

A Recipe for Improved Conducting

Michael Haithcock, Director of Bands, University of Michigan

**Presented for the MidWest Clinic
December 15 and 16, 2004**

A “baker’s dozen” three-part suggestions for daily improvement

- 1) Three things your conducting should illustrate: execution, expression, exploration
- 2) Three C’s for getting your players to watch: contour=contrast=communication
- 3) Three goals exhibited in every gesture: when to play, how to play, with whom to play
- 4) Three variables that create clarity and artistry: speed, space, weight
- 5) Three parts of every movement: preparation, action point, follow-through
- 6) Three tools to create “contact”: torso, limbs, face
- 7) Three hinges that move the limbs in organic sequence: wrist, elbow, shoulder
- 8) Three planes that “expose” you to the ensemble: vertical, horizontal, sagittal
- 9) Three parts of every cue: eye contact, establishing the action point, breath
- 10) Three types of releases: point, loop, fade
- 11) Three kinds of patterns: standard, alternative, “in search of 1”
- 12) Three hybrid gestures: melded beat, dead beat, syncopated beat
- 13) Three roles in every “director” job: administrator, teacher, artist

Suggested Reading to Feed the Creative Soul and Imagination:

Adolphe: *The Mind's Ear*

Adolphe: *What to Listen for in the World*

Barron: *Creators on Creating*

Boerstien: *The Creators*

Csikszentmihalyi: *FLOW, The Psychology of Optimal Experience*

Epstein: *Shaping Time: music, the brain, and performance*

Feldenkrais: *Awareness Through Movement*

Fritz: *Creating*

Gardner: *Creating Minds*

Hart: *Human Brain and Human Learning*

Half: *On Hiring*

Kohl: *Growing Minds*

May: *Courage to Create*

McCormack: *What They Didn't Teach You at the Harvard Business School*

Moore: *Care of the Soul*

Myers: *The Soul of Creativity*

Nachmanovitch: *Free Play*

Peck: *The Road Less Traveled*

Salisbury: *The Rise of the Creative Class*

Sherman: *Piano Pieces*

Schneidermann: *Confident Musical Performance*

Steinberg: *Music and the Mind Machine*

Wolf: *The Teaching of Artur Schnabel*