

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

Effective Conducting Techniques

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Pittsburgh, PA



Alondra de la Parra

The Maestro's Magic!



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Educator, Conductor, Clinician

- University of the Arts, Philadelphia
- NAFME Eastern Division President-Elect
- Conn-Selmer Educational Clinician
- South Jersey Area Wind Ensemble
- American Music Abroad Gold Tour



Mark Lortz

Educator, Composer, Conductor

- Stevenson University, Maryland
- Award Winning Composer
- Guest Conductor/ Clinician
- Vic Firth Marching Perc. Specialist
- Temple Doctoral Candidate

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

OVERVIEW:

- 8 POINT CHECKLIST
- THE PREPARATORY BEAT
- INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS
- GROUP DEMO
- CONDUCTING TASK #1
- GROUP DEMO
- CONDUCTING TASK #2
- GROUP DEMO
- CONDUCTING TASK #3
- GROUP DEMO
- CONDUCTING TASK #4
- "TOP 10"
- FINAL THOUGHTS



John Williams

A black and white photograph of a conductor's hands. The right hand is open, palm facing up, with fingers slightly curled. The left hand holds a thin, light-colored baton. The background is solid black.

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

BASICS REVIEW

A black and white photograph of a conductor's hands. The right hand is raised, palm facing forward, with fingers slightly spread. The left hand is lower, holding a thin baton. The background is dark and out of focus.

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

THE "EIGHT POINT" CHECKLIST

EIGHT POINT CHECKLIST:

Review

-Anthony Maiello

1. Proper Stance (*both feet securely on the podium*)
2. Correct Posture (*arch the back, no crouching*)
3. Correct Baton Grip (*fingers tucked, palm to the floor*)
4. Survey the Performers (head sweep) to insure readiness
5. Ready position on the horizontal and vertical plane is set
6. Internalization of the tempo before executing the preparatory beat (*touch tip of tongue to roof of mouth in tempo*)
7. Preparatory beat will effectively convey tempo, style, dynamic marking, who plays, starting beat
8. Inhalation of air during the entire preparatory beat

FIVE PREPARATORY BEAT CONSIDERATIONS:

-Anthony Maiello

1. TEMPO

2. STYLE

3. DYNAMICS

4. ON WHICH BEAT MUSIC BEGINS

5. WHO IS PLAYING



THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS ON CONDUCTING

Proper Preparation Promotes Perfection

Preparation

- Be sure to have knowledge of the musical scores and players in the ensemble (i.e., strengths, weaknesses, any special concerns), etc.
- Prepare your scores with all cues, musical lines, meter changes, etc.

Plan

- Have an effective rehearsal plan that includes
- Plan A, B and C

Practice

- Practice your conducting as if you were practicing your instrument for a performance

What Makes an Effective Conductor?

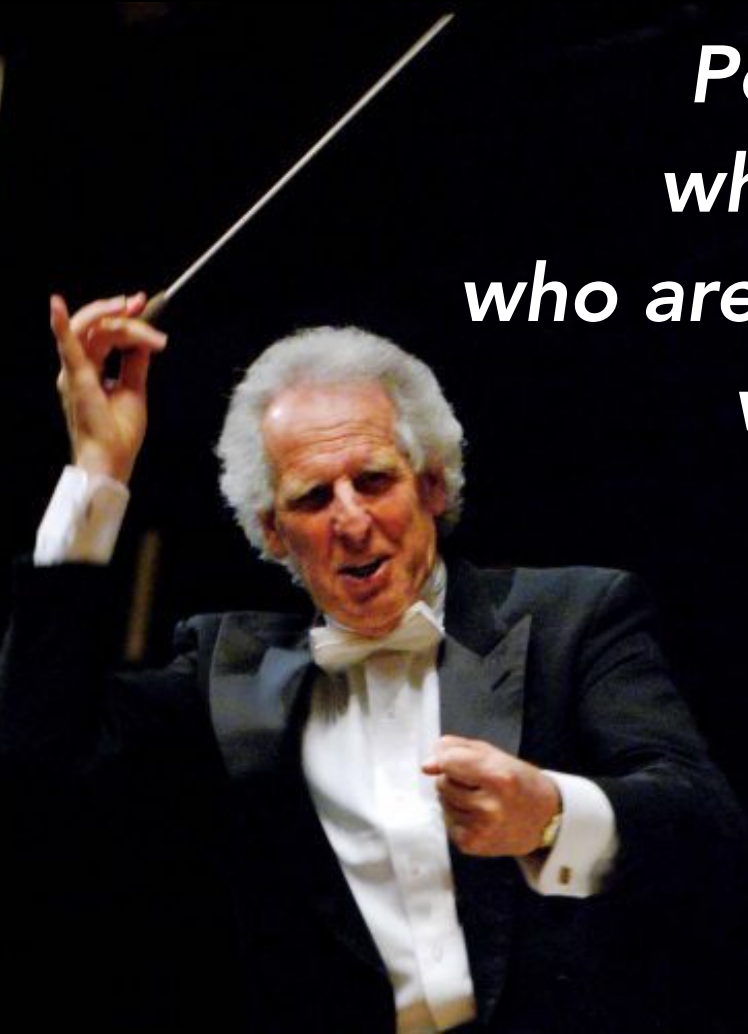
Conducting Characteristics

- Dedication - a love for music
- Musicianship - musical competence
- Manual Technique
- Organization
- Psychology
- Physical presence / persona / personality / sense of humor
- Ability to display emotion, sensitivity
- Ability to impose one's will upon others and having them enjoy it (upholding personal ideals without violating others)
- Interpersonal skills - The ability to work with people

***“What makes an effective businessman
is the same thing that
makes an effective orchestra:***

***People who want to be there,
who give everything they have,
who are having a wonderful time doing it,
whose eyes are shining and
who are giving out energy
to people around them.”***

–BEN ZANDER





THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

GROUP DEMO 1

THE FERMATA!

MUSICAL DECISIONS:

- Treatment of each Fermata... Decisions
- Release of each Fermata and Prep for Next Phrase
- Making Musical Decisions about...
 - *Tempo*
 - *Dynamics*
 - *Phrasing*

Solfege Melody

J. S. Bach (1685—1750)

Handwritten musical score for a piano piece, measures 1-16. The score is written on three systems of grand staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 1-4 are the first system, measures 5-8 are the second system, and measures 9-16 are the third system. There are handwritten annotations: a circled '2' at the beginning, circled 'A' above measure 9, circled 'B' above measure 12, and circled downward arrows above measures 10, 14, and 16. The notation includes various note values, rests, and accidentals.

A black and white photograph of a conductor's hands. The right hand is raised, palm facing forward, with fingers slightly curled. The left hand is lower, holding a thin baton. The background is dark and out of focus.

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

CONDUCTING TASK #1

TREATMENT OF THE
FERMATA & MAKING
MUSICAL DECISIONS

TREATMENT OF FERMATA:

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

J. S. Bach (1685—1750)

The image displays a musical score for the hymn "Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light" by J.S. Bach. The score is written in 4/4 time and features two staves, treble and bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 visible. Several measures contain fermatas, which are circled in blue ink with a downward arrow pointing to them. These circled fermatas are located in measures 2, 10, 11, 14, and 16. The score is marked with a '2' at the beginning of the first system and a 'B' at the end of the second system. The title "TREATMENT OF FERMATA:" is written in large, bold, red letters at the top left of the page.



Music Joke #85

Wanna hear a joke
about a staccato?
Never mind, it's too
short. How about a
fermata joke? Never
mind, it's too long.

**"I'm not interested in having an orchestra
sound like itself.
I want it to sound like the composer."**

-LENNY





THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

GROUP DEMO 2

CUEING / USING THE LEFT HAND

Cueing Gestures: **How do you deliver a cue?**

- 1. A Left Hand gesture (*consider style, dynamic etc*)
- 2. A Right Hand gesture within the pattern
- 3. Eye contact
- 4. Facial expression
- 5. Combination of several or all

* Prep / Entrance



THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

CONDUCTING TASK #2

CUEING / USING
THE LEFT HAND

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THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

GROUP DEMO 3

Eric Whitacre's Virtual Choir
'Lux Aurumque'
Conductor view...



"I can't write music unless I'm deeply connected to it and that connection almost always comes from some experience that I have had or am having."

—ERIC WHITACRE



LYRICAL CONDUCTING

"What is best in music is not found in the notes..."

-Gustav Mahler

"We can never exhaust the multiplicity of nuances and subtleties which make the charm of music..."

-Pablo Casals

"The written note is like a straight jacket, whereas music, like life itself, is constant movement, continuous spontaneity, free from any restrictions..."

-Pablo Casals



THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

CONDUCTING TASK #3

LYRICAL CONDUCTING

Developing a uniqueness for musical expression:

"Music making begins in the mind, not in the stick." -Leonard Bernstein

*Oh beautiful for spacious skies,
for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountains majesties
Above the fruit-ed plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on three,
And crown thy good with brotherhood,
From sea to shining sea!*

Developing a uniqueness for musical expression:



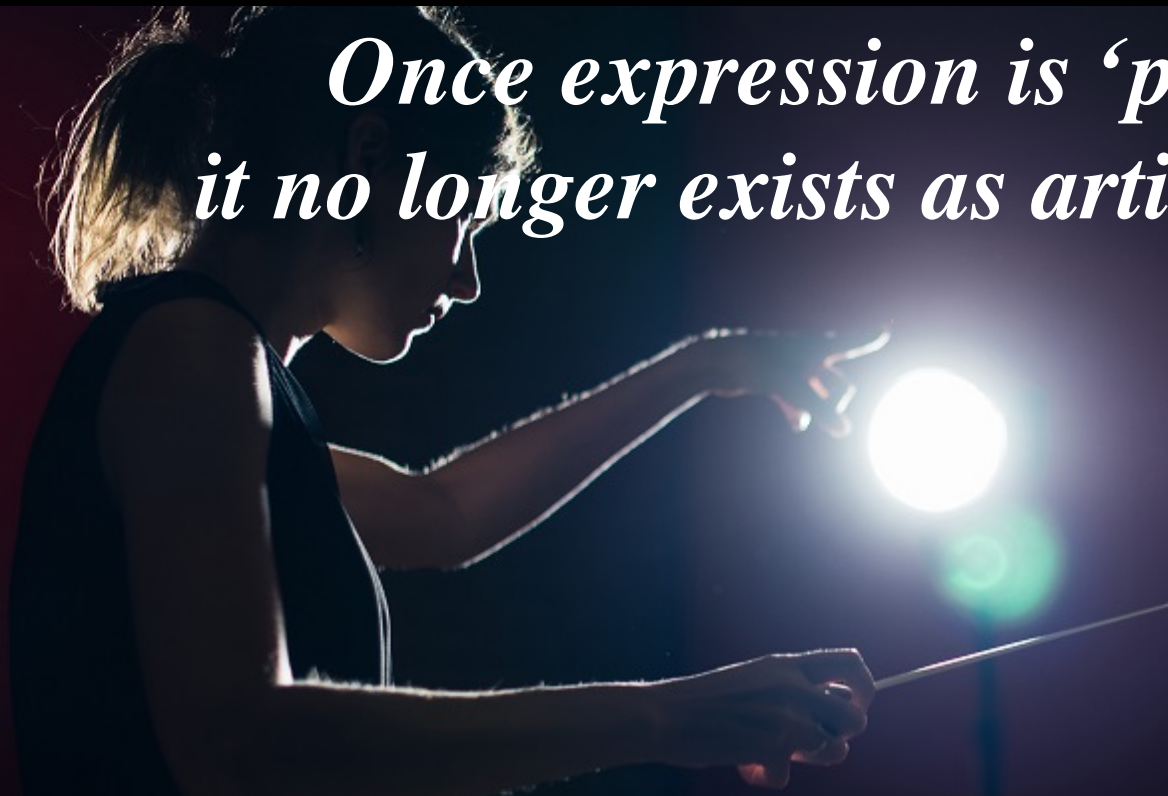
- *Sing the text as you conduct.*
- *Let the text inflection drive your musical decisions.*
- *Don't feel bound by the conducting "pattern."*
- *Use hands for now instead of a baton.*

*“Artistic expression has no limitations.
It is spontaneous and cannot be
programmed or imitated.*

*Artistic expression is freedom...
Freedom from preconceived patterns or
boundaries.*

*Once expression is ‘programmed,’
it no longer exists as artistic expression.”*

—EDWARD LISK







THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

GROUP DEMO 4

METER MADNESS

- Compound Time Signatures
- Changing/ Mixed Meters
- Clarity of Sub-Division
- Clarity of Conducting Pattern
- Phrasing, Articulations, Rhythmic Groupings

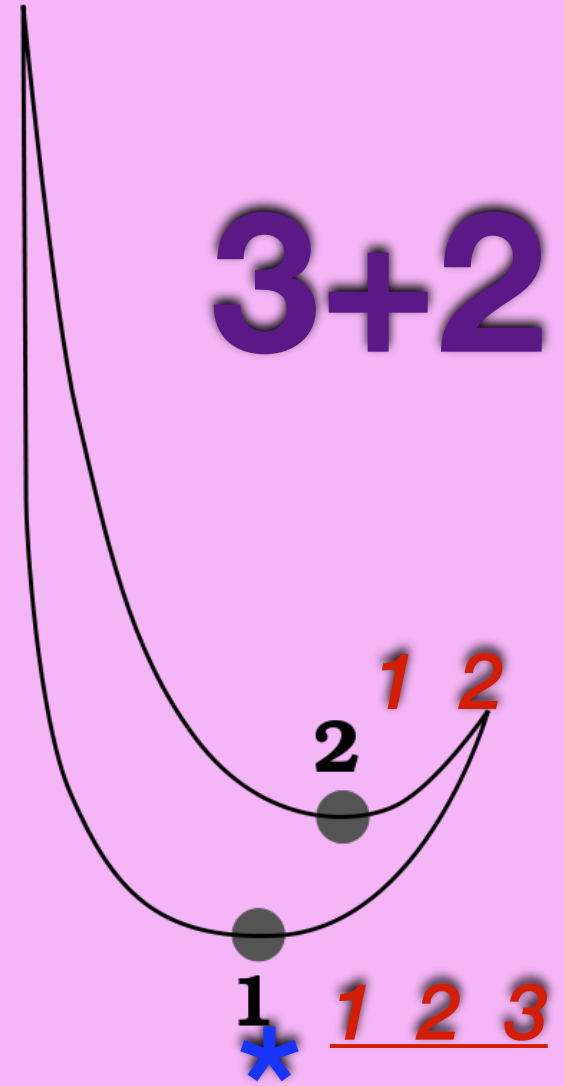
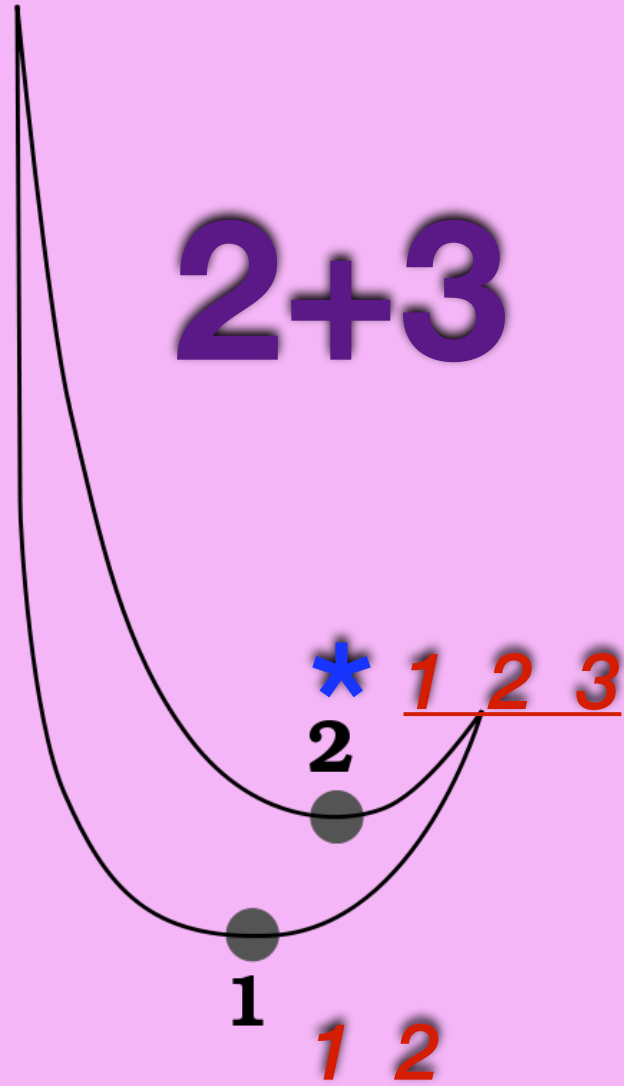
** = Delayed*

5
8

2+3

3+2

*Irregular
Compound
Meter*





THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

CONDUCTING TASK #4

METER MADNESS

Armenian Dances I:

5
8

Allegretto non troppo (2+3)(3+2) (♩ = 176)
"HOY NAZAN EEM" (Hoy, my Nazan)

Fls. *poco rit.* *p* *mf* *pp*

Trpts. (Cup. Mts.) *p* (+Cls.) *pp*

(2+3) (3+2)

Continue to alternate

B. Cl.
1 Tuba.
Strg. B. Pizz.

Susp. Cymb. (Play with metal Triangle beater on edge)

Tamb. *p*

Bells. *p*

Timp. (medium hard sticks) *p* (let ring)

Sn. Dr. (Snares off)

B. Dr. *p*

1 2 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2

↓ (3+2)..... 6
8

A musical score for a 6/8 piece, consisting of six staves. The first staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a complex melodic line with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a bracket and the notation $(3+2)$. The second staff is also a treble clef, featuring a melodic line with a *mp* (mezzo-piano) dynamic marking and a *p* (piano) dynamic marking. The third staff is a bass clef with a melodic line. The fourth staff is a treble clef with a simple rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests. The fifth staff is a bass clef with a simple rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests. The sixth staff is a treble clef with a simple rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a 6/8 time signature.

6
8

5
8 (3+2)

6
8

5
8



87 $(= \text{♪})(2+3)(3+2)$

6/8 (♩=♩) (♩=♩) (♩=♩)

Cls. *mf*

p Eng. Hrn., Ten. Sx.

Hrns. *p stacc.*

(2+3) (3+2) Continue to alternate

↓ (3+2)

This musical score is written for a piano and features a 3+2 measure signature, indicated by a red arrow and the text "(3+2)" in the top right corner. The score is organized into six systems, each containing three staves. The first staff of each system is in treble clef, the second is in treble clef with a key signature change to one sharp (F#), and the third is in bass clef. The first system includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) at the beginning. The second system includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) at the beginning. The third system includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) at the beginning. The fourth system includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) at the beginning. The fifth system includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) at the beginning. The sixth system includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) at the beginning. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) is present in the fifth system. The instrument abbreviations "Fls." (Flutes) and "Bsns." (Bassoons) are present in the fifth system. The score is written in a 3+2 measure signature, which is indicated by a red arrow and the text "(3+2)" in the top right corner.

6

5

6

5

8

8 (3+2)

8

8 101 **(2+3)**

Obs., Alto Sax.
Eng. Horn.

101 (2)

Cors. *f*

Trpts.
Xvlo.

Trbs.
Bar.

Tuba.

f (let ring)

(Snare On)

(2+3).....

Obs., Eng. Hrn. Cls.,
Alto Cl. Alto Sxs.

This musical score is for a brass and woodwind ensemble. It consists of six staves. The top staff is for Oboes, English Horns, Clarinets, and Alto Saxophones, marked with a *ff* dynamic. The second staff is for Horns, also marked *ff*. The third staff is for Trumpets, marked *f*. The fourth staff is for Trombones, marked *f*. The fifth staff is for Baritone (divisi), marked *f*. The sixth staff is for Basses, marked *f*. The score is in 2/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests. A large bracket spans the first four staves, indicating a section of the music. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Trpts.

Hrns.

Trbs.

Bar. (div)

ff

f



(3+2) (3+2).....

Bb Cl. 1, E \flat Cl.

poco a poco dim.

Cl. 2 Obs.

Cl. 3 Eng. Hrn. Obs.

Fls. Trpts. *f*

Cors.

Bsns., B. Cl.

Trbs. 1, 3

Hrns. *mp*

Bar. Tuba Strg. B. *mp*

(with Timpani stick, normally) *f*

dim. *p*

The musical score is written for a symphony orchestra. It features multiple staves for woodwinds (Bb Clarinet 1, Eb Clarinet, Clarinet 2 Oboe, Clarinet 3 English Horn Oboe), brass (Flutes, Trumpets, Corsos, Bsnns. B. Cl., Trbns. 1, 3, Hrns., Bar. Tuba Strg. B.), and percussion (Timpani). The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *dim.* (diminuendo). A red arrow points to the annotation (3+2), which is repeated and followed by a dotted line. The tempo/mood marking *poco a poco dim.* is also present.

(3+2).....

Alto Sax. 1 117

mp

sempre dim. *pp*

Cl. 2. div. (Vibra.)/(legato|tongue)

dim. *pp*

B. Cl.

poco a poco dim.

p

poco a poco dim.

pp

poco a poco dim.

p

This musical score is for a symphony orchestra, featuring woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The score is written for six staves, with the top three staves containing the woodwind and brass parts, and the bottom three staves containing the percussion parts.

Woodwind and Brass Parts:

- Ob. 1:** Oboe 1, marked *mp* (mezzo-piano).
- Fls., Picc. Bells:** Flutes, Piccolo, and Bells, marked *mf* (mezzo-forte).
- Cl. 3:** Clarinet 3, marked *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).
- Cors. (Cup. Mts.):** Cor Anglais (Cup Mts.), marked *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).
- Picc., Fls. Alto Sxs. Bells:** Piccolo, Flutes, Alto Saxophones, and Bells, marked *mf* (mezzo-forte).
- Trb. 1 (CUPMTS):** Trumpet 1 (Cup Mts.), marked *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Percussion Parts:

- Drum:** The bottom three staves show a drum part with a steady rhythm of eighth notes.
- Triangle:** The top three staves show a triangle part with a steady rhythm of eighth notes.

Dynamic Markings:

- mp* (mezzo-piano)
- mf* (mezzo-forte)
- p* (piano)
- sim.* (sforzando)

Performance Instructions:

- mf soli* (mezzo-forte solo)
- p* (legato tongue) (piano, legato tongue)

(3+2).....

Cls., Sxs. 127

mf

Fls. *mp*

p Bsns., Hrns.

(+ low Cls., Bar. Sx.)

This musical score illustrates a 3+2 measure pattern across five systems. The first system contains four staves: Clarinets and Saxophones (C127), Flutes (mp), Bassoons and Horns (p), and a low Clarinet/Bassoon Saxophone part. The second system continues with the same four staves. The third system introduces a new staff for the low Clarinet/Bassoon Saxophone part. The fourth system continues with the same four staves. The fifth system continues with the same four staves. The score is written in 2/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests.

musical score for measures 137-141. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Horns (Hrns.), and Bass. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The dynamics are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) at the beginning, *ff* (fortissimo) at measure 140, and *p* (piano) at measure 141. The Horns part is marked *p* (piano) at measure 141. The Bass part is marked *f* (forte) at measure 141. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

musical staff for measures 142-146. The staff is written in Treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The dynamics are marked *f* (forte) at measure 146. The staff contains various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

empty musical staff, likely for a second part or a continuation of the previous staff.

musical staff for measures 147-151. The staff is written in Treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The dynamics are marked *f* (forte) at measure 151. The staff contains various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

(3+2).....

Fls., Picc.,
Cls.

mf

sim.

Hrns.

mf

Bar.

(*sim.*)

p

p

The musical score is written for a symphony orchestra. It consists of 12 measures. The woodwinds (Flutes, Piccolo, Clarinets) play a melodic line starting in measure 3, marked 'mf'. The brass (Horns, Baritone) play a harmonic line, marked 'mf', with a 'sim.' (simultaneous) marking in measure 10. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, marked 'p' (piano). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Cls. only(unis)

mp

Obs. Eng. Hrn. *mf*
Trpts.(Str. Mts.)

Bsns., Ten., Sx., Alto Cl.

The musical score is written for measures 147 through 151. The top staff is for woodwinds (flutes, oboes, English horn, trumpets) and is marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The second staff is for strings and is marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The third staff is for percussion (bassoons, tenors, saxophones, alto clarinet) and is marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The bottom staff is for percussion and is marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The woodwind section has a melodic line starting in measure 147, marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The string section has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The percussion section has a simple pattern of eighth notes.

(3+2).....

Fls., Obs., Eng. Hrn., EbCl.

mf *f*

Cors., Sxs.

f Bb Cls.

mf *f*

Trbs.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

Fls., Picc.(8va)
Cls.

+Obs.

ff

Trpts:

f

Hrns.

ff 1 +3 5 1 +3 5 1 +3 5 1 +3 5

Cors.

Trbs.

f

Hrns.(8va)

f

(let ring)

p low W. W.

sfz

mf

p

sfz

(3+2)



(2+3)

(3+2)

165

(+Fls., Picc.) (+sxs) (2+3)(3+2)
(Fls., Picc. 8va higher)

(+Cors.)

cresc. *molto* *ff*

Cls., Obs., Sxs., Cors.
Xyb., Bells

Trpts. 3 *ff*

cresc. *molto*

Bar., Bsns.
Bar. Sx.

Bar., Tuba. *p*

f

poco a poco cresc. molto *f*

poco a poco cresc. molto *f*

↓ (3+2)

(3+2)
Cls., Sxs.

6
8

5
8

(3+2)

6
8

p sub.

3

Bsns., B.Cl.

1 Tuba
Strg. B.

p

Fls., Picc.
mp

Trpts.
mp

Hrns.

all Tubas.

p sub.

mf

p

6/8, 5/8, 6/8

8

8

(3+2)

8

8

(3+2)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Ob. 1 *mp*

Alto Sxs.

Fls. *mf*

Bssns.

Bar. Sx.

1 Bar.

1 Tuba. Strg. B. *p*

dim.

(Snares off)

p

3
8 (In 1)

3
4

,

Obs. *mp*

Fls. *mf*

Hrns. *p*

(+ Picc.) (Bells)

Hrns. *p*

Trbs. *p*

Trpts., Hrns. *f*

Trbs. Bar. *f*

low W. W. Tubas. *p*

all upper W. W. & Sxs. *f*

1 + 2 + 3 +

1 2 3

1 2 3

1 2 3

pp

pp

"Great conductors get the best out of their people at the right time. They ensure their musicians feel significant, accepted and secure."

—MICHAEL HYATT



Larry Lang

The Maestro's Magic!

TOP 10:



The Maestro's Magic!

#10



Anu Tali

ALWAYS BE
GRACIOUS
AND KIND

The Maestro's Magic!

#9

KNOW
THE
SCORE!



Edward Lisk

The Maestro's Magic!

8

**USE
BOTH
HANDS**

**BUT HAVE A
REASON FOR
USING THE
LEFT HAND**



Tomomi Nishimoto

The Maestro's Magic!

#7

FOCUS
ON
BREATHING



Joseph Young

The Maestro's Magic!

#6

**STRIVE TO HAVE
YOUR BANDS...**

**PLAY LIKE
ORCHESTRA'S
BOW...**

**AND LIKE
CHOIRS SING!**



Eric Whitacre

The Maestro's Magic!

#5

WORK
FOR
CLARITY



Chloe Dufresne

The Maestro's Magic!

#4

BE
ECONOMICAL

(DON'T OVER
CONDUCT)



Arturo Toscanini

The Maestro's Magic!

3

MAINTAIN
METER,
PULSE
AND TEMPI



Marin Alsop

The Maestro's Magic!

#2

PRACTICE!

THIS IS
IMPORTANT.

SO MANY
DIRECTORS
DON'T!



Kurt Masur

The Maestro's Magic!

AND NOW...
THE #1 SECRET
TO BEING AN
EFFECTIVE
CONDUCTOR...



Lorin Maazel

The Maestro's Magic!

#1

BE YOURSELF!

**DRAW ON YOUR
OWN INSPIRATIONS
AND EXPERIENCES.**

**CONDUCT THE
MUSIC!**



Alondra de la Parra

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

FINAL THOUGHTS

MARK:



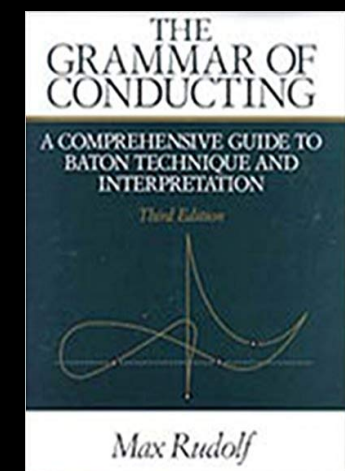
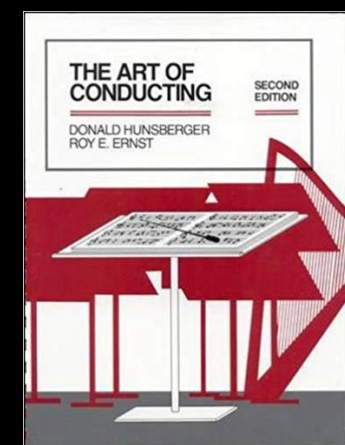
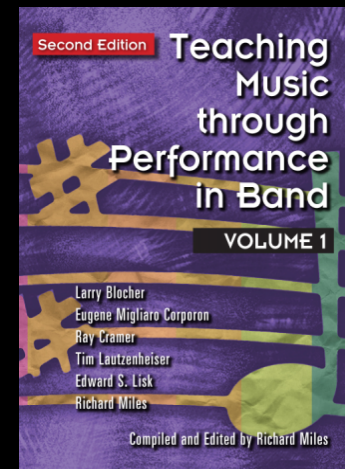
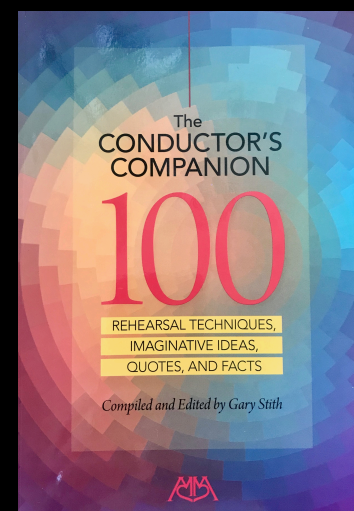
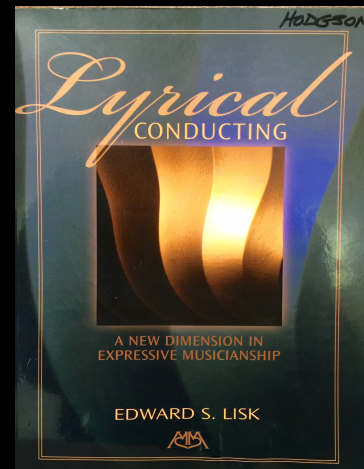
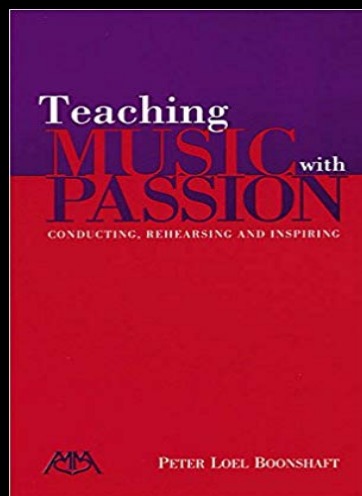
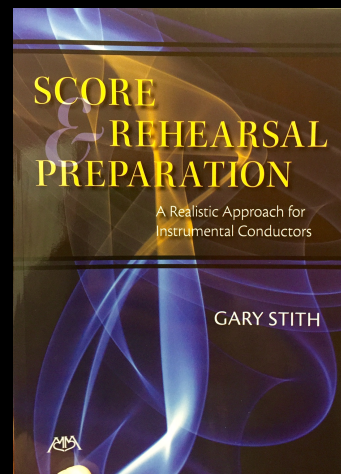
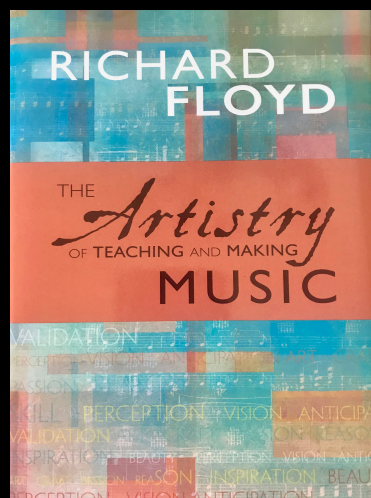
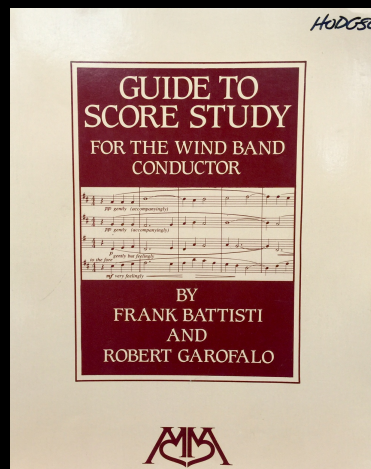
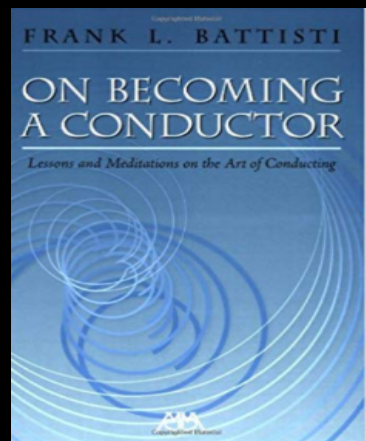
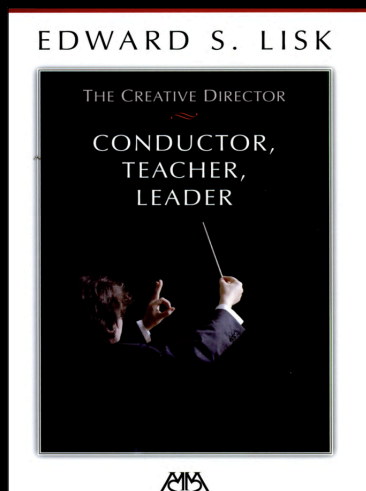
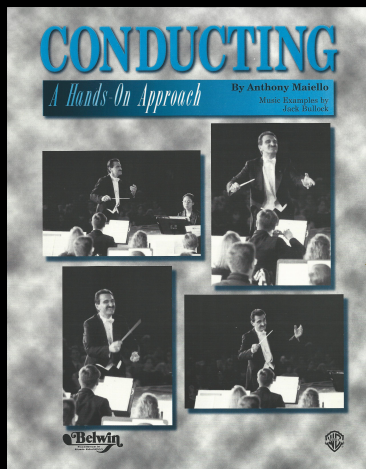
- Always prepare your scores and have an effective rehearsal Plan A, B & C.
- ALWAYS discuss phrasing and musicality.
- Become obsessed with balance, color, and bass motion.
- ALWAYS rehearse transitions - they are the glue that holds the piece together and the place where things can fall apart.
- Continue to assess yourself by video recording yourself.

KEITH:



- LOOK Like the Music!
- Avoid Sending Mixed Messages.
- Clarity of gestures.
- Find true musical experiences.
- Delivery of the moment!

RECOMMENDED BOOKS



**"I set out to create a means whereby
music could be a way of vindicating the
rights of the masses."**

—GUSTAVO DUDAMEL



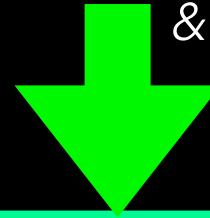
OR...

HA!

**YOU FELL FOR MY FAKE CUE.
LEARN TO COUNT!**

The Maestro's Magic!

Session Materials
& Keynote



Please Sign-In

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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

TREATMENT OF FERMATA:

Always "travel" on fermatas

Do Not Stop Horizontal Motion

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

R
E
P
E
A
T

The image shows a handwritten musical score with three systems of staves. The first system contains measures 1 through 4. The second system contains measures 9 through 12. The third system contains measures 13 through 16. The score is annotated with various notes and markings:

- Measure 2:** A fermata is circled in pink. A pink arrow points down to it with the label "HALF (not too long little to no break)".
- Measure 4:** A fermata is circled in pink. A pink arrow points down to it with the label "PAC (longer pause)".
- Measure 10:** A fermata is circled in pink. A pink arrow points down to it with the label "cadence in gmi".
- Measure 12:** A fermata is circled in pink. A pink arrow points down to it with the label "cadence in dmi (possible no breath?)".
- Measure 14:** A fermata is circled in pink. A pink arrow points down to it with the label "HALF (possible longer pause)".
- Measure 16:** A fermata is circled in pink. A pink arrow points down to it with the label "PAC (longest sustain)".

Other annotations include "modulations..." under measure 9, "Break Forth, (Deer)" above measure 1, and circled letters "A" and "B" near measures 9 and 12 respectively.