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On Music Conducting: Expressivity vs. Technicality: Annotated Bibliography

University of Denver

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On Music Conducting: Expressivity vs. Technicality *Annotated Bibliography*

Secondary or Tertiary Monographs

Colson, John F. *Conducting and Rehearsing the Instrumental Music Ensemble: Scenarios, Priorities, Strategies, Essentials, and Repertoire*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012.

This book aids any maturing conductor practical information and options for conducting and rehearsing instrumental music ensembles. It assists and guides a growing conductor to develop strategies to organize the rehearsal process, selecting appropriate repertoire for specific ensembles, and effectively and efficiently conduct and rehearse an instrumental ensemble to achieve musical excellence in performance. This is a great resource for any developing conductor, regardless of his/her level of competency. It includes different kinds of information, such as topics for practical application, laboratory activities, appendixes with repertoire lists and recordings, and class activities, projects, discussions and demonstrations. This book can be used either as a source for investigation or as a guide textbook for applied lessons or academic courses.

Meier, Gustav. *The Score, the Orchestra, and the Conductor*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Gustav Meier provides a practical approach to the conductor's preparation of a score for performance. It focuses on orchestral conducting and the preparatory aspects that a conductor should consider before standing on a podium. This book also gives rehearsing strategies with specific types of ensembles and guides a conductor in how to approach different issues that may appear. Meier utilizes very clear and practical examples of music in the form of reduced and shortened musical scores with descriptions of his approach on how to conduct that specific passage. Although it mainly focuses on orchestra, the author includes special techniques to deal with other ensembles such as wind bands, operas, ballets, and choirs.

Schuller, Gunther. *The Compleat Conductor*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

This book is a guide to interpretation of various specific orchestral pieces of the romantic period, as well as a very short introduction to conducting history as told by the author. This monograph deals with Schuller's findings and own interpretations of the works of major composers in the Romantic period. According to Schuller, his experience as a musician left him with dubitable credibility of the interpretation of the works by famous maestri. He argues that many conductors preach a topic, but then, in practice, they do something different. In the last section of the book, Schuller provides very specific and detailed information on the proper interpretation of certain scores and how their markings should presuppose a very specific performance idea that was trying to be conveyed by the original composer.

Wittry, Diane. *Beyond the Baton: What Every Conductor Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Professor and conductor Diane Wittry writes in this book the fundamental aspects that every conductor should have off the podium. Wittry's purpose for writing this book is to point out characteristics that set great conductors apart from good conductors. These characteristics go

from professional aspects such as artistic leadership, programming, contracts and career development to artistic vision, community and even human resources. This resource is very helpful in guiding young conductors to properly shape a professional path for a conducting career. It deals with the different roles that a conductor should embrace on and off the podium and the leadership skills that he/she should develop in order to become a great conductor.

Sound and Video Recordings

Jordan, James, and Eugene Migliaro Corporon. "The Anatomy of Conducting: Architecture & Essentials - Choral & Instrumental." DVD. GIA Publications, Inc. 2008. This source is a masterclass-type lecture by two different conductors: choral (Jordan) and instrumental (Migliaro). They discuss their most effective techniques of conducting with high school and college-level ensembles. They cover various topics that include mechanics, morphology, clarity, body mapping and communication with the ensemble. In addition to the masterclass lectures, the DVD includes a section with various examples performed by both conductors with different video angles, which allow the viewer to study a specific pattern from different perspectives. This is a very useful material that can be used by any conductor to evaluate the anatomical movement and position of the body. The different video examples guide the viewer to examine and fix any possible bad habits that may have been developed through the conductor's life.

Journal Articles

Gillis, Glen. "The A's of Conducting." *Canadian Winds: The Journal of the Canadian Band Association* 8, no. 2 (2010): 55-57. This article deals with the distinct roles and responsibilities of the wind-band conductor. This is a comprehensive list of positive characteristics that distinguish a great conductor from the rest. The author claims that there are two main characteristics that contemporary wind-band conductors should consider in order to approach their profession seriously. Gillis concludes the article by reminding any conductor about what should always be the main conductor's priority: Music Making.

Kalyn, James. "Art of Conducting - Balancing the Band: The Percent Technique." *Canadian Winds: The Journal of the Canadian Band Association* 12, no. 2 (2014): 36-37. The author discusses the importance of a balanced sound in orchestras and bands, which is a common problem that all conductors must address. He presents a method of explaining balance to the ensemble using percentages, which encourages band members to listen critically to themselves and others, and self-correct imbalances based on non-judgmental conductor feedback. The author claims that such method is highly effective even with young players, and that it is most effective when applied in a planned manner. This is a useful article for student conductors who are looking for techniques or methods to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their ensemble.

Silvey, Brian A. "Strategies for Improving Rehearsal Technique: Using Research Findings to Promote Better Rehearsals." *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 32, no. 2 (2014): 11-17.

This article refers to the various behaviors that may be adopted by conductors that affect their musical ensemble, whether choral, instrumental, or mixed, in different ways. The author deals with three main outcomes: increase of effectiveness during rehearsal, increase of expressivity of the conductor and/or the ensemble, and improvement of ensemble performance. Silvey provides various topics that may be considered rehearsal techniques that according to other research (cited within article) have proved to have a significant impact in the ensemble through one of the three outcomes previously mentioned. This is a useful source that provides information of other leading music scholars and their research in conducting, as well as helpful techniques that can aid in the musical development and improvement of young or teacher conductors.