

“This I Believe...”

Conducting is summoning and releasing the potential of the ensemble. Teaching is summoning and releasing the potential of the student.

A formula for leadership: Love + Knowledge = Will. Your passion provides the energy to turn your knowledge into the ability to galvanize others into cooperative action.

Passion can be represented with the numeral 1. All other aspects of conducting (knowledge of the score, aural skills, physical conducting, rehearsal techniques, etc.) can be represented by 0's.

If you have the “1” to put in front of the zeros, you have a lot. If you don't, you have nothing.

If you only have the “1” you have something, but it's not much. You need it all.

Teaching is not filling a barrel—it is igniting a flame. Leadership is transforming knowledge and dreams into accomplishments.

Mann: “Great conductors of music are educators, for that is their *métier*. And if they are more than mere technical experts—which they must be in order to be great—their will to educate, their belief in education reaches into ethics and enters the political-human sphere.”

We cannot make learning happen. We set up the context and the encouragement for it to happen. The same is true of great music making.

What do conductors do? Inspire. Where does “inspiration” come from? From being “in the spirit” of the music.

We need enough confidence in our own abilities that we can give our players (students) confidence to take risks.

Conducting comes from what we expect. We study to develop the strength of our expectation. Furtwaengler: “Ich glaube, es kommt darauf an was von uns erwartet wird.” [“I believe it comes from what we expect.”]

Conducting comes from one's inner singing voice.

Technique is repeatable experience.

Conducting technique is based on two-handedness and one-footedness. Don't “plant” your feet.

Less is more--“*I begin with a block of marble, and then remove what is unnecessary.*” —Michelangelo Buonorroti

Great music can happen anytime---rehearsals must be more than just “preparing for the concert.” And concerts are more than rehearsing in front of an audience.

Intuition always trumps analytical intellect for performers. Great performers integrate their intellect into their intuition—*then know when to stop thinking*. Informed intuition is the basis by which great conductors make decisions.

Talent is where you find it. (Corollary: Talent is where you look for it.)

Most of the truly insightful knowledge we can gain comes when two disciplines interact. Our favorite “conducting books” are books that seem to be about horseback riding, captaining naval vessels, martial arts and how to be a successful salesman.

Four quotes

1. It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing. (Duke Ellington)
2. If it sounds good, it IS good (Duke Ellington again—the guy was a genius)
3. Don't play what's there! Play what's not there! (Miles Davis)
4. Don't think. Don't Try. And Don't Relax. (Leon Russianoff)