

Strategies for Developing Intonation in the Orchestra Classroom

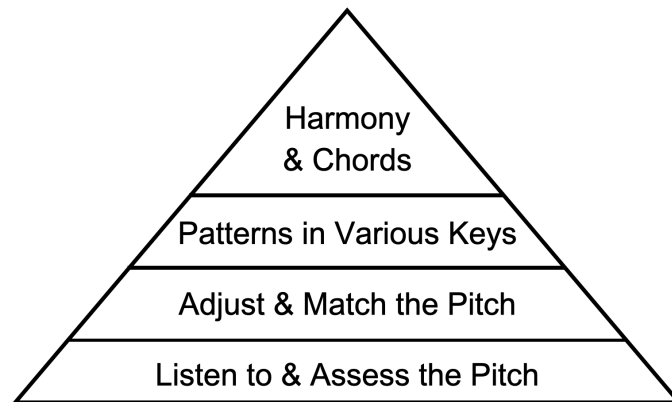
The Midwest Clinic
Chicago, Illinois
Friday, December 17, 2021
10:30 to 11:30am (CST)

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BALDWIN WALLACE UNIVERSITY

conservatory of music

“The problem isn’t playing out of tune...it is NOT knowing you are out of tune.”



FOCUS ON THE BASICS

- Use a drone whenever possible
- Set-up and posture matter
 - Check first to see if this may be the problematic issue
- Listen, assess, adjust, and match the pitch
 - Hum and bend the pitch
 - Play and bend the pitch
 - Pass and match the pitch
- Finger patterns
 - Rote finger patterns (move around the room)
 - Use various positions as students develop
 - Rote modulating scales
 - Ascend in one mode / descend in another (student or teacher led)

SCALES – DEVELOPING AN INDEPTH UNDERSTANDING

- Learn the aural patterns and theory
 - Sing or hum with a drone
 - Alternate scale degrees
 - Audiate with a drone
 - Practice descending more than ascending
 - Practice scales in thirds, fifths, and octaves

- Partner “chase” scales
 - 70% drone > 30% scale
 - Adjust intonation to the drone
 - Match bow speed and style
 - Teach and reinforce chamber music skills
 - Change bow direction together
 - Watch each other
 - Listen to each other
 - Cue each other
 - Breathe together
- Build and reinforce positive tonal habits
 - Short excerpts
 - Method book exercises

PERFECT THE INTERVALS

- Fingerboard mapping (always with a drone)
 - Diatonic notes within a key
 - Chromatic notes within a key
 - First finger shifts
- “Skyscraper” drill
 - Group #1 = Holds the tonic
 - Group #2 = Alternates between tonic, scale degree, tonic, scale degree, tonic,...
- Method book exercises

FOCUS ON THE INNER LINES

- VTIAL TO SUCCESS - Controls the ensemble’s fate
- Rehearse in various combinations
- Pair with the bass and melodic parts

FOCUS ON THE HARMONY

- Build chords through layering
- Develop an understanding of chord functions
 - Bend chord tones
 - Practice chord progressions from repertoire
 - Scatter chords: play unison tonic → diverge to chord → return to unison tonic
 - Rotating chord tones: build a chord → musicians change to various scale degrees → return to unison tonic
 - Lean on (intentional) dissonance / relax the resolution
- Create chorales (varies by time signature / example below is from piece in common time)
 - Beat 1 (hold for 4 beats)
 - Beat 1 and 2 (hold for 3 beats)
 - Beat 1, 2, and 3 (hold for 2 beats)
 - Beat 1, 2, 3, and 4
 - Perform variations of above with melodic line

Special Gratitude to the Baldwin Wallace University Demonstration Ensemble

Violin
 Alexis Facaros
 Alivia Gaskins
 Renée Long
 Grace Nelson
 Natalie Scerbo

Viola
 Tyler Hodgson

Cello
 Lillia Chapman
 Renee Danko
 Jessica Jonczyk
 Alex Palmer

Double Bass
 Nijah Holliday

Faculty
 Andrew
 Machamer, Ph.D.