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**The Devil's Trill Sonata, Tartini and his Teachings**

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**The Devil's Trill Sonata, Tartini and his Teachings**

**by**

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**Treatise**

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this treatise to my family whose love, support and patience have been invaluable.

## **Acknowledgements**

I thank my supervisor, Andrew Dell'Antonio, for his encouraging help and my teacher, Eugene Gratovich, for his great input. I also thank the library Koninklijk Conservatorium / Conservatoire Royal, Brussels for their permission to include a copy of Vieuxtemps' quartet arrangement of the Devil's Trill Sonata in this treatise.

## **The Devil's Trill Sonata, Tartini and his Teachings**

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2003

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A musician performing an historical composition should first gain as much knowledge as possible about the original intent of the composer. With this understanding, the performer can add his own appropriate contribution, breathing new life into the work and making it attractive to the audience.

Tartini taught that the musician should have great freedom to enhance the piece and had guidelines for performing these personal ornamentations and cadenzas. He was a prolific composer, but most of his pieces are no longer performed possibly because musicians today are unaware of the great freedom the works offer them. In contrast, his Devil's Trill Sonata is a popular performance piece today, but it is almost always done in a standard edition. It is wonderful music, but the violinist loses Tartini's instruction to add original contributions, which might add to the piece's enjoyment.

The Treatise provides a biographical sketch of Giuseppe Tartini, the historic background of his Devil's Trill Sonata, and a discussion of his Treatise on Ornamentation. The treatise gives a musical analysis of the Urtext edition of the Devil's Trill Sonata and helpful tips for performing the sonata. A cadenza to the third movement and Vieuxtemps' rare quartet arrangement of the sonata are provided in the appendices. The treatise can provide violinists with a fresh insight to a popular piece so that they can approach it differently and possibly achieve new beauty of expression.

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## Introduction

Giuseppe Tartini was violinist, teacher, theorist and composer in eighteenth century Italy. Perhaps he is best described as Italian musician, artist, and thinker. In the history of violin music, he can be placed directly after Arcangelo Corelli and Antonio Vivaldi and completes a trio in the early eighteenth century Italian school of violin playing. His work greatly influenced and inspired other important performers and composers such as colleagues Antonio Vivaldi and Luigi Boccherini, as well as musicians outside of Italy as Europe was very interested in Italian violin performance. Historians have found traces of Tartini's violin style in the works of the young Wolfgang Mozart.

Tartini was a prolific composer but most of his works were not published. One can learn much about his music and techniques by studying his manuscripts and his *Treatise on Ornamentation*. It was a special kind of music making, one in which the chief figure was the performer. Tartini's artistic inventions are well exhibited in what he considered to be his best work, the Devil's Trill Sonata.

This paper hopes to give insight to Tartini's artistic processes so that one may create a more original presentation of his works, with special emphasis on the Devil's Trill Sonata.

The first chapter discusses Tartini's life. The second chapter focuses on the Devil's Trill Sonata, discussing dating of the work, its various sources, and

discrepancies. It also touches upon performance practices, such as the practice of attaching a huge cadenza onto the third movement. The third chapter is an overview of Tartini's *Treatise on Ornamentation* and provides a basis from which a performer can draw when approaching one of Tartini's works. The fourth chapter gives an analysis of the sonata. The fifth chapter discusses how to approach a modern performance of the Devil's Trill Sonata; it gives a review of the Urtext edition versus the Kreisler edition of the Devil's Trill and gives pointers for tackling some of the sonata's technical difficulties.

## Chapter 1: Tartini's Life

Giuseppe Tartini was born in Istria on April 8, 1692. His birthplace was Piran, a small town located on the coast of the Adriatic ocean in a country now known as Slovenia. At the end of the seventeenth century, Istria had strong trading ties with Venice and was greatly influenced by her. But Piran was equally populated by the Slavs and the town maintained its ties to the Slavonic culture. This combination of these Italian and Slavonic influences produced peculiarities in the local musical folklore, which most assuredly stayed in Tartini's memory and influenced his compositions.<sup>1</sup>

Tartini's father, Giovanni Antonio, was the general manager of Piran's salt mills and a prominent figure in the community, who desired that his son become a priest and had him educated accordingly. Following his studies at the local monastery, the Brothers of the Minori Conventuali, Tartini was sent to study at the Collegio dei Padri Scolopi delle Scuole Pie at Capo D'Istria. There he received regular violin and theory lessons from Giulio di Terno and made rapid progress.<sup>2</sup>

Tartini left Istria sometime between 1708 and 1709 and moved to Padua (Padova) a city in the mainland of the Venetian republic. Padua was one of the

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<sup>1</sup> Pierluigi Petrobelli, "Giuseppe Tartini," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (London: MacMillan, 2001), vol. 25, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> Leslie Sheppard, "Giuseppe Tartini," *The Strad*, vol. 91 (Sept. 1980), p. 333.

oldest towns in Italy and was famous for its University where Galileo himself had lectured. Founded in 1222, the University was renowned for providing a high standard of education in jurisprudence. Tartini enrolled at the University under the pretense of continuing his study of theology but chose instead to study law. It is purported that he was quite a colorful character at the University who spent most of his time perfecting his fencing skills, all the while dressed as a priest. Tartini's father was very disappointed in his son's pursuits and withdrew most of Tartini's allowance, forcing him to withdraw from the University and teach violin lessons.<sup>3</sup>

Tartini fell in love with one of his students, a young girl named Elisabetta Premazone, and they were secretly wed on July 29, 1710.<sup>4</sup> He fled Padua shortly thereafter, unaccompanied by his new bride. Although there are varying accounts of why he fled, there is strong evidence to suggest it was due in fact to a consequence of his marriage. Leslie Sheppard writes:

Elisabetta was closely connected with Cardinal Giorgio Cornaro – a powerful figure in the Catholic Church, and greatly respected by Tartini's father. The Cardinal ordered Giuseppe's immediate arrest on a charge of unlawful abduction of a juvenile.<sup>5</sup>

Giovanni Tartini immediately withdrew all financial support from his wayward son when he heard the news and Giuseppe was forced to leave Elisabetta in her parent's care and flee towards Rome dressed as a pilgrim. Eventually he took

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<sup>3</sup> Sheppard, p. 333.

<sup>4</sup> Petrobelli, "Tartini" p. 108.

<sup>5</sup> Sheppard, p. 333.

refuge in the convent of S. Francesco in Assisi where a Piran native, the superior Padre G.B. Torre, sheltered him.<sup>6</sup> He remained at the convent for nearly four years diligently studying and practicing the violin.

There are no accounts of Tartini receiving violin tuition, but it is generally assumed that he studied composition with Padre Bohuslav Matej Cernohorsky (1684-1742), the organist of the basilica at that time. Padre Boemo, as he was affectionately called in Italy, was a “noted Czech composer and theorist and head of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Czech school of composition, who had also taught Cristoph Willibald Gluck in Prague.”<sup>7</sup> This was a time of serious study and contemplation for Tartini – where many of his acoustical theories and musical style germinated. Leslie Sheppard states that it is also during this period that Tartini experimented with the instrument itself; using strings of thicker gauges, creating a bow made of lighter wood, lengthening it, correcting the outward bulge of the shaft and diminishing the size of the head. Additionally, Tartini had the wood of the handles of his bows fluted to give a firmer grip.<sup>8</sup> All these modifications gave the violin a surer tone and length and variance of breath more comparable to the human voice. They paved the way for the final bow improvements of Francois Tourte, c. 1780-1790. In notes for an edition of the Devil’s Trill Sonata, Richard Aldrich writes the following:

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<sup>6</sup> Petrobelli, “*Giuseppe Tartini*,” p. 108.

<sup>7</sup> Lev Ginsburg, *Tartini His Life and Times*, ed. Dr. Herbert Axelrod, Eng. trans. I. Levin (Neptune City, N.J.: Paganiniana Publications, Inc., 1981), p. 44.

<sup>8</sup> Sheppard, p. 333.

He (Tartini) was who first found the value of a long elastic bow that responds to the player's slightest pressure and gives him command of all varieties of tone-color, of all degrees of force and of the limitless power of expression in phrasing that elevates the violin above all other musical instruments. It is for the possibilities of the bow that Tartini should be held in reverence by the modern violinist. His own style of playing sought fully to realize the value that lay in this new-found element; and if any one thing be designated as showing his influence in advancing the art of the violinist, it must be his teaching and practice of bowing.<sup>9</sup>

It was during his stay in Assisi that Tartini apparently formulated his initial version of the Devil's Trill Sonata, in which the Slavic influences of his earlier years in Piran are apparent. After leaving the town as a young man to continue his education, Tartini returned many times during the summer months to visit relatives. It was then, according to Lev Ginsburg, that Tartini "no longer confined himself to direct emotional perception of the ingenuous Slavonic songs or folk dancing with their characteristic rhythms; he analyzed their peculiarities and used them in his own interpretation."<sup>10</sup> A Croat authority, F.X. Kuhac, finds similar intonations (opening pitch intervals) between Tartini's sonatas and Croatian works. Ginsburg writes: "Very likely it is the folk music of the southwestern Slavs that Tartini draws upon in his use of improvised melodic phrases with an augmented second, which according to him creates an 'excellent

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<sup>9</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, *Le Trille Du Diable*, ed. Lichtenberg, in *Masterpieces for the Violin Vol. XXIII* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1901).

<sup>10</sup> Ginsburg, p. 67.

impression’.”<sup>11</sup> Much later, in his treatise *Trattato di Musica secondo la vera scienza dell’armonia*, Tartini enlarges upon Dalmatian folk songs that according to him “have no definite intervals, but flow in a prolonged, improvised tune, now rising, now falling.”<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, according to the noted Slovene violinist, Rok Klopčič, any folksongs that may have directly influenced Tartini have long been forgotten. Consequently, research into folksongs and dances that might have influenced Tartini in his Devil’s Trill Sonata have revealed nothing specific.

Following the death of Father Torre, Tartini was obliged to seek employment as a violinist. He played in the orchestra of the Ancona opera house and later in the opera houses of Fano and elsewhere in the region. Tartini’s good friend and first biographer, Francesco Fanzago, writes that it was while working in the Ancona opera house that Tartini discovered the principle of the “third tone.” A third and lower pitch is produced as a byproduct of any two tones played accurately in tune simultaneously. Tartini used this third tone in writing music and in practicing intonation. Once the fame of Tartini had begun to spread, Elisabetta strongly petitioned that he be exempt of his former charges. Cardinal Cornaro relented and Tartini was able to reunite with his wife in Padua where he enjoyed the company of many cultured aristocrats.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., citing Giuseppe Tartini, *Trattato di Musica secondo la vera scienza dell’armonia* (Padua: Manfre, 1754), p. 158.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., citing Giuseppe Tartini, *Trattato di Musica...*, p. 151.

Legend has it that in 1716 Tartini attended the performance of the great Florentine violinist Francesco Maria Veracini, perhaps at the festivities in honor of the Crown Prince of Saxony, and he was so profoundly impressed by Veracini's style that he left his wife with his brothers in Pirano and returned to Ancona where he spent four more years in seclusion perfecting his skills as a violinist.<sup>13</sup> Ginsburg thus characterizes the elements unique to Veracini's music: "melodic freedom in the flow of music, the 'singing' quality of the tunes, a bold use of harmony and use of chromatics, double stopping and ornamentation that were unusual for the period, thereby giving his sonatas a romantic coloring."<sup>14</sup> Lev Ginsburg aptly states the following:

All this could not but attract Tartini. He was especially impressed by Veracini's manner of playing, which was bold and vivid, with a smooth flowing tone and an easy mastery of bow and finger technique, including the trill.

His sensitive and inquiring mind led Tartini into seclusion to absorb all the new things that he had heard from Veracini, to perfect his skill and to return to Padua with a mature mastery of the violin.<sup>15</sup>

Tartini was by now a fine violinist of excellent repute and his decision to return to Ancona clearly depicts his unwavering thirst for artistic excellence. This genuine love and respect for his art and his determination were characteristic of Tartini

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<sup>13</sup> Petrobelli, "Giuseppe Tartini," p. 108.

<sup>14</sup> Ginsburg, p. 44.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

and he returned to Padua only four years later having successfully accomplished the goals he had set for himself. Following this second period of seclusion, where it is thought he tried to perfect his deficiencies under his old master Giulio Terni, he re-emerged an accomplished artist with his set of bowing variations: *L'Arte dell Arco*, which was based on a Gavotte from Corelli's Sonata Op. 5, No. 10 in F major and published in 1758.

On April 16, 1721 Tartini, with the help of the prominent father of Gerolamo Ascanio Giustiniani, a Venetian student, was appointed *primo violino e capo de concerto* at the basilica of S Antonio in Padua.<sup>16</sup> It is not unreasonable to assume that the grandeur of the basilica where Tartini spent nearly half a century of his life inspired his works. The church was completed in the early fourteenth century, with the basilica being added during the sixteenth. Italian Masterpieces that include the works of Titian and Veronese have been preserved and are still on display.<sup>17</sup> Lev Ginsburg believes the soviet write Marietta Shaginian paints a vivid picture of the basilica. She writes:

There it stands, as if shaped by superhuman hands, like a gigantic toy, with an unbelievable completeness in its austere geometrical lines, with rounded domes amid the pointed ones, with a look of the Byzantine or at the least Oriental in it – there it stands, from top to bottom in a kind of perfection of fulfillment, complete in itself, as if it were not fixed in the ground by its foundation but had merely been placed fully built, on the paving stones of the square,

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<sup>16</sup> Petrobelli, "Tartini," p. 108.

<sup>17</sup> Ginsburg, p. 42.

the most charming – no, that is the wrong word – the most convincing basilica of them all.<sup>18</sup>

Though Tartini was only modestly remunerated for his work at the basilica, he was shown great respect and given unusual liberties. Petrobelli observes:

The proceedings of the appointments board expressly stated that Tartini was exempt from the usual examination because of his acknowledged perfection in the profession, and he was at the same time granted complete freedom to play in opera and musical academies whenever he so wished. The document is in itself proof of the high reputation Tartini had by then acquired.<sup>19</sup>

His reputation became ever more established and in 1723 Tartini was invited to Prague for the coronation of Emperor Charles VI as King of Bohemia. He joined his friend and colleague, the cellist Antonio Vandini, and they remained in Prague for three years. There he was in the service of Count Kinsky and enjoyed contacts with Prince Lobkowitz's household as well as with important musical figures including the German lutenist S. L. Weiss and the flutist-theorist J.J. Quantz. Tartini was influenced by his new experiences and continued to perfect his own playing. Wiseman, an English friend of Tartini's, reported to

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<sup>18</sup> Marietta Shaginian, *Italiansky Dnevnik* (Italian Diary), Moscow, 1963, p. 23, quoted in Lev Ginsburg, p. 42.

<sup>19</sup> Petrobelli, "Tartini," p. 108.

Charles Burney, “Tartini...used to say that he studied very little ‘till after he was thirty of age.”<sup>20</sup>

Various sources give different accounts as to why he left Prague and returned to Padua in 1726 – perhaps it was his wife’s pleading, his brother’s financial debacle, or the poor climate and his subsequent ill health. Nevertheless, upon his return to Padua, Tartini opened an academy that quickly became famous. Aspiring musicians traveled to Padua from all over Europe to study violin and composition with the master in his “School of the Nations.” It was probably about this time that Tartini established his relationship with the famous Padre Martini in Bologna and in 1732 his first published works, a set of twelve sonatas for violin and continuo, appeared in Amsterdam. This prompted many invitations to travel abroad but he rarely traveled and seldom played in other Italian cities once his school became established. It is purported that he journeyed to Rome sometime around 1740 at the invitation of the Cardinal Olivieri to play in the presence of Pope Clement XII and that his performances were received with great enthusiasm in towns such as Milan, Florence, Bologna, Naples, Palermo and others along the way.<sup>21</sup> However, there is no concrete evidence to support his trip to Rome and it is documented that he suffered a stroke the very same year, which partially paralyzed his left arm.

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<sup>20</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present* (1789) (London, 1789; reprinted New York: Dover Press, 1957), II, 47.

<sup>21</sup> Ginsburg, p. 51.

Tartini continued to work and to be published. David Ewen writes the following about his compositions:

He built upon the foundation laid by his great predecessor, Corelli but ... he greatly enlarged upon his models. He employed broader and more pregnant themes, while his passagework reveals organic development. Tartini understood the importance of light and shade. His passages stand out in bold contrast to the melodic passages and they reveal a certain kinship to the whole structure.<sup>22</sup>

It should be noted that Tartini's musical repertoire consists mostly of two instrumental genres, the violin sonata and the solo violin concerto with string accompaniment. In regards to this, Petrobelli writes the following: "in a century in which practically every composer was obliged to write for the church and the theatre, this fact is in itself striking and significant."<sup>23</sup> He quotes Tartini as having said the following "I have been asked to write for the opera houses of Venice, but I always refused, knowing only too well that a human throat is not a violin fingerboard."<sup>24</sup>

Tartini's second opus, six sonatas for violin and bass, was published by Le Cene in Amsterdam in 1738; another set of twelve sonatas for violin and bass was printed by Cleton in Rome in 1745. In November of 1749, Tartini sent a set of piccole sonate (little sonatas) for solo violin to his friend Algarotti to be presented to his master, Frederick of Prussia. In February of 1750 Algarotti requested six

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<sup>22</sup> David Ewen, *Great Composers 1300-1900* (New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1966), p. 375.

<sup>23</sup> Petrobelli, *The New Grove*, vol. 25, p. 109.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

violin concertos for Ferdinand Philipp von Lobkowitz. Tartini complied and they were completed by July of that year.<sup>25</sup> Le Clerc-Boivin, a publishing house in Paris, published a large number of sonatas in Tartini's lifetime. Lev Ginsburg writes that the fact that so many of Tartini's works were published during his lifetime is evidence of their early popularity at a time when most musicians mainly performed their own compositions. However, only 18 of 135 violin concertos and approximately 70 of the 187 sonatas, plus a *Pastorale* in A major, were published in Tartini's lifetime, mostly between 1732 and 1750.<sup>26</sup> In 1754, Tartini's first treatise, *Trattato di musica secondo la vera scienza dell'armonia*, was published by Manfre in Padua in 1754 after having been scrutinized by Padre Martini and the mathematician Balbi.<sup>27</sup>

On February 23, 1765, Tartini was no longer required to perform as first violinist at San Antonio. His assistant, Giulio Meneghini, who had served as Tartini's substitute since 1756, was nominated as his successor and yet Tartini continued to work.<sup>28</sup> Six of his violin concertos were transcribed by Vincenzo Rota as three and four part sonatas and published in London in 1766. In 1767,

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<sup>25</sup> Petrobelli, "Tartini, Alarotti e la corte di Dresda," in *Analecta Musicologica* II (Graz-koln: Bohlau, 1964), p. 81, quoted in Mary P. Ogletree, *Giuseppe Tartini: His Influence on Violin Technique and Literature*, (diss. University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1979): p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Michelangelo Abbado, "Presenza di Tartini nel nostro Secolo," *Nuova Rivista Musicale Italiana*, IV (Nov.-Dec. 1970) p.1088, quoted in Mary P. Ogletree, *Giuseppe Tartini: His Influence on Violin Technique and Literature*, (diss. University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1979), p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Pierluigi Petrobelli, *Giuseppe Tartini: Le Fonti Biografiche* (Florence: Universal Edition, 1968), p. 151, quoted in Ogletree, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup>Petrobelli, p. 76 "Tartini, Alarotti e la corte di Dresda," cited in Ogletree, p. 9.

Tartini's second treatise, *De principi dell'armonia musicale contenuta nel diatonico genero* was published along with his reply to criticism of his first treatise, the *Risposta...alla critica del di lui "Trattato di musica" di Mons. Le Serre de Ginevra*.<sup>29</sup>

After Tartini's wife died, his old friend Antonio Vandini moved in with him. Their "fifty years of true and sacred friendship" is documented in a letter to Padre Martini in Bologna, dated April 7, 1769.<sup>30</sup> Pietro Nardini, Tartini's oldest and most beloved student, returned from Livorno shortly afterwards to care for him (Tartini suffered from a cancerous growth on his left foot). Tartini died on February 26, 1770. He was mourned by Padua and hailed "its chief and most attractive ornament, ... philosopher, saint, and sage."<sup>31</sup> Francesco Fanzago gathered biographical material from Vandini and Sberti and gave a funeral oration in Tartini's honor on March 31. The oration was published in June, just a few months later.<sup>32</sup>

Tartini's influence continued after his death. In 1771, Tartini's *Traité des agréments de la musique* was published in Paris. This treatise is the only one pertaining to the violin, also known as *Regole per ben suonar il Violino* in its Italian manuscript form. Charles Burney published Tartini's famous letter to

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<sup>29</sup> Ogletree, p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> Ginsburg, p. 50.

<sup>31</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music* (London, 1789; reprinted New York: Dover Press, 1957), II, p. 450.

<sup>32</sup> Petrobelli, pp. 91-92, quoted in Ogletree, p. 10.

pupil Maddalena Lombardini with an English translation in 1779; but most importantly, it was Tartini's influence, which was spread throughout Europe by his many students, that eventually formed the basis of the Italian violin school of the eighteenth century.

## Chapter 2: The History of the Devil's Trill Sonata

Because an autographed manuscript of the Devil's Trill Sonata has never been found, scholars debate over when the sonata was written. The famous trill passage from the last movement was quoted in Leopold Mozart's violin method of 1756, but the first published edition did not appear until 1798, nearly 30 years after Tartini's death, in a Parisian anthology compiled by violinist Jean-Baptiste Cartier. The original version of the Devil's Trill Sonata may have been drafted in 1713 following a dream of Tartini that was reported by the French astronomer Joseph-Jerome De Lalande. Lalande visited Tartini in Padua during his trip to Italy in 1765-1766 and recounts the story of his trip in his book, *Voyage d'un Francais en Italie*. The eighteenth century music historian, Charles Burney, later incorporated Lalande's story into his own book *The Present State of Music in France and Italy*. Here is Burney's translation of Lalande's French:

He dreamed one night in 1713, that he had made a compact with the devil, who promised to be at his service on all occasions; and during this vision everything succeeded according to his mind...In short, he imagined he gave the Devil his violin, in order to discover what kind of musician he was; when to his great astonishment, he heard him play a solo so singularly beautiful and executed with such superior taste and precision, that it surpassed all he had ever heard or conceived in his life. So great was his surprise and so exquisite his delight upon this occasion that it deprived him of the power of breathing. He awoke with the violence of this sensation, and instantly seized his fiddle, in hopes of expressing what he had just heard, but in vain; he however then composed a piece which is perhaps the best of all his works (he called it the 'Devil's Sonata'),

but it was so inferior to what his sleep had produced that he declared he should have broken his instrument and abandoned music forever, if he could have subsisted by any other means.<sup>33</sup>

Not all scholars give credence to this account. The great Tartini scholar, Minos Dounias, believes that the simplicity of the sonata's melodic line points to his "late" period when he is believed to have embraced the emerging "galant" style. Scholars Andreas Moser and Paul Brainard believe that the "sonata's artistic content, its profundity and finish of ideas, the harmony, originality of form, and the manner in which technique is used"<sup>34</sup>, point to the "mature" period in Tartini's works. Moser believes the sonata could not have been written before 1730 and Paul Brainard says it could not have been written before 1740.<sup>35</sup> Minnie Elmer in *Tartini's Improvised Ornamentation* (1962), presents another possibility. She examines ornamented manuscripts of Tartini's works that were purchased by the University of California, Berkeley. These examples of written ornamentations are consistent with Tartini's treatise on ornamentation and if they do not represent his own performance practices, then they at least represent practices of ornamentation by students studying with him. She deduces from her studies that what is considered Tartini's late "galant" style might not actually represent a change in style at all. The manuscripts suggest that his highly ornamented style might have

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<sup>33</sup> Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy*, a facsimile of the 1773 London edition (New York: Broude Brothers, 1969), pp. 128-129.

<sup>34</sup> Lev Ginsburg, *Tartini His Life and Times*, ed. Dr. Herbert Axelrod, Eng. trans. I. Levin (Neptune City, N.J.: Paganiniana Publications, Inc., 1981), p. 111.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

continued into his last years. By then Tartini's School of the Nations was well established and his trade secrets and aesthetics were already understood by his pupils. This meant that his last sonatas, which were the bulk of his published sonatas, did not need to have all the ornamental detail written out, as did his early opera. Francesco Galaezzi supports her conclusions with the only other authentic Italian treatise on violin playing entitled *Elementi Teorici-Pratici di Musica*, published in Rome in 1791. This treatise shows that Italian teachers continued to provide directions for improvised ornamentation in the last decade of the century. Along this line, Joan Smiles writes: "No Italian method suggests that composers attempt to prevent mistakes by performers or to restrict ornamentation by writing out embellishments"<sup>36</sup> and that "To Italian musicians of the late eighteenth century, the words 'taste' and 'expression' were still as closely identified with the art of improvised ornamentation as they were earlier in the century."<sup>37</sup>

Further supporting the idea that the Devil's Trill might have been a work in progress during Tartini's life is Lev Ginsburg's book that connects characteristics of the sonata to many of Tartini's other works, many of which were written and published quite early. Ginsburg points out that the trill was an expressive ornament that had always fascinated Tartini. This is evidenced not only by Tartini's autographed manuscripts, but also by the considerable length of

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<sup>36</sup> Joan E. Smiles, "Directions for Improvised Ornamentation in Italian Method Books of the Late Eighteenth Century," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol. 31 n3 (1978), p. 505.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 509.

text that he devotes to it in his treatise. It is also the only ornament he addresses in his famous letter to Signora Maddalena Lombardini, translated by Burney and published as *An Important Lesson to Performers on the Violin*. Tartini used abundant trills in performance and judging from handwritten manuscripts, he must have used them to teach his students since practicing them helps secure the left hand's coordination. Ginsburg develops a case for believing that the Devil's Trill Sonata is most likely a piece that Tartini perpetually worked on polishing. He states in his book, *Tartini: His Life and Times*:

The Devil's Trill may be regarded as Tartini's creed in art, as a generalization not only of the ideas, images, meaning and emotional content of his work, but also of its specific melodic, harmonic and rhythmic idiom, and of certain devices in composition and execution.<sup>38</sup>

Of all of Tartini's roughly 200 known sonatas, the Devil's Trill has remained most prominent in violinists' repertoire. That this particular sonata did not fall into obscurity like so many of Tartini's other sonatas can be attributed to Cartier's anthology. Yet, there seems to be more to it than that, since Cartier's anthology contained several of Tartini's works, none of which have survived in popularity. Indeed, the Devil's Trill is perennially popular and appears frequently on star violinists' recital programs and in orchestral concerts. The interest in this sonata seems to be derived from myriad factors: its interesting technical demands

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<sup>38</sup> Ginsburg, p. 117.

such as the accompanied trill, its deep musical content, its beguiling programmatic association, as well as its sumptuous traditional-modern renditions as exemplified by Fritz Kreisler. In the preface to an edition of the Devil's Trill Sonata, Richard Aldrich writes:

Tartini's qualities as an artist are reflected in his compositions, which are likewise important contributions to the art of his day, and are still cherished by connoisseurs. Naturally some of these, in the lapse of two hundred years [in 1901], have lost their savor; but the survival of so many of them is a proof of the inherent vitality of his creative impulse.<sup>39</sup>

The actual Devil's Trill, an accompanied trill in the third movement, has inspired many artists. It is a continuous trill in connection with double stops and extensions, and it involves shifting the fingers while trilling. It has become a familiar feature of cadenzas and of virtuoso concertos, which can be found throughout the violin repertoire. An example is the Sibelius violin concerto. Clearly this was an innovation that has captured the imagination of generations of composers and performers and has made a lasting impact. A recently discovered manuscript leads one scholar to believe that the Devil's Trill Sonata influenced even Chopin.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, *Le Trille Du Diable*, ed. Litchenberg, in *Masterpieces for the Violin Vol. XXIII* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1901).

<sup>40</sup> See Rip Rense, "Deciphered: A Demonic Prelude by an Ailing Chopin," *New York Times*, 12 May 2002, sec Arts and Leisure.

Example 2.1  
Examples of the Devil's Trill and Examples of its Influence

The image displays a musical score for Example 2.1, consisting of two staves of music. The first staff begins at measure 88 and features a series of trills (tr) and a simile marking ([simile]). The second staff begins at measure 94 and continues the sequence with trills and a simile marking. The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The notation includes various rhythmic values and articulation marks. A small musical staff with a single note and a trill symbol is positioned to the right of the main score.

**CONCERTO**  
First movement FRANK MARTIN

**CONCERTO** SIBELIUS Op. 47

**SOUVENIR DE MOSCOU** WIENIAWSKY Op. 6

Lev Ginsburg quotes Vladimir Odoyevsky as saying in 1837 that Tartini “had anticipated the romantic taste of our age” and that “a new epoch had begun for the violin” with the Devil’s Trill. This influence has continued to thrive in modern times. Examples are being Fritz Kreisler’s arrangement for violin and piano and for violin and string orchestra, or new lushly orchestrated renditions

such as Ricardo Zandonai's and the innovative interpretation by violinist Vanessa Mae. Perhaps this sonata survived because it so vividly fits the romantic notion of the artist under demonic possession, though surely this was not Tartini's intent. Still, the modern ear clearly senses the violence of passions within the sonata. Ginsburg quotes Konstantin Rosenchild:

In this 'Pathetic Sonata' of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian violin music, there really is something 'demonical,' to use the concept in the broad esthetic manner of that period, in the sense of being possessed by violent passions with all their turbulence and transports, perhaps oppositions, a state caught and put into music by the artist.<sup>41</sup>

The famous pedagogue Leopold S. Auer (1845-1930) gave special prominence to Tartini's Devil's Trill both in performance and in teaching. In his book, *Violin Masterworks and their Interpretation* he remarks in regards to the Devil's Trill and to Dido Deserted:

In the works just mentioned we find, aside from musical invention, dramatic conception and perfection of form. They rank among the most significant compositions included in the entire range of violin literature. And their spontaneity is not merely a mental, an intellectual originality, an originality of clever calculation, as in the case with the majority of newly-discovered works by distinguished masters, whose very names are full of promise, but they have their origin in those deep founts from which genius alone draws inspiration.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Konstantin Rosenschild, *History of Foreign Music to the Middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1963, p. 195, quoted in Lev Ginsburg, *Tartini His Life and Times*, pp. 112-113.

<sup>42</sup> Leopold Auer, *Violin Master Works and their Interpretation* (New York: Carl Fischer, Inc., 1925), p. 2.

## Historical Performance Practices

The first printed edition of the Devil's Trill Sonata appeared in 1798 in an anthology dedicated to the Paris Conservatoire by Jean-Baptiste Cartier called "L'art du Violon ou Collection Choisie dans le Sonatas des Ecoles Italienne, Francaise et Allemande," which can be briefly translated as "Violin Pieces in the Italian, French and German Manners." He states that he obtained this "very rare" sonata from Baillot, a famous French violinist and prodigy student of the last representative of the great Italian classical violinist-composers, Giovanni Battista Viotti. Cartier writes that Tartini's students nicknamed it "Devil's Trill" in reference to "the master's dream, in which he saw the devil seated at the foot of his bed, playing the trill from the final movement of this sonata."<sup>43</sup> It should be noted that earlier handwritten manuscripts make no reference to such a dream. A second edition of Cartier's anthology was printed in 1801, a third edition came out in 1803. The next known publication appeared in 1855 as arrangements by Henri Vieuxtemps and Robert Volkmann for pianoforte accompaniment and for a string quartet. The rare string quartet version is provided in the appendix of this paper. There since have been over twenty different editions of the work. All of these published editions display major discrepancies when compared to earlier manuscripts, possibly written by Tartini's scribes and his students, and serve to

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<sup>43</sup> Jean-Baptiste Cartier, *L'Art Du Violon*, a facsimile of the Paris [1803?] edition (New York: Broude Brothers Limited, 1973), p. 307.

reflect a later development of the art of violin playing. Further complicating the search for the most authentic Tartini composition are the specific discrepancies among the manuscripts themselves that are described in a critical report by the publisher Bärenreiter.

Cartier's copy of the sonata also contains some discrepancies when compared to earlier manuscripts found at the Capella di S. Antonio in Padua. Besides minor note and phrasing differences, Cartier's version features an unfigured bass while in some of the handwritten manuscripts originating during Tartini's time, the bass part is figured, though not consistently.<sup>44</sup> The bass in Cartier's version must have been realized by *regola dell'octava*.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, Vieuxtemps' score differs considerably from the Cartier edition. In Cartier's edition the bass is unfigured while Vieuxtemps' edition has a full accompaniment written out, as would be expected during that time. Vieuxtemps also eliminates the double stops (the accompanying lower voice) of the opening *siciliana*-like movement. This is very significant because any written notes of Tartini's would have been considered necessary according to the Italian performing practice. In addition, the last Allegro is changed in such a way that it joins the Vieuxtemps cadenza which leads into a pompous derivative of the original Adagio. Joseph

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<sup>44</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, *Sonata in G minor*, ed. Agnese Pavanello, (Basel: Barenreiter Kassel, 1997), editorial notes.

<sup>45</sup> A system of harmony in which each diatonic note of a bass part has an assumed chord above it. 18<sup>th</sup> century figured bass players were accustomed to these "rules" or guides - to them certain bass lines probably indicated certain harmony.

Szigeti states in his book, *Szigeti on the Violin*: “No wonder that those who came after Vieuxtemps felt free to commit still further and more reprehensible distortions in the name of liberty of interpretation.”<sup>46</sup> He goes on to illustrate what he calls “subsequent vicissitudes of the text” –mainly the deletion of the accompanying lower voice of the first movement.

A number of violin and piano arrangements of the Devil’s Trill Sonata appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century. Joseph Joachim, Leopold Auer, and Fritz Kreisler each came out with their editions in 1905. What is most notable about all of these editions is that they, like Vieuxtemps’, dispensed with the opening double stops. Versions by Nachez and Jenő Hubay came out in 1914 and were very similar to the Cartier text. None of these editions became as popular as the Kreisler edition, which was written for violin and piano or orchestral accompaniment. Indeed, in the *Discopaedia of the Violin 1889-1971* edition, thirty-three of the fifty-four recordings of the Devil’s Trill are of the Kreisler edition. Kreisler provides a long, splendid cadenza attached to the last movement, 81 measures compared to the 136 in the last movement. Trends become apparent in these editions. The early ones, such as Cartier’s and the manuscripts, do not contain notated cadenzas. In Tartini’s time they were expected to be personal impromptu performances by the individual violinist. Later editions which retain the early manuscript’s double-stopping in the first

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<sup>46</sup> Joseph Szigeti, *Szigeti on the Violin* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1970), p. 139.

movement have shorter cadenzas in the last movement than editions such as Vieuxtemps, Kreisler, Joachim, and others that omit the double stopping in the first movement and have long last movement cadenzas. Clearly there was a difference of opinion about proper forms or structure of ornamentation.

One must wonder why so many violinists choose to perfect another violinist's cadenza rather than develop their own. The Devil's Trill was so popular in Russia that Dmitri Tsyganov collected and published eleven cadenzas by famous nineteenth and early twentieth century violinists. These cadenzas are by Vetan (2 cadenzas), Hubay, Leonard, Joachim, Marto, Kreisler, Nachez, Auer, Ianzhinov, and Erdenko. Yet none are as popular as the Kreisler today. If you perform the Devil's Trill Sonata today it is assumed that you will perform the Kreisler-Tartini edition with the Kreisler cadenza. No one seems to question this practice, probably because the Kreisler cadenza is so musically satisfying while being technically challenging. It is interesting to note that even Anne Sophie Mutter's recording with an early twentieth century arrangement by Zandonai incorporates the Kreisler cadenza.

The various cadenzas published for the Devil's Trill Sonata since 1840 are unlike other cadenzas for a sonata; they resemble a free cadenza of a concerto. The exception is the D minor sonata of Locatelli, the last of his twelve Op. 4 sonatas. Locatelli added a five-minute capriccio, titled "Prova del Intonazione." The tradition of the lengthy cadenza did not come from Tartini's students. Tartini

was aware of the trend toward the elaborate cadenzas and capriccios and states in his treatise on ornamentation that, while he does not condone such elaborate inventions, the student must know how to write one to be prepared for what an audience expects. Perhaps the tradition of adding a lengthy cadenza to the last movement came from the showmanship of virtuosos like Vieuxtemps, who was idolized in Russia where he spent five years (1846-1851) as soloist to the Tsar and professor of violin. It was probably a natural progression as performers in the nineteenth century lost the skill of improvising at cadences or within Adagio passages that they developed the art of composing cadenzas to be superimposed on the structure. With the improvised form of ornamentation lost, the effect of the music was less compelling and a larger final cadenza became more necessary.

By the late twentieth century, popular adaptations of “master works” became tradition. Much of this was due to the development of recording, which created a larger audience for the masterpieces and accompanying “best seller” list. The Kreisler arrangement of the Devil’s Trill became the popular arrangement of that piece, which is ironic since Kreisler never recorded the Devil’s Trill. After hearing the Kreisler cadenza played a dozen times in a row during an international competition, Szigeti commented on how short-lived traditions are, even those as recent as Kreisler’s playing: “Of all the competitors only one played it in the unmistakable manner in which Kreisler meant it to be played – with a short

stopping of the bow after each group of ‘tremolos’ and with the requisite bite of the bow.”<sup>47</sup>

## **Cadenzas**

What we now call a cadenza, Tartini knew as a capriccio. “Cadenza” originated from the practice of ornamenting cadences. They usually occurred at main cadences and were most noted in slow movements. Tartini gives examples of how to construct a proper cadenza. They consisted of rapid scales, high positions, arpeggios, trills and double trills, multiple stops, bariolage and other special effects, but Tartini also advocated occasionally including thematic material used in the course of the movement, an unusual idea at that time. His cadenzas generally ended with a trill on the dominant. The modern cadenza of today was known as a capriccio, caprice, or fantasia in Tartini’s time. In a section entitled “Cadenze Artificziali,” Tartini stated that this ‘flight of fancy’ is more a capriccio, or caprice, than an elaborate cadence or cadenza:

This sort of cadenza partakes at the present time more of the nature of a capriccio than a cadenza [i.e. an ornamental cadence] because today every singer and player feels entitled to lengthen it and with such diverse expression that it is surely unreasonable to call it cadenza, but better to say capriccio, since capriccio can be

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<sup>47</sup> Joseph Szigeti, *A Violinist’s Notebook* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. LTD, 1964), p. 154.

prolonged at will and can consist of separate parts and of different sentiments and different tempi.<sup>48</sup>

Tartini's fanciful capriccio was longer than ornamented cadential cadenzas. The capriccio was also more frequently written out than the cadenza, which was usually improvised. Often times a capriccio will end with a held note on which a cadenza might be added. Tartini generally wrote capriccios to be inserted before a closing phrase in the last movement of his concertos. Cadenzas, however, could occur in any movement. David Boyden says, "The longest written-out capriccio (so labeled) of Tartini (known to the author) lasts fifty measures and occurs in a cello concerto. On the other hand, the 'cadenzas' at the end of his *Traite* are not more than a couple of lines in length apiece"<sup>49</sup> and he observes that "From the musical context of Tartini's own works, it is not easy to make clear distinctions between cadenza and capriccio beyond the fact that the latter is generally longer and more 'capricious' (however, some cadenzas are longer than some capriccios). There seems to be no consistent difference in style or technical procedure between them."<sup>50</sup> It should be noted, however, that in Tartini's concertos, his written out cadenzas start on the dominant while examples

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<sup>48</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, *Traité des Agrémens de la Musique*, ed. Erwin R. Jacobi, trans. Cuthbert Girdlestone (New York: Hermann Moeck Verlag, 1961) p. 117-118, quoted in David D. Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967) p. 465.

<sup>49</sup> Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761*, p. 465.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 465-466.

of cadenzas in his Treatise of Ornamentation start on a note from the tonic chord.<sup>51</sup>

In summary, because Tartini never published a score for the Devil's Trill Sonata, which he composed in the eighteenth century, performers have presented the piece with different interpretations over the years. The standard today is the Kreisler edition because of its splendid written cadenza. If one wished to perform the piece in keeping with Tartini's original intent, it is necessary to be familiar with his "Treatise on Ornamentation," or rules for playing violin, which emphasize spontaneous embellishments and an improvised cadenza. These principles are the subject of Chapter III.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 464.

### Chapter 3: Principles of Performance

Tartini taught that the violin should be played with much individual expression, which required the performer to provide his own embellishments. Consequently, the Devil's Trill Sonata, his signature piece, was probably played in a variety of ways in the 1700's. Today the piece is usually performed in a "standard" manner without improvisation. Joseph Szigeti regretted the current manner of performing eighteenth century Italian music and he wondered why many of Corelli's and Tartini's sonatas had almost disappeared from violinists' programs even though they were still in print. He believed that this was probably due to the inadequacies of the current versions of these early pieces, which do not communicate the composer's original thoughts largely because editors and performers were looking at them "through nineteenth century spectacles."<sup>52</sup> Conductor James Conlon adds to these thoughts by saying, "every age needs excitement. □ But our ideas of what is exciting are not necessarily the same as they were for Mozart, or Brahms, or Mahler, or Stravinsky. □ Their music has the power to challenge [us]... We need that. □ An interpretive artist has to be completely open to the world of the composer."<sup>53</sup> □

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<sup>52</sup> Joseph Szigeti, *Szigeti on the Violin* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1970), p.137.

<sup>53</sup> See Matthew Gurewitsch, "An American Maestro Looks Homeward," *New York Times*, 7 October 2001, Arts and Leisure, p. 36.

Minnie Elmer said composers in the eighteenth century expected their pieces to be embellished:

The use of embellishments by Tartini and other eighteenth century virtuosi is well known.□Generally the techniques of embellishments are divided into two categories: the use of stereotyped figures, often indicated by the composer through a variety of symbols; and the use of free melodic improvisation.□The first technique is the French style in the eighteenth century, the second, the Italian style.□The former can be reconstructed through definitions and examples in various theoretical works, but the latter, consisting of extempore improvisation over a melodic outline left incomplete by the composer, is for the most part a lost art as far as authentic performance is concerned.<sup>54</sup>

Most of the instrumental tutors of the period taught ornamentation in the French manner, which followed the composer's specific instructions.□Tartini's contribution, the *Traité des Agréments* (Treatise on Ornamentation) was an instruction manual for the Italian style. This work has been largely overshadowed by the more comprehensive work of Johann Joachim Quantz, and has received comparatively little attention, either in the histories of the violin or in histories of ornamentation. Leopold Mozart (1756), Francesco Geminiani (1749) and Carl Philip Emanuel Bach (1753, 1762) also left behind treatises that devoted a great deal of attention to ornaments and stressed their expressive significance.

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<sup>54</sup> Minnie Elmer, *Tartini's Improvised Ornamentation as Illustrated by Manuscripts from the Berkeley Collection of Eighteenth Century Italian Instrumental Music* (diss. University of California, Berkeley, 1962) p.58.

Early Italian music required meaningful improvisation. The written music represented only a sketch of the musical content and the performer's embellishments were required for the music to be Italian art. A great performer needed to be a talented and spontaneous composer. He was the final element in composition and was afforded great artistic license. Dietrich Bartel writes that Italians had aesthetic rather than exegetic principles in mind. Their emphasis was on delivery involving action, human behavior, and musical portrayals of affections. Music was to speak directly and immediately to the senses.<sup>55</sup> A good performance of eighteenth century Italian music had to be emotionally compelling.

There were very few manuals that explained how one should improvise and ornament music in the eighteenth century. Because the Italian style depended on creative improvisation and spontaneous embellishments musicians believed that it could not be learned from books. Instead, the expertise was acquired by studying with a master and was largely an unwritten tradition passed from teacher to student in schools like Tartini's "School of the Nations."<sup>56</sup> This academy produced most of the famous performers of the time and was considered the leading school of its day.

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<sup>55</sup> See Dietrich Bartel, *Musica Poëtica* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), pp.59-60.

<sup>56</sup> Joan E. Smiles, "Directions for Improvised Ornamentation in Italian method books of the late eighteenth century," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.31 n3 (1978), p. 496.

An article in the 1825 *Harmonicon* regrets the loss of the art of improvisation by classical musicians. It said that Mozart and Beethoven were the last great composers and performers who understood and used improvisation, but they used it with a German flavor.<sup>57</sup> It was at this time that music became popular among the bourgeoisie instead of just at the courts and many of those who took it up as a hobby lacked the training and skill to improvise and required more complete manuscripts. Also, starting with Beethoven, performers became less willing to “override” the composer’s apparent wishes.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Tartini’s contemporary, wrote in his *Musical Dictionary*:

Expression is a quality with the help of which the musician feels keenly and conveys with energy all the ideas that he must convey, and all the feelings that he must express. There is one expression of composition and one of execution, and it is their concurrence that results in the most powerful and agreeable musical affect ... there is no instrument from which one obtains a more varied and universal expression than from the violin.<sup>58</sup>

Lev Ginsburg refers to this quote and says it described Tartini as a violinist and composer.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> See The German, “Advice to the Young Composer,” *Harmonicon* 23 (September 1825): pp. 152-154.

<sup>58</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Collection Complete des Oeuvres*, book 18 in the first volume of *Dictionnaire de Musique*, Brussels, 1804, p. 422, quoted in Lev Ginsburg, *Tartini His Life and Times*, ed. Dr. Herbert Axelrod, Eng. trans. I. Levin (Neptune City, N.J.: Paganiniani Publications, Inc., 1981), p.128 also quoted in David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p.494.

<sup>59</sup> Ginsburg, p.128.

Ginsburg goes on to claim, “The melodic expression of Tartini’s music, as we know, was greatly enhanced by his extensive use of ornaments which required of the performer not only highly developed taste but also a degree of technical skill.”<sup>60</sup> To understand Tartini’s style, one must study his embellished manuscripts and his *Treatise on Ornamentation*. Also helpful is David Boyden’s book *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761*. Tartini developed a number of rules to help the performer express himself, emphasizing individuality that was most forcibly done with spontaneous ornamentation. His students’ array of styles attest to this emphasis. Among his most famous students were Italians Pietro Nardini, Pasqualino Bini, Domenico Ferrari, and Maddalena Lombardini, the Germans Johann Gottlieb Graun and Johann Gottlieb Naumann, Dalmation-born Michele Stratico, Frenchmen Pierre La Houssaye and Andre Noel Pagin, the Czech Antonin Kammel, the Spaniard Don-Paolo Gstarobbu, the Swede Anders Wesstrom, and the Dutchman Pieter Hellendaal. All became very successful artists in that period.

### **Introduction to the Treatise on Ornamentation**

The first edition of Tartini’s *Treatise on Ornamentation* was entitled *Traité de Agrémens de la Musique* written in French and published in Paris in 1771, a

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<sup>60</sup> Ginsburg, p.151.□

year after his death. The translation was attributed to its publisher P. Denis, however some believe it was instead translated by Pierre La Houssaye, a famous French pupil of Tartini's, from a manuscript he procured from the master.<sup>61</sup> Almost two hundred years later, in 1961, a new edition of Tartini's work was published in London. This book is an English translation of the French book plus some new material from a Tartini manuscript found in 1957. The book also contains French and German translations and is the version commonly used by musicians today. Before the French edition, the Treatise had circulated among Tartini's pupils in manuscript form known as "Regole per ben Suonar il Violino" (Instructions for Playing the Violin well). In effect, these manuscripts were "manuals" for Tartini's students. The students usually copied these manuscripts, which were partly from Tartini's dictation and also from their notes of his lectures, and Tartini would later edit them.

Only four copies of the original manuscripts have been found. The University of California discovered one, an incomplete copy, in a collection of late eighteenth century Italian manuscripts purchased in 1958. The most complete version was discovered in 1957 by Pierluigi Petrobelli in the library of the Conservatorio di Musica "Benedetto Marcello" in Venice. It was signed "copied by Giovanni Francesco Nicolai" who was one of Tartini's celebrated students and was made available to the public in 1960. This manuscript is written

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<sup>61</sup> See Giuseppe Tartini, *Traité des Agréments de la Musique*, ed. Erwin R Jacobi, trans. Cuthbert Girdlestone (New York: Hermann Moëck Verlag, 1961) preface and Ginsburg, p. 156.

with great attention to detail probably reflecting the esteem Nicolai had for his teacher. The title on this manuscript is: “Regole per arrivare a saper ben suonar il violino, col vero fondamento di saper sicuramente tutto quello, che si fa buono ancora a tutti quelli chi esercitano la Musica, siano Cantanti, o Suonatori” which translates in English as “Rules for learning to play the violin well, with a true explanation so that the student understands well all that he does; also suitable for all Musicians, whether Singers or Players.” The manuscript contains all the material included in the French translation as well as a chapter on bowing and a 16-page appendix containing musical examples of cadenzas in various keys. These two manuscripts bear no dates but Dounias believes that they were written between the years of 1735 and 1750, when Tartini was intensely active as a performer and teacher. Erwin Jacobi believes that they were written between 1752 and 1756 because Quantz wrote in his flute tutor of 1752 that rules governing cadenzas had never been formulated. He said this despite the fact that the final chapter of Tartini’s Treatise was devoted to rules and examples for constructing cadenzas. Since Tartini and Quantz were personally acquainted, Jacobi reasons that Tartini’s treatise did not yet exist. But he admits the possibility that Quantz chose not to acknowledge Tartini’s work. Certainly the manuscripts were written before 1756, when Leopold Mozart included entire sections in his book “Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule.”

Tartini's Treatise was the only book written on Italian ornamentation at a time when all Europe was copying the Italian style.□ It was never published in Italian, but circulated in manuscript and was probably seen by C.P.E. Bach and certainly studied by Leopold Mozart.<sup>62</sup> Erwin Jacobi writes that the treatise

gives us a unique insight into the subtlety of ornamentation in Italian string and vocal music during the transition from the baroque to style galant, written by one of the greatest virtuosi and teachers of his time.□□As the Paduan school founded by Tartini and directed by him for more than forty years was the leading violin-teaching center, whose students included most of the great European violinists, the importance of a treatise by such a man cannot be over estimated.□The fact of Leopold Mozart's being one of Tartini's greatest admirers north of the Alps and of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's receiving from his father tuition in violin playing leads to the conclusion that Mozart's early violin compositions were strongly influenced by Tartini, and has important bearing on their interpretation.<sup>63</sup>

Tartini did not believe in the mechanical use of formal ornamentation. Instead, he said the performer should use improvisations. His treatise associates ornamentation with "affect" and "nature." These improvisations should come "naturally" from the sounds around us, for example, from the melodies and cadences of the local language. The ornamentation should enhance the piece and "affect" the audience in a manner consistent with the performer's interpretation of the music. Tartini found inspiration in the poetry of Petrarch, Tasso and

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<sup>62</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, *Treatise on Ornamentation*, ed. and trans. by Sol Babitz, *Early Music Laboratory*, Bulletin 6, copyright 1970, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> Jacobi, ed., *Traité des Agréments*, p. 44.

Metastasio. In his *Trattato di Musica* (1754), Tartini wrote: “I can approve of the proper use of musical ornaments in many tunes, but I have never been able to understand the use of exactly the same ornaments in all tunes. I am firmly convinced that every tune that truly corresponds to an affect of words must possess its own individual and original manner of expression and consequently its own individual and original ornaments.”<sup>64</sup> Ginsburg writes: “The fact that Tartini turned to poetic images is a manifestation of his desire to attain a maximum of expression, to break through the abstract and scholastic da chiesa norms of the baroque epoch and to assert the principles of a new, profoundly humane and democratic musical style.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Treatise on Ornamentation, Part 1**

The Treatise begins with a discussion of the appoggiatura. Tartini discusses the long, short, rising, and falling appoggiaturas (grace notes). He considers the falling appoggiatura to be more natural than the rising one. The grace note is always slurred to its following note of resolution and usually played on the same string. If it is long, it should take half the value of the main note. If the main note is dotted, it takes two thirds of the value. Long grace notes should

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<sup>64</sup> Ginsburg, p. 155 quoting Giuseppe Tartini, *Trattato di Musica*, (Padua: Manfre, 1754), pp. 149-150.

<sup>65</sup> Ginsburg, p. 63.

only be used with unequal notes. Regarding the long appoggiatura, Tartini says, “the bow or voice must begin it softly, increase it gradually until halfway through its length, and decrease it again till it falls on the main note to which it is joined.□ This later needs a short trill to give it more force.”<sup>66</sup> He goes on to say, “The effect of such grace notes is to give the expression melodiousness and nobility.□ Thus, they suit all slow, mournful tempi.”<sup>67</sup>

Example 3.1  
Execution of long grace notes



Tartini says that short passing grace notes are “to sharpen and brighten the expression. It is very different from that of long grace notes, which merely make it sing more. Short, passing grace notes should therefore not be used in slow, mournful pieces, but only in allegros, or at most in those marked andante

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<sup>66</sup> Jacobi, ed., *Traité des Agrémens*, p. 66.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

cantabile.”<sup>68</sup> He then gives the following example of how to execute short grace notes.

Example 3.2  
Execution of short grace notes



Tartini states that ascending grace notes do not conform to the nature of harmony since they create dissonances that should be resolved downward. Instead he says to combine grace notes when ascending. He gives examples of different combinations:

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

Example 3.3  
Execution of ascending grace notes

The image displays a musical score for Example 3.3, titled "Execution of ascending grace notes". It consists of four staves of music in a single system, all in treble clef and common time. The first staff is labeled "simples" and shows a sequence of notes with grace notes. The second staff is labeled "composees" and shows a similar sequence but with more complex grace note patterns. The third staff is labeled "dissonances" and shows a sequence of notes with grace notes, including some dissonant intervals. The fourth staff contains numerical figures: 4, 3, 9, 8, 9, 8, which likely represent fingerings or specific intervals. Below the main score is a single staff showing a sequence of notes, possibly a simplified or related version of the main score.

Finally, Tartini mentions grace notes that move by leaps, rising or falling, which, he says, are well suited for “cantabile, grave, and pathetic pieces.” They are like long sustained grace notes that are used in descending scales.

Example 3.4  
Leaping grace notes

The image displays a musical score for Example 3.4, titled "Leaping grace notes". It consists of two staves of music in a single system, both in treble clef and common time. The first staff is labeled "valeur des petites notes" and shows a sequence of notes with grace notes that move by leaps. The second staff shows a similar sequence but with more complex grace note patterns, including some leaping intervals.

The second chapter of his *Treatise* is devoted to trills, vibratos, and mordents. Tartini describes the trill as an “ideal ornament in music”<sup>69</sup> but says, “It should be used in the same way as one uses salt in eating. Too much or too little salt spoils the taste, and it should not be put on everything one eats.”<sup>69</sup> Sol Babitz remarks that the warning not to overuse trills was appropriate in the eighteenth century; he believes that today Tartini would consider them underused and urge “more salt.”<sup>70</sup>

The *Treatise* starts the instruction on trills by defining the two basic types, the whole tone, which is the final trill of major keys, and the semitone, which is the final trill of minor keys. There is also an example that incorporates an augmented second. Tartini warns against its use because it is so difficult and recommends using another ornamental figure instead. To execute a trill, the violinist holds the string down on a lower note while striking the string briskly and lightly with another finger a whole or half tone above. All the examples in the *Treatise* begin the trill from the higher note, while today the common practice is to begin the trill from the lower note. Trills may be slow, moderate, or fast depending on the tempo and character of the movement. Tartini elaborates this thought by saying:

The slow trill is suitable in serious, pathetic and sad pieces; the moderate trill in moderately gay ones; the fast, in pieces which are

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>70</sup> Babitz, ed., *Treatise on Ornamentation*, p. 7.

gay, lively and swift.□A good player must practice and master trills at all these speeds; it is clear that a trill in a cheeky, swaggering allegro must not be the same as in a grave or an andante malinconico, nor one on the E string the same as one on the G string. This is all the more necessary because the command of these different degrees of speed is also necessary for other kinds of trills.□For instance, on a cadential note, which is not tied to the beat, the best trill is one which begins slowly and gradually speeds up to become very fast. <sup>71</sup>

He does caution that the change from one trilling speed to another is always done by gradation, not by doubling the velocity all at once.<sup>72</sup>

Example 3.5  
Examples of approaching and ending a trill



<sup>71</sup> Jacobi, ed., *Traité des Agréments*, p. 76.

<sup>72</sup> See Tartini, Letter to a Pupil, trans. Charles Burney, (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), p. 23.

Tartini warns against changing octaves during a trill because it is artificial and not natural.<sup>73</sup> The treatise points out that an instrument makes a pleasant sound going from piano to forte and that this can be duplicated with a trill that begins gently and slowly and increase its speed and volume simultaneously.<sup>74</sup> Finally he describes an unusual trill that is almost a vibrato. He says, “The two notes that make it up join in such a way that the two fingers never quite leave the string. It is not done, like the others, by raising the finger, but by using the wrist to carry the whole hand, and thus also the finger in a rippling motion, so that this kind of trill is ‘rippled’ and not ‘struck.’ It sounds well in playing *con affetto* and when the two notes are only a semitone apart.”<sup>75</sup> The “stepwise” trill was another favorite of Tartini’s that is created by trilling up or down a scale, gliding on the first or second finger. This type of trill implies starting on the main note and using it as an anchor. In summary, the performer has a whole palette of trills at his disposal.

“The Use of the Trill and Where to Introduce it” comes next. Tartini believed trills are necessary at phrase endings and at cadences; he writes, “The trill is used at the end of phrases, on what is called a full close, in a half close, in cadences on the fourth or fifth, and in interrupted cadences.”<sup>76</sup> Perfect authentic

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<sup>73</sup> Babitz, ed., *Treatise*, p.8.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>75</sup> Jacobi, ed., *Traite*, p. 78.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

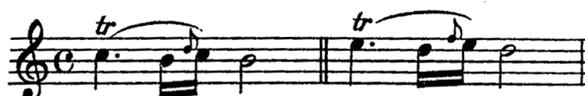
cadences should be only ornamented with a trill, but imperfect, and interrupted cadences should consist of three notes.

Example 3.6  
Three note trills



When there is time, a passing grace note is added to the three notes.

Example 3.7  
Trill with added grace note



At this point Tartini organized the use of trills into some general rules. He commented that there were too many ways of using trills to review each individually.

1. Trills should come on the first note of slurred pairs
2. “If there are two slurred and two detached notes, the trill should be other first of the slurred ones”<sup>77</sup>
3. “When there are three slurred notes, the trill should come on the middle one”<sup>78</sup>
4. “If the notes are slurred across the beat, the trill should come on the second of the two slurred ones”<sup>79</sup>

Example 3.8  
Trills on the second of two slurred notes



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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

5. “In a scale of dotted notes, the trill can come on either the long or the short one:”<sup>80</sup>

Example 3.9  
Trills on dotted notes



6. A trill on the long note makes the expression more melodious. On a short note, it makes it sharper and more daring.

Example 3.10  
Trills placed on a short note



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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

7. “When there are dotted notes, the trill sounds excellent on the dot.”<sup>81</sup>

Example 3.11

Trills on the short notes within dotted note patterns



8. “When there are two tied notes of the same pitch, the trill falls on the second of the two, together with the accent.”<sup>82</sup>

Example 3.12  
Trills on tied notes



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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

9. Don't trill on the first note of any phrase or trill on two successive notes unless making a chain of trills.

“The Tremolo”(Vibrato) section follows. Vibrato is a slight alteration of the wave motion of a vibrating string. Tartini says, “The vibrato is impressed on the finger with the force of the wrist, without the finger leaving the string, despite its being lifted slightly.... if the vibrato of the finger is slow, the undulation will be slow; if it is fast, the undulation will be fast. One can accordingly increase the speed of the undulation little by little, by starting slowly and rendering it faster by degrees.”<sup>83</sup> The vibrato is a rhythmic ornament, the stronger portion falling on the first of the note. It produces a good effect on long tones and on double stops, as well as on the final note of a musical phrase. He found it especially conducive to playing syncopated notes, though he suggests emphasizing the second of two tied notes, which is contrary to the modern method of syncopation.

Then Tartini says something that has puzzled students; he instructs the performer not to vibrate “semitone intervals, where not only must the human voice be imitated, but in addition, the intonation must be perfect.”<sup>84</sup> The original French reads:

Cet agreement ne s'emploie jamais dans les demi sons, qui  
doivent imiter non seulement la voix humaine mais encore la

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<sup>83</sup> Babitz, ed., *Treatise*, p. 11.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

nature de la parfaite intonation jusqu'au pont mathématique, c'est à dire, que l'intonation ne doit point être altérée dans les demi sons, et elle seroit par le tremblement ou l'ondulation de la voix, qui empêche l'intonation de rester à son point fixe et la fait monter ou descendre quoique insensiblement.<sup>85</sup>

The puzzle is what does the semitone have to do with the human voice? The answer probably lies in a mistake in the original French translation of the Treatise because the Nicolai manuscript found in 1957 says “messa di voce,” not “semitone.” “Messa di voce” was a popular embellishment of a sustained note in eighteenth century Italy that fits his comment about imitating the human voice. To vibrate it would be to embellish an embellishment. Leopold Mozart, who copied Tartini's comments on vibrato almost verbatim in his own book, must have been confused too because he left out this section of the Treatise.

Finally, there is an interesting observation about vibrato in the eighteenth century. Many doubt that vibrato was very popular in those days, but Tartini featured its use in his Treatise and Geminiani, Tartini's contemporary, proposed that it be used on every note which suggests that it may have been quite popular in the Italian school.<sup>86</sup>

The last part of this section deals with two types of mordents. The first is a turn-like embellishment; three small notes joined to the written one. Tartini preferred a descending turn and advocates its use mainly in quick tempi. He believes this ornament is “given by Nature” and should be played very fast and

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<sup>85</sup> Jacobi, p. 85.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 37.



## **Treatise on Ornamentation, Part 2**

The second part of the Treatise is devoted to free ornamentation, which depends on the performer's gift for improvisation.□ These are more elaborate embellishments than the relatively simple ornaments that the Treatise has covered so far.□ Tartini discusses what he calls 'natural' ornamental figures, which he defines as the melodies and rhythms of language and the sounds of nature. These fit a variety of melodies and do not clash with the bass. He uses improvised figures at places where the melody is still unfinished, as one would punctuate a sentence with a semi-colon or colon. Tartini finishes this section with examples of various rhythmic figures that include measured trills, three note trills, passing tones, and auxiliary groups. He writes that by practicing these simple figures one will master them and new ones will come naturally without study or thought. These natural ornaments are more easily understood from studying musical examples than by reading a description.

Example 3.15  
Natural ornamental figures



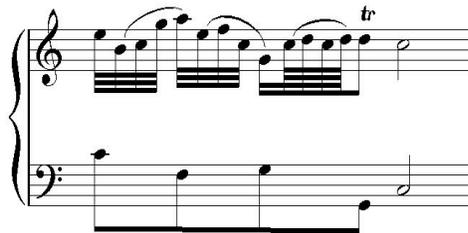
Tartini next talks about “artificial figures” that he explains are improvisations of the melody over a fixed bass. These figures are innumerable, they draw on the art of composition and depend on the performer’s ability. He says they should be limited to places that are melodic and he warns against using them when the composition has a particular ‘intention, or sentiment,’ which should not be altered in any way. This does not exclude less elaborate ornaments such as trills and mordents. He recommends that “artificial figures” only be used in a few carefully selected places, mainly before the first of two notes forming a cadence. The Treatise does not have examples of “artificial figures” but shows instead possible bass progressions. The chief progressions are what he refers to as “harmonic” and “arithmetic” and from the fourth to the fifth of the key and from the sixth to the fifth.

Example 3.16  
Artificial figures' bass progressions



Here is a possible example of an “artificial figure:”

Example 3.17  
Artificial figure



Next, he discusses “natural” cadenzas and provides many examples of these ornamented cadences.□They are used at phrase endings where the strain rests and stops and they range from simple grace notes and trills to runs, arpeggios, and other complex patterns that follow the bass. However, the

performer must avoid parallel fifths and octaves. Again, he says that once these figures have been mastered, one will employ them in many other places.

Example 3.18  
Natural cadenzas

The musical score for Example 3.18, titled "Natural cadenzas", is presented in five systems. Each system contains a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system is marked "Simple." and "Composé". The music is written in a style characteristic of 18th-century cadenzas, featuring a variety of rhythmic patterns, including triplets and trills. The notation includes many slurs and trill markings, indicating the performer's freedom to extend and ornament the passages. The overall structure is a single melodic line with a simple harmonic accompaniment in the bass.

He goes on to discuss “artificial” cadenzas, “Cadences known as ‘artificial’ are those by which any piece of music, either slow or fast, is brought to a close.□This term indicates final cadences on which the singer or instrumentalist stops at will without regard to the beat, and makes them last as long as he wishes

or as long as he can prolong them.”<sup>90</sup> Usually such a cadence was marked by a fermata sign before the penultimate note, but sometimes it would be indicated by the words ‘a capriccio’ or ‘cadenza’, which implied improvisation by the performer on the  $I_4^6$  pedal point. Tartini spoke out against the abuse of artificial cadenzas by many eighteenth century musicians, who made them too long and often unconnected in style and intonational structure with the main score. But, audiences enjoyed solo virtuoso capriccios and cadenzas and were attracted by the virtuosity of the soloist and his ability to improvise.<sup>91</sup> Tartini says, “as listeners today like hearing this kind of thing, however disorderly and unsuitable, one must know how to write it.”<sup>92</sup> He then speaks of tasteful artificial cadenzas and presents examples.

### Example 3.19a

Examples of cadenzas based on scalar patterns and bowing variants



<sup>90</sup> Jacobi, ed., *Treatise*, p. 117.

<sup>91</sup> Ginsburg, p. 164.

<sup>92</sup> Jacobi, ed., *Treatise*, p. 118.

Example 3.19b  
 Examples based on the pedal point with chromatic shifts



The Treatise shows many more examples of cadenzas which provide an excellent overview of violin technique in the eighteenth century.<sup>93</sup> They are remarkably complex with many different bowing and rhythmic patterns, rapid left-handed articulations, and wide range (up to sixth position). One of the examples is shown below.

Example 3.20  
 Cadenza



<sup>93</sup> Mary P. Ogletree, *Giuseppe Tartini: His Influence on Violin Technique and Literature*, (diss. University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1979): p. 23.

## **Berkeley Manuscripts**

Among the manuscripts acquired by the University of California in 1958 were a number of Tartini's embellished musical scores. These show that he occasionally ignored his rules of ornamentation. For example, despite his advice to avoid ascending appoggiaturas, in these scores he frequently used them in leading up to trills. Tartini developed his rules to bring order to the art of ornamentation, which was abused by so many musicians in those days. It is not inconceivable that he sometimes changed his mind. One can theorize that his emphasis on spontaneity allowed the performer some latitude in his performance. In simplest terms, his rules were for Italians, not Germans.

Tartini preached creativity and his ornamentation varied greatly, sometimes making the piece elaborate and other times simplifying the melody. He believed the musician should have freedom yet not deviate too much from the Italian ornate style for which his school was known.

The Berkeley manuscripts show that as far as embellishment went, the technique is highly stylized, with arabesques and minute figurations that resemble the symmetrical and balanced patterns of an Italian formal garden of the eighteenth century...To the modern taste, the embellished versions often seem over-detailed and over-meticulous.□Even in the eighteenth century tradition of improvised embellishment, there was much disagreement as to the esthetic value of the style, and the representatives of the Tartini school

were as often castigated for over-elaboration as praised for the delicacy and sensitivity of their performance.<sup>94</sup>

The Berkeley manuscripts show that the added embellishments were sometimes only a few trills and appoggiaturas, and at other times a complete reworking of the entire structure. For example, there is one score that has three different versions of embellishments, which almost turns it into three different pieces. From the Treatise and from the Berkeley scores, Elmer summarizes elements of Tartini's style.<sup>95</sup>

1. Most phrases conclude by following his rules on internal cadence points. Opening measures are lightly embellished and the elaboration increases toward the principal cadences.
2. The line of the original melody is broken rhythmically and melodically into smaller figures, but at cadence points longer note values remain unchanged.
3. Phrase endings are carefully observed but, if part of a movement consists of a series of short and distinct paired phrases, the second pair is often made into a longer phrase by means of a scale passage or other connecting link.

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<sup>94</sup> Minnie Elmer, *Tartini's Improvised Ornamentation as Illustrated by Manuscripts from the Berkeley Collection of Eighteenth Century Italian Instrumental Music* (diss. University of California, Berkeley, 1962) pp. 133-134.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-33, p. 129.

4. Rhythmic variety is a great concern; consequently long passages with equal note values are rarely used.
5. Disjunct motion is usually ornamented with direct or decorative scale passages. These scales rarely exceed a sixth or an octave.
6. Conjunct motion is usually ornamented with figures that curve around the notes while retaining the shape of the line. These figures rarely exceed a third.
7. Decorative leaps, normally in Lombard rhythm, which ascend a third or fourth return to the original line.
8. An upward leap in the original line is usually not decorated, but a falling leap is decorated or filled in.
9. Triadic patterns appear in interlocking form rather than as direct arpeggios. While often embellished, original notes are always retained and usually emphasized.
10. The approach to an important cadence is often decorated with broken chords.
11. When a modulation occurs, a brief arpeggio that outlines the pivot chord or the tonic of the new key often accompanies it. An arpeggio outlining the tonic is particularly favored at the return to the original key of the movement and at a modulation involving a change of mode from minor to major.

12. Trills occur abundantly, sometimes with and sometimes without preceding appoggiaturas.□Chains of trills appear occasionally, but it is more typical for scale passages to be decorated with trills on alternate notes, emphasizing either the strong or the weak beat.□In dotted rhythms, the trill alternates between the long and short notes.□In arpeggio figurations, trills are often placed on the lower notes, especially if these notes are the original melodic line.
13. Groups of four small notes are often used in the approach to a trill.□They may express either a short trill or a mordent.□As a rule, these notes are reserved to embellish a trill in the final cadence.

Tartini's style was distinguished by the extensive use of trills to emphasize the melody, little arpeggio patterns to announce or reaffirm the key, and recurring cadential formulas that highlight the phrase structure.<sup>96</sup>

The fingering is given in many of Tartini's scores. Most of the melodic figures are simple patterns for the four fingers of the left hand, and lie easily in one position either on a single string or on adjacent strings. In almost every case, shifting occurs on the same finger from first to second, first to third, or third to fourth position in preparation for an ornamental pattern that might follow. The purpose is clearly to place the hand in readiness for a four-note pattern.

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

Finally, we know from Tartini's other works that he considered double-stopping an adequate embellishment technique.□Tartini employed much double stopping but did not discuss it in his Treatise and none appears in the embellished manuscripts.

Two other works of Tartini's that provide insight into his philosophy and style are "Letter to a Pupil" and "Art of bowing." The "Letter to a Pupil" is a letter he wrote to Maddalena Lombardini in 1760 in which he gave instructions about practicing the violin. He covered son file, staccato, string crossings, playing in all positions on all strings, and practicing a trill. David Boyden describes the letter as " a survey of several important and basic points in one sweeping lesson."<sup>97</sup>□□The "Art of Bowing," written in 1720, presents fifty examples of ornamentation on Corelli's Gavotte, Op. 5, no. 10. Tartini's highly sophisticated use of bowing and left hand technique is clearly evident in this amazing but often overlooked work.□

In summary, Tartini's style was very ornate when compared to modern standards. He emphasized that the performer should follow his ear. The rules set in his Treatise on Ornamentation are guides to good performance but they are not rigid. For example, the Devil's Trill sounds better if the violinist does not always start the trills from above and does not necessarily start the cadenza on a  $I^6_4$  chord as the rules would indicate. Some of Tartini's manuscripts show that he ignored

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<sup>97</sup> David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967) p. 361.

the rules about improvisation by meticulously writing out the embellishments. So, while his rules of ornamentation are a guide for the performer, the ultimate rule is to do what sounds natural. The rules create a framework for the performer, but doing what sounds natural frees the violinist and allows a degree of individual expression.

## Chapter 4: Musical Analysis

This analysis is based on the Urtext edition of Tartini's Sonata in G Minor (the Devil's Trill Sonata). The sonata consists of three movements in the order slow-fast-slow, with the last movement leading directly into a 2/4 Allegro so the overall effect is slow-fast-slow-fast. This has led some editors to divide the sonata into four movements instead of three, with the Allegro being the beginning of the fourth movement. However, the middle Andante is connected to the Allegro in all the manuscripts that have been found and it introduces themes that are found later in the movement. It makes the third movement complete. Below is a chart of the key areas of the sonata.

### I. Andante

|   |         | <b>A</b>        |   |   | <b>B</b>  |   |  |
|---|---------|-----------------|---|---|-----------|---|--|
| : | mm. 1-4 | mm. 5-12        | : | : | mm. 13-23 | : |  |
|   | g minor | B $\flat$ major |   |   | ~ g minor |   |  |

II. Allegro

**A**

|           |                 |                           |                 |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| : mm. 1-4 | mm. 5-8         | mm. 9-54                  | mm. 55-59 :     |
| g minor   | B $\flat$ major | ~modulating through keys~ | B $\flat$ major |

**B**

|                 |           |             |               |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| : mm. 60-63     | mm. 64-67 | mm. 68-131  | mm. 132-136 : |
| B $\flat$ major | g minor   | ~ d minor ~ | g minor       |

|              |                 |          |           |            |             |
|--------------|-----------------|----------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| III. Andante | Allegro         | Andante  | Allegro   | Andante    |             |
| mm. 1-2      | mm. 3-7         | mm. 8-55 | mm. 56-61 | mm. 62-101 | mm. 102-107 |
| g minor      | B $\flat$ major | g minor  | d minor   | d minor ~  | g minor     |

|             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| Allegro     | Adagio      |
| mm. 108-137 | mm. 138-142 |
| g minor     | g minor     |

The sonata can be viewed as a contrast between g minor and B<sup>b</sup> major. There are no transitions, Tartini simply shifts from one key to another. He states an idea in one key and then reiterates it another. B<sup>b</sup> major brightens the melody, and g minor darkens it. The difference of shading between the two keys colors the music and keeps it flowing.

Tartini foreshadows elements of the Classical style. For example, the sonata consists of three movements not four, and the second movement is not fugal but rather a moto perpetuo. There are many different bowings in the movement, the majority of which are characteristic of the Baroque period.

Example 4.1  
Bowings typical of the Baroque period



Bowings such as in measures 72-73 are definitely more characteristic of the Classical period.

Example 4.2  
Bowings characteristic of the Classical period



Perhaps the most interesting heralding of the Classical style occurs in the key scheme of the third movement. At first glance, the movement resembles a rondo in form:

|         |         |         |         |         |                       |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| Andante | Allegro | Andante | Allegro | Andante | Allegro/Adagio (coda) |
| A       | B       | C       | B       | C       |                       |

However, the key scheme is not a rondo, rather it hints of an early sonata-allegro design. The key scheme is as follows:

|      |             |         |             |         |                |         |        |
|------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|----------------|---------|--------|
|      | Andante     | Allegro | Andante     | Allegro | Andante        | Allegro | Adagio |
| Key: | g/B $\flat$ | g       | d           | d*      | g              | g       | g      |
|      | Exposition  |         | Development |         | Recapitulation |         | Coda   |

\* This second Allegro is developmental in nature

Historically there have been different tempo indications throughout the piece. The first movement is marked “Larghetto Affectuoso” in most editions, probably taken from the Cartier edition. Kreisler refers to it simply as “Larghetto.” However Pavanello marks it as “Andante” as do two of the earliest manuscripts, believed to be closest to Tartini, and she points out that in another two of the six manuscripts from which she drew her edition, it is labeled “Largo,”

one of the last two is untitled, and the other one has the title “Adagio.” In the second movement, the tempo marking in Cartier’s edition is “Tempo Giusto della Scuola Tartinista,” while in Kreisler’s most widespread arrangement, it is labeled “Allegro Energico.” Finally, in Pavanello’s Urtext edition, it is referred to simply as “Allegro.” Discrepancies are also present in the third movement. It consists of alternating slow and fast sections. Some early sources have these sections marked as “Grave” and “Allegro assai,” with the cadential closing measures being “Adagio.” Vieuxtemps marks the sections simply as “Largo” and “Allegro Assai” – the closing measures are not “Adagio”, but rather also “Largo.” In Cartier’s edition, the sections are marked “Andante” and “Allegro Assai,” with the closing measures being “Adagio.” Kreisler designates “Grave” and “Allegro Assai,” with the closing measures being “Adagio.” The Urtext edition uses the relatively simple markings of “Andante,” “Allegro,” and “Adagio.”

### **The First Movement**

The first movement is in 12/8 meter, using a lilting Siciliano-like dotted rhythm throughout:  . David Boyden writes that this 12/8 dotted dance rhythm would have been strictly adhered to and Minnie Elmer states that movements in 12/8 were less ornamented than those in duple time. This does not

mean that the movements were not ornamented, rather that they were more conservatively ornamented. Lev Ginsburg describes this movement as follows:

The music is highly poetical and exalted, full of soulful lyricism and repressed sorrow. In the melody of this movement (as in the short final adagio, the coda of the whole sonata) Tartini's skill in intensifying the melodic expression by chromatic modes is clearly demonstrated. The listener is enchanted by the song-like music and the dreaminess; at the same time one can sense an underlying excitement which comes out in harmonic accentuations (diminished seventh chords). The Larghetto affettuoso is one of the best pieces in the 18<sup>th</sup> century violin classics.<sup>98</sup>

The movement is bipartite in form. The first part consists of measures 1-12. It opens with a four bar phrase in G minor which can be divided as (1mm+1mm=antecedent) + (2mm = consequent). Chromaticism in the lower accompanying voice of the second bar and in the melodic voice of the third bar creates thematic tension. The music comes to a rest at the end of the fourth bar with a perfect authentic cadence. The music shifts to the key of B $\flat$  major in measure 5 with the opening bar being repeated in major and joined to a slightly varied second measure, which incorporates a move through V instead of iv. The next part of the phrase consists of one bar of new melodic material that is echoed before continuing to a V/V in bar 9. In bar 10, the push to cadence is thwarted by a quick deceptive cadence and then by a jarring, sustained C chord (V<sup>7</sup>/V), which occurs on weak beat eight, prematurely precipitating the last three beats of the

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<sup>98</sup> Lev Ginsburg, *Tartini His Life and Times*, ed. Dr. Herbert Axelrod, Eng. Trans. I Levin (Neptune City, N.J.: Paganiniana Publications, Inc., 1981), p. 113.

measure. Auer remarks that the sonata “begins in lyric style, yet ever and anon takes a profoundly sorrowful inflection”<sup>99</sup> and Auer uses this C<sup>7</sup> chord as an example of the sorrowful inflection. This whole jarring, thwarted cadence idea is repeated in the next bar, and resolution does not come until beat seven (strong beat) in bar twelve, a perfect authentic cadence in B<sub>♭</sub> major. These twelve bars constitute the first half of a binary form and are repeated.

The opening phrase in g minor can be heard almost as an introduction to the B<sub>♭</sub> Major. When the key shifts to B<sub>♭</sub> major there is a sudden ray of sunshine, but a struggle ensues between B<sub>♭</sub> major and F major, with B<sub>♭</sub> being the victor.

The second half of the binary form consists of measures 13 through 23. It starts out with two bars that are a linear progression to get from b<sup>o</sup> to g minor. Once the music arrives at g minor, it moves by a sequential pattern through the circle of fifths for four bars, which are measures 15 through 18. The passage is based on the opening dotted figure and plays out with a secondary voice in dialogue with the first. It is interesting that instead of following the conventional circle of fifths exactly, Tartini throws in a tritone (E<sub>♭</sub> – a<sup>o</sup>) sequence that gives the passage a more jagged sound. This could be called a “baroque” sound since it does not fit the classical norm. The sequence gives a feeling of unsteadiness, which affects the second half. Tonic – dominant movement is not long enough nor strong enough to give a real sense of arrival, although a fleeting sense of

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<sup>99</sup> Leopold Auer, *Violin Master Works And Their Interpretation* (New York: Carl Fischer, Inc., 1925), p. 2.

arrival does take place on beat ten of measure eighteen, Tartini immediately adds a  $vii^{o7}/V$  which propels the music forward into bar 19. The music tries to cadence on V, but Tartini adds a seventh to the V chord that again pushes the music onward. As the melodic line escalates to a sustained tonic, the bass line rises chromatically creating mounting tension. The music then moves towards a big cadence that is thwarted by a passage parallel to the last three measures of the first part. This time the music is more emphatic. Instead of using a deceptive cadence and the  $V^7/V$  ( $C^7$  chord in  $B_b$ ), he cadences weakly to tonic and then interrupts with a  $vii^{o7}/V$  in g minor. After a reiteration in which he utilizes a deceptive cadence, the music finally does indeed cadence in measure 23, a perfect authentic cadence in g minor.

Ogletree says in summary:

The basic harmonic rhythm of this first movement is steady, based on the dotted quarter beat. The melodic material, based on the (siciliano theme) figure throughout, is cantabile in nature, with its stepwise motion, middle register, and legato phrasing. Tartini extends material through repetition, both literal (mm. 7-8, 10-12, 21-23), and sequential (mm. 13-14, 15-18).<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Mary Patricia Ogletree, *Giuseppe Tartini: His influence on violin Technique and Literature*, (diss. University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1979) p.41-42.

## The Second Movement

The second movement is a type of *moto perpetuo* that begins very energetically and is dramatic in character. Ogletree writes:

The Allegro which follows provides a complete contrast in character, with its brisk duple meter, wide leaps, and perpetual motion drive reminiscent of Corelli's Opus 5. It is much more idiomatic for the violin than the first movement, with its varied scalar and arpeggiated figures, many string crossings, and different bowing patterns and embellishments which make the movement a technical *tour de force*. The "Allegro" is again bipartite in form, but its sections are longer (56 and 77 measures) and more developed motivically than those of the "Larghetto affetuoso."<sup>101</sup>

The movement begins with a heroic bugle-like call in g minor of fourths and fifths that is followed by an accented, graced eighth-sixteenth note pattern. This opening phrase is four measures long. There is a silent pause and then the phrase, or call, is restated in B $\flat$  major. After a beat rest in the bass, the chase begins. A new two bar trill theme enters, first in B $\flat$  – it goes from B $\flat$  – F<sup>7</sup> (I-V<sup>7</sup>) which is then repeated in g minor (g-D) and then sequences from E $\flat$  – B $\flat$  while moving onto the next manifestation of the theme. This g minor/B $\flat$  major and then B<sup>b</sup> major and g minor phrases are mini key schemes. They outline the struggle between g minor and B $\flat$  major. In bar 14, the trill theme is divided into two elements. The first element is a repeated half step (e.g. B $\flat$ -A, B $\flat$ -A). The second

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

element is a descending scalar pattern. Tartini plays with the elements of this theme throughout the movement – sometimes placing them backwards and sometimes inverting them and slurring them various ways. Perhaps the most striking element is the little trills. Auer calls them “short, ironic little trills “ and writes, “I say short because care must be taken that they are not extended so that their length interferes with the flow of the melody.”<sup>102</sup> Ginsburg writes, “the further use of a short trill on semi-quarters lends the music a sharp, rhythmically stressed shade.”<sup>103</sup>

The music progresses with two bar phrases and no clear formal sections other than motivic and textural delineations such as bowing articulations and string crossings. The bass line is perfunctory with the melodic motives being more important than harmony. There are brief anchor points where ideas change, where the music has to briefly rest. An example is the fresh start in measure 26 (cadence to D) and in measure 32 (the cadence to A). The arrival to a solid point of B $\flat$  major does not occur until measure 54. Measures 54-59 are a cadential motive repeated in Corellian fashion to confirm B $\flat$  major. The first half of this binary form ends on a B $\flat$  major chord in measure 59.

Measures 60–136 comprise the second half of this binary form. Like the first half, it begins with the 2 bugle calls but this time the calls appear in the backwards order of B $\flat$  first and then g minor. Scalar patterns in broken thirds

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<sup>102</sup> Auer, p. 3.

<sup>103</sup> Ginsburg, p. 114.

take on a pronounced role of driving the music forward and conveying a sense of great determination. The longest resting spot comes on the downbeat of measure 104 – a cadence in d minor. There had been tension leading up to this spot between A major and d minor with d minor winning. Tartini's choice of using d minor in lieu of D major after so much B $\flat$  major is refreshing.

A noteworthy passage begins in measure 126 and runs to m. 132. Here Tartini plays with the half step element and tonic dominant relations until in bar 128 he presents a rising chromatic line – the pinnacle of direction which drops suddenly in leading to a strong cadence in g minor. The last four measures again consist of a two bar cadential motive being repeated for emphasis.

This section requires some complex left and right hand coordination with large leaps and rapid string crossings, but the range of the left hand movement does not go beyond the third position.

### **The Third Movement**

Finally the third movement of the sonata which in earlier editions is also known as “Sogni dell Autore” or dream of the author, consists of two alternating parts: the Andante and the Allegro. The Andante is brief and lyric and the Allegro is brisk and virtuosic. The opening Andante consists of seven bars, which some say are the focal point of the entire sonata. The phrasing is 2 bar phrases, each

begins with the same rhythmic pattern: . An echoed measure constitutes bar 5, making the overall bar numbers uneven. The first phrase is in g minor. The second and third phrases are in B $\flat$  major. Ginsburg writes, “The Andante (Grave) is characterized by breadth of melos and is song-like and at the same time pathetic. Contrasting dynamics are characteristic of this movement.”<sup>104</sup> The character is heavy and dignified. The stepwise motion and legato line are characteristics of Tartini’s cantabile style.<sup>105</sup> Actually, the three Andantes share these characteristics: each begins with the same motive, employs the Corellian echo effect (measure 4-5, 56-57, and 102-103), and each utilizes the mid to upper range, scalar lines, and similar ornamentation (trills, graces, and thirty-second passing tones). The second and third of these sections (Andantes) are virtually identical, the only difference being the transposition from d minor to g minor.

The following Allegro section introduces a staccato theme in complete contrast to the opening Andante. The motive outlines the g minor triad and firmly establishes the key. A second motive is then introduced which incorporates double stops. It is first played in g minor (i-V) and then restated in B $\flat$  major (I-V). A reiteration in g minor leads to another motive, which involves rapid slurred notes and triple stops on the dominant. The next sequence is a dialogue with a secondary voice. Once again Tartini does not follow the conventional circle of

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<sup>104</sup> Ginsburg, p. 114.

<sup>105</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, *Traité des Agrémens de la Musique*, ed. Erwin R. Jacobi, trans. Cuthbert Girdlestone (new York: Hermann Moëck Verlag, 1961) pp. 55-56. See also supplement, *Regole per arrivare a sapere ben suonar il violino*, pp. 2-3.

fifths. He throws in a tritone (E<sub>b</sub> - a), which adds more dissonance to the sequence. Sequential double stops and scalar patterns follow until measure 33 when it hits an arrival point where the mood changes. Stable two bar phrases then spiral down towards measure 38 where the notorious Devil's trill begins. The "trillo del Diavolo" is a continuous trill over a moving, arpeggiated voice. It rises in sequence from the key of d minor to g minor, then to a minor and back again to d minor, creating excitement. The trill ends on the dominant seventh chord and leads directly into the d minor Andante section.

The second Andante shares the same characteristics as the opening Andante but this time the melody is different and remains in one key. It begins with a one bar phrase, which is echoed, and then moves into two bar phrases. Tartini plays with the mode going from d minor to D major in major 60. This Andante can be viewed as an example of large scale ornamentation.

The next Allegro begins in d minor and quickly moves into a modulatory, development-like section. Motives used in the first allegro return with a chain of suspensions occurring in measures 72-75. This creates a feeling of increased excitement. The echoed double-stop motive in measure 76 recurs as if stalled on the dominant. Tartini surprises us in measure 80 when he lands on G major, creating a very bright sound. He then sequences down using a new scalar and arpeggiated pattern. This introduces the second "Devil's Trill," in measure 88,

which again concludes on a dominant seventh chord and leads to the third Andante section.

The third Andante is in g minor but is otherwise exactly like the second. The final Allegro is in g minor and again presents motives A and B, but this time they are slightly altered. Next comes a shortened version of the trill, with the accompanying voice in inversion. A sequence follows which takes the music to the V chord. Tartini then spends five measures emphasizing the arrival on V. A cadenza is traditionally inserted before moving on to the final Adagio. No new material presented in this section and it is more harmonically stable than the middle Allegro.

In the final Adagio, the final four measures of the piece, Tartini condenses his harmonic progression into four bars that are again grouped into two bar phrases and which utilize much chromaticism. This Adagio is considered to be the coda to the whole sonata.

## **Summary**

The most important element in the sonata is the contrast of keys. Each movement to a new key signifies a new idea and should be highlighted in some fashion. For example, in m. 5 of the first movement, the new key of B $\flat$  could be distinguished with an arpeggiated chord, as is often seen in Tartini's embellished

manuscripts. Each Andante in the last movement moves to a new key and although these Andantes contain embellishments, their musical flow encourages a higher level of spontaneous ornamentation. Tartini would have added an embellishment whenever the music returned to the sonata's original key, g, as was his custom in his written manuscripts. Tartini preferred major keys over minor in a ratio of nearly 3 to 1 and seldom combined the two except for shading. Perhaps the struggle between the two that he creates in the Devil's Trill is his metaphor for the struggle between dark and light.

## Chapter 5: Preparing a Performance of the Devil's Trill Sonata

First the performer must select a performance edition of the Devil's Trill Sonata. Two types are being published today, the "modern" Kreisler edition, which is a complete work with his embellishments, cadenza, and accompaniment, and the Urtext edition. The Urtext edition is based on some original manuscripts used by Tartini's circle in the eighteenth century. This edition includes a realized bass and some marked embellishments but has no cadenza. Many essential performance indications such as dynamics, accents, and sforzandos are not marked which is a significant difference between the Urtext edition and the Kreisler score. So, one must choose between a complete score that is very popular and the original score which requires improvisation and offers opportunities for individual expression.

The Kreisler edition is a spectacular work. Kreisler provides dynamics, expression markings, bowings and articulations, fingerings, additional ornamentation and an extremely difficult but stunning cadenza that makes the piece successful. He also makes certain note and rhythmic changes and adds some chords to change the harmony. His deletion of double stops in the first movement and the addition of slurs throughout the sonata enable the melodic line to flow more freely. The violinist does not have to worry about the sustained intervals of a ninth or tenth. It may be that editors who deleted the double stops

did not consider sevenths and ninths to be proper harmony.<sup>106</sup> Kreisler modernized the piece by providing a lushly scored piano accompaniment that romanticizes the harmony to cater to the taste of an early twentieth century audience. Even Tartini said if you're going to be a successful performer, you must give the audience what it wants.<sup>107</sup> Kreisler slowed the tempo of the first movement by changing Andante to Larghetto and he dramatically altered the mood of the third movement by changing Andante (Urtext edition) to Grave. The great popularity of Kreisler's edition is chiefly due to the inclusion of a brilliant cadenza. It is a romantic *tour de force* that provides the sonata with a spectacular climax. Although Tartini left cadenzas to the performer's judgment, he likely would not have approved of one written in a completely different harmonic style than that of the original piece. And, as stipulated in his Treatise on Ornamentation, he would have built the cadenza from the  $I^6_4$  chord before the final V chord. On the other hand, some of Tartini's later works did base the cadenza on the V chord and, since the third movement of the Devil's Trill comes to a halting stop on the V chord before the final  $\text{Adagio}$ , as do many third movements in his concertos which contain capriccios, it is logical to insert one there.

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<sup>106</sup> Discussion with Dr. Kenneth Sarch

<sup>107</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, *Traite des Agremens de la Musique*, ed. Erwin Jacobi, trans. Cuthbert Girdlestone (New York: Hermann Moeck Verlag, 1961) p. 118.

There is a significant difference in the accompaniment between Tartini's bass line, the realized bass in the Urtext edition and Kreisler's fully developed score. Tartini provides a simple bass line, probably due to the acoustics of the churches and courts that were the performance venues of the time. The performer had to adjust the accompaniment to the acoustics of the location. The harpsichord was the traditional accompanying instrument in Tartini's time, but he preferred the cello. He traveled with his favorite cellist and beloved friend, Antonio Vandini. At home in Padua, Tartini often played his sonatas accompanied by cello and organ.<sup>108</sup> Between 1745 and 1770 Tartini wrote his Little Sonatas (twenty-six pieces) and most of them had a bass line. But he wrote to his friend, Count Algarotti, Court Chamberlain to Frederick the Great, that he included the bass part for "ceremony" and always played them without a bass.<sup>109</sup> Today the Baroque violinist Andrew Manze performs the Devil's Trill Sonata unaccompanied and with his exciting embellishments, the bass line is not missed. Finally, since Tartini never published his score and Kreisler never recorded his performance, we don't know exactly how either performed the piece.

The Urtext edition is a faithful replica of some original manuscripts of the Devil's Trill that includes their ornamentation. Many appropriate places for trills were marked, but not the trills' construction. Most of the embellishment is left to

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<sup>108</sup> Lev Ginsburg, *Tartini His Life and Times*, ed. Dr. Herbert Axelrod, Eng. trans. I. Levin (Neptune City, N.J.: Paganiniani Publications, Inc., 1981), p. 51.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendices.

the performer who should presumably be guided by Tartini's Treatise on Ornamentation. Simply put, choose Kreisler's edition and try to master his music and his directions, or choose the Urtext edition and master your music and your directions.

Performing the Urtext edition requires that the musician make a fundamental decision about how the piece might best be performed. The Devil's Trill is a virtuosic piece but the tempo of each movement can be varied to emphasize its melodic qualities. Setting the overall feel of the music comes first and allows the performer to begin adding natural embellishments at the appropriate places. The first movement is relatively slow and can be morose if taken very slowly or can be melancholy if taken at a faster, lilting pace - more in line with its dance-like rhythm. The second movement is fast, a characteristic that can be emphasized or it can be played in a slower "perky" style to emphasize the sequential phrasing. The final movement is dramatic, even heroic. It has sections that alternate between slow and fast and the tempi and textures of these contrasting sections can be varied, allowing the performer to highlight the drama and emphasize the virtuosic qualities of the piece. By testing excerpts the performer can decide how to perform the piece so that it fits his skills and is presented well to the audience. The choices one makes will establish the mood of the piece which becomes a guideline when interpreting phrases and adding articulations and embellishments.

The choice of accompaniment largely depends on the venue for the performance. It is a wonderful solo piece but it can also be done with piano, organ, harpsichord, cello, or ensemble. Tartini provided a simple bass line and left the rest to the continuo performer. The Urtext edition conveniently provides a realized bass for the accompaniment. The type of accompaniment, if any, determines to a great extent the performer's freedom with embellishments. And it is clear from manuscripts of Tartini's other works that he desired the violin to dominate the performance.

The character of the music that was set at the beginning by the musician will lead him to the appropriate embellishments and help with the cadenza. There are many ornaments in the Urtext edition of the Devil's Trill but they would not have been the only ornaments that Tartini performed. Tartini's performing idiosyncrasies would also have prevailed. Ginsburg said:

One can imagine how much more colorful, lively, and expressive Tartini's execution of his work must have been as compared with what was merely written on the page. It was the dynamic coloring and timbre, the agogic shifts, the varied strokes, the manner of playing the ornaments, chords and arpeggios, the cadences, etc., that lent real life to the music and the artistic images in it... when one listens to Tartini's music, one senses a lively feeling for form that is peculiar to him, a feeling that is at the same time logically meaningful; it is this that accounts for the classical grace of his music.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Ginsburg, pp. 69, 72.

This is the challenge and the Treatise provides Tartini's rules for duplicating such a performance. One might eliminate some or all of Tartini's suggested embellishments to shape the music to his choice of presentation. Also, nothing prevents one from using Kreisler's edition or any other edition for ideas.

An important observation from Tartini's examples in the treatise is that embellishments do not start on the chord tone, instead they end there. The violinist decorates to "get there" rather than landing on the note and then decorating. The examples show that the decorations before a cadence should be varied so that the listener does not begin to predict the cadence. Tartini was consistent in the application of these points in the treatise's examples.

To complete the ornamentation one must decide whether to include a cadenza. There is no direction in the manuscript but it seems normal since there is a pause before the final Adagio. Also it may be expected by contemporary audiences because of the power of the Kreisler cadenza. It would be natural to place it on the V chord and build it on tonic and dominant harmonies. This would bridge the gap between the final Allegro and the final Adagio. A cadenza here feels natural and this is where Kreisler and others have placed one. The composition of the cadenza should come from the interpretation of the piece that the performer decided at the beginning. And, it would depend on his skill as a performer and composer. Tartini occasionally used thematic material for a cadenza and also frequently gave examples that simply climbed a scale, starting

and stopping any figures on I, III, or V. I have provided a cadenza that is built from the tonic chord and uses thematic material from the last movement. It is in Appendix A.

Leopold Auer, the famous violinist and teacher of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, included the Devil's Trill Sonata in a list of works representing "the very maximum of technical difficulties."<sup>111</sup> Some of the difficult passages with suggested practice approaches are shown below. In the first movement, the variation of bow symmetry (alternating two long bows with a short bow in between - in the Siciliana rhythm) is challenging for tone production. Carl Flesch, the famous violin pedagogue, mentions this in both his books on violin playing. The performer needs to scrutinize his bow division. He should find out how much bow is needed for two down bows, being aware that the addition of the two down bows will make a full bow length. It is perhaps advisable to use more bow on the second down-bow in order to make a slight crescendo to keep the melodic line flowing.

Example 5.1  
Bowling of opening Siciliana pattern

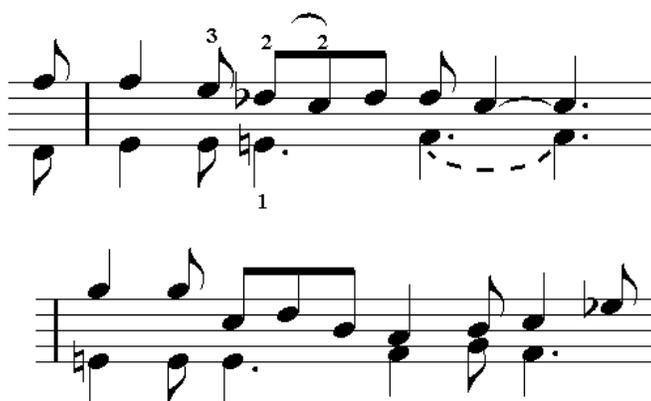


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<sup>111</sup>Leopold Auer, *Violin Playing as I Teach It* (London: Hinrichsen, 1921, reprinted 1960), p. 97.

Another difficulty in the first movement is executing the tenths as seen in measures 6 and 9.

Example 5.2  
Andante, mm. 6 and 9



In Tartini's time, the violin neck was shorter which made the tenths smaller and easier to play. Today, violin necks are longer and these tenths are a big stretch for a violinist's left hand that may injure one unless done properly. Three pointers can help. One is to not sustain the lower note; imply the pedal by playing it and then releasing it. Another is to adopt a middle hand position. For example, prepare measure 6 by opening the hand and going into second position on the measure's pickup. On the downbeat, reach back with the first finger and play the E flat. Likewise, in measure 9, fan the hand open while extending the fourth finger up to the G and reaching back with the first finger to play the E natural. Opening the

hand like this releases tension. Finally, use the rhythm of the music to keep your hand flowing and to time these maneuvers.

The second movement is a *moto perpetuo* featuring abundant trills on the sixteenth notes. The rapid string crossings, asymmetric bow changes, and the need for articulation make this movement difficult and they should be well thought out. Some of the bowings can be made less difficult by analyzing their string crossing patterns. Bowing choices will be affected by whether a string crossing occurs on a down bow or an up bow. The bow needs to be on the next string exactly on time and therefore should anticipate the fingers. It is evident from the manuscripts and from his *Art of Bowing* that Tartini was accustomed to a fast down bow stroke. Studying the variations in his *Art of Bowing*, especially variation 4, will help develop the necessary bowing technique. Also, choose passages and practice them as etudes.

One must decide on the types of bow strokes to be used: brush, *spiccato*, *martelé*, and *detaché*. In his “Letter to a Pupil” Tartini recommended practicing the fast movements of Corelli’s *Opus 5* sonatas – stopping quickly between each note to develop a *staccato* with a fluid wrist. The performer could also practice this way using sections of the second movement of the *Devil’s Trill*. In any event, one should identify the stroke, play the passage in rhythm using the stroke and then add the trills. The numerous trills must not get in the way of the music and must be played as if throwing them away. Choices about trill fingers need to

be made; trills fall on fingers 1&2, 2&3, and 3&4. Perhaps most difficult are the many trills that fall on the fourth finger, a violinist's weakest finger. One might work around this difficulty by substituting a fast turn for the trill, which creates an impressive effect. Another possibility is to change positions to avoid a trill on the 4th finger.

The last movement contains many difficult passages, most notorious is the passage named by Cartier and by Kreisler as the "Trille du Diable." It appears on three occasions, the first time between measures 38-55.

Example 5.3  
Devil's Trill

Musical score for 'Devil's Trill' in G minor, 3/4 time. The score is presented in three systems. The first system starts at measure 37 and includes a trill on the first note, a trill on the second note, and a trill on the third note, with a [simile] marking above the third note. The second system starts at measure 44 and contains several trills. The third system starts at measure 51 and contains several trills, some with [tr] markings above them. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4.

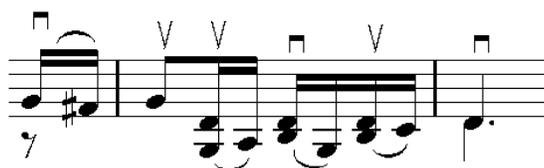
To master this trill, one must build strength and coordination while avoiding too much tension, which might cause injury. Stretching is an issue. It is a pulling in opposite directions. Start by opening the hand, stretching the 4<sup>th</sup> finger up while



Other suggestions:

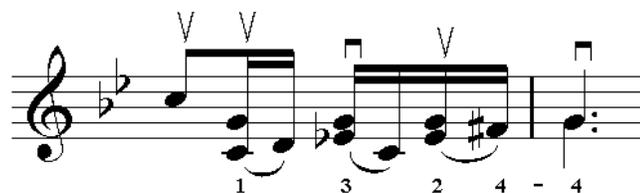
In measures 12-16 and 66-70, break the double stop sixteenth pattern into slurred pairs for clearer rhythm and articulation.

Example 5.5  
Execution of mm. 12-16



Prepare the double stop unison stretch in measure 17 by using the fingering in measure 16 shown below.

Example 5.6  
Fingering in mm. 16-17



The stretch on the last eighth note in measure 32 is very difficult. Keep the first finger anchored on A, move the thumb up, and reach into second position with the third and fourth fingers.

Example 5.7  
Measure 32



There is great tension on the strings on a modern violin. Some performers ease the tension by tuning their violin down to a lower pitch. This can disturb a violinist with perfect pitch and may not be appropriate if part of the program is performed with a pianist. But, one might consider it. It is probably more practical to experiment with different types of strings. Today one can choose from a wide assortment of synthetic strings. Finding a string that speaks well on the instrument is key. Tartini experimented extensively with strings. Leopold Mozart said that strings were all of gut, but Majer in 1741 and Quantz in 1752 both mentioned a wound G string. The Diderot encyclopedia mentions wound strings for the D and G (before 1781). Lohlein in 1774 stated that the G was over spun with silver. Tartini developed thicker strings, but the question remains

“thicker than what?” In his book *Violin Making* (1889), Heron Allen claimed that Tartini found a combined horizontal tension of the strings of 63 pounds in 1734. Today the tension of the strings is closer to 100 lbs.

Many thoughts in this chapter were summarized well by David Boyden when he wrote:

The composer creates and, ideally, the performer re-creates, realizing the intentions of the composer.□But in music these intentions cannot be exactly expressed, and, in any case, every performance must, in the nature of music, allow for the individuality of the performing artist.□For these reasons, there is no such thing as a single authoritative performance of a piece of music.<sup>113</sup>... The ideal performance in early violin music as indeed in all music is not to play faster and louder but with more meaning through expression and phrasing.□By analogy to language, it is not the speed or loudness with which an orator speaks that sways his audience, but his expression, his emphasis, his modulation of voice, and his sense of timing and phrasing.<sup>114</sup>□□

To prepare a performance of the Devil’s Trill Sonata the artist must first decide whether to polish the Kreisler edition or to be more original. If one takes the second course, he should consider Tartini’s original vision of the piece. Tartini intended that his sonata be performed with personal embellishments and an improvised cadenza. He believed that whatever sounded natural was good and he knew that performances of his piece would change over time in a manner that would be pleasing to the audience. This is one of the wonderful things about

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<sup>113</sup> David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 494-49.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 503.

Tartini's approach to music. He felt that the performer was central to the success of the piece. The performer should not simply repeat notes and instructions; he should add ideas and music that is natural. His attempt should be to create something new and meaningful. Tartini wanted his music to grow.

An approach to the Devil's Trill from the Urtext edition may give a performer an opportunity to play the sonata as the composer intended which might be different than its currently popular version, not necessarily better, but perhaps offering the opportunity for more original personal expression. The message is simple: it is intriguing to research the original intent of a composer and to understand the musical environment in which the piece was composed. That understanding often provides a performer an opportunity to take chances and produce a performance that is different from what has become a traditional presentation. Tartini left us with lessons on ornamentation and original expression; his intention with his "Devil's Trill" sonata seems to have been to give the performer a great vehicle to display his or her talent.

# Appendix A

## Cadenza

$\text{♩} = 90$

5 **slower and softer**

9 **accel. and cresc.**

14 **A tempo**

17 **Slower**

Chords: Gm, Cm, D7, Gm, A7, Dm, G7, Cm, D7, Gm, Cm, Gm, D7, tr

## Appendix B

Vieuxtemps' quartet arrangement of the Devil's Trill Sonata

**LE TRILLE DU DIABLE.**  
**SONATE**  
pour le Violon  
composée en 1730 par  
**TARTINI**  
arrangée pour être exécutée dans les Concerts  
avec accompagnement de  
**Piano**  
ou d'un second Violon, Alto et Violoncelle  
par  
**HENRI VIEUXTEMPS.**

Pr. av. Pf. fl. l. 48.      Propriété de l'Éditeur. pour tous les Pays      Pr. av. Trio fl. l. 48.

**OFFENBACH S<sup>r</sup>/M, chez JEAN ANDRÉ.**

*Tartini rêvant une nuit que le diable s'était effrîé au pied de son lit, et lui jouait sur le violon des choses extraordinaires, se réveilla en sursaut et écrivit sur le champ ce qu'il venait d'entendre, sous la forme d'une sonate, à laquelle est restée depuis, le nom de Trille du diable.*

# LE TRILLE DU DIABLE.

SONATE de TARTINI.

ARRANGÉE PAR

HENRI VIEUXTEMPS.

VIOLINO PRINCIPALE.

SIGNES. } <sup>1</sup> TIREZ.  
          } <sup>2</sup> POUSSEZ.

Larghetto affettuoso.

The musical score consists of eight staves of music in a single system. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 12/8. The piece begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. The first staff ends with a *pp* marking. The second staff features a *f* dynamic. The third staff has a *f* dynamic. The fourth staff starts with a *p* dynamic and includes a *mf* marking. The fifth staff has a *dim.* marking. The sixth staff begins with a *f* dynamic, followed by a *p* dynamic. The seventh staff contains two first endings, labeled "1<sup>re</sup> volta." and "2<sup>de</sup> volta.", both starting with a *p* dynamic. The piece concludes with a *tr* (trill) and a *di* (diminuendo) marking.







Musical score for a piano piece, featuring multiple staves with complex rhythmic patterns, trills, and dynamic markings. The score includes sections labeled "LARGO" and "Facilité", with various performance instructions like "cresc.", "poco", and "a piacere".

The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of several systems of staves. The first system shows a vocal line with lyrics "cen - do" and a piano accompaniment. The second system is marked "LARGO" and includes dynamic markings *f*, *p*, and *All?*. The third system features a piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *pp*, *cresc.*, and *p*. The fourth system continues the piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *mf*, *f*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *p*. The fifth system is marked "Facilité." and includes dynamic markings *p* and *poco*. The sixth system includes a vocal line with lyrics "a - poco - cres - cen - do." and a piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *f* and *poco - a - poco*. The seventh system is marked "LARGO" and includes dynamic markings *f*, *p*, and *f*, with the instruction "a piacere." The eighth system continues the piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *p* and *cresc.*.

The score concludes with the number 7498.



# LE TRILLE DU DIABLE.

SONATE de TARTINI.

ARRANGÉE PAR

**HENRI VIEUXTEMPS .**

VIOLINO SECONDO.

Larghetto affettuoso.

The musical score is written for Violino Secondo in 12/8 time, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo and mood are marked "Larghetto affettuoso". The score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The second staff also starts with *pp* and includes a *cresc.* marking. The third staff continues the melodic line. The fourth staff features dynamic markings of *f*, *p*, *f*, and *p*. The fifth staff begins with a *p* dynamic. The sixth staff contains rests and rhythmic patterns. The seventh staff features *p*, *f*, and *p* dynamics. The eighth staff concludes with a first ending (*1<sup>re</sup> volta.*) marked *p*, a second ending (*2<sup>de</sup> volta.*) marked *f*, and a *ritard.* (ritardando) marking.



VIOLINO SECONDO.

*f* *mf* *pp* *rit. a Tempo.*

*p*

*p* *cresc.*

*f* *poco rit.* *a Tempo* *p* *poco ritard.*

*a Tempo.*  
*mf* *cresc.* *f* *cresc.* *ff*

LARGO. *p* *cresc.* *f* *pp* *f*

Allegro assai.

*f* *p* *f* *pp* *p*

*pizz.* *pp* *1* *1* *1* *1*

*1.* *1* *arco.* *ritard.*

LARGO. *f* *p* *f* *pp* *ritard.* *cresc.*

VOLINO SECONDO.

Allegro assai.

LE TRILLE DU DIABLE de TARTINI.

ARRANGÉE PAR HENRI VIEUXTEMPS.

VIOLA.

Larghetto affettuoso.

*pp* *pp* *cresc.*

*cresc.* *pp*

*p* *f* *p* *p*

*p* *cresc.* *f* *p* *f*

*p* *f* *p* *1<sup>re</sup> volta.* *2<sup>de</sup> volta.* *ritard.*

TEMPO GIUSTO. *f* *f*

*p*

*pizz.* *arco.* *pizz.* *arco.* *pp*

*cresc.* *p* *ritard.*

*ritard. a Tempo.*

VIOLA.

1

a Tempo. *f* *f* *p*

*marcato.*

*mf*

*cresc.* *p*

*pp* *cresc.*

a Tempo.

*ritard. pp*

*f* *f* *ff* *ff*

*ff* *ff* *p* *mf* *cresc.*

*ritard. a Tempo* *poco rit.*

*f* *p*

a Tempo.

*mf* *cresc.* *cresc.* *ff*

LARGO. *p* *cresc.* *f* *pp* *f*

*ritard.* *tr* *p*

Allegro assai

1 1 1

*f* *p*

VIOLA.

*p* *p* *p*

*mp*

*ritard.*

LARGO. *f* *p* *ff* *mp*

*ritard.* Allegro assai. *mp* 2

*mp*

*cresc.* *cresc.* *f* *ritard.*

*pp*

LARGO. *f* *p* *ff* *mp*

*ritard.* Allegro assai. *p*

*cresc.*

*v<sup>o</sup>l.* 2 *p*

*cresc.* *f* 1 1 *piaz.*

2 2 *cresc.* *arco.* *ritard.*

LARGO. *ff* *pp* *ff* *animato.* Adagio. *ritard.*

LE TRILLE DU DIABLE de TARTINI,

ARRANGÉE PAR HENRI VIEUXTEMPS.

VIOLONCELLO.

Larghetto affettuoso.

The musical score is written for Violoncello in bass clef with a 12/8 time signature. It begins with the tempo marking "Larghetto affettuoso." and includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, *f*, and *cresc.*. The score features two first endings, labeled "1<sup>ma</sup> volta" and "2<sup>da</sup> volta", with a "ritard." instruction at the end of the second ending. A section marked "TEMPO GIUSTO" begins with a 4/4 time signature and includes markings for "1", "f", "cresc.", and "pp". The score concludes with "ritard." and "a Tempo." markings, and a final dynamic marking of *f*. The page number "7199." is printed at the bottom right of the score.

VIOLONCELLO.

*a Tempo.* **1** *f* *f* *p*

*cresc.* *cresc.* *mf* *mp* *mp* *mp* *cresc.* *mf* *cresc.* *f*

*a Tempo.* *ritard.* *p* *poco rit.*

*a Tempo.* *mf* *cresc.* *f* *ff*

**LARGO.** *p* *cresc.* *f* *mp* *f* *ritard.*

Detailed description: This is a page of a cello part for a musical score. It consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'a Tempo.' and there is a first ending bracket. Dynamics include fortissimo (f), piano (p), and piano mezzo-forte (mp). The second staff continues with a similar texture, featuring 'cresc.' markings. The third staff has a piano mezzo-forte (mp) dynamic. The fourth staff includes 'cresc.' and 'mf' markings. The fifth staff has 'mp' markings. The sixth staff has 'cresc.', 'mf', and 'f' markings. The seventh staff has 'a Tempo.', 'ritard.', 'p', and 'poco rit.' markings. The eighth staff has 'a Tempo.', 'mf', 'cresc.', 'f', and 'ff' markings. The ninth staff begins with a new section marked 'LARGO.' in a 2/4 time signature, with dynamics 'p', 'cresc.', 'f', 'mp', and 'f'. The final staff ends with a 'ritard.' marking.

Allegro assai.

The musical score consists of several systems of music for a bassoon. The first system is marked 'Allegro assai' and includes dynamics such as *p*, *f*, and *pp*. The second system is marked 'LARGO' and includes dynamics like *f*, *p*, *pp*, and *ppizz.*. The third system is marked 'Allegro assai' and includes dynamics like *p*, *f*, and *pp*. The fourth system is marked 'LARGO' and includes dynamics like *f*, *p*, *sf*, and *pp*. The fifth system is marked 'Allegro assai' and includes dynamics like *p*, *f*, and *cresc.*. The sixth system is marked 'LARGO' and includes dynamics like *sf*, *pp*, and *sf*. The seventh system is marked 'LARGO' and includes dynamics like *sf*, *pp*, and *sf*. The score also includes various performance instructions such as *cresc.*, *pizz.*, *arco. ritard.*, *animato.*, and *Adagio.*. The page number 749A is located at the bottom right.

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## **Vita**

Susan Murphree Wallace is the daughter of Robert and Cecelia Wallace. She was born November 21, 1963 in Red Bank, New Jersey. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from the New England Conservatory in 1987, her Master of Music degree from Shenandoah Conservatory in 1989, and her Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Texas at Austin in 2003. She has taught at two colleges in Florida, and was director of the University of Texas String Project in 1995-1997. She has also maintained a private studio. Susan has performed with numerous orchestras in the south, has been manager and first violinist of a professional string quartet, and has performed as soloist and chamber musician in Europe.

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This dissertation was typed by Susan Wallace.