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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA  
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TEACHING CHORAL REPERTOIRE THROUGH  
SCORE STUDY AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

A Document

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

By

Paul D. Head

Norman, Oklahoma

2002

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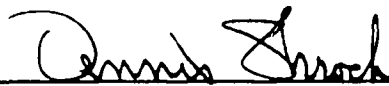


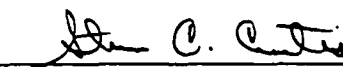
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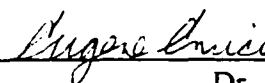
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## ABSTRACT

### TEACHING CHORAL REPERTOIRE THROUGH SCORE STUDY AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

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The purpose of this study is to propose an alternative approach to teaching an undergraduate choral literature course that embraces a diversity of learning styles in helping students arrive at a meaningful, personalized, and intuitive interpretation of a musical score. This is accomplished in part by integrating Bernice McCarthy's *4MAT System* with Michael Rogers' *Communication Chain for Musical Performance* in the development of a systematic procedure that requires the choral student to go *beyond the surface details* in determining the musical essence of a particular composition.

Chapter One of this study reviews current conducting and methods textbooks, and recent and related research specific to teaching score preparation procedures, particularly as they relate to the use of primary source material.

Chapter Two describes the aforementioned pedagogical approaches espoused by Bernice McCarthy and Michael Rogers, while providing a framework for teaching score analysis skills to undergraduate music education students. This approach is illustrated in the presentation of two sample lessons.

Chapter Three provides an overview of performance practice ranging from the Sixteenth through the Nineteenth centuries, including quotations dealing with sound quality, tempo and meter, phrasing and articulation, rhythmic and melodic alteration, and

expression. While far from exhaustive in scope or depth, these quotations provide the undergraduate choral scholar with a cross-section of materials available for those who wish to glean musical insight from contemporaries of the composer.

Chapter Four provides additional sample lessons that incorporate the tenets of performance practice in the investigative process of decoding and interpreting the musical score. Specific choral compositions provide the basis for these examples. The final chapter places these lessons within the context of a one-semester course along with suggestions for sequencing, assessment, and the possible correlations to a comprehensive undergraduate music education curriculum.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

*Our schools . . . concern themselves almost exclusively with abstract knowledge, which pupils are expected to absorb immediately and regurgitate on demand. . . . We know more about the world, and experience it less, than perhaps any previous generation in history.*

- Christopher Smart<sup>1</sup>

### THE PROBLEM

When young musicians first examine a musical score, what do they see – or perhaps more importantly, what do they *hear*? Those who teach will tell you that more often than not, the answer is *little or nothing*. In fact, it is ironic that students who have found the inspiration to choose music education as a course of study are frequently unable to put music that is unfamiliar to them into a context that derives any sense of personal meaning. In the course of study, teachers seem to generally do an excellent job in helping the young musician identify various musical elements while providing a chronology into which these elements have developed, but more often than not, the novice conductor or performer is unable to relate these discoveries to any meaningful working knowledge. Stated more simply, they see the music printed on the page but have considerable difficulty taking what they've learned in theory and history courses and turning this collective knowledge into viable musical decisions.

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Smart, *Music, Society, Education: A Radical Examination of the Prophetic Function of Music in Western, Eastern and African Cultures With Its Impact on Society and Its Use in Education* (London: J. Calder, 1977), 5; quoted in Alan Baker, "Creating Conductors: An Analysis of Conducting Pedagogy in American Higher Education" (D.M.A. diss., Stanford University, 1992), 55.

To be sure, a great deal of thought has been dedicated to preparing the undergraduate student for a career in music education. With few exceptions, university curriculum committees have universally adopted a predictable prescription for those courses considered to be necessary for a comprehensive academic program in choral studies. This prototype typically includes four to six semesters of theory, including harmony and ear training, in addition to two to four semesters of music history organized and delineated by historical period. In preparing the student for a career in teaching, there are numerous course offerings in the areas of conducting, instructional methods, and in some instances even a historical overview of choral literature. In applied study the student is expected to develop technical skills related to performance and to begin to *synthesize* all components of music in the medium of accomplished performance.

All said, it seems that such a course of study would fully prepare any student who desires to become an efficient and engaging choral conductor. In reality, however, the beginning conductor is *overwhelmed* with the immense responsibility of making intelligent, well informed musical decisions. Indeed, having been presented with all the pertinent data, most are unable to make the necessary connections between theory, history, and performance that will allow them to arrive at interpretive decisions when examining a musical score.

This should not be surprising, given the structure and design of the prevailing style of studio and ensemble instruction at the university level. Instructors in these areas have a tendency to *share their wisdom and expertise* in a didactic manner instead of requiring the students to *dig in and solve problems themselves* when faced with issues of interpretation. On the threshold of student teaching, the choral music education student

may be able to tell you how many motets can be attributed to Palestrina, strategies for identifying augmented sixth chords, and even demonstrate an acuity in responding to a private teacher's or ensemble director's instruction. But many classrooms become deathly quiet when the student is asked to speak to the intricacies of making a musical score come to life. Indeed, as Mr. Smart has observed, we may "know more about the world," but most of our students are ill prepared for the real first-hand experience when placed on the podium in front of a choir. It seems we have developed a curriculum that points our students to the *what* questions, but falls short of the mark when addressing the *hows* and the *whys*.

## THE NEED

We cannot assume that just because students have been successful in the memorization and even regurgitation of facts that they are fully prepared to face the intricate process of score study<sup>2</sup> as it pertains to preparing for choral rehearsal and performance. To know about the circumstances regarding Monteverdi's appointment to the Basilica San Marco is different from understanding the acoustical and logistical properties of that particular venue and how these manifest themselves in the issues of performance practice of music that was created for that space. Similarly, the ability to identify an augmented-sixth chord or the use of a secondary dominant is of limited

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<sup>2</sup> The terms "score study" and "score preparation" are used somewhat interchangeably in referring to the comprehensive process that includes the varied procedures embraced by the conductor when faced with learning a musical score. This may include, but is not limited to, musicological research, Roman numeral and structural analysis, translation of text, marking entrances and cues and other related activities as described in detail throughout this document.

value unless the conductor can aptly describe how Mozart and Haydn so carefully manipulate these structures in the creation of unprecedented expeditions within the harmonic deviations that were so influential in the expansion of form during the Eighteenth century.

This is not to diminish the efforts made by countless theorists and musicologists to demystify the extensive curricula that has become the canon of the comprehensive music education, but instead to identify two areas in which pedagogues of choral music education tend to neglect:

- 1) The incorporation of elements of *performance practice* and an awareness of *historical style and context*, not only in the choral rehearsal or conducting classroom, but also in developing a vocabulary or 'set of tools' with which the young musician might effectively identify what is taking place in the music.<sup>3</sup>
- 2) The dissemination of material to the student in a manner that requires him or her to 'synthesize' the data in *alternative modes of representation*<sup>4</sup> as is required of conductors every time they approach a new score. The student

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<sup>3</sup> *Performance practice* includes, but is not limited to, issues of tempo, phrasing, articulation, instrumentation, and varied conventions of notation – all of which would be commonly understood by the practicing musician of a particular historical period. Conversely, matters of *historical style and context* concern the development and evolution of musical structure and form, such as the linear design of a Palestrina motet as compared to the more vertical organization of a Bach motet and the liturgical purpose of either as informed by scholarly research. This should also include the recognition and identification of specific compositional devices unique to a particular composer and/or musical period.

<sup>4</sup> *Alternative modes of representations*, or *changing modalities*, has become the common nomenclature for adapting instructional activities to meet the varied needs of the individual learner.



should be able to express musical ideals in a variety of *modalities*, be it drawing a picture, creating a kinesthetic representation, or even writing a descriptive paragraph such as a pointed article in the voice of an angry critic who is able to bring even a poor performance back to life by his or her use of metaphorical prose.

What is needed is a choral literature course in which the pedagogical approach coalesces performance practice and historical context with systematic learning theory so that the young conductor might find meaning and cohesion in previously compartmentalized areas of study (i.e., a process that unites and interweaves each of the elements of musical knowledge).

There has been extensive research, and subsequently, innumerable volumes dedicated to the elements of performance practice and historical style which provide the performer with far more material than one could fully master within a lifetime, let alone during the time of undergraduate study. Similarly, many educational psychologists have dedicated their entire life's work to the use of *changing modalities* in addressing the varied learning styles of the individual student. Of particular interest is the work of Bernice McCarthy and her 8-Step model that creates the experience first (in this case, the first encounter with a given musical score) then systematically provides strategies and approaches for the student to solve the problems of musical interpretation. What is lacking, however, is a curricular approach that coalesces the ideals of performance practice and historical context *with* a systematic pedagogical approach to score study.

Consequently, the emphasis of my study is to identify the essential elements that define the evolution of style in performance in the continuum of musical development as

these elements become the tools that enable a student to interpret a musical score. This, in turn, should facilitate the student's ability not only to identify those elements of performance practice and compositional devices that are of importance, but also to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter through substantive conversation and/or alternative modalities – thus resulting in a conductor who will be able to address the many musical and psychological complexities of a musical score and the effectiveness of music as it relates to an accompanying text.

### **THE PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION**

The purpose of this document is to design a specific undergraduate course that embraces the concepts of performance practice, historical stylistic development, and teaching through alternative modalities in an effort to enable the aspiring conductor to make viable rehearsal and performance decisions when faced with the raw material of a musical score. More specifically, such a course would facilitate activities and discussion that would cause the student to recognize elements of style, structure, and performance practice as tools for interpreting the printed score, while creating a learning environment in which the student must go *below the surface* in the pursuit of making these musical decisions.

The present chapter, in addition to reviewing characteristics of the study, reviews current research in these areas, particularly as it pertains to score study for conductors, including dedicated chapters of choral methods and conducting textbooks, volumes dealing with elements of performance practice, and additional research that addresses various approaches to the study and preparation of a choral score. Chapter Two discusses

the theory of alternative modalities of learning and examines how those might be adapted to the process of score analysis. An overview of Bernice McCarthy's *4Mat System*<sup>5</sup> provides insight into current trends and research as related to learning styles and modalities. This is elaborated in a discussion of Michael Rogers' concept of *aural imaging* as a comprehensive approach to score preparation that requires the student to examine the score in a variety of ways, but always related to eventual performance. Chapter Three provides an overview of selected elements of performance practice as related to primary sources dating from the fifteenth century to the present day. While not intended to be an exhaustive resource, this chapter presents a compendium of *prevailing* principals and ideals of each period that are prerequisite to the student's appropriate investigation of scores ranging from antiquity to the present. Chapter Four identifies the correlation between the learning theories surveyed in Chapter Two and the raw data of treatises regarding performance practice presented in Chapter Three. This discussion takes place in the context of sample lessons for use in the proposed course in choral literature. The emphasis here shall be placed *not* on the analysis of specific repertoire, but instead upon implementation of strategies that allow the student to get below the surface details, facilitating a process of developing personal insight and meaning as it relates to the score. Finally, Chapter Five suggests a specific course outline that provides a sequential approach to the strategies and ideals described above, along with suggestions for assessment of student progress. An appendix provides an annotated list of additional

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<sup>5</sup> See Bernice McCarthy, *The 4Mat System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques* (Oak Brook, IL: Excel, 1983).

works appropriate for use in the context of such a course, as well as sample assignments and a possible course syllabus.

## THE LIMITATIONS

As previously noted, an extraordinary abundance of material dealing with performance practice is currently in existence. Thus it would be impossible to facilitate an exhaustive analysis of such within the limitations of this study. Instead, this document will identify sources that have remained the most influential over the last decade, particularly in regard to choral repertoire.

Similarly, it has become increasingly *en vogue* for conducting and choral methods textbooks to include sections and/or chapters that deal with issues of score analysis and performance practice. As each of these textbooks share an amazingly similar approach to this material, only those considered to be exemplary, either in scope or in depth, will be identified as representative of what is available for instructional materials in a course such as the one being proposed.

While this document does propose a specific pedagogical approach in the design and implementation of a specific course, an extensive review of materials dealing with the educational psychology of alternative modalities and experiential learning go well beyond the practical limitations of this study. The focus here is not on the validity of teaching through alternative modalities (which has been repeatedly proven in a variety of subject areas) but in adapting this approach to an instructional process for score analysis to help the young musician synthesize prior knowledge while constructing meaning upon examining the musical score.

## DISCUSSION OF RELATED LITERATURE

A discussion of literature related to the pedagogy of score study and performance practice becomes immediately problematic, largely due to the underlying complexity of the topic itself. In such a discussion, several types of sources must be considered, each of which contribute an integral part to the puzzle, but *none* of which provides a strategy for putting the puzzle together.

The first materials to be considered are conducting and choral methods textbooks that deal with score study and performance practice (which is the case to a varying degree in nearly every methods textbook published within the past ten years). While frequently shortsighted in depth and scholarship, these books more often than not dictate the curricula for that which is taught at the undergraduate level in our colleges and universities. Unless a faculty member brings a personal passion for such topics into the classroom, these texts become the authoritative source of knowledge for the choral music education student. These books typically offer *one-dimensional checklists*: a young conductor might complete every task on the list, yet still be lacking in a personalized interpretation of the score.

More closely related to scholarship in music education than that of choral performance are numerous dissertations and scholarly documents that examine *how* we *teach* our students to prepare the score. These are typically very narrow in focus as related to specific cause and effect relationships bearing titles such as "Reflective Thinking as Exemplified in Musical Decision-Making."<sup>6</sup> While helpful in contributing to

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<sup>6</sup> See Nancy Whitaker, "Reflective Thinking as Exemplified in Musical Decision-Making" (Ed.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1989).

the overall body of knowledge as related to learning styles, teaching pedagogy, and the various approaches to score study, most of these fail to present a comprehensive approach to the score study process, particularly that based on performance practice and historical context.

A third body of information can be found in books that deal specifically with performance practice itself. These are not intended for the music education student *per se*, but instead for any practicing musician who wishes to aspire to the ideals of stylistic, historical performance. Generally speaking, these volumes are the antithesis of choral textbooks in their specificity, making them all but insurmountable for the novice conductor simply due to the vast quantity of information contained therein.

With consideration to all of the above, conducting and choral methods textbooks were considered only if they dealt specifically with score study and/or performance practice. Further, they must have been relatively recent publications that were currently in use in college and university undergraduate music education programs. This was determined not only by my field experience with these textbooks but further reinforced by the observations and citations of Steven Hart.<sup>7</sup> While some conducting texts present themselves as unilateral approaches to choral and instrumental conducting, only those that address the specific issues unique to choral music were considered here, as the necessity of dealing with the relationship of words *and* music over a period of five centuries is an integral part of the comprehensive choral score study process. In addition,

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<sup>7</sup> See Steven Hart, "Evolution of Thought and Recurrent Ideas in Choral Conducting Books and Secondary Music Education Texts Published in English from 1939 to 1995" (Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, 1996).

sources other than textbooks had to be more contemporary than 1988, which represents the last twelve years of research in the field. This includes journal articles and dissertations. Finally, those texts dealing specifically with the implementation of performance practice were included only if they reflect recently updated research (since 1988) and were purposefully comprehensive in nature. The abundance of texts that deal with very narrow interests in performance practice, such as “Bach interpretation: articulation marks in primary sources of J.S. Bach”<sup>8</sup> are far too detailed for the nature of this generalized study of performance practice. Texts of such specificity would be impractical for use in a course of study as delineated in this document. The intent here is to present the preeminent scholars who are currently considered to be leading minds in the study of performance practice. Finally, those sources dealing with performance practice must include direct references to primary source material, as this also is one of the underlying tenets of the proposed approach to comprehensive score preparation.

In facing any of the aforementioned bodies of literature, an exhaustive survey of all sources would fall between impractical and impossible. Instead, the reviewed literature exemplifies the collective body of knowledge in each of the three designated areas: methods and conducting books; scholarly documents; and texts on performance practice. Those presented here are included as exemplars of the currently prevalent approach, or conversely, as examples that present a markedly original or different perspective.

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<sup>8</sup> See John Butt, *Bach Interpretation: Articulation Marks in Primary Sources of J.S. Bach* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

## **Choral Methods and Conducting Textbooks**

There is no such thing as the definitive choral methods book, largely because choral methods courses tend to vary tremendously in scope and content from one institution to the next. In 1982, Charles Leonhard conducted a comprehensive study not limited to evaluating methods textbooks, but an assessment of the uneven nature of collegiate music education programs themselves. Amidst six specific problem areas, he cites:

The principal problem with the music teacher education program is that no program has ever been systematically developed for the specific purpose of preparing music teachers. Existing programs are, without exception, hybrids, the result of a kind of random cross-fertilization of three related programs from different types of institutions – the conservatory, the liberal arts college, and the teachers college or normal school. The result has not been the beautiful flower which sometimes results from hybridization but an overgrown thicket which pleases nobody, not the musician, not the humanist, not the educator.<sup>9</sup>

Later, he states:

There is a lack of a substantial body of basic research on the processes of music learning, aesthetic perception, and development of musical taste. Teachers of music are forced to base their instructional procedures largely on tradition and inference due to the absence of research findings concerning music learning.<sup>10</sup>

A brief comparative analysis of any two choral methods books will quickly illustrate Leonhard's observations. Such content of the books appears to be assembled at random, with the implicit bias of the author as to what topics should be presented and to what depth. This is further complicated by the tendency to provide instruction in

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<sup>9</sup> Charles Leonhard, "Music Teacher Education in the United States" in *Symposium in Music Education*, ed. Richard Colwell, (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1982), 245-246.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 247.



conducting.<sup>11</sup> and by conducting textbooks that take on the broader perspective of topics typically relegated to the choral methods book.<sup>12</sup> The current approach seems to reflect a desire for *one stop shopping* in providing a textbook that meets every conceivable need of the novice choral director, albeit in a shallow or incomplete manner.

One commonality in recent conducting and methods books is the unilateral concern with historical performance practice. The prevalence of performance practice as a subject in conducting and methods books was among the most prominent findings of Steven Hart, who traced this phenomenon in textbooks written between 1939 and 1995.

[Three] items regarding performance practice deserve mention. They are:  
1) [a] dramatic increase in the amount of verbiage devoted to historical style periods; 2) the relationship of choral tone and historical style periods; 3) use of the term performance practice.

The literature shows a dramatic increase in the amount of verbiage devoted to historical periods. This trend began in 1976 and continues to the present. Harold Decker, Donald Roach, Ray Robinson, Robert Garretson, Don Moses and Paul Roe all devoted a substantial percentage of their books toward historical style periods.<sup>13</sup>

While this trend is evident in nearly all materials produced within the last decade, this is not to suggest that all textbooks are created equal in this regard. Some methods books are clearly written from the perspective of the traditional music educator deeply

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<sup>11</sup> See Ray Robinson, *The Choral Experience*, (New York, Harper and Row, 1976); John Hylton, *Comprehensive Choral Music Education*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Robert Demaree and Don Moses, *The Complete Conductor*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995.); Robert Garretson, *Conducting Choral Music*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998.

<sup>13</sup> Hart, "Evolution of Thought", 13.

rooted in issues of philosophy and psychology of education. Collins' text<sup>14</sup> is particularly blatant in the dedication of seventeen chapters to issues such as philosophy, history of voice training, and classroom management, yet the entire topic of score preparation is contained in a ten page section entitled "Style – the Choir's Authenticity," providing little more than an obligatory acknowledgement that the choral director must study the music before rehearsal.

Collins' text provides a clear example of the inadequacy of the *score study checklist model*, with statements that lie someplace between ambiguity and common sense. In the following example, he directs the student *not* to seek out the primary source or a similar scholarly document, but instead, defaults to another choral methods text.

Choir members should execute Baroque pitch notation correctly, so directors must use choral music edited by competent authorities. However, most editions do not deal with the proper interpretation of Baroque rhythmic notation and ornamentation. To be absolutely correct, directors should study each thoroughly. An excellent source is *The Choral Experience*.<sup>15</sup>

A similarly ambiguous directive regarding music from the Eighteenth century can be found later in the same chapter.

Teachers should give careful attention to phrasing as dictated by the text. They should teach note separation when necessary to communicate the message of the words.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Don Collins, *Teaching Choral Music* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993), 311.

<sup>15</sup> See Ray Robinson, *The Choral Experience*. (New York, Harper and Row, 1976).

<sup>16</sup> Collins, *Teaching Choral Music*, 312.

Statements such as these are rarely enlightening to the student, as they imply that he or she would already have the ability to recognize the need for rhythmic alteration or possess a thorough understanding of the text-music relationship in a work such as one of Mozart's Salzburg Masses.

If Collins is to represent the underlying concerns related to philosophy and music education, then texts by Hylton and Brinson provide the performer's perspective. In the realm of choral methods books, John Hylton offers the opposite extreme, dedicating two extensive chapters to score study and performance practice as delineated by period.<sup>17</sup>

The author states,

A choral composer creates a composition and the choral conductor seeks to recreate it. A choral score is a written outline of a composer's intention . . . . You have a responsibility to the composer to develop an accurate understanding of his or her intentions as expressed in the score and elsewhere.<sup>18</sup>

Hylton strives to attain a *process oriented* approach to score preparation that goes beyond the observation of surface detail to examine the *essence of what a composer is conveying*.

Thorough score analysis involves several steps. You must place the selection in context, consider its overall outline, and then examine it in detail, so you have a clear understanding of the significance of every symbol on the page and how that aspect of the music fits into the broad outline of the work and the historical and musical context in which it was created.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See John Hylton, *Comprehensive Choral Music Education*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1995).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 150.

Particularly useful in this text, and lacking in most of the others, is the use of musical excerpts, which illustrate the author's main points. The accompanying discussion, however, lacks the authority of primary source material, relying instead on traditional conventions and prevalent thinking from the earlier part of the Twentieth century, such as the rebarring of Renaissance music<sup>20</sup> or a discussion of overdotting that tacitly ignores the accompanying phenomenon of space between the notes. Though considerably more thorough than most, the book exemplifies the adage, *a little knowledge is a dangerous thing*.

Barbara Brinson's text is unique in suggesting the need for the conductor's *aural map* as he or she is encouraged to derive a mental image of how the music will sound in performance.<sup>21</sup>

An aural map is a model in the director's mind and ear of the way the music should sound when performed correctly. This sound is so securely in place that the director can evaluate the choir's success without the aid of the piano. As the singers rehearse the piece, their efforts will be measured against the director's expectations.<sup>22</sup>

Brinson also provides a checklist for score study, but attempts to provide cognitive objectives that require the student to look below the surface for musical meaning derived from the notation. Statements and questions include:

Characterize the accompaniment and its relationship to the choral parts.

Are there any places where dynamics are "written into the music" (through the addition of voices or use of range, etc.) If so, where?

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<sup>20</sup> Hylton, *Comprehensive Choral Education*, 169.

<sup>21</sup> See Barbara Brinson, *Choral Music Methods and Materials: Developing Successful Choral Programs*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996).

<sup>22</sup> Brinson, *Choral Music*, 114-18.

Does the text present potential problems with word stress? If so, what words and where?<sup>23</sup>

Though less recent, one additional text that deserves mention is Ray Robinson's book that attempts to fully exploit the aforementioned *one stop shopping* approach.<sup>24</sup> The pervading theme of the text is the student's *musical ownership of the score* as he or she is encouraged to draw out the intent of the composer's unique form of expression.

Choral conducting requires a combination of theoretical analyses and specific directions that enable the choral singer to translate symbols from the printed page into a meaningful expression of the composer's intentions.<sup>25</sup>

Every choral work has a central idea or purpose to which all of its musical elements contribute. Another way of phrasing it is to say that every composer strives for a distinctive variety within the unity of the composition.<sup>26</sup>

This book, more than any of the others, goes to great lengths in an effort to link concepts of basic musicianship to the specific compositional devices composers implement in the score. Typical discussions include the evolution of the time signature and the effects of coloration (not evident in modern notation) that influence tempo and phrasing. Also helpful are narrative analyses of choral works by Handel and Brahms that attempt to walk the student through the process of applying theoretical and historical knowledge. However, this material is rarely related to specific primary sources, thus causing the student to take the author's word as codified truth.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>24</sup> Robinson, *Choral Experience*

<sup>25</sup> Robinson, *Choral Experience*, 153.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 175.

Though not actually a *methods* text, Robert Garretson's book<sup>27</sup> dedicated to performance practice is an extension of the efforts described above, originally derived from a similar chapter in his book on choral conducting.<sup>28</sup> In terms of sheer volume of information aimed toward the undergraduate choral scholar, Garretson's text is the most thorough of those currently available.

Five chapters address each of the historical periods from the Renaissance to the twentieth century. Garretson attempts to create an appropriate context by first identifying the impact of important historical events such as the invention of the printing press or the repercussions of social reform in western Europe during the early nineteenth century. Brief discussions of prominent composers and their significant accomplishments precede a systematic discussion of elements of performance practice broken into subtopics such as meter, tempo, and articulation. Finally, Garretson attempts to relate musical development to the other fine arts so that a student might better comprehend the music of the Rococo by studying the ornate and excessive paintings of the same period.

Garretson states his mission in the forward of his book:

For many years there has been a need for an authoritative text on choral music performance practices to which conductors might refer for specific information relating to the preparation and performance of their choral programs. . . . Although numerous articles have been published in scholarly journals, the problem is having access to them when the need arises.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See Garretson, *Choral Music: History, Style and Performance Practice*. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993).

<sup>28</sup> See Garretson, *Choral Conducting*.

<sup>29</sup> Garretson, *Choral Music*, ix

Though extensive and systematic, once again there are few specific allusions to primary source material, and in fact, the author's bibliography is based largely on secondary sources spanning the last 100 years. Thus, the result is a marriage of sources of highly varied scholarship, all put forth as accepted fact.

Finally, one must consider the recent trends in conducting textbooks to include increasingly detailed information about score study and performance practice. Garretson was among the first to take this comprehensive approach of including a chapter on historical performance practice as early as 1975.<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth Green also dedicated considerable space to score study, particularly that related to articulation (vocal and instrumental) as influenced by historical style.

The most extensive efforts in this area, as found in a conducting textbook, are exemplified in that by Don Moses and Robert Demaree,<sup>31</sup> with considerable portions of the text not only relegated to matters of score study and analysis but aligned to elements of style and performance practice as well.

Your ears should be open to the music of each era, and your mind should be seeking, through that music, to understand the inhabitants of long-dead centuries, striving to learn from them (just as you would seek knowledge of a visitor from a galaxy light-years away).<sup>32</sup>

Demaree and Moses place emphasis on the "complete structural image of the work"<sup>33</sup> in an effort to pull the student into the essence of the score beyond that of

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<sup>30</sup> See Garretson, *Conducting Choral Music*. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1975).

<sup>31</sup> See Demaree and Moses, *Complete Conductor*.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 405.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 409.

observing surface detail. To accomplish this, the authors suggest a three-step process:

- 1) Score preparation should begin with a *spiral study*,<sup>34</sup> that will help the student learn about the historical context with increasing depth as he or she moves from more generalized research to writings that address the nature of the specific work at hand. This may also include studying other works of the composer in order to recognize patterns and trends that define the composer's personal style of expression. The *spiral* nature of the process suggests an ever-increasing depth of knowledge, as the student continues to attach new knowledge to pre-existing knowledge. The authors refer to this entire process as the gathering of *external evidence*.
- 2) The student is then encouraged to search for *internal evidence*, that is, the process of *exhaustive theoretical study and analysis* that will bring out the mechanics and structure of the score. The author also cautions the conductor to complete this process, being ever mindful that he or she must *let the work speak for itself*.
- 3) Finally, the student is directed to consider the elements of performance practice, including that of performance venues, the limitations or peculiarities

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<sup>34</sup> The development of the *spiral curriculum* concept is attributed to educational psychologist Jerome Bruner. Bruner proposes a course of study that revisits topics and concepts repeatedly throughout a child's education, gradually increasing the complexity of activities and tasks based on the child's developmental readiness. In this application, the conducting student would reexamine elements of score study as he or she continues to gain theoretical/historical knowledge and musical perspective. See Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962).



of the instruments, and even speculation as to audience's collective response or reaction to the work when first performed.

Ultimately, Demaree and Moses are attempting to break the *one-dimensional checklist* model in an effort to help the student draw personal meaning from the score.

What do you see in that passage between "here" and "there?" What indications has the composer written that signal you how to proceed expressively through the form at hand? What do these combinations of sounds (in a purely acoustical sense) "mean?" Your task is not to exhibit the music but to clarify it. The greatest conductors sometimes can find in the most complex and opaque forms the simplest of answers – the essence or "meaning" in these works.<sup>35</sup>

Much like the choral methods text by Barbara Brinson, Demaree and Moses pose highly cognitive score study questions to help the conductor find the *essence* of the work. For example:

In any piece of music, the structure makes some cadences more important than others. What is that hierarchy in this particular work?

What editing of dynamics will make your interpretation clearer?

Where are the climaxes in the design? How are they prepared, established, and left?<sup>36</sup>

While Demaree and Moses have gone to great lengths to develop materials designed to pull the student into the structure and essence of the music in search of personal meaning, the textbook is just that, a textbook. There is no specific curricular approach espoused by the authors other than that of the sequence in which the material is presented in the book. Further, the text is primarily designed for use in the conducting

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<sup>35</sup> Demaree and Moses, *Complete Conductor*, 405.

<sup>36</sup> Demaree and Moses, *Complete Conductor*, 410.

laboratory class, where presumably success of their methodology, if it might be labeled as such, is only to be assessed in the final product of the conducting itself.

In short, while providing a valuable resource to augment the score study process, the book does not present a thorough or systematic approach that is likely to help the student derive personal meaning from the printed page. In addition, like most of the sources noted above, primary source material has presumably been the basis of chapters dedicated to style in performance, but few specific allusions have been made to allow the conducting student to realize the actual source of his or her knowledge.

### **General Research in Score Study and Preparation**

General research in score study falls into two categories: 1) dissertations, and 2) studies codified in professional journals.

#### **Dissertations**

While there are innumerable dissertations that deal with specific aspects of score study and analysis, particularly in regard to a specific genre or work, there are amazingly few that actually focus on the pedagogical process of *teaching* the score study process itself. Here again, there seems to be a widespread assumption that the undergraduate student will draw the appropriate connections from previous coursework with an innate sense that will allow him or her to turn formal observation into personalized interpretation. Very specific topics, such as the “effect of emotion,” “reflective thinking,” and “developing increased perception of form” tend to focus on the underlying process of engaging the student in a systematic *below the surface* process, while others are strategy based with specific agendas such as “from analysis to gesture” or “preparing

and rehearsing works of the Baroque.” While several of the documents provide original and alternative approaches to score preparation, *none* propose themselves to be a comprehensive curriculum for the undergraduate music education classroom.

Moving from those most general in character to those with an increasingly narrow focus, Louis Zagar’s<sup>37</sup> study on the effect of emotion on score interpretation seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice as stated above. An examination of the physiology of human emotion results in a continuum that is designed to compare objective and subjective approaches in the interpretation of musical notation as part of an effort to identify what emotional perspective, if any, has an unconscious effect upon the score study process. In the consideration of known neural processes, Zagar attempts to discover if some conductors are more likely to derive personal meaning from a printed score based on their intuitive cognitive process. Based on extensive research of the brain and cognitive process, Zagar suggests that the unconscious effect of emotion is inseparable from score analysis procedures even if one attempts complete objectivity in such a pursuit. He observes, “music sets up very subtle but specific anticipations and then satisfies them. Interpretation can control and even manipulate perceived resolutions.”<sup>38</sup> That is, as interpreters become increasingly aware of the language of musical tension and release, they cannot help but interject their own perceptions derived from either an emotional or musical response.

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<sup>37</sup> Louis Alan Zagar, “The Effect of Score Interpretation and the Development of Musical Meaning: The Phenomenon of Unconscious Affect” (D.M.A. diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1997).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 213.

The implications, as pertaining to the current study, reinforce the concept that the *one-dimensional score study checklist* model is simply not enough to mobilize the conductor's musical imagination. *Who* we are, *what* we see, and *how* we see it are all woven together in the interpretive process, even though we may strive to remain completely objective. However, Zagar has little concern for the specific score study process itself, but only sets out to investigate the psychological and physiological process therein.

Similarly concerned with cognitive process, Nancy Louise Whitaker<sup>39</sup> performs a qualitative study with six subjects (two conductors, two pianists, and two composers) in an effort to trace and document the reflective process in score selection, preparation, and presentation. Whitaker's study is largely based on John Dewey's research pertaining to critical thinking and the implications that cause one to go beyond *funded* knowledge implicit of lower level thinking.<sup>40</sup> In regard to the score study process, Whitaker suggests that if the individual is provided only with experiences that represent little or no challenge to belief, he or she will not develop the disposition to think reflectively.<sup>41</sup> Within this process Whitaker further recommends that we develop an awareness of the

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<sup>39</sup> Nancy Louise Whitaker, "Reflective Thinking as Exemplified in Musical Decision-Making" (Ed.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 1989).

<sup>40</sup> *Lower level thinking* refers to Bloom's *Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain*, which identifies six levels of cognition: knowledge; comprehension and application being considered *lower level skills*; analysis; synthesis and evaluation being *higher level skills*. See Benjamin Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*. New York: D. McKay, 1956.

<sup>41</sup> Whitaker, "Reflective Thinking," 468-470.

students' individual learning styles in an effort to engage their imaginations when faced with interpretive decisions in the score.

Here again. Whitaker does not portend to suggest a specific curricular approach, but rather a philosophical ideal with the intent of engaging and challenging the student. The pedagogical implications of her approach are multi-faceted and subscribe well to current trends in *active learning*, a problem-solving approach that requires students to invest into the process through discussion and directed discovery.

While primarily focused on conducting technique, Glenn Alan Haynes<sup>42</sup> acknowledges the role of score study as influenced by *image*. Haynes observes the many *non-technical* modes of communication between conductor and choir, whether that is facial expression, the use of figurative language and posture, or any other transmission of subtlety and style not directly related to a particular conducting gesture. Of value to this study is his acknowledgment of the *human* context that is an implicit and integral part in relating a musical score to the ensemble. It is simply not enough that the conductor can portray the technical aspects of the score, but he or she is also obliged to communicate an image that represents the essence and underlying emotion of the music at hand.<sup>43</sup> Further, the use of figurative language is highly effective in communicating musical concepts and ideas, especially to the lesser-experienced singer. Of course, in order for one to create an analogy, one must have first developed an understanding of the musical structures and devices inherent in the score. Haynes does not suggest how this process is

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<sup>42</sup> Glenn Alan Haynes, "Non-technical Communication in Conducting and Its Presentation in Selected Textbook" (D.M.A. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1994).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 16-18.

to take place, but simply acknowledges that it is a prerequisite to communicative conducting.

David Lee Covington<sup>44</sup> provides a more systematic approach in his attempt to create a model for comprehensive score study that goes beyond superficial observation of surface detail. An exhaustive discussion of current trends in score analysis classifies varied approaches into the following four categories:<sup>45</sup>

1. Basal Methods of Score Preparation and Score Marking – general techniques of score preparation (and marking), including charts and lists of preparatory questions and tasks. (mark dynamics in yellow, determine the tempo, etc.)
2. Designated Systems – a consistent application of systematic procedures to identify particular elements within a score. This approach suggests a specific agenda, such as identifying particular elements of Baroque articulation.
3. Invasive techniques – designed to encourage a more in-depth examination of the interrelationship of specific musical components by interweaving each of the previous models with an emphasis on the integration of musical elements.
4. The Synthesis of Analysis: Perspectives on Stylistic Interpretation and Musical Expression – All of the processes noted above have already taken place so that the conductor can “discover the significant relationship between

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<sup>44</sup> David Lee Covington, “A Diagnostic and Analytical Model of Score Preparation: A Clinical Approach to Musical Morphology” (D.M.A. diss., Florida State University, 1993)

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

stylistic interpretation and the communication of musical meaning.”<sup>46</sup> The author refers to this process as *musical morphology*.

Of those studies examined, Covington’s document offers among the most thorough approach to systematic score preparation and thus would lend itself well to the development of a curricular process, though the author does not specifically attempt to do this himself. As related to the increasingly complex nature of the four models delineated above, Covington has identified four stages of the score study process: clinical; diagnostic; analytical; and morphology. Ultimately, the conductor is instructed to compare his or her initial observations to his or her final analysis in an effort to reinforce the conductor’s initial intuitive response.

Covington is clear in his intent to draw from the strength of each of the aforementioned score study procedures. However, he offers few ideas that lend themselves to the pedagogical approach of teaching these processes to an inexperienced student. Once more, it is assumed that the student will be able to complete each of the procedures as prescribed. There is a conspicuous absence of strategies that might be of help to a student who does not have an innate ability to perform those tasks.

Timothy Stalter<sup>47</sup> set out to document *the conductor’s process*, interviewing many of the nation’s most successful conducting teachers and comparing the results of those meetings to recent trends in the scope and focus of conducting textbooks. Stalter identified five specific areas that are essential to the score study process: score study:

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>47</sup> Timothy Stalter, “The Conductor’s Process Model and Its Presentation in Current Conducting Materials and Methodologies” (D.M.A. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1996).

[score] preparation; rehearsal; performance; and evaluation. His questions and research objectives examined each of these five entities as individual components in an effort to produce a summary of current thought as to teacher/conductor preparation.

A recurring theme that surfaces in Stalter's research is the concept of the mental musical template, or *aural image*. Nearly all of the conductors interviewed refer to the need for a student to possess a cohesive aural image of the score before being able to effectively convey the music through the conducting gesture. While there is some difference of opinion as to whether the ability for aural imaging comes more naturally to some novice conductors than others, what is conspicuously absent is a specific approach to helping the student develop such skills. A few of those interviewed cite traditional activities such as singing each of the parts or completing score study checklist assignments such as those discussed above, but no one suggests strategies that are likely to help the student move from the observation of musical detail to meaningful personal interpretation. It is a general consensus amongst the panel that we do a less than satisfactory job when it comes to helping students apply knowledge of theory and history to actual performance-based interpretive decisions. Repeatedly, the conducting teachers suggest that prolonged conducting experience is prerequisite to a student's development in this area, and at best, the conducting teacher can only be expected to put forth concepts and ideals for future consideration. One interviewee confesses:

I used to believe that students would just get it, that they would observe it happening and be able to do it. But the more I teach the more I realize that they don't. So I tend . . . to share more and more with them, and to be more and more explicit.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 69.



Lewis Strouse<sup>49</sup> also suggests a specific procedural process in his “Comprehensive Approach to Score Preparation” (CASP) which suggests three sequential levels of analysis:<sup>50</sup>

Level I – Basal structural analysis: explores the score in terms of musical elements that may be translated directly into gesture without further study of structural comparisons.

Level II – Review of supplementary information: surveys the historical and stylistic background of the work and the composer.

Level III – Detailed structural analysis: identifies the individual components of the musical structure as each relates to the larger structure and to the conductor’s emotive interpretation.

The author quotes Hermann Scherchen in acknowledging that “many concert artists achieve technical mastery of their instruments to the exclusion of a thorough understanding of the works which they perform.”<sup>51</sup> Strouse brings this forth not to diminish the importance of score study but to acknowledge that many of today’s accomplished *musicians* lack the formal training that higher education has deemed to be indispensable. In addition, the traditional approach to teaching theory and analysis may not be effective in helping the typical student draw personal meaning from the score.

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<sup>49</sup> Lewis H. Strouse. “From Analysis to Gesture: A Comprehensive Approach to Score Preparation for the Conductor” (D.A. diss., Ball State University, 1987).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., i-ii.

<sup>51</sup> See Hermann Scherchen. *Handbook of Conducting* (reprinted London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 1. in Lewis Strouse. “From Analysis to Gesture: A Comprehensive Approach to Score Preparation for the Conductor” (D.A. diss., Ball State University, 1987), 3.

The need for a reasoned methodology of score preparations, having a direct relationship to the practical application of gesture technique, would be worthy of serious consideration.<sup>52</sup>

Ultimately, Strouse's goal is to create a process in which the composer and performer become amalgamated in the interpretive gesture of the conductor.

Since the conductor's interpretation derives from (1) an understanding of the compositional process, and (2) the subsequent cognitive-emotional bond formed between the conductor and the score, it is useful to further trace the compositional process to its source of emotional inspiration. By doing so, the conductor will complete a personal involvement with the music through some knowledge of the composer's personality and the reasons for having written the composition. Access to this information will mold the conductor's deepest emotional involvement with the composer's intentions.<sup>53</sup>

The CASP process as designed by Strouse is successful in delineating activities that require the student to take personal ownership of the score analysis process, such as, the identification of the presence and fluctuation of the emotional energy sequence,<sup>54</sup> the labeling of tension and release,<sup>55</sup> and any other compositional events that the author would define as Major Musical Moments (MMM). The conductor is to perform these activities at least twice, once at the beginning of the process as part of an immediate and intuitive gestural reaction to the score, then again as his or her interpretation becomes more concrete through more formalized process and analysis.

While there is no specific curriculum presented by Strouse for teaching of the CASP approach, this document is more successful than most in presenting a methodology

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<sup>52</sup> Strouse, "Analysis to Gesture", 3.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 24-25.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 67.

that lends itself well to curricular implications in the designation of activities that require the student to take a vested interest in the score study process. Ironically, however, even though the document includes an extensively detailed analysis of Palestrina's *Sicut Cervus*,<sup>56</sup> Strouse gives little or no attention to the elements of style and performance practice except for those implicit in his analytical decisions as demonstrated therein. While he clearly acknowledges that a thorough understanding of performance practice is prerequisite to the analytical process, suggestions for acquiring this information are not included. Further, though the document appears to be well based in appropriate learning theory and psychology, such as Jerome Bruner's aforementioned concept of *spiral learning* or John Dewey's *problem-based instruction*, there are no direct correlations to such theorists that could potentially add greater validity to this sequential instructional approach.

A study by Gary Bangstad<sup>57</sup> is only indirectly related to the pedagogy of teaching score preparation, as the author sets out to design a choral rehearsal procedure that encourages a heightened awareness amongst the singers of style and compositional structure. In a sense, this document reverses the process discussed above. All too frequently, the author states, "teachers and students are forced to drill on a limited repertoire of music and concern themselves primarily with the next performance."<sup>58</sup> In the author's opinion, this results in little more than a *dog and pony show*, producing

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 148-156.

<sup>57</sup> Gary Philip Bangstad, "Developing a Choral Rehearsal Program Designed to Increase Perception of Form and Style in Choral Music" (Ph.d diss., Arizona State University, 1975).

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 1.

choirs that perform repertoire with technical accuracy but little understanding of the music that they are singing. Bangstad submits "A Choral Rehearsal Program Designed to Increase Perception of Form and Style in Choral Music"<sup>59</sup> based on a series of behavioral objectives that would allow for quantitative assessment of a student's ability to recognize common musical structures. The author's stated intent is to create a greater awareness of the *aesthetic* qualities of the score as opposed to the singers succumbing to the cognitive process. This *feel more than you think* approach is to be facilitated by pointing out prevalent structures and compositional devices to the students, although the study lacks the *qualitative* assessment tools to measure whether students are drawing personal connections from these procedures.

The greatest significance of this study is the author's intention of bringing personalized musical meaning to the performers by altering the rehearsal process. This implies that the conductor will have prepared the music in a way that such subtleties are self evident in the course of rehearsal. Many excellent considerations are presented that might cause a conductor or performer to *ask the right questions* in the process of studying a score, and the material is presented in a sequential, curricular manner as a course of study for a collegiate choir. Once again, however, there is little information presented that will help the novice musician decipher musical notation without having to be told *what to see or think* by the conductor. In a sense, this document presents a clear diagnosis of the shortcomings of undergraduate music education programs, but fails to provide a viable cure for either the symptoms or the illness itself.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 86-446.

A study by Philemon Theodorou<sup>60</sup> takes an entirely different approach in presenting a guide to performance practice issues for the conductor of the middle or high school choir. Particularly useful is a chapter that addresses common practices of editors who create performance editions, thus alerting the conductor to inaccuracies that might be encountered during the score study process. That which follows is a compendium of Baroque and Classical performance practice elements as documented in primary sources. This document purports to be neither a curriculum nor even a strategic approach to score study itself except in an implicit design that will allow the conductor to make informed decisions while accurately deciphering imprecise notation.

Similar in scope and purpose is a study by William Amann<sup>61</sup> that seeks out specific relationships regarding elements of Baroque performance practice as ultimately manifested in the conducting gesture. In addition to an extensive chapter dealing with performance practice as related to primary sources, the document examines how knowledge of such elements should become evident in the nuance of the conducting as well as in the structure of the rehearsal itself. One could make an argument that the resulting gestures are a kinesthetic analysis of the score relying heavily on the conductor's commitment to informed *and* intuitive decisions. Further, the chapter dedicated to rehearsal technique not only requires the conductor to make a series of evaluative decisions in the score study process (such as those regarding structural seams,

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<sup>60</sup> Philemon Theodorou Jr., "Baroque and Classical Interpretation for Secondary School Choral Music Conductors: A Guide for Performance" (D.M.A. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1998).

<sup>61</sup> William Amann, "Preparing and Rehearsing Works of the Baroque: A Guide for the Beginning Conductor" (D.M.A. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1995).

patterns of articulation, etc.), but also provides in-depth guidance to choosing an appropriate edition and developing a musical shorthand to codify interpretive decisions.

These last two studies provide an excellent illustration of the prevailing problem that has continued to undermine music education at the undergraduate level. Stated simply, research tends to deal with matters of performance *or* matters of learning theory – rarely, if ever, both! Frequently, the educators (those who teach music education methods courses) assume that the student understands the medium and requirements of performance, while the performers (the applied teachers or conducting instructors) assume that the student understands the complexities of learning theory and developmental psychology. More often than not, however, we fail to provide the strategies and resources needed by students in a manner in which they can effectively apply them.

### **Journal Articles**

While the profession at large clearly recognizes the importance of score study and preparation based on historical and stylistic context, there are surprisingly few articles that specifically address teaching these skills to potential music educators. By far, most articles related to the topic discuss a specific approach in the analysis of a specific work, focusing not on the pedagogical method, but on the unique characteristics of the work itself.

In an extension of the aforementioned research presented in his dissertation, Lewis Strouse specifically addresses the question, “What do we teach when we teach

interpretation?"<sup>62</sup> Strouse reaffirms my opinion regarding the current status of higher education. "students are taught to play the correct notes, to read the printed dynamics and articulations accurately, to understand the form, and on and on, but the impact on the listener . . . is rarely discussed."<sup>63</sup> Strouse provides the analogy of a young musician attending a solo-ensemble festival only to be told that even though the performance was technically correct, musicality was lacking.

Strouse is adamant that emotion is an inseparable component of the interpretive process. He emphasizes the need to seek out the correlation between music making and speech communication in an effort to identify the speech-like patterns even in those compositions that lack text. Further, he elaborates on a charting process first introduced in his dissertation that not only documents the student's perception of tension and release, but also the charting of more subtle occurrences of musical energy that might be observed in comparative listening of recordings. Strouse suggests that we need to do more in providing our students with the ability to discriminate between engaging and lackluster performance.

An article by philosophy professor Kendall Walton<sup>64</sup> does not present itself as an approach to either score study or reform in educational practice, but *does* add a significant dimension to Strouse's discussion of music, emotion, and meaningful interpretation. Walton is preoccupied with the dichotomy that lies between the purist who insists on the

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<sup>62</sup> See Lewis H. Strouse, "What Do We Teach When We Teach Interpretation?" *American Music Teacher* 40 (February/March 1991), 18-19, 72-73.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>64</sup> See Kendall Walton, "Listening with Imagination: Is Music Representational?" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52:1 (Winter 1994), 47-61.

virtues of *absolute music* and those who confess to finding programmatic themes and ideals in compositions that have no deliberate storyline or agenda. While Walton is careful to acknowledge the dangers of creating false meaning that fails to represent the composer's intent, he points out that even the purists have difficulty discussing compositional structure without embracing terms like "tension, release, motion and rest."<sup>65</sup> Walton suggests that even the use of such ambiguous terms requires imagination, as the notation itself is incapable of expressing such human qualities. He best surmises his perspective in stating,

If we follow through on our purist inclinations to reject stories or images or meanings attached to music as unmusical . . . we must begin to wonder how much of what we love about music will be left.<sup>66</sup>

In the end, Walton's discussion provides the pedagogue with a rationale for examining the effect of the musical score through alternative modalities of expression, even if only in an attempt to somehow identify and label the sequence of compositional events.

John Dickson<sup>67</sup> compares that process of score study to the development of the visual perception and acuity necessary to realize a 3-D *Magic Eye* painting, wherein a specific image arises from what first appears to be a random collage of color and shape. Dickson suggests three *stages* of score study:

I.        Developing a Vision of the Score

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>67</sup> See John Dickson, "Score Study: A "Magical Eye" for Musical Blueprints," *Choral Journal* 39, 8 (March 1999) 9-22.



II. Translating the Musical and Textual Elements into Sound

III. Preparing an Effective and Efficient Rehearsal Strategy

In the primary stage, the author suggests a close examination of the text in comparison to that of the accompanying musical structure as delineated by processes developed by Julius Hereford and Margaret Hillis. From there, Dickson seeks a method to *translate* this data into sound in an effort to discover the unique qualities of individual phrases within several choral examples. Finally, the author presents ideas for turning these discoveries into strategies for efficient rehearsals.

Dickson's article does not suggest an approach for teaching these skills, but merely attempts to provide a well thought out and sequential paradigm for the score study process. While Dickson emphasizes that it is the conductor's responsibility to bring the *musical blueprint* to life through interpretation, it seems that his target audience is the conductor who has already developed the ability to translate notation into interpretation.

Thomas Wine<sup>68</sup> embarked on a quantitative study of score marking practices among undergraduate and graduate conducting students. The study elicits little definitive data (perhaps due in part to the small number of participants – 62 students in two university programs) other than the fact that nearly all of the students embrace some methodical approach to score study, and most of them first examine the score by reading through the music at the piano or singing the individual parts. Beyond this, Wine encountered a widely varied approach to score marking procedures. Of particular value

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<sup>68</sup> See Thomas Wine, "Approaches to Score Marking by Undergraduate and Graduate Choral Conducting Students," *Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education*, 32 (1995), 40-51.

in this study is the acknowledgement that the standards for teaching score study and interpretation are between inconsistent and nonexistent.

An article by Jeffrey Bush<sup>69</sup> is not intended so much for the conductor preparing the score, but for the general music teacher who strives to present music history to high school students in an engaging manner. Bush states:

The only model for teaching music history that most music educators have experienced is what they encountered in university course work. . . to revert to lecturing. The other traditional method – having students research composers through the use of reference books – is frequently approached in a noncreative way and is often viewed by students as “busy work.” Many times, middle and high school students view these instructional models with disinterest. Their disinterest works against the goal of seeing the relevance of music history in a meaningful way.<sup>70</sup>

Unfortunately, this perception is shared by many college students as well, who fail to recognize the value of study in music history and theory. Bush suggests several activities to help students put music in a historical context, such as creating a radio show or relating musical developments to the political or sociological events that have inspired the music in the first place.

A brief article by Patricia Shand<sup>71</sup> speaks to the need for reform in collegiate music education programs in general, advocating a shift from teaching *mechanical how-to* techniques to encouraging students to become *reflective practitioners*, a process that advocates the integration of theory and praxis. The study is centered around the work of

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<sup>69</sup> See Jeffrey Bush, “Bringing Music History to Life,” *Music Educators Journal*, 86 (May 2000), 31-33.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>71</sup> See Patricia Martin Shand, “An Innovative Approach to Music Teacher Education,” *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 5, 2 (Spring 1996) 14-20.

Doreen Rao, who stresses teaching for understanding, with rehearsal procedures that require singers to participate in musical problem-solving.

In a related article from the same journal, Don Ester<sup>72</sup> places the traditional choral methods course in the context of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance (CMP) model that involves a similar rehearsal process of asking students *why? who? what? when? and where?* This, once again, represents a shift from the top-down model of the revered professor imparting wisdom and knowledge to the student in a didactic manner.

While these last two studies have limited specific relevance to teaching score study and preparation, they reflect an important trend in teacher education programs to focus more succinctly on the cognitive process, as students synthesize and integrate the many dimensions of comprehensive musicianship.

### **Books on Performance Practice**

It is difficult to pinpoint when the twentieth-century musician first became obsessed with the study of performance practice. Though later deemed less than scholarly, choral octavos dating back to the 1930s<sup>73</sup> provide evidence of a contingency of practicing musicians who sought to recreate editions that reflect the composer's musical intent. During World War II, a global community of scholars began to emerge who shared a common desire to establish a sense of relevance between the ideals of

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<sup>72</sup> See Don Ester, "Choral Methods and the CMP Model," *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 5, 2 (Spring 1997) 26-28.

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, Byrd, William. *Ave Verum Corpus*. Edited by Doris Quinn. New York, Witmark, 1936.

musicology and performance. Landmark documents by Manfred Bukofzer,<sup>74</sup> Frederick Dorian,<sup>75</sup> Arnold Dolmetsch,<sup>76</sup> Robert Donnington,<sup>77</sup> and Thurston Dart<sup>78</sup> opened *Pandora's Box* in their design to draw attention to definitive historical documents that might rationalize specific musical decisions. In each case, the authors provide explanations of various treatises as to how these documents can provide valuable insights for the twentieth-century musician.

Similarly, groundbreaking publications by Oliver Strunk<sup>79</sup> and Carol MacClintock<sup>80</sup> forego the inherent dangers of *subjective explanation* by simply providing the historical excerpts themselves, thus returning the onus to the performer who must then extract that which he or she deems pertinent in matters of performance practice and historical style.

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<sup>74</sup> See Manfred Bukofzer, *On the Performance of Renaissance Music* (Pittsburgh, PA: Music Teachers National Association, 1941).

<sup>75</sup> See Frederick Dorian, *The History of Music in Performance; the Art of Musical Interpretation from the Renaissance to Our Day* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1942).

<sup>76</sup> See Arnold Dolmetsch, *The Interpretation of the Music of the XVII and XVIII Centuries Revealed by Contemporary Evidence* (London: Novello, 1946).

<sup>77</sup> See Robert Donington, *The Instruments of Music* (London: Methuen, 1951) and *The Interpretation of Early Music* (London, Faber and Faber, 1963).

<sup>78</sup> See Thurston Dart, *The Interpretation of Music* (London, Hutchinson's University Library, 1954).

<sup>79</sup> See Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History From Classical Antiquity Through the Romantic Era* (New York: Norton, 1950).

<sup>80</sup> See Carol MacClintock, *Readings in the History of Music in Performance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979).

By the mid-1980s, the market was literally flooded with innumerable documents on the subject of performance practice, many of which rely specifically on primary source material. The following is a sampling of these texts that represent the various approaches prevalent in the field today.

Robert Donington's<sup>81</sup> extensive writings on performance practice have long provided the definitive guide to the serious study of style in performance, particularly that pertaining to the Baroque period. His most recent monograph contains not only the forward written in 1988, but also the forward to his previous reworking of that text completed in 1974. Collectively, Donington's musings in these preliminary pages reflect the evolution of scholarship itself, in that there are no absolutes in the study of historical performance, as newly discovered documentation continues to provide insight into earlier musical ideals.

Having said this, Donington goes on to discuss in detail the many elements of performance practice as supported by primary sources, frequently illustrated with musical excerpts and examples. Donington provides a delicate balance of *self-imposed* narrative juxtaposed with quotations from primary sources themselves. Of course, the inherent dangers of such an approach are the implicit interpretative values of his detailed explanations. Perhaps this is why he frequently chooses to counter-balance his *arguments* with several varied source readings on any given topic.

A more *user-friendly* approach is exemplified by a series of books published by Schirmer, each of which carries titles that begin with *A Performer's Guide to . . .*

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<sup>81</sup> See Robert Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, New Revised Edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992).

Jeffrey Kite-Powell<sup>82</sup> served as editor for the volume dealing with the Renaissance period, a book that draws on the expertise of nearly thirty different scholars. In depth descriptions of period instruments, discussions of typical instrumental groupings, and descriptions of genres and musical forms are intended largely for the collegiate *Collegium* director, who seeks a comprehensive guide to early music. While it is clear that primary source material provides the backbone for each of the varied writings (and drawings), seldom are these sources quoted in their original form. However, extensive bibliographies throughout the book provide an excellent point of departure for those who desire less speculation and more facts.

Yet another perspective on the presentation of performance practice can be found in a book by Mary Cyr.<sup>83</sup> once again dealing exclusively with a singular period of music. Cyr's approach begins very much like that in the Schirmer *performance guides* but finds a unique dimension in an extensive appendix that includes, among other things, the complete scores of the works being discussed. The author feels strongly that her ideas and perspectives are considered within the context of the entire work. These are provided, in some cases, in a facsimile of the manuscript as well. Once again, primary sources are paraphrased in order to provide cohesive and sequential discussion. In addition to bibliographic notes and references, Cyr also provides a brief discussion at the end of each chapter as to which scholars will provide the most pertinent information for further study.

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<sup>82</sup> See Jeffery Kite-Powell, ed., *A Performer's Guide to Renaissance Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994).

<sup>83</sup> See Mary Cyr, *Performing Baroque Music* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1992).

Finally, one cannot conclude a discussion related to performance practice without considering the publications of Frederick Neumann.<sup>84</sup> While his original writings date back to the 1980s, continued revisions and reissues of his research and ideals contribute to his prominence in the field today. As the titles of his first two volumes suggest, his books are indeed a collection of essays ranging from criticism of those authors who have gone before him in the quest of dealing with performance practice issues (i.e. Robert Donington and Robert Levin), to specific discussions on very narrow topics, such as *misconceptions about the French trill in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries*. In many ways, Neumann's work well represents the current status of scholarship pertaining to performance practice. That is, musicians have come to accept the premise that the study of primary source material can help enlighten the modern performer in matters of style and interpretation. However, there will *always* be a certain level of controversy as to how we go about interpreting and implementing these words of wisdom from centuries past. Neumann's inquisitive style draws attention to this very sense of inexactitude.

Once again, the texts examined herein are by no means exhaustive in their representation of the plethora of materials available to the musician who seeks instruction and insight in performance practice. They do, however, represent the prevalent approaches to the dissemination of these thoughts and ideals. It also bears repeating that the quantity of information provided in these documents is very extensive. While this

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<sup>84</sup> See Frederick Neumann, *Essays in Performance Practice* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1982), *New Essays in Performance Practice* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1989), *Performance Practices of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993).

material provides an invaluable resource to the accomplished musician, such a body of knowledge is generally beyond the average student.

## SUMMARY

In surveying the related literature of research presently available, five distinct areas emerge: 1) conducting and choral methods textbooks that suggest various approaches to score preparation (mostly in the form of checklists for score study); 2) conducting and choral methods textbooks that address historical implications for stylistic performance (performance practice) to varying degrees of depth and scholarship; 3) general research that espouses a specific approach to the score preparation process; 4) studies that observe recent overall trends in music teacher education programs; and 5) books designed not as textbooks or instructional materials, but as guides to performance practice for the accomplished performer. While some of those who suggest particular methodologies in score preparation present implicit ideals for curricular or course design, *none* present themselves as a study of the pedagogy itself. Just as it is assumed that if given the raw data, the undergraduate student will intuitively make the appropriate and necessary connections, it is likewise assumed that given the task of score study, the undergraduate instructor will innately find a way to teach the process to the students.

In addition, while many authors acknowledge the importance of performance practice during the interpretative process, few address the complexity of the task itself, once again suggesting that students will draw appropriate conclusions based on what they perceive to be pockets of virtually unrelated information (history, theory, performance practice, etc.).



A comprehensive approach to score preparation that incorporates the ideals of performance practice and the development of musical style and structure, presented in a manner that requires students to take ownership of the music, is lacking. This study serves to present such a pedagogical approach to the process of teaching score study at the undergraduate level.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A MODEL FOR SCORE STUDY TO FOSTER DIVERGENT THINKING AND INTUITIVE MUSICIANSHIP

*We must perceive music not as a mere succession of reasonably arranged acoustical facts; we must extricate it from the sphere of amorphous sound, we must in some way participate, beyond the mere sensual perception of music, in its realization as sound; we must transform our musical impressions into a meaningful possession of our own.*

- Paul Hindemith<sup>1</sup>

The genesis of this paper can be traced to my personal challenges and frustrations in teaching conducting and score study skills to undergraduate music education students. As observed in a study by Merry Carol Spencer<sup>2</sup> concerning conducting pedagogy, the emphasis in most university programs is placed upon the automization of kinesthetic movement. Spencer states,

Young conductors are often dismayed, because once in front of an ensemble they are barely capable of maintaining a consistent beat pattern, let alone evoking anything emotional from the ensemble. This occurs primarily because there is a disparity between what is desired versus what is actually shown by the conductor.<sup>3</sup>

Spencer goes on to recognize that the predominant model for teaching conducting to undergraduates lies largely in what Benjamin Bloom calls *automaticity*.<sup>4</sup> This refers to

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<sup>1</sup> See Paul Hindemith, *A Composer's World: Horizons and Limitations*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953) 11.

<sup>2</sup> Merry Carol Spencer, "Conducting Pedagogy: Teaching Through Musicianship" (D.M.A. diss., University of Oklahoma, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 21 (In addition to the *Taxonomy for the Cognitive Domain*, Bloom also developed similar taxonomies for the aesthetic and psychomotor domains in an effort to document differences in perception and response in the learning process).

the teaching of beat patterns, cueing, and generalized approaches for articulation (such as a violent, choppy gesture for staccato as opposed to a more fluid motion for legato) *devoid* of specific emotions and musical ideals. The student masters the process of *keeping time*, perhaps even providing a visual synopsis of the overall mood of the piece, but often neglects the countless details pertaining to the expressive qualities of the music, thus resulting in a considerable waste of rehearsal time as the conductor finds it necessary to verbalize every detail of the printed score to the singers.

Of course, this is based on the assumption that the young conductor *has something to say* in the first place. If the student is unable to decode the notation in order to arrive at a viable interpretation of how the printed page is to assume an audible form, then the study of gesture is of little or no consequence.

So how is it then that so many of our students have nothing to say on the podium? What can be done for the student who lacks the innate ability to integrate history, theory, and praxis? How do we help them build a bridge from the immense body of information collected during the first two years of college to a working knowledge that might manifest itself in the upper division study of conducting and score interpretation, and more importantly, thereafter, as a professional teacher and/or conductor?

### **BERNICE McCARTHY AND THE 4MAT SYSTEM**

While not solely concerned with the teaching of conducting or score preparation, Bernice McCarthy has developed a pedagogical approach that provides significant insights for teaching students who learn in a variety of different ways, or *modalities*. McCarthy's work draws on the research of numerous renowned psychologists, including

Jean Piaget, David Kolb, and Howard Gardner, to arrive at defining attributes of various learning styles as exemplified in a typical classroom. McCarthy goes on to examine the research of Roger Sperry who submits that humans process information predominantly through either the left brain or the right brain, a phenomenon that has a marked influence on a student's capacity to learn in a given classroom environment.

Similar to the aforementioned account of my own frustrations in the classroom, McCarthy's *4MAT System*<sup>5</sup> was borne out of the challenges of teaching in the Chicago Public Schools, during which time she observed that the vast majority of instruction that occurs in the typical classroom is directed toward what she calls the *analytic learner*. In short, this is a person who learns best by didactic means. That is, this person is able to listen to a lecture, take notes, and transform information from concrete data into abstract application through a self-imposed process of analysis and reflection. Such students are typically sequential learners who respond positively to facts and statistics, but who are uncomfortable with subjective problem-solving activities that may result in more than one possible answer. McCarthy claims that only 30% of students are of the *analytic* type, meaning that at best, less than one out of three students has the innate ability to receive and process instruction in the way it is usually presented.

In documenting research in educational psychology, McCarthy discusses the findings of Carl Jung, Gordon Lawrence, David Kersey, and Marilyn Bates, and perhaps most importantly, the work of David Kolb, all of whom have conducted extensive

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<sup>5</sup> See McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*.

experimentation on how people learn. McCarthy observes that *each* of these scholars has independently identified four types of learners, summarized as follows:<sup>6</sup>

**Type One – *Imaginative Learner*:** Seeks personal meaning; judges things in relationship to values; functions through social interaction; wants to make the world a better place; is cooperative and sociable; respects authority, when it is earned.

**Type Two – *Analytic Learner*:** Seeks intellectual competence; judges things by factual verification; functions by adapting to experts; needs to know “the important things” and wants to add to the world’s knowledge; is patient and reflective; prefers chain of command authority.

**Type Three – *Common Sense Learner*:** Seeks solutions to problems; judges things by their usefulness; wants to make things happen; is practical and straightforward; sees authority as necessary, but will work around it if forced.

**Type Four – *Dynamic Learner*:** Seeks hidden possibilities; judges things by gut reactions; functions by synthesizing various parts; enjoys challenging complacency; is enthusiastic and adventuresome; tends to disregard authority.

The shortfall of the typical classroom is that most instruction is designed to meet the needs of the *analytic learner* and thus, the majority of the class members are functioning outside their comfort level most of the time. In assessing the typical educational environment McCarthy states:

Students read, they write stories and essays and sometimes poems, they solve math problems, they paint and draw, they play music. They do skills things, they do workbooks. But students don’t experience the law, and they don’t experience their own history, and they don’t often get the chance to be the person in the story. They don’t do science, except in the rare lab courses, where they are not all expected to arrive at the same results: mostly they read about and hear about other people doing science.<sup>7</sup>

While McCarthy is referring to practices that commonly occur in primary and secondary education, the underlying philosophy often extends well into the collegiate

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 17.

setting as well. Students who have best mastered the learning strategies of the *analytic learner* are most likely to find success in the university classroom. Further, McCarthy's research also illustrates why so many students have difficulty integrating the study of music history and theory with the implementation of performance practice and score preparation. Such activities require that the student think divergently, using a wide base of knowledge to arrive at original and appropriate musical decisions. However, the prevailing paradigms in today's classrooms tend to discourage divergent thinking, as students are taught to seek out *the right answers* for standardized testing through didactic means of instruction. At the collegiate level, the situation is further exacerbated as students come to rely on the experience and wisdom of the accomplished university professor, negating the need, or even the opportunity, for the student to participate in the musical decision-making process.

The interpretation of musical notation is a problem-solving activity of the greatest complexity. The recurring theme in even the most scholarly documents suggest that there are few absolutes in arriving at musical decisions, a process that relies as heavily on intuition as intellect.

A single 'correct' solution to the problem of which accidentals to add to a particular piece, and precisely how to sing the words – a solution about which all scholars will agree – seems beyond our grasp.<sup>8</sup>

So then, how are we to develop the young musician's intellect and intuition at the same time?

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<sup>8</sup> See Howard Mayer Brown (ed.) and Stanley Sadie (ed.), *Performance Practice: Music Before 1600*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1989), 148.

## McCarthy and Piaget: The Cycle vs. the Ladder

McCarthy goes on to discuss the work of Jean Piaget in regard to developmental psychology.<sup>9</sup> She observes that Piaget has done well to document the readiness of a child to comprehend certain levels of abstraction based on age and psychological development and that this alone has become the basis for many curricular decisions. In brief, she reveals that Piaget discovered that a very young child (0-2 years old) is only capable of concrete perception as embedded in his or her reflexes (feeling, touching, handling), that which Piaget labels as *sensorimotor*. Between the ages of 2 and 7, the child will move into the *preoperational* stage, in which the child is able to understand representational images, and then on to the *concrete operational* stage (age 7 – 11), during which the child is able to first exercise logic in dealing with classes and relationships. This framework depicting Piaget's research is typically portrayed as a ladder that finally leads to the *formal operational* stage (age 12-15), during which the child is able to actively reflect upon his or her own thinking. This is a process of moving from generalizations of *what is* to an analytical process of *what might be*. According to Piaget, only when the learner has ascended through this developmental hierarchy is he or she truly capable of *knowing* – knowing in the sense of taking ownership of the knowledge with the ability to fully integrate seemingly unrelated components into the creation of new personal meaning.

Bernice McCarthy then turns to the work of educational researcher Robert Kegan, who suggests that Piaget never meant for this model to be a *one-dimensional ladder*, as it is so frequently portrayed, in the support of various learning theories. The ladder merely acknowledges that there are prerequisite levels of readiness in a child's psychological

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 57.

development. What the ladder does *not* adequately portray is the recurring journey through each of the developmental stages each time the learner processes new information. Kegan has translated these stages into layman's terms in an effort to more succinctly identify the specific tendencies one observes in a student of *any* age. (See figure 2.1)

Figure 2.1 Piaget and Kegan

Piaget's Ladder	Kegan's correlation
Formal Operational 12-15 years	Reflecting on one's own thinking.
Concrete Operational 7-11 years	Embedded in concrete thinking and logic. Learning engaged with physical dimensions.
Preoperational 2-6 years	Embedded in perception. Images are manipulated.
Sensorimotor 0-2 years	Embedded in reflexes. Learning through feeling, touching, handling.

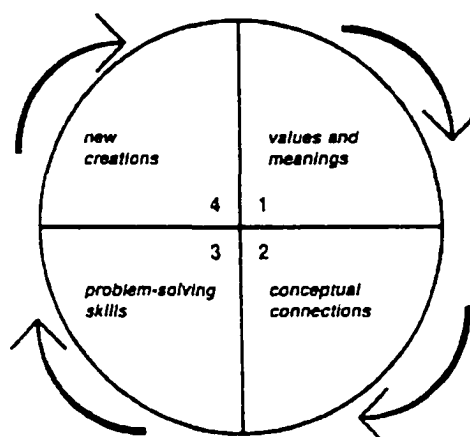
While it is clear that certain levels of emotional and intellectual development are prerequisite for readiness in Piaget's *formal operations*, for most people, the ladder analogy *is* inaccurate. McCarthy suggests that, instead, learning is a *circular* process: each person enters the cycle amidst his or her most comfortable style of learning and must be encouraged to work through those *modalities* that are neither intuitive nor innate. Figure 2.2 provides an alternative to Piaget's ladder, a cyclic nature of the learning process.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 58.



Figure 2.2      McCarthy's Model for the Cyclic Learning Process<sup>11</sup>



McCarthy's *quadrants* have direct correlations to the aforementioned developmental stages of Piaget and Kegan.<sup>12</sup> While focusing on specific behaviors of the individual learner, McCarthy exemplifies Kegan's point that learning is a process that requires one to repeatedly move through the various steps on Piaget's ladder in order to fully integrate new information in a meaningful way. This correlation is delineated below in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3      Correlations of McCarthy's Cycle to the Research of Piaget and Kegan

McCarthy	Defined	Correlation to Piaget and Kegan
Values and meanings <i>Integrating Experience with the "Self"</i>	<b>The Imaginative Learner:</b> Students seek personal meaning as they perceive information concretely and process it reflectively.	Sensorimotor - reflexes

<sup>11</sup> Permission to use this illustration is provided for one-time use by the publisher, About Learning, Inc. This illustration is from Bernice McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, 1984, 38. No additional transmission or reproduction is allowed without the expressed written consent of About Learning, Inc. For additional information on *4MAT*, please contact About Learning at (800) 822-4MAT.

<sup>12</sup> McCarthy, 38-43.

<b>Conceptual connections</b> <i>Concept formulation</i>	<b>The Analytic Learner:</b> Students seek concrete answers and are Sequential learners.	Pre-operational - perceptions
<b>Problem-solving skills</b> <i>Practice and Personalization</i>	<b>The Common Sense Learner:</b> uncomfortable with subjective judgments. Students integrate theory and practice. Most comfortable learning by active experimentation.	Concrete operational – physical dimensions.
<b>New creations</b> <i>Integrating Application with Experience</i>	<b>The Dynamic Learner:</b> Students learn best by trial and error, often reaching conclusions devoid of rational justification.	Formal operational – reintegrate

McCarthy reiterates that students will enter the cycle where they are most innately successful in an effort to create immediate relevance and understanding. In addition, fostering such an attitude in the midst of a learning environment that values cooperative learning activities (e.g. group work, guided discussion) will allow the dominance of one student's particular learning style to help compensate for the shortfalls of that of another. She states,

We need to allow students to function with their innate gifts as a focus, a home base, while they work with other students who have different styles which are honored in turn. We need to combine the ladder and the cycle.<sup>13</sup>

Of greatest importance, however, is that we design instructional activities that address each of the four quadrants based on Jean Piaget and labeled here by Bernice McCarthy. In doing so, we cannot help but reach a greater number of students *where they are* in an effort to facilitate what Piaget calls *real knowing*.

### **Right and Left Brain Processing**

There is one additional dimension to McCarthy's model that is of at least equal importance, that of right-left brain hemisphere dominance. Based on the research of Dr.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 59.

Roger Sperry.<sup>14</sup> McCarthy recognizes that the majority of the population tends to process information through either the left brain (analytical, sequential learners) or the right brain (intuitive, experiential learners). Here again, traditional curricular design strongly favors the left-brain learner while typically devaluing the *gut-reaction* patterns of the right-brain learner. The implications are particularly significant to this study in that creative activities such as art and music are thought to take place mainly in the right hemisphere of the brain. Yet, even in teaching music students in the academic setting we seldom take this into consideration when designing instruction. McCarthy's point is that learning through both hemispheres of the brain is to be equally fostered, not only in an effort to meet the varied needs of the individual learner, but also to help develop the skills of the opposite hemisphere dominance in each student. She provides an excellent synopsis of the differences between learning as facilitated by right-brain and left-brain dominance.<sup>15</sup>

People who approach learning with a left-mode processing preference  
have beautiful gifts.

They are systematic.

They solve problems by looking at the parts.

They are sequential and are excellent planners.

They are analytic.

People who approach learning with a right-mode processing preference  
have beautiful gifts.

They see patterns.

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<sup>14</sup> See Roger Sperry, "Lateral Specialization of Cerebral Function in the Surgically Separated Hemispheres" in *The Psychophysiology of Thinking* (ed., F.J. McGuigan and R.A. Schoonover, New York: Academic Press, 1973).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 75.

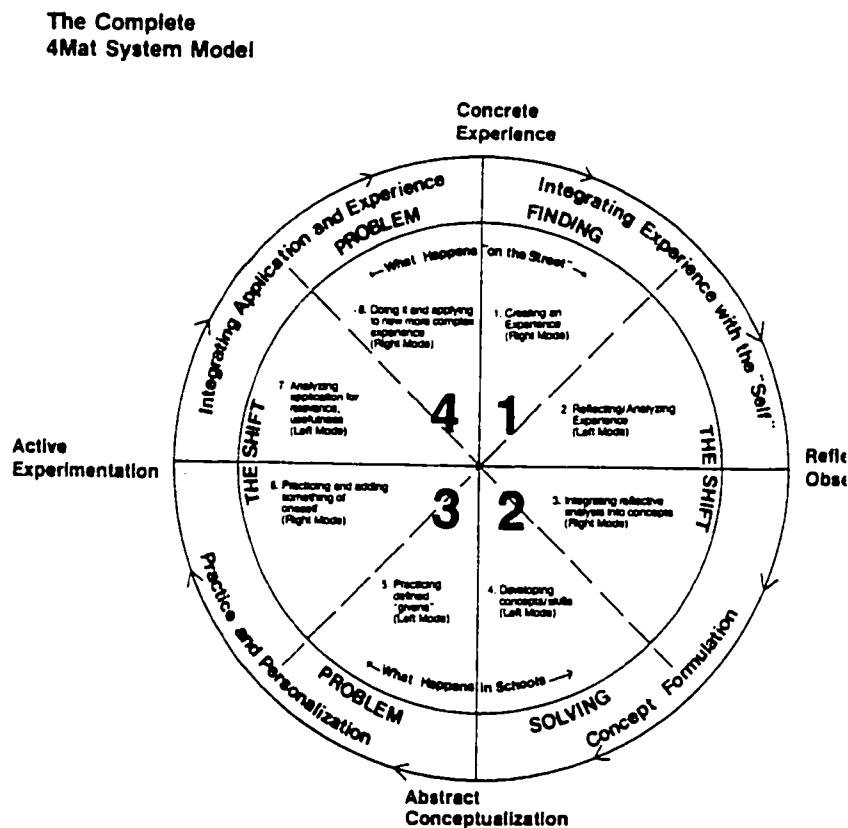
They solve problems by looking at the whole picture.

They are random and arrive at accurate conclusions in the absence of logical justification.

They are intuitive.

Thus, McCarthy's research results in a circular learning model with eight distinct parts as evidenced below in Figure 2.4. Based on the original four quadrants as they appeared in Figure 2.2, there are now additional divisions to compensate for instructional activities that are directed specifically toward right and left brain hemisphere dominance.

Figure 2.4 McCarthy's Eight Step Model with Sectors for Right and Left Brain<sup>16</sup>



<sup>16</sup> McCarthy, 122. See permission for use on page 53.

## **The 4MAT System Applied to the Teaching of Choral Literature and Score Analysis**

The following is an overview of how one might implement McCarthy's 4MAT System in the teaching of a choral literature course. Once again, the emphasis is not so much on a prescriptive plan of ordered events as it is upon encouraging students to think divergently according to their uniquely innate skills and intuition.

### Quadrant One – Integrating Experience with the Self

In quadrant one the main priority is *creating an experience*, first in the right-brain mode, then reinforcing this experience in the left-brain mode. In the teaching of choral literature this would be the student's first encounter with a musical score. This can take place by means of listening to a recording or simply by looking at the printed page in an effort to coax from each student his or her *intuitive* reaction to what he or she sees and hears. During the right-mode sector, the instructor provides little or no factual information other than that which is self evident from the recording or the score itself. The emphasis here is upon the *student's* first response to the music.

A shift to the left-mode of quadrant one will involve a discussion of students' initial observations. "What do you hear? What do you see? What are the salient characteristics that might help you identify this score? Are there any clues in the notation that might help inform your interpretive process?" Discussion that encourages reflection will help to solidify these first impressions, especially for those who lack confidence in their own initial intuitive response.

### Quadrant Two – Concept Formulation

The second quadrant involves integrating reflective analysis into specific

concepts. This is where most typical classroom teaching begins, and where much of it ends, as well. If there is a lecture or assigned reading to take place, this is when such would occur. In returning to the right-mode, this will involve identifying the discoveries from the preceding informal, intuitive analysis and reassigning more formal or appropriate labels and terms. Perhaps a student will have identified a prolonged period of harmonic instability in the middle of the piece even by simply stating, “the music gets chaotic at the top of page five.” The instructor might identify this as the development section of the piece, putting into context what ultimately becomes the balancing sections of exposition and recapitulation. In short, this is the where the student’s intuitive reactions are given validity in connection to more typical or *formal* means of analysis.

Returning to the left-mode, the instructor supplies the information necessary for solving the rest of the puzzle, either by lecture, readings, or a similarly didactic presentation. Let us suppose we are examining one of the thirteen secular part songs of Franz Joseph Haydn. The instructor would probably want to explain the occasional nature of these works and how they differ from subsequent pieces labeled as part songs that were born out of social unrest and the growth of fraternal organizations. (Haydn’s works, of course, were conceived for the entertainment of the aristocracy and lack the double entendre of their later counterparts.) It would also be worthwhile to present an overview of Sonata-allegro form, arguably the dominant force in musical language of that day, and a discussion of how each of these small pieces tend to exploit similarly developmental processes in their musical structure. This would also be the time to discuss the prevailing elements of performance practice at the height of the Classical period, providing examples of appropriate articulation, ornamentation, rhythmic

alterations, and reference to likely instrumentation and the limitations therein. In short, this is the only time during the lesson that the instructor would be fully in charge of the process – the typical note-taking procedure found in most college classrooms the majority of the time.

### Quadrant Three – Practice and Personalization

Moving into quadrant three, the McCarthy model reverses the right-left hemisphere orientation in order to create a smooth transition into the early stages of analysis. Remaining in the left mode, students *practice defined givens* by searching for evidence of that which has been presented in the lectures and by participating in discussions of quadrants one and two. “Are there any instances where rhythmic alteration or ornamentation should be added or modified? What are the considerations in performing this piece with the appropriate performance forces and instrumentation based upon what we know about Haydn and his work at the Esterházy estate?” These questions differ from those in the first quadrant, as they call upon the student not only to identify musical structures and elements, but also to coalesce these observations with historical background and considerations for actual performance. This is also the time when traditional musical analysis should take place, identifying the function of particular chords, delineating phrase structure, and seeking out other definitive elements that will help the student understand the compositional techniques manifested in the music.

When moving to the right hemisphere mode of quadrant three, the emphasis is to reinforce conceptual knowledge by encouraging the students to find a way to make the knowledge their own. Perhaps when working in the left-mode, the student uses traditional Roman numeral analysis to identify harmonic movement and structure, or a

Herford bar-line analysis<sup>17</sup> to demonstrate the balance and symmetry of the piece. In returning to the right-mode, the students are encouraged to devise a non-traditional representation of the subject matter that will force them to rework concepts into clearly defined personal meaning, perhaps an alternative graphical representation that uses colors or line-graphs to portray harmonic instability and the return to tonicization, or a narrative paragraph that portrays the development section in metaphorical terms, creating a human quality that more clearly expresses the formulaic nature of the figured base. Most important is the student's ability to arrive at a personal response to the elements of formal analysis, thus resulting in an interpretation that will influence the eventual performance.

#### Quadrant Four – Integrating Application with Experience

Quadrant four returns to the left mode in an effort to establish whether the analytical procedures of quadrant three are viable. McCarthy advocates beginning with an activity that involves “analyzing for usefulness or application.”<sup>18</sup> To continue with the example of the Haydn partsong, the most obvious activity here would be to actually perform the song. “Can we put the concepts into practice? Are they applicable to this particular work? What assumptions must we make about performance practice that are not readily apparent in the score?”

Finally, the right hemisphere of quadrant four becomes the defining activity of the

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<sup>17</sup> Julius Herford is renowned for his systematic approach to score analysis that involves the grouping of measures to reveal structure, symmetry and form as an aid to the conductor. See Harold Decker, *Choral Conducting Symposium*. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988).

<sup>18</sup> McCarthy, 118.



entire process – “applying [all of the above] to a new and more complex experience.”<sup>19</sup>

This might include having the student examine one of the other Haydn part songs on his or her own in an effort to prepare the score for performance. Or it might involve looking at a movement from a Haydn oratorio or mass in search of similarities and differences in structure and style while venturing forth in making appropriate decisions regarding interpretation and performance.

Bernice McCarthy repeatedly reminds us that the model is circular and that the process will continually repeat itself, not only as we broach new information regarding various periods and styles, but also as we approach each new piece of repertoire. The process, however, remains essentially the same:

*Experience* the piece to arrive at an intuitive response;

gather in *conceptual* information to make sense of what you have seen or heard;

use the concepts to dissect and *analyze* the piece;

then, *synthesize* all of the above in the evaluation and analysis of a similar work.

### **Changing Modalities**

In following the circular process of the *4MAT System*, McCarthy encourages the instructor to take every opportunity to change the modality of learning, that is, alternating between the three modes of perception: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

“Can you create a kinesthetic representation of the harmonic instability of measure 42?”

(Certainly a prerequisite to communicative conducting.) “Can you create a multi-color

graphic that represents the subtle changes in the tonal and/or modal center of the piece?”

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<sup>19</sup> McCarthy, 122.

McCarthy suggests that making an effort to change modalities whenever possible in a *MMAT* lesson will simply solidify the student's ability to fully comprehend and manipulate the concepts of the subject matter at hand. In a musical context, asking the student to write about the *psychological development* of the first theme or to use body movement to demonstrate tension and release of a musical phrase will result in opportunities for alternatives to traditional musical analysis. The student is consistently encouraged to find a way to express his or her intuitive reaction to the musical score.

While it is certain that Bernice McCarthy did not have the specific process of score study in mind when developing the *MMAT System*, the System is helpful in requiring students to analyze, dissect, and evaluate nearly any musical score, thus, in turn, facilitating an excellent point of departure for creating an environment that encourages, if not requires, the student to become intimately involved with the unique essence of each composition.

### **SCORE STUDY TO DEVELOP THE AURAL IMAGE**

While Bernice McCarthy's research lends itself well to this study by providing a generalized pedagogical approach to learning, there are numerous sources that more succinctly address the prevalent issues of teaching in the music content area, or more specifically, the teaching of music theory.

In 1959, music theorist Stanley Fletcher identified the dichotomy between the terms *applied music* and *theory of music*, frequently the nomenclature for specific areas of study in a typical university. His illustration brought forth that, indeed, students are often unaware of the relevance of music theory as it pertains to performance. He states,

The most essential idea that we must get across to the student performer is that in a musical composition all the elements are always related; that is what makes it a composition.<sup>20</sup>

Theory teaching has failed for the performer unless it increases his sense of the magic and mystery in the power of musical patterns, develops in him an understanding of the dynamic functioning of the materials of music, and empowers him with the ability to conceptualize a musical composition as a live psychological event, as an organic pattern of active and inter-related forces operating upon himself and the listener alike.<sup>21</sup>

Fletcher portends that the teaching of theory cannot exist in a vacuum set apart from the other elements of music. The theory professor is obliged to assist the student in drawing conclusions that pertain to performance. Likewise, the studio instructor is obliged to help the student discover elements of structure and style as part of the interpretive process. In short, the only way that theory and praxis are likely to unite is through the application of actual theoretical principles to real musical examples.

Dealing with real music is a safeguard against over-generalization. From the point of view of a performer, I would say that theory as it is often taught is too abstract and academic a study. It does not get around soon enough or often enough to dealing with actual compositions. There is not sufficient study of live music. The student is left with a residue of bits and pieces that are of little use to him in his job as performer.<sup>22</sup>

Similarly, theorist and pedagogue Michael Rogers draws upon numerous illustrations regarding the inability of many institutions to provide a cohesive approach to the teaching of the varied musical elements. In his book, *Teaching Approaches in Music*

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<sup>20</sup> Stanley Fletcher. "The Value of Teaching Theory: For the Performer." *Journal of Music Theory*, III, i (April, 1959) 28-49.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 46.

*Theory*; <sup>23</sup> he quotes an essay by Frederic Homan which states.

Unfortunately most music study does not train us to listen (really), identify or even remember the music sounds we hear or use. This is left to accident. The student must put it all together alone and often by accident. And we say some are born with good ears and some are not. This is only partly true.

Some of us hear more precisely than others just as some see well without glasses while others require them to improve the clarity of their vision. But there is no use in improving our vision if we do not know what we are seeing. <sup>24</sup>

The above leads Rogers to his definition of *listening* as a participatory activity that requires the *listener* to mentally engage in the musical process. In fact, the *thinking/listening* interaction serves as a foundation throughout Rogers' pedagogical approach.

The more thinking that takes place, the more there is to hear; the more listening that takes place, the more there is to ponder. . . . Musical analysis is usually the operation that sets this cyclical and spiral process into motion. The goal of analysis is to understand from the inside out how and why a piece of music works and therefore, by extension, how it might have been composed, how it might be performed, heard or taught. <sup>25</sup>

Ultimately, Rogers places great value on the development of one's musical curiosity, as the study of theory is only a point of departure for the lifelong practicing musician.

But a more substantial and inclusive view of theory should also admit the possibility of learning how to ask questions as well as how to answer them. In fact, one of the most important goals of any theory class ought to

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<sup>23</sup> See Michael R. Rogers, *Teaching Approaches in Music Theory: An Overview of Pedagogical Philosophies*, Carbondale & Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984)

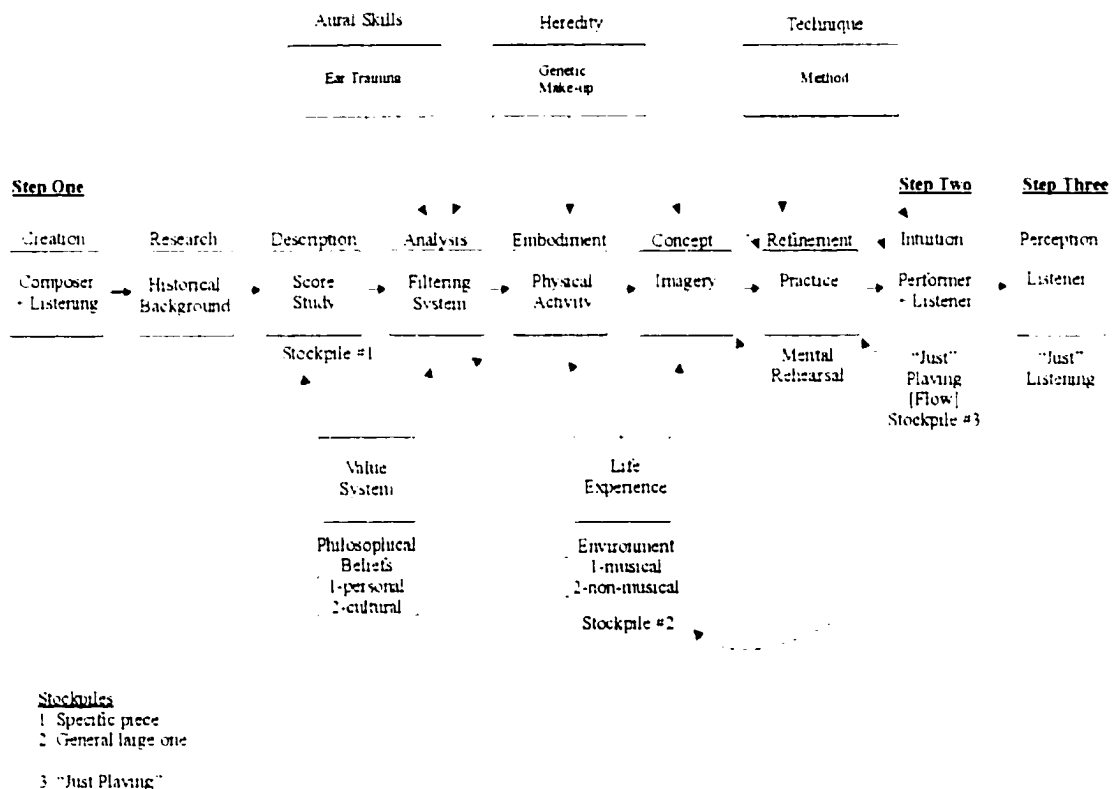
<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

be discovering which questions about music are most worth asking in the first place.<sup>26</sup>

Since the publication of Rogers' book in 1984, he has continued to develop this active listening approach to music theory, resulting in a three-step process he refers to as the "Communication Chain for Musical Performance." (See figure 2.5)

Figure 2.5 Communication Chain for Musical Performance



### Step One: Preparing for Performance

*Step One* consists of the many activities that lead to the performance of a given work. While these appear to be sequential in Rogers' chart, he will tell you that each of the activities that prepare one for a musical performance *blur together* according to one's

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 5.

background and personal experience and mental process. Below is a brief explanation of these first seven stages.

**Creation:** The first conception/perception of a given musical work. This might be the actual compositional process, or it might be the first time one hears or encounters a recording, score, or performance of the piece.

**Research:** Facts, dates, and performance venues – any information that will help place this work in an appropriate historical context.

**Description:** Data collection as actually pertaining to this specific piece of music. This is the time not only to observe surface detail such as tempo and articulation markings, structure, and symmetry, but also the context of these elements as they pertain to the work as a whole.

**Analysis:** An attempt to draw from the observations of the previous stage to arrive at a cohesive realization of the music. This involves explaining connections, relationships, patterns, making comparisons, answering *how* and *why* questions, and activating one's cognitive/perceptual filtering system.

**Embodiment:** "Actualizing the expressive content or character of music within the body."<sup>27</sup> Based on the research of Alexandra Pierce,<sup>28</sup> this process requires the musician to express phrase, tension, release, articulation, metrical accentuation, and other musical nuance through kinesthetic representation.

**Concept:** All previous stages inform the musician's *aural image* – the complete mental picture of how a composition is to sound in performance. The aural image becomes the driving force and inspiration of *all* processes that follow.

**Refinement:** The stage familiar to most people as practice, except practice sessions are constantly compared to the aural image that is the synthesis of all previous stages. The arrows in the chart indicate that the music lives in a cyclic process of practicing and refining to the standards delineated by one's aural image.

Upon developing a clear *aural image* of the work to be performed, and dedicating sufficient time and energy to practice and refinement, the musician is ideally ready for

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<sup>27</sup> Michael R. Rogers, *Score Study and Analysis*, a handout used at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> See Alexandra and Roger Pierce *Expressive Movement: Posture and Action in Daily Life, Sports and the Performing Arts*, (New York: Plenum Press, 1989).

performance. Rogers states that during the seven stages of *Step One* the musician moves gradually from a conscious, cognitive approach to a more intuitive state of *flow*.<sup>29</sup> This is the point at which one becomes lost in the music, drawing on all previous knowledge, training, and experience to become an *intuitive* performer.

One should also note the peripheral elements that provide second and third dimensions to Rogers' chart. Above the *Communication Chain* are three boxes that account for the performer's musicality, thus contributing to his or her success in achieving each stage.

**Aural Skills:** What does the musician hear? How well has the ear been trained, be it in the recognition of chord structures and intervallic relationships, or to detect the nuance of phrasing and articulation?

**Heredity:** What does the musician bring to the table in terms of innate talent?

**Technique:** What skills has the musician developed through the regimen of practice and discipline?

As demonstrated by a series of arrows, each of these components will influence the musician's success at various stages of the process. Similarly, two boxes below the chain account for non-musical qualities that will ultimately influence the performance as well. Be it one's personal, philosophical or religious beliefs, or simply the experiences of daily life, musical and otherwise, these all coalesce in the performer's personality, bringing insight to the interpretive process.

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<sup>29</sup> See Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: the Psychology of Optimal Experiences*. (New York: Harper Collins, 1990). Csikszentmihalyi submits that when one is fully immersed in a pleasurable activity, be it athletics, a hobby, or other highly concentrated effort, a person enters into a state of *flow* during which time he or she loses track of time, space and consciousness. Or in the author's words, "the sense of effortless action [humans] feel in moments that stand out as the best in their lives."

Also important are the *stockpiles* placed at the point of *descriptive score study* and again, below the chain as part of *Life Experience*. These stockpiles refer to every bit of information the musician has collected about music, art, and the human condition in general. Each time we encounter a musical performance, regardless of the quality, we gather data for our stockpiles that will later inform our musical decisions. The same can be said for every time one reads a great book or engages in a thought provoking conversation. As musicians and interpreters of humanity, we rely on every human experience that has gone before us to inform our sense of expression.

### **Step Two: Performance**

*Step Two* represents the symbiotic relationship between the performer and the listener, the result of which is derived largely from the performer's intuitive rendering of the musical score. Once again, it should be noted that the musician's intuition is a product of the seven preceding stages of *Step One* and, in fact, remains in flux by the cyclic process that continues to transpire between the interaction of practice and the aural image.

Rogers submits that this process will result in a phenomenon he has labeled as *just playing*. Implicit in this label is the double entendre of first rendering an appropriate and informed, or *just*, performance of the work, but also engaging in an intuitive process resulting in a sense of *flow*. That is, the accomplished musician loses the sense of self and time in the process of *just playing*.

Out of this process, a third *stockpile* is borne that is the product of musical intuition. This is the spontaneity of inspired performance – the *ah-ha* moments that are derived from heightened musical intensity.



### Step Three: Perception

Finally, Rogers focuses on the listener in *Step Three*, although this may apply simply to the performer who is able to metabolize and reflect upon his or her own performance. The act of *just listening* is congruent with that of *just playing* in that the listener is able to fully experience the psychological and aesthetic qualities of the performance beyond the dogmatic regimentation implied in the seven stages of Step One. The process loops back into the cycle via one's cumulative Life Experience, which again contributes to the collective *stockpiles* of musical knowledge and empathy for the human experience.

What is unique about Rogers' multifaceted approach is the philosophy that a person's source of knowledge, musical or otherwise, is inextricably linked to one's total sense of musical expression. Rogers' *Communication Chain* thoroughly addresses the disintegration of musical instruction so succinctly identified by Stanley Fletcher. This is not a sequential process of practice and data collection, but a model that demands synthesis of all the musical elements if *just playing* is to ever occur.

Returning to our mission of preparing the young conductor, Rogers' model suggests that we are obliged to help our students cross the chasm from that which exists in raw notation to that which becomes an inspired musical idea in the mind of the musician. So often, young conductors rely on the *aural image* of others as they strive to recreate a piece as they remember having performed it with their high school or college choir. They may recreate every pause and nuance without ever giving thought to why such detail is taking place. This is not *just playing*, but merely mimicry. The act of *just playing* (or *just conducting*) is a constant interaction between the conductor and his or her

aural image, a process that requires the students to take personal ownership of the score by allowing them (or more accurately, requiring them) to explain, justify, rationalize, and demystify the musical choices they have made.

While numerous approaches to finding detailed information in the score are addressed in the discussion of *score study checklists* in Chapter One, Rogers' process for developing the aural image provides a bridge between the observation of surface detail and arriving at a meaningful personalized musical interpretation. To this end, he has developed a list of questions designed to help students discover their unique aural image of a musical score.<sup>30</sup>

1. What is the timber of the voice singing? Is it warm? Is it agitated? Is the mood forgiving, accusing, or of some other character?
2. Where is the singer? On a stage? In a church? Where? Is there an audience or congregation? How many people are there? What are the acoustics of the hall? Is there reverberation? Is it intimate?
3. If you had to assign a color to this performance, what would it be? Does it stay the same throughout?
4. What is the tempo? Does the tempo remain the same? If not, where does it change and how dramatically?
5. Is there accompaniment? If yes, what? Are there other singers? Instruments? What are they and how many? Where are they in proximity to the singer?
6. Were you, as an audience, at all moved by your mental performance? If yes, how? Exhilarated? Saddened? ...?

These questions are neither exhaustive nor sequential, nor is it necessary that every question be fully addressed in every analysis. This is a qualitative process that relies more on one's *depth* of knowledge than one's *breadth* of knowledge.

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<sup>30</sup> Paraphrased. Based on a series of lectures and handouts by Michael R. Rogers.

For example, if a student is to demonstrate a thorough understanding of a phrase structure in a Palestrina motet, the student will have had to grapple with issues of vertical harmonic structure (or lack thereof), dove tailing phrases that lead to inconclusive cadential points, stress and release as related to melodic contour, the accuracy of text underlay, and the manifestation of *musica ficta* and *recta*, whether written or implied. That is, no one musical element exists in absence of the others. If the student is to participate in *substantive conversation*<sup>31</sup> about any one element, there is a necessary *depth* of understanding in regard to the other elements and how they interact with one another. Thus, it would be more useful for a student to explore even one or two of Rogers' questions at length than to superficially provide short answers to each of them.

What the aural image does not always provide is hard quantitative data that can easily be identified as right or wrong. The interpretive process, however, is less about finding the *right* answers than it is about seeking out *viable* answers that are well informed from one's collective stockpiling experience. It is only when one becomes truly at ease with *just playing*, or *just conducting*, that the musical experience achieves its full capacity for inspiring performers and listeners alike.

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<sup>31</sup> See Fred Newmann and Gary Wehlege, Five Standards of Authentic Instruction, *Educational Leadership*, 50, 7. (April 1993), 8-12. *Substantive Conversation* is one of the Five Standards of Authentic Learning as developed by Newmann and Wehlege. They submit that engaging the student in substantive conversation, be it by journaling, discussion or written assignments that encourage divergent thinking, is prerequisite to assessing one's depth of knowledge.

## CORRELATION OF THE 4MAT SYSTEM TO THE COMMUNICATION CHAIN FOR MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

While there are no apparent *formal* links between Bernice McCarthy's 4MAT System and recent trends in the pedagogy of teaching music theory, it is clear that Michael Rogers strives to elicit a similar level of curiosity and divergent thinking on the part of his students. The chart below (Figure 2.6) compares the procedures of Rogers' *Communication Chain for Musical Performance* to the eight steps of McCarthy's 4MAT System. (Refer to *Communication Chain* – Figure 2.5 on page 65)

Figure 2.6 McCarthy and Rogers

McCarthy 4MAT System	Rogers Communication Chain
1. Create the experience. (right-mode)	1. <b>Creation</b> – The first encounter with the music – live performance or initial perusal of score.
2. Reflective analysis. (left-mode)	2. The "listener's" response.
3. Integrate reflective analysis into concepts. (right-mode)	3. The interactive stages of Step One, particularly <b>Analysis</b> questions that require divergent thought and <b>Embodiment</b> activities.
4. Develop concept skills. (left-mode)	4. The <b>Research</b> and <b>Description</b> stages of Step One.
5. Practice defined givens. (left-mode)	5. A return <b>Analysis</b> and <b>Embodiment</b> , incorporating information from <b>Research</b> and <b>Description</b> .
6. Add something of oneself. (right-mode)	6. <b>Concept</b> – Development of one's personal aural image.
7. Analyze application for relevance. (left-mode)	7. <b>Refinement – Intuition – Perception</b> . The actual process of performance.
8. Apply to new or more complex experience. Share your findings with others. (right-mode)	8. The recurring cycle of the entire process each time one encounters a new composition in preparation of conducting or performance.

The Communication Chain model may not subscribe to McCarthy's systematic approach designed to consistently address varied learning styles, but philosophically, the two paradigms have much in common.

1. Both are concerned with taking the process from inception to completion in a manner that will require an active and inquisitive level of involvement.
2. Both value the use of alternative modalities, well exemplified in the Communication Chain by the use of non-traditional analytical procedures and exercises.
3. Both include a series of activities or events that result in a real and meaningful application, thereby creating additional *stockpiles* of useful information.

Of greatest value to this study is the recurring theme that embraces alternative approaches to problem solving in an effort to engage the student/musician in an active participatory role.

The *4MAT System* purist would desire to adhere specifically to McCarthy's *cycle* in the presentation of every musical example. This is not an absolute necessity in leading the student into a thorough score preparation procedure. What is important is the philosophy of creating the experience first – allowing the student to immerse him or herself into the music, either visually or aurally, *before* trying to explain how the music is structured or how it should be performed. It is crucial that we cultivate the ability for our students to trust their intuition as a point of departure in the deciphering of any musical work. Once this has been done, a need to gain additional knowledge and information is created to serve as a motivation for the student to fully dissect what it is they have heard

or seen. This is a recurring procedure for every practicing musician who desires to be an intuitive and communicative conductor.

The following provides two examples of how this procedure might be implemented, adapting and integrating the *Communication Chain for Musical Performance* (correlation noted at the end of each activity) into the *4MAT System* approach. The first example is built around *the experience* of responding to a recording of the work to be studied.

### Sample Lesson #1: Giles Swayne – *Magnificat*<sup>32</sup>

1. **Create the experience:** Play a recording of the Swayne *Magnificat* without introduction. Students are provided with a blank piece of paper and a variety of colored markers. The only instruction given is to draw a picture, as explicit as possible, of what they hear. (Creation)
2. **Reflective analysis:** Students draw the picture. Instructor moves about the classroom encouraging them to be creative in their analysis. The intent is to capture the musical essence of what they have heard. (Analysis, Concept – Imagery)
3. **Integrate reflective analysis into concepts:** Students describe their drawings to the rest of the class, identifying the various graphics and colors and why they have made particular choices. They are encouraged to express how the drawing is related to their emotional reaction to the piece and what musical events have evoked a particular response. Why was the music unsettling in places? What about it seemed sonorous or incongruent? How would you describe this piece to someone who hasn't heard it before? (Description, Analysis, Concept-Imagery)
4. **Develop concept skills:** Scores of the work are distributed. The instructor gives the historical context and how it relates to other works composed by 20<sup>th</sup> century English composer Giles Swayne. Additional details regarding the occasion and purpose for which it was composed may also be presented. The instructor continues with a brief discussion of 20<sup>th</sup> Century harmonic tendencies and various compositional devices, including a few of those employed here. An examination of the *Magnificat* text is also important as it relates (or not) to Swaynes' musical

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<sup>32</sup> See Giles Swayne, *Magnificat* (Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent: Novello, 1986).

setting. What personal commentary (if any) does Swayne desire to communicate regarding the text of the *Magnificat*? (Research, Description, Analysis, Concept-Imagery)

5. **Practice defined givens:** Students break into groups to dissect the score further, seeking additional compositional devices, trends in harmonic/melodic development, symmetry or lack thereof in musical structure etc. – particularly as it relates to specific lines of the text if such a correlation exists. Students are encouraged to develop alternative tools for analysis, whether it is a kinesthetic representation or a personalized approach to charting the events of the piece. (Research, Description, Analysis and Embodiment)
6. **Add something of oneself:** Students consider questions regarding their personal *aural image*, discussing them in small groups and/or presenting their opinions to the class. Sample questions might include:
  - What is the character of the music? Is it in agreement with the character of the text?
  - Is there a discernable form in the composition? If so, is there any correlation to the mood of the varied sections of the piece? Could you write a psychological profile for this work?What is the tonality? Is there just one? Describe the tonal events such as modulations and tonicization and how these events are related, or not, to the text. (Analysis and Concept-Imagery)
7. **Analyze application for relevance:** As class discussion takes place, a list of compositional trends and devices is compiled as a result of student and small group analysis. “What can we observe about Swayne’s compositional style and his ability to communicate emotional and musical ideas? Which of these are unique to Swayne as a Twentieth century composer? Which of these are we likely to encounter in other works by Twentieth century composers who write in a similar style.” Students are asked to sing (perform) specific phrases as they would want to hear them performed by their choir based on these findings. (Refinement, Intuition and Perception)
8. **Apply to new or more complex experience – sharing with others:** Students are given a recording and score to Rautavaara’s *Suite de Lorca*<sup>33</sup> and instructed to go through a similar process with the third and fourth movements, noting the similarities of Avant Garde compositional devices and the mixing of musical and cultural ideas. “Prepare to conduct what you hear.” With this, they return to step one at the top of the circle.

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<sup>33</sup> See Einojuhani Rautavaara, *Suite de Lorca* (Helsinki, Finland: Fazer Music, 1993).

While Swayne's *Magnificat* and Ratauvaara's *Suite de Lorca* exemplify advanced choral repertoire typically beyond the scope of a novice conductor, both are excellent compositions for an introductory assignment such as this one. A student will most likely possess a familiarity with the sound and scope of twentieth century choral repertoire, and thus, are more likely to trust their intuition in developing an intuitive reaction. Secondly, these works are particularly blatant in their proportions and stylistic components to an extent that they are certain to elicit a personal response from the listener. They lend themselves easily to descriptive words that immediately evoke an emotional response as a point of departure for substantive conversation. Beginning with a Haydn part song or a Palestrina motet may represent genres unfamiliar to the student and, thereby, require much more guidance before the student can properly place the music in an appropriate context. At this stage, the emphasis is placed upon the process of decoding the musical notation and developing a musical opinion about the printed score as the student comes to rely on his or her own intuition and analytical skills.

### **Sample Lesson #2: Benjamin Britten – *The Evening Primrose*<sup>34</sup>**

Quite by contrast is Benjamin Britten's *The Evening Primrose*, one of *Five Flower Songs*. Here, the medium is much more subtle, though equally deliberate in the extension of harmonic language and other specific compositional devices to create a unique musical effect. This procedure will demand a greater level of concentration on the part of the student in order to decipher that which might not be evident upon first glance, thus it is advantageous to reverse the process by requiring the student to first

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<sup>34</sup> See Benjamin Britten, *The Evening Primrose*, (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., 1951).



encounter the music via the printed score in an effort to create the initial aural image devoid of actual sound. A possible approach to this process is as follows.

1. **Create the experience:** Hand out the scores to the students without introduction. Either provide them with a list of the *aural imaging* questions or pose two or three specific questions that are particularly pertinent to this score. Some possibilities might include.
  - What color(s) do you hear in this piece? Do they change? How often and where?
  - What is the significance of the overlapping arpeggiated figures at the bottom of page three and again on page seven? Is this a random decision on the part of the composer?
  - Is there a direct relationship between music and text? Of phrases to one another? Explain. (Creation, Analysis and Concept-Imagery)
2. **Reflective analysis:** Students take a few moments to address the questions as posed above. They may choose to write a paragraph articulating their thoughts verbally, or they may create some graphical representation to be explained to the class at a later time. It is crucial at this point that they have *not yet heard* a performance of the music, recorded or otherwise. (Creation, Analysis and Concept-Imagery)
3. **Integrate reflective analysis into concepts:** Students share their *aural images* with the rest of the class either by reading their narratives or sharing their drawings. The instructor compiles a list of observations as the narratives are clarified and/or translated into musical terms. (Description)
4. **Develop concept skills:** The instructor provides information on the context of the work, how it relates to the other five pieces in the set, the origins of the poetry by John Clare, and specific examples of how Britten creates ambiguity by the extensive use of inverted chords and passages that lead toward momentary bi-tonality. (Research and Description)
5. **Practice defined givens:** Students break into small groups to examine how these compositional devices manifest themselves in relation to the text. They also may wish to identify conducting issues and possible solutions. (Analysis and Embodiment)
6. **Add something of oneself:** Returning to the class discussion, students share their opinions of the meaning of the text *as according to Benjamin Britten*, based on his use of extended harmony and various compositional devices. (Concept – Imagery)

7. **Analyze application for relevance:** Finally, the students are allowed to hear a recording of the work to see if their initial *aural image* is consistent with what they hear in an actual performance. Were they correct in their assessment of Britten's compositional style? Do they wish to revise any of their opinions? (Practice, Performer and Listener)
8. **Apply to new or more complex experience – sharing with others:** Students are given a similar assignment, this time with Randall Thompson's *Last Words of David*, in an effort to develop an aural image of the score *before* actually hearing a recording. "Prepare to conduct what you hear."

In beginning with the score first, the works of Benjamin Britten and Randall Thompson are particularly useful, not only due to their brevity, but also due to the fact that each possesses a very unique compositional language that tends to elicit a very specific and vivid response on the part of the listener. The lesson is most effective if the composition is not familiar to anyone in the class. In the case of this lesson, the emphasis lies on the student's ability to begin hearing the texture and style of the music before the first sound is made, a process that will become the very foundations of creating the conductor's aural image.

## SUMMARY

In recent years much energy and thought has been dedicated to examining how the teaching/learning environment can be enhanced to meet the needs of those who learn in a variety of ways. Yet, despite this extensive research, change comes slowly in the classrooms of higher education. Even in dealing with students in the arts where innovation and creativity are said to be especially valued, university instructors frequently rely on outdated modes of didactic instruction to present information to their students.

Bernice McCarthy and Michael Rogers have each developed highly personalized pedagogical approaches that not only value the needs of the individual learner, but also focus on a series of problem-solving activities that require students to take personal ownership in the process of acquiring knowledge.

McCarthy's *4MAT System* attempts to meet students *where they are* in a circular model that provides learning opportunities for every student, regardless of how he or she learns best. Furthermore, McCarthy's sensitivity to left-brain or right-brain dominance helps the *analytic learner* become more intuitive and the *intuitive learner* become more analytical. While not directly related to the process of score study, adopting McCarthy's approach is sure to result in a more comprehensive and engaging process that leads the student from a superficial knowledge of theory and history to an application of concepts and ideals in preparation for performance.

Similarly, Michael Rogers is concerned with surpassing the all-too-common phenomenon of teaching music theory for theory's sake. He acknowledges that one can know a great deal about a musical score, yet lack the capability to render a viable or interesting performance from that score.

His nine-stage *Communication Chain for Musical Performance* provides a systematic, but highly flexible, paradigm for seeing beyond the surface detail of the score in an effort to achieve a depth of musical understanding that leads to a personalized interpretation. The development of one's *aural image* is the culmination of all past experience, including research, score study, and analysis. In addition, Rogers acknowledges that as musicians, we bring unique qualities to our performances simply from the experience of being alive. All of the above results in the development of a

series of *stockpiles* that ultimately inform and enhance our personal aural image of a musical score. Only when we have a clear aural image are we free to experience *just playing*, or *just listening*, the completely intuitive musical experience.

This chapter has sought out the commonalities in the varied approaches and applications of McCarthy and Rogers. The result is a comprehensive approach to teaching score study to undergraduate choral conducting students that fuses these two ideologies into one. In creating a classroom where teaching to diverse learners is commonplace and while formulating varied activities that encourage young musicians to think creatively and divergently, we are well on our way to facilitating conductors who rely not only on intellect, but on intuition as well.

## CHAPTER THREE

### AN OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE PRACTICE AS RELATED TO PRIMARY SOURCES

*The dividing line between improving a composition, to the advantage of the composer, and distorting it is both elastic and very thin. It is not a boundary that can be surveyed as if one were dealing in real estate. Flexibility, good taste and above all reverence for a master are the essence. The admonition to play what is printed will never suffice. Between these extremes lies a vast field of exercise of thoughtful consideration.*

- Erich Leinsdorf<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest challenges for the choral conductor is the need to cultivate a level of historical expertise that spans more than five hundred years of musical development. It is not enough to understand vocal pedagogy, fundamentals of diction, and the relationship of gesture to sound. The choral conductor is also expected to be at ease when dealing with phrasing in a Renaissance motet or rhythmic alteration and ornamentation in a Baroque oratorio. We cannot assume that students arrive at the university level with an innate understanding of such factors in performance. Even if a student has been fortunate enough to participate in ensembles that have performed a wide variety of repertoire, it is rare to find a singer who has given notice to the interpretive *decision-making process* of the conductor. And it is even *less* likely that the singer will have related those decisions to historical style and performance practice. Further, we simply cannot rely on the consistency of such past experiences. There are still plenty of overly romanticized *Messiah* performances to be heard, as well as many choirs that

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<sup>1</sup> Erich Leinsdorf, *Cadenza: A Musical Career*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1981 230-231).

perform Brahms and Schumann in such a dry and *clinical* manner that the end result seems completely devoid of human emotion.

It is of great help that it has become the norm in the last quarter-century to aspire to the tenets of historical performance practice. Even many of the world's leading orchestras, including those previously renowned for preserving the thick, laborious renditions of the late Nineteenth century, have conceded to the findings of scholars of early music. Such trends are well documented in the performance notes found in the preface to many recent performance editions. In fact, it is interesting to note the evolution of this phenomenon, as historically informed performance has become increasingly common. Take, for example, the edition of Handel's *Messiah* by Watkins Shaw,<sup>2</sup> first published by Novello in 1959. Regarded by many as the definitive modern edition, Shaw's score provides extensive editorial notes and markings, mainly in regard to dynamics, articulation, ornamentation, and tempo. In addition, Shaw later published a companion volume<sup>3</sup> to provide additional guidance for the scholar who desires to more fully understand the musical conventions of Handel's day. These timely publications were an integral part of the performance practice movement that resulted in innumerable recordings using period instruments and performance editions with higher standards for scholarship.

By contrast, more recent *Messiah* editions, such as the one edited by Clifford

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<sup>2</sup> Watkins Shaw, ed., *Messiah* (London: Novello, 1959).

<sup>3</sup> Watkins Shaw, *A Textual and Historical Companion to Handel's Messiah* (London: Novello, 1972).

Bartlett<sup>4</sup> for Oxford in 1998, acknowledge that today's musicians have become accustomed to the ideals and manifestations of performance practice. Thus, there is less need to *overedit* the score, a process that can't help but reflect the editor's subjective opinions and ideals. In the introduction to his edition, Bartlett writes:

There are two incompatible aims for new editions of music from the past: to show what the composer wrote and to suggest what his notation meant. *Messiah* brings this problem to a head because it is performed so frequently and by such a wide range of singers and players. Some with thorough knowledge of Handelian performance practice will instinctively make the necessary adjustments to his notation, others will assume that the notation of their score is as precise as, say, Verdi's *Requiem* or Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*. This new edition may be used by all. It is less didactic than some to avoid ephemeral ideas in performance practice and to allow conductors to use their own imagination; but it offers tactful guidance when necessary.<sup>5</sup>

Bartlett is one of many editors today who is producing *clean* editions with few editorial markings and alterations, on the assumption that today's performer will, indeed, be able to "instinctively make the necessary adjustments." Thus, it is all the more important that the next generation of musicians have a thorough understanding of what those adjustments might be.

As noted in Chapter One, there is no shortage of books that provide infinite detail on the various aspects of performance practice, ranging from those that concentrate on specific topics such as instrumentation in the Renaissance, to thoughts about tempo and vocal timbre in the Nineteenth century. In short, we have an unprecedented wealth of information to help the conductor decipher how the music might have been performed had we been there when and where it was created.

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<sup>4</sup> Clifford Bartlett, ed., *Messiah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., v.

The difficulty for most practicing musicians, let alone the typical college student attempting to absorb a vast quantity of information in a very limited time frame, is dealing with this material in a logical and surmountable way so that it is of some immediate use in the interpretive process of score study. To that end, the following pages are intended to provide an overview of issues in performance practice from the beginning of the Sixteenth century to the end of the Nineteenth century. In the context of the pedagogical approach espoused in Chapter Two, the pages that follow become an indispensable part of the syllabus for a course in choral literature.

The goal in this endeavor is two-fold: first, to provide the young choral scholar with a surmountable *stockpile* of information regarding the artistic performance of early music, *according to those who were there* when it was first performed; and secondly, to provide a sense of justification for what the student may already sense intuitively. “Who said that Renaissance music should be sung by men and boys? How do you know Handel would have wanted those notes to be *overdotted*?” This, then, becomes a resource that serves as a point of departure in the young conductor’s scholarly endeavors, encouraging him or her to *go to the source* when faced with the complexities of interpreting pre-Twentieth century music. While not intended to provide every answer to every question regarding the intricacies of performance practice, this will hopefully instill enough curiosity in the aspiring conductor to continue to seek out similar documentation that extends beyond the scope of these pages.

As to the use of primary source material, an exhaustive compendium such as the



one by Donington discussed in Chapter One<sup>6</sup> goes beyond the practical limitations of this document. When appropriate, general or specific references are made to primary source material in an effort to provide the reader with a sense of style and tradition as they pertain to the musical score. In turn, the student will be encouraged to seek out additional material in the context of the course in order to develop the research skills prerequisite for becoming a choral scholar. The emphasis here is to identify the major trends and ideals of musicality and expression. The closing remarks in each section attempt to summarize the main points and pervading philosophies of each period as an aid for the student to bridge the gap between history, theory, and performance.

This survey of performance practice is divided into three chronological sections: *the Renaissance era* (c. 1450-1600); *the Baroque period* (c. 1600-1750); and *the Enlightenment and beyond* (tracing the evolution from the height of the *Classical era* to the end of the Nineteenth century). Selective topics are presented for discussion as they represent prevailing aspects of a particular historical period and are organized within seven general areas. These include: sound quality; tempo and meter; articulation and phrasing; metrical structure and accentuation; rhythmic alteration; melodic alteration (ornamentation); and expression. As *metrical accentuation* is very much a defining characteristic of Seventeenth century music, significant verbiage is dedicated to this topic in the section addressing the Baroque performance practices. Conversely, the concept of *tempo fluctuation* in the same era pertains to a very specific repertoire of keyboard music, thereby having limited relevance to this study, and it therefore is omitted from this

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<sup>6</sup> See Robert Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*. (New York. W.W. Norton & Co., 1989).

discussion. The intention here is to provide data that is representative of the *prevalent concerns of the choral performer* pertaining to each historical period as delineated above.

Sections dealing with *sound* will not only consider the strength, number, and distribution of performance forces, but also related issues such as the desired timbre of voices and instruments, the use of vibrato, and the common perception of pitch as related to the performance of a specific piece.

Discussions on *tempo* will address matters of meter, the evolution of the time signature, and definitions of terms related to the speed of the tactus or pulse. In addition, issues regarding the fluctuation of tempo are included as the use of rubato becomes increasingly common in the late Eighteenth century.

*Articulation and phrasing* not only deals with elements at the *micro level* of the treatment of individual notes within a phrase, but also at the *macro level* of the incorporation of such ideals into the overall shape of the phrase and the relationship of phrases to the prevailing structure of the entire piece. Writings that address issues of musical structure are useful here in helping the conductor create a hierarchy that will govern the musical decisions within a piece. Additionally, very specific matters such as the implementation of *messa di voce* or the groupings of notes as influenced by probable bowings and articulations provide valuable insight to the musical nuance of the score.

The evolution of *metric accentuation* from the Renaissance to the Twentieth century plays a crucial role in how we perceive the composer's intentions, particularly during the shift from linear structures of the Renaissance to greater vertical emphasis in the Baroque. Closely related to the aforementioned issues of phrasing and structure, these investigations center around the role of the tactus as bar lines come into common

practice, thus changing the singer's perception of the shape and intensity of the individual phrase.

Matters of *rhythmic alteration* deal primarily with those necessary adaptations to rhythmic figures that do *not* appear explicitly in the score (i.e., the implementation of *notes inégales* in the music of the French Baroque, or the need to align the choral and instrumental forces in the hastily penned revisions of Handel's oratorios.

Similarly, there are a number of situations that call for *melodic alterations* to the printed score – going beyond what is actually printed, as the contemporary musician of a particular time and place would have done so innately. The prevailing issues of this sort are those dealing with ornamentation, not only in the Baroque, but in the Renaissance and Classical periods as well. To be sure, extensive documentation has been published that deals with every nuance of ornamentation for any number of specific genres and applications. The intent here is to identify those situations most commonly encountered by the choral conductor. Other manifestations of melodic alteration, such as the implementation of *musica ficta*, are discussed as they become pertinent to common practice within a given era.

Finally, the category of *expression* becomes something of a catchall for everything that has gone before, since we must assume that all musical elements are inextricably related to the performer's ability to express the musical and emotional intentions of any compositional setting. In some instances this material seems repetitive to what has appeared earlier under specific topic headings, and appropriately so. There is no single matter related to expression and interpretation that is not in some way influenced by the other attributes or characteristics of a musical composition. Quotations

presented here are intended to help the student grasp the *prevailing musical effect* of a style or genre as opposed to focusing on the *specific* elements therein.

Collectively, this chapter provides a framework for many of the presentations and readings appropriate for the second quadrant of instruction described in Chapter Two. It is hoped that once students have come to rely on primary source material as part of the stockpiling process, their intellectual curiosity will cause them to seek out similar reference materials as needs arise.

## THE RENAISSANCE ERA

The most valuable primary source material from the Renaissance period can be found in a number of treatises that address the prevalent and/or desirable compositional and performance practices of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries. For example, Gioseffo Zarlino's *Istitutioni harmoniche*<sup>7</sup> (1558) provides specific rules for writing counterpoint while maintaining sensitivity to the text. In *Musica practica*,<sup>8</sup> (1482) Barolomé Ramis de Pareia not only describes the Guidonian scale in detail and the resulting ramifications for *musica ficta*, but also speaks to the contemporary ideals regarding tempo as related to the human pulse. Michael Praetorius provides extensive information in the three volumes of his *Syntagma Musicum*<sup>9</sup> (1571-1621), addressing

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<sup>7</sup> See Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le institutioni harmoniche* (1558) tr. Guy A. Marco and Claude V. Palisca, (New York, Yale University Press, 1968).

<sup>8</sup> See Bartolomeo Ramos de Pareja, "Musica practica" (1482) tr. Clement A. Miller in *Musicological Studies and Documents*, 44 (Neuhausen-Stuttgart: American Institute of Musicology, 1993).

innumerable issues from iconic descriptions of period instruments to guidelines for performers of sacred and secular music. Even more direct is Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*<sup>10</sup> (1597), providing the scholar with significant insights into the tenets of musical expression. Primary source material such as the above provides a point of departure for the choral scholar who wishes to make informed musical decisions on the basis of first-hand accounts and observations.

### Sound Quality

#### **Performance Forces**

The first questions one must ask when approaching any musical score must address the performance forces necessary and appropriate to a particular work. How many singers? Accompanied? If so, by whom?

In this regard, records from various church and court archives have been extremely helpful in determining the hiring practices for various church choirs of Europe. Among the most famous of these is the account of Pope Sixtus V as he set forth the liturgical guidelines for St Peter's Basilica in Rome.

12 singers: four basses, four tenors, and four contraltos (i.e., falsettists), and in addition for the voice which is called soprano, four eunuchs, if skilled ones can be found; if not, six boys. These singers, according to the custom of the basilica, shall be present at the whole of the day and night office and at Mass, every day.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See Michael Praetorius, *The Syntagma musicum of Michael Praetorius, an annotated translation I, II & III* (Lawton, OK: American Choral Directors Association, 2001).

<sup>10</sup> See Thomas Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (1597) Ed by R. Alec Harman (New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1952).

At the other extreme, the royal court of Bavaria at Munich accommodated a considerably larger ensemble. During his appointment there, Orlando di Lasso was fortunate to have as many as 60 singers.

This chapel is said to have included 12 bass singers, 15 tenors, 13 altos, 16 boy singers, 5 or 6 castrati and 30 instrumentalists, making a total strength of 90 persons.<sup>12</sup>

Musicologist Roger Bray has produced documentation regarding several other choirs throughout Europe, thus providing valuable insight into the typical ensemble of the Renaissance.<sup>13</sup> (See Figure 3.1)

Figure 3.1 Church Choirs in Renaissance Europe

Patron/place	Date	Total	Boys	Men
Eton College	1463	17	10	7
5 <sup>th</sup> Earl of Northumberland	c. 1510	14-17	5-6	9-11
St. Paul's, London	1515	16	10	6
Ely, Peterborough, Oxford	1541	20	10	10
Exeter	1563	26	14	12

As to whether choral singing was accompanied or to be sung *a cappella*, there are few definitive writings other than those that indicate the *exceptional practice* of *unaccompanied* singing. Such a cappella performances were the case at the Cathedral of

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<sup>11</sup> Anthony Milner, "The Sacred Capons," *Musical Times* Vol. 114 (March 1973): 250-251.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum* (Vol. 2, Part 2, 1619) trans. Harold Blumenfeld (New York: Da Capo Pres. 1980), 17.

<sup>13</sup> Roger Bray, "Performers' Guide," *Early Music* Vol. 6, No 3 (July 1978), 437-441.

Cambrai and the Sistine Chapel. Neither facility had an organ on the premises, nor were there instruments allowed in the context of worship.

In most other instances, however, it seems that it was neither practical nor common for the choir to sing without accompaniment from the organ, or in some instances, the doubling or substitution of other instruments of compatible timbre.

Keep in mind that there is little or no indication in the original manuscripts that indicates the *appropriate* performance forces for the motet, or any other work in the Renaissance for that matter.

While it is true that the use of boys and men was the standard for performances in the church, this does not preclude the use of female voices in the sacred repertoire of the Renaissance. Hercole Bottrigari<sup>14</sup> (1594) is among the scholars who describe the use of women in sacred singing in the convents in Northern Italy, a practice that would remain common throughout the Baroque period, especially in and around Venice.

In the secular genres, there is considerably more latitude not only in the number of performers, but in the gender as well. Although madrigals and related forms were typically performed one on a part, there were fewer rules governing such performances, largely due to the fact that more often than not this music was intended for informal gatherings and social occasions, and therefore, fewer social restrictions existed as to the use of female voices.

The renowned *concerto delle donne*, or “Singing Ladies of Ferrara,” featured some of the finest female singers in Renaissance Europe. Duke Alfonso formed the ensemble in 1580, presumably to dazzle and entertain his friends at his *musiche secrete* –

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<sup>14</sup> See, Hercole Bottrigari, “Il Desiderio,” (1594) quoted in Carol MacClintock, ed. and trans., *Musicological Studies and Documents*, 9 (1962), 58.

intimate social gatherings catered to his most prestigious guests. These made such a favorable impression that similar ensembles emerged through Italy, including Mantua, Florence, and Rome.<sup>15</sup>

As to the matter of using instruments in *secular* music of the Renaissance, the only thing we can know for sure is that there was no standardized approach to this practice. Anthony Newcomb assesses this dilemma in his discussion of instrumentation.

Here, as in so many aspects of Renaissance music, if there is a cardinal rule, then that rule is variety.<sup>16</sup>

Newcomb goes on to discuss the conventions of one voice to a part (meaning *either* vocal or instrumental) for intimate settings, such as one's private chambers. By contrast, performance in large halls, intended for public entertainment, would be more likely to feature a greater array of instruments, often doubling the voice parts (especially the outer voices) for reinforcement.

Summary:

- 1) For sacred music a typical choir consisted of 15-20 singers with approximately two treble voices for every changed male voice.
- 2) The trebles were unchanged voices. (castrati.) or older males instructed to sing in falsetto.

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<sup>15</sup> See "the dispatch of Ambassador Urbani" quoted in Anthony Newcomb, *The Madrigal at Ferrara*, Vol. 1, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 24.

<sup>16</sup> Anthony Newcomb, "Secular Polyphony in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century," in Howard Mayer Brown, ed., *Performance Practice: Music Before 1600* (New York: Norton and Co., 1989), 228.



- 3) In sacred music, female voices were used only under rare circumstances, such as in female religious orders. In secular music, the female voice became increasingly *en vogue*, especially in northern Italy.
- 4) Vocal performances were rarely unaccompanied, except for those in particular venues such as the Sistine Chapel where instruments were not allowed.
- 5) For secular music, *Si placet*, or *as you please* was the rule. There was much greater latitude in the number and gender of performers as well as in the doubling or alternation with instruments.

### **Tone Production**

The increasingly prevalent ideal for vocal production, especially in the late Sixteenth century, is one of compatibility. That is, instruments should be compatible with one another, voices should be compatible with one another, and when performance forces are combined, the voices should be compatible with the instruments and *visa versa*. Known as the *consort principle*, the guiding ideal here is that like instruments are typically grouped together: a group of viols; a group of recorders; and so on. Further, the general perception was that there should be little difference in the timbre from one to the other. The voices were to emulate the timbre of the instruments; the instruments were to emulate the sonority of the voices.

Musicologist Howard Mayer Brown writes about the evolution of the *consort principle* (like groups of instruments.) as opposed to the *foundation principle* (a small group of instruments meant for doubling and reinforcing the bass – a forerunner to the

*basso continuo*).<sup>17</sup> Brown points out that *a cappella* singing was simply one specific manifestation of the consort principle.

Within the choir itself, it seems that a certain level of sophistication was fundamental in establishing a sense of unified ensemble. The extensive writings of Giuseffo Zarlino have thoroughly documented the desired practices of the high Renaissance lending further credence to the aforementioned concept of compatibility.

A singer should also not force the voice into a raucous, bestial tone. He should strive to moderate his tone and blend it with the other singers so that no voice is heard above the others. Such pushed singing produces more noise than harmony. For harmony results only when many things are tempered so that no one exceeds the other.<sup>18</sup>

#### Summary:

- 1) The *consort principle* was the rule, with similar voice and instrumental timbres sounding together through the early Sixteenth-century.
- 2) Grouping of more varied instruments became increasingly common in the late Sixteenth-century.
- 3) A sensitivity to ensemble singing, or blending one's voice with a sweetness of tone, was highly encouraged.

#### Pitch

Today's standard of  $a = 440$  is a relatively recent development. In the Renaissance no such uniformity existed, nor was even desirable. The composer

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<sup>17</sup> Howard Mayer Brown, "Sixteenth-Century Instrumentation: The Music for the Florentine Intermedii," in *Musicological Studies and Documents*, 30, (1973).

<sup>18</sup> Gioseffo Zarlino, *The Art of Counterpoint*, trans. Guy A marco and Claude V. Palisca (New Haven: Yale Universtiy Press, 1968), 111.

understood that the primary role of notation was to provide rhythmic and intervallic relationships *between* pitches, but not necessarily to refer to specific pitches themselves. In unaccompanied singing, a senior chorister would be responsible for choosing an appropriate starting note. In accompanied works, the pitch of the available instruments would be the decisive factor. The fact that a piece might not be performed in the same tonal area from one place to the next, or even from one time to the next was of little concern to the Renaissance musician.

Musicologist Howard Mayer Brown provides an excellent summary of the study of pitch in the Renaissance.

It is virtually impossible to know at what pitch level music was played or sung in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth-centuries. Some instruments of fixed pitch (such as large church organs and recorders) do, of course, survive from the Renaissance, but they do not always give us clear-cut answers to our questions. In many organs, for example, the pipes have been changed since they were originally built, and with particular recorders we cannot always be certain at what pitch level they were said to play (even if the ravages of time have not changed the pitch at which they originally sounded). In any case, pitch levels seem to have varied from time to time and from place to place.<sup>19</sup>

Particularly interesting is a table published by Arthur Mendel noting organs built in the Renaissance, indicating the pitch of the instrument as related to today's standard of  $a' = 440$ .<sup>20</sup> A sampling of these findings are listed in Figure 3.2.

Modern editions are published in specific notation, complete with modern key signatures. This can be misleading to the unsuspecting singer who makes the assumption

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<sup>19</sup> Brown, *Performance Practices Before 1600*, 155.

<sup>20</sup> Arthur Mendel, "Pitch in Western Music since 1500: A Re-examination," *Acta Musicologica*, Vol L, (1978), Fasc. 1/1127-31.

Figure 3.2

## Organ Pitch in the Renaissance

Date of Construction	Location	Semitones above/below a' = 440
c. 1550	Klosterneuburg, Stiftskirche	+1
1561	Innsbruck, Silberne Kapelle	+2
1601	Paris, St. Gervais	-2
1512	Hamburg, St. Jacobi	+3
c. 1560	Groningen, Academie	+2

of authenticity. In practice, even works appearing to be set in a specific key area may have been performed at a significant interval higher or lower, sometimes even that of a third or greater.

Take, for example the anthem *If Ye Love Me* by Thomas Tallis. (See figure 3.5) The incipit in the Oxford edition indicates that the original score was pitched a perfect fourth lower than the key set for this modern edition, perhaps to accommodate the overall lower ranges of a choir of men and boys. In this case, the editor has adapted the work into a key more suitable for a mixed choir. The defining evidence is found in the placement of clef signs in the incipit, indicating the approximate starting pitch as Tallis had envisioned. In this case, the low placement of clefs suggest this work was intended to be sung by an ATTB ensemble, a voicing that would result in a dramatically different timbre than the modern SATB voicing.

While making the music more accessible to a modern choir of mixed voices, the higher key gives the piece an entirely different timbre and mood. The modern performer should know that given the approximate nature of Renaissance pitch there is an obligation to seek out the key area that best suits the character and structure of the music being performed. Most easily accomplished in unaccompanied performance, simply

attempting the piece at an adjacent half step up or down will not only dramatically change the character of the music but will facilitate a significantly increased sense of ease for the singers.

Figure 3.3 Thomas Tallis: If Ye Love Me<sup>21</sup>

**IF YE LOVE ME**

Transcribed and edited by  
PETER LE HURAY

THOMAS TALLIS  
(c. 1505 - 1585)

St. John 14: 15-17

SOPRANO

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

ACCOMPANIMENT  
(Optional)

If ye love me, keep my com - mand - ments.

If ye love me, keep my com - mand - ments.

If ye love me, keep my com - mand - ments.

If ye love me, keep my com - mand - ments.

#### Summary:

- 1) There was no standardized sense of pitch during the Renaissance. It was up to the performer to determine where a piece works best, particularly in unaccompanied singing.

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<sup>21</sup> Thomas Tallis, *If Ye Love Me*, ed. Peter le Huray, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), Permission for use pending.

- 2) The incipit, when provided, is helpful in determining the composer's approximate intended pitch level, even if the subsequent musical edition does not concur.
- 3) The original placement of the clef signs in an original manuscript or incipit provide valuable information regarding the composer's original intent in regard to voicing and timbre.

### Tempo and Meter

The discussion of tempo and meter in the Renaissance era begins with consideration to the role of the *tactus*.

What is *tactus*?

It is a movement or stroking motion of a finger fitting the value of all notes and rests into equally divided temporal beat. The *tactus* therefore defines very accurately the temporal value of every note and rest. Moreover, nothing definite can be understood or taught about the length, perfection, imperfection, augmentation and diminution of notes unless previously the *tactus* has been definitely established.<sup>22</sup>

As defined above by Sixteenth century theorist Sebald Heyden, we learn that the *tactus* is the equivalent to what we refer to today as the beat, or the recurring pulse that allows us to establish a steady tempo. Tomás de Santa Mária provides further insight.

All *tactus* [are] measured and regulated by the length of the first *tactus*, that is, that the amount of time occupied by the first *tactus* be occupied [by] each of the ones that follow, so that no more time elapses in one than in the other.<sup>23</sup>

Sixteenth century theorists commonly spoke of the *tactus* as related to *the pulse of*

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<sup>22</sup> Sebald Heyden, "De Arte Canendi," (1540) quoted in Shrock *Phrasing*, 136.

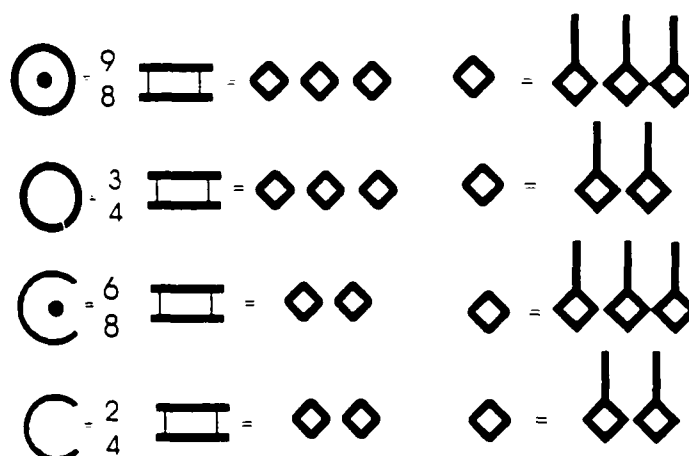
<sup>23</sup> Tomás de Santa Maria, "Arte de tañer fantasia," (1565) quoted in Charles Jacobs, *Tempo Notation in Renaissance Spain* (Brooklyn: Institute of Medieval Music, 1964), 7.

a man at rest, thus providing a basis for tempo decisions in Renaissance music. As the semi-breve was most commonly aligned to the tactus in the late Renaissance, one can derive an appropriate sense of pacing as related to the notation.

Integral to this discussion are the concepts of *tempus* (the relationship of the breve to the semibreve) and *prolatio* (the relationship of the semibreve to the minim) as related to mensuration signs in common usage during that time. (See Figure 3.4) The chart below shows the proportional relationship of Renaissance notation to the most common signs of mensuration and their modern day time signature counterparts. Below the chart, the mensuration signs are defined as related to practices in modern notation.

Figure 3.4

Proportions of Early Notation



Perfect/Perfect would be the equivalent to today's time signature of 9/8, relating the correlation of three *semibreves* to the *breve* and three *minims* to the *semibreve*. The *modern* notation would be three dotted-quarter notes to the dotted-half note and three eighth notes to the dotted-quarter note.

Perfect/Imperfect relates a triple/duple relationship. Equivalent to today's 3/4, in modern notation this would be three quarter notes to the dotted half note and two eighth notes to the quarter note.

Imperfect/Perfect reverses the previous correlation to arrive in a duple meter. In 6/8 this would appear as two dotted-quarter notes to the dotted half note and three eighth notes to the dotted-quarter note.

Imperfect/Imperfect is strictly duple meter, or today's 2/4. The modern equivalent would be two quarter notes to the half note and two eighth notes to the quarter note.

In short, the role of the mensuration sign was to clarify the relationship of the *tempus* and *prolatio*, or more succinctly, the units of notes in a measure and the division of those units into smaller divisions.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, if we are to conclude that the mensuration sign is concerned mainly with proportional relationships, then the question remains as to how one might establish an appropriate tempo. Must every piece move at the speed of the human pulse? Strict adherence to such a rule would deny the Renaissance performer of common sense and musicality. Of greatest influence was the character of the text, discussed extensively in innumerable treatises such as this from Zarlino's *Istitutioni Harmoniche*:

Singers should aim to render faithfully what is written to express the composer's intent, intoning the correct steps in the right places. They should seek to adjust to the consonances and to sing in accord with the nature of the words of the composition: happy words will be sung happily and at a lively pace, whereas sad texts call for the opposite.<sup>25</sup>

In fact a tempo, once established, was subject to change, as appropriate to the changing character of the text.

Changes of tempo are not inconvenient in any composition. The practice of the orator teaches this, for one sees how he proceeds in an oration – now he speaks loudly, now softly, and slower and faster. This way of changing the tempo has an effect on the mind. So, one should sing music

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<sup>24</sup> The practice of *rebarring* as can be found in some modern editions undermines this relationship by placing the metrical accent at a point that is contradictory to the *tactus* as it was intended by the composer.

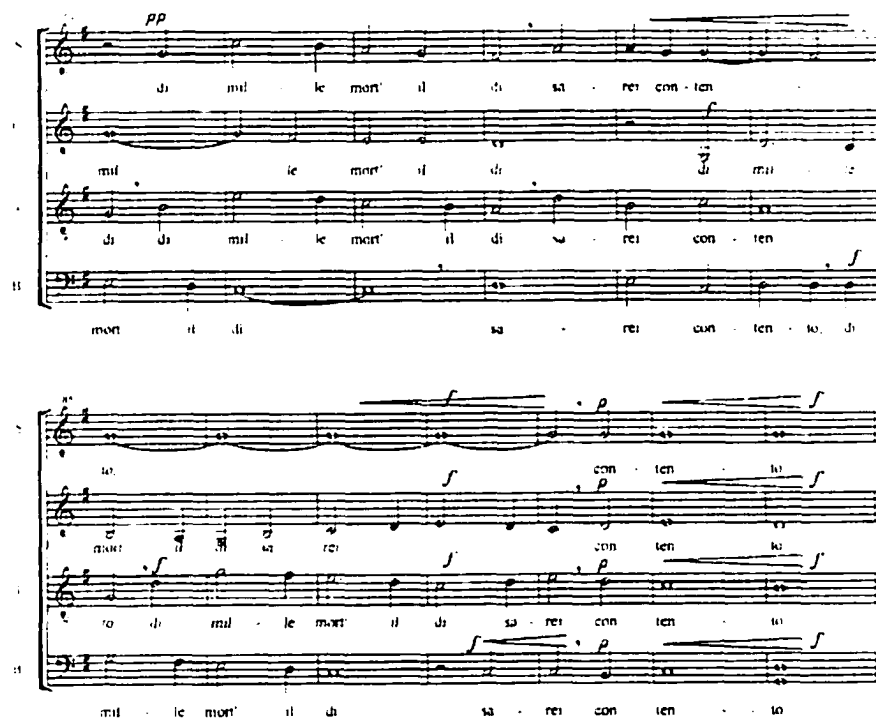
<sup>25</sup> Gioseffo Zarlino *The Art of Counterpoint*, 110.



*all mente* to imitate the accents and effects of the parts of the oration, for what effect would the orator make if he recited a fine speech without arranging his accents and pronunciations with fast and slow movement, softly and loudly? That would not move his hearers. The same should occur in music.<sup>26</sup>

One additional practice known as *diminutum* was also known to have an effect on tempo. The process of drawing a vertical line directly through the mensuration sign was used as an indication that the tactus should move more quickly. Though used somewhat inconsistently during the Renaissance, this has survived in modern notation as *alla breve* or *cut time*.

Figure 3.5 Arcadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno*



<sup>26</sup> Nicola Vicentino "L'Antica Musica," (1555) quoted in MacClintock, *Readings*, 78.

Finally, it should be observed that the Renaissance composer would often facilitate the need for a piece to *decompress* when approaching the final cadence by creating a *rallentando* in the slowing of harmonic motion. This is accomplished by elongating the notational durations in approaching the final phrase, even though the *tactus* remains essentially the same. An example of this can be found in the final stanzas of Arcadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno*. (See Figure 3.5)

#### Summary:

- 1) The *tactus* represents the recurring, evenly spaced pulse of the music, most commonly related to the heartbeat of a man at rest.
- 2) Sixteenth century mensuration signs provide information as to how notes relate to one another, *without* implication for specific tempi.
- 3) The main factor influencing tempo is the character of the music and text. If the character of the text changes within a piece, the tempo should be adjusted accordingly.
- 4) There is some latitude in terms of *rallentando* and *accelerando* (while avoiding extremes and sudden changes). Look for these, as they are actually built into the notation of the score.

### Phrasing and Articulation

#### **Phrase Structure**

Of those issues addressed in the treatises of the Sixteenth century, specific details pertaining to phrasing and articulation are conspicuously absent. This, along with the ambiguity of the notation itself, leaves much of the discussion on phrase structure

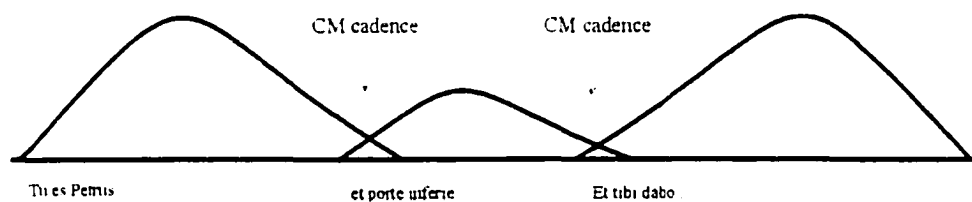
somewhere between speculation and deductive reasoning. Howard Mayer Brown summarizes the situation.

We shall probably never know . . . about some of the qualities of performance of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. for example, whether musicians regularly slowed down at cadences, whether they varied the dynamic level of individual notes or whole phrases, whether they regularly made use of crescendos and diminuendos, whether they accented the goal note of a phrase (and, if so, whether they had a whole variety of kinds of accents to enliven different kinds of music).<sup>27</sup>

Much of what we *do* know comes from the examination of compositional practice near the end of the Sixteenth century as theorists and composers began to provide more details pertaining to performance. German theorist Joachim Burnmeister compares the structure of a Renaissance motet to classical oratory,<sup>28</sup> alluding to a three part model of *exordium* (beginning), *body* (middle), and *supplementum* (ending). Burmeister's model suggests that the Renaissance musician would understand this progression of events and pace the musical intensity accordingly.

To be sure, at its zenith, the motet of the High Renaissance was highly structured. Consider, for example, the typical formula employed in literally hundreds of Palestrina motets. (Figure 3.6)

Figure 3.6 Structure in Palestrina's *Tu es Petrus*



<sup>27</sup> Brown, *Performance Practice: Music before 1600*, 157.

<sup>28</sup> See Joachim Burmeister, "Musica poetica," (1606) quoted in Tomlinson, "Renaissance," 468-469.

Palestrina was diligent in his efforts to align the text to the musical structure. With the introduction of new text, there is a corresponding new musical event (typically a new *point of imitation*). In the case of *Tu es Petrus*, the work is nearly symmetrical in three divisions. The opening (or *exordium*) introduces the first line of text, and likewise, the subject of the composition.<sup>29</sup>

“Thou are Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my Church.” In modern notation, this section is thirty-two measures in length, culminating in a C-major triad, interestingly enough, the IV chord of this composition in G-major.

“And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Twenty measures later, a similar occurrence concludes the second section (or *the body*), once again arriving at a C-major triad outlined by four of the six voices. The alto immediately begins the next section.

“And I shall give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” This final section of text (or *supplementum*) spans nearly thirty-four measures, almost identical in length to the opening section, thus resulting in a sense of balance (as is the case in nearly all of his motets) as Palestrina paces the musical development throughout the composition. Due to the inherent strength of the cadential points as they occur, phrases are drawn to these *seams* in the music – momentary episodes of repose and resolution.

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<sup>29</sup> Translation from Ron Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire Vol 1: Sacred Latin Texts* (Corvallis, OR: earthsongs, 1988), 227.

Summary:

- 1) Examine the musical structure for natural divisions as indicated by the text and corresponding cadential points. Seek out the long-range destination of the work as a whole and determine the major points of arrival.
- 2) Study the natural inflection of the spoken text as it relates to the peaks and valleys of the musical line and how this corresponds to the cadential structure and the recurring tactus.

### Melodic Alteration

The two prevailing topics of melodic alteration in the Renaissance are *ornamentation* and *musica ficta*.

### **Ornamentation**

Nimble minds are continually discovering new embellishments . . . even to works previously embellished . . . like so many well-trained birds.<sup>30</sup>

While it is rare to hear a performance of Baroque music today without melodic embellishment, the modern musician is more reluctant to ornament Sixteenth century polyphony. There are numerous sources, however, that indicate that this was common practice during the Renaissance, even in the church. Even Josquin provided examples in manuscript of *passaggi* to add interest to passages of long sustained notes.

The following excerpt provides a context for the prevailing attitudes toward the use of embellishments during the Sixteenth century.

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<sup>30</sup> Lodovico Zacconi, "Practtica di Musica," (1592) quoted in Donington *Interpretation*, 165.

[Advice to singers:] Embellishments both can and ought to be scattered though all the voices [parts], but not all the time, and indeed in appropriate places, and not simultaneously in all voices, but let them be embellished in a fitting situation, remaining in their own places, so that one embellishment can be heard and picked out expressly and distinctly from another, yet with the composition whole and unharmed.<sup>31</sup>

Howard Mayer Brown paraphrases one of the most famous treatises on singing by Giovanni Camillo Maffei, which provides five rules for the use of ornamentation for singers.

Ornaments are to be added primarily at cadences. Voices that cadence at different times can add ornaments at staggered intervals.

Singers should not add ornaments to more than four or five passages in any one composition, lest the listener be satiated, as so often happens.

Passaggi are to only be applied to the penultimate syllables of words so that the end of the ornament will coincide with the end of the word.

Singers should take care to embellish only those vowels that are convenient for melismas.

Each singer in a group of four or five should be careful to give way to the others so that two singers do not ornament simultaneously, a circumstance that merely serves to confound the harmony.<sup>32</sup>

In his study entitled *Embellishing Sixteenth Century Music*, Howard Mayer Brown provides an example of the use of *passaggi* in Arcadelt's madrigal, *O felici occhi miei*. The excerpt below shows (Figure 3.7) Arcadelt's original notation, (A) embellishments added by Diego Ortiz (B), and additional passaggi added by Silvestra di Ganassi (C).<sup>33</sup>

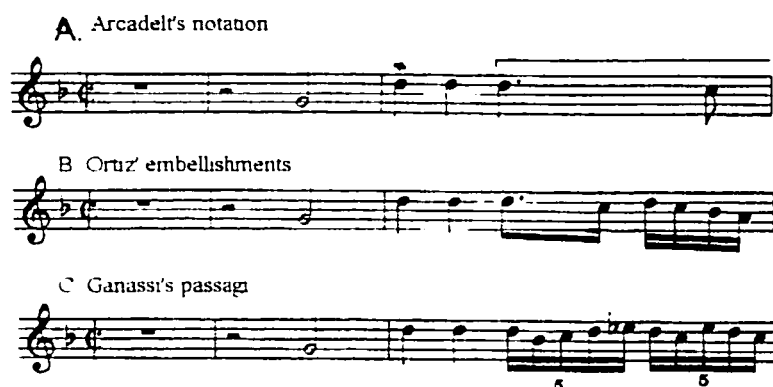
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<sup>31</sup> Hermann Finck, "Pratica Musica," (1556) quoted in Donington *Interpretation*, 164.

<sup>32</sup> Giovanni Camillo Maffei, "Letter on embellishments," (1562) paraphrased in Brown, *Embellishing*, 54.

Figure 3.7

## Example of Pasaggi in a Renaissance Madrigal

**Musica Ficta**

There are few topics in primary source material from the Renaissance that claim more prose than that of “feigned music,” or *musica ficta*. This involved the common practice of the performer executing chromatic alterations even though they are not evident in the notation.

Plainchant and mensural music are divided into true, which can be called real, and feigned . . . . The feigned music is nothing else than the transposition of the notes from the proper place.<sup>34</sup>

The irregular mutation is called ‘false mutation’ because a syllable is changed into one which is connected with it not truly but falsely. It is also called ‘false music’ because it proceeds against the regular disposition of the syllables in the gamut. From this it is clear that the descent from *mi* of b fa b *mi* by a whole tone and a semitone produces false music because then it is necessary that, when *mi* is connected in unison, it is changed into *sol* . . . singing *mi sol fa mi*.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Excerpted from Brown, *Embellishing*, 12

<sup>34</sup> Agostino Bindoni, “Fior angelico di musica,” (1547) quoted in Karol Berger, *Musica ficta: Theories of accidental inflections in vocal polyphony from Marchetto da Padova to Gioseffo Zarlino*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 12.

<sup>35</sup> “Corpus Scriptorum de Musica 3,” VI, quoted in Berger, 194.

The rules regarding the implementation of *musica ficta* are many and complex, based on the extensive theory of the *Guidonian Hand* and the resulting series of hexachords. (These hexachords were the forerunners of what today are defined as key-related tonalities, bridging the gap between the early church modes and functional harmony of the Seventeenth century.) Three recurring themes that appear in innumerable sources provide a basis of understanding for the modern performer.

The first general rule states *mi contra fa, diabolus in musica* (*mi* against *fa* is the devil in music). The position of *mi* against *fa* is referring to the relationship of degrees within two interlocking hexachords that result in the sounding of the tritone, which was to be avoided in the context of the melodic interval. This is reiterated not only in discussions of *musica ficta* itself, but also in treatises that deal with theoretical practice in general, such as the following quote from Hothby that discusses the rules for contrapuntal writing.

In the second counterpoint, one should put no soft b [flat], since there occurs no fifth or octave or either *mi* against *fa* or *fa* against *mi*. But in the first low counterpoint, the soft b is placed several times to regulate such counterpoint, so that one does not hear either *fa* against *mi* or *mi* against *fa*.<sup>36</sup>

The second general rule states *una nota supra la semper est canendum fa* (one note above *la* is always sung as *fa*). Here again, referring to the correlation of hexachord structures, *fa* is understood as a leading tone to the tonic above *la*. In other words, the singer is required to raise the seventh of the scale in order to reinforce the cadential progression.

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<sup>36</sup> John Hothby, "Spetie tenore del contrapunto prima," quoted in Berger, 67.



Not a small amazement is certainly produced in me when I consider the heedlessness of so many who, wanting to give precepts in the popular music, envelop the understanding of those who know nothing in thousand errors. [sic] since they claim thoughtlessly as a strict rule that this note or syllable which will be above the note called *la*, will always be pronounced *fā*, through which inane opinion they lead a new disciple to a false understanding . . . . It will not be necessary in such contexts to consider the sweeter [that is, *b*] or the harder [natural], except when there arises the interval of the tritone, in which case you will have to pronounce the syllable *fā* above the syllable *la* . . . since in plainchant one does not sing through the soft *b* [flat] for another reason than to sweeten the tritone.<sup>37</sup>

As noted above, the two rules thus far are really one and the same, as the raising of the seventh frequently eliminates the tritone as well. This rule however lends credence to the pervading sentiment that this is especially important in the midst of a cadential formula.

The third reason for *musica ficta* is *causa pulchritudinis*, or, by reason of beauty.

I say, therefore, that good players of artificial instruments play songs through a certain practice not as they are simply composed and written by the unlearned composers, but play them as they should be signed. Similarly do experienced singers. Often they sing pieces better than they had been composed and signed by the composers.<sup>38</sup>

It appears that especially in the Sixteenth century, the performer took more artistic license in the implementation of accidentals simply to accentuate the beauty of the music. This is closely related to the use of the *Picardy third*, the practice of ending a piece with a major triad regardless of the tonality of the work up to that point. In fact, in many cases,

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<sup>37</sup> Pietro Aaron, "Lucidario in musica de alcune oppenioni antiche," (1545) quoted in Berger, 78.

<sup>38</sup> Giovanni Spataro, "Letters in Ms. Vatican, lat. 5318," (1529) quoted in Berger, 164.

the composer actually added the chromatic alteration himself, as seen below in John Bennet's *Weep, O Mine Eyes*. (Fig. 3.8)

Of greatest concern for today's choral musician is the implementation of *musica ficta* particularly as it is represented in modern editions. The common rules stated

Figure 3.8 Picardy Third in Bennet's *Weep, O Mine Eyes*

The musical score for "Weep, O Mine Eyes" by John Bennet is presented in two systems. The first system shows the vocal entries and the beginning of the phrase "O when, O when be-gin you to swell so high that I may". The second system continues the phrase "drown me in you? that I may drown me in you? you?". The score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a keyboard accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating G major. The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "O when, O when be-gin you to swell so high that I may drown me in you? that I may drown me in you? you?". The Picardy Third is indicated by the key signature change to one sharp at the end of the piece.

above suggest that the Renaissance singer would simply make these alterations as he or she saw fit, according to the style and tradition of that particular time and place. Modern

editors have sought to compensate for this lack of common understanding in one of two ways.

- I. Editions dating from the first half of the Twentieth century often include accidentals in the score wherever the editor felt alteration was necessary and/or appropriate, regardless of *manuscript authority*, or the specific notation in the composer's original manuscript. In such cases, the performer is not able to differentiate which accidentals originated with the composer and which are a result of the editors opinion.
- II. More recent editions have included accidentals in their normal position (on the staff) but enclosed in brackets, or above the staff to indicate an editorial decision *not* indicative of the actual manuscript.

While few of today's practicing musicians are inclined to pursue the lengthy course of study that would facilitate a working knowledge of the many rules of and exceptions *to* the tenets of *musica ficta*, the modern performer is reminded of the inherent nature of this practice. That is, the avoidance of the melodic tritone, the raising of the leading tones, and contributing to the general beauty of the music.

Summary::

- 1) Ornamentation was common in Renaissance music (in secular and sacred repertoire), especially in the decoration of passagework and at cadence points.
- 2) In order to avoid the melodic tritone, alter one pitch, usually resulting in a perfect fourth.
- 3) Consider raising the seventh or lowering the sixth degree of the scale when it contributes to a cadential formula in the music.

- 4) Let the beauty of the music guide the performer in the decisions regarding melodic alteration.

### Expression

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, elements of expression represent a pursuit of considerable latitude. To be sure, the study of each of the preceding ideals in performance practice attempts to identify those attributes of the musical score which must be brought forth if we are to realize the composer's emotional and psychological perspectives in the setting of a given text. Within this process, however, there are those elements of the music that defy specific objectification but relate more appropriately to the overall affect of a particular musical composition. The quotations that follow speak to the underlying character of the music and/or the prevailing attitude of those who lived, composed, and performed during the Renaissance. Far from exhaustive in regard to any singular ideal or approach, these excerpts are intended to draw the preceding discussions into a cohesive overview of musical aesthetics in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries.

Amidst the formative years of the Council of Trent, Bernardino Cirillo, a prominent churchman of Rome wrote a letter expressing his grievous concerns about the current trends (1549) of abandoning the church modes: clearly he was not impressed by recent innovations in imitative polyphony either. The paragraphs that follow, however, do present a compelling account of the subtlety of musical expression during that period.

I should like, in short, when a mass is to be sung in church, the music to be framed to the fundamental meaning of the words, in certain intervals and numbers apt to move our affections to religion and piety, and likewise in psalms, hymns and other praises that are offered to the Lord. . . . Thus the musicians should seek to recover the styles and modes and the power of the Phrygian, Lydian, Dorian and Mixolydian compositions, with which

they would be able to do what they wish . . . and that they should lend beauty and individuality to sacred music.

In our times they have put all their industry and effort into the writing of imitative passage, so that while one voice says "Sanctus" another says "Sabaoth," still another says "Gloria tua," with howling, bellowing, and stammering, so that they seem at times like cats in January or bulls in May.<sup>39</sup>

Marsilio Ficino was a physician, musician, and philosopher of his day, largely famous for his *De vita libri tres* (1489), within which he reveals his perceptions regarding the power of music, particularly as it relates to human expression.

But remember that song is a most powerful imitator of all things. It imitates the intentions and passions of the soul as well as words; it represents also people's physical gestures, motions, and actions as well as their characters and imitates all these and acts them out so forcible that it immediately provokes both the singer and the audience to imitate and act out the same things.<sup>40</sup>

Nicola Vincentino is a bit more concise on this topic.

Now the composition of Masses and Latin-texted pieces ought to be serious, not frenzied, because Masses and Psalms being ecclesiastical, it is only right that the treatment of these should be different from that of French chansons, madrigals, and the like. Some composers compose Masses on madrigals, on French chansons, and even on battle pieces, so that when such compositions are heard in church, they impel everyone to laughter, to the extent that it almost seems as if the temple of God had become a place for the recitation of lascivious and ridiculous things, as if it were a stage here it was permissible to perform every kind of ridiculous and lascivious musical buffoonery.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Bernardino Cirillo, "Letter to Ugolino Gualteruzzi" (1549) quoted in Tomlinson, "Renaissance," 369.

<sup>40</sup> Marsilio Ficino, "De vita libri tres," (1489) quoted in Tomlinson, "Renaissance," 387.

<sup>41</sup> Nicola Vincentino, "L'antica musica riotta alla moderna pratica," quoted in Pietro Weiss and Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1984), 134-35.

And finally, a few words in closing, first from Zarlino as to the marriage of music and text.

They [singers] should seek to adjust to the consonances and to sing in accord with the nature of the words of the composition: happy words will be sung happily and at a lively pace, whereas sad texts call for the opposite. Above all, in order that the words may be understood, they should take care not to fall into the common error of changing the vowel sounds.<sup>42</sup>

Marc' Antonio Mazzone da Miglionico sums up the discussion in the preface to his book of madrigals in 1567, capturing not only the spirit of Renaissance choral music, but also the charge for the performer to judiciously break the rules.

The notes are the body of music, while the text is the soul and, just as the soul, being nobler than the body, must be followed and imitated by it, so the notes must follow the text and imitate it, and the composer must pay due attention to it, expressing its sense with sad, gay, or austere music, as the text demands, and must even sometimes disregard the rules.<sup>43</sup>

Summary:

1. The pervading theme regarding expression in the Renaissance era is the relationship between music and text.
2. While the music may not always exemplify specific *word to note* correlations, the performer is obliged to consider the character of the text with all matters of musical nuance, including timbre, tempo, phrasing, articulation, and ornamentation.

### **The Baroque Period**

The innovations of the Baroque period were borne largely out of the development of the Florentine Camerata, a group of intellectuals along with professional and amateur

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<sup>42</sup> Gioseffo Zarlino, "The Art of Counterpoint," quoted in Weiss and Taruskin, 128.

<sup>43</sup> Marc' Antonio Mazzone da Miglionico "Dedication of his First Book of Madrigals," (1569) quoted in Weiss and Taruskin, 143.

musicians who came together at the court of Count Giovanni de Bardi of Florence in the late Sixteenth century. Lavish operatic productions exploited the Greek ideals of *singing as one speaks*, as monody began taking precedence over the antiquated polyphonic practices in Rome. This oratorical nature of singing became the foundation of musical expression in the Seventeenth century, permeating all areas of style and performance practice.

Primary source material regarding the practice of performance is not only more abundant in the Seventeenth century, but more specific as to the techniques necessary to accomplish certain elements of nuance and style, partially due to the dawning of a literary age that served to encourage theorists and musicians to commit their philosophies and ideals to print.

In addition to the aforementioned treatises of Zarlino and Praetorius, very focused documents began to appear written by laymen *about* music, such as Vincenzo Giustiniani's *Discorso sopra la musica*<sup>44</sup> (1628), which documents the musical developments in northern Italy at the advent of the Baroque period. Also possessing a philosophical edge is Marin Mersenne's *Harmonie universelle*<sup>45</sup> (1636-37) that sought to provide theoretical and practical information for the Seventeenth century musician.

Of particular interest to the choral musician is a volume by Bénigne de Bacilly

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<sup>44</sup> Vincenzo Giustiniani, "Discorso sopra la musica," (1628) trans and ed. Carol MacClintock in *Musical Studies and Documents*, 9 (American Institute of Musicology, 1962).

<sup>45</sup> Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*, trans Roger E. Chapman, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957).

entitled *Remarques curieuses sur l'art de bien chanter*<sup>46</sup> (*A Commentary upon the Art of Proper Singing*). This text, published in 1668, represents the proliferation of very specific *how to* manuals for particular instruments that became increasingly common throughout the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries. Finally, among the most revolutionary developments in terms of documentation is the appearance of musical reference materials, such as Sébastien de Brossard's *Dictionnaire de Musique*,<sup>47</sup> first published in Paris in 1703 as an attempt to alleviate much of the ambiguity of Sixteenth century musical practice and notation.

From sources such as those mentioned above, we can observe that the prevailing themes and ideals of the Baroque period reiterate the desire for space between notes, an increasingly declamatory nature of text, and a sense of sweetness in tone production for voices *and* instruments.

### Sound Quality

#### **Performance Forces**

Today's performer is often baffled by the sheer proportion of grandiose events like the *Sing-it-Yourself-Messiah* performances held in nearly every metropolitan center in the western world. It wasn't until the very end of Handel's life that such large ensembles were assembled, and only for special festival and ceremonial occasions at that. Conversely, repeated evidence suggests that the *typical* choir for the *church and theater*

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<sup>46</sup> Bénigne de Bacilly, *A Commentary upon the Art of Proper Singing*, (1668) trans. And ed. Austin B. Caswell. New York: The Institute of Mediaeval Music, Ltd. 1968).

<sup>47</sup> See Sébastien de Brossard, *Dictionnaire de Musique* (Paris, 1703. tr. by James Grassineau. New York: Broude, 1966).



*alike* numbered about twenty members, frequently accompanied by as many instrumentalists. Such forces were found on the stages of secular productions as described by Gagliano in the preface to his *Dafne* in 1608.

The chorus enters, formed of nymphs and shepherds, their number more or less in conformity with the capacity of the stage. . . . Half the chorus should . . . consist of six or seven nymphs and shepherds (for the chorus should be made up of no fewer than sixteen or eighteen people).<sup>48</sup>

Conversely, Johann Sebastian Bach addressed his preferences for the performance of church music.

[To each church choir] there must belong, at least, three trebles, three alti, three tenors, and as many basses. . . . [As a minimum,] a motet may be sung with, at least, two voices to each part. (N.B. – How much better it would be if . . . four singers could be available from each part, each choir thus consisting of sixteen persons.)<sup>49</sup>

[The orchestra should be] two or even three Violino Primo, two or three Violino Secundo, two Viola Primo, two Viola Secundo, two Violoncello, One Double Bass, two or three according to need, Oboes, one or two Bassoons, Three trumpets, one Drum.

In all eighteen persons, at least, for the instruments. N.B. -- Added to this since church music is also written for flutes (i.e. – they are either *à bec* or *Traversieri*, held sideways), at least two persons are needed for that; altogether, then twenty instrumentalists.<sup>50</sup>

Various paintings and drawings, along with recovered billing requisitions, provide additional evidence that the Baroque choir rarely numbered more than about twenty singers. Rare celebratory occasions, such as the premiere of Handel's *Messiah* in Dublin

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<sup>48</sup> Marco da Gagliano, *Dafne* (1608) quoted in Dennis Shrock, *Performance Practices*, 14.

<sup>49</sup> J.S. Bach, "memorandum," (1730) quoted in J.A. Phillip Spitta, *J.S. Bach* (New York: Dover, 1951), II, 240.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

employed a festival choir of sorts, even then numbering only about forty. Not until the mid-Eighteenth century did festival choirs numbering in the hundreds become more common, such as those assembled for commemorative events in London's Westminster Abbey.

In the church, the Roman tradition of men and boys remained the norm, but on the secular stage, any combination of falsettists, castratti, and female performers proliferated in productions of opera and oratorio.

The *consort principle* of the Renaissance gave way to the broken consort (combinations of different instruments) and eventually to a wide array of concerted instruments, as virtuosic solo compositions became more and more prevalent. As was true in the Renaissance, it was expected that the instruments would double the voices whether or not specific instrumental parts were provided. This practice of playing *colla parte* is well exemplified in the seemingly unaccompanied motets of J.S. Bach motets, documented in the recent discovery of instrumental parts written out by the composer himself.

The most notable innovation of the Baroque period, however, was that of the *Basso Continuo*, which became a mainstay in the performance of music throughout Seventeenth century Europe, whether or not such notation was present in the score.

The author composed these madrigals with the intention that they should be sung by five voices alone, and without any accompaniment of any kind of instrument, and thus he wishes and begs that they be sung. Notwithstanding all this, he wanted to add the basso continuo in order to conform to the custom of the time.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Cesare Zoilo, *Madrigali a cinque il primo* (1620), quoted in Shrock, *Performance Practices*, 11.

### Summary:

- 1) The ideal choir for the church or the stage typically numbered sixteen to twenty singers, with as many accompanying instruments as appropriate to the music.
- 2) The practice of doubling vocal parts on instruments of similar timbre remained common throughout the Baroque period.
- 3) The advent of the Basso Continuo became the foundation of nearly every Baroque musical form.

### Tone Production

There were two priorities for vocal production in the Seventeenth century, sweetness of tone and clarity of text.

[A voice should have] sweetness and a certain harmoniousness, on which depends the charms which ravish the hearers, for voices which are hard do not please, however accurate they may be, and possessed of the other qualities I have mentioned, for they have too much sharpness and glitter, which hurts sensitive ears, and which hinders their gliding pleasantly enough into their hearers' spirit to win them, and to carry them whither so ever you desire.<sup>52</sup>

I shall say that, since the recent discovery of the true style of expressing the words, namely, the imitation of speech itself in the best possible manner, something which succeeds best with a single voice or with few voices, as in the modern airs of certain able men and as is now much practiced in Rome in concerted music, it is no longer necessary to make a score or tablature, but, . . . a bass with its signs [figured bass or basso continuo] suffices. And if anyone objects that a bass will not suffice to play the ancient works, I shall reply that music of this kind is no longer in use, both because of the confusion and babel of the words, arising from

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<sup>52</sup> Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle*. (1636) quoted in Donington *Interpretation*, 517.

the long and intricate imitations, and because it has no grace, for, with all the voices singing, one hears neither period or sense.<sup>53</sup>

While the consort principle became less common in its truest form, this is not to suggest that compatibility of timbre was any less of a priority. In fact, the late Renaissance ideal of instruments emulating the voice was still very much the norm throughout the Seventeenth century.

The song of instruments is a sound which art has invented for the purpose of imitating the natural voice.<sup>54</sup>

Now since instruments were invented only to imitate artificially human voices, either to substitute for them when they are missing or to accompany and sustain them, there are people who extend the term VOCI to the parts intended for instruments.<sup>55</sup>

All instruments must imitate the well-cultivated human voice. For if a beginner on the lute, who does not yet have an idea of its characteristics, wished to play all the letters he sees and the tones hidden in them, the sound would emerge very crudely and roughly.<sup>56</sup>

Summary:

- 1) Sweetness of tone was of the first priority, whether sung or played on an instrument.

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<sup>53</sup> Agostino Agazzari, *Del sonore sopra il basso . . .* (1607) quoted in Shrock *Performance Practices*, 24.

<sup>54</sup> Bénigne de Bacilly, *Commentary*, 127.

<sup>55</sup> Sébastien de Brossard, "Dictionnaire." (1702) quoted in Shrock *Performance Practices*, 79.

<sup>56</sup> Ernst Gottlieb Baron, "Historisch-Theoretisch und Pratische Untersuchung des Instruments der Lauten." (1727) quoted in Shrock *Performance Practices*, 80.

- 2) The ideal of capturing the oratorical nature of the music permeates the writings of the Baroque scholars. Thus, the inflection of the text has tremendous influence on the shaping and delivery of the phrase.

## Dynamics

This point above all must be carefully kept in mind in all concerti, by instrumentalist as well as singers. No one must cover up and outshout the other with his instrument or voice, though this happens very frequently, causing much splendid music to be spoiled and ruined. When one thus tries to outdo the other, the instrumentalists, particularly cornett players with their blaring, but also singers through their screaming, rise in pitch so much that the organist playing along is forced to stop entirely. At the end of the piece it happens then that the whole ensemble through excessive blowing and shouting has gone sharp by a half, often indeed a whole tone or more.<sup>57</sup>

This quotation from Praetorius in 1619 serves as the underlying principle for loudness (or perhaps more accurately, the lack thereof) in the Baroque period. In fact, one must realize that the *forte* of the Seventeenth century is not congruent with our perception of *forte* today.

One might consider the following diagram in the perception of dynamic contrast throughout the ages. (See figure 3.9) Clearly, a range of dynamic contrast exists within each period of music history. As the years go on, however, the perimeter of the box expands and dynamic contrasts increase. This is due in part to the ever-expanding performing forces (the size of the orchestra of Johannes Brahms was far beyond any orchestra J.S. Bach could have ever conceived of), as well as the expanded capabilities of

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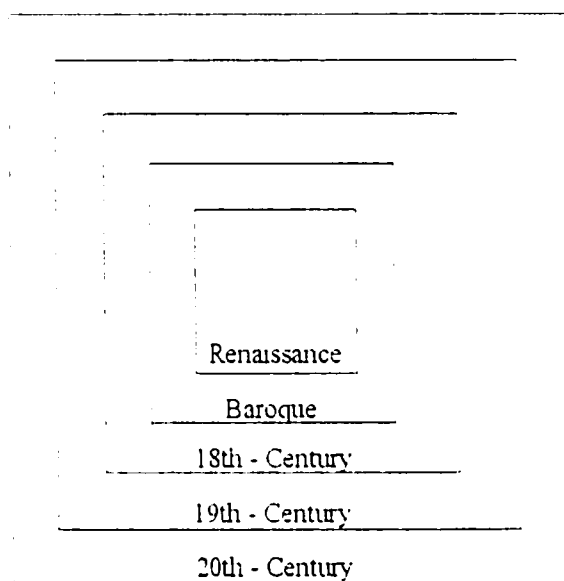
<sup>57</sup> Michael Praetorius, "Syntagma Musicum," (Vol. 3, 1619) quoted in Shrock *Performance Practices*, 31.

the instruments themselves. For example, while essentially the same instrument, the modern-day trombone is considerably louder than the Sixteenth-century sackbut.

Monteverdi was among the first to reinforce the ideals of expression by regularly

Figure 3.9

The Expansion of Dynamic Range<sup>58</sup>



including *p* and *f* markings, as well as crescendi and decrescendi, in the score. Such practice was considered an important affect in the shaping of a phrase.

Yet with both [*p* and *f*] it is to be noted that one does not go so suddenly from piano to forte, but one should gradually strengthen the voice and again let it decrease so that at the beginning piano is heard, forte at the middle, and once again piano as one comes to the close.<sup>59</sup>

So then what are we to make of the common perception of terraced dynamics in the Baroque period? Was musical expression confined to the limitations of one-

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<sup>58</sup> Used by permission. Dennis Shrock, *Expansion of Dynamic Range*, illustration used at University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK, 1999.

<sup>59</sup> W. M. Mylius, "Rudimenta Musices," (1686) quoted in Donington, *Interpretation*, 484.

dimensional changes in amplitude? Most probably not. Robert Donington addresses the likelihood that dynamic expression was *only* constrained by the limitations of the instrument.

Baroque organs and harpsichords in their dependence on hand-stops for changing the registration and with it the volume, lend themselves to terrace dynamics in some degrees. . . . Other instruments have no such tendency: and while the structure of baroque music itself does often imply rather more terraced dynamics than a highly dramatic structure like sonata-form, it does so only on the assumption that a terrace need not be altogether flat.<sup>60</sup>

The pressing question for the modern-day musician is to determine the purpose of a particular dynamic marking as it appears somewhat sporadically in a Seventeenth century score. For example, Handel often created dynamic contrast simply by adding or subtracting instruments. In some cases, an additional dynamic marking placed underneath one particular part may have simply been an admonition to pay attention to the balance of this particular voice should it get lost in the overall texture. Thus, dynamic markings appear only to note the *exceptional* situation, otherwise calling on the performer simply to use his or her musical intuition. Especially in the oratorios, hastily prepared revisions are inconsistent in the use of such markings. Thus it is ultimately the performer's responsibility to determine the relationship of loudness to the expressive qualities of the music and text.

Summary:

- 1) While the limited flexibility of some instruments lends some credence to the concept of terraced dynamics, this does not defeat the natural tendency to vary the

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<sup>60</sup> Robert Donington, *Interpretation*, 482.

dynamics in the shaping of the phrase. This results in a sense of crescendo and decrescendo according to the character of the text and the drama of the music.

- 2) Early dynamic markings, in an effort to draw the performer's attention to an *unusual* circumstance in the score, often represent the exception rather than the norm.
- 3) Sudden (*subito*) changes in dynamic levels were not part of the Baroque aesthetic, except for that which naturally occurs in the addition and subtraction of instruments.
- 4) The modern performer must consider the relatively limited range of dynamic contrast, especially in early music.

## **Vibrato**

As was the case in the Renaissance, writings that address the use of vibrato in singing are very limited. Instructions found in various instrumental treatises provide some insight for the judicious use of vibrato.

The tone of the violin is most ravishing [when the players] sweeten it . . . by certin tremblings [here meaning vibrato] which delight the mind.<sup>61</sup>

A long, expressive note [on the clavichord] may be performed with a vibrato. The finger holds down the key and rocks it, so to speak.<sup>62</sup>

After examining innumerable sources on the topic, Robert Donnington concludes.

[Vibrato] should be used with sufficient restraint to keep it in style; but it should certainly be used. [String] tone can sound very dead without it.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> M. Mersenne, "Harmonie Universelle." (1636-37) quoted in Donington *Interpretation*, 232.

<sup>62</sup> C.P.E. Bach, "Essay," (1753) quoted in Donington, *Interpretation*, 234.



Not unlike that in the discussion of *terraced dynamics*, the truth may actually be found in the context of what is *not* said in the primary sources, as once again, the musician is called upon to exercise musical sensibilities.

Summary:

- 1) Tone completely devoid of vibrato is lifeless, directly in opposition to the expressive nature of Baroque music.
- 2) A moderate use of vibrato with sensitivity to the clarity of texture appears to be the rule.

### Tempo and Meter

As terminology related to tempo evolved during the Baroque period, many scholars attempted to define these terms as related to earlier writings concerning the *tactus* and the human pulse. However, the only conclusion that can be drawn from these innumerable writings is that there are no definitive rules when it comes to interpreting the appropriate tempo. Malcolm writes in 1721,

Time . . . is a various and undetermined thing . . . tho', the same notes of time are of the same measure in any one piece, yet in different pieces they differ very much, and the differences are in general marked by the words slow, brisk, swift, etc., written at the beginning; but these are still uncertain measures, since there are different degrees of slow and swift; and indeed the true determination of them must be learnt by experience from the practice of musicians.

Sebastian de Brossard was one of several musicians who attempted to provide definitions for *time words* in common use. A few of these appear below.

LARGO . . . VERY SLOW, as if enlarging the measure and making the main beats often unequal, etc.

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<sup>63</sup> Robert Donington, *Interpretation*, 234.

ANDANTE . . . to stroll with even steps, means above all for basso continuos, that all the notes must be made equal, and the sounds well separated.

ALLEGRO . . . always GAY, and decidedly lively; very often quick and light: but also at times with a moderate speed, yet gay, and lively.

Most notable in these definitions is the allusion to the *character* of the music, as opposed to the modern perception of tempo words having specific relationships to metronomic markings. The Baroque composer used tempo words to define the quality of expression; it was the performer's duty to establish the correlating tempo.

As the Seventeenth century progressed, some assistance could be found in the composer's choice of meter. Several treatises attempt to define the effect of the recently evolved meter signature. Among the most thorough is that by Jean-Pierre Freillon Poncein in his oboe treatise of 1700.

#### Rules for Tempo

- C (signe majeur): Beat in four grave beats. Each beat falls on a quarter note. The four beats are as follows: down on the first, to the left on the second, to the right on the third and up on the fourth.
- 2 (signe binaire): Beat in two slow beats with a downbeat on the first two quarters and an upbeat on the last two.
- [C-slash] (signe mineur): Also beat in two but a bit faster than the sign 2. I mean by "a bit faster" that it is necessary to increase the tempo bit by bit.
- 4/8: Beat in two but more quickly than [C-slash].
- 03 (signe trinaire): Beat in three grave beats the first one down, the second to the right and the third up.
- 3/1: Very slow, beat in the same manner as 03.
- 3/2: Beat in three, a bit faster than 3/1.
- 3/4: One quarter note for each beat, still faster than 3/2.

- 3: Beat in three, still faster than  $\frac{3}{4}$ . For minuets, this time signature is beaten in  $1\frac{1}{2}$ , i.e., two quarters on a downbeat and the third on an upbeat.
- $\frac{3}{8}$ : Beat like the minuet but a bit faster in tempo.
- $\frac{6}{4}$ : Beat in two grave beats with three quarter notes on each beat.
- $\frac{6}{8}$ : Beat in two in a faster tempo with three eights on each beat.
- $\frac{9}{3}$ : Beat in three grave motions with three quarters on each beat.
- $\frac{9}{8}$ : Beat in three more quickly than  $\frac{9}{3}$  with three eights on a beat.
- $\frac{12}{4}$ : Beat in four grave motions with three quarters on each beat.
- $\frac{12}{8}$ : Also beat in four but a bit faster with three eights on a beat.
- For measures that go quickly, one should place a 4 under the 2 and save the sign [C-slash] to indicate a fast quadruple meter. However, this is not in use.<sup>64</sup>

In other words, the higher the bottom number of the time signature (the denominator), the more brisk the tempo. Conversely, a movement from a Handel oratorio that suddenly transitions from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{2}$  implies a major change in tempo and character, in a sense, actually creating a ritard as harmonic and melodic motion dramatically decrease.

Summary:

- 1) Tempo words are not necessarily related to the actual speed of the tactus, (such as those equivocated to metronome markings today), but are more aptly to be considered character words that related more closely to the expressive qualities of the music.

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<sup>64</sup> Jean-Pierre Freillon Poncein, "La Véritable Manière d'apprendre à jouer en perfection du hautbois." (1700) quoted in Shrock *Performance Practices*, 100-101.

- 2) The evolution of the time signature provides significant information to the performer: those with smaller numbers on the bottom indicating a slower, more sustained tempo.

### Phrasing and Articulation

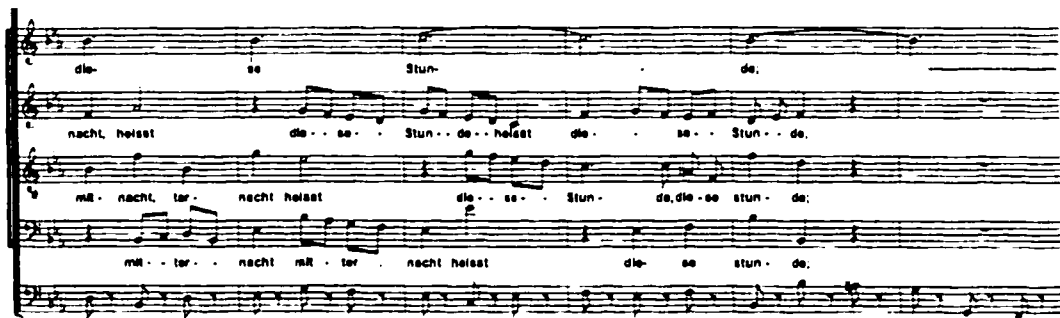
#### **Phrase Structure**

One of the greatest challenges regarding phrasing in Baroque music results from the diversity of musical forms and structures. This is well illustrated in the compositions of Claudio Monteverdi, who wrote in both the self-proclaimed *prima* and *secunda pratica*, or with composers such as Antonio Lotti who kept much of the Renaissance horizontal phrase structure amidst the increasing tendencies toward vertical harmonic organization in the Seventeenth century. In addition, composers such as Handel and J.S. Bach placed highly contrasting movements (such as neo-Renaissance imitation next to an ornamented da capo aria) in juxtaposition to one another. Or consider the antiquated styles found in the Bach *B Minor Mass*, a work written to demonstrate the composer's versatility when applying for a position in the Roman Catholic Church: extensive movements of highly complex Renaissance imitative counterpoint appear amidst concerted arias, duets, and choruses that feature all the energy and nuance of the high Baroque.

Thus it becomes the performer's responsibility to recognize the pervading structure of a particular Baroque composition, while remaining aware of the importance of cadential structures as they relate to evolving concepts of form and tonality. Whereas composers of the High Renaissance tended to focus more on momentary emphasis within the context of the long arch-like phrase (such as in the trademark suspensions amidst

expansive melismatic phrases in a Palestrina motet). Baroque music is more frequently organized around short phrases seeking urgent cadential resolution. Thus, it stands to reason that the melodic phrase should likewise find its peak at the point of cadential resolve, especially when it is reinforced by the metrical structure as well. (See Figure 3.10)

Figure 3.10 Cadential interaction of phrase and metrical accent  
in J.S. Bach's Cantata #140



#### Summary:

- 1) Phrasing in the Baroque period is built around the musical destination of the cadence, especially strong when interacting with metrical accents as well. The performer should strive to organize series of cadences.
- 2) Music with text provides additional insight into the phrase, as the Baroque composer was greatly concerned with the natural inflection and character of the text.

#### Articulation

Most discussions regarding articulation in Baroque vocal music lead directly to an in depth study of text inflection, as seen in the following excerpts.

One must employ that kind of music whose notes have been properly adapted to the words lest their sense be lost; and the singer must enunciate the words in such a way that not a syllable be missed. For this reason, St. Charles Borromeo ordered that in the churches of his diocese nothing be sung that could not be easily understood.

In all that has been said and declared concerning the inclination of music, namely to move the souls of its subjects or listeners, the principal acclaim is owed not to music or to song but to narration.

And because music is like matter given form by oration and narration, and since form is nobler than matter, therefore the effect of moving must be attributed to oration and narration.<sup>65</sup>

Because of the current custom and style, according to which one composes and sings as if one recited an oration . . . let me say that the right manner of expressing the words by singing almost and as much as possible as if one were simply talking to someone has recently been invented.<sup>66</sup>

In addition to this preoccupation with oration, it is also during this time that we first encounter very specific articulation markings, such as those to delineate slurs, staccatos, tenutos, and even early fermati. Sometimes marked, sometimes not, it was expected that the performer would vary the phrase according to the expressive quality of the music and text.

Certain notes and rests should be prolonged beyond their written length, for reasons of expression.<sup>67</sup>

It is necessary to study how to detect and understand well what makes musical sense, and what must be joined together. It is necessary to avoid, with equal care, separating what belongs together, and joining what comprises more than one thought and should therefore be separate.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Severo Bonini, *Discorsie e Regole*, (1640), trans. and ed. Mary Ann Bonino, (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1979), 109, 126, 129.

<sup>66</sup> Michael Praetorius, "Syntagma Musicum" (Vol. 3, 1619), quoted in Shrock *Performance Practices*, 25.

<sup>67</sup> C.P.E. Bach, "Essay I," (1753) quoted in Donington *Interpretation*, 472.

There was also a proliferation of treatises in the Baroque period that address the unique challenges of bowing, which provide further evidence of the specificity of musical expression. It is from these writings that we have a clear sense of *detached* articulation, especially in rapid and repeated pitches, most often accomplished on a string instrument by reversing or lifting the bow.

Closely related to the discussion of bowings is the phenomenon known as the *silence of articulation*, or the immediate decay that leaves a sense of space between the notes, especially in fast or stately musical settings.

Dots after long notes, or after short notes at a slow tempo, and dots occurring singly, are all held on. But at a fast tempo, continuing successions of dots are [often taken as rests] in spite of the contrary appearance of the notation. This contradiction should be avoided by more exact notation. In the absence of that, however, the feeling of the music will throw light [on the proper way of performing it].<sup>69</sup>

In slow pieces . . . the dot has to be joined to its note with a diminuendo [and slurred to the subsequent short note].

In quick pieces the bow is lifted at each dot: therefore each note is separated from the other and performed in a springing style. . .<sup>70</sup>

In effect, the space in place of the dot brings greater intensity to the note that follows, creating sharper, more driving rhythms. (See Figure 3.11) Failure to do so allows the music to blur, resulting in fast moving harmonic progressions that sound heavy and muddled.<sup>71</sup>

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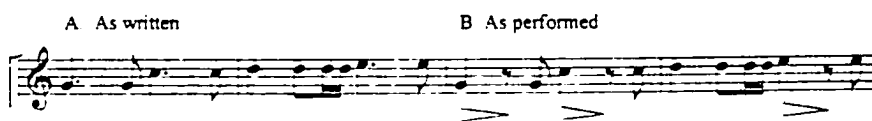
<sup>68</sup> Joachim Quantz, "Essay," (1752) quoted in Donington, *Interpretation*, 478.

<sup>69</sup> C.P.E. Bach, "Essay I," (1753) quoted in Donington, *Interpretation*, 444.

<sup>70</sup> Leopold Mozart, "Violinschule," (1756) trans. Editha Knoch (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), 41.

Figure 3.11

## Silence of Articulation



Perhaps the most distinctive development in articulation during this period, however, is that pertaining to the use of the *messa di voce*. First codified by the Florentine Cammerata, by the end of the Seventeenth century there was hardly a treatise that did not speak to the expressive qualities of this technique.

It must also be pointed out that wherever notes of one, of two, or of four beats length are found, they should be held in a singing fashion (in *modo cantabile*), by starting softly, making a crescendo until the middle of the note, and (then) making a diminuendo on the second half [of the note] until the end of the beat, so that it may hardly be heard; and in doing this, one will render perfect harmony.<sup>72</sup>

The ideals implicit of the *messa di voce* coalesce with the aforementioned considerations for dynamic shape, in that neither long phrases nor long notes should be allowed to become stagnant or otherwise lifeless. This might be compared to a magnetic force that pulls the listener into the phrase in search of resolution at the height of a complex harmonic progression. The greater the *pull*, the greater the need to apply the *messa di voce* in order to give a contour of peaks and valleys to the phrase.

Summary:

- 1) Examine the character of the words to grasp the pervading character of the text.

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<sup>71</sup> See the discussion of the *silence of articulation* in the following section that deals with implementation in the Classical era.

<sup>72</sup> Girolamo Fantini, "Method for Learning to Play the Trumpet in a Warlike Way. . ." (1638) quoted in Shrock, *Performance Practices*, 168.



- 2) The articulation should seek to reinforce this sense of style and mood, be it gay, agitated, melancholy, or morose.
- 3) The conductor is obliged to study the markings of the orchestral score, including the implications for bowing as set forth by Seventeenth century theorists, as this provides tremendous insight into the nuance of the phrase.
- 4) The *silence of articulation* replaces the dot with a space in fast music of a dramatic character.
- 5) Consider the use of the *messa di voce* to further heighten the intensity of the phrase, particularly as the phrase interacts with metrical and cadential structures.

### Rhythmic Alteration

There are two frequently recurring situations that cause the performer to alter rhythms as they appear in the score. The first of these has to do with the vertical alignment of rhythmic figures, such as those that feature even eighth notes in the vocal parts and dotted rhythms in the accompaniment. In such cases, the performer must alter one of the parts to conform to the pervading rhythmic character of the piece. (See Figure 3.12)

Figure 3.12                      Alteration for Rhythmic Alignment

A. As written

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Soprano, Alto, and Piano. The Soprano and Alto parts are vocal staves with lyrics: "Sing all ye lands" and "Sing to the lord of hosts". The Piano part is an accompaniment. The score illustrates a rhythmic misalignment where the vocal parts have even eighth notes, while the piano accompaniment has dotted rhythms. A vertical dashed line is drawn through the score to highlight this misalignment.

B. As performed



The other prevalent rhythmic practice is that of inequality, or adding dotted figures to notes that otherwise appear even. (See figure 3.13)

Figure 3.13

Notes inégales



Although this practice originated in France, the practice had become prevalent throughout Europe by the end of the Baroque period.

Diminutions of the first rank such as sixteenth notes in four-beat measures, eighth notes in two-beat or *alla breve* measures, or notes that divide a beat in half in slightly quick triple meters and their proportions are, when used successively, not played each equal to the next, as they are written: for that would have something of the sluggish, the crude, and the dull. But they are altered in the French style, by lengthening each odd-numbered note the value of a dot, rendering the following note shorter to the same extent.<sup>73</sup>

Similar in effect and intent is the practice of *overdotting* in music of a majestic character, such as that of the French Overture. A bit of a misnomer, the sense of

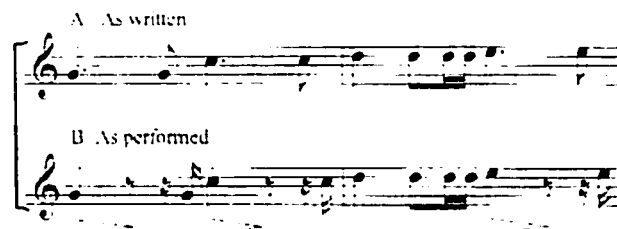
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<sup>73</sup> Georg Muffat, "Florilegium Secundum," (1698) quoted in Shrock *Performance Practices*, 233.

overdotting is actually a result of extending the *silence of articulation*, thereby bringing greater intensity to the short note and increasing the drama of the music as a whole. (See Figure 3.14)

Figure 3.14

### Overdotting



As to the degree of the rhythmicity in the practice of *overdotting* and *notes inégales*, the treatises speak to the lilting or softer quality of even rhythms and triplets as opposed to the jolting nature of the dotted note followed by the snap of a short note. The Seventeenth century performer's decision on this matter focuses on the severity of the character of the music. The admonishing melismas of Handel's *Thus Saith the Lord* require sharply pointed (overdotted) rhythms as opposed to the pastoral and flowing dotted note pattern found in *He Shall Feed his Flock*. Here again, the text provides the key to solving the puzzles of articulation.

### Summary:

- 1) Cross rhythms were all but non-existent in the Baroque period, especially in the placement of a duplet against a triplet. The performer is required to adjust the rhythm throughout the voices and instruments to attain vertical alignment and unity.
- 2) It is expected that the performer will adjust recurring dotted rhythmic patterns to accentuate the character of the text. Sometimes this results in the practice of

*notes inégales*, wherein alternating note values are lengthened. At other times, this results in *overdotting* to create a greater sense of drama.

### Melodic Alteration

One could dedicate a lifetime to the study of Baroque ornamentation. Robert Donington, among others, provides an exhaustive list of common embellishments ranging from fourteen possible manifestations of the *appoggiatura* to various applications of trills, turns, and mordents.<sup>74</sup> For the choral conductor, however, familiarity with the *appoggiatura trill* will address a large majority of situations found in the prevailing repertoire.

The aforementioned emphasis on the cadential structure is of great importance in the discussion of the *appoggiatura trill*, a device the main purpose of which is bringing emphasis to the cadence.

Whoever has a fine shake [trill], wanting in every other grace, always enjoys the advantage of conducting himself without giving distastes to the end or cadence, here for the most part it is very essential.<sup>75</sup>

The trill is an *appoggiatura* repeated two or more times from a little sound to an ordinary note, one degree lower.<sup>76</sup>

This coalescing of the *appoggiatura* and the trill can occur in any number of ways, the most common of which appears in the illustration below. (See Figures 3.15 and 3.16.)

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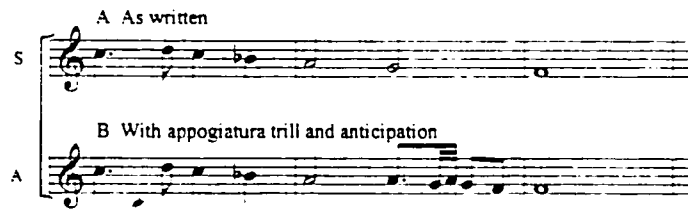
<sup>74</sup> See Robert Donington, *Interpretation*, 152-287.

<sup>75</sup> Pier Francesco Tosi, "Opinioni de' cantori antichi, e moderni," (1723) quoted in Donington, 241.

<sup>76</sup> Étienne Loulié, "Elements ou principes de musique," (1696) quoted in Donington, 242.

Figure 3.15

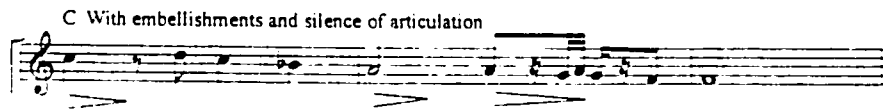
### The Appoggiatura Trill



Consider also the same appoggiatura trill with the implementation of the silence of articulation.

Figure 3.16

### Appoggiatura trill with Silence of Articulation



Summary:

- 1) The appoggiatura trill is used to bring emphasis to the cadence or to significant cadence-like passages.

### Expression

In general terms of musical expression in the Baroque period, one is obliged to revisit two recurring themes that are pervasive in the treatises of the Seventeenth century: diversity in style and form and the desire to capture the oratorical nature of the text.

These ideals are well represented in Jean Rousseau's singing treatise of 1710.

Several ways of beating the measure are employed in order to diversify pieces of music, as well as in order to suit the prosody of the words, which demands sometimes a measure of four beats, sometimes one of two or three beats, etc. But this diversity of measure serves mainly as a means to the different types of movement, wherein lies the pure spirit of music, if one knows how to enter into it. For the measure is a means that has movement as its end. Now, as there is a difference between the means and the end to which it leads, there is also a difference between measure and

movement. And just as the voice should be led by the measure, the measure should also be lead and animated by the movement. Because of this it happens that under the same time signature, one often conducts the measure differently: because sometimes one animates and sometimes one retards [the movement], following the various emotions that the voice should express. That is why, in order to conduct a musical work, it is not enough to know how to beat the measure according to the various time signatures; it is still necessary to enter into the spirit of the composer – that is to say, into the different movements that the expression of the piece demands. And it is for this reason that few people know how to conduct music well. The composer of a piece should [be able to] conduct it better than anyone else, because he should have a better conception of the design and the types of movement involved.<sup>77</sup>

Rousseau's admonition to "enter the spirit of the composer" speaks as well to the conducting student today as it did 300 years ago, documenting the transition from the Renaissance conductor's role of simply keeping the tactus to the subsequent notion that the conductor is responsible for every aspect of musical nuance, shape, and design.

Summary:

- 1) All the elements of Baroque performance practice culminate in the charge to draw upon the unique character of the music as it portrays the dramatic nature of the text.
- 2) The conductor of music from the Baroque period is obliged to understand vocal and instrumental forms and conventions of the Seventeenth century if he or she intends to fully appreciate and exploit the varied character of the music.

## THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND BEYOND

The latter half of the Eighteenth century represents a significant transformation in

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<sup>77</sup> Jean Rousseau, "Methode Claire, certaine, et facile pour apprendre á chanter la musique." (1710), quoted in Shrock, *Performance Practice*, 326.

the deciphering and interpretation of the printed score. This evolutionary process is well documented in the primary source material of the time as treatises become more specific to the idiosyncrasies of specific genres, composers, and instruments. Representative works include Johann Friedrich Schubert's *Neue Singe-Schule oder gründliche und vollständige Anweisung zur Singkunst*<sup>78</sup> (*New singing school of thorough and complete instruction for the singing art*), and Moritz Hauptmann's *Die Natur der Harmonik und der Metrik*<sup>79</sup> (*The nature of the Harmony and the Meter*). These volumes represent a shift in paradigm from the grandiose documents of the Renaissance that attempted to address the many vast subtopics ranging from the development of modalities to specific instructions for playing and singing, such as those aforementioned treatises by Morley and Zarlino. Also informative to the modern performer are the various first person accounts such as the innumerable published letters of Mozart and Brahms,<sup>80</sup> or the extensive writings of Berlioz including his *Grand traité d'instrumentation et d'orchestration modernes*<sup>81</sup> (*Great treatise of modern instrumentation and orchestration*). Writings such as these provide insight into the composer's personal philosophy and

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<sup>78</sup> Johann Friedrich Schubert, *Neue singe-schule: oder gründliche und vollständige anweisung zur singkunst, in drey abtheilungen mit hin länglichen uibungsstücken*, Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1804).

<sup>79</sup> Moritz Hauptmann, *The Nature of Harmony*, (1893) trans. S. Sonnenschein (New York: Da Capo Press, 1991).

<sup>80</sup> See Robert Spaethling, *Mozart's Letters, Mozart's Life: Selected Letters*, (London: Faber, 2000). See Styra Avins, *Johannes Brahms: Life and Letters*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

<sup>81</sup> Hector Berlioz and Richard Strauss, *Treatise on Instrumentation*, trans. Theodore Front (New York, Dover, 1991).

ideals, allowing the reader to not only arrive at a better grasp of the music, but also the intricacies of the thought process that created it.

### Sound Quality

#### **Performance Forces**

Perhaps the most significant development at the end of the Eighteenth century was the transition from the traditional use of men and boys to the proliferation of the mixed chorus. By the end of the Baroque period, female voices begin to appear among the ranks of the church choir, as documented in a mid-Eighteenth century survey of church musicians published by Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg.

Paris, *Concerts Spirituels* . . . four female and four male solo singers, choir of six female and six male sopranos, six male altos, seven tenors, five high basses, eight low basses; orchestra of sixteen violins, two violas, six cellos, two double basses, one flute, four oboes, three bassoons.<sup>82</sup>

Dresden, King's chapel and chamber-music: . . . five female and six male sopranos, one female and three male altos, three tenors, four basses.<sup>83</sup>

It appears that the ensembles described above represented the *best-case* scenario, as lesser institutions were content to have as few as two or three singers on a part, even when performing with full orchestra.

To address issues of balance between the orchestral and choral forces, the choir was usually placed *in front* of the orchestra, often necessitating the use of two or three conductors in order to keep the ensemble synchronized.

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<sup>82</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, "Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik," quoted in Donington *Interpretation*, 589.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.



Shortly after the turn of the Nineteenth century, the first *liedertafel* took form, a group of singers and poets who sought to exercise the freedoms of social reform in lively discussion and amateur music making. This, along with the decline of the post-Enlightenment Church, resulted in not only a reformation of the choral ensemble, but in a significant change in compositional practice as well. At first an exclusive men's organization, the *liedertafel* resulted in the advent of innumerable singing societies, (male, female, and mixed) particularly in Austria, Germany, and Great Britain. These amateur ensembles varied in size from a chamber choir to the large mixed choruses assembled to perform the great Baroque oratorios.

It was ensembles such as these that inspired the vast choral output of Schubert, Brahms, and Mendelssohn, as they each assumed conducting posts of such choirs at one time or another during their careers. Brahms wrote to a friend about one such chorus composed of women's voices, the *Hamburger Frauenchor*.

I am here and shall probably remain until I go to Detmold. Some very pleasant pupils detain me and, strangely enough, a ladies' society that sings under my direction, till now only what I compose for it. The clear, silver tones please me exceedingly and, in the church with the organ, the ladies voices sound quite charming.<sup>84</sup>

The other notable Nineteenth century phenomenon was the popularity of large choral-orchestral works requiring massive orchestras accompanied by choirs numbering in the hundreds.

The numbers indicated are only relative. If space permit, [sic] the Chorus may be doubled or tripled and the orchestra may be proportionally increased. But in the event of an exceptionally large chorus, say 700 to 800 voices, the entire chorus should only be used for the Dies Irae, the

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<sup>84</sup> Sophie Drinker, *Brahms and his Women's Choruses*, (Merion PA: Musurgia Publishers, 1952), 23.

Tuba Mirum and the Lacrymosa, the rest of the movements being restricted to 400 voices.<sup>85</sup>

Summary:

- 1) Choral Music in the mid Eighteenth century served mainly the Aristocracy and the Church, and was usually accompanied by orchestra.
- 2) While the men and boy choirs of earlier times remained the norm, the appearance of female singers became increasingly common during the Enlightenment, especially in Northern Europe.
- 3) Balance between voices and instruments was typically addressed by placing the singers in front of the orchestra.
- 4) The musical expansion and social reforms of the Nineteenth century resulted in the proliferation of innumerable amateur choruses, often conducted by the most renowned composers and musicians. The result was an unprecedented diversity in the choral ensemble in terms of size, ability, and gender.
- 5) The advent of large choral-orchestral works brought unprecedented large performance forces to the stage, frequently numbering in the hundreds.

**Vibrato**

There is considerable evidence that the Eighteenth century musician considered vibrato to function mainly as an embellishment. According to Leopold Mozart (1756).

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<sup>85</sup> Hector Berlioz, *New Edition of the Complete Works*, quoted in Ronald Bruce Mayhall, "Tempo fluctuation in the romantic era as revealed by nineteenth century sources and applied to selected choral compositions," (D.M.A. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1990).

The Tremolo [vibrato] is an ornamentation . . . which can be used charmingly on a long note, not only by good instrumentalists but also by cleaver singers. Nature herself is the instructress thereof. For if we strike a slack string or a bell sharply, we hear after the stroke a certain wave-like undulation on the struck note. And the trembling after-sound is called tremolo, [or tremoleto].<sup>86</sup>

[It would] be an error if every note were played with the tremolo. Performers there are who tremble consistently on each note as if they had the palsy. The tremolo must only be used at places where nature herself would produce it. . . . For at the close of a piece, or even at the end of a passage which closes with a long note, that last note would inevitably . . . continue to hum for a considerable time afterwards.<sup>87</sup>

Mozart concurs with several Eighteenth century theorists who say that the abuse of the tremolo, or *vibrato*, is likely to draw upon the sympathy of the audience, as they assume the performer has been consumed by some sort of palsy that causes the performer the tremble uncontrollably. This opinion is echoed by Georg Simon Löhlein in 1774.

One must not be too liberal in its use: for if, as many do, one introduces it too frequently, the hearer will feel a sympathetic anxiety, for he believes that this constant trembling comes from an attack of cold fever, which has just seized the player. . . . Many have the praiseworthy habit of trembling on the open strings. This is worse than bad and belongs in the beer cellar.<sup>88</sup>

The modern performer typically has little difficulty in assimilating the ideals of a moderated and judicious use of vibrato in the music of Haydn and Mozart. Ironically, however, primary source materials suggest that the vibrato fell much *farther* from favor

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<sup>86</sup> Leopold Mozart, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing*, trans. Editha Kocker, (London, Oxford University Press, 1948), 203.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 203-04.

<sup>88</sup> Georg Simon Löhlein, "Anweisung zum Violinspielen mit practischen Beyspielen und zur Uebung mit vier und swanzig kleinen Duetten erläutert," quoted in Clive Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 525.

in the Nineteenth century. The current perception that Romantic music is to be sung with a full-bodied voice and a consistent oscillation of pitch did not evolve until well into the Twentieth century. Consider Manuel Garcia's admonition written near the end of the Nineteenth century.

The tremolo should be used only to portray the feelings which, in real life, move us profoundly: the anguish of seeing someone who is dear to us in imminent danger, the tears which certain movements of anger or of vengeance draw from us, etc. Even in these circumstances, the use of it should be regulated with taste and moderation [mesure]; as soon as one exaggerates the expression or the length of it, it becomes tiresome and awkward. Outside of the special cases which we have just indicated, it is necessary to guard against altering in any way the security of the sound, for the repeated use of the tremolo makes the voice tremulous [chevrotante]. The artist who has contracted this intolerable fault becomes incapable of phrasing any kind of sustained song. It is thus that some beautiful voices have been lost to the art.<sup>89</sup>

Desirable or not, it appears that at least some amount of vibrato was common amongst singers, if only as a natural attribute of the mature human voice. Not until the 1930s did the *present* use of vibrato come into common practice, and even then it fell under the harsh criticism of master teachers of instruments and voice. Amidst all the controversy, James Winram (1908) offers a voice of reason imploring the performer to consider the character of the music.

[Vibrato] should be judiciously used at all times, as it is quite possible to have too much of a good thing. Beethoven's music will sound lovely with very little close shake, or if preferred with none at all; whereas Wagner's will gain rather than lose by its introduction. The character of the music must be taken into consideration, and good taste will surely be sufficient guide.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Manuel Garcia II, *A Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing: Part Two*, trans. and ed. Donald V. Paschke, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1975), 150-51.

<sup>90</sup> James Winram, "Violin Playing and Violin Adjustment," (1908) quoted in Brown, *Performing*, 533.

### Summary:

- 1) As in the Baroque period, the use of vibrato is considered mainly an embellishment to the music throughout the Eighteenth *and* Nineteenth centuries.
- 2) Judicious use of vibrato is encouraged especially on long notes and at phrase endings.
- 3) The current perception of a full, widely oscillating vibrato typically associated with the Nineteenth century did not actually evolve until well into the Twentieth century.

### Pitch

Although the disparity of concert pitch became considerably less than in the late Eighteenth century, enough variation existed even in the Nineteenth century to cause angst amidst composers and musicians. Verdi complains to a colleague,

Don't you remember the strong opposition presented by the whole orchestra and by the two chief conductors two years ago, when I proposed adopting the normal diapason [pitch] of Paris? And, oddly enough, to come to an agreement with me they proposed splitting the difference, which was the most absurd thing in the world.<sup>91</sup>

Indeed, the musician of the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth centuries found that nearly every town had its own version of concert pitch, in the most extreme cases, ranging from  $a' = 360$  to  $a' = 490$ . The most reliable data comes from artifacts such as a tuning fork that was reportedly used to tune Mozart's piano at  $a' = 421.6$ . This appears to be about the average for concert pitch in the late 1700s, and musicians carried various

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<sup>91</sup> Giuseppe Verdi, "Letter to Cesarino De Sanctis," (1871) quoted in Ruth Halle Rowen, *Music Through Sources and Documents*. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.), 273.

crooks and attachments that would allow their instruments to adjust to the concert pitch *du jour*.

By the end of the Nineteenth century, most European orchestras were tuning to  $a' = 430-435$ . Today's standard of  $a' = 440$  was codified in 1939, although in more recent times many early music ensembles *tune down* to  $a' = 415 - 420$ , (or approximately a half-step lower than today's standard) in an effort to recreate a more appropriate timbre.

The implication for the modern performer is that the entire canon of pre-Twentieth century music is pitched at least a half-step too high, creating a particular challenge for singers. Particularly problematic are choral parts from Beethoven's choral/symphonic works that lie in the upper tessitura of the voice for extended periods, but are typically performed by modern orchestras at the commonly accepted  $a' = 440$ . In addition, we are well aware that even in Renaissance music, simply changing the key by a half-step in either direction can completely change the character of the piece. At the very least, the ensemble dedicated to unaccompanied Nineteenth century choral music should feel at liberty to experiment with adjacent key areas in seeking out that which fits the character of the music within the comfortable tessitura of the voice.

Summary:

- 1) The presently accepted standard of  $a' = 440$  was not established until 1939. Until then, musicians were prepared to re-tune according to the local pitch standard.
- 2) In most cases, music of the late Eighteenth century was performed at least a half-step lower than it is today, thus effecting the vocal demands *and* the character of the music itself.

- 3) Today's musician should consider re-tuning the instruments when possible, or at least lowering the pitch for unaccompanied choral works, even those from the late Nineteenth century.

### Tempo and Meter

By the middle of the Eighteenth century, many composers had become very specific in regard to preferential tempi for performance. In the early part of the Classical era, this was mainly indicated by the selection of meter.

Regarding meter, those having larger values, such as alla breve, 3/2, and 6/4, have a weightier and slower tempo than those having smaller values, such as 2/4, 3/4 and 6/8, and these in turn are less animated than 3/8 or 6/16 meter. Thus, for example, a loure in 3/2 meter has a slower tempo than a minuet in 3/4 meter, and the latter is in turn slower than a passepied in 3/8 meter.<sup>92</sup>

While meter continued to have some influence on the overall speed, an increased vocabulary of time words resulted in highly descriptive and detailed compositional practice. This evolving phenomenon was well documented in the Paris Conservatoire's *Principes élémentaires de musique* (c. 1800).

Formerly tempo was determined by the nature of the metre . . . . In a word, the tempos increased in speed accordingly as the metres decreased in value. Modern music no longer observes this rule rigorously; and as at present each metre can be played at three tempos, that is to say slow tempo, moderate tempo, and fast tempo and their nuances, it follows that the silence of the metre in this matter has been replaced by terms which indicate the degree of slowness or fastness which the tempo should have.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Johann Philipp Kirnberger, *The Art of Strict Musical Composition*, (1771) trans. David Beach and Jurgen Thym (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 377.

<sup>93</sup> François-Joseph Gossec, "Principes élémentaires de musique arrêtés par les membres du Conservatoire, suivis de solfèges" (1798-1802) quoted in Brown *Performing*, 293.

By the end of the Eighteenth century, we find an unprecedented amount of verbiage relegated to helping the performer arrive at the appropriate speed and character of a given composition. Consider, for example, the opening of the “Kyrie” in Beethoven’s *Mass in C* that carries the marking “Andante con moto assai vivace quasi Allegretto ma non troppo.”

The other significant development during this time was the invention of the early metronome. After several experiments with chronometers and other pedulum driven devices, Johann Nepomuk Maelzel patented the metronome in 1815. Though not the first to do so, Maelzel aligned a series of tempo markings to numerical values (See Figure 3.17), thus resulting in standardized *Maelzel Metronome* (“MM”) markings.

Figure 3.17 Maelzel’s Metronome Markings<sup>94</sup>

40	<i>Grave</i>	42
44	<i>Largo</i>	46
48	<i>Larghetto</i>	50
52	<i>Adagio</i>	54
56		58
60	<i>Andante</i>	63
66	<i>Andantino</i>	69
72		76
80	<i>Moderato</i>	84
88		92
96	<i>Allegretto</i>	100
104		108
112	<i>Allegro</i>	116
120	<i>Vivace</i>	126
132		138
144	<i>Presto</i>	152
160		168
176	<i>Prestissimo</i>	184
192		200
208		

<sup>94</sup> Excepted from Brown *Performing*, 307.



These numerical tempo markings found their way into musical scores almost overnight. Even Beethoven was known to have returned to earlier compositions adding tempo markings according to this new level of specificity. Maelzel's metronome has remained relatively unchanged to this day and has served as a unifying standard since the beginning of the Nineteenth century.

To composers it [the metronome] offers the great advantage that their compositions when marked according to the degrees of the metronome, will be performed in every country in exactly the same time . . . Long directions by means of multiple epithets are no longer necessary, since the whole system of time is divided into three principal movements, the slow, the moderate, and the quick, and therefore it will but very seldom be necessary to add more than one word, indicating the particular emotion or passion predominating throughout the piece.<sup>95</sup>

In the event that a score is lacking metronome or tempo markings of an exact nature, the rules for establishing an appropriate speed remain the same as in previous eras – that is, to seek out the essence and character of the score.

The correct tempo or degree of speed cannot be determined by any heading, and can only be gathered from the inner characteristics of a composition itself.<sup>96</sup>

Summary:

- 1) As in the Baroque era, the Eighteenth century composer's choice of time signature continued to provide valuable insight in choosing appropriate tempo.
- Generally speaking, the smaller the denominator, the slower the tempo.

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<sup>95</sup> Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *"A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instructions, on the Art of Playing the Piano forte,"* (1828) quoted in *Brown Performing*, 305.

<sup>96</sup> Johann Friedrich Schubert, *"Neue singe-schule"* (1804) quoted in *Brown Performing*, 296.

- 2) The evolution of the chronometer, then the metronome, provided a systematic solution to solving questions of tempo, previously ambiguous according to the non-conformity of terminology regarding tempo.
- 3) Due to specific markings associated with Maelzel's metronome, particular tempo words became increasingly linked to specific metronomic markings, whereas before, the use of such terms referred more closely to the desired *character* of a composition.

### **Tempo Rubato**

The other major development that affects tempo in the Nineteenth century is the use of rubato. Thomas Busby defines rubato in 1801 as "time alternately accelerated and retarded for the purpose of enforcing the expression."<sup>97</sup> This creative license was manifest in numerous different ways, according to the collective expressive preferences of composer and performer.

In the Classical era, the most desirable approach to rubato was to vary the tempo in the melody while the pulse remained steady.

[Tempo rubato] is a detraction of part of the time from one note, and restoring it by increasing the length of another, or vice versa; so that whilst a singer is . . . singing *ad libitum*, the orchestra, which accompanies him, keeps the time firmly and regularly.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> See Thomas Busby, *A Complete Dictionary of Music* (London: R. Phillips, 1801).

<sup>98</sup> Domenico Corri, "The Singer's Preceptor," (1810) quoted in Mayhall, 17.

Apparently, this was more easily said than done, as Mozart writes to his father regarding his *unusual* ability to keep the tempo steady in one hand while employing rubato in the other.

The fact that I always maintain the beat accurately amazes everyone. They simply cannot understand the idea that the left hand goes on as usual during tempo rubato in an Adagio. They imagine that the left hand always follows along.<sup>99</sup>

Moving toward the turn of the Nineteenth century, there is much greater latitude in the implementation of rubato. Consecutive quotations from Garcia and Christiani provide a sense of what was to be considered tasteful and appropriate.

The sensation of a forward impetus, or for that matter of holding back, should never give the listener an impression of hurrying, dragging, or indeed anything violent in the tempo. Musical and poetic significance can only take the forms of period or phrase, depending on the intensity of expression. . . . Music has no means of putting all this on paper. All depends on the sensitivity of the human individual: if this is lacking, little help can be expected from the metronome, which can only guard against the most crass errors; or from the very inadequate hints which I might be tempted to insert in order to point to further depths of meaning.<sup>100</sup>

The momentary prolongation of value which one gives to one or several tones to the detriment of others is called tempo rubato.

This distribution of the values by lengthening and shortening certain notes, at the same time as it serves to break the monotony of equal movements, is favorable to outbursts of passion. . . . Used without discernment and with affectation, the tempo rubato would have the effect of destroying the balance and distorting (tourmenter) the melody.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Letter to his father," (1777) quoted in Ruth Halle Rowen, *Music Through Sources*, 228.

<sup>100</sup> Carl Maria von Weber, "Euryanthe," (1824) quoted in Mayhall, 164-65.

<sup>101</sup> Ecole de Garcia, "Trate complet," (1847) quoted in Mayhall, 21-24.

Adolph Christiana recognized that in 1885 two distinct perceptions regarding the use of rubato exist, but clearly favored the greater freedom associated with the ebb and flow of melody and harmony in coordination with one another.

[Rubato] may be executed in two ways:

1. Both hands in sympathy with each other, i.e., both hands accelerating or retarding together.
2. Or, the two hands not in sympathy, i.e., the accompanying hand keeping strict time, while the other hand alone is playing rubato. The latter way is the more beautiful of the two, and is truly artistic rubato.<sup>102</sup>

Summary:

- 1) In the Eighteenth century, tempo rubato referred mainly to the practice of varying the speed of the melody while the accompanying figure remained constant.
- 2) Gradually through the Nineteenth century, rubato came to represent a greater sense of freedom in accelerating or slowing the entire ensemble, or in the case of the piano, both hands.
- 3) Various composers in the Nineteenth century tend to have uniquely specific ideals as to the appropriate amount of rubato to be used, along with highly varied ways of notating such in the score, ranging from the very specific to the extremely ambiguous.

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<sup>102</sup> Adolph Christiani, *The Principles of Expression in Pianoforte Playing*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1885), 299.

## Phrasing and Articulation

### **Articulation**

The focus on articulation and phrasing becomes nearly obsessive in the treatises of the Eighteenth century. More exacting notation combined with an unprecedented attention to detail created an environment in which a composer was able to present a more thorough and explicit representation of his or her music than ever before.

This is not to imply, however, that the musicians of the Classical era relied *only* on notation as it appeared on the page. Two of the most prevalent attributes of Eighteenth century notation are space, particularly that of the *silence of articulation*, and the *messa di voce*.

### **Silence of Articulation**

The concept of space between notes is crucial to the appropriate articulation of notes in the Classical era. It was simply assumed that the performer would surround each note with an appropriate amount of silence unless the composer explicitly indicated otherwise.

In contrast to legato and staccato is the ordinary style of playing in which the finger is lifted from the key just before the following note is played. This ordinary style, being always taken for granted, is never marked. . . . Playing in the ordinary manner . . . means that the notes are held for slightly less than their full value . . . . If certain notes should be held for their full value, ten, or tenuto is written above them.<sup>103</sup>

These *silences of articulation* provide clarity and emphasis to a note by clearing the air of sound immediately *before* the articulation of a note. This could be

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<sup>103</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, "Anleitung zum Clavierspielen" (1765), quoted in Dennis Shrock, "Aspects of Performance Practice During the Classical Era" in *Five Centuries of Choral Music: Essays in Honor of Howard Swan*, (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1988), 292.

accomplished by lifting the bow, using a designated tonguing, or momentarily ceasing vocal phonation before rearticulating each note in a succession of pitches.

All the notes in execution, whether ornamented or not, are partly in hold and partly in *silence*: which means that they all have a certain length of sound and a certain length of silence, which united makes the whole value of the note.

These silences at the end of each note fix its articulation and are as necessary as the holds themselves, without which they could not be detached from one another; and a piece of music, however beautiful, would be no more agreeable without these *silences d'articulation* than these country songs of Poitou, performed upon insipid bagpipes which only give a noisy and inarticulate sound.<sup>104</sup>

The *degree* of silence may be every bit as important as the silence itself. The *silence of articulation* does not imply a sudden cessation of sound, but rather a rapid decay (see illustration in Figure 3.11 on page 132), often a natural bi-product of the string player moving to the weaker part of the bow.<sup>105</sup> The faster and more lively the music, the greater the expectation of *space* as noted in innumerable treatises of the period. Consider these quotations of Giuseppi Tartini and Johann Sulzer, both dating from the early 1770s.

In performance it is important to distinguish between cantabile and allegro music. In cantabile passages the transition from one note to the next must be made so perfectly that no interval of silence is perceptible between them; in allegro passages, on the other hand, the notes should be somewhat detached.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> François Bedos de Celles, "L'art du Factuer d'orgues" (1766-78) quoted in Shrock "Performance Practices in the Classical Era," (Norman: University of Oklahoma), Part II, 12.

<sup>105</sup> The bow gradually evolved from an arch shape to the more concave Tourte-style bow that is still in common use today. These advancements allowed the string player to produce a more consistent tone from beginning to end of the bow stroke, as opposed to the earlier design that caused a pitch to begin and end with a degree of softness and sweetness. This greatly influenced the preference for the use of *messa di voce* in nearly all music of the period.

A great part of the expression depends on this. A piece of grand and pathetic expression must be performed in the heaviest and most emphatic manner: this occurs if every note of it is firmly given and sustained, almost as if *tenuta* were written over it. In contrast, pieces of pleasant and gentle expression are performed more lightly: namely, every note is more lightly given and not sustained so firmly. A wholly merry or dance-like expression can only be obtained through the lightest performance.<sup>107</sup>

Innumerable theorists speak to the prevalence of the *silence of articulation*, especially in works featuring dotted rhythms at a brisk tempo. Such treatises that provide specific instruction for the string player are informative to the singer as well, largely due to the fact that the vocalist and the string player sought to emulate *one another* in matters of style, timbre, and articulation. In addition to countless documents that speak to the vocal qualities of the string instrument, the intentional doubling of voices and instruments in so much of the repertoire of this era can only suggest that orchestra and choir should adopt a similar approach to phrasing and articulation.

As the Nineteenth century unfolded, the literary undercurrents of social reform surfaced in the ideals of articulation as well.

The next grand requisite to intonation is articulation: the poet being as desirous that his words should be heard, as the musician, that his music should be properly sung. Articulation, from the French, *articuler*, to articulate, to pronounce syllables and words distinctly. . . .

Articulation refers equally to words and notes, and includes that distinctness and accuracy of expression, which gives every syllable and

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<sup>106</sup> Giuseppe Tartini, "Regole per arrivare a saper ben suonar il violino col vero fondamento di saper sicuramente tutto quello che si fa buono ancora a tutti quelli ch'essercitano la musica," (177-?) quoted in Shrock "Performance Practice in the Classical Era, Part II, 20.

<sup>107</sup> Johann Georg Sulzer, "Allgemeine Theorie der schönene Künste," (1771-4) quoted in Brown *Performing*, 628.

sound with truth and perspicuity, and forms the very foundation of pathos and grace.<sup>108</sup>

The prevalent desire for lyrical recitation finds definition in a term coined by Charles de Bériot as *syllabation*.

There are rests even slighter than those we have just explained, namely those of syllabation. By this expression we mean the method of separating words and syllables to give them more force and accent in lyrical recitation.

These nuances, which are entirely in the spirit of the piece, are so delicate that they cannot be classed in the punctuation. They should be more or less marked according to the sentiment of the song.<sup>109</sup>

While *syntax* and *punctuation* of the musical phrase remain common themes in the discussion of phrasing and articulation (see discussion below on phrasing), the context here becomes one of fluid and arhythmic speech patterns lacking the symmetry and refined structures of the previous century. Freedom of expression takes precedence over adherence to form.

### **Messa di Voce**

One cannot fully address articulation in the Classical era without examining the role of the *messa di voce*, an articulative device that reached its height in the late Eighteenth century. Tartini describes this practice in a letter dated 1760.

To draw a beautiful tone from the instrument, place the bow on the strings gently at first and then increase the pressure. If the full pressure is applied immediately, a harsh, scraping sound will result.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Issac Nathan, "Musurgia vocalis," (1836) in Shrock "Performance Practice in the Classical Era," 27.

<sup>109</sup> Charles de Bériot, "Méthode de violon," (1858) quoted in Brown *Performing*, 161.



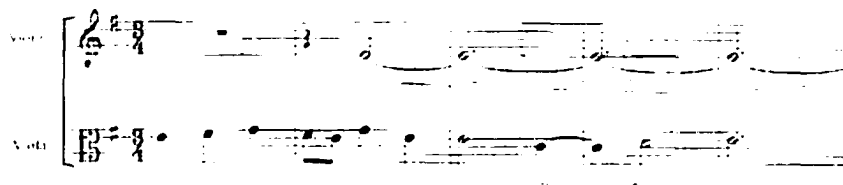
Giambattista Mancini reiterated this practice as applied to the art of singing.

Messa di voce describes that action which . . . gives to each long note a gradation, putting in it at the first a little voice, and then with proportion reinforcing it to the very strongest, finally taking it back with the same gradation as used in swelling.<sup>111</sup>

As in the late Baroque period, the *messa di voce* finds its greatest strength when a long note intersects the bar line, particularly at a cadential figure, although any note of length is subject to this effect if only from the aforementioned properties of the Eighteenth century bow. (See Figure 3.18)

Figure 3.18

Messa di voce



By the second half of the Nineteenth century, *messa di voce*, like many articulations of the Classical era, had given way to a more consistent and sustained sense of line. Composers of the Romantic era more commonly called for this effect by actually notating the crescendo and decrescendo in the score. More common, however, was the use of *messa di voce* as one of a variety of accents. In some instances, the placement of the *messa di voce* suggested *not only* an increase of volume, but a swell in vibrato as well.

The vibrato, however, is not only employed for the beautifying of notes of longer duration in slow movements, but also in the fleeting course of

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<sup>110</sup> GuiseppeTartini, "Letter to Signora Maddalena Lombardini," (1760) quoted in Shrock *Aspects*, 289

<sup>111</sup> Giambattista Mancini, *Practical Reflections on Figured Singing*, (1774/77) trans. and ed. Edward Foreman. (Champaign, IL: Pro Musica Press, 1967), 44.

passages that are to be rapidly played. Rode has made a specialty of this, and has indicated its use by the mark < > in many of his compositions.<sup>112</sup>

#### Summary:

- 1) The *silence of articulation* is commonly understood as the space between notes (especially following dotted notes) wherein a rapid decay creates a momentary silence before the articulation of the note that follows. Such articulation was requisite for all works of a brisk or lively nature.
- 2) The implementation of the *messa di voce* (< >) reached its zenith in the late Eighteenth century, due in part to the shape of the bow of stringed instruments from that era.
- 3) In the Nineteenth century, devices such as those described above succumbed to the more evenly paced Romantic phrasings. Peaks and valleys of the phrase were more closely aligned to the *textual* context than to that of musical tension and release.

#### Phrase Structure

It also became common to speak of musical development, especially phrase structure, in terms of syntax and punctuation, alluding to the oratorical nature of even purely instrumental compositions.

[Make perceptible] the separation of phrases in such a manner that one feels in their inflection as well as in their cadences the beginning, fall, and greater or lesser connections just as one feels all of these with the help of punctuation in speech.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Bartolomeo Campagnoli, "Nouvelle méthode de la mécanique du jeu de violon." (1824) quoted in Brown *Performing*, 552.

<sup>113</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Dictionnaire de musique" (1768) quoted in Shrock *Aspects*, 291.

Correlations between speech patterns and the shaping of the musical phrase remain prevalent throughout the Classical era and well into the Nineteenth century. Two famous treatises on singing address not only the aesthetic qualities of speech as related to singing, but the technical aspects as well.

A phrase in Music is like a sentence in Language, with this difference, that one word will not form a sentence, but one Note can form a Phrase in Music. . . . Some sentences containing many words may be uttered in one breath: indeed a sentence is seldom or ever broken in the midst by taking breath: whereas, in a musical Phrase you are frequently compelled to do so, from the length of some Notes, and the slow movement of the Music but when the Singer finds it necessary to take breath, he should always contrive to do so by a dying or diminuendo of the Voice, because the break will then be less perceived.<sup>114</sup>

Music, like language, has its prose and its verse. One knows that the writer of prose is not at all subjected to the difficulties which annoy the poet. The rhyme, the caesurae, the limited number of feet, the regular cadence of the accents, are the fetters and also the special graces of poetry.<sup>115</sup>

Beyond the technical demands of *oratorical phrasing*, however, are the more fundamental concepts of grammatical structure amidst the melodic development. One should give appropriate consideration *not only* to the proper ordering, emphasis, and delivery of the notes within a phrase, but also to the nuance, pacing, and subtle contours implicit in impassioned and eloquent speech. Daniel Gottlob Türk provides one such example in his treatise on playing the clavier.

Just as the words: "he lost his life not only his fortune" can have an entirely different meaning according to the way they are punctuated (He lost his life, not only his fortune, or, He lost his life not, only his fortune),

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<sup>114</sup> Domenico Corri, "The Singer's Preceptor," (1810) quoted in Shrock "Performance Practice in the Classical Era," 32.

<sup>115</sup> Garcia, *The Art of Phrasing*, 50.

in the same way the execution of a musical thought can be made unclear or even wrong through incorrect punctuation.

Thus, if [a musician], other than at the end of a musical period, does not join the tones together well, and consequently divides a thought where it should not be divided, then he makes the same mistake that an orator would if the latter would pause in the middle of a word and take a breath.<sup>116</sup>

Implicit in this philosophy is a shift from the shorter cadence oriented phrases of the Baroque period to the more expansive, sometimes even meandering melodic journeys that find moments of repose *within* the peaks and valleys of the phrase. The emphasis gradually shifts through the Eighteenth century from efficiently traveling to one's musical destination to the emergence of a growing curiosity about details and diversions along the way. One's ability to pace this journey in a logical and interesting manner is the primary challenge inherent in classical phrasing.

Consider, for example, the *Gloria* from Haydn's *Missa St. Joannis de Deo*. Each voice part is assigned a fragment of the *Gloria* text, each sung simultaneously to meet the liturgical rituals of the mass within the requirements for brevity. The markings above the staff in Figure 3.19 suggest a hierarchy of commas, semi-colons, and periods to indicate the pacing of tension and repose according to the interaction of melodic contour and harmonic structure. Immediately below that staff is a line graph that suggests the rise and fall of energy within that phrase, according to the implicit punctuation.

It is this attention to the detail and contour of the phrase that epitomizes the musical essence of Haydn and Mozart. Moving from the clarity and predictability of binary and tertiary forms of the Seventeenth century toward the outwardly poetic *stream*

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<sup>116</sup> Daniel Gottlob Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, (1789) trans. Raymond H. Haggh, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982) 329.

Figure 3.19

Tension and Release in Haydn's *Gloria*'Gloria' from *Missa brevis* St. Joannis de Deo

F. J. Haydn

Soprano

Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus ti - bi prop - ter ma - gnam glor - ri - am tu - am Do - mi - ne  
B<sup>1</sup>M FM B<sup>1</sup>M E<sup>1</sup>M B<sup>1</sup>M

De - us, Rex Coe - les - tis, De - us Pa - ter. De - us Pa - ter o - mnis - po  
FM FM FM dm gm CM GM

tens, cum San - cto Spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a De - i Pa - tris, A - men, a  
FM FM B<sup>1</sup>M B<sup>1</sup>M FM FM FM

men, A - men, a - men, a - men.  
B<sup>1</sup>M FM B<sup>1</sup>M FM B<sup>1</sup>M

of consciousness compositional practice of the Nineteenth century, the Classicists provide the transformational link in expressive phrasing capable of portraying emotion and pathos within the limitations of structure and form.

By the death of Beethoven in 1827, calculated structures of the Classical era were more often than not subjugated to the freedom of a romanticized sense of expression. While composers like Mendelssohn and Brahms are said to have *Neo-Classical* tendencies, factors such as symmetrical forms and predictable tonal plans were no longer the norm. Further, an ever-increasing array of articulation markings was available to provide an even greater clarity as to the composer's specific intentions. Charles de

Bériot, however, acknowledges in his violin treatise that it is impossible to notate one's every whim and desire and that the essence of phrasing in the Romantic era requires a balance of discipline and sensitivity.

Composers do not always mark the long and short notes, for fear that the song should take too rhythmical a form. In such cases they leave to the singer the care of marking the syllables with that infinite delicacy which lends so great a charm. Thus, for instance, if we sung [sic] with absolute equality the two quavers which begin each bar of the following Romance, [see example below] our dictions would be flat and cold. But if the composer had written those notes as dotted notes this sweet song would be too jerky in effect and would agree but little with the sentiment of its poem. It is here that a medium form is required, which the feeling alone can understand, and which no sign can express. It is sufficient for the first quaver to be a little longer than the second and that the small interval which separates them should be almost insensible.<sup>117</sup>



A study of phrasing in late Nineteenth century music reveals highly varied accounts of what liberties are and are not to be taken with any given score. There are stories of a conservative Franz Schubert who would become easily angered when a singer would attempt to over-romanticize by adding expressive devices not indicated in the score. Conversely, there is the Wagnerian school known (and often shunned) for full, robust singing lacking in finesse. Furthermore, composers such as Bruckner and Brahms, who were fascinated with earlier compositional styles, create an additional dilemma for the conductor who is required to decipher the neo-Renaissance or neo-Baroque qualities of a given score.

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<sup>117</sup> Charles de Bériot, "Méthode de violon." (1858) in *Brown Performing*, 162-63.

Philosophically, however, the unifying factor in phrasing during the Romantic era is the continuity of line. The ideals of *silence of articulation*, *detaché bowing*, and the *messa di voce* for structural emphasis were becoming antiquated. A continuous *stream of thought* now serves as the primary model for appropriate phrasing. Even the role of the slur evolved from marking an articulation to a marking of literary expression in an effort to identify logical musical structure and ideas in the absence of predictable form. Brahms, perhaps more than any of his contemporaries, understood the intricacies of phrasing in the Romantic style.

The slur over several notes does not reduce the value of any of them. It signifies legato, and one makes it according to groups, phrases, or whims.<sup>118</sup>

Karl Klindworth was renowned for his creation of piano renditions of many of the masterworks of the Nineteenth century. In the citation below, he provides valuable insight on the new ideals of phrasing and score markings of the Romantic era.

The new phrasing-slurs are intended to preserve the pianist from the error of rendering the melody according to the strict rules of pianoforte playing, which would require that in every group of slurred notes the first is to be accented and the last slightly shortened in value, thus dividing it from the following group. In thinking over the manner in which Mendelssohn may have intended the melody to be played I have imagined the style in which, for instance, a great violinist would render the song thus phrased. He would certainly link the last group of notes played with one bow to the first note of the new bow, without shortening its value, and thus he would logically connect phrase to phrase, so that the melody might appeal to our hearts in a broad and unbroken stream.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Johannes Brahms, "Briefwechsel," (Vol VI., 1879) quoted in Brown, *Performing*, 233.

<sup>119</sup> Karl Klindworth, "Preface" and "Explanatory Notes" in Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte" (1898) quoted in Brown *Performing*, 238-9.

### Summary:

- 1) The model of Eighteenth century phrasing is based on grammatical sentence structure, with allusions to punctuation to replicate momentary repose within the phrase. Theorists rely upon the oratorical nature of vocal *and* instrumental music to explain the appropriate pacing and development of melodic ideas.
- 2) As instrumental forms dominate the music of the Eighteenth century, the performer is obliged to examine the relationship between music and text, realizing that the role of the text is often subordinate to the thematic and harmonic development.
- 3) Nineteenth century phrasing is mostly influenced by a *stream of consciousness* approach. Slur markings delineate literary thoughts and ideas as opposed to musical phrasings and articulations.

### Metric Accentuation

For the purposes of this study, the most important point to be made about metric accentuation in the Eighteen and Nineteenth centuries is the complete reorientation of thought that took place during this time span. This is best illustrated in first-hand examination of the scores themselves.

First, let us consider the “Credo” from Mozart’s *Coronation Mass* (K. 317) as it appears in the excerpt below.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, “Credo” from *Coronation Mass*, K.317. Ed. Paco Marmel and Manolo Casaus. (Choral Public Domain Library, 1999, accessed 12 March 2001); available from <http://www.cpdll.org/modules.php>; Internet.



Mozart 'Credo' from the Coronation Mass K. 317

Cre - do in u - num De - um, in u - num De - um, pa - trem o - mi - ni - po - ten -  
Cre - do in u - num De - um, in u - num De - um, pa - trem o - mi - ni - po - ten -  
Cre - do in u - num De - um, in u - num De - um pa - trem o - mi - ni - po - ten -  
Cre - do in u - num De - um, in u - num De - um pa - trem o - mi - ni - po - ten -

tem, fa - cto - rem coe - li et ter - rae, vi - si - bi - li - um o - mi - ni - um,  
tem, fa - cto - rem coe - li et ter - rae, vi - si - bi - li - um  
tem, fa - cto - rem coe - li et ter - rae, vi - si - bi - li - um o - mi - ni - um,  
tem, fa - cto - rem coe - li et ter - rae, vi - si - bi - li - um o - mi - ni - um,

The rhythmic structure is clear and pronounced. Accented syllables typically fall on strong beats (one and three). Forward motion is derived mainly from the articulations and dotted-note figurations *within* the measure. Each of these attributes align closely with the prevailing philosophy of metric accentuation, as elucidated by several theorists of the Classical era.

Of the different beats of a measure, there are some more prominent, more marked than the others, though of equal duration: the beat that is more marked is called strong beat: that which is marked less is called weak beat. The strong beats are the first in two-beat measures, the first and third in three- and four-beat measures. The second beat is always weak in all measures, and it is the same with the fourth in the four-beat measure.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Jean Jacque Rousseau. "Dictionnaire de musique" (1768) quoted in Shrock *Aspects*, 296.

Musicians have long agreed [that] . . . in triple time, . . . the first note and the last are accented, the second unaccented . . . . If the third note in triple time is accented in serious music, it is always less forcibly marked than the first.<sup>122</sup>

In short, duple meters require emphasis on the first (and third) beats of each measure, and triple meters require emphasis on the first beat (and sometimes third beat) of the measure. This remained largely unchallenged until the emergence of Romanticism.

Virginia Hancock's study<sup>123</sup> on Brahms' choral compositions documents the composer's fascination with cross-rhythms and obscured bar lines. She cites the numerous examples in which Brahms made note of these practices in his personal copies of works by Palestrina, Schütz, and Bach. Hancock states,

In both his vocal and instrumental music, Brahms frequently disregarded the rhythmic patterns implied by his own bar lines and instead wrote rhythms with a freedom and flexibility that has often been compared with the practices of early music. His library shows that he was well aware of these practices.<sup>124</sup>

It is difficult to find a work by Brahms that does not employ this technique of disregarding, or *blurring* the bar line. Consider the final measures of *O Schöne Nacht*, (Op. 92, No. 1). (Figure 3.21) Rhythmic ambiguity is created by the placement of ties over the bar lines along with hemiola structures in the soprano. Similar devices appear in

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<sup>122</sup> Charles Burney, "Music Articles in the Cyclopaedia," (1819) quoted in Shrock *Aspects*, 300.

<sup>123</sup> Virginia Hancock, *Brahms: Choral Compositions and his Library of Early Music*, (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1977).

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

Figure 3.21

Brahms, *O Schöne Nacht*

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' 'O Schöne Nacht'. It consists of four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in G major and 3/4 time. The lyrics are: 'schö ne, o scho ne Nacht!'. The piano accompaniment features arpeggios in the right hand and octaves in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings like 'dim' and 'pp'.

the lower parts as well, but occurring at different times. Further, the piano arpeggios alternate between falling on and off the downbeat against syncopated octaves in the right hand. The resulting psychological effect for the listener is a sea of ambiguity devoid of metrical orientation. Brahms' mastery in alleviating the traditional role of the bar line (that of metrical organization) perpetuates the new aesthetic of the Romantic era wherein the pervading mood or atmosphere of the music supercedes the need for symmetry and order.

## Summary:

- 1) In music of the Classical era, seek out the natural tendency of the metrical accents to occur on strong beats, (one and three in duple meter, one in triple meter) and the resulting sense of repose on weak beats.

- 2) In music of the Romantic era, observe the vacillation beyond metric accentuation as described above, and the complete negation of such as composers strive to create rhythmic ambiguity by *blurring* the bar line.

### Melodic Alteration

#### **Ornamentation**

By the middle of the Eighteenth century, the use of extensive ornamentation (*ad libitum*) was on the decline, or perhaps more appropriately, designated by specific notation within the score. One significant notational ambiguity, however, remained in the differentiation between the *grace note* and the *appoggiatura*. When is a small note considered an appoggiatura in the Baroque sense of borrowing from the value of adjacent notes, and when is it merely a fleeting decoration to the principle thematic material?

Quantz identifies the varied circumstance of the accented and passing appoggiaturas.

*Accented appoggiaturas* . . . are held for half the value of the following principal note [unless] the note to be ornamented by the appoggiatura is dotted . . . [and therefore] divisible into three parts. The appoggiatura receives two of these parts, but the note itself only one part. Therefore the notes in Fig. 13 are played as illustrated in Fig. 14.



*Passing appoggiaturas* occur when several notes of the same value descend in leaps of thirds. (see Figure 5) When performed they are expressed as shown in Fig. 6.<sup>126</sup>



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<sup>126</sup> Johann Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*, (1752) trans. Edward R. Reilly (New York: Schirmer, 1966), 93-96.

FIG. 6



Türk offers a list of conditions upon which small notes function as grace notes and *not* appoggiaturas, a sampling of which are listed below.

- Which stand before a note . . . that is repeated several times.
- Before notes which should be performed short (staccato).
- Before leaping intervals.
- At the beginning of a movement, or an individual idea and, similarly after a rest.<sup>127</sup>

Ultimately, it is the performer's discretion as to what degree these conditions exist and what manifestation of the ornament best befits the character of the music. By the Nineteenth century, the grace note functioned almost exclusively in the short and fleeting fashion, as true appoggiaturas are more likely to appear in literal durational notation.

#### Summary:

- 1) Composers of the Classical era, and to an even greater extent, those of the Romantic era, tend to write melodic embellishments into the score leaving less and less discretion to the performer.
- 2) A notable exception is the implementation of the *grace note* in scores from the late Eighteenth century – and the determination of whether this note is to be performed long with accentuation, or short with little or no emphasis. Actual appoggiaturas appear most frequently at the midpoint or end of phrases, particularly when reinforced by textual emphasis.

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<sup>127</sup> Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, 211-21.

## Expression

The period of the Enlightenment and the social reforms that followed during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries are well documented in music and thought. A shift from service music intended for church and court to music *for the people* and meant to relate *to the* people had a profound impact on the ideals of musical expression.

The performer . . . must spare no pains to discover and deliver correctly the passion that the composer has sought to express. Everything depends upon a [performance] by good players who know how to apply the passion . . . in its proper place, [and know] how to make the greatest possible distinction in the characters. The player has not only to follow closely every marking and direction, and play the work as is written. . . . he has to enter into the passion that is to be expressed.<sup>127</sup>

Allusions to passion are frequent in Eighteenth century writings, belying the tendency of some who choose to objectify music of the Classical era in an effort to differentiate Haydn and Mozart from their more Romantic successors. Leopold Mozart comments as early as 1756.

The player must be guided by the passion. Sometimes a note requires a rather lively attack, at other times a moderate one, and at still other times one that is hardly perceptible.<sup>128</sup>

Passion has many faces, and the responsibility falls on the performer's shoulders to ascertain the appropriate form of expression that is appropriate according to venue, genre, and chronology. It is in this pursuit that the study of performance practice is most informative.

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<sup>127</sup> Franz Joseph Haydn, "Letter accompanying the manuscript of his Applausus Cantata," (1768) quoted in Ruth Halle Brown, *Music Through Sources*, 255.

<sup>128</sup> Leopold Mozart, "Treatise," quoted in Shrock *Aspects*, 321.

The balance of free-spirited passion and self-discipline remains a challenge to the performer throughout the Nineteenth century.

I heard [Schubert] accompany and rehearse his songs more than a hundred times. Above all, he always kept the most strict and even time, except in the few cases where he had expressly indicated in writing a *ritardando*, *morendo*, *accelerando* etc. Furthermore he never allowed violent expression in performance. The *lieder* singer, as a rule, only relates experiences and feelings of others: he does not himself impersonate the characters whose feelings he describes. Poet, composer and singer must conceive the song lyrically, not dramatically. . . . Everything that hinders the flow of the melody and disturbs the evenly flowing accompaniment is, therefore, exactly contrary to the composer's intention and destroys the musical effect.<sup>129</sup>

After years of literally reading between the lines, we find in the music of the Nineteenth century a specificity that requires a new kind of musical investigation. No longer do we search for what is missing in the score, but instead, we can turn our energies toward understanding what is in the score. Clive Brown summarizes this in a succinct manner in observing,

The onus for the performer had decisively shifted from one of determining in which of a number of different ways to interpret the notation, on the basis of general conventions of appropriate style, to one in which it was primarily necessary to know the precise meaning and intention behind the composer's symbols and instructions.<sup>130</sup>

And indeed, we as performers and conductors are obliged to adhere as closely to the composer's desires as knowingly possible. Thus we seek out contemporary accounts of probable cause and effect in the making of music over a period of more than 500 years. Shall we ever know for certain the aesthetics of attending a performance of a Mozart mass in Salzburg? Can we ever assume any true level of expertise regarding Palestrina's

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<sup>129</sup> Franz Schubert "Memoir" quoted in Mayhall, 242.

<sup>130</sup> Brown, *Performing*, 631.

work in the Sistine Chapel? Are we even capable of reading primary source material without inadvertently invoking our own modern-day subjective opinions and ideals? The answer to each of the above can only be a resounding no – as it is impossible to know all the details and innuendos of a time and place you have never experienced. However, the continued investigation of performance practice not only provides some level of detail about the notation, but more importantly, an insider's look at the prevailing thought processes that influenced the prominent musicians of each of the given eras. As we come to understand the culture, communities, and contexts in which these people lived their lives, we glean insight into their ideals of expression as well.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### TEACHING CHORAL LITERATURE THROUGH SCORE STUDY AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

*I can remember one of my friends, Serge Koussevitsky, speaking of 'reading behind the notes.' What he meant was the ability of the conductor to see behind the notes into the mind of the composer.*

- Michael Bowles<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two addressed the need to teach to individual learning styles while encouraging intuitive and divergent thinking in the process of musical interpretation. Chapter Three presented a wide array of analytical tools in the examination of trends in performance practice and stylistic developments. Here in Chapter Four we find an amalgamation of these two ideals: intuition becomes integrated with intellectual curiosity, and we have a process to use five hundred years of documented tradition to inform or *reinforce* one's intuitive response to the printed musical score.

The lessons that follow are designed to facilitate this process. Unlike the abbreviated examples in Chapter Two, these provide additional narrative for the unfolding sequence of events as they might occur in the undergraduate classroom. While each lesson adheres to Bernice McCarthy's eight-step *4MAT System*, it should be reiterated that the objective is not so much the creation of the sequential process as it is the desire to present a series of activities and assignments that will address the various learning styles of the student population while causing each student to look beyond the superficial details of the score. To this end, the integration and implementation of

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Bowles, *The Art of Conducting*, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1975), 123.

Michael Rogers' activities from the *Communication Chain for Musical Performance* are prevalent throughout the course of each lesson.

At the time of this writing, many of these lessons have been test piloted at both the University of Delaware and Westminster Choir College of Rider University. Discussions and student responses that have proven to be endemic to the activities that are described below are integrated into the descriptions that follow, serving as the first evidence of qualitative research regarding the effectiveness of this approach.

### **Analysis of a Renaissance Madrigal**

It would be impossible to find a single genre that epitomizes Renaissance compositional practice. However, the Sixteenth century Italian madrigal comes close. Well exemplified in Arcadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno*, this work combines the intimacy of the text-music relationship found in much of the secular music of the period with the expansive phrase structure that typically drives the motet, thus presenting an excellent point of departure for the young scholar who seeks to relate theory and history to performance.

#### Sample Lesson #1: Arcadelt - *Il bianco e dolce cigno*

1. **Create the experience:** Students sightread/perform *Il bianco e dolce cigno* from a score with minimal editorial markings. Little information is provided from the instructor, verbally, gesturally, or otherwise.

Each student is certain to have some pre-conceived idea of what an Italian madrigal is supposed to sound like, though in many cases this paradigm may be completely misguided or inappropriate. The purpose of this initial reading is to allow the

music to speak in its purest form. *without* overt interpretation or the intentional application of appropriate performance practice.

2. **Reflective analysis:** Upon completion of the read-through, students are asked to make two lists. The first includes everything the students know about performing Renaissance music. (Perhaps they recall the concept of arch shaped phrases or the relationship of tempo to the heartbeat.) Secondly, the students write down any interpretive ideas they think might pertain to Arcadelt's madrigal.

In many cases, students know more than they think they do when it comes to style and performance of early music. Perhaps some have sung in a madrigal ensemble, while others may recall a reading from music history that describes the versatile nature of secular music in the Renaissance. This process allows each student to take inventory of his or her personal *stockpile* – a crucial step in building new paradigms upon existing knowledge.

3. **Integrate reflective analysis into concepts:** Once individual lists are complete, a brainstorming session takes place at the chalkboard as students share their lists with the instructor and the rest of the class. Group discussion will result in the refinement of establishing those elements and ideals that seem the most natural and *intuitive* in the performance of Renaissance music.

At this point, the instructor limits him or herself to the role of facilitator as students share their thoughts and ideas. There are likely to be numerous inquiries that begin with "Don't I remember that . . ." or "Isn't it true that . . ." as students begin testing hypotheses as applied to the composition under consideration. The facilitator guides this discussion in creating a comprehensive list of the prevailing attributes of Renaissance music. As ideas are brought forth, students are constantly challenged to support their statements with musical illustrations, either by actually singing a phrase as an example or by recalling and describing a specific occurrence in another piece.

4. **Develop concept skills:** The instructor presents a lecture on style and performance practice in the Renaissance period. (This may take place over two or three class sessions, with various musical illustrations to demonstrate concepts of style and their respective applications for performance.)

Listed below are a few of the prevailing characteristics of the Italian madrigal well exemplified in Arcadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno*.

- The evolving use of tonality and the potential use of *musica ficta* at cadential points. The model shifts between the relative major (GM) and minor (em) key areas reinforce the character of the text, as do the recurrence of open fifths at phrase endings.
- Other text-music relationships, such as the non-harmonic F-major chord on each uttering of *piangendo* (crying) or the staggered layering of voices, to reinforce the idea of dying *a thousand deaths*.
- The expansive phrase structure that repeatedly draws toward strong cadential patterns, usually intersecting the tactus as well, thus defining the peak of the arch shape phrases.
- The use of dissonance to further heighten the phrase, usually found in 4-3 *suspensions* on important words while accentuating cadential patterns.
- The slowing of harmonic motion in the final measures to create a sense of ritard even though the tactus remains essentially steady.

Within the context of class discussion, the topics listed above are first addressed in general terms, *not* in relation to *Il bianco e dolce cigno*. In fact, it is most useful to find illustrations in *other* compositions of a similar style, leaving the process of analyzing the Arcadelt for the activities that follow.

5. **Practice defined givens:** Students now return to Arcadelt's score in an effort to apply the concepts discussed during Step Four. Working in small groups, the students seek actual examples of previously discussed concepts, such as dissonance for textual emphasis or the potential for *musica ficta*.

As students divide into small groups they are encouraged to seek out a space with a piano as they work through the structure of the music seeking clues that will inform their interpretation. The lists generated from the earlier discussions and lectures now

function as stockpiles for the interpretive process. Students are provided with a series of questions that correlate to the aforementioned discussion topics to help them move beyond the observation of surface detail. Questions might include:

- How do the three sections of the piece correlate (or not) with the text? Has the composer been successful in capturing the character of the text in the music? If so, how? Are there specific musical devices that reinforce the text?
- What is the function of the FM chords in measures 12 and 22?
- How does Arcadelt use dissonance and/or syncopation to bring emphasis to the text? How will this influence the conductor's approach to phrasing?
- What is the prevailing mood of the text? Is it literal or metaphorical? What is the meaning of "to die" in the Renaissance? How does Arcadelt portray this meaning musically?
- How has this edition addressed the use of *musica ficta*? Are there places you would add accidentals in order to reinforce the finality of a cadence?
- Are there other elements of structure and style that provide insight to the composer's interpretation of this text? How will you determine an appropriate tempo? Where might you wish to employ *accerlerando* or *rallentando*? How will you determine the appropriate articulation of text?

As noted in Chapter Two, it is not necessary (or even possible) for every student to address every question in depth. This is *not* a score study checklist, but a line of inquiry to help the student ask the right questions in deciphering the score. Once the students have been successful in unmasking the composer's musical agenda, it is hoped that they will be motivated to continue with this type of analytical, divergent thinking

throughout the rehearsal process. The observation of style and performance practice is *not* an end in itself, but simply a key to unlocking the musical language of the composer.

6. **Add something of oneself:** Having completed the above process of analysis and inquiry, students are assigned sections of the piece to learn, sing, and conduct. Emphasis is placed upon musical decisions, such as shaping the phrase, articulation of the text, tempo, and appropriate gestural communication.

It is not enough that the students can talk about the music. Can they make the music come to life? The first step in solidifying one's aural image is to be able to demonstrate it by singing or by gesture. "Can you sing the opening phrase the way you want to hear it?" "How will you conduct the third phrase to bring emphasis to the F-major chord in measure twelve?" "Can you speak the Italian with appropriate mood and inflection?" Such questions cause the student to take personal ownership of the score study process, turning observations into interpretive decisions.

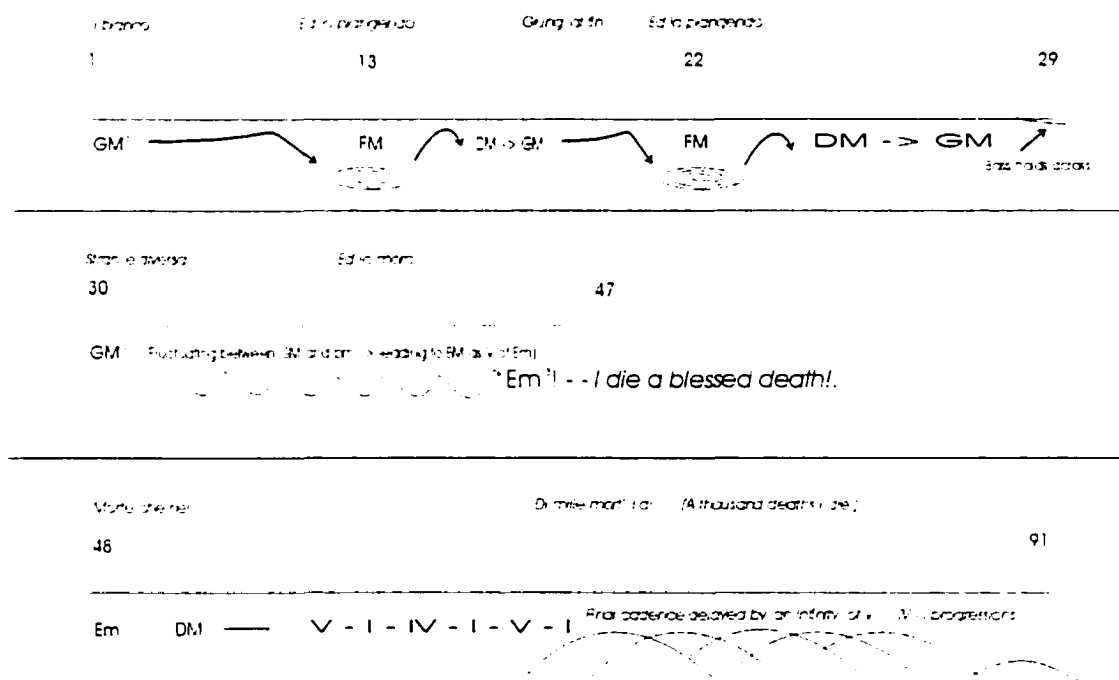
7. **Analyze application for relevance:** Following student demonstrations, the class discusses what they have seen and heard. Students are encouraged to present different solutions to interpretive problems found in the score.

There will be more than one viable interpretation of any musical thought or ideal, just as different conductors respond differently to a composer's setting of a particular text. The emphasis of this discussion focuses on the appropriateness of these decisions according to the tenets of performance practice and prevailing stylistic trends. "What influenced your decision to use a slow tempo in the second section?" "What is your rationale for placing the apex of the soprano phrase on the downbeat of measure 44?" The objective is to engage the student in substantive conversation that causes him or her to support his or her decisions, not only based on intuition, but also on codified concepts of performance practice and musical style.

8. **Apply to new or more complex experience – sharing with others:**  
Students are given another piece to analyze, perhaps another madrigal or even a Renaissance motet that shares similar attributes in style and structure. The end result of the analysis is a pictorial graph that indicates proportion, tonality, and musical events that give the piece its unique character. The analysis will be useful when the piece is used later in the corresponding conducting class.

Having completed the first seven steps of the cycle, the students are given a new work to analyze for eventual performance. A list of questions similar to those listed above under Step Five may be generated as they pertain to the new selection of repertoire. As stated, the graph (See example in Fig. 4.1) can take any form as long as it clearly delineates proportional structure, the role of tonality, and the occurrence of unique or unusual musical events that define the character of the work.

Figure 4.1 Sample Analysis: Arcadelt – *Il bianco e dolce cigno*



It must be acknowledged that this eight-step lesson is likely to take place over several class meetings. Should time permit, it would be useful to repeat the cycle, using a radically different composition such as an English ballet or a French chanson. But again, the emphasis here remains not on mastering all there is to know about Renaissance music within a two or three week period, but on establishing the need and desire for students to ask the right questions when faced with the ambiguities of the musical score.

### **Analysis of a Movement from a Baroque Oratorio**

Many young conductors first experience Baroque music through the genre of the oratorio, most commonly in the performance of excerpts from *Messiah*. Handel's oratorios represent a microcosm of Seventeenth century musical development as Handel found innovation in the marriage of Italian opera and English oratorio, with heavy influence from the French school as well (i.e., the infiltration of the French Overture). *Draw the Tear from Hopeless Love* from *Solomon* is one such chorus that not only represents the evolution of musical style and structure, but also lends itself to the various issues of Seventeenth century performance practice.

#### Sample Lesson #2: Handel – *Draw the Tear from Hopeless Love*

1. **Create the experience:** Students examine the score of Handel's *Draw the Tear from Hopeless Love* (from *Solomon*) with instructions to seek out *visual* differences in the score from that of a representative Renaissance composition. "Why is this *not* a Renaissance madrigal or motet?"

The opening activity for this lesson is intentionally vague. Students are encouraged to simply take note of the obvious characteristics of the score, particularly



those that differentiate this work from that of earlier musical periods. At this point in the lesson, students are asked to keep their own lists while refraining from discussion with peers or guidance from the instructor. “What do *you* see that appears to represent a progressive movement in musical thought and style?”

2. **Reflective analysis:** Students are posed the question. “Suppose you are an editor for a Seventeenth century music publishing company and you have just received this score from Mr. Handel said to be full of musical innovations – sure to be the next big trend. What’s innovative about it?”

Students work in pairs to compare notes during continued examination of the score. Based on the premise as stated above, they will need to construct an argument to be presented to the rest of the class as to why this music should be considered modern, progressive, and potentially interesting to the concert going public. How does the composer capitalize on dramatic effect? What’s new and exciting about the instrumentation? What sorts of musical devices are similar to those currently *en vogue* (in Seventeenth century England) that are likely to make this music appealing to connoisseurs of oratorio?

3. **Integrate reflective analysis into concepts:** Students share their arguments as developed above. They are encouraged to do so with the fervency one might use to sell a demo tape to a record company or a movie script to a Hollywood producer.

While students present their *sales pitches* as to why they believe that *Draw the Tear* is destined to become the next big hit in English oratorio, the instructor keeps a running list of observations regarding style and structure of the score. One student might observe the pulsing reiteration of chords in the keyboard/orchestral part that provides a driving sense of urgency. Someone else might comment on the overdotted notes that provide a heightened sense of drama. Yet another may observe the places where the

texture changes from polyphonic to homophonic, thus altering the ability to understand the text. The instructor (taking the role of a skeptical and jaded producer) continues to challenge the students to support their arguments as to how each of the examples represent anything different from earlier practice. “So how is this different than Palestrina, Byrd, or even Monteverdi?” By the end of the discussion, there is a substantial list of compositional devices listed on the board that become the springboard for discussion and lectures in the steps that follow.

4. **Develop concept skills:** A combination of readings and classroom presentations address the tenets of Baroque performance practice and the prevailing musical structures of the Seventeenth century.

Beginning with a discussion of the highly elaborate productions of the Florentine Cammerata, the instructor draws attention to the shift from music *for the church* to music *for the theater*. This is not to diminish the extensive output of *sacred* music by composers such as J.S. Bach, but to create an awareness of the dramatic nature of sacred repertoire as well. One only needs to compare the Passion settings of J.S. Bach and Orlando di Lasso to fully comprehend how musical form has evolved to capture the dramatic intrigue of the congregation.

Oratorio is particularly interesting in this regard as it is neither purely theatrical nor purely sacred; thus it is well suited to represent the interweaving of musical styles. As in the previous discussion on Renaissance style, topics are first presented in a somewhat generic format before the student returns to the score to seek relevancy and application. Topics for consideration might include:

- The use of moderate performance forces, with the same number of singers and instrumentalists.

- The desire to maintain a sweetness of tone regardless of the intense drama in the music.
- The layering of dynamics along with the use of *messa di voce* for increased dramatic effect and the accentuation of cadential structure.
- Tempo as determined by meter and articulation as influenced by the character of the music.
- Ideals of phrasing as they are driven by frequent cadences and the declamatory nature of the text.
- Practices in articulation, particularly those that require instruments to emulate the voice and vice versa (bowing, *silence of articulation*, *messa di voce*).
- Concepts of rhythmic alteration that require the performer to adjust rhythms for vertical alignment when discrepancies occur.
- An introduction to ornamentation with particular attention to the appoggiatura trill at cadential points.

At the conclusion of these discussions, students examine several musical examples in an effort to identify stylistic practices and trends.

5. **Practice defined givens:** Students are presented with a listening assignment that includes three different recordings of J.S. Bach's *Singet dem Herren*. They are instructed to take note of each conductor's interpretive decisions based on the above discussion and their collective understanding of the Baroque style and performance.

Working independently, students carefully listen to three different renditions of a Bach motet. The instructor must be careful to choose recordings that represent markedly different approaches to their respective performances. For example, recordings that are currently available under the direction of Paul Christiansen, Weston Noble and Nicholas Harnoncourt provide clearly discernable differences even to the student lacking a decisive understanding of Baroque performance and style. At this stage of comparative listening,

the student is simply creating lists of those elements of performance he or she feels are appropriate, and those that are not.

6. **Add something of oneself:** Students write a newspaper review of the three recordings, as if they had just heard three performances of the same work within a time span of a few days. Students are encouraged to use colorful and descriptive language to portray the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of each performance.

Here, the objectives for instruction are two-fold: first, to allow the student a platform for demonstrating what he or she knows about appropriate style and performance in response to hearing several performances; secondly, to encourage the student to take a stand in regard to the interpretive process by either supporting or disagreeing with each conductor's interpretive decisions. As in other examples of critical writing, the emphasis focuses more on the logic of argument than the statement of fact. Students must be prepared to substantiate their intuitive reactions, perhaps even by quoting primary source material in order to justify a given concept or point. Newspaper critics are rarely diplomatic or reserved in their judgments. Likewise, students should strive to be direct in their assessments to evoke from the reader *not only* an emotional response, but also a sense of the *critic's* passion and fervency regarding each performance.

7. **Analyze application for relevance:** Students share their newspaper articles with the class to identify common concepts for appropriate Baroque performance.

Students are given the opportunity to read their reviews to the class *without* disclosing which recording is being evaluated until other class members have had an opportunity to discuss and/or respond to the evaluation. Frequently, two students will form completely opposing opinions about the same recording, leading to debate about

what *is* and what *is not* considered stylistically correct. As there are no absolutes in the interpretation of early music, this activity is of tremendous value – students continue to refine and re-evaluate their perspectives, drawing on the collective expertise of their peers to draw logical conclusions.

8. **Apply to a new or more complex experience – share with others:**  
Students return to the score of *Draw the Tear* to discuss how this composition might be appropriately performed. Class rehearses and sings the piece.

Students return once more to the score of Handel's *Draw the Tear* in order to place all previous discussion in the context of Seventeenth century style. However, students are now required to sing and conduct the work in a manner that reflects their interpretive decisions. "What notes shall we change for rhythmic alignment?" "Where is the application of the *silence of articulation* and *messa di voce* most important, and what character are you hoping to project in the implementation thereof?" After so much listening, writing, and discussing, the crucial question remains – "but can you do it?" Each student in the class is given the opportunity to conduct while working out his or her intuition and ideas.

### **Analysis of a Movement from an Eighteenth Century Oratorio**

With the predominance of instrumental music in the late Eighteenth century, the choral scholar is obliged to become familiar with the prevailing genres and forms that are the foundation of the Classical era. The motet all but ceases to exist. Even the oratorios modeled after their Baroque predecessors are driven largely by the skeletal framework of the Sonata-allegro form.

Such is the case in *Komm, Holder Lenz* from Haydn's oratorio *Die Jahreszeiten*. Primarily an orchestral movement with accompanying text, the piece presents an excellent introduction to Classical style and form.

Sample Lesson #3: Haydn – *Komm, Holder Lenz!* (from *Die Jahreszeiten*)

1. **Create the experience:** Listen to a recording of *Komm, Holder Lenz*, without translation. Draw a picture that represents the unfolding drama of the music. Is there a musical form? If so, your sketch should indicate the proportions of the piece.

Here, the procedure is reversed as students are asked to listen first, before having an opportunity to examine the score. As the roots of Romanticism begin to emerge amidst the momentary *sturm und drang* of the development section, the piece lends itself well to both narrative and pictorial depiction. Students are first asked to draw a picture that represents the story being told *by the music*. No translation of the text is provided at this time and it is assumed that none of the class members are fluent in German. It is of little consequence at this point whether the student's impression agrees with Haydn's actual text. It is the intuitive *knee-jerk reaction* that is sought here.

2. **Reflective analysis:** Students share their sketches with other members of the class and explain what they have drawn and why.

Students show their drawings to the other members of the class and tell the accompanying story. Most will recognize the shift to C minor (and the instability that follows) as some kind of storm or darkness that sweeps through the music, resulting in a dramatic episode flanked by G major on either side. Many will also recognize that the opening theme returns at the end of the piece, with a contrasting section in the middle that interrupts the tonal development. Students are encouraged to create a verbal narrative

regarding what they have drawn, much like those written by Jérôme-Joseph Momigny that provided fabricated stories in response to Haydn's instrumental works.<sup>2</sup>

3. **Integrate reflective analysis into concepts:** The students are guided through the process of transforming their pictures into formal analysis. "Is there a sense of form to the piece?" "What is the proportion of one section to another?" "What is the role of each section?" "How does Haydn use tonality to derive a sense of form?" The translation of the text is still withheld from the students.

Music of the Classical era poses a serious challenge for many undergraduate students. Lacking the clarity and objectivity of the binary and ternary forms of the Baroque period and the blatant emotional forthright nature of the Romantic era. Eighteenth century music requires the performer to pay attention to the *subtleties* of expression. Much of this lies in the gradual building of tension as a composition wanders farther and farther from the home key only to catapult the listener back into the tonic after a deliberately circuitous journey. Thus, it becomes the first priority in the analytical process to help the student comprehend the nature of this journey and how each of these twists and turns contribute to this pursuit.

The student's initial pictures (from Step One) may be transformed here into bar line analyses, such as those used by Julius Herford to delineate the sectional divisions of a given composition.<sup>3</sup> This is most effective if accompanied by some sort of hieroglyphics that denote the gathering of tension and the imminent release along with the accompanying role of tonality. (See Figure 4.2)

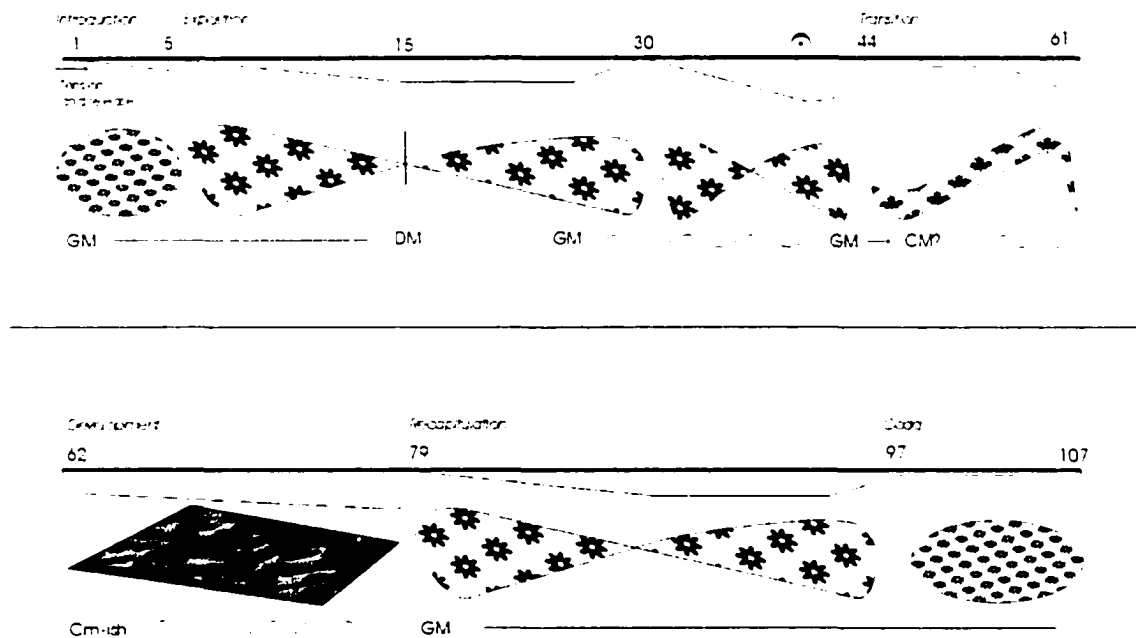
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<sup>2</sup> See Malcolm S. Cole. "Momigny's Analysis of Haydn's Symphony no. 103." *Music Review*, xxx (1969), 261-284.

<sup>3</sup> See discussion of *Herford analysis* in Chapter Two, page 60.

The translation of the text is withheld from the students as they seek out the musical drama before deciding if Haydn has appropriately captured the essence of the prose. The initial observance of form will direct the pacing of the entire piece; the subsequent examination of phrasing and articulation will inform the subtle musical diversions along the way.

Figure 4.2 Sample Analysis: Haydn – *Komm, Holder Lenz!*



4. **Develop concept skills:** Lectures and readings examine Sonata-Allegro form, phrase structure and articulation, Ratner's *topics*, and other nuances of Eighteenth century performance practice.

A discussion of style in Eighteenth century choral repertoire must coalesce the equally important roles of form, structure, phrasing, and articulation in an effort to unveil the subtleties of Classical expression. In addition to reviewing the role of Sonata-allegro form as a foundation of musical tension and release, a study of *topics* as defined by



Leonard Ratner<sup>4</sup> can be helpful in providing structural insight amidst the complexities of the score. Ratner's use of descriptive headings, such as the *singing style*, the *brilliant style*, the *pastorale*, *sturm und drang*, and *empfindsamkeit* help the student to develop a vocabulary useful in identifying a variety of musical events as they occur in the music.

Once the role of form, tonality, and stylistic topics becomes discernable, the student is ready to focus on the more detailed elements of musical performance. These might include:

- The gradual expansion of performance forces, particularly in the performance of oratorio.
- The more exacting preferences for tempo as related to the character of the piece, delineated first by long, descriptive tempo markings, then later by specific metronome markings.
- The emergence of *tempo rubato* as an expressive device.
- The precision and nuance of articulation as influenced not only by metrical accentuation, but also by the character and grammatical structure of the *musical* phrase, and to a much *lesser* degree, by the inflection of the text.
- The heightened role of articulative devices, such as the *silence of articulation* and the *messa di voce*.
- The diminishing use of ornamentation and the evolving implementation of the grace note from the earlier role as an *appoggiatura*.

5. **Practice defined givens:** Returning to the score of Haydn's *Komm, Holder Lenz*, students identify elements of form, style, and

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<sup>4</sup> See Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form and Style*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 9-29.

performance practice as appropriate and applicable to this particular composition.

“Can you find evidence or influence of *Sonata-allegro form* in this piece?” “Are there episodes or events within the work that conform to Ratner’s defined *topics*?”

“What are the mechanical aspects of articulation that will lend character and diversity to the phrasing?” This becomes the line of inquiry that takes the student below the surface of the score leading to questions about the intrinsic character of the music as a whole.

“At what point(s) does the music feel stable or unstable?” “What does Haydn do to create instability?” “What response do you think he’s trying to elicit from the listener?”

More often than not, the undergraduate musician will be reluctant to candidly address questions such as these, as this requires not only a tremendous sensitivity in listening skills, but also the ability to trust one’s deepest intuitive inclinations. As discussed in Chapter Two, this is extremely difficult for someone who has been conditioned to seek out the *correct* answer. Here we find there *are no correct answers*, only informed opinions.

6. **Add something of oneself:** Write a narrative of the musical development that portrays the drama of the music.

The process as described above culminates in a narrative essay pertaining to the *musical* content of *Komm, Holder Lenz*. Even still, the translation is withheld from the students as they seek to make sense of the innate but subtle dramatic unfolding of the score. Using Momigny as a model, the students tell the story as it is portrayed in the music, scene by scene. The use of highly detailed descriptive language is encouraged to portray the gradual building (and imminent release) of tension throughout the course of

the composition. A simple account of subsequent events is not enough. It is the details of the circuitous journey that result in the subtlety of expression.

7. **Analyze application for relevance:** Students compare their narratives with the translation of the actual text.

Finally, the students are allowed to view the actual text of the composition. In this case, Haydn's libretto contrasts the arrival of gentle spring against the last vestiges of winter's cold envenomed fog. The students compare their narratives against that employed by Haydn while discussing the compositional *and* performance attributes that contribute to the persuasiveness of each. "How does *Haydn* delineate these contrasting ideas?" "How do the *performers* portray the gentle breezes of spring and the harshness of winter?"

8. **Apply to a new or more complex experience – share with others:**  
Working alone, students repeat this process with the "Credo" from Mozart's *Coronation Mass* (K. 317).

Even more challenging is establishing the interrelation between music and text of Eighteenth century church music. This is especially problematic in the Salzburg masses of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart who was severely restricted by the prevailing conservative compositional practices of sacred music and the strict time restrictions for music performed during the worship services in Salzburg. The student should begin by listening to the work in an effort to derive an aural perception of form as related to the narrative qualities of the music. "When is Mozart preoccupied with text and when is he preoccupied with the music?" "How do the elements of style and performance practice bring clarity to the character of the music and/or text?" The resulting analysis (either narrative, graphical, or otherwise) should serve as a point of departure for conducting exercises to take place in another course later in the semester.

### Analysis of a Nineteenth Century Part Song

The study of Nineteenth century music becomes increasingly focused on the expanded harmonic language and extension of compositional techniques. The choral scholar finds much greater precision in the written notation as composers go to great lengths to write more precisely what they want.

At first glance, it seems this would all but eliminate the need for interpretive analysis, as the conductor should simply adhere to the detail of the printed page. The reality, however, is that notation alone fails to communicate human expression, no matter how specific. The challenge of deciphering the subtle nuances of Schumann and Brahms can be even greater than realizing the more formulaic and predictable musical forms of Mozart and Handel. For this study, the primary goal for the conducting student involves identifying the origins of musical structures that have been transformed to coalesce with a poet's stream of consciousness. Inherent in this is a harmonic language, frequently overwhelming in its complexity, that defies the symmetry and logic of predictable tonic-dominant relationships.

In addressing specific elements of performance practice, there are still issues of phrasing, tempo fluctuation, and sound quality to consider, but these become secondary to the understanding of the musical language itself.

#### Sample Lesson #4: Brahms – *Nächtens* and *O Schöne Nacht*

1. **Create the experience:** The class listens to Brahms' *Nächtens* (Op. 112, No. 2) without translation. Students are instructed to write down words that define the character and mood of the piece.

Among the most prevalent characteristics of Brahms' quartets and part songs is his ability to create and alter one's emotional sense of being. Not that this is unique to music

of the Romantic era, but never before had there been such a wide variety of colors, hues, and atmospheric consistencies. From a clinical point of view, we can address this by acknowledging the use of extended harmony, the dissolution of form, or even the abandonment of metrical organization. But in layman's terms, our objectives can be stated more simply – music of the Nineteenth century finds purpose in evoking a personal and emotional response from the listener. Thus, students are asked to write down words related to emotion or character as they come to mind during the hearing of Brahms' *Nächtens*. Once again, the translation of the German text is withheld, to be utilized later in the analytical process.

2. **Reflective analysis:** Following a second hearing of the piece, students are asked to write a poem that *could be* the text of the piece. They should strive to capture the developing sense of drama, particularly *if* and *when* they sense a change of character within the work.

Students will vary in their comfort levels when it comes to writing poetry, but literary form is of little or no consequence to the value of this part of the assignment. There are no requirements for a rhyming scheme, or even a sense of symmetry in length or structure. Students are simply instructed to let their imaginations run rampant in finding words that adequately portray the unsettling and troubling nature of this piece. While one student may generate an elaborate text comprised of several stanzas, another may capture the essence in a single sentence. To seize the character of the music is the prevailing challenge.

3. **Integrate reflective analysis into concepts:** Students read their poems aloud to the rest of the class. The instructor keeps a list on the board of key words, themes, and characteristics drawn from the students' poems. (In most cases, the ideas of death and darkness will appear on more than one list.) The discussion that follows attempts to identify what the composer did *musically* to elicit specific textual allusions.

As was demonstrated in the previous lesson where collective brain storming sessions produced a comprehensive list of elements of style and form, here the instructor seeks out the common threads of expression that recur in the student's poems. It is often intriguing to find how many of the poems share similar themes, even though they were written independently.

The class discussion then turns towards the analysis of these thematic commonalities. "How does the Nineteenth century composer convey the feeling of darkness, death, or weeping?" "Are there rhythmic elements that contribute to the music's unsettling nature? If so, what are they?" "What about the layering of voices, or the shifting of tonality, or the irregular meter?" As the students have yet to see either a translation of the text or a copy of the score, they must rely heavily on their ears in the repeated hearings of this brief quartet. Finally, the text is revealed and students compare their poems to the text set by Brahms. The class examines Brahms' score to identify innovative compositional practice that elicits ideas of darkness and death.

4. **Develop concept skills:** Lecture/Presentation on the development of the part song as related to the social context of Nineteenth century Europe. This should include an examination of contemporary poetry as it reflects the move towards humanism and the increased fixation on mortality. "How are these themes and ideals reflected in concurrent compositional practice?" "How does the composer use extended harmonic language to reinforce *or defeat* the text?"

There is no question that the music of Nineteenth century Europe provides a considerable insight into the collective psyche of a continent amidst incredible turmoil and social unrest. Industrialization and the accompanying trends toward democracy gave birth to countless poets, musicians, and philosophers who struggled to make sense of life and society amidst the post Enlightenment reality. Thus, there are inextricable links

between the philosophy and music of the Romantic era. For example, this evolution becomes especially clear when one acknowledges the transition from the Classical era with the telescoping text of the mass often falling prey to the brevity of the music, to the blatantly expressive genres of the Nineteenth century, with composers altering traditional texts to reflect their personal feelings.

The attempt to find order in this altered sense of being becomes the departure point for the interpretation of Nineteenth century music. The student of the Romantic era must also take into consideration.

- The great diversity in performing forces, ranging from small, competitive chamber ensembles to huge symphonic choruses assembled to sing over bombastic orchestral writing.
- The use of tempo rubato to accentuate the expressive qualities of the music.
- The wide array of expressive markings that provide unprecedented detail regarding the composer's intentions for phrasing and articulation.
- The disregard for metric accentuation, to the extent that the downbeat is frequently undermined to cause a sense of metrical disorientation.

5. **Practice defined givens:** Students are now instructed to examine Brahms' *O Schöne Nacht*, working in pairs to map the character of the *poem* as related to the character of the *music*.

Having become accustomed to the prevailing structure and terminology as related to the Romantic part song, the students are now presented with Brahms' *O Schöne Nacht* (Op 92, #1). Through recordings or simply by working at the keyboard, they are encouraged to examine the musical elements of the score to ascertain the atmospheric

characteristics of Brahms' setting, particularly as they change during the course of the composition. The students are provided with a list of questions to set this process in motion.

- 1 What is the effect of the piano arpeggio immediately followed by syncopated octaves? (mm. 1 – 12)
- 2 What, if any, is the significance of the chordal writing each time the words "O schöne nacht" appear? (mm. 4-8, 28-32, 62-76)
- 3 What is the character and/or purpose of the soprano line in measures 40-45?
- 4 What is Brahms' tonal plan for this piece and how does it support and/or undermine the text?
- 5 What is unconventional or innovative about Brahms' use of quarter notes in measures 51 – 53 and 59 – 61?
- 6 What techniques does Brahms use to blur the bar lines in this composition? What relationship does this have to the character of the text?
- 7 Is Brahms successful in capturing the essence of the poetry? If so, how? Provide specific examples.

Once students have addressed the above questions in small groups, the class reconvenes to discuss Brahms' structural plan and compositional techniques, seeking some level of consensus as to Brahms' interpretation of the poetry at hand.

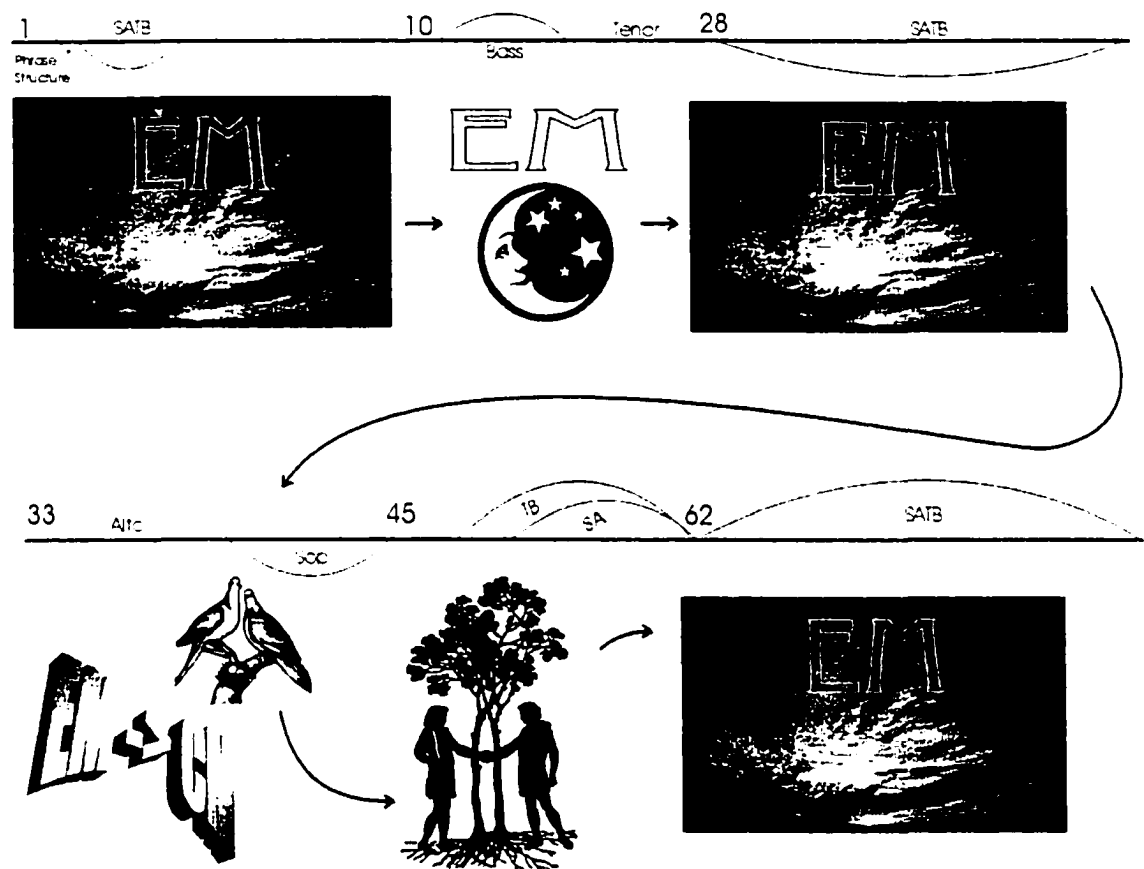
6. **Add something of oneself:** Develop an analysis of *O Schöne Nacht* that aligns the tonal and musical events as they correlate with the episodic nature of the text.

As homework, students are instructed to create a bar line analysis of *O Schöne Nacht*, indicating natural divisions of large and small phrasings, the overall tonal plan.



and most importantly, the changes of character within the text as these align (or not) to the changes in character of the music.

Figure 4.3 Sample Analysis: Brahms – *O Schöne Nacht*



7. **Analyze application for relevance:** Students return to class to compare and contrast graphs.

Having completed the graphing process, students compare their graphs with those of their peers to observe the various levels of detail in each of the drawings.

8. **Apply to new or more complex experience – share with others:** Prepare to teach and conduct Robert Schumann's *Herbstlied*. Note those elements of Romanticism that Schumann shares with Brahms, and those that are different or unique.

While Brahms has many stylistic traits that are indicative of his particular compositional process, there are many elements that represent the language of Nineteenth

century choral writing in general. Here, the student is challenged to find Robert Schumann's unique voice in the setting of Romantic poetry.

The student is advised to be innovative in the analytical procedure, approaching the score in any way that brings the greatest depth of understanding, as long as the process results in demonstrated substantive knowledge in regard to tonality, phrasing, and interrelation of music and text. At this point of study, the student should use whatever means of expression that suits him or her best, be it narrative, graphical, or otherwise.

### SUMMARY

The four lessons above represent an extended process of inquiry designed to take place over several weeks of instruction. These exercises do not portend to be an exhaustive investigation of style and structure, but instead, a procedural and philosophical approach that requires the student to take personal ownership in the score preparation process.

Since the beginning of this study, I have taught this course several times to varied populations of undergraduate students, each time adjusting the activities, procedures, and assignments to better elicit divergent thinking from the participants. As is the case in all good teaching, the method and delivery of instruction is always a *work in progress* as we strive to find the appropriate wording for each question that will cause the student to take personal interest in discovering the unique essence of each musical score.

While these lessons may or may not lend themselves well to another classroom with another instructor, it is the pedagogical approach that is to be emphasized in this study. That is, by facilitating an instructional process that includes activities directed towards a student population with diverse learning styles, we stand a better chance of

engaging a greater percentage of our students in the process of musical interpretation. Bernice McCarthy's *4MAT System* provides an excellent paradigm within which to utilize this approach. Further, the many analytical and investigative activities implicit in Michael Rogers' *Communication Chain for Musical Performance* provide the young choral scholar with a considerable number of tools to aid and abet the *stockpiling* process. Finally, an introduction to the tenets of style and performance practice is meant to help the student begin the construction of a lens through which the unique character of each genre and period might become more clear. If this approach is even remotely successful, students will leave this study with a desire to seek the essence of the music that lies below the surface of the printed page while looking to primary source material to inform their intuitive decisions about music that is, at first, unfamiliar to them. This, indeed, becomes the charge for any serious musician throughout the course of one's career.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSESSMENT

*Certainly the realization of any great music obliges the performer to go far beyond the sounds on the page in understanding the spiritual, emotional, and psychological impulses of the work.*

- Joseph Flummerfelt<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

As disclosed in the opening of Chapter Two, this study was borne out of my personal desire to find a more effective and engaging approach to teaching undergraduate choral literature within a comprehensive choral music education curriculum. In my first attempts at teaching this course, I adopted the syllabi and approach of my predecessor (as well as that of other colleagues), wherein the choral literature course served mainly as an extension of the music history sequence. Working primarily out of texts by Homer Ulrich<sup>2</sup> and Percy Young,<sup>3</sup> most classroom activities consisted of extensive lectures and numerous listening assignments to prepare the students for the inevitable *drop the needle* examination.

It was not surprising that students found these activities to be of little relevance as they prepared for the imminent challenges of student teaching the following semester.

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Flummerfelt, quoted in Carole Glenn, *In Quest of Answers*. (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music, Inc., 1991), 173.

<sup>2</sup> See Homer Ulrich, *A Survey of Choral Music*, (Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1973).

<sup>3</sup> See Percy Young, *The Choral Tradition, An historical and analytical survey from the sixteenth century to the present day*, (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1962).

More disturbing, however, was observing these same students as they took to the podium in the concurrent methods and conducting courses. Even when faced with repertoire that had been discussed in the choral literature course, they were able to demonstrate little or no understanding of the music, let alone any context of the genre or form. Thus, the need arose to either eliminate the course altogether or to create a process that might better facilitate a more meaningful understanding of the repertoire while arming the students with a more effective pallet of tools to choose from in the preparation and implementation of efficient and engaging rehearsals.

### **THE COURSE**

This course, as outlined below, reflects the current implementation of this research as it is presently in practice at the University of Delaware. As mentioned before, this represents a work in progress, as activities and assignments are reinvented and adjusted not only as a result of trial and error, but also in accordance with the needs of each student according to his or her unique strengths and deficiencies. Additionally, adjustments are made to compensate for a student's total experience throughout his or her tenure in the university program. If last year's sophomore class had Professor Smith and this year's sophomore class has Professor Jones (each of whom present concepts of analysis and score study according to their own philosophy and perspective), then the instructor of the choral literature course is obliged to compensate by modifying his or her own instructional procedure to compliment and compensate for the students' collective *stockpiles* of theoretical and musical knowledge. In other words, this outline presents a

sense of *sequence* while acknowledging that the instructor must constantly evaluate the *scope* of material to be presented.

### **An Introduction to the Course**

The very first activity of the course is built around the lesson on Giles Swayne's *Magnificat* as described in Chapter Two (see page 74-76). No introduction is given. No syllabus is handed out. The students are merely presented with a blank piece of paper and an array of colored markers to complete their first *analysis*.

As described in the lesson, a recording of Swayne's composition is played for the class and the students are instructed to simply draw a depiction of *what they hear*. This piece lends itself particularly well to this exercise as it combines a variety of compositional techniques ranging from pointillism to an ostinato-like tribal chant that eventually intercepts and derails the musical development. Even if a student finds the work peculiar or unfamiliar in style, the music is highly likely to evoke a personal response. Further, the dichotomy between these jarring fragmented phrases and the more traditionally melodic settings of the *Magnificat* provides an excellent point of departure for discussion regarding the relationship of music and text.

Once presented with the score, the students begin to identify Swayne's musical vocabulary with speculation as to his interpretation of the *Magnificat* text. "What emotional response does the composer wish to elicit from the listener?" "What is Swayne's commentary (if any) on the nature of Mary's song?"

From here the class discussion turns towards more generalized compositional practices that draw particular responses from an audience. This will be the defining role of our study for the coming semester – to identify the unique essence of each musical

score and attempt to understand how we might make the music speak as the composer intended.

### **Activities to Establish the Aural Imaging Skills and Score Study Procedures**

The assignments and presentations that follow focus on the development of the student's ability to create an aural image as discussed in Chapter Two (see pages 62-71). This is best accomplished with works from the late Twentieth century, as most students share a common understanding of performance practice in contemporary repertoire. The lesson on Benjamin Britten's *The Evening Primrose* (see pages 76-78) has proven extremely effective in this pursuit, as Britten's music is highly idiomatic in the interaction of music and text. This is often a process of helping the student *recognize the obvious*, such as acknowledging unison writing to represent solitude or the reiteration of sharply accented open voice chords to represent the voice of God. While it is dangerous to impose one's personal sentiment in the interpretation of a composer's work, the opposite is also true. The student must be encouraged to get inside the mind of the composer even if only to speculate what emotional or psychological response the composer is hoping to evoke. Even beginning with a false hypothesis to ultimately be proven wrong is better than beginning with no opinion at all. In the end, the conducting student with *no* opinion has *nothing* to say to the choir.

Thus, the opening sequence of activities and assignments are meant to help the student find his or her voice as an interpreter of written notation. "Take a stand and look for data, theoretical, historical, or otherwise, to support your premise." Out of this process is borne the priority for securing one's *aural image* every time he or she sets out to learn a new score.

## An Introduction to Research

A general introduction to research serves as a prerequisite to the forthcoming discussions on historical style and performance practice. This process is oriented towards locating and obtaining copies of primary source material, performance editions, and scholarly manuscripts by traditional and electronic means. The following activities have proven useful in this pursuit:

- An orientation to the collected works list in the *Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.<sup>4</sup> Students are made aware of abbreviations and cross-references to the collected works of a variety of composers.
- An examination of other useful reference tools, such as *Choral Music In Print*<sup>5</sup> and James Laster's *Catalogue of Choral Music Arranged in Biblical Order*.<sup>6</sup>
- A survey of electronic resources such as *Groves Online*, *Choralnet.org*, and *Musicanet.org*, each of which provides remote access to a vast amount of information previously unavailable outside the university library.
- An introduction to editorial processes and guidelines for identifying a scholarly edition suitable for performance.

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<sup>4</sup> Stanley Sadie (ed.) and John Tyrrell (ed.) *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. (New York: Grove, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Gary S. Eslinger (ed.) and F. Mark Daugherty (ed.), *Choral Music In Print*. (Philadelphia, Musicdata, Inc., 1985).

<sup>6</sup> James Laster. *Catalogue of Choral Music Arranged in Biblical Order*, (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1996).



- The comparison of middle school level adaptations to manuscripts from the collected works.

The primary objective in each of the above exercises is to provide the student with the skills necessary for locating scholarly editions of choral repertoire while developing the discretion to make adaptations to those that are not.

### **Presentation of Musical Style and Structure by Historical Period**

A general scope and sequence of this segment of the course is presented in the sample lessons found in Chapter Four. Moving chronologically from the Renaissance through the Nineteenth century, the student is able to trace the development of various genres through the discussion of the evolution of form and the accompanying ideals of performance practice.

The greatest difference with this approach as opposed to the aforementioned *Survey of Choral Literature* commonly used in the college choral literature course is that the procedures outlined in this document concentrate on *depth* of knowledge as opposed to *breadth* of knowledge. Is it important that the young conductor is able to name the defining characteristics of Haydn's early masses versus his late masses? Probably not. Is it important that the undergraduate choral music education major is able to recite the orchestration of the Berlioz *Requiem*? Not in the context of *this* course. The recurring question for the choral scholar in this sequence of study is, "How do I begin to make sense of musical notation to the extent that I can communicate its essence to my choir?"

As there is not enough time to examine every genre of every period in order to draw definitive conclusions regarding every choral composition ever written, this process must concentrate on process over product. The questions of *how* we look at a new piece

of music must predominate over the demands of *how much* music we look at. The in-depth study of a Sixteenth century Italian madrigal still leaves many unanswered questions about the analysis and preparation of a Palestrina motet. The process of inquiry, once established, however, remains the same. Given the puzzle of musical notation, it is the conductor's job to derive a viable and personal interpretation. The choral student must understand his or her responsibility to draw upon every available stockpile of information, be it theoretical, historical, philosophical, or psychological to solve each of these problems as they arise, and what is more, to take a sense of satisfaction and enjoyment in the pursuit.

### Assessment

Several possibilities for potential student assignments have been described in the course of the sample lessons that appear in Chapters Two and Four. However, an additional challenge lies in the evaluation of these assignments in assessing whether a student is able to derive this sense of personal meaning that has been deemed crucial to the interpretive process.

Fred Newmann and Gary Wehlage developed *Five Standards of Authentic Instruction*<sup>7</sup>; these lend themselves well to the procedures of assessment in a course such as the one outlined in this document. The five standards are stated and annotated below as they pertain to this study.

1. **Higher-Order Thinking:** Activities require that a student engage in higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) in order to meet the

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<sup>7</sup> Newman and Wehlage. *Five Standards*.

educational objectives – this as opposed to the mere reiteration of names, dates and facts.

2. **Depth of Knowledge:** A focus on depth of knowledge as opposed to breadth of knowledge. As discussed above, the value is placed upon fully understanding the structure and style of a single madrigal over creating an exhaustive list of music written in the Renaissance.
3. **Connectedness to the World Beyond the Classroom:** The student must be able to realize the relevancy to real life situations, in this case, the need to present a persuasive argument capable of rendering an impassioned performance from a choir.
4. **Substantive Conversation:** The student should be able to voice an opinion (interpretation) and create a logical and sequential argument to support that opinion. The conversational aspect suggests that a student should be able to maintain and support his or her position when challenged with another perspective.
5. **Social Support for Student Achievement:** Students are expected to work cooperatively for the good of the order, or in this case, the *good of the art*.  
The acknowledgement that most people continue to learn from their peers is a valuable aspect of becoming a well-rounded and intelligent musician.

The counterpart of authentic *instruction* is authentic *assessment*, which holds these five standards at the forefront when making evaluative judgments on a student's progress in the mastery of the subject matter. The predominant assessment tool of authentic instruction is the *rubric*.

The rubric attempts to provide a *quantitative* component to a *qualitative* evaluation by supplying criteria to monitor a student's progress in material that is highly subjective in nature. The goal is to evaluate one's personal or intuitive interpretation of a given musical score beyond the mere accuracy of a one-dimensional Roman numeral analysis. The rubric provides questions closely aligned to the standards of authentic instruction that not only provide data that can be translated into grades, but also result in feedback to help the student identify his or her strengths or weaknesses. Consider the following rubric designed to assess the final assignment from *Step Eight* of the Classical era lesson (see page 191).

Figure 5.1 Rubric for Eighteenth Century Analysis Project

<p><b>Higher Order Thinking</b>  <i>Demonstration of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in analytic procedure.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student is unable to draw correlations between musical examples presented in class and similar musical events in Mozart's <i>Credo</i>. There is no evidence that the student understands the role of form or tonality in the development of musical ideas.</li> <li>2. Student is able to label the various parts of the composition, but unable to identify the respective roles of each as they contribute to the musical development of the piece.</li> <li>3. Student demonstrates a clear understanding of Sonata-allegro form and its role in the musical development of a composition. In the identification of opposing sections of the musical form, the student is able to provide clear examples that relate to other compositions.</li> </ol> <p>Comment:</p>
<p><b>Depth of Knowledge</b>  <i>Clear understanding of form, harmonic development, and melodic phrase structure.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student only observes the surface details of the score, unable to gain a sense of the piece as a whole.</li> <li>2. Student is able to explain individual elements of style and performance practice, but fails to understand the work in the overall context of Eighteenth century expression.</li> <li>3. Student not only recognizes the unique attributes of music from the Classical era, but is able to draw conclusions as to the suitability of elements of performance practice according to the character of the music.</li> </ol> <p>Comment:</p>

<b>Connected to the World</b> <i>Analysis provides information useful for eventual performance.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analysis deals with theoretical concepts only, lacking relevance to issues of performance practice or rehearsal technique.</li> <li>2. Analysis provides generalized information related to performance, but lacks specific elements and ideas that will influence rehearsal technique.</li> <li>3. Analysis provides information that will directly translate to rehearsal technique and performance practice, such as specific articulations that exemplify the character of the music and text.</li> </ol> <p>Comment:</p>
<b>Substantive Conversation</b> <i>Ability to explain analysis and address questions from the instructor and class.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student is unable to defend or explain analysis when asked to do so.</li> <li>2. Student is able to speak to general concepts of style and performance practice, but is unable to defend or explain specific musical decisions.</li> <li>3. Student is able to defend analytical and interpretive decisions based not only on intuition, but on codified aspects of performance practice and theoretical elements of style as well. Specific examples provide clarity and logic to student's argument.</li> </ol> <p>Comment:</p>
<b>Social Support</b> <i>Contributes to collective knowledge of the class.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student is unable to work cooperatively with other members of the class and makes little or no contribution to class discussions.</li> <li>2. Student frequently participates in class discussions but fails to demonstrate depth of knowledge regarding the topic at hand.</li> <li>3. Student regularly participates in class discussions and is able to demonstrate depth of knowledge while contributing to the intellectual and musical growth of his or her peers.</li> </ol> <p>Comment:</p>

A rubric such as this one can be adapted to nearly any assignment described in the sample lessons featured throughout this document. Qualitative statements translate into numerical ratings that may assist the instructor in grading procedures while providing specific feedback to the student. A Comment section exists in each block for those issues that need to be addressed beyond the scope of the descriptors for each standard.

While this represents *one* rubric that might be used for *one* assignment during the course of the semester, this format sets forth to address the standards of *authentic*

*assessment*, in this case, evaluating the preeminent issues regarding the study of Eighteenth century music. Here again, the instructor is obliged to adjust the rubric in order to assess those issues he or she considers to be most vital to a thorough working understanding of style and performance practice throughout the progression of course related activities.

The instructor will also need to consider the incorporation of more traditional assessment tools, such as testing on the definitions of musical vocabulary or the use of traditional *drop the needle* examinations. Even activities such as these, however, can be structured in a manner that more aptly assesses whether the student is simply memorizing facts (or musical excerpts) to be mindlessly quoted upon request, or whether he or she is prepared to utilize this knowledge in the process of deciphering a score. For example, if a student is asked to identify a musical example upon a single hearing, the student should also be asked to provide justification for his or her answer, such as noting the texture, instrumentation, and appropriateness of performance practice in the recorded example.

While lacking the objective conciseness of multiple choice and *fill in the blank* testing, alignment to the standards of authentic instruction and assessment can provide immediate insight into a student's total understanding of the subject matter. In this light, alternative assessment procedures such as these become one of the most important components in creating a classroom environment that values individual learning styles and divergent thinking.

### **Correlation to a Comprehensive Music Education Curriculum**

Additional research needs to be conducted for the potential redesign of collegiate music school curricula in general. The teaching of compartmentalized areas of study

(history, theory, etc.) can only continue to perpetuate students who compartmentalize areas of knowledge. A few schools, such as the University of Illinois, have made an effort to combine conducting and choral literature courses to acknowledge that the two procedures are inseparable in practice. Others, such as the University of Delaware, have altered the sequence of courses offered so that choral literature is taken simultaneously with choral conducting and different aspects of common repertoire can be studied concurrently. But these are only partial solutions.

Ultimately, students need to begin the score study process of the Sixteenth century madrigal in the first semester of theory when they are learning about phrase structure and chord progressions. They need to sing and perform Monteverdi and Handel when they study the origins of Italian opera in their music history classes. Similarly, applied instructors and ensemble directors need to gain awareness of the total curricula and take time during instruction to ask students thought provoking questions instead of merely giving directives for phrasing, tempo, and dynamics. In this regard, the young conductor must understand that the first conducting lesson begins the day he or she sets foot on the university campus, even though he or she may not begin studying *gestural* communication for another two or three years. We, as musicians, are a product of the total environment. The student who is able to understand that the sum is infinitely greater than the parts, will be rewarded with the coveted ability to see beyond the notes on the page.

## CONCLUSION

This document has sought to provide an alternative approach to teaching scores study skills to undergraduate choral music education students through the implementation

of a choral literature course that embraces individual learning styles and elements of performance practice.

It is hoped that this research might inspire others to reevaluate their classroom teaching as well as their effectiveness in reaching students *where they are*. Further, I believe that primary source material dealing with style and performance practice offers a highly underutilized perspective on the real life scenarios of music and musicians through the ages. The main point, however, is to promote a pedagogical approach that requires our students to think independently and divergently while relying increasingly on their intuition. Accomplished musicians know that the most powerful musical experiences occur only when one is able to surrender to the music itself, resulting in a timeless sense of *flow* and creativity. We are responsible for helping our students find this sense, providing them with as many tools as possible along the way.



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## APPENDIX I

### Course Outline and Sample Assignments

University of Delaware Music Department  
**MUSC-328: Choral Literature**  
*Course Outline*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
<b>Week One</b>	<b>Introduction to Aural Imaging</b>	
<b>Week Two</b>	<b>Aural Imaging and Analysis</b>	Article – “ <i>Creating an Aural Image</i> ” Article – “ <i>Inspiration and the Musical Score</i> ” Article – “ <i>Repertoire IS Your Curriculum</i> ”
<b>Week Three</b>	<b>Aural Imaging and Analysis</b>	
<b>Week Four**</b>	<b>Editions and Resources – Where and How</b>	Article – “ <i>What is a Good Edition?</i> ” Article – “ <i>Religious Music in the Schools</i> ” Article – “ <i>Repertoire</i> ”
<b>Week Five**</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Renaissance Period</b>	Garretson – <i>Chapter 1</i>
<b>Week Six</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Renaissance Period</b>	McCray – <i>Chapter 5</i>
<b>Week Seven</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Baroque Period</b>	Garretson – <i>Chapter 2</i>
<b>Week Eight</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Baroque Period</b>	McCray – <i>Chapter 7</i>
<b>Week Nine**</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Classical Period</b>	Garretson – <i>Chapter 3</i> Ratner – “ <i>Styles</i> ”
<b>Week Ten</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Classical Period</b>	
<b>Week Eleven</b>	<b>Oral Presentations: “The best piece ever!”</b>	
<b>Week Twelve**</b>	<b>MON: Oral Presentations: “The best piece ever!” WED: Mid-term: Style, Genres and Performance Practice</b>	
<b>Week Thirteen</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Romantic Period</b>	Garretson – <i>Chapter 4</i>
<b>Week Fourteen**</b>	<b>Musical Structure in the Romantic Period</b>	
<b>Week Fifteen**</b>	<b>Choosing Music for Your Church Choir</b>	McCray – <i>Chapter 6</i>
<b>Final Examination</b> <i>Time - TBA</i>		

**\*\* Denotes weeks when assignments are due. See schedule on following page.**

### Assignments:

- I. **Aural Imaging:** Following the guidelines provided, complete the 'aural imaging' process along with a narrative that describes your musical analysis in vibrant, descriptive terms.  
*Due date: Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup>*
- II. **Resources for Choral Repertoire:** Simply stated, this assignment is a scavenger hunt wherein you are to seek out editions and source material for a specific choral work provided to you.  
*Due date:*
- III. **Comparative Listening – Newspaper Article:** After listening to several recordings of the same piece(s), you will write a newspaper review of the performances you have heard comparing them not only to one another, but to the appropriate norms of Baroque and/or Renaissance performance practice as well. Your writing should be well informed, impassioned and authoritative as you make value judgments about each of the performances.  
*Due date:*
- IV. **Oral Presentation:** 20-minute presentation to convince the other class members that you have found "the best piece ever!" The work must be from the Renaissance, Baroque or Classical period, but can be for any level choir for any voicing. You must find a way to communicate your passion to the class: be it by using a recording, having us perform the work, or in some other way that allows us to experience the piece.  
*Due date:*
- V. **Aural Image and Analysis:** Choose a choral work from the 19<sup>th</sup> century that you find appealing. Complete the Aural Imaging assignment in the same manner as was required in the first assignment. Submit a graphical representation analysis of the piece. The analysis must include elements of tonality, structure, form, and compositional devices unique to the genre or piece.  
*Due date:*
- VI. **Annotated List of Repertoire:** Choose 25 pieces that will be of use to you within the next two years. Submit an annotated list describing the salient characteristics of each piece. Use the Choral Journal Repertoire Reviews as a guide to your annotations.  
*Due date:*

Assignment: *Aural Imaging*

Examine the score to Charles Stanford's *Justorum Animae* as we have done in class in an effort to develop your aural image of the work. Your completed assignment should be in three parts.

- I. Initial 'aural imaging' analysis. Use the list of questions from the aural imaging handout to arrive at your initial conclusions as to what you *think* the piece is *going* to sound like. Do not listen to the recording before completing this part of the assignment. The objective is to see what you can glean from the printed score before listening to a performance or using the piano. You may submit this part of the assignment in a simple "point-to-point" outline.
- II. After listening to the recording, decide what, if anything, you want to change about your interpretive analysis. Draw a picture or graph that represents your analysis of the work. You may use any medium you want to create the graphic illustration, but there must be evidence of form, tonality and compositional devices.
- III. Write a narrative essay that explains your graph. (You may find it easier to write the essay first, and then derive the graphical representation from that.) Attempt to discover the 'storyline' of the music as it continues to unfold. You may wish to relate it specifically to the text, or you may decide that the music has a subtext that does or does not agree with the text of the piece. If this is the case, explain why you think the composer would do this. While there are no page limitations on your narrative, it will probably take 4-5 pages to aptly describe the musical events to the appropriate level of detail. Don't be afraid of using analogy, metaphor and other highly descriptive language to get your point across. Be daring.

Assignment is due:

University of Delaware Music Department  
**MUSC 328: Choral Literature**  
Assignment 1: Score Analysis

- 1) Before listening to the recording, go through the aural imaging process with Randall Thompson's *Last Words of David*. Actually write out your responses.
- 2) Go through the score to make sure your initial decisions about your interpretation of the piece are appropriate and well thought out.
- 3) Mark your score according to the guidelines provided, including *structure*, *expression* and *tracking*.
- 4) Create a graphical representation of your interpretation. This can be in any form, but must express tonality and overall structure of the piece. You may also wish to include interpretive markings as well.
- 5) Listen to the two recordings of *The Last Words of David*. Consider the following points and ideas about each:
  - a. Was the performance convincing? Did the performers draw you into the music? Do they *understand* the music?
  - b. Did the conductor have a particular concept or interpretation of the score? Do you think it is in agreement with that of the composer?
  - c. Did the conductor/ensemble observe the markings and details of musical notation? Did they include things NOT in the score? Did they leave things out?
  - d. Was the performance in alignment with performance practice for this particular genre and period? Did the music find a 'language of expression'?
  - e. If you could change one thing about this performance, what would it be?

## APPENDIX II

### Suggested Repertoire

The following list provides several compositions that have proven to be useful for score study and analysis projects in the Choral Literature course as described in this document. Accompanying annotations provide a brief description and rationale for the inclusion of each work along with information regarding editions and publishers.

#### **Et Misericordia** – Tomás Luis de Victoria

Edited: Patrick M. Liebergen

Hal Leonard 08551284

This edition was created with younger choirs in mind, extracted from Victoria's *Magnificat Primi Toni*. Though the editor has transposed the piece up a major second from the original, the notation is true to that of the composer's. The editor has also substituted a more generic text than that set by Victoria.

For class discussion:

- The study of Renaissance phrasing is easily attainable in this concise canon with limited harmonic complexities.
- The piece exemplifies the proliferation of works adapted for middle school choirs, also providing possible programming ideas for a young conductor.
- The composition also provides an excellent example for comparative analysis between the urtext edition and this readily available performance edition. Students are encouraged to examine the text underlay in the urtext as compared to that in the performance edition to determine if the editor/arranger has altered the phrasing by the misplacement of text.

#### **Sicut cervus desiderat** – Giovanni de Palestrina

Arista Music Co. AE 165

Palestrina's *Sicut cervus* is among the most commonly performed motets, particularly among high school choirs. Many students will likely have performed the piece and relate to this as their previous understanding of Renaissance music.

For class discussion:

- The simple two-part structure (each with two subsections) provides a *textbook* example of phrase structure in the Renaissance motet. As is typical in this genre,

each subdivision is closely related to the division of the text. (i.e. new text for each new point of imitation.)

- This edition is particularly clean and devoid of excessive editorial marks, or even the acknowledgment of a specific editor, and thus a good example for that which should be sought out.
- There are innumerable recordings available of this work, thus providing an excellent basis for comparative listening assignments. Such exercises are most effective if the instructor chooses extreme examples, such as a large choir performing the work in an overly romanticized style compared to a recording by early music specialists with one voice on a part.

**Swell the Full Chorus – George Frederic Handel**

Arranger: Sherri Porterfield

Heritage Choral Series 15/1232H

Another arrangement pared down for three-part SAB middle school chorus. This setting excerpted from *Solomon* preserves the ABA form of the original, along with the original text, but transposes the piece up a half-step into E<sup>b</sup> major, presumably to adapt to the ranges for adolescent voices.

For class discussion:

- The comparison between the original SATB orchestrated composition and this highly adapted arrangement for SAB and piano (with two optional trumpets). Has the arranger done well to preserve the integrity of the original score?
- A discussion of performance practice as it pertains to adolescent voices, and how one might go about teaching performance practice in a middle school rehearsal.
- The nature of ABA form and related issues of phrase structure and ornamentation.

**Beatus Vir – Claudio Monteverdi**

Editor: John Steele

Novello 07 0212 09

This work from Monteverdi's *Selva Morale et Spirituale* of 1641 is a microcosm of the composer's work in the *secunda prattica*. This edition includes the music for two viols in addition to the continuo part. The five distinct sections of this Psalm setting are related to the emergence of the *stile concertato* as each section reflects the unique character of the text.



For class discussion:

- The use of instruments for colla parte doublings.
- Accentuation as influenced by the inflection of the text as it interacts with the metrical structure.
- Variation of tempo and articulation to reflect the nature of the text, as well as the interrelation of vocal and instrumental articulation.

**Dona Nobis Pacem – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Editor/Arranger: Patrick Liebergen

Belwin OCT9816 (SAB)

This “Dona Nobis Pacem” from *Missa Brevis* K. 259 is relatively true to Mozart’s original setting, except for a two measure revision at the end and the addition of a flute part derived mainly from the violin parts in Mozart’s orchestration. Set for either SSA or SAB, it provides another accessible edition for the middle school choir.

For class discussion:

- Phrasing and metrical accentuation in the Classical era.
- The influence of form on the destination of the phrase.
- Issues of tempo as related to the notation and the character of the music.

**Kyrie Eleison – Franz Joseph Haydn**

Arranger: Charles Hirt

Warner Brothers 487-40599

Charles Hirt’s setting of Haydn’s “Kyrie” from the *Lord Nelson Mass* has long been a part of the standard choral repertoire, deemed an arrangement due primarily to the exclusion of the solo section that comprises nearly one-third of the piece. Among the more dramatic of Haydn’s sacred choral settings, the piece facilitates numerous discussions regarding Classical style, structure and performance practice.

For class discussion:

- The roll of Sonata-allegro form in the unfolding of the harmonic and melodic structure.

- Elements of style, including Ratner's topics such as *sturm und drang* and *emfandsamkeit*.
- The effect of omitted musical material on the development of phrasing and musical ideas.

**A Spring Song** – Robert Schumann  
 Editor: Raymond Sprague  
 Gentry JG2226

This setting exemplifies one of many duets by Schumann and Brahms that are extremely accessible for young female voices. German and English text is provided, though the editor advises that while the English is intended to "capture the spirit" of the original poem, it is in no way a literal translation.

For class discussion:

- The use of German versus English, and the inherent dangers of performing a piece in the alternate language.
- The application of tempo rubato as related to melodic and harmonic events.
- The prominence of the piano as it alternates between the roles of solo and accompaniment, and the conducting challenges therein.

**Die Nachtigall** – Felix Mendelssohn  
 Editor: Geoffrey M. Mason  
 Walton 7010-6

One of the most frequently performed Mendelssohn partsongs. This work is essentially strophic, with a slightly elongated third verse. Once again, English and German texts are provided.

For class discussion:

- Expressive qualities of both harmonic and melodic structures in the Nineteenth century, especially those that have atmospheric and madrigalistic qualities.
- The use of tempo rubato, especially to bring emphasis to extended harmonic events.
- Conducting challenges related to tracking predominant melodic figures, and conversely, controlling non-melodic vocal parts.