

Becoming Bulletproof | Part 1

Description

Becoming Bulletproof

Lesson 1: How to be more consistent

Today's Video

Today's Practice

Here are a couple ways to apply today's lesson to your practice:

[Part 1: Warmup/fundamentals | 5-10 minutes](#)

[Part 2: Repertoire | 5-10 minutes](#)

Part 1: Warmup/fundamentals | 5-10 minutes

When was the last time you enjoyed practicing your scales and arpeggios? If it's been a while, hopefully today will be one of those days!

Because instead of regular ol' boring scales, you're going to practice playing your scales with as much musical expression as possible.

Credit goes to violinist Pamela Frank for this strategy. The rationale is that you're going to encounter bits and pieces of these scales in real music, where there's going to be dynamics and phrasing and different types of vibrato and textures and colors of sound. So why not practice them that way?

So, whatever key the concerto you're working on is in, **select the scale/arpeggios in that same key, and do your best to add character to your scales.** Play them sad, triumphant, mysterious, etc.

Do still aim for good sound, intonation, smooth bow changes, clear articulation, etc., of course!

Part 2: Repertoire | 5-10 minutes

When it's time to work on your concerto, try applying the same range of characters that you experimented with in your scales. It's ok if the characters you choose don't match your piece, or if you never do this in an actual performance.

It's just a way to challenge your muscles to become a little more musically flexible.

Here too the goal is still to aim for good sound, intonation, smooth bow changes, clear articulation, etc., and at first, you may find yourself losing a bit of accuracy. But if you want to be able to take risks in performance, you have to practice taking them in practice too. And with enough of this kind of practice, you'll find that what used to feel risky on stage, will start to feel much safer.

And you'll find that not only does practicing become more creatively satisfying and more fun, but it'll become easier to just let go and trust yourself in run-throughs, and lessons, and studio classes, and run-throughs for colleagues, and mock auditions – and eventually, in performances and auditions too.

Post-Practice Reflection

At the end of the day, take a moment to reflect and internalize what you experienced.

How did scales/arpeggios feel? More challenging at first? But more engaging?

How did your piece feel after having approached scales this way? Was it easier to play expressively? To not worry quite as much about technique and accuracy when you shifted your focus in this way?

Let me know how this went in the comments below!

Date Created

November 2022