

text and edition taken from "The Quad"  
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### Richard Strauss "Don Juan"

This is one of the more playable of Strauss's famous "tone poems". All of the tone poems have a story and a character that should affect one's approach. The character of Don Juan has been the center of poems, plays, operas, ballets and musical scores. The character that I keep in mind is that of an amorous and swashbuckling male mainly interested in the chase and conquest of the fairer sex, for better or worse. One should play with boldness and confidence as well as tenderness and playfulness in different parts of the score.


In orchestra repertoire (as well as solo) I think a "bow arm first" approach helps to codify one's presentation and save time. In other words, one must decide what the basic strokes and bowings are to be before choosing the fingerings. Of course, this is not to suggest that there are never any changes or adjustments, but this approach addresses our sound, clarity and articulation, which in today's competitive audition scene is extremely important.

**Details** – Triplets are on the string with some stick flex. Dotted rhythms are crisp and probably leaning to the stylized side. Any 16<sup>th</sup> passages should be on and into the string. In this range of the bass, clarity becomes more difficult. Keep the stroke into the string and compact. In the lyric passage at letter F, vibrato speed and shape are important components. The *un poco più lento* is approximately 2/3rds the tempo of the E#'s at the end of the *molto appassionato string*. The 8<sup>th</sup> note triplets before and after Q are out in the bow with the first triplet 8<sup>th</sup> emphasized. *Detaché* produces light articulate triplets. In the slurred triplets before S, it is very important to articulate with pivots, hammering the fingers and jamming the shifts for clarity. I have attempted to detail pivots and bracketing of positions where most needed. Finally, in the heroic letter X excerpt, pay close attention to where the *fortes* and *fortissimos* occur.

# Don Juan

Allegro molto con brio

Richard Strauss



ff

3

V

V

V

V

V

pizz.

ff

ff

ff

arco

mf

mf

pizz.

**A**

arco

ff

ff

ff

ff

fff

f

ff

3

V

V

V

V

V

V

**B**

ff

ff

pp

pizz.

2





## Johannes Brahms Symphony No. 1 - Movement 2

**Details:** This passage is also commonly asked. It begins on what is typically an unfriendly note on most basses (A  $\flat$  on the E string). A  $\flat$  is a common wolf note and many players struggle with the tone. I recommend starting non-vibrato and allow the vibrato to mirror the hairpin. One must articulate the left hand in measure 18 under the slur. It can sound like a soupy mix if you don't. I suggest sustaining the *sfs* on the quarters in measures 19, 21, and 22 through the entire beat. Drop back to *piano* in measure 22 as well. My suggested hook in measure 23 is to help with the *piano* and bow distribution. From measure 24 on, the playing should be liquid, with no breaks, and a healthy vibrato to keep it warm.

## Movement 3

**Details:** I am including this tough little passage as it is asked sometimes. The main issue is present in all of the three note motifs. One must pivot or shift in each one (unless four finger technique is employed). My patterns reflect pivots (notated with a dot between 2 notes). It is important that when beginning the sequence at measure 104, one sustains everything except a slight release on the last note of each slur.

The first ending presents an especially tricky turn around and requires close attention to the dynamic detail. I include the last passage beginning at measure 154. Note the bowing interpretation, using portato in measures 156, 157.

## Movement 4

**Details:** This music is so joyful, energetic and downright fun to play. At letter D, the 8<sup>th</sup>s are all short, whether dotted or not. The three note slurs sustain right up to the short 8<sup>th</sup>. All quarter note accents are slightly spaced. The 16<sup>th</sup>s at 106, 108, and 109 are all legato détaché - on the string with direction! The direction of the 16<sup>th</sup>s in 106 lead to next bar line, and the 16<sup>th</sup>s at 108 lead away from bar line.



15

*p* *dolce* *f*

159

*p*

→ Movement 4



**Allegro non troppo, ma con brio**

94 **D**

*ff animato* *sf* *sf* *sf* **D**

99

*sf* *sf* *sf* **A**

104

*f* **A D**

109

*fp* **E**

112

*fp* *pizz.*

