, deputy director responsible for education D.Rakšnienė, piano department director I.Oparyševa, teachers of Vilnius J.Tallat-Kelpsa conservatory S.Kuncienė and N.Krauter. Commission Chairman Daina Rakšnienė mentioned – “...it is very important to see overall team work, teacher’s and student’s collaboration, which is leading to excellent performance. We evaluate full performance, pay attention even to stage culture....”.



25 best ensembles were given the names of the winners; others were awarded with special diplomas and prizes. Guests from Olsztyn Fr.Chopin Musical School were recognized as absolute best. The Jury and the listeners were fascinated by professionalism, musical perception and artistic performance of the winners’ trio (piano, violin and cello). Many good words could be said about other ensembles. The hosts of the festival – Vilnius Algirdas music school students were particularly active. Teachers of this school had prepared 22 different ensembles. So ensembles changed one another on the stage, the audience gratefully applauded. After the festival was finished, participants were surprised by ... a giant cake and refreshments. Participants and their teachers enjoyed good organization of the festival, thanked for the hospitality and even excursions provided in the Old Town of Vilnius. Several participants shared their impressions.

Jovita Klimaševska: „I like to play in the ensemble, listen and adapt to others. I found a lot of new contacts, saw others' results and high level of performance, it is still a lot of space for improvement “.

Juzef Kučinsky: „I heard a lot of unknown pieces, I saw other countries and other cultures children playing. That fascinated me ...”

Second international chamber ensemble festival “Play together” (“Muzikuokime drauge”) took place on the 7-th of March 2015. There were 48 ensembles, a total of 130 students from Lithuania and Belarus participating in this year's festival. The participants were trained by 70 teachers. The performance was evaluated by an international jury:

Daina Rakšnienė – teacher methodologist, deputy director of Vilnius Algirdas music school;

Prof. Petras Kunca – Board member of European Chamber Music Teachers Association.

Gunta Melbarde – teacher of Jāzeps Mediņš Riga 1st music school, head of the Fondation “We play together with friends”;

Natalja Lezhniova – director of Minsk 4th music and art school.

Stasė Kuncienė - Vilnius J. Tallat-Kelpsa Conservatoire, teacher-methodologist.

Natalia Krauter - Vilnius J. Tallat-Kelpsa Conservatoire, teacher-methodologist.

Irina Oparyševa – Vilnius Algirdas Music School, head of the piano department, teacher-methodologist.

The festival jury has selected one of the most prominent ensembles for the “Grand Prix” nomination: ensemble (three balalaikas and an accordion), which performed a Russian folk song “The Moon is shining”. There was also a special prize from a Latvian member of the Jury Gunta Melbarde, for the ensemble of Kaunas 1st Music School, which performed V. Vlasov's, “Basso Ostinato”.



The jury appreciated professional arrangements and adaptations made by the teachers. They were also very happy that the program was cleverly arranged and the festival was not tiresome, the musical compositions were easy and pleasant to listen to.

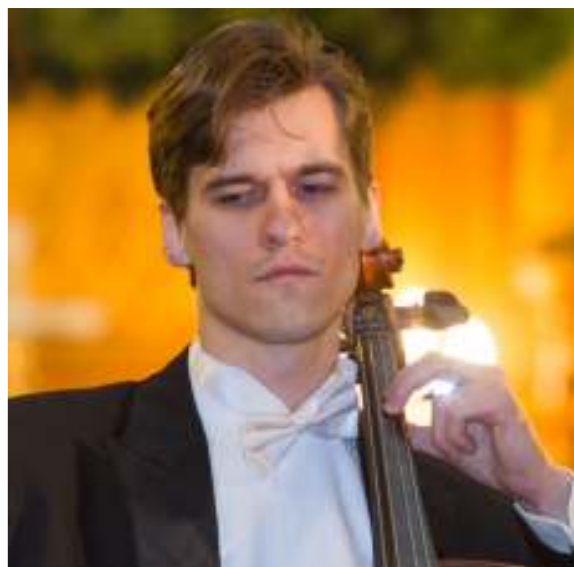
The ensembles "enchanted" the listeners with their cheery mood, artistry and professional performance from the first notes. We hope that this festival which is associated with “Kaziukas Fair” charm will live for long and will continue inspiring teachers and participants with high musical performance and spring mood.

In fact, the International Chamber Ensemble Festival „Play together“, only proved once again that ensemble performance is very important and popular . We wish the festival a long life together with excellent music performance!

(Translated by Juste Šablinskiene)

YOUNG VOICES

Mārcis Kuplais, cellist, born in 1983 in Riga. First teachers (in Latvia) - L. Sudraba and A. Štrauss. From 2002-2010 studied in Music Academy of Basel (Switzerland) by prof. Ivan Monighetti. His chamber music teachers were G. Wyss, A. Oetiker, F. Renggli, B. Engeli. In July 2006 he got the teaching diploma with marks of “very good” and in July 2008 – the concert diploma with the highest marks of “excellent”. In July 2010 finished his studies at the Music Academy of Basel, getting the highly prestigious Masters Degree with Soloist distinction with the highest marks of “excellent”. Since July 2011 he is a teacher in a children music school Binningen-Bottmingen (Baselland). He has given concerts as a soloist and chamber music player in Latvia, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Georgia, Cyprus, Brazil, USA, South Korea and Japan. He has had master classes with B. Greenhouse, A. Bylsma, D. Geringas, Troels Svane, Y. Feigelson, M. Villerušs and others.



Diverse roles of a cellist: my experience

The necessary human qualities

What kind of work with an instrument (the cello, to be concrete) is the most appropriate for an individual depends on that person's ego, upbringing, flexibility, and responsibility to the duty at hand. Some people are scared of playing solo on stage and cannot imagine themselves being soloists. In this case, chamber music might be the best option as that involves less stage fright. Others, in their turn, being bright individualists, cannot imagine themselves playing *tutti* cello in an orchestra as they want to express themselves as individual artists with their personal emotions. In an orchestra of 100 people personal individuality in a *tutti* cello group gets completely suppressed. For instance, any orchestra has just a small number of flutes, oboes and other similar instruments, so their play remains individual and also their responsibility is therefore greater than that of a typical *tutti* artist.

In the modern world of massive competition with plentiful of cellists and other instrumentalists, an ideal musician is the one who can operate in various styles of music (as many as possible) and is flexible enough to feel comfortable being a part of any complement of musicians – let it be a solo, a chamber ensemble, the first cello in an orchestra or the last cello at the last music stand. The global competition in any of these spheres is approximately 100-150 people for one position regardless of whether it is an orchestra with a solo or *tutti* cello position, or a teaching position in a music school for children. Given these circumstances, an individual must be open to any job opportunities and offers, be it playing baroque music where the tuning is lower for a half-step, romantic, impressionist or modern music. One must be prepared to play music originating from any nation, whether it is Latvian, American, Israeli, Chinese or Japanese and any style – jazz, pop and rock music, metal, gospel, dubstep etc.

There are people who do not wish to perform with the cello at all but are talented at teaching others how to play the instrument: being a teacher is their greatest calling. Nowadays when 100 cellists apply for a teaching position (in Switzerland, for example) and only those cellists having a great CV as performing artists or cellists with impressive pedagogical experience are invited to test lessons or interviews (depending on decision of the management of the respective school), pedagogical ability is a basic requirement in most cases; moreover, additionally to giving lessons, teachers themselves must perform, too. It is not always that a good artist is a good teacher (especially if we discuss teaching children rather than the work with students in a music academy). Ability to relate to children and create good relationships as well as the skill to sometimes have a laugh and play with children is very important when working with them.

Specifics of playing cello or some differences when playing in various complements of musicians

Soloist

Solo artist as a person must be both sensitive and deeply emotional as well as a strong individualist with a big ego, perseverance, goal-orientation, self-discipline, and have a sense of responsibility towards the audience, music, musical material, the ideas and suggestions of composers. A soloist is responsible for his play, musical ideas, agogic etc. There are both introvert and extrovert soloists. A soloist must have a strong nervous system not only to be patient while preparing the program and take control of nervousness on the stage but also to be ready for a positive or negative criticism from the audience or media. In case of a positive criticism, one should not get too confident, whereas the negative criticism should not make one desperate and willing to give up. When a soloist plays alone, with piano or orchestra, he should



always imagine somebody conducting and a big orchestra behind. Agogics, let it be *ritenuto*, *accelerando*, some *rubato* etc. should be played so that the imaginary conductor is able to conduct it and the imaginary orchestra – play it. A soloist must imagine that he is telling a story and it should be done so that the audience finds it interesting and feels the emotions.

Soloist must always have a good physical state and good health. To get a position in a concert agency, good health is a very important prerequisite. In case of health problems and illnesses, one is soon dismissed from an agency and somebody else is recruited instead. There are hundreds of excellent musicians, and an agency is not interested in incurring losses. Since a large number of concerts provide a greater income, agencies these days overload the new soloists. Agencies do not need soloists who are not ready for this kind of workload..

Good physical state is necessary to cope with the enormous workload – long rehearsals, frequent concerts, flights etc. One often hears that soloists go to fitness and aerobics classes,

swimming pools and saunas in their hotel to maintain a good physical state. According to my experience, I know that prior to longer concert tours I have to go for a run for at least one hour in a park or to a fitness club on a stepper and bike on a regular basis. During concert tours I try to run for at least half an hour per day or do some other kind of sports.

There is a tradition to celebrate successful concerts with organizers, friends and audience. From what I have experienced with various excellent artists is that they often stay in the concert hall to rehearse their programs off-stage until midnight preparing for the next concerts with the respective complement of musicians because it is very likely that the next meeting with this same trio, quartet etc. will take place in two months time – a day before the concert or even on the day of the concert. Others prefer to go directly to their hotel and rest as the following day comes with a flight or train journey to another city where a different concert with a different programme and different artists is due in the evening. I personally take into account the circumstances I am in. For example, I loved going to hot springs in Japan so I agreed with the organizers that after concerts we would all go to saunas, swimming pools and Jacuzzi, and afterwards have a quick meal on the spot. I tried to get back to the hotel on time; one feels very sleepy after hot springs. The following day I would be full of energy and ready to go on a several hour trip to the next city and play a concert in the evening.

Chamber musician

The cello, if it does not play the lead, fulfils several functions in almost every typical chamber ensemble and orchestra: it plays accompaniment, gives harmonies and often provides the rhythmic basis. Therefore, the cello is the leading instrument in the musical progression and development. It is very important to realize that this is not an inert and phlegmatic accompaniment that follows what the first violin or the conductor does. That is why every good chamber music ensemble and orchestra needs a cellist-individualist with all the qualities of a soloist (I discussed this in the previous paragraph about soloists) to be the concertmaster of the cello group. Every musician playing chamber music has to be able to take responsibility and react to the given musical situation, its development and musical ideas of partners-individualists at any time.



Contrary to solo playing, being a part of a chamber music ensemble is somewhat more difficult as one must be both an individualist with ability to take responsibility and react to the respective musical situation and its development at any time and a team player with ability to

co-operate with other members of the ensemble. Quite often it happens that several strong personalities meet in an ensemble and want to lead it fulfilling their ideas without any discussions. In that case, much depends on the person that is the most flexible and agrees to obey. I know from my experience that if an author of an idea in an ensemble is a good musician, he will not give advices and suggestions that are not of a musical character. I get the idea right away and have no problem accepting it. Sometimes there are parts in music that can be played in various ways and every musician has some ideas. In this case, we try out different versions and find the one that we all are happy with. I have had situations when an ensemble contains one or even several members with poor musicality. In such situations I take the lead with full sense of responsibility for the result. This is not an ideal situation; however, if the musicians are nice people and get my ideas and try to implement them, our concerts turn out well and I am glad to play with them. If a chamber music ensemble incurs disagreements or conflicts that last for several rehearsals, I try to leave such an ensemble as soon as I can. I am not interested in spending my energy and damage my nerves for the sake of just a couple of concerts.

Orchestra musician

Orchestras need cellists-individualists with all the qualities of a soloist (I discussed this in the paragraph about soloists) to be concertmasters of the cello group in an orchestra. With their emotions, group concertmasters react to the gestures of a conductor and lead their group in accordance with their musical understanding. They ought to be leaders. I have seen a colleague cellist suggesting something to the group concertmaster and the latter replies: "Thanks for your suggestion but I don't need any suggestions. If there is something to be changed, I shall do it myself."



Being a concertmaster of *Basel Sinfonietta* and other chamber orchestras, I often consult with a colleague I share the music stand with and sometimes with other colleagues at the second music stand to find out their opinion on the respective musical segment and changes. If changes happen to be really unpleasant, for example, the first violin group suggests using a difficult bowing that is not comfortable for cellists, I write down the kind of bowing I see fit, and then look back to my colleagues, wink my eye and we play the way our group finds it

more convenient and better.

Cellists and contrabass players in orchestras quite often tune up their instruments using tuners, yet each musician ends up having a tuning that matches his/her own understanding and pitch. In my opinion, string instruments in orchestra and chamber music should be tuned up with narrow fifths to ensure that the *C* string of cellos has a clean sound with the *A* string and the *G* string of a violin – with its *E* string. Some musicians tune up their instruments using

narrow fifths and some – wide fifths. In the end, the bass group as well as the whole of the orchestra has not tuned up properly. Being a concertmaster, I pay attention to this problem and ask my colleagues cellists to check their strings and adjust to my cello. One needs certain strength of character there as some musicians object to this saying that they have just checked all of the strings with a tuner...

If a person is not a little bit of a soloist who loves to be seen, heard, noticed and judged, and has not got sufficient levels of ego, finds it hard to take musical responsibility for his solo play or an ensemble, has an uncontrollable stage fright, he then is not suitable as ensemble musician or concertmaster in an orchestra. However, if he has got a sufficient level of responsibility for his work and enjoys playing the cello, he might be suitable for a *tutti* play in an orchestra. Great attention is necessary to imitate the group concertmaster, adjust to his tone and bowing, and go with him in *rubato*, *ritenuto* and *accelerando* segments as well as in *pizzicato* that often presents a challenge in slow pieces of music for both solo and *tutti* cellists. A *tutti* cellist should not play passively without emotions; he ought to follow the solo cellist and conductor.

Teacher

This is the fourth year I am working as a teacher in two music schools for children in Basel. At the moment I have more than 20 pupils aged 6-20.

I think that the best teacher is a great performer, too. A teacher must have all the qualities a performer has, that is, a teacher must be sensitive, emotional, creative, with great perseverance and patience, goal-orientated, self-disciplined, responsible for the work, and must develop pupils to the maximum extent of their capabilities. A great performer empathizes with feelings, character and mood of a child and is able to fascinate and inspire. A great artist can show a child the simplest of melodies in an emotional manner with a good tone, technique and accurate phrasing altogether, and by doing so he sets a perfect example for a child or a student.



A performer definitely has a good technique, free and naturally positioned arms that are used to a *ri n* playing. Despite being aware of methodological basis on how arms should be set to position etc. A teacher sometimes teaches his own technique which a pupil often imitates.

If a teacher has some health issues since the years of childhood or adolescence (tight muscles, pains in arms and back etc.) that he has not deliberately tried to overcome patiently working with the problem in later years, such a person is destined to be a mediocre or bad teacher. A teacher that has not been keen on working with himself is often superficial when it comes to setting a pupil's arms, legs and sitting into position. As a result, the pupil inherits these problems from the teacher.



A performer will definitely try to improve a child's rhythmic precision using a metronome as well as *ri n* to achieve a clean intonation, choose the most suitable exercises, and look for rational solutions to technical problems. Moreover, an artist who performs on a regular basis is creative in both technical and musical matters. He will definitely be able to come up with various *ri n s* designations, stories, fairy-tales, and will stimulate the fantasy of a child... A mediocre teacher can spend the lesson with no inspiration and energy output. Such a teacher can say that a person is born with or without the sense of rhythm; some will

even say that there is no need for a metronome in music and won't use it in lessons.

The same story follows regarding musical ear – either it is innate or non-existent, even though, of course, it can be trained. A mediocre teacher, unable to perform a difficult program, can ask a pupil to repeat the complicated segments for tens of times in a slow and pointless manner; such a teacher does not show the pupil exercises with various rhythm, accent and dynamic patterns as he has never used them or does not know about them.

One of the biggest problems with mediocre teachers is that they tend to communicate with children on a too primitive level. Some think that there is no need for a dialogue at all and everything should be *taught*. There are teachers who talk to children either rather strictly *ri n* an artificially childish manner. The main problem in a dialogue occurs when a teacher does not perceive a child as a full-fledged individual and does not listen and understand what the child thinks, feels, understands, and wishes. As more sensitive and patient is the teacher, as better is the contact with a child. I have seen teachers in staff room on break times looking absolutely disappointed with their work because they do not love and respect children at all. Such teachers should be dismissed right away but they continue working for all I know.

It follows that human qualities, experience, technique and musicality of a performer are the features that make a good teacher. Due to the low remuneration of teachers there is practically no competition for teaching positions in Latvia. There is no competition with 70, 100 or 120 applicants for a part-time or even smaller position as it is in Switzerland and other economically developed countries of Europe. It follows that almost anyone who wants to be a teacher and is studying or has already graduated from the Academy of Music can be a teacher

in Latvia. To what extent does school management follow their newly employed (without strong competition) teachers' abilities, learning process, contact with children, musical development of children, technical problems (setting a pupil's arms in a position), and preparation of children for an independent work etc.? In my opinion, this, if happens at all, is not done quite enough. Is it possible to solve this problem any time soon? It is very unlikely that teachers in Latvia will ever be remunerated the way their European colleagues are (remuneration will rather decrease with every year), therefore the amount of students in the Academy of Music will decrease and there will be no competition for teaching positions. In the situation of financial crisis, the number of music subjects and practical lessons will be reduced; therefore, the overall level of music education in Latvia will decrease. Of course, there is a hope that the best teachers of today with their diligence, decency and responsibility towards their work will pass the best qualities of a musician to their pupils who, in turn, will pass their knowledge on to the next generation.

(Translated by *Fluent*)

COLLEAGUES SHARE THEIR REFLECTIONS



Silvija Notte, pianist,

Piano and Chamber Ensemble Teacher at Marupe Music and Art School.

Academic education: graduated from Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy (RTTEMA); was awarded Master of Arts in Pedagogy Degree by the University of Latvia.

Teachers: Jelena Berzina (Tukums MS), Inara Vignere (Academy of Music), Jautrite Putnina, Valdis Jancis (RTTEMA).

Organizer of the Small Chamber Music Festival (*Mazās kamerģmūzikas festivāls*) and the Latvian Music Teacher Festival (*Latvijas Mūģzikas skolotāģu festivāls*).

Currently pondering on the idea: “*No disciple is greater than his master*”.

The Latvian Music Teacher Festival “Master Class” Renewed

In schools, music education begins with a teacher. Teacher will pass on their understanding of music, aesthetic sense of music to their students. Music is a language, a narrative in sounds told by the master to his/her disciple. Let us speak it more so that it is more than just another foreign language to us. Tradition of the Latvian Music Teachers' Association and Cultural and Educational Centre of Latvia commenced in 2000 to start a year with teacher concerts was renewed, the first Latvian Music Teacher Festival took place last year from January 29 to February 1. The Music Teacher Festival resumed after 6 years of silence with five concerts: in Marupe, Sigulda, Daugavpils, and Ventspils.

The first teacher festival took place in 2000. Soon enough it turned into an international event – Baltic Music Teacher Festival. Back then, the festival was very well received. Concert venues included Ave Sol Concert Hall, Sigulda Concert Hall “Baltais Fligelis”. Kekava Music School concert hall, Klaipeda Stasys Simkus Conservatoire. Church music concerts were held at St. Catherine's Church in Kuldiga, Church of the Holiest Jesus Heart in Rezekne. The festival featured performances by teachers from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland. The festival was organized for 8 consecutive years.



Authors of the idea of this musical event are teachers of the Marupe Music and Art School. Upon resuming the teacher festival, its future form had to be considered. It did not make sense to repeat the same thing. We did not want to resume an international music school festival, we wanted to strengthen the tradition – Latvian music teachers play music. In order to involve as many music

school teachers as possible, Dace Strodaha (*Dace Štrodaļa*), Head Master of Marupe Music and Art School suggested that concerts are organized in regional schools of Latvia: In Ventspils, Daugavpils, Riga.

Sigulda Arts School “Baltis Fligelis” that had welcomed all participants of the Baltic Music Teacher Festival year after year was an integral partner of these concerts. The first festival featured 122 music school teachers from 22 educational institutions of music. Arnolds Dimants, Teacher at Sigulda Arts School “Baltis Fligelis” joined the festival organizers this year. We reviewed programmes submitted by teachers, drew up a concert schedule together.



Arnolds Dimants agreed upon the next concerts with music school management, they were planned at Rezekne Music Secondary School, in Saldus, Limbazi, Sigulda, and Marupe. Arnolds Dimants plays not only the piano, but also the organ so he took care of teachers willing to play the organ too. Next year, Saldus St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church will be used as a concert venue and will welcome not only organ players, but also small chamber ensembles to perform.

This year, concerts took place in Balvi, Kuldīga, Bauska, Sigulda, and Marupe. Our motto for the festival was: *Teachers' Master Class for Students*. Teacher will always be a master for their student. I have been pondering on the idea that the disciple cannot outdo their master. Each great performance artist has their own first teacher who normally works at children's music school and whose name is not always well known outside the walls of the school. However, regardless of how great the artist is, they will never be greater than their teacher. Participating in all teacher concerts, I have come to realize that teachers are capable of so many different things that others do not even know about and thus will never be able to appreciate. What a teacher is capable of cannot be paid for in cash, it has no price. Money starts and ends somewhere, but what a teacher can do never ends. Sometimes it feels like teachers underestimate their skills that make them active, omnipotent. If this inner power cannot be weighed, measured, the disciple will never be able to outdo the immeasurable.

Some of my contemplation about concerts. Festival organizers asked teachers to choose compositions for this festival keeping in mind the students who will listen to them. What and how teachers would want to speak to their students turned out to be very unexpected.



The programmes they submitted contained sonatas by J.S. Bach, G.F. Handel, J. Brahms, as well as compositions by S. Rachmaninoff, F. Chopin and contemporary composers: P. Jurel and N. Martincija. I was looking forward to these concerts. Students listened with interest and they were responsive to

these performances, with applause, sometimes cheers.

Concerts featured different kinds of ensembles from different music schools. Teachers of Marupe Music School and Jazeps Medins 1st Music School of Riga and teacher ensemble of Marupe and Limbazi music schools. This ensemble was born at Winter Master Class for Chamber Ensemble Teachers in Riga. Playing in chamber ensembles together served as basis for union that would not be possible otherwise. The greatest number of performances were staged by chamber ensembles: duets, more seldom trios and big ensembles. We heard only a few solo performances.

I met teachers from various music schools and they came up with suggestions for what they would like their Latvian Music Teacher Festival to be like in future. I was happy to hear that we were not the only ones with the idea of performing teachers.

Suggestions by teachers: To inform about concerts *timely* in order to manage to prepare programmes – it means there is hope that the festival will continue, it means that teachers want to play music and they will find the time to do that. *It would be nice* if all performances would be in one place – one concert. *(The precedent, if you will, took place on the first day of the festival at Marupe Music and Art School. The concert was 3 hours long without breaks! It was noteworthy. The idea that the festival should consist of one concert where everyone can hear everyone play has not materialized yet.)* It means that teachers have not lost their interest in the way their colleagues perform. That is right – how serious other musicians' programmes can be.



After concerts musicians normally meet the locals school teachers, head masters, we engage in interesting discussions about students' repertoire, we exchange sheet music. At these encounters, one sometimes runs into colleagues they have not seen since the university. For some of them these concerts serve as an opportunity to perform at their former music school they last visited many years ago.

Why do teachers play? It might be a need for self-expression. They have to tell, show and expect yield from their students that might come later, so they want to do it themselves. Music is a language we teach students to understand and speak.

Ideas from Kuldiga – there is nothing what teachers can't do!... they raise the young musicians, tell and show really complicated music stuff in a simple and understandable language. And normally they also manage to prepare a concert performance without their students knowing. We will not know what their daily responsibilities are when we listen to concerts of the festival. Teachers from Ventspils, Liepaja, Riga, Valmiera, Smiltene came to these concerts. I would like to write about selflessness, about friendship. Teacher is something special even though opinions differ – they are both flattering and condemning. While watching their activities, I remembered how a teacher was described in early 20th century. It seems like

nothing has changed. Teacher is light, the carrier of culture at the place where they are working. Us, teachers, we dress up, get on the stage and we have our own music celebration for a moment. We finish our classes with students and in the evening we go to the other side of Latvia to a concert to perform, say, one of Skryabin's poems (*might seem like two incompatible things...*) *Whether* I like it or not, the festival makes me think – what is the meaning of the festival, why do teachers want to play and why do they play? At the moment I am not bothered about the concerts that have only a few performances because the sound of music does its thing and the show begins.

Teachers talk, tell, convince, hear out a lot in their classes and that is how their own concept of how Haydn, Clementi, Diabelli should sound like is shaped, it radiates when playing music whether they like it or not. Sometimes children counteract teachers' ideas with their ability, understanding and what they are able to perceive. Teachers often say: *I'd love to play for you in the exam*. And now they have a chance to play for their students.

Ideas from Bauska. In what language would teachers want to speak to their students? After all the motto of this festival is: *teachers play for their students*. It might have been Clementi, Diabelli in your head. When I received programmes chosen by teachers, I realized that teachers are willing to speak to their students in a more complex – Brahms's, Rachmaninoff's, Rosauero's language. Brave! At what point is the disciple not able to outdo their master? In the eyes of students their teacher was and always will be a master.

The 2nd festival featured music teachers from nearly 60 schools and educational institutions.

I as the organizer and coordinator of the festival had the opportunity to attend all concerts of the festival. Each of the concerts made me think about the meaning of the festival, about the performing teachers. I would also like to invite the teachers who are reading this *E-Journal for the teachers of chamber music* to join one of the festival concerts in the winter of 2016.

(Translated by *Fluent*)

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* "Tchaikovsky's music always sounds better than it is; the music of Brahms is often better than it sounds." (*Eduard Hanslick*)