

***Review from Bass World Vol. 37***

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**Progressive Studies for the**

**Double Bass**

Joseph Prunner, Edited by Daniel Stotz  
Vol. I Major and Minor Scales and  
Arpeggios  
Vol.2 Chromatic and Fixed Position Scales  
MMHC Music Publications

As a student at the Bucharest Conservatory, Joseph Prunner's Progressive Studies for the Double Bass was the "Bible" used by the entire studio. Through regular study of the scales and arpeggio exercises laid out in the book, I immediately noticed improvements to my technique that can only be described as magical. I cannot be more excited that this book, which was previously only available at the conservatory in Bucharest, is now be available to all.

While Prunner's studies were magnificent in their ideas, there were a lot of problems with the edition available at that time. Through his revision, Editor Daniel Stotz, DMA, has fixed problems found in the previous edition, and added an amazing amount of new material that updates this book for the 21<sup>st</sup> century double bassist. The final product is the most comprehensive collection of scale and arpeggio studies for the double bass I am aware of. This is the Prunner that I know, but new and on steroids!

Volume I (327 pages), major/minor scales and arpeggios, is the method I employed, but now all the scales and arpeggios are given in a three-octave presentation. In addition, there are now 32 examples of different bowing patterns for both the scales and arpeggios, which follow a logical progression of difficulty. One of the most exciting parts of the new edition is

the inclusion of concepts of Carl Flesch into the Prunner system. As they both follow a diatonic system of scale study, it was a perfect fit to add double-stop studies using thirds, fifths and octaves.

Volume II (138 pages), chromatic and fixed position scales, is again the system that I studied, but now the fixed-position scales (working horizontally across the fingerboard, starting in upper-positions) have been completed for all keys and are also available in minor scales, with corresponding arpeggios. The chromatic scales now reads much more clearly and easily with the elimination of cumbersome page turns. I am fully aware that the difficulty level in some sections (particularly in the extreme acute register) verge on the impossible, but think of these parts as purely theoretical and the work invested will bring up a level of unprecedented technique that will help one negotiate with ease even the fiercest passages in solo, chamber or orchestral literature.

Both editions are beautifully covered with a picture of Joseph Prunner, spiral bound (essential for keeping it on the stand), and include a table of contents. I know there are many remarkable and efficient technique materials available, but this book has always been a major part of my own studies and my pedagogical approach, so I am excited that I finally have a newly revised and complete edition of this incredible scale and arpeggio system. This is the type of technique book that will keep on defining and refining one's playing technique for a lifetime. Dr. Stotz is to be commended for his exhaustive work, which will benefit all future generations of double bassists. I have no reservations in recommending this book for all double bassists, private teachers, and conservatory and university libraries.

***Review by Catalin Rotaru***