

2005 MIDWEST CLINIC

YOUR ORCHESTRA HAS ACHIEVED ITS GOAL WHEN IT CAN PERFORM WITHOUT YOU

or

HOW'D THEY DO THAT?

The Concert Without a Conductor

Presented by Lyndon Lawless

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Assisted by members of the Youth Performing Arts School Chamber String Orchestra

The Youth Performing Arts School Chamber String Orchestra (Louisville, KY) performed at the 2004 Midwest Clinic minus a conductor (Mr. Lawless) with just 26 hours notice due to an unexpected medical emergency. This clinic will explore ways of rehearsing that help create the kind of ensemble that can play together with understanding and involvement—whether conducted or not. Many of the points below will be demonstrated with members of the YPAS Orchestra in a rehearsal of Ravel's "Enchanted Garden" from the *Mother Goose Suite* arranged by Michael Hopkins. The attached score is reproduced with the generous permission of Highland/Etling-Alfred Publishing.

I. GENERAL APPROACH

Playing successfully in an orchestra is a very, very challenging task. It requires great focus and attention to many simultaneously occurring variables. Young musicians have to be *taught* how to play in an orchestra. It requires skills not generally taught by private teachers.

The five biggest challenges are--

BASIC PULSE
COUNTING
APPROPRIATE USE OF THE BOW
ACCURATE RHYTHM
ENSEMBLE LISTENING

I have found that *all* of my students need to learn most of these *from the ground up!*

II. HOW TO CREATE GROUP AWARENESS, PERSPECTIVE & RESPONSIBILITY

- Make clear to the students the conductor's role in performance.
 - Conductor functions as guide, coach, cheerleader.
 - Conductor is the unifier, sets and changes tempi, inspires the affect and style, adjusts balances, shapes the ensemble sound...
 - The conductor does NOT keep the group together. For the most part, that is up to the players themselves.
 - The players in the orchestra are the driving force.

