

## FIFTY-ONE

### *ESTA & ISME Conferences*

Over the years I have visited many ESTA (European String Teachers Association) and some ISME (International Society for Music Education) conferences. David and I have used them as a basis for holidays. They suited us, because neither of us is very interested in beaches, or too much sightseeing, or museums! Instead we were given a rich mix of concerts, the chance to meet people from many countries, and hear of teaching ideas: some new some old.

As this chapter describes ten conferences (and some holidays too), I have decided to highlight the town of the conference the first time it appears. This will help your eye if you are scanning for a particular event. I have also included some extracts from ESTA Magazine articles relevant to my last two conferences. These are rather long but I do feel that they are worth including.

The only English ESTA conference I went to was at the Purcell School, near **London**. There I was asked to teach people how to teach in schools. But, I was so out of touch with this topic, by this time, that I felt useless, having recently been teaching mostly advanced cello students and spent most of my time encouraging other people to talk of their ideas. I especially remember Judy Bird and Caroline Bosanquet, who supplied much that was excellent. Jenny Ward Clarke taught baroque cello, and played with an excellent baroque violinist from Holland.

For our spring holiday in 1983 we decided to go on our usual Italian trip. First we took the train to Milan where we stayed in a very cheap hotel which appeared to be inhabited by prostitutes, to judge by the noises at night! We ate at an ordinary restaurant, which we imagined

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was run by the Mafia, judged by the Godfather look we got. Years earlier, while studying with Enrico Mainardi, I had only visited the *posh* area of Milan where he and his wife had a luxurious flat.

Anyway, we then spent a few days in Cremona, Mantua, Vicenza, with its lovely town square and villas, and in Padua seeing the sights. In Venice they had lost our hotel reservation and, as it was a Bank holiday, there were no rooms to be had. So we went right back to Vicenza to find a bed for the night. Back in Venice we decided to turn away from San Marco's, walking north visiting the old ghetto, finding an excellent small restaurant, and got a ship to the various islands around the lagoon. There were so many people around that we only just got back in time to get our night train to Vienna. On the train we had a really comfortable couchette, and an attendant dressed smartly in navy blue.

In Vienna we had problems with connecting from one station to the other. Although we had no change in Austrian shillings we got there in the end. We boarded an almost empty train, which ran on a single track to Prague. We had prepared ourselves with the proper transit visas, one for Czechoslovakia and one for East Germany. A lady came along to check our visas and our luggage. Many quite jolly men with bottles got on about halfway through the journey, and got off in Prague. At the East German border, we had another passport and visa check.

In the early evening we arrived at **Dresden**. There we met 'the mob' of Joan Dickson, Joyce Rathbone and other ESTA colleagues at a large hall where we queued up to sign in for the conference. It was rather chaotic but we managed eventually. We were helped with our luggage to the hotel.

Professor Max Rostal, in his opening speech at the conference, pointed out that East Germany was the only communist country to trust the motives and ideals of ESTA. We were all impressed by the warmth and generosity of all the musicians and ordinary people we met. Most of the concerts and lectures were given in the town hall. There were very good facilities for translation both German to English

and English to German. No tipping was expected. Food and the 'end of course party' were very good. There was lots of folk music played.

David and I went to visit the Leipzig Conservatoire, where William Pleeth studied with Julius Klengel, as did many other famous cellists. With the ESTA group we visited the china factory in Meissen, Schloss Moritzburg, and the Zwinger Palace with its feast of paintings by Rembrandt and Canaletto.

On our own we visited a library on the far side of the river to unearth some Boccherini manuscripts. We saw the dreadful Dresden ruins by the river, left as a reminder of the ghastly bombing during the war.

The next ESTA conference I went to was at **Berne**. I think this was in 1984 and to start with I went by myself. I had a room in the same small hotel as Elspeth Iliff, a stalwart of ESTA International. We talked, and I got to know her a little! The lectures were mostly in German, so incomprehensible to me, and I don't remember much about the concerts. But I remember going by train to Interlaken, and coming back by ship, on a glorious day, sitting next to Christopher Bunting in a deck chair. On our sailing we passed Max Rostal and his wife waiving at us from the lake end of his garden outside his villa.

I was hoping to see my former teacher, Franz Walter, from Geneva. He taught me Ševčík<sup>146</sup> exercises and later attended his classes at the Lucerne Festival. By now he was more of a journalist than a cellist. He had been asked to give a talk, but, he suddenly died in Spain. I lamented this kind tall man who was a fine cellist.

David arrived before the end of the week, and so did Menuhin, the then European President of ESTA, and we both went to his farewell dinner sitting at a long table. The next day we set off by train to Milan for our usual Italian Easter break. We went on to Arezzo, changing trains at Bologna, to a concert which begun, as in Italy, whenever people chose to arrive! Then on to Perugia, Terni and Rome. Over Easter the trains were very crowded.

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<sup>146</sup> Please refer to footnote on page 281

Next was **Budapest** in Hungary. We flew from Leeds via Brussels. We were booked into at a good hotel in south of the town for the conference. The train and underground facilities were good. At the conference, lectures were usually inaudible and unintelligible, in either German or Hungarian, and if in English, badly read. But there were some very good folk music discussions in English, with accompanying concerts.

We met Milena Kavrakova. She had come over by bus from Bulgaria, rather a long trek, and I have photos of us three together at a dinner party.

There were at least two excellent cello classes. The first included students who played and discussed Kodály's unaccompanied cello sonata Op. 8. The other was on Popper's *High School Studies* where a professor had heard, from his teacher, that Popper played piano parts for all these study pieces. The piano parts were written down but have been lost (alas!). I still like to teach these studies because they are pieces of music, like Piatti, but unlike some other studies. We managed to arrange a cello lesson for Milena with this professor and tried to enquire about Milena studying further, but it proved too difficult and expensive.

David and I then took a train to Slovakia, to Banská Bystrica, where we met a young man who took us round the National War museum. I bought him a bottle of beer for showing us round. This was not long after the separation from the Czech Republic. Our guide was let off his National Service to be a guide.

After three days in a modern hotel, where all foreigners were charged double what the locals paid, we took the train east towards Košice. The people in the train were very friendly and talkative, not like the Czechs, but I believe this area was poverty stricken. We then took the train back up the main valley back to Bratislava. There we stayed in the ghastly modern hotel Sputnik. One taxi-driver advised us to eat out at an excellent small hotel with a restaurant, which was very good. We also spent a day going up to the old castle.

The next day we went to the railway station, our train to Budapest was up on the board but was not at the platform. We went outside to sit in the sun and drink coffee. Then, suddenly, the train vanished off the signboard; apparently there was a train strike in Hungary. So we looked for a taxi to the airport but the driver said he could drive us to Budapest, a journey of around 100 miles. The cost was £50, which we accepted as we had a plane to catch to the UK the following day. On the outskirts of Bratislava the driver took off the taxi sign, bought lots of petrol and we shot off, overtaking most cars.

In 1990 we went with Nancy to one of the best ISME conferences I have ever attended. It was held in **Helsinki**, and before we went we had to get visas and tickets for our later trip we were planning to Russia, as David was attending a conference there. The Russian part of the trip was organised through Intourist and David had repeatedly rung up their office. We had made all our applications in good time, but it seemed to be their policy to delay matters as long as possible!

The day before our flight to Helsinki, David had to travel to the Intourist office in the London Docklands to fetch our visas and hotel bookings. He set off early afternoon from Chiswick knowing they shut at 5 p.m. But there were problems on the underground. He rang the office (and me) to explain he was going to arrive late. When he arrived it was well after 5 p.m., but our visas and hotel bookings had been left with the receptionist, so all was well. Later on we had to pick up our train tickets at Intourist offices in Leningrad and Moscow.

In Helsinki there was a concert in the Finlandia Hall, with young people singing, then there were moving discussions about when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania would gain their freedom. The Finns felt very close to their neighbours across the water. In Helsinki, there is also a wonderful round church built out of the rock, where many concerts were held, sometimes by candlelight. The Sibelius Academy was nearby, where practical demonstrations and masterclasses took place. The Principal, a Finnish cellist, played Prokofiev's March for unaccompanied cello.

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We stayed at a student hostel, comfortable enough. Nancy then flew home after which we went by train to Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg), in the Soviet Union, where we stayed for a week in a hotel on the outskirts. On arrival at Leningrad railway station, we were almost mobbed by unpleasant looking characters, but we managed to find an Intourist taxi driver to take us to the hotel. We wondered why he was swinging about so much in the road, we thought perhaps he was drunk, but discovered he was avoiding the large potholes! Superficially the hotel appeared all right but there were some problems over drinking water. Even the expensive bottled water looked a greenish blue with silt at the bottom. The tap water was bright yellow. Only imported water was drinkable!

The food was not too bad, but it was always difficult to arrive at the right time for meals! Sometimes, despite official opening hours, the waiters refused to serve the customers until the horrible noisy band played! The waiters acted as salesmen to each other and to the customers. They sold clothing, and anything else that was in short supply. Because there were free telephone calls within Leningrad, almost everything was bought or sold by this method. The shops were mostly empty but there were some stalls near the underground station, which would receive large amounts of one item, for example chickens, which would then sell out very quickly.

We met a grandmother who was looking after her grandson whose parents were visiting Europe. The boy used to bicycle in the woods around the hotel, where we used to walk, thus we met them! The hotel tried to get us to visit grand hotels with posh western-currency dining rooms. But, instead, we arranged with the grandmother to go by public transport, bus and tube, to her flat for a meal. Later we went into the centre of Leningrad, where she arranged for us to meet a young man, probably a student, who took us to an ordinary restaurant, up an unmarked staircase, through a door. The food was adequate, quite cheap, and we sat at a table with a man who said 'In other countries waiters are people who wait, here they are people we wait for!' The official rate of exchange was ten times worse than the tourist rate.

One day we went by bus to a large country house with a garden, and on our return, as part of the package, we went to the Hermitage Museum<sup>147</sup> (far too much art to see at one go) although it was magnificent! I had the usual row with the ‘garderobe ladies’ who seemed to want me to undress. I refused! We also went on a riverboat trip, when we saw the fort on the island opposite. The town looks its best from the river. Then I got an awful fluey cold about one day before we were due to take the train to Moscow.

So, on a cold evening, we arrived at Leningrad station to find there were half-a-dozen trains on this route, made famous by Russian novelists. It was difficult to find out which train had our reservation. We hung about for ages with nowhere to sit, in an arctic wind. Somehow we eventually found our compartment, slept, arrived in Moscow the next morning and got a taxi to the hotel near the ring road. I felt so awful I went to bed Saturday morning and stayed there all day Sunday, staggering up on Monday.

We then proceeded to the conference. My basic Russian, learnt from a BBC beginner’s book, was just adequate to get us to the university on two different buses. The universities in Moscow were all huge monolithic ugly buildings. We found our way to the reception for David’s conference on macromolecules. David had received nearly no information from them before he came, so he almost expected (being a pessimist) that no one would expect him. Much to his amazement, he was welcomed as an honoured guest, an invited speaker. He was so staggered I had to take over communicating with the man at the desk, who gave him money, and directed us to a hotel near a different section of the ring road. The man also organized a car to collect our luggage from our Intourist hotel.

This conference hotel looked very grand, but our room, decorated in rich red hangings, was very cold and the food was, well only just bearable, usually stodgy. Then each morning the participants were

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<sup>147</sup> The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia is one of the largest museums in the world, with 3 million works of art (not all on display at once), and one of the oldest art galleries and museums of human history and culture in the world.

taken off to the conference, and a bus appeared to take the *ladies* or *partners* on visits to places of interest.

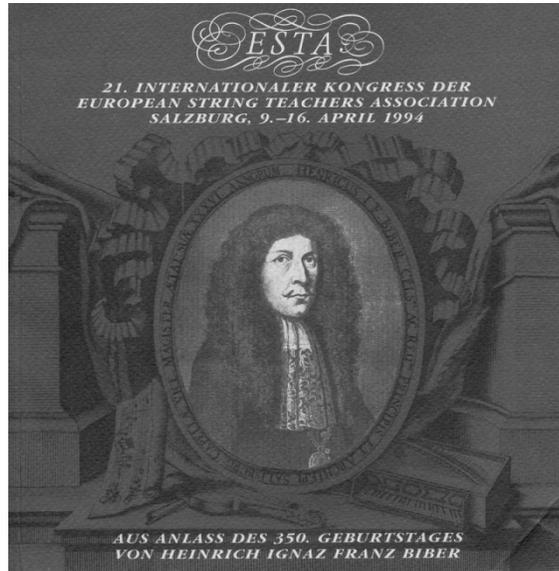
I made friends with the lady tour guide, who gave me a present of matchboxes at the end of the week. We went for trips on the river and we visited Red Square. Out into the country we visited some Byzantine churches. In Moscow we met the conference participants for a big dinner, with far too many dumplings! We took the night train back to Helsinki and after a few days there returned to the UK.

Looking back over the years, the ESTA conference that most stands out for me is **Salzburg**, Austria, in 1994. The standard was high and the excellent students from the Mozarteum<sup>148</sup>, performed under Hiro Kurosaki. The music and talks were all in the context of these magnificent buildings. Much of it was magical, almost unreal.

The Austrian ESTA had laid on a magnificent programme, a feast of riches, in baroque music and dance, centred round the violinist Biber, and also Muffat, both of whom lived and worked in Salzburg under the rule of the Archbishops. As well as concerts and lectures a Biber Opera, *Chi la dura la vince*, was performed, for the first time since Biber's lifetime. In Salzburg Cathedral, on Sunday 10 April 1994, Biber's 350<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated with his huge *Missa Bruxcellensis*.

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<sup>148</sup> In Salzburg, the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg, the University of Music and Dramatic Arts Mozarteum Salzburg honours the Austrian city's most famous son, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.



Program – 51 – ESTA Salzburg conference celebrating the life of Biber

Nikolaus Harnoncourt gave a workshop on Biber sonatas with the Mozarteum students taking part. Harnoncourt's wide cultural background opened our eyes to the details of these baroque masterpieces. The workshop took place in the Grosses Aula where the biblical inspirational paintings were displayed. He showed how 'musical gestures of devotion' and 'C major Ladders to the Heavens' of which the performer need to be aware.

There were many lectures, and I was particularly interested in the differing *scordaturas*<sup>149</sup> used for the Biber sonatas. The mystery of

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<sup>149</sup> A *scordatura* (literally Italian for "mistuning"), also called cross-tuning, is an alternative tuning used for the open strings of a string instrument. In the Western classical music tradition it is an extended technique to allow the playing of otherwise impossible note sequences or note combinations. H.I.F. Biber used *scordaturas* in his *Rosary Sonatas* for violin and continuo (c. 1674). Aside from the first (Annunciation) and last works (Passacaglia, for solo violin) of this collection, where in the instrument is set to the common G-D-A-E tuning, the violin for each sonata is tuned to a different array of pitches. Sonata XI (the Resurrection) is a special case: in addition to a unique *scordatura*, the two inner strings of the violin are interchanged between the

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*scordatura* is related to religion so what the performer hears is different to what he sees! Another lecture was on the difference between Italian, French and south German violin techniques. How in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were nearly no changes in the build of violins, the only changes being to the bows (although Locatelli asked for longer fingerboards!).



Photo – 52 – Biber's tuning of the violin [note crossed strings] (from Wikipedia)

For baroque bows the balance is different because the frog is heavier, and they were usually shorter than modern bows. According to a well-known bow book, the weight was about 32 grams and they used mixed coloured hair. Biber's bow was 44cm long, Tartini's 85cm and Corelli's 50 cm in length.

*Extract from letter by Ken Kay*

Possibly the highlight of the week was the workshop held [...] on the Twelve [Editor suggests *sixteen* is the correct number] Sonatas by Biber' [...] Hiro Kurosaki [taught] students to perform in authentic Baroque style on modern instruments, delighted his students and

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bridge and tailpiece of the instrument, thus attaining a tuning (from top string to bottom string) of G-g-D-d.

listeners with the many musical insights he brought to bear on these fascinating works. I am sure many of the movements would be good material for our Grade 6 to 8 string ensembles. He addressed the importance of finding the correct tempi in baroque music and improving our knowledge of the dance rhythms of the period dance!

[...]

Some Kurosaki gems: 'Don't define a *bemiola*<sup>150</sup> strictly, the charm of it is when it is ill-defined', 'Each dance rhythm has its own bowing', 'Not using a shoulder rest produces a different approach to playing and music.'



Music – 53 – Part of title page from Biber's Rosenkranzsonaten

Of course, it would be possible to write a whole book on this conference, but I am just going to mention a little background.

Biber was born 12 August 1644 in Wartenburg, Bavaria. After studying in Italy and being accepted as a violin virtuoso he came to Salzburg in 1670, staying there until his death on 3 May 1704.

Muffet worked in Salzburg from 1678 to 1690 as court organist. He wrote *Vorreden* on violin playing and pedagogy which is still of invaluable importance to violinists today. He was influenced by Corelli, and also published books and music.

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<sup>150</sup> In modern musical parlance, a *bemiola* is a metrical pattern in which two bars in simple triple time (3/2 or 3/4 for example) are articulated as if they were three bars in simple duple time (2/2 or 2/4).

Biber published songbooks at vast expense, and they were a 'flop'! This was because music was played before and in between court games, but prayers were said before and after games.

Salzburg after the Thirty Years' War had no territory around it. It was run by a series of Archbishops, elected by the clergy. They disliked foreigners, and had absolute rights of life and death. The peasants had no rights or voice. It was a police state with rules, laws, regulations and punishment. The Archbishop was only responsible to the Pope and the Emperor. Ordinary folks were punished if they killed animals for survival. In 1631 there was total intolerance of Protestants; punished by banishment, from 1685 their children were taken away for re-education. There was delinquency and a fifth of the population were connected with witchcraft resulting in brutal executions and burnings.

Bishops, clergy and nobles could parley with foreigners; play chess and backgammon, and tennis. Officially forbidden to play 'luck' games there were sixteen gaming tables at the Archbishop's house. Theological students, often from abroad, acted in plays in a special theatre in the Bishop's Palace.

So, by Biber's and Muffat's time they 'moved in' with this religious aristocracy, although they probably did not realise the Archbishop was a despot, at least it is not written down.

Biber's current Archbishop changed the face of the D.O.M.<sup>151</sup> to High Baroque, copying the Italian style. The next Archbishop put the four organs in making the four music lofts for players. He built a house for choristers and generally demanded excellence in music. Cultural performances looked to Italy, France and Vienna.

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<sup>151</sup> Deo optimo maximo, often abbreviated D.O.M., is a Latin phrase that originally meant "to the greatest and best God", referring to Jove, when the Romans were polytheists. Centuries later, after the Romans had become monotheists via the adoption of Christianity, the phrase was used in reference to the Christian God, and meant "To God, most good, most great." Its use continued long after the fall of Roman civilization via Europe's retention of Latin as a scholarly and ecclesiastical language. Thus the phrase or its abbreviation can be found on many Renaissance-era churches and other buildings especially over sarcophagus, particularly in Italy. It is also inscribed on bottles of Bénédictine liquor.

In 2002, between 14 to 17 October, the ESTA conference was held in the beautiful and grand Hindsgavl Slot, close to the central Danish town of **Middelfart**. The castle stood in a park, which led down to the sea with yachts sailing by.

Anders Grøn and Karen Valeur organised four days of inspiring music making (despite very wet weather). Anders gave a cello recital, beginning with playing just two notes: 'D' and 'E'. The story goes that Casals did this once, just repeatedly playing two notes – saying he did not go on until 'D' and 'E' were perfect! He also played a thoughtfully ornamented Bach first suite. Then there was a talk by Lennart Winnberg titled 'From Ear to Brain' – how to teach music directly to the right side of the brain, and later link it with the more theoretical left side.

Lots of children played, and there was a talk on the Hardanger fiddle (played in Norway), as well as performances of Baroque music. Two brilliant folk musicians Harald Haugaard and Alfred Høirup, gave an exciting concert.

The great climax of this week was Erling Bløndal Bengtsson, who came home from the USA to give a brilliant masterclass. In the evening he gave a superb recital of unaccompanied cello music. I had the feeling that each piece was the 'definitive performance'; no memory slips, and no uncertainties of intonation. This Master of Cello, then seventy years of age, had studied with Piatigorsky at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. After playing Bach's sixth suite (everything from memory) he received a standing ovation. Below is a transcript of the program (apart from the Bach suite) to show the pieces he played that night:

*Concert with Erling Bløndal Bengtsson - cello  
Christianskirken - Thursday 17 October 2002 8 p.m.*

**Paul Hindemith (1865-1963)**

*Sonata Op. 25 No. 3 (1923)*

Lebhaft, sehr markiert

Mässig schnell, Gemächlich

Langsam

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Lebhafte Viertel

Mässig schnell

**Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)**

*Theme and variations (ca 1887)*

**Atli Heimir Sveinsson (1938)**

*“Dal regno del silenzio” (1989) (From the silent world)*

**Niels Viggo Bentzon (1919-2000)**

*Variations on “The Volga Boatmen” Op. 354 (1974)*

Theme Sostenuto

Var. I Con moto

Var. II Vivo

Var. III Allegro molto

Var. IV Rubato

Var. V Presto

Var. VI Allegretto

Var. VII Adagio (Fantasia)

Var. VIII Allegro deciso

Theme Sostenuto

In 2003 I went to ISME’s fiftieth anniversary conference in **Tenerife**. It sounded as though it was going to be wonderful, with many global events and titles like ‘Focus Sound Worlds’ and ‘A Vision for the Future’.

The conference was held in a huge white building with horrible acoustics – and personally I did not enjoy either the talks or the concerts. The heat was too great, our hotel was fine, and the nearby town had good restaurants. But, taking a bus around these dull volcanic islands made one realise how lucky I am to live in England!

Our journey to **Tallinn**, in 2006, begun from Kent; we drove from Whitstable to Gatwick where the car was left with a collection firm to be looked after. Then there was a huge queue for check in for the Estonia Air flight, so we went to have a coffee. Then we met Elspeth Iliff who went back to the queue earlier than us. Although, due to a

bad leg, she had booked in with special assistance, she had no help offered to her for the first queue. I was not feeling well so I sat on the floor! Anyway Elspeth got through quicker than us and she kindly waited for us on the other side of security. She then organised a people carrier that took us the one-mile journey to the gate for the flight. At the other end, at Tallinn, we were greeted by one man and two wheelchairs, so Elspeth went first, then David pushed me and our luggage to the taxi! Then Elspeth carefully found out how much it would cost before we set off for our hotel.

Now, I could have written about this conference myself, but as Janet Thomas has already produced such a good article in the ESTA Magazine, I prefer to quote parts of this:

*Excerpts from Janet Thomas's article on the ESTA Tallinn Conference. Taken from ESTA Magazine Vol. 31 No. 4 2006*

As a conference venue, the centre of Tallinn has a lot going for it: its compact layout meant that our hotels, our base at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (EMTA), and the other local concert venues were all within walking distance of each other. The weather was just about perfect, warmer than you might expect, considering that Tallinn is further north than the Orkneys. [...]

[Any musician] would have gone just for Bruno Giuranna's brilliant talk on, and performance of, the Hindemith Solo Sonata (No. 1 Op. 25) and there were eventually some presentations for, or including cellists. [...]

Purely Estonian programmes made up two of the concerts, both in striking venues. The one in the Niguliste (St Nicholas) Church featured solo strings with organ. The other was of music for chamber orchestra, delivered with great commitment and enthusiasm by the Estonian Youth String Orchestra, in the unusually resonant setting of the 'House of the Brotherhood of Blackheads'. Two particularly memorable items were Arvo Pärt's *Tabula Rasa*, alternately searingly [read: in a burning, blistering or hot manner] dramatic and hypnotically calm, and the joyfully energetic Concerto for Chamber Orchestra by Jaan Rääts. [...]

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The most outstanding [session] was [...] the Alexander Technique session. The translator was expressive, really bringing Maret Mursa's talk to life. [...]

There were, of course, some lighter moments at this conference. Undoubtedly the most enjoyable was Dermot Crehan's session entitled 'The Music of the Lord of the Rings with an Irish Lilt'. You may have heard Dermot's presentation at our National Forum Day. [...]

Two other items I would like to mention. One was a brilliant cello duo, two ladies from Latvia, who were kind enough to give me photocopies of all their music. Then a professor from the conservatoire gave a long talk about cellists who taught at Moscow Conservatoire, including an Estonian.

The last ESTA conference I attended was **Cremona** in 2007. We arrived by flying from Leeds to Bologna, bus to railway station, and two trains to Cremona. We took a taxi to the Ibis Hotel, a little outside the centre of town (twenty minutes walk). There was a frequent bus service to take us to the conference, and taxis were also available. I was impressed by the youngish shortish double bass player, who stood up and swung her instrument around. Played in tune too!

Again, I am using Janet Thomas's interesting and excellent article, taken from the ESTA Magazine, to help me describe what took place. I also include some of my own text from the same source.

*Excerpts from Janet Thomas's article on the ESTA Cremona Conference. Taken from ESTA Magazine Vol. 32 No. 3 2007*

[...] With Cremona's luthiers' consortium, our Italian hosts excelled themselves in their unstinting generosity, hospitality and style. [...]

The formal opening ceremony in the imposing Piazza Comunale included a minute's silence for Rostropovich, who had died that day. The first concert of the conference was given by the Quartet of Cremona: appropriately Italian fare, including Puccini's beautiful Crisantemi, with (remembering Rostropovich) the last movement of Shostakovich 8 as an encore. [...]

The morning included a presentation on Enrico Mainardi by ESTA Belgium Flanders President Mark Lambrecht (see Anna Shuttleworth). This was followed by the first of a series of Stauffer Foundation lunchtime concerts: today's featured students of Salvatore Accardo with an all-Paganini programme. The last of these performers, a thin Russian lad with wild dark hair, black clothes, and phenomenal technique, even looked like Paganini incarnate! I can't recall ever having heard left-hand pizzicato trills before – yet this virtuosic display might beg the question and leave you wondering 'But can he play Mozart?' [...]

Back on Saturday, the evening's prestigious Gala Concert 'Omaggio a Cremona' took place in the impressive Teatro Ponchielli, the interior design of which is based on La Scala Milan. The highlight was Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, for which the string sextet line-up included Maestri Salvatore Accardo, Bruno Giuranna and Rocco Filippini. This performance was dedicated to the memory of Elspeth Iliff, a dimension which made this exquisitely beautiful work all the more moving. [...]

[There was] another splendid evening concert, this time in Cremona Cathedral. The Coro Costanzo Porta with a consort of period instruments gave a programme constructing a Mass for the feast of Saint Mark, comprising the four-part Mass of 1650 by Monteverdi (born in Cremona) with additional motets and canzonas by Gabrieli. It was good to hear this fabulous music in such a fitting context. [...]

I can't imagine a better way to start any week than listening to the Telemann Viola Concerto performed by Bruno Giuranna! He was ably accompanied by the talented Italian Swiss Youth String Orchestra, whose programme also included works by Mozart and Mendelssohn. It was followed by the second British item: an informative and interesting talk by Charles Beare, who is an Honorary Citizen of Cremona.

At the lunchtime Stauffer Foundation concert, it was the turn of the lower strings: it featured students of Rocco Filippini: also the Rossini Duo for cello and double bass.

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The afternoon featured Phyllis Young on teaching Rolland<sup>152</sup> movement principles by linking them to everyday objects and actions, such as throwing balls, caressing baby birds, or helping yourself from a plate of hamburgers or strawberries. Phyllis's entertaining approach is very handsome; she involves everyone, not just the unsuspecting guinea pigs called upon to demonstrate the points. She would have had us practising viola, using matchboxes filled with rice, had airport security not confiscated them! [...]

This ends Janet's text. The rest of this article is then my own work:

Anna Shuttleworth in her visit to Cremona concentrated particularly on the tributes paid to Enrico Mainardi. She introduces two papers published below at the end of her report.

[...] This year in Italy there was a great revival of interest in Enrico Mainardi. [...] In England Joan Dickson had introduced the cellists, my colleagues at the Royal College of Music (Amaryllis Fleming, Jane Ryan, Teresa Jones [Tess Kirkpatrick]) to Mainardi. Joan organised the masterclasses. Here we learnt about his great technical cello teaching (see Paper 1, below).

Until I was in Cremona I did not realise that his student André Messens had founded a Belgian cello school at the Conservatories of Ghent and Antwerp. Mark Lambrecht gave a talk about this, illustrated by slides of Mainardi's classes. [...] During this lecture he kept mentioning an English cellist in the group – Joan Dickson. She was Mainardi's assistant for many years. After this talk I spoke to Mark Lambrecht about Joan Dickson and later asked Louis Carus to write briefly about Joan Dickson, and he sent a copy to Mark Lambrecht (see Paper 2, below).

### **Paper 1, Enrico Mainardi Pro Memoria**

#### *The Right Hand*

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<sup>152</sup> Paul Rolland (1911 - 1978) was a violist and an influential American violin teacher who concentrated on the pedagogy of teaching fundamentals to beginning string students. He was famous for emphasizing that the physical demands of most violin techniques can be taught in the first two years of violin education. He advocated that teachers learn and teach freedom of movement and use clear, specific and concise instructions when teaching.

- All movement and positions must follow natural impulses.
- The bow must be at a straight angle with the fingerboard at all times. One must not change the direction of the bow or start ‘sloping’ on the string. There are a few rare exceptions to this rule (in which case the bow is allowed to travel slightly sloped on the strings).
- Avoid pointless movements.
- The overall position of the fingers should enhance the contact of the ring finger on the ring of the frog.
- The fingers on the bow have the following task: the index finger regulates the pressure, thus determining the quality and quantity of the sound. The middle finger supports the bow. The ring finger functions both as a stabiliser for the right hand and as a double lever, in cooperation with the index finger, particularly in passages that require fast string changes and continuous alternations of the bowing direction. In this regards, it is very much helped by the little finger. The thumb functions as a pressure controller and secures the bow in all movements.
- The position of the wrist and the arm must be of a natural kind as well, hereby avoiding too much inflection of the wrist and raising of the elbow.
- One must keep in mind that the arm guides the bow and is supported in this process by the hand and the fingers, which are responsible for the discipline and harmony of the movement.

With regards to the ‘left hand’ the same principles of naturalness and movement ergonomics apply:

- The position of the left hand is slightly sloped on the fingerboard.
- The contact point with the string is the inside of the fingertips.
- The thumb follows the hand along the neck and is held slightly sloped to the left compared to the middle finger.
- The arm guides the hand, in left as well as right movements.
- The position of the thumb should never compromise the position of the fingers. In case of a fixed thumb position, the thumb must produce a pure fifth. In order to enhance the use of the index finger, the hand must assume an arched shape.

A general and essential rule for *all* movements of the arm: they must never *freeze*. One must play with a relaxed disposition and a controlled, even breathing. Moreover, it is better not to look at the hands while studying, except for minor check-ups.

Finally, 'Do not neglect the last note of each bow, no Cenerentolas' – *Cenerentola* is 'Cinderella'!

### **Paper 2, Joan Dickson and Enrico Mainardi by Louis Carus**

The first time I met and heard Joan Dickson was at Rugby School when she was a girl guide, and came down from Edinburgh with her family to visit her brother at the school. They gave a trio recital, and I was immediately struck by the alertness of her demeanour and style of playing. Many years later, when I became Head of Strings at the RSAMD, these same qualities were even more striking, and became part of her 'persona' as a teacher, a creative and generous colleague, and as an artist of remarkable breadth and vision.

Throughout our years of collaboration in the Scottish Trio, other extended ensembles and, above all as teachers, the name of Enrico Mainardi was a major factor, which generated the direction and character of Joan's career. The mainspring of her technical and musical inspiration was the personality and breadth of Mainardi's authority during her post-war period of study with him in Rome.

In the later 1970s Joan persuaded Mainardi to supervise a masterclass for cellists and chamber music groups in Edinburgh, and this helped to explain the force of both his personality and of his musicianship, which laid the foundations of Joan's career. Apart from his musical and technical expertise, Mainardi had the most striking good looks and personal charm, which must have played a part in his success as an artist and teacher.

Other facets of Mainardi's inspiration and authority were his meticulous attention to details of technical finesse and artistic expression, both of which became the hallmarks of Joan's success as a teacher at the RCM, and earned the admiration of so many of her pupils there. Her career also included frequent forays as a chamber music coach at the Dartington International Summer School, and numerous other courses and classes throughout the UK – as well as in

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Ireland and further afield. She will be long remembered as one of the 'torch bearers' of Mainardi's huge influence as an artist and teacher – also as a distinguished solo performer together with her sister, Hester Dickson, who is still teaching and coaching at the RSAMD.

This concludes my chapter on the many ESTA and ISME conferences that I have attended. I hope that you have enjoyed reading about them and that both organisations will continue to flourish for many years to come!