



Kjos Band News



NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR BAND EDUCATORS

Welcome to the Kjos Band News

Welcome to Volume 13 of the *Kjos Band News*, a biannual publication from the Neil A. Kjos Music Company. We are dedicated to supporting quality music education by providing our readers with articles, suggestions, and teaching tips from leading educators, composers, and conductors from around the world.

We hope our readers will find this edition of *Kjos Band News* helpful in accomplishing a successful conclusion to the school year.

If you have specific topics you would like to suggest we address, or wish to receive back issues, please contact:

Kjos Band News
Neil A. Kjos Music Company
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Those Big Copper Bowls (Timpani): Their Care, Maintenance, and Performance Tips

by Dave Hagedorn

Timpani is a unique instrument in the percussion family. In addition to requiring proficiency in many basic techniques, playing timpani demands fluency in reading music written in bass clef, and requires skills in areas of pitch discrimination, scale and interval identification, and sight-singing. Mastering these special skills requires daily drilling and self-practice. Interval dictation, singing, and written music theory are but a few of the possible activities that can be used to aid student development.

The aural skills necessary in timpani performance will vary with the level of the music. Beginning timpanists should use a chromatic pitch pipe to help find pitches. More advanced players usually prefer to use a tuning fork as a reference pitch source. At this more advanced level, the pitch pipe should be used only to check tuning accuracy.

Regardless of the advancement level, it is critical that the timpani are in good working order, and adjusted properly so that all notes in each drum's range are tunable.

Hard covers should be used to protect the

timpani heads. These head covers can be the ones that came with your timpani, or you can make one out of cardboard. We've all seen dents and small holes in timpani heads. These imperfections dramatically affect the sound, intonation and responsiveness of the instrument. In fact, these dents and holes impair the sound even more than imperfections in snare drum heads. Of course, absolutely nothing should ever be set on top of the timpani even when they are covered. Some companies issue a felt covered protective covering with the drums. If you have this style of covering, be sure that when you take the cover off, the felt is off the floor. This will prevent the collection of dirt or anything else that may scratch the timpani heads. This same advice should be heeded with any cover that is in contact with the head. Make sure whenever you move the timpani from the band room or orchestra room to a concert space, that you keep the heads covered until the drums are in playing position. This will help keep the heads from becoming damaged.

When moving the timpani, do not pick

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by Dean Sorenson

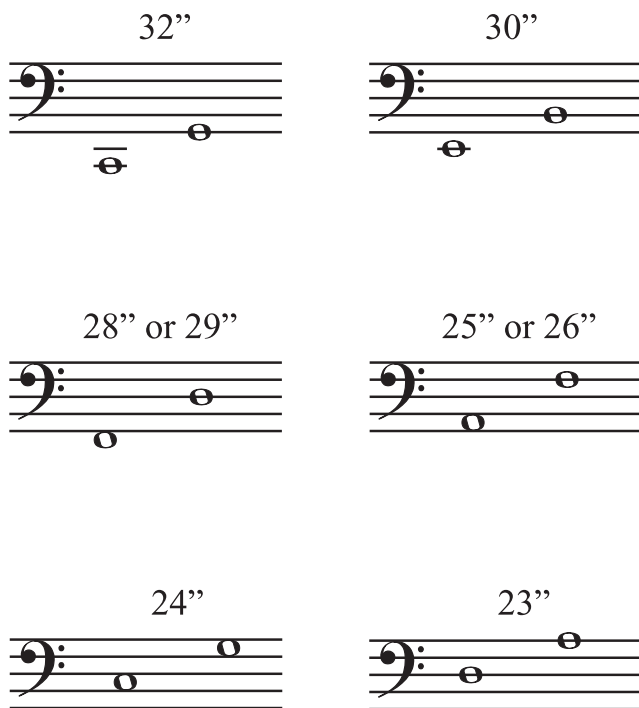
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them up by the rim! It is easier to move them by grabbing onto the rim, but this will make the head go out of tune. Instead, grab the struts on the outside of the bowls. If your drums do not have support struts on the outside, pick the drums up by the bowls only. This may be awkward, so make sure there are always two people on each drum when moving them this way. When rolling the timpani, tilt the drums forward so the pedal is off the floor.

When buying timpani for the first time, the choices can be overwhelming. Copper bowls are more expensive, but have better resonance. On the other hand, less expensive fiberglass bowls are lighter and do not dent like copper. The first two timpani one should buy are a 26" and 29" drum. The next size one should consider is a 31" or 32" drum and finally a 23". For contemporary band music, a fifth drum, a 20" piccolo can be very useful. Another consideration is whether or not to purchase timpani with extended collars. The extended collar drums have more resonance and a fuller sound.



If you have relatively old drums that have tuning rods with T-handles, an inexpensive way to make them more playable

would be to change out all of the rods to ones that require a timpani key to tune them. This also makes playing the drums simpler when moving from drum to drum.

There are a variety of mallets available. For the beginner, a pair of all purpose, or general mallets is the place to start. Next, purchase a harder pair of mallets for more staccato or brighter sounds. I see many students using timpani mallets that are completely worn out. This is apparent when there is white felt hanging off the mallets that is loose, or just the core of felt on the wood mallet. A number of manufacturers produce mallets that can be easily recovered. I recommend these mallets for beginner to intermediate players, so when a mallet head wears out, one can replace it without having to buy a new set of mallets.

When setting up the timpani for playing, make sure the player can reach the playing spots on all of the drums. The playing spot is directly over the pedal about 2" to 4" in from the edge. **DO NOT** play in the center of the drum, unless specified by the composer. I have seen many young players striking the drum in the center like a snare drum. This produces a very dry thump that is not very musical. The optimum sound for timpani is one that rings freely and resonates a clear pitch. Everyone has arms of different lengths, so you need to move the drums for each player. When there are four drums, make sure that students can reach each playing spot by rotating their torsos, not by reaching for the drums. This will make difficult technical passages much easier.

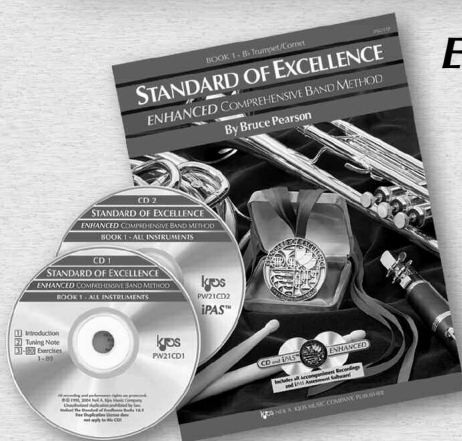
Finally, here are a few words about technique. There are some good descriptions about basic technique in the **Standard of Excellence** books. The basic idea for timpani is to "lift" the sound off the head. Feel how the mallet head naturally rebounds off the head, and let it happen without restriction. This will give your sound more resonance. When rolling, make sure that you use a single stroke roll, just as you would on mallet instruments. I have seen inexperienced players trying to create a buzz roll, like a concert snare drum roll, on timpani. This just does not work, unless, of course, the composer has specified it. Work on coordination and speed to develop a fast single stroke roll, and the sound will blend with the ensemble, and still have the resonance that is desired for the timpani sound. When considering the speed of the roll, lower notes require a slower speed than higher notes.

I hope this article can help dispel some of the mystery of timpani playing. Good luck.

Dave Hagedorn is a professional percussionist in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. He is the percussion instructor at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

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– Robert E. Carter
Elementary Instrumental Specialist
Plymouth, Connecticut

Scales a' la Mode

by David Newell

It is probably safe to assume that the vast majority of middle school and high school bands play memorized *major scales* as part of their daily warm-up procedure. It seems equally safe to assume that significantly fewer bands regularly play memorized *minor scales*. When minor scales are played, they are more often notated than they are memorized. But the safest assumption of all is that very few, if any bands, play *modal scales*, either notated or memorized. Playing modal scales can add a rich component to the band's repertoire of memorized scales and is something that band directors might want to consider adding to their rehearsal regimen.

Most band students are well aware of major tonality when performing traditional pieces of music, but whenever the tonality is not major, many automatically assume that it must be minor. Quite often this is a false assumption. Composers often write pieces or sections of pieces in one of the modes other than the minor mode. Teaching our students to play and recognize various modal scales will open their ears to these fascinating and important sounds. Fortunately, they are very easy to teach and to learn. Plus, they require students to think, which is always a good thing. Thinking is an enjoyable human activity.

Teaching Modal Scales

An easy way for students to be introduced to the modal scales is through the manipulation of key signatures. Before beginning this process, it must be established that all students in the band have a firm grasp of key signature theory. They must know the order of flats and sharps as they appear in key signatures, and they must know the key signatures of the major scales that they play from memory.

(the order of flats) → B E A D G C F ← (the order of sharps)

Once it is established that all of the students in the band have mastered the above information, the teaching and learning process is quite simple and effective.

To begin, have the band play their most familiar memorized major scale. Shall we assume that it is the B \flat Concert Major Scale? As they play it without notation, ask the students to envi-

Musical notation for the B \flat major scale in 4/4 time. The notation is arranged in four staves: C Instruments, B \flat Instruments, E \flat Instruments, and F Instruments. The key signature is one flat (B \flat). The scale is written as a sequence of eighth notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4.

sion the key signature that appears with this scale when they do see it in written form.

Next, have the students play *the same basic notes* but with one, important change. Ask them to *add one flat* to the key signature. If students have mastered the theory discussed above, they will know which flat to add. At this point students will also need to be taught that opposites do not always “attract,” as the old saying goes. When it comes to key signatures, “opposites *subtract*.” When adding flats to a sharp key signature, each added flat cancels out one sharp, and vice versa. For example, when adding three flats to a two sharp key signature, the original two sharps are wiped out by two of the added flats, leaving one flat remaining to form the new key signature. Of course, students also have to know that the one remaining flat must be B \flat . When there is only one flat in the key signature, it is always B \flat .

In the example notated above, adding one flat cancels out the one sharp in the E \flat part, leaving a key signature of no sharps and no flats. The original B \flat Major Scale with one flat added to the key signature, if played correctly, no longer sounds like a major scale.

Musical notation for the B \flat major scale in 4/4 time, showing the effect of adding one flat to the key signature. The notation is arranged in four staves: C Instruments, B \flat Instruments, E \flat Instruments, and F Instruments. The key signature is now two flats (B \flat and E \flat). The scale is written as a sequence of eighth notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4.

After several days of being asked to play this same major scale “with one flat added to the key signature,” the students are ready for the final step. “We are going to play this same scale again, but from today on I will call it by its rightful name. Obviously it is no longer a major scale. What we have been playing for the past few days has been the B \flat *Mixo-lydian Mode*. ‘Mode’ is an older name for our modern word ‘scale.’ *When you add one flat to the key signature of any major scale, you are playing that scale’s mixo-lydian mode.*”

The next logical step is to change other memorized major scales to their mixo-lydian forms using the same formula: E \flat Major to E \flat Mixo-lydian, F Major to F Mixo-lydian, and so forth, all by simply adding one flat to the key signature. Do not help the students to figure out their new key signatures. Force them to think for themselves. This is an excellent way for band directors to assess whether their students have truly mastered key signature theory.

Gradually over time, all of the modes can be learned, based on the following principles:

The “modal name” of our modern *major scale* is the *Ionian Mode*.

Adding *one flat* to any major scale results in the *Mixolydian Mode*.

Adding *two flats* to any major scale results in the *Dorian Mode*.

Adding *three flats* to any major scale results in the *Aeolian Mode*.

(The Aeolian mode’s “modern name” is the *natural minor scale*).

Adding *four flats* to any major scale results in the *Phrygian Mode*.*

Adding *five flats* to any major scale results in the *Locrian Mode*.*

Adding *one sharp* to any major scale results in the *Lydian Mode*.

Band directors should take their time teaching the above, allowing students to master the *formula* for each mode before moving on to another one. Done consistently, even young bands can successfully add the modes to their repertoire of scales.

Having bands add modal scales to their warm-up routine has numerous benefits, among them:

Playing modal scales by manipulating key signatures includes a built-in *theory component*. Every time students are asked to play one of the modes, they have to review their knowledge of how key signatures work. The more often students think about key signatures, the more proficient they become. Aristotle said it best: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

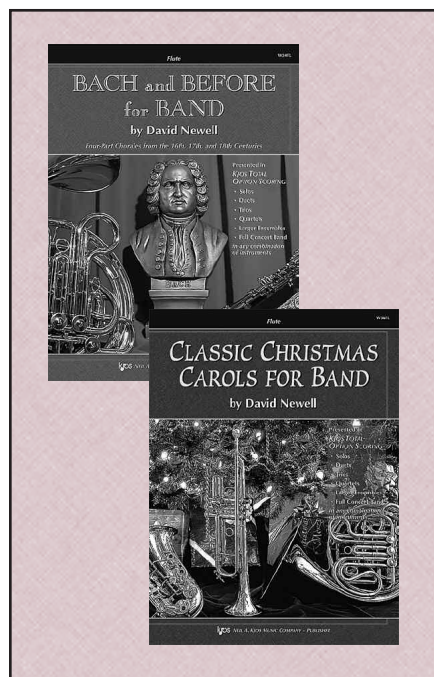
Adding the ancient church modes to what we teach our students enables us to meet one of the more difficult National Standards for band directors to address — Standard Number 9: Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Some of the modes, particularly the *Mixolydian*, and the *Dorian* provide a gateway to an understanding of the melodic language of jazz improvisation. National Standard Number 3 tells us that we should be teaching *all* of our students about improvisation — not just the few soloists in our jazz bands.

Students’ melodic and harmonic horizons will be broadened through these activities. Our students need to know that the tonality of traditional Western music does not consist of only major and minor.

* Caution is advised when doing any scale that results in more than seven flats or seven sharps in the key signature. For example, changing the A \flat Major Scale into the A \flat Phrygian Mode results in a key signature of eight flats for concert pitched instruments — the original four flats plus the added four. The formula still works, but the key signature is now eight flats — B *double flat*, E \flat , A \flat , D \flat , G \flat , C \flat and F \flat . At this point the process probably becomes more cumbersome than it is worth. And finally, the *Locrian Mode*, the result of adding *five flats* to the key signature of any major scale, is rarely used and might not be worth the time it takes away from working with the more often heard modes.

David Newell has taught instrumental music for thirty years in the public schools of Berea, Ohio. In 1979 he received the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation’s “Master Teacher” Award for Excellence in the Classroom. He also received the Alumni Achievement Award from Baldwin – Wallace College in 1987.



BACH and BEFORE for BAND and CLASSIC CHRISTMAS CAROLS FOR BAND by David Newell

Both Bach and Before for Band and Classic Christmas Carols for Band are presented in the unique “Kjos Total Option Scoring” format. In this format, each of the part books contain all four choral voice parts, written in the playable range of each instrument, allowing for unlimited flexibility in instrumentation. Not only can the chorales and Christmas carols be performed in traditional full band arrangements, but they can also be performed as solos, duets, trios, quartets, and larger ensembles in absolutely any combination of instruments. Because all four voice parts are printed in each book, the individual soprano, alto, tenor, and bass parts can also be rehearsed in unison, which will lead to significantly improved intonation.

Improve two of the most important skills necessary for superior performance – the ability to play in-tune and to play expressively!

One to a Stand!

by Phil Ostrander

Great posture and taking big breaths are two of the most important fundamental concepts that lead to enhanced brass playing. Another way of expressing this idea is simply “Stand (or sit) up straight and blow!” Student trombonists should be wary of one specific detriment to good posture — sharing a music stand. Trombone players cannot share a stand and still maintain great posture with an open airway. When looking at a trombonist, the stand should always be to the left of the player, so that he/she can look directly at the music. If the stand is on the other side, the player has to angle the bell straight down to see the music. Seeing this in an ensemble, conductors often yell “Bells up,” creating a visual obstruction between the trombonist and the music stand.

Beginning Players:

Backing up several years — beginning trombonists should play by ear frequently. The aural benefits of this kind of work are myriad. When led by an accomplished teacher/performer, call and response exercises will train young players to both hold the instrument properly and have great posture. Upright and erect posture will ideally become second nature. Work on breathing exercises with beginning players — posture alone will not create a beautiful sound! Play a video or DVD of a great trombone artist (one with good posture) for your students. Let students work towards replicating both sound quality and posture. A full length mirror or video recorder will help students to observe results. If possible, all trombonists should stand when they practice or have a sectional. Standing will allow the lungs to open up for more air.

High School Players

Moving forward several years — high school trombonists need to decide exactly where to put the music stand. Many players will want the music stand as close as possible to “hide behind the music.” In most cases, the written music is a mental crutch that keeps trombonists from projecting. With more advanced performers, have them play from memory regularly. Typically, the more advanced the player, the further away the stand is (this is also a sign of plenty of preparation). Both

teachers and students should have regular vision check-ups. Wear glasses or contacts so the music stand can be placed at a distance from the player. If possible, wear contact lenses for increased peripheral vision. Conductors will appreciate the improved eye contact that results from proper stand placement.

Additional pointers for student trombonists

- Have the slide lubricated, preferably with Trombone cream and water
- Snake out the slide with a Slide-O-Mix Flexible Snake and water
- Horns with a .525 bore are good for all styles of playing
- Horns with a .547 bore are for advanced orchestral players
- Horns with a .505 bore are for jazz and lead trombone playing
- Use a good mouthpiece .505 bore = Bach 7C, .525 = 6½AL, .547 = 5G
- Beginners should start on a pea shooter (no trigger) trombone (.505 bore)
- Move to a trombone with F-attachment after several years of study
- Take a professional trombone player with you to buy a new instrument
- Strong (not weak) high school students should play bass trombone
- Take private lessons — improvement rate will increase exponentially

Phil Ostrander is Assistant Professor of Trombone at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where he conducts the Symphony Band and teaches private trombone, trombone ensemble and brass techniques. Prior to his work at Eau Claire, he held a faculty position in New York at SUNY Geneseo teaching trombone and jazz studies. Dr. Ostrander completed his doctoral studies in trombone performance and literature at the Eastman School of Music, and received master's degrees in both trombone and wind conducting from the New England Conservatory, as well as a bachelor's and Performer's Certificate from Eastman.



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Brass Tactics

by Bob Baca

Answers To Commonly Asked Brass Questions

For the student, there is often a fine line between progress practice and prolonged paralysis. Efficient progress depends on the way we approach the many instrument challenges that lie on the road to successful musicianship. I wish I had a penny for every time I heard a musician say, “If I only knew then what I know now.” The intent of this article is to direct students into utilizing good habits early on by answering common questions asked by band directors for their brass players.

INTEREST – LISTEN – IMITATE

How do I get a characteristic sound from my brass player?

Resource: Recordings and Live Music

The children’s tune *Mary Had A Little Lamb* is sung effortlessly by every child across the globe shortly after they learn to speak, and yet many young instrumentalists would have a difficult time playing the rhythm if written out because they’re using their eyes and not their ears. In much the same way, creating the most critical element in music — tone quality — can be a laborious task if approached logically. The key is to imagine what the tone will SOUND like. Our imagination is the mechanism that will coordinate the hundreds of muscles to synchronize in exactly the right place to create good tone quality. A regular ear soaking of recorded and live music provides the interest a student needs to start the process of creating beautiful music.

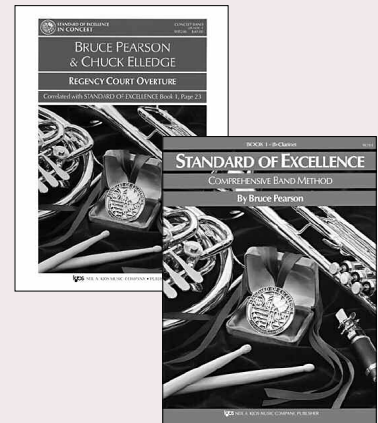
TAKE A BIG BREATH

How do I clear up a pinched sound?

Although a brass instrument can cost thousands of dollars, the metal itself is worth about \$10. Our purchased investment goes toward the design and labor of the instrument’s manufacturing. In order for an instrument’s design to “be all it can be,” one must activate the standing wave energy by playing right down the center of the instrument. A failing embouchure, tight muscles, and poor posture are the three main causes of a pinched sound.

It’s important to know the lips themselves have very little to do with brass playing. They must remain flexible in order to vibrate properly, which is how the sound is created. It’s the corners that keep the aperture the same shape throughout the range of the instrument. If they fall back (“smiling”), the instrumentalist naturally presses harder on the embouchure creating a “pinched” sound similar to the sound created from squeezing the end of an inflated balloon. Always think of a relaxed “Ah” sound with warm, moist air. The corners are developed similarly to weight lifting; small weights first, lots of repetitions. Students should play lots in the middle register, always thinking of a beautiful sound. One way to keep the corners in place is to have the student think of “spitting” while tightening the corners against the teeth.

Playing the tuning slide is an absolutely wonderful beginning to a performer’s practice routine. Playing the mouthpiece is good for getting our lips vibrating, but the length of the lead pipe is necessary for setting a proper standing wave. Taking the main tuning slide out and playing through the lead pipe tube will relax the air and set the embouchure to a “ready” position. Students then play through the tube making small adjustments in air directions. The closer one comes to the center of the tube the more overtones are produced in the sound. Overtones sound like “white noise” between two radio channels. They make a sound “ring” more. Students should keep relaxing the warm moist air while maintaining the “energized” overtone rich sound. Then they



STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE LEADS THE WAY IN ADDRESSING THE NATIONAL STANDARDS

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should apply the same concept with the tuning slide back in.

Using good posture, students should relax from the neck down, and breathe slow, deep, and fill from the bottom up.

LOW AND HIGH ARE JUST THE SAME How Can I Increase My Student's Range?

Acoustically speaking there is no such thing as low and high, only slower and faster frequencies. When we see music on a printed page, it is a picture describing these frequencies. Too often, we associate a higher or lower note as something to be reached for, when in fact the key lies in keeping the thought of our entire range all on the same plane. Here are a few imaginative ideas that can help your students:

- Always think of playing through the sound, never at the sound. A sound in motion keeps the muscles energized but loose

(“ready”). Our imagination is singing the note played before it begins and after it has ended so as always to be in motion. To improve concentration and focus, pick a point somewhere in the room and play through that point.

- Sing, Sing, Sing to lock the pitch center in our head and for sure footed playing in all registers.
- Listen to players who make it sound easy then imitate up to the level of our physical limitations.
- Make these ideas habitual by playing exercises that start slowly in the middle register and expand in both directions. Start with a good tone and maintain it while slowly increasing physical demands.

Tempo is adjusted to always accommodate a beautiful sound. I remember at age 16, driving on the freeway with my driving instructor and taking that first exit ramp a little too fast.

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CLEAN ARTICULATION

How Do I Get My Students To Play With Clean Articulation?

Articulation is a sound. Clear articulation is easiest achieved when one can compare his/her articulation to the sound they are imitating. I tell my students to narrow articulation to a couple of taste buds to get a clean attack. If one plays with a “tha” sound the tongue is likely articulating between the teeth. Refine placement and force of the tongue while getting your mind off of it by listening to a seasoned player articulate. Imagine what that professional would sound like if he/she was playing the same passage you are trying to play. Record yourself with a mini-disk player and compare your playing to the person you are trying to imitate. It is amazing how fast this works. If we think of our tongue too much all we will have is a mouth full of tongue.

PLAYING IN TUNE

How Do I Get My Students To Play In Tune?

One of the many great habits my grade school band director drilled into us was having a good sense of pitch. He had a concert “Bb” tone bar nailed to the wall next to the band room door and after rehearsal as every student left, they had to hit the button that played the tone on the bar. Being a trumpet player, by the time I got in line, I would have heard that “Bb” 50 times before leaving. For years, every time a concert “Bb” came on the radio, television, during a rehearsal or concert, or even one of the pitches in a fire engine, that pitch would be amplified in my head. Then as a teenager I wanted to know, “What was that note Maynard Ferguson played on the end of that tune?” I could sing the “Bb” in my head as a base and figure the screamer pitch by singing up a diatonic or chromatic scale. Soon all of the pitches in the chromatic scale were on the same level as the “Bb”, first when played by the trumpet and later other instruments followed. As new pitches became familiar, those already learned became more refined.

99% of pitch problems can be solved with simply hearing the note in tune. The best habit to build is to always sing everything one plays. The more one sings (with guidance from an instructor), the closer one will come to nailing the pitch, head on. When a student asks what to do to improve their “A”, which is always sharp on certain passages of music, I usually recommend to play it flatter.

GET A GOOD PRIVATE TEACHER

Having a great interest in fishing, I have learned that although books are informative, nothing can replace the experience of going out with an experienced guide. Nothing can guarantee a successful musical experience more than a good private teacher. Along with imitating the live sound of a top

notch player, the student learns regular accountability, confidence, attention to detail, the larger world of their instrument, and the endless resource for the inquisitive that a good teacher can provide. Whether rural or large city band programs, a good private teacher program spells quality at a potential level.

These suggestions are general guidelines to approaching common instrument challenges. One time my private lesson instructor said, “I am amazed, humbled and in awe at the talent in this studio, but there is one thing that I still have to offer: experience.” I hope by incorporating the above ideas, students may gain time-saving experience that will speed up the realization of their musical goals and give them all of the benefits music has to offer.

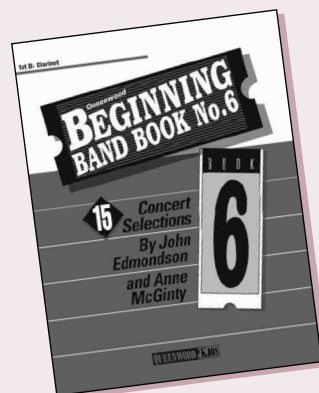
Bob Baca currently serves as Associate Professor of Trumpet and Director of Jazz Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. He has performed with the Buddy Rich Big Band, Frank Sinatra, Mel Torme, Tony Bennett, and Andy Williams, as well as the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Philip Brunelle “Plymouth Music” Orchestra, and the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. He also freelances in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. Baca is in demand throughout the United States and Canada as a brass clinician.

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Now You Hear It Now You Don't

Using Call and Response to Teach Jazz Improvisation

by Dean Sorenson

Knowledge of music theory is important. It helps instrumentalists better understand how their part fits into the whole, and it helps conductors more accurately interpret scores. All that having been said, even if students have the opportunity to study music theory, many will struggle to transfer music theory concepts to their instruments. For the jazz improviser, theory knowledge includes an understanding of the chords that make up a progression and the scales that are often associated with them. Jazz improvisation pedagogy has historically been very theory oriented, with many volumes of chord and scale patterns and exercises available. This is ironic, because the master improvisers that we listen to today primarily learned their craft by listening.

Developing the ear is the single most important skill that a musician can practice. While this may seem obvious at first, try asking students to play a piece of music, any piece, without reading it. Chances are they will freeze and not know what to do. We do far more training of the eyes than we do the ears when it comes to instrumental technique. If we can see something, we can practice and eventually learn to play it. Why can't we take this same approach with training our ears?

The use of call and response is quite common in certain kinds of music. Gospel music comes immediately to mind, where the preacher or leader sings a line and is answered by the chorus. This same concept can be useful for ear development in instrumentalists, and can also develop an "improvisational vocabulary" for players with limited theory knowledge to use when improvising. This kind of exercise often involves listening to short "licks" that the students then play back. The licks should be stylistically related to music they are already working on. The fringe benefit of this kind of work is the internalization of the phrasing and sound of the lick.

In a classroom setting this kind of exercise is extremely flexible in terms of difficulty level and ensemble. The licks can be as easy or difficult as the situation allows. A younger, less experienced ensemble will want to begin with easier licks, with limited rhythmic variety and limited range. On the upper range, the sky is truly the limit, with elaborate and difficult licks stretching the ears and technique of advanced players. This is also an activity that can be inclusive of everyone, regardless of instrumentation of the ensemble.

In looking at some ways to incorporate these techniques into a rehearsal, we will use a jazz ensemble rehearsal as an example, but as stated above, these kinds of exercises work with any ensemble. Rehearsal balance is very important, meaning that no one single type of exercise should take over a rehearsal. Equal time needs to be given to rehearsing ensemble passages, etc.

Given limited rehearsal time, the flexibility of these kinds of exercises makes them very easy to incorporate into just about any rehearsal schedule.

We will begin with a young jazz ensemble, middle school or junior high level. Many of these players will have been playing only 2–3 years and will still be working hard on technique, sound production, etc. It is important that the licks they listen to and copy be easy enough for them to play technically. Remember, ear development is of primary importance. Licks should always be listened to and played back within a rhythmic context. This teaches good rhythmic skills and good time. The rhythmic context can come from an accompaniment recording or from something as simple as a collective tapping of the feet. The rhythm section of the band can also play an accompaniment groove (often a short vamped segment of a chart), but it is also helpful for the rhythm section to participate in the exercise along with the horns.

The ensemble needs to know what the starting pitch of the lick will be. Once that is given, the leader (either the director or a student) plays a lick that begins on that note but lasts only a bar or so. At the beginning level it is very helpful that the lick remain diatonic. That is, all the pitches should be within a given scale. It may be a major scale, blues scale, or other mode, but keeping the lick diatonic allows the ear to develop more thoroughly. The lick should be thought of as a "melodic building block" that is preferably related to a chart the band is playing. This sort of contextual exercise has a much greater potential to remain with the student, as it will be reinforced when the chart is played. They should then be encouraged to incorporate the licks into solos they are playing. Do not be concerned if the licks are not reproduced exactly when the students are soloing. In fact, rejoice! These exercises are just that, practice exercises meant to provide stimulation for performance.

Begin with one bar licks, and then move to two bar licks. Always think in terms of four bar phrases. With one bar licks, students will listen in the first bar, rest in the second bar, play in the third bar, and then rest in the fourth bar. With two bar licks, students should listen for the first two bars, and then play for the second two bars.

More advanced students can take these exercises in any direction they would like. The licks can get longer, although I have found that four bars is about the practical limit for length. Anything over two bars in length becomes very cumbersome as it often requires more than one hearing to fully assimilate, even for very good players. Other possibilities for more advanced students include adding chromatic tones, or even making the licks entirely atonal. Before working at this level,

however, students should feel very comfortable with simpler, diatonic exercises.

Call and response exercises are a fundamental part of the **Standard of Excellence Jazz Ensemble Method** and the **Standard of Excellence Advanced Jazz Ensemble Method**, both published by the Neil A. Kjos Music Company. Accompaniment recordings are included, as well as recorded licks and suggested solos that can be used to help build students' ears. For more

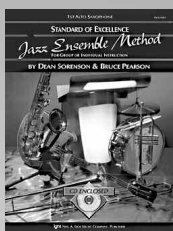
information please visit www.kjos.com, or my own website at www.deansorensonmusic.com.

Dean Sorenson is a prolific and highly sought-after composer, trombonist, and clinician. He holds degrees from the University of Minnesota and the Eastman School of Music, and was recently appointed Interim Director of Jazz Studies and Performance at the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis.

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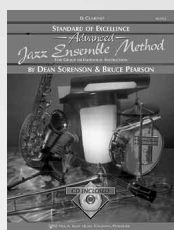
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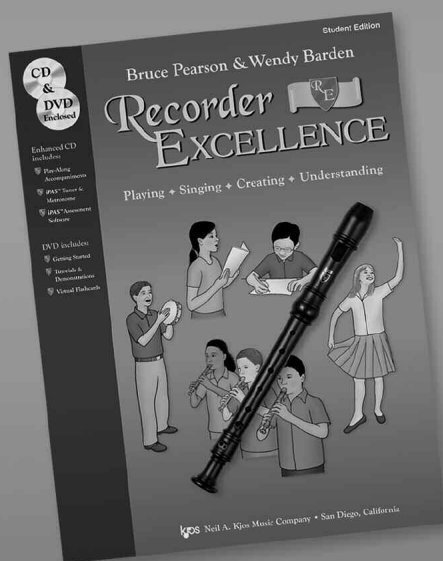
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