

CHAMBER MUSIC PEDAGOGY GUIDE

A. FULLARD Cavani String Quartet

Creating a Dynamic Coaching Experience: A guide to the hearts and minds of young musicians through Chamber Music

Cavani String Quartet *From The Art of Collaboration- A Creative Resource for Chamber Music Rehearsal Techniques and Teambuilding (2021 D. Cotter-Lockard, A. Fullard all rights reserved)* Questions: annie@cavani.org

Itinerary for Coaches:

1. Introduction

Create an atmosphere where students feel safe, uninhibited and inspired.
Be in love with the music, so you can inspire the students to fall in love with it!
Greet students with excitement and kindness.

2. Logistics

For the best experience, all students should have the following:

A score **and** their individual part

Music in a binder or on a tablet

Score easily accessible

A pencil

Listen to a recordings and performances on the internet or Youtube.

Everyone must come to the first coaching with a fact about music and composer (dates , genre , city or country where the composer lives or lived) and a anecdote or interesting detail about the composer (Beethoven through a fish across the room at a restaurant , Mendelssohn painted, spoke Latin and Greek, Jessie Montgomery plays violin and was a member of the Catalyst Quartet)

3. Individual Preparation:

Each student member should receive a preliminary private help session on their individual parts to go through bowing, fingerings, and any rhythms and general score study. Coaches/teachers should design a highly structured session with the goal of having the student leave with a very clear idea of how to practice a chamber music part on their own.

3. COACHING - To help students learn and understand basic Chamber Music Leadership Skills

BASICS

- Definition of Chamber Music -
“Music that is written for two or more instruments usually less than twenty, with one person to a part, and no conductor.” No conductor means EVERYONE LEADS TOGETHER !! TEAM WORK IS KEY!
- Sports Team metaphor with passing the ball- everyone is in “ ready” stance
- Warm Ups: Bach Chorales /Scales/Mirroring offers individual students a chance to lead.

COACHING ITINERARY:

Four segments

1. 5-10 minutes **TUNE!**

one at a time with a regular system, use a tuner and proceed around group cellos violas violins . Then play all strings together , a , d, g ,e's and c's simultaneously.

For younger groups :

Each coaching : you pick someone to be the Director of Tuning and let them run the show.

Using a timer, challenge them to beat the clock , most efficient tuning “Director” gets a certificate of merit air prize at the end of semester

2. 15 minutes **PLAY!**

Encourage a positive feeling before they start !

Before starting try picking a word that describes a character or personality of the music and the composer .

For example

Mendelssohn : magical

Beethoven : stormy

Coach should suggest a small goal that can be achieved in the amount of time. for example:

Everyone cues together, Everyone moves in a similar manner which suits character of music . Everyone knows the score, where the melody is where the small subdivisions are , where the silences are.

3 5 minutes **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT!**

Notice and articulate achievements to the group **in general** and then one thing specifically to **each** player.

Example for younger groups:

“Gabe , I love the way you are using your bow!”

“Claire , wonderful communication across the group!”

“Faith , great cuing yourself in after a rest!”

“Olivia love your energy in those eighth notes!”

“Sam way to play close to the bridge , great sound!”

“Julia , thanks for showing rhythm in such a helpful way!”

“Le Bron You are such a great team player - I love the way you pass the melody”

4. 15 minutes **“LET’S IMPROVE WHAT’S ALREADY WORKING”**

Decide what the biggest and fundamental issue is - (most of the time it’s counting and rhythm :)

Ask group to figure out **character** then you can choose from ensemble rehearsal techniques below:

Make them feel like they can do anything , that they should be confident in their goals.

5. Process for improvement:

Techniques shared and created by the Cavani String Quartet. See. THE ART OF COLLABORATION cavanistringquartet.com

Physical movement if they are stiff - **Chamber Music Aerobics**

Visual connection everyone_is_challenged to look up at least once per bar

Shakespearean or Expressive counting aloud without instruments if they are out of sync with each other .

Scat or **Sing** rhythms together if rhythm is difficult to feel or understand

Play Standing Up if they need to feel more flexible and move or play with confident sound and posture.

Clapping rhythms together - interacting with different sections helps with syncopation and rests

Play by heart, by memory Just one or two notes with all students looking up at each other rather than music can be very powerful

Left Hands Alone

Pass The melody

Listening and Focus. Techniques ***‘Live, Breathe and Die’- Each member takes a turn initiating (leading) a passage , a cadence, or note ending, or any musical passage that needs to be better together. All other members watch initiator, and mirror exactly how they move, breathe and cue.***

5.) 10 minutes **FINAL GOAL- PERFORM! :** At the end of coaching the students will play the first or last 10 bars by memory USING the LBAD technique.



Cavani String Quartet -A. Fullard (copy by permission only)

Lakewood Chamber Orchestra
Dr. Elizabeth Hankins, Director
Visiting Artists Cavani String Quartet
Shostakovich String Quartet No 8
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