

## The Next Pedagogical Wave:

### Justifying the Need for a Comprehensive Alternative String Methodology

Instrumental methodologies for bowed string instruments have been created for centuries as a way of helping train players to become ideal musicians for the age in which they live. Leopold Mozart wrote his famous “Versuch Einer Gründlichen Violinschule” to supply violinists with the standardized technical abilities required to perform new virtuosic pieces being composed in the Classical era. Shinichi Suzuki believed that, while there were masterful pedagogues helping to sculpt children into becoming professional performers in his time, there was still a need for a system which would enable all children to learn musical skills in a way that benefited their personhood and overall life. As the world enters a new phase in which diversity, flexibility, and inclusion are becoming increasingly important attributes in a musician, there is a great need for re-imagined string methodologies which take these qualities into account.

While there is a rapidly growing body of resources related to alternative string styles, there is currently a lack of research-based comprehensive methodologies in existence which help teachers and students navigate between classical and non-classical styles in a scaffolded way. This project defends this claim with an in-depth literature review and an analysis of existing materials. In contrast to the gaps which currently exist in the field of alternative string pedagogy, there is a large and consistently growing desire among string players to learn non-classical techniques at the primary, secondary, and professional levels. The reason for this dichotomy can be traced back, in part, to elitism among the traditional circles of classical pedagogy, colonial influences, and wealth disparity. This project examines the ways in which pedagogical

acceptance of genres such as Jazz and Appalachian Fiddle have been historically resisted at the university level in order to highlight these trends in professional music education.

Traditionally, the general consensus has been that a student should commit themselves whole-heartedly to the study of classical techniques, repertoire, and style before diverting to cross over into additional genres. This project examines this philosophy, and raises questions as to if this should be the definitive school of thought. This investigation is analyzed through a technical-scaffolding lens, as well as in the context of repertoire and style. While this document focuses on string pedagogy specifically, its discussion contains far reaching implications for any instructor seeking to craft an ideal educational experience for a twenty-first century musician.

Part 1 of this project focuses on analyzing the needs of 21st century musicians, in order to justify my claim that we are entering an era in which diversity and flexibility are valuable skills, in addition to raw technical abilities. This is examined through the lens of a postsecondary career in music, as well as looking at the economic and cultural trends of the rising Generation Z.

To follow my progress in this project as it continues, see my publications at [stevenschumann.com/publications](http://stevenschumann.com/publications) or scan the QR code below.

