

The

Note Worthy

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Director's Message

Everyone has settled in well here at the Studio, now that we're three months into the school year. In fact, many of you, both continuing members as well as new members – which is almost half of you – are surprising me quite a bit. I'm impressed with the hard work and progress you are making in learning to play well. A number of you are putting up impressive weekly practice times, and several others are pretty much burning through method books as fast as you can pass off exercises to me.

We are now ready to get to work on our solos, and ensembles too, for some, for our January 23rd Winter Recitals, as well as for school, district, region and state Solo & Ensemble Festivals and for college scholarship auditions. Everyone will have a printed copy of their solo by next week to start working on, and CD recordings will follow shortly. You also will have a worksheet to fill out in the next few weeks about your solo, including who wrote it and when, if it was originally written for your instrument, and details on how you are going to perform the solo.

Before the Christmas Break you will be assigned to find an accompanist – and get him or her a copy of the music – who can play piano with you here at the Studio, and, preferably, for school Festivals, too. The week of January 17-20 (Week 19) you will be rehearsing here at the Studio with your accompanist and your ensemble. Times will be open throughout the week and you will need to arrange a time that will work the best for you, your accompanist, and your ensemble members. There is no school on

Monday and Tuesday of that week (end of the Semester), so Session Times will be available earlier on those days.

Our Winter Recitals will take place on Sunday, January 23rd, at 4:00 and 6:00 pm. You will perform on only one of the Recitals, which I will confirm with you when you attend with your accompanist/ensemble the week before. We need to perform on Sunday in order to avoid the All-State Band & Orchestra Concert on Saturday, and still perform before school Solo & Ensemble Festivals begin.

Remember, though you are out of school the week before Christmas, December 20-23, we will still have regularly scheduled Sessions here at the Studio, unless you arrange to reschedule before then (we need the time to work on the solos). Then we will take the week between Christmas and New Year's Day off and return the first week of January.

After the Recitals on January 23rd, we will have two weeks off for Winter Break, during which time the Utah Music Educator's Professional Development Conference will take place in St. George. You will receive another newsletter after the Recitals reminding you of the break and our return for Semester II the week of February 7-10.

Prepare for some good hard work on solos and ensembles the next couple months, and we'll review the Recital performances at the start of Semester II.

Top 10 Contest Tips

American flutist, Albert Tipton, an accomplished orchestral player and teacher, felt that "students entering a competition could benefit more from the experience if they were aware of the judges' aims as well as their own." Here are ten tips summarized from an article Tipton wrote in 1971 for the August-September issue of *The School Musician Director and Teacher*, titled "Notes on the Judging of Contests." These tips may give you a better perspective as to what judges may be thinking at your next competition, festival or audition.

1. Tonal Focus

Having a focused core of your sound is the most important aspect of performance. Your tone should not sound airy or forced in any register. Equally important is good intonation developed through practice with other instruments and piano, and by playing intervals correctly.

2. Accuracy

Especially take care to interpret the dynamics on the page correctly. Check that accidentals are carried through the measure. Play for someone else or record yourself and listen for an accurate performance including no missing notes in runs.

3. Understanding Rhythm

Keeping a steady tempo and properly subdividing the count is essential. Practice regularly with a metronome.

4. Technique

Technique is more than just fast fingers. Finger evenness, legato playing, articulation, dynamic range, and tone projection are all part of technique. Regularly practice scales and etudes.

5. Phrasing and Musicality

Work to develop musical lines and learn to shape phrase endings. Listen carefully to direction from teachers and to professional recordings. Try singing a phrase out loud and imitating your singing on your instrument.

6. Style

In drama, each character has characteristic costumes and a unique way of delivering lines. Music is much the same, with composers writing with a particular sound in mind and following certain compositional rules. A winning performance will demonstrate an understanding of the composer's style.

7. Ensemble

Being a "team player" is crucial, whether performing with other wind instruments or with the piano. Entrances must be together and tempos must be the same. The melody needs to be heard at all times – if you can't hear the melody, you're probably playing too loud.

8. Personality

Often the difference between two apparently equal performances comes down to a player's personality or approach to the music. Show confidence and enjoyment in playing your music.

9. Stage Presence

A performer sets the mood from the moment they walk on stage. Everything, including posture, tuning your instrument and announcing your selection creates an impression on the judges. Watching video of your performance can reveal any nervous habits and polish your stage presence.

10. Memorization

Wind and string players are seldom required to memorize their music, but memorization can enhance a performance by providing more confidence resulting from a deeper understanding of the music. Judges are always impressed with memorized performances.

One final thought – Tipton recommended keeping a positive attitude, staying open and receptive to judges comments, and not focusing just on the final rating.

Heather Small, Flute Talk, Articles, Advice for Students, September 2008, www.theinstrumentalist.com/magazine-flutetalk/

Accessories Order December 3rd

I will be placing an accessories order in December in order to replenish my stock of reeds. Many other items are also available at a reduced cost, if you are interested in having me place your order with mine.

Below is a list of some of the items available and their approximate cost. Many other items are also available – just ask.

Payment for these orders will need to be received before the 3rd or I will not be able to place your order. There will be a reminder announcement on the board.

Metronomes	\$18.00 up
Tuners	\$15.00 up
Combo Metro/Tuners	\$25.00 up
Clarinet Mouthpiece	\$31.00
	(Fobes Debut)
Ligatures	\$13.00 up
Clarinet Reeds	\$10.60 up
(Vandoren Traditional(10)	\$18.50,
Rico Reserve(5)	\$10.60)
Alto Sax Reeds	\$13.70 up
(Vandoren Traditional(10)	\$22.70,
Rico Reserve(5)	\$13.70)
Tenor Sax Reeds (5)	\$15.90 up
(Vandoren Traditional	\$15.90,
Rico Reserve	\$16.80)
Reed Guards (assort. colors)	\$3.50 up
(Clar/Alto 2	\$3.50,
Clar/Alto 4	\$3.50)
Neck straps	\$4.50 up
(Clarinet -	\$9.85/\$24.50,
Sax -	\$4.50 up)
Handkerchief Swabs	\$7.00 up
(Silk pull through, assort. colors,	
Oboe \$7.00 up, Clarinet \$7.50 up,	
Sax \$10.00 up, Bassoon \$9.50 up)	
Music Stands	\$10.00 up
(carrying bags also available)	

Also other reed cases, instrument cases & stands, other reeds, mouthpieces & ligatures, etc., etc.

Parent's Column

*Reminders & Helps to
Enhance Your Child's
Musical Experience*

High School Music = College Success

"Richard Strauch tells of the star clarinetist, violist, or tenor who informs the director that he or she is going to drop of a high school ensemble because of the need to "focus on my academics and add some other things to my high school resume so I can get into my first-choice college."

"Not so fast, says Strauch. In a 2008 article in *Voice* magazine, he cites some fascinating statistics. At Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington, students who had played in band through high school had higher GPAs and SAT verbal and math scores and show a record of "consistent commitment" a quality that catches the eyes of college admissions staff.

"Fred Pforsh noted that, in his experience, usually "the music students are academically above average." The GPA and SAT numbers often simply "confirm what [people in the admissions office] have been seeing all along."

"This is no surprise to Michael Blakeslee, MENC's Deputy Executive Director, who says, "This approach is backed by a number of studies, notably the Harris surveys of 2006 and 2007 that linked participation in music programs to higher graduation rates, educational attainment, and even lifetime earnings. It's well in line with some of the points made in the "Arts Skills Map" of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills(www.P21.org), where study in music and the other arts is linked to skills that include "initiative and self-direction." And finally, it's consistent with the experience of generations of teachers, students, and parents, who know that music study is one of the best ways for students to learn to focus on the things that really matter in school and in life."

"Bottom line: Stick with that high school ensemble, and you're more likely to succeed—both in college and beyond."

To read the entire article, go to www.voicemagazine.net.

Richard Strauss is a professor of music at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. Michael Blakeslee is MENC's deputy executive director and chief operation officer. Fred Pforsh is dean of enrollment services at Whitworth.

--Ella Wilcox, Nov. 3, 2010, MENC: The National Association for Music Education (www.menc.org)