As part of a research project funded by the European Union, the MARTIN SCHLESKE MASTER STUDIO FOR VIOLINMAKING carried out a study to determine the most important subjective criteria when rating a violin. A questionnaire was developed and presented to 120 mostly professional violinists including soloists and members of chamber music ensembles and various German orchestras:

“What criteria would you use to judge a violin in terms of its sound and playability? Please rank the attributes you select in terms of importance (personal ranking).”
A total of nearly 80 different attributes was cited. The results were sorted and weighted based on the frequency of the attribute and the individual priority it received. The attributes that were cited fell into six general groups.

The following figure shows the groupings along with their percent share in the overall rating. [The figures in brackets indicate the number of different attributes per group].

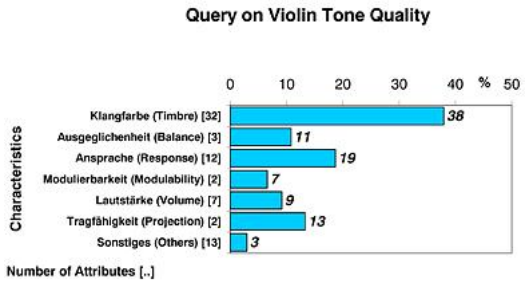


Fig. (below): Criteria for rating violins. Results of a survey of 120 violinists. The length of the bar show how important each group (“Timbre”, “Response”, etc.) was in the overall rating of a violin. The figures in brackets show the number of different