

Finger Independence Exercises, or finger Dependence Exercises?

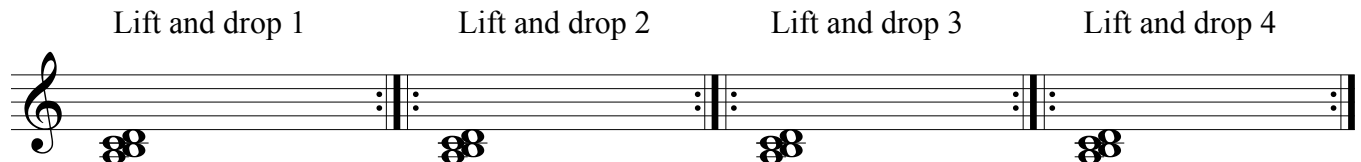
Constantine Dounis (c. 1886-1954) was a tremendous proponent of "Finger Independence" exercises. His violin exercises push the capabilities of the left hand far beyond the requirements of the violin repertoire. Sometimes, his exercises involve actions from all four fingers: one finger held in place, pizzicato with one finger (left to right), lifting with another, and pushing forward and backward with the last.

However, "Finger Independence" is a misnomer. Really, we can only achieve the *illusion* of finger independence through a balancing and coordinating of motions in the entire hand.

Finger Dependence Exercise with Fox Hand:

1) With violin only (no bow):

Position your Fox Hand carefully on the G string. With all of the fingers stopping the string, we'll practice lifting and dropping each finger from the 1st major knuckle joint.



2) Besides simply lifting individual fingers, we can also alternate between 2 opposing fingers, 3 fingers vs 1, or add and remove the entire Fox Hand.

Alternate Opposing single fingers:

1 and 4, 1 and 3, 1 and 2, 2 and 4, 2 and 3, 3 and 4,

Alternate Opposing doubles:

1+2 and 3+4, 1+3 and 2+4

Three against One:

1 and 2+3+4, 2 and 1+2+4, 3 and 1+2+4, 4 and 1+2+3

Raise and Lower entire Fox Hand: 1+2+3+4