David Whitwell

The Milan Lectures

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Introduction

In September 2022, Dr Whitwell was invited by Alida Altemburg, artistic director of a television series featuring Music, broadcast in Milan, Italy, to present a series of discussions on Conducting. The following lectures are the result of these productions.

Alida Altemburg, while studying at the Conservatorio Niccolo Paganini in Genoa enjoyed a very active modeling career. As a classical pianist she has performed on National tv in Italy and Monaco and has taught at the Melbourne Piano School. As founder and President of D Major TV in Milano she has produced numerous interviews and has created a documentary on Glenn Gould in cooperation with the Glenn Gould Foundation in Toronto, Canada

What is the Purpose of Performance?

This is a very important decision for which every conductor must make a choice in preparing a performance: Am I going to give an aesthetic performance or an entertainment performance?[1]

What do we mean by the word *Aesthetic*? Aesthetic was a subject created by Aristotle some 3,000 years ago. He also created, at the same time, a new branch of philosophy called Aesthetics. Aristotle was writing a book intended for young playwrights. The subject of this book was the most important kind of stage play of his time, Tragedy. He also wrote a book on how to write entertainment stage works, but that book is lost. The book on Tragedy which has survived is called *Posey*, a word which was derived from the word *poetry*, because in Aristotle's time all stage works were given in poetry.

In this book Aristotle discusses all the elements which make up a Tragedy. What sort of characters and their development should the playwright represent? In this case Aristotle thought only the highest noble persons should be represented on the stage. It was not appropriate to have just ordinary people, the people on the street, represented on the stage. He also talked about Time. Should the length of the story represent several weeks or just a brief story comparable to the actual amount of time it would take to occur on the stage?

Well, after he finished the book, having written about all the components which make up a Tragedy on the stage, he realized there was one topic he forgot and that was what does all this mean to the observer, the member of the audience? Aristotle had observed that in a Tragedy by a great writer, such as Sophocles or Euripides, you could see in the faces of the audience members that they were very involved in their reaction to the story and that the feelings and experience of the story seemed to "get inside" them somehow. Actually, this topic had been discussed even earlier by Socrates. Socrates gave the beautiful analogy of a magnet. If in one hand you have a magnet and in the other hand a piece of metal which is not magnetized and you touch the piece of metal to the magnet, it also becomes mag-

1. The video of this lecture can be found at https://youtu.be/xQ8V2Y4_7GM

netized. And then you can add another piece of metal and it too becomes magnetized, etc. Socrates wrote that this is what happens when the story on the stage reaches the audience member. The experience becomes part of the audience member's experience and not just something he watches on the stage.

On the other hand, Aristotle notes that this does not happen with entertainment music. Even 3,000 years ago there could be seen on stage entertainment productions with great events—great battles, shipwrecks, etc. Aristotle found that in these popular stage works, while the audience was involved in watching, it all seemed to "bounce off" and leave no permanent impression on the audience member.

Everyone can understand this distinction in the case of going with friends to see a movie. In some cases you are so moved by the story on the screen that when it ends you just wish they would leave the lights turned off for a while, giving you time to return to your normal senses. And when you walk out of the cinema with your friends no one says a word—you are still filled with the experience you had and this can stay with you for some time. On the other hand, you can go to the cinema with friends and during the picture you are fully engaged, you laugh, you cry, but when the picture ends you and your friends exit and immediately are talking about friends, school, and business, etc. The experience may have been strong, but it did not stay with you—it bounced off.

So the conductor has this choice regarding what they are going to present to the audience. This philosophical question is very old, it has been discussed for 2,000 years. Some questions have arisen, for example, does the conductor really have a choice? Yes they do. When a member of your town reads in the newspaper that there is going to be a concert next week, the reader decides to go or not to go primarily on the basis of wanting to hear a concert. They do not go with any preconceptions about literature. In the concert the conductor has the choice of giving the listener either an aesthetic experience or an entertainment experience.

Another question is, "Is there some kind of middle ground? Can a performance be partly entertainment and partly aesthetic?" The answer, on the basis of long experience, is "No." When the audience member leaves after the concert they will feel either they have been moved and uplifted by the experience or that they have been entertained. Regarding this question, the nature of an encore is very important. You can have an entire concert of serious music, but when you have an encore with some kind of silly happy music it works like a kind of electronic eraser, it overcomes the earlier part of the experience and the listener leaves feeling they were entertained. In one

famous example of this, a conductor scheduled after a performance of the Verdi Requiem, one of the most deeply moving compositions ever written, for the Tenor to come out and for an encore to start singing Cowboy Songs. You can imagine how this changed the entire experience for the listener.

Another issue raised concerning this choice is the setting of the concert. If your town band is going to perform at the half-time of a soccer game, then whatever you perform will likely be received by the listener as entertainment, because that is why they came to this event. In this regard I recall one time going to a university concert and the conductor came out wearing a clown's suit. And so, in this case, before you had heard even one note of music, you knew this was going to be an entertainment event. I might also mention this is why we have the tradition for aesthetic concerts of turning out the lights, because of all our senses the eyes are the most important and if the lights are on the audience will be looking around the hall and will be distracted by what they see. But if the lights are off the influence of the eye is then limited and allows the sense of hearing to come forward allowing the audience to better concentrate on the music.

Finally, in spite of everything there will be differences in the experiences among the individual audience members. As Socrates pointed out in his analogy of the magnet, in a performance of, let us say, sad music, the experience leaves the stage and is heard by each individual and then sifted through their own personal history with sadness. The person sitting next to them will have had a different history with sadness and so will have a somewhat different reaction to the music. So in an audience of 500 people there will be 500 slightly different reactions to the music, but the general emotion of sadness will be shared by all—no one will begin laughing.

Well, what does all of this mean today for the conductor of a civic band? The first thing which comes to my mind is the question, does the member of the town really need more entertainment? If they have a television set they probably have hundreds of channels to choose from and most of them are entertainment. They have the opportunity go see live events, soccer games, tennis matches, etc., all of which are also sources of entertainment. Does the town really need more entertainment? Should it be the job of the conductor of a town band to provide more entertainment for the town? And if this is true, how can a band compete with commercial entertainment and the vast sources of money it has at its disposal? In my view, then, the town band has the opportunity to provide a different experience for the citizen of the town, an experience which is uplifting and consists of a deeper kind of emotion.

This reminds me of an occasion with the famous composer George Fredrick Handel, the composer of probably the most frequently performed piece of music today throughout the world, *The Messiah*. At the conclusion of the very first performance of this great oratorio, a member of the audience, who must have been a noble since Handel called him Sir, approached Handel and thanked him for the great entertainment. Handel responded, "My Lord, I should be very sorry if I only entertained the audience. My hope was to make them better!"

Where does Music Exist?

In the first lecture in this series I mentioned that Aristotle invented a new branch of philosophy called Aesthetics.[2] He also was the first to point out that if you speak the word *dog* this word is only a symbol of the real animal, not the actual animal. And if you write the word *dog* this word is only a symbol of the spoken word, which is only a symbol of the real animal, thus we are now two generations away from the actual animal. This sequence is precisely the problem when we try to write music on paper. Music notation is only a symbol of actual music. In fact, the symbols of music we see on paper are really only a representation of the "Grammar of Music."

2. The video of this lecture can be found at https://youtu.be/duduHaMsFvM

If, then, what we see on paper is not actual music, where does music exist? First of all, music is the only art form which cannot be seen. You can go to a concert and see the musicians and their instruments, but you cannot see the music. It exists in the form of vibrations in the air, which you can feel and hear, but which you cannot see. This being the case, we must conclude that music exists only in the mind of the listener, the performer and the composer.

The thought of music existing in the mind takes on great importance when we consider the results of twentieth-century brain research. We have two large, but separate hemispheres of matter which comprise the brain. Their official medical names are the left side and the right side. They are libraries, the left side consisting of data, language and numbers while the right side consists of our experiences. First, it is very important to understand that everything in the left brain is past tense, something told us or something we have read from other persons. Therefore only the right side, consisting of our own experience including the present tense, is the real us! You can immediately understand the initial challenge of education. The room is full of students who are very much in the present tense, while the teacher comes in with information from the past, from other sources. No wonder the students have such a potential to be bored.

Second, only the left brain, where language resides, can write or speak in sentences. The most powerful language of the right brain

is music, something which has been observed for many centuries and thus the most common definition of music among centuries of philosophers is, "Music a special language which allows us to communicate feelings and emotions." This distribution of purpose allows us to understand why it is so difficult to write a love letter. In so doing we are asking the left hemisphere to write about something it knows nothing about! But also this explains how ordinary listeners with no background in music can nevertheless hear a performance of music and be deeply moved by the experience. This seems to be true with persons of every nationality and it seems to be something innate, an ability we are born with.

Understanding this separation in brain function allows us to understand what Mahler meant when he wrote, "The important things in music are not found in the notes on paper." This allows the reader to also understand why my definition of a conductor is, that they are one who brings to the rehearsal and concert things which are not on paper. Where then does the conductor find this information which is not on paper? The answer reminds me of a famous Indian parable in the Sufi literature.

A student was walking through the village of his teacher and soon saw his teacher on his hands and knees in the front yard looking for something in the grass. "Master, what are you looking for?" His teacher replied, "I have lost my house key, please come and help me look for it." The student of course immediately joined his teacher in the yard looking for the key. After a few moments the student began to imagine this was some sort of lesson and so he asked, "OK Master, where did you actually lose your key?" His teacher answered, "I lost it in the house somewhere." "Why then," asked the student, "are we outside looking in the grass?" "Because there is more light out here," replied the teacher!

This is what the conductor must do. They can study the score as much as they want, they can analyze the chords, etc., but at some point they must go somewhere where there is more light. The most helpful tool for doing this is memorization.

On memorization

What do we mean by the memorization of music? If I were to ask any experienced musician, "Do you know the Verdi Requiem?" they would answer, "Of Course!" and that would be a true statement. But this does not mean that they could take a pen and write out the viola part of the entire Requiem. To do this would require some sort of photographic memory, but photographic memory refers to the eye and not the ear! Instead, what we conductors memorize is what

Wagner called the *melos*, by which he meant the stream of melody and emotion that flows through the composition. There is no need to memorize the names of notes and chords, etc., which are the tools of the composer.

This reminds me of a very nice story about the great conductor, Toscanini. A young student received permission to interview Toscanini in his home in New York City. When the student was ushered into the studio of Toscanini he found the conductor sitting before a piano studying a score of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The student asked Toscanini why he was studying this score which he had performed and recorded from memory for seventy years? And Toscanini answered, "Well, but what if I missed something!" And probably Toscanini did in fact find something new, because while the score remains the same, the conductor with each passing year has more experience which may cause them to understand some details or phrasing in the score now with their greater experience.

This reminds us that music is a life-long study! It is not like a fact of math, for example, which you can learn and then walk away from. Instead, music represents experience, not data, and our gaining of new experience year after year changes how we interpret the experience. And thus, if you choose a life of music, you are obligated to study music for the rest of your life and you have no choice!

On the origins of Symbols for Dynamics

Here we discuss the symbols for dynamics used in the notation of music—the lower case *p* of the Italian word *piano* and the lower case *f* of the Italian word *forte*.[3]

Today we teach these symbols primarily as representing levels of loudness. But when these symbols were first introduced, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Baroque Period, they were used for an entirely different purpose, not just for indications of volume, but as symbols of emotional quality. We can see this very clearly in the writings of Michael Praetorius, a German conductor and composer. He was also the author of the very best contemporary treatise on performance practice of the seventeenth century, a three-volume work called *Syntagma Musicum* of 1619. Volume one is about the mathematical grammar of music, volume two consists of plates showing families of instruments and volume three is all about performance practice. And here is what he wrote, and it has nothing to do with loud and soft:

> Changes in dynamics by the performer are agreeable and popular to express the feelings of the music and to affect the spirit of the listener.

At the same time these familiar symbols were first used, the beginning of the seventeenth century, they were intended for use by the performer; it was not yet the time when this duty fell to the composer. We can see this in a statement by the English composer and writer, Christopher Simpson in 1659: "We play *piano* and *forte* according to our own desire."

This freedom left to the performer can be clearly seen in a first-hand account of the famous Arcangelo Corelli playing his violin.

> He suffered his passions to hurry him away so much whilst he was playing on the violin that his eyes would sometimes turn as red as fire, his face would become distorted, his eyeballs roll as in an agony, and he gives in so much to what he is doing that he doth not look like the same man.

3. The video of this lecture can be found at https://youtu.be/vmAzaugclBg

Of all the things which Corelli did here which so impressed this listener, no indications of any kind can be found on the page of music. It is a fine illustration of something I tell all musical performers today: There is no music to be found on the page—the music is found within yourself!

Today we teach these symbols almost as if they were like road signs—if you see *p* it means everything from this point on is soft. In addition, also at the earlier time it was felt that even if a composer did write these symbols on paper then as a matter of personal musicianship the performer would be free to continue making changes in dynamics as is the case with fine musicians today. We have a valuable account of this in the report of a performance by J. S. Bach by a contemporary, Johann Cramer.

> All who have heard Bach play the clavichord must have been struck by the endless nuances of shadow and light that he casts over his performance.

And again, the changes which this eyewitness reports are not things which appear on paper. A similar account is found by Johann Quantz in his *Treatise on Flute Playing*.

> Even in sections marked *f* or *p* the constant play of light and shadow keeps the textures alive with interest.

The implication of this observation is that without this "constant play of light and shadow" the music on paper remains just dead symbols.

IT IS ALSO VERY INTERESTING and enlightening to consider what these words *piano* and *forte* mean in the Italian language. In my professional Italian–English Dictionary by Cassell, for example, when you look up the word *forte* you find a long string of expressive definitions, including Vigorous, Powerful, Sturdy, Large, Hale, Healthy, Considerable, Large, High and Angry. It is only when you get to the twelfth of these words that you find "Loud."

The result of looking up the word *piano* is even more surprising. The first definition is Soft, but the next one is Gentle and the third one is Slow! Today we never think of *p* meaning slow, but on the other hand when you think of all the large forms—symphony, concerto, sonata—of the music you know of the eighteenth century, the second movement is almost invariably a slow movement and it is always marked at the beginning *p*! Here we must think of the symbol *p* as meaning slow because we would never say to a class, "We will now hear the soft movement of Mozart's Symphony Nr. 40."

It is also rarely understood by musicians today that the symbol *pp* can mean either "very soft" or "very slow." Mozart, who never

used the word *ritard.*, used *pp* to mean just that! And in Schubert, Dr Doerr of the Schubert Society of Germany told me that in the music of Schubert when he wrote *dim.* in 90% of the time he also meant "slower."

I WONDER HOW WE HAVE LOST these wider definitions of the symbols *p* and *f* and only think of them as soft and loud? I am afraid one answer lies in the popularity of contests in music, something which only began in the nineteenth century. Because contests in music are judged on the basis of adherence to what the eye sees on paper, not on the basis of the ear and subjective musicianship. If the music paper says *p* the concern of the judges becomes who can play the softest, etc. This tendency took on a personal meaning for me in 1990 when I was invited to be the President of the Jury in an international piano contest in Italy. There were eleven judges and they were all, except for myself, locally famous piano teachers. There were no written comments and we judged like Roman Emperors. After each performance we would turn among ourselves and indicate with a thumb up in the air that the contestant could continue to the next round. But if a majority of the thumbs pointed down, then the student performer must pack their suitcase and go home! After one young lady from Finland performed a very expressive and musical Beethoven Sonata, the vote was ten thumbs down and one [mine] up! I had known one of the other judges, Hector Moreno of Argentina, before and so I asked him to explain to me why this wonderful performance which was so musical was voted down? He answered immediately, "Oh, a piano contest has nothing to do with Music!"

I would like to recommend that we return to thinking of these symbols as being expressions of the heart and not of science.

Music as an Expression of Time

Time is something we are all aware of to some degree but since we cannot see Time we must create labels for it in order to allow Time to function in our lives.[4] For example, to speak of the rotation of the Earth we call this a "day." For the rotation of the Earth around the Sun, we label this a "year." But the use of these man-made labels is very limited, as for example in describing the planet Venus using these same definitions do not work, for there a "day" lasts longer than a "year!"

When it comes to our daily lives the use of the left hemisphere of our brain, which contains words and numbers, becomes very difficult with respect to Time. For example, the moment we speak a sentence it immediately becomes past tense, and the future tense is not here yet. So Time in the present tense is actually a very thin place between the past and future.

When we experience Time in the right hemisphere of our brain, which is a library of our own experience—and thus is the hemisphere of the real us—a special phenomenon occurs. Here the normal experience of Time seems to stop. When we listen to the movement of a symphony, for example, we seem to experience the entire movement in the present tense. We do not hear a measure which then passes into the past tense as the next measure arrives, etc. This, of course, is what makes Music possible for the listener. In addition, movement, as an element of Time, also carries feelings and emotions. As a matter of fact, the first use of the word "Movement" in France was a description of emotions and not form. I have known people in Europe who still used this word in the description of hearing a symphony as meaning "First emotion" and "Second emotion," etc. With respect to the association of movement and emotion, I might here remind the reader that in English we have the word "motion" which with the addition of a single letter "e" becomes "emotion." Even in long works of music this phenomenon of hearing in the present tense even makes a *da capo* assume meaning as part of the whole. Nothing like this occurs in the left hemisphere of the brain. It would be absurd in

4. The video of this lecture can be found at https://youtu.be/YHpU5NwLIpc

the left hemisphere, for example, to read a book and then at the end find the statement "Go back and read the first five chapters!"

Because of this association of emotion with movement, one finds Arbeau in 1588 giving titles of basse danse works, *Comfort*, *Forlorn* and *Patience*. And when the Italian tradition of placing "tempo words" in the upper left-hand corner of a score began, Johann Mattheson reminded the reader that Adagio meant Distress, Andante meant Hope and Allegro meant Comfort! He also added, "movement is a spiritual thing!"

THE GREAT CRISIS IN MUSIC PERFORMANCE came in the late Middle Ages with the idea of writing music on paper, due to the need to speed up the training of choir singers. This was the first time that Music became associated with the eye instead of the ear. The great problem with respect to performance is that when Music is written on paper it becomes frozen Music because the invention of notation did not include accounting for feeling or emotion. Even today, a thousand years later, we still do not have a single symbol which represents any feeling or emotion. This was because the Church, who sponsored the new invention of music notation, was trying to prevent the faithful from coming in contact with emotions. The Church warned its members not to go to the theater or the coliseum because there they would be exposed to emotion. St Basil (third century) even maintained that a good Christian should not even laugh, for laughing is a form of emotion! The very ancient tradition of individual expression by the performers was now replaced by "Rules of Performance."

Performers began to seek ways to reestablish their personal feelings in performance. One way was by introducing the expansion of Time through *rubato* ("stolen time"). Pier Francesco Tosi, a famous singing teacher of the Baroque, observed,

> Whoever does not know how to steal Time in singing is destitute of the best taste and greatest knowledge.

Another very important kind of "stolen Time" in the early Baroque was to allow the singer to improvise at the end of a phrase, to extend the cadence for the purpose of personal emotional elaboration. Then this was followed by a rest to preserve this feeling and then the resumption of Time would come on the basis of feeling as well, when it feels "right" to begin again, rather than observing the strict punctuality of the written page. Early music specialists today call this practice "Placement," meaning to place the beginnings of phrases according to feeling, not according to the metrical descripton the eye sees on paper.

This practice was the fundamental style of the first operas, which also began at the birth of the Baroque.

This practice of Placement remains a part of informed musicians even in the Classical Period. I think of the very moving Andante of Mozart's Partita, K. 384a where in the development section Mozart seems to have experienced his mind wandering off, perhaps I think of the sudden recall of the death of his first child, Rimond, which occurred a year before. Here he begins the development with the statement of his principal theme, but it breaks off suddenly and it hangs in the air incomplete, followed by two quarter-note rests. I must remind the reader that when rests occur for the entire ensemble, as here, Time has stopped and Time does not begin until the music begins. Thus the two quarter-note rest symbols have no meaning in actual Time. Again the ensemble, or conductor, waits until it feels right emotionally to resume the music and in this case the wait can be lengthy. Mozart, coming back to the present tense, begins again and again the phrase stops suddenly and hangs in the air. And again for a third time, the same thing. Finally Mozart realizes it is time to create a *da capo* back to the beginning of the movement. But apparently, he was still not quite back in the present time because he makes a mistake here. He realizes he did not want the music to go back to the first bar, but rather to a repeat of that melody, so he really wanted a *dal segno*, which he affected by creating his own unique symbol here and back near the beginning.

The introduction of the word *ritard.* also was a means of expanding time. Mozart, himself, never used this word but instead at the end of movements or sections of movements he writes *pp* which meant very slow. In places like the ending of the Adagio of the Gran Partita, K. 361, if the performance does not include this *ritard.* the ending doesn't quite sound like an ending. In fact, the slower the final fragment is performed, the more elegant it sounds.

Mozart frequently expected, and sometimes wrote out, a brief melodic expansion in a solo part, which he called an *eingang*, for the purpose of making a smooth connection with the following music.

And, of course, the performers also expanded Time by creating cadenza. The Baroque cadenza consisted of a brief ["a single mouthful of air"] expansion at the end of an aria, to allow the singer to add their own emotional feelings. The cadenza of the Classical Period became a quite lengthy passage of solo improvisation.

Thoughts on Tempo

YET ANOTHER EXPANSION of Time came with the freedom to make changes in the written Tempo, a word we use to describe the speed of the music through Time. As with the practice with dynamic symbols in the early Baroque, Tempo also was expected to be a decision left to the performer. And, again, we have some freedom today to make decisions about Tempo according to our own feelings no matter how precisely the composer may have notated this aspect of performance. There are in extant literature many illustrations of how important early performers regarded this aspect of performance. Some examples:

Frescobaldi, 1615

> These pieces should not be played to a strict beat, anymore than modern Madrigals . . . By taking the beat now slower, now faster and by even pausing altogether, according to the meaning of the text.

Praetorius, 1619

> To use, by turns, now a slower, now a faster beat lends dignity and grace to a performance and makes it admirable.

Thomas Mace, 1676

> According as they best please their own Fancy—some tempi very briskly and courageously and some again gently, lovingly, tenderly and smoothly.

In this statement, Mace makes it clear that the judgement on Tempo must be based on feeling, a stipulation other composers also stressed.

Monteverdi, 1638

> The madrigal must be sung to the time of the heart, and not of the hand.

Bonachelli, 1642

> In accordance with the feelings one must guide the beat.

Beginning with the Classical Period this sense of freedom allowed the performer was now limited somewhat by an emphasis on the need to find the tempo within the music itself.

Joachim Quantz, 1752

> It is necessary to take the tempo from the context of the piece and not from the Italian word at the top.

Leopold Mozart, 1756

> Taking the tempo from the music itself infallibly shows the true quality of a musician.

These two points of view are still a consideration in the case of composers conducting their own music. Brahms was once asked about his experience guest conducting the Meiningen orchestra, a very famous orchestra at the time, and he complained that he had difficulty making "slowings and accelerations" in his performance—none of which, of course, are indicated on paper!

On the Metronome

DUE TO THE COURSE of an industrial revolution which was also much in evidence in the nineteenth century, well-meaning inventors attempted to invent mechanical devices to help the performer deal with Tempo. There must have been a period of interesting competition among these inventions. I have a copy of a manuscript score which has markings for both the metronome and the "Vienna knife."

The winner of this competition was, of course, the metronome invented by Beethoven's friend, Johann Maelzel (1772–1838). He, by the way, eventually had to flee Vienna after demonstrating a mechanical chess player, which actually contained a midget inside, and later moved to Philadelphia where he ran a music store!

Beethoven was the first important composer to use his friend's new metronome and thus helped its acceptance. In his own experience, however, Beethoven found the new machine to be of limited help. One day a young composer approached Beethoven and said, "Master, you must be so thankful that now it is possible to mark precisely the tempo of each movement of your music!" Beethoven answered, "Yes, but only for the first measures, because after that Feeling has it's own Tempo!" And in his final years Beethoven was approached by one who wanted his advice on using a metronome and he answered, "Better none."

And Beethoven was right, for we have our own metronome in the pulse of our own heart and it plays a fundamental association with respect to our feelings.

What is the Purpose of a Conductor?

The role of the conductor we know today is something relatively new because this role was not possible until the availability of full scores, which were first published in the early nineteenth century.[5] Before that music was just published in individual parts in part-books. So if you were a Tenor, for example, and were going to perform the Madrigals of Gesualdo you would have in your hands only the Tenor part and your understanding of the music could only come from hearing the other parts in rehearsal. This was also the case in the earlier manuscript music of the Roman Church, as for example those huge manuscript pages divided into individual parts, Superius, Altus, Tenor, etc., often without even measure bars. Those early Church singers were more or less full-time singers and we may imagine them spending long rehearsals just to be able to learn how to stay together just through constant repetition.

It follows that today some audience members assume that the primary role of the conductor is just to keep large numbers of musicians together and no doubt some members of the audience consider this an amazing accomplishment. I recall once sitting on an airplane with a man who was the manager of a small bank with some fifteen employees and he spoke of his astonishment that conductors could get a group of people to do even the most minute things together, commenting, "I can never get my people to do anything together!"

Well I think that most musicians today would agree that keeping people together is not the real purpose of a conductor. Nevertheless, today virtually all books dealing with the art of conducing contain very large sections illustrating the visual arm patterns representing meter and carry the implication that you must use these patterns to keep people together or the music will fall apart. My experience has proven to me that musicians, even very young musicians, are quite capable of counting to four without these visual patterns.

And again, from the audience perspective, the role of the conductor in affecting dynamics must also be impressive. If the listener hears the ensemble suddenly playing very loudly and at the same

5. The video of this lecture can be found at https://youtu.be/7QyTYfFw27g

time the conductor leaps up in the air, the listener credits the effect to the conductor. But actually, regarding dynamics, the conductor has no affect at all on the sound of the ensemble unless they make some gesture before the moment the dynamics take place. Otherwise, if their motion only corresponds with what is heard, then the conductor is just dancing to the music.

Another thing the audience member often sees is a conductor who spends a great deal of their time "cuing," by which we mean giving a gesture to indicate the entrance of some portion of the ensemble. There is one American School of Conducting where this is greatly emphasized, resulting in conductors who are constantly looking all over the ensemble cuing various entrances. To the audience these conductors may remind them of policemen directing traffic and the danger is that the listener's attention following all this visual activity may limit them in hearing the actual forward movement of the music.

My definition of a conductor is that they are the one who brings to the rehearsal and concert all the things which are not written on paper. For this end, they must first decide whether they are going to present an aesthetic concert or an entertainment concert, a subject I discussed in the first of these lectures. The written history of music is almost entirely devoted to aesthetic music and almost never discusses entertainment music. Therefore, one will find in this literature very strong objections to the goal of entertaining the public. Wagner, for example, wrote,

> It is impossible for anything to be truly good, if it is chosen in advance for presentation to the public.

and Robert Schumann,

> Do not help spread bad compositions, but help to suppress them with all your force!

I might add that my experience suggests that it is impossible to make a bad composition sound good, as is sometimes the case of a conductor who thinks that with their skill and musicianship they will be able to make a composition sound better. However, the reverse is the case, for the very result of rehearsal will be to clarify and define the musical elements which make the music sound bad. Therefore, in rehearsal the music goes from bad to worse!

The true value of a conductor lies in their role in communicating the essence of the music to the musicians before them. The conductor is better able to do this than the individual performer because the conductor has a full score showing all the parts together. In addition, as is seen in my definition of a conductor, a conductor is one who brings to the rehearsal and concert all the things not on paper. What

is on paper is only the grammar of music and no matter how many hours the conductor spends studying this grammar, it will not reveal the true essence of music itself. Thus, this kind of study is very frustrating. The great German poet, Heinrich Heine, wrote, "Nothing is more futile than theorizing about music." And the famous composer, Tchaikovsky, wrote, "I do not understand how to analyze Music."

The study of the grammar of music may hold some benefit for the intellect, but it does not serve performance.
François Couperin,

> Just as there is a difference between grammar and public speaking, there is an infinitely greater one between music theory and the art of fine performance.

Johann Matheson, 1739

> No matter how one defines music theory, no real conception with the passions of the soul can ever be drawn from this.

This definition by Matheson is very similar to the great conductor, Bruno Walter's goal of score study: "To discover the soul of a composition, not the body of a composition." The soul of a composition is what Wagner called the *melos*, the unifying thread, the quintessence of the spirit of the artwork. Earlier, Marpurg in 1749 called this "the distilled essence of emotion."

This essence of emotion is what the conductor brings to the rehearsal and must communicate to the players. This is the real goal of score study and the beginning point in communicating with the performers, and audience. This is what Francesco Geminiani, a great Baroque singer, emphasized in 1749, "You must first be inspired yourself." I pause to point out that this is also the most important standard in the conductor's choice of repertoire. If the conductor is not inspired, how can they inspire their players? This is the point the great conductor, Antal Dorati, had in mind when he wrote,

> If you don't feel it completely, then you cannot convey it. You cannot "act" music. This will always leave the audience cold. They know immediately if the feelings are not true.

The great conductor, Georg Solti, reminds us that this is the goal of performance before an audience.

> What the audience remembers is not the performance itself, but whether the performance touched them.

The greatest aid for the conductor in acquiring this essence of Music, in addition of course to his own musical background and study, is memorization of the score. This also helps greatly in their

communication with the players because every time they look down at the score this emotional link is instantly lost. One can observe this in any rehearsal of any conductor—when they look down at the score, their face instantly becomes blank.

Memorization also helps the conductor personify the music—assimilation.

Leonard Bernstein,

> After intense study I become the composer.

Carlo Maria Giulini,

> Like a great actor on the stage, the conductor becomes himself the composer.

Illustrating the importance of assimilation, the great Austrian conductor, Herbert von Karajan, used to tell a story which he claimed was told him by a Buddhist priest who had studied in the Far East. The priest was unsuccessfully trying to teach a student how to meditate and so he finally asked the student, "What is the dearest thing to you?" The student answered it was a buffalo back on his farm. So the priest told the student he was going to lock him in a nearby small room and he wanted the student to concentrate solely on the buffalo. The priest did this and turned to talk with other people and after a time forgot he had locked this student in the small room so he called to the student, "Are you alright in there?" and added that he could come out now. The student answered, "I have been trying to come out but I cannot get my antlers through the small opening in the door!"

In closing, let me warn the young conductor that when they walk into the rehearsal room there will be three different forms of the score present. One will be the score lying on the conductor's desk, but they must not conduct that one, because there is no music on the page and also because even printed scores may have mistakes and we should not want to conduct and rehearse mistakes! Another form of the score in the rehearsal room is the one they hear, but certainly with students that version may include wrong notes, etc., so they must not conduct that version. They will hear the mistakes and correct them later when the music stops. The third version of the score in the rehearsal room is the one in their head, the product of their study in coming to understand the fundamental essence of the music. That is the only version of the score they must conduct.

On the Need to Reinvent Music Education

Teaching Music is the oldest profession on Earth.[6] Plato dates Music Education to 13,000 years ago. That is older than any written language and that is older than the use of numbers! According to Plato, Music Education stressed not just the pleasure of listening to Music but also for the education of the inner person through the development of character and the appreciation of beauty. In general, the goals of the ancient Greeks were similar to the famous engraving on the Delphic Temple, "Know Thyself."

These values remained in place until the late Middle Ages when there was a decision by the Roman Church to begin notating Music on paper. This changed the entire History of Music in four fundamental ways:

1. Music became addressed to the eye, instead of the ear.
2. Function replaced Feeling.
3. Emotion was outlawed. Even today, 1,000 years later, we have not a single symbol in music notation for any feeling or emotion. This followed deliberate efforts by the Church to discourage its members from associations with emotions, such as going to the theater or the coliseum. St. Basil (3rd century) even maintained that a good Christian should not even laugh, for laughing is a form of emotion!
4. Music became a branch of mathematics; Music was the part of arithmetic that you could hear. A tenth-century story has a nun giving a Music lecture to a group of students and one student raised his hand and asked, "When are you going to talk about Music? You have been talking only about numbers." The nun replied, "But that is how you talk about Music!"

It is very important to understand that these four characteristics remain today as fundamental parts of Music Education. First, we emphasize what is on paper, but what is on paper is not Music, it

6. The video of this lecture can be found at https://youtu.be/MyxLkAdtZE4

is grammar. We talk about what is on paper primarily because it is easier than talking about things like feelings and emotions. The emphasis on the eye even takes over our language. We say, "Watch out for intonation problems at Letter B," but we don't *look* for intonation problems, we *listen* for intonation problems!

We emphasize function in music education rather than the development of the person. I once was playing golf with a recently retired man in Austin who commented that for his retirement he bought himself a new truck. He was not familiar with CD players and so he asked a friend what this device in his new truck was for. In response, his friend gave him a CD of Mozart piano Concerti. The next time the man drove his truck he put on this CD and soon was so astonished by this new experience of listening to Classical Music that he pulled off the highway and parked just to listen. I asked, "But surely you must have had some introduction to Classical Music in the Austin schools?" No, he maintained that in public school and in four years at the University of Texas he had never had any introduction to listening to Music. The extraordinary thing to me was that as he continued, he mentioned that he did play trombone in high school and for four years in the University marching band, but he regarded this as a social activity which he enjoyed very much but he had never associated this activity with music!

Our Music education also includes some false concepts. We say we are teaching Music when we teach rhythm, but actually we are teaching arithmetic. We do not talk at this moment about motion and its ancient association with Music. We say we are teaching Harmony when we draw those familiar Roman numerals on the blackboard, but we are really teaching the writing of harmony as a symbolic language. We do not ever hear the harmony teacher use words like *pain* or *sorrow*. We say we are teaching Music when we teach performance on instruments, but we are really emphasizing this as a digital skill and not as a means of emotional expression.

We are even teaching some concepts which are unusable. An example is in the form class when we introduce the Sonata Form. We write centered at the top of the black board, "Sonata." Then beneath that we write the three sections of a sonata form: the Exposition Section, the Development Section and the Recapitulation Section. And under this we continue with the parts of these sections, the Exposition Section for example consisting of a first theme, transition section, second theme and closing section. We end up on the blackboard with something that looks like someone's family tree, with one word at the top and all the rest flowing down in a big triangle, etc. Well, this is all true information, as any survey of Classical Period sonatas will prove. However, while this is true information, it is also unusable informa-

tion. That is because at no time as a composer, performer or listener do we ever listen to the sonata form from this perspective, as if it were seen from the side of a barn. If knowledge of the sonata form is to have any usable value it must be understood from the beginning, the left side of the blackboard, experiencing it through to the end. And in this way the student would encounter some valuable elements of Time, such as the way Time becomes shortened in our memory as it moves into the past tense. So we are teaching information we can never use. Sorry, an exception: we can use it if we ourselves someday teach this form class!

Before the year 1300, this artificial description of Music by the Church dominated music education. But in 1300 the Renaissance (the word means "rebirth") arrives with a return to the ancient Greek values of Music, with Feeling now becoming as important as the Intellect.

This emphasis on the importance of Feeling has been testified to by many major composers.

Leonardo da Vinci

> The tears come from the heart and not from the brain.

Ravel

> Music must be emotional first and intellectual second.

Schumann

> Music is to me the perfect expression of the soul.

Berlioz

> The prevailing characteristic of my music is passionate expression.

Chopin

> My universe is the soul and heart of man.

Mahler

> The best in music is not found in the notes.

Wagner

> Music is the speech of passion.

This return to the ancient understanding of Music being an expression of the emotions was of course shared by Baroque performers, as demonstrated by descriptions not found in the Middle Ages. A critic, Raguenet, writing in 1702 describes,

> The artist while performing is seized with an unavoidable agony. He tortures his violin, he racks his body, he is agitated like one possessed with an irresistible motion.

A first-hand description of the famous Arcangelo Corelli playing his violin,

> His eyes will sometimes turn red as fire. His face will be distorted. His eyeballs roll in agony. He does not look like the same man.

And it is no surprise to find descriptions of listeners also so moved. Samuel Pepys, 1668:

> The music ravished me and did so wrap my soul as to make me really sick . . . as if in love.

An audience member after hearing a Handel performance:

> A stranger, seeing how the audience were so affected, would have imagined they all had been distracted.

These descriptions of the importance of the associations of emotions with performance seem very familiar to us today when we think of the performance of music. It may be difficult for some readers to imagine that this practice was considered new beginning with the Baroque and later. This is especially difficult to understand when one acknowledges that the most common definition of Music itself by philosophers for many centuries before has been,

> "Music is a Special Language which allows us to communicate Feelings and Emotion."

This being true, it is all the more surprising and extraordinary that modern Music Education has not reflected this. Most Music Education today is only functional, having its focus on creating players and singers and corresponding ensembles. And it seems so devoid of discussion on the emotions that one sometimes wonders if the very word is not allowed in the classroom.

In my view, the time has come when we need to completely reinvent Music Education. It will require new pedagogy and new materials, and it must be centered on performance, in the experience of Music and not in listening to lectures.

A new understanding of Music Education must have, as its foremost purpose, the focus on the development of the self-identity of the child—helping them to discover their own unique emotional template. That at present we simply leave for the student to experience on their own out in the street. This must have had a fundamental effect on society as we see it today. Music education, through performance and contemplation, can do this. No one else on the school faculty is prepared to do this. The great potential for this kind of education has long been recognized.

Wagner

> Music allows us to gaze into the inmost essence of ourselves.

Goethe

> When we encounter that which is great, beautiful and significant, it needs to be woven into the fabric of our inmost self, must become one with it, to create a new and better self in us.

We are speaking here of fully one-half of the child's brain, for which traditional education does nothing to educate. Music Education offers real education in the right hemisphere of the brain and it the only subject in the school which occurs entirely in the present tense. In addition, through Music performance the student has direct exposure to a great mind. This is not true in the other liberal arts, such as painting or literature where an object, a canvas, or a book, stands between the student and the great mind.

Finally, I want to recommend for the new reformed pedagogy of Music Education, five new areas of emphasis which need to be included.

First is emphasis on the fact that music students experience Beauty as a form of Truth. This fundamental principle of the association of Music with Truth can be seen already in the twelfth-century comment by the philosopher, Gottfried Strasburg:

> If Music is performed heartless, or soulless, or superficially or "not in the mind," the result cannot even be called Music.

Second, emphasis on the fact that music students experience a world of higher Spirituality. E.T.A. Hoffmann observed that musicians say, "Our Kingdom is not of this World." He calls this an unknown realm of feelings we never had before. Jean Paul Richter calls this realm, "The echo of our inner souls." The nineteenth-century philosopher, Herbert Spencer, calls this, "A realm of Things we have not seen and shall not see."

Third, emphasis on the fact that music students experience principles of Morality.
The fifteenth-century philosopher, Gafurio:

> The successful ancient Greek cities cultivated Music as the Mother of Morals.

Francis Bacon

> Virtue is nothing but inward Beauty. Beauty is nothing but outward Virtue.

Robert Schumann

> The Laws of Morality are also those of Art.

But, already in the third century AD, Aristides warned,

> There are other musicians who have taken the Nature of Music into depravity and cultural corruption.

Fourth, emphasis on the fact that Music Education develops Character. Aristotle, following observations by many other ancient Greek philosophers,

> Enough has been said to show that Music has a power in forming Character.

Shakespeare (*Merchant of Venice*):

> Of that man that hath no Music in himself—Let no such man be trusted.

Martin Luther:

> Music is a semi-discipline and taskmistress, which makes people milder and more gentle, more civil and more sensible.
>
> Those who have mastered Music are made of good stuff and they are fit for any task.
>
> Music is a mistress and governess of the human emotions.
>
> Those who are not moved by Music are definitely like stumps and blocks of stone.

Shinichi Suzuki:

> Teaching Music is not my main purpose. I want to make good Citizens.

But take Note: the fifth century BC philosopher, Aristophanes, warns,

> Your choice of repertoire displays your Character quite sufficiently.

Fifth, emphasis on the fact that Music develops Manners. Aristoxenus (third century BC):

> The correct molding or ruin of Manners lies in Music Education.

Pythagoras (sixth century BC):

> In Music are obtained remedies for human Manners.

Plutarch (first century AD):

> Ancient Greeks thought Music was necessary for seriousness of Manners.

Clement of Alexandria (1st–2nd century AD):

> Music is to be studied for the sake of composure of Manners.

Wagner:

> Music is able to work on Manners.

Kaiser Joseph of Austria on the purpose of the theater:

> It shall work for the ennobling of Taste and Manners.

One striking illustration of the influence Music has had on this aspect of society can be documented in the famous Baroque German tradition of Tower Music, in which during their entire lives ordinary citizens heard noble music floating down from above three times a day. I have heard two separate contemporary German philosophers state that they are convinced this practice formed the basic character of the German citizen for two centuries.

In closing, may I recommend that if you are concerned about the falling level of public music and manners, I suggest you take Music Education off the sideline and make it part of the basic education of all our youth.

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About the Author

Dr David Whitwell is a graduate ("with distinction") of the University of Michigan and the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC (PhD, Musicology, Distinguished Alumni Award, 2000) and has studied conducting with Eugene Ormandy and at the Akademie für Musik, Vienna. Prior to coming to Northridge, Dr Whitwell participated in concerts throughout the United States and Asia as Associate First Horn in the USAF Band and Orchestra in Washington, DC, and in recitals throughout South America in cooperation with the United States State Department.

At the California State University, Northridge (Los Angeles), Dr Whitwell developed the CSUN Wind Ensemble into an ensemble of international reputation, with international tours to Europe in 1981 and 1989 and to Japan in 1984. The CSUN Wind Ensemble has made professional studio recordings for BBC (London), the Köln Westdeutscher Rundfunk (Germany), NOS National Radio (The Netherlands), Zürich Radio (Switzerland), the Television Broadcasting System (Japan) as well as for the United States State Department for broadcast on its "Voice of America" program. The CSUN Wind Ensemble's recording with the Mirecourt Trio in 1982 was named the "Record of the Year" by *The Village Voice.* Composers who have guest conducted Whitwell's ensembles include Aaron Copland, Ernest Krenek, Alan Hovhaness, Morton Gould, Karel Husa, Frank Erickson and Vaclav Nelhybel.

Dr Whitwell has been a guest professor in 100 different universities and conservatories throughout the United States and in twenty-three foreign countries (most recently in China, in an elite school housed in the Forbidden City). Guest conducting experiences have included the Philadelphia Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Czech Radio Orchestras of Brno and Bratislava, The National Youth Orchestra of Israel, as well as resident wind ensembles in Russia, Israel, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, England, Wales, The Netherlands, Portugal, Peru, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Canada and the United States.

He is a past president of the College Band Directors National Association, a member of the Prasidium of the International Society for the Promotion of Band Music, and was a member of the founding board of directors of the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE). In 1964 he was made an honorary life member of Kappa Kappa Psi, a national professional music fraternity. In September, 2001, he was a delegate to the UNESCO Conference on Global Music in Tokyo. He has been knighted by sovereign organizations in France, Portugal and Scotland and has been awarded the gold medal of Kerkrade, The Netherlands, and the silver medal of Wangen, Germany, the highest honor given wind conductors in the United States, the medal of the Academy of Wind and Percussion Arts (National Band Association) and the highest honor given wind conductors in Austria, the gold medal of the Austrian Band Association. He is a member of the Hall of Fame of the California Music Educators Association.

Dr Whitwell's publications include more than 127 articles on wind literature including publications in *Music and Letters* (London), the *London Musical Times,* the *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (Salzburg), and fifty books, among which is his 13-volume *History and Literature of the Wind Band and Wind Ensemble* and an 8-volume series on *Aesthetics in Music.* In addition to numerous modern editions of early wind band music his original compositions include ten symphonies.

David Whitwell was named as one of six men who have determined the course of American bands during the second half of the twentieth century, in the definitive history, *The Twentieth Century American Wind Band* (Meredith Music). A doctoral dissertation by German Gonzales (2007, Arizona State University) is dedicated to the life and conducting career of David Whitwell through the year 1977. David Whitwell is one of nine men described by Paula A. Crider in *The Conductor's Legacy* (Chicago: GIA, 2010) as "the legendary conductors" of the twentieth century.

> "I can't imagine the 2nd half of the 20th century—without David Whitwell and what he has given to all of the rest of us." Frederick Fennell (1993)

About the Editor

Craig Dabelstein began studying the piano at age seven and took up the saxophone at age twelve. He has Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts Music degrees from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, where he studied saxophone, clarinet and piano, and a Graduate Diploma of Learning and Teaching and a Graduate Certificate of Editing and Publishing from the University of Southern Queensland.

Craig has held the principal saxophone chairs in the Australian Wind Orchestra and has been an augmenting member of the Queensland Philharmonic and Symphony Orchestras. He was also a member of the Queensland Saxophone Quartet.

As a conductor he has worked with the Young Conservatorium Symphonic Winds and was the conductor of the Queensland Wind Orchestra for five years with whom he conducted many Australian premieres.

Craig has been a research associate for the *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* series of books. He is the editor of more than sixty books on music including *The Art of Musical Conducting*, *Aesthetics of Music* (8 volumes) and *The History and Literature of the Wind Band and Wind Ensemble* (13 volumes).

He currently works as a freelance conductor and a woodwind/percussion performer. Craig is the owner (and sole employee) of Maxime's Music, where he works to preserve important works of band music from the past.