



Australian and New Zealand Viola Society Journal

Issue No. 39

June 2016

The Australian and New Zealand Viola Society is a section of
The International Viola Society
Association for the Promotion of Viola Performance and Research

Peer-Reviewed Article

Time and Time Again: Tempo as Interpretation in the Second Movement of Mozart's 'Kegelstatt' Trio

Andrew Filmer, Robin Lee, and Mabel Wong

Contact the authors care of the ANZVS Journal Editor,
Olwyn Green cogreen@actrix.co.nz

This page is intentionally left blank as the
inside cover page.

Time and Time Again: Tempo as Interpretation in the Second Movement of Mozart's 'Kegelstatt' Trio

Andrew Filmer, Robin Lee, and Mabel Wong

Mozart, despite being a violist himself, left precious few works for the instrument so much so that musicians have taken much effort to extrapolate from available repertoire – from Philip Wilby's reconstruction of the *Sinfonia Concertante* in A for violin, viola, cello, and orchestra, to a version of the clarinet concerto with the viola instead at the forefront.

In Michael and Dorothea Jappe's bibliography of viola repertoire from 1649 to 1800, only the *Sinfonia Concertante* in E flat, the violin-viola duos, the aforementioned clarinet concerto, and the 'Kegelstatt' trio for clarinet, viola, and piano are listed.¹ In a sense, this highlights the value of the that trio in the viola chamber music repertoire – standing above, say, the string or flute quartets – perhaps in part because Mozart, instead of playing the piano, took on the viola part himself.²

In the 'Kegelstatt', while there is melodic interest evident in the outer movements that parallel the clarinet part, it is in the second movement that the viola has a more independent role. It brings together three very different instruments, in three distinct approaches, and this movement becomes the focus of this article. Specifically, we discuss the role of tempo: should or could the trio section display a contrasting pace, and to what extent?

A Glance at the Trio's Trio

Following a fairly straightforward menuetto, we have a trio that is particularly complex in comparison. Right at the start of the trio section, we note not only the bridging element that the viola plays – at both ends – but that all three instruments play individually crafted characters: from the potentially mysterious clarinet part to the dancing viola and the almost martial piano, with plenty of overlapping.

Example 1: Opening of the Trio, bars 42-45

Example 2: Coda excerpt, bars 148-152

This movement has another important attribute: the coda, because it incorporates material from the trio section. With the triplets – originally for the viola, but now also shared with the clarinet – this part would be most noticeable.

¹ David Fallows, 'Briefly Noted'. *Early Music* vol. 28, no. 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Nov. 2000: 656.

² Aaron Grad, programme notes on the Mozart clarinet concerto for The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, 2015. <https://goo.gl/i0xngw> (accessed March 20, 2015).

Additionally, we note that the recapitulation has no real separation from the trio – the clarinet part brings us in with a chromatic line.



Example 3: Bars 101-102³

Relative tempos in the minuet and trio form: questions on traditions

The idea of contrasting tempos in the minuet and trio form provides an array of opinions. One suggests both a tradition of the trio being slower, as well as the musical context being an indication. With the example of Joseph Haydn's String Quartet in G major op. 76, no. 1, David Hurwitz notes: "Although Haydn does not indicate a change of tempo for the trio, it's always played much slower than the minuet, partly owing to tradition and, more significantly, no self-respecting player could miss the point."⁴ On whether one would 'miss the point', it would appear that Hurwitz is of the view that there is something intrinsic in that work of Haydn, whereby having a relatively slower tempo would be the more obviously musical approach. This would suggest that the musical content is as, if not more, important in determining tempo modifications, in addition to having some sense of a tradition.

Going backwards in time, such a tradition does not seem to be evident in Bach, but the musical context can indeed suggest having the trio slower. Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne take on the example of Bach's Overture in F major, BWV 820, stating: "Since both minuets are in F major, some performers may choose to play the trio slightly slower than the first minuet."⁵ Moving forward in time, we have the scherzo of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, with a clear tempo indication along with Beethoven's metronome markings of 132 measures per minute in stark contrast to just 84 for the trio.⁶

In direct contrast to the earlier mention of a tradition, Roland Jackson notes an account from a contemporary of Mozart, Johann Sulzer, that suggests otherwise. The trio, Sulzer states, "needs to conform to the tempo of the minuet itself."⁷

A discussion by Hans Lampl may provide us information that is directly relevant in the 'Kegelstatt'. Generally advocating for the availability of tempo changes, Lampl notes: "Certain fluctuations in tempo play an important role in defining musical structure.... Handled properly, these tempo fluctuations are not only helpful in defining the form and message of the music, but the effect in itself is delightful."⁸ More importantly, he cites two justifications for this change in tempo. The first is if the texture of the trio significantly departs from the minuet or scherzo, in which case the tempo is adjusted, generally becoming slower.⁹ The second is a pause between the minuet and trio, Lampl stating: "A short *Luftpause* between main movement and trio and again at the *da capo* will help set off these sections. If in doubt, one can try and connect them, if only to make sure that a hesitation and/or change of pace are really preferable."¹⁰

The fact that there is the use of a connecting line between the trio and the return to the menuetto is quite possibly the reason why a slower tempo is not chosen in recordings surveyed in the following section.

³ It may be worth noting that the chromatic line is an elongation of the end of the first half of the menuetto – suggesting that both of these segments function as lead-in to the first menuetto theme. If this is so, this 'connecting tissue' should not be played during the repeat of the first half of the menuetto, since it no longer has this well-defined function.

⁴ David Hurwitz, *Exploring Haydn: A Listener's Guide to Music's Boldest Innovator*, Milwaukee, (WI: Amadeus Press, 2005): 95.

⁵ Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, Bloomington, (IN: Indiana University Press, 2001): 74.

⁶ Michael Steinberg, *The Symphony: A Listener's Guide*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 43.

⁷ Roland Jackson, *Performance Practice: A Dictionary-Guide for Musicians*, (New York: Routledge, 2005): 247.

⁸ Hans Lampl, *Turning Notes into Music: An Introduction to Musical Interpretation*, (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996): 53.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.: 54.

Comparisons of recordings

Ten recordings were obtained for this survey, with commentary provided in the following table.

No.	Performers (cl, vla, pf.)	Relative Tempo	<i>Luftpause</i> before the trio	Commentary
1	Gidon Kremer, Kim Kashkashian and Valery Afanassiev	Approximately same tempo	Yes	Internal fluctuations in the trio: occurrences of the first theme slow down
2	Owen Watkins, Jaap Schröder and Penelope Crawford	Same tempo	No	Historically informed performance; some elements of rubato in the trio, but minimal.
3	Martin Fröst, Antoine Tamestit and Leif Ove Andsnes	Same tempo	Yes	Slight internal fluctuations similar to No. 1
4	Melos Ensemble of London	Same tempo	No	
5	Nash Ensemble	Same tempo	Yes	
6	Felix Schwartz, Matthias Glander and Daniel Barenboim	Starts at the same tempo, but accelerates	No	Acceleration coincides with the shortening of phrases in the trio
7	Nicole van Bruggen, Jane Rogers and Anneke Veenhoff	Even tempo throughout, no break between sections.	No	Historically informed performance.
8	Kim Aseltine, Eva Ster and Joel Schoenhals	Same tempo	No	
9	Yuuko Shiokawa, Erich Höbarth and András Schiff	Same tempo	No	Historically informed performance.
10	The Ensemble da Camera of Washington: Claire Eichhorn, Ricardo Cyncynates and Anna Balakerskaia	Same tempo	No	

Table 1: Comparisons between various recordings of the 'Kegelstatt' trio.

Additionally, online sources also indicate the use the same tempo for menuetto and trio:¹¹

- Michel Portal & Les Musiciens, on Harmonia Mundi;
- Sergio Del Mastro, Josef Kluson, and Riccardo Caramella;
- Talalyan Brothers Festival 2013: Vadim Lando, Yana Daryan, Lusine Hakobyan;
- Trio Claviola: Vytautas Giedraitis, Jurgis Juozapaitis, Ugnė Antanavičiūtė.¹²

In reviewing all of the recordings encountered, none exhibited a slower tempo in the trio section.

While the lack of a *Luftpause* between the trio and the return of the menuetto may indeed lead performers to choose a consistent tempo, it does not preclude the inclusion of such a pause preceding the trio. In two out of the three cases where this occurs, it seems that the performers have some general inclination towards a tempo change *within* the trio section. Since slowing down the trio section as a whole does not seem to be an option, slowing down the main theme of the clarinet seems to be viable (with the viola entering *a tempo*).

¹¹ All sources accessed March 20, 2016.

¹² Respective URLs:
<https://goo.gl/AB1UDk>
<https://goo.gl/zRGVyy>
<https://goo.gl/MSE3IY>
<https://goo.gl/S7h144>

Curiously, this internal flexibility of tempo occurs even when the *Luftpause* is not evident, as heard in the recording of Schwartz, Glander, and Barenboim – and it is even more interesting that some acceleration occurs, in contrast to the slowing down we noted earlier.

What does this tell us? Firstly, the absence of a *Luftpause* before the return of the menuetto does not preclude one preceding it. Secondly, it could well be that whether or not a *Luftpause* precedes the trio is not related to any modification of tempo within the trio. Finally, it is the later absence that makes the *overall* tempo of the trio close to that of the menuetto, and whether it occurs earlier on is then immaterial. Oddly, in essence, this suggests that Lampl is both right and wrong, depending on whether one looks at tempo modification between sections or within them.

It also tells us that there is enough of a critical mass to suggest that tempo modification in the trio section is considered a positively musical option, and that it is not restricted to simply slowing down the section as a whole – indeed, that even speeding up can be an option at times. The musical material may not be to the extent that “no self-respecting player could miss the point,” as Hurwitz thought of the Haydn, but enough to be frequently employed in recordings.

Underpinning these interpretations that include tempo modifications is the nature of Mozart’s trio section, insofar as it contrasts clearly with the comparatively simple menuetto. Recordings that indicate a slowing down juxtapose the clarinet’s plaintive melody to the viola’s triplets and the piano’s dotted rhythm. The speeding up in the recording of Schwartz et. al. indicates a different approach: emphasising the abrupt truncation of the viola line, in essence creating a sense of competition – even conflict – between the clarinet and the viola. We note that the viola’s opening line in the trio section lasts three bars and one note. After this initial statement – where the viola is allowed to finish before the next entrance of the clarinet – the clarinet interrupts the viola line, which is now one bar shorter.¹³

¹³ One might reasonably argue that the clarinet line simply responds to the viola line: the overlapping of the viola line from the start of the trio section can be seen as an interruption as well. That being said, the nature of the differing lines seem to suggest that the clarinet part noted here is more of an interruption than the viola’s triplets, if only because of its greater melodic nature.

Example 4: A conflicted conversation between the clarinet and the viola in bars 47-52.

After this happens twice, as seen in Example 4, the viola line is left virtually speechless, being truncated one crotchet more as the piano decides to take on the clarinet's interruption in bar 55. This sense of collision, a characteristic entirely different from the minuetto, allows performers to accelerate in tempo, providing emphasis to the sense of conflict.

One view of the approach of acceleration taken by Schwartz et al. is that it backs Lampf's first, not second, justification – that the textural interplay of the trio warrants some alteration in tempo in contrast to the minuetto.

Interpretative options

With this discourse in mind, it is possible to summarise or extrapolate some interpretative options.

1. When the trio is the same speed as minuetto, tempo is not the distinguishing factor

If one follows the view that the two sections are of the same tempo, it leads us to the conclusion that the contrast must be achieved through some other means. For many recordings, this is either through articulation, dynamics, or some combination of the two. This is in addition to the trio having longer phrase lines, and the minuetto being more recognisably dance-like.

The reason for keeping the same tempo here may be more than just the connecting line between the trio and the return of the minuetto. It could be a more conservative approach that suggests that the trio already provides enough of contrast in character within its writing, and does not need additional manipulation. This approach of course solves the issue of trying to connect back to the recapitulation – the present authors, in trying to follow the tradition of a slower trio, found that speeding up in the chromatic connecting line proved to have the most aesthetic problems.

2. Factoring in the Coda

Putting aside the problem of the connecting line for the moment, the fact that the coda includes some of the trio section material – most significantly the viola's triplets – provides some interesting aesthetic opportunities and implications. On the one hand, it seems to support not slowing down for the entire trio, as this parallel material in the coda would have to slow down as well, providing a less-than-appealing end to the movement.

On the other hand, if the trio section does indeed slow down, but the coda does not, it provides the element of surprise. With this approach, the work ends with a sense that the piece accelerates towards the finish line – even though in reality it is just following the tempo of the relatively faster minuetto. In other words, the coda would naturally sound faster than the original trio section, even though there is no real change in tempo. This arguably ends the movement more impressively, and provides a nice segue to the following movement.¹⁴

3. Tempo modification in the Coda

The approach of internal tempo variation by Schwartz et al. provides us the possibility of doing likewise in the coda. A slight increase in tempo in the coda would highlight its use of the trio section material, again bringing the movement to an impressive close.

This being said, those advocating a more conservative approach would have a valid point in suggesting that the presence of the trio material's triplets in itself provides this sense of acceleration, regardless of any tempo modification to the trio section or the coda.

¹⁴ It may also be worthwhile to note that while current editions write out the da capo, Mozart's manuscript did not, possibly indicating a distinctive nature of the coda, though just as likely to save time and space.

Closing Remarks

The word ‘Kegelstatt’ translates to “skittles-lane” or “bowling alley”. This suggests the occasion when Mozart wrote this trio for the Jacquin family, with his friend Anton Stadler on the clarinet, for whom he also wrote his clarinet concerto.¹⁵ Steven Ledbetter states that there is little to support the connection to skittles, noting that the horn duets K. 487, in contrast, actually had the note “while playing skittles” on the manuscript.¹⁶

Whichever may be the case, a sense of playfulness pervades the work. The viola community is fortunate that friendships provided us many of the works that feature our instrument – the violin-violata duos were likewise composed for a friend, Michael Haydn. It is with this context, as well as the timelessness of Mozart’s music as a whole, that we experiment with new interpretations of his music, time and time again.

¹⁵ Programme notes, Rhode Island Chamber Music Concerts: <http://goo.gl/rLrcju> (accessed March 21, 2016).

¹⁶ Ibid. See also: Edward Klorman, “An Afternoon at Skittles: On Playing Mozart’s ‘Kegelstatt’ Trio Part I: A Trio for Signora Diniminimi, Natschibinitschibi, and Pünkitititi”, *Journal of the American Viola Society*, vol. 32, no. 1 (Spring 2016).



First page of the trio, from the composer’s autograph manuscript.¹⁷
Autograph housed at the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

¹⁷ International Music Score Library Project: [http://imslp.org/wiki/Trio_in_E-flat_major,_K.498_\(Mozart,_Wolfgang_Amadeus\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Trio_in_E-flat_major,_K.498_(Mozart,_Wolfgang_Amadeus)) (accessed April 2, 2016).

Additional References: Editions

W.A. Mozart, Trio for Pianoforte, Clarinet, and Viola, composer’s manuscript.

_____. *Klavier Trio*, KV 498, Urtext edition, Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1981.

_____. *Trio in E-flat major for Piano, Clarinet and Viola*, KV 498, Urtext edition, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2004.

_____. *Trio No. 4 für Pianoforte, Clarinette und Viola*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozarts Werke, Serie XVII: Pianoforte-Quintett, -quartette und -trios, Bd.2, No.7 (pp.2-19 (68-85)) Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1879.



Time and Time Again: Tempo as Interpretation in the Second Movement of Mozart’s ‘Kegelstatt’ Trio is a Peer-Reviewed article published by the Australian and New Zealand Viola Society in the society’s Journal as well as posted on the ANZVS website. This article may be cited as:

Andrew Filmer, Robin Lee, and Mabel Wong, 2016: Time and Time Again: Tempo as Interpretation in the Second Movement of Mozart’s ‘Kegelstatt’ Trio; in *Australian and New Zealand Viola Society Journal* 39, pp. 3-8.