

Hello, everyone!

We were treated to a very unique session on Thursday with violinist and tap dancer Samantha O'Connell! Samantha began our session by introducing her violin - named Bob after her late uncle and violinist - which was made in 1916 and is now a family heirloom. The violin has four strings (G, D, A, and E) and has a range of G3 (G below middle C)-A7 (almost the end of the piano keyboard). The violin is one of a few instruments that are made in multiple sizes to accommodate growing learners.

It is thought that the violin was invented in the 16th century in Northern Italy. While some things about violin materials have changed since then, like using steel or synthetic strings instead of ones made of cat gut, violin bows are still made with real horsehair. The violin is a mainstay in the orchestra world as well as the folk world. It can be seen as a solo instrument in an orchestra, in many kinds of ensembles like mariachi, as well as in chamber ensembles.

Sam played "Twinkle Twinkle" for us on each string so we could compare and contrast range and sound. She then played "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," and "Greensleeves," "Danny Boy," and "Orange Blossom Special" all by request. Sam explained the concept of shifting on the violin, and how a violinist will do this for efficiency of movement since one can play the same note in multiple places on a violin. She also explained that the violin can play multiple notes at once, and demoed double stops (two notes at a time) and an arpeggiated chord in "Eine kleine Nachtmusik."

Sam then put on her dancing shoes and shared all things tap dancing with us! Tap dancing is an American art form that surged in the Reconstruction Era. Drum circles were banned under Jim Crow laws, so it is thought that tap dancing became an alternative way to communicate beats through one's feet instead of through drumming. Many tap dancing moves, such as the flam and paradiddle, are also drumming terms.

Many of you immediately emailed us links to your favorite tap dancing performances, so below is a list of what everyone sent along!

Next week, the jazz duo of Beegie Adair and Monica Ramey will be joining us! We'll send more about them tomorrow, but in the meantime here's a link to one of their albums on [Spotify](#).

Enjoy what's left of your weekend!
Chrysa & Julianne

Tap links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPV1g05NMfE>

<https://youtu.be/JOoNOs8QI28>

<https://youtu.be/fNKRm6H-qOU>