

# Bandworld

Online Magazine ♦ Volume 22, Number 2



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**BW 2006***The Future of the Bandworld***MusiClips**

by Ira Novoselsky

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**Pavanne (excerpt)**

by Morton Gould

Album Title: BRAVO, MAESTRO! ENCORE!

Recording: Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra

Frederick Fennell, conductor

Publisher: Kosei Publishing Company KOCD-3580

The earlier recordings of Fennell with the TKWO were recorded at Fumon Hall in Tokyo. The selections on this Fennell tribute were taken from various live concert sites and have not been available on other recordings. The encores range from familiar marches (Sousa, Fillmore, King) to classical miniatures (Ravel, Tchaikovsky, Debussy) so there is something for everybody in this collection. Needless to say, this superb Fennell/TKWO recording is a most welcome addition to your library whether for band music or easy listening.

**Consorts for Two Winds (excerpt)**

by Robert Spittal

Album Title: WIND CONSORTS

Recording: Wisconsin Wind Orchestra

Lawrence Dale Harper, conductor

David Rachor, bassoon

Publisher: Mark Masters 6053-MCD

The listener may recognize three of the five works on Wind Consorts, even though they are in different clothes. The Notturmo Op. 24 of Mendelssohn written in 1824 was expanded into the famous Overture for Band in 1838. Debussy's familiar Petite Suite appears in a delightful setting for ten winds by Stefaan Brakkee. Ten winds also make up Friedrich Wanek's five excerpts from Orff's Carmina Burana. The two excellent new works on this recording are Robert Spittal's Consort for Ten Winds and Concerto for Bassoon & Wind Ensemble by Bernard van Beurden. This is a marvelous recording of enjoyable music played with utmost professionalism and is highly recommended.

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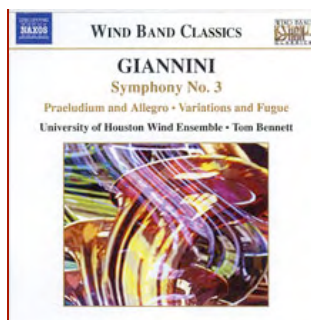
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*The Future of the Bandworld***MusiClips**

by Ira Novoselsky

[Previous MusiClips](#)[Next MusiClips](#)**Praeludium & Allegro (excerpt)**  
by Vittorio Giannini

Album Title: GIANNINI- SYMPHONY NO. 3

Recording: University of Houston Wind Ensemble-Tom Bennett, conductor

Publisher: Naxos 8.570130

Finally!! For all of us who have longed to hear Vittorio Giannini's five band works in one collection, the Naxos Wind Band Classics Series comes to the rescue. The University of Houston Wind Ensemble is a fine choice for bringing justice to this music and it shows. All five legendary compositions are here: Symphony No.3, Dedication Overture, Praeludium & Allegro, Variations & Fugue, and Fantasia. The performance is first-rate and this recording deserves a place in every serious band library. Thank you, Naxos!!

**Queen of the Night (excerpt)**  
by W. A. Mozart/Krienes

Album Title: MUSIC FOR TRUMPET AND WINDS

Recording: DePaul Wind Ensemble: Donald DeRoche, conductor  
John Hagstrom, trumpet

Publisher: Albany Troy-848

The nine selections on Music for Trumpet and Winds is a wonderful variety of trumpet solos old and new. The DePaul Wind Ensemble gives solid support to John Hagstrom's artistry in works of Mendez, Hummel/Dondeyne, Petrov and others. This review wouldn't be complete without a tip of the hat to Joseph Krienes, who did some very fine windstrations of music of Mozart, Ropartz and Stolzel. While this recording will definitely appeal to trumpeters, the professional quality of Music for Trumpet & Winds makes a fine program for all listeners to enjoy.

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**Redline Tango (excerpt)**

by John Mackey

Album Title: REDLINE TANGO

Recording: University of Kansas Wind Ensemble: John Lynch, conductor  
David Fedele, flute

Publisher: Naxos 8.570074

With a musical quotation from Beethoven's Ninth, the first recording in the Naxos Wind Band Classics series is off and running. That famous Scherzo quotation appears in Slalom (Pann), a picturesque example of perpetual musical energy on skis. The title work is John Mackey's 2005 ABA Ostwald Composition winner, a passionate and driving portrait in dance. Also included on this excellent recording is The Alcotts (Ives/Elkus) and the conductor-composer's essay on the hymnsong "Were You There?" The central work is the Concerto for Flute & Wind Ensemble (Mower); a flautist's adventure into the world of expression, virtuosity, and jazz-pop.

**Mercury (from the Planets) (excerpt)**

by Holst/Patterson

Album Title: THE PLANETS/APPALACHIAN SPRING

Recording: University of Houston Wind Ensemble:Eddie Green,conductor  
Publisher: Mark 2807-MCD

This is the first of the MusiClips 'Old Comrades.' An extraordinary pair of masterful bandstrations by Merlin Patterson. The Planets is performed with all the spectacle one expects from Holst's seven movement megawork, including the wordless women's chorus. Copland's Appalachian Spring offers the perfect contrast to The Planets with its rural portrait of Americana. It is interesting to know this recording was considered a Grammy nominee in 1998 for best classical recording, best performance & best artwork. The Planets/Appalachian Spring is an incredible recording combining exquisite bandstration with unmatched performance by Eddie Green and the University of Houston Wind Ensemble; a definite for your audio library.

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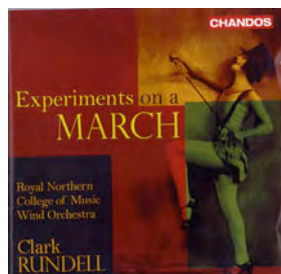
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by Ira Novoselsky

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**March No. 4 (excerpt)**

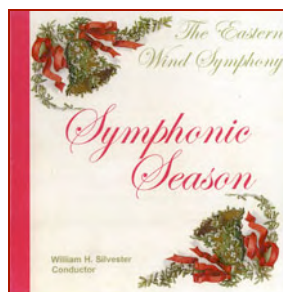
by Mauricio Kagel

Album Title: EXPERIMENTS ON A MARCH

Recording: Royal Northern College of Music Wind Orchestra: Clark Rundell, conductor

Publisher: Chandos - CHAN 10367

The translation of Marcel Wengler's *Versuche Über Einen Marsch* serves as the title for this fascinating recording. In addition to Wengler's unique composition, the Ten Marches to Miss the Victory by Mauricio Kagel make up another very interesting component to this recording. More traditional concert marches and funeral marches by Weill, Ives/Sinclair, Wagner, Purcell/Stucky, and Bruckner round out the program. *Experiments on a March* is far removed from the typical march compilation disc and it most definitely deserves your attention.

**Joy to the World (excerpt)**

by Handel/Harris/Silvester

Album Title: SYMPHONIC SEASON

Recording: Eastern Wind Symphony: William H. Silvester, conductor

Publisher: Mark 6199-MCD

Here is a Christmas recording that gives the listener something different. The majority of *Symphonic Season* is comprised of carol settings by Arthur Harris, finely transcribed for wind band by Dr. Silvester. Each carol can stand on its own to provide a special touch to any holiday concert. Also included on this recording is *Sleigh Ride* and three timeless settings by Alfred Reed: A transcription of *Waltz of the Flowers*, the wind band version of his *Joyeux Noel* and the hallmark bandstratration of *Greensleeves*. This is definitely a Christmas recording that stands out above many others.

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# 20 Years Ago in Bandworld

## Horn Embou-Sure

by Val Phillips

### Preparation and Buzzing

I'll make an argument here for the need to at least attempt a few minutes of buzzing the lips before using a mouthpiece or horn. It is important for students to understand that horn playing, like singing, depends on a vibration generated by the player and not by the instrument itself. Therefore, the quality and reliability of the tone is more dependent upon personal perception and reflexes than it is upon "equipment." Any effort directed toward this understanding, including- five or ten minutes of "buzzing" or attempts to do so, is a valuable- able starting procedure.

Buzzing without the mouthpiece: The goal is a sound like that of a bee or large fly. Syllables are most effective aids. I use the word DIM or EM to set the lips. Saying it several times, vigorously or even angrily, gives a good feeling for "set" of lip corners and placement of teeth (about the thickness of a tongue-tip apart) and lips.

Try it again, blowing air against closed lips for a feeling of com- compression of the air stream (later known as "support"). Exhale, three or more times, to gain a sensation of firm lip-set and air stream compression.

For a vibration: moisten lips, set, and let a sudden puff (NO TONGUE, please) of air out. Probably, no buzz will occur. Doing it more vigorously, with a teacher demonstration, will eventually produce the desired result. It may help to place two fingers in a "V" over the lips to restrain them or to place the mouthpiece on them and try buzzing. The syllable of the airburst is PEH. Combining DIM-PEH (with no observable movement of the lips except the buzz), gives a good basic set.

### Setting the Mouthpiece

The low register of the horn requires that a 2/3 to 1/3 ratio of upper to lower lip within the mouthpiece be used. I place the mouthpiece on the student's embouchure myself and ask them to hold it in place with thumb and forefinger (so I can see). Remove and reset a dozen times; then introduce the buzz. The student's ability to find this "groove" is most important and making a new one for a student who has habitually used too little upper lip is major undertaking...best to find the "groove" from the outset.

No details about right or left hand will be given here except to say that the only way a small player can get a good downward angle to the mouthpiece is to be sure that the left hand pulls the horn leadpipe downward and straight toward the music stand. Most likely the student will need to turn the lower body, or at least the right leg, somewhat to the right.

## **The Lower Jaw**

Once a buzz is consistent (without the horn but with the mouthpiece), it is a good practice to see that the student flexes the lower jaw (I ask them to "chew.") both silently and with a buzz. The effect is rather siren-like. For smooth slurs, consistent quality of tone, and ease of response in range extremes, it is necessary to have lower jaw flexibility. Once again, syllables are useful. As the jaw move downward, high register "ee" becomes middle register "oh" and low register "aw." The lower jaw pivots up and inward or down and outward. For students who can whistle, the setting of tongue and jaw is much the same in horn playing as whistling. I often ask students to try whistling intervals of fourths and fifths to get the "ee-oh-aw" oral cavity shapes and sizes.

The only alternative to a flexible jaw is "stretch and pucker." Those are difficult concepts to change later; establishing jaw movement from the outset is worth the effort. The other way encourages pressure. The result is uncertain response and inconsistent tone quality from register to register.

## **Tonguing**

The embouchure is frequently disturbed by the tongue. Hornists use TU and DU or often TDU for a marcato. Generally, it is a broader tongue than one uses on trumpet. It's THU that interferes with both lips and teeth, resulting in a nastiness not appropriate in horn playing.

## **Essentials of the Horn Embouchure**

1. Setting of the mouthpiece rim above the lip-line on upper lip, thereby making effective use of the underlying muscle.
2. A downward, rather than horizontal, angle to the leadpipe, thereby allowing free vibration of the upper lip.
3. A flexible lower jaw, thereby establishing the basis for ease register shifts and oral cavity adjustment.

#1-Correct Result

EXAMPLE #1

More often than not, a reasonable tone will be produced if you have carefully introduced the embouchure formation.

#2-No Tone, Rushing Air

EXAMPLE #2

In this instance there are four possible causes:

1. Lips not together (spread aperture).
2. Too much pucker in the lips ("oo" shape).

3. Dry lips, dry mouthpiece.
4. Insufficient air to make lips vibrate.

REMEDY: Re-form and maintain the EM lip formation to eliminate possibility of spread aperture and too much pucker. Dry lips and mouthpiece can be eliminated by having the student lick his lips and the inside of the mouthpiece. To eliminate insufficient air, review breathing exercises.

### #3-Airy Tone EXAMPLE #3

This is one step above #2; the tone is now evident as actual pitch but the same basic problems exist. In this case, however, it is less likely that dry lips or insufficient air will be responsible for the sound. More often the causes will be:

1. Lips not together (spread aperture).
2. Too much pucker in the lips ("oo" shape).

REMEDY: Re-form EM and watch carefully for severe change of lip position when student starts to play.

### #4-Tight, thin tone EXAMPLE #4

Pinched tone quality is invariably produced as a result of tenseness. In addition to more localized tension, the entire body often plays a significant role in this area. Specifically- speaking, the three common causes are:

Tense, excessively pursed lip formation.

1. Too much pucker in the lips (hard "oo").
2. Tight, closed throat.

REMEDY: Work with the student to be sure he is relaxed and then return to re-formation of EM but with less exaggeration so that the lips do not bite, pinch, pucker, or excessively purse together.

### #5-Completely Stopped EXAMPLE #5

This possibility is a severe exaggeration of #4. No tone of any kind occurs due to:

1. Tense, excessively pursed lip formation.
2. Mouthpiece pressure toward lips.
3. Closed throat.



REMEDY: Review breathing procedures for closed throat. Also review "EM" formation and emphasize less exaggeration of that formation. Watch for excessive mouthpiece pressure.

# **American Bands: Proper Focus**

**Frank Bencriscutto**

**Vol 2, #2, p.9 (Nov-Dec 1986)**

The following has been excerpted from the committee report and panel discussion chaired by Frank Bencriscutto at the March '86 American Bandmasters Association convention in Oklahoma City.

Music offers a phenomenon capable of expressing the highest feelings to which humanity aspires. The ultimate goal of music education is to teach us to love this great force not as an amusement or merely an ornament, but for its ennobling energy and power to make us better by awakening the perception of what is good and beautiful.

It has been concluded by psychologists that such goals as a fully functioning, mentally healthy, well-educated, vocationally successful individual are undeniably related to that individual's creative fulfillment. At the same time, studies have been shown that most of those who would score in the upper 20 percent of a test on creativity would not score in the upper 20 percent on an intelligence test. Thus, if creative development is to soon become a primary concern of education, music and the fine arts must lead the way.

To maintain music as an art form in our school programs, students must learn music theory, skills of performance, and the great potential of music to positively affect life. To this end, anything that hinders the main focus of the concert band, its most significant literature and its instrumentation, strays from the central purpose of the school band program.

Questions that arise here relate to over-emphasis on brass and denial of woodwinds in corps-style marching bands, the development of corps percussionists who lose interest in the concert approach to playing, and the general loss of sensitivity to sophisticated, classical-contemporary repertoire. Contests which require preparation that denies students' opportunities to cover varied literature, basics of music, and skill development must be questioned.

The American Concert-Marching Band has historically been a single group with several functions. Typically in many high schools and colleges, jazz bands plus solos and ensembles have come from within that group allowing the student access to the total band experience. The farther we stray from the total concert band program, the less we can justify that program as educationally viable.

In high schools and most colleges, the students all register for concert band and rehearse and perform with the concert band throughout the school year. In many schools all are required to also perform outdoors during football season. For winter sports the group frequently divides into smaller pep bands. Throughout all of this time (Fall and Winter), the primary purpose of the group is to rehearse the most advanced literature the students

are capable of learning and to work in method books which develop their musicianship, basic theory, and the consideration of aesthetic/philosophical values.

Certainly a pep-rock-march-component (the marching band) has limited educational value. Combining this, however, with the concert band which performs the most advanced literature from all periods of music, we begin to see the true American band program, a program which bridges all gaps: classical, pop, rock, jazz, folk, utilitarian, ceremonial, and march music. As such, the American Band becomes one of the most significant forms of musical expression in the Twentieth Century and educationally of major importance.

# **My Rehearsal is a Riot**

**William Fry and William Prescott**

**Vol 12, #2, p.31 (Oct-Dec 1996)**

## **Developing Superior Rehearsal Discipline**

Discipline is the refining fire by which talent becomes ability.

Good discipline is the result of student respect for you, your personality, your skills, your musicianship.

Good discipline is a result of proper rehearsal atmosphere.

Good discipline is a result of setting high expectations for your students.

Good discipline is a result of setting and striving for individual and group goals.

Good discipline is a result of your respect for your students.

YOU are the number one cause of the success of your band, orchestra or chorus.

YOU, THE TEACHER, may also be the number one cause of discipline problems!

You talk too much!

You are not prepared for class.

You try to learn the score at rehearsals.

You start the rehearsal with talk and announcements instead of MUSIC; 90% of the discipline problems are caused by you, the teacher!

Slow-paced rehearsals cause boredom (i.e. discipline problems).

You permit students to talk during rehearsals.

You talk over students who are talking.

You are hesitant in corrections, you say "let's go back to No. 5," without giving a reason.

You don't know your score, so you're really winging it during class. (How do you know if students are making mistakes if you don't know the score?!)

Fast-paced rehearsals eliminate many discipline problems. That means:

Keeping your head out of the score, memorizing the score, being ready to conduct a performance at the very first rehearsal. Students will usually sense when you are winging it, when you don't know what corrections to make.

Boredom in the rehearsal is a major cause of poor discipline.

Don't say it, conduct it. Teach them your conducting motions. Memorize the score; know what every instrument is supposed to be playing. You can't teach what you don't know.

Keep your head up and out of the score. Keep eye contact with the students.

Poor results can be a major source of dissatisfaction among students and, therefore, poor discipline.

Students can sense poor quality of teaching-lack of balance in the ensemble; overblowing; poor tonal quality; poor sectional balance; lack of technical preparation.

Students may not know the CAUSE of poor results, but they will blame it on you, the teacher-and that causes poor discipline.

DO YOU TALK TOO MUCH? It's a MAJOR cause of poor discipline.

#### More Ways to Poor Discipline

Your preparatory beats are confusing.

You don't diagnose the problem, you just say, "let's do it over."

You work too long on one problem and lose the group's interest. (There's always tomorrow.)

You rehearse the complete work when spot rehearsal (small segments) would improve interest (and, incidentally, improve technique).

You don't break down problems into musical factors, then drill each factor.

You talk too much!

You don't use a blackboard to clarify problems.

You make the whole group sit idle while you repair an individual's instrument.

You never work on fundamentals, so you don't have any carry-over value from one piece to another.

Your exact ictus (tip of baton at point of attack) is not clear.

Your baton beats are out of sight of the students.

Your eyes cannot be seen because your head is in the score.

You didn't check the height of the students' music stands (too high or too low), so they cannot see your eyes, baton and facial expressions.

Your rehearsals are slow-paced and lose student interest.

You talk too much, instead of letting your baton talk for you.

#### Guides for Well-Disciplined, Interesting Rehearsals

1. Train your ensemble to give you immediate attention when you step on the podium!
2. Train your ensemble to continue that silence as long as you are on the podium or even when you are off the podium, but talking to them.
3. Train your group to immediately look at you when you stop for a correction, and to mentally ask themselves, "why did he/she stop?" and then wait for your answer.
4. Keep interest at a high level with a fast-paced rehearsal, with results obvious to students themselves:
  - a. DON'T be a "stop-&-fixit" conductor, stopping for every tiny error; many times students fixit themselves.
  - b. DON'T be a time-beater; you can get a flashing metronome for that. Time beating is monotony, turns students OFF and doesn't teach MUSIC. Your baton should SAY something.
  - c. The first three minutes (3 minutes) are the key to the whole rehearsal and are critical to establishing the mood of the rehearsal. No announcements, no paper-passing, no distributing music, no talk, JUST MUSIC, RIGHT OFF THE BAT.
  - d. Make the last five minutes of the rehearsal the impetus for the next rehearsal.



- e. DO put your rehearsal agenda on the blackboard before each rehearsal.
- f. DON'T use long warm-ups; they're boring, repetitious and break the 3-minute rule. Any warm-up should be meaningful and should relate to the rehearsal (stress balance, dynamics, intonation, tone, following the baton, technical fundamentals) but definitely not the same every day, ad nauseum.
- g. DON'T talk if your baton can say it for you. Teach your students the expressiveness of your conducting motions. The less talking you do, the more concentrated the rehearsal will be. If you must talk, make it short, concise and clear.
- h. Know exactly what you want to accomplish during each rehearsal. That means knowing your score, knowing what spots need work.
- i. Always give as much praise as possible to individuals, to sections, and to the whole group.

Anecdote: Arturo Toscanini stopped an NBC Symphony rehearsal in mid-stride and asked William Bell, the famed tuba player, to play a certain passage. When Mr. Bell finished, Toscanini asked him to play it again. Mr. Bell was flustered and asked, "Maestro, what am I doing wrong?" Toscanini beamed and said, "you play it so beautifully I just wanted everyone to hear it again." The power of praise!

Music directors recognize that music classroom situations are more complex and dynamic than the average school class. Music ensemble classes are not like other classes. This unique educational setting requires discipline approaches different from other academic classes. For your first meeting of the school year (for those of you who are new to a particular situation), the first meeting or rehearsal is the time to put your best foot forward. That first meeting should be an experience in exacting demands, in what you want your students to learn, in your hopes and expectations; what you expect of them in rehearsals. You set the tone for the entire year. They can leave that first meeting all enthused and expecting great things-or they can walk to the guidance office and change their schedule!

The story of Toscanini's first rehearsal with the fabulous NBC Symphony is a classic: He walked on stage, stepped on the podium, raised his baton and gave the downbeat for the first bar of the Brahms First Symphony, all without saying one word. Only after the Orchestra had finished a breath-taking performance of the first movement did he say his first words to the Orchestra: "Not bad, not bad." Don't you think he got the attention of those world-class players on his very first meeting with them?

Discipline is often the result of the physical environment of the rehearsal hall. The setting influences attitudes. Make your rehearsal area pulsate with interest, with past history and pictures, with up-coming events, with musical themes. Always neat and clean and well-ordered, with chairs and stands always properly placed, never a messy area! Discipline is negatively impacted when students walk into a messy room.

Discipline is sometimes improved by your stepping off the podium. Leave aisles down the middle of the group so you can step down from the podium and circulate down the middle or along the sides-right in the middle of the rehearsal. It will improve the effort of

the students. It also helps if you wish to work for a few minutes (repeat: few) with a particular section in the rear or middle of the group.

Your facial expression can be a powerful discipline tool. It can express your pleasure or displeasure without the disruption of words. A frown can say "STOP!" or your face can express satisfaction with behavior, or your pleasure with the performance of a certain passage. Facial expressions are also used by excellent conductors to convey emotion in the music.

Your approach to rehearsal should always be enthusiastic. It will carry over to your students. Wear a smile!

Involve your parents. Inspire them to be in tune with your philosophies, your rules and your discipline. Get them to support you on your goals, your aspirations for the group.

### Causes of Discipline Problems

You will readily recognize these causes for poor discipline:

YOU, the director

Boredom

The Student's sense of ensemble non-achievement

Student discouragement/sense of failure

Negative social conditions

Lack of motivation

Boredom

Interest (the opposite of boredom) will be enhanced when the students feel emotionally involved in what they're doing. Enliven your rehearsal by keeping it fast paced, by some comments on technical composition techniques such as form, themes, historical scenarios of the composer and work, visual descriptions of a musical passage. Again, keep it fast-paced, never any wasted time, no time for boredom.

### Student Sense of Non-achievement

Students usually sense poor quality of teaching. They may not be able to define poor tone quality or lack of balance in the ensemble, or poor intonation, or poor technical preparation, etc., but they sense that the music does not sound good. They sense non-achievement. This creates dissatisfaction and that leads to poor discipline. If this is a problem for you, don't hesitate: Find the best musician you can and ask for help.

Student Discouragement,

### Sense of Failure

A student may feel inadequate in comparison to others. Whether this is a valid reality or not, the perception of lack of personal progress leads to dissatisfaction and poor discipline. Discouragement with one's individual progress is a leading cause of dropout.

Praise and encouragement are prime methods of getting young people to give their best. Praise before criticizing. When mistakes are made, say something complimentary before you mention the mistake. Encouragement can help give the student a new start after a failure. Look for something to compliment. Praise the slightest improvement. Make them excel. Even the most untalented student can be praised and encouraged and made to feel important.

### Negative Social Conditions

Your warmth, your personal interest in each student, your attempt to make each student feel there is something for them, your desire for their success, might just be the catalyst needed to lift a student out of a poor home condition, an unloved situation, or some other negative social condition.

### Lack of motivation

A feeling of inadequacy, a feeling of non-achievement, a feeling of the unimportance of band or orchestra, a feeling of failure or lack of success, a feeling of not belonging or being a social outcast from the group, a feeling that YOU don't like him/her. All these can be factors in a potential dropout and certainly factors in poor behavior patterns. You, as a music director and teacher, are more than just a teacher. You are a motivation, an inspiration, a person to be admired and looked up to.

One of the greatest compliments you will ever receive is a student telling you that he/she wants to be just like you when they grow up!

### Other Discipline Factors

Occasionally, a problem student will be the product of where there is no love. Your warmth, your obvious interest in each student, your desire for their success, may find a receptiveness which will change the problem student into an asset, both to the group and to him- or herself.

Even in band or orchestra, a few students will develop excuse-making techniques.

Destroy this by showing them the futility of such an exercise.

When poor conduct is willful, take immediate action. To falter is to commit discipline suicide. Move immediately, with tactfulness, but with forcefulness. To even APPEAR to accept poor conduct is disastrous for the group discipline. Don't make a mountain out of a molehill, but demonstrate the seriousness of the situation. The approach of a private meeting with problem students will let them know you really care.

We repeat again: Keep rehearsals fast-paced. Make corrections or praise performance, get your baton up, start immediately, never any waiting around, any loss of time. Keep them busy and concentrated. At the same time, your approach is warm, human, student-centered and never an ego trip for the teacher.

Next time: Setting goals, winning attitudes, inspiring others, winning.

### 3. BASSOON ASSEMBLY

The bassoon is a fragile instrument. Made almost entirely of wood, a bassoon requires patience and care when putting it together AND returning it to its case. This will help insure there is no accidental damage from forcing parts together, putting tension on the long key rods, bending the bocal, or chipping a good reed, etc.

Each part should fit together with only a medium amount of effort. Parts that fit too tightly may be damaged when forced by the student. It is important that you check all joints for a smooth fit before handing the student the instrument. Replacing a broken tenon joint is VERY expensive. A bent bocal will need repair or replacement (replacement

cost is about the same as repairing one for standard bocals - be sure to check this first).



FIG. 3.1 - RENARD® BASSOON W/CASE



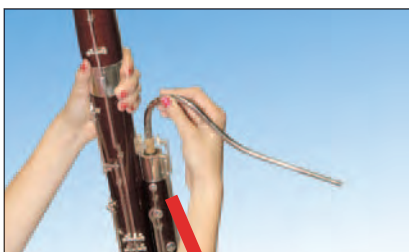
FIG. 3.2 - PARTS OF A BASSOON

**STEP 1:** Put the boot joint in your left hand, resting on your thigh or chair between your legs. With your right hand, insert the wing joint into the smaller hole of the boot joint. Line up the curve of the wing joint with the bass joint hole. As you insert the wing joint, be careful to apply pressure to the wood only - do not squeeze the keys or rods.

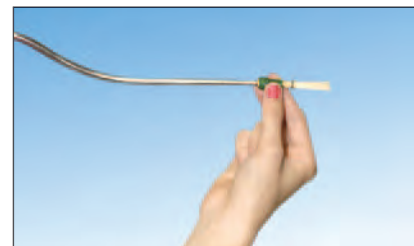


**STEP 2:** While holding the boot with your right hand, insert the bass (long) joint into the boot. Rotate back and forth as you push to make it go in easier. Remember to line up the thumb keys and attach the locking pin at the top of the wing joint.

**STEP 3:** With your right hand, pick up the bell and depress the B<sup>b</sup> key with your thumb. Carefully push the bell onto the bass joint. Use a rotating motion as you push to make it go easier. Remember to align the connecting keys for the B<sup>b</sup> to work properly.



**STEP 4:** Insert the bocal into place by GENTLY pushing and rotating it back and forth until the vent hole and whisper key pad line up. Lastly, attach the reed to the bocal, adjusting it to be parallel with the floor when seated in playing position.





## 4. POSTURE AND HAND POSITION

### Seat Strap vs. Neck Strap

Establishing a relaxed and comfortable posture is an important step towards mastering the bassoon. A majority of professional players/teachers recommend the use of the seat strap instead of the neck strap for young players. When used correctly, the seat strap will support the instrument allowing for a more relaxed body, arm and hand posture.

Position the seat strap to allow the reed to touch just below the lips when pulled toward the face. The student can adjust the strap as needed by pulling on the strap on the left side of the chair. Always remember to keep the right hand on the bassoon while adjusting to prevent it falling to the floor.



FIG. 4.1 - USING A SEAT STRAP



FIG. 4.2 - LEFT HAND FINGER POSITION

### Left hand Position

- The left hand covers the upper set of tone holes and keys. Using the fingering chart diagram as a guide, put your left thumb on the whisper key.
- Curve your hand and fingers around the instrument (like forming the letter "C"),



reaching around to put the first finger over the “E” tone hole (the top one).

- Following the fingering diagram, position the remaining fingers over the correct tone holes and keys. Note: tone holes should be covered with the soft, fleshy pad of your fingers.
- Remember to keep your wrist straight and your fingers curved when supporting the instrument.

### Right Hand Position

- The right hand covers the lower set of tone holes and keys. Again, using the fingering diagram as your guide, position your thumb over the large round key (E key). Note: Do not get in the habit of needing your thumb pressing a key all the time. Depending on the notes, it may remain hanging free a lot of the time.
- Curve your hand and fingers around the instrument (form a backwards “C”), reaching around to put the first finger over the B tone hole (the top one) and so on as the diagram illustrates.
- As with the left hand, curve your thumb and fingers in a relaxed manner and keep your wrist relaxed and straight.



FIG. 4.3 - RIGHT HAND FINGER POSITION



FIG. 4.4 - PROPER POSTURE USING A SEAT STRAP



## 5. BASSOON EMOUCHURE

A correct bassoon embouchure is much softer than other wind instrument embouchures. A phrase often used to help describe it is "*Slight Overbite.*" The lower jaw must recede slightly to form the overbite. Follow these steps as described by Richard Polonchak in "*Embou-Sure a step-by-step method*" P. 23 & 24 - © 1987 W.I.B.C. Publishing:

**Step 1.** Place the tip of the reed on lower lip.

**Step 2.** Draw the reed into your mouth taking the lower lip with it. (reed should not slide on lip – lip will roll in, over teeth)

**Step 3.** Bring the top lip down slightly over the top teeth. When the reed is in your mouth, the top lip should be almost up to the first wire with the bottom lip slightly behind it.



FIG. 5.1 - STEP 1



FIG. 5.2 - STEP 2



FIG. 5.3 - STEP 3



Daryl Durran, Penn State University offers these ideas on bassoon embouchure:

- A correct bassoon embouchure is identical to the position of the lips and jaw when one says “ew” as in “dew.”
- The center of both lips is relaxed while the corners of the mouth are pursed, focusing toward the center of the mouth.
- The jaw is held open and the skin on the chin is drawn smooth – not pushed up with a frown.

Common to most bassoon embouchure descriptions are the following:

- Recede the lower jaw slightly to form a slight overbite.
- The upper lip should be closer to the first wire on the reed than the lower lip.
- The initial lip formation or “pucker” is similar to forming the lips to whistle.
- The teeth NEVER touch the reed.
- The lips support the reed all the way around not just top and bottom.
- There should be no air leaking around the lips.
- The relative firmness of the lips along with proper breath support control pitch and tuning.
- Bassoon embouchure is much softer or more relaxed than other wind instruments.

Common embouchure issues and possible fixes:

- Student puffs cheeks - Fix: Using small water balloons, have the student practice blowing up balloons without puffing cheeks, keeping corners of mouth firm. Saying “weee” will allow student to feel the firmness in the entire cheek.
- Student bites reed with teeth - Fix: Reset reed on lower lip (Fig. 5.1) and follow steps 1-3 again. Teeth remain open while the firmness in the lips supports the reed.
- Not enough reed in mouth - Fix: Review Fig. 5.3 on page 10. Have student look in mirror to approximate a similar reed position.
- Teeth touching reed - Fix: Reset reed on lower lip again, telling student the lip cushions the reed as the teeth pull away - follow steps 1-3 again.
- Air leaks around the corner of the lips - Fix: The lips should feel as though they are supporting the reed in a circular shape - not just top and bottom. Student may be shaping embouchure into a smile - pull corners of mouth down and in towards reed sides - increasing lip firmness in a circular shape.

With the proper embouchure, blowing the reed alone produces a sound called a “crow.” It can be described as a combination of a pitched buzz sometimes containing a shrilly rattle. The pitch of the crow is determined by the amount of reed in the mouth, firmness of the embouchure, and the amount of breath support.

A bassoon reed crow is not usually tuned but the relative pitch can rise and fall with changes in embouchure firmness and breath support. Ideal firmness will be determined when tuning notes played with the full bassoon and listening carefully to the tone quality produced.



## 6. TONGUE PLACEMENT & ARTICULATION

The process of articulation (tonguing the notes) happens entirely inside the mouth. Incorrect tongue placement will not be easy to diagnose and correct, therefore should be discussed at the earliest stages of bassoon study.

There are only two questions to think about at the beginning stage of articulation development:

- What part of the tongue touches the reed?
- Where on the reed does the tongue touch?

To answer the first question, we must first accept that among several bassoonists there will be slight variations in tongue placement. As a general rule, the tongue touches the reed using the spot indicated in the figure below. NOTE: The very tip of the tongue is not used as it would be too low and far forward to contact the reed in the proper place while maintaining a relaxed jaw, etc. For most players that spot is about 4 - 6 millimeters back from the very tip of the tongue.

The spot on the reed where the tongue will make contact is indicated by the dot in the diagram below... in the center of the reed, 1-3 millimeters past the edge of the opening under the BOTTOM BLADE of the reed.

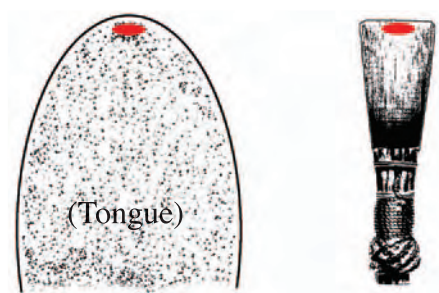


FIG. 6.1 - TONGUE AND REED CONTACT POINTS





William Diets, author of *Teaching Woodwinds*, P. 14-17, © 1998, offers the following points to consider when verifying proper tongue/reed contact and placement:

- Have the student describe the placement as if they were teaching it to another bassoonist.
- Ask the student to point out on both the tongue and reed the areas that make contact.
- Have the student put a dot on a diagram of a tongue and reed indicating where they believe they are currently touching when articulating notes.
- DO NOT use the very edge of the tongue (common among clarinet converts).
- DO NOT tongue into the opening or on the front edge of the reed (common among brass player converts).
- Be careful the tongue doesn't touch the reed too far back on the tongue, i.e. a "Lah-lah" style of tonguing (common among saxophone converts).

Other common thoughts about bassoon tonguing and articulation to help illustrate for your students:

- Remember that the tonguing and articulation process happens inside the students mouth. All they will have to guide them is your descriptions of what it might look or feel like.
- They will be guessing at first... having an example CD or being able to demonstrate what the note should sound like will go a long way towards training the student to play by "sound" rather than playing by "feel."
- Have the student look in a mirror to check for unwanted jaw, cheek, or lip motion while tonguing. The jaw as well as the embouchure must remain firm and steady.
- Most of the energy used for tonguing should be going towards proper breath support. Stress the lightest, most efficient motion of the tip of the tongue which produces the desired articulation result. Anything more will be wasted effort.
- A loose or wiggly embouchure usually produces a very spready tone that is quite flat and/or unstable.
- A biting or squeezing embouchure produces a stuffy, sharp tone. A student with this issue will also tire quickly.
- Former brass players learning the bassoon have noted that a relaxed brass embouchure is somewhat similar to a good bassoon embouchure.

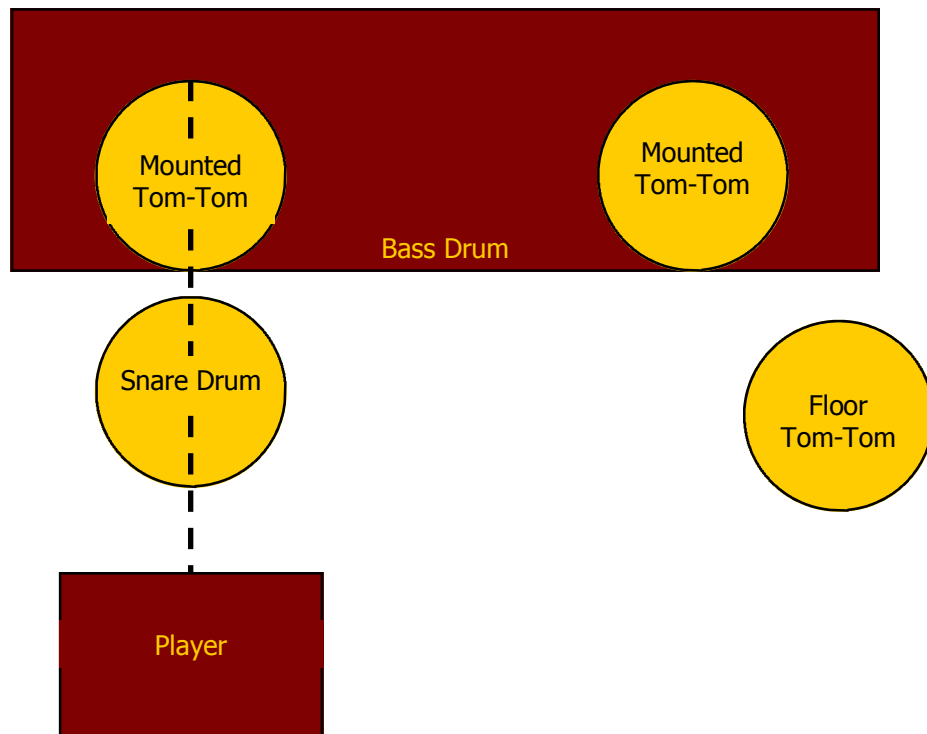
Listening to quality audio examples of the desired tone and articulation styles is the best way to build a solid, fundamental bassoon tone concept. CD's included with the various method books are a terrific start (make sure the CD isn't a "midi" example - some are computer generated sounds instead of actual players). Recordings offered by professional players would be the next step. Most are readily available online or through a larger book/music retailer.



# Getting Started

## Body Position

- **Always move the instrument to accommodate the body and not the body to accommodate the instrument.**
- While sitting on the drum throne with legs and feet evenly spread, arrange the bass drum, hi-hat and snare drum.
- Add the remainder of the set.
- Sit facing forward so that you look across the snare drum and mounted tom-toms.



### Correct Posture Includes:

- A comfortable position on the drum throne
- Relaxed limbs & body
- Thighs are parallel to the ground
- Back is straight

### Correct Posture Does Not Include:

- Leaning against the band room wall
- Slouching
- Twisting head or shoulders
- Contortions of face or mouth

# Getting Started

## Recommended Contents of Your Stick Bag:

5A General Snare Drumsticks with nylon tip

7A Jazz Snare Drumsticks

5B Rock Snare Drumsticks

Wire or Nylon Brushes



Acorn-shaped nylon tip



Tear-drop-shaped wooden tip



Tear-drop-shaped wooden tip  
Thicker shaft than 5AN or 7A



# Technical Development

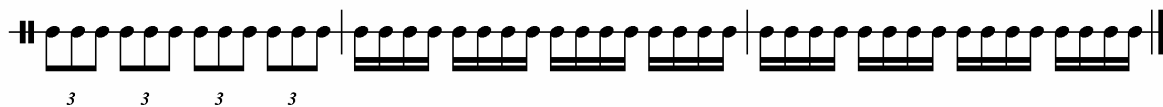
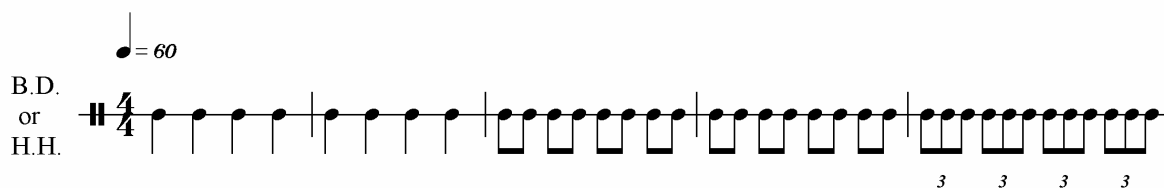


## The Hands

Hand technique is not new to the drum set student. Before beginning to play the drum set, students should already have a base of knowledge that includes rudimental drumming. The continued practice of the 40 PAS International Drum Rudiments will develop hand technique.

## The Feet

Try the following warm-up exercises daily:



# Technical Development

## Coordinating the Hands and Feet

Practice the following exercises to develop interdependence of the hands and feet.

### Right Foot & Left Hand



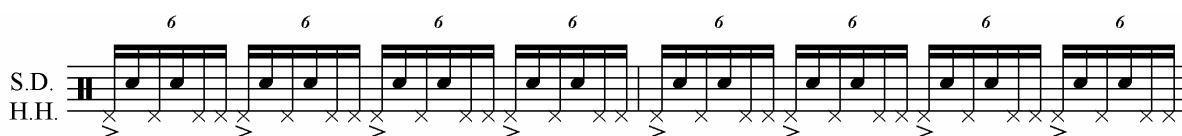
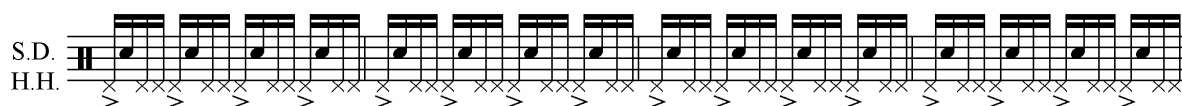


# Technical Development

## Coordinating the Hands and Feet Continued

Practice the following exercises to develop interdependence of the hands and feet.

### Left Foot & Right Hand



# Basic Beats: Swing

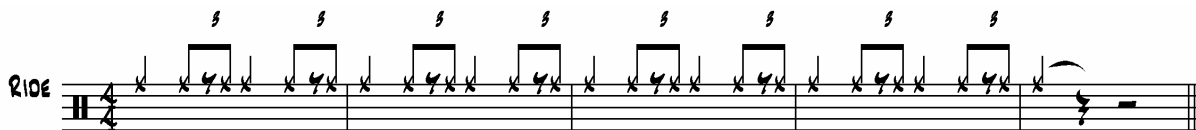
## The Basic Swing Beat



Start with the beat keeper, the ride cymbal, whose pattern looks like this but....



...is interpreted like this.



Add the hi-hat to the ride cymbal.



Finally, add the snare drum.



# Basic Beats: Swing

The basic swing beat may also appear like this...



or this...



or this.



For a challenge, try the jazz beat with snare drum improvisation.



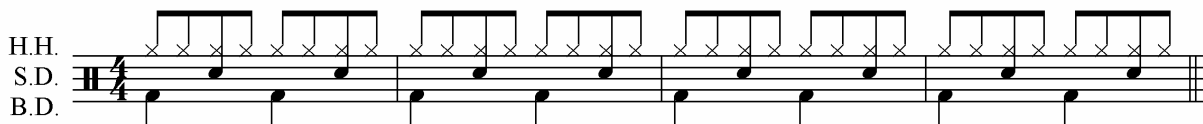
## Feathering the Bass Drum

Playing the bass drum softly on all four beats is referred to as "feathering." When feathering, the bass drum is played lightly and almost felt rather than heard. Always play the bass drum feathered unless playing accents.

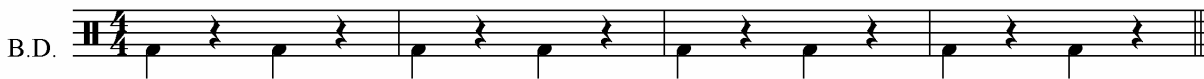
**REMEMBER: Jazz = 80% Ride Cymbal & Hi-Hat + 20% S.D. & B.D.**

# Basic Beats: Rock

## The Basic Rock Beat



Start with the beat keeper-the bass drum.



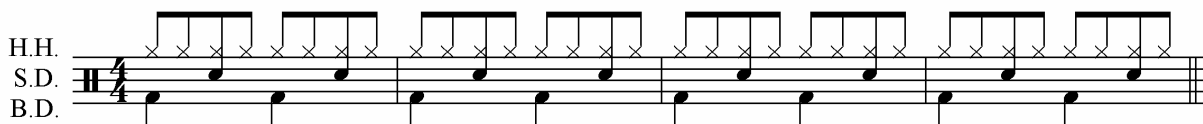
Add the snare drum with the left hand.



Add the hi-hat with the right hand (cross over left hand).

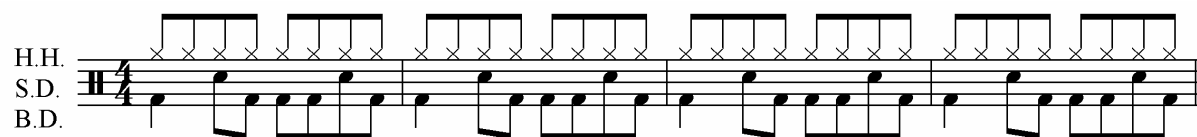
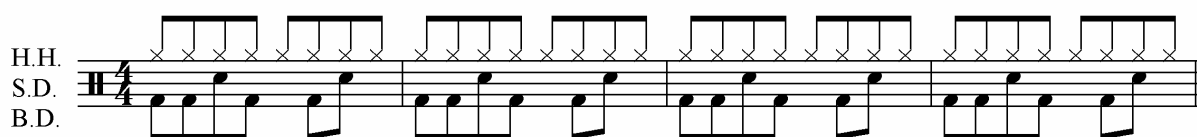


Once you have mastered the basic rock groove with a quarter-note feel, try the groove with an eighth-note feel.

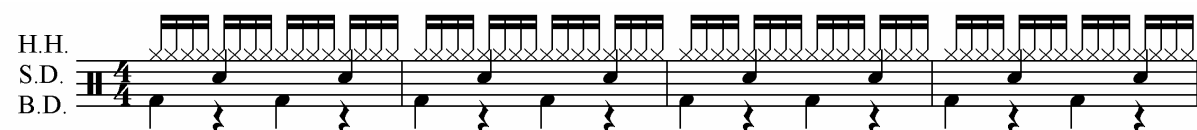


# Basic Beats: Rock

Common variations of the rock groove with an eighth-note feel:



Once you have mastered the basic rock groove with an eighth-note feel, try the groove with a sixteenth-note feel. Alternate hands on the hi-hat.



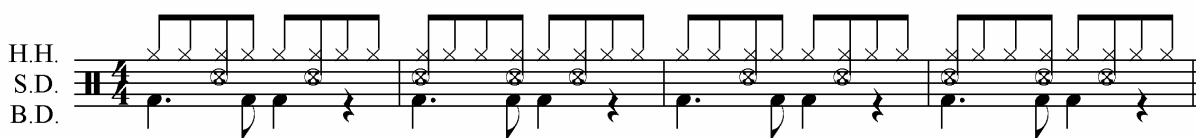
Feeling ambitious? Try the basic rock groove with fills.



**REMEMBER: Rock = 80% S.D. & B.D.+ 20% Ride Cymbal & Hi-Hat**

# Basic Beats: Latin

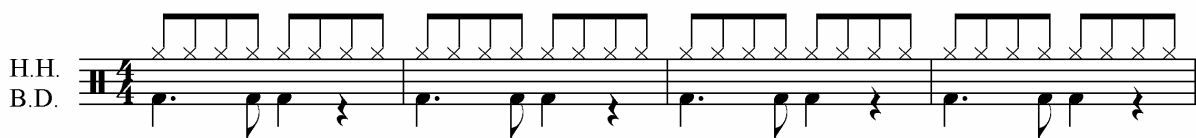
## Bossa Nova



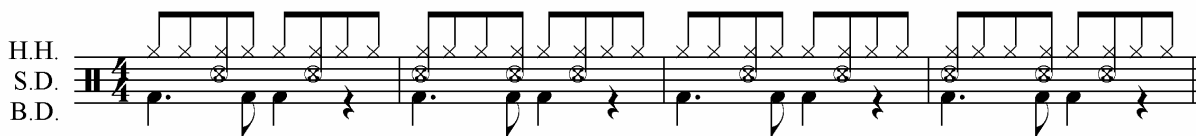
Start with the bass drum.



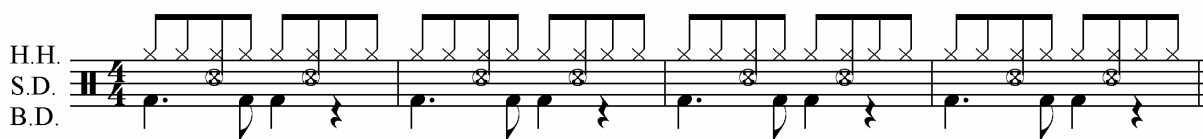
Add the hi-hat with hand.



Add the snare rim knock.



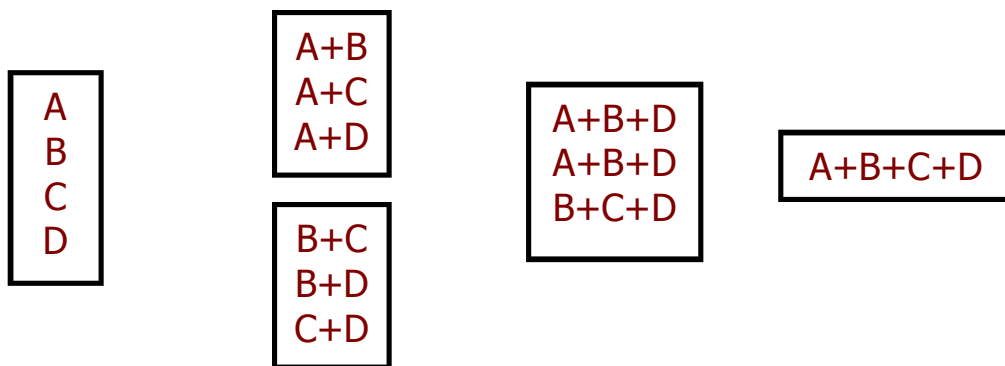
If necessary, try the "Cheater" Bossa, which is a simplified version of a Bossa Nova beat.



# Basic Beats: Practicing

## Alternate Practice Technique

Instead of layering the different components of the beat, try mixing the components up. For example, look at a basic rock groove. If the bass drum is line A, the snare drum is line B, the hi-hat is line C and the small tom is line D, you could practice the following combinations:



# Accents & Kicks

## Accents

Everyone in a jazz band has to play accents. Your job on drum set is a little more complicated, because not only do you have to play accents, you have to keep the beat going at the same time. Practice the following exercise while maintaining each of the basic beats. Play each accent first on the bass drum, then ride cymbal, hi-hat, and tom-toms, using different limbs. Use of a metronome will aid you greatly.

The image displays four staves of musical notation, each representing a 4-beat exercise for a drum set. The notation uses standard drum symbols: a slash (/) for a basic beat, a note with an accent (>) for an accent, and a note with a vertical line for a kick. The exercises are as follows:

- Staff 1:** Beat 1: four slashes. Beat 2: slash, slash, slash, accented quarter note. Beat 3: four slashes. Beat 4: slash, slash, slash, accented quarter note.
- Staff 2:** Beat 1: four slashes. Beat 2: slash, accented quarter note, slash, slash. Beat 3: four slashes. Beat 4: slash, slash, slash, accented quarter note.
- Staff 3:** Beat 1: four slashes. Beat 2: slash, slash, accented quarter note, slash. Beat 3: four slashes. Beat 4: slash, slash, slash, accented quarter note.
- Staff 4:** Beat 1: four slashes. Beat 2: slash, slash, slash, accented quarter note. Beat 3: four slashes. Beat 4: slash, slash, slash, accented quarter note.



# Accents & Kicks

## Kicks

Often in jazz band, the ensemble will play syncopated rhythms called kicks. A kick can also be described as accents of more than one note played by the band. As a drummer you can make these kicks easier for the band if you play a single note on the beat just preceding the ensemble entrance. This shows the band where the beat is and helps them enter solidly. This is called a set-up. Set-ups are not written on your music. Only by listening can you determine when to play a set-up. Practice of the following examples will get you started.

Band

Ride  
S.D.  
B.D.

Band

Ride  
S.D.  
B.D.

Band

Ride  
S.D.  
B.D.

# Adeste Fideles

Clarinet 1  
Soprano Sax  
Trumpet 1

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

*f*

*p*

*cresc.*

*f*

# Adeste Fideles

Clarinet 2  
Trumpet 2

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

*f*

*p*

*cresc.*

*f*

*cresc.*

# Adeste Fideles

Clarinet 3

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

5 staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The tempo is Maestoso moderato. The score includes dynamic markings: *f* (forte) at the beginning of the second staff, *p* (piano) at the end of the fourth staff, and *f* at the end of the fifth staff. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with some slurs and ties.

# Adeste Fideles

Bass Clarinet

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

5 staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The tempo is Maestoso moderato. The score includes dynamic markings: *f* (forte) at the beginning of the second staff, *p* (piano) at the beginning of the fifth staff, and *f* at the end of the fifth staff. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with some slurs and ties.

# Adeste Fideles

Alto Sax 1

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

5 staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The tempo is Maestoso moderato. The score includes dynamic markings: *f* (forte) at the start of the second staff, *p* (piano) at the end of the fourth staff, and *cresc.* (crescendo) and *f* at the end of the fifth staff. The music features various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some slurs and ties.

# Adeste Fideles

Alto Sax 2

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

5 staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The tempo is Maestoso moderato. The score includes dynamic markings: *f* (forte) at the start of the second staff, *p* (piano) at the end of the third staff, and *cresc.* (crescendo) at the start of the fifth staff. The music features various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some slurs and ties.

# Adeste Fideles

Tenor Sax  
Baritone T.C.

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

Five staves of music in 4/4 time, key of D major (two sharps). The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The fourth staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fifth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line.

# Adeste Fideles

Baritone Sax

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

Five staves of music in 4/4 time, key of D major (two sharps). The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff continues the melody. The fourth staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fifth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line.



# Adeste Fideles

Trombone  
Baritone B.C.

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

Five staves of music in bass clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. The tempo is Maestoso moderato. The first staff begins with a forte (f) dynamic. The second staff has a forte (f) dynamic. The third staff has a forte (f) dynamic. The fourth staff has a piano (p) dynamic. The fifth staff has a forte (f) dynamic. The music features various note values, including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and slurs.

# Adeste Fideles

Tuba  
Bass Trombone

arr. Russell Howland

Maestoso moderato

Five staves of music in bass clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. The tempo is Maestoso moderato. The first staff begins with a forte (f) dynamic. The second staff has a forte (f) dynamic. The third staff has a forte (f) dynamic. The fourth staff has a piano (p) dynamic. The fifth staff has a forte (f) dynamic. The music features various note values, including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and slurs.

# **Music Selection Through Grading (Grade 2 - 2 1/2)**

by Quincy Hilliard

Selecting music for teaching instrumental techniques and providing the students with a successful learning experience is even more difficult at this grade level. The first two levels encompass all of the basic learning skills that a student must know in order to have a solid foundation from which he will advance to a higher level. After the student passes this level, he will be expected to perform in a high school setting and know, without question, all of his basic skills.

Emphasis on good tone production, rhythmic reading, and intonation are the three major aspects in this level. If a student can produce a tone of good quality, understand how to count rhythms, and listens carefully for intonation problems, he has the primary bases that will ensure him of being a successful player. When selecting music for this level, examine those pieces that are exciting and challenging rhythmically, and those that emphasize good tone quality (chorales, andante works, etc.). The director should begin to explore intonation and its effects with the student. The first step in dealing with intonation is to teach students to listen and match pitches. The student must be aware of his own pitch, as well as, those around him.

The following outline contains the common music skills that a student is expected to learn in grade level 2 and 2 1/2. There may be some additions or deletions depending on the method book used. In choosing music that provides good teaching concepts, there ideas should be taken into consideration.

## **I. Performance Fundamentals**

A. Keys and Scales (Most Common)-F, B Flat, E Flat, (A Flat), Chromatic (One Octave)

B. Articulation

1. Staccato
2. Accent
3. Slur

C. Note Values and Rests

D. Rhythms

1. Simple Syncopation
2. Quarter Note Triplet

E. Meters-2/4, 3/4, 4/4, (Simple 6/8,)

F. Dynamics-p, mp, mf, f, Including crescendos and diminuendos

G. Tempo

1. Allegro- = 108 – 144
2. Andante- = 72 – 96
3. Ritardando

#### H. Phrasing-Elementary Techniques: Breathing

#### I. Style

1. March
2. Chorale
3. Mixed styles

#### J. Percussion

1. All Rhythms in Letter C
2. All Rolls in duple meter (Slow to moderate tempo)
3. Flam
4. Teaching common mallet instruments

### II. Selection Considerations

#### A. Scoring

1. Independent Contrapuntal Lines-The music should be interesting and provide melodic interest throughout. At this level, independent lines should be present in most sections.
2. Mature Band Sound-Avoid Block Band Scoring. Look for works which provide different but interesting color combination of instruments: (For example-clarinet & baritone, sax and Clarinet, flute and sax, etc.).
3. Limited Exposed Parts-Avoid exposed playing, especially in the low brass and horns.
4. Doubling of Unique Instruments-Parts for the Oboe, Alto Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Horns, and 3rd Trombone should not be essential to the work, so if they are not present, the piece does not suffer any harmonic loss.
5. Short Solos are acceptable in the Flute, Clarinet, Alto Sax, and Trumpet provided they have a good range and are technically not demanding upon the student.
6. One or Two Horn Parts-The piece may contain parts for one or two horns and their part may be doubled (most of the time) by another instrument. The rule for this is: If the horns have a melodic part, the part should be doubled with the alto sax; if the horns have a harmonic part, the part should be doubled with trombones or trumpets.

#### B. Range

1. Third Clarinet-Since this instrument will probably be your weakest, the range should not extend across the break and should not be technically demanding upon the student.



2. Third Trumpet-This instrument should not extend above third space C. In addition to a limited range, it should not have any demanding technical work for the student.
3. Third Trombone-Avoid writings that are above B Flat (above staff) and below A (first space). This instrument should also not explore any technical writing.

#### C. Use of Percussion Instruments

1. Pitch-Bells, Chimes, Xylophone
2. Timpani-Should not be demanding or essential to the piece
3. Non-Pitched-will include Woodblock, Triangle, Tambourine, Suspended Cymbal, and Crash Cymbal.
4. Special Effects-(Example: Coin Rake on Cymbal. Snare Stick on Cymbal, etc.).

#### D. Musical Forms

1. March
2. Overture
3. Theme and Variation
4. Suites-In the author's opinion, a young band can handle material of two or more movements. This musical form for grade level two is too often overlooked by publishers and directors. If you have works in your library for this grade level, treasure them and play them!!

E. Occasional Use of Accidentals-Works with few accidentals are acceptable and provide a good teaching tool for the director to expose students to what accidentals are and how they should be treated.

F. Avoid Frequent Key Changes-One key change is acceptable in a work at this level.

G. Avoid Frequent Meter Changes-One meter change is acceptable in a work at this level.

H. Length of Composition-The work should last somewhere between two and five minutes.

### III. Intangibles

A. Music From Other Lands-One of the most important elements in selecting music is to provide the students with a variety of different types of music. Music from other cultures (folk songs, etc.) should be introduced to the students in hopes that it will increase their awareness of the importance of music in other cultures.

B. Students' Reactions-For learning purposes, if the students enjoy what they are playing, the musical experience (for the director and student) will be more successful. Taking suggestions from the students when ordering or selecting music will give them an active role in the music selection process.

C. Musical Value-Musical value or musical substance is determined by the structural elements (melody, harmony, rhythm, form) and how well they are unified in the total composition. Is the piece interesting? Does each of these elements contribute to the unity of the piece? Finally, does the piece contain teaching concepts?

D. Diagnose and Treat the Problems of your Group. Once you have defined the strengths and weaknesses of your group, selecting music or exercises to correct these weaknesses is the next step. Listed below are the six major problems that a grade level two band may encounter. If your group possesses one or more of these problems, the proper music selection, in some instances, can help overcome the weaknesses.

1. Tone Quality
2. Intonation
3. Attacks and Releases
4. Rhythmic Counting (Music Reading)
5. Articulation
6. Blend and Balance

Grade two is the second and last area in which a student has to learn his basic fundamentals. Selecting quality literature for this grade level is a difficult task because there is such a large repertoire to choose from. If the director is familiar with the limitations of his group and knows the teaching concepts they must learn, he will probably not have a difficult time in selecting the correct literature for his band.

Next time: Grade 3 and 3 1/2.

# **A Brief History of the ABA**

John Locke

Vol 12, #1, p.8 (Aug-Sep 1996)

During the early decades of the twentieth century, it was the concert band which could rightfully be credited with bringing more quality music to the general public than any other type of musical organization. Concert bands travelled throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe and brought great music to thousands of people who otherwise would not have had an opportunity to experience musical culture. Regardless of their popularity, these concert bands were unable to compete on the same musical level as the symphony orchestra and, as a result, were said to have suffered from an inferiority complex. Several factors contributed to this state of mind including the difficulty of aspiring band conductors to obtain a quality music education, the limited repertoire of the band (which, with the exception of marches, had to be largely borrowed from libraries of the orchestra, opera, and light opera), and a lack of camaraderie among the leading bandmasters.

Dr. Edwin Franko Goldman, composer, conductor, and founder of the Goldman Band, recognized these problems and challenges to the band movement. He believed that good band music could and should be offered to the music-loving public. In addition, Goldman was convinced that what was good for one band would be good for all. He arranged for a small group of outstanding bandmasters to meet in New York to discuss the problems of their profession. They all agreed that through a combined effort, they could work toward better bands and better band music. It was here that Goldman's idea for establishing The American Bandmasters Association (ABA) became a real possibility.

Goldman continued to be the momentum behind the ABA and was driven by his resolve to improve what he considered to be unprofessional conduct among some bandmasters. Goldman noted an increasing degree of envy and jealousy among band conductors and performers. He, in fact, was determined to improve not only the band profession, but collegial spirit among the directors. Goldman also realized the dramatic impact of the radio broadcast and the steady decrease in popularity of the touring professional bands. Concert bands were forced to compete for important bookings. The one exception was Goldman's New York City-based band which experienced the opposite effect from the popularity of the radio. Many of Goldman's concerts were broadcast on radio and became popular throughout the country. This in turn boosted his live concert success in New York City, drawing crowds of 25,000 or more people. Goldman became the second most famous bandmaster in the United States, behind only the immortal John Philip Sousa.

This rise in fame was not easy for Goldman, as his sensitive nature caused him to worry about the quarrelsome conduct he was witnessing in the professional band world. It did, however, provide him the respect and contacts that he would need to gain interest and support for the ABA. In 1927, his travels as a leader in the band world afforded Goldman opportunities to discuss his ideas with other bandmasters. He was encouraged by favorable reactions in the profession and, during the summer of 1928, met with Victor

Grabel, conductor of the Chicago Concert Band and Captain William Stannard, Leader of the U.S. Army Band, in Columbus, Ohio, to begin discussing what resulted in the first formal steps towards the foundation of ABA.

The original and lasting intent of ABA was recorded in a letter to Albert Austin Harding, Director of Bands at the University of Illinois, by Capt. Stannard in August, 1928: "...we conceived the idea of creating an ABA for the purpose of furthering the interests of outstanding American Band Masters, and of interesting composers, arrangers, and music publishers in Wind Band music... It would be the aim of the ABA to unite in a concerted effort to influence the best composers to write for the Wind Band."

He also mentioned that Commander John Philip Sousa had been interviewed in connection with the proposed idea and was quite enthusiastic in consenting to act as President of the association. The support of John Philip Sousa was of vital importance as he was a man recognized as America's foremost bandmaster. Sousa had the respect and personality necessary to motivate bandmasters to unite in Goldman's common cause.

Grabel and Stannard immediately began groundwork toward the official foundations of ABA. Stannard sought input from acclaimed bandmasters and Grabel organized meetings in Chicago when Stannard, Harding, Sousa or other bandmasters were in the city. Goldman remained the guiding force behind the movement, while Grabel appears to have acted as the primary executive force.

Next time: The first meeting.

# **Bandworld View**

## **Editorial**

### **The System is the Solution**

**by M. Max McKee**

Back in 1986 (year two of Bandworld Magazine), I wrote the following editorial. I believe it is even more true today than it was 20 years ago.

The System is the Solution. Ma Bell's slogan wasn't such a bad one, was it? The system she had in place before the breakup of AT&T sure beat the devil out of the one we now have!

What's that got to do with bands? A lot.

As I observe the work of struggling young directors and hopelessly entrenched older directors, what happened to America's phone system often comes to mind. The focal point of quality control was easy to determine. Knowing who to contact when something went wrong was straight forward. More importantly, (like it or not) there was a philosophy, a plan of operation...in short, a system which everyone recognized.

A great many band programs are like today's phone company. The system is there, but focus and long-term purpose are lacking. The end user (in our case, the bandsman) finally just gives up in one way or another.

I learned early on in my own career that a lack of innate talent could be almost totally overcome by systematizing: Organize, organize, organize. The concept is so simple that most people overlook it.

I'll never forget a statement made to me many years ago by my good friend, Bill Moffit: "For every minute you want to save on the football field, expect to spend one hour of preparation outside rehearsal time." Now that doesn't mean that it will take 50 hours of preparation to get ready for the next 50-minute rehearsal. It does mean, however, that adequate preparation will save valuable time while inadequate preparation will surely waste it...by the bucketful.

And there is another side effect. Good organization is perceived by others as quality control. It, in fact, is. If, for example, daily warmups are directly related to skill development which are in turn connected to current and future music selections, this has to be thoughtfully organized. Quality and the development necessary to achieve it are controlled through a regimen. Result: Quality via organization.

This systematizing can extend to anything: Intonation, rhythm, instruments, music storage, uniforms, publicity, recruitment, fund raising. And...the less experience and confidence a director feels about a particular area, the more preparation and systematizing he or she must do.

Can't tell 5 cents flat from 5 cents sharp? Study the intonation tendencies of the instruments. Memorize them. Make the students memorize them. Sha-zam! Intonation improves. Can't get a halftime show to sound good and look good? Stop. Figure out why certain tunes make your band sound bad (too complex, difficult key, needs lots of low brass, etc.). Determine what part of the entrance and exit look lousy (end zone entry, ranks too long). Eliminate those. Simplify. Systematize. Find something that will make the students proud. Zap! Halftime shows improve.

No matter what the area, if it's just not working, then organize it. Sound too easy? It is. But if you try it, you'll soon find that the system is the solution.

P.S. All of this got installed into our American Band College masters degree program starting in 1992. There are now 342 grads from over 40 states. MANY of them will tell you just how true they found the above after studying here in Ashland, Oregon with dozens of the world's most successful teachers, composers and conductors.

## **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to a Band Rehearsal #4**

**By M. Max McKee**

After the Gunnison experience, I started private lessons and quickly moved to first chair clarinet. In high school I was in the Washington All-State Bands of 1958 and 1960 and the All-Northwest Band in 1959 playing in the first clarinet section. Because of the improvements in my playing, my teacher (Eric Nelson, the band director in nearby Sumner) passed me off to the principal clarinetist in the Seattle Symphony in my senior year. Ron Phillips had been a student of the most famous clarinet teacher of all, Daniel Bonade. He nearly instantly cured my nervous habits as a player. Perhaps it had something to do with his long and wonderful career. He played principal clarinet in the Seattle Symphony for 56 years and died at the age of 98 in 2004.

During those high school years I got doubly lucky because my father and mother, George and Ona, were involved in many facets of choral work. My dad had been a band director for years but switched to choir about the time I got to high school. I not only sang in his high school choir but he nudged me toward being a member of the barbershop quartet he formed every year. It ("The Uncalled Four") got quite good, did over 50 performances, and the experience set me up for many special times in choral music ever after. And, as my dad said over and over again in the years that followed, "Don't forget. Your bands can sing. Have them put their instruments down and sing. The crowd will love it." I didn't forget and he was absolutely right!

After the excitement of the band-orchestra-choir finale at the 1959 All-Northwest convention in Seattle, I never forgot "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" with audience participation. While conducting church choirs as a college student in 1962-1967, I recalled that moment and made an arrangement. It was so successful that in 1974 I orchestrated it for band, orchestra and choir to use as a finale at the Southern Oregon University Senior Honor Festival. Later it went into finale and you can now download a score and complete set of parts. Try it.

As a member of those all-state groups, I had the great fortune to play under Clarence Sawhill (UCLA) and Charles Minelli (Ohio University). Both became mentors, Clarence to a very large degree less than 10 years later at Southern Oregon University's Siskiyou Band Camp.

In my senior year (1960), I had a contest judge by the name of Randall Spicer (Washington State University). He recruited me via a very nice scholarship. Less than two years later I married his daughter, Nelwyn, and thus began a 40-year association with one of the world's finest teachers, a man who became a second father to me.

Next time: Randall Spicer's unique band sound. (Maybe the fact that his Colorado high school bands finished first in concert and marching 17 years in a row had something to do with that.)


**BW 2006**

## *The Bandworld Legion of Honor*


[Previous LEGION](#)
[Next LEGION](#)


**Russell Bertles**

Director of Bands at Dutchtown Middle School in Hampton, Georgia, Russ Bertles has taught in the public schools for 25 years. He holds a bachelor's degree from Jacksonville State University and just completed the American Band College masters program at Southern Oregon University. His middle school bands have received many superior ratings at the district level and in various other festivals.

"I strongly believe that you have to put the kids first, to teach them life skills. You must care about them and care for them. The superior ratings and the first place awards are simply the gravy."

## A special award of The John Philip Sousa Foundation

The Bandworld Legion of Honor was established in 1989 to honor, over the course of a year, eight of the finest band directors in our business.

Recipients have taught for at least fifteen years, have maintained a very high quality concert band program, and have contributed significantly to the profession through dedication to bands and band music.

Each is honored at the annual Sousa Foundation awards ceremony during the Midwest Band Clinic in Chicago, Illinois.

Chairman of the Legion of Honor Committee is Robert E. Foster, University of Kansas, and Past President of the American Bandmasters Association.

[Legion Laureates List Link](#)

[Robert Foster Bio](#)  
[Legion of Honor Chairman](#)



**William Ingram**

Bill Ingram has taught in the California public schools since 1969. The past 30 he has served as Director of Bands at Tulare Union High School. A graduate of Bakersfield State University, he holds bachelor's and master's degrees from BSU. In 1988 he received the High School Band Director's Hall-of-Fame Award and in 2001 he was inducted into the American School Band Directors Association. For the past 27 years his bands have received superior ratings in the CMEA Central Section contests.

"Having played in the Porterville Union High School Band" in the Tournament of Roses Parade, traveling to Japan and many other important events "under Buck Shaffer was one of the most important factor in shaping my career."