

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

“THE ART OF AUDITIONING”

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One of the most important aspects of becoming a successful orchestral musician is to be able to survive perhaps the least musically satisfying experience of your life-an audition.

What is the best way for a violinist to prepare for an audition? This question entails many different aspects in the answer which I shall examine in depth. This question forms the basis for my research proposal.

What do the committees expect of you? Knowing this can help you prepare better. How does one get invited in the first place to an audition? I shall give advice on how to write a proper curriculum vitae and give an example of a covering letter. Many orchestras now request a video recording in order to obtain an audition to a live audition. What is the best repertoire for such a recording if not specified?

How can one prepare mentally to be at one's best for those all-important twenty minutes? Knowing this can help you prepare better. The mental preparation for an audition is not the same as preparing for a recital or concert. Going to an audition means dealing with many unknowns. I shall try to name as many of these as possible. Knowing what to expect will help one to cope better!

Bringing together various aspects pertaining to auditioning in one document will be the backbone of my vision with regards to this research. I would like to tape audition programs performed by my students and review them with them to evaluate the effect it has on their next performance. Working with my own students on orchestral repertoire will be included in the information as a source of information for others on how to approach the study. I would be interested in doing a case study with students performing a concerto and excerpts they have worked on extensively and then the same students preparing a concerto and excerpts on their own.

I have a lot of knowledge already about choosing repertoire to practise to be prepared for most auditions. Which Mozart Concerto should one choose? Which cadenzas do orchestras expect to hear? Not every orchestra has the same view on this, so I shall research which orchestras are impressed by an own composition and which are horrified. Choice of romantic concerto will also be discussed. With regards to this, there is also a great diversification from orchestra to orchestra and country to country. The differences in what orchestras expect in various parts of the world shall be documented. I shall give musical examples of the most commonly asked orchestral excerpts with parts bowed and fingered.

I would like to travel and speak to concertmasters of other orchestras worldwide to obtain their views on what they are specifically looking for at an audition. I have many contacts of course in Holland, but also in North America- Toronto and Los Angeles. Recently I have been lucky enough to meet a few concertmasters I did not previously know in conjunction with my work with the Solistes Europeaan Luxembourg. I would also like to travel to other large music centres such as Berlin, London and Vienna to speak with orchestral leaders there.

I have been teaching orchestral classes for many years at the Conservatory in The Hague and also in Amsterdam. Many of my students have been successful in obtaining positions in good orchestras. As someone once pointed out, many of the violinists in orchestras in The Netherlands have studied with me. I have also served on audition committees for many years and have experienced already many changes in audition procedure.

I myself have been a member of an orchestra for 38 years, and 35 of those as a leader. I would like to pass on my own knowledge and experience to others as well as consolidate my own awareness.

Of course, auditioning is a necessary part of many musicians' lives. Hopefully my work here will benefit many in the future. Considering the large amount of material already available here and there, my goal shall be to present a comprehensive package of information which anyone preparing for an audition can read and use to prepare in the best possible way for an audition. My aim is to also write a shorter pamphlet which shall provide the most necessary information regarding preparing for an audition. This pamphlet shall then refer to the main paper or thesis for more extensive information on the same subject.