

Collaboration from Variable Perspectives Through a Multi-Instrumental Approach

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A Senior Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for graduation
in the Honors Program
Liberty University
Fall 2022

Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

This Senior Honors Thesis is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from the Honors Program of Liberty University.

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Abstract

This thesis is a discussion of the art of musical collaboration. First to be defined is general collaboration and what the key components to success are as discussed by various authors. The components will be discussed through the various aspects of musical collaborative relationships, such as those between fellow performers, composers and artists, conductors and their ensembles, as well as teachers and their students. A discussion of the differences between those who are experienced on their singular instrument versus those who are experiences on multiple instruments will also be made. Incorporation of this knowledge will be observed in the different aspects of collaboration through analysis of various professionals in the field.

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Defining Collaboration

The art of musical collaboration is far from simple and requires extensive preparation that the audience does not see. Hours are spent cultivating communication, balance, and most significantly for the discussion of this paper, relationships. These form between composer to artist, fellow performers, conductor to ensemble, and other dynamics such as teacher to student. Even between musicians that have never met, collaboration must occur to produce a polished performance. The background of each musician critically affects the collaborative experience because every musician must be equipped with the ability to read and interpret notation, listen and correctly identify errors, commit to musical phrasing and intent, and contribute to the ensemble. While these abilities all come with time and experience, there are other factors that can escalate an individual's growth as a mature musician. One such factor is a musician's familiarity and proficiency on multiple instruments. Professional musicians should develop skills of working with others regardless of whether they play more than one instrument, however knowledge and proficiency on multiple instruments can affect the collaborative experience. Instrumental bilingualism is an influential factor that enables a musician to have a different collaborative experience with other musicians for multiple reasons, such as prior understanding of repertoire, a deeper level of communication, and a better understanding of the technique required between instruments.

Combining the ideas, techniques, and skills of a group of two or more musicians produces an experience unlike any other. Like any setting that requires the input and involvement of multiple people, musical collaboration requires complete commitment to the

group while remaining open-minded enough to challenge one another.¹ In their broad discussion of collaboration, Savage and Simonds describe this concept as follows: “The process of collaboration involves constant re-negotiations, continuous fadings between you and me, this and that, here and now, and him and her; discords and harmonies that take place between participants, between thoughts, between practices and between different ways of knowing the world.”² In order for this many factors to run smoothly between multiple individuals, there can be little room for a lack of participation and total commitment is required throughout the entire music-making process.

Some of the factors necessary for a successful collaboration can be found in Keith Sawyer’s book, *Group Genius*. His discussion revolves primarily around jazz and other improvisatory groups; however, his criteria can be applied to any group that is attempting to work together. Sawyer lists ten conditions for successful *group flow*, which he observes when “improvising groups attain a collective state of mind.”³ This state of being is something present in all collaborative relationships; in a productive rehearsal or performance, this happens when everyone is on the same page, all the time, actively paying attention to what each one has to say.

The first of Sawyer’s criteria is the group’s goal. He defines the goal of jazz and improv groups by their purpose: to perform well and to give the audience a performance that equaled or surpassed their expectations. This brings about an interesting paradox. The performers know roughly what is going to happen, but through their performance they are “establishing a goal that

¹ Dorothy Miell and Karen Littleton, *Collaborative Creativity: Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Free Association Books, 2004) 128-129.

² Savage, Karen and Dominic Symonds, “Collaboration,” in *Economics of Collaboration in Performance*, (Palgrave Macmillan, Cham., 2018), 69, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95210-9_3.

³ Keith Sawyer, *Group Genius* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 43.

provides a focus for the team—just enough of one so that team members can tell when they move closer to a solution—but one that’s open-ended enough for problem-finding creativity to emerge.”⁴ The same is true for more classically-directed collaborations. Although much of it is dictated, there is still quite a bit left the performers’ discretion, especially in areas of expression. Each individual working together must come to an agreement as to how the piece in question should be played.

Sawyer then discusses close listening and complete concentration as two mutually dependent factors in music-making. A musician must be fully focused on the task of performing, especially when playing with someone else. There are many aspects that must align in collaboration for each individual musician: constant sound production, focused listening to oneself, awareness of the performances of all musicians playing simultaneously, and responding creatively to the group’s performance. This is combined with the idea of being in control which Sawyer describes when he writes, “Control results in a paradox because participants must feel in control, yet at the same time they must remain flexible, listen closely, and always be willing to defer to the emergent flow of the group.”⁵ In both improvisatory jazz ensembles and classical settings, one musician may “take charge” and lead the group. At the same time, both musicians are still actively listening and moving with one another to keep a cohesive performance. This balance and blend requires all performers to actively listen and respond with their best musical intention to produce a high-quality performance. Each musician knows what they bring to the group, but they should be more than willing to learn from what the others also have to offer and incorporate it into their own playing.

⁴ Sawyer, 45.

⁵ Ibid., 49.

Other key components Sawyer mentions are the ability to “move it forward”⁶ and communication.⁷ “Moving it forward” is the action taken after close listening when everyone must listen, recognize what has happened as fact, and then build on what was said instead of changing the idea midway through.⁸ Communication is an imperative tool for an ensemble to perform cohesively. Since speaking to one another is sometimes impossible, musicians must rely on other forms of communication. The acts of conducting and cueing through breathing, eye contact, and gestures made usually with the upper body are major aspects of non-verbal communication between musicians, especially those who do not use music during their performances like jazz groups. The development of this communication is just as important as the discussion that takes place during rehearsals and can make or break a group’s success.

The previously mentioned criteria can only be attained if everyone in the group is demanding equal participation of themselves and one another. Sawyer’s description can be related to the “weakest link in the chain” cliché when he writes, “Group flow is more likely to occur when all participants play an equal role in the collective creation of the final performance. Group flow is blocked if anyone’s skill level is below that of the rest of the group’s members; all must have comparable skill levels.”⁹ According to Sawyer, a musical performance may not reach its highest quality if the skill level of all participating members is not equal. This is true for both large and small ensembles. To keep pace with peers, musicians must have familiarity with their

⁶ Sawyer, 54.

⁷ The term “move it forward” is referring to the instrumentalists’ abilities to adapt to whatever musical idea is happening in the moment rather than relying purely on something previously arranged.

⁸ Martin Katz. *The Complete Collaborator: The Pianist as Partner*. (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2009) 15.

⁹ Sawyer, 50.

craft and be well-versed in the language and expectations of professional music. Although it may be an enriching experience, even one participating musician's skill level that does not match the others in the group could lower the overall performance quality.

Sawyer's final point almost contradicts his discussion of equal participation. He states that the potential for failure is necessary for musical success and advancement. In Savage and Simonds' reflection of this point, they write, "Sawyer's final collaborative quality, *the potential for failure*, speaks to the reality that any development step forward can only come if parties move out of their comfort zones—if untested innovations are explored with the possible result that an idea or decision may not lead to success."¹⁰ Each person has to fully commit themselves to whatever happens in a performance, no matter how unexpected it is. There is no room to participate when the feeling comes. These qualities are all necessary for successful collaboration, inside or outside the field of music. They apply to every area where multiple people are required to work together to produce something they would not have been able to alone. Each of these qualities can be applied to the specific relationships mentioned previously and can be bettered if the individual(s) in question have experience on more than on instrument.

Collaboration in Performance

Collaboration is an activity that under any circumstance requires extreme attention to detail by each person involved. Performers in any medium are the most aware and knowledgeable about their instrument. This is perfect for solo work where it is just a person and their instrument. Collaboration between performers can benefit from foundational knowledge about all of the instruments being used. It is not necessary to learn at such a level where one is

¹⁰ Savage and Simonds, "Collaboration," 79.

considered professional on multiple instruments, however it is extremely beneficial to have the slightest knowledge of what one is working alongside with. A base knowledge of other instruments encountered in collaborative settings can provide deeper analysis of the performed music from rehearsal through performance, no matter the size of the ensemble.

This useful fundamental knowledge of each instrument in collaboration is comparable to a conductor's expertise used with ensembles. The conductor knows the sound each instrument should be producing and communicates what they want effectively. They also study the score thoroughly so that they know what will sound in the music before it occurs. Each individual player should have knowledge of their role as a section member and contributing ensemble performer. For example, in the overture to Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, it is important for the woodwind players to know their musical and harmonic role in the opening chorale. Later in the piece, the wind section functions as accompaniment and therefore requires the wind section to blend each part to sound as one. This is easier to do when familiar with the other instruments in the section. While recognizing the rest of the ensemble is important and vital, the knowledge of one's particular section takes greater priority. To be aware of their place in the ensemble, each section has to take consideration of themselves and the other sections and play accordingly to enhance the ensemble's experience. If a section does not do this, they might play too loud or not loudly enough, thus diminishing the quality of music.

Much like the conductor, the element of score study by each member through a great deal of listening coincides with ensemble success. As an instrumentalist specifically (excluding pianists), the part given is one line of music with very little, if any, indication of what the rest of the ensemble is doing enhancing the importance of score study. The benefits include knowing where one's own part fits into the rest of the ensemble through elements like tone, dynamics, and

intonation, who might be receiving cues from that specific part, who might be giving cues, and how the ensemble effects the ten elements previously mentioned for that individual part. The more preparation each person gives before rehearsal lessens the work the collaborating musicians must do to produce a higher quality performance.¹¹

The factors discussed regarding preparation can very well be applied to small ensembles, specifically soloist and accompanist. The dynamic is different between a large ensemble and two people, which calls for a different approach in preparation and rehearsal. In her dissertation, Laurie Pow gives great importance to the concept of understanding the other person's instrument through her example of violinist Jascha Heifetz. Heifetz would require his students to study piano until they were at a level where they could accompany themselves comfortably. He also required this of himself and was an equally skilled pianist as he was violinist.¹² This is a level of familiarity that will not often be found, but in Heifetz' case it made him all the more comfortable and familiar with the piano's methods and techniques. A study of another collaborator's instrument to this extent is not necessarily needed, but one that covers the minimum of technique can be an advantage when working with another instrumentalist. When this experience is present, it can help avoid one partner's opinion becoming the final word. A key to good collaboration, no matter the instrumental arrangement, is communication. A mutual respect between musician and accompanist enhances collaboration, as both are able to exchange ideas and musically perform with nuances that will aid in easier performance from both players.

¹¹ Katz, 3.

¹² Laurie Bell Pow. "More than the Mere Notes": Incorporating Analytical Skills into the Collaborative Pianist's Process in Learning, Rehearsing, and Performing Repertoire." (PhD diss., University of Miami, 2016) 40-58. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

In both cases, each individual should feel able to ask questions regarding the other's instrument so that they can better know how to approach the music.¹³

Rehearsal is optimal to discuss timing issues such as entrance cues and cut-offs and recognizing how other instruments uniquely cue helps an individual recognize when these moments happen. Bishop and Goebel touch on this when they state, "Experience in performing a particular instrument strengthens the associations between actions and their perceptual effects, facilitating the prediction of both one's own actions and observed actions."¹⁴ This article is mainly referring to experience performing with another person that plays another instrument, not so much experience playing the instrument personally. Being able to interpret what another instrument's cues are, how they execute them, and the rate and speed they are executed can be extremely beneficial when collaborating with another instrument that is not one's own. Discussion between both collaborators aids in understanding that can bridge the unfamiliarity of instrumental specifics with cueing and a successful rehearsal by easily avoiding simple technical mistakes.

A performance, especially one involving more than one person, will never be the same as another. There will always be the element of humanity: a factor that can be the most volatile and unpredictable. Sloboda discusses the use of expression and "phrase boundaries" in individual performance to guide the audience's ear in a particular direction.¹⁵ The same is true for

¹³ Katz, 11.

¹⁴ Bishop, Laura and Werner Goebel. "When they listen and when they watch: Pianists' use of nonverbal audio and visual cues during duet performance." *Musicae Scientiae*. 19, no. 1, 85 (2015)
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1029864915570355?utm_source=summon&utm_medium=discovery-provider.

¹⁵ Sloboda, John A. "Individual Differences in Music Performance." *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 4, no. 10, 401 (October 1, 2000).

collaborative performances as well, with the biggest difference being the addition of communication pre-performance. Any expressive or seemingly unexpected moments are the ones that have been rehearsed with the greatest frequency. Accompaniment repertoire, despite misconceptions, requires as much practice and rehearsal time as solo literature.¹⁶ If inadequate preparation has been made before even the first rehearsal, the time together could be less productive and could add stress to both the performers regarding the actual performance.¹⁷ From the standpoint of an ensemble participant, performance is a unique thing. Each member is extremely aware of one another, especially those in proximity physically. Cueing becomes even more important as starting together settles both performers immediately: “In some performance contexts, it is not unusual for musicians to have to synchronize with silent observed gestures. Orchestral musicians often synchronize with conductor gestures or with performers in other sections whose sound they cannot hear distinctly.”¹⁸ The above discussion of cueing applies here as well. As a performer, it is often easier to watch other players to see how they generally move in different sections of a piece or listen for specific moments in the music. Quick observation makes it is easy to tell when something is off by looking at other performers and seeing them adjusting something on their instrument, or even just listening and hearing a difference in tone that has not been previously present. In situations like these it is very important for an ensemble member to be aware of the different technical aspects of the instruments surrounding them and learn to recognize what each gesture means when everything is going as rehearsed.

¹⁶ Katz, 7.

¹⁷ Katz’ discussion of different aspects of preparation beforehand by a pianist supports the necessity of extra time required before even a first rehearsal happens.

¹⁸ Bishop and Goebel, “When They Listen,” 102.

Performance awareness becomes exponentially more important as the ensemble becomes smaller due to the exposed nature of chamber groups. Bishop and Goebel describe this when they write:

In typical performance situations, ensemble musicians maintain synchrony by monitoring the effects of their own and others' actions and modifying their actions plans when asynchronies occur... During ensemble performance, sound signals from musicians' own and others' playing might also facilitate imagery. All members of an ensemble must share an integrated representation of the entire piece structure for a coordinated performance to be produced.¹⁹

Coordination between ensemble members could be affected by performers losing their place in their music while playing. Clear communication between performers using visual and auditory cues will aid in coordinated presentation and can be solidified through singular preparation and collaborative rehearsal. Collaborative musicians, like conductors, adapt to the performance immediately with communication to produce a well-coordinated and accurate performance by utilizing a variety of rehearsal visual and auditory cues and recognizing what these cues look like for each instrument.

As Katz discusses, the more comfortable an ensemble is together the more comfortable the audience is. A performer's goal is to make the audience feel as if the music is extremely easy and takes very little effort. Katz states, "Once the techniques and ideas discussed here have been understood and correctly implanted, they will disappear into the fabric of a performance... Perhaps another informed and aware collaborative pianist might discern the mechanics at work, but certainly no one else should be able to do so."²⁰ Katz is describing the process of musicians making moments that may qualify as difficult seem as if they are just the opposite. In these

¹⁹ Bishop and Goebel, "When They Listen," 87.

²⁰ Katz, *The Complete Collaborator: The Pianist as Partner*, 5.

difficult moments, this is most easily done using eye contact. Jascha Heifitz would instruct his students to keep eye contact with the pianist during performance to recognize when they had soloistic moments in the music. The purpose was to convey to the audience that each performer was an equal member.²¹

The aspect discussed thus far in regard to the relationship between fellow performers has been towards a more classically oriented and structured ensemble. The work is done all together before the performance, leading everyone to know exactly what should happen at specific moments. There is a contrast between this type of ensemble and a jazz or contemporary group. The easiest example for the purpose of this discussion is a jazz combo. A combo consists of drums, bass, and piano at minimum comprising the rhythm section and can have other instruments like a trumpet, saxophone, or guitar. Each one of these musicians knows the role and responsibility of themselves and the others. They are also required to know when it is their turn to be the one heard and when they should blend into the background, or when the group should be heard collectively without one person standing out. In Sawyer's discussion of blending egos, he states, "An individual's own knowledge, perspective and voice may for the good of the community require to be temporarily suppressed to make way for other voices (egos)."²² Each voice gets to have its moment, as it should, but never should another member of the group invade another's time. They can add in the background if it will aid where the group is headed. This is often done by the rhythm section following the soloist and building tension through rhythmic and harmonic changes towards a resolution. Each player in the rhythm section should know what each instrument utilizes to cue a change in feel or tempo, otherwise they can be caught off guard

²¹ Pow, "More Than the Mere Notes," 20.

²² Sawyer, 77.

and are no longer synchronized with the rest of the group. Even in this instance, however, it is still the job of every individual to provide a background for the soloist.

Fundamental knowledge of other instruments has advantages when collaborating due to a feeling of trust between performers in shared and mutual knowledge of technical aspects for performance. Trust is a necessary quality in performing, especially in improv groups like jazz combos; nothing of professional quality will be produced without it. Katz refers to this in the context of a vocalist and their accompanist when he writes, “When it comes to breathing and phrasing, they may not always know precisely *why* it is comfortable to sing with one pianist and not with another, but the difference is palpable to each of them, and they soon become intent on hiring someone who is in touch with their physical process.”²³ This comfort between collaborative partners comes from purposeful and time-consuming attention to detail. When a connection of trust is established between collaborators, the audience can receive permission to be as comfortable as they like without having to think about the efforts being put into the performance unfolding before them. Additionally, these opportunities grow a deeper appreciation for one’s colleagues that they might not otherwise have. It is easy to recognize that each instrument is unique and difficult in its own ways, but personal investment gives the individual firsthand insight into a new area in which to grow. As a musician there is always room to grow; as a collaborator, growth is infinite.

Collaboration in Conducting

Perhaps one of the most demanding roles is that of the conductor. Conductors act as a guide that leads the ensemble towards a musical product and should have intricate knowledge of

²³ Katz, *The Complete Collaborator*, 278.

each nuance of the score.²⁴ They should also be aware of the capabilities and limits of each instrument in their ensemble, so that appropriate musical suggestions can be made to make a high-quality performance. Their knowledge and understanding is necessary when forming the relationship between conductor and ensemble.

As a leader of an ensemble, regardless of the size, it is only considerate to have some understanding of the instrument being used by a fellow collaborator. Knowledge of all instruments in the ensemble advises the conductor on a variety of specific instrumental techniques, specifically instrumentation, orchestration, and transposing instruments. When discussing instrumentation, Karl Gehrrens states, “The leader of an orchestra must in the first place know at least superficially the method of playing the chief orchestral instruments, the advantages and disadvantages involved in using their various registers, the difficulties of certain kinds of execution, and other similar matters.”²⁵ Mark Wigglesworth describes the advantage a conductor has whose career started as a performer in an orchestra. They are able to communicate far more effectively because they know from personal experience and can address not only the musical aspects but the psychological as well.²⁶ For example, in the overture to Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet*, the opening melody as a woodwind chorale features each distinct voice by section, and the conductor’s job is to balance them amongst each other, so each voice is heard equally, but blended together. Later in the piece, the wind section becomes the accompaniment, and the conductor must balance this blend of voices to be less distinct as the strings now carry

²⁴ Mark Wigglesworth. *The Silent Musician: Why Conducting Matters* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 8.

²⁵Karl Wilson Gehrrens. *Essentials in Conducting*. (Project Gutenberg, 2007), 94.

²⁶ Wigglesworth, *The Silent Musician*, 60.

the melody. The functions of carrying melodic material and accompanying material in the woodwinds are different, and the conductor's purpose is to balance these differences in scoring and texture from the podium. Oftentimes a conductor will give the instruction to "sing," to those with the melody knowing that there is a way to accomplish this effect on the instrument. As the conductor a lack of knowledge in instrumental technique would be extremely difficult when giving instruction and feedback in rehearsal. By having previous experience as a performer, if the conductor is so lucky to have had this as a professional career, the conductor has the advantage of referencing their own experience and tailoring their communication to the ensemble so it is more easily understood and widely accepted.

Even before coming to a rehearsal, a conductor should undertake a detailed score study to ensure their own security and knowledge of a piece. In her discussion of collaborative pianists, Lauralie Pow lists six elements that should be specifically searched for when analyzing a score that are applicable to large ensemble in addition to soloist and accompanist. These elements are phrasing, melody, harmony, tempo and rhythm, timbre and clarity of register, and musical structure and form.²⁷ Each of these is especially significant to an ensemble of larger size, instrumental or choral, because of the diversity in range and uniqueness brought by the musicians. This is what Gehrkens refers to as orchestration: "He must understand the combinations of these various instruments that are most effective."²⁸ Through the study of orchestration and score analysis, a conductor learns why these combinations of instruments are influential to the effectiveness of collaboration. When dealing with an ensemble, the approach varies

²⁷ Pow, "More than the Mere Notes," 40-58.

²⁸ Gehrkens, 94.

depending on the age group as question. However, whatever the age may be, the conductor should be so familiar with the score, having already predetermined what they are looking for, that they are able to focus almost entirely on maintaining engagement with the ensemble. The conductor should already know where every breath, phrase, and mood change exist in the piece in order to better instruct the ensemble on execution and completion. This can only be accomplished through extensive score study pre-rehearsal.

If the conductor is well prepared by familiarity with the instrumentation, orchestration, and repertoire, it can allow the conductor to have the knowledge to guide the ensemble in an informed and high-quality musical performance. A conductor of a higher-level ensemble can guide the more advanced musicians to musical performances due to individual preparation done on all players' parts, but with lower level or volunteer ensemble, will have to utilize more fundamental knowledge and pedagogy to create a higher quality presentation. Gehrkins even discusses working with younger students, which requires the need for more consistency.²⁹ Younger players often cannot adequately prepare the music to match what the conductor expects to hear, and the conductor will have to teach and rehearse by drawing on the fundamental technical knowledge of each instrument to improve their skills in an ensemble setting.

Live performance means anything can happen. As a conductor of a larger ensemble, this means being prepared beforehand. The conductor should rehearse difficult musical selections enough and to the highest level that the performers will have the greatest chance at correct execution in live performance. Gehrkins states, "A good rule to follow in preparing for a public performance of any kind is this: Go through the work over and over until it is done correctly;

²⁹ Gehrkins, 82-83.

then go through it enough times more to fix this correct way in mind and muscle as a habit.”³⁰ If a conductor has done this process and has given adequate feedback on technique and execution, there is no reason that a performance should go badly. Conductors should be prepared for anything to happen in a performance and to adapt and react quickly. The conductor should be well-versed in the individual collaborative techniques of cueing, eye contact, and communication during rehearsal and performance to get the best musical product. A good conductor knows each element of the ensemble better than anyone else, even better than the members themselves.

Collaboration in Composing

An important and sometimes overlooked aspect in a discussion of this kind is the composer—more specifically, the relationship between the composer and the artist. In her book describing the process of becoming a composer, Elizabeth Swados describes composition as follows: “The art of taking something from instinct and accident and making it permanent is what composing is all about. And when a composer can retain a sound’s original freshness and power even while transforming it, she has succeeded.”³¹ The composer should know the function of each instrument, no matter their personal expertise. For collaboration and music-making to be successful, composers and performers should respect the task each has and work together to create a product that was intended by the writer and executed at a high quality by the artists. Swados describes this relationship when she writes:

The chances of hearing an effective performance of your work improve if you don’t regard your players as the slaves who build the composer’s monuments. When they are not taken for granted, musicians are among the human race’s most admirable members. A composer shows respect for musicians by writing parts that challenge their technical

³⁰ Gehrkins, 82.

³¹ Elizabeth Swados, *Listening Out Loud: Becoming a Composer* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 3.

skills and imagination... Musicians share composers' understanding of pure sound and know the *feel* of it as well. Most of them are motivated by a love of music rather than a grandiose dreams of stardom, and are, on the whole, quite selfless in their desire to serve the piece they are playing.³²

The composer should know the abilities and limitations of each instrument and respects both while creating a part that will not only challenge the artist but allow them to enjoy it.

Reciprocally, the artist uses their expertise in performance on their primary instrument to execute the composer's notation to the best of their ability to respect the writer's intent. The composer should possess knowledge similar to a conductor in creation of their parts for performers that respects and challenges them.

Collaboration in Teaching

The next relationship that requires a specific area of expertise is pedagogy. Pedagogy, in a group setting or on a one-on-one basis, requires a focus on the individual as the driving force to productivity. It is an art that if not effectively executed, can be counterproductive or simply ineffective. Pedagogy in music has additional factors that require more attention, especially when it is related to individual teaching situations. In a group setting, this becomes an even bigger challenge due to the variety of individual factors present. Personal experience as both student and teacher are necessary to formulate a new perspective tailored to each individual as themselves and as a member of the whole. This as well as extreme familiarity with one's own specialty, instrumental or otherwise, is vital to a productive exchange. In certain cases, this can be exponentially increased due to additional factors such as long-term experience on multiple instruments or exposure to other instruments in a professional setting on the part of the teacher.

³² Swados, 12.

Bilingualism on instruments can be extremely effective from a pedagogical standpoint in both one-on-one and group settings.

Dorianne Cotter-Lockard's study of chamber ensemble coaching, although focused on various methods of coaching between levels of experience in a chamber group, discusses the importance of basic relational elements such as trust, empathy, and respect.³³ Open communication is the key to success, as it is necessary for all parties involved to feel that they can trust one another with questions of style, interpretation, and other expressive ideas. In a one-on-one situation, a student must feel that they are able to ask their teacher anything and not be answered in a way that shatters their confidence. Too much of this and the student will stop suggesting their own ideas and asking questions. Gemma and Grant state, "For both student and teacher participants in the study, the potential to tailor teaching to the needs and goals of the individual student was a vital part of what makes one-to-one valuable and effective."³⁴ This relationship between student and teacher can function as a building block for the student's future collaborations, giving them a voice to communicate more openly with their peers. It also helps to prepare a student for moments in performance that are unexpected. For example, there are moments in a piece for a solo instrument and accompaniment that switch the roles. The soloist becomes the accompanist for a moment. Unless this is communicated by the instructor, there is no way that the student will know how to interpret this section of the music in their practice.

³³ Dorianne Cotter-Lockard, "Chamber Music Coaching Strategies and Rehearsal Techniques That Enable Collaboration" (PhD diss., Saybrook University, Pasadena, 2012), ResearchGate.

³⁴ Gemma Carey et al., "Teacher and Student Perspectives on One-to-One Pedagogy: Practices and Possibilities," *British Journal of Music Education* 32, no. 1 (March, 2015): 7-8.
<http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fteacher-student-perspectives-on-one-pedagogy%2Fdocview%2F1780091413%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

There are times in private lessons where the instructor can demonstrate the other side of a piece, especially in vocal lessons where the professor is also proficient on the piano. This is for the student to learn how to interact with the piano. In instrumental areas, this is less common as proficiency on multiple instruments at a more advanced level is limited due to establishing a primary instrument in higher education and not having opportunities to advance on a secondary instrument. Unfortunately, this can lead to a soloist learning their repertoire without the experience of playing with accompaniment. This can present some difficulties when soloists began collaborating with their accompanying instrumentalists if they have never had this training. If the soloist has no reference to what the music will sound like with a complete ensemble, they could be less confident when they initially collaborate with other musicians.

In these moments when teaching collaboration, the professor has an advantage if they can communicate with both the soloist and the accompanist individually. This is no easy task as the physical technique involved is just as different as the instruments themselves. Therefore, if they have the experience of working with another person to the point where each one has explained their specific parts and the technique required to play to the other, they now can discuss this with not only the soloist they are teaching on their primary instrument, but with the accompanist as well. It can be more effective if the professor can talk about it from personal experience. It is one thing to have played a piece as a soloist; it is another thing entirely to have played the piece on both instruments. This is not to say that proficiency on both instruments is necessary to communicate with a student, as that is not true. The level of understanding and familiarity with the music is something that should be achieved regardless of whether or not an individual can play both parts on their designated instruments. This allows for the most detailed study and secure performance, factors that will leave the audience waiting to listen more.

In his discussion on the philosophy of pedagogy, Swinkin recalls his method of teaching piano music to his students. Although solo piano music seems as though it should be interpreted as written purely with the piano in mind, this is not true on an interpretive level. Swinkin describes the process of following a Schenkerian analysis with his student in familiarization with a piece, conveying how the “method affords the student a tactile, non-conceptual sense of musical multidimensionality, of hierarchical structure, and not primarily as static reduction but rather as dynamic generation.”³⁵ This analysis involves hearing a piece of music as written for multiple instruments, not just one. For instance, a piece by Debussy can be reinterpreted as being composed for orchestra by assigning different instruments to different voices. Hearing the different voices as various instruments allows the teacher to communicate the sound they are looking for in a more effective way, especially if the student has a similar frame of reference. While this is effectively most likely for advanced students, it is still a method that can be used to get the student to listen to a piece as something written for more than one instrument. This pedagogical approach allows the student to understand and relate voicing to different instruments. While personal experience playing in or conducting a large ensemble is not required for the teacher, they must have listened to different pieces and performances multiple times to know how composers tend to use certain instruments and in which contexts they can be quoted the best, all the while directing this interpretation back to a solo instrument.

Teaching an ensemble or chamber group has a slightly different approach, even though many of the elements are the same. Each individual’s needs must still be met within the group’s

³⁵ Jeffrey Swinkin, “Conclusion: Pedagogy as Art.” In *Teaching Performance: A Philosophy of Pedagogy* (Springer, Cham: 2015). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-12514-5_8.

parameters, as Cotter-Lockard describes her own experience playing in a string quartet. She states, “My chamber music coaches imparted wisdom about working together in a group, how to show respect when disagreeing, and how to negotiate with different viewpoints and approaches.”³⁶ This is equally true, not only through the lens of personal interaction with other ensemble members, but musically as well. Each person’s sound and contribution as a musician has to be taken into account and respected as a valid part of the ensemble. The instructor, or conductor, is the one to instigate this. In order to do so, they should know what each member is expected to give in regard to the specific group and piece of music at hand. This means knowing each person’s part, how that part must be shaped on its own, and how it must be shaped in the context of a group. A woodwind quintet is a perfect example of this. The oboe may have a line that is supposed to be part of the background to the piece that matches the French horn. Since the two have extremely different timbres, how the horn and oboe interpret this line will differ based on its role as accompaniment to the instrument carrying the melody.

If the chamber group is less advanced, it is beneficial for the instructor to know how to teach timbre. This can be a difficult thing to communicate, like teaching phrasing. However, if the instructor has experience playing clarinet and oboe, for example, they have a better idea of how to communicate the technical aspects of how to blend sound with other instruments. If the group is more advanced, the instructor can use more vague or broad statements like, “match your tone with theirs.” In certain cases, it is still necessary to describe the technical method to blending the sound, however it is not necessary to do so all the time. When teaching at this level, the instructor can also be aware of which instrument can more feasibly alter or balance their

³⁶ Cotter-Lockard, “Chamber Music Coaching Strategies and Rehearsal Techniques That Enable Collaboration,” 1.

sound with the ensemble based on fundamental technical knowledge. For example, a younger horn player may be able to blend their tone more with a younger oboe rather than vice versa due to the hand placement in the bell and embouchure manipulation ease, based on individual ability levels. Familiarity with high-quality sound production on multiple instruments being coached can be a key element in working on timbre and tone with a chamber ensemble.

Music is a field that requires a great deal of experience in multiple areas. Successful performers often familiarize themselves with many aspects of a work beyond learning the notes and rhythms in their part. Teaching students requires solid communication that allows the student to feel like they are in an open environment where they can be themselves and explore new boundaries of their creativity. Even though it is expected that the student learns a piece of music thoroughly on their own, the teacher's ability to communicate more advanced techniques and ideas is necessary for the student to grow. The more a teacher can demonstrate what a healthy collaborative relationship looks like by giving the student more freedom through teaching, the more a student will be able to gain from their collaborative experiences in the future. A teacher with detailed fundamental knowledge about the instruments and pieces being played and collaborated with can present a great amount of effective and useful information to the student(s) involved in the collaborative music-making process.

Consider this example. A teacher in a private lesson hears the student play an expressive passage where there is clearly a melodic line that should be heard above everything else. All the correct notes are played, but it is lacking something. The teacher asks the student to play the melody on its own so they can hear the way they are playing. Then the teacher asks them to play the ascending part of the melody as if it were a violin solo in an orchestra. For the student this can conjure up images of a violin player's movement and physical expression while they are

playing, as well as what the line would sound like. The student attempts to play this, but still is not able to execute what they are hearing due to technical hindrances.

At this point the teacher should remind the student of the technical aspects needed to play what they desire. If a line is growing up the keyboard, as well as in volume, there must be adequate weight transfer through the reach of the fifth finger in the right hand. Transfer requires movement of the torso and the weight transferring through the whole arm. The student plays through the line a few times, remembering the physical aspect of what they must do and can finally play the melody as if it were a vocal solo. It would then be expected for the student to continue playing in this way after adding the accompaniment of the melody back.

Similarly, James Lyke presents another example, this time with an octave leap found in the piano piece Summer's Nocturne composed by Catherine Rollin. He writes, "The obvious distance of the octave leap helps students to understand how a singer would naturally have to give a lot of breath support to reach the high note of the octave leap. Students understand that they will continue to use arm weight on the upper note of each subsequent phrase's octave leap."³⁷ This is like a student with no prior knowledge of playing a violin hearing a violin player and echoing that instrument's execution. Comparing the weight transfer in the arm and hand of a pianist with breath support from a singer can be more relatable as the student uses their voice daily. This comparison can also be used to teach the concept of taking time with large interval jumps. If a vocalist were to sing an octave leap, they would take a little bit of time to be set so that their tone and pitch are consistent between the notes. This correlates directly into phrasing,

³⁷ James Lyke, Geoffrey Haydon and Catherine Rollin. *Creative Piano Teaching* (Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing, LLC, 2011), 263.

allowing the student to stretch across the octave leap so that their weight and tone are also consistent.

These examples give a student something they can hear in their head and compare it to what they hear when they play. Camp describes this concept when he states, “If a student is expected to learn and perform advanced music in phrases, practice instructions must foster the process from both the mental and physical aspects, not just from the physical or technical standpoint.”³⁸ By first starting with the phrase and then giving the student the technical resource to be able to play that phrase, the teacher is tying technique and expression together as though they are one and the same. This requires the student to grow the coordination of their mind and body, allowing them to know how to execute what they hear through their own technical growth, and gain an understanding of the technical aspects of other instruments.

The concept of teaching everything as interconnected is called gestalt teaching. “Gestalt” as defined by *Merriam-Webster* is the idea that “something that is made of many parts and yet is somehow more than or different from the combination of its parts.”³⁹ In other words, different subjects can be taught independently but when they are brought together, they provide the elements of a larger subject that may or may not be specifically referencing each element. Gestalt therapy is a form of therapy that is used to overcome trauma, especially in music.⁴⁰ It is a useful

³⁸ Camp, *Developing Piano Performance: A Teaching Philosophy*, 54.

³⁹ *Merriam-Webster, Inc.*, “gestalt (n.)”

⁴⁰ Trauma therapy is specifically referring to those who have had multiple performances or lessons where they have been shamed for not being able to execute a piece well. It is used as a building block for self-confidence and trust.

tool for the development of incorporating emotions into the music being performed.⁴¹ Camp specifically talks about this theory in regard to humans' conception of things as a whole rather than the individual parts from development forward. Music is interconnected in a way that collaboration must exist between all parts to produce the whole, with a focus on the whole being a high-quality presentation by collaborating musicians.

This method of teaching has many benefits to both the student and teacher. From the student's perspective, they become increasingly aware of other music outside of what they are practicing. The more they know what to listen for, the more they want to listen and develop. Teaching a gestalt approach reinforces to the student that music performance is a sum of the parts creating the whole – not just isolated factors. When they are practicing phrasing, they are also practicing the technical aspects of what it takes to execute the phrasing they want to hear. Making musical judgments and having musical understanding is only possible if the student is exercising critical self-listening. From a teacher's perspective, this teaching style incorporates assessment and critique that emphasizes both the technical and musical qualities of the piece being prepared by the student. As seen in previous examples, the act of comparison to another instrument can show the student how to make the sound they want without generic statements like, "play more expressively."

The discussion of these relationships formed between collaborators demonstrates the ten qualities discussed by Sawyer as keys to successful collaborations. A focus on these elements of collaboration creates group flow that produces intangible moments between musicians that react

⁴¹ Cardie Boydell, "Music and Gestalt." *Gestalt Journal of Australia and New Zealand* 11 no. 1 (2012): 94, <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=0&sid=7f143f07-158e-432a-801d-f78c33c65bdf%40redis>.

and adapt to one another and can produce high-quality musical performances. Similarly, there is a vast difference between performing singularly and performing with others. Both are enjoyable, and there is something incredibly fulfilling about being able to blend ideas with one another to enrich a performance. The experience of every musician also advances the quality of the collaboration. If musicians can identify the role and technical aspects of one another's instruments, especially if they have any experience playing an instrument other than their primary, this can lead to a much deeper and enriching experience for everyone involved. For future discussion, a study of the impact of knowing different instruments could be made in comparison to the choices a musician makes versus the choices of one that only knows one instrument. Performers of all mediums equipped with this fundamental knowledge of musicians they are collaborating with can produce efficient, high-quality and enjoyable rehearsals and performances.

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