

The

NOTEWORTHY

Summer 2025

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Coach's Comments

Keep your fingers crossed for nice warm weather for our Spring Festival Recital here at the Studio, taking place on Sunday, May 18th at 6:00 pm!

For the Recital, everyone has been placed in a small ensemble, or two, as well as with the entire group, to perform. So, in order to accomplish this we will need to rehearse these ensembles. I have set up a schedule for May for us to do so, which everyone received when they were given their music.

Ensemble rehearsals will all take place the week before the Recital, as this has proven to be the most effective way of preparing the groups for performance. So the first week of May will be our regular Coaching Session, with Rhythms and Scales Pass-Offs (last chance to add on the points!). Then the second week will be the two ensemble rehearsals. They will take place on Monday and Thursday of that week. Makeup Sessions will also be scheduled this week.

Here is our exact schedule:

Monday, May 12th (Week 14):

3:30 pm: Sax Quartet: Ben, Charlotte, Liv
4:00 pm: Sax Quintet: Charlotte, Cheryl, Alex, Ben
4:30 pm: Clarinet Quintet: Alex, Liv, Ben, Charlotte
5:00 pm: Double Reed Trio: Danielle, Ben
5:30 pm: Clarinet Quartet: Abrielle, Avonlea, Conner
6:00 pm: Sax Quintet: Kelus, Abrielle, Danielle, Simon
6:30 pm: Sax Quartet: Izzie, Stephen, Jacob
7:00 pm: Clarinet Quartet: Jacob, Stephen, Audrey
7:30 pm: Double Reed Quartet: Audrey, Stella, Simon
8:00 pm: Woodwind Choir: Everyone

Thursday, May 15th (Week 14):

3:30 pm: Sax Quartet: Ben, Charlotte, Liv
4:00 pm: Sax Quintet: Charlotte, Cheryl, Alex, Ben
4:30 pm: Clarinet Quintet: Alex, Liv, Ben, Charlotte
5:00 pm: Double Reed Trio: Danielle, Ben

5:30 pm: Clarinet Quartet: Abrielle, Avonlea, Conner
6:00 pm: Sax Quintet: Kelus, Abrielle, Danielle, Simon
6:30 pm: Sax Quartet: Izzie, Stephen, Jacob
7:00 pm: Clarinet Quartet: Jacob, Stephen, Audrey
7:30 pm: Double Reed Quartet: Audrey, Stella, Simon
8:00 pm: Woodwind Choir: Everyone

I know this won't be convenient for everyone (if anyone), but please, for the sake of your fellow ensemble members, as we really cannot have an effective rehearsal without everyone, do all you can to arrange to be here.

The Recital will be held here at the Studio, in the "East Garden," entering through the north front gate. In case of rain, we have access to a great big tent, and additional smaller tents. And plan to stay afterwards for awards and refreshments.

We will have one final Coaching Session the week after the Recital, where we will review our performances, and for which you should prepare a page or two from one of your method books, on your preferred instrument, to play for me.

We're on break after that for four weeks, then the optional six-week Summer Semester will begin the week of June 23rd. If you decide to take a break for the summer, you will still be enrolled in the Studio when we begin again in September. But if you decide to attend for the summer, I promise we'll do something different (and maybe even more fun!) than during the school year. I am hoping to have Sessions for the Summer Semester on Tuesdays and Wednesdays starting at 2:00; and, if needed, on Thursdays, starting at 4:30. No problem with skipping a week or rescheduling for camps or family vacations, etc. You may pay for the six weeks however you'd like - weekly, half-and-half, monthly, all at once. Invite your friends and classmates to join us for the summer, with no contracts and no obligation to continue in the Fall - just an opportunity to improve on playing skills.

Let's have a great, successful Recital!

10 Steps to a More Organized Way of Learning New Music

Learning music, just like learning any other high level cognitive activity, requires many hours of work with intense concentration.

I am often surprised when I ask my students, and even sometimes colleagues, about their process for learning new repertoire. This could be for solo, chamber, large ensemble, and/or foundational music. Many musicians approach this critical process in a casual and non-organized manner. The most successful and accomplished musicians have a structured game plan when tackling new repertoire.

There are numerous stages of preparing a piece of music for performance. Each player can develop their own methodology for achieving their personal best musical results.

Having a well-conceived plan in place will ultimately lead to more thorough preparation and will certainly save time. A structured routine will also ease the learning process. It will allow a player to more easily determine the current stage and progress of the preparation process.

Here is my list of the 10 stages of musical preparation:

1. Listening to the piece (live or recorded performances, if any)
2. Initial reading
3. Planning musical intentions
4. Creating a practice strategy
5. Macro practicing; learning sections at a time
6. Micro practicing; identifying and practicing more challenging measures and phrases
7. Score study (unless unaccompanied)
8. Connecting multiple sections
9. Run-throughs
10. Simulating performances

"Having a well-conceived plan in place will ultimately lead to more thorough preparation..." - Mitchell Estrin

Let's expand on these 10 stages of musical preparation.

1. Listening

Go hear a live performance or find recording(s) to listen to, in order to get an overall impression of the total work. It is important not to listen too much again after this initial hearing, in order to avoid influencing one's interpretation during the actual learning process.

2. Initial Reading

I encourage reading through the entire piece (or entire movement) the first time through. Take conservative tempos, keep a steady beat, and keep your place in the music, overlooking missed notes, rhythms, etc. This will not only get you started, but will enhance your overall sight reading ability.

3. Planning Musical Intentions

Reflect on the character of the music, any indications given by the composer, and personal preference, to decide the musical mood and style. Also decide on your goal tempo(s). Begin considering phrasing choices, such as breathing and the tension and release points of the phrases.

4. Create a Practice Strategy

This is a very important part of the process. Realistically analyze the amount of woodshedding required to master the most difficult measures, phrases, and sections.

Commit to slow methodical practice and gradually build up the tempos.

Make a spreadsheet, breaking the piece down into components with multiple rows listing the date of practice, length of practice, tempos, difficulties encountered, and comments on overall progress. You will

quickly learn which passages require the most attention and repetitions.

5. Macro Practicing; Learning Sections at a Time

I have found that slowly learning sections at a time leads to the most thorough preparation.

When planning your practice strategy, make specific notes about how you intend to divide the piece up into smaller sections, each to be worked on individually.

Think of the piece as a pie chart, with the most challenging sections receiving a larger proportion of the chart and the corresponding practice time allotment.

6. Micro Practicing; Identifying and Practicing More Challenging Measures and Phrases

As you study, it will become obvious as to which measures and phrases present the most difficult challenges.

These challenges can be technical and/or rhythmical. It is critical to identify these places early and spend the necessary time analyzing the difficulties, finding solutions, and then repetitively practicing these places at slow tempos. Never play these places faster than you can execute them cleanly. Gradually work up the tempo over a period of days, weeks, or even months, when necessary.

7. Score Study

Studying and knowing only your own part is incomplete musical study.

The exception, of course, would be when learning an unaccompanied solo piece. It is important to study and understand all of the parts in a particular work in order to create a complete interpretation.

If you are performing a work with piano, study the piano part. This will give you a better understanding of the harmonies, textures, balance, and rhythmic structure.

If you are preparing a chamber work or large ensemble piece, carefully study the score to more fully understand the music and how your part fits into the overall musical context.

8. Connecting Multiple Sections

Once you have worked comprehensively on two smaller sections, play through them together. This will give you a good idea of how your preparation of the smaller sections is progressing.

Each time you work on another smaller section to your satisfaction, link it to the previously learned sections, and continue adding sections until you have completed the movement or the piece in its entirety.

9. Run-Throughs

Once you have put all of the sections together of an entire movement or piece, begin making complete run-throughs.

Note any trouble spots or measures, phrases, and sections that are still not at performance level.

Revisit these sections and practice slowly and methodically until you are satisfied. Run-throughs will increase stamina and begin the last stage of the preparation process.

10. Simulated Performances

Lastly, go through the entire piece simulating performance. Do not stop for any reason until you have gone through the entire piece.

You will learn a great deal in simulated performances that will help you have a better performance when the time comes. Aspects such as pacing, endurance, stage presence, and the reappearance of weaker sections will be defined.

Learning a piece of music takes a great deal of time and effort, I hope these 10 steps will help you to achieve a more organized and successful musical preparation process!

<https://www.dansr.com/resources/10-steps-to-a-more-organized-way-of-learning-new-music>, Mitchell Estrin. Date Posted: March 04, 2020. Accessed 4/8/25.

Media Center

Print, Digital and Internet Extras

The Number Ones: Twenty Chart-Topping Hits That Reveal the History of Pop Music. Tom Breihan, 2023. Paperback, 352 pages. Da Capo. Amazon.com, \$19.99, Kindle \$11.99.

Tom Breihan launched his Stereogum column in 2018 writing about every No. 1 hit in the history of the *Billboard* Hot 100 Singles chart, in chronological order. He now compiles and expands on those reviews providing a fascinating narrative of the history of popular music through the lens of game-changing No. 1 singles. What results is an exploration of what makes indelible ear candy across the decades – leaving readers to wonder what could possibly happen next.

Music for Prime Time: A History of American Television Themes and Scoring. Jon Burlingame, 2023. Hardcover, 480 pages. Oxford University Press. Amazon.com, \$35.12, Kindle \$24.99.

With hundreds of interviews conducted over a 35-year span, this book is the most comprehensive history of television scoring to date. Music composed for TV had, until recently, never been taken seriously. Catchy themes were fondly remembered but not considered culturally significant. Yet noted composers like John Williams, Henry Mancini, Jerry Goldsmith and Lalo Schiffrin learned and/or honed their craft in television before going on to major success in feature films. It also looks at music for animated series, news and documentary programming, TV Movies and miniseries, and how music for TV has evolved in the era of cable and streaming.

Classical Goes Pop Video. David Bennett. 2022.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTZjYKNPnYg>.

It might seem that classical music is a world apart from popular music, but in this video, piano instructor David Bennett lists 14 modern songs based on classical music and showcases them side-by-side with the pieces that inspired them. Without a doubt, the spirit of classical music is alive and well in our modern world.

Being in a Band, with Monica Strut: Podcast.

Being in a Band is a podcast for savvy musicians and aspiring professionals who want to learn more about the music business, marketing, branding, strategy, mindset and all things, well, being in a band. Hosted by digital marketer, music journalist and musician, Monica Strut, this show is designed to be a resource for you to up-skill, become empowered and take you to the next level.

Parent's Column

Reminders & Helps to Enhance Your Child's Musical Experience

How can you keep your child's interest in training and attending sessions at a high level through the summer months, especially if they're taking the summer off?

Perhaps a glimpse at what is possible in the future if they stick with it will help. Showing and allowing students to discover what their potential is can be an excellent motivator.

One activity that is free and appropriate for the entire family is a professional level Symphonic Band Concert. Utah State University's Alumni Band is scheduled to perform on five Sunday evenings, June and July, outside on the Quad east of Old Main, and in the Daines Concert Hall. Performances begin at 7:00 pm. and last about an hour.

These fifty to seventy professional-level musicians, many whose careers are not in music, meet for just over an hour prior to the concert to prepare the music, and then deliver a polished and varied performance of traditional marches, classic standards and new publications.

The drive to Logan is pleasant, the temperature is much cooler, and the music is great! Plan your family outing(s) now:

June 8th, Quad
June 22nd, Quad
June 29th, Daines Concert Hall
July 13th, Daines Concert Hall
July 27th, Daines Concert Hall

Closer to home are the many, often free, community band and orchestra concerts, especially for Independence Day and Pioneer Day (don't forget about the parades!); and a number of musicals using live musicians in area cities including Murray, Sandy, Cottonwood Heights and Herriman. Here's just a few:

"Tarzan the Stage Musical" Butterfield Park Pavilion, Herriman, June 6-16.

"Something Rotten," Murray Amphitheater, June 13-21

"The Lightning Thief," Butler Middle School, Cottonwood Heights, July 11-19.

"Hairspray!" Murray Amphitheater, August 1-9.

"Shrek the Musical" The Theater at Mount Jordan, Sandy, August 1-16.

More information on exact locations, times and prices can easily be found with a simple internet search including the name of the show and the city.