

# The Memory Map ©

Handout prepared for NFA, August, 8, 2008  
Melissa Colgin Abeln, D.M.A.  
The University of Texas at El Paso  
[mcolgin@utep.edu](mailto:mcolgin@utep.edu)

“When you walk onstage, everything leaves you except your preparation.”

Stanley Drucker, ret. principal clarinetist, New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

- I. Why memorize by mapping?
  - a. Increase efficiency
  - b. Increase performance level
  - c. Achieve artistic mastery
  
- II. Literature Search
  - a. Groves [www.grovemusic.com](http://www.grovemusic.com)
  - b. JSTOR [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org)
  - c. International Index to Music Periodicals <http://0-iimp.chadwyck.com>
  - d. Google [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
  - e. Flute Listserv of Syracuse University [flute@listserv.syr.edu](mailto:flute@listserv.syr.edu)
  
- III. Conventional Wisdom
  - a. Guitarist Jamie Andreas <http://www.acousticfingerstyle.com/memorize.htm>
    - i. Finger memory
    - ii. Aural memory
    - iii. Eye/brain memory
  
  - b. Pianist Martha Beth Lewis [www.serve.com/marbeth/memory\\_methods.html](http://www.serve.com/marbeth/memory_methods.html)
    - i. Brute force method
    - ii. Analysis
  
  - c. Flutist Kimberly Gandrup “*Creative Memorizing Tips*”. *Flute Talk Magazine*, Feb. 2000
    - i. Mark benchmarks of the form
    - ii. Practice in front of friends and family
    - iii. Practice in the dark
  
  - d. Pianist Rebecca Shockley “*Mapping Music: Some Simple Strategies to Help Students Learn*” *American Music Teacher* 56:2 (Oct-Nov. 2006)
    - i. Concept of mapping music but not expressly for memorization
    - ii. Uses pictures, symbols, colors

► There is much consensus on the conventional parameters of memorizing techniques. ◀

- IV. The Memory Map --What is it?
  - a. Akin to Schenker analysis
  - b. A musical work reduced to a graph, with shorthand notations
    - i. to show form, harmony
    - ii. Phraseology, theme construction
    - iii. A musical road map
    - iv. Written on note pad--rhythms and melodic shapes within a framework of the form and cadences.
    - v. Levy's model of a musical graph (Music: A Listener's Introduction, pp. 170-71)
  
- V. Map of Mozart *Concerto in G Major*, 1<sup>st</sup> mvt.
  - a. Four pages reduced to one.
  - b. Outlines above parameters
  
- VI. Debussy's *Syrinx*.
  - a. Form—4 sections
  - b. Harmony—ambiguous (whole-tone, pentatonic, diatonic) key signature is irrelevant
  - c. Meter and barlines not in the original manuscript (added at publication)
  - d. Rhythms suggest improvisation
  
- VII. Shulamit Ran's *East Wind*
  - a. Form—multiple sections (Exposition, Development, Recap, Coda)
  - b. Harmony-- atonal, 20<sup>th</sup>-century pitch cells, middle eastern modality
  - c. Meter-- free, no barlines, yet an undercurrent pulse is to be kept
  - d. Rhythms—conventional, yet composed for improvisational effects
  
- VIII. Summary
  - a. Memorization is a process of discovery, hard work, liberation.
  - b. Understanding layers of composition are necessary for success.
  - c. The Memory Map assists the musician to fully prepare a work.
  - d. Memory Map construction leads to insight of the composer's intentions.
  - e. The Memory Map shows tangible efforts of a student's efforts to prepare their assignments.

EXAMPLE: Shulamit Ran's *East Wind*  
Development, IIb

## SOURCES CONSULTED

- Andreas, Jamie. *On Memorizing: Part 2*. <http://www.acousticfingerstyle.com/memorize.htm>  
Accessed June 5, 2007.
- Brightbill, Elizabeth. "The Flute Music of Shulamit Ran." Doctoral Dissertation, Indiana University, May 2006.
- Dunsby, Jonathon. *Memory and memorizing*. Grove Online: [www.grovemusic.com](http://www.grovemusic.com)  
Accessed June 5, 2007.
- Ernst, Roy and Green, Douglass M. "Performance Guide: Interpreting Syrinx" in *Flute Talk*, February 1991.
- Gandrup, Kimberly. *Creative Memorizing Tips*. *Flute Talk Magazine*. Vol. 19, no. 6. February, 2000.
- Garrison, Leonard. *For the Mnemonically Challenged*.  
<http://webpages.uidaho.edu/~leonardg/memorize.html>. Accessed June 5, 2007.
- Houser, Virginia. *Memorization-An Integral Part of Musicianship at Every Level*.  
<http://www-personal.ksu.edu/~vhouser/memorize.htm>. Accessed June 5, 2007.
- Kelly, Robert T. *How to Memorize Music*. <http://www.robertkelleyphd.com/memory.htm>.  
Accessed June 5, 2007.
- Koenig, Laura. "Debussy's Syrinx: An Annotated Biography" in *The Flutist Quarterly*, publication of the National Flute Association, Inc. Vol. XXI, No. 2; Winter 1995/6.
- Lewis, Martha Beth. [www.serve.com/marbeth/memory\\_methods.html](http://www.serve.com/marbeth/memory_methods.html)  
Accessed June 5, 2007.
- Levy, Kenneth. *Music: A Listener's Introduction*. New York: Harper and Rowe, 1983.
- Rampal, Jean-Pierre. "Syrinx," in *Music, My Love*. Compact Disc: CBS Records, Inc., 1989.
- Ran, Shulamit. "East Wind" (performed by Mary Stolper) in *Mirage: Chamber Works for Flute*. Compact Disc: Elektra/Wea, ASIN: B000005E45. May, 1996.
- Ronai, Laura. "Debussy's Syrinx" in *Flute Talk*, March 2008 Vol. 27, No. 7.
- Shockley, Rebecca. *Mapping Music: Some Simple Strategies to Help Students Learn*. *American Music Teacher* 56:2 (Oct-Nov. 2006), p. 34-36. International Index to Music Periodicals, <http://iimp.chadwyck.com/home.do>. Accessed June 5, 2007.

Sample page for Memory Map construction.

The image shows a musical score template. On the left side, there is a vertical staff consisting of 11 horizontal lines. To the right of this vertical staff, there are ten horizontal staves, each beginning with a treble clef. The rest of the page is blank, intended for the user to write musical notation for their Memory Map.

