

## **Teaching system based on Galamian-string technique concept: Barbara Lüneburg**

Playing any instrument requires to be conscious of the interplay of mental and physical challenges and the relation of playing technique to artistic expression. Therefore it is necessary to convey to the students the correlation of interpretation and instrumental technique and give them a profound technical, musical and mental base to work with:

Concerning the right hand (bow) I deal with the following topics:

Drawing straight bow stroke, bow hold (relation thumb to fingers), contact point and strength of contact, how to exploit the natural weight of the arm for producing sound in balance with wrist and hand, subdivision and use of the whole bow length, sound and sound colours (point of sound generation on the string, bow pressure, speed of bow movement), inaudible bow change, string crossing (tilt of the arm in relation to the string), bowing techniques (spiccato, sautillé, staccato, détaché, ricochet, playing chords etc.)

In relation to the left hand my main emphasis lies on intonation, shift of position, vibrato and effortless virtuosic playing. In the course of which I deal with:

Stabilisation of the arm within the octave position, scales (starting with one-finger-scales up to developing scale systems and arpeggios over several octaves), double and multiple stop technique, vibrato (hand and arm, flexibility of the fingers, training of strength and stamina), finger fall and active lifting of the fingers, sliding motion of fingers, hand and arm, position of hand, position of arm (tilt of the arm in connection with string crossings), systematically organised fingerings that fit the music.

Students need to develop a technique for left and right hand that is at the same time stabile, flexible and valid for all requirements of modern viola playing independently of artistic interpretation, style of music (from Baroque to contemporary music) and context (solo performances, chamber music or orchestra). I put great emphasis on tensionless playing and awareness of the body: an upright natural posture, control of breathing, developing of stamina, strength that is supplied not alone by means of the arm muscles but by using the whole body for power supply and stretching exercises to lighten musculature tension are all important points to help prevent later wearing out of muscles, joints and sinews. Body control and proper breathing is also important for leading in chamber music or orchestra.

Another important point in my teaching is to develop an efficient praxis in studying: concentration, efficiency (for example to practise runs using diverse rhythm-patterns or variations of bowing techniques), and mental alertness. I especially pay attention on teaching students how to consciously analyse their playing by analytically listening to themselves while playing and thus developing a critical ear.

In the framework of my PhD at Brunel University/London ("The creative role of the performer as an intermediary between instrument, composer and audience in new music") I am investigating everything that is relevant for establishing a concert aura:

Stage presence, charisma, non-verbal communication by means of body language, competence, communication with the audience, programming and stage setting.

The results of this work form an immediate part in my work with students.

To built up profound technical and musical knowledge I use a combination from scales, studies and string literature as basis for my lessons:

Scales: Galamian viola technique (scales and double stops)

Studies: Kreutzer, Rode, Dont, Gavinies, Paganini

Literature: a combination from Baroque, Classic, virtuosic string music, Romantic and contemporary music

Chamber music: string chamber music and compositions with varied instrumentation to develop analytic knowhow, to train the analytical ear and feeling of rhythm, development of sound colours, phrasing, timing and last but not least social competence.