

8. CONDUCTING GESTURE. CONDUCTING TECHNIQUES

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Abstract: *“Director può farlo anche un asino. Ma fare musica è un'altra cosa” used to say maestro Toscanini to emphasize the true role of the conductor, because conducting does not only mean gestures to maintain “order”, technical rules, rhythm, accents, but represents the art of making music in the true sense of the word.*

Key words: *art of conducting, orchestra, opera*

1. Introduction

Many times, I have been asked whether the study of piano is important for an orchestra conductor. Our answer is: Yes, studying piano is very important! The serious study of an instrument helps a lot in conducting and as contemporary examples we have Daniel Harding (the assistant of Abbado) – who was a trumpet player and Gustavo Dudamel – who was a great violinist. Since childhood I started to accompany fellow instrumentalists from the conservatory, then I started to work with the performers, and these experiences have helped tremendously in my personal musical development, in understanding certain aspects of instrumental or vocal interpretation. Those mentioned above make us say that the piano is the most complete and important instrument for a conductor, because it facilitates the approach of a score.

For example, for the study of a new work, I dedicate at least a week to each act; I sit down at the piano and play the first act, then next week I sing the second act and so on. Thus, the speech of memory acquires its size, because through reading and visualization the memory takes the notes, dynamics, pagination, musical numbers, in short, everything. A particularly important role in the development of conducting skills is also played by the musical ear; it is essential for a conductor to know how to listen and reproduce the sound image inside him both on a microstructural, as well as macrostructural level, before it occurs externally.

It is truly fascinating that when the conductor raises his arms, with one gesture he draws the orchestra, the music, and the attention of the audience to him, because practically the conductor creates the music through a movement that starts the performance. We feel the magic of this profession even before the beginning of a performance, when we are surrounded by the atmosphere and the uproar in the hall while the audience appears, the artists are ready to perform.

Then, immediately after the lights go off and gets quiet, the musical conductor appears, the one who carries on his shoulders the entire responsibility of the performance. In general, for the vast majority of the audience in a hall of performances / concerts, the conducting gesture is only a combination of movements, without a clearly established task; the reality is, however, that the role of the conductor is essential in the construction and interpretation of music, because he is the one who establishes the *tempo* and dynamics of sounds, he is the one who

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animates (gives life to) the performance.

2. Discussions

The conductor must have the ability to manage and coordinate a complex system of musicians, artists with distinct emotions and personalities that must function as a single body, with one voice or better said together, reunited in the desire to create a work of art. This requires a lot of work, science, study, rigor, commitment, more emotion, involvement, and passion. The role of the conductor varies depending on duration of the working period with an orchestra, because here we are talking about the conductors invited or permanent, about how close is the professional relationship between them, about the level of training of the instrumentalists, about the interpretative traditions and even about the hall where the event takes place.

Throughout the personal career, for the rehearsals with the orchestra, I have considered several parameters that have proven their effectiveness in the result. First, I wanted the instrumental artists to have a clear perception on the content of the work, thus increasing the qualitative involvement of their work and the professional satisfaction at the end of the rehearsals. At the same time, it is essential to ensure a certain climate during rehearsals, in accordance with the interpretation of the work, because it produces the motivation, the enthusiasm and perception of the instrumentalists on the importance of personal contribution in the entire orchestral apparatus.

Also, for the preparation of the concerts / works, depending on their degree of difficulty, of the level and ability of interaction between the members of the orchestra, we schedule a certain number of repetitions necessary to build and define the interpretative objectives. I noticed that the perception that instrumentalists have on the quality of their own work is influenced by the harmony and respect that artists show among themselves, by the degree of complexity of the repertoire approached and by the internal dynamics of the orchestra. No matter how famous the work of a composer might be the performance could be affected to a lesser or greater extent by an orchestra in which we do not find the qualities of the musicians we have listed above, and at this moment the role of the conductor intervenes, who, with his mastery, will know how to ensure the functionality of the ensemble.

Let's not forget that musicians are artists (instrumentalists, soloists, choristers, or ballerinas), *che l'artista è un uom*³⁴⁴ – as Leoncavallo so beautifully asserts, endowed with talent and personality, and even if human relationships are not always very good, the result is the fruit of collective work, of professional skill and involvement on the part of all, in the most professional way possible.

The relationship between the conductor and orchestra is built during rehearsals, depending on the objectives pursued, on the technical and artistic valences of the performers, on the ability to communicate and transmit information as accurately as possible to be capitalized in an interpretation as good as possible. To achieve these results, in the decisions we have made since the first rehearsals, we have considered several approaches, starting from the logical - rational (technical) one, which is very important in the study of the musical language of the

³⁴⁴ Ruggero Leoncavallo – *I Pagliacci*

work, continuing with the heuristic one of the interpretative visions of the work, to finally get to the experimental - reactive study. Although the interpretive conception of a work is very clear in mind before the beginning of the rehearsals of the orchestra, changes can sometimes occur, depending on the technical and artistic valences of the instrumentalists; that is why technical and heuristic approaches are constantly enriched with the gained conducting experience.

There are also situations in which the conductor must be very flexible, especially when his decisions depend on external stimuli, and here we refer to *solo* instrumental moments, in which the instrumentalist proposes an interpretation focused on sound, color, phrasing, etc. This flexibility is necessary to convey the concept of “together” because we are going through a common path and that is why the conductor must always consider the proposals of the instrumentalists who have to interpret solo passages. If the conductor considers that the proposed *solo* version is much different from his interpretive vision or is contrary to the musical discourse of the score, then he can ask the instrumentalist to adapt to his requirements, but it is quite possible that the proposed variant is appreciated and accepted. The conductor will encourage the instrumentalist, will give him confidence and a professional communication based on appreciation and mutual professional respect that will benefit the artistic act will certainly result.

The conducting gesture represents the theatrical element of the conductor's expression, which has become part of the collective image related to this profession. From a technical point of view, the conducting gesture serves to tact *the tempo* and is a basic element of the solfeggio. In general, it is the right hand that holds the baton and the command center, and the left hand accompanies and completes the movements of the right hand. Very important is the so-called “empty” movement, that is, the gesture that precedes the attack, provides information about the interpretation, dynamics and suggests the interpretative expressiveness of the work.

Given that music is a universal language, the same is true for the conducting gestures, universally recognized by all orchestras in the world, and it can be complemented by facial expression or body movements that suggest the intention and dynamism of the work through personal gestures, sinuous or direct tones, depending on the personality and talent. The gesture of the conductor is designed to create an image through which music, invisible and untouchable, becomes a visual art; it is the meeting point between the conductor and orchestra, performers, and audience. The conducting baton – of great importance in the art of conducting - is basically an extension of the hand, an instrument that makes the movement smoother for the conductor and more visible for the orchestra.

Over time, the conducting baton has experienced an important evolution - from paper rolls to giant wooden sticks or heavy batons from the beginning of the 20th century. Nowadays, the baton is becoming lighter, it can be handmade or industrial and contains two segments: handle and body. The handle of the baton is more prominent, comfortable for the hand, and the body must be light, perfectly balanced; the color of the baton is generally white (or even fluorescent) so that it can stand out among the stage lights and the darkness in the hall, because the main task of the baton is to amplify the visibility of the conducting gesture.

At the same time, the baton highlights the subtlest intentions and amplifies the

expressiveness of the gesture by making it visible also for the instrumentalists who are at a greater distance from the conductor. In the collective image, the baton symbolizes the power, command, and the conductor must know how to use it easily, as if it were part of his body. Moreover, the baton complements the expressive valences of the gesture allowing the conductor to also use the gesture of the fingers or wrist, when appropriate. However, sometimes the baton can be an obstacle in expressing the tones because the hand closes around the handle and so a certain stiffness is created that can prevent the free flow of the gesture, and in this situation, it is recommended to conduct with free hands.

There are several ways to hold the baton in hand, but the main peculiarity lies in maintaining the underlying relaxation and avoiding the tensions and muscle stiffness that can be reflected during the act of conducting. Because everyone is unique, so each conductor has his own gestures and communication skills. The conductor must have the ability to develop a very empathic relationship with the orchestra, consisting in turn of professionals who must be guided to understand our intentions without imposing a dictatorial style on them, on the contrary, by exploiting the individual and collective skills.

Our goal as a conductor, whether conducting with or without a baton, is that the conducting gesture is clear, firm (both in *piano* and in *forte*), expressive and visible even in the peripheral view of the artists. When we talk about the clarity of the conducting gesture, we refer especially to precise anticipation, because everything that a conductor wants to express is achieved before the music flows, from *tempo* and dynamic communication to the tiniest nuances of expression and character. The general body language of the behavior and the conductor's posture support the images he wants to instill in the orchestra through free movements, avoiding the tension of the shoulders and arms.

We draw attention to the importance to be given to the gesture from the moment of attack of the sound, when the conductor raises his hands; it is the breath that prepares the orchestra for the performance of the work and must be very safe, precise and describe exactly the way of attack. The complexity of the art of conducting consists in the ability of the conductor to focus, in the valences he must convey the intentions and the information necessary for the orchestra. Perhaps the most important aspect related to the work of conductor is the capacity for communication and determination that he provides to the orchestra. The experience acquired confirms that the work of the conductor takes place essentially during rehearsals, when a non-verbal communication channel is made with each member of the orchestra based on subtle signs (gestures, mimics, etc.).

The gestures performed by the conductor during the performance are partially coded by the practice and are the result of personal choices based on the experience and communication valences that serve (or not?) to empower the attention of the musicians on the important points of the performance (which were deepened in advance during the rehearsals). The conductor's interventions during the performance are mainly focused on indicating the attacks on instrumental sections or *solo* instruments, to provide the initial metronomic *tempo* or to change the *tempo* and to capitalize on expressive interpretation.

We emphasize that in certain musical genres, such as the Viennese waltz, the

musical time is “treated” continuously, that is, the metronome continuously changes for expressive purposes; in this situation, the direction of the conductor is of fundamental importance, requiring increased attention from the performers who must respond to the conducting gesture in real time. Many times, I was asked what would happen if the best instrumentalists in the world were reunited in a single orchestra. The answer seems obvious, but it is not as simple as one might think, because an instrumental soloist is studying to find his own sound and his own interpretative style that makes him unique and different from the others.

The orchestra is instead a body in which every artist acts to increase the quality of the whole, all the instrumentalists are focused on one direction, this means that the way of thinking and creating music (expression, phrasing, breathing, etc.) must be the same for all the members of the orchestral ensemble - from the first violinist to the percussionist; the achievement of these objectives is favored by the conductor's charisma and by the harmony of the whole orchestral apparatus.

We believe that a world-class orchestra playing a symphony by Mozart or Beethoven will always be more performant than an orchestra made up of exceptional soloists, who are “struggling “ with the same work, because to create and form the unique unitary thinking mentioned above is a lasting problem, all the more so as we talk about exceptional artistic personalities, who may have different conceptions, which would give rise to numerous professional discussions on the ways of thinking and interpreting music. In the extensive works, written for soloists, choir and orchestra we can have an ensemble of over 150 artists, but everyone's attention is focused on the conductor and thus the valences, the magnetism, the in-depth knowledge of the score, the strength to convey the expression and vigor of the eyes, the ability to indicate the musical time or the attacks with the baton become a subtle balance game that must be masterfully managed by the musical conductor.

The conductor of the orchestra must find the best correspondence between the gesture, the rhythmic figuration, and the melody in order to capitalize on the evolution, the highlights, the musical phrasing giving in practice more information to the artists to whom the interpretation of the work is entrusted. Also, the conductor will clearly direct the beginning, then the direction of the song to the high point and the subsequent descent. In certain contexts, a gesture rounded in the most natural way indicates a progression and at the same time provides the possibility of perception on the movement of the phrase, compared to the vertical gesture (from top to bottom) that can show neither evolution nor continuity, but an indication of fragmentation, of segmentation of the phrase.

The musical instinct is one of the fundamental attributes necessary for those aspiring to any of the disciplines of musical art. It has an essential contribution in the development and completion of the artist, and in the case of the conductor of the orchestra, the musical instinct must be managed so as not to harm the gesture, avoiding the waste of useless gestural energy. Each conducting gesture has a specific connotation, and the arms (in particular) are the main means of conveying the language, governing the character of the performance, and revealing the essence of the melody in its privacy to the listeners, with precise and expressive movements.

A correct conducting technique is highlighted by the clarity of the gesture, by the way of beating the beat and by the expressiveness of the arms, by the practical

and gestural problems that each conductor resolves instinctively most of the time. The most important thing is that the members of the orchestra understand each gesture, each intention because only this way they will be able to solve the rhythmic or melodic patterns which are met in a score. The study of the conductor assumes the concentration on different types of attack (anacrusic, thetic, etc.), on the application of *staccato* and *legato* schemes, on the optical principles for the transmission of the *tempo*, etc, rhythmic formulae for the direction of the phrase and dynamic and agogic development of melody, all this starting from the specific gesture to be used at certain times and up to the use of the baton with the left hand, where necessary.

In other words, the work that the conductor does during the study is to identify the principles that govern the creation of an artistic form, as Stanislavski said: “starting from the knowledge of the score, enlivening, personifying and finally the communicating the artistic product”³⁴⁵. The conductor is the one who establishes the connection with the composer's score and thinking, he must know the structure in depth and understand the compositional form with all the procedures used by the author, he said, while carrying out a formal analysis of the work.

The technical study of the score is performed simultaneously with its antithesis, with the analysis of conceptual, poetic, and emotional principles that the composer wanted to convey, because only in this way the conductor will be able to penetrate into “intimacy” the work, as it was conceived. Depending on the conductor's readiness, he will be the foundation of the communication with the orchestra, will be able to provide the safety in anticipating and solving more difficult passages, while ensuring an interpretative conception of his own, because the conductor must have the power to penetrate the thinking of the instrumentalists in order to complete his conception of the work. Without this in-depth study conducted before starting the rehearsals with the orchestra, a conductor will never be able to get that natural communication for the functionality of the ensemble and will not be able to work in detail on all the subtexts of the score.

After the assimilation of the score, the conductor must search and find inside himself the feelings and emotions that the composer wanted to convey, thus deepening and acquiring the musical conception of the score. It is the stage in which gestures and mimics prevail, because in the moments when the conductor's arms cannot fully express the meaning of music, the completion is achieved by the expression of the eyes, by the posture of the body or by the facial expression. The contact with the public represents the moment when the conductor practically opens his soul in front of all those present in the hall (artists, public, technical staff), because he must conduct with his heart and develop an emotional flow dominating, listening, and revealing the music in the smallest details, in all its splendor and valences.

For a conductor, the thinking associated with the images revealed by the song (like a programmatic musical genre) has a decisive role in facilitating the creation and development of an atmosphere that serves the performers to identify with the requirements the score, with the characters (in the opera), and the result has an

³⁴⁵ Konstantin Sergheevici Stanislavski, *Munca actorului cu sine insusi*, State Publishing House for Literature and Art, 1955, p. 103

extraordinary emotional effect. In this way an invisible thread of connection between the thinking and the arm of the conductor arises from which results a clearer and more intimate interpretation of the work. It is the moment when the conductor exposes his ability to reveal to the public the progress of the work by maintaining an uninterrupted, gestural line of action, a fluid movement of gestures that generates customized sounds that must keep the public's attention alive.

If we analyze the stages of preparation that must be covered until the completion of the conductor conception of a work, we will notice the importance and functionality that a good, correct, clear, expressive gesture has for the orchestra to respond firmly, without doubt, with confidence in the elaboration of the same musical thinking that is to be converted into sounds. “Nella direzione d’orchestra bisogna saper servirsi della propria gestualità, usare movimenti disinvolti, morbidi, plastici. Un gesto potrebbe risultare grottesco se forzato”³⁴⁶ said Ilya Musin.

However, there are also situations when the conductor hesitates in performing the preparatory gesture to obtain the most suitable sound at a certain moment, and in this case the instrumentalists, based on the recommendations during rehearsals, can automatically correct the conductor, making the sound they already have in mind. In such a case, the result will no longer be the result of the relationship between cause and effect but may undergo changes that will lead to imbalances in musical interpretation. However, we must not forget that there are also situations in which the orchestra could make the decision not to follow the conductor if there are discrepancies between the gesture and conducting thinking, and often this attitude could save the performance.

3. Results

When we are in front of an orchestra that we meet for the first time, the first minutes are decisive for both the instrumentalists and the conductor to understand who will lead the rehearsal; the conductor must intervene with tact and diplomacy, science, and safety in the arguments he will bring to develop that harmony necessary to achieve the final goal: a performance of the highest quality. Ever since the first rehearsal (sometimes even before it begins) the instrumentalists in an orchestra have an extraordinary intuitive perception on the readiness of the musical conductor who will present in front of them for the first time; depending on the attitude he has at the entrance to the rehearsal room, on the way of addressing the greeting or on the way he opens the score, the instrumentalists will get a clear picture of the readiness and effectiveness of the repetitions.

The gestural and verbal communication during the rehearsals is among the main landmarks that ensure the success of the artistic performance because the conductor is the main character on whom depends on the achievement of the perfect balance between involvement, respect, respect, safety, and trust in the conducting of the orchestra. If the conductor demonstrates that he has a clear interpretive view of the work, this aspect ensures his authority in communication and consistency in the work he carries out with the whole ensemble. To get the best results in a

³⁴⁶ In orchestral conducting, you must know how to use your own gestures, to use natural, soft and plastic movements. A gesture could be grotesque if forced (t. a.) cf. Ardoin, John, *Valery Gergiev and the Kirov: A Story of Survival*. Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 2003, p. 76

reasonable time, it is not advisable for the conductor to stop the orchestra to make corrections unless he wants to draw attention to certain concrete details related to the score. In this way the instrumentalists are not discouraged and can focus on the indications related to the resolution of the previous deficient passages. The explanations will concern the safety in achieving the quality of the artistic act, in no case will there be critical analysis on the interpretation, maintaining the attention and creative energy of the orchestra.

The technical and artistic level of an orchestra contributes essentially to the achievement of complex objectives, and it is the conductor who must have the skills to lead it to full success, because the technical requirements and the trust that the conductor offers help to capitalize on the interpretative and expressive skills of the instrumental artists. Depending on the mastery with which the conductor manages the *tempo* changes, the sound dynamics, the articulation, the phrasing, it will also influence the performance of the instrumentalists that they may not even know fully. The attitude of the conductor during the rehearsals must always be positive, and the corrections will be explained in a constructive, harmonious manner, tactfully avoiding tense moments that could have negative effects on the atmosphere of teamwork.

A conductor should never stop the orchestra from resuming a certain number or musical fragment without having solid arguments and without giving concrete explanations on the musical or interpretative corrections that he intends to solve. He must find the most appropriate means of communication necessary for describing the details, motivating, and clarifying the expressive options to obtain more easily his interpretive vision and to make the time allocated to rehearsals more efficient. The conducting techniques are based on certain rules and principles, but it can be said that each conductor has a specific technique, customized according to training, talent, intelligence, knowledge and understanding of the content of the works, aesthetic sense, emotional involvement or power of communication and transmission of his intentions.

In active moments, such as: changes in *tempo*, *accelerando*, *rallentando*, *rubato*, *fermata*, crowns etc., gestural information is essential and necessary, it is the one that sets rules and commands, which is why it must be done with great precision and technical rigor. The gesture in passive moments is totally opposite, being used when the *tempo* is already set and no longer involves changes, when a soloist or *solo* instrument is accompanied, the task of the conductor is mainly to maintain the same *tempo* and possibly provide some expressive details.

Dialog gestures are ideal for maintaining the *tempo* and provide interpretative information on the sound, color, phrasing tones and other details previously established during rehearsals. The gestural technique for the beginning of a work has three stages:

- **The stop point** – is the moment of preparation for the initiation of the artistic act, when all the attention is focused on the expressive state of the conductor. The performance will begin only when the eyes of all the instrumentalists are directed to the conductor, and his gestural information will anticipate the sonority, the dynamics, and the expression he wants to achieve at the time of the attack. This is the stage when the conductor listens inside his most suitable *tempo* of execution, the

arms will remain still, in tension (otherwise they could create some hesitations to attack) and even if it is not a moving gesture, it will contain expressively all the information required for the beginning of the performance, excluding *the tempo*.

- **The gesture of readiness or the gesture of lifting the arms** must accurately represent the speed that the conductor intends to impose at the beginning of the performance. The slightest hesitation or change of *tempo* can generate chaos in performance, that is why we recommend that the conductor breathe while looking into the eyes of the instrumentalists, thus establishing the empathic connection and the safety of the momentum required at the time of attack.

- **The gesture of attack** – it is mandatory that it contains the same *tempo* as the gesture of readiness. Only in this way at the time of the attack the performers will see the *tempo* twice: first with the help of the gesture of readiness and then with the gesture of attack. To achieve the rhythmic clarity, it is very important that the gesture is accompanied by a good use of the impulse, which will provide comfort and safety to the performers. Also, for greater safety on the attack of *pizzicato* sounds I noticed that the instrumentalists respond very well if the gesture is expressed by the left hand that describes a descending arc, completed by the time down with the right hand.

- **The closing gesture** – it is also an active gesture, which must be performed with great precision because many works do not end in *tempo*, but in a *rallentando* or *crown*. In the art of conducting, it is agogic that portrays the peculiarities of the conductor, because this is the most important element that defines him. Moreover, *tempo* changes have always been the main reason why the conductor's presence proved indispensable.

These *tempo* changes are active moments that, from the point of view of the conducting technique, require great clarity and safety from the musical conductor, and they impose full awareness of the *tempo* relationship that will ensure the transition from one gestural scheme to another with maximum precision. For example, a *rallentando* cannot be obtained only by progressively tapping a slower *tempo*, but by signaling this agogic variation by enlarging the conducting gesture; instead, the practical implementation of an *accelerando* can be more complicated and is carried out by decreasing the gesture.

In the case of crowns, we consider it necessary to make some clarifications. The term *crown* generally refers to a crown of sounds (notes), which means that the development of the sounds is mandatory - especially in the repertoire of the opera, thus marking the points where ornaments, cadences, variations, improvisations, etc. can be introduced. When a soloist (instrumentalist or singer) intones a note with a crown, the conductor must make a stop (*fermata*) that may represent an extension of the note or a break of the accompaniment.

Depending on the balance between the amplitude of the gesture and the inner tension, result the dynamics necessary to define the type of sound and the expression we want to reach. Thus, to obtain a soft, triumphal *forte*, a wide gesture is required, unlike a sudden, nervous *forte secco* when the gesture will be reduced, intense and complemented by a corresponding mimic. The expression of the eyes, face, the tension and body posture of the conductor must be combined during the creation process, constituting an effective, harmonized communication, to provide the performers with as much information as possible on the sound and dynamics.

During the rehearsals and performances, the orchestra needs emotional stimuli that direct it towards creativity and artistic perfection; that is why it is very important for the conductor to be able to implement the personal conception of the work, to transfer it to the instrumentalists, because only in this way an energetic unity will create in the interpretative communication that will help to increase the professional level of the orchestra. The in-depth and sustained study methods that I have approached in my career so far have facilitated my option to conduct from memory. Personally, I think that this choice amplifies the ability to focus on sound balance and interpretive expressiveness by providing a dominant feeling over the score.

The knowledge of the smallest details of the work and the way to consciously and convincingly transfer the conducting conception creates a greater closeness, we can even say a certain intimacy with the score that leads to (non-verbal) communication much more credible for both the artists and the public, because in our opinion the musicality, the phrasing, the dynamics and expressiveness of the interpretation will be revealed more clearly. Aware that conducting from memory means being more relaxed and having a complete knowledge of what I am about to conduct, the option for conducting by heart was an end in itself in the evolution of the personal career; as I said before, this approach allows for a deepening and increased attention to every detail of the score.

I discovered this talent incidentally, about 20 years ago, when I was called to replace a fellow conductor for the performance *Un ballo in maschera*. By the time I got to the pit, I realized the score wasn't on the desk... Well, without panicking, I started conducting and I slowly realized that my mind was recovering the pages of the score, the notes, the dynamics, so I have the gift of photographic memory. The art of conducting requires a special typology of memory, very synthetic, focused on several parameters: metric, form, phrasing, dynamics, means of expression (*legato*, accents, etc.), inputs (to instruments and voices, where applicable, breaths, cadences, crowns, etc).

However, the approach of a score from memory is not justified if it is not correlated with the ability to focus during the act of conducting (both at rehearsals and especially at the performance) and are inseparable. At the same time, the thorough knowledge of the score allows anticipating the more difficult passages (technical, of virtuosity, intonation, *tempo* changes, etc.), and solving them lies only in the hand of the conductor.

Depending on the orchestra and on the relationship developed with it over time (we refer to the quality of conductor as guest or permanent conductor), the conductor can experience during rehearsals certain sounds that he considers to be the most suitable for the work to be performed. The planning of the rehearsals involves several successive, gradual steps, managed primarily according to the time allocated, the priorities and objectives to be achieved. If the notes, the rhythm, and intonation are correct, then the mastery of the conductor will complement the whole picture with breathing elements, phrasing and technical details that will lead to the achievement of expressive colors and sound balance of the ensemble.

4. Conclusions

If the time allowed for rehearsals is reduced, the conductor will insist on the

most important moments he wants to capitalize on, and musical - expressive refinements and subtleties will be resolved according to the remaining time, to the ability to focus and to the talent of the performers. The time allocated to repetitions should be estimated and managed with efficiency, patience, calmness, and diplomacy, depending on the degree of difficulty and the size of the works, but it is advisable to provide additional space for situations where unexpected problems may occur (fatigue, lack of concentration, difficulty of the score, etc.).

While the conducting technique is universal, the rehearsal techniques are specific to each conductor and adapted to the artistic ensemble he has in front of him; the conductor will find the most appropriate approaches to capitalize on their efficiency and improve their performance by maximizing the concentration of work in a relatively short period of time. The art of conducting provides that information which supports the clarification of the meaning of musical notations, which are in fact symbols to be decoded by all the performers one by one.

The effective communication from the performer (conductor) to the performer (soloist, instrumentalist, chorist) favors the achievement of the common goal if all levers are concentrated in the same direction; that is why an expressive conducting gesture is worth more than a thousand words and is more likely to achieve the desired result. In other words, if the gesture is correct and expressive, it will always work, regardless of the musical training of the performers.

The conducting technique requires study and exercise throughout the career, as conducting is the most complex component of music. In musical conducting there are two contrary ideals: on the one hand we can be purely subjective and personal in our interpretation, on the other hand, we try to consciously render the musical conceptions of the composers based on the indications in the score, according to the knowledge, the preparation, the characteristics, and traditions of the respective ages. Nowadays, the modern conductor generally has less time for the rehearsals with the orchestra and must achieve very good results in a very short period. Therefore, a standardized conducting technique promotes a faster communication with the orchestra.

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