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REPORT OF A GRADUATE RECITAL

by

Earl B. Swenson

Report of a recital performed in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Music Education

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

1962

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Dr. Walter Welti and Mrs. Fay Hanson, private instructors;

Douglas S. Mann, accompanist for the graduate recital program.

Earl B. Swenson

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INTRODUCTION

The art of successful teaching has long been studied by young people entering the profession and by educators who desire to improve their teaching.

In an attempt to become more proficient, many of these educators analyze the highly successful teacher and try to pattern their lives and work in the same direction. This analysis of the superior teacher usually reveals a person who has a broad basic knowledge of his subject matter, a person who is competent in the description and discussion of the material and whose personal qualities, such as enthusiasm, efficiency, leadership, general personality and grooming, add to his effectiveness as a teacher. In addition to the qualities already mentioned, the outstanding teacher possesses the ability to effectively present or demonstrate material in the classroom situation.

In the case of a music instructor this ability to demonstrate or perform skillfully on one or more instruments is perhaps one of the most important qualities of successful teaching. In many instances, such a teacher is able through demonstration to save time and thus make more progress in the rehearsal situation. Many small details of phrasing, style, and articulation which escape verbal definition can be conveyed to a class through teacher performance. In addition, a teacher who has attained a high degree of skill on one or more instruments occupies a position of respect among his students. That respect is often displayed in the classroom situation by attention and enthusiasm on the part of the students. Although many teachers who have little performing ability

succeed in producing acceptable results with school music groups, it is generally recognized that the ability to perform on one or more instruments is one of the greatest aids to successful music instruction.

For these reasons the writer has attempted to improve his teaching by improving his performing ability. During the past year he has studied privately with members of the Utah State University staff. This study had included both fundamentals of teaching and preparation of the graduate recital program.

REPORT OF A GRADUATE RECITAL PROGRAM

The teacher of music in the public school system must possess certain qualities in order to achieve acceptable results with school music groups. Some of these are teaching skills, a good personality, a sense of musicianship, and a basic knowledge of the instruments. The performing ability of the teacher has an effect upon the qualities mentioned above.

There are a number of reasons why the teacher should be an excellent performer. In the first place, he can justly claim himself to be a practicing musician, a member of the ranks of capable players. He can justifiably feel a certain prestige and admiration. Through the excellence of his performance, he can inspire his students to harder work and higher standards. The attainment of a high degree of performing ability indicates through study over a period of time; it reveals that most or all technical problems of singing or playing have been mastered or understood.¹

Performance is also a valuable teaching aid in the rehearsal situation.

Righter discusses the teaching of interpretation as follows:

The conductor may have a perfectly clear conception of how a given melody should be played and his emotional reaction may be precisely the correct one, but his problem is to convey this mental and emotional picture to the performer by the simplest and most direct method.²

This method may differ with each director, but, in general, demonstration by performance on a major instrument or by singing seems to be the most effective. Therefore, it seems that study and improvement of the

¹Joseph A. Leeder and William S. Haynie, Music Education in the High School. Prentice Hall, Inc. 1958, p. 305.

²Charles Boardman Righter, Success in Teaching School Orchestras and Bands. Paul A. Schmitt Music Company, 1945, p. 195.

performing skills is a method of improving music instruction.

Preparation of the Trumpet Solos

The physical elements which contribute to the playing of a trumpet may be divided into four divisions: embouchure, tonguing, breath control, and fingering. Although each of these may present individual problems which must be corrected separately, the coordination of all must be intact if the performer is to achieve proficiency.

In order to improve these physical elements the writer practiced certain exercises daily. These were selected in such a way as to improve areas in which he was inadequate. Private study under the direction of Fay Hanson, a member of the staff of Utah State University, was arranged. The solos were selected by Mrs. Hanson and were learned under her supervision.

"Choral and Variations" by Marc Delmas

The French composer Marc Delmas wrote this modern choral with variations. The central theme has a flowing melody which is quite typical of the modern period. This is followed by four variations upon this theme. The last movements in no way represent the usual variation a theme with added arpeggios; rather, they approach a counter-point style. There is some difficulty involved in achieving good intonation in this number, due in part to the large number of high A's and low C's. In several cases a succession of notes which tend to be sharp is followed by a note which is usually flat, such as F#, A, and E in the high register. The sustaining of high notes for an extended period of time makes the production of good intonation difficult. The technic of this number was not difficult until the finale or fourth variation. At this point the

fingering becomes very difficult because of the constant use of the second and third finger combinations. Execution of the final measures of sixteenth triplet rhythms was made easier through the use of alternate fingerings.

"Concert Etude" by Alexander Goedicke

Alexander Goedicke, a Russian composer born in 1877, is one of the older modern contemporary composers. "Concert Etude," however, seems to follow a previous era. Satz writes:

The "Concert Etude" is written along fairly "classical lines", which is not too difficult to understand since Goedicke is one of the greatest living exponents of the "Western Tradition" in Russia. The "Etude" which ordinarily connotes as a dry-as-dust study is qualified with the word "concert" by the composer. It follows along the lines of the Chopin Etudes for piano which have always been used both as study and concert material. The opening theme has the light, airy character of a Mozart Rondo or Mendelssohn Scherzo. The secondary theme, which appears at (5), is in direct contrast and has broad, flowing lines. The tonguings should all be soft and the player should take short breaths so that all the notes will appear connected.³

The preparation of this solo included work on smooth double-tonguing in all ranges and also considerable work on finger technic.

III Movement "Concerto for Trumpet" by Vittorio Giannini

Several years ago the National Association of Schools of Music commissioned four American composers to write a sonata or concerto. Vittorio Giannini was selected to write for the trumpet. His "Concerto for Trumpet" is this work. The third movement is written in the modern idiom and expresses three different moods. These are fanfare or trumpeting, a smooth soft chromatic slur, and finally a melody which is

³Ralph Satz, "Concert Etude," Leeds Music Corporation, New York, (no date).

marziale in character. Problems which were encountered concerned the odd and large intervals found in this number. The memorization proved difficult because of several melodies which were repeated in different keys.

Preparation of Vocal Solos

The description of correct vocal production is at best somewhat elusive, this condition being attributed to the complex human structure and to the difficulties encountered in studying the voice mechanism during performance. However, certain practices have been established that, when applied to a voice which is physically capable of acceptable production, result in improvement. Two of these are the relaxation of the jaw and throat and the use of all the resonating chambers of the chest and head.

In preparation for the graduate recital, the writer practiced certain exercises daily. These were designed to increase the strength and technic of the vocal apparatus. Private study under the direction of Dr. Walter Welti, of Utah State University, was arranged. The selection of materials was made by Dr. Welti, and they were prepared under his supervision.

"It is Enough", from Elijah by Felix Mendelssohn

In the 1830's Felix Mendelssohn composed Elijah, his most famous oratorio. The text is from the Old Testament and centers around the prophet Elijah. The aria, "It is Enough," is sung by the prophet Elijah.

The problems involved in the preparation of this aria concerned tone-color and quality of voice. The solo is written for a baritone, demanding a dark, dramatic tone-color.

"Ich Liebe Dich" by Edvard Grieg

Edvard Grieg, possibly Norway's greatest composer, wrote "Ich Liebe Dich" in dedication to his future wife. This song is written in the romantic idiom, and it has enjoyed considerable popularity since its composition.

The problems involved in the preparation of this song were caused by the writer's inadequacies concerning the German text. It was found that pronunciation without meaning leaves a singer at some loss as to interpretation and phrasing. A study of the definitions of the words involved resulted in the improvement of phrasing and interpretation.

Preparation of Student Groups

The ten students used in the writer's graduate recital were selected from the eighth and ninth grades of Box Elder Junior High School. Part of the students involved had studied privately with the writer, and all are included in the instrumental class offered at this school. Their average musical experience is approximately two and one-half years.

"Rondo Espressivo" by Beethoven, arrangement by Woodhouse

This selection was originally composed for eight wind instruments, but it was later arranged by Charles Woodhouse for string orchestra or quartet. The melody was written in the typical rondo or light style.

In preparing this number problems were encountered in conveying the correct style and expression to the students. The intonation, too, proved to be quite difficult for students of this age. However, a certain amount of improvement in this area was noted. In general, the students in the string quartet seemed to enjoy and profit by the experience.

"Rubato Caprice" by Ervin Kleffmann

This cornet trio written by Ervin Kleffmann seems to be based largely upon the rubato tempo marking. Its constant change of tempo and general appeal made this number popular with students of this age group.

The problems involved in the preparation of this number were largely physical in nature. The staccato tonguing in particular seemed to give these students the most trouble. In attempting to have each student produce staccato notes of the correct length, much attention was given to the release of each note. After an explanation of the throat structure and the process by which the air is stopped, some success in the solution of this problem was achieved.

"Allegro" (from Divertimento IV) by Mozart

Included in the chamber music of Mozart are eight divertimenti. This clarinet trio is taken from the allegro section of the divertimento Number IV.

The problems encountered in the preparation of this number varied. The staccato tonguing, particularly in the high register, was perhaps the most difficult problem. The open fifths and octaves presented difficulty in the achievement of acceptable intonation. In the second and third parts difficulties were encountered in awkward fingerings. Exercises involving the use of the staccato tongue and the use of cross fingerings were obtained and practiced. A discussion of the out-of-tune notes and chords on the instrument was presented and alternate fingerings designed to improve the intonation were suggested.

This graduate recital program was performed March 25, 1962, in the Edith Bowen Auditorium, on the Utah State University Campus, Logan, Utah.

Utah State University
Department of Fine Arts

Presents

EARL B. SWENSON
ACCOMPANIED BY DOUGLAS S. MANN

in a

Graduate Recital

with

STUDENTS FROM BOX ELDER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Edith Bowen School Auditorium
LOGAN, UTAH

Sunday, March 25, 1962

3:00 P.M.

Figure 1. Printed program of the writer's graduate recital program

LITERATURE CITED

- Leeder, A. Joseph, and Haynie, William S. Music Education in the High School, Prentice Hall, Inc., 1958, p. 305.
- Righter, Charles Boardman, Success in Teaching School Orchestras and Bands, Paul A. Schmitt Music Company, 1945, p. 195.
- Satz, Ralph, "Concert Etude", Leeds Music Corporation, New York (no date).