



Score Study: Discovering and Detecting the Composer's Intent

"The real voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." -Marcel Proust

LOOKING AT OUR SCORE WITH NEW EYES (AND EARS)

How does the score inform our GESTURE?

How does the score inform our REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE?

GESTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cues & Cut-off

Dynamics: *piano*, *forte*

Dynamics: *crescendo*, *diminuendo*

Articulation: *marcato*, *staccato*, *legato*,
tenuto

Tempo (MM markings)

Meter changes

Breathing (phrasing?)

Fermatas

Syncopation

REHEARSAL CONSIDERATIONS

Rehearsal numbers/letters

Keys and modulations

Harmony

Articulation

Historical/National Context (Style period)

Tempo (MM markings)

Meter changes

Phrasing

Clef/Transposition

Balance/Voicing

Structure/Form

Emotional Context

Text and translation

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER CONDUCTORS:

Ann Howard Jones: Choose music carefully and thoroughly know your score BEFORE the first rehearsal.

Helmuth Rilling: "If you want to be a good conductor, score preparation will require much work ahead of time—much *solitary* work."

Ken Jennings: Schedule a regular time for practice (alone and uninterrupted)!

Jerry Blackstone: LISTEN! Learn the score, Imagine your dream choir, Show the dream through gesture, Transform your choir, (En)spire your choir.

SCORE STUDY: DISCOVERING AND DETECTING THE COMPOSER'S INTENT

MACRO DETECTION

- Read text silently and aloud
- Analyze poetry and structure of the text, and discover the poet (translate, if necessary)
 - How does composer set the poem?
 - Does s/he make changes?
- Discover historical significance, understand composer's time period, and any circumstances surrounding the work specifically
- Get familiar with piece completely
 - Play through the piece on the piano (as many parts as possible)
 - Sing through parts individually; play one part, sing another, etc.
 - Listen to MULTIPLE recordings
- 3-tiered approach to structure, form and phrasing
 - large sections, periods or smaller sections, phrases
 - upper-case letter, lower case letter, phrase delineation (vertical line)
- Analyze harmonies and key areas
- If polyphonic, mark all entrances of themes, subjects, etc. (color code, if needed)
- Graph the piece to get an overall view of the piece (dynamic landscape, structural landscape, textural landscape)
- Conduct through the piece and discover difficult passages

MICRO DETECTION

- Number all measures
- If in a foreign language, write the translation (literal, word for word) above the text in the score. Attach a poetic translation to the score, as well.
- Mark all articulations that you want to add stylistically. Draw attention to any articulations that composer has marked
- Emphasize the following:
 - Red pencil *forte* dynamics
 - Blue pencil *piano* dynamics
 - Orange pencil meter changes
 - Green pencil cues
 - Purple pencil tempo changes
 - Highlighters themes and material you wish brought out
 - Dark pencil articulations, etc.
- Analyze the melodic contour
 - Is there text painting?
 - Word stress