

Teaching & Learning: More Practicing Insights, Featuring The Musicians Way and The Bullet Proof Musician

Suggested and highlighted by BJ Nicoletti

We tend to keep the theme of “practice improvement and joy” going in The Portland Piper. These two blog postings are insightful and practical.

FROM THE MUSICIANS WAY BLOG

Link to Webpage: [6 Hidden Skills of Expert Musicians](#). Read the blog and go deep!

This blog is rich in insights on each of the six skills. Notice, picture to the left, that each skill is accompanied by a few links to resources for deepening one’s understanding. This is a great resource for the more thoughtful student of the flute student – particularly the more advanced-intermediate through advanced.

The six skills are:

1. Artistic Repetition
2. Feeling Ahead
3. Solving Problems
4. Handling Mistakes
5. Cultivating Ease
6. Reinforcing Performance Habits.

A screenshot of the MusiciansWay.com website. The header is black with the logo "Mw MusiciansWay.com" in white and yellow. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, Practice, Performance, Wellness, Creativity, Music Careers, and Workshops. The main content area has a dark background with white text. It features a quote: "The building blocks of high-level performance are assembled in the practice studio, hidden from the eyes and ears of the public." Below the quote is the title "6 Hidden Practice Skills of Expert Musicians" and the first skill, "1. Artistic Repetition". The text explains that accomplished musicians use repetition to master technical and artistic ingredients. It lists three sub-points: "Beautiful Repetition", "The Perils of Mindless Repetition", and "Varied, Distributed, and Interleaved Practice". The second skill, "2. Feeling Ahead", is also visible, with a sub-point "Awareness, Focus, Concentration". The third skill, "3. Solving Problems", is also visible, with a sub-point "The Creative Power of Problems".

FROM [THE BULLET PROOF MUSICIAN BLOG](#)

Link to the Blog Article: Why the Progress in the Practice Room Seems to Disappear Overnight

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

These two articles by [Christine Carter](#), DMA, focus on addressing the issue of why practice progress can seemingly disappear overnight. “Daily muscle memory amnesia is super discouraging” for musicians must be addressed. This is a relatable fact and sentiment for many flute players.

- The first part offers up a few explanations for this pesky phenomenon, laying the foundation by defining “blocked” versus “random” practice schedules (more current term now used is “interleaved” instead of “random”).
- Drawing on research and her own learning and teaching, she updates us on the importance and elements of the “interleaved practice” approach – an approach which “involves rotating between different tasks, rather than completing all work on one task in a block before moving on to subsequent tasks.”
- The most useful part of this posting is her very clear explanation on how to use a random schedule in the practice room.

The second part addresses some of the common questions she has received over the years since introducing interleaved practicing.

- **Foremost, remember - practice is problem solving.** “The structure of how we work on music, whether through blocked repetition or interleaving, does not replace the essential work of problem-solving.”
- **Focus must be strategically turned on and nurtured, not muted and discouraged by mindless effort, particularly mindless repetition.** “When we provide variety and challenge, we create a learning environment that welcomes focus naturally. I remember my days of “play it perfectly 10 times in a row” and the mind-wandering that would ensue a few repetitions in. I would feel guilty for being distracted and berate myself to “focus!” But when I fundamentally changed the way I practiced, incorporating far more challenge and variety, the focus came easily. Time goes by so much faster now and I leave practice feeling like my brain has had a real workout. So often when people are feeling bored or distracted, it isn’t from a lack of focus at all, but from a lack of challenge.” (C. Carter)

GPFS 2022-2023 Program Sponsors

The Greater Portland Flute Society thanks our Sponsors for their extraordinary support! Please show your appreciation by giving them your patronage first.



Brannen Brothers Flutemakers, Inc.
58 Dragon Court
Woburn, MA 01801-1014
781-935-9522, brannen@brannenflutes.com



Canter Flute Repair
Flute Repair Specialists
Beaverton, OR
Straubinger & Muramatsu Certified
JS Engineering Gold Pads
971-266-4096



Carolyn Nussbaum Music Company
625 Digital Drive, Ste 300
Plano, TX 75075
972-985-2662, 877-FLUTE4U (toll free)
info@flute4u.com
[Watch video](#)



Flute Center of New York
307 7th Ave. #401
New York, NY 10001
212-307-9737, info@flutecenter.com
[Watch video](#)

GPFS 2022-2023 Program Sponsors

The Greater Portland Flute Society thanks our Sponsors for their extraordinary support! Please show your appreciation by giving them your patronage first.



[FLUTEWORKS Seattle LLC](#)

[Facebook Page](#)

781-526-3677, fluteworks@gmail.com

By appointment only

[Watch video](#)



[Keefe Piccolo Company](#)

<http://www.keefepiccolo.com/>

54 Church Street

Winchester, MA 01890

781-369-1626

jim@keefepiccolo.com



POWELL FLUTES
BOSTON

[Verne Q. Powell Flutes](#)

3 Mill & Main Place, Suite 130

Maynard, MA 01754

978-461-6111

powellflutes.com

Kristyn Moore

978-716-0728

kristyn.moore@buffetcrampon.com



[Ted Brown Music](#)

6228 Tacoma Mall Blvd

Tacoma, WA 98409

800-562-8938

253-272-3211

sales@tedbrownmusic.com

GPFS 2022-2023 Commercial Members

The Greater Portland Flute Society also thanks our Commercial Members for their support! Please show your appreciation by giving them your patronage first.



Burkart

2 Shaker Road, #D107
Shirley, MA 01464
978-425-4500
burkart.com/contact



Flute World

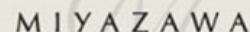
29920 Orchard Lake Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
248-855-0410, flutes@fluteworld.com



Wm. S. HAYNES Co.
BOSTON, MASS

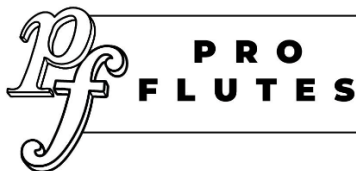
Wm. S. Haynes Co.

68 Nonset Path, Acton, MA 01720, USA
978-268-0600



Miyazawa Flutes

Miyazawa - USA
1214 5th Street, Coralville, IA 52241
1-800-967-6733
info@miyazawa.com



Pro Flutes

678 Sperber Lane
Grand Junction, CO 81506, 970-242-9364
(formerly Sherry Lee Flutes)
info@proflutes.com



WINDSMITH MUSIC
Professional Woodwind Repair

Professional Woodwind Repair
Straubinger Certified
Flute & Double Reed Specialist

119 Neabeack Hill Dr, Philomath, OR 97370
Contact: Katie Cooper, 541-760-8865
katie@windsmithmusic.com
By appointment only.

GPFS 2022-2023 Commercial Members

The Greater Portland Flute Society also thanks our Commercial Members for their support! Please show your appreciation by giving them your patronage first.



Sankyo Flutes
1212 5th Street, Coralville, IA. 52241
888-899-5747
info@sankyoflutes.com



Zing Studio
Rachel Hadiashar
Photographer for Creatives
Zing Studio Sherwood
503-941-0796
rachel@zingsherwood.com
zingsherwood.com,
[@zingsherwood](https://www.instagram.com/zingsherwood)