

THE
CONDUCTOR
AS AN
ARCHITECT OF SOUND

UNDERSTANDING HOW SOUND
IS SHAPED AND INFLUENCED
THROUGH EMPATHY



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WHAT INFLUENCES SOUND?

HOW SOUND MOVES AND THE CONTENT IT CARRIES

- Exiting Your Emotional Tunnel and Realizing You Are In One

If you don't want to burn out, you must stop living like you are on fire. —Amelia Nagoski

In the end, we cannot hide from each other. When we imprison our fellows in categories that cut off their humanity from our own, we end up imprisoning ourselves. We can't hide behind the mask either. We have to run toward the trouble that makes us afraid of life. We have to choose life, Baldwin repeatedly said. Salvation is found there: in accepting the beauty and ugliness of who we are in our most vulnerable moments in communion with each other. There, in love, a profound mutuality develops and becomes the basis for genuine democratic community where we all can flourish, if we so choose. This was his prayer, and it is my own (pp. 213-214). —Eddie S. Glaude, Jr., in *BEGIN AGAIN*

- Empathy and Its Neurology for Musicians
 - What is empathy and its role in Music Making?
 - What is it to “be another”?
- Shame and Vulnerability – Brene Brown TED Talk
- The Metaphor of Kintsugi

Empathy is our ability to identify what someone else is thinking or feeling and respond to their thoughts and feelings with an appropriate emotion. —Simon Baron-Cohen in *THE SCIENCE OF EVIL*

Perhaps the primary distinction of the artist is that he must actively cultivate that state which most men, necessarily, must avoid: the state of being alone. That all men are, when the chips are down, alone, is a banality—a banality because it is very frequently stated, but very rarely, on the evidence, believed. Most of us are not compelled to linger with the knowledge of our aloneness, for it is a knowledge that can paralyze all action in this world. There are, forever, swamps to be drained, cities to be created, mines to be exploited, children to be fed. None of these things can be done alone. But the conquest of the physical world is not man's only duty. He is also enjoined to conquer the great wilderness of himself. The precise role of the artist, then, is to illuminate that darkness, blaze roads through that vast forest, so that we will not, in all our doing, lose sight of its purpose, which is, after all, to make the world a more human dwelling place. —James Baldwin from “The Creative Process” in *THE PRICE OF THE TICKET*

- Pandemic “Listening”
- Emotion VERSUS Feeling
- Breath and Its Neurological Messages for a Conductor
- Removing the Notational Prison
 - The Deeply Human Experience of Chant

Notation, far from being the final goal of musical science, is not even a part of it. —Dom Daniel Saulnier in *GREGORIAN CHANT*

A true musician believes in only what he hears.
—Paul Hindemith in *THE CRAFT OF MUSICAL COMPOSITION*

PHRASING RULES DREIVED FROM CHANT AND MAURICE TABUTEAU

- Break the trance of music notation. Audiate and bring audiation to notation.
- Grouping chant into STRICTLY metric “twos” and “threes” destroys the musical and expressive intent of chant.
- Weight should not be added to descending notes/gestures.
- Sing legato through all vocal registers. Sing “Liquid Gold.”
- Always ascend to high notes of the phrase.
- Motion in chant always continues forward to arrive at ends of phrases.
- Learn to end phrases by “tucking in.”
- Breath always ends phrases and begins the next.
- Psychologically eliminating the bar line as a sign of division.
- Animate the breath. Soul-feel the breath.
- Suspending sound as it moves forward – the performance of repeated tones.
- Up/Down inflections (impulses).
- Chant teaches intonation through harmonic structures that hang in the room.

SOUND AS SHAPE FANTASY

- The Kinesthetic Upload for Phrasing – Experiencing Harmonic Rhythm
- Movement as an Antidote Against the Visual Restrictions of Notation
- Teaching the “Etceteractually” of Music

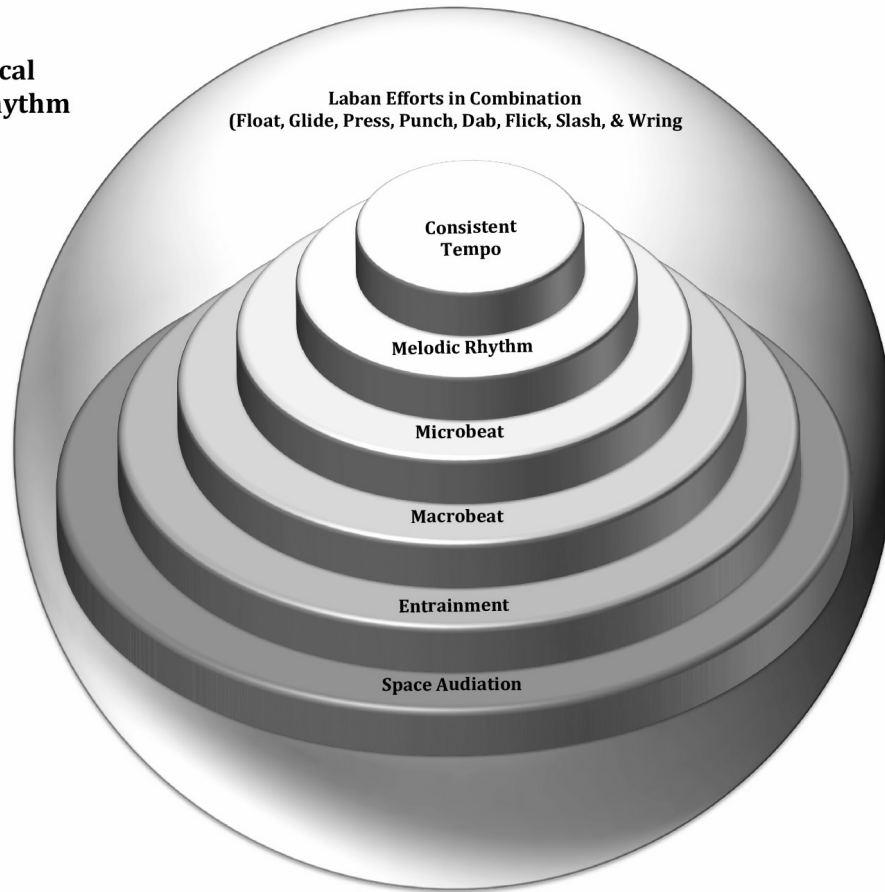
Our feelings of our own movement are principally due to the sensibility of our rotating joints. (p. 38) —William Jones in THE PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY

One thought only: rhythmic problems are not primarily problems of reading—for us. We repeat things often enough so that it should be difficult for a sightless person to make more than a few mistakes. The primary problem is that of feeling. Now, that is a fairly indeterminate “term,” but what I’m trying to say is that the “sense” of rhythm is a mighty complex thing: physical, psychological, visceral, etceteractual; and our problem as a group is not that of visual identification—two quarter notes equal one half note—but that of getting people to experience two quarter notes simultaneously, physically, psychologically, viscerally, and etceteractually. (p. 65) —Robert Shaw in THE ROBERT SHAW READER

The same tempo, but slower....
—Bruce Chamberlain, 2019 Westminster Conducting Institute

The speed of life and the speed of communication—all these things are, on one level, wonderful and miraculous, and have given birth to this information age—have robbed us of the capacity to be vertical—to slow down, to go deep. (p. 124)
—Joseph Flummerfelt in CONVERSATIONS WITH JOSEPH FLUMMERFELT

A Hierarchical Model of Rhythm Audiation



Graphic by
Terrence E. Bacon

AUTISM AND MUSICIANS AND MUSIC MAKING

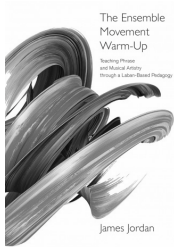
But I do wish people would take a moment and take in things happening around them. It's a mindset you have to practice all the time, like did you smell that flower or like why are you walking so fast? Or why are you arguing with this person about a totally meaningless topic, or why is this weird negative emotion building up inside you out of nowhere because of spilled milk? It's crazy.

Sometimes I look around and think lots of people are not good at interacting with other people. They may think that autism is a disability, but at least I'm aware that I don't interact with people very well. I see so much anger, and I feel like saying, "You know what, y'all are disabled too. You just don't know it because you are all the same." (p. 173)

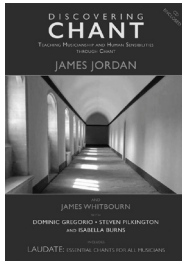
But people need to install something like a circuit breaker to stop this crazy amount of emotion. I need to design an autistic circuit breaker for normal people. (p. 174)

—Jory Fleming in *HOW TO BE HUMAN: AN AUTISTIC MAN'S GUIDE TO LIFE*

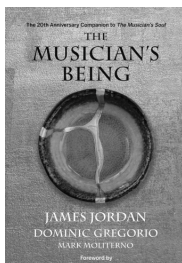
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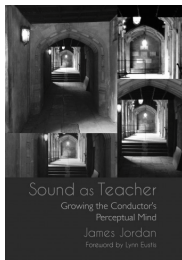
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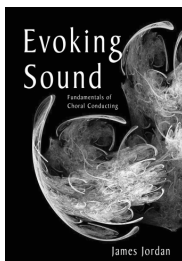
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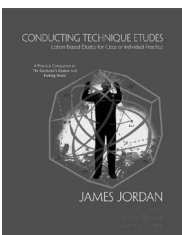
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THE MUSICIAN'S EMPATHY

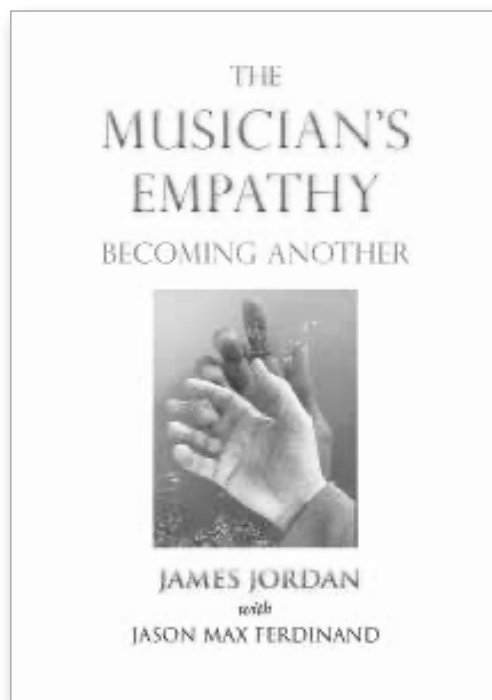
JAMES JORDAN
JASON MAX FERDINAND

*Continuing the journey started in
The Musician's Soul in 1999 . . .*

In *The Musician's Empathy*, James Jordan argues for both awareness and understanding of the essential role Empathy plays in honest musicianship. Jordan states that our awareness of what Empathy is (and is not) will build both new human depth and new connection within the rehearsal room and concert hall.

This book is a collection of suggestions and metaphors for how musicians can harness their own human empathy to refocus rehearsals and performances. Jordan passionately argues that an acute and constant awareness and understanding of Empathy should be at the forefront of all music making, and must be the threshold to artistry and human connection in a post-pandemic world "re-set."

Joining with James Jordan, Jason Max Ferdinand shares how Empathy has shaped his own music making. The book also contains a wealth of QR codes for video presentations dealing with topics related to this book for both self-exploration and class use.



Grammy-nominated **James Jordan** is Professor of Conducting at Westminster Choir College of Rider University, where he conducts the acclaimed Westminster Williamson Voices. He is Artistic Director and Conductor of The Same Stream (www.thesamestreamchoir.com). He is Co-Director of the Choral Institute at Oxford and Director of the Westminster Conducting Institute.

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