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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
 - o Both hands side to side
 - o RH up/down, LH side to side (and vice versa)
 - o 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
 - o Use a metronome and subdivide
 - Vary your subdivision (e.g. 8ths or triplets)
 - Vary the tempos at which you practice
- Practicing Styles
 - o "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
 - o 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

Gretchen Renshaw James | Assistant Professor of Music

Score Study

- Goal: understand the music and make decisions about it
- Basic process
 - o 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?
 - o Form
 - 0 Phrases
 - o 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.
 - o 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
 - o Singing
 - o Scales in rounds discuss interval intonation
 - Chord tuning exercises (balance chords = most of root, less of 5^{th} , least of 3^{rd})
 - o Circle rehearsals

Rehearsal Cycle Planning

Rehearsals

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	Dress Rehearsal

Total Rehearsal Time

X	=	=	=	=
# of reh.	Minutes/reh.	Total time	Group Warm Up Time	Total Time
			(15 min/rehearsal)	(For Rep.)

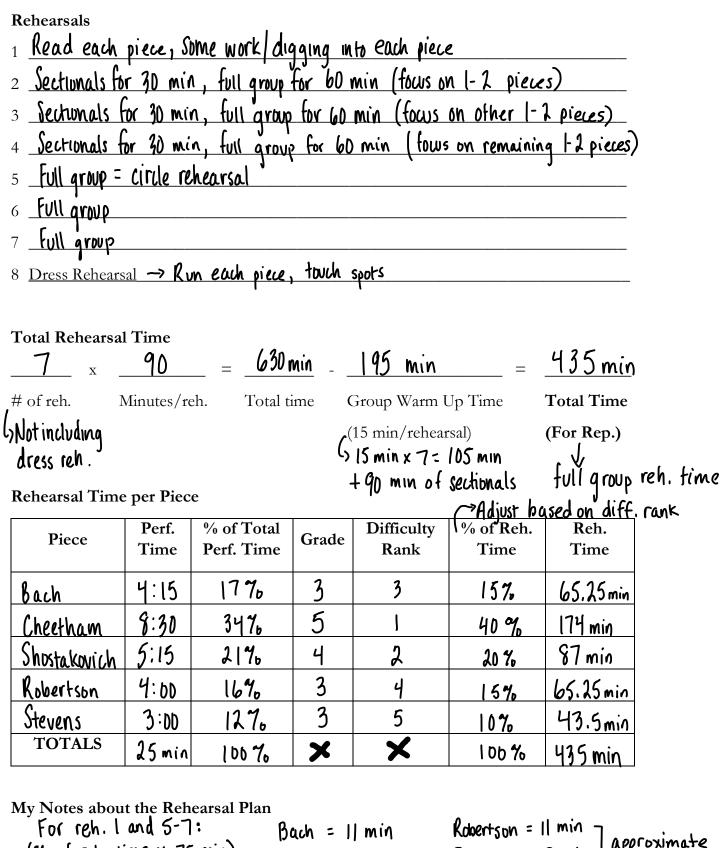
Rehearsal Time per Piece

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



(40 of reh. time x 75 min) reh. time after warm up Bach = 11 min Cheethan = 30 min Shostakonch = 15 min Stevens = 8 min approxim

Difficulty: Medium

Amazing Grace

Traditional Arr. by Gail Robertson

Gracefully 9: Euphonium 1 р a. Ø Euphonium 2 р 6 Tuba 1 7 6 7 7 7 р soli ٢ 3 Tuba 2 mp





Score

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





