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## Non-Traditional String Sound Resources

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**NOTE:** This is a collection of symbols indicating non-traditional ways of creating sounds on traditional stringed instruments. The initial entries are mostly from Penderecki's, *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*. One of the symbols which a composer invented (the Bartók pizz.) has moved into common practice.

Also see: [Mute photos](#) | [Sound Files Library](#) | [Common String Articulations](#)

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### QUIK FAQ - Top 20 Violin Questions



**Bartók pizz:** Also called snap pizz. Right hand pulls the string away from the fingerboard and releases, causing a snapping sound. *Bartók pizz.*



sharpen a quarter tone



sharpen three quarter tones



flatten a quarter tone



flatten three quarter tones



highest note of the instrument (no definite pitch)



play between bridge and tailpiece



arpeggio on four strings behind the bridge



play on the tailpiece (arco) by bowing the tailpiece at an angle of 90° to its longer axis



play on the bridge by bowing the wood of the bridge at a right angle at its right side



Percussion effect: strike the upper sounding board of the violin with the nut or the fingertips



several irregular changes of bow



molto vibrato



very slow vibrato with a 1/4 tone frequency difference produced by sliding the finger



very rapid non rhythmized tremolo

ord. - ordinario; cancel previous special instructions

s.p. - sul ponticello; play on the bridge

s.t. - sul tasto; play on the fingerboard

c.l. - col legno; play with the wood of the bow

l. batt. - legno battuto; play by striking the wood

At first glance, these last two entries (*col legno* and *legno battuto*), seem to be the same thing. In the *Threnody* score, however, the *legno battuto* is associated with "arpeggio on four strings behind the bridge" (graphic, right).



There is another modern construction of this sort, the *col legno tratto* ("drawn with the wood"). This is much less common, and the plain marking *col legno* is invariably interpreted to mean *battuto* rather than *tratto*. The sound produced by *col legno tratto* is very quiet, with an overlay of white noise, but the pitch of the stopped note can be clearly heard. [Ref: [Wikipedia: Col Legno.](#)]

Other, more traditional techniques which are used in this piece are the glissandi and the subito dynamic markings.

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# My Notes in the Score

Composed at the turn of 1959 and won third prize at the G. Fitelberg Composers' Competition in Katowice in 1960. First public perf. took place at the Warsaw Autumn Festival of 1961 with the Cracow Phil, cond. by Andj. Markowski. 1964, Oct. 12: Pederecko wrote: "Let the Threnody ('lament') express my firm belief that the sacrifice of Hiroshima will never be forgotten and lost."

- m. 6 texture change
- m. 7 first overlap of texture, imitation in inversion
- m. 9 misprint, 3rd bass part, 3rd note; should be, highest pitch
- m. 10 change
- m. 11 gesture which expands and contracts
- m. 12-13 imitation in retrograde
- m. 15 internal cadence before next section
- m. 16 change
- m. 17 ascending and descending gestures
- m. 18 change
- m. 20 very big change, five minute point
- m. 20 Big Canon (cosmic size); Voice = Choir 1, basses imitation vls  
In meter, like traditional notation (staff lines, rests)
- m. 38 Choir 2 comes in (Gabrielli; St. Marks)
- m. 44 Choir 3 enters, not complete canonic imitation
- m. 51 Retransition
- m. 56 Overlap, unpitches special effects [A]
- m. 62 [A] for sure, back to graphic notation
- m. 63 imitation in retrograde
- m. 69 Tonic cadence

## Orchestra

- 24 Violini (Vn)
- 10 Viole (VI)
- 10 Violoncelli (Vc)
- 8 Contrabbassi (Cb)

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# Bibliography

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[Score](#) | [MP3](#)

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See also: [Music History/Theory Guide to Studying for Placement Tests](#)



*Guernica* - Picasso