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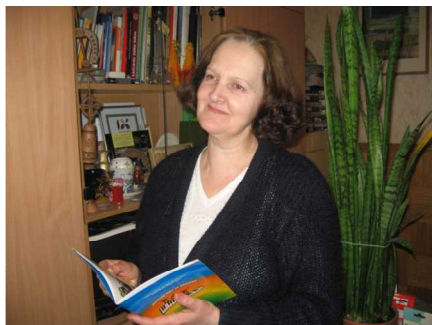
FOR TEACHERS OF CHAMBER ENSEMBLES



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PROLOGUE



Gunta Melbārde,
teacher of Jāzeps Mediņš Riga 1st Music School.
Graduated from Leningrad State Conservatory
(Petrozavodsk branch).
Artistic director of International Festival – Competition
of chamber ensembles for young performers *We Play
Music with Friends*. Creator of numerous note
collections for young musicians.

Dear colleagues!

At this very moment we are at the beginning of a new way. We have got convinced that the joy of performing music with friends cannot be an advantage of the world of grown-ups only.

Seven saturated years have passed since our first fête of joint music playing. During the intervals between the annual *We Play Music with Friends* contests we have been gathering together at Winter master classes for teachers of chamber ensemble.

Times change, but the question is still topical: of what is happening in Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania... We would like to discover the latest trends in chamber music pedagogy, in the methods of our neighbors. Teachers still lack for methodological information. We all wish to *'know how'*.

To make this e-journal a really inspiring helper in our day-to-day work with our youngest colleagues - children, everyone has to do his bit. Everyone who wishes to contribute to our project is invited to share their ideas, dreams, thoughts, experience: adventures and discoveries, tears of both grief and joy on the pages of this journal.

Our e-mail: weplay@inbox.lv

We intend to publish it twice a year (in September and March) with the help of all enthusiastic chamber music performers and teachers of all Baltic countries.

Together with our friends we will make it!

(Translated by Alexey Pegushev)

IDEAS, COMMENTS, REVIEWS



Merja Soisaari-Turriago,
Jyväskylä University/ Music Department (Finland)
European Chamber Music Teachers Association
(ECMTA), Chair of the Board

A TRUE DEDICATION TO CHAMBER MUSIC

I have been to many conferences and congresses which have claimed themselves to be events for development of music in its different forms. There have been Power Points with empty phrases and promises.

Last year I had the happy opportunity to visit the organization *We Play Music with Friends* and Mrs. Gunta Melbarde in Riga. I was impressed by the work done in this true community of chamber music. Children of different ages are brought together to make chamber music in various ensembles. Chamber music is used as both social and musical means for development.

Mrs. Gunta Melbarde has also done a great work in collecting educational material for young children. I hope this material will find its way to a many chamber music teachers. Her work and *We Play Music with Friends* will be presented in the European Chamber Music Teachers Association's Festival and Annual Meeting in Mannheim 2009. I hope that this will help it to get to the hands of true lovers of chamber music.

This is where the Power of Love for music lies.



Roman Trautman, cellist

Ensemble of medieval music *Ludus*

Graduated from Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Music Academy.

Teacher of cello and chamber ensemble Em. Dārziņš Music School
and Jāz. Mediņš Riga^{1st} Music School

DAY-TO-DAY WORK WITH A CHILDREN CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

(Translated by Alexey Pegushev)

What is the most important in our day-to-day work with a children chamber ensemble?

The process can be divided into **three phases**:

1. What has to be done **BEFORE THE FIRST JOINT REHEARSAL**;
2. What has to be done **DIRECTLY AT THE REHEARSALS**;
3. What has to be done during the **INTERVALS BETWEEN** rehearsals.

1. Before the first rehearsal

The participants of a children chamber ensemble must be selected in such a way that the children are approximately the same age and extent of mastering their instrument. The teacher must know what each child is able to play.

The next item is selection of repertoire. Not only does it depend on the level of technical skills of each child, but also on where and when the piece is meant to be performed (either in front of an audience or just in the classroom). In my view, the chamber repertoire must be easier than the one in the children's specialty program (for example, in the first level string instrument players could play more on open strings or in the 1st position, without double notes and complicated chords, in keys with less than three signatures; in the parts of wind instruments notes not higher than the 2nd octave, difficult intonations, mordents would not occur, etc.).

THE DRAMATIC SENSE OF THE PIECE - style, genre, character, form -all these points must be thoroughly clear to the teacher in order to be described later to the children. After the instrumental parts are distributed among the students for acquaintance and further study, a close creative contact with the students' specialty teachers must be maintained.

In the parts each remark (fingering, tempo, dynamic, agogic, articulation, bowing for string instrument players, places for taking breath for wind instrument players, etc.) must be written down in detail. These points must not be discussed during the rehearsal. Otherwise, while the teacher explains something to one student all the others may get bored and lose concentration, which will reduce the efficiency of the classes.

2. At the rehearsal

First of all, the instruments must be tuned to the piano if piano is part of ensemble or to each other if not. Warming up is highly recommended (for instance, my ensembles play scales simultaneously). Pauses are also important - muscles must be warmed up gradually. Pauses are also required for the work of our brains: to analyze what went wrong and needs corrections.

Unlike specialty classes, which require students concentrated attention, playing in a chamber ensemble needs divided attention at the same time (not only has one to listen to his/her own play, but also to one's partners and the sound of the whole ensemble).

Roles must be distributed and marked in the parts (desirably with multicolored pencils): each participant has to see clearly where his solo or dialogue with another instrument or just inconspicuous accompaniment, etc. is.

At the first few rehearsals the tempo of the performance is to be slower than the real one, but the rhythmical patterns (the correlation of note values) have to be observed as strictly as possible. There is a useful exercise of practicing to play in such a way: the one who has the lead at the moment plays *forte*, but all the others play *piano* while listening to the rhythmical structure of the lead. In my view, 3 DIFFERENT TEMPOS must be used during the study process: A SLOW ONE (to check the parts on 'dirty' places and remove technical defects), ONE A BIT FASTER (the usual tempo for studying) and THE REAL ONE (for performance). It is also important to select the most suitable tempo for each stage of work (although sometimes the form of the piece which has to sound Adagio is more likely to be worked out more properly if the piece is played in the real tempo a couple of times during the study process).

Playing in a chamber ensemble is *simultaneous performance* of all their parts by the participants, that's why strict pulsation undoubtedly is decisive, but the tempo is determined by the participant whose part includes notes with the smallest values.

During a rehearsal it is important to combine thorough performance of the piece and studying some separate difficult episodes (regardless of their being sentences, phrases or even separate bars). In the second case it is possible to work with only one or two participants for a while in order to activate and develop their auditory control (up to complete automatism).

Another detail that is not less important is discipline. In order to increase the efficiency of the work the teacher must make arrangements with the children that everything that would be done during the classes is important and interesting for everybody present. Nevertheless, sometimes the teacher must use the '*gentle terror*': total irreconcilability to superficial attitude, mistakes, etc., in order to get the best result possible at the particular moment.

3. Intervals between the rehearsals.

It is recommended to use audio and video recordings at the rehearsals, and it is even better if the children have an ability to listen to the piece at a concert. However, going too far, especially at the first stages of studying can cause the students' senseless copying the performers that they have heard, and that it is not always good.

Naturally, the children have to work at home intensively during the breaks. The teacher must be responsible for the task's being very concrete; the demand's being consequent, but feasible. For example, playing one's part and singing the solo part at the same time can help to prepare oneself to playing in a chamber ensemble quite well. Especially, this exercise is useful for young pianists. After a joint rehearsal the teacher should analyze together with the students what was good and what went wrong and needs improvement.

It is utterly perfect if the children have made friends and arrange their own rehearsals at school or at somebody's place, or anywhere else by themselves. That sort of initiative should undoubtedly be supported and encouraged, because in fact, that is the *dream of a teacher...*

4. Some more useful advice.

When we speak about high things, such as style, genre, form, character it is necessary to realize what simple means all that can be achieved by. Correct choice of tempo, distinct articulation in all voices, precise *attaca*, clear rhythmical pattern, either light or more satiated sound, suitable dynamic tinges, justified and logical agogic...

How can one make a child feel the form of a musical piece and convey it to the audience? The concept can be explained as a sequence of events that occur during the performance of the piece. Not only does one have to know the character of the personages of the story distinctly (if we compare a piece of music to a story, which, by the way, is a good

way to explain the concept of form to a child, too), but also such things as when and how the action starts, how it develops, where and how the peak is achieved, and how the whole thing eventually comes to an end.

Indications of dynamics and tempo should be mainly interpreted as marks of character. One must also take into account that each instrument has dynamic limits, beyond which a sound is not a sound YET or not a sound ANY MORE, for the texture in the sound of the whole ensemble has to be heard clearly.

A teacher can also achieve the desirable results by using their personal KEY WORDS, images, poetic expression and exquisite comparisons - in one word, any fruit of teachers' vivid imagination that is intelligible to a child of certain age.

If the ensemble apart from, for example, a violin, a cello, a flute, etc. contains a piano, the teacher has to know that the children are in different start positions, for in the first 2-3 classes a pianist might not know what it means, to play together with somebody (in an orchestra, with an accompanist) simply for lack of experience. A young pianist is taught to be a soloist and is sure to behave correspondingly: either play his solo parts aggressively or wish to dominate all the time. Here lots of educative work is to be done to make the child gradually learn that there are other participants, too, and they have the main role sometimes. However, my colleagues say that the pianist is the creative centre of a chamber ensemble... Surely, that is true, he has the whole score and so on, but that usually reveals itself in the last few forms.

However, other instrumentalists may also have problems with perception of the texture as a whole for they have only their own part before their eyes. That is why it is highly recommended for everyone to play reading the score at least at a few rehearsals so as not only to hear but also to see what the other voices are.

To make the playing really simultaneous, one must take some troubling factors into account, such as string and position changes for string instruments, taking breath for winds, etc.

It is important (especially in classicism music) to keep to the tempo from the very first bar till the last one, to return to *tempo primo* after a *ritenuto* or a lyrical middle part. The characters of different episodes can and must be different, but the tempo has to stay the same. Here the old recipe of 'M.M=120' can give a hand.

The articulation issue is not of the easy ones. For instance, although *staccato* indication in the part(s) of string instrument(s) can be interpreted as *martelé* as well as *spiccato*, the possibly highest extent of similarity of its sound in the parts of all instruments must be achieved. (For example, if everybody jumps like a sparrow (maybe somebody more or less similar to a sparrow, but anyway) then everyone must jump like a sparrow, and nobody like a frog.) It is also necessary to explain the difference between the meaning of slurs (either these are that show how to phrase, or ones that indicate to play *legato*, or slurs that describe the bowing). Multicolored pencils could help a lot here.

These are *very simple*, familiar things, but knowing them leads us to all *the depth* of sense of music.

An Artistic Portrait



Interview with the *Professor Gunta Sproģe*, Head of
the Chamber ensemble Department of Jāzeps Vītols
Latvian Music Academy

(Translated by Alexey Pegushev)

Gunta Melbārde: What is your view on the idea of creating a methodological journal for chamber ensemble teachers of Baltic countries on our website?

Gunta Sproģe: Such conceivment is undoubtedly praiseworthy. One of the main reasons of its necessity is our cooperation with our Estonian and Lithuanian colleagues from educational institutions of different levels. Furthermore, joining the European Chamber Music Teachers' Association (ECMTA) in 2008 has actualized and accelerated the process.

GM: How did you come to chamber music?

GS: Years ago, having graduated from professor Igors Kalniņš's piano class in Jāzeps Vītols State Conservatory of Latvia with a first-class honorees degree I was invited to study at Peter Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory's residency but was unable to begin my work due to family circumstances. Only seven years later, when I had already been quite enthralled by chamber music and had received an invitation to work at the accompaniers' department of JVSCL from J.Ķepītis and M.Saiva, I could fulfill my dream of studying at residency, this time at the professor Georgi Fedorenko's chamber ensemble class at Moscow Gnesini Pedagogical Institute of Music (now Russian Gnesini Music Academy) by correspondence.

GM: In your view, what are the aspects that make Latvian chamber ensemble school remarkable?

GS: The best artistic and pedagogical traditions are synthesized at the JVLMA chamber ensemble department, which were accumulated in the professors' Jānis Ķepītis, Maija Saiva, Valdis Jancis chamber ensemble classes. Apart from that, they are supplemented by my and assoc. prof. Aldis Liepiņš's knowledge acquired at MGSIMP at prof. Georgi Fedorenko's class and Jānis Maļeckis's knowledge acquired at prof. Tamara Fidler's class at Leningrad Rimski-Korsakov State Conservatory. The main purpose of the work of our department is to encourage students' free and enthralled music making, and at the same time to work out every instrumental part in the most filigree way in order to develop their perfect orientation in different styles and forms.

GM: Could you tell us about your pedagogical experience?

GS: In my pedagogical work I have always fallen back on the basis of knowledge provided by my excellent teacher's prof. Igors Kalniņš, Jānis Ķepītis and Georgi Fedorenko. Working at the piano class of Riga Jāzeps Mediņš High School has helped lot, too.

I have always made efforts to make a favorable, free and easy atmosphere. First of all, I work with the pianist individually putting accents on perfect mastering the score, precise rhythms and pedaling often giving some practical advice how it is easier to learn to play technically difficult things. A lot of attention is paid to comprehension of the composer's style for the selection of tempo, *touché* and phrasing style depends on it. Of course, the character of the piece is decisive. The selection of a proper tempo and proper revealing of the form has an important role, too, but that choice has to be made at one of the later stages.

A pianist must have a conductor's view on the whole score, has to know when the piano is the leading instrument and when just an accompanying one and when the parts are equal. The same thing refers to all the other participants. A chamber ensemble has to have a united sounding. All the parts have to be performed with the same articulation and breath and

of course, all the participants have to listen what is happening in the other parts. I often use the opportunity of recording my students' performance on tape (regardless whether it is audio or video) so that they can listen and establish the good and bad points of their play. Not only does it help to find the correct solution, but also it makes us more intimate and inspires interest to further work.

I have been working in JVLMA since 1978 and heading the department of chamber ensemble and accompaniment since 1991. 15 masters of Arts have graduated from my class and some of them, Antra Vīksne, Normunds Vīksne, Herta Hansena, Mārtiņš Zilberts and Ilona Meija have an active concert life and work at JVLMA. My students have also attracted attention at many international contests. For seventeen years has the annual contest 'The Best Chamber Ensemble of JVLMA' been held, the winners of which receive a bonus from the academy administration and the possibility to record their performance at the First recording studio of Latvian Radio.

I have also been one of the judges at many contests (International S.Taneyev chamber ensemble contest in Kaluga (1996, 1999), International chamber ensemble contest Jurmala (1997, 2000), International Gnesini chamber ensemble and piano duet contest for young musicians in Novomoskovsk (2001, 2004), First International Stays Vainiūnas pianist and chamber ensemble contest in Vilnius (2006), First International Dmitri Shostakovich chamber ensemble contest in Moscow (2008).

One of the forms of co-operation with our foreign colleagues is exchange of teachers, which means business trips of our teachers during which master classes for student of different musical educational institutions are held. Several teachers of our academy, including me in 1996, had the opportunity of working in South Illinois University in Carbondale (USA) and giving a concert there. I have also conducted master classes in Berlin School of Arts (1995, 2003), Estonian Music Academy (2000, 2004), Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (2002, 2008), Stuttgart Institute of Music and Arts (2006), Elder Conservatory, Australia (2006) and the Royal Music Academy of Denmark in Copenhagen (2008).

GM: Is methodological knowledge provided at JVLMA chamber ensemble classes?

GS: Students of MA studies at JVLMA have an obligatory subject in the chamber ensemble program which is called *Assistance Practice* where students are taught the basics of teaching to play in a chamber ensemble. They also attend open classes of both Latvian and foreign professors and gain practical knowledge in working with chamber ensemble students.

GM: What is your view on the previous and future partnership with our fund?

GS: It has been very fruitful and has had good results so far and that can be proved by both professional and artistic growth of children chamber ensembles that perform at the annual international contest *We Play Music with Friends*, which has been held in different places in Latvia in co-operation with Riga Jāzepts Mediņš music school since 2003 and the charring the judges of which was trusted to me. Methodological discussions which are part of the contest program had good results. An immense contribution was made by the annual master classes and lectures for chamber ensemble teachers with participation of professors and masters of chamber ensemble play from Estonia, Lithuania, Russia and Finland, which are also organized by the Fund in co-operation with Riga Jāzepts Mediņš music school. That is important for the improvement of both technical and artistic level of children ensembles from the very first forms. The new rules permit students of music high schools (up to 21 years old) to go in for the contest, which, in my view, is really essential. I also suggest an obligatory piece of a Latvian composer is included in the program of the next contest.

GM: What topics do you advise to include in the next numbers of our e-journal?

GS: Basic methods of teaching, news about contests, festivals, master classes, etc., interviews with experienced teachers, repertoire issues could be discussed.

GM: Thank you! Look forward to meeting you again!



I am **Anneli Kuusk**.

I am a flute teacher of H.Eller Music School in Tartu (Estonia).

I have worked at Vanemuine Theatre Orchestra for 20 years.

I have got my music education in Tallinn *G.Ots* Music School and in Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre.

Now I teach different ensembles at music schools in Tartu - recorder ensemble *Ellerino*, flute ensemble and different chamber ensembles.

Short overview of chamber music in Estonian music schools

I would like to give you a little overview about Estonian chamber music which is played in our music schools today.

The chamber music performed in Estonia can be divided in two:

- 1) The music composed by Estonian composers;
- 2) The arranged Estonian folk music.

The music composed by Estonian composers can be divided in older and newer period. From the older period the most well-known composers are *Heino Eller*, *Eduard Tubin*, *Eugen Kapp*, *Heino Jürisalu*, *Artur Lemba* and others.

In the new generation composers such as *Mati Kuulberg*, *Lepo Sumera*, *Arvo Pärt*, *Veljo Tormis*, *Anti Marguste*, *Urmak Sisask*, *Tõnu Kõrvits*, *Rene Eespere* can be named.

Genres in Estonian contemporary chamber music scene

One can distinguish different genres in Estonian chamber music:

1) Symphonic music (for example composed by *Heino Eller*). His symphonic piece "**Homeland melody**" is a very beloved and well-known piece of Estonian symphonic chamber music. *Eller* was more known as a composer for strings, but he has also written three well-known pieces for flute and piano.

2) String chamber music. For example: *Artur Lemba's* "**The poem of Love**" for piano and violin. This very known piece is usually played by advanced students in music school because it requires a sensitive tone and high technical skills. Quite similar piece in that sense is "**The Pine Trees**" by *Heino Eller*.

There is also violin and piano music by Estonian composers- for example: *Heino Eller's* "**Lyrical song**", *Ester Mägi's* "**Dancing**". For the youngest students, the beginner level, *Anna Ellerhein's* "**Simple string pieces**" are very popular in Estonian music schools.

From Estonian composers' cello music, a collection of cello pieces can be mentioned, the authors of which are *Anti Marguste*, *Ester Mägi*, *Artur Lemba* and others.

3) Piano music:

Anti Marguste's "**Piano pieces from the cycle of chamber ensemble -School Music**". From this cycle, the most popular piece for students in music school is the small concert for two pianos, called "**Waltz Without Corners**".

Urmak Sisask is a contemporary productive composer for piano in Estonia. His music is inspired by astrology. He has written a cycle of piano pieces about the horoscopes. For piano ensembles, *Urmak Sisask* has written "**Andromeda**"- a sonata for eight hands, "**The Milky Way**" for 4 hands and other pieces.

Other interesting piano pieces for advanced piano students are: *Raimo Kangro's* piece for 2 pianos "**Oh Sancta Simplicitas**" and "**Display 2: Portrait of Mozart**"; *Tõnu Kõrvits'*

interesting and quite technical piece "**When we meet in ten years in Cosmos**"; *Age Hirv's* piece for 4 hands "**The Rainbow**"; *Rene Eespere's* "**One wish and dream**" for 2 pianos.

4) Wind music. The wind orchestra is the oldest type of orchestra in Estonia. The first wind bands date back to the end of the 19th century when the brass ensembles were very popular. The most known music composers from the 20th century for wind orchestras are *Raimond Kull, Eugen Kapp, Ülo Raudmäe, Rein Ploom* and others. From contemporary composers I would mention *Hans Hindpere, Peeter Raik, Aadu Regi and Tõnu Kõrvits*.

Aadu Regi is a clarinet player himself and an activist of brass-wind instrument scene in Estonia. He is an appreciated teacher and a creator of his school of clarinet players. One of his students Meelis Vind has recorded many pieces of Estonian contemporary wind music, for example "**The Rowan Sea**". This piece is written by a young composer *Mirjam Talli* who has a very interesting sound language.

5) Folk music. Lots of Estonian folk music is played on wind instruments. The trend is to make arrangements of pop hits, for example *Olav Ehala's* "**The Song of Money**" from a well-known children's film "**Nukitsamees**".

Arrangements in Estonian contemporary chamber music

I would like to draw special attention to a trend in Estonian school chamber music - the so-called arranged Estonian folk tunes. There is a lot of beautiful folk music in Estonia that the ensembles in music schools wish to play. But the instruments played in the ensemble depend on the existing instruments at this school. Then the music has to be adapted to the existing instruments. Good examples of these arrangements are made by *Ott Kask*-a well-known wind instrument teacher. He has published a book: "**10 four Voice Arrangements for in C, Bb, Eb, F instruments and percussion**" which is widely used in music schools.

Kaido Otsing, teacher of horn in Tartu, has arranged in a very interesting way the pieces that he has adapted to the instruments existing at the school and the capacities of the actual students. For example: „**Integrated 5**“ - this piece consists of five different Estonian folk songs. All of them are connected with each other with very easy technical methods. This piece also fits well with the instruments of the school orchestra. Another example arranged by *Otsing* is „**Jooksupolka**“ (Estonian folk dance).

Orff instrumentarium in the basics of chamber music studies

In order to study chamber music it is very important to begin the studies with *Orff* instrumentarium. These instruments are not technically difficult to play but at the same time they developed musical and rhythmic sense of children - it is important to feel the music going through the body without reading the notes in the beginning of the music studies. *Monika Pullerits and Tuuli Jukk* has published a book about the basic music teaching. Their method is based on the *Orff* instruments. Estonian folk songs have been composed in a clever and simple way for those instruments. The children begin with rhythms. This seems natural because the rhythms are everywhere around us- the night and day, the seasons... In Estonian national poetry there has been a lot of attention thrown to the rhythms of nature. The *Orff* instruments take children and nature closer together, helping them to understand music in a natural way. Applying *Orff* instruments and the system in teaching music is a good presumption for early ensemble play.

Perspectives in Estonian chamber music education

In Estonia not many composers have composed school music. Most of the pieces are technically complicated and therefore performed by professionals. The notes of school music from all over the world are available and everybody can get access to the notes they wish to use. In the music schools there is a trend to make arrangements of pop music. In the last level of music school (for the advanced students) the program *Sibelius* is taught. This raises the interest in arranging music. Important is that the music would be easy to play for the children.



Egle Čobotiene,
violinist, expert teacher and deputy director of
Vilnius Mikalojus Konstatinas Čiurlionis National
School of Arts (Lithuania)

PEDAGOGY AND CHAMBER MUSIC IN MUSIC SCHOOLS

(Translated by Alexey Pegushev)

He who works in pedagogy has to have such features of character that resemble mother's feelings (A.Artobolevskaya).

That requires a whole-hearted devotion and immense intellectual and emotional resources. Nevertheless, all the efforts, tortures and losses are more than compensated by the bright stream of youth energy, which each teacher receives in return. However, one can impinge on quite musically gifted children that are not always emotionally responsive to their teachers' vivifying enthusiasm from time to time. To make a child not only listen, but also hear, not only watch, but also see is definitely an issue not of the easy ones.

For going in for in-depth analysis of an artistic character, the teacher himself must have certain features. The most important ones are vivid interest, love and kindness towards other people and also the capacity of exact expression of one's thoughts. A teacher has to be able to demonstrate the things he is suggesting to his student. He has to be gifted with an inexhaustible imagination, fantasy, temperament, strong will, organizing capacities and has to be a good psychologist.

Apart from that, a teacher of chamber ensemble must know the specificity of different instruments at least partially. Then there is the problem of forming an ensemble. Concerning that, not only the age of a certain child is an important criterion, but also talent, temperament, character and upbringing are not less essential. Actually, I have to admit it is impossible to define a certain age when it is best to start playing in a chamber ensemble. On a basis of my many year experience I can undoubtedly establish that the earlier the beginning is, the better it is for the child for at quite an early age (form 2 or 3) students develop not only motivation to learn to play their instrument but also interest in music in general.

Every teacher wishes to achieve good results at work, every student dreams about successful performance at contests, festivals, concerts, etc. However, all that is not so easy to achieve. As I have mentioned before, first of all, selection of students is decisive in a lot of aspects. Chamber ensembles may contain a lot of different instruments, but more different are the characters of the students who play them.

The selection of repertoire can be placed number two in my importance gradation. One has to choose pieces to perform very carefully. The form and, in fact, all contents of the repertoire selected must be easy understandable and perceptible for the particular children in the particular ensemble. Sometimes, when the students are a bit older, it may be useful to suggest they find something on their own as that stimulates motivation and independent thinking.

It is better to start with very simple pieces gradually increasing the difficulty extent. Also it is important to maintain the concept of equality in the minds of the children from the very beginning. Every chamber music piece is meant for two or more musicians, which means that the composer has divided the thematic material equally among the participants of the ensemble. That is the main difference between piano accompaniment and a chamber ensemble, where there is no number one and number two, but all the parts are equally important.

Sometimes the composer puts the material sequently in all the instrumental parts, sometimes the beginning of the main theme is in one part while the sequel is in another, but sometimes the themes interlace like boas or ivies and sound in two or more parts at the same time. The possibilities are almost endless and that is why it is very important for each participant to learn to hear the sound of the whole ensemble, both harmony and melody, both vertical and horizontal.

At the rehearsals it is necessary to work on details of each piece, separate sentences, phrases, even bars, but it is also essential to play the whole piece in the real tempo from time to time. There are also a lot of more subtle aspects that have to be worked on. For instance, active articulation in one part requires bright sound of the other parts.

One of the most popular concepts nowadays is 'contact'. Collective creativity, co-operation - that is also the contact, without which the true art of music cannot exist.

Beginning to work on a piece, the teacher has to specify everything concerning articulation to each participant providing the same articulation for the whole ensemble. Articulation is defined by different styles of performance, that's why attention has to be paid to the character of each phrase. Sometimes it may be useful to compare the sound of a certain phrase when it is played on the instrument that it was meant for and when it is sung. The work on articulation must be closely connected to the work on all the other aspects of musical language such as tempo, rhythm, dynamics, phrasing, etc.

These are the main things concerning chamber ensembles and performing problems in music schools that I would like to have pointed out.

I would also like to wish every teacher, especially every young teacher, to be courageous, sincere, to avoid perfunctory attitude in any aspect. I am grateful for the opportunity of working with such admirably enthusiastic staff, the staff of Riga Jāzeps Mediņš music school.

Your work is really outstanding and is an example for younger generations. Our international seven year partnership is a striking example of musical contact. That has really been making music with friends.

AMMUNITION

Festivals, Contests, New Music for the Chamber Ensembles

http://www.incorpore.com.ee/IN_CORPORE_ENG/IN_CORPORE_2010.html

<http://www.heifetzcompetition.com/>

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