

FOR PLAYERS OF VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO, BASS, AND FIDDLE

STRINGS

December 2016



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Why is this an exciting time to be a string player?

It's exciting for string players today because the styles and levels of string playing are all over the map. There are many different markets for string players of varying skill and musical education, more places to find a niche than ever.

What kinds of skills do you think a string player needs in order to succeed in the 21st century?

That depends on what genre one expects to succeed in and at what career level. For some kinds of music, very little systematized training is needed or even desirable; for others, it's hard to find training rigorous enough to make it to the top.

What do you think audiences expect from string performers?

Audiences today generally expect projection of sound, musical ideas, and personality as top priorities.

How do you expect string playing to change in the next 20 years?

I expect to see the importance of individuality return as a criteria for artistic success, which I welcome, along with a growing sense of supporting the composer as the performer's primary responsibility.

What concerns do you have for the future of string playing?

My concerns for string players are the same as for the entire classical-music industry: lack of general education and lack of support, recognition, respect, and understanding of the high arts by the media, government, and prominent figures in society. The level and number of extraordinary and worthy young artists are in danger of exceeding the number of people of understanding interested to hear them.

What is the best piece of career or musical advice you've received?

Career advice and musical advice can either be looked at as separate or equal; I see them as equal. To be a great performing musician you have to have the physical discipline of a world-class athlete, the intellectual curiosity of a Rhodes Scholar, and the yearning for artistic depth and excellence of the finest artists, of any field, who have ever walked the face of the earth. If you really do all that, the career will follow. It may take time, but you will not go unnoticed, and people will be interested in you because you show a love and dedication to music that is above and beyond mercenary and narcissistic concerns.