

Rick's Place

Notes, Thoughts, and Random Musings on the Online Experience

by Rick Hein, AMIS web master

I have come to believe that the whole world is an enigma, a harmless enigma that is made terrible by our own mad attempt to interpret it as though it had an underlying truth.

Umberto Eco

Italian novelist & semiotician

As we look back on our route to our current positions, we can find the logic in our steps: these courses, this university, the right job, the right performances – the list goes on. We all look back and usually find a logical explanation for the way things happened. When we work on music we look for the construction of the piece, the structure so we can convey the logical plan of the author.

Our academic lives have been built piling datum on datum and searching for the structure and building information. We then analyse the information and through the logical tools find the higher level structure that we seek and construct knowledge. As we examine more and more data and build information and analyse the resulting structure we gradually grow to understand what is acknowledged as wisdom.

As educators we are in the business of leading others in the same dance. We lay out the progression and encourage our students to make the same steps on the journey and build on the structure that we, and others, have erected.

What do we do when all of our assumptions are challenged? What do we do when there appears to be a new way of doing what we do and believe we do so well? How do we examine the path we followed?

We look at the professional practice in which we participate. How are others practicing the art of teaching? Many of us have been exposed to new styles of thinking brought about by neurological research. The nature of our subject has grown in time and become more mature. The understanding of the role of the conductor has become more codified. We would like to believe that we are more aware of the individual and their style of thinking and understanding. The effects on the students of preparing a performance and developing their musicianship have been more fully observed. In our own way, we all have been examining our paths towards wisdom and looking for our way to the new ideas.

During the year we will have opportunities to listen to the work of our colleagues, whether at festivals or in the groups lead by our colleagues at our schools. We will also listen to and lead performances of students who have all arrived at that time and place on a variety of paths from a variety of locations.

As we watch and listen and teach, both in our classrooms and in the concert hall, we must all be reminded that we are still dancing that dance of learning and moving towards the light of understanding.

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