

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, MUSICIANSHIP?

A Lecture/Workshop
by

Dr. Brian L. Bowman
Regents Professor of Music Emeritus
bandCollege of Music
The University of North Texas
Denton, Texas

LECTURE

I. DEFINITION OF MUSICIANSHIP - WHAT IS IT?

- A. Physical skills vs. Musical Art Form**
- B. Being skilled in Music-Performing in an Artistic and Professional manner.**
- C. “Good Taste” as applied to Music.**

II. SKILLS OF MUSICIANSHIP - WHAT DO I DO?

A. Tone Production and Quality

- 1. Shape
- 2. Pitch
- 3. Consistency
- 4. Intonation
- 5. Vibrato
- 6. Dynamics

B. Musical Phrasing

- 1. Consistency of Rhythm
- 2. Follow-Through {Air Flow vs. Air Pressure}
- 3. Building and Releasing Musical Tension
- 4. Finding Focal Points, Melodic and Harmonic Tendencies

III. DEVELOPING MUSICIANSHIP RECOGNITION HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TO DO?

A. Study of the Basic Principles of Musicianship

- 1. Texts and other writings
- 2. Recordings and Live Performances
- 3. Private Teachers, Clinics, Master Classes, etc.

B. Exercising Abilities

- 1. Always play as if you were before an audience, even when alone in the practice room.
- 2. Don't be “just a brass player”!! Remember, you are a **MUSICIAN**
FIRST!!!

WORKSHOP

Text: EXPRESSION IN MUSIC, H. A. Vandercook, Pub. by Rubank

“It is not what you play; it’s the way you play it!”

Common mistakes in interpreting music:

Too much monotone--all the notes are too near the same volume.

Long notes are too soft as compared with the shorter ones and short notes are too loud in comparison with the longer ones.

Long tones are allowed to diminish in volume before their time value has expired.

Short notes are almost invariably too loud for the long notes that accompany them, especially in runs or arpeggios of 16th.

All dotted notes are curtailed making them staccato, shorter than is written.

WERE YOU THERE THAT NIGHT?
WERE **YOU** THERE THAT NIGHT?
WERE YOU **THERE** THAT NIGHT?
WERE YOU THERE **THAT** NIGHT?
WERE YOU THERE THAT **NIGHT**?

DISCUSSION TOPICS

DOTTED FIGURES
SYNCPATION
TIED AND SLURRED NOTES
ORNAMENTAL NOTES
STACCATO PLAYING
LEGATO PLAYING
EMPHASIS
INTERPRETATION

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- Auer, Leopold. VIOLIN PLAYING AS I TEACH IT. Dover Publications, Inc. New York, 1980. Chapters III, IV, VIII, X, XI
- Blum, David. CASALS AND THE ART OF INTERPRETATION. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977. All
- Cone, Edward T. MUSICAL FORM AND MUSICAL PERFORMANCE. W.W Norton & Company, Inc., New York c1968 All
- Farkas, Philip. THE ART OF MUSICIANSHIP. Musical Publications, P.O. Box 66, Bloomington, IN 47401, 1976 All
- Johnson, Keith. THE ART OF TRUMPET PLAYING. (reissued by Harold Gore Publishing Co., 314 S. Elm St., Denton, TX 76201, 1981 Chapters 1,2
- Kagen, Sergius. ON STUDYING SINGING. Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1950 Chapters II, IV, VII
- Keller, Hermann. PHASING AND ARTICULATION. (Translated by Leigh Gerdine) W.W. Norton & Company, mc, New York c. 1965 All
- Kohut, Daniel L. MUSICAL PERFORMANCE: LEARNING THEORY AND PEDAGOGY. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632, 1985 All
- Krell, John. KINCAIDIANA. Trio Associates, P.O. Box 2752, Culver City, CA 90230, 1973 Part II, III
- Labuta, Joseph A. TEACHING MUSICIANSHIP IN THE HIGH SCHOOL BAND. Parker Pub. Co., West Nyack, New York. 1972 All
- Leinsdorf, Erich. THE COMPOSER'S ADVOCATE: A RADICAL ORTHODOXY FOR MUSICIANS. Yale University Press, c1981 All
- Matthay, Tobias. MUSICAL INTERPRETATION. Boston Music Co., 1913 Section 1,2,3,6
- Reid, Cornelius L. BEL CANTO PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES. Patelson Music House, New York, 1950 Chapters IV, V
- Thurmond, James Morgan. NOTE GROUPINGS: A METHOD FOR ACHIEVING EXPRESSION AND STYLE IN MUSICAL PERFORMANCE. JMT Publications, c1982 ALL
- Severnson, Paul and McDunn, Mark. BRASS WIND ARTISTRY. Accura Music, Athens, OH 45701, 1983 All (a treatise on learning and attitude)
- Dart, Thurston. THE INTERPRETATION OF MUSIC. Hutchinson University Library, London 4th edition 1967 All (a treatise on early styles)
- Veilhan, Jean-Claude. THE RULES OF MUSICAL INTERPRETATION IN THE BAROQUE ERA. Aiphones Leduc, Paris 1979 All
- Vandercook, H.A. EXPRESSION IN MUSIC. Rubank, Inc., Chicago, IL, 1942 All

Excerpts from:

Blum, David. CASALS AND THE ART OF INTERPRETATION. University of California Press,
Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977.

"We must have exaltation"

(Exaltation of a note)

(Exaltation of a theme)

"If there is no exaltation it is not good"

"How do you count here?" "With my soul."

"Imagine!" Pablo Casals once said. "They call me a great cellist. I am not a cellist; I am a musician. That is much more important."

"Although it is pianissimo, every note must sing."

"Note one dry note"

"Always something lovely, always singing.."

"We must not be afraid to give expression."

"Every note has to have a different sonority, it is a song."

"play frankly"

"It is better to have character in what you play than to have a beautiful sound."

"You will see where to make the vibrato, the crescendo, the diminuendo of the notes -- all those things you have to have present, but present more in your feelings. Not present only here," as he tapped on his head, "because it is not profound enough; but here" -- and he drew his hand to his heart.

"Although only piano is written, we must follow the line of the music; we must find the design."

"Variety is a great word -- in music as in everything; variety is a law of nature. Good music has never monotony. If it is monotonous it is our own fault if we don't play as it has to be played..... We must give to a melody its natural life. When the simple things and natural rules that are forgotten are put in the music -- then the music comes out!"

"Nature never stays at one level, there is a constant vibration."

"Each note is like a link in a chain -- important in itself and also as a connection between what has been and what will be."

"If the design goes up we must give a little more tone; if it goes down, a little less tone. This does not mean that there are not exceptions; there are always exceptions. But this the general rule. Don't be afraid; let us be natural."

"Generally, a long note will mean a crescendo or diminuendo..... We must know how much to give, depending on what the music does. The note has to say something; one must give form, expression, interest."

"An immediate repetition should provide contrast -- a little more forte or piano; a change of color. Otherwise it is not music. Variety -- the art consists in that!"

"When we see piano, the composer means in the range of piano. The range of piano extends all the way to forte and the range of forte extends all the way to piano. One has to follow the line of the music. If it goes up you have to give more, despite the piano. Otherwise it is something that is not free -- not what the music intends."

"Remember, that all music, in general, is a succession of rainbows."

"Sing at the top of the phrase!"

"Do not forget, that in piano there is a range of expression and sonority. Even if you play piano in general - give color in that piano."

"It is a general rule that repeated notes or a repeated design must not be equal. Something has to be done. Otherwise you have monotony -- and nothing is more monotonous than monotony!"

"In those short notes we must give something."

"If you say the same thing in the same way it has no value."

"It is not enough just to play fortissimo."

"Give life to the sustained note!"

"No passage work!"

"It's not a 'passage' -- it's a wonderful melody!"