

Mallory Thompson
Northwestern University
61st Annual Midwest Clinic
An International Band and Orchestra Conference
Thursday, December 20, 2007

Rehearsing with Commitment: Imaginative Listening and Creative Interaction

CLINIC ENSEMBLE

William Fremd High School
Wind Symphony
Palatine, Illinois
Matthew Moore, *conductor*

REPERTORY

Galop (1959)

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906–1975)

Elegy for a Young American (1964)

Ronald LoPresti
(b. 1933)

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT REHEARSAL

- Play what the music sounds like, not what it looks like. If you play what's on the page, you'll be wrong.
- Ask the students questions and listen to their answers.
- Make students aware of their musical responsibilities.
- Teach students to listen to each other.
- Tempo is a shared responsibility; everyone is either helping or hurting.
- Where is the line going? How does it get there? We need to play the music like we know.
- Never play a long note without doing something.
- Every note should be filled with subdivisions.
- You don't breathe only because you need the air. Sometimes you breathe because the music needs room.
- Become obsessed with balance, color, and bass motion.
- Be precise, specific, and demanding with articulation.
- Address intonation issues in a way that encourages students to take responsibility and learn to make changes on their own.
- Fight to minimize sharpness.
- Listen to the percussion, expect them to make good sounds, know what you want, and take the time to get it.
- Find reasons—any reasons—to play softer.
- Never miss the opportunity to rehearse a transition.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect and creativity. If your students know that you believe in them, they will be more likely to respond positively to criticism and make changes.
- The spirit of any rehearsal should include elements of spontaneity, improvisation, and play.
- Study and make decisions, but listen and respond to what the music needs to become in the moment.

AN EXCERPT FROM

Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience

by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

On the **phenomenology of enjoyment:**

“First, the experience usually occurs when we confront tasks we have a chance of completing.

Second, we must be able to concentrate on what we are doing.

Third and fourth, the concentration is usually possible because the task undertaken has clear goals and provides immediate feedback.

Fifth, one acts with a deep but effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life.

Sixth, enjoyable experiences allow people to exercise a sense of control over their actions.

Seventh, concern for the self disappears, yet paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the flow experience is over.

Finally, the sense of the duration of time is altered; hours pass by in minutes, and minutes can stretch out to seem like hours.

The combination of all these elements causes a sense of deep enjoyment that is so rewarding people feel that expending a great deal of energy is worthwhile simply to be able to feel it.”

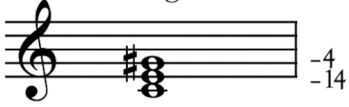


SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Create an ensemble resource website. Northwestern University and hundreds of other institutions use a course management system developed and powered by Blackboard; similar service providers include Edline and PowerSchool, and some schools and bands develop websites on their own. In addition to the syllabus or ensemble handbook, grading information, calendars, and downloadable permission slips and other forms, content may include:
 - Reference recordings of outstanding performances (with publisher and/or composer permission). For transcriptions, include recordings of the original version for orchestra, piano, etc. If you are repeating repertory that you have programmed in the past, include your last performance.
 - Reference scores in PDF (with publisher and/or composer permission). Adobe Acrobat software allows you to create PDF files that may be viewed online but not printed out.
 - Rehearsal recordings. This can be particularly valuable to help students self-correct balance issues and give any soloists an opportunity to hear and objectively evaluate their playing.
 - Notes from the conductor to the students regarding specific rehearsal issues. Always have hard copies on hand at the next rehearsal, but posting notes online allows especially conscientious students to mark their music before rehearsal.
 - Goals and a schedule for the next rehearsal. Sharing your goals in advance allows students to focus on what you are going to target and make a stronger contribution to the success of the rehearsal.
 - Errata listings. Update these files as you discover more errata during the rehearsal process – and keep your final list inside your score or in a separate file to save time if and when you program the work again.
- Have each student number the measures in their own parts. (No one has the time to start at 20 measures before letter D and then wait for everyone to count; if you anticipate starting frequently between rehearsal letters C and D, mark that as measure C1.) Add extra rehearsal letters or numbers based on the form of the composition.
- Use student assistants to help with logistics, and create a one-page handout for each role (rehearsal manager, librarian, recording engineer, etc.) that clearly states that assistant's responsibilities. Delegating requires planning, but this extra effort can potentially reap significant rewards.
- Make sure every student in your ensemble can transpose to and from concert pitch!

- Assign a percussion section leader. With that person (or with the entire section), create a form or template that includes places for specific equipment needs, hand-drawn set-up charts, and a list of part assignments. Make a copy of the form for each piece and compile the forms into a reference notebook that is available both to you and the students. When you discover in rehearsal that a certain mallet, cymbal, triangle, etc., produces the right sound in a particular place, the section leader should update the notebook. After the performance, save this information, either inside your score or in a separate file, for the next time you program the piece.
- Try scheduling two dress rehearsals—the first one a week before your concert and the second one on the last day before your concert. Not only does the early dress rehearsal help ensure that your students will be able to make it through the performance, but it gives you the opportunity to record and listen to the dress rehearsal and spend the last couple of rehearsals polishing more specific sections. Doing the dress rehearsal in concert order gives everyone an idea of endurance issues and gives the percussion section a chance to identify any resonance problems (turn off the snare drum, dampen the tam-tam you struck ten bars earlier that's still ringing at the end of the piece, etc.) or set-up issues which might have gone unnoticed.
- Every set up is a compromise. Factors that should be considered include your hall, strengths and weaknesses in your ensemble, giving principal players an opportunity to hear each other, giving sections and groups an opportunity to forge a stronger identity (e.g., brass section, lower group, piccolo/E-flat clarinet, bass drum and cymbals), and specific needs determined by specific works. Experimenting with possibilities always helps students to hear things differently.

CHORDS OF JUST INTONATION

While we ultimately address intonation by listening, rather than sight or mathematical formulas, sometimes it helps students to see exactly how much they need to adjust certain intervals in order to sound in tune. Some of the following information may be useful...

Maj 	min 	dim 
aug 	6 	min 6 
dim (♭6) 	7 	Maj 7 
min 7 	7 (#5) 	dim 7 
min 7 (♭5) 	7 (♭5) 	min Maj 7 
Maj 7 (#5) 	dim Maj 7 	9 
7 (♭9) 	Maj 9 	

The modern **equal temperament** system divides the octave into twelve equal intervals, representing a compromise that makes intervals sound the same in every key. However, almost every interval is slightly (or significantly) out of tune when compared to **just intonation**, a tuning system in which intervals are based on mathematical whole-number ratios, resulting in pure harmonies without beats. Musicians must raise or lower certain intervals within chords in order to eliminate beats and achieve pure harmonies.

FOR FURTHER READING

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- Green, Elizabeth A.H. *Orchestral Bowings and Routines*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1957.
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- Ristad, Eloise. *A Soprano on Her Head: Right-Side-Up Reflections on Life and Other Performances*. Moab, Utah: Real People Press, 1982.
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William Fremd High School Wind Symphony

Matthew Moore, *conductor*

William Fremd High School is one of five high schools that make up Township High School District 211 – the largest high school district in the state, with 12,878 students in its five schools (William Fremd, Palatine, James B. Conant, Schaumburg, and Hoffman Estates). The district is located about 25 miles northwest of Chicago. Considered one of the best high schools in the state in terms of quality and standardized test scores, Fremd was named among the top in the nation in the United States Department of Education’s National Secondary School Recognition Program in 1987. Fremd High School has also been recognized by *Newsweek* as one of “America’s Best High Schools” and by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of 99 outstanding high schools in the United States.

The Fremd High School music department serves more than 500 students enrolled in four symphonic bands, three choirs, and three orchestras. Extra-curricular ensembles include the Viking Marching Band, jazz ensemble, jazz lab band, flute choir, percussion ensemble, winter drumline, and four *a cappella* groups. Recognized as a Grammy Signature School in 2005 and 2007, Fremd has recently been designated a 2008 Grammy finalist.

The Fremd Wind Symphony is the top symphonic band at Fremd High School, where band enrollment numbers more than 300. Students are selected through auditions, with the band comprising sophomores, juniors, and seniors. This past November, 15 students were selected for the IMEA District 7 Festival, performing in the honors band, orchestra, or chorus. Six members were recently named All-State musicians.

Since 2001 the Wind Symphony has received superior ratings at the San Diego Holiday Bowl (awarded grand champion of the Symphonic Band Festival), Outback Bowl, and Gator Bowl. The band also received superior ratings at the Chicagoland Invitational Concert Band Festival in 2005, 2006, and 2007. In April 2007, the band hosted and performed with Mastery Gunnery Sergeant Philip Franke, principal euphonium of “The President’s Own” U.S. Marine Band. In May 2007, the band was invited to perform at the prestigious University of Illinois Superstate Concert Band Festival. They are the first band in the district’s history to achieve this honor.

Mr. Moore and the Fremd Wind Symphony would greatly like to thank Dr. Mallory Thompson for the wonderful opportunity of performing at the Midwest Clinic. They would also like to thank the District 211 administration and the Fremd High School administration for their continued support of the Fremd music department. Lastly, thank you to all of the parents who traveled to Chicago to support the band today.

Fremd High School

Music Department

Marla Caballero, *orchestra*

Robert Green, *choir*

David Lang, *band,
department chair*

Matthew Moore, *band*

Fremd High School

Administration

Dr. Marina Scott, *principal*

Eric Dolen, *activities director*

Craig Johnson, *ass’t principal*

Jennifer Krause, *ass’t principal*

Eric Wenckowski, *ass’t principal*

Ruben Hinojosa, *dean of
students*

Mark Kovack, *student services*

director

Jack Drollinger, *athletic director*

Township High School

District 211

Dr. Roger W. Thornton,
superintendent

Board of Education

Robert LeFevre, Jr., *president*

Lynn Davis, *vice president*

Anna Klimkowicz, *secretary*

George Brandt

Susan Kenley-Rupnow

Bill Lloyd

Debra Strauss



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|--|---|--|
| <p>Flutes
 Jamie Amundsen
 Sophie Chen
 Erin Daigle
 *†§ Sarah Finegan
 Michelle Hur
 Nellie Romanowski
 Ashley Ruff
 †§ Ryoh Shinohara
 Nicole Thompson
 Bethany Vandercar</p> <p>Oboes
 * Kellie Kinsella
 Amanda Lee</p> <p>Clarinets
 *† Jessica Amundsen
 Joanne Chung
 Jane Danstrom
 Jiyoung Kim
 Xiaohan Ma
 † Jamie Oakes
 Emma O'Brien
 Sara Schimdt
 Vincent Tambellini
 Jim Xu</p> <p>Bass Clarinets
 Liz Domin
 * Zach Duray
 Ashley Foulks</p> <p>Bassoons
 * Nathan Foltz
 Stephanie Willney</p> | <p>Alto Saxophones
 Lena Brottman
 * Teresa Finegan
 Nick Hurley
 Amber Palcheck
 Marybeth Wesoloski</p> <p>Tenor Saxophones
 * Cong Gu
 Matt Hubbard</p> <p>Baritone Saxophones
 Justin Goetz
 * Mary Healy</p> <p>Trumpets
 Scott Bezek
 Jay Chung
 Ryan Ciesla
 Alex Cox
 Nicky Grapsas
 Max McWilliams
 Max Meigel
 Ken Sanderman
 *† Rick Wiedelman
 Jeremy Wilson</p> <p>Horns
 † Daniel Brottman
 Kevin Casey
 Drew Dickelman
 *† Matt Schuelke</p> <p>Trombones
 * Emily Blair
 †§ Brendan Jacobi
 Jimmy Schiffer</p> | <p>Euphoniums
 *† Chris Biank
 Marie Daboub</p> <p>Tubas
 Carney Claunch III
 James Grayczyk
 *†§ Jon Samuel</p> <p>String Bass
 †§ Rachel Bomba</p> <p>Percussion
 Jamie Esposito
 *†§ Colin Fleming
 Eric Freeburg
 Maggie Hubbard
 Donald Magnani
 Tyler Peterson
 Aaron Sanfillippo</p> <p><i>Students listed alphabetically to signify the importance all members.</i></p> <p><i>* section leader</i></p> <p><i>† selected for IMEA Honors Band or Orchestra</i></p> <p><i>§ selected for IMEA All-State Festival</i></p> |
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