

Northwestern University Wind Ensemble Rehearsal Notes
2016 Band Director Workshop

Strauss notes 10/14

- bass insts 1-21: know yourself and your instrument and put those pitches where you want them! It's a very pretty sonority, but the dynamic range could be more expressive. Have you played these notes as long tones from f to p to see if/how your intonation varies? m.12 could you give last two quarters more weight/substance? (not more volume though) 13 first half note needs to be more full of beautiful tone and melodic potential.

- ALL - the softer the dynamic, the more alive, beautiful, and resonant your tone should be.

- Susan Kang - I'm wondering about the relative (?) wisdom of this piccolo part (the part, not your playing of it :) Let's try more parts on flute and just a few on piccolo and you see what you think. 11-21 flute up an octave.

- 12 upper wws make that "yum" release by listening to each other; I'll be with the bass line here.

- lovely build 14-17.

- All - in the "rhythmic hook" (that sounds so cheap, but...) half note - dotted quarter - eighth: the half has to hold the promise of the melody (or motive) that grows from it. That promise is realized more fully in the dotted quarter and sung through that dot and the eighth into the next bar.

- a little less timpani in 18 (but I love the roll speed!)

- awesome crashes !!!!! I will add this to my list of things to remember you for when you're famous (BBs will make a better story tho)

- Let's be more assertive 18-19.

- 24 horns good dynamic adjustment!

- IMPORTANT! in 28 we have to reclaim the time that we sacrificed from the breath/syncopation at the end of the previous bar. Horns please be ready to get us moving again, cleaner articulation too.

- upper wws eighths at end of 28, make sure you are keyed in to the horn eighths that start earlier in this bar. This is a little off right now.

- clarinet 2 m 27 warmer tone. (it could be a very interesting exercise to have Lewis play your part, you play your part with him, match his tone, and then sound like him when you harmonize his part. It's important in 28 that clarinets sound really beautiful on the long note!

- tubas - in general, it would be very helpful to me if you could help me move the tempo along.

- 31-32 wws with eighths - can you hear how this could be a bit more? (esp 32 the bottom c to prepare the octave leap)

- 32 all with quarter on b. 3 - this sort of died and left a hole. Let the quarter have a shape with the close/taper/tail of it resonating into the rest. (in slow music it's always better to have notes preceding rests a little too long than a little too short - that's some A material)

- euphs your eighths in 32 need to be vibrant, beautiful, and provide direction and connection

into the next bar. (also louder would help)

- 33 really listen to the harmony on +of beat 2. If we stretch it too much then we can either correct it the next time or we can decide we LIKE stretching that much.

- much nicer balance with inner parts and flutes!!

- tubas and bassoons make sure you are aware when you have the 7th of a V7 chord and that it's low enough (i.e. C in 35). I always love an expressive and songful bassline that descends by step.

- outstanding leadership from 1st trumpet.

- flutes, oboes clarinets 34 is another place that you need to make a beautiful release together (and make sure the harmony is fully represented all the way through the diminuendo - don't leave the top voice hanging out!)

- altos and tenor more 36,

- horns can you have your repeated pitches 36-8 contribute a sort of under-pinning energy that supports everyone else?

- clars more 37

- clars 38 - can you hear the sixteenths on b.3???? (I can't)

- upper wws 39 this needs to continue the volume and energy that the trumpet melody had in 38. Be mindful of your dynamic so you are still audible and SINGING for the final dissonance resolution in 40 beat 1-2.

- more euph and more expressive on theme at 41.

- 40 clarinets - last three eighths could soloists play those together slowly just a few times for perfect blend and tuning? bring us YOUR point of view.

- tuba , bsn, b clar, bari eighths in 44 should have more of an expressive chamber music feel (interacting with the theme).

- hns are very pretty in this texture. In 44 can you shape your G in a way that the F# on b.3 in alto sax and clar 2 can continue your line?

- 46 if you have a quarter rest, please write a cue in that the horns (with melody) enter after an eighth rest. Your b. 2 has to be relative to their entrance.

- hns and euphs (caught that one - it was oafs again...) on theme 45-49: HN 1 IS IN CHARGE - follow her leadership with articulation and phrasing, but don't anyone play louder than she does. (hn 1 feel free to lead a little more assertively) Firmer on the 9-8 suspension in 47

- oboes 46-7 intonation.

- I don't really like what's happening in 47.... the only people that can breath after b.3 are horns and oafs.

- clarinets an you hear your pairs of slurred eighths? this rhythmic and harmonic motion should provide energy from within!

- this all got too slow too soon - partly me, partly you. It also needs to stay stronger dynamically (esp upbeat to 49 - hns and euphs). For some reason this always feels kind of operatic-victorious to me.

- oboes and clar 1 intonation upbeat to 50 — — —get this please. I understand that the intonation spooks you and then you don't play musically (i.e. the gesture in 50)

- clarinets 52-3 eighths need to be clear.

—ALWAYS ASK - how can I contribute to the music going on around me? possible answers could be (but are not restricted to): play cleaner, softer, stronger, support the harmony/voice leading, adjust timbre, emerge on something interesting and immediately recede, bring out a stylistic rhythm in a stylistic way (i.e. fanfare). Okay, I'm exhausted just thinking about possible scenarios here - you get the picture.

- 50 oafs need to almost play too loud - this needs to sound like a cello section.
- 54 all that have the triplet on b. 4 need to really reach out your ears to each other so this is perfectly placed with no early birds.
- 57 last 2 quarters need beautiful attacks (both attacks the same) that sound like they taste good (like the notes are sweet, not like you want to hurry past them) The last beat of the bar can be longer.
- all start stronger in 58
- flutes check out intonation on that F in 57.
- wws intonation was beautiful in 60, but the three upbeats need to be in tune.
- 62 tubas the breath created too much of a gap.
- tbns and hns (63 and 64) be sure the second quarter on the same pitch begins clearly and beautifully. Right now the two repeated pitches sound like a half note.
- 65 -79 gross generalizations: if there's a note that you enter on that "bites you back" a little bit on the attack (i.e. trumpets the C concert) practice the attack! on unisons it might be helpful for principals to play out a hair more so the rest of the section can find you. In the fourth bar of the sequences be sure that the whole note people don't overplay the last entrance of the sequence (upper wws) by doing too much cresc. I'm going to move this along. Be sure your half notes are full of energy and ready to continue into your line so you can still be musical when we go a little faster.
- upper wws it is your musical obligation to play in tune, finish your ideas, and make sure you are heard!!! (i.e. last eighth of 72) support those descending intervals!!!!!!

A contagion of errors 77-80:

- 77 horns and euphs - tune this lick please. esp. Db
- seriously euphoniums, I don't know how you can miss an Ab that's in the key signature in the 4th week of class. (79) This led to the trumpets ears getting discombobulated and a terrible Fb
- brass 77-79 needs to get into your ears.
- FUMBLE 79-80. tbns and euph were early to 80 and bass line was late.
- 81-2 clarinets need to match timbre as a section and sing 4th beat of each bar.
- tpt1 83 breathe at end of bar for phrasing please.
- tpts in 82 and 84 your last eighth of the bar needs more presence/beauty to connect to the people that play the motive in the following measures. SING THE EIGHTH AS CONVINCINGLY AS THE HALF NOTE!!!
- woodwinds 85 and 86 you need to sing out the last eighth of each bar.
- trombones can be more in 87. It's a Bb7 chord, be sure you place the Ab wisely and sing that bottom eighth.
- tpts and horns 87-8 the half notes would benefit from a bit more sustain before you taper the

release. (it sounds like it dissipates too soon after the terrific and stylistic attack)

- we'll address 90 together in rehearsal Monday.
- 94 brass and saxes be very precise about the placement of b.3 (not accented. precise)
- 96 brass sing and sustain the 2 eighths that follow the dotted quarter.
- no piccolo 99 to end.
- 99 the release needs to be later and faster with a longer (energized) taper to the breath
- flutes intonation 102 on b.3 whole step. It's a B7 chord.
- intonation 102-104 upper wws.
- wws keep life and resonance in your tone to support the harmonic motion (imagine increasing intensity and focus in your air) 102-3. We don't want it to sound empty or hollow.
- wws 105 if you have a whole note be sure you stay beautiful through the entire measure. If you have a half note, don't take an entire quarter rest to breathe!!?!?!?!?
- wws eighths upbeats to 106: please project the bottom one more and let the line evaporate/dim as you ascend. If we do this right it will sound like there's a harp playing (don't ask me why, I only know that it's true :-)
- tpt 2 has to taper with everyone else on last chord.

Let's make the softest parts as musical as the strongest parts.

Wagner notes from 10/14

- breathe together and play together on first sound. p attacks need to be especially beautiful and supported.
- upper woodwinds (esp oboes) need to be trustworthy rhythmic allies of the ensemble by being sure that your dotted quarters are really equal to 3 eighths and that they expressively sing to the eighth that follows.
- hn 1 the moving figure in 5 needs to be a little stronger than the figure in 4 (it's higher and it's a repetition)
- m 12 woodwinds (except saxes) horns and string bass have a whole note, yes?????? (Only the cornets/trumpets and saxes have a half note) SUSTAIN IT.
- trumpets/cor 13 breathe like a section, think like a section, and be a section. These attacks need to be about the music and the section, not about your ability to make an attack.
- hn, euph, alto, bsn 14 and 17 are pretty, but need more rhythmic discipline. The dots on all dotted notes need to spin the tone into the following notes more. (if the dots are dead, the rhythm will be too)
- bass line more cresc 19-21. also more precise articulation.
- cor 1, now I have you for too much sting on downbeat of 21. Please - just a precise attack and good press into the tone of the note.
- all URGENT that we are very precise with rhythm on downbeat of 22. Don't just let it kind of cave in from the previous bar.
- brass the fanfare is very pretty 22 etc, but we lose time every time you have a tied note.....
- 32 trombone 2 make sure your D matches the tbn 1 d from the previous bar (I think you're

sharp). It's a Bb major chord.

- cornet 1 outstanding articulation on dotted figure.
- terrific b.d./cym
- cornets it still seems like 2,3 could be stronger to support the first.
- 47 etc hn 3,4 see if you can make the triplets speak in this texture. (it may be too dense)
- all let's try a little bit of cresc in 50 to make the following sub p more dramatic. Everyone has to do it
- b.d/cym extra soft at 51. can we try having this one ring a little longer than the earlier strong ones?
- 57-8 VERY nice shape and tutti phrasing. Be sure you start p again in 59
- melody 59 etc, be sure you project the low notes (i.e. eighth in 60)
- horns I LOVED 64, just do that in 63 too.
- tpt 68 we have to hear these quarters!!!! especially 1-2. Get b. 2 in on time so the cornet eighth on + of 2 comes after you play the pitch ON 2.
- 72 and 74 euphs and bari much more of b. 4. euphs both take low Eb please.
- bass line (beginning with euph) 71-76 the eighth needs to be placed more precisely and with greater importance. (right now esp with euphs it's almost a sixteenth the way you're playing it now.)
- 75 what cornet has the trill into the dotted quarter rhythm in the next bar? whoever it is, lets try a whole lot more of it.
- 77 etc bass line needs to come to some kind of understanding so trombones can contribute the clarity that they do best and the people can contribute what the trombones can't (um, a trill.....). Trombones - not such a quick decay on each dotted note, trill people more sustain on the trill. This shouldn't sound like one section handing off to another, it should sound like a great bass line.
- horns 77 make eighths much stronger.
- 82-89 EVERYONE that EVER has 2 quarters on the downbeat: play the first one as long as possible and really lean into it dynamically and expressively.
- eighths in 90 - lead us to 92 AND do the dim.
- brass fanfare 95 - let's make this softer (like you're guiding the listener to REMEMBER a heroic character - very Wagnerian....)
- tpts and cornet 1 93-4 I get a little nervous that you aren't quite lining up with each other perfectly and that we could have a rhythmic mishap in 94. (specifically tpt 1 dotted quarter eighth across/in time into the quarters that follow)
- tpts 102-4 your steady eighths have more momentum than the lines you are accompanying and you could rush past them if you aren't really listening to the others carefully.
- clar 1, cor 1 sing more expressively into 100.
- melody 104-109 you need to make the forte in 110 sound logical (right now you aren't doing enough cresc and it sounds subito) dotted half/2 eighths/dotted quarter - eighth/ half people - sing very expressively to dotted quarter and don't drop the half at the end of the motive.
- flutes and picc need to attach to each other so 109-10 connect and sound like one thing. Flutes need to be convincing on cresc through end of 109 and make grace notes (to nowhere) work musically.

- ALL : you should have a cresc in either 105 or 106 (probably the word Cresc, which you will forget you read in two measures.....) have a plan for how you are going to pace your cresc and then do it.
- horns there's no way you were playing forte on the downbeat of 110..... please help us!
- trumpets/cornetssounded very good until a truly bizarre early entrance on the downbeat of 117. (keep your concentration!) Seriously trumpets, there are a lot of you and it is really important that you think like a section and not like individuals. You need to sort of feel each other breathing and get in a section "zone"; that's when you'll have some serious power.
- tpts whatever you can do for an acoustical advantage 117-121 (bell angle) take it.
- I think we could use more triangle throughout (though listening to the compressed dbs on my computer headphones isn't as reliable as ears in the house. If it's possible to have someone listen for that on Wednesday that would be great. Triangle= Meistersinger= very Wagner, right?
- solo b.d. hits need to be drier.
- cornet 1, oboes, flutes 122 make sure this is beautiful and still has phrasing (like it did when you played it softly).
- 130 ALL softer on the downbeat, dotted half molto espressivo and sing to next downbeat (BUT NOT LOUDLY)
- ww and trumpet eighths more rhythmic clarity 137 and 140 . lean into chromatically altered pitches.
- horns 134-5 let's try phrasing these bars this way: lean into half notes and dim away. lightly tongue both D and Eb. This currently sounds too heavy for the rest of the texture.
- tpts 138 etc your most interesting note is the A nat upbeat you have to following measures. Lean into them.
- horns listen to see how you can contribute to cresc on your long notes 140 into 146. (what's the best way to pace the cresc? what can you do with your color?)
- 146 etc softer cymbals.
- 142 euph, tbn 3, bassoon 2, b clar, tenor - MARCATO and much stronger much sooner. This needs character!!!!
- cornet 1 more of eighths 142-3
- melody get upbeats to 150 in on time.
- trumpets to do you hear how the dynamic of the melody drops off when cornet 1 drops out in 158? Cornets and trumpets you both need to make this work - maybe you're all a little less when you're together and tpts play out a lot more in 158 when cornets drop out. Come up with a plan - this really needs to be fixed.
- cornet 2,3 with motive 163-4 then again 165-6 - this needs to project like you're the principal player.
- ALL 170 has to culminate in 171 and it sounds like the only people doing that are cornet 1.
- a little less b.d./cym here on every downbeat. be less so you can build a little to the arrival in 171.
- cornet 1 173 no marcato here please, just firmly.
- wws on the fermata: please play your note with a tuner from FF to p with a very artful release and see what happens to your pitch. We need to develop the mind set of playing like a mature woodwind section: blend, sensitivity, good intonation, and the ability to focus your sound all the

way through a tapered release. As I said on Wednesday, I think a big part of this for you is timbre: playing with a really focused resonant sound so you get great overtones that everyone can tune to. You can't be a victim of your instrument here - make this happen.

- less cornet 1 189-191 (you aren't the melodic voice here)

- 189 more clarinet, oboe and piccolo - you're the top melodic voice.

- all the long note 189-190 needs a little finish/leading into the next bar dynamically. Don't start it too loud (esp tpts)

- quarter notes 192 to end: a little more follow through (ring) on all of them - if this makes them a little longer, fine. Very important: 196 has to be a little stronger than 195 and 197 has to be a little stronger than 196

- tpts and tbns hearing this I think we need more of you on the unison arpeggios in 192. Bells up and finish on the chord that follows. We can all hear that it isn't too much yet, let's see if it's too much on Wednesday.

- cymbals got too loud and shrill. I know it's tricky to get the shape on the last chord, but it'll be easier if isn't too loud.