

STYLISTIC AND TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS IN VIOLIN
SOLO CAPRICCIOS IN THE 20th CENTURY –
KONSTANTIN G. MOSTRAS, GRAŻYNA BACEWICZ,
STANLEY WEINER, AND JOAQUIN RODRIG

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Abstract: The history of the capriccio is relatively well studied. Based on historical documents, the term can be traced back to 1561, when in France this term was used to refer to madrigals and instrumental music, mostly for keyboard instruments of an improvisational nature. In violin literature, the genre of capriccio categorically begins with the extraordinary virtuoso discoveries of Pietro Antonio Locatelli. Today, the work of this original master is overshadowed by the fame of Paganini. Still, in the interests of justice, it is fair to admit that Paganini borrowed 90% of Locatelli's achievements in bow technique and his discoveries are reduced only to:

- Double flageolets in the left hand;
- Guitar fretboard in the left hand, in which the thumb is also used to fix tones of G string;
- The widespread use of the ricochet articulation in the right hand, though Locatelli contributed to this discovery.

Keywords: Violin; Konstantin Mostras; Grażyna Bacewicz; Stanley Weiner; Joaquin Rodrigo; Pietro Locatelli; Niccolò Paganini; Arcangelo Corelli; capriccio; double flageolet; flageolets in the left hand; guitar fretboard; articulations

Locatelli invented the cadenza in the instrumental concerto, placing it before the coda of the respective part, thus setting a model that composers have been using for 300 years. A characteristic feature of Locatelli's cadences is that in their essence, they are capricci. In these, the author-virtuoso demonstrates dizzying technique and fantasy, with themes and formal supports that have nothing in common with the thematic material

of the respective concert. Moreover, Locatelli's violin concertos, which are very simple in technical terms, are dominated by lyrical elements, and in essence, hardly build on the achievements of his teacher Arcangelo Corelli. A characteristic feature of Locatelli's thematicism is its lyrical positioning in an extremely high register, creating a unique and fascinating tension. This achieves a natural balance with the other string instruments and presents a significant challenge to violinists in maintaining proper intonation.

Paganini's revolutionary contribution consisted of integrating capricci into the instrumental concerto, where their attractiveness was distributed among classical sonata, variation, and rondo forms. In terms of capricci, he strictly followed the model of Locatelli even in the number of works combined in a cycle (in this case, 24). Paganini inspires romantic content in the antique (baroque) form by incorporating bold leaps in the various registers of the instrument, as well as complex four-voice chords and diverse articulations. Unlike Locatelli, Paganini is extremely disciplined when improvising on music material. He reprises the themes and thus creates the necessary support for the listener, enabling them to compare the material's complexity, development, and elaboration. In this respect, the master of Genoa has only one rival – Johann Sebastian Bach and his sonatas and solo violin partiti. Bach and Paganini emancipated the violin in different ways as a separate solo instrument along with the guitar and keyboard instruments. One of the composers based his work on polyphonic principles and the other on homophony. However, in both cases, the violin combines leading material and self-accompaniment. Before J. S. Bach, violinists who had mastered the organ would play thematic material, enrich it with chords, and play the bass on the organ's pedal keyboard.

If we compare the work of J. S. Bach, Pietro Locatelli, and Niccolò Paganini, we will find that their diversity is the basis of their conception of the genre. However, in terms of form, J.S. Bach and Paganini have many common features compared to Locatelli's approach. Locatelli incorporated free improvisation with a continuous and often self-serving renovation of mostly four-voice, three-voice, and two-voice chord passage techniques. The lack of reprise partially disorients the listener, and the insertion of capricci with their extraordinary complexity into the relatively simple texture in his instrumental concerts gives the impression of intentionality. To some extent, this approach bore fruit in the 19th century, when the superficial salon music of famous virtuosos stifled the creative impulses of masters such as Beethoven, Schumann, Grieg, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky.

In contrast, the improvisation in Paganini's capricci is organized in strict and well-known forms, such as a simple tripartite and a theme with variations in which the instrument accompanies itself, often on the principle

of the hidden polyphony of J. S. Bach. In terms of melody, Paganini is a true 'opera' composer, whose themes often overshadow the melodies of Bellini and Rossini in colour and euphony. Another aspect present in Paganini's capricci is the inclusion of dance rhythms and folklore. In this approach to composition, the great master has few followers. It is a matter of national pride to note that the capricci of Professor Peter Hristoskov are one of the rare examples of both consistency and originality in improvising and spontaneously organizing musical material. When comparing the capricci of Paganini and Petar Hristoskov, it becomes evident that both¹. Another similarity between the works of the two masters is their pastoral character, as well as the imitation of various brass orchestral instruments such as flute, oboe, bassoon, and cello. There are also successful imitations of horns with the clichéd hunting two-voiced third, fifth, sixth, and octave sequences.

The importance of the capriccio genre is huge not only in the concert but also in the pedagogical practice. In string and wind instruments, musicians, unlike their fellow pianists, organists, and guitarists, always perform in a team with one or more partners. This fact deprives them of the direct responsibility over the processes of setting up the form, which in turn is very important for the elaboration of an interpretational concept that is attractive enough for the listeners, yet at the same time does not distort the author's idea. Left alone with their instrument in front of the audience, the violinist enters another unusual space, where everything is only in 'their head and hands'. In the pedagogical practice, this is a turning point in the development of an instrumentalist, to whom it is imperative to imbue that a basic moral principle in the performing arts is to go on stage only if you have something important to say. In this regard, it is fascinating to observe various interpretative decisions, determined by the specific type of temperament, degree of education, awareness, and general knowledge of the musician. However, having a cultural and academic background does not help a violinist perform capricci for solo violin if they lack spontaneity, a soaring sense of fantasy, a penchant for measured risk, and the freedom to choose their own interpretative path instead of copying other people's experience. That is why capriccios are extremely important in the work of each pedagogue at different educational levels in the training of young violinists.

Konstantin Mostras (1886-1965) was a prominent Russian violinist, pedagogue, and author of violin music. He studied in Moscow, and at the beginning of the 20th century, he performed mainly in quartets and various chamber ensembles. Starting in 1922, he taught violin at the Moscow

¹ Bulgarian circle folk dance

Conservatory, where he introduced a new method of teaching. He was the director of the renowned experimental Persifans Symphony Orchestra, the first in the world to play without a conductor. Mostras contributed significantly to the development of the Russian violin school, as he taught the famous pedagogue Ivan Galamian, who later mentored stars such as Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, and Eugene Fodor. Mostras is the author of five scientific works on pedagogical problems in the training of violinists.

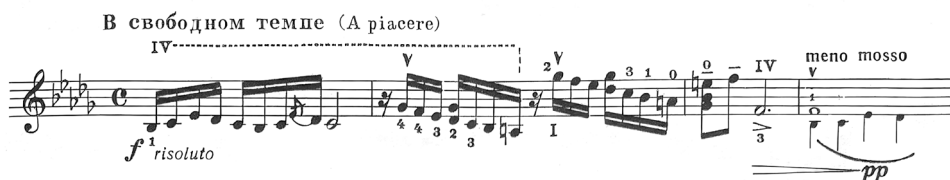
Recitative and Toccata is a spectacular capriccio, written with much fantasy and discipline in working with the material. Compared to the works of the great virtuosos Locatelli, Paganini, Wieniawski, and Eugène Ysaÿe, this work stands closer to Locatelli in terms of its utilized texture and techniques. Proof of my statement is the absence of flageolets – a fundamental effect of the capriccio genre in terms of timbre shading. One of my assumptions about this technique is that Mostras, along with his artistic views, had set the achievement of certain pedagogical tasks as his goal. My arguments in this direction are related to the meticulously written fingering, which is present in almost every tone and facilitates the technical absorption of the work, with a focus on technical problems, mainly in the left hand, especially when mastering double and chord fingerboards. The analysis of the fingering proposed by the author suggests that the double fingerboard ‘takes care’ of releasing the natural muscle tension in the hand.

Choosing the most non-string key possible, B-flat dooms the wide and comfortable use of three-voice and four-voice chords in advance, testing the performer’s ability to provide pure intonation.

In the construction of the form, no strictly fixed structural frame is observed in both the recitative and the toccata, yet the organization of the material obeys a monolithic intonation containing a nucleus of interval sequence of a major second, a minor third, two major and one minor second intervals:

Example No. 1

Н. МОСТРАС • РЕЧИТАТИВ И ТОКНАТА



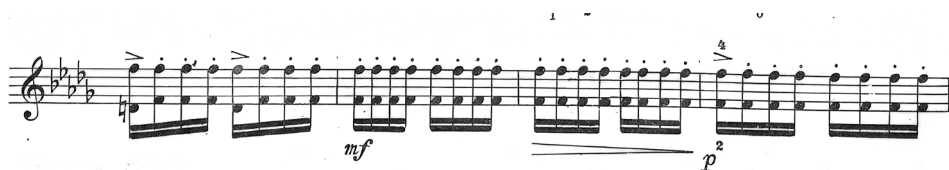
The recitative consists of seven semi-sentences, the second (point 4) being a varied repetition of the first, and the fifth (Meno mosso) being a reprise of the third (piu tranquillo).

The toccata is built as a general flow of development with clear stabilizing supports in octaves representing a replica of the initial monophthong. These landmarks can be considered micro-refrains, and in this sense, there are features of nativeness in the toccata, regardless of the brevity of the miniature.

Example No. 2: The beginning of a toccata

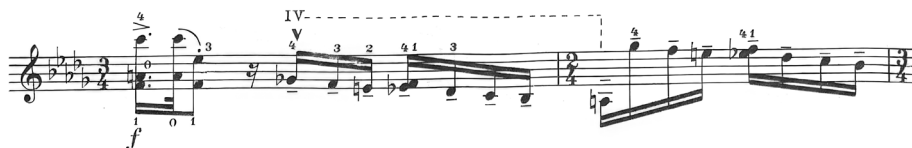


Example No. 3: One of the stabilizing supports in developing a toccata



At the end of the work, the author reprises two phrases from the recitative, thus the formal development gains stability and helps the listener logically understand the construction of the work.

Example No. 4: The end of a toccata



Grażyna Bacewicz (1909–1969) was a Polish violinist and composer, considered one of the most talented composers of her time. She studied at the Conservatory of Łódź, the Warsaw Conservatory, and the University of Warsaw. Her professional career was impacted by the French composer Nadia Boulanger.

Bacewicz began playing the violin at the age of seven. She won first prize at the Young Composers' Wind Quintet Competition in Paris (1933) and second prize for her trio from the Polish Music Society Publishing in Warsaw (1936). Later, she recorded an overture (1946), premiered her Concerto for String Orchestra in the United States (1952), published *Music for Strings, Trumpets, and Percussion* (1958) – a body of work performed all over the world – and received a gold medal from the Belgian government at the International Competition of Composers (1965).

In an era when women's works were rarely performed and even more rarely recorded, almost 20 recordings of Grażyna Bacewicz's compositions were made. Her work marks a new trend and a breakthrough in a field almost exclusively dominated by men.

When her talent was recognized at an early age, Bacewicz studied music under the aforementioned Nadia Boulanger, who accepted only the most talented students. In 1933, Bacewicz won first prize at the Young Composers Competition in Paris. A gifted violinist and composer, she toured Europe as a concert performer. Many of her compositions were for string ensembles, and her experience allowed her to compose seven violin concertos. Having survived World War II, she was also forced to navigate the challenges of maintaining her artistic integrity and creativity under communist rule in Poland. Despite these obstacles, she won numerous awards across Europe. In Poland, composers depend on state subsidies to survive. Although this imposes some restrictions, Bacewicz managed to perfect her form. Her *Music for Strings, Trumpets, and Percussion*, published in 1958, has been globally acclaimed.

Caprice, or capriccio, is usually defined as a form with a free structure that may contain one or many different parts. This makes this type of composition too loose in stylistic terms, and Bacewicz used this form in various cases. She composed three solo violin capricci in 1949, 1952 and 1968. Folk melodies were extremely popular with European composers, so it is no surprise that in her *Polish Caprice* (1949) she used intonations of Polish folk melodies.

The *Polish Caprice* is a short piece with a runtime of only two minutes, but it is filled with dynamic contrasts, which may be why it remains a popular recital work in modern times. Bacewicz experimented with tonal relationships using a major-minor key, reflecting the characteristic features of tonal and intonation development in Polish folk music, which often employs major-minor oppositions.

Starting with a slow introduction, like a recitative in E minor, this melodic line leads to a brighter dance part in E major, labelled *Allegro* as per its tempo.

Example No. 5



In the Polish Caprice, she skillfully combines both neoclassical and folkloric concepts. The following paragraphs will analyse this combination based on tonal relationships, structure, and melodic lines.

Therefore, the *Polish Caprice* falls within the perimeter of the major-minor system. Despite its lack of folkloric pentatonic structures, its characteristics bring it closer to Polish folk music where major and minor modes are often mixed in the same melody. In this sense, the work highlights the distinctive shift from a slow minor temper to an energetic and major one.

The capriccio can be classified as a genre that tolerates the strong influence of folk music. The *Polish Caprice* begins in E minor with a slow recitative introduction in 3/4 and then the development of the form leads to a bright dance part of Allegro in E major and 2/4 time signature.

Andante
sul G

f

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Example No. 7



From a structural point of view, the composition has an ABA three-part form. Interestingly, the Polish dance Kujawiak has a very similar structure. It is a dance slower than the Mazurka and the Oberek. The uniform dance rhythm in the Kujawiak fits very well into the structure of the Polish Caprice.

The motif at the beginning (F-D-C-D) is of central importance in the *Polish Caprice* and remains throughout the piece with few transformations.

Example No. 8



It changes with the tempo of the dance in measure 25, transferring to E-D sharp-C sharp-B with an alternative tempo in a major key. The same motif perseveres throughout the whole piece but with differing ornamentation.

Analysis shows that the *Polish Caprice* can be categorized as functionally complex for highly technical violinists for two reasons. On the one hand, the constant chord progressions on three tones are inconvenient to perform and go beyond the usual violin techniques.

Example No. 9



Moreover, the fast tempo in the second part would be challenging for many violinists.

On the other hand, the same continuous figure patterns make this piece of music an excellent example for teaching music. For example, measures 95 to 97 demonstrate a descending passage with semi-tone intervals.

Example No. 10



Some moments make the transition look incredibly difficult, especially when played at a fast tempo. Understanding the specific fingering can be extremely useful for learners at an advanced stage of training. There are four semiquavers in a group, two groups within a time, and a total of six groups.

All groups require the first, second, and third fingers to be maximally synchronized. For the first group, all three fingers are in an open position. Groups from number two to five have the same finger pattern. The performer must place their first and second fingers next to each other and keep the distance between the second and third fingers. The last set of semiquavers has a different arrangement of fingers than the others. Since there is a semi-tone between C and B, the second and third fingers should be next to each other.

Another interesting point is observed from measures 114 to 121, where the continuous three-tone passage seems challenging to perform. However, an opened E on the E string is the steady note that appears in succession, where the performers can initially focus on the lower two notes in the chord, using two figures to practice changing strings D and A and later play the open string E as a triad.

Example No. 11



Everything noted so far about the *Polish Caprice* shows why it is so interesting, both for the performers and the audience. Through this nonverbal communication, giving certain suggestions in the process of perception, an unquestioning interaction between the performer and the audience takes place. The slow, more dramatic first theme and the cheerful, merry second theme can easily transport the audience to the atmosphere that the composer intended to create. Bacewicz skilfully designed her music by successfully blending the concepts of neoclassicism and folk music. The three-part form and major-minor content also reflect the style of the Polish dance Kujawiak.

In the twentieth century, traditional notation and composition techniques could no longer express what composers had in mind. Aleatorics, Serialism, Sonorism, etc. fit into the field of non-traditional notation. New ways of articulating music, expressive dynamics, and even new timbres are some of the trends in many modern music parts. The innovation was bold and personal, therefore the meaning of notations in scores may be different for different composers, as new notations do not have the standard meanings of conventional ones. Many composers add explanatory notes to their scores to explain how to play their music.

Against this background, her *Capriccio for Solo Violin* (1952) seems to pull the thread that confirms its positioning as marking the transition from the neoclassical to the sonorist period of the author, but remaining more in the zone of neoclassicism. Unlike the *Polish Caprice*, here the connection with folklore is not so tactile. Separate intonations and metrorhythmic structures hint at the connection.

The first system of the musical score for 'The Rose Tree' consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains a melody starting on a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a half note B-flat4. The lower staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one flat. It contains a bass line starting on a half note D3, followed by a quarter note E3, and then a half note F3. There are two 'v' marks above the first staff, indicating a vocal entry or a specific articulation.

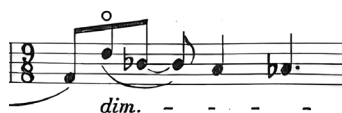
This caprice features more deviations in tempo and changing time signatures. Besides the already familiar alternation of 3/4 and 2/4, the calm part (Andantino) includes a 6/8 time signature, which evokes a special sense of dancing, reminiscent of a waltz movement.

Example No. 13



Just before the return to the time signature of 2/4 and the dynamic leaping intonation line in Tempo I, there is another unexpected transition to 9/8, which in combination with the ascending major sixth, followed by a descending major third and a short descending chromatic movement, establishes a small culmination moment, despite the diminuendo, logically followed by the reprise section.

Example No. 14



It is obvious that in this caprice, the formal construction is also based on a three-part form of the ABA type.

In the finale of the piece the sound of the tremolo, accompanied by a leaping motion, (Example No. 15) is sonically connected to the beginning of the work (Example No. 16).

Example No. 15



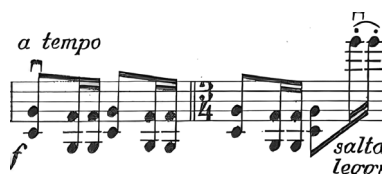
Example No. 16



Unlike the *Polish Caprice*, where this technique is not used at all, here its presence in different places creates a noticeable sense of tension and dynamic development.

Another particularly important point in the work is the appearance of a rhythmic pattern at measure 11, which has an almost constant presence until the end of the caprice, except for a break in *Andantino*.

Example No. 17



All of the examples above clearly show that Grażyna Bacewicz transitions between her first and second creative periods in a very progressive and planned way, so that the shock that her audience would experience in the *Four Caprices* of 1968 would be as negligible as possible. It is precisely these tense moments in the considered caprice, achieved through the use of traditional technical violin techniques, that can be understood as a kind of preparation for the “blowing up” of the neoclassical paradigm and our previous ideas about violin sound.

Stanley Weiner (1925-1991) was an American violinist and composer of Russian origin. He began his career as a violin virtuoso at the age of eight with a concert with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. In 1947, he made a name for himself by auditioning with Leonhard Bernstein and becoming the youngest concertmaster in the New York Symphony Orchestra. He later joined the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra with Fabien Sevitzky in the same position. However, working as an orchestral musician did not satisfy him, and he was already considering a solo career. Since performing solo concerts in Europe was the key to success in America, Weiner went to Europe in 1953 and settled in Brussels, where he performed and taught violin students. He was appointed professor of violin at the Hamburg College of Music.

Weiner began composing relatively late, at the age of 35 but wrote 213 works in different genres and for different instruments. According to his statements, his work deliberately opposes the main trends of the musical avant-garde.

Interestingly, to a large extent, he was creatively influenced by violinists Yehudi Menuhin and David Oistrakh, and trumpeter Edward H. Tarr, which became the starting point for composing for a particular performer in terms of the interpretive specifics characterizing their style.

In this sense, the seven capricci of Weiner's solo violin considered in this study are a priori placed within the framework of their purpose, so that not everyone can perform them. That is, the violation of the pre-set instructions by the composer would lead to a moment when the formal playing of the notes of any of them would carry another semantic load and thus the works would be situated as different and with impaired authorship.

With this in mind, let us specifically examine the seven capricci, so that we may see and consider how he binds the instructions given by him about the character of each capriccio concerning the interpretative peculiarities of the respective violinist for whom it is intended. It is no coincidence that the 1962 edition itself bears the title *Homage to the Violinists*, after which the numbers of the capricci are listed along with the names of the violinists in the following way:

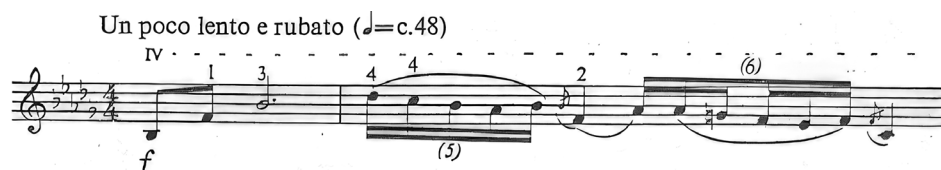
- No. 1 to Yehudi Menuhin (*Un poco lento e rubato*);
- No. 2 to Joseph Szigeti (*Un poco lento*);
- No. 3 to Nathan Milstein (*Scherzando*);
- No. 4 to Arthur Grumio;
- No. 5 to Henrik Szeryng (*Allegro con fuoco*);
- No. 6 to Louis Persinger (*Un poco lento*);
- No. 7 to Isaac Stern (*Molto vivace*).

This approach is particularly interesting because it demonstrates not only the attitude of a violinist-composer towards other violinists but also reveals a much deeper knowledge and anticipation of how each capriccio will sound in the upcoming performance.

Examining the seven scores reveals interesting connecting threads between them regarding their formal and structural construction, technical approaches, tempo deviations, measure changes, and conditional tonal centres, situated in the sound environment of chromatic melodic sequences and dissonant harmonic combinations and chords.

Imagining the tempo *Un poco lento e rubato* as performed by Yehudi Menuhin reveals the sound of the theme from the beginning. Some of Menuhin's intonations appear in different places in the first part of the three-part form:

Example No. 18



Unlike some previous capricci, where the second part is slow, in this case, the most dynamic processes are concentrated in the second part – Allegro. In this part, Menuhin is the only one capable of conveying the development of the piece to the point where, through his interpretation, he positions himself as a kind of co-author of the first capriccio.

Example No. 19



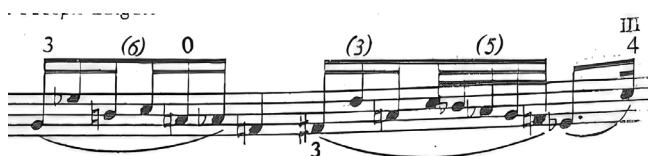
The third part, Tempo primo, offers a return to the original theme from the piece's beginning through a gradual preparation of the quasi cadenza, where the scale-like chromatic passages overflow into the final harmonious constructions and chord:

Example No. 20

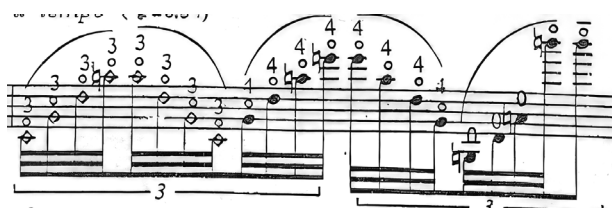
Quasi cadenza
Lento ma poco a poco accel. e cresc.
V 2 3(6) 3 (3) 4 3 4

No. 2 to Joseph Szigeti (*Un Poco Lento*) contains an audible line of continuity. However, the absence of the intense tension present in the previous capriccio's *Allegro* indicates a shift towards a calmer development, as much as such a development can exist within the genre of capriccio. Here, the uniform triole movement with inserted quintoles and sextoles at certain times (Example No. 21) interacts with the bizarre-sounding combinations of natural and artificial flageolets (Example No. 22) and spectacular pizzicati (Example No. 23).

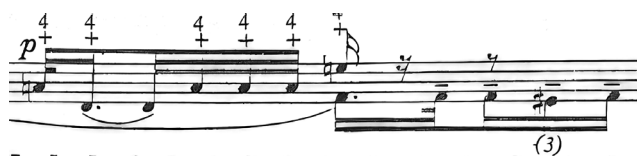
Example No. 21



Example No. 22

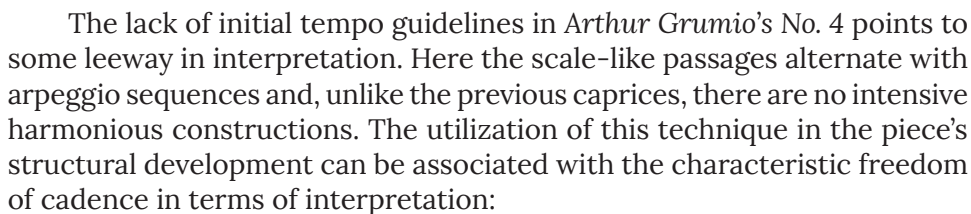


Example No. 23

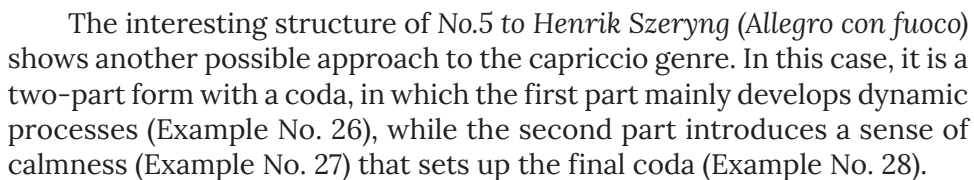


In No. 3 to Nathan Milstein (*Scherzando*), the interpenetration of the genre specifics of the caprice and the scherzo is at the heart of the piece's form. The breakout sequences of double notes in combination with trills and alternating bow pizzicati are the basis of the scherzo character of the piece, with elements typical of the capriccio genre creeping in occasionally:

Nathan Milstein



3



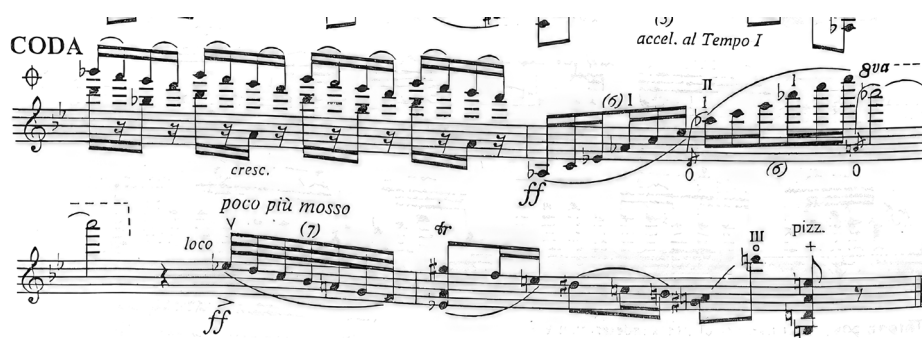
Example No. 26



Example No. 27



Example No. 28



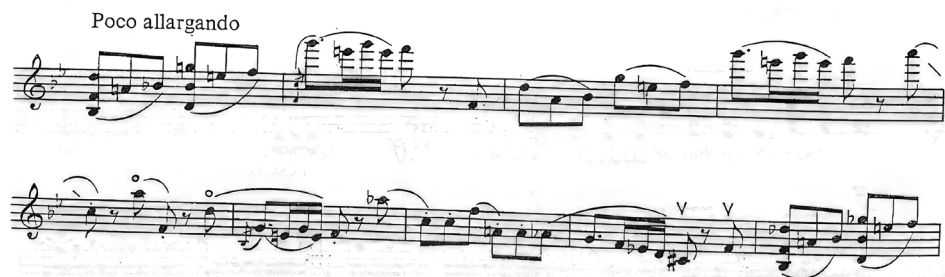
Louis Persinger's No.6 (*Un poco lento*) illustrates the final moment of the decomposition processes of the three-part capriccio form, presenting a pattern of streaming development without an idea of tripartite with a reprising part. The changes in this example mainly concern the supporting tones' measures.

In his final capriccio No. 7 to Isaac Stern (*Molto vivace*), Stanley Weiner returns to the typical three-part form. At the rather fast tempo in the first part in 6/8 time signature, the main thematic line in B flat (Example No.29) emerges, creating rhythmic patterns that underlie the entire *Molto vivace*. Then, with a slowing down of the tempo in the seemingly calmer second part, in the eponymous key that is inconvenient for violinists, intonational moves can be observed that, whether accidentally or not, resemble certain sections in the *Recitative of Mostras* (Example No. 30).

Example No. 29



Example No. 30



Andreas Makris – *Tonal Caprice* (1986)

Andreas Makris (1930–2005) was an American composer of Greek origin. For an extended period, he worked for the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington with conductors such as Howard Mitchell, Mstislav Rostropovich, Antal Doráti, and Leonard Slatkin. He composed about 100 works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and solo instruments. His *Aegean Festival Overture*, transcribed for a concert band by Major Albert Bader of the USAF Band, became a popular piece among American bands. Among the scholarships and awards he has received are the Damrock Grant, the National Fund for the Arts Grant, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Award, the ASCAP Award, and the Fulbright Scholarship.

Makris was the concertmaster of the National Symphony Orchestra for 28 years. Previously, he was employed by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. His compositions have been performed in the USA, South America, Canada, Europe, Russia, and Japan.

The *Tonal Caprice* is built entirely per the characteristics of the genre. It features the familiar three-part form of the ABA type, with a range of five changing time signatures, maintaining a tempo, measured through an eighth note value – 3/8, 5/8, 4/8, 7/8, 2/8. The virtuoso layer of the first part alternates chord structures with chromatic scale-like passages and leaping intonation techniques in the full range of the violin and with a tonal output base in C major:

Example No. 39



The effective transition to the second part, achieved through the use of pizzicato, reinforces the original theme, followed by a passage that introduces the intonational atmosphere of the second part:

Example No. 40



The single-voiced melodic line at the beginning of the second part gradually develops into a two-voice melody in wide disposition. This is succeeded by a semi-quaver leap, leading to a moment when spectacular natural flageolets overflow alternately between pizzicato and bowing:

Example No. 41

5



Building upon the structural logic established in part three, Makris consolidates and summarizes the thematic material of the first part.

Joaquin Rodrigo (1901-1999) was a Spanish composer, pianist, professor of music at the University of Madrid, and one of the major figures in the Spanish School of Music. At the age of three, he almost completely lost his sight. He studied music under Francisco Antich, Eduardo López Chavarri, and Paul Ducas. Manuel de Falla had a powerful influence over his work and directed him to master the unique peculiarity of Spanish folklore, which then became the basis of his work. Although he wrote many multi-genre compositions – four piano, violin, cello, and harp concertos, the *Pavana Real* ballet, four love madrigals for voice and orchestra, etc. – his global acclaim is due to his two guitar concertos, named *Aranjuez* (1938-1939) and *Fantasy of the Noble Knight* or *Fantasy of a Gentleman* (1955). The second concerto is based on thematic references from works by the remarkable 17th-century Spanish guitarist Andreas Sanse. The concerto is also dedicated to the world-famous leader among guitarists Andres Segovia.

Capriccio (Homage to Sarasate) is Rodrigo's only composition for solo violin. It was written at the invitation of Radio Madrid to commemorate the centenary of Pablo Sarasate (1844-1908). The work was entrusted to Spanish violinist Enrique Iniesta (1906-1969), who played it on stage for the first time in Madrid in January 1946. Sonically, *Capriccio* immediately calls up associations with the composer's guitar works. It is a very complex piece in technical terms, as the challenges for the violinist outweigh the need to play only double-stops and triple-stops and other common virtuoso techniques

in Sarasate. Considering the line followed by the composer in his guitar works allows for a better understanding of why he utmostly intensifies the texture of his *Capriccio*. Both cases demonstrate his strive for maximum development of the functional parameters of the musical instruments. At the same time, it should also be taken into account that he lost his eyesight at the age of 18 and was forced to write his music in the Braille system. In any case, the sound of his well-played works is astounding.

Capriccio offers something interesting and unusual in terms of its construction. The three reprising parts are modified, as the third part contains thematic material from the first and second parts. In practice, the whole work develops with too much intensity, passing as quickly as a breath through various playing techniques such as spiccato, martele, staccato, thrillers, pizzicato, natural and artificial flageolets, double-stop, triple-stops. This approach affirms the concept of surpassing the ergonomic aspects of the violin as an instrument, rather than indicating inaccuracies in the Braille transcription. To substantiate this perspective, here are illustrative excerpts from the three parts as an example:

Example No. 41 – The beginning of *Capriccio*

The musical score for the beginning of *Capriccio* is presented in five staves. The first staff begins with the tempo marking 'Presto' and a note value '(d. = ca 86)'. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major). The time signature is 3/4. The first staff is marked 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The second staff is marked 'pp' and 'mp'. The third staff is marked 'mf' (mezzo-forte) and 'p' (piano). The fourth staff is marked 'mf' and 'p'. The fifth staff is marked 'p' and 'c' (crescendo). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. Fingering numbers (1-4) are indicated above many notes. There are also some unusual markings like 'III II' and 'IV' below the staff in the fourth and fifth staves.

Example No. 42 – The end of part two

Example No. 42 – The end of part two

Example No. 43 – The beginning of part three

Example No. 43 – The beginning of part three

Example No. 44 – The end of part three

The musical score consists of five staves. The first staff begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The second staff includes a piano (p) dynamic and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The third staff features a piano (p) dynamic and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The fourth staff includes a piano (p) dynamic and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The fifth staff includes a piano (p) dynamic and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The score is marked with various dynamics including p, ff, and sempre ff, and includes articulations such as slurs, accents, and staccato markings.

To summarize the characteristic features of the capriccio genre based on the examined pieces: virtuosity remains a constant, now intertwined with twentieth-century compositional techniques that explore the violin's technical capabilities at an advanced, unprecedented stage of development. Throughout this process, the triad of composer, instrument, and instrumentalist emerges prominently. Here, human subjective expression propels the capriccio genre forward through the instrument.

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