

Learn with Nicky – Salut d’amour – Lesson 2

Today we’re going to be focused on that moment when things start to get difficult, and HOW can we can solve problems.

But before we delve into that, some little birdies have been telling me that some of you are starting to try to learn this piece without listening to ‘how it goes’ first. So pop over to any recording of Salut d’amour, and take a good, proper listen!

Music exists out in the air - it is song and dance and sound. We need context to understand the meaning of things. We are also beings of imitation. You will understand a lot more if you hear it first.

After you have listened to it a few times, see if you can:

Sing the melody?

Dance to it?

Make up a story to it?

If you cannot hear how it goes inside your mind, it is nearly impossible to play it on an instrument.

Now, I want to talk to you about how to make something easier when it seems like it will never, ever get better.

FOR ME, THERE ARE TWO MAIN WAYS TO IMPROVE

1. ‘Method’ based work, and lots of repetition
2. Experimentation and being creative

No. 1 - if you imagine that you are an excellent, first class soldier. One that ‘fits into line’ and is just perfect. Or perhaps like being the best daughter or son ever, where you do everything you’re told. You are being very obedient, and you are not thinking too hard!

No. 2 – think of this one as you being rebellious. You have to be bold and confident; to think for yourself, and to try out anything!

So today’s lesson is going to be structured in two parts.

- First, method and repetition
- Second, experimentation and creativity

To test out both, we’re going to take the first few bars of Salut D’amour and pick out what’s challenging.

1. Starting with a beautiful sound
2. 1-1-1 fingering
3. Intonation
4. Smooth string crossing
5. Bow distribution

FIRST METHOD – Method and Repetition (Let's be good soldiers!)

We are going to make clean decisions before we start, and then repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat

BEAUTIFUL SOUND

- Breath
- Do the motion without sound
- Play first note
- Stop
 - *Be disciplined*
 - *Do not go off track because things don't sound right..*
 - *Carry out what you decided to do, with only one objective... improving the sound*

- Repeat this x 20

1-1-1

- Sing it
- Relax the hand
- Feel where thumb is
- Play first note, second note, third note.. SLOWLY
- THEN STOP

- Repeat x 20

INTONATION

- Count up from your base finger so you are anchored
- Check in.. that your hand is relaxed and sensitive
- Tune the interval
- PLAY SOFTLY
- USE LITTLE BOW
- Play each note evenly
- And LISTEN LISTEN LISTEN

- STOP
- REPEAT

STRING CROSSING

- Put bow on A string
- Put bow on D string
- Check elbow for both

- 1
- Use arm and flow
- Go from one to the other and back

- 2
- Use only hand
- Go from one to the other and back

- STOP
- REPEAT

BOW DISTRIBUTION

- No left hand
- Full bow / half / quarter quarter

- STOP
- REPEAT

SECOND METHOD – Experimentation and Creativity (now let's be rebels!)

1. Starting with a beautiful sound
2. 1-1-1
3. Intonation
4. Smooth string crossing
5. Bow distribution

BEAUTIFUL SOUND

- What are alllll the ways we can experiment with creating a beautiful sound?
- *Start off by singing and dancing it. Notice how you breath. What do you feel?*

USE YOUR IMAGINATION. TRY THINGS OUT.

- Try softly
- Try loudly
- Try a shorter in take of breath
- Try a nice big long one
- Try lifting your elbow
- Try dropping it
- Try tilting your bow
- Try with a flat hair
- Try to pretend like you're playing a baby to sleep
- Try pretending like you're whispering something
- Try pretending like you're walking in the countryside or by the sea
- Try imagining someone is dancing
- Try starting on the fingerboard and sneaking into the sound

- Try an up bow

EXPERIMENT

BOW DISTRIBUTION

- Before, when we were soldiers, I gave you really clear instructions. Whole bow / half bow / quarter quarter.
- Now let's presume we don't have to do that at all. You can do WHATEVER YOU WANT!

Thank you so much! And please keep sharing your practice videos with us!

#salutnicky