PETITE VOIX: 
AN ENDEAVOR IN THE CONDUCTING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

The conductor of a musical ensemble has many responsibilities to prepare a group for a performance. As undergraduate students, few music education majors have the opportunity to be fully responsible for all aspects of the concert preparation process until they are out of the guided learning environment. This project was designed to provide me with an opportunity to assume full responsibility for preparing a choir for a recital. For the project, a recital choir of ten women’s voices rehearsed for three weeks and performed a recital of repertoire that I selected for the ensemble. Decisions made during the process were based on methodologies taught in my formal education as a future music educator and a review of standard literature on topics pertaining to repertoire selection, rehearsal strategies, and concert performance. I documented and reflected on my experience within the four main areas of conductor responsibility: Repertoire Selection, Score Preparation, Rehearsal, and Performance. Based on the experience, I provided recommendations to other beginning conductors including that they be familiar with the nature of their singers, avoid over-programming, schedule shorter, more frequent rehearsals, use original sources for background research, and provide the ensemble with director’s notes prior to the first rehearsal. In addition, I discussed the impact of the experience on my musical and educational philosophies.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

The process of leading an ensemble to publicly express a unified musical interpretation of a given composition is a complicated venture. At each step, a director must consider numerous variables affecting the repertoire selection, rehearsal process, and details of performance. As with all circumstantially dependent disciplines, practical adeptness in these areas is developed through both instruction and experience. In the Bachelor of Music Education program at the Pennsylvania State University, the primary focus of course work is the development of personal musicianship, technical facility and “a firm foundation in pedagogy.” (“Bachelor of Music Education: Mission Statement”) While these lay an important foundation for informed pedagogy, elements of ensemble leadership are most effectively learned through real world experience. While the Penn State School of Music does provide undergraduate music education majors the option of performing a solo recital or conducting a chamber ensemble, in both instances, faculty members retain certain responsibilities and authority over the projects. The objective of this thesis was to document a recital experience from its conception to its performance.

Overview of the Project

In this project, I assumed full responsibility for all elements of concert preparation and execution through conducting a choral recital. The recital choir of ten women’s voices was comprised of junior, senior and graduate members of Penn State’s auditioned choirs. These women were selected based on their musical skill, level of experience, scheduling availability, and compatibility of vocal timbre with the other singers. No
audition was administered as the women were invited based on a previous knowledge of musical work.

For the purposes of the experiment and its documentation, the areas of conductor responsibility are divided into four categories: Repertoire Selection, Repertoire Preparation, the Rehearsal Process and Performance. The approach to each one of these areas was based on a review of standard literature and methodologies as taught in the Penn State Music Education curriculum. Based on recommendations in each area, I selected repertoire, prepared the scores, planned rehearsals, rehearsed the ensemble and performed the recital. Reflections on the process are based on the perceived musical success of the performance as it aligns with standards of quality music performance and personal musical philosophy.
CHAPTER II: REPERTOIRE SELECTION

Review of Standard Criteria

When selecting repertoire for concert performance, many considerations guide a conductor’s selection. (Brinson 74) As Margaret Hillis, late conductor of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, shared in an interview, “There is such a broad spectrum of repertory that programming becomes a problem of elimination.” (Glenn 82) Years of tradition and methodologies suggest that this process of elimination begins at the extra-musical level. Whether selecting music for a school program, for a community concert, or in a professional performance, the concert process must be founded on repertoire that is appropriate for the given size and voicing of the ensemble. (Glenn 85)

According to James Jordan one must consider the ensemble force, voicing, range, tessitura, level of difficulty and vocal demands, ensuring that a successful performance of the repertoire is within reach for the ensemble. (113) The range of a given voice part is commonly defined as the distance between the highest and lowest pitch a voice part is required to sing. The tessitura of a voice part is commonly defined as the area within the range where the majority of the notes sit. When assessing the range and tessitura of a piece a conductor should also consider the vowel shape, duration, approach to, dynamic level and exposure of a voice part at extreme pitches. (Brinson 76)

Other elements contributing to the level of difficulty of a piece is its length, texture, meter, rhythm, tempo, accompaniment, and tonality. One must truly consider whether the conductor and singers have the skill set, stamina, technical facility, contextual awareness, and intellectual or emotional understanding to accurately perform the composition. For example, the suggested song length for a child between
Kindergarten and 2nd grade is four phrases of four beats. (Rutkowski 32) Any piece longer than this suggested length could be vocally straining to the young singer. Other factors impacting the accessibility of a composition are the language and style of the piece. In order to lead singers through a musical experience, the conductor must have some knowledge of the cultural, stylistic, and linguistic foundation of the music. (Cannon) If a conductor has no background in the correct pronunciation of the text or proper performance practice, s/he must consider his/her access to resources such as a language teacher or native speaker. Additionally, the conductor must be mindful of the availability of the accompaniment forces for the piece. (Brinson 78) A complex piano reduction of the orchestra parts may be beyond the ability of the accompanist or the composition may call for inaccessible instrumentation.

Secondly, one must consider the occasion and audience for which the performance will take place. This is not to say that a conductor selects his or her concert program in order to please an audience. However, he or she must consider the circumstances under which the concert will occur and respond in a musically appropriate fashion. (Glenn 86) For this reason, most conductors do not program music intended for the holiday season as part of a spring concert or a lively folk-song arrangement for a somber occasion.

Thirdly, while much debate surrounds the evaluation of the value of a piece of music, many renown choral conductors have agreed that the quality of a piece is an important component of programming. For Larry Wyatt, “the music simply has to be worth doing” and Jameson Marvin considered “the intrinsic quality of the music itself.” (Glenn 91) So, what imbues a composition with quality? What determines its value?
Even Robert Shaw admitted that one could not fully understand why a human prefers one piece of music over another. In the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) summer conference in 2008, Dennis Schrock, author of *Choral Repertoire*, shared this adage: “Bad music is predictable, great music is inevitable.” Yet, can one truly delineate between “inevitable” and “predictable?” Other conductors have offered more concrete measurements of the quality of a composition. For many in the choral field, a musically satisfying composition begins with an aesthetically compelling text. (Glenn 82) Aside from those compositions born as an experiment in sound, choral pieces are usually built on the texts that they set. A trite text provides little structure on which to hang a substantial musical composition. As Dr. Kiver stated in a presentation for the Penn State student chapter of ACDA, a conductor must consider whether the text can hold cultural, intellectual, or aesthetic value on its own. (Kiver)

One must then consider the stand-alone value of the music itself. Artistic value is found in the quality of the composition and its relationship to the text. Does the music enhance the meaning of the text that it sets? Has the composer handled the melody, harmony, rhythm, form, or timbre in an innovative or imaginative way? (Kiver) Such questions beg one to ponder the point of embarking on an artistic endeavor with a creation that errs on the side of function rather than art. What is there to interpret musically if there was little thought given to setting this word to that sound? In the same vein, the rehearsal period for a set of repertoire will often extend over a significant span of time and a musician may spend months with a piece before it is performed for an audience. Thus a conductor must consider whether the music is compelling enough to sustain and challenge a singer over that time. In my experience, it is no coincidence that
the compositions performers initially dislike for the challenge they present often become
the highlight of the singer’s experience.

Another important consideration in programming is the available time and
schedule for the rehearsal period since the frequency and number of rehearsals may
greatly impact the ability of a choir to successfully realize a composition. (Jordan 115)
This consideration must not only account for the time required to accurately learn the
notes and rhythms of a piece, but also allow for time to interpret and mature in
understanding the significance of the text and the musical setting. This definition of
“musical success” is of course grounded in the individual philosophy of the conductor.
For some, giving an accurate account of the text, pitches and rhythm is sufficient, while
for others, a deeper understanding of the function and context of the music is a vital part
of the learning experience. However, if a composition is so painstakingly selected for its
musical and textual value, should not these elements be part of its full realization?

Ultimately, a review of the literature reveals the highly subjective nature of
repertoire selection. The starting point of this process and resulting selection evolve from
both the personal preference and situational necessity facing each conductor. As Lloyd
Pfautsch stated: “There is no one authority or one school that has discovered all the
knowledge pertinent to the choral art.” (71) Even so, unifying themes emerge in
conductors’ opinions and can be summarized in two areas of the consideration. First,
when selecting repertoire the conductor considers if the repertoire is appropriate.
Secondly, he or she asks if performance of the repertoire is a worthwhile endeavor.
With these considerations in mind, repertoire for the project was selected for its appropriateness and musical merit as defined by current literature. True to its nature, measurements of these qualifications are unavoidably grounded in personal philosophy.

**Selected Repertoire**

A survey of the available literature began with the music contained in Penn State’s Willa Taylor Choral Collection. The accessibility of the collection allowed for a full perusal of every piece to assess it appropriateness and quality. During this initial inquiry, all music set for two to three treble voice parts was pulled and assessed for its musical value and textual depth. Through out this process, I was aesthetically drawn to pieces published in sets because of the emotional and musical continuity they can provide a program. I wanted the programming framework to be a juxtaposition of two complimentary sets. Thus, during this phase of selection, stand-alone pieces were set aside and the remaining sets were screened for their artistic value and vocal and musical accessibility.

The two sets selected for performance were *Four Cummings Choruses, op. 98, No. I-IV* by Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987) and *Petites voix: cinq chœurs faciles a cappella pour trios voix d’enfants, No. I-V*, by Francis Poulenc (1899-1963). These sets were vocally and musically appropriate, befitting the ensemble of college singers and a university recital setting. Both contain musical value according to the suggested criteria and were thematically complimentary. With these pieces, I established the program order to create a natural sense of emotional and textual progression. At this time, it was proposed that an additional stand-alone piece be selected to provide a sense of closure for the audience at the conclusion of the program. The *Prayer from “Hänsel and Gretel”* by
Englebert Humperdinck, (1854-1921) arr. By Bryceson Treharne was selected to serve this role as its textual and musical qualities provided a compliment to the other pieces. This piece was also available in the Penn State Choral Library.
CHAPTER III: SCORE PREPARATION

Review of Current Methodologies

According to Gordon Paine, not only is score study important for the conductor to select the repertoire, but also for him or her to learn the music, develop an interpretation of the music and prepare to “rehearse and conduct it effectively.” (“Score Study” 71) These reasons for study are reflected in the three levels of study defined as preliminary score study, interpretive score study, and pedagogical score study. (Paine 38) The preliminary level of score study occurs through the process of repertoire selection as already discussed in Chapter II. Once the repertoire has been selected for performance, interpretative score study begins whereby the conductor learns the music. Finally, pedagogical score study is the planning for rehearsals and is discussed in a later chapter.

A conductor must come to the first rehearsal knowing the musical score since it is his or her responsibility to guide the ensemble in an interpretation that aligns with the original intent of the composer. (“Score Study” 71) “The ideal performance of a piece of music is the one that most closely approaches the composer’s expectations for performance.” (Collins 128) Without both an aural and visual understanding of the music a director can neither assess the choir’s current level of achievement on the repertoire nor effectively lead them forward toward a performance. (Brinson 108) The process of preparing a score is threefold. First, a director must develop a visual understanding of the score through a survey of all musical markings. Choral score investigation, or “CSI” as coined by Dr. Kiver, is a process whereby a conductor uses all musical markings in the score to inform his or her understanding of the composer’s musical intent. Secondly, a director must have an aural understanding of what the music is to sound like. Finally, the
conductor researches the composer and text author. This background research informs the aural and visual understanding of the composition.

As defined in the resource packet for *Music 366: Intermediate Conducting*, background research of the composer and the musical characteristics of his or her era are the first steps in score study. Paine suggested that a conductor gather information about the composer and the time period in which he or she lived. This will include research into the compositional aesthetics and standard performance practice of the day. (Paine 41) The genre of the piece is also an important consideration, especially as it compares to the total musical output of the composer. For example, an art song written by a composer more notably versed in Opera may contain elements of the operatic style. Due to the contextual nature of music composition, background research must consist of both breadth and depth. (Herford 200) The conductor must consider the life events of the composer leading up to and during the time of the composition. As music is often a reflection of its time and place, an understanding of the context of the composition will affect its interpretation.

Paine also suggests beginning score study with a study of the text, its origin and author. With texts in foreign languages, study of the text will include developing its word for word and poetic translations. In addition, unless the conductor is a fluent speaker, he or she must consult pronunciation guides or other informed singers to learn the correct pronunciation of the text. (Pfautsch 91) As in preliminary score study, the text is and should be a basis for musical interpretation since it too will inform a director’s understanding of the genre, function and form of the composition.
Once the background research on a piece is completed the conductor must develop a sense of how the piece will sound. Often times, a conductor creates an aural map of the piece while he or she conducts background research. A suggested method for learning a choral score is to play through the parts together on the piano and then sing through the vocal parts individually while taking note of the structure, tonality, and texture of the composition. (Decker 70) It is suggested that a conductor approach the investigation of such musical components by working from larger elements to finer details. For example, a conductor may get a sense of the overall form for the piece and then focus on smaller sections with similar thematic material. From here, the conductor labels phrase groupings and individual phrases. Musical sections are labeled based on their function and melodic material. To organize the structural information, many conductors create an analysis chart that serves as a roadmap for the entire piece. The analysis chart maps the key, meter, tempo, voicing, texture, articulation, dynamics and harmonic motion in the music. How a conductor arranges the structural information of the music in chart form is a matter of personal preference. Below are examples of charts completed according to the specifications of Kiver and O. Richard Bundy, Director of Athletic Bands. (See figures II.1 and II.2.)
The findings reflected in the score analysis chart should then be marked in the musical score to serve as reminders to the conductor of significant events within the music. (Brinson 118) Such score markings are also a matter of personal preference. Conductors often start the process of marking a score as an editor would: numbering...
measures, marking breaths and transcribing translations of foreign language texts as they correspond to both their word for word and poetic translations. Linguistic markings may also include symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) indicating correct pronunciations of the text. (“An Introduction…” 66)

At Penn State, students in Music 266: Basic Conducting were discouraged from using recordings too early in the score study process. When recordings are used in score preparation, they should be sampled later in the process and from a wide variety of performances of the repertoire. (Rudolf 323) If a conductor is to create an original interpretation of a score, his or her musical decisions must come from thorough study of the score, not previous performances of the work. However, according to his research on the effect of score study on error detection in young conductors, Crowe stated that score study accompanied by a correct aural example of the music was the most effective method of preparation for beginning conductors to detect errors during rehearsal. Additionally, from the two groups of conductors who did not use a recording to prepare their scores, there was no significant difference between those who created their aural map using a piano and those who did not use a piano. (Crowe 165)

**Process of Score Study**

Equipped with basic techniques for score preparation, after selecting the repertoire I consulted a number of sources for background research, learned the music, and created a series of score analysis charts (See Appendix A). I first researched the lives and other works of Vincent Persichetti, Francis Poulenc and Engelbert Humperdinck. The Grove Music Encyclopedica Online provide a basis for most information on composers and their published works. From this research, I created a succinct sheet of
information on each composer based on the suggested model taught in *Music 366: Intermediate Conducting*. I then researched the lives, works, and stylistic characteristics of poets e.e. cummings and Madeleine Ley, authors of the texts for the Persichetti and Poulenc sets.

The Poulenc *Cinq choeurs*, based on the poetry of poet, Madeleine Ley is set in its original language: French. I found a number of poetic translations online from the programs of other ensembles who had performed the set. These concert programs and a French-English dictionary provided the poetic and word for word translations of the text. I then wrote these translations into my scores and distributed copies of the translations to the singers for their reference and transcription. Having little experience in French pronunciation, I consulted various books and other singers experienced in French song to develop an IPA guide for the correct pronunciation of the Ley text.

Throughout my process of background research, I drafted an analysis chart for each piece outlining its musical elements such as phrasing, voicing, texture, tempo, rhythm, tonality, and dynamic level. These charts were designed as a synthesis of Kiver’s and Bundy’s analysis charts. Meanwhile, I played all voice parts and piano accompaniments on the piano and practiced each voice part individually to learn the music.

It was not until after all these steps had been completed that I consulted any recordings of the repertoire. I delayed listening to recordings to avoid the influence of interpretative choices made beyond indication in the score on my interpretive understanding of the repertoire. Also, I could not find any recordings of “uncles” and “nouns to nouns” from the Persichetti set.
CHAPTER IV: REHEARSAL PROCESS

Scheduling Rehearsals

A rehearsal schedule is directly related to the purpose of the ensemble and the nature of its members. (Pfausch 74) For this project, the primary purpose of the ensemble was to serve as a medium through which I would gain conducting experience. The singers were either experienced choral musicians or music majors performing in other university choral ensembles. Thus, the concert timeline and rehearsal schedule were designed to maximize my experience for a minimum time requirement on the singers. To minimize time spent in rehearsal, the singers were expected to prepare their music outside of rehearsal time. This expectation was based on the model set forth for the Penn State Chambers Singers.

Having established a concert date of September 26, 2010, a time when there were few other performances in the School of Music, the frequency and length of each rehearsal was determined by the complexity of the repertoire and the availability of the singers, accompanist, and rehearsal space. Given these considerations, rehearsals were scheduled from 7-9 p.m. in room 110 of Music Building I on Monday, September 6, 13, and 20. I reserved the rehearsal room through the School of Music. Room 110 serves regularly as the rehearsal space for Penn State’s choirs.

I distributed music to the singers and accompanist, Lauren Kooistra, during the first week of the 2010 fall semester. I also included translations of the French text with the music scores. Singers were expected to arrive at the first rehearsal with measures numbered, word for word translations written into their scores, and familiar with their voice part.
Review of Planning Strategies

Once interpretative score study has been completed, pedagogical score study lays a foundation for effective and efficient rehearsing. (Paine 38) Pedagogical study is the level of preparation at which a conductor creates an overall strategy for preparing the ensemble for performance. It is during pedagogical score study that a conductor locates areas of potential difficulty for the singers, preparing him or her for more efficient error detection during rehearsal. Paine suggests identifying areas of a possible “train wrecks.” (Paine 41) These may be areas of voice crossing, meter changes, accidentals or other tonally or rhythmically surprising passages. The conductor also drafts preemptory strategies to minimize the challenge of these sections. (Byo 338) Such strategies may include warm-ups that prepare singers vocally and mentally for challenging aspects of the music. (Robinson 157) Secondly, effective rehearsal planning includes a plan for the introduction of each piece. Conductors may choose to talk the singers through the piece before singing it, pointing out areas of change in the tempo, meter, or tonality. They may also choose to focus on one element found in the piece before delving into the whole. The preemptory steps taken to prepare singers for success and the specificity of a conductor’s stated objectives directly impact the time necessary to rehearse each musical section. (Pfautsch 79) Too often, conductors have the singers attempt to sing a piece and wait for areas of difficulty to emerge rather than rehearsing proactively. (Yarbrough 30) With planning, conductors can avoid a disastrous first run though and alleviate time spent multiple rehearsals of a section.

Designing rehearsal time to facilitate the success of the choir is also based in the organization of the rehearsal itself—the order of repertoire, the focus of rehearsal on each
piece and the time spent on each section. (Brinson 142) Appropriate design of rehearsal time is dependent on the ensemble, the time of day, the length of the rehearsal and its proximity to performance, the variety of the tempo, dynamics and tonality of the repertoire and the director’s long-term goals for the ensemble. (Pfautsch 77) Numerous sources also relate a rehearsal’s effectiveness to its pacing. (Robinson 159; Pfautsch 81) The most effective rehearsals are fast-paced with frequent and brief interjections from the director. (Byo 335) The shorter and more condensed a conductor’s instructions, the more time allowed for singing. The following strategies are suggested to keep singers from fatigue during rehearsal: the alternation of familiar and non-familiar repertoire, variation of tempi, dynamics, and style, the balance of healthy vocal, mental, and physical demand on the singer, the limitation of allotted time for each piece, and the maintenance of total ensemble participation and interest throughout. (Robinson 159; Pfautsch 81)

Embedded in the overall rehearsal structure, focused rehearsal of musical material must include “processes of diagnosis, prescription, presentation, monitoring, and feedback.” (Byo 335) These processes are an unpredictable element of rehearsal and are dependent on the cyclical relationship between performance and feedback. For example, the conductor presents a task, the ensemble responds and the conductor provides reinforcement or correction accordingly. (Yarbrough 30) This process is outlined in greater detail in the rehearsal flowchart found in Figure IV.1 below.
The focus of each musical task is drawn from the current performance level of the repertoire. Level of achievement is measured against the hierarchy of musical elements: 1. Tonal Accuracy, 2. Rhythmic Accuracy, 3. Articulative accuracy, 4. Textual accuracy, 5. Precision and clarity of items above, 6. Phrasing/Dynamics, 7. Tone Color. (“Basic Rehearsal Hierarchy”) Should a choir fail to perform a task successfully, the conductor can employ a number of corrective procedures. These are methods specific to the preference and training of the conductor. Among such corrective procedures, conductor demonstration is considered one of the most effective and important responsibilities of the director. (Pfausch 97) Whether s/he is addressing choral tone, vowel formation,
performance practice, etc. the conductor can model a desirable performance of that element, or juxtapose it with an undesirable performance. Directors may also call upon individuals in the ensemble to model correct performance for the group. (Grimland 8)

Upon detection of an error, a conductor attempts to identify the nature of the error—tonal, rhythmic, timbral, etc. After the source of error is identified, the first step in correction is isolation of the error. Brinson defined isolation as “working with less than the whole.” (Brinson 147) Working with less than the whole involves eliminating elements such as other voice parts, the accompaniment, dynamics, tempi, rhythm, text, pitch, etc. Once the error has been isolated the conductor employs corrective measures as appropriate to the nature of the error. As singers perform “problem-spot” correctly, previously removed components of performance are re-added. It is not until all elements are returned to the condition of performance and the students successfully perform the section in a larger musical context that the error is considered corrected. At this point, the conductor provides evaluative feedback concerning the singers’ efforts to improve. (Brinson 157) As previously shown in Figure IV.1, should the error not be successfully fixed, the director should return to step 8 of the process and proceed as before with similar or revised corrective strategies.

The final element of rehearsal preparation is practice of conducting gesture. A direct relationship exists between the gesture of the conductor and the sound of the choir. (Pfausch 104) The conductor’s gesture both informs and affects an ensemble’s interpretation of repertoire and is a crucial element of his or her preparation for rehearsal and performance. A singer’s reaction to movement is rooted instinctively and conditioned through cultural socialization. (Garnett 16) The involuntary nature of this reaction
suggests that a conductor must be intentional with his or her gesture to evoke a singer’s appropriate musical response. What a conductor fails to communicate through gesture must be conveyed verbally. Giving verbal instruction to compensate for what is not communicated in a conductor’s gesture hinders rehearsal efficiency.

When deciding the gesture s/he will employ, a conductor can singularly or collectively manipulate the four elements of movement as defined by Rudolf von Laban: flow, weight, time and space. According to Laban, flow is the result of variances in weight, time and space and can be separated into eight different action verbs. These action verbs encapsulate the possible combinations of indirect, light, and sustained weight, time, and space. These elements, as seen in Figure IV.2 are at the disposal of the conductor to evoke musical response from the ensemble.

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<tr>
<td>FLOAT</td>
<td>indirect (S)</td>
<td>treading water at various depths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>light (W)</td>
<td>sustained (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRING</td>
<td>indirect (S)</td>
<td>wringing a beach towel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heavy (W)</td>
<td>sustained (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLIDE</td>
<td>direct (S)</td>
<td>smoothing wrinkles in a cloth, or ice skating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>light (W)</td>
<td>sustained (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESS</td>
<td>direct (S)</td>
<td>pushing a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heavy (W)</td>
<td>sustained (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FICK</td>
<td>indirect (S)</td>
<td>dusting off lint from clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>light (W)</td>
<td>quick (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLASH</td>
<td>indirect (S)</td>
<td>fencing, or serving a tennis ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heavy (W)</td>
<td>quick (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAB</td>
<td>direct (S)</td>
<td>typing or tapping on a window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>light (W)</td>
<td>quick (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUNCH</td>
<td>direct (S)</td>
<td>boxing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heavy (W)</td>
<td>quick (T)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure IV.2 “Laban Action Verbs (Jordan 32)
Once the conductor has decided which elements of movement best convey the musical intent of the composer, s/he rehearses these within the context of a metrically appropriate conducting pattern. In addition, the conductor considers important cues the ensemble will need to navigate difficult passages of the music and uses rehearsals to establish the effectiveness of these cues. (Pfausch 105) Cues indicate cut offs, entrances, breathing, tempo, dynamic level, phrasing, articulation, and any other elements of musical expression. (Robinson 193)

**First Rehearsal**

**Plan.** A change in ensemble size, voicing, and leadership affects the role of each singer harmonically, vocally, and aesthetically. As many of the singers were accustomed to singing in a mixed choir under University faculty, the first rehearsal objective was to orient the singers to a new ensemble voicing, establish a standard for choral tone, and build the conductor-singer relationship. To orient the singers vocally, I designed a warm-up sequence to foster healthy, vibrant vocal production, accustom the singers to sensitive ensemble listening, and define the ideal vowel formation. Fifteen minutes of the first rehearsal were allotted for this purpose. Also, many of these women were my friends and colleagues. Building an effective conductor-singer relationship required a new mode of communication and balance of authority—I needed to foster the singers’ response to my expectations and gestural vocabulary.

Finally, the first rehearsal was designed to introduce each piece to the ensemble and prepare the singers for success in some element of the repertoire. To fit an introduction of every piece into the first two-hour rehearsal, I allotted a maximum of ten minutes on each piece. Then I planned preemptive strategies so the singer could
successfully tackle challenging elements of the music before the first sing through. I extracted challenging rhythmic or melodic motives and used them in vocal warm-ups to familiarize singers with awkward or surprising passages.

Per the advice of Dr. Kiver, I scheduled a short break two-thirds of the way into the rehearsal to prevent singer fatigue. Similarly, I selected the order of rehearsal to vary the vocal, musical, and mental demands on the singers. The level of task difficulty followed a hairpin design to start easy, increase in difficulty toward the break, and decrease away from the break. Thus, the singers would begin and end the rehearsal with tasks in which they were more prone to find success. The ensemble would first sight-read through the Humperdinck; a piece rhythmically and harmonically familiar so that the singers could continue warming up their vocal mechanisms unhindered by complicated rhythms and tonalities. The other pieces to follow, however, required more strategic methods of introduction.

Before beginning the first piece in the Poulenc set, I prefaced the singers with an introduction to his compositional style. Poulenc’s writing style includes very specific dynamic and articulative markings in the score. Singers would need to pay special attention to his markings while learning the music. According to Pierre Bernac, when performing Poulenc, a singer must only express that which is on the page. (Bernac 87) Poulenc gives very specific dynamic and articulative markings for singers to follow. The singers sight-read small portions of each piece on a neutral syllable to allow for close attention to these musical details without the French text.

By contrast, I planned to introduce much of the Persichetti set through rhythmic chanting of the text. Many of the Persichetti pieces had challenging rhythmic patterns and
would be more accessible through isolation of the rhythm through chant. Chanting the text also highlighted the Persichetti’s skill in using natural rhythms of speech to inform his musical setting of the text. Pitches were then added with the assistance of piano. As I identified during pedagogical score study, one of the most complicated aspects of the Persichetti set would be combining the vocal lines with the. For this reason, I omitted the accompaniment from this introductory stage of rehearsal. (See Appendix B)

**Execution.** The first rehearsal took place on Monday, September 6, 2010 from 7 to 9 p.m. in Room 110 of Music Building I. Dr. Kiver did not come to observe this first rehearsal to enable the conductor and the ensemble to establish a professional and musical relationship. A video of the first rehearsal can be found in Appendix D.

The rehearsal began with a brief warm-up. As planned, the singers sang the descending fifth on a hum, followed by a five-note descending pattern, rearticulating “fah” on each note. The singers focused on having a balanced onset and vibrancy. Next, the singers sang an arpeggiated pattern on “zi-ah.” This was surprisingly subdued and consequentially slower in tempo and flat in pitch. In an attempt to stick to the rehearsal timeline, the ensemble moved forward from the warm-up and did not work specifically on vowel formation as planned. However, the decision to skip a focus on unified vowels impacted vowel shape and tuning later in the rehearsal.

To begin, the group sight-read through “The Prayer” twice. The singers read it with ease and responded well to my gesture. Except for the final chord, the pitches and rhythms were accurate. Through the second sing through, the group focused on creating a connected sound. Using the analogy of “pulling taffy,” the group used movement to find a legato sound that highlighted the melodic lines of the piece.
The second piece was “La Petite Fille Sage.” Before beginning to sing the piece, I provided the singers with an introduction to some stylistic elements of Poulenc: “If it’s on the page, do it.” The singers sight-read the piece on a neutral syllable with the piano playing voice parts. The group started at measure 18 and rehearsed each voice to the end individually before putting all three voices together. I followed the same procedure for measures 12 to 14, rehearsing individual parts then assembling the three first with the piano, then without. To finish, the group sang measures 12 to the end with then without the piano.

Next, I introduced “uncles.” As planned, the choir chanted the rhythms on text the entire piece. The focus of this run through was not only learning the rhythms, but also practicing energized diction with explosive consonants. We then went back to read through “uncles” with pitches. To aid this process, the accompanist played both bits of accompaniment and the voice parts. The choir made it all the way through the piece and only had to stop a few times to pick up the “train-wrecks.” Work on the piece concluded with a focus on the ending section to coordinate the voices with the piano.

We then went back to the Poulenc set to work on “Le Hérrison,” the final piece in the set. This introduction followed a “Work, Run, and Gun” strategy whereby the choir practiced a small section and then sang through the entire piece. Singing with a neutral syllable the group worked from rehearsal marking two to the end. In this section, voice crossing between the soprano parts required some work. The nature of the composition and its relationship to the text warranted some explanation and the group received a brief synopsis of the text. Knowing more of background of the piece, the group ran through
this section to the end of the piece. Then, starting at the beginning of the piece, the choir sang through the piece to the end with greater tonal accuracy.

The focus then turned to number three in the same set: “En Rentrant de L’École.” From measure 16 to the end the group sight-read parts slowly. However, the read through was unsuccessful so the group chanted the rhythm then ran through the pitches at a considerably reduced tempo. One of the singers suggested that the group read the pitches slowly then gradually increase the tempo. Even with this procedure, the group struggled so I rehearsed individual voice parts then put them back into the whole. Once this section had been solidified, the group moved back to address another rhythmically and tonally challenging section in measures five through seven. Work on this section followed a similar procedure of breaking down musical tasks. To end, the group went back to the beginning and successfully sight-read through the entire piece.

Next, the group sight-read through “maggie and millie and molly and may” at a slower tempo with the piano again playing both the voice parts and the accompaniment. A section of difficulty was measures 10 through 33 and so after the run-through we went back to work these sections again starting at a slower tempo then gradually increasing as the singers experienced success. To conclude, the group sang the piece from the beginning again at an increased tempo with the piano accompaniment. This final run through was fairly successful. We then took a brief break.

After the break, the group opened “dominic has a doll” to chant through the text in rhythm. The original focus here was learning both the rhythm and the accents. However, text-underlay challenged the singers and so we removed the text and chanted the rhythms on a neutral syllable. In this section of rehearsal, I had to model numerous
rhythmic patterns. Even at a slower tempo, it took a number of repetitions before the singers successfully performed the rhythms with text.

Next, it was back to the final two pieces in the Poulenc set. “Le Petit Garçon Malade” and “Le Chien Perdu.” Rehearsal of the former began with a sight-read through measures one to 16 on “Da” with the piano playing parts. From here, we rehearsed areas of difficulty, such as measures 13-16, in individual parts with piano assistance. We sang the four notes that set the text: “sur le trottoir” in measure 15 out of rhythmic context to be sure that the singers were hearing and singing them correctly. From this point the group continued sight-reading with the piano to the end. The singers were able to sing their notes and rhythms accurately with assistance from the piano.

On “Le Chien Perdu,” a shorter piece, the singers read through their parts individually from beginning to end with the piano. Then, all the parts were put together. The singers were successful with piano assistance and we focused on letting the most important voice part, soprano II, come through the texture in the last four measures. Because this sing through was so successful with the piano, the group tried to sing from beginning to end without the piano, but fell apart. The singers practiced rehearsal three to the end with piano, and then without and were much more successful in their efforts.

To end the rehearsal, the ensemble sang measures 64 to the end on “nouns to nouns” at a slower tempo before going back to the beginning and reading through the entire piece. They were able to do this with the accompanist playing most of the accompaniment and providing minimal assistance on the voice parts.

**Reflections.** I reflected on both my performance and that of ensemble in the first rehearsal through first-hand experience and a review of video taken of the rehearsal.
Through the course of the first rehearsal, it became apparent that the singers were not familiar with the music from outside study. While this did not significantly hinder the pace of the rehearsal, it did impact the singer’s success on each task. Areas of perceived difficulty included both tonal and rhythmic errors and influenced planning for the next rehearsal. With only ten minutes to spend on each piece, it was also apparent that four remaining hours of rehearsal would not be enough time to prepare all the repertoire for performance. I made no decisions to eliminate repertoire but the next rehearsal would determine the final program.

Viewing the video of the rehearsal, I recognized areas for improvement in both my conducting and rehearsal technique. First, I needed to use a more dynamic speaking voice to communicate with the singers and effectively spur them to respond to directions and gestures with appropriate energy. When I stood on the podium, my demeanor translated as an undesirable lack of enthusiasm for the rehearsal. Additionally, I was delaying the arrival of my ictus causing the tempo to slow. This may have been an attempt to stay with the ensemble that was dragging as they sight-read. Regardless, while much of my gesture was musically appropriate, the more rhythmic musical sections required a more energetic wrist flick.

Second Rehearsal

**Plan.** When planning for the second rehearsal, I considered both the diagnosis of issues in the first rehearsal and my long-term vision for the project. The primary focus of the next rehearsal would be to wean the singers of their initial reliance on the piano. To expedite the weaning process, I identified areas in the music that would be tonally challenging without piano assistance to isolate for focused attention. These areas were
sections of harmonic ambiguity, transition, and intervallic awkwardness. As before, I isolated these sections to create vocalizations for warm-ups.

As the entire Persichetti set had never before been performed at Penn State, this set emerged as the priority in performance should some selections need to be eliminated from the program. Due to the breadth of musical material, I restructured the rehearsal plan to focus primarily on the Persichetti set. In addition, despite the challenging accompaniment, the Persichetti was originally more accessible tonally to the singers than the Poulenc. Accordingly, part of the second rehearsal would also be devoted to coordinating the vocal parts in the Persichetti with the piano. Strategies to coordinate the two include repetition of transitions within each piece and the entire set. In this rehearsal plan, I delineated a full hour for work on the *Four Cummings Choruses* in the hope that once these pieces were solidified, the next rehearsal would be almost solely devoted to work on the Poulenc set (see Appendix B).

**Execution.** The second rehearsal took place on Monday, September 10, 2010 from 7 to 9 p.m. in Room 110 of Music Building I. Dr. Kiver observed the first half. His notes from that rehearsal can be found in Appendix C. A video of the rehearsal can be found in Appendix D.

The warm-up began with a physical warm-up of stretching, rolling shoulders, and neck stretches. I specifically drew vocalizations for warmups from excerpts in the repertoire. Vocalizations included a descending sol-mi-do pattern on “in the sea” to focus on response to gesture, a do-sol-mi-do pattern on “and may came home, to familiarize a tricky section in one of the Persichetti pieces and practice vowel modification at higher pitches and the rhythmic pattern on “quite as if he were really” on repeated pitches to
solidify the rhythm and appropriate syllabic stress. The warm-up ended with a four-part chord on “bah.” The ensemble had some intonation issues with this chord, which were not resolved despite considerable effort. Because of time constraints, I decided to move on to the first piece.

Following advice to begin with something on which the singers felt successful, the first piece for rehearsal was “maggie and millie and molly and may.” To start, the group sang from measure 39 to the end to solidify notes and rhythms. Their performance of this section was successful, so we started back at the beginning and sang the entire piece. We encountered problems on page four at the “and may came home” text. The singers were simply not counting and so I asked, “what do we recall from the warm-up?” Once they made the connection between what was practiced in the warm-up and what was in the repertoire, the group moved forward. We then discussed the meanings of certain instructions from Persichetti: “caloroso,” “cantabile.” I asked the singers: “What does this mean? What are your thoughts?” The singers defined the terms as “warm” and “stinging” and we continued working to the end stopping to address ways that the singers could find their starting pitches between verses. Once we had made it to the end, we sang the piece from the beginning with accompaniment. The singers had fewer melodic errors but continued to struggle making transitions within sections.

We rehearsed “dominic has a doll” next and read from the beginning on pitches with the piano playing parts. The rhythms were much better this time. Once we got to measure 75, I asked the sopranos: “What are you going to think about from here to the end?” We had been having intonation issues and so the singers talked about techniques to modify the vowels and maintain vocal consistency such as raising their soft palate or
dropping their jaw. Applying these techniques, we practiced the chord in measure 82 on the word “dolls.” This time, the Alto I’s had difficulty in tuning the chord—the were consistently sharp. After many tries and little improvement we finally went back to the beginning and tried to run the piece with accompaniment using crisp diction and listening for accuracy in the alto part. The group fell apart on page five in the transition to “gives me a most tremendous hug” and so we practiced this section a number of times. To end, we went back to the beginning and sang through the piece with accompaniment.

Next, we rehearsed “nouns to nouns” from the beginning. Again, the altos were struggling and we went back to isolate their line. All members of the choir sang the alto line to ease their pressure in working on the difficult section. We then went back and ran the selection on all voice parts. Afterwards, we discussed the importance of using pure vowels sounds in pronunciation due to the similarity of the words. Again we sang the piece, stopping to focus particularly on the vowels in “in singular.” Per the advice of Dr. Kiver we sang through the piece a number of times to build the comfort level of the singer. Each time we sang the piece, the singers’ accuracy improved.

We then attempted to run through “uncles” from the beginning with accompaniment but had to stop and establish where the singers were going to find their first pitch. Once we found a place in the accompaniment that would give them a starting pitch, we ran it with accompaniment. At measure 19 we stopped to isolate the Alto line and then practiced the transition in measure 23 to 25 with the piano. At this point, the rehearsal started to derail a bit and Dr. Kiver suggested: “there comes a point when it helps to just drill things.” He instructed me to run the section a number of times and listen for the errors—tonal or rhythmic. This run through went much more smoothly so we
went back and sang it from the beginning. There were even fewer errors and the singers had appropriate intensity at the end. We sang through the piece again before the taking a break.

The second half of rehearsal began with further discussion on the literary style of e.e.cummings and the interpretive cues Persichetti provides in his piano accompaniment. At this point the rehearsal, I took some time to define some of the words in the text that the singers had had questions about in the first rehearsal.

We recommenced with “Le Chien Perdu” and sang Rehearsal marking 1 with then without piano. Rehearsing with then without the piano became a pattern of the rehearsal as it was a goal to wean the singers from reliance on the piano. Without the piano, the ensemble started to fall apart and so the accompanist reentered periodically to reground the group. Before rehearsing “Le Chien Perdu” again, we worked on the Alto part at measure seven and I asked them to think about dipping down to pick up the lower notes rather than reaching up to the higher ones to keep the line from going flat. We then ran it from Rehearsal marking 1 with minimal piano assistance. This time was much more successful.

“En Rentrant de L’École” was next and quickly became a discouraging endeavor. At this point, only one Soprano I was in the rehearsal because the other two had left due to other commitments. We started by working measures 5-7 with the piano on “la” and then went back to run it slowly from the beginning. We made it to the end but needed to do some isolated tonal work for the Altos starting at Rehearsal 2. It was clear that voice parts for this piece were much less familiar and the singers quickly became discouraged.
In an effort to end the rehearsal on a positive note, the last two minutes of rehearsal were spent on a run through of the Humperdinck. This was really more for psychological purposes than musical purposes.

**Reflection.** Unlike the first rehearsal, the second did not go according to the original plan. The Persichetti set proved to be a much greater challenge to the ensemble without piano assistance and our work on that set took almost the entire rehearsal period. It was clear that many of the singers had not spent time on the music between the first and second rehearsal. It was also apparent during the warm-up process that the singers were struggling to hear and sing basic intervals, such as the whole step, in the context of the group. The rehearsal quickly became a discouraging and frustrating endeavor.

Based on this rehearsal, I realized the program was too ambitious. We spent the majority of effort learning notes and rhythms. At the break, the Persichetti pieces were nowhere close to a performance level and it was decided that some part of the Poulenc set needed to be cut from the program. This decision was made to allow for greater polishing of the Persichetti as it was agreed that it would be better to perform fewer pieces well, than to poorly perform the entire program.

In reflecting on the second rehearsal, I consulted both the videotape and the notes from Dr. Kiver’s observation. His comments were both encouraging and constructive, suggesting techniques that would move the ensemble toward success (see Appendix C). Based on these sources, it was clear that the purpose for the project needed clarification. Until that point, rehearsal time was spent not only rehearsing the repertoire but also on developing the skills shown lacking in the singers. However, as Dr. Kiver pointed out in his notes, though extremely valuable and necessary, in this particular situation, these
these educational moments were time consuming and the looming performance required efficiency and speed in procedures. Originally reluctant to spoon-feed material to the singers, it was clear that rehearsal priorities had to change. From hence forth, my modeling would be the most efficient and effective mode of error correction.

In addition to issues of time management, feedback from Dr. Kiver pertained to conducting gesture and its effective reflection of the musical character. It was now time for me to focus on dynamic contrast and expressivity in the performance evoked through my conducting gesture.

**Third Rehearsal**

**Plan.** The focus for the third and final rehearsal was to run the transitions within the pieces and incorporate the French text into the Poulenc. At this point the three most complicated Poulenc movements were eliminated from the program. Dr. Kiver and I mutually agreed that it was more logical to perform fewer pieces well. Thus, the entire first half of rehearsal was devoted to the Poulenc set. The singers still needed to solidify their pitches and rhythms as they incorporated the original French language. To add the language, we would first speak through the pronunciation of the French texts and discuss the importance of making consonants “Rapid, late, and clear.” (Grubb 5)

The primary rehearsal strategy during this time was to run through each piece as many times as possible. As Dr. Kiver advised, at the performance, it would be most important for the singers to feel that they were familiar with the repertoire and know what to expect at every transition. (See Appendix B)
Execution. The third rehearsal took place on Monday, September 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. in Room 110 in Music Building I. Again, Dr. Kiver observed the full rehearsal. The added pressure of a rapidly approaching performance seemed to provide extra incentive for the singers to focus and it is possible that the frustration of the previous rehearsal prompted some to practice the music more seriously. Dr. Kiver’s notes from that rehearsal can be found in Appendix B. A video recording of the rehearsal can be found in Appendix D.

Once again, the warm-up began with physical stretches and neck rolls to release tension and loosen the body. Vocalizations included sighs and sirens, the do-sol-mi-do pattern from the week before on “zi-a,” the “ahh” section found in measures 18 to the end of “La Petite Fille Sage,” naming the descending intervals of the major scale (m2, m3, P4, P5, m6, m7, 8v) and the troublesome chord on “dolls” from “dominic has a doll.” The singers sang the chord on “dah” and were instructed to descend by half-steps, tuning the chord at each cue. This was a challenge for the singers and so we finally moved on to begin the first piece.

The ensemble read through “La Petite Fille Sage” from the beginning on the syllable “dah.” We went back and worked from rehearsal marking one without piano to rehearsal marking two. At this point, we stopped and sustained the notes in transition between the rehearsal markings. We went back to sing the section from the beginning but the first sopranos were having tremendous difficulties with the rhythms. I modeled the correct sequence a number of times until they could sing it. Dr. Kiver suggested to them that they mark something in their scores to assist them in singing the section correctly. Finally able to move on, we sang through the piece again and went back to add in the
French. For this process, I spoke the pronunciation and the singers repeated it, marking IPA pronunciations in their scores. As seen in the video, being very inexperienced in French, I ended up deferring to those in the group who were more familiar with the language. Upon the first run of the piece with the French, the first sopranos once again sang the incorrect rhythm in the first measure. The singers were very flustered. I modeled it a few more times and we continued reading. The tempo was considerably slower as the singers added the French and we stopped continually to address certain issues. Once we made it through on the correct pitches and rhythms, we went back to write in translations of the text. Ultimately, this process took a larger portion of rehearsal time than I had anticipated.

Rehearsal on “Le Chien Perdu” followed a similar procedure of adding the French language and translations. Again, the first sopranos were really struggling and perhaps the block at this point was more mental than technical. Because of this, I decided to focus on other sections for the remainder of the rehearsal time. We then took a much needed break.

During the break Dr. Kiver and I decided that for the recital it would be best to only perform the two Poulenc pieces we had rehearsed that day, along with the Persichetti set and the Humperdinck. When the singers returned to the room, we stood in a circle and sang “The Prayer.” This piece always seems to provide a boost in morale.

Because the first half of rehearsal had seemingly dragged on so long, not much time was left in the second half to run the Persichetti pieces. We selected “nouns to nouns” and before running it with the accompaniment, I alerted the singers to dynamic differences between the singers’ parts and the accompaniment on the last page. We also
took some time to polish the transitions between sections where there were large chunks of quirky accompaniment. We then sang through the piece and I identified sections where I needed to practice giving the singers clearer cues in my conducting gesture. The rehearsal ended with practicing a small section starting at measure 75 of “uncles” to solidify an entrance that had been habitually catching the ensemble off-guard. Fortunately, by the end of the rehearsal we were able to laugh about certain things and feel that we had accomplished something.

**Reflection.** Most comments about this rehearsal from Dr. Kiver focused either on my conducting technique or specific problems in ensemble tuning. These details became the driving forces in planning for the dress rehearsal. Especially in the Persichetti set, many sections required two very different gestural cues for the voice and piano parts. During the previous rehearsal, my conducting gesture was not clear in directing the performers through these sections, hence a need for special attention to these areas.

While some things had been accomplished in this rehearsal, there was a lot of time that had been wasted and reflected a poor prioritization of tasks on my part. The first was in the warm-up. Teaching the ensemble the “Ahh” section in “La Petite Fille Sage” took a surprising amount of time. This strategy did help them to learn the section but was a very inefficient way to do so because it required teaching each voice part by rote. Secondly, rehearsing the French pronunciation and writing in the translations were steps that could have and should have been done outside of precious rehearsal time. The singers already had the translations and I could have made a recording for the singers to learn the proper pronunciation. Also, as it became apparent in rehearsal, many of the singers were more adept at French pronunciation that I was.
Dress Rehearsal

Plan. The dress rehearsal was scheduled in an hour-long block of time immediately preceding the actual recital. This was the only time that all the singers were available to rehearse and would be the first time that they all were present at one time. Based on the previous rehearsal, the focus for this time would be smoothing out transitions through coordinating conducting gesture with the ensemble. It was also used to rehearse sections from the repertoire that had been selected to share with the audience as part of the spoken introduction I planned to give before each set. (See Appendix B)

Execution. The dress rehearsal took place on Sunday, September 26, 2010 at 12:30 in the sanctuary of the University Baptist and Brethren Church (the performance venue, described in Chapter V). I warmed the singers up with vocalizations designed to simply warm-up the voice. We then rehearsed the planned sections where the singers needed specific gestural cues to navigate transitions within each piece. This was followed by the practice of significant melodic or textual concepts found in the Persichetti set that were worthy of highlighting for the listener. By the end of the dress rehearsal, the ensemble seemed sufficiently ready for performance.
CHAPTER V: PERFORMANCE

Location Selection

Before a date for the recital was selected, I considered a number of possible venues including the Penn State’s Esber Recital Hall, the Eisenhower Chapel in the Pasquerilla Spiritual Center, and various local churches. The availability of these spaces impacted when and where the concert would be held. Ultimately, the University Baptist and Brethren Church was selected as the best place for the recital due to its location, favorable acoustic, accommodations, and scheduling availability. Within the first week of the fall semester I contacted the church and signed an agreement for use of the space. This agreement involved a refundable $25 key deposit and a $25 payment for use of the fellowship hall for a reception following the event. A copy of this agreement is available in Appendix E.

Preparation of Printed Program and Program Notes

The printed program for Penn State recitals are typically designed in a standard format and printed by the University. The program for Petite Voix was designed as an adaptation of a variety of program templates available from the university as well as online sources. I designed and printed the program along with a customized “Text and Translations” page. These documents were distributed on the day of the performance. A copy of the program and the texts and translations page can be found in Appendix F.

Program notes for the recital were written the week of the last rehearsal and before the dress rehearsal. These were based on information I gathered during score study. Instead of distributing a written copy of these notes to the audience, I decided to speak before each set of pieces. This provided an opportunity to welcome the audience
and explain the premise of the project. Also, excerpts from the repertoire were performed prior to the full run-through to serve as examples of certain concepts that the audience could listen for during each piece.

**The Recital**

The recital took place on September 26, 2010 at 2 p.m. at the University Baptist and Brethren Church at 411 S. Burrows Street in State College, Pennsylvania. The singers and accompanist arrived an hour and half before the recital for the dress rehearsal. The event was publicized via personal and electronic invitation and approximately forty people attended.

I began the recital with a word of welcome to the audience and a brief explanation of the premise of the project. This was followed by an introduction to the Persichetti set where the audience was informed of what they would hear and the reason *Four Cummings Choruses* were selected as a part of the program. I shared a small portion of my research on e.e. cummings and the ways in which Persichetti highlights his particular writing style through his compositions. The ensemble then demonstrated selected measures to illustrate these concepts and give the audience something familiar for which to listen during the performance. These excerpts were followed by a complete performance of the Persichetti.

Following the Persichetti, I once more addressed the audience to explain my process of program selection and the themes that had emerged in the repertoire throughout that process. I explained that the project was named *Petite Voix* because the poetic basis of each set was either from the perspective of a child, or recounted an experience a child might have. This was not originally an intentional element of the program, but
rather arose throughout the course of the project and became worthy of recognition. In preparing the audience to hear the Poulenc, I shared the information that I had imparted to the singers about the compositional style and philosophy of Poulenc. As I shared with the audience, Poulenc put it eloquently when he said: “The musical setting of a poem should be an act of love, never a marriage of convenience… I have never claimed to achieve the musical resolution of poetic problems by means of intelligence; the voices of the heart and of instinct are far more reliable.” (Bernac 269) In conclusion, I challenged the audience to listen for such a marriage of text and music in the two pieces to follow.

The concert concluded with a brief expression of gratitude to all those that had assisted in the project and an invitation to join the performers for a reception following the recital. Finally, we performed a piece that “needs no explanation,” Humperdinck’s, *Prayer from “Hänsel and Gretel.”*
CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Project

The purpose of this project was to document a student-conductor’s first endeavor in leading an ensemble through the complete concert process. For this project, I was responsible for all components of concert performance as defined under Repertoire Selection, Score Preparation, the Rehearsal Process, and the Performance. The approach to these areas of focus was based on a review of standard literature and techniques for concert preparation and performance taught in the undergraduate Music Education program at Penn State. Repertoire was selected during the summer break preceding the fall semester and then distributed to the singers one week prior to the first rehearsal. Personal score study and background research occurred before and during the rehearsal period. Rehearsals took place Monday September 6, 13, and 20, 2010 in room 110, Music Building I, University Park, Pennsylvania. The ensemble rehearsed for two hours each and was accompanied by Music Education doctoral candidate, Lauren Kooistra. The recital took place on September 26, 2010 at 2 p.m. at the University Baptist and Brethren Church in State College, Pennsylvania.

Reflections and Discussion

Repertoire Selection. The selected repertoire was overly ambitious in a number of ways. First, much of the repertoire was rhythmically and tonally challenging for the singers. Given the amount of rehearsal time, too many elements of the repertoire were beyond the immediate means of the singers’ musical skill. This was especially apparent when first chanting the rhythm on “dominic has a doll.” The syncopated rhythms were a challenge for the singers and many phrases had to be modeled by the conductor. Because
the repertoire was selected after the concert and rehearsal dates were established, the repertoire was inappropriately programmed. Ultimately, three pieces in the Poulenc set had to be deleted from the program. The singers either needed more time or less challenging repertoire.

In addition, while the singers were experienced choir members, I gave inadequate consideration to the impact a change in ensemble voicing and size would have on the comfort level and confidence of the singers. As members of the Penn State Chamber Singers and Concert Choir, most of the singers were accustomed to singing in a mixed voice arrangement. Suddenly, the singers were in a new harmonic role with a program that was musically challenging. Also, the recital choir consisted of only ten singers, much smaller in number than the other ensembles. This required greater vocal and musical independence from each singer. A surprising number expressed feelings of exposure and intimidation in this setting. This psychological effect was unanticipated as many of the singers were experienced solo performers. This was both surprising and disappointing.

Over-programming the recital was ultimately to the detriment of the performance. There was little realization of certain musical intricacies as rehearsals focused almost entirely on learning the correct notes and rhythms. In addition, the quantity of repertoire negatively affected the quality of my score study because I could not focus as deeply on each piece.

**Preliminary Score Preparation.** The search and review of possible repertoire was perhaps the most accessible part of the project process for me. By using Penn State’s choral library as a starting point for research, the search for repertoire was much less overwhelming since the repertoire in the library was available for full review of all
musical elements. I was able to evaluate the quality of the text and composition and its appropriateness for the ensemble without needing to order the score first. Once the repertoire was selected, the scores were available for immediate study and distribution with neither cost nor delay. In the future, this method of preliminary score study may or may not be effective and will depend on the proximity and quality of such a choral library.

**Interpretive Score Preparation.** As stated previously, the breadth of the repertoire made depth in interpretive score study a challenge. While the arrangement of repertoire in sets made background research more manageable by limiting the number of composers, performance practices and poets for research, learning all of the music was still a large task. Even with continued review of the vocal lines before and throughout the rehearsal process, it was a struggle to detect errors in pitch and intonation. Very few recordings were consulted during the process to avoid tainting the interpretation of the music, but perhaps more listening would have been beneficial for me and the singers to aid the process of “aural-mapping.”

Most background research on composers was based on information found in the Grove Music Encyclopedia online. This provided a good overview of the life of each composer and a good foundation for further research but was ultimately not the richest source of information. As seen later, when writing program notes for the concert, more interesting and specific information was available in original sources on the life, style, and works of each composer and poet. This sort of research would have been beneficial in the earlier stages of score study. In addition, one of the most helpful processes of inquiry was consulting other people who had experience in performing the composers’
work or had studied the literary style of the poets. For example, most information on the
type and aesthetic ideals of e.e. cummings was gathered by speaking with an English
major who had studied his work in a University poetry class. The information from this
conversation provided the bulk of that which was shared with the audience during the
concert. Similarly, review of other poems written by e.e. cummings provided further
insight into his style. Understanding elements of his style illuminated decisions that
Persichetti made in setting cummings’ texts to music, thus revealing elements of
Persichetti’s style simultaneously.

**Pedagogical Score Preparation.** I planned each rehearsal with an overarching
goal for each. While this did move the process forward as a whole, the strategies
employed within that design were sometimes more effective than others. Overall, the
introductory strategies for each piece during the first rehearsal were successful at
introducing concepts and preemptively addressing certain challenges. However, from this
point forward, the planning for rehearsal of each piece was neither specific nor
sufficiently proactive. The second and third rehearsals were largely dictated by what the
singers struggled with based on a first run through that day. While some plans addressed
large categories like pitch and rhythm, not enough planning was in place to address
smaller tasks and challenges within those areas. I should have initially conducted a more
in depth analysis of the each piece for specific pitches, rhythms, etc. that would be a
challenge for the singer. This process also would have focused error detection
considerably. I came to the rehearsal process so focused on how be expressive with the
music, that I was not prepared to lead the singers in learning the nuts and bolts of the
music.
The second area of pedagogical score study, conducting preparation, did not prove to be thorough enough from the onset of rehearsal either. I did not recognize many sections as areas that would need my special navigation until we ran into them in rehearsal. This wasted time as I had to figure out how I was going to effectively cue the singers to enter, sustain, cut off, etc.

**Rehearsal Process.** The Reflections in Chapter IV were during the rehearsal process and reflect the adjustments made between rehearsals to prepare for the next. Since then, revisiting the entire rehearsal process has revealed new insight into what was successful and what was unsuccessful throughout the process.

Foremost, it is very important that a conductor learns to establish and communicate his or her expectations for the ensemble and provide feedback accordingly. I expected the singers to prepare their music outside of rehearsal time because I knew that would be necessary for the musical success of the recital. However, some of the singers were not accustomed to this approach to concert preparation and so it did not seem many prepared before the first rehearsal. Also, throughout the rehearsal process, I assumed that the singers knew why I was making certain rehearsal decisions and did not consistently explain on what I based the assessment of their success. This was especially apparent when moving from one piece to the next, I often would say: “Okay” or “Yeah” and put the piece to one side. It is possible that because the group did not have a clear sense of direction or level of achievement, the process of rehearsal slowed as a result. I was sequencing and processing in my head, but needed to verbalize that to the singers.

During the process of rehearsal, I also did not have realistic expectations for the singers, or a true understanding of just how much they grew between each rehearsal. At
the time, I was so concerned that the group was not immediately up to performance level, that I failed to see true strides. Upon reviewing the videos once the project was completed, it was clear that between each rehearsal period the singers made tremendous strides in some areas and were able to take on more and more difficult musical tasks each rehearsal. However, because I could not see this at the time, my concern and dissatisfaction was reflected in the tone of my feedback and consequently the singer’s perception of their success. Both the second and third rehearsals were very stressful, and many of the singers were frustrated with themselves despite having truly made progress.

In addition, my internalized processing on the podium translated to a considerable lack of energy in each rehearsal. A slower rehearsal pace and singer fatigue seemed to result. This lack of energy is apparent in my conducting gesture and ability to nonverbally evoke a musically appropriate interpretation. It seemed that I often gave instruction about performing a section with a certain character but did not reflect that in my conducting gesture. Had I effectively reflected the character from the outset perhaps less time would have been spent addressing issues of articulation, dynamics, and phrasing verbally.

Finally, the rehearsals were simply too long. It was too difficult to maintain focus for such an extended period of time. The achievement decreased per hour spent. Long rehearsals also did not allow the singers time to recover emotionally from frustration. As seen through the process, the singers returned to each rehearsal with improved performance. There was gain in achievement between rehearsals, not loss. Thus, shorter, more frequent rehearsals would have allowed the singers individual time outside of
rehearsal to polish problematic sections instead of having to focus on individuals within the rehearsal.

Performance

The location and date of the performance worked out very well. The recital space was intimate, yet had a helpful acoustic. It was very appropriate for the occasion. The program and program notes were also well received. Using an adapted template for the printed program made it possible to tailor the layout to contribute to the recital experience. It was the first thing that the audience saw upon entering the recital space and part of setting the tone for the experience.

Though I had previously practiced what I was going to say when sharing about each piece with the audience, this part of the recital was a bit awkward. My words and thoughts were not nearly as concise as they could have been. This slowed the recital pace, and seemed to make the beginning of the recital anticlimactic. I did not write out and adequately rehearse exactly what I wanted to say—in future endeavors I will write out my comments and practice their delivery. However, I did receive numerous positive comments from the audience in regard to this educational portion of the concert. Despite its clumsiness, it was well received.

The performance of the music was also a success in that at no point did the program derail completely. At the very beginning of “dominic has a doll,” the singers’ entrance was shaky and a few measures passed before the entire ensemble picked up their parts. This however, was not to the detriment of the entire performance.
Recommendations

Based on my experience with this project and my reflections both during and after, I offer the following recommendations for future concert endeavors. I first recommend that the conductor consider the whole nature of the singer as part of his or her preliminary assessment of the appropriateness of repertoire. These considerations includes a true assessment of skill levels, the singers’ understanding of the rehearsal process based on previous experience, their psychological and emotional maturity, and among many other considerations, their inclination to practice. Furthermore, a conductor must consider not only the stamina required of the singer to perform certain repertoire, but also to maintain focus in rehearsals. As stated in the reflections on the rehearsal process, more frequent and shorter, condensed rehearsals would have been physically, emotionally, and musically beneficial to the ability level of these singers.

The summative lesson learned from this experience is that less, done well, is better. Were I to reprogram this recital, I would focus solely on the four Persichetti pieces and would have included a more formal lecture on the texts and compositions in the recital. This would have allowed for more focused rehearsals and a deeper musical understanding for the singer, conductor, and listener alike. I walked away from the recital feeling as though I had only scratched the surface of the set and wished that I had given more focused attention to the repertoire.

In addition, I recommend that a conductor consult original sources in background research and consult other experts who have experience in performance practice, pronunciation or interpretation. This information should then be shared with the singers so that they too may participate in a fuller understanding of the piece.
Finally, I recommend that a conductor compile a list of director’s notes to give to the singers before rehearsals begin. Background research can be included in these notes in addition to specific score markings, pronunciation guides and text translations. A director may also choose to share recordings of the pieces with singers as part of this outside preparation. While I had originally decided against using recordings, I see now that they would have been beneficial to prepare the singers without tainting the originality of our interpretation. These tools would assist the singers in preparing adequately for each rehearsal and maximize rehearsal time devoted to more musical elements of the presentation.

Conclusion

As revealed in much of the literature review for this project, the process of concert performance is an artistic endeavor deeply rooted in personal philosophy. One of my conclusions is the effect this project has had on my personal musical philosophy.

The purpose of this project was to provide experience in leading an ensemble through the complete concert process. Ultimately, the experience was exactly that: an exercise in the process. However, as Collins stated, “The ideal performance of a piece of music is the one that most closely approaches the composer’s expectations for performance.” (128) As in all interpretive disciplines, a true assessment of whether or not the composer’s original intent was realized remains elusive.

At the conclusion of the concert, I could not help but feel that something was missing; that somehow, an intangible, yet irreplaceable element of the process had been lost. This element, beyond the quantification of research, was the sense of aesthetic satisfaction and closure. Through out rehearsals and the performance of Petite voix, it
appeared that the singers (and conductor) were so concerned with “getting it right,” that few demonstrated an emotional response to the music or appreciation for its construct. This realization coupled with a positive audience response to the educational program notes, changed my philosophical understanding of the purpose of concert performance for both the audience and the musicians.

First, I feel strongly that there is value in spending a substantive amount of time on repertoire. This does not necessarily translate to more hours of rehearsal, but rather a longer period of time through which the musician continually revisits the music with an interpretive appreciation of its context, construction, and significance. At Penn State, choirs will spend an entire semester preparing a concert program. While some bemoan that the choirs expend more rehearsal minute per concert minute than their instrumental counterparts, I returned from *Petite voix* to this format with an appreciation for the extended opportunity to explore repertoire on an aesthetic, emotional, and spiritual level. There is something to the steeping of musical thought and the nature of aesthetic response that cannot be microwaved.

Secondly, the concert cemented in my philosophy the importance of including the audience in discovering the structural and textual significance of certain compositions through concert notes and lecture. Unlike the singers and conductor, they have not had months to explore and absorb elements of the music that are worthy of appreciation and enrich the listening experience. After the recital, many persons approached me to thank me for sharing the information I had about the repertoire. From this response, I feel strongly that when a composer writes notes to enrich or provide commentary on a text, it
is valuable to the listener to provide them with the tools to interpret and appreciate the composer’s intent.

In conclusion, this experience has left me with a far deeper understanding of the concert process than I had originally anticipated. While I would approach many parts of this process differently in the future to accommodate new circumstances or improve on inefficient methodology, the philosophical convictions born from the experience also changed the way I plan to approach future musical endeavors. _Petite Voix_ was a culmination of my Penn State career, and a foundation for all that is to come.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A

Score Analysis Charts
SCORE ANALYSIS BIBLIOGRAPHY


## APPENDIX B

### Rehearsal Plans

Rehearsal 1: September 6, 2010 7-9 pm, 110 MB 1 University Park, PA

Goal: sight-read successfully and expressively through each piece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:05-7:20</td>
<td>WARM-UP</td>
<td>5<del>1 hum&lt;br&gt;5-4-3-2-1 “Fah”&lt;br&gt;5-8-5-3-1 “zi-ah”&lt;br&gt;5-5-5-5-5—1&lt;br&gt;i-e-a-o-u</del>&lt;br&gt;“dominic has a doll”</td>
<td>Loosen voice, unify sound/vowels&lt;br&gt;Establish response to gesture&lt;br&gt;Establish core sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:20-7:25</td>
<td>PRAYER</td>
<td>Sight-read 2x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:25-7:35</td>
<td>LA PETITE</td>
<td>1. sight-read w/ piano “da”&lt;br&gt;2. reread rehearsal 2 slowly&lt;br&gt;3. m. 76 w/o piano</td>
<td>Bright, light, clear sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:35-7:45</td>
<td>UNCLES</td>
<td>1. speak in rhythm&lt;br&gt;2. sightsing more slowly w/o accomp.&lt;br&gt;3. m. 76 w/o piano</td>
<td>Focus on consonants and accents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:45-7:55</td>
<td>LE HÉRISSON</td>
<td>1. A: rehearsal 2 to 3 on “pa”&lt;br&gt;2. A, SII, S build up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:55-8:05</td>
<td>EN RENTRANT L’ECOLE</td>
<td>1. m.16-end slow&lt;br&gt;2. mm.5-7 SI, A&lt;br&gt;3. Read on “lu”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:05-8:10</td>
<td>MAGGIE</td>
<td>Sight-read piano on parts, no accompaniment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:10-8:20</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:20-8:30</td>
<td>DOMINIC HAS A DOLL</td>
<td>Speaking rhythms&lt;br&gt;Sight-read with accompaniment (on parts and with accompaniment)</td>
<td>Focus on consonants “dominic” “depaola”&lt;br&gt;Look for unison and splits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30-8:40</td>
<td>LE PETIT GARÇON</td>
<td>Sight-read on “Da”&lt;br&gt;work problem spots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:40-8:50</td>
<td>LE CHIEN PERDU</td>
<td>Sight-read individual parts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:50-9:00</td>
<td>NOUNS</td>
<td>Sight-read with accompaniment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rehearsal 2: September 13, 2010, 7-9 pm. Room 110 MB 1

Goal: Persichetti solid with accompaniment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>GOAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00-7:10</td>
<td>WARM-UP</td>
<td>PHYSICAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5-3-1 detached in-the-sea 1-5-3-1 and-may-came-home –warmth “quite as if he were really” – moving up scale chord building—vowel unification, 4 pt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:10-7:25</td>
<td>MAGGIE</td>
<td>1. mm. 39-end 2. run a capella—attn. to character 3. with piano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:25-7:40</td>
<td>DOMINIC</td>
<td>1. m. 10-end 2. sight-read 3. add piano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:40-7:55</td>
<td>NOUNS</td>
<td>1. run w/ piano 2. vowels: “nouns” “singular”</td>
<td>Freedom, release in “wan”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:55-8:10</td>
<td>UNCLEs</td>
<td>1. run w/ piano (entrance m. 29, m. 50, m. 106) 2. “Brattle” vowel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:10-8:15</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:15-8:20</td>
<td>WARM-UP</td>
<td>Sighs 1-3-1-4-1-5-1-6-1 zi-a-zi-a-zi-a-zi-a-zi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:20-8:30</td>
<td>LE CHIEN</td>
<td>mm. 5-12 w/ piano, w/o piano run all a capella</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30-8:37</td>
<td>EN RENTRANT</td>
<td>mm. 5-7, 14-end, 10-end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:37-8:45</td>
<td>LE HÉRISSON</td>
<td>1. run w/ piano 2. transitions m. 7, m. 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45-8:50</td>
<td>GARÇON</td>
<td>1. run w/ piano 2. run w/ minimal piano 3. mm. 1-7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:50-8:58</td>
<td>FILLE SAGE</td>
<td>1. run w/o piano 2. isolate 2 3. transitions mm. 12-13, 14-15, 17-18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:58-9:00</td>
<td>PRAYER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Rehearsal 3: September 20, 2010. 7-9pm Room 110, MB 1

Announcements: Dress Rehearsal, Concert Dress, Call Time
Goal: Solidify pitches and rhythms, character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>GOAL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00-7:10</td>
<td>WARM UP</td>
<td>Sighs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1-5-3-1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fi-ah-i-ah</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fille: rehearsal 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>intervals descending</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>chord “da” Gb, Bb, Db, F—shift down whole step</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:10-7:30</td>
<td>FILLE SAGE</td>
<td>1. run w/ piano</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. transitions mm. 12-13, 14-15, 17-18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. add French</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30-7:45</td>
<td>LE CHIEN</td>
<td>1. staccato</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. add French</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. run</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:45-8:05</td>
<td>EN RENTRANT</td>
<td>1. staccato mm. 10-11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. run up to speed</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. text</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:05-8:15</td>
<td>TRANSITIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:15-8:20</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:20-8:30</td>
<td>NOUNS</td>
<td>Warn about ending</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purity of vowels</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Address trouble spots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>run</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30-8:40</td>
<td>UNCLEs</td>
<td>Entries after piano interludes mm. 75-end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>run</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:40-8:50</td>
<td>DOMINIC</td>
<td>Altos p.3 m1/ p5, m1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythmic accuracy</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Character difference</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearse ending</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:50-8:58</td>
<td>MAGGIE</td>
<td>Run!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purity of vowels (stone, large, lose)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dynamic contrast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Connectedness to text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:58-9:00</td>
<td>PRAYER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Spots to Troubleshoot | “dominic” page 6 “dolls” “hugs”
| | “nouns” final cut off
| | “uncles” page 8 “castrated”
| | “Fille Sage” Page 1
| | Transition between “Fille” and “Chien”
| Highlighted sections | “dominic” mm. 5-13
| | “uncles” mm. 42-61
| | “maggie” mm. 3-4 |
APPENDIX C

Notes from Dr. Kiver

REHEARSAL 2

Warm-up
  • Good pacing of warm up, verbal direction
  • I appreciate that you are teaching them something in the warm-up-good, but maybe for this age/skill level just model and have them echo it.
  • It’s not the same, help them change-either model/question-I am not sure that they were as detached as your were.
  • “release that” maybe have them do the physical thing(ah, good you did …)
  • Good to joke with them and point out they need to be better than you were!!
  • They tend to sing note for note as they go higher, so maybe help them to sing with more line.
  • Good to connect warm-ups to the text
  • Your diction seemed better than theirs-‘quite as if’-good to point out consonants
  • Glottal on ‘if’ is tough if eliding with [z] of ‘as.’ You could ask them to sing the consonants as they are tapping the shoulder-i.e. more articulate.

“Maggie and millie and molly and may”
  • “for whatever we lose” (it sounds rather matronly-more naivety) breathier delivery of text ‘whatever’- more articulate ‘t.’
  • last measure- Do you like the length of ‘sea’?
  • maybe you could be smaller-encourage them to be softer.
  • Encourage them to be more connected to the text-‘horrible,’ ‘chased’ etc.
  • Good to ask them about the major triad-you made them think.
  • More demanding for dynamics, articulation
  • Sometimes having them sing staccatto (say p.4 line 2, m. 3) can help force them to think more about the pitches.
  • Listen to p4, line 2, m. 3-they tend to scoop into the high ’a’- place ‘m’ (voice) at same pitch as vowel ‘may.’
  • Good to help them think about the piano.
  • I like your manner with the group-good use of humor.
  • Maybe you can be still on ‘smooth’
  • You can show more dynamic contrast
  • Feel free to have them sit/stand more.
  • More character from you-you look ‘correct’
  • More childlike, energetic, care-free…

“Dominic has a Doll”
  • How could you look like ‘suddenly’ and ‘and she but’-how can you prepare them to be characterful when they enter? Smaller, more energy in wrist, face.
  • Elbows still have a tendency to reach forward a little-not too bad, but something to think about.
• Good to ask Julia to explain further.
• You’re doing very well-hitting a lot of different things-vocal technique, text, shape etc.
• You’re leading a lot of stuff, but perhaps by now we need to move on, even if you have to give notes, etc. with 1.5 rehearsals left….
• “Altos could have more of that?”-that what?
• More snap in the opening (more bite)
• Last page-less beaty.
• I mentioned to do it again just to give them another chance to feel how it all connects together. Sometimes you just need to drill something a couple of times.
• Check altos p.3, m 1
• Check altos p. 5, m 1
• I like the horizontal on last page, line 2
• Conduct phrase on last line

“Nouns to Nouns”
• How do altos find last pitch? There were better 2\textsuperscript{nd} time, but maybe before you run it next week, remind them.
• Check the recordings of you rehearsals as there is probably some good footage here
• Maybe start with this next time you rehearse these pieces?
• Separate your hands on last time

“uncles”
• conducting last page ‘castrated pup’- long lines.

REHEARSAL 3

Warmup-really be thinking about the intonation
• I’m not sure about 1-5-3-1… on the 1 to5 can take a little too much pressure up and will be around most breaks. Just a thought but you could argue that music has lots of ascending 1 to 5.
• Elbows could be a little closer to your torso (in terms of forward/backward space)
• Good for you for taking time recalibrate-this is perfectly okay to do
• Good the break things into smaller chunks
• The era-training/memory is good—still draw their attention to other things such as shape, vowel, pitch/intonation
• Great that you w/ups are so connected to the repertoire
• When doing the chordal thing they have difficulty tuning the unison (just 8ve, the fifth, then the ‘awkward’ interval, the major 7\textsuperscript{th}. The 3\textsuperscript{rd} whether major or not is the thing that is harder to place, so you would who have the root, the mag 7\textsuperscript{th}; the other parts?

• Poulenc 1
• The last beat in the measures sometimes has too much energy. Maybe more A before 3
• Conducting could be more horizontal in this area
• 3/4 measure after 1—the rhythm is the trick, so maybe isolate it into a monotone take away the pitch. Always try to figure out what is the problem and strip it down to its basic elements
• maybe you could do less in the opening, more horizontal? Think of the legato nature of French diction.
• Be ready to help them see the printed rhythms differently. M3 is simply a quarter note, but it is harder to read because the that the two eight notes to accommodate the English text. Remind them of that. Perhaps they could even cross out the extra notes.
• This is splitting hears, but as you teach the text and they are repeating, remember the goal-rapid, late, and clear etc. They tend to be a little lumpy in their repetition and a little “f”
• You are a patient lady Maggie !!!!
  AARGHHH ....1st sop…

Le Chien
Humperdinck
• Preps could have DNC (in general) not just this piece
• Lovely looking on sleep-more forward movement
• Perhaps less beaty/vertical
• Nice release at end but maybe the release could be higher placed-ask me about that.
• Be with alto at pg 2, m. 2 etc
• They don’t always do what you show…
• Maybe at high F, have left hand shape more, less mirroring
• Maybe last 3 bars, very little pulse needed
• Great at p3, m5, low, nice
• At times you look as though you are conducting with you hand rather than the end of your stick
• Maybe hands lower at end-moving up slower

Nouns
Bottom of pg 6, 2 hands-for piano

Uncles:
P8 middle line-keep stick in correct direction in terms of up and down- “led” needs to came up.
Last piano chord lower, more abrupt, “off with his head”
APPENDIX D

Video of Rehearsal and Performance*

* Video is on file at the Schreyer Honors College
APPENDIX E

Recital Space Agreement

University Baptist and Brethren Church
411 S. Burrowes Street
State College, PA 16801
Telephone: 814-237-2708  E-mail: ubbc@verizon.net

STUDENT RECITAL POLICY

All student recital requests will be referred to the church office through Dr. Christopher Kiver, Assistant Professor, School of Music, the Pennsylvania State University.

The church secretary will schedule recitals according to the availability of the sanctuary. Recitals will not conflict with regularly scheduled activities of the church. No more than two (2) rehearsal times will be allowed. The student will contact the church office during the week prior to his/her recital to pick up a key. A $25 key deposit is required and will be refunded when the key is returned within one (1) week of the scheduled recital.

There will be no fee for the use of the sanctuary if scheduled through Dr. Kiver.

Use of the church organ for a recital must be approved by Dr. Kiver at least two weeks before the recital date. Recitals not approved by Dr. Kiver will pay regular facility fees.

If the student wishes to use the Fellowship or Fireside Room for a reception, there will be a $50.00 fee. Alcoholic beverages may not be served.

No food or beverages (except bottled water) permitted in the Sanctuary.

Sanctuary furniture, supplies, decorations and furnishings in the Narthex may not be moved and/or removed without prior approval from the church office. If approval is given, all furnishings must be replaced immediately following the recital.

Students will be responsible for turning off all lights and locking all outside doors at the conclusion of the recital.

Students are liable for any damage to church property, or extraordinary cleaning expenses incurred by the church as a result of the recital.

Name & Date

September 26, 2010
Date of Recital

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Beginning/Ending Time
APPENDIX F

Program and Texts and Translations

Petite voix

A conducting recital
Sunday, September 26, 2010
2 p.m.
University Baptist and Brethren Church

Four Cummings Choruses, op. 98
I. dominic has a doll
II. nouns to nouns
III. maggie and milly and molly and may
IV. uncles

Petites voix
I. La petite fille sage
II. Le chien perdu

Prayer from “Hänsel and Gretel”

Four Cummings Choruses, op. 98

Vincent Persichetti
(1915-1987)

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Engelbert Humperdinck
(1854-1921)
Arr. Bryceson Treharne
(1879-1948)

Margaret B. Cox, conductor
Lauren Kooistra, piano

Soprano I
Julia Kershetsky
Teal Ruland
Elizabeth Walton

Soprano II
Kristy Drake
Stephanie Shoffner
Laurel Smail

Alto
Stephanie Baker
Rachel Dungan
Kimberly Kraft
Jessica Neal

Special Thanks to:
Dr. Christopher Kiver, Honors Thesis Supervisor
Dr. Joanne Rustkowski, Honors Advisor

This recital is given as partial completion of an Honor Thesis for the Penn State Schreyer Honors College.
Four Cummings Choruses
E. E. Cummings (1894-1962)

I. dominic has a doll

dominic has a doll wired
to the radiator of his ZOOM DOOM
icecoalwood truck a
wistful little clown
whom somebody buried
upside down in an ash barrel so
of course dominic took him home

& mrs dominic washed his sweet
dirty face & mended
his bright tom trousers (quite
as if her were really her &
she but) & so that's how
dominic has a doll

& every now & then my
wonderful friend dominic de paola
gives me a most tremendous hug
knowing i feel that we & worlds
are less alive than dolls & dream

II. nouns to nouns
	nouns to nouns
wan too nouns and nouns
two nouns wandering in
singular untheknownudulous spring

III. maggie and milly and molly and may

maggio and milly and molly and may
went down to the beach (to play one day)
and maggie discovered a shell that sang
so sweetly she couldn't remember her troubles, and
milly befriended a stranded star
whose rays five languid fingers were;
and molly was chased by a horrible thing
which raced sideways while blowing bubbles; and
may came home with a smooth round stone
as small as a world and as large as alone,
for whatever we lose (i love a you or a me)
It's always ourselves we find in the sea

IV. uncles

my uncle Daniel fought in the civil war band
(and can play the triangle like the devil)
my uncle frank has done nothing for many years but
fly kites
and when the string breaks (or something)
my uncle frank breaks into tears.
my uncle tom knits
and is a kewpie above the ears
(but my uncle ed that's dead from the neck up
is lead all over brattle street by a castrated pup
Petites Voix
Madeleine Ley (1901-1981)

1. La petite fille sage
La petite fille sage
est rentrée de l’école
avec son panier.
Elle a mis sur la table
les assiettes et les verres lourds
Et puis elle s’est lavée
à la pompe de la cour
sans mouiller son tablier.
Et si le petit frère dort
dans son petit lit cage,
elle va s’asseoir
sur la pierre usée pour voir
l’étoile du soir. Ah,

2. Le chien perdu
Qui est tu, inconnu?
Qui est tu, chien perdu?
Tu rêves, tu somnailles,
pour-tu voudrais-tu
que je te grarte là,
derrière les oreilles,
doux chien couché sur le trottoir
qui tue vers mon œil
ton regard blanc et noir.
Qui est tu, inconnu,
chien perdu?

Prayer from “Hänsel and Gretel”
From the German White Paternoster, translated by Constance Bache
Stanza two adapted by Willis Wager

When at night I go to sleep,
Fourteen angels watch do keep:
Two my head are guarding,
Two my feet are guiding,
Two are on my right hand,
Two are on my left hand,
Two who warmly cover,
Two who o’er me hover,
Two to whom ‘tis given
To guide my steps to heaven.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John
Bless the bed that I lie on,
Blessed guardian angel,
Keep me from all danger.
Now I fear would rest me,
May the Lord now bless me.
If I do not waken,
May my soul be taken,
By the Lord be given
A home above in heaven.
APPENDIX G

Academic Vitae of Margaret B. Cox

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Education:
Bachelor of Music Education, Honors in Music Spring 2011
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania

Thesis Title:
“Petite Voix: An Endeavor in the Conducting Process”

Thesis Supervisor:
Dr. Christopher A. Kiver

Related Experience:
Student Teacher Spring 2011
Carlisle Area High School, Cheryl Parsons
Crestview Elementary School, Beth Ellen Walters
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Director, Sine Nomine Spring-Fall 2010
University Park, Pennsylvania

Musical Co-director: Cherub Choir Fall 2009-Spring 2011
St. Paul’s United Methodist Church
State College, Pennsylvania

Awards:
PMEA Excellence in Scholarship Award 2011
Dean’s List, All semesters 2007-2011
Willa A. Taylor Vocal Endowment Intern 2010
Pi Kappa Lambda Inductee 2008

Membership in Professional Organizations:
American Choral Directors Association,
Vice-President, Penn State Student Chapter
National Association of Teachers of Singing
Pennsylvania Music Educators Association
MENC: The National Association for Music Education