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Advanced Conducting for Low Brass Players
2019 International Tuba Euphonium Conference
University of Iowa

Physical Conducting Practice

- Malko Conducting Exercises
 - Both hands up/down
 - Both hands side to side
 - RH up/down, LH side to side (and vice versa)
 - For more exercises: <https://youtu.be/oZYFi89Ph4g>
- Using the Baton
 - Gives focal point for the beat
 - Ictus should be at the tip of the baton
 - Start with basic conducting grip, adapt based on your hand shape/baton
- Practicing Time: Conducting
 - Use a metronome and subdivide
 - Vary your subdivision (e.g. 8ths or triplets)
 - Vary the tempos at which you practice
- Practicing Styles
 - “General” = doo
 - Legato = loo (round out corners of beat pattern)
 - Short = too (“stab” each beat, lots of rebound)
- Transitions
 - Show the new style/tempo/etc. one beat ahead of where it starts
- Practicing Time: Subdivision Exercise
 - Metronome at quarter = 40
 - Count out loud
 - 1 (quarter)
 - 1,2 (two 8ths)
 - 1,2,3 (triplet)
 - 1,2,3,4 (four 16ths)
 - Etc. up to 8, then back down to 1

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Score Study

- Goal: understand the music and make decisions about it
- Basic process
 - History/background of composer and piece
 - If transcription/arrangement: original instrumentation?
 - If vocal work: what is the text?
 - When was it written? Why was it written?
 - Relevant info from composer's background
 - Listen to a recording (only a few times!)
 - Get a sense of form and phrase structure
 - What might be challenging?
 - Form
 - Phrases
 - Layers
 - Decide how many distinct layers of music are happening in each phrase
 - Decide which layer is most important, second most important, etc.
 - Decisions about each layer
 - Decide how each layer should sound: shaping, articulation, etc.
 - Audiate and practice
 - Hear the score (and your decisions!) in your head (but don't move)
 - Hear the score in your head while conducting it

Rehearsal Techniques

- Big picture: what does your ensemble need?
- Adapt your practice methods to the ensemble
 - Rehearsal as model for individual practice
 - Breathing
 - Mouthpiece buzzing
 - Warm up/routine exercises – perhaps with metronome and drone
 - Wind patterns
- Specific suggestions for intonation/blend = how to develop listening
 - Singing
 - Scales in rounds – discuss interval intonation
 - Chord tuning exercises (balance chords = most of root, less of 5th, least of 3rd)
 - Circle rehearsals

Rehearsal Cycle Planning

Rehearsals

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

8 Dress Rehearsal _____

Total Rehearsal Time

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & \times & \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & = & \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & - & \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & = & \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \\
 \text{\# of reh.} & & \text{Minutes/reh.} & & \text{Total time} & & \text{Group Warm Up Time} & & \text{Total Time} \\
 & & & & & & (15 \text{ min/rehearsal}) & & \text{(For Rep.)}
 \end{array}$$

Rehearsal Time per Piece

Piece	Perf. Time	% of Total Perf. Time	Grade	Difficulty Rank	% of Reh. Time	Reh. Time
TOTALS			X	X		

My Notes about the Rehearsal Plan

EXAMPLE

Rehearsal Cycle Planning

Rehearsals

- 1 Read each piece, some work/digging into each piece
- 2 Sectionals for 30 min, full group for 60 min (focus on 1-2 pieces)
- 3 Sectionals for 30 min, full group for 60 min (focus on other 1-2 pieces)
- 4 Sectionals for 30 min, full group for 60 min (focus on remaining 1-2 pieces)
- 5 Full group = circle rehearsal
- 6 Full group
- 7 Full group
- 8 Dress Rehearsal → Run each piece, touch spots

Total Rehearsal Time

$$\underline{7} \times \underline{90} = \underline{630 \text{ min}} - \underline{195 \text{ min}} = \underline{435 \text{ min}}$$

of reh. Minutes/reh. Total time Group Warm Up Time Total Time

↳ Not including dress reh. (15 min/rehearsal)
 ↳ 15 min x 7 = 105 min
 + 90 min of sectionals (For Rep.)
 ↳ full group reh. time

Rehearsal Time per Piece

↪ Adjust based on diff. rank

Piece	Perf. Time	% of Total Perf. Time	Grade	Difficulty Rank	% of Reh. Time	Reh. Time
Bach	4:15	17%	3	3	15%	65.25 min
Cheetham	8:30	34%	5	1	40%	174 min
Shostakovich	5:15	21%	4	2	20%	87 min
Robertson	4:00	16%	3	4	15%	65.25 min
Stevens	3:00	12%	3	5	10%	43.5 min
TOTALS	25 min	100%	×	×	100%	435 min

My Notes about the Rehearsal Plan

For reh. 1 and 5-7:

(% of reh. time x 75 min)

↓
reh. time after warm up

Bach = 11 min

Cheetham = 30 min

Shostakovich = 15 min

Robertson = 11 min

Stevens = 8 min

} approximate times

Score

Amazing Grace

Difficulty: Medium

for Tuba / Euphonium Quartet or Ensemble
dedicated to "Mamom"

Traditional

Arr. by Gail Robertson

Gracefully

Euphonium 1

Euphonium 2

Tuba 1

Tuba 2

p

p

p

sol

mp

3

3

E 1

E 2

T 1

T 2

sol

mf

3

3

18

E 1

E 2

T 1

T 2

mp

mp

p

p

p

sol

mf

mp

p

Amazing Grace

2

26

Measures 26-33. E1 and E2 have a melodic line with a triplet in measure 28. T1 has a triplet in measure 26 and a complex rhythmic pattern in measures 28-33. T2 has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp*, *f*, and *mf*. A *soli* marking is present above E2 in measure 28.

34

Measures 34-41. E1 and E2 have a melodic line with triplets. T1 has a dense, fast-moving rhythmic pattern. T2 has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include *f* and *mf*.

Measures 42-49. E1 and E2 have a melodic line with triplets. T1 has a dense, fast-moving rhythmic pattern. T2 has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf* and *p*. A *soli* marking is present above E2 in measure 42.