

Traveling Around the Cello Fingerboard with Ease
Dr. Katherine Jetter
Colorado ASTA Summer Conference
Lamont School of Music @ University of Denver
Denver, CO
July 16, 2018

Introduction

The Body in Action:

- Developing freedom in the arms and shoulders
- Relationship of the thumb to the fingers in daily activities
 - Catching a ball
 - Holding a glass

Moving throughout the Positions:

- Motion of the whole arm
 - Ski jumps
 - Harmonic slides
- Leading the way with the arm and elbow
 - Start motion with larger muscles
- Keeping the thumb/finger relationship intact
 - Sliding on 2nd finger between 1st and 4th position
- Ears alert for pitch accuracy

Charting the Positions:

- Anchor notes
 - Pitches that match other open string
 - Finger replacement in lower positions
- Thinking of notes above and below anchors by ½ steps
- Many routes to the same pitch
 - Shifting is not just for the A string

Adventures into Thumb Position:

- Developing the hand position
 - Bear caves
- Harmonics as anchors
 - Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
 - D scale
 - Mary had a Little Lamb
- Mapping the territory
 - Major tetrachord: ♀ - 1 - 2 ^ 3
 - Minor tetrachord: ♀ - 1 ^ 2 - 3
 - Whole-tone tetrachord: ♀ - 1 - 2 - 3
 - ½ Step start tetrachord: ♀ ^ 1 - 2 - 3

Extending the Terrain:

- The thumb and 2nd finger travel as a pair
- "Guppy" lips
- Rotation and movement in the arm
 - Mini-shifts
- Freedom of the index finger

Moving on with Vibrato:

- Freedom in arm with a neutral wrist
- Getting the motion with a ball
- Playing with the speed
- Now to add the bow

Source Material for Your Trip:

- Barber, Barbara. *Fingerboard Geography*. Estes Park, CO: Preludio Music, 2008.
- Benot, A.W. and L. Sutton. *Introduction to Thumb Position*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Grant, Francis. *Intermediate Etudes in the Position for Violoncello and Francis Grant Cello Series*. Cleveland: Ludwig Music, 1972.
- Jorgen Jensen, Hans. *Fun in Thumb Position*. Michigan: Shar Products, 1998.
- Legg, Pat and Alan Gout. *Thumb Position for Beginners and Thumb Position Repertoire*. London: Faber Music 1997.
- Leogrande, Dennis. *Cello Extensions for the Student*. Madison, WI: Opus One Music, 1993.
- Marton, Anna. *New Perspectives in Position Playing*. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1989.
- Matz, Rudolf. *25 Etudes, 12 Etudes, and 24 Short Etudes*. Montreal: Dominis Music.
- Mooney, Rick. *Position Pieces for Cello*. Miami: Summy-Birchard, 1997. (Books 1-2)
- Mooney, Rick. *Thumb Position for Cello: Book 1*. Miami, Summy-Birchard, 1998.
- Rhoda, Janice Tucker. *The ABC's of Cello*. New York: Carl Fischer, 2000. (Books 1-3)
- Sazer, Victor. *New Directions in Cello Playing*. Los Angeles: Of Note, 1995.
- Whistler, Harvey. *Introducing the Positions (Volume I and II)*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1947.
- Young, Phyllis. *Playing the String Game: Strategies for Teaching Cello and String*. Austin: UT-Austin Press, 1978.

Dr. Katherine Jetter, Associate Professor of Cello and Music Theory
Music Department, Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO 81301
970-247-7377 phone, 970-247-7520 fax, jetter_k@fortlewis.edu