

## The Wooden Viola

Looking back on all of my most memorable experiences, I'd have to say that my favorite tree product would be my viola. It's sturdy, made from tiger maple, and honestly, I cannot imagine life without it. If all trees disappeared, I would travel all over the world to replant the forests. The opportunities are inspiring, making glorious, exciting melodies and entertaining hundreds of people. Everyone needs to have such an experience in his life. Even the rosin for the bow is made of tree sap. We string-players could not make any beautiful music, should the rosin not be found.

If the trees became extinct, no one could have any more pride in accomplishing Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons," or play in front of an amazed, appreciative audience that clapped and whistled after the musician took their final bow. Houses would not be filled with crisp, clear Christmas carols as the holidays came around, nor would children, friends, or other loved ones be strengthening their brains as they "fiddled around" on their violin, viola, cello, or bass - even the mandolin or a baroque.

The viola will always be important to my life, and other people's lives because whenever I play, I feel better about myself - and others. It has proved to be useful way to let out energy when I don't have time to exercise. When I am filled with anger or sorrow, it often soothes when

I grind out a few furious bow strokes on the strings. I've discovered that playing the strings also drowns out any sound of the crying that I need to do, on rare occasions. Please protect our forests so that everyone may experience and enjoy the viola and other instruments.