

## Uniting the Hands

### Varying Left Hand Depth

#### Learn

- To unify the left and right hands through similar use of weight and gravity.

#### Feel

- Gravity and the weight of your left arm hanging give your finger a sense of depth, security and “belonging” to the fingerboard. Relate the degree of this depth to how light or deep the bow feels in the string; the two hands can share similar sensations.
- To deepen the finger in the fingerboard, you can also gently pull back (down) with the whole arm.
- Hanging your arm on your rounded finger does not mean that your elbow should hug your body. Experiment to find a comfortable elbow height; the shoulder and upper arm should be able to float in suspension or release their weight. Avoid feeling that you must hold them up.
- Playing the instrument is a total, integrated body experience. Relate your hands to each other and to the cello--feel them create your musical interpretation. As the musical intensity increases and your bow sinks deeper into the string, your left hand will sink deeper into the fingerboard. In quieter places, both hands will lighten out of the instrument.

#### Think

- Imagining that your playing finger sinks and releases into a big black pillow (the finger board), is similar to visualizing your bow as a heavy ship whose bottom rests under the surface of the water (the strings). Both hands infinitely vary the letting down of weight and the holding off or suspension of weight depending upon the colors, dynamics and the expressive needs of the music.

#### Listen

- Listen for the rise and fall of the phrase--relate it to the changing feelings of lightness and depth of the two hands.
- Listen for a big sound that you love. If it sounds forced or tight, consider that you may be pressing the hands rather than releasing, sinking and resting into the instrument.
- Listen for a quiet sound that you love. If it sounds pressed or tight, consider that you may need to lighten and suspend more weight off of the cello.