

IASAS

Cultural Convention - 2005

music

jakarta

International School



Art work by Sun Kyung Kim

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GUIDE TO COMMON SENSE INSTRUMENT CARE

(Kristiyanto Christinus)

Many players simply opt for older instruments of anonymous or less than exalted pedigree, in varying states of repair or disrepair, hoping that the ever esteemed patina of age would be reflected in the sound and play ability are more acceptable to the serious student, floated up with the rest of the economy.

For all players, then, at all levels, the price of acquiring an instrument has become formidable, and it is not likely to become any less so in the years ahead. Unfortunately, not everyone knows how or where to turn for reliable advice. That is why I held a workshop that described how to open up stringed instruments, adjust bridges and sound posts, repair cracks, re-hair bows, and straighten necks.

Caring for violins does not only need attention in the violin's body, but also need attention in the components of the violin from the largest to the smallest. Violins maintained are not only seen from the visual condition, but also the components of it.

Some violin components that need attention are:

1. Varnish

A high-quality violin uses a good varnish and quite vulnerable to the cleaner. We need to be more careful in choosing a cleaner that will be used. Commercial cleaners or polishes do not really clean up that varnish; it only makes the violin shining. But it is also dangerous

since it possibly can destroy the original varnish of the violin. This is because the ingredients in commercial cleaner are a combination of wax and linseed oil. That combination will harden and ruin the original varnish. When it hardens, it is very difficult to eliminate it.

To give a varnish treatment, we can use a very soft cloth, but it is really important to ensure that the cloth is clean and dried. The soft buffing of the cloth will also give the instrument a subtle sheen that would never get with the polishes, leaving the fiddle looking like a new car in the showroom.

2. The Bridge

The bridge and soundpost are the heart and soul of the violin. Perhaps no other single part can affect the sound you get as much as these two; the fitting; cutting; and proper placement of them are critical, both for the sound and for the health of the instrument. Make sure when tuning that the bridge has not been pulled forward. If it has, brace the body of the instrument with yours and hold the top of the bridge firmly in both hands, gently pull it back toward you.

If the bridge doesn't move fairly easy, loosen the strings slightly, then pull the top of the bridge back up to pitch; it will bring the bridge forward to the proper place. Weather changes also influence the erectness of the bridge. Most cellists find it necessary to have two or three bridges to compensate for the movement of the neck between the seasons.

You can change the bridge yourself, if you have a tool called a bridge jack. But if you don't feel comfortable with it, you can solve your problems to your repairer. When slipping the old bridge out and the new one in, keep the feet in place, and just move the top; this will lessen the chance that the edges of the feet will scratch the varnish.

3. The soundpost

The soundpost is the simplest component to be found but the most difficult to fit and adjust. The soundpost must be measured accurately. It has to be cut for just the right tightness in the proper spot; if it is loose or too tight it will deform or even crack the top, and it will not give the best sound.

Adjusting the post is best left to a person who has had the training and experience to do it. Adjusting a sound post is like tasting wine; after a short while you can lose your perspective and end in confusion.

4. Open Bouts

Open bouts are just for when the top or back come unglued from the sides. A maker or repairer with any training at all will only use hot hide glue for open bouts, as, being water soluble, it is easily removable. But an experienced maker will only use old, thin glue, since it will pop free quite easily. The most common error is using the wrong glue. The most danger is from the glue knife itself. If the glue knife is not used just right, that surface can be irretrievably hurt, and

the only way to fix it is to remove the top and back and rebuild the surfaces. Gluing an open bout is a small job but best left to a professional.

5. The Fingerboard

Fingerboard will be too thin to plane anymore and will have to be replaced, but if the instrument purchased has a healthy, good, and dense wood, this should not be necessary for many years. The shape of the neck and fingerboard can have quite an effect on your perception of the instrument's response and easy of play. Many times the problems one encounters with the sound are actually due to the set up.

6. Pegs

Be sure when wind the strings around the peg that you don't let them bunch up against the peg box wall. Some people are taught to do this as a trick to help the pegs to hold. It is actually an easy way to cause a crack in the peg box. With it is taper, the peg is like a wedge, and winding the string in this manner just forces it deeper into the hole, eventually forcing the wood to give way. It might find with a new instrument that the pegs need more frequent lubrication.

7. String

There are three kinds of strings: gut, nylon, and metal. Unwound gut strings have come back into use in just the past few

years with the resurgence of interest in proper Baroque performance technique. In the past generation a type of nylon trademarked under the name 'perlon' was developed to replace gut.

When selecting a string, choose the right gauge, how thick or thin it is. The thicker strings are called forte, and the thinner, dolce. Strings with a gut core tend to produce the richest sound. Perlon strings are more consistent and stretch out much faster. And metal strings are essentially wire, wound or unwound, and they will give the strongest, most edgy sound.

Violinist invariably use an unwound metal E strings, and most use perlon and or gut strings for the lower three strings. The choice of strings is a very personal one; there will be different results when the players play the same instruments.

8. The Bow

The most important thing to avoid the bow is over tightening it for use. There should always be some of the reserve camber in the stick while the players are playing. When playing is done, loosen the hair completely, and then bring it back just a single turn of the button. The weather really affects the health of the bow.

The bow will need rehairing when we feel that it is no longer digging into the string, when we lost a number of the hairs, when it just gets dirty from use. Keep the leather grip and silver winding in good shape. When the rosin is accumulated on a bow, wipe down the bow with a soft cloth after each playing.

From the illustration above, it can be concluded that it is important to be careful in taking care of the violins, in use, storage, and the control of instrument health.

Biographies

Piano Adjudicators



MS. AZUSA HOKUGO attended the prestigious Toho Gakuen University School of Music in Tokyo, Japan on a piano performance fellowship. She studied with well-known Japanese pianists: Kazuhiko Nakajima and Yuko Todoroki and graduated with a Bachelor of Music Degree as well as a Certificate in Music Therapy. After graduating from Toho Gakuen University, she was invited to attend the Music Alp Courchevel Festival in France where she studied with a world-renown French pianist, Dominique Merlet.

She is currently on the piano faculty at Mahidol University College of Music where her duties include: private studio, undergraduate piano courses and voice coaching. This year, Ms. Hokugo has accompanied Artist Performances at the 2004 Southeast Asian Youth Orchestra & Wind Ensemble music festival (SAYOWE) and most recently, she accompanied Mr. Arno Bornkamp, one of Netherlands' premier alto saxophonists in a formal recital during the 2004 Thailand International Saxophone Conference.

As soloist, Ms. Hokugo has performed in Japan with the Osaka Symphonica and the Nishinomiya Symphony. In addition, she has appeared with countless chamber ensembles in Japan and Thailand as she continues to enjoy an active career performing solo and chamber music.



MS. REGINA ROSBROOK has been the Music Specialist at the Jakarta International School Pattimura Elementary School since 1989. Gina sings with "Vox Essential", the JIS faculty accapella singers, plays and teaches Javanese Gamelan, and plays guitar and keyboard in "Java Jam", a contemporary acoustic band. Gina is the creator/producer/performer of "Hey Dum Diddle", an annual family concert that has been raising funds for Tolong Anak-Anak since 1990. She has also been the musical director/pianist/conductor for 12 Jakarta Players musicals and assists with the Music Ministry at All Saints Anglican Church.

Strings Workshop leader



PAK KRISTIYANTO CHRISTINUS is Indonesia's leading violin maker and restorer. Born in Surakarta (Solo) and now a resident of Jogjakarta, Mr. Kristiyanto is currently a lecturer of violin in the music conservatory division of the Music and Arts Institute of Indonesia (Institute Seni Indonesia). He began violin lessons with Mr. Supardi at the age of 14 and holds a degree in violin performance. In his youth, he attended the Indonesian, Malaysian and Philippine Asian Youth Orchestra Festivals, and today performs in professional orchestras including the Jakarta Chamber Orchestra and the Nusantara Symphony Orchestra. Pak Kristiyanto studied violin making with the noted violin maker, Matthieu Besseling in Amsterdam, returning on two occasions of a year's duration each.

Mr. Kristiyanto's workshop at this IASAS Cultural Convention will focus on care and repair of stringed instruments including demonstrations on bow rehairing, neck repairs, and removing the top of an instrument.

Band Workshop leaders

MR. RAY HEBERER teaches Jazz Ensemble, Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, HS & MS Beginning Bands, and 19 5th-grade trombonists at Taipei American School. During the past 2 years he has worked with bands at JIS ('03 & '04), HKIS ('04), Canadian Academy in Kobe ('03), California, and Taiwan. A professional musician, Ray performed with Taiwan's National Symphony Orchestra (2 years), Ray Charles, Natali Cole and other groups. He studied under Buddy Baker and won Downbeat Magazine awards for Classical Instrumental soloist and as a member of the University of Northern Colorado Jazz Lab I and Vocal Jazz I choir. Ray continues to perform at selective jazz and classical engagements around Taiwan and at Ned Kelly's in Hong Kong.

MR. JEFF TAYLOR is the High School Ban director at ISKL. 1986 with a Bachelors of Music Education. After teaching in the Chicago, Illinois area for four years, he moved to Taipei, Taiwan. There he taught Instrumental Music at Morrison Academy, Bethany Campus. In 1995 Mr. Taylor received his Masters in Music Education from VanderCook College of Music in Chicago, Illinois. This is his 5th year teaching instrumental music at the International School of Kuala Lumpur, in Malaysia, where he directs the HS Concert Band, Beginning Band, Jazz Band, Wind Ensemble and String Ensemble.



JIS

JAKARTA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

High School Office

March 15, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to confirm and commend the work of Mr. Kristiyanto, who in my humble estimation is Indonesia's best violin craftsman. I try to invite Mr. Kristiyanto to Jakarta at least once a year to repair our many instruments at Jakarta International School (JIS).

On two occasions, I invited Mr. Kristiyanto to conduct day-long workshops on the craft of repairing string instruments. At these workshops, he described how to open up stringed instruments, adjust bridges and sound posts, repair cracks, re-hair bows, and straighten necks. The workshops were well-received on both occasions, the first one held in 2001, and the second one held in 2005 at Jakarta International School when we hosted the annual IASAS (International Association of Southeast Asian Schools) Cultural Convention.

Generally each of the six member IASAS schools must take turns hosting, so that each school hosts every six years, but JIS was luck to have the opportunity to host after only a four-year cycle. Thus, we had the opportunity to invite Mr. Kristiyanto on the two occasions (2001, 2005). IASAS Cultural Convention members include the international schools of Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Taipei, and Jakarta. The convention brings the top young student artists, vocalists, wind players and string players from each of the member schools over a five day period to rehearse, play solo and ensemble adjudications, attend workshops and master classes, and perform in festival ensembles. Thank you for this opportunity for me to write this letter on behalf of Mr. Kristiyanto.

Sincerely yours,

Sharon Eng, Ph.D.
Director of HS and MS Strings

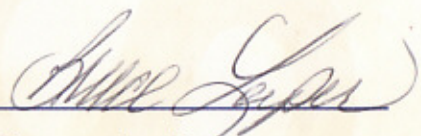
Certificate of Participation

Cultural Convention 2005

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This is to certify that
Kristiyanto Christinus
was a participant in the Strings Workshop Leader section
of the 2005 IASAS Cultural Convention



Bruce Leiper
High School Principal



Patricia C. Davies
Activities Director