

# Teaching from the Podium

## Is there anything behind their eyes?

Presented by

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Missouri Music Educators Association Conference  
Thursday, January 28, 2016  
Tan-Tar-A Resort  
2:00-3:00 pm – Room 74-77

## Teaching from the Podium

Is there anything behind their eyes?

## Complete Control



"There's nothing behind their eyes."

A music-centered and musician-centered learning environment.

*Tell me, I forget.  
Show me, I remember.  
Involve me, I understand.*

## Chaos



## Possible Rehearsal Scenario

- 1) Musicians enter rehearsal area and get out their instrument(s), music, music rack, chair, and begin playing their instruments or sit quietly awaiting instructions.
- 2) The conductor checks attendance, asking if "anybody knows where \_\_\_\_\_ is today."
- 3) Ensemble is instructed to play a selection from a technique or scale-study book. (This helps to establish in the minds of many of the musicians either the attitude that "Technique is a big pain in the \_\_\_\_\_," or "Technique can't hurt us.")
- 4) Maybe the conductor will ask someone to play a concert Bb, so that we can see who can play the loudest! Some ensembles may also play a scale "in-the-round" or a chorale with little or no consideration as to what could be accomplished or learned from this exercise.
- 5) The ensemble plays through a warm-up march.
- 6) The rehearsal continues with work on concert/festival/contest music. (There may be some infrequent stopping to check and attempt to correct technical and musical problems.)
- 7) The rehearsal ends with the ensemble playing through a "favorite" pop tune.

## In This Rehearsal:

- In #s 1-5, are musicians involved in a creative, shared learning experience or just going through the motions like robots?
  - Who specifically is taking "responsibility" for results at this time, the musicians, the conductor, or no one?
  - In #s 1-5, what is happening mentally and physically for the musicians? Are they developing or reinforcing planned and structured performance concepts?
  - Is the time spent, especially in the first 5-10 minutes, as productive as it could be (ie warming up mentally and physically, developing techniques and/or concepts, creating or stimulating an interest in music, etc.)?
- The question is, how do I as a conductor/teacher change this scenario?

The process of developing performing techniques and musicianship is similar to teaching someone to read. Success in future endeavors is closely tied to having received a solid foundation in basic concepts and skills. When you consider the effect that our leadership may have upon the future success or failure of young musicians, our responsibility as a conductor becomes almost overwhelming. There is much more involved than just beating time!

Conductor

+

Teacher

=

Teacher from the Podium

Concepts (lead to) Habits (lead to) Skills

We must have an organized, thought out, written down plan to get each student from day one to their final performance under our leadership (and to continue on successfully if they choose to).

Recent brain research has found that the prefrontal cortex of our brain is instrumental in managing executive functions – our capacity to control impulses, prioritize tasks, and organize plans. Research has also shown that this area of the brain is less developed in humans prior to late adolescence and early adulthood. This late development of the prefrontal cortex is one of the reasons why it is so important for those of us working with younger musicians to be more proactive and structured in our approaches and methods of working with developing musicians.

## Audiation

The phenomena of hearing and comprehending musical sounds whether or not the actual sounds or notation are present. (Edwin Gordon)

"Audiation is to music what thought is to speech."

### Pre-Beginner Checklist

- Have they already learned to match pitches with their voices?
- If so, where are they in this process?
- If not, how can I work with the elementary music staff to change this?
- What teaching methods or approaches are they familiar with (Orff instruments, Kodaly, Dalcroze, others)?
- What folk songs do these kids already know?

### Setting the Stage

- Efficient and Productive Process
- Is there a "Vomit Plan?"

💡 Videotape this process and involve students in evaluation and plans for change.

### The What, Why, Who, and How of Learning to Play in Tune

**What** specifically needs to be changed/improved?

**Why** do I/we need to change?

💡 Unison melody or chorale phrase (why and who)

**Who** is responsible for making changes/adjustments?

**How** do I as a musician make the changes/adjustments?

### The Music Begins

#### Tuning Centers

Creative/helpful uses of tuning devices (eye to ear to eye)

Intonation of any pitch

Tone quality

Beginning and release of note

Idiosyncrasies of each individual instrument ("Intonation Tendencies")

Relationship of dynamic level(s) to pitch/tone quality

Relationship of air and embouchure to pitch/tone quality

Correct "distance" between notes (intervals/scales)

Each musician's personal "Intonation Tendencies"

"Preparation" is what we don't see.



### Section-Leader Tuning



## Full Ensemble "Focus"

- Eye Contact
- Adjust Chairs and Stands
- "The eyes are a window into our souls."
- Watch for "Invisible Screen"
- What are the implications for the conductor?
- "Look at the music."

## Now, where am I and my instrument pitchwise?

Consider other, more appropriate, tuning pitches:

Concert A – piccolo, flute, oboe, alto sax., baritone sax.

Bb – cornet, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, tuba (C)

F – clarinet, bassoon, horn

E – tenor sax.

## Move Air

- Caution: Moving Air is the key – never stagnant or "locked"
- Volume (Capacity)
- Control (Flow)
- *The Breathing Gym* by Patrick Sheridan and Sam Pilafian:  
[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), and [www.schooltube.com](http://www.schooltube.com)

## Ensemble Blend

"Possibly the most effective approach to improving or the most important factor affecting ensemble intonation." (Francis McBeth)



"Put your tone inside the tuba's tone."

Application of Physical and Mental to Music

- Continue moving air
- Focus eyes on the conductor
- Concentrate on music not notation
- Scales (watching, listening and adjusting)
  - 1) Series of notes that I need to support, shape, place in the center of correct pitch, and place rhythmically with the conductor – all of this visually and with my fellow musicians
  - 2) Develop technique (push daily)
  - 3) Develop ranges (push daily)
  - 4) Learn keys, intervals, and modes



Develop ability to audiate pitches (sing and buzz)

## Ensemble Balance



Relates to:

- Sections (# on parts, strengths of players, bass and color instruments)
- "Choirs"
- Full Ensemble
- Seating (lows to highs)

*Effective Performance of Band Music*

(Francis McBeth,  
[www.southernmusic.com](http://www.southernmusic.com))

### Learning with the Bb Chord

Teach chord by groups (bass line, I, II, III, IV)

R + 5<sup>th</sup> + 3<sup>rd</sup> (Use 3<sup>rd</sup> to change "color" of chord)

Sing (Buzz)

Blend

Balance the pyramid(s) - (WW vs. Brass vs. Tutti, sections ("choirs"), "groups")

"Resonance" (Blend, Pitch, Balance)

Vary dynamics

Vary mode

Major scales

Ideas to stimulate thought and action!  
How do I get to Carnegie Hall?

- Melodic intonation – mark notes with up or down arrows
- Harmonic intonation – build problem chords (R+5+3+7, etc.)
- "Sizzle" difficult passages (also air-on-hand technique)
- Inner Game – students decide on the correct articulation, phrasing
- Students listen and comment on ensemble from out front
- Melodic line on first pitch only (with correct articulation, etc.)
- Sing/Buzz
- Vary ensemble seating

### What can we learn from a chorale?

Musical line

First pitch/chord only – Maintain volume level(s)

First pitch/chord only – Musically expressive

½ play/buzz + ½ sing/buzz

Quartet play (Cor. I & II, T. Sax., Tuba) + WW & Perc sing/Brass buzz

4 mallet parts (Ob. I/I and Bsn. I/II) + tutti sing

4 mallet parts + sing and buzz

WW vs. Brass vs. Tutti ("Resonance")

Joining the conductor in making music

Ensemble unity (play without conductor, also with eyes closed)

### "Involve Me"

[robertmgifford@sbcglobal.net](mailto:robertmgifford@sbcglobal.net)

### Finding Creative Rehearsal Techniques Through Score Study

- Know the score (overall form, keys, specific harmonies, melodies, etc.)
- Plan each rehearsal based upon this knowledge
- Spot potential "problem" spots and plan possible solutions
- Analyze harmonic/chord structure and simplify when necessary
- Apply skills that we have learned

(B<sup>b</sup> Chord)

The musical score is written on two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Both staves have a key signature of two flats (B<sup>b</sup> and E<sup>b</sup>). The score is divided into four groups of instruments, each with a bracket indicating their part in the chord.

- Group IV**: Piccolo (sounding note), Eb Cl., I Fl. & Ob., II Fl. & Ob., II Cor. & Cl., III Cor. & Cl., III Cor. & Cl., III Horn & A. Sax., III Horn & A. Sax.
- Group III (Cornets & Clarinets)**: I Horn, I Bsn., II Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., IV Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., V Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., Euphonium, III Trb., Ten. Sax., Bass Cl., Bari. Sax., Bass Line.
- Group II [Insts. in brackets]**: I Horn, I Bsn., II Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., IV Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., V Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., Euphonium, III Trb., Ten. Sax., Bass Cl., Bari. Sax., Bass Line.
- Group I (Insts. in parentheses)**: I Horn, I Bsn., II Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., IV Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., V Horn, II Bsn., A. Cl., Euphonium, III Trb., Ten. Sax., Bass Cl., Bari. Sax., Bass Line.



Piccolo (III)  $\text{b}^{\text{e}}$  |

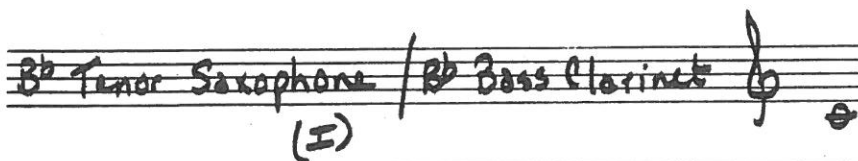
Flutes / Oboes (II)  $\text{I}^{\text{I}} - \text{b}^{\text{e}}$   
(divisi) |

E $\flat$  Clarinet (III)  $\text{e}$  |

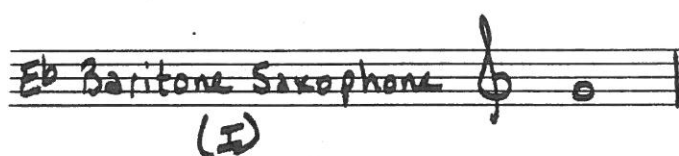
B $\flat$  Clarinets (III)  $\text{I}^{\text{I}} - \text{III}^{\text{e}}$   
(divisi) |



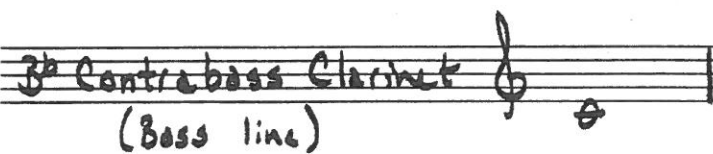
B $\flat$  Tenor Saxophone / B $\flat$  Bass Clarinet  
(I)



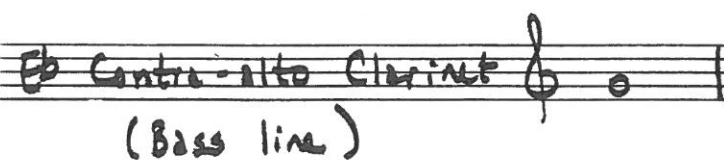
E $\flat$  Baritone Saxophone  
(I)



B $\flat$  Contrabass Clarinet  
(Bass line)



E $\flat$  Contra-alto Clarinet  
(Bass line)



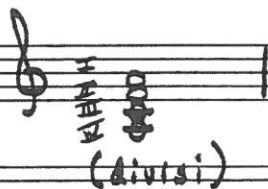
Cornet/Trumpet  
(III)



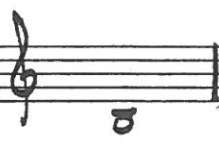
E♭ Alto Saxophone  
(II)



F Horns  
(II)



E♭ Alto Clarinet  
(II)



Bassoon  
(II)

$\text{G}^{\flat}$ :  $\frac{\text{F}}{\text{II}}$   $\text{B}$  |  
(divisi)

Trombones  
(I)

$\text{G}^{\flat}$ :  $\frac{\text{F}}{\text{II}}$   $\text{B}$  |  
(divisi)

Euphonium  
(I)

$\text{G}^{\flat}$ :  $\text{B}$  |

Tuba  
(Bass line)

$\text{G}^{\flat}$ :  $\text{B}$  |

# 12. Du Lebensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ

Thou Prince of Life, O Christ our Lord

Johann Rist  
English version by  
G. Mar

J. S. Bach

11. 1st x mallets  
2nd x mallets + sing } Play

*coll' sua*

Thou Prince of Life, O Christ our Lord, As cend-ed to Thy Fa-ther,  
Where in sweet heav-en ly ac-cord The cho-sen right-eous gath-er,

How shall I prize the vic-to-ry Through strug-gle bit-

ter won by Thee And meet de-vot-ion ren-der To Thee, our one De-fend-er?