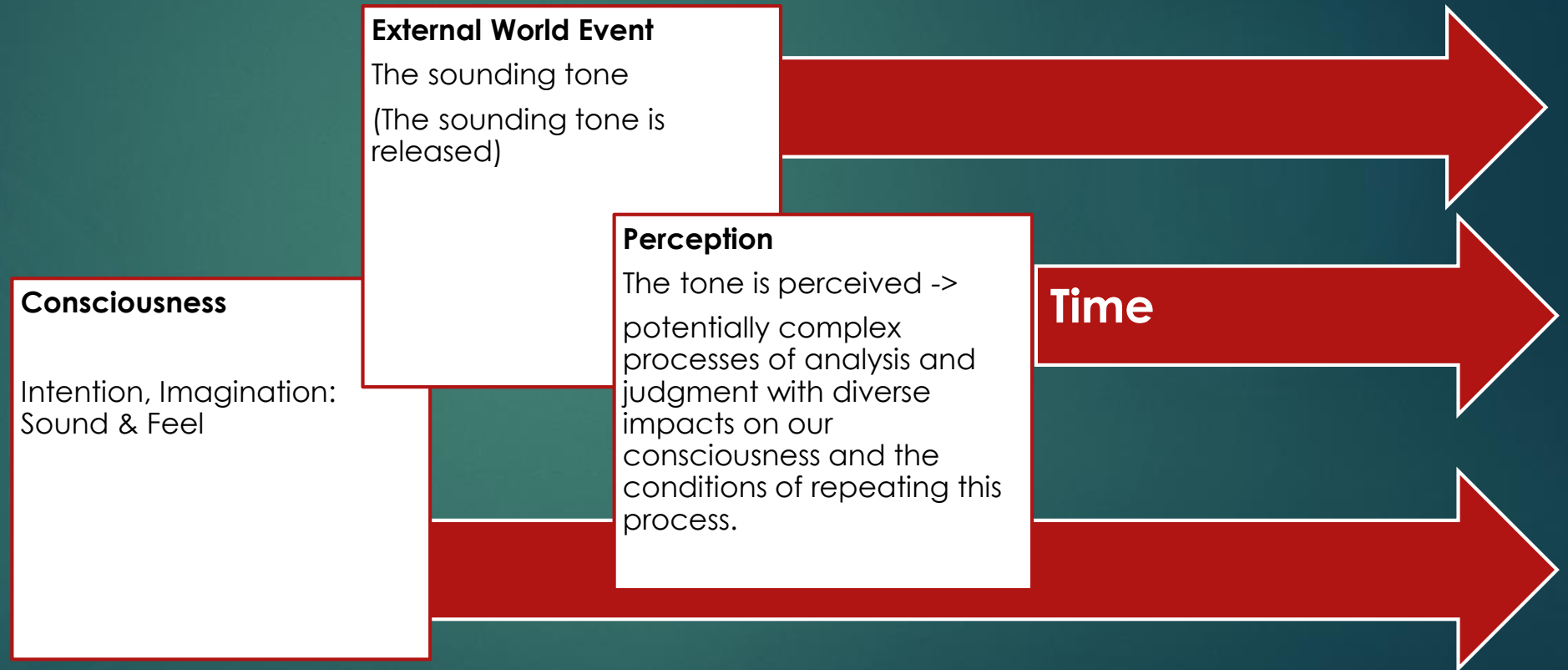


# The Left hand is your friend

[GOETZ.RICHTER@SYDNEY.EDU.AU](mailto:GOETZ.RICHTER@SYDNEY.EDU.AU)



# Schematic analysis of performance: The importance of timing and imagination



# Movement



## Principles

1. Timing and Rhythm determine effort and structure
2. Metaphorical relationship between “body” and “mind”, imagination & feeling are central
3. Connectedness (the person plays) -> psycho-physical unity: movement changes person, person changes movement. Feeling unifies dualism
4. Active – passive
5. Movement is cyclic/ rhythmic: impulse – recovery. (Feeling)

# The basis of playing: Rhythm & Co-ordination

“Ear training alone will not make a child love and appreciate music; the most potent element in music and the nearest related to life, is rhythmic movement” (E. J. Dalcroze)

The role of the left ... the bilateral foundations of playing. Anticipation and co-ordination of movements. Left leads (temporal) – Right forms. (artistically, right leads)

Thinking and movement change “timing” and change as a result of time

Mind and body regulated and correlated through rhythm

-> Galamian's concept of “correlation”

Rhythm is “felt” – Stability of rhythm depending on condition of body.

Rhythm is felt because we feel the impulses and recoveries. This points to the centrality of relaxation and relaxation techniques to instrumental development. (Gingold: “...we do not practice the notes, we practice in between the notes...”). Rhythm and movement regulate change.

# Practical

- ▶ Left hand work needs to be rhythmic (Co-ordination practice)
- ▶ Rhythmic practice is recovery practice. Tension reduction
  - ▶ How strong is finger pressure?
  - ▶ Hammering vs stroking?
  - ▶ Lifting rather than pushing down
- ▶ Joints, muscles and bones. Impulse and recovery -> rhythmic movement. The relativity of relaxation. (active/ passive)
- ▶ Effortless movement requires anticipation (left before right, but also within left. Clear separation between active/ passive feel

# Intentionality, Attention, Feeling

What generates difference? How do we learn?

The importance of intentionality (directedness) -> metaphorical relationship

The fundamental role of the imagination -> guides recovery, impulses, intensity.


*ergo*: Technique is feeling -> Psycho-physical unity.

# Practical

- ▶ Anticipation practice. (single, passage work)
- ▶ Silent practice (audiation, visualisation... although it is not visual... rather: presencing...)
- ▶ **Shifting**: Anticipation needs to be clear, movement of arm is “released” (stages of shifting: conception/ concrete intention -> “balancing”/relaxation -> release of action (receptive, non-active))

Changes between 1st and 4th Positions

The image shows a musical score for violin, titled "Changes between 1st and 4th Positions". It consists of two staves, labeled I and II. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two parts, I and II, each containing eight measures of music. Part I starts with a circled 'I' and contains the following fingerings: 1 1 1, 1 2 1, 1 3 1, 1 4 1, 2 1 2, 2 2 2, 2 3 2, 2 4 2. Part II starts with a circled 'II' and contains the following fingerings: 3 1 3, 3 2 3, 3 3 3, 3 4 3, 4 1 4, 4 2 4, 4 3 4, 4 4 4. The score is marked with a '5' in the top right corner.

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- ▶ **Vibrato:** vibrato dependent on “idea” -> wrist/ arm oscillation. Rhythmic, reflex like movement, which is practiced away from instrument (miming)



# Structural considerations

Connection of the hand to the body:

Size of instrument: why is it important, how do we know what the right size is.

Placement of instrument to body. Instrument is part of the body. -> the hand is not an object in space.

Hands as pivoting systems... thumb vs. fingers. Provides opportunity for active/ passive elements.

Finger angles and contacts (is there a hand "position" -> possibility to move; considerations for balance, the hand as a dynamic, pivoting system -> fingers feel pitch and position (privilege of tactile sense over geometric-visual sense, cf. braille readers)

Fingers, Hand and Hand position are balanced by arm, body via joints (loose to allow balance). Attention is directed to passive elements of movement -> freedom of balance

# Practical

## Independence Exercises

“Geminiani” Exercise. Vertical (lift, trill), horizontal (chromatic), Vertico-horizontal (String Crossing), More Complex, eg Dounis, but also Schradieck, Sevcik, etc Flesch, “Basic Studies”:

I A.

The image shows a musical exercise labeled 'I A.' consisting of two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features a sequence of eighth notes, followed by a trill on the final note, and then three measures of rests. The second staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. It features a sequence of eighth notes, followed by a trill on the final note, and then three measures of rests. The exercise is designed to practice independence of the hands through vertical, horizontal, and vertico-horizontal patterns.

*monacum regem.*

I B.

The musical score for I B. consists of two staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/2 time signature. It contains a sequence of eighth notes with various accidentals (flats and naturals) and includes first and second endings marked with '1' and '2'. The bottom staff continues the piece with similar rhythmic complexity, featuring eighth notes, triplets, and various accidentals. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

I C.

The musical score for I C. consists of two staves. Both staves feature a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with various accidentals. The notation includes many flats and naturals, and the piece ends with a double bar line.

## Shifting Exercises (simple) (G. Yost)

Skip of the Octave

same fingering

On all strings in the  
keys of A, D and G

## Vibrato Exercises

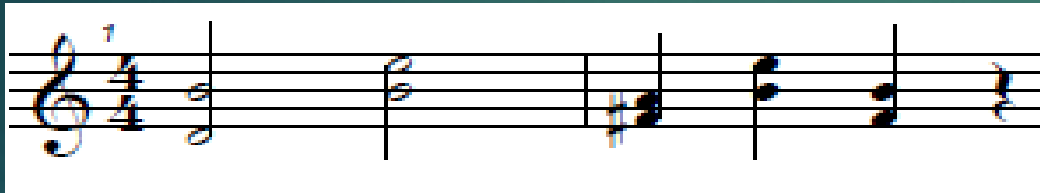
Exercises for finger joints

Rivarde's Exercise in Modifications

Sliding exercises (siren shifts), dotted rhythm

# Intonation

Harmonic vs melodic intonation: **The syntonic comma**



The syntonic comma is the **difference between a just ( $5/4$  or  $80/64$ ) and a Pythagorean major third ( $81/64$ )**. It is the difference which describes our decision to play melodic major thirds wider while playing them narrower in the harmonic context. This difference is also relevant to minor thirds and, of course, by implication to major and minor sixths.

# Intonation as a symptom...

Intonation is a reflection of referencing -> establishing referencing signposts

Correcting intonation occurs at the level of

(a) intentionality (attention)

(b) interference (eliminating)

Methods to improve intonation/ pitch: audiation, miming, referencing, re-scoring, building listening ahead

Eliminating physical obstacles/ interference (silent rehearsal) -> left hand obstacles (independence, instability of hand or finger angle)

# Conclusion

- ▶ Foundational principles need to be in place and followed through:
- ▶ Including:
- ▶ Mental preparation and direction (intention, imagination)
- ▶ Structural/ dynamic elements
- ▶ Attention for timing and rhythm
- ▶ Management of reaction -> confident and trusting relationship with the left hand.

# Contact

For questions, discussion

[goetz.richter@sydney.edu.au](mailto:goetz.richter@sydney.edu.au)

For more information, slides, links, etc

[www.goetzrichter.com](http://www.goetzrichter.com)

