

## Viola-do Workshop

### Playing Viola as a Way and Its Parallels with the Aiki Way (Aikido)

Who: about 15-20 string, mostly viola students; about 3 to 5 aikidoka.

Space: dance studio. Seating for spectators.

Time: two 90-minute sessions, one evening and one morning.

Instructors: Masumi Per Rostad and Donald Levine

#### Session I. Preparing to play

0. **Introduction.** A. Masumi and Don each open with a statement about their respective *do*.

B. Each presents outline of their respective presentations.

Principle	Viola-do	Aiki-do
1. Intoning the <i>do</i>	Beauty in sound	Harmony in action
2. Tuning in: "find the station"	Core check-up	Minding the center
3. Affirming self: play the station	Self check	Unified bodymind
4. Broadcasting from self	Checking posture	Balancing the energy vectors
5. Receiving the medium	Receiving the instrument	Receiving a partner
6. Being relaxed	Using and releasing tensions	Using tension and letting it go
7. Downward movement	Ultimate down bow	Cutting, not striking
8. Upward movement	Ultimate up bow	Heaven and earth

#### Session II. Playing, and playing with others

0. Review of first session

9. Readiness a. to begin b. to move	Staying cool a. Tapping into flow b. Maintaining fluidity	Mu-shin: "empty" mind a. Receptiveness b. Postural readiness, reversibility
10. Basic technique	C Major scale	Ikkyo ("first lesson")
11. Coordinating movements	Timing management	Ma-ai (space/time coordinating)
12. Playing with another	Connecting with composer, musical character	Making and maintaining connection
13. Playing with group	Duet/ensemble playing	Randori; Soft vision
14. Returning to the aim	Always playing beautifully	Living harmony in action (aiki)

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Viola-do</b>	<b>Exercise</b>
1. Intoning the <i>do</i>	Beauty in sound	<b>Masumi plays Bach G major suite 1st movement.</b> Don and ukes demonstrate continuous takemusu aiki
2. Tuning in: "find the station"	Core check	Think of core, movement to find core
3. Affirming oneself: play the station	Self check	Sit and breathe with core in mind
4. Broadcasting from self	Flow from core	Think, move, breathe from core
5. Receiving the medium	Receiving the instrument	Put viola into position with bow at side
6. Being relaxed	Using and releasing tensions	Place bow quickly at frog, tense and relax; let finger vibrate on contact with string
7. Downward movement	Ultimate down bow	Release from core through elbow without tensing
8. Upward movement	Ultimate up bow	Lead upwards while staying grounded

## **Session II. Playing, and playing with others**

### 0. Review of first session

9. Readiness a. to begin b. to move	Staying cool a. Tapping into flow b. Maintaining fluidity	a. Move into musical entrance. b. Don't stop during rests.
10. Basic technique	C Major scale	Every aspect of playing is contained here. Two octaves, use fourth fingers, with vibrato, all first position.
11. Coordinating movements	Timing management	Shift with elbow first, not finger. Play from elbow, not bow grip.
12. Playing with another	Musical character	Move and breathe "musically", using cue system
13. Playing with group	Duet/ensemble playing	Get in the zone
14. Returning to the aim	Always playing beautifully	Don't lose yourself <i>trying</i> to play; that makes you play worse. Reprise of 1.

Principle	Aiki-do	Exercise
1. Intoning the <i>do</i>	Harmony in action	<b>Don and ukes demonstrate continuous <i>takemusu aiki</i></b> Masumi plays Bach G major suite 1st movement.
2. Tuning in: "find the station"	Minding the center	Keep one point by directing exhale inward and downward; test posture
3. Affirming oneself: play the station	Unified bodymind	Exhale into hara through entire body; balance the energy fields
4. Broadcasting from self	Balancing the energy vectors	Exhale outward; six directions flow; move from core
5. Receiving the medium	Receiving a partner	<i>Katate tori</i> : partner grabs wrist. Static: tense and relax; dynamic: rotate wrist on contact
6. Being relaxed	Using tension and letting it go	Standing and connecting
7. Downward movement	Cutting, not striking	<i>Bokken shomen suburi</i> : release from core through elbow without tensing
8. Upward movement	Heaven and earth	Settle down to extend up: lead upwards while staying grounded

## Session II. Playing, and playing with others

### 0. Review of first session

9. Readiness a. to begin b. to move	Mu-shin: "empty" mind a. Receptiveness b. Postural readiness, reversibility	Receiving shomenuchi, yoko-menuchi
10. Basic technique	Ikkyo ("first lesson")	Ikkyo. All aikido principles are contained herein.
11. Coordinating movements	Ma-ai	Push hands; enkan (ki flow). Move from hips, not hands.
12. Playing with another	Making and maintaining connection	Katate dori Irimi nage
13. Playing with group	Responding to group attack. Soft vision	Randori
14. Returning to the aim	Living harmony in action (aiki)	Take musu aiki (demonstrate). Reprise of 1.