FUNCTIONAL ORCHESTRAL COLLABORATION SKILLS FOR
WIND BAND PIANISTS: A STUDY GUIDE
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As opportunities to perform as a soloist diminish, more pianists consider chamber and orchestral playing as an alternative solution. By so doing, ample performance opportunities are introduced. Although most university music programs offer ensemble courses for pianists and have begun to offer degrees with an emphasis in accompaniment, their curriculum lacks instructions specifically designed to train and prepare pianists for playing in large ensembles, especially wind bands. This dissertation addresses the difficulties, which one might encounter in large ensemble collaboration, and recommends useful suggestions for acquiring functional skills to solve these difficulties. Pianists can attain professional status by acquiring the functional skills presented in each chapter. The goal of this study is to provide pedagogical support and direction for novice pianists in the larger ensemble collaboration.
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Getting through my dissertation required more than academic support, none of which could have happened without my family. To my parents, my husband and my precious daughter Rachel, and my friends, thank you for supporting me spiritually throughout writing this dissertation and my life in general. This dissertation stands as a testament to your unconditional love and encouragement.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SCORE READING ........................................................................ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Open Score Reading .............................................................. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Clefs and Transpositions ...................................................... 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Preparing the Part ............................................................... 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. CONDUCTING PATTERNS .......................................................... 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Beat Placement ....................................................................... 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Beat Patterns ......................................................................... 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Irregular Meters ................................................................. 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Tempo ................................................................................... 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. EXTENDED TECHNIQUES .......................................................... 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Modern Notational Symbols .................................................. 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Glissando ............................................................................. 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Inside the Piano ................................................................. 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. OTHER KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS .......................................... 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Piano ................................................................................. 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ........................................................................................................................................ iii  
LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................................................. vi  
LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................................................... vii  
LIST OF EXAMPLES ........................................................................................................................................ viii
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Table Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Clefs Used in Wind Band</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Transposition Intervals</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Instrument Studies for Eyes and Ears</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Time-beating in TWO</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Time-beating in THREE</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Time-beating in FOUR</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Time-beating in SIX</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Time-beating in FIVE</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Time-beating in SEVEN</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Piano and Celesta Placement</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Synthesizer Manuals Collection</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF EXAMPLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. George Frideric Handel, <em>Suite no.3 in G Major, HWV 350, Minuet</em>, mm.1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Alto Clef Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. George Frideric Handel, <em>Suite no.3 in G Major, HWV 350</em>, m.1-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Jess Turner, <em>Rumpelstilzchen</em>, mm.98-104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Frank Ticheli, <em>Songs of Love and Life: II. First Lesson</em>, mm.72-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Elliott Carter, <em>Double Concerto for Harpsichord and Piano</em>, mm. 319-336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kevin Walczyk, <em>Epitaphs Unwritten</em>, Improvisation Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Kevin Walczyk, <em>Epitaphs Unwritten</em>, mm.1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. White-key Clusters,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. White-key Clusters, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Black-key Clusters,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Black-key Clusters, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Chromatic Clusters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Joseph Schwantner <em>and the mountains rising nowhere. m.1</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
20. Celesta Written Range ............................................................................................... 42
21. Glockenspiel Written Range ..................................................................................... 42
From the inception of the Harmoniemusik of Vienna to the present concert stage, the instrumentation of the wind band has diverged in many ways, with the shape and size of the ensemble fluctuating from octets to ensembles of over a hundred.¹

As the tradition of a wind band grew, it created a natural growth in both the quantity and quality of the repertoire, especially since many groups commissioned compositions from important composers. In the United States this resulted in an international reputation for American wind bands and their music.

Most university music programs currently have wind bands, and the body of literature is growing. Many compositions call for piano, and it is becoming increasingly evident that pianists need to be expressly trained for the special skills demanded by this repertoire. Although most university music programs offer ensemble courses for pianists and have begun to offer degrees with an emphasis in collaborative piano, their curricula lack classes specifically designed to train and prepare pianists for playing in large ensembles, especially wind bands.

As opportunities to perform as a soloist diminish, more pianists consider chamber and orchestral playing as an alternative solution; in fact, by engaging in larger

¹ Kevin Thompson, *Wind Bands and Brass Bands in School and Music Centre* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 56.
ensembles, performance opportunities are ample both within and outside of academia. Understanding how to function in a large ensemble should be a fundamental part of a pianist’s skills. Just as most pianists are trained to collaborate with singers or instrumentalists so should pianists be required to gain orchestral collaboration skills.

According to Deon Price in “Accompanying Skills for Pianists”,

It is frustrating to everyone concerned when rehearsal time is not used efficiently. Musicians are likely to be on tight schedules, and performance deadlines may be imminent. Rehearsal time, therefore, is extremely valuable. When one or more participants are musically unprepared, or when someone does not know how to solve musical problems in a group situation, the entire ensemble feels a sense of wasted effort.²

Given that many pianists have never had any experience performing with a large ensemble, they could easily experience the above-mentioned frustration.

Playing in a large ensemble means all members in the group must participate in a continuous flow of energy and motion; when music making takes place, all the instrumentalists and the conductor must embody the same principle of connection.³ The ability to follow a conductor’s beat is critical for an optimal performance. This can prove challenging for a pianist inexperienced in orchestral collaboration.

A study guide is needed to assist in obtaining those skills essential for orchestral collaboration. While there is a great deal written about individual skills, there is no comprehensive study guide for pianists who wish to collaborate in a large ensemble.

² Deon N. Price, Accompanying Skills for Pianists, 2nd ed. (Culver City, CA: Culver Crest Publications, 2005),177.
This study will serve as a guide for pianists seeking fundamental knowledge in wind band collaboration. By exploring the dynamics of wind band collaboration, examining a number of functional skills necessary for attaining professional status, and providing a guide to mastering these skills, this document can assist those pianists interested in orchestral ensemble playing as well. These include: acquiring a knowledge of conducting patterns, mastering the extended techniques required in many contemporary scores, and gaining the aptitude to read open scores. Additionally, the study guide will discuss basic stylistic concepts germane to 20th and 21st century wind symphony repertoire and provide some basic information about the makeup of the traditional wind band as well as some suggestions for concert etiquette. Attention will be paid as well to other keyboard instruments used in a wind band, such as the celesta, harpsichord, synthesizer, and organ.

By examining potential problems that one encounters in large ensemble collaboration, and recommending the effective means of solving these problems, this study aims to provide a pedagogical support and direction for pianists new to orchestral collaboration.
2.1. Open Score Reading

Orchestral Collaborating often requires reading a full page of staves. A piano part by itself will include only the piano part, generally surrounded by many measures of rest. In *Mysterious Village* by Michael Colgrass, the pianist only plays about 23 measures. There are two piano entrances: See Example 1.

1) Begins at measure 15 and stops at measure 27.
2) Begins at measure 125 and ends at measure 134.

Between the two piano entrances, there are 98 measures of rests. For the inexperienced pianist, this presents a challenge. Hence, a pianist who is new to orchestral collaboration might wish to use the full score in order not to lose their place. However, reading the full score requires training, and obtaining a full score may not always be possible. If at all possible, the pianist should request the full score and a recording, if one exists.

Playing solo involves reading two or three staves. Pianists are trained to read music horizontally while perceiving two vertical parts moving simultaneously. Reading a full score requires a systematic training for a different kind of visual skill. Price explains the procedure clearly in *Accompanying Skills for Pianists*:

Rapid vertical motion of the eyes may be necessary to read open scores that cover most or all of the page. The pianist who is able to simultaneously read three or four staves has developed a relaxed, expanded soft focus that takes in large sections of the page; he then consciously moves his eyes slowly ahead.\(^4\)

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\(^4\) Price, *Accompanying Skills for Pianists*, 75.
Reading the full score is totally different from reading a piano score. In order to be an effective orchestral or wind band pianist, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the notation of all orchestral instruments since more than half of the orchestral instruments require transposition.\(^5\) (Further discussion on “Clefs and Transpositions” follows in section 2).

Here are a few exercises for full score reading skill. The musical excerpts are from *Suite no.3 in G Major, HWV 350*, by George Frideric Handel.\(^6\)

**Exercise 1:**

The exercise begins with two familiar clefs and one unfamiliar clef. It should be used to learn to read a score in three parts.

**Example 2.** George Frideric Handel, *Suite no.3 in G Major, HWV 350, Minuet, mm.1-8.*

![Music Example]

1. Recognize a score in three parts with three different clefs:

   Treble Clef
   Alto Clef
   Bass Clef

---


2. This is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Follow the outer rhythmic line vertically while counting in three. Play the two outer lines while counting out loud.

3. Learn the alto clef line. Use a colored pencil to trace the fourth line from the bottom and draw three lines above the top line. The colored line becomes the bottom line. Now read in treble clef. See example 3: the notes are: B♭, D, F, G, G, G, A, G, F etc.

![Example 3. Alto Clef Reading](image)

4. Play the bottom two lines on the piano.

5. Imagine the sound of three parts together and follow the score vertically.

Exercise 2:

Learning to read a score in five parts. This eight measure example has a doubling.

1. Recognizing a score in five parts with three different clefs:

   Treble Clef
   Treble Clef
   Treble Clef
   Alto Clef
   Bass Clef

2. This is in 3/4 times. Follow the rhythms vertically while counting in three. Try to imagine the chords by reading the figured bass that is indicated beneath the bass line.

3. The top two lines are in unison. Play the top three lines with the right hand and play the bass line with the left hand.

4. Learn the alto clef line. Use a colored pencil to trace the fourth line from the bottom and draw three lines above the top line. The colored line becomes the bottom line. Now read in treble clef.

5. Try to imagine the sound of all parts while feeling the pulsation of the time signature.

An excellent method book is Dennis Fisher’s *Improved Score Study Through Focused Listening Techniques*. As Fisher notes, “This method is designed to provide a means of internalizing the music through the application… allowing us to hear the music with our eyes before we hear it with our ears, thus creating expectation and eliminating surprise.” This method enables a musician to read full score and gain the ability to move fluently through a full score.

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7 Dennis W. Fisher, *Improved Score Study through Focused Listening Techniques* (Denton, 2005).
8 Ibid., 3.
The piano part in the open score is indicated as “Pno.” or “P-no” and often placed above the harp part or the percussion part. However, placement of the keyboard parts instruments in the score can vary according to the composer. Norman writes in Anatomy of the Orchestra:

The order or placing of these instruments in the score cannot be said to be standardized. The keyboard instruments are perhaps mostly placed above the harps, as by Strauss, but there is no invariable rule and they can be found to vary even within the span of a single work. There is even less common practice in the placing of the more infrequent visitors, the organ, for instance, being sometimes found far away from the conventional overall area for such instruments, at the very bottom of the score. 9

2.2. Clefs and Transpositions

Knowledge of the sound and the range of the other instruments in the wind band will expedite the process of following the open score. Green specifically writes about the band score, “Since the band uses certain instruments that do not appear in the orchestral score, its symphonic score is lengthier. Also, the band conductor is plagued with infinitely more transpositions.”10 Some of the wind instruments require transposition. When the fundamental key of an instrument is not notated at concert pitch in C, the notes written in the score differ from actual sounding pitches. In order to have a thorough understanding of the notation of all orchestral instruments, the pianist needs to learn which instruments are transposing instruments and how to transpose their written notes to concert pitch. See table 1 and 2.

An excellent resource is available through Teaching & Learning Technologies Center of Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University:

9 Norman Del Mar, Anatomy of the Orchestra (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2009), 431.
The website is called *Instrument Studies for Eyes and Ears*. It provides a detailed explanation of each instrument in the orchestra with an actual clip of a performer playing the instrument. It is laid out as followed. See figure 1.

Figure 1. Instrument Studies for Eyes and Ears

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Table 1. Clefs Used in Wind Band\textsuperscript{12}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTRUMENT</th>
<th>Treble</th>
<th>Alto</th>
<th>Tenor</th>
<th>Bass</th>
<th>Tr / Bb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piccolo</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oboe</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinet</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass Clarinet</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Horn</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basset Horn</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassoon</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxophone</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrabassoon</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horn</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagner Tuba</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass Trumpet</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombone, alto</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombone, tenor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trombone, bass</td>
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<td>Tuba</td>
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<td>Timpani</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xylophone</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vibraphone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marimba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Organ</td>
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<td>Harpsichord</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{12} Source: Meier, \textit{The Score, the Orchestra, and the Conductor}, 98.
Table 2. Transposition Intervals

Source: Green and Gibson, *The Modern Conductor* 149.
2.3. Preparing the Part

Having both visual and auditory aids can expedite the pianist’s learning process. There are some studies that suggest how activating the auditory sense may help to consolidate learning. A recommended article is “Improved motor sequence retention by motionless listening,” written by a team of researchers led by pianist-turned-neuroscience researcher Amir Lahav. This study examines how listening activates the auditory part of our brain which then results in activation of the region of the brain responsible for motion. The study posits that motor skills can be acquired and further enhanced by listening even without the benefit of immediate physical practice. 14

Although listening to a recording can expedite the learning process, a recording of a newly or recently composed piece generally is not yet available. Under these circumstances, search online; it might be available in a video format on YouTube, Vimeo, etc. Another alternative is to record a rehearsal in order to study with the score afterwards. It is always useful to check the full score and copy significant cues into the piano part.

The following is a step-by-step guide for pianists on how to learn their part and how to learn to sit through the rests. Tutorial ideas come from Accompanying Skills for Pianists by Deon Nielsen Price. 15

Preparing for the Rehearsal

1. Find a place with good lighting. Lay out full score, piano part, colored pencils and recording (If available).

2. Follow the score while listening to the recording (If available).

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15 Price, Accompanying Skills for Pianists, 179.
3. Mark the melodic line wherever it appears with a colored pencil.

4. Mark the time signature and tempo changes with two different colors.

5. If listening to a recording, pay particular attention to the sections in which the piano does not play. Copy any significant cues into the piano part: note which instruments are playing and notate the rhythmic figures from at least two measures before the piano enters.

6. Sight-read the piano part at a feasible tempo paying strict attention to such details as dynamics, articulations, tone qualities, texture. Try to understand the function of the piano part and how it fits into the whole piece.

7. Practice difficult passages. Write down fingerings, work on pedaling, dynamics, touch and bringing the difficult passages up to tempo. Work out challenging rhythms by deconstructing to find patterns and motives.

8. For exceptionally challenging passages, practice one hand alone while humming or mentally following the line in the other hand.

9. Use a metronome.

10. Divide the piece into segments by orchestration such as woodwinds, brass, and percussion. If a recording is available, follow these sections with the full score while listening to the recording. In the listening process, focus on one section at a time until it is clear how the piano part fits into each particular section. Repeat the process with different targeted sections until the pianist becomes familiar with the aggregate of all parts. If no recording is available, the pianist will have to transpose the various sections of the orchestral score in order to learn them, one section at a time, at the piano.
11. If a recording is available, listen to it looking only at the piano part. This should be done as a last step in the preparation.
3.1. Beat Placement

“Are there different techniques used for leading band and orchestra?” Green answers, “Fundamentally, the technique is the same. In practice however, there are distinctions in approach.” According to H. Robert Reynolds writing about the band approach:

Two Principles of Band Conducting: (1) The way you move through space is the same as the air moves through the instrument. It can be with intensity, or with breadth, or with depth of sound. Or it can be loud with intensity, or soft with great intensity. Show the resistance of the air in your gestures! (2) The way the conductor shows the beat-point is the way the player attacks the sound…In fermatas keep the baton moving to show the progress of the sound.

Because up to three-quarters of a wind band consists of instruments that use air, when the conductor shows the beat-point, the breathing defines the beat placement. A pianist has a faster reaction to the conductor’s beat-point because, striking a key does not take breathing time; if a pianist is not aware of this, he/she will anticipate the beat and come in early. Pianist must remember to breathe with the other musicians before pressing down the keys, and take time to fully observe the conductor’s gesture and play slightly after the beat-point. The beat point may vary from conductor to conductor; a pianist must develop sensitivity to this. Be aware of different hall and stage acoustics. When a pianist is playing with a musician who sits far away from him/her in the orchestra and there is a considerable acoustic delay, place a wireless microphone in front of the other

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16 Green and Gibson, *The Modern Conductor*, 189.
17 Ibid.
musician or section and listen to them through the monitor. This will help a pianist to play together with others.

3.2. Beat Patterns

Knowledge of certain terminology is the first step to understanding beat patterns.

1. Preparatory Beat: The initial signal to start an ensemble. It may establish the tempo, style, dynamics and breathing.¹⁸

2. Ictus: Denotes the indication of the precise instant of the rhythmic impulse in a visible pattern of beat points.¹⁹ This is typically the lowest point to stress the intensity of delivery that distinguishes one note from the others.²⁰

3. Release/Cut-Off: An arm and hand motion that indicates to an ensemble to stop. Normally at the end of a composition, end of a movement or section.²¹

Typically, although not always the case, the conductor’s two hands have different functions. Keeping time is primarily the task of the baton hand.²² The non-baton hand gives special gestures to indicate dynamics, articulations, cutoffs, cues, and other information.²³

¹⁸ Meier, *The Score, the Orchestra, and the Conductor*, 8.
²¹ Ibid.
²³ Meier, *The Score, the Orchestra, and the Conductor*, 18.
Basic Beat Patterns\textsuperscript{24}: In all time-beating, beat One is a descending vertical line that indicates the beginning of the measure. Note: CAPITAL LETTERS are used to refer to the number of beats in the whole measure.\textsuperscript{25} In TWO: Movement: straight down, wing upward to the right. Figure 2 is a diagram for time-beating in TWO.

Figure 2. Time-beating in TWO\textsuperscript{26}

1. In THREE: Movement: first down, then to the right, and finally up. Figure 3 is a diagram for time-beating in THREE.

Figure 3. Time-beating in THREE\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{24} Reproduced tutorial ideas from The Modern Conductor by Elizabeth Green. Green, 9-29
\textsuperscript{25} Green and Gibson, The Modern Conductor, 9.
\textsuperscript{26} Gordon Lamb, “The Conducting Beat Patterns,” Openstax CNX, last modified March 20, 2009, https://cnx.org/contents/c9T2JkJJ@1/The-Conducting-Beat-Patterns
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
2. In FOUR: Movement: straight down, then to the left, right, up. Figure 4 is a diagram for time-beating in FOUR.

Figure 4. Time-beating in FOUR

3. In SIX: This is the first of the “multi-beat” patterns. A basic four-beat pattern has expanded into SIX beats.

Figure 5. Time-beating in SIX

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29 Gordon Lamb, Openstax CNX.
5. Divided Patterns: In slow tempo, divisions are customary. The conductor often shows half-beats. Do not get confused with the SIX, which is 3+3 and a divided THREE, which is 2+2+2.

6. Asymmetrical Patterns: Irregular meters are conducted with unbalanced or “mixed subdivision” beats. Most irregular meters are combinations of standard patterns. Time-beating in FIVE: 3+2(One-and-and Two-and) or 2+3 (One-and Two-and-and). Time-beating in SEVEN: 3+4, 4+3, 2+3+2, 3+2+2, 2+2+3, etc. Figure 6 is a diagram for time-beating in FIVE. Figure 7 is a diagram for time-beating in SEVEN.

Figure 6. Time-beating in FIVE

Figure 7. Time-beating in SEVEN
3.3. Irregular Meters

Music of the 20th and 21st centuries often contains rhythms that are challenging for musicians to follow. Green expresses the characteristics of 20th century rhythmic structures this way:

In the twentieth century, composers began to challenge the boundaries of basic rhythmic and metric structures. Not allowing themselves to be confined to standard bar lengths, composers began to stretch and shrink the duration of primary beats to accommodate their rhythmic inventions…In addition, composers started to regroup smaller pulses within the measure.30

Example 5. Jess Turner, Rumpelstilzchen, mm.98-104

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30 Green and Gibson, The Modern Conductor, 96.
The manner in which rests are notated in a passage such as example 5 is a good indicator of how the conductor is likely to group or regroup the beat patterns. For example, in mm.99, 9/8 is not evenly grouped as 3+3+3, but may be regrouped a number of ways, including 2+2+2+3 or 4+5.\textsuperscript{31}

The excerpt in Example 6 has been adapted from the Songs of Love and Life: II. First Lesson, by Frank Ticheli; it is an example of how a pianist is cued in an improvisatory passage. In mm.72, the conductor only gives two cues at 1 and 2. He does not conduct in the remainder of the section. It is up to the pianist to use the existing notes on the score to improvise the rhythm. The pianist returns to strict meter at mm.74, and resumes following the conductor.

Example 6. Frank Ticheli, Songs of Love and Life: II. First Lesson, mm.72-75

3.4. Tempo

Tempo markings are as significant in modern music as they have ever been, indicating not only the speed of the music but often the characteristics of the music as well. Here are tempo markings from Richard and Renée by Carter Pann,\textsuperscript{32} which

\textsuperscript{31} Green and Gibson, The Modern Conductor, 97.
\textsuperscript{32} Carter Pann, Richard and Renee (PA: Theodore Presser, 2010).
A metronomic tempo is a common denominator for a conductor and orchestral musician; it would be difficult for a pianist to practice a piano part without knowing the composer’s intended speed for each section. In orchestral collaboration there is little room for personal interpretation. “Contemporary composers generally notate exact metronomic tempos, and musicians are expected to honor them. At times the technical abilities of the performers dictate a tempo and override the notated tempo marking.”

The tempo markings noted above are illustrative of Meier’s point. Composers from earlier periods used self-explanatory tempo markings that approximate the speed of a given pulse, such as Allegro, Andante, Moderato. By contrast, many contemporary composers are more meticulous about their notation:

Ritardando and accelerando are rhythmic tools. The ritardando is understood to mean a gradual slowdown of the tempo…[However] Some composers have begun to pinpoint their intentions by utilizing increasing or decreasing metronome markings at short intervals, thereby setting the degree of a ritardando or accelerando more precisely.

Here is an example of pinpointed metronome markings by Elliott Carter:

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33 Meier, *The Score, the Orchestra, and the Conductor*, 98.
34 Ibid.
Example 7. Elliott Carter, *Double Concerto for Harpsichord and Piano*, mm. 319-336
In dealing with newly composed nontonal works, the pianist will encounter many different methods for organizing sound beyond the limits of conventional notation and beyond traditional playing techniques.\textsuperscript{36} As more composers develop their own musical languages, and notations, it becomes critical for a pianist to be familiar with the non-standard musical notations and extended techniques.

4.1. Modern Notational Symbols

Some modern notational symbols are more familiar than others. There are two types of symbols: universal symbols that are used commonly by composers and newly invented symbols that are sometimes unique to the composer. Some composers include explanation of the musical symbols in the ‘Performance Notes’. Here are four examples (example 8- example 11) of modern notation from \textit{Epitaphs Unwritten} by Kevin Walczyk.\textsuperscript{37}

1. Improvisation Box: provides specific instructions for the improvisation. A horizontal line marked by an arrowhead will indicate where the pianist will finish the event. The pianist plays the four given notes freely, without meter. If there are other players performing simultaneously, the pianist should try not to synchronize with the others.

\textsuperscript{36} Green and Gibson, \textit{The modern Conductor}, 168.
\textsuperscript{37} Parts of these explanations on the notation come from Kevin Walczyk, \textit{Performance Notes}, \textit{Epitaphs Unwritten}. (2010)
2. Proportional Time Notation [non-metered time]: events are dictated by diamond shaped indicators between measures. The required time is indicated to the right of the diamond indicators. The conductor will cue the measure.

3. Angled Beams: it is used to show the alteration of speed in several successive pitches within a notation duration. When the angle widens, the speed will increase and it will decrease when the angle narrow.

Example 11. Kevin Walczyk, *Epitaphs Unwritten*, mm.1-4
Example 11 is the first four measures of a Walczyk wind orchestra work. In order to successfully perform this piece, a pianist must understand and be prepared to play the notation above; ‘Examples nos. 8-10’ are the notations most frequently used in this work.

Developing an ear for contemporary music and becoming adept at the use of modern notations are skills critical for an orchestra pianist. Thompson writes, “Crucial to accurate reading is the understanding of all notational symbols.”

Joseph Schwantner’s three wind ensemble compositions titled and the mountains rising nowhere…, In evening’s stillness… and Dark Millennium, hold a prominent place in the last twenty-five years of the twentieth century wind band repertoire. These three compositions are useful study pieces because they offer in-depth exposure to contemporary music in which the ensemble pianist plays a significant role. Salzman writes,

Successful performances of these works require the utmost in technical proficiency and musical understanding from both players and conductor. The challenges are formidable but the artistic growth available to those ensembles who experience this music is invaluable…All three compositions find their organic root in material introduced by an amplified piano, the central instrument in each work. This material is also the basis of the sonorities and harmonic “pillars” that follow.

Although and the mountains rising nowhere is an experimental piece that contains many different elements such as, tonality, atonality, serialism and aleatory writing, Schwantner describes it as Baroque in character, given its ornamental nature and complexity.

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38 Ellen Thompson, Teaching and Understanding Contemporary Piano Music (San Diego: Kjos West, 1976), 173.
40 Ibid.,131-132.
41 Ibid., 132.
This work is a through-composed piece. It is based on the harmonic material found in the piano’s arpeggiated tone clusters in the first full measure; the cluster is doubled by the fingered crystal glasses.\textsuperscript{42} See Example 12.

Example 12. Joseph Schwantner, \textit{…and the mountains rising nowhere}. Amplified Piano and Glass Crystals

Schwantner’s \textit{…and the mountains rising nowhere} begins with loud grace notes played by the three sets of toms while a pianist holds down cluster notes, allowing the vibrations created by the percussion to stimulate resonant frequencies within the lower piano strings.\textsuperscript{43} Cluster is one of the most frequently used modern notations. As defined by Kurt Stone, Clusters…

May be defined as a combination of three or more pitches too close to each other to form a chord in the traditional sense. The degree of closeness, or density, may

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 132.
  \item \textsuperscript{43} Chris Sharp, \textit{A study of Orchestration Techniques for the Wind Ensemble/Wind Band as Demonstrated in Seminal Works} (University of Florida, 2011), 241.
\end{itemize}
range from adjacent whole tones to the immeasurable density of electronic white noise. Certain instruments have relatively unalterable densities: white-key or black-key clusters on keyboard instruments consist mostly of whole tones...Clusters are used in two contrasting ways: as very short sounds for percussive effects, and as sustained sounds.44

Here is a specific discussion of clusters for the piano.45

1. How to play: piano keys are to be struck simultaneously. There are many ways to play clusters depending on the range of the clusters, from a few fingers to a forearm. In general, fist, palm of hand, edge of hand and entire forearm can be used. For enormous blocks of clusters, suitable objects may be used such as, two wooden blocks or plastic rulers. Depress keys by using these objects.

2. Pitches: generally notated with a thick vertical line between the outer notes.

3. White-key Clusters:

   A. Natural signs are placed in front of the clusters. See Example 13.

   Example 13. White-key Clusters, 1.46

   B. Right Hand: natural signs are placed above the clusters. See Example 14.

   C. Left Hand: natural signs are placed below the clusters. See Example 16.

   D. White-key cluster symbols are notated in different ways. See Example 14.

45 Discussion comes from Music Notation in the Twentieth Century by Kurt Stone.
46 Ibid., 259
4. Black-key Clusters:

A. Accidentals are placed in front of the clusters. See Example 15.

Example 15. Black-key Clusters, 1. 48

B. Right Hand: sharps and/or flats are placed above the clusters. See Example 15.

C. Left Hand: sharps and/or flats are placed below the clusters. See Example 16.

D. Black-key cluster symbols are notated in different ways. See Example 15.

Example 16. Black-key Clusters, 2. 49

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48 Ibid.
5. Chromatic Clusters: clusters without any accidentals such as natural signs, sharps or flats. Different notations of chromatic clusters. See Example 17.

Example 17. Chromatic Clusters.\textsuperscript{50}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chromatic_clusters.png}
\end{center}

6. Spatial Notation: the duration of the clusters indicated by the length of the measures.

Pianists should be aware that Schwantner uses clock time and aleatoric technique instead of time signature in his measures.\textsuperscript{51} For example, the first full measure is made up of timed sections of 35 seconds’ duration.\textsuperscript{52} See Example 18

\textsuperscript{50} Irvin, \textit{Clavier}.
\textsuperscript{51} Salzman, \textit{A Composer’s Insight}, 133.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
4.2. Glissando

Glissando is often used in piano music. While different pianists are comfortable using their hands and fingers in different ways to achieve a glissando, a basic technique for a Glissando going down is to use the fingernail of the thumb and keep the rest of the fingers up; it is important not to close the hand because by keeping it open, a shock absorbing space between thumb and index finger is created. Secondly, the arm must be relaxed in order to allow weight to flow down the arm. It is recommended to use the fingernails of the second and third fingers for a Glissando going up; some prefer using all four fingernails but the surface of the white keys is not spacious enough for pianists who have larger hands. However, one chooses to do a glissando, the crossing
Glissando in *Rumpelstilzchen* by Jess Turner is technically demanding for a pianist.

Here are some suggestions for the pianist on how to handle this challenging cross glissando.

1. It is impossible to do double glissandi crossing with right hand going down four octaves while left hand going up for four octaves. FIND A MID POINT of the glissando. Right hand glissando down for two octaves and go up for two octaves while left hand does a glissando up for two octaves. Then go down for two octaves.

2. Glissando may also be played with suitable objects. For example: prepare a pair of gloves and two sticks or plastic rulers. Put a stick into a glove and use tape to wrap around the top. Use two of them to do double crossing glissandi. It is easier to use an object to play fortissimo glissando.

4.3. Inside the Piano

The piano is used in a variety of ways, from playing on the keys to playing inside the piano. There are many modern compositions that include techniques of playing inside the piano directly on the strings. Henry Cowell was the first composer to use the term "stringpiano," since he recognized that strings inside the piano could function as a separate instrument, Cowell said:

Since the sounds, and the technic necessary to produce them, are entirely different from keyboard piano playing, I have no hesitation in calling the piano strings, when played after this fashion, a separate instrument, which I term 'stringpiano'.

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Cowell composed a piece called *Aeolian Harp* for the “stringpiano”. It breaks all the conventional rules of playing a piano. It requires a pianist to stand to perform since the pianist needs to reach inside the piano in order to play on the strings while simultaneously holding the pedal. In *Aeolian Harp*, the pianist needs to depress the keys without making any sound in order for the dampers to go up, and then must strum the strings.

John Cage uses “prepared piano” which means that strings inside the piano are prepared prior to the performance. He uses nuts, clips, bolts, and rubber bands to create percussive timbres when pianist plays on the keyboard.\(^{54}\)

These are general techniques used in stringpiano works:\(^{55}\)

1. Pizzicato: plucking the strings. Stick office tapes on the damper heads to indicate pitch names.
2. Sweeping chromatically with the fingers.
3. Tone cluster: using a flat hand to sweep across the strings.
4. Single string: Stroke along a string with the flat part of the finger.
5. Bowed string: strings are bowed with various kind of wire or string.
6. Objects used: different types of mallets, drumsticks, light chains, pencils or paper.\(^{56}\)

Pianists should be cautious when playing inside the piano in order not to damage the instrument. Kevin Richmond explains:


Since the hands directly contact the strings, the student should become familiar with preventative measures to safeguard against potential damage to the instrument. The hands should be clean and dry. If playing extensively on the strings, the performer should consider using magnesium carbonate powder on the hands. In addition, a soft dry cloth should be used to wipe the strings after playing to prevent corrosion. Often it is necessary to mark strings at nodal points, and this should be done with a bit of chalk. White-out or adhesives will destroy the strings and should never be used. The dampers should be marked only with adhesives labeled as “non-permanent,” and only when absolutely necessary. Adhesives not labeled as such can leave a sticky residue or even remove finish. Small pieces of Post-it notes work well to mark dampers and should be placed and removed with extreme care.\(^{57}\)

The conductor should be consulted before using an object inside the piano. When performing inside the piano, make sure to minimize the damage to the piano since it is private property.

\(^{57}\) Ibid.
In an orchestra, usually one pianist covers the entire keyboard section. Keyboard instruments are generally placed between the percussion and the strings in the orchestra score, but usually above the percussion in the band score. However, there is no invariable rule and positioning of instruments can vary. The keyboard instruments frequently used in an orchestra are piano, celesta, harpsichord, synthesizer and organ. Less frequently used are harmonium, accordion, cimbalom and ondes martenot.

The piano and celesta are the most frequently used among the keyboard instruments. When a pianist needs to play both piano and celesta, it is important to set up both instruments close enough to travel back and forth. The celesta can be placed to the right at right angles to the piano. Sometimes, there are only a few measures to change from one instrument to another. See figure 8.

Figure 8. Piano and Celesta Placement

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The synthesizer is useful as a substitute for harpsichord, harp, guitar and zither etc. since it is capable of reproducing numerous instrumental sounds. In this day and age it is essential for a pianist to know how to operate a synthesizer and other electronic devices that connect to the system.

5.1. Piano

The piano has many different roles in a wind band, serving from time to time in a soloistic capacity or adding color to the ensemble. The piano can also function to reinforce the percussion instruments. These are the general characteristics of a piano.59

- Staccato: Piano has a very short decay, piano is able to play short passages effectively.
- Low register: Three strings per note. The sound gong-like and resonant.
- Middle register: Two strings per note.
- High register: Can produce a bell-like and shimmering sound.

There are many examples of great orchestral piano part writing. The Warriors by Percy Aldridge Grainger is an excellent piece of purely orchestral piano writing. This is a recommended study piece for pianists. At least four keyboard players are required to play this work. Grainger scores for three pianos, bar-piano or dulcitone, bell-piano and celesta. This unusual instrumentation also appears in Stravinsky’s Symphony of Psalms.

59 Discussion comes from Black and Gerou, Essential Dictionary of Orchestration.
5.2. Organ

The organ is occasionally used in orchestral works. When used in the church music of classical composers it usually takes the continuo role but in orchestral work, due to its size, visual impact, and amplitude of sound composers tend to use it as a distinguished visitor. Here is a list of some repertoire for a band with organ:

- *Angels in the Architecture* by Frank Ticheli.
- *The Frozen Cathedral* by John Mackey.
- *Pomp & Circumstances Marches #1 and #4* by Edward Elgar.
- *Symphony No.4* by David Maslanka.
- *Polka and Fugue*, from *Schwanda, the Bagpiper* by Jaromir Weinberger.

Many halls do not have a built-in organ and often replace it with an electric organ or a synthesizer. Even though the manuals look similar to the piano keys, the operating manual is totally different. Pianists should be aware that organs and electronic organs vary greatly depending on the manufacturer and the model. Here are some of the things which vary or may be lacking in different organs:

- Different Stops
- Number of manuals
- Swell box, composition buttons (couplers), mixtures, etc.

Make sure to check the organ before the concert to tune to orchestral tuning.

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60 Del Mar, *Anatomy of the Orchestra*, 475.
Organs are often tuned to a different pitch from A=440 Hertz. Rarely does a pianist have to cover the organ part in the wind band but if a pianist needs to play an actual build-in organ, it is recommended to consult with an organist for performance practice. Very little technical detail is indicated in the organ parts of most orchestral scores. This is partly why:

- Part of an organist's training is in the art of registration
- Any registration specified based on an organ known to the composer has to be reorganized by the player.

5.3. Celesta

The name “Celesta” is universal, even with the French adding the “accent aigu” on ‘e’: célesta. Since the celesta is a transposing instrument, it sounds an octave higher. Written Range: C3-C7, see example 20. Celesta is referred to as the Mustel Celeste in certain works: Mustel was the original manufacturer. Celesta has a damper pedal. Celesta has a bell-like tone but is not as bright as the glockenspiel.

Example 20. Celesta Written Range

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63 Ibid.
64 Ibid., 480
65 Reasons come from Del Mar, Norman. Anatomy of the Orchestra, 480.
66 Ibid., 469.
68 Black and Gerou, Essential Dictionary of Orchestration,164.
The “Glockenspiel” (orchestral bells) has a similar sound and appearance but is smaller.\(^70\) Since the Glockenspiel is a transposing instrument, it sounds two octaves higher. See example 21.

Example 21. Glockenspiel Written Range\(^71\)

5.4. Synthesizer

When certain instruments are not available, the synthesizer is an adequate substitute. Although there are synthesizers in many different configurations such as keyboard, guitar, bass and percussion, the keyboard form is most commonly used since a keyboard has the most variety.\(^72\) The synthesizers most commonly used are equipped with 49 notes, 66 notes, 76 notes, and 88 notes.\(^73\) Since it is electronic equipment, it is not a pianist’s responsibility to connect the synthesizer to a mixer or any other audio related equipment; A/V staff should take care of audio related matters, however a pianist should know how to turn on the synthesizer and utilize the list of different

\(^{71}\) Source: Ibid., 256.
\(^{72}\) Ibid., 180.
\(^{73}\) Ibid., 182.
instruments. Usually the on/off switch is located near the power cord. Certain orchestral
 gigs require a pianist to have his/her own equipment such as a synthesizer and a
 monitor. Here is a helpful resource for pianists to find manuals that provide instruction
 on how to operate each synthesizer:


Figure 9. Synthesizer Manuals Collection[^74]

[^74]: Synthesizer Manuals Collection, last modified October 19, 2011,
A pianist who has never played in a wind ensemble might like to know something about the setup of the ensemble.

6.1. Seating Positions and Instrumentation

The instrumentation or the seating position for the band is by no means standardized. According to Meier in “The Score, the Orchestra, and the Conductor”,

A rule for seating in all situations is impossible because each composition has its specific orchestration and each stage and auditorium has its own unique acoustical and logistical properties...The size of the [each] section depends on the conductor’s preference, the ability of players, the financial strength of the orchestra, and the available space on stage.\(^{75}\)

The concept of the orchestra and the band are parallel in a manner of speaking. Both are quite large, on some occasions using more than one hundred players, but usually in general about sixty players in a group. However, in a band, the clarinet section functions as the violin section and the band expands its instrumentation to include euphonium and saxophones.\(^{76}\)

6.2. Stage Etiquette\(^{77}\)

Enter:

1. Before it is time to go onstage, check to be sure that the piano and other

\(^{75}\) Meier, 151.


\(^{77}\) Some of the general suggestions come from The Modern Conductor by Elizabeth Green, 211.
keyboard instruments are properly positioned. Then enter with the other members of the band. Once seated at the piano, arrange the part or parts on the piano and other keyboard instruments.

2. The solo clarinet becomes the concertmaster and sits in the first chair to the conductor’s left as he/she faces the band. The first clarinetist walks out after the group is seated and gives the signal to the oboe.

3. The band tunes to the oboe: the principal oboist gives an “A” to the woodwinds to tune first, then gives a “B-flat” to the brass to tune next. Most musicians arrive early enough to be warmed up and to tune their instruments. Usually the piano is tuned in prior to a concert by a professional piano technician. The note “A” above middle “C” is to be tuned to a frequency of 440 Hz (vibrations per second) which is the general tuning standard for a piano. If a pianist needs to play a harpsichord for a concert, make sure that the harpsichord is also tuned to 440 Hz.

4. As the conductor enters the stage, the band stands. When the conductor takes the podium, the band may be seated.

Exit:

1. When the piece is finished, the conductor turns to bow to the audience.

2. The audience applauds. The band remains seated.

3. If the piece featured several prominent solo parts, the conductor will have the soloists stand.
4. The conductor may bow again and leave the stage, but returns promptly to the stage. Stay seated.

5. The conductor motions for the band to rise. This is when the band stands up simultaneously with the concertmaster.

6. When the conductor leaves the stage, watch the concertmaster and follow him/her to be seated together.

6.3. Conclusion

Most university music programs offer large ensemble courses but their curriculum lacks classes specifically designed to train pianists for these large ensemble collaborations. While there are a great number of method books for individual skills, there is no comprehensive study guide for pianists who wish to collaborate in a large ensemble. A study guide is needed to obtain some of the essential skills to serve as a study tool for pianists seeking large ensemble collaboration.

This study examined difficulties which one might encounter in large ensemble collaboration, and recommended useful suggestions for acquiring functional skills to solve these difficulties. Pianists can attain professional status by acquiring the functional skills presented in each chapter.

While pianists are generally experienced in playing with small chamber ensembles, they are not always trained in orchestral playing. As opportunities to perform as a soloist diminishes, more pianists consider ensemble playing as an
alternative solution. By so doing, they open up ample performance opportunities. The goal of this study was to provide pedagogical support and direction for pianists new to larger ensemble collaboration.
Orchestral Etiquette

By David Weiss (with extra comments inserted by Dawn Weiss)

Building your reputation in the field of music involves a lot more than how well you play your instrument. The transition from practice room to professional can be more successfully achieved by understanding some simple but frequently overlooked ideas of "Orchestral Etiquette." Using good discretion and common sense will go a long way to make you the kind of musician that personnel managers are always hoping to find.

🎵 Be on time! Traffic or parking problems are NEVER an acceptable excuse, especially in L.A. where we suffer through this on a regular basis and know how bad the traffic can be. Allow PLENTY of time. Arrive early, have extra time to practice your parts, or bring a book, or some homework to do until the rehearsal begins. PERSONNEL MANAGERS always like the early bird, and are paying attention. Show up physically and mentally prepared. It helps a lot to be a good sight-reader. Remember that performing is a visual as well as auditory experience for the audience. Most successful musicians make it "look easy" - that your music pours out of you naturally, without excessive effort. You should look like you're enjoying what you're doing.

🎵 Communicate with our orchestra manager if you have any problems. Return phone messages promptly. Cell phones are very useful - but be sure to turn yours off during rehearsals/concerts!

🎵 When the conductor or coach or teacher tells you to do something, be sure to do it! Do not be disrespectful or create any embarrassment, even if you disagree with the request, or if it shows incomplete knowledge of your instrument. See the director later if at all possible. Be a good colleague. You NEVER KNOW who among you will become very influential in the music business years from now. Your professional networking has already started. A good impression can be a life-long asset. A bad impression can haunt you for years to come. Be discreet when discussing intonation issues with a colleague. Don't brown-nose the conductor or anyone else with power or influence. It's one thing to be interested and respectful, but your colleagues will hate you for blatantly kissing up to your superiors.
• Try to keep your personal life away from the orchestra. Be careful about "falling in love" with a colleague. After the relationship ends you may still have to work with that person for a long time!

• Out of respect for others, go very easy on the perfume or cologne. Especially around singers and wind players.

• Avoid "nervous knee" wiggling, foot tapping, excessive body movements, and choose your moments carefully when doing maintenance on your instrument like swabbing or blowing out water from a key, so as not to distract others.

• Avoid crossing your legs, yawning, or any appearances of boredom or lack of attention (magazines on your stand). When the conductor is dealing with another section of the orchestra, you can usually learn something by paying attention to what other sections are doing. The same phrase may show up in your part two minutes later. Conductors hate having to repeat themselves, and it wastes a lot of time. You are a "representative" of the group - donors, board members might be present. Also, good to have knowledge about your organization - when people ask you questions, etc. Be willing to attend social events with donors, etc.

• Put your equipment under your own chair and try not to sprawl out. Don't leave your instrument in a precarious position, especially during intermissions when people are walking around.

• Prepare your own part so that you are not dragging everyone else down. Music is always available in advance. Contact our librarian. It is a good idea to get recordings of the repertoire. Attend live concerts.

• Prepare for emergencies (swab, handkerchief, cigarette paper, pencil), and be sure your instrument is kept in good working order.

• Be gentle with your music. Avoid bending, folding, tearing, jamming into folders, and make sure it gets to the rehearsal or concert on time, even if you have a problem and can't be there yourself. Write gently in your music, using a black #1 or #2 pencil. Try not to write too much! (Conductors and colleagues get distracted with a lot of fidgeting). The librarian has to erase all markings if it is a rental part. Avoid writing funny comments or jokes, no matter how tempting.

• Commending your colleagues: If someone does a really nice job, you can tap your hand on your knee or lightly shuffle your foot as a subtle compliment - just don't overdo it. People are still trying to concentrate and shouldn't be distracted. Also, it tends to appear amateurish to the audience. Don't stare at your neighbor's part or be fingering something in the middle of his or her solo. Watch your body language!

• Don't whisper, roll your eyes or make faces as commentary about the conductor. They see everything! Sit up straight and stay alert and attentive. Yawns and sitting with legs crossed show disrespect. Bow toward the audience and avoid a lot of joking around or commentary to your
stand partner or neighbor.

♫ When on tour, never talk in your room about any of your colleagues. The walls are often thin and you would be surprised at what people hear you say. At auditions, be tactful and show appreciation to anyone involved in organizing the audition. Chances are they are members of the orchestra and/or management. Don't comment on other auditionees or the orchestra performance from the night before.

♫ Do not warm up on somebody else's solos!

♫ If you have questions of the conductor and are not the principal of the section, direct your questions to the principal.

♫ NEVER cross a Musicians Union picket line. This holds for when you might have a ticket to a performance that is being picketed, or most importantly if you are ever asked to substitute for a union musician who is out on strike. The ramifications of being a "scab" can be devastating. Young musicians owe a huge debt of gratitude to those who fought for decent wages and working conditions. A general knowledge of the musician's union movement over the past 50 years should be required for anyone contemplating a career in music.

♫ Tuning: Be a good colleague and TAKE THE A. If you're onstage early, be sure you are tuning to the proper pitch. Your pitch while warming up will influence all who follow you on stage. The principal oboist might give a "perfect" A at the beginning of the concert, but if everyone has been tuning incorrectly (usually too sharp) while warming up, chaos can result. String players especially need to understand the constraints of woodwind tuning. Most woodwind instruments are designed to play between A-440 and A-442. It is practically impossible for certain instruments to play in tune with themselves if the A is much below 440 or above 442. For example, an oboe or clarinet or bassoon player may be able to find or make a reed to play A-446, but then the rest of the notes in the scale don't line up, and the results sound awful.
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