

# PERFORMANCE PREPARATION

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## I. What is performance?

- A. “An act of staging or presenting a play, concert, or other form of entertainment”
- B. What opportunities do college music majors have to perform?
  - Student recitals, solo recitals
  - Band/orchestra/chamber concerts
  - Studio class
  - Juries
  - **Weekly lessons**

## II. Building Confidence

- A. The thin line between insecurity and arrogance is **confidence**
- B. How thoroughly we practice determines the confidence with which we perform
- C. Arrogance is the illusion that we are better than we really are

## III. General Practice Guidelines, Macro – Micro – Macro Approach

- A. Macro
  - Get an overview of the music by sight reading it a few times (at a slower tempo)
  - Take note of the musical phrases and challenging spots
  - Listen to multiple recordings (of that piece and other compositions by the composer)
- B. Micro
  - Isolate/sectionalize challenging passages
  - Be creative with problem solving techniques by writing customized exercises
  - Use more than one technique
  - Practice fingering passages on air more than actually playing
  - *Practice until you can't get it wrong*
- C. Macro
  - Slowly piece together isolated sections (i.e. add measures on either side)
  - Play each phrase by itself, then piece together phrases to make longer sections
  - Eventually do run-throughs (with and without rests for endurance)
  - Mental run-throughs with recording, just accompaniment, metronome, and/or silence

## IV. Final Stages

- A. Simulate nervousness (proceed with caution)
  - \*The goal is to get used to feeling nervous and the possible side effects and be able to adjust on the fly without dwelling on mistakes
    - Run up/down stairs, jumping jacks, sit ups, push ups, etc.
    - Spin around in a swiveling chair a few times to feel dizzy, then stand up and play
    - Hold breath for 30 seconds (or more/less), release air, take a breath and then play
    - Stand on one leg or try to balance on an odd object
- B. Mental imagery
  - Visualize the performance in detail (stage, audience, other musicians, self, etc.)
  - Watch yourself from the audience perform everything just the way you want to
- C. Turn the practice room into a **Performance Room**
  - After macro-micro-macro practice is completed, perform **and record** the entire solo, etude, etc. as if it were the real performance
  - You only get one chance in music; *do not allow yourself any do-overs*
  - Listen back and take note of mistakes and fix them later in follow-up micro practice
  - Balance the performance run-throughs with supporting micro practice sessions
- D. Pantomime - a dramatic entertainment, originating in Roman mime, in which performers express meaning through gestures accompanied by music
  - Feel the music and put it to motion; eventually this will be heard through the horn
  - Like a kid dancing to music