

**DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC**

**THE TCHAIKOVSKY VIOLIN CONCERTO:  
VIOLINISTIC INFLUENCE ON PERFORMANCE TRADITION**

**RECITAL RESEARCH PAPER**

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## Introduction

The Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto is one of the most recognized and celebrated works ever written for the violin. Student violinists grow up listening to countless performances of this masterpiece and some consider performing the concerto as the pinnacle of a performance career. When one imagines the compositional process of any great work it is easy to think that the music simply came to the composer's mind in its perfect form and that it was quickly written down as if taking dictation. The reality is that many masterpieces are the result of a long, strenuous compositional process, and often the composer is not the only individual with influence on the final product. The Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto is no different. Through composition, editing, and performance practice, this famous concerto was altered and shaped by several well-known violinists.

Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto was greatly affected by violinist Iosif Kotek during the compositional process. Kotek worked side by side with Tchaikovsky in the earlier stages of composition and there is also some evidence to suggest that Kotek was the inspiration for the conception of the piece.<sup>1</sup> Adolf Brodsky was the violinist who performed the concerto in public for the first time. Reviews and reactions to the premiere were only the beginning of an intriguing performance history of Tchaikovsky's now loved work.

The editing of the concerto by violinist and teacher Leopold Auer arguably had the greatest and most lasting influence on the concerto as it is performed today. Auer's edits, made years after the concerto's completion, include cuts, octave transpositions, passage modifications, and even complete re-writes of a few select sections.<sup>2</sup> Examining these passages reveals potential reasons for the changes that Auer made. The edits could have been initiated to simplify

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<sup>1</sup> Leslie Kearney, *Tchaikovsky and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 94.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, ed. David Oistrakh and K. Mostras (New York: International Music Company, 1956).

the performance of difficult passages, to remove repetitive material, or they may have been changed purely as a matter of personal aesthetic preference.

Additionally, Auer's changes were likely passed down to his famous students which solidified current performance practice. Auer taught the virtuosos Mischa Elman, Jascha Heifetz,<sup>3</sup> and Nathan Milstein<sup>4</sup> all of whom gave many successful performances of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. David Oistrakh and Joseph Szigeti, who were not educated in the Auer tradition, also had a relationship with the famous concerto, though their performances

lessons with Tchaikovsky at the Moscow Conservatory. Although Kotek was a successful performer and composed a few duets and solo violin works, he is most recognized for his partnership with Tchaikovsky in the writing of the Violin Concerto.<sup>5</sup> By the time Kotek graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in May of 1876, Tchaikovsky had become very fond of him.<sup>6</sup> The relationship between the two men was not typical of most student-teacher relationships. Their fondness for each other developed into a friendship, and the friendship ignited deeper feelings on Tchaikovsky's part. Correspondence with Tchaikovsky's younger brother Modest gives a more complete picture of their relationship. In a letter dated January 19, 1877 Tchaikovsky writes:

I am *in love*, as I haven't been in love for a long time. Can you guess with whom? . . . I have known him for six years already. I always liked him, and on several occasions I have felt a little bit in love with him. That was like a trial run for my love. Now I have momentum and have *run right into him* in the most decisive fashion. I cannot say that my love is completely pure. When he caresses me with his hand, when he lies with his head on my chest and I play with his hair and secretly kiss it, when for hours on end I hold his hand in my own and tire in the battle against the urge to fnsat his fge -2() -2 (t) 4 ( ) 2 (ns)1 (nd ) k4 (i) (ns) 4 (s) 2 ( ) 4





fit into the context of the concerto and suggested a change.<sup>21</sup> Tchaikovsky himself was not satisfied with this movement either. In an April 3 letter to his brother Anatoly, Tchaikovsky wrote,

Kotek has copied out the violin part of the concerto and we played it through before lunch. It was a great success both for the author and for the performer. Kotek actually played it in such a way that he could have immediately played it in public. . . . In the evening he played the Andante, which pleased a lot less than the

follow tomorrow morning as intended. The copyist brought it yesterday . . . there were a fearful number of mistakes. But I hope that they have all been removed; slurs and markings are at least notated correctly.”<sup>28</sup> The violin part and piano reduction were published in November of 1878. Following this publication the two began work on the orchestral parts, which progressed slowly. The parts were completed and published in August of 1879. Unfortunately, more problems with the complete score remained and it was not released until almost ten years later in April of 1888.<sup>29</sup>

Of Kotek’s contribution to the compositional and publication process Tchaikovsky said, “There is no denying that without him I could not have done anything.”<sup>30</sup> Tchaikovsky’s gratitude toward Kotek for his help was great. However, his close partnership with Kotek in the writing process makes it difficult to determine what, if any, musical passages Kotek may have changed or suggested. Regardless



### **Adolf Brodsky and the Concerto's Public Debut**

Although composition of the violin concerto was relatively quick, the first public performance did not happen right away. In fact it was not performed until several years after its completion.<sup>33</sup> Finding a violinist to premier his concerto proved to be more difficult than Tchaikovsky might have hoped. Although it is unclear why, Kotek did not give the concerto's first performance, which was his original intent. Instead, Tchaikovsky turned to a violinist and teacher who he had become familiar with and very much respected: Leopold Auer. Auer was a renowned Hungarian violinist who relocated to St. Petersburg to play with the Imperial Orchestra. Although critics of his playing complained that he was not virtuosic enough to stand up to the great violinists of the day, he still received acclaim from many.<sup>34</sup> Auer had established himself in St. Petersburg as a performer in the Imperial Orchestra and teacher at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.<sup>35</sup> Tchaikovsky hoped dedicating the piece to Auer would prompt him to be the first to perform the work. Auer's response to the dedication was not what Tchaikovsky expected. The two met to review the work. Auer described their meeting saying:

well.<sup>37</sup> Thus, Tchaikovsky's requests for a premiere were denied by not one, but by two different violinists. The concerto was still left unheard by the public.

The first performer to play the concerto in front of an audience was violinist and conductor Leopold Damrosch. His 1879 concert in New York was performed with piano accompaniment only. The absence of an orchestra, however, makes it impossible to consider this performance the premiere.<sup>38</sup> Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto had its official premiere performance in Vienna almost two years later on December 4, 1881 given by Russian violinist Adolf Brodsky and the Vienna Philharmonic under the direction of Hans Richter.<sup>39</sup>

Circumstances for this performance were far from ideal. The first challenge was that only one rehearsal with the orchestra was held prior to the performance. The next difficulty was the orchestral parts. As a result of the single rehearsal the orchestra musicians allegedly decided to play everything *piano* so that the audience would not notice how many mistakes were in the parts. One rehearsal was not enough time to correct all of the inconsistencies. Questions of editing and cuts to the work were brought up even at this, the first performance. Although pressured to make cuts and changes, Brodsky would not hear of altering Tchaikovsky's work and insisted on performing the piece as written.<sup>40</sup>

Tchaikovsky did not know that Brodsky had decided to perform the concerto. In fact, he did not find out that his work had been premiered until after the performance had already taken place. Tchaikovsky happened upon a review of the performance in a Vienna newspaper shortly

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<sup>37</sup> Schwartz, Liner Notes, *Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto*.

<sup>38</sup> Vajdman, "Preface," V.

<sup>39</sup> Edward Downes, *Guide to Symphonic Music* (New York: Walker and Company, 1981), 957.

<sup>40</sup> Emery, *The Violin Concerto*, 255.

after.<sup>41</sup> The review, by Austrian music critic and historian Eduard Hanslick,<sup>42</sup> was far from complimentary:

For a while the concerto has proportion, is musical, and is not without genius, but soon savagery gains the upper hand, and lords it to the end of the first movement. The violin is no longer played. It is yanked about, it is torn asunder, it is beaten black and blue. I do not know whether it is possible for anyone to conquer these harassing difficulties, but I do know that Mr. Brodsky martyred his hearers as well as himself.<sup>43</sup>

The review goes on to give some halfhearted compliments to the second movement only to highly criticize the co

Kotek played your concerto well, but he cannot compare with someone like Brodsky. Despite the perfect technical performance there was no passion, neither on the part of the artist nor on that of the audience. . . . Kotek is exactly like his playing, that is, he is extremely proper, even elegant, but there is a touch of triviality in his elegance. There is also a hint of triviality with Brodsky but at the same time there is fire, energy and natural intuition.<sup>48</sup>

Although Jürgenson was not entirely impressed with Kotek's performance, it was fitting that Tchaikovsky's good friend had an opportunity to play the work that he had such a large part in creating.

### **The Influence and Editing of Leopold Auer**

With the first performance completed, the doors were opened to other performers who wanted to learn the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto. This is also when people began to consider editing and changing the work. Fritz Kreisler was one of the violinists who made an attempt at editing. In his book *From Russia to the West*, Nathan Milstein discusses Kreisler's work on the Violin Concerto and recounts two stories he was told by Kreisler. Both stories were based on alleged conversations that Kreisler had with people who were close to Tchaikovsky. Both individuals told Kreisler that Tchaikovsky wanted to rewrite and edit his violin concerto, but that he "simply hadn't gotten around to it."<sup>49</sup> Milstein seems skeptical of Kreisler's stories expressing some frustration with his claims. Milstein comments that, "Either way, the story wasn't very convincing, but I had no intention of arguing about it with the adorable maestro."<sup>50</sup> Regardless of Milstein's feelings about his edits, Kreisler's edition of the concerto was not widely used and is now virtually obsolete. Although Kreisler and other violinists made edits to the concerto, none were as drastic or as lasting as those made by Leopold Auer. Why might one violinist's edition catch on and not another's? A look at Auer's life and influence on the performance community reveals why his editions may have gained so much momentum.

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<sup>48</sup> Vajdman, "Preface," V.

<sup>49</sup> Milstein, *From Russia to the West*, 175.

<sup>50</sup> Milstein, *From Russia to the West*, 175.

In spite of a successful performance career, Auer is most recognized for his teaching as the violin professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory from 1868-1917. While there Auer taught many famous violinists and solidified his position as one of the most sought-after teachers in Russia.<sup>51</sup> Despite his initial refusal to perform Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, Auer's interaction with the work did not wane, but only intensified in later years. On January 30, 1893 Auer relented and publicly performed the concerto in St. Petersburg using his own cuts and alterations. Later that same year, in October, Auer performed the concerto at Tchaikovsky's funeral when the great composer died from cholera.<sup>52</sup>

Despite the fact that Auer changed his mind about performing the concerto, he still received some criticism for his early comments and initial refusal to play it. In an effort to justify his reasoning, Auer combated the rumor that he called the concerto "unplayable." In the January 12, 1912 edition of the *Musical Courier* Auer wrote:

It is incorrect to state that I had declared the concerto in its original form unplayable. What I did say was that some of the passages were not suited to the character of the instrument, and that, however perfectly rendered, they would not sound as well as the composer had imagined. From this purely aesthetic point of view only I found some of it impracticable, and for this reason I re-edited the solo part.<sup>53</sup>

Although Auer's early feelings about the concerto seemed unfavorable and he insisted on the use of his own edition in lieu of Tchaikovsky's, his respect of the work increased as time went on. In his book *Violin Playing as I Teach it* copyrighted in 1921, Auer recognized the merits of playing the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, among others.<sup>54</sup> Additionally, in his 1925 book *Violin Masterworks and their Interpretation*, Auer refutes Hanslick's terrible review and instead calls Tchaikovsky a "genius." He goes on to say that, "the great Russian composer's Concerto in D major has held its own in all the concert halls of the cultured world, and in every studio where

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<sup>51</sup> Schwartz, "Auer, Leopold," *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>52</sup> Vajdman, "Preface," VI.

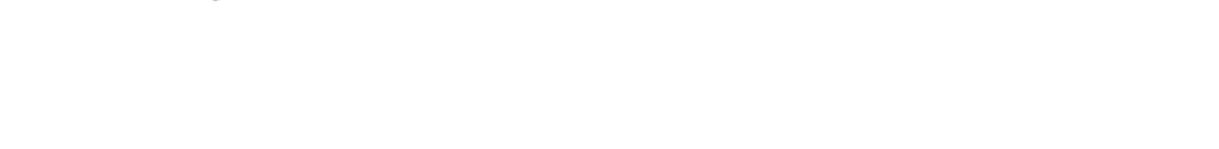
<sup>53</sup> Steinberg, *The Concerto: A Listener's Guide*, 485.

<sup>54</sup> Leopold Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975), 93.

rational violin-playing is taught.”<sup>55</sup> -

## Example 1.1

## Example 1.1 continued





The second cut shown in Example 1.2, between the violin's exit in the development and the beginning of the cadenza, removes material between measures 195 and 202.

**Example 1.2**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 194-204



Although Auer never indicated why he made these alterations, analysis reveals potential reasons for the changes. The most obvious reason for the first two cuts is to shorten transitional material between sections and return focus to the soloist in a more timely fashion.

The next revisions to the first movement affect the violin part only. The first of these occurs in measures 111-113 shown in Example 1.3. Tchaikovsky's version is on the top staff, and Auer's on the bottom.

**Example 1.3**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 111-119



## Example 1.4

example Auer alters the octave placement of the passage so that it mirrors the melodic line established in the exposition.

**Example 1.5**

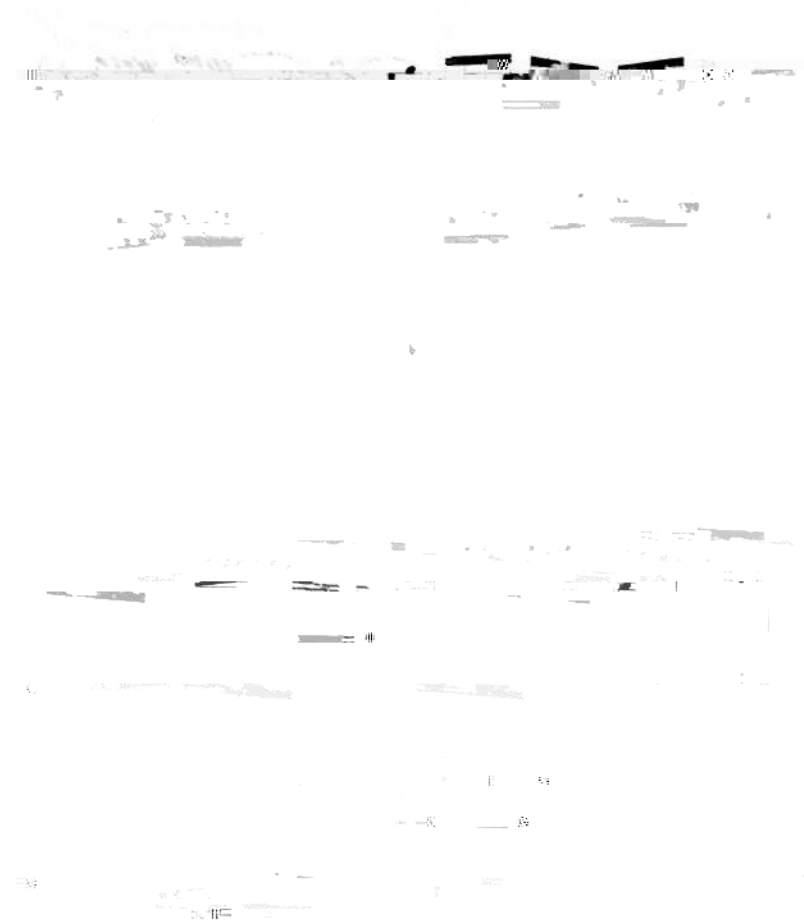
Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 55-59, 238-243

Example 1.6 shows Auer's changes in the development section. In measures 166 and 167 he omits the lower notes of the passage so that it mirrors the melodic line established in the exposition.

original. A few octave transpositions throughout and a scalar sweep added in measure 169 change the passage so that it is not simply a repetition of what happened in measure 162. Though once again these changes are nominal, the small embellishments in this section add contrast that was not present before.

**Example 1.6**

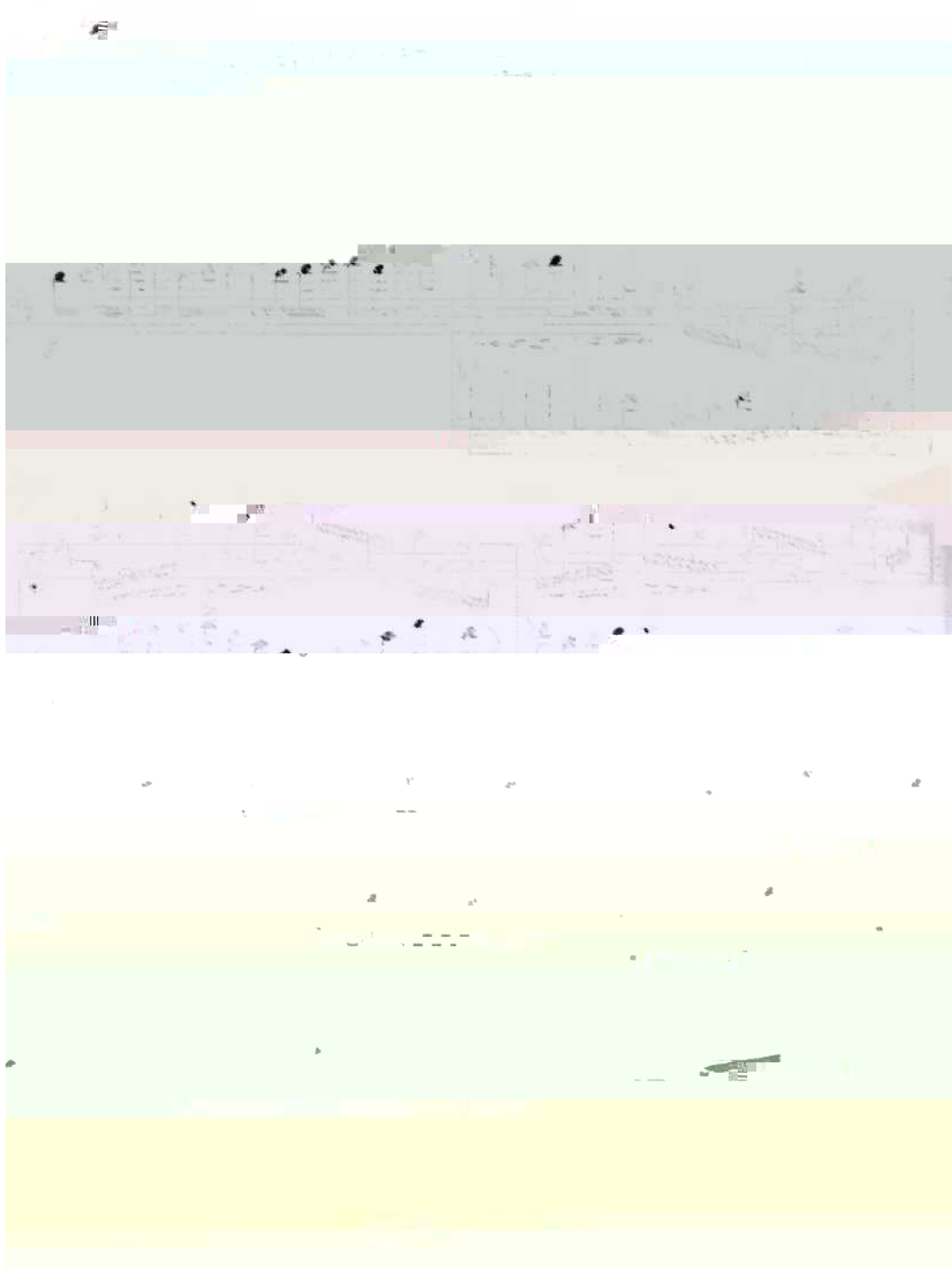
Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 162-175



The last two changes to the first movement occur at the end. Example 1.7 shows measures 303-312.

**Example 1.7**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 303-312



In measures 306-308 Auer changes the melodic figuration of the sixteenth notes. In this section ease of performance is not an issue, and there are not substantial changes to increase the virtuosity of the passage. This suggests that maybe Auer favored the sound of the rising melodic line of the sixteenth notes in the second half of each measure as opposed to the falling line, although there is no way to know for sure.

Example 1.8 shows the final revisions in this movement. Study of Tchaikovsky's version reveals that he repeated the same pattern twice in a row from measure 316 to 317 and measure 318 to 319. Auer may have chosen to alter the part so that the feeling of repetition would be lessened by an octave transposition the second time through the passage. Additionally, Tchaikovsky's arpeggiated chords in measures 317 and 319 were simplified for ease of execution.

**Example 1.8**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 316-320



As stated earlier, reasons for Auer's specific edits to Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto are not recorded, so analysis and speculation are the only possible way to understand Auer's changes. Auer did, however, provide a few comments about Tchaikovsky's first movement in his book

**Example 2.1**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 66-69

**Example 2.2**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 75-85

**Example 3.1**

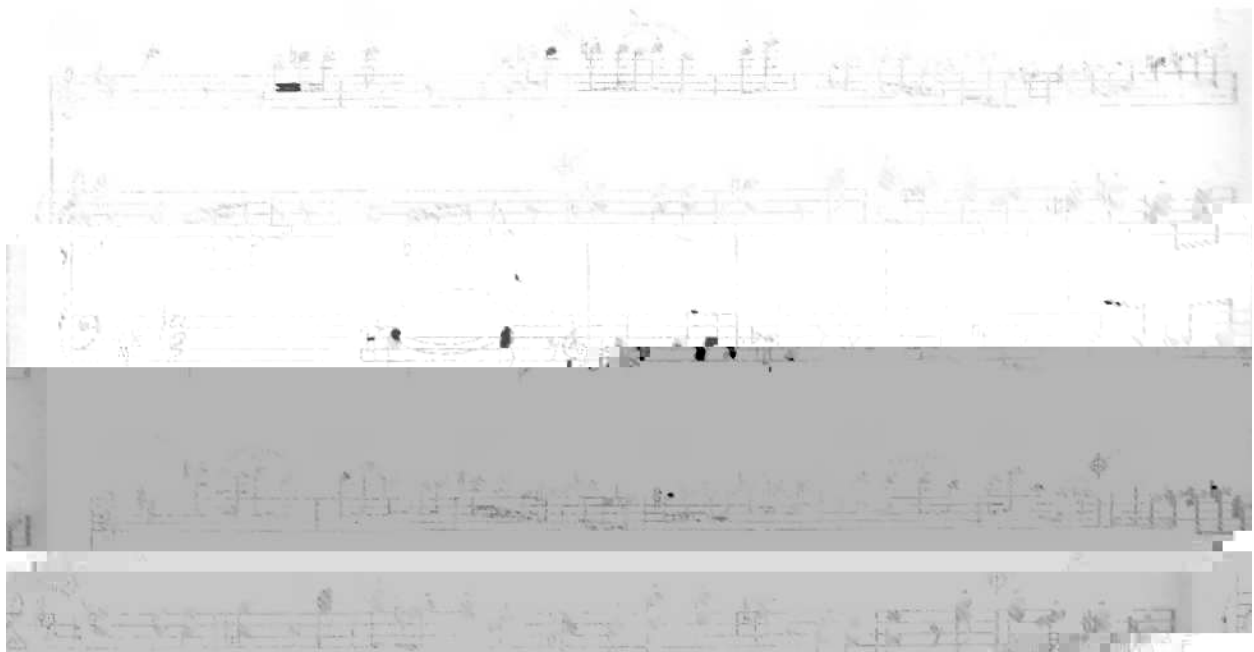
Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 61-87



Two additional short cuts were made in measures 295-298 and measures 305-308. These cuts are displayed in Example 3.2. Once again, this example shows that Auer removed sections of repetition for both the orchestra and the soloist.

**Example 3.2**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 293-312

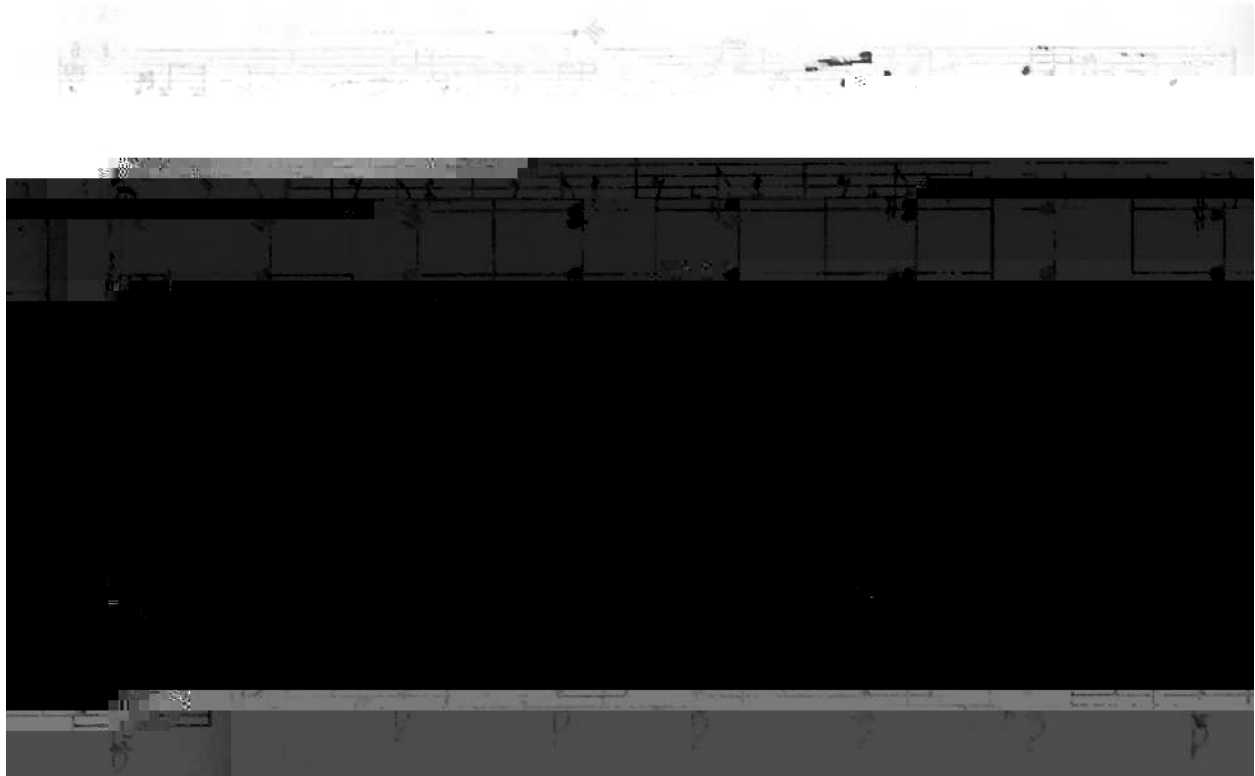


The next cut Auer suggests is from measures 421-430 shown in Example 3.3. However, David Oistrakh and K. Mostras, who edited this edition, suggest moving the beginning of the cut

two measures later to measure 423 due to the movement in the bass part.<sup>61</sup> The eliminated section is repetitive harmonically even though the violin part is slightly more varied.

**Example 3.3**

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 162-175



The final cut shown in Example 3.4 and extending four measures from 580-583 is an exact repetition of the previous four measures.

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<sup>61</sup> Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*.

### Example 3.4

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 576-585



One additional section of the third movement contains changes made by Auer. This is the only change in the movement that affects just the violin part. Example 3.5 shows the passage that Tchaikovsky wrote, and below it, Auer's revision. Auer's material would be inserted by the performer beginning at the \*) in Tchaikovsky's edition. In this case, Auer was apparently trying

to make the passage more virtuosic. The passage went from a motive that was repeated over and over to an ascending passage that keeps the audience engaged.

### Example 3.5

Peter Tchaikovsky, *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*, mm. 446-462

The image displays a musical score for Peter Tchaikovsky's *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35*, specifically measures 446-462. The score is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff shows measures 446-452. The middle staff shows measures 453-458, with the instruction "poco stringendo" and a tempo change to "Tempo I" at measure 460. The bottom staff shows measures 459-462. Below the main score, there is a separate staff for fingering, labeled "L. Auer", with various fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and bowing techniques (1, 0, 3, 2, 1, 4, 3, 1, 4) indicated above the notes.

Auer changed each of these passages for one of several reasons. Many of the cuts were made to remove repetitive material, whereas the edited passages were changed to simplify, intensify, or add interest.

### Establishment of Modern Performance Practice

What is the current performance practice of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto? Whose version is used today: Tchaikovsky's or Auer's? How did the performance practice of this great work become such a tradition? To determine what led to today's traditions, the history of this piece and its performances must be addressed. Many famous violinists have performed the work

throughout history. While all of the famous performances cannot be dissected, the performances of several revolutionary violinists can be studied. First are previous students of Leopold Auer: Mischa Elman, Jascha Heifetz,<sup>62</sup> and Nathan Milstein.<sup>63</sup> Second, are contemporaries of these virtuosos who were not educated in the Auer tradition including David Oistrakh and Joseph Szigeti. Discovering how each artist performed the concerto leads to a greater understanding of the history and performance practice of this piece.

Auer's cuts and alterations were, and still are, used by many performers. Why did these changes become part of the Tchaikovsky tradition? Since Auer was such a prominent violin teacher it is likely that he taught the piece to his students with his revisions. These violinists who were, by many accounts, considered revolutionary performers familiarized the next generation with the Auer edition. Violinists that followed wished to perform the Tchaikovsky like the great artists before them. As each performance was witnessed, the tradition grew stronger.

One of Auer's first most accomplished students was Mischa Elman (1891-1967) who was born to a Jewish family living in Russia. Elman's earliest violin lessons came from his father, but at the age of six he began studying at the Imperial Music School. There he studied with Alexander Fidelman who was a former pupil of both Leopold Auer and Adolf Brodsky. Several years later, Auer heard Elman perform in Odessa, and he decided to take the boy on as a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.<sup>64</sup> By age thirteen, Elman had begun a full-fledged performance career, and as a result, formal training with Auer became significantly less regular. In fact, by age fourteen, Elman had completed his violin instruction entirely.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Schwartz, "Auer, Leopold," *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>63</sup> Milstein, *From Russia to The West*, 13.

<sup>64</sup> Henry Roth, *Master Violinists in Performance* (Neptune City: Paganiniana Publications, Inc., 1982), 135.

<sup>65</sup> Roth, *Master Violinists in Performance*, 136.



Although their time together lasted only a few years, Auer was Elman's last teacher and most certainly had a hand in shaping the way the young man performed many of the famous works for violin. In her book *The Great Violinists*, Margaret Campbell retells a story about Auer and Elman working on the Tchaikovsky together. According to Auer, he worked with Elman in preparation for a public examination when Elman was only twelve years old. Auer remarked that his student was having some difficulty with one of the passages in the cadenza. Auer asked Elman to repeat the passage several times to no avail. Auer then told Elman that he obviously was not able play the concerto correctly and that he would have to select another piece to play for the examination. Auer reported that, "with eyes filled with tears, and a voice full of determination, he assured me that at the examination the passage would go well." A short time later Elman performed it perfectly at the dress rehearsal.<sup>66</sup> This story reveals not only the determination and drive of the young Elman, but more importantly it confirms that the two men worked on the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto together.

popularity, but also th

believe that there is any teacher in the world who could possibly approach him. Don't ask me how he did it, for I would not know how to tell you, for he is completely different with each student.”<sup>73</sup>

Heifetz gave his first European performance at age twelve with the Berlin Philharmonic playing the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto.<sup>74</sup> His experience with the work began early, and his performance of it would become a favorite worldwide. Throughout his career Heifetz performed this concerto many times. As a result there are many audio and video recordings of him playing it. Creighton sites one recording of the second movement only, along with three recorded performances of the concerto in its entirety.<sup>75</sup> The performance referenced here is from 1957 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. Study of the recording confirms that just like Elman, Heifetz follows virtually every cut

Orchestra, and the last was with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under the direction of William Steinberg.<sup>77</sup> Listening to this last recording reinforces the tradition of performances given by Auer's students. Milstein takes all cuts and alterations made by Auer with only one exception. Once again this exception occurs in measures 123-126 and its mirrored part in the recapitulation. Here Milstein chose to adhere to the original part written by Tchaikovsky.<sup>78</sup>

In his book *From Russia to the West* Milstein gives some comments and opinions on how the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto should be perf

had no choice.”<sup>80</sup> Of course, this comment is speculation on the part of Milstein; however, it does seem probable that patriotism could have been a factor in Oistrakh’s decision. A look at Oistrakh’s education on the violin shows that unlike Elman, Heifetz, and Milstein, Leopold Auer did not have a part in his development. Although Milstein and Oistrakh shared an early violin teacher, Oistrakh did not go on to study with Auer. His technical education came from another source.

David Oistrakh (1908-1974) was born in Odessa. His father was a musician and gave him his first real violin at the age of five. Shortly after he began lessons with Pyotr Stolyarsky at the Music School of Odessa and later moved onto the Conservatory in Odessa.<sup>81</sup> Thus, Stolyarsky was Oistrakh’s most lasting and influential teacher. There are a significant number of recordings of David Oistrakh playing the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto. Creighton cites six recordings of the work up to 1971.<sup>82</sup> At least one other known recording exists after 1971. Although Milstein clearly witnessed a performance of Oistrakh playing Tchaikovsky with no alterations, the 1960 recording with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Norman Del Mar shows otherwise,<sup>83</sup> as does his 1968 live performance with the Moscow Philharmonic.<sup>84</sup> In both recordings Oistrakh plays every alteration by Auer with the exception, once again, of measures 123-126 and the mirrored recapitulation where he adheres to Tchaikovsky’s original.

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<sup>80</sup> Milstein, *From Russia to the West*, 215.

<sup>81</sup> Campbell, *The Great Violinists*, 213-214.

<sup>82</sup> Creighton, *Discopaedia of the Violin*, 555.

<sup>83</sup> Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *Vio*

There is no way to know Oistrakh's experience and artistic journey with this piece without him sitting down and discussing it. However, it appears that Oistrakh changed his mind about adhering to Tchaikovsky's original composition. Maybe he had once thought that performing the piece with Auer's changes was a sign of disrespect to Tchaikovsky, but then over time, he grew fond of the changes and embraced them. Still another possibility is that the world was getting so used to the Heifetz rendition that Oistrakh's uncut performances were not granted with favor. We cannot know for sure, but the evidence suggests that Oistrakh began performing the piece uncut and unedited, but by the end of his career chose to adhere to Auer's changes instead.

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Szigeti points out that even though Auer's changes were widely used, there were a number of violinists, including himself, who favored Tchaikovsky's original work. He also highlights an important fact about the Tchaikovsky competition. In the year this book was written, 1969, there was already a rule that the original version of Tchaikovsky's concerto must be used for those who wished to participate in the competition. This is true today as well. The Tchaikovsky Competition website lists the complete repertoire requirements for each stage of the competition. In parentheses next to the title of the concerto, the text confirms that the competitor must play the version "edited by the author."<sup>86</sup> It is interesting that despite the established performance history of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto using the Auer edition, one of the most prestigious international competitions specifically requests the original.

What about more recent performances of the work? Does the tradition remain the same? Performers seem divided on the subject. Violinist Isaac Stern (1920-2001) released a recording in 1979 with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mstislav Rostropovich. Boris Schwartz wrote in the liner notes:

Auer's changes are neither good nor necessary, but the public accepted them as gospel truth. It is all the





originally intended.<sup>92</sup> This is a bold choice considering that throughout history, the most famous







- Tchaikovsky, Peter. *Concerto in D Major, Opus 35 for Violin and Piano*. Edited by David Oistrakh and K. Mostras. New York: International Music Company, 1956.
- Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilich. *Violin Concerto in D Major, Opus 35*. Reprint of the Tchaikovsky Collected Works. New York: Edwin F. Kalmus, 1970.
- Tschaikowsky, Peter Iljitsch. *Violinkonzert D-dur, Opus 35, Urtext*. Edited by Polina Vajdman. Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 2005.
- Todd, R. Larry. "Nineteenth-Century Concertos for Strings and Winds." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Concerto*, edited by Simon P. Keefe, 118-138. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
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