

Accessing Emotion for Musical Performance
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Susan Lorette Dunn

Analysis

- Complete an analysis of the piece you are preparing
- Ask yourself 'why' regarding the composer's intentions.
- Study the piece, song, and movement in complete silence.
- What is the form?
- What is the substructure within the form? For example, ABA – where does the B section start? Ask yourself why?
- Identify themes
- Identify tonality – why has the composer made these choices?
- Motives – look for these and what do they mean? Repeats?
- Mood – identify a general overarching mood, then break this down. If it is completely serene, how is this realized, and how many variations of serene can you identify?
- What do the dynamics tell you about the mood of the piece?
- Is there a shifting character – a variety of distinct moods? How is this realized within the structure and tonality?
- Where is the high point/climax?
- Where is the softest point?
- What do the phrase structure and length tell you?
- **Give an emotional interpretation – a word to describe the emotion every 8/16 bars.**
- Ask why, not just what.
- Start macro, go micro, and back to macro.

Background

- Who is the composer, where are they from, and what language do they speak?
- Where did the composer write the piece?
- When did the composer write the piece, and why?
- What influenced and compelled the composer to write the piece?
- What was going on in the world when the composer wrote the piece?
- What was happening in the world artistically - in literary, art, and musical circles?
- What did the composer invite us to feel/express?
- Through your analysis, how does the composer speak to you? What is the composer inviting you to express?

Narrative

- Is there background information to this piece that gives you clues regarding **storytelling**, which influence your musical and interpretive choices or not? Explain.
- What is your **subtext/narrative**?

Emotional Clarity

- You must have a clear emotional subtext to communicate your intentions physically and emotionally with the orchestra.
- Immerse yourself in the story.
- The only way you can show emotion is to feel it.
- Use your imagination to access your emotions.
- Find clarity in how you express emotion in your life.
- Watch good actors!

Emotional Color

- **Primary emotions – sadness, fear, love, anger, joy.**
- An emotion or feeling starts with a reaction, a thought, or an idea.
- How do you express these emotions – start with a situation and think about how those emotions are manifested as an expression in your body.
- What is happening with your face, eyes?
- Where is your energy, and how intense is that energy with each emotion?
- **Emotions to consider: Happy, Frantic, Anxious, Shame, Calm, Resentful, Curious, Overwhelm, Confident, Embarrassment, Determination, Disgust, Hope, and Gratitude.**
- You can make your own list of emotions you want to express, but go for simpler emotions to communicate at first – the primary emotions are a good start.

Exercise

- Choose 32 bars of one of your pieces
- What is the subtext, narrative
- How can you express your clear intention for the narrative and musical decisions?
- Express these emotions with intention.
- Are you present and in the moment with your physical and facial expressions?