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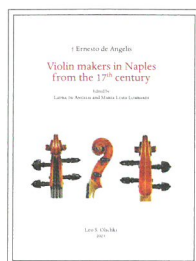
THE VIOLIN SUPERSTAR TALKS ABOUT HIS
CONDUCTING CAREER, PLAYING PAGANINI
AND MEMORIES OF NEVILLE MARRINER

UK£5.95 • US\$12.60 • CAN\$17.75

ISSN 0039-2049



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For string players, the main takeout in the book may well be Arditti's often exhaustive explanations of what may be called 'extended string techniques.' These include fingernail pizzicatos, battuto, frappe col legno (a fast battuto with the wood of the bow), ricochet, jeté, spiccato, balzato-type gestures, tabla (hitting the body of the instrument with the palm or the fingers), particular types of bridge sounds, flautando molto tasto, gettatini (a continuous gettato bow), spazzolare ('a fast windshield-wiper movement of the bow on the fingerboard between the tasto and sul ponticello areas'), in addition to various types of glissando, microtonality, irrational rhythmic patterns, poly-temporality and so on.

It's all described in meticulous detail, alongside several scans from scores, with some of them usefully containing Arditti's own pencil annotations. Any string player aspiring to explore this repertoire would do well to read the violinist's own detailed and illuminating performance instructions before rehearsing a note of the music.

As with any memoir, there is a sense in which Arditti's narrative reads like a snapshot of what now feels like a bygone era, where white male composers dominated the world of contemporary music, and artistic merit was judged according to criteria based on complexity, virtuosity, cleverness, sophistication and abstraction.

Some will no doubt note the glaring absence of gender and racial diversity within these pages. Of the 25 composers featured in each chapter, 21 of those are white male

Europeans/Americans (by my reckoning, at least), while the only female composer represented in the entire collection is the violinist's wife, Hilda Paredes.

Arditti is careful not to wade too much into broader ideological issues concerning cultural, racial and gender-based ramifications associated with this repertoire, some of which have been addressed by other performers of the so-called 'new complexity' movement, but the absence of female composers such as Liza Lim, Alwynne Pritchard, Chaya Czernowin and Rebecca Saunders will be viewed as a disappointing omission by some, especially since the Arditti Quartet has performed and recorded music by three of these composers.

Nevertheless, *Collaborations* is without doubt a valuable book for anyone interested in the modern classical music of the past 50 years, providing essential reading for string players specialising in avant-garde repertoire, and offering an indispensable companion to Arditti and Robert H.P. Platz's co-authored book on the techniques of contemporary violin playing, published by Bärenreiter in 2012.

PWYLL AP SIŌN

**Violin Makers in Naples
from the 17th Century**
Ernesto de Angelis

82PP ISBN 9788822268686

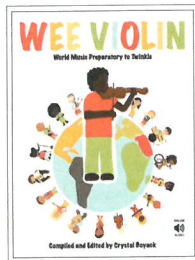
CASA EDITRICE LEO S. OLSCHKI €25

It is 15 years since Ernesto de Angelis's book on the Neapolitan luthiers first appeared, and it is still the only volume available on the subject. Now

it has been translated into English, and a wider audience can appreciate the scholarship of this devotee of the Neapolitan making traditions.

De Angelis (1943–2001) was a doctor, biologist and 'amateur violin maker', as he liked to call himself. He spent much of his life researching the lives and instruments of the Neapolitan makers, and after his death the notes he made and his collection of instrument photos were collected together and edited into a book. It is divided into three parts: an introduction to the history of violin making in Naples and notes on the distinguishing characteristics of the Neapolitan making school; biographical information on around 50 luthiers of the 19th and early 20th centuries; and finally, a photographic record of 38 representative instruments by the various makers. For each instrument (27 violins, 6 violas, 4 cellos and 1 double bass), the date is given as well as its principal dimensions and details of the label. All the photos were taken by the author, often while he was restoring the instrument at his workbench. Consequently, the whole book has a sense of authority, as De Angelis is clearly writing with a broad hands-on knowledge of the Neapolitan makers and their traditions.

The first section is probably the most useful to today's makers, as it includes a summary of the main characteristics of the 'Neapolitan school of lutherie'. De Angelis summarises the most important ones at the end of the chapter: 'the heavy thickness of the tables, the protruding points, the rather flat back, the scroll with its protruding first volute and the lower placement



of the eye, the nearly vertical positioning of the f-holes, the thin purfling [and] the transparent oil varnish, yellow-brown or red-brown'. There are many more, and his descriptions are often colourful: 'the lower bouts are rather flat at the bottom, giving the impression of a "sitting" instrument', and 'the first volute is more protruding so the scroll appears to have ears'. De Angelis's biographies of the various makers are also filled with commentary that suggests he knew them personally: for instance, we learn that Giuseppe Cappiello (1922–92) was 'known to offer lunch to anyone who went to see him for minor violin repairs or just to see his violins'. The lively prose style makes this volume one of the most enjoyable books on lutherie I have recently read.

It is odd, then, that among so much first-hand scholarship, De Angelis tells us on page 4 that Alessandro

Gagliano 'was a student of Antonio Stradivari', even though 18 pages later he backtracks and says he was 'a possible pupil of Stradivari', but two pages after that, that he 'worked about 30 years in the Stradivari workshop'. There are also some odd translations ('People says that Pistucci is also know to letting play his just finished violins to poor people') but these are minor quibbles about a book that will prove very valuable for luthiers, scholars and researchers into the making traditions of southern Italy's largest city.

CHRISTIAN LLOYD

**Wee Violin: World Music
Preparatory to Twinkle
Crystal Boyack**

62PP ISBN 9798987401200

INDEPENDENT \$19.99

Wee Violin presents a kaleidoscope of songs from around the world, and uses them thoughtfully and creatively to help the beginner violinist establish a solid technique. Suzuki teachers and learners are the target audience for this book, as playing skills are built in tiny increments, all heading towards the end goal of enabling the young player to master the *Twinkle* variations that are the bedrock of the Suzuki repertoire. While the songs themselves use a variety of keys and rhythm patterns, the student is only required to join in on the E and A strings, using the main bowing variations found in Suzuki Book 1. The teaching point for each song is clearly stated below its title and the notes for teachers are informative. Audio versions of every song can be downloaded via a QR code.

The book as a whole seems to exude positivity – everything from the friendly vibe of the illustrations to the helpful teaching notes contributes to an overarching sense of joy and encouragement. The songs are presented respectfully, mostly using original words in their original language, with occasional tweaking to fit the song's specific teaching purpose within the context of the book. There are some instances where the use of the Suzuki rhythms feels a little forced, and there are a few small typos and missing time signatures, but these do not detract from the book's overall effect or the clever way in which it guides the young player, almost by stealth, in a joyful journey towards successfully playing their first set of *Twinkle* variations.

It feels important to mention that two potentially problematic songs, *Dancing Josie* and *Canoe Song* are included in the book. These are familiar songs which have been used and loved by music educators over the years, particularly those from Kodály-inspired teaching traditions, but both have been named in the list of 'Songs with a Questionable Past' issued by Lauren McDougale, director of the American Kodály Institute. There is of course no suggestion that the author had anything but positive pedagogical motives for including these songs in the book, but given the information now available about the background of those two particular songs, it could be that she might choose to substitute them in future editions.

In short, this is a delightful and very useful book. The author's evident joy in her teaching shines through effortlessly.

CELIA COBB



Violin made
by Ernesto
de Angelis
in 1999

COURTESY MARIA LOMBARDI