

### Music at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

As an accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music, the UNL School of Music offers its students a wide range of degree options and the opportunity to interact with a faculty dedicated to the highest standards of excellence in music. Westbrook Music Building houses a music library containing approximately 55,000 books, scores and periodicals; 18,000 recordings; and 30 listening and video booths. The school also maintains a fully equipped, state-of-the-art music technology research classroom. The performance complex consists of the 2,200-seat Lied Center for the Performing Arts, with stage dimensions sufficient for major touring and production companies, and the 850-seat Kimball Recital Hall.

Musicians at UNL are a part of a vibrant arts community that serves as one of the university's focal points. Established in 1993, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts includes the Department of Art & Art History, the School of Music (including the Dance Division), the Department of Theatre Arts, and the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center. Affiliated units include: the Great Plains Art Collection, the Lentz Center for Asian Culture, the Lied Center for the Performing Arts, and the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery & Sculpture Garden. The mission of the college is to nurture creative, artistic activity and scholarship; to educate students to a high level of accomplishment as artists, teachers and scholars; and to enrich the education of all students through the study and practice of the arts.

The University of Nebraska is the 18<sup>th</sup> member of the Association of American Universities (inducted 1909), and has a long tradition of academic excellence and equal opportunity for all. UNL is listed by the Carnegie Foundation as a Doctoral/Research University-Extensive, with important ongoing research in many areas of inquiry.

For more information about the School of Music, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, please visit <http://www.unl.edu> or contact the School of Music: 402/472-8962, [music2@unl.edu](mailto:music2@unl.edu)

### Conducting Opportunities at UNL

Among numerous other emphases in the graduate program, the UNL School of Music offers both a Master of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in the wind band, orchestral, and choral conducting areas. The program director and principal advisor for wind band conducting majors is Dr. Carolyn Barber, UNL's director of bands. Applicants to the program should be individuals who wish to join a community of scholars, performers and pedagogues dedicated to the study and practice of wind band conducting as an applied performance medium. Enrollment in the studio is intentionally limited and auditions are competitive. A high degree of musicianship, scholarship, and an engaging interpersonal style are essential. In addition to a wide variety of performance opportunities, research and debate are also vibrant elements of studio life. Students are encouraged to explore the leading edge of conducting practice and pedagogy even as they are immersed in the 125-year history and tradition of the University of Nebraska band program. The objective of the UNL wind band conducting program is to develop skillful, expressive conductors who are prepared to succeed in professional and academic settings.

For more information about conducting studies at UNL, please visit <http://www.unl.edu/band/conducting.html>, contact the Band Office: 402/472-2505, or email Dr. Barber directly at [cbarber2@unl.edu](mailto:cbarber2@unl.edu)

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln does not discriminate based on gender, age, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, veteran's status, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation.

## 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Clinic

An International Band and Orchestra Conference

# Creative Practice Strategies for the Improvisational Conductor

Carolyn Barber, clinician

1:00-2:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, December 17, 2003  
Hilton Chicago; Chicago, Illinois

Sponsored by:  
The University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
School of Music

"When I was a kid I drew like Michelangelo. It took me years to learn to draw like a kid."  
(Pablo Picasso)

1. It's not the face of God, it's just a bunny... 10-14 years v. 4-8 months

"The great enemy of creativity is fear. When we're fearful, we freeze up - like a nine-year-old who won't draw pictures, for fear everybody will laugh. Creativity has a lot to do with a willingness to take risks." (Faith Ringgold)

2. It all boils down to three basic concepts:

- Conducting is the act of influencing, by design, the sound of an ensemble using nonverbal means.
- The study of conducting is not the study of gestures; it is the study of human interaction.
- Conducting gestures are kinesthetic metaphors.

"The highest human capacity is the capacity for metaphor." (Aristotle)

"Metaphor, a form of artistic shorthand, is one way among many through which the artist seeks to make known the unknown, by working, as with any other aspect of imagination, with and through known experience... You cannot imagine something that is not based in images you have already perceived, nor can you imagine something whose elements you have not perceived." (Downs, David. *The Actor's Eyes*. New York: Applause Theatre Books, 1995. p. 148).

3. What you already know (but might not have realized): practicing is practicing

Three general "zones" & the loop back principal:

- Warm ups & calisthenics: building self awareness, mental focus & physical capabilities  
"Physician, heal thyself." (Luke 4:23)
- Technical studies & etudes: building vocabulary & refining technique  
"Start with bad sounds [awkward gestures] and make them into good ones.  
Silence cannot improve." (Arnold Jacobs)
- Standard repertoire: putting it all into play  
"Technique, wonderful sound... all of this is something astonishing - but it is not enough." (Pablo Casals)

4. Where to start: determining what you have to work with

- "Fixed" elements v. variable elements: working for balance, range & flexibility

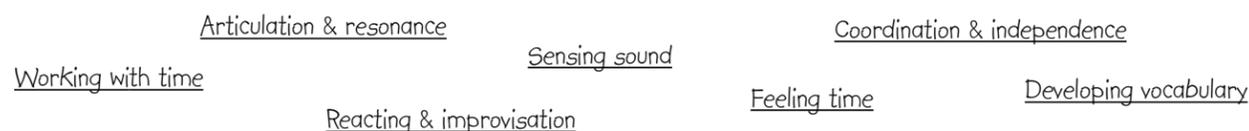
"The self-image is the root system from which our overt communication behavior grows. Our overt communication behavior is an extension of the accumulated experiences that have made up our understanding of self. In short, what you are, or think you are, organizes what you say and do." (Knapp, Mark and Judith Hall. *Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Fort Worth: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1992. p. 113).

Just for fun: the psychological "Cosmo Quiz" (3 on-line versions): <http://www.personalitypage.com/home.html>  
<http://haleonline.com/psychtest/> <http://www.keirsey.com/>

- The principles of reflection & compensation: it's not nice to fool mother nature  
First, an obscure reference for the oenophiles  
Then, fun with physics: volume, mass, momentum & metaphors  
"The natural laws of music are synonymous with the way we breathe and live." (Isaac Stern)
- Audiation, listening & hearing: the heart of it all  
"Listening is being able to be changed by the other person." (Alan Alda)  
"You really get your work from another actor... you've got to trust them to give it to you." (Kathy Bates).

5. Strategies for working alone:

- Warm ups: setting up the board  
Physical, mental, musical
- Technical studies: setting out the pieces & preparing to play the game



- Standard repertoire: establishing your game plan  
Putting it all together: connecting score study to gesture (bypassing choreography)

6. What it's all about: "A painting is not a picture of an experience; it is an experience." (Mark Rothko)

- The three secrets of getting over yourself: Fight or flight, public spectacle, & use it or lose it.

Suggested Reading

Bruser, Madeline. *The Art of Practicing*. New York: Bell Tower, 1997.  
 Colgrass, Michael. *My Lessons with Kumi*. Moab, UT: Real People Press, 2000.  
 Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Creativity*. New York: Harper Collins, 1996.  
 Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow*. New York: Harper & Row, 1990.  
 Downs, David. *The Actor's Eyes*. New York: Applause Theatre Books, 1995.  
 Gardner, Howard. *Creating Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity Seen through the Lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Gandhi*. NY: Basic Books, 1993.  
 Jordan, James. *The Musician's Soul*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 1999.  
 Jordan, James. *Evoking Sound*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 1996.  
 Lieberman, Julie. *You Are Your Instrument*. New York: Huijsi Music, 1991.  
 Ristad, Eloise. *A Soprano on Her Head*. Moab: Real People Press, 1982.  
 Sousa, David. *How the Brain Learns*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2001.  
 Walter, Bruno. *Of Music and Music Making*. NY: W.W. Norton, 1957.

Suggested Viewing

*The Art of Conducting — Great Conductors of the Past* (Teldec DVD 0927-42667-2).  
*The Art of Conducting — Legendary Conductors of a Golden Era* (Teldec DVD 0927-42668-2).  
*Daniel Barenboim: Mahler Symphony No. 5* (Arthaus Musik, DVD 100 033).  
*Leonard Bernstein Conducts West Side Story* (Unitel / Polygram Music DVD 073-017-9).  
*Carlos Kleiber: Beethoven 4 & 7, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam* (Unitel / Philips, 1983).  
*Georg Solti: Mozart & Mahler, Chicago Symphony Orchestra* (Sony Classical, 1986).

About the Clinician

Dr. Carolyn A. Barber is an associate professor and director of bands at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She earned a B.M. in horn performance at Northwestern University as a student of Richard Oldberg and Dale Clevenger. She received her M.M. in horn performance from Yale University as a student of Paul Ingraham, and returned to Northwestern to earn her D.M. in conducting as a student of John P. Paynter and Victor Yampolsky. Dr. Barber began her career as a lecturer and assistant to the dean of the Northwestern University School of Music. She subsequently served as an associate professor and director of bands at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Under her direction, the UW-L Wind Symphony performed at the National Band Association-Wisconsin Convention (1998), and the Wisconsin State Music Conference (2000). While in Wisconsin, apart from her conducting and teaching at the university, Dr. Barber also served for five years as the principal horn of the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra.

Dr. Barber was appointed director of bands at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2001. She currently teaches both graduate and undergraduate conducting and literature courses and coordinates the graduate wind band conducting program. She is the conductor and music director of the UNL Wind Ensemble, and as director of bands she is actively involved with all facets of the band program. Under her direction the UNL Wind Ensemble has been invited to perform at the Nebraska State Bandmasters Association Convention (2002), the Nebraska Music Educators Association Convention (2003), and the College Band Directors National Association North-Central Division Conference (2004). In addition to her work at UNL, Dr. Barber performs with the Lincoln Municipal Band, and as a substitute/extra with the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra.

Dr. Barber has received numerous awards for musical and academic achievement. While some of her work has been published in the *Journal of Band Research*, her research also includes 12 compact disc recording projects, a growing list of commissions of new works for wind band, and extensive research concerning the development of conducting practice and pedagogy. In addition to teaching, performing, and research, Dr. Barber maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor and clinician throughout the United States.