

Big Band studies



- Day before the concert
 - Edward A Partyka is conducting, coaching, arranging his own compositions with the Katowice Academy Big Band for a concert during 3rd Silesian Jazz Festival

Disclaimer:

This media is created under the Creative Commons NoDerivatives, Attribution, NoCommercial licence. Please don't change anything here but spelling mistakes. I am giving it out for free, with a full support from **Edward Partyka** – Yes, he is that nice. The notes are representing only my particular view on the classes given, there are sometimes my own insights on the topic that I am not sure mr Partyka would like to endorse, therefore **he is not liable of any damage**, misinterpretation or grief if any of them happen. So appreciate the content, but adhere to those simple rules: **Don't change, don't sell, and please give credit to the authors.**

Thanks,
Nikola Kołodziejczyk (<http://music.thinkbay.net>)

Leaving out chords



- Strong connection to the rhythm section
 - If they play too much – take Your conductor and show them which chords to lay out still.
 - Always count for Your band.
 - Nobody keeps the good time better than You – the composer and conductor.
 - Practice keeping good time You're after with Your hand. It will make Your thinking shift so that You grasp the time better mentally



■ Let them know

- Big section starts should be pointed out at least 2 measures beforehand – use the fingers to *count in*
- If You see they are hiding Your sound because of being unsure – invite them with Your hand
 - Just like You call a waiter
- When You know what to rehearse – don't let the band play more than they need to, for fluid reahearsal experience
 - Stop the band with raised hand only
 - Don't talk to make them silent unless You need to – It has no impact on people who don't hear You since they play already
 - Generally don't do things which You know that don't work – it makes people hesitate to listen to You next time
 - So don't talk to silence them – no point, no effect, losed time and charisma.



- Don't hesitate to change things during the rehearsal. You are making music. **Let them know You have distance to Yourself.**
 - If You think a note should be changed – tell them what note to play, and it was a stupid idea in the first place.
 - You need to be deadly exact, fast and sure about the decision beforehand.
 - Try to find the wrong things as fast as possible, don't play over and over bad music – It will make rehearsal 10x longer – they will need to overwrite bad habits.
 - Listen to the pleads of players, but do not comply until You made Your job done
 - If they want to eat, sure, but first make sure the wrong note in the trumpet is fixed first
 - They will remember more, and **rehearsals will be shorter** – they'll thank You for that later, even if they will get slightly pissed off on You for not stopping the work abruptly.

Symbols



- Fist
 - Means head
- Arm over Your head perpendicular to the surface, cowering
 - Hide Your melody at this point
 - to show someone else
 - To make everything softer
 - To immerse in the sound
- Cueing with fingers
 - Make it verbally clear before starting the rehearsal, and during breaks in music **where** and **how** You like the band to interpret Your signs.



- Assure the lead players
 - Make them confident so they are making the job for You
 - Tell the lead trumpeter to somehow lead other trumpeters if he isn't already
 - "It's a different attitude – You look like a nice guy, but sometimes someone needs to be an asshole"
 - Show Your intentions – Your sources, hip Cds, **what is behind Your reasoning**
 - Play the right music in the breaks
 - Leave some silence right before the rehearsal though – You don't want Your musicians to become paranoid and aggravated by too much loud sounds a day.



- Superimpose Your feelings on Your players
 - Show commitment and immersion in Your own music – live it out. Show example of 120% indeep engagement. If the band takes 80% of it from You, You still get the 100% extreme performance at the concert.
 - Breath with brass sections – hiperventilate to express breath taking points, hum, articulate the most important parts the way You want them to sound.
 - Tap the tempo with passion – nothing stops the emotion more than just bland start
 - Try to express verbally as much as possible before even starting to play.
 - Keep focus on minimising wrongly interpreted, and wrongly read notes.
 - If it sounds good from the first take, the next to happen has good mood helping.

Check out



- Measures 140-160 from Overcast
 - The brass voicings are killing.
 - Providing the rhythm section maintains the paranoid, intense half swing.
- Low unisons:
 - One Bass, 2 Bass Clarinets and a Bass Trombone with a little help from a drummer
 - Make a kicking rhythmic counterpoints
 - Piano don't need to double the bass instruments with the left hand
 - Instead, give him very high twohand sixteenth written-out arpeggios
 - Piano can keep time with octaves on the beats, with drums tacet

Remember



- Remember every musical glitch rehearsed
 - So You can come to it at the end and correct it
 - Not before the main problems are sorted out
 - If You have short memory, get a easily erasable pencil or something – write directly on the conductor sheets (hey, they finally can work for You, after all this work printing and writing)
 - Intonation problems should be solved at the end of the rehearsal, or when others get a break or silently discuss or scope other parts, so they don't loose the focus and start monkeying around.
- **It can always get worse**
 - Ensure Your players about it if they hesitate to hasten in changing from trumpet to flugelhorn.
 - There was an arrangement where there was 7 bars to change from trumpet with cup to flugelhorn. They are lucky that You didn't chose it.



- Practice reading transposed score on the fly
 - In case something is wrong in the parts, You can easily catch it.
 - Order Your musicians to write on their copies thier marks as much as possible and as the time allows
 - Unless You did a good job and blacked the paper with correct articulation, ties and dynamics