



The Green Violin: Theory, Ear Training, and Musicianship for Violinists

Marie C. Taris

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The Green Violin; Theory, Ear Training, and Musicianship for Violinists is designed to provide classical and improvising violinists with the foundational theory, ear training, and musicianship basics that they need to study and play the violin. *The Green Violin* introduces music theory, ear training and musicianship as they apply to the practice of scales, bowings, and to listening assignments specifically designed for violinists.

The Green Violin is structured in four sections that can be tackled concurrently:

Chapter 1: The TERRAIN lays out the music theory that all violinists must be familiar with.

Chapter 2: The DRILL introduces the Major and Minor scales up to three octaves with alternate fingerings for virtuosic practice, in multiple positions for the purpose of ear training; The DRILL is an application of the pitch and harmony theory acquired in The TERRAIN.

Chapter 3: *The Lost Scrolls* features open string exercises, an array of violin sound effects, timbres, dynamics, and rhythms to refine a violinist's bow technique and musicianship skills; *The Lost Scrolls* illustrate and significantly expand on the rhythm theory discussed in The TERRAIN.

Chapter 4: The BRIEFING offers an introduction to the violin repertoire and to the violin world that violinists, parents and friends will appreciate; The BRIEFING also includes further musicianship and ear training in the form of listening exercises, and study recommendations.

This fourfold approach addresses several handicaps that modern violinists in training and their teachers are facing:

Many are called to learn how to play the violin without having studied music theory or having received any kind of musicianship or ear training specifically designed for violinists. Violinists who have taken classes in these topics often walk away not knowing how to apply what they have learned in class to their practice of the violin. Method books for the violin repeatedly introduce the instrument as if it were a monophonic oddity existing in some vacuum divorced from the western world of harmony, there is virtually no theory included. Music theory, ear training, and musicianship are introduced in *The Green Violin* as they apply to your learning to play the violin.

Another handicap for modern violinists in training is that most are asked to tackle the study of the instrument before they have had an opportunity to listen to the violin repertoire. Popular violin music and method books tend to include a CD, which students are urged to listen to daily, often to the exclusion of other recordings. Unfortunately these CDs are either recorded using synthesizers or they feature a piano accompaniment instead of the full orchestra. This format thwarts the introduction of many young players to a multitude of sounds at an age where brain development that is linked with the acquisition of languages, i.e., with the recognition of tone shading, articulation and rhythm, is at a crucial stage. *The Green Violin* ratifies the ownership of several devices and apps for the listening of over seven hundred pieces from the violin repertoire as they were meant to be performed. *The Green Violin* outlines what to listen for in a recording and includes a guide to the free online videos of great violin soloists.

Impediments to ear training are compounded by a lack of bowing exercises in most violin method books. *The Green Violin* introduces students to the practice of bowings at an advanced level, independently of left hand

technique (on open strings), to encourage the establishment of an early link between what the violinist hears in good, lush, interesting recordings and what the violinist attempts to play and reproduce of the recordings on the violin.

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