

Fall 2023 Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra Audition packet: Viola

Auditions consist of scales and excerpts from Brahms' Symphony No. 4

Scales: please prepare the following two scales using all of the articulations below.

1. C major scale and arpeggio; three octaves preferred, two octaves acceptable.
2. E melodic minor scale and arpeggio; three octaves preferred, two octaves acceptable.
 - a. In whole notes, one note per bow, using the whole bow, rich sound, and vibrato (whole notes at approximately quarter=72)
 - b. With slurs of your choosing, as quickly as you feel comfortable while maintaining tone quality and intonation – anything from 2 to 12 notes per bow.
 - c. Sautillé, sixteenth notes at the balance point, quickly, repeating each note of the scale four times.
 - d. Spicatto eighth notes, moderately, repeating each note of the scale four times.

Note: Regular and dedicated practice of scales and arpeggios in a variety of tempi and articulations is **strongly encouraged** of all string players.

Excerpts:

1. **Brahms Symphony No. 4, movement 2, letter C through measure 74**
2. **Brahms Symphony No. 4, movement 3, letter H through end of movement**

Tips on taking a successful audition

If possible, bring all music to a teacher early on (i.e. 1-2 months ahead of the audition) for advice and guidance on appropriate fingering, bowing, breathing, tonguing, practice strategies, etc. In addition, many (free) masterclasses on standard excerpts and audition strategies (how to prepare excerpts, how to deal with nerves, etc) can be found on Youtube. See for example <https://www.robknopper.com/auditionhacker>, <https://bulletproofmusician.com/>, and <https://stringsmagazine.com/12-ways-to-ace-your-orchestral-audition/>.

Get a concrete idea of the appropriate tempi (metronome markings), phrasing, articulations, etc. for your excerpts by listening to recordings. For the Brahms I recommend the recent recording by the Oslo Philharmonic (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4UScRNrb5M&t=2056s>). Repeated listenings to this recording (and others) while following along with your part will help you immensely.

Do a “mock audition” (or several mock auditions) by playing through your scales and excerpts in front of others for feedback and to simulate the stress factor of playing in front of other people.

Relax, breathe, and be kind to yourself! Remember that everyone gets nervous before auditions – a little bit of meditation, yoga, and/or positive imagery before the audition will go a long way.

Excerpt 1

Brahms — Symphony No. 4 in E Minor

Viola

8

41 *p*

46 *f* *p* *dim.*

51 *f*

55 *p* *f*

58 *p dim.* *dolce*

61 *p dolce*

66

69 *dim.* *ppp* *pizz.*

73 *arco*

76

78

Excerpt 2

Brahms — Symphony No. 4 in E Minor

Viola

12

239 *p* *dim.* *p*

249 *cresc.* *f*

260 *ben marc.* *cresc.*

269 *ff*

279 *fp marc.* **H** 1 3 1 2

294 *cresc.* *fp*

300 *cresc.* *f*

308 *ff*

312 *ff sempre* **I**

325

332 **K**

338

346

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for the Viola part of Brahms' Symphony No. 4 in E Minor. The page contains 12 measures, numbered 239 to 346. The music is written in E minor and 4/4 time. It features a variety of dynamics including piano (*p*), fortissimo (*ff*), and *ff sempre*. Performance markings include *dim.*, *cresc.*, *ben marc.*, and *fp marc.*. The score includes several slurs, accents, and articulation marks. There are also some handwritten annotations: a box labeled 'H' above measure 279, a box labeled 'K' above measure 332, and a circled 'I' above measure 312. The page number '12' is in the top left corner.