

Awakening the Unlimited Potential of Young Musicians

**"An Alternative Approach:
Stimulate your ensemble to perform at the highest level"**

2005 Midwest Clinic

Dr. Jean Montès

Director of Orchestral Studies and Coordinator of Strings
Virginia Commonwealth University - Richmond, VA
jmontes@vcu.edu

Objective:

This session will provide ensemble directors with practical strategies that engage and challenge young musicians, ultimately leading to superior performances. Is technical ability enough? An alternative, balanced approach may be the answer...

Superior technical ability in student ensembles is *not* the key ingredient for amazing performances. **All ensembles, from beginning to advanced, can employ effective strategies that guarantee incredible, exciting performances.** Instilling self-confidence, a high degree of motivation and cohesion among students are the techniques that this session will provide the ED.

For the last 10 years I have experienced successful performances with ensembles at various levels from elementary to professional by preparing the ensemble holistically. The following methods and techniques enable students individually and ensembles as a whole to see themselves as great musicians who have a unique story to tell.

We will discuss three key strategies that, when implemented as a cohesive whole, will lead to truly successful performances: Assessment, Challenge & Expectation.

Strategies:

1. Assessment

- Is essential in order to instill self-confidence from the beginning
- Must be carefully organized & executed to encourage success for all
- Must encourage a new level of "student self-awareness"
- Types of Assessment
 - Auditions
 - Excerpt tests
 - Post-performance self-assessment

2. Challenge

