

Conducting Reflection

In general, I am somewhat pleased with my gesture and stance, I found myself focusing more on what I was hearing than to an ideal technical picture but I assume that this is due primarily to the years I've had since being in a conducting techniques class, myself. Advising others is quite simple, breaking my own die-hard habits is naturally more difficult.

I tend to over-conduct a choir which is struggling to look at me and which is somewhat unfamiliar to me. This is simply a demonstration of my lack of trust which will grow as I continue to work with the group and is a reflection of my nature to not trust at first and to warm-up slowly. This is most commonly reflected in pattern structure which is rarely broken in an initial read-through. I tend to also lean on this strategy when I know that I have instrumentalists in the room, who will not be familiar with the choral conductors means of shaping to the point of departing from a clear downbeat. A final reflection on this note comes from my undergraduate training, which was entirely in baton (as Michigan is a Midwestern School with strong band influences). This use of the baton tends to naturally lean towards over-enunciation of the pattern. When put together, these contributing factors lead to an overly strong right hand during initial choral read-throughs.

I was pleased with my choice of dynamic demonstration overall. I did find that Miles was correct, I gave a release and prep which anyone outside of my graduate studio would see as a double prep. The lack of clarity at that moment was not lost on me, but I did look past it versus addressing it at the time.

Unlike what has been demonstrated, I do not choose to show each entrance when they are so close together unless the piece is using excessive imitation. I would rather rehearse them in a manner which allows them to see that they can lean on the other voices to find their own entrances. It is quite clear from the other voices how many entrances in this piece should work. If a singer is watching the other lines, they should find their way without much help from the conductor.

Overall, I was pleased with my performance. I do not ever intend to be a warm conductor, even though I do think of myself as inviting. I'm relatively academic in nature and tend to find little flaws and big successes before I find anything else. This will always be reflected in my conducting personality and I have long-since accepted that.

