

Creating a Long Line?

@creativeflutist

Ideas on how we create long lines:

1. **Air:** That our **Air Stream is Alive** and has the **Speed** and **Support/Pressure** needed, for a **Sustained, Spinning and Singing** musical line. How we **use our air** our breath, **sculpt** the air, **invoke our emotions**, be **aware of our musical instinct**, use **our education**, **share our knowledge**, **make artistic choices**, is the art form of making music, via our air/breath.
2. **Listening:** How are we listening? **What** are we listening to? Are we **inclusive** of our 4 ears as we listen: **physical, mental, emotional, spiritual**? Are we including **the space inside and outside of us**? Are we including **the people** we are making music with? **How we listen** is one of the most important elements a musician has in creating music and of course in how we hear musical lines.
3. **Connection:** Being **curious** about all our connections. How are all the notes **connected or disconnected**? How do they **contribute** to making a Long Line of music? If they are **Legato**, are we playing between, using our breath to connect the notes? If they are **Staccato** how are we using the **silence**, and our **dynamic design** to connect the notes into a phrase and line of music?
4. **Intention & Clear Choices:** What is our **musical intention** with this line of music? Are we **clear and committed to our artistic choices**? Making clear artistic choices with shape and direction, will give clarity to our music making and create longer lines of music. Where are we going? Where are we coming away from? What kind of shapes are we **sculpting in our musical lines**? Where is the **peak**, high point, climax, of the phrase/phrases? What are some **destination** sites to point out along the way? What **kind of inflection** would we like to give to those places? **Hierarchy** of our inflections and phrases?
5. **Rhythmic Vitality:** How **engaged** are we with the **pulse, the heartbeat**? **This is the rhythmic vitality enlivens everything**. And, inside this heartbeat is a **singing subdivision** that gives us an even more life to **enlivening our musical line**. **Let's consciously unite our rhythm and breath, in our music making. This heartbeat and intricate rhythmic connections is what our body does naturally, 24/7!**
6. **Meter Matters:** How does **meter affect our phrasing** and help to create longer lines? Each meter has it's own **hierarchy** of inflection. What is the meter? What beat is most important in the bar? How can we **contour the meter** to bring out it's uniqueness and give direction and flow to the phrase? We can also feel a 4/4 bar in 2. We can take a 6/8 set of bars and feel in a 12/8... The way we **inflect a bar or a group bars** together can change the way we feel and hear a phrasing and create a feeling of it flowing over the bar lines too.

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7. **Articulation:** What kind of articulation are you using? Let's be way more **curious about our articulation: the ability to speak clearly**. What kind of **articulation choices** are we making and what kind of articulations are written by the Composer? Make articulation choices that reflect what is written in the music and for the kind phrasing we are creating. **There are sooooo many ways to articulate something!** Staccato, legato, portato, marcato, pesante, accents, sforzandos... For example; are there are several accents in a line? Which one is most important and least important? Create accents in the line that gradually lead and or come away with emphasis, length and vibrato. Also, give each articulation a dynamic design that leads or comes away from in our phrasing. **How we start any note**, the front part of the note, creates the kind of articulation we want to give it.
8. **Vibrato:** is a **wave of e-motion, energy & motion...** that gives, emotion, movement and direction to a note and to the musical line. **How we create waves of vibrato via, speed, amplitude or no vibrato will add to the flow to our long lines**. What kind of waves is our vibrato? Round vibrato waves tend to give more flow to the sound. Using an **image like a waves** may connect your notes and musical line. If our vibrato is not flowing, **using numbers** to even it out, like vibrato in 5's. Or for giving a line more **direction**, moving the vibrato from 3, to 4's to 5's... etc., as William Kincaid said, *"vibrato can be a direction indicator."*
9. **Vowels:** When used can **give shape, sculpt, contour a note or group of notes to flow our phrase forward**. Changing the vowel shape, a, e, i, ahhh, oooh, ō, etc.. **help us to keep the space in our oral cavity flexible, colorful and spacious**. It may influence the **embouchure** corners to be more supple, when using vowel movements. By shaping the notes using vowels, **as we do in speaking and singing**, vowels give words their flow. **When we apply this to our sound sculpting, this also gives flow and direction to our musical lines**.
10. **Dynamic Design:** Create a design for your dynamics with **the printed ones and, in between the printed ones**. We can use *Mf-*, *Mf*, *Mf+* ... We can add more *<* & *>*... We can use colors for each dynamic choice and design. We can **change the dynamic into a word**, *p* = the softness of "moonlight"... **Let's use our musical imagination** to lead with dynamics or sustain with a dynamic, or come away from with our dynamic designs. **Playing with the dynamic, the energy flow of a musical line**, part and whole movement and piece is an important element and often neglected part in our practice and music making. **Dynamic = Energy** which is the life blood of the music.
11. **Dancing Fingers:** How we move our fingers matters in creating a beautiful phrase. **Consider our fingers as dancers, who move in many ways, with artistic consideration in choreographed movement**. Let's choose to move our fingers as a dancer would. In creating longer lines, these movements would mostly be the smooth, light movements. Our dancing fingers help create a longer line or the opposite they can disrupt the line. **It is helpful to consider the movement of our fingers and hands**. Sometimes if the

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movement is too disruptive, it moves the flute **changing the angle of how we are best aligned**, changing our sound and then disturbing the line of music.

- 12. Resonant Spaces:** Releasing any tension that may disrupt the **freedom of the breath to be free flowing in the most resonant spaces inside our body**. We are **artists of the breath** and **our body is the home of our Sound**. As musicians, we receive breath, from the "Greater Home" and accept breath inside our home, then gratefully and generously give back the breath as sound. **How we shape the sound in our resonant spaces, creates our sound and gives more life to a longer line of music too.**
- 13. Necklace of Notes:** How are you **beading together each note** on your necklace/ phrase? Are there similar kinds of beads? Is there **one that stands out** more than the rest? Choose how you want the beads to be strung together. Which one **shines** the most? Are they **translucent?** What **color/colors** are the beads? What **size** are the beads? What **texture** are the beads? Stringing the notes/beads together in a **meaningful** way to you, will give your phrase a more **interesting sound design and a longer line**.
- 14. Between the Notes:** "*Music is the space between the notes...*" ~ Debussy
We have often heard **play between the notes**. This can also mean how we connect the notes together via a slur. Some ways to help with this: Use a **breathing bag** to see if your air is flowing between the notes. Check your **air speed and pressure/support** too. A **small crescendo** between the notes. Changing **the vowel** from ahh to oh or ō to ahh so the oral cavity remains open and resonant. **Freeing the tension** in body, especially in the tongue, neck and shoulder areas. It can mean how we **connect the silence/rests** between the notes. To help with this consider how you are shaping the dynamic of the note before and after the rests. Are they **connected or the start of something new?** Does your **body language** effective silence/rest? Sometimes it is to be still during the rest, at other times it may be a more dramatic end or start.
- 15. Beginning - Middle - End:** Every note has a beginning, middle and end. Every **phrase** has a beginning, middle and end. Every **movement** has a beginning middle and end. Every **piece** has a beginning, middle and end. Considering each of these beginnings, middles and endings, helps us to notice each part as it flows through time and to give it meaning, shape and direction. **How we shape** the note, the phrase, the phrases, the movement, the movements, the whole piece... create shapes, flow phrases together, give direction, **create longer lines of music at the beginning, middle and endings**.
- 16. Imagination:** Ahh, **imagination**, your **musical instinct** and **artistic intent** and **discoveries are** one of THE most important elements. If you are not already, become super **aware of your unique take** on the music you are making. Highlight your **imagination** with your **education, knowledge** and **discoveries** and this will create your artistic interpretation and more meaningful long lines of music.