

PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SELECTED SOLO VIOLIN WORKS OF  
SERGEI PROKOFIEV AND KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

by

FEI TONG

(Under the Direction of Levon Ambartsumian)

ABSTRACT

*Sonata for Solo Violin in D major, Opus 115* by Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) and *Cadenza for Solo Violin* by Krzysztof Penderecki (1933-2020) have been rarely performed in concert. These pieces were written in the twentieth century and represent the coexistence of both tradition and modernity. Based on the existing literature and my own analysis, this study is designed to integrate the full knowledge of both works with useful performance suggestions in one description, offering a detailed performance guide for violin students and professionals, and bring these overlooked solo works to light.

Backgrounds on the composers and the works are introduced, as well as stylistic characteristics and musical interpretations focused on performance aspects, as these necessary knowledges are integral for an effective performance. Performance suggestions are made for vibrato, articulation, and sound production. In addition, the suggestions on the topics of technical challenges, effective fingerings and bowings are provided as well.

INDEX WORDS: Sergei Prokofiev, *Sonata for Solo Violin in D major*, Krzysztof Penderecki, *Cadenza for Solo Violin*, performance suggestions.

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FEI TONG

B.M., China Conservatory of Music, China, 2015

M.M., Central Michigan University, 2018

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FEI TONG

Major Professor: Levon Ambartsumian

Committee: Milton Masciadri  
Emily Koh

Electronic Version Approved:

Ron Walcott  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Need for Study

The majority of the scholarly attention regarding unaccompanied violin works has been primarily devoted to J. S. Bach's *Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin*, Eugène Ysaÿe's *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin*, and Niccolò Paganini's *24 Caprices for Solo Violin*. There are few inquiries devoted to the selected compositions in this project, the lack of scholarly studies and specific performance guides and practice suggestions of the selected works prompted me to choose and study them in this project.

Sergei Prokofiev was regarded as one of the musical giants of the twentieth century, as he wrote numerous masterpieces in a wide range of music genres. Prokofiev's two violin concerti and two sonatas for violin and piano are the best-known pieces among his violin repertoire, his *Sonata for Solo Violin in D major, Opus 115* is often overlooked and rarely performed in the concert hall. Composed in 1947, this unaccompanied sonata was actually written as a pedagogical work for students and was originally intended to be performed by unison violins.<sup>1</sup> The *Sonata for Solo Violin* is a unique sonata featuring the dual function of being performed by both soloist or ensemble of violinists and can be used not only at solo but also at studio ensemble recitals. Such characteristics furnish the piece with high value for both teaching and research.

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<sup>1</sup> Morrison, Simon. *The People's Artist: Prokofiev's Soviet Years*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Krzysztof Penderecki was well-known around the world through his numerous orchestral and choral works, such as *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima*, *Symphony No. 3*, *Polish Requiem*, and the *St. Luke Passion*. He also contributed several of important works to the violin repertoire, including two violin concerti, two sonatas for violin and piano, and the *Capriccio for Violin and Orchestra*. Most scholarly research on Penderecki is written on his orchestral works and overlooks the valuable solo violin work from his later years. The *Cadenza for Solo Violin* evolved from Penderecki's *Viola Concerto* (1983) and was premiered in 1986 with Christiane Edinger on violin.<sup>2</sup> The *Cadenza for Solo Violin* has since aroused the interest of theorists and violinists, and more and more professionals/violin students have added it to their recital programs. As the *Cadenza for Solo Violin* enters the academic and performance worlds, it is necessary to examine Penderecki's compositional approach and provide a detailed instructional performance guide for this piece.

These two relatively lesser-known solo works are becoming part of the standard violin repertoire. This document, based on theoretical, historical, and performance analyses, provides specific performance practice suggestions from a scholar and performer's perspective, thus adding great value to the understanding of the works and assists violin students and professionals in their study of these works.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide a detailed performance guide from both a scholar and performer's perspective for Prokofiev's *Sonata for Solo Violin in D major, Opus 115* and

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<sup>2</sup> Schwinger, Wolfram. *Krzysztof Penderecki: his life and work: encounters, biography and musical commentary*. London: Schott, 1989.

Penderecki's *Cadenza for Solo Violin*. As well as introducing the composer's respective biographies, the lecture recital intends to address and communicate structures, stylistic characteristics, technical issues/solutions, and musical expressions presented in the works to the audience. Focusing on performance aspects, these solo works performed in the lecture recitals are analyzed with suggestions made for vibrato, articulation, sound production, and musical interpretation. Suggestions are also provided on the topics of technical challenges, effective fingerings, and bowings. In addition, musical examples are included as needed. These suggestions discussing essential elements give the audience/reader a full and comprehensive knowledge of the works. Just as well, specific suggestions from a performer's perspective provide efficient ways to practice for a successful performance. This study seeks to arouse more interest and attract more violinists to perform these two under-appreciated solo violin pieces.

### Review of Literature

A considerable number of scholars turned to the study of Prokofiev and Penderecki, most of them focus on compositional style or are more biographical in nature. In the article "*Prokofiev, Sergey*," Dorothea Redepenning provides a comprehensive biography and extensive list of the works of Prokofiev.<sup>3</sup> Prokofiev's history in soviet Russia, exile, and eventual return to his homeland illuminates his compositional style and gives insight into the style needed to perform the *Sonata for Solo Violin*. Another scholar, Sydney Beck, provides a brief description of each movement in the *Sonata for Solo Violin* by Prokofiev.<sup>4</sup> Beck's descriptions further aid in

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<sup>3</sup> Redepenning, Dorothea. "Prokofiev, Sergey." *Grove Music Online/Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed April 8, 2021.

<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000022402>.

<sup>4</sup> Beck, Sydney. "Review of Sonata for Violin Solo, Op. 115, by Serge Prokofiev." Vol. 13, No. 1 (December 1955): 142-43. Accessed April 8, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.2307/893572>.

understanding the style needed to perform the *Sonata for Solo Violin*, yet there is not an in-depth technical explanation nor are there suggestions for practice/performance.

In the article “*Penderecki, Krzysztof*,” Adrian Thomas presents an introduction to Penderecki’s musical style and divides these styles into two distinct periods: music up to 1974 and music after 1975. In addition, Thomas’ book, “*Polish Music Since Szymanowski*,” also examines several of Penderecki’s compositions, some of which are written in the same period as the *Cadenza*.<sup>5</sup> Regarding Penderecki, Thomas draws attention to the use of the semitone, tritone, and B–A–C–H motif within Penderecki’s music,<sup>6</sup> these characteristics appear extensively in the *Cadenza*. The (0134) set class is also frequently mentioned by Thomas in passages about Penderecki, this tetrachord occurs several times in the *Cadenza*. Wolfram Schwinger provides further musical analysis of the *Cadenza* in his book “*Krzysztof Penderecki: His Life and Work: Encounters, Biography and Musical Commentary*.” Schwinger predominantly recognizes the use of a “sighing” motif and unusual chord progressions in the work.<sup>7</sup> Although some of the authors mention Penderecki’s *Solo Sonata* and Penderecki’s *Cadenza* in their articles/books, there is no information about how these solo works should be practiced and/or performed.

Two recent dissertations provide a specific overview of Prokofiev’s *Sonata for Solo Violin* and Penderecki’s *Cadenza*: one by author Joanna Steinhauser<sup>8</sup> and the other by Sila Darville.<sup>9</sup> In Sila Darville’s study of the *Cadenza*, a sizable part of the content is devoted to

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas, Adrian. *Polish music since Szymanowski*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas, Adrian. “Penderecki, Krzysztof.” *Grove Music Online/Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed April 8, 2021.  
<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000021246>.

<sup>7</sup> Schwinger, Wolfram. *Krzysztof Penderecki*.

<sup>8</sup> Steinhauser, Joanna. “A historical analysis and performer's guide to Sergei Prokofiev’s Sonata for Solo or Unison Violins, Op.115.” DMA diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Darville, Sila. “A motivic analysis of Krzysztof Penderecki’s cadenza for solo violin.” DMA diss., Texas Tech University, 2017.

motivic analysis based on the B-A-C-H and D-S-C-H motifs, with performance insight in phrasing, voicing, and dynamic preferences after extensive discussion of the permutations of B-A-C-H and D-S-C-H motifs in the works.<sup>10</sup> In Joanna Steinhauser's study of the *Sonata for Solo Violin*, in addition to biographical information and historical analysis, Steinhauser provides information and discussions about Prokofiev's compositional style, form analysis, harmonic analysis, and phrase analysis, but few performance suggestions.<sup>11</sup> Neither of the dissertations provides a detailed performance guide nor examines the technical difficulties found in works. The existing relative studies are helpful, however, in understanding Prokofiev and Penderecki's styles and assisting the violinists in interpreting the works. Delving into *Solo Sonata* and *Cadenza*, this study will fill the gaps in the literature by emphasizing performance aspects, providing useful suggestions from a scholar-performer's perspective for a successful performance of both selected solo works.

### Delimitations

The focus of this study is to examine the technical challenges in both the *Sonata for Solo Violin* and the *Cadenza* and to provide technical solutions and performance suggestions for the best musical expression of each work. Background, compositional style, and the composer's other works are introduced briefly in order to help the reader to become more familiar with the composers, broad music analysis is also presented to assist in the understanding of these solo works. In-depth discussion regarding the use of compositional techniques and comprehensive theoretical analysis of the works are not provided, however.

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<sup>10</sup> Darville, Sila. "A motivic analysis of Krzysztof Penderecki's cadenza for solo violin."

<sup>11</sup> Steinhauser, Joanna. "A historical analysis and performer's guide to Sergei Prokofiev's Sonata for Solo or Unison Violins, Op.115."

## CHAPTER 2

### SONATA FOR SOLO VIOLIN, OPUS 115 BY SERGEI PROKOFIEV

#### Life and Influences

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) is considered to be one of the Russia's most important and influential composers. Prokofiev's inner traditionalism, coupled with the neo-classical style he and Stravinsky championed, made it possible for him to play a leading role in Soviet Russian music and to have much of his music performed regularly.<sup>12</sup> Prokofiev's compositions, however, received mixed reviews from critics, one of whom called him "a psychologist of the uglier emotions."<sup>13</sup> Yet in musicologist Richard Taruskin's eyes, Prokofiev was gifted and unparalleled "for writing distinctively original diatonic melodies."<sup>14</sup> Indeed, though Prokofiev often broke the rules of classical music, composing in the tonal style but developing his own uniquely personal counterpoint and compositional melodic voice. Prokofiev explores more tonal centers and produces more complex, emotional expression in music, creating a new and fascinating sound by mixing satire, bitterness, and strongly contrasting dissonances. There is no doubt that Prokofiev contributed to the development of the neo-classical style and made a considerable, transnational impact for the music of the twentieth century.

Prokofiev was born in Sontsovka, Ukraine, where he began his piano studies with his mother at a very young age. Prokofiev's talent for composition was recognized early when he

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<sup>12</sup> Redepenning, Dorothea. "Prokofiev, Sergey."

<sup>13</sup> The New York Times, 21 November 1918.

<sup>14</sup> Richard, Taruskin, "Prokofiev, Sergei," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Reference, 1992).



wrote his first piano piece at five and his first opera at the age of nine. In 1904, he was accepted to the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where he studied the piano with Alexander Winkler and Anna Yesipova, theory with Anatoly Liadov Vitols, and orchestration with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.<sup>15</sup> Prokofiev attended the Conservatory from 1904 to 1914, during which he was influenced by several composers such as Stravinsky and Scriabin for their new-age music and where he wrote a respectable amount of early works.

After graduation, Prokofiev travelled to the West where he opened his eyes to modernist paintings and poetry. He also met with Serge Diaghilev, a great ballet impresario, who commissioned Prokofiev's ballet *Ala and Lolli* which was disrupted because of the first World War, but its music survives as the *Scythian Suite Op.20* (1914-1915). In 1918, Prokofiev published his first symphony, the *Classical Symphony*, which was inspired by the works of Haydn and Mozart. That same year, he moved to the USA due to the February Revolution in Russia.

Between 1918 and 1922 Prokofiev stayed in the USA where his compositions were not accepted at first, deemed complicated and cosmopolitan. The sound of his music did not cater to American audience's musical tastes. However, his satirical opera, *The Love for Three Oranges*, was premiered in 1921 by the Chicago Opera and won applause and acceptance in the end. Prokofiev lived in Western Europe between 1922-1936, during which he married Lina Codina, a Spanish singer who performed Prokofiev's vocal works occasionally. Prokofiev toured extensively as a pianist and gave many recitals in Western Europe and the United States during

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<sup>15</sup> Redepenning, Dorothea. "Prokofiev, Sergey."

this period and his reputation as a composer grew due to the international success of a series of commissioned works.

In 1936, Prokofiev returned to the Soviet Union where he spent the rest of his life. He produced several masterpieces during his Soviet period, such as the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Symphonic Story for Children: Peter and the Wolf*. He never stopped walking on the path of musical creation even during and after World War II when he started to become more involved in operatic projects and chamber music. This period saw his great opera *War and Peace* and he also started adding heroic majesty imagery into his music, as in his *Symphony No. 5* (1944) and in the film score for *Ivan the Terrible*. Extreme contrast, complexity, and dissonance combine with the tonal style, creating biting sarcasm and more complicated emotional expression in Prokofiev's music. These stylistic innovations are fully realized in his later works. The *Seventh Symphony* was Prokofiev's final masterpiece and last completed work, as he passed away in 1953 due to an intracerebral brain hemorrhage.<sup>16</sup>

### History of the Sonata's Composition

*Sonata for Solo Violin in D Major, Opus 115* was published in 1952 and was Prokofiev's last violin work. During the Soviet period, the Soviet government banned numerous composer's works that were labeled as "formalism." During this time of censorship, composers needed to write music fitting the tastes of socialist realism in order to be accepted by Stalin and his regime. As Morrison describes in his book about the *Sonata for Solo Violin*: "It could be argued that, in the immediate postwar period, official artistic doctrine itself became his muse."<sup>17</sup> In 1947, the

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<sup>16</sup> Hingtgen, C M. "The tragedy of Sergei Prokofiev." *Seminars in neurology* vol. 19 Suppl 1 (1999): 59-61.

<sup>17</sup> Morrison, Simon. *The People's Artist: Prokofiev's Soviet Years*.

Soviet Union's Committee of Arts Affairs commissioned Prokofiev to write a pedagogical piece for talented children—the result was *Sonata for Solo Violin or Unison Violin, Op. 115*, “a piece in the spirit of Fritz Kreisler’s arrangements for budding violinists.”<sup>18</sup> It was one of the few works written for unison violins and could be either performed as unison or solo. Uniquely, when performed by unison violinists, the work has a Baroque feel; when performed solo, however, the work becomes blatantly modern.<sup>19</sup>

Somehow, the *Sonata for Solo Violin* was never performed by violin students or professionals in unison at that time and was not played in concert in Russia. Even legendary violinist David Oistrakh, who performed almost all Prokofiev’s other violin works through his career, did not perform the *Sonata for Solo Violin*. In fact, Prokofiev did not see the piece premiered in his lifetime. It was first performed by violin virtuoso Ruggiero Ricci in a solo performance in 1959 at the Moscow Conservatory, which we enjoy as the standard measure of *Sonata for Solo Violin in D Major, Opus 115* today.

### Style and Structure

In order to understand the stylistic components of the *Sonata for Solo Violin*, the stylistic features in Prokofiev’s later works must be examined. During the Soviet Period, Prokofiev started to become more involved in chamber works and focused more on lyricism, melody, and expressing emotion, these stylistic features and late compositional styles are fully reflected in the

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

*Sonata for Solo Violin*, a non-virtuosic piece, in which melody plays an important and primary role.

Composed in the classical style, the piece is differentiated from traditional solo works, instead of employing lots of multiple voices, the melody is mostly monophonic and embellished by ornaments and chords, conforming to the Soviet musical tastes of socialist realism. Scholar Nestyev elaborates: “This sonata bespeaks Prokofiev’s intense quests in the realm of pure melody, his search for lyricism strong enough to stand without complex harmonic support.”<sup>20</sup> Based on diatonic scales, the melody in the *Sonata for Solo Violin* contains an abundance of chromatic pitches with a strong motion towards particular resolutions, both traditional and newly peculiar.<sup>21</sup>

Another characteristic to be mentioned in the later works of Prokofiev is the shift in his use of harmonic language. During the last twenty years of his life, harmonies became relatively simple and clear compared to the period before and Prokofiev’s harmonic language often derived from folk music. The third movement of the *Sonata for Solo Violin* is a superior example of the use of folk music, in which the characteristics of a mazurka are included. “Modern music could best express the spirit of the times in vigorous rhythms and fast tempos,”<sup>22</sup> however, during the Soviet period, melody and lyricism grew more important than rhythms and tempos for Prokofiev. As Redepenning concludes, this piece “displays the freely tonal harmonies, melodic and thematic wealth of ideas and lyrical expressivity characteristic of the mature Prokofiev.”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Nestyev, Israel V., Florence Jonas, and Nicolas Slonimsky. *Prokofiev*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1960.

<sup>21</sup> Stephenson, Ken. *Melodic Tendencies in Prokofiev’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’*. College Music Symposium 37 (1997): 109-28. Accessed April 5, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40374307>.

<sup>22</sup> Nestyev, Israel V., Florence Jonas, and Nicolas Slonimsky. *Prokofiev*.

<sup>23</sup> Redepenning, Dorothea. “Prokofiev, Sergey.”

Prokofiev wrote the *Sonata for Solo Violin* by following the classical sonata form with a three-movement structure. In this sonata the movements are titled: I. *Moderato*; II. *Andante dolce. Tema con variazioni*; III. *Con brio. Allegro precipitato*. The first movement is sonata-allegro, in which the pedagogical intention is the study of simple figurations as in student etudes.<sup>24</sup> Table 1 presents analysis of the first movement based on Steinhauser's study, showing thematic material, formal sections, and key areas. The use of primary theme (PT), the secondary theme (ST), the closing theme (CT), the modulating transition (Trans), and the main harmonic language are all detailed, assisting a student in becoming more familiar with the work and understanding how those thematic materials are connected.

Table 1: Steinhauser's Analysis of Sergei Prokofiev's Solo Sonata, First Movement<sup>25</sup>:

<b>Exposition</b> mm. 1-38	<b>Development</b> mm. 39-67	<b>Recapitulation</b> mm. 68-99	<b>Coda</b> mm. 100-117
PT (I): mm. 1-10 Trans.: mm. 10-17 ST (V): mm. 18-30 CT (V): mm. 31-38	V-[Bb-F]-V	PT (V): mm. 68-77 Trans.: mm. 77-87 ST (I): mm. 88-95 CT (I): mm. 96-99	D major

Comprised of a theme and five variations, the second movement is written in a traditional form. Prokofiev's pursuit of "clarity and expressiveness of modest, single-voiced melodies"<sup>26</sup> is embodied through the onset of the theme, a simple 8-measure phrase. Prokofiev employs several variation techniques in the movement, including melodic variation, rhythmic variation, harmonic variation, and the minor mode. Variation I and variation IV decorate and elaborate on the original theme, variation II breaks up the steady pulse via the use of slurs and off-beats, variation

<sup>24</sup> Morrison, Simon. *The People's Artist: Prokofiev's Soviet Years*.

<sup>25</sup> Steinhauser, Joanna. "A historical analysis and performer's guide to Sergei Prokofiev's Sonata for Solo or Unison Violins, Op.115."

<sup>26</sup> Nestyev, Israel V., Florence Jonas, and Nicolas Slonimsky. *Prokofiev*.

III enriches the theme with modal color (the key is changed from the Bb major to the parallel Bb minor mode here), and variation V embellishes the theme by the use of chords and multi-voices. In each of the five variations, all melodic notes are indicated by accent marks, tenuto, or two stems.

The third movement contains several elements of the folk dance, the mazurka: triple meter, lively tempo, and accents on beats two and three. The movement is titled *Con brio* and is to be performed with liveliness and energy, implying that the music is supposed to be spirited in character. The movement may be divided into three sections, producing a ternary form. The A section, mm. 1-75, is dominated by two contrasting themes: the first (mm. 1-8) is animated and the second (mm. 52-61) is lyrical and expressive. The B section, mm. 76-120, is indicated by a tempo marking *Allegro precipitato* and a change of meter to 2/2. After the reappearance of the spirited rhythmic primary theme (mm. 121-128) and the cantabile theme (mm. 260 to 268) in A' section, the piece reaches the final climax: Coda (mm. 179-209), in which the original key of D major returns back. The Coda prolongs the tonic and is comprised of chordal writing in the faster tempo. With a triplet scale ascending to a high D, the piece ends with a flourish on the tonic.

### Performance Suggestions

#### **First Movement – Moderato**

Prokofiev is fond of using grace notes to embellish the melody, evidenced by their prominent use in the first movement. Grace notes are notated in different ways, a single grace note, and multiple grace notes should be played differently, which is well demonstrated by the opening of the first movement.



Example 1. Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Solo Violin, First Movement, mm. 1-2.

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Accents are placed on every beat in first measure, the multiple small sixteenth grace notes should be played slightly before the main notes in order to emphasize the accented melody line. The violinist should speed up the bow when the main note arrives on the beat. The single small eighth grace notes in the second measure, however, should be played right on beat, the grace notes and the main notes are almost about same length in a fast tempo, because there is no time to hold the main notes long. The fingertip should lightly compress the string in order to move more efficiently and faster, helping to produce a good quality grace note with clarity.

Prokofiev adds a large number of chromatic patterns in the music, the half step motion can be found pervasively in the work.



Example 2. Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Solo Violin, First Movement, mm. 10-13.

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The circled notes in Example 2 all move by half-steps with accent markings, which is essential in the music, as it helps to highlight the descending chromatic lines. None of them can be missed

and each accent must be heard clearly. What follows is the abrupt harmony changes and the use of harmonic language that breaks the traditional classical music rules, as seen in the measures mentioned below (Example 3):



Example 3. Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Solo Violin, First Movement, m. 16, 52, 85.

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Prokofiev uses the minor third (red square), major third (green square), and augmented third (blue square) alternately, creating a strong new sense of tonality. A tenuto is displaced on every beat, effectively emphasizing the harmonic changes. It is worth noticing that tenuto is different than an accent, and so, the violinist needs to hold the tenuto notes out for their full value when playing and emphasize each tenuto with vibrato of the left hand.

In the cantabile at measure 18, Prokofiev modulates the key to A major, which is the dominant key of the original key D major. No specific dynamic markings are placed here by Prokofiev except “*piano*” and “*dolce*” at the onset of the second theme. The use of a variety of dynamics to add excitement and emotion is not advised, there is no room to add individually conceived personality and phrasing, in order to serve exactly what is printed on the score. The cantabile is interspersed and contrasted by metronomic sounding seventh chords, each of which should be played with a full sound (Example 4). The challenge here is to play those chords with a pure sound quality without breaking them.





Example 4. Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Solo Violin, First Movement, mm. 26-34.

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Infrequent dynamics are marked in mm. 41-45, where the violinist needs to show *mezzo-forte* and *forte* very clearly to present contrasting melodic phrases. What follows is the most harmonically ambiguous passage in the piece, intonation is a demanding challenge here. Fast grace notes embellish the melody, not only creating lots of rapid shifting, but also tallying additional difficulty:



Example 5. Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Solo Violin, First Movement, mm. 46-49.

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In the preparation of this passage, the violinist should spend time on the intonation, which is not easy due to rapid shifting. The passage must be listened to carefully, aiming for clarity and unblemished string crossings. These bars must first be practiced at a slow tempo, taking care that every note speaks, and then gradually speed up to the desired performance tempo.

Beginning with a return of the primary theme, the recapitulation (mm. 68-99) is similar to the exposition. After the reappearance of the opening thematic materials, the piece reaches the final climax at the Coda, in which Prokofiev marks a mass of accents.



Example 6. Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Solo Violin, First Movement, mm. 100-107

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In addition to the need to play every accented strong sounding note with good sound quality, the violinist should connect the notes without accent markings with a full rich tone, especially those on G string, to create a big contrasting tone color, which is what Prokofiev desires.

## Second Movement - Andante dolce.

In this movement, the theme is simple—though lyrical. In order to perform the theme with best expression, the violinist needs to think about how to shift, how to place fingers, how to vibrate, and most importantly, how to keep a consistent sound. Continuous vibrato is helpful and necessary for keeping a consistent sound. In order to vibrate without any interruption, an overlapping vibrato will occur when switching from one finger to the next, so the violinist has to vibrate both fingers for a short period of time. The performance suggestions for Variation III are the same as the original theme as they are similar though presented in different key and with

different dynamic markings. Prokofiev also wrote variation III one octave lower than the original, thereby creating a new mood and tone. In Variations I, II and IV, the violinist should highlight the hidden melodies by vibrating every note with accent markings and double stems. In Variation V, except for emphasizing melodic notes, the other challenge is the intonation of the double-stops. The double-stops should be practiced slowly to improve the accuracy of the intonation, the violinist could start from the bottom note, then add the top, then put them together. Try your best to listen to both notes on the strings, but if it is too difficult, the violinist may listen to the melodic notes first.

### Third Movement - Con brio

Spirited thematic fragments appear in the third movement frequently and most of them are performed on G string (Example 7).



Example 7. Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Solo Violin, Third Movement, mm. 1-2

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Be careful to control the bow to avoid a scratchy and muffled sound when producing the thematic fragments with accent markings. The rest of the movement should be played as suggested as in the previous movements, emphasizing melodic notes, playing exactly what Prokofiev marks on the score, paying attention to the intonation of the chords, and to always aim for the best sound quality possible.

**Playing in Unison**

Playing the *Sonata* as ensemble in the original version is a challenge for violinists, the accurate intonation, timing, balance, articulation, and dynamics are all required for a stirring performance. Free personal expression is to be stifled, as the ensemble violinists need to communicate with each other and discuss ideas of interpretation in order to play unified. Breaking up each of the chords that are shown in the music into divisi is suggested, in order to produce good sound quality.

## CHAPTER 3

### CADENZA FOR SOLO VIOLIN BY KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

#### Life and Influences

A native of Poland, born on 23 November 1933 in Dębica, Krzysztof Penderecki (1933-2020) is now recognized as one of the most imaginative composers. He began his violin studies in Dębica with Stanisław Darlak, the military bandmaster.<sup>27</sup> Penderecki later entered the Jagiellonian University and Kraków Academy of Music respectively in 1951 and 1954 where he studied music theory with Franciszek Skołyszewski and then composition with Artur Malawski and Stanisław Wiechowicz. Malawski was the more influential of his teachers and Penderecki absorbed much of the compositional craft from him.<sup>28</sup> In 1958, Penderecki graduated from the Academy of Music with high marks, where he continued on as a teacher. He had his first success in 1959 when his “Strofy” (‘Strophes’), “Emanacje” (‘Emanations’), and “Psalmy Dawida” (‘Psalms of David’) were awarded the top three prizes at a competition organized by the Union of Polish Composers.<sup>29</sup> Thanks to the awards, his reputation as a composer blossomed.

Penderecki’s first success outside of Poland came in 1960 with his musical composition *Anaklasis*. That same year, he wrote *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* for the victims of the bombing of Hiroshima, in which he distorted the boundaries between sound and voice while also exploring unfamiliar techniques of playing and new ways of producing sound.<sup>30</sup> Penderecki also created a new notational style never seen before (Example 8). The piece attracted the eyes of the

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<sup>27</sup> Schwinger, Wolfram. *Krzysztof Penderecki*.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas, Adrian. “Penderecki, Krzysztof.”

<sup>30</sup> Schwinger, Wolfram. *Krzysztof Penderecki*.



*Sun*.<sup>33</sup> Besides composition, Penderecki succeeded as a conductor as well, conducting dozens of outstanding orchestras all over the world. He started his conducting career in 1972 and from 1987 to 1990 he was the artistic director of the Kraków Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1988 he became principal guest conductor with the NDRSO in Hamburg, Germany.<sup>34</sup> His works were often performed and presented by the famous soloists in the world, such as violin virtuosi Isaac Stern and Anne Sophie Mutter. Penderecki was also an honorary member and doctor at a number of artistic universities.

Later in his career, Penderecki composed numerous works that defied many conventions concerning the nature and purpose of contemporary music.<sup>35</sup> He was also a laureate of many prestigious prizes, receiving plenty of national and foreign prizes, including: the Sibelius Gold Medal (1967), the Polish State Prize, first class (1968),<sup>36</sup> and four Grammy Awards (1987, 1998, and 2017). In 1990 he was made a Chevalier de Saint Georges and in addition received the Grosses Verdienstkreuz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Other honors include the Österreichisches Ehrenzeichen für Wissenschaft und Kunst (1992) and the Monacan Ordre du Mérite Culturel (1993).<sup>37</sup>

Penderecki wrote hundreds of works in nearly every genre: opera, solo piano, chamber music, ballet, and symphony—many of which became the study subjects of scholars. He also consistently engaged with the concerns of the world, “sometimes with piety, often with apparent anger, and never without passion.”<sup>38</sup> Sadly, Penderecki’s health deteriorated during the later

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Parrish, director (27 August 1969). *Journey to the Far Side of the Sun* (Motion picture). Screenplay by Gerry and Sylvia Anderson and Donald James. Produced by Gerry and Sylvia Anderson. Music by Barry Gray. Cinematography by John Read. Edited by Len Walter. Century 21 Cinema Productions. OCLC 905922131.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas, Adrian. “Penderecki, Krzysztof.”

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

years of his life and he died in his home in Kraków, Poland after a long illness.<sup>39</sup> There is no doubt that Penderecki has made a considerable impact on the future composers as in-depth research on Penderecki's life and influences has further increased interest in the performance of his underappreciated, lesser-known works.

### History of the Cadenza for Solo Violin

The *Cadenza for Solo Violin* is an independent work for unaccompanied violin composed by Krzysztof Penderecki and dedicated to violinist/violist, Grigori Zhislin. In 1984, Krzysztof Penderecki and his wife Elzbieta organized a music festival in Lusławice for string instruments, during which the *Cadenza for Solo Viola* was created.<sup>40</sup> The work was first imagined as a sort of supplement to the *Concerto for Viola* and originally designed for the viola. The motivations for writing *Cadenza* are clear as the piece was intended as a thank-you from Penderecki to Grigori Zhislin, a young Russian virtuoso of the violin and viola. Penderecki's dedication thanks Zhislin for "his brilliant interpretations of his (Penderecki's) *Capriccio for violin and Orchestra*, *Violin Concerto*, and the *Viola Concerto*."<sup>41</sup>

Grigori Zhislin successfully premiered the *Cadenza for Solo Viola* during Penderecki's festival in 1984. The *Cadenza* attracted a great deal of attention due to its virtuosic and expressive qualities and violinist Christiane Edinger arranged the piece and first performed it on violin in October 1986 in Warsaw. In the following year, Edinger published her transcription of the *Cadenza* for solo violin.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Lewis, Daniel (29 March 2020). "Krzysztof Penderecki, Polish Composer with Cinematic Flair, Dies at 86." The New York Times.

<sup>40</sup> Schwinger, Wolfram. *Krzysztof Penderecki*.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.



### Style and Structure

The scholar Adrian Thomas divides Penderecki's works into two stages: the music up to 1974 and the music after 1975. As the *Cadenza for Solo Violin* belongs to Penderecki's second stage works; understanding the overall style of the second stage will assist violinists in their interpretation of this piece. Similar to several of his avant-garde contemporaries and compatriots, Penderecki relaxed his harsher compositional language in the mid-1970s and allowed for more lyrical melodies to take the central role in both his vocal and instrumental compositions.<sup>43</sup> The relaxed compositional language is widely applied in the *Cadenza*, which is well differentiated from that of his earlier works. In this period, Penderecki discontinues using the adventurous string techniques to produce sounds and effects, and he instead builds dark expressivity and achieves dramatic appeal by employing only conventional string techniques. As Thomas identifies, "His (Penderecki's) subsequent allusions to 18th- and 19th-century idioms and genres, in his choral and operatic works as well as in his purely instrumental pieces."<sup>44</sup> Specific to the *Cadenza* are the use of different bow stroke styles, double-stops that combine with harmonics, and fast string crossings.

The graphic notation in his first stage works is not employed here, the *Cadenza* is composed by using conventional notation yet with no time signature or bar lines. The piece follows the traditional structure from 18th- and 19th-century of ternary (ABA) structure, rhythmic activities based on numerical ordering are also carried out within the classical framework.

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<sup>43</sup> Thomas, Adrian. "Penderecki, Krzysztof."

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

Penderecki is notable for his recurrent and varied usages of the semitone, he frequently uses unresolved sequences of semitones often separated by a tritone. The sequences are the most prominent aspect of Penderecki's melodic style starting from the mid-1970s. Thomas claims, "this *idée fixe* was crucial to Penderecki's development of his own brand of neo-romanticism."<sup>45</sup> The use of semitone and tritone provide the *Cadenza* with a highly chromatic background, its chromatic quality can be heard through whole piece while also featuring descending minor seconds and small, dissonant intervals.

The *Cadenza* is split into three sections following a slow-fast-slow structure. The sections are connected seamlessly, *attacca*, as the entire piece goes straight through without pause. As an appendix to the *Viola Concerto* (1983), the piece echoes thematical and compositional features in the concerto and there are many similarities between the two compositions. The first section of the *Cadenza* begins with the descending minor second figure (sighing motif), *lento, espressivo*, which is very similar to his *Viola Concerto*. The *Viola Concerto* "begins with solo viola unaccompanied, and with Penderecki's favorite interval, the falling minor second, continued in sighing fashion, *lento, espressivo quasi recitativo*."<sup>46</sup> The sighing motif is transformed into the following four-note motifs: B-A-C-H and D-S-C-H motifs, "from which the *Cadenza* is generated."<sup>47</sup> The motivic language continues to evolve and develop while the arching grows louder and wider, the fast thirty-second note gestures intersperse with strong chords and triplets. Penderecki uses a succession of ascending powerful chords, fast passages, and a gradual *accelerando* in triplets, directly leading the music to the brilliant and storming *Vivace*. The lively

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas, Adrian. "Penderecki, Krzysztof."

<sup>46</sup> Schwinger, Wolfram. *Krzysztof Penderecki*.

<sup>47</sup> Darville, Sila. "A motivic analysis of Krzysztof Penderecki's cadenza for solo violin." In which the author presents extensive motivic analysis and discussion of the permutations of B-A-C-H and D-S-C-H motifs. Since the focus of this paper is to provide technical solutions and performance suggestions for musical expression, in-depth discussion about the use of 12 tone row and comprehensive theoretical analysis of the works are not provided.

*Vivace* section, comprised of rapid sixteenth notes and triplets, combines substantial wild string crossings and violent double stops with passages of accented triplets to produce high tension.

*Pesante, poco rubato e grazioso, subito piano* comes as a short passage for sharp contrasts.

Penderecki employs *accelerando* triplets, three-part chords alternating with bottom G, and the consecutive running triplets, bringing the music towards a magnificent climax. Connected by a *ritardando*, Tempo I returns. In this section, the motivic material is represented by double stops in *forte*, followed swiftly by a calming mood where the dynamic falls back to *piano* in the last three lines where the use of double-stops combining harmonics makes the melodic and thematic material sound more dramatic and attractive. The piece ends with a *pianississimo* sighing motif on Eb to D in the low register of the violin creating a whispering sound effect that constructs a solemn atmosphere calling for deep thought.

### Performance Suggestions

At the very beginning of the *Cadenza*, every sighing motif of a descending minor second is slurred and marked *decrescendo* in expressive *piano* on the G string (Example 9). This is a challenge for violinists, especially for student violinists.



Example 9. Krzysztof Penderecki, Cadenza for Solo Violin, line 1

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When performing alone on the stage, a violinist not only performs technically and musically demanding material, but also faces significant pressure and nerves that are known to

easily cause a shaky bow in *piano* dynamics. In order to play a *piano* sound with a lot of expression without having shaky bow, the *piano* sound is to be produced by using less bow hair, a lighter part of the bow, and playing closer to the fingerboard. Thus, the *piano* sound with a lot of expression is primarily about bow speed, expressive yet matching vibrato, and mood.

When playing the opening of the *Cadenza*, getting oneself into and focusing on the solemn and mysterious mood before playing is helpful for expressive *piano* as well as stopping the shaky bow. Vibrato throughout the long phrase is also important for expression. It is worth noting that the first two lines should always keep expressive *piano* until the appearance of *crescendo* markings.

At the end of the third line, the music grows through the *crescendo* to a powerful *forte*; it is the first time that *tenuto* markings appear under the sighing motif (Example 10). The emotions and mood change and the notes with *tenuto* markings have to be shown very clearly. The violinist needs to hold the note out for its full value and vibrate it.



Example 10. Krzysztof Penderecki, *Cadenza for Solo Violin*, the end of the line 3  
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The extensive use of chromatic language makes the double and multiple stops in the *Cadenza* difficult to play. The use of 12-tone rows produces numerous minor second (red circle), octave (blue circle), and ninth (purple circle) intervals. Most of these intervals are played in the octave hand placement—which is not a convenient hand posture and also a challenge for intonation, as our ears are normally insensitive to the intonation of those dissonance intervals (Example 11).



Example 11. Krzysztof Penderecki, *Cadenza for Solo Violin*, lines 4-7

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Accurate intonation is essential as it gets your music across to the listener easily.

Accurate intonation is even more important for contemporary music. When playing famous classical pieces such as the works of Bach, Mozart, or Beethoven, bad intonation is a distraction and destroys the great composition, but people still know what is going on. However, most contemporary works are based on melodies composed by using specific compositional approaches and contemporary techniques. Penderecki's *Cadenza* is composed by using 12 tone rows, and thereby it is very chromatic, the dissonant yet melodic line is logical with highly expressive quality and all rhythmic activities are based on specific numerical ordering. Playing out of tune or a wrong note destroys the numerical ordering; the extreme dissonance and intention of the composer loses its meaning, and the audience will not understand the music and know what is going on. To improve the accuracy of the intonation, reducing the shifting is helpful. For example, when playing the chord D, C, E $\flat$  in line 4 (see Example 11), instead of shifting from B $\natural$  to the chord (green slant line in Example 11), keeping first fingering B $\natural$  on D

string then stretching the fourth fingering to note C of chord helps the violinist to find the position easier and produce better intonation.

Moving on, a series of down-bow chords in line 9 (Example 12) creates extreme tension. Here, all chords must be articulated as one note and played with intense vibrato. Experiment with the contact point and bow pressure in order to get good sound quality on each chord.



Example 12. Krzysztof Penderecki, Cadenza for Solo Violin, line 9

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Bowing is to also be considered. There are two bowing options in line 12, these consecutive running triplets could be played by using down and up bows, or up and down bows, both bowings are available.



Example 13. Krzysztof Penderecki, Cadenza for Solo Violin, line 12

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Down and up bowing is good at articulation, but it is easy to produce a scratchy sound, the violinist must be careful with the sound quality. Up and down bowing is more convenient on violin, but every up bow must catch on the string before pronouncing for articulation.

Each detail is to be examined and performed. The markings at the beginning of the *Vivace* are very interesting and important, but very few performers notice them.



Example 14. Krzysztof Penderecki, Cadenza for Solo Violin, lines 13-18

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The “V” sign appears with different directions, what do these notations mean? According to Mark McGrain, “there are two types of accent marks: the *forzato* accent “Λ” and the sforzando accent “>”. The *forzato* accent represents the heavier, or stronger, of the two types of accents. Neither of these accents alter the durational value of the note or voicing they attend.” The *forzato* accent “V” under the note is *past practice*, the *forzato* accent “Λ” above the note becomes more common.<sup>48</sup>

Five continuous accents begin the *Vivace* section, implying that the music is supposed to be somewhat violent and storming in character. When playing sixteenth notes in the wild string crossing (see Example 14), the bow arm must be relatively relaxed, relaxing shoulder and putting weight into the string naturally with a natural posture as the weight transferred from the arm

<sup>48</sup> McGrain, Mark (1990). *Music Notation: Theory and Technique for Music Notation*, p.165. Hal Leonard. ISBN 9780793508471.

determines the fullness of the sound. In the passage of triplet runs that follows, every note is marked with accents, which should be played with frog of the bow for powerful tone quality. Still, no matter what dynamic is performed, the violinist always needs to control the bow to avoid a scratchy sound and aim for the best expression of the music's intended character.

The majority of the rest of the piece is similar to the passages previously discussed and should be played as previously suggested. The ending of the *Cadenza*, however, provides new challenges.



Example 15. Krzysztof Penderecki, Cadenza for Solo Violin, lines 39-40

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In the double stops, the primary theme reappears in harmonics, surmounting a bass on the open D string. It is not easy to play double stops combining harmonics, because the intonation has to be very exact for them to speak clearly. Similarly challenging, the open string is easy to play while harmonics are not and so the violinist has to be precise with the bow. When starting to practice double stops combining harmonics, they can be separated and practiced slowly. Playing only the harmonics line could help to make sure that the hand knows the distance and keep the focus on the harmonic's intonation. For the bow arm, finding out a good sounding point for both the open D and harmonics is important, the bow should lean to the A string and be closer to the bridge to help the harmonics speak and produce a balanced sound.



## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

*Sonata for Solo Violin in D major, Opus 115* by Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953), and *Cadenza for Solo Violin* by Krzysztof Penderecki (1933-2020) are distinctive yet similar: their composers represent two different countries and were composed in distinct compositional styles, yet both were written in the twentieth century and represent the coexistence of both tradition and modernity. *The Solo Sonata* is unique in the violin repertoire due to its dual function and pedagogical purpose, while the *Cadenza* is special because of its eclectic style. Each composer's style can be seen in these solo works, both of which provide violinists with opportunities to exhibit virtuoso skills, complex musical arrangement, mastery of unusual musical genres, and a wide range of artistic expression.

This study has provided a detailed performance guide from a performer and scholar's perspective and shown methods in which both solo pieces can be performed in a more convincing way by quarrying into their respective contexts. The goal of this research is to inspire more scholars to discover, explore, advocate for, and perform overlooked violin repertoires.

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## APPENDIX

### LECTURE-RECITAL SCRIPT

#### **Slide 1 (title of the recital and portrait of Sergei Prokofiev and Krzysztof Penderecki)**

Good afternoon. Welcome and thank you for coming to this lecture-recital, a “Performance Guide to Selected Solo Violin Works of Sergei Prokofiev and Krzysztof Penderecki.” Today I will discuss two lesser-known solo violin works, one is *Sonata for Solo Violin in D major, Opus 115* by Prokofiev, the other is *Cadenza for Solo Violin* by Penderecki, focusing on providing specific performance practice suggestions from a scholar-performer’s perspective. First, I will talk about the background of the *Solo Sonata* by Prokofiev.

#### **Slide 2 (Prokofiev, a musical giant)**

Sergei Prokofiev was regarded as one of the musical giants of the twentieth century, he wrote numerous masterpieces in a wide range of music genres. His two violin concerti and two sonatas for violin and piano are the best-known pieces among his violin repertoire, however, his *Sonata for Solo Violin in D major, Opus 115* is often overlooked and rarely performed in the concert hall.

#### **Slide 3 (Sonata for Solo Violin in D Major: Current Research)**

Composed in 1947, this unaccompanied sonata was actually written as a pedagogical work for students and originally intended to be performed by unison violins, thus the piece has high value for both teaching and research.

Several analyses of Prokofiev’s works by scholars such as Dorothea Redepenning, Sydney Beck and Joanna Steinhauser, discuss the *Solo Sonata* with emphasis on history, formal

structure, and general compositional procedures. Beck provides a brief description of each movement in *Solo Sonata* by Prokofiev, while Steinhauser provides information and discussions about Prokofiev's compositional style, form analysis, harmonic analysis, and phrase analysis, but few performance suggestions. None of them provides detailed performance guide or examine the technical difficulties found in works. My research integrates the full knowledge with useful performance suggestions in one description, offering some advice on technical issues, solutions, and appropriate musical expressions in the sonata.

**Slide 4 (Life and influences: bullet points; Prokofiev's portraits)**

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) is considered to be one of the Russia's most important and influential composers. Prokofiev's inner traditionalism, coupled with the neo-classical style he and Stravinsky championed, made it possible for him to play a leading role in Soviet music and to have much of his music performed regularly. Prokofiev's compositions, however, received mixed reviews from critics, one of whom called him "a psychologist of the uglier emotions." Yet in musicologist Richard Taruskin's eyes, Prokofiev was gifted and unparalleled "for writing distinctively original diatonic melodies."

**(Slide 5)** Prokofiev often broke the rules of classical music, composing in the tonal style but developing his own uniquely personal counterpoint and compositional melodic voice. He explores more tonal centers and produces more complex, emotional expression in music, creating a new and fascinating sound by mixing satire, bitterness, and strongly contrasting dissonances. There is no doubt that Prokofiev contributed to the development of the neo-classical style and made a considerable, transnational impact for the music of the twentieth century.

**(Slide 6)** Prokofiev was born in Sontsovka, Ukraine, where he began his piano studies with his mother at a very young age. Prokofiev's talent for composition was recognized early

when he wrote his first piano piece at five and his first opera at the age of nine. In 1904, he was accepted to the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Prokofiev attended the Conservatory through 1914, during which he was influenced by several composers such as Stravinsky and Scriabin for their new-age music and where he wrote a respectable amount of early works.

**(Slide 7)** After graduation, Prokofiev travelled to the West where he opened his eyes to modernist paintings and poetry and wrote the popular music *Scythian Suite Op.20* and his first symphony, the *Classical Symphony*. In 1918, he moved to the USA due to the February Revolution in Russia. Between 1918 and 1922 Prokofiev stayed in the USA where his compositions were not accepted at first, deemed complicated and cosmopolitan. However, his satirical opera, *The Love for Three Oranges*, was premiered in 1921 by the Chicago Opera and won applause and acceptance in the end.

**(Slide 8)** Prokofiev lived in Western Europe between 1922-1936, during which he married Lina Codina, a Spanish singer who performed Prokofiev's vocal works occasionally. Prokofiev toured extensively as a pianist and gave many recitals in Western Europe and the United States during this period, his reputation as a composer grew due to the international success of a series of commissioned works.

**(Slide 9)** In 1936, Prokofiev returned to the Soviet Union where he spent the rest of his life. He wrote some of his famous works here, including *Romeo and Juliet*, the *Symphonic Story for Children: Peter and the Wolf*, *War and Peace*, *Symphony No. 5*, and the film score for *Ivan the Terrible*. Extreme contrast, complexity, and dissonance combine with the tonal style, creating biting sarcasm and more complicated emotional expression in Prokofiev's music. The *Seventh Symphony* was Prokofiev's final masterpiece and last completed work, as he passed away in 1953 due to an intracerebral brain hemorrhage.

### Slide 10 (Sonata for Solo Violin in D Major: History)

Now, let us turn to the history of the *Solo Sonata*. The work was published in 1952, it was Prokofiev's last violin work. In 1947, the Soviet Union's Committee of Arts Affairs commissioned Prokofiev to write a pedagogical piece for talented children—the result was *Sonata for Solo Violin or Unison Violin, Op. 115*, “a piece in the spirit of Fritz Kreisler's arrangements for budding violinists.” It was one of the few works written for unison violins and could be either performed as unison or solo.

Somehow, the *Sonata for Solo Violin* was never performed by violin students or professionals in unison at that time and was not played in concert in Russia. In fact, Prokofiev did not see the piece premiered in his lifetime. It was first performed by violin virtuoso Ruggiero Ricci in a solo performance in 1959 at the Moscow Conservatory, which we enjoy as the standard measure of *Sonata for Solo Violin in D Major, Opus 115* today.

### Slide 11 (Style and Structure)

During the Soviet Period, Prokofiev focused more on lyricism, melody, and expressing emotion; these stylistic features and late compositional styles are fully reflected in the *Sonata for Solo Violin*, a non-virtuosic piece, in which melody plays an important and primary role. Composed in the classical style, the piece is differentiated from traditional solo works, instead of employing lots of multiple voices, the melody is mostly monophonic and embellished by ornaments and chords, conforming to the Soviet musical tastes of socialist realism. Based on diatonic scales, the melody in the *Sonata for Solo Violin* contains an abundance of chromatic pitches with a strong motion towards particular resolutions, both traditional and newly peculiar.

**(Slide 12)** During the Soviet period, melody and lyricism grew more important than rhythms and tempos for Prokofiev. As scholar Redepenning concludes, this piece “displays the

freely tonal harmonies, melodic and thematic wealth of ideas and lyrical expressivity characteristic of the mature Prokofiev.”

**Slide 13** (Structure of the Sonata for Solo Violin in D Major, bullet points)

Prokofiev wrote the *Sonata for Solo Violin* by following the classical sonata form; a three-movement structure. In this sonata the movements are titled: I. *Moderato*; II. *Andante dolce. Tema con variazioni*; III. *Con brio. Allegro precipitato*.

**Slide 14** (Form of the First Movement)

The first movement is in sonata-allegro form, in which “the pedagogic intention is manifest in the etude-like progression from simple figurations.”

**Slide 15** (Table 1: Steinhäuser’s Analysis of Sergei Prokofiev’s Solo Sonata, First Movement)

Table 1 presents analysis of the first movement based on Steinhäuser’s study, showing thematic material, formal sections, and key areas. The use of primary theme (PT), the secondary theme (ST), the closing theme (CT), the modulating transition (Trans), and the main harmonic language are all detailed, assisting a student in becoming more familiar with the work and understanding how those thematic materials are connected.

**Slide 16** (Form of the Second Movement, bullet points)

Comprised of a theme and five variations, including melodic variation, rhythmic variation, harmonic variation, and minor mode, the second movement is written in a traditional form, Prokofiev’s pursuit of “clarity and expressiveness of modest, single-voiced melodies” is embodied through the onset of the theme, a simple 8-measure phrase. Variation I and variation IV decorate and elaborate the original theme, variation II breaks up the steady pulse via the use of slurs and off-beats, variation III enriches the theme with modal color, and variation V



embellishes the theme by chords and multi-voices. In each of the five variations, all melodic notes are indicated by accent marks, tenuto, or two stems.

**Slide 17** (Form of the Third Movement, bullet points)

The third movement contains several elements of the folk dance, the mazurka: triple meter, lively tempo, and accents on beats two and three. The movement is titled *Con brio* and is to be performed with liveliness and energy, implying that the music is supposed to be spirited in character. The movement may be divided into three sections, producing a ternary form. The A section, mm. 1-75, is dominated by two contrasting themes: the first (mm. 1-8) is animated and the second (mm. 52-61) is lyrical and expressive. The B section, mm. 76-120, is indicated by a tempo marking *Allegro precipitato* and a change of meter to 2/2. After the reappearance of the spirited rhythmic primary theme (mm. 121-128) and the cantabile theme (mm. 260 to 268) in A' section, the piece reaches the final climax: Coda (mm. 179-209), in which the original key of D major returns back. The Coda prolongs the tonic and is comprised of chordal writing in the faster tempo. With a triplet scale ascending to a high D, the piece ends with a flourish on the tonic.

**Slide 18 (Performance Suggestions, bullet points)**

The performance suggestions will be provided movement by movement.

**Slide 19** (First Movement, mm, 1-2)

Grace notes are notated in different ways, a single grace note, and multiple grace notes should be played differently. Accents are placed on every beat in first measure, the multiple small sixteenth grace notes should be played slightly before the main notes in order to emphasize the accented melody line. The violinist should speed up the bow when the main note arrives on the beat. The single small eighth grace notes in the second measure, however, should be played right on beat, the grace notes and the main notes are almost about same length in a fast tempo,

because there is no time to hold the main notes long. The fingertip should lightly compress the string in order to move more efficiently and faster, helping to produce a good quality grace note with clarity.

**Slide 20** (First Movement, mm, 10-13)

Prokofiev adds a large number of chromatic patterns in the music, the half step motion can be found pervasively in the work. The circled notes in Example 2 all move by half-steps with accent markings, which is essential in the music, as it helps to highlight the descending chromatic lines. None of them can be missed and each accent must be heard clearly.

**Slide 21** (First Movement, mm. 16, 52, 85)

What follows is the abrupt harmony changes and the use of harmonic language that breaks the traditional classical music rules, as seen in the measures mentioned below (Example 3).

Prokofiev uses the minor third (red square), major third (green square), and augmented third (blue square) alternately, creating a strong new sense of tonality. A tenuto is displaced on every beat, effectively emphasizing the harmonic changes. It is worth noticing that tenuto is different than an accent, and so, the violinist needs to hold the tenuto notes out for their full value when playing and emphasize each tenuto with vibrato of the left hand.

**Slide 22** (First Movement, mm. 26-34)

In the cantabile at measure 18, Prokofiev modulates the key to A major. No specific dynamic markings are placed here by Prokofiev except “*piano*” and “*dolce*” at the onset of the second theme. The use of a variety of dynamics to add excitement and emotion is not advised, there is no room to add individually conceived personality and phrasing in order to serve exactly what is printed on the score. The cantabile is interspersed and contrasted by metronomic

sounding seventh chords, each of which should be played with a full sound (Example 4). The challenge here is to play those chords with a pure sound quality without breaking them.

**Slide 23** (First Movement, mm. 46-49)

Measures 46-49 are the most harmonically ambiguous passage in the piece, intonation is a big challenge here. In the preparation of this passage, the violinist should spend time on the intonation, which is not easy due to rapid shifting. The passage must be listened to carefully, aiming for clarity and unblemished string crossings. These bars must first be practiced at a slow tempo, taking care that every note speaks, and then gradually speed up to the desired performance tempo.

**Slide 24** (First Movement, mm. 100-107)

With a return of the primary theme, the recapitulation (mm. 68-99) is similar to the exposition. After the reappearance of the opening thematic materials, the piece reaches the final climax at the Coda, in which Prokofiev marks a mass of accents. In addition to the need to play every accented strong sounding note with good sound quality, the violinist should connect the notes without accent markings with a full rich tone, especially those on G string, to create a big contrasting tone color, which is what Prokofiev desires.

**Slide 25** (Second Movement - Andante dolce, theme)

In this movement, the theme is simple—though lyrical. In order to perform the theme with best expression, the violinist needs to think about how to shift, how to place fingers, how to vibrate, and most importantly, how to keep a consistent sound. Continuous vibrato is helpful and necessary for keeping a consistent sound. In order to vibrate without any interruption, an overlapping vibrato will occur when switching from one finger to the next, so the violinist has to vibrate both fingers for a short period of time.

**Slide 26** (Second Movement - Andante dolce, Variation III)

The performance suggestions for Variation III are the same as the original theme as they are similar though presented in different key and with different dynamic markings. Prokofiev also wrote variation III one octave lower than the original, thereby creating a new mood and tone.

**Slide 27** (Second Movement - Andante dolce, Variation I, II and IV)

In Variations I, II and IV, the violinist should highlight the hidden melodies by vibrating every note with accent markings and double stems.

**Slide 28** (Second Movement - Andante dolce, Variation V)

In Variation V, except for emphasizing melodic notes, the other challenge is the intonation of the double-stops. The double-stops should be practiced slowly to improve the accuracy of the intonation, the violinist could start from the bottom note, then add the top, then put them together. Try your best to listen to both notes on the strings, but if it is too difficult, the violinist may listen to the melodic notes first.

**Slide 29** (Third Movement - Con brio, mm. 1-2)

Spirited thematic fragments appear in the movement frequently, most of them are performed on G string. Be careful to control the bow to avoid a scratchy and muffled sound when producing the thematic fragments with accent markings. The rest of the movement should be played as suggested as in the previous movements, emphasizing melodic notes, playing exactly what Prokofiev marks on the score, paying attention to the intonation of the chords, and to always aim for the best sound quality possible.

**Slide 30 (Playing in Unison)**

Playing the *Sonata* as ensemble in the original version is a challenge for violinists; the accurate intonation, timing, balance, articulation, and dynamics are all required for a stirring performance. Free personal expression is to be stifled, as the ensemble violinists need to communicate with each other and discuss ideas of interpretation in order to play unified. Breaking up each of the chords that are shown in the music into divisi is suggested, in order to produce good sound quality.

**Slide 31 (Penderecki's Compositional legacy)**

Let us now turn to the *Cadenza for Solo Violin* by Penderecki. Krzysztof Penderecki was well-known around the world through his numerous orchestral and choral works, such as *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima*, *Symphony no. 3*, *Polish Requiem*, and *St. Luke Passion*. He contributed a couple of important works to the violin repertoire, including two violin concerti, two sonatas for violin and piano, and *Capriccio for Violin and Orchestra*. Most scholarly research on Penderecki is written on his orchestral works and overlooks valuable solo violin work from his later years.

**Slide 32 (Cadenza for Solo Violin: Current Research)**

The Cadenza for Solo Violin was evolved from Penderecki's Viola Concerto, premiered in 1986 with Christiane Edinger on violin. The work aroused the interest of theorists and violinists, even though it is not that popular, more and more professionals/violin students have added it to their recital programs and present it in the concert hall. As the Cadenza for Solo Violin entered the academic world, it is necessary to figure out Penderecki's compositional approaches and provide detailed instructional performance guide to this piece.

Several analyses of Penderecki's works by scholars such as Wolfram Schwinger, Nestyev, and Sila Darville, discuss the Cadenza with focus on motivic analysis and general compositional procedures. Darville provides extensive motivic analysis based on B-A-C-H and D-S-C-H motifs, Schwinger presents a general description of the *Cadenza*, none of them examine the technical difficulties found in works.

**Slide 33 (Life and Influences: bullet points; Penderecki's portraits)**

A native of Poland, born on 23 November 1933 in Dębica, Krzysztof Penderecki (1933-2020) is now recognized as one of the most imaginative composers. Penderecki began his violin studies in Dębica with Stanisław Darlak, the military bandmaster. Penderecki later entered the Jagiellonian University and Kraków Academy of Music respectively in 1951 and 1954 where he studied music theory with Franciszek Skołyszewski and then composition with Artur Malawski and Stanisław Wiechowicz.

**(Slide 34)** Penderecki's first success outside of Poland came in 1960 with his musical composition *Anaklasis*. That same year, he wrote *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* for the victims of the bombing of Hiroshima, in which he distorted the boundaries between sound and voice while also exploring unfamiliar techniques of playing and new ways of producing sound.

**(Slide 35)** Penderecki also created a new notational style never seen before (Example 8). The piece attracted the eyes of the academic/musical world and won the Tribune Internationale des Compositeurs UNESCO prize in 1961.

**(Slide 36)** Today, Penderecki's works appeal to modern listeners through his uniquely personal style and varied compositional techniques. Penderecki's prominence came about initially through his use of new string textures and techniques. Indeed, Penderecki's name was commonly synonymous with avant-garde Polish music.

**(Slide 37)** Besides composition, Penderecki succeeded as a conductor as well, conducting dozens of outstanding orchestras all over the world. He started his conducting career in 1972 and from 1987 to 1990 he was the artistic director of the Kraków Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1988 he became principal guest conductor with the NDRSO in Hamburg, Germany. His works were often performed and presented by the famous soloists in the world, such as violin virtuosi Isaac Stern and Anne Sophie Mutter. Penderecki was also an honorary member and doctor at a number of universities.

**(Slide 38)** Later in his career, Penderecki composed numerous works that defied many conventions concerning the nature and purpose of contemporary music. He was a laureate of many prestigious prizes, receiving plenty of national and foreign prizes. Penderecki wrote hundreds of works in nearly every genre: opera, solo piano, chamber music, ballet, and symphony—many of which became the study subjects of scholars. He also consistently engaged with the concerns of the film world.

**(Slide 39)** Sadly, Penderecki's health deteriorated during the later years of his life and he died in his home in Kraków, Poland after a long illness. There is no doubt that Penderecki has made a considerable impact on the future composers as in-depth research on his life and influences has further increased interest in the performance of his underappreciated, lesser-known works.

#### **Slide 40 (Cadenza for Solo Violin, History)**

Let us now turn to the history of the Cadenza. The work was first imagined as a sort of supplement to the *Concerto for Viola* and originally designed for the viola. The motivations for writing *Cadenza* are clear as the piece was intended as a thank-you from Penderecki to Grigori Zhislin, a young Russian virtuoso of the violin and viola.

Grigori Zhislin successfully premiered the *Cadenza for Solo Viola* during Penderecki's festival in 1984. The *Cadenza* attracted a great deal of attention due to its virtuosic and expressive qualities, violinist Christiane Edinger arranged the piece and first performed it on violin in October 1986 in Warsaw. In the following year, Edinger published her transcription of the *Cadenza* for solo violin.

#### **Slide 41 (Style and Structure)**

In the mid-1970s, Penderecki allowed for more lyrical melodies to take the central role in both his vocal and instrumental compositions. The relaxed compositional language is widely applied in the *Cadenza*, which is well differentiated from that of his earlier works. In this period, Penderecki discontinues using the adventurous string techniques to produce sounds and effects, and he instead builds dark expressivity and achieves dramatic appeal by employing only conventional string techniques. Specific to the *Cadenza* are the use of different bow stroke styles, double-stops that combine with harmonics, and fast string crossings.

#### **Slide 42 (Structure, bullet points)**

The *Cadenza* is split into three sections following a slow-fast-slow structure. The sections are connected seamlessly, attacca. The first section of the *Cadenza* begins with the descending minor second figure (sighing motif), *lento, espressivo*, which is similar to his *Viola Concerto*. The sighing motif is transformed into the following four-note motifs: B-A-C-H and D-S-C-H motifs, from which the *Cadenza* is generated. The motivic language continues to evolve and develop while the arching grows louder and wider, the fast thirty-second notes gestures intersperse with strong chords and triplets. Penderecki uses a succession of ascending powerful chords, fast passages, and a gradual *accelerando* in triplets, directly leading the music to the brilliant and storming *Vivace*. The lively *Vivace* section, comprised of rapid sixteenth notes and



triplets, combines substantial wild string crossings and violent double stops with passages of accented triplets to produce high tension. *Pesante, poco rubato e grazioso, subito piano* comes as a short passage for sharp contrasts. Penderecki employs *accelerando* triplets, three-part chords alternating with bottom G, and the consecutive running triplets, bringing the music towards a magnificent climax. Connected by a *ritardando*, Tempo I returns. In this section, the motivic material is represented by double stops in *forte*, followed swiftly by a calming mood where the dynamic falls back to *piano* in the last three lines where the use of double-stops combining harmonics makes the melodic and thematic material sound more dramatic and attractive. The piece ends with a *pianississimo* sighing motif on Eb to D in the low register of the violin, creating a whispering sound effect that constructs a solemn atmosphere, calling for deep thought.

#### **Slide 43 (Performance suggestions, line 1)**

At the very beginning of the *Cadenza*, every sighing motif of a descending minor second is slurred and marked *decrescendo* in expressive *piano* on the G string. When performing alone on the stage, a violinist not only performs technically and musically demanding material, but also faces significant pressure and nerves that are known to easily cause the shaky bow in *piano* dynamics. In order to play a *piano* sound with a lot of expression without having shaky bow, the *piano* sound is to be produced by using less bow hair, the lighter part of the bow, and playing closer to the fingerboard. Thus, the *piano* sound with a lot of expression is primarily about bow speed, expressive yet matching vibrato, and mood.

#### **Slide 44 (Line 3)**

At the end of the third line, the music grows through the *crescendo* to a powerful *forte*; it is the first time that *tenuto* markings appear under the sighing motif (Example 10). The emotions

and mood change and the notes with *tenuto* markings have to be shown very clearly. The violinist needs to hold the note out for its full value and vibrate it.

**Slide 45** (Lines 4-7)

The extensive use of chromatic language makes the double and multiple stops in the *Cadenza* difficult to play. The use of 12-tone rows produces numerous minor second (red circle), octave (blue circle), and ninth (purple circle) intervals. Most of these intervals are played in the octave hand placement—which is not a convenient hand posture and also a challenge for intonation as our ears are normally insensitive to the intonation of those dissonance intervals.

Accurate intonation is essential as it gets your music across to the listener easily. Accurate intonation is even more important for contemporary music. Most contemporary works are based on melodies composed by using specific compositional approaches and contemporary techniques. Penderecki's *Cadenza* is composed by using 12 tone rows, and thereby it is very chromatic; the dissonant yet melodic line is logical with highly expressive quality and all rhythmic activities are based on specific numerical ordering. Playing out of tune or a wrong note destroys the numerical ordering; the extreme dissonance and intention of the composer loses its meaning, and the audience will not understand the music and know what is going on. To improve the accuracy of the intonation, reducing the shifting is helpful. For example, when playing the chord D, C, E $\flat$  in line 4 (see Example 11), instead of shifting from B $\sharp$  to the chord (green slant line in Example 11), keeping first fingering B $\sharp$  on D string then stretching the fourth fingering to note C of chord helps the violinist to find the position easier and produce better intonation.

**Slide 46** (Line 9)

Moving on, a series of down-bow chords in line 9 (Example 12) creates extreme tension. Here, all chords must be articulated as one note and played with intense vibrato. Experiment with the contact point and bow pressure in order to get good sound quality on each chord.

**Slide 47** (Line 12)

There are two bowing options in line 12, these consecutive running triplets could be played by using down and up bows, or up and down bows, both bowings are available. Down and up bowing is good at articulation, but it is easy to produce a scratchy sound, the violinist must be careful with the sound quality. Up and down bowing is more convenient on violin, but every up bow must catch on the string before pronouncing for articulation.

**Slide 48** (Lines 13-18)

The “V” sign appears with different directions, what do these notations mean? According to Mark McGrain, “there are two types of accent marks: the *forzato* accent “Λ” and the sforzando accent “>”. The *forzato* accent represents the heavier, or stronger, of the two types of accents. Neither of these accents alter the durational value of the note or voicing they attend.” The *forzato* accent “V” under the note is *past practice*, the *forzato* accent “Λ” above the note becomes more common.

Five continuous accents begin the *Vivace* section, implying that the music is supposed to be somewhat violent and storming in character. When playing sixteenth notes in the wild string crossing (see Example 14), the bow arm must be relatively relaxed, relaxing shoulder and putting weight into the string naturally with a natural posture as the weight transferred from the arm determines the fullness of the sound. In the passage of triplet runs that follows, every note is marked with accents, which should be played with frog of the bow for powerful tone quality.

Still, no matter what dynamic is performed, the violinist always needs to control the bow to avoid a scratchy sound and aim for the best expression of the music's intended character. The majority of the rest of the piece is similar to the passages previously discussed and should be played as previously suggested.

**Slide 49** (Lines 39-40)

The ending of the *Cadenza*, however, provides new challenges. In the double stops, the primary theme reappears in harmonics, surmounting a bass on the open D string. It is not easy to play double stops combining harmonics, because the intonation has to be very exact for them to speak clearly. Similarly challenging, the open string is easy to play while harmonics are not and so the violinist has to be precise with the bow. When starting to practice double stops combining harmonics, they can be separated and practiced slowly. Playing only the harmonics line could help to make sure that the hand knows the distance and keep the focus on the harmonic's intonation. For the bow arm, finding out a good sounding point for both the open D and harmonics is important; the bow should lean to the A string and be closer to the bridge to help the harmonics speak and produce a balanced sound.

**Slide 50 (Conclusion)**

*Sonata for Solo Violin in D major, Opus 115* by Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953), and *Cadenza for Solo Violin* by Krzysztof Penderecki (1933-2020) are distinctive yet similar: their composers represent two different countries and were composed in distinct compositional styles, yet both were written in the twentieth century and represent the coexistence of both tradition and modernity. *The Solo Sonata* is unique in the violin repertoire due to its dual function and pedagogical purpose, while the *Cadenza* is special because of its eclectic style. Each composer's style can be seen in these solo works, both of which provide violinists with opportunities to

exhibit virtuoso skills, complex musical arrangement, mastery of unusual musical genres, and a wide range of artistic expression.

This study has provided a detailed performance guide from a performer and scholar's perspective and shown methods in which both solo pieces can be performed in a more convincing way by quarrying into their respective contexts. The goal of this research is to inspire more scholars to discover, explore, advocate for, and perform overlooked violin repertoires.

Thank you!