

ABSOLUTE FLUTE

VICTORIA HEATH

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It's the season ...

... performance season!

As Christmas and wintertime are fast approaching, the whole of our playing processes can change - we swap out normal repertoire for festive music, we are suddenly hearing music everywhere and for many musicians... concerts!

Performances, concerts and carolling can bring up a whole range of new problems including the dreaded musician's performance anxiety. This affects students of all ages whether 60 or 6 and can be a difficult thing to combat. It is more common than you think so I have included some useful tips and tricks in this newsletter to get you through the performance season!

You might also be interested to know that my own performances don't always go right (in fact more often than not, there are plenty of things that don't go to plan). I have included some of my most memorable mishaps below.

I have also included some monthly music to have a listen to, including some of your picks from the last half term! I encourage you to have a listen to them and see what you like - you might discover a new favourite genre!

Aside from the winter performances, I hope that you enjoy your festive season this year and, in the hustle and bustle of winter, you find time to relax and enjoy the company of family and friends!

Have a wonderful half term ahead!

Victoria Heath

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Performance Anxiety

Your heart is racing, your hands are sweaty and you feel like time is moving wrong - does this sound familiar? If this sounds like something you experience, you might suffer from performance anxiety.

With flute, it can be especially hard - your breathing can go out the window and you either end up with no breath or too much, the sweaty palms and chin can cause the flute to feel like it will fall. But, you can overcome this. You have the power to push through and perform your very best and, at the end of the day, that is all anyone wants.

Before your performance, make sure you **practice** as much as you can. The more you know your piece, the more confident you will be!

Visualise it going well - the audience will enjoy your music that you have chosen to share with them! Make sure to smile at them and thank them for listening.

Controlling the breathing can be the first step to regaining your composure, I have included a few techniques to try below.

- **4-7-8 breathing** - Breathe in for 4, hold for 7 and out for 8.
- **Square breathing** - Inhale for 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4.
- **Alternate nostril breathing** - breathe in and out through one nostril and then swap. Close the one you are not using with a finger.
- Repeat all of these for a couple minutes for the best benefit.

Some things I try to keep in mind during a performance:

- Don't think, just play!
- It's about the music, it's not about you.
- You're not alone in feeling 'The Fear', and it's absolutely fine to feel it. The world will still turn tomorrow!
- Everyone wants you to do well – people are kind!

SHOUT OUT SPOT!

Well done to the flute choir this term, it has been fabulous to have our numbers double!

Bonus Tips

It can also help to have some friendly faces in the audience to focus on so invite people to watch too - it'll make their day!

Make sure you have your music ready with pages photocopied or corners bent for any quick turns.

Try not to rush!

If you know you are going to sweat or you are performing in the heat, a stamp or bit of tape on the lip plate can stop your flute slipping.



Exam Details

- ABRSM In Person Exam booking is now closed. The exams will take place 04 Nov - 07 Dec 2024.
- ABRSM Performance (Online) exams can be booked any time and videos submitted within a month.
- Trinity In Person Exam booking opened on the **21st Aug 2024**. The Exams will take place from October 2024.
- Trinity Digital can be booked any time and videos submitted within a month.



Tips, Tricks and Information Continued...

flutetunes.com

Apples In Winter

Traditional Irish

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Sometimes performances don't go to plan - have a read of some of my mishaps below!

Once, I was tuning with a group on stage and put my tuner device on my stand... but it was a wire stand so the tuner fell through the back, onto the floor and the batteries fell out! But then I put the batteries back in, tuner back on the stand and it happened again!

Another time, I was in an orchestra on a small platform behind a strings section. Throughout the concert the violin player in front of me was shuffling their seat over but my stand was caught on it. I couldn't untangle it so my stand was meters away by the end of the performance and I had to share someone else's!

At Christmas time, I was playing a solo from the balcony in a church as a choir processed in with candles - it was all very beautiful. However, they were turning off the lights so the candles could be seen and they forgot to leave mine on. I could no longer see the music and had to make something up for the next minute until they reached their positions! Thankfully no one noticed that I played something completely different and ended in a different key - if I can get away with that, a few wrong notes will definitely be unnoticed!

There were so many other things that have gone wrong, but looking back on it, these were some of my favourite performance memories (even if they were stressful at the time)!

Festive Music

With the festive season coming up, it is a great time to find new festive music to try playing with others.

You can find some wonderful pieces here:
<https://www.flutetunes.com/tunes.php?q=christmas>

Or some woodwind trios here:
<https://musescore.com/sheetmusic?instrumentation=35&text=christmas>

Perhaps you can share the festive spirit by playing for friends or relatives (or with them!).





Monthly Music



See below for a few music listening recommendations:

Something classic:

Debussy - Syrinx

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUo2lcpeFrQ>

Something unknown:

Takemitsu - Air

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSUdlUmtg3Qv>

Something a bit different:

Goldie's Goldie

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smSpePH_koM

Events

The Conservatoire

Young Woodwind Ensemble (7-15 yrs, Grades 1-5)

Tuesday 29th October, 10:30 - 12:30 (£24)

<https://www.conservatoire.org.uk/halfterm/music>

The Nutcracker

Sunday 15th December 2:00pm & 3:30pm

Free on Fridays

Fridays 1:30pm, donations for musicians encouraged
15th November - Valerija Iljin
<https://www.conservatoire.org.uk/events/504-free-on-fridays-valerija-iljin>

Just Flutes

Chris Hankin: Articulation Woes Sorted!

Monday 4 November 2024, 19:00
<https://www.justflutes.com/instore-events/tone-development-through-interpretation-roderick-seed-2024-09-12>

Chris Hankin: New Core Repertoire

Monday 2 December 2024, 19:00
<https://www.justflutes.com/instore-events/just-flutes-presents-evening-andy-findon-pearl-flute>

Your Music Picks:

John Williams - Hedwig's Theme

<https://youtu.be/wtHra9tFISY?si=Mt36nRffcsfwgSSd>

Taylor Swift - Trouble

<https://youtu.be/VmBoTeLsKfs?si=T0lvL2ToKbGajthP>

The Lion King, Circle of Life

<https://youtu.be/uixfXt2M-xs?si=RCcy-GwJQTYA808D>

The Beatles - Hey Jude

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNv_Bu_L6C8

Thank you for reading!

VICTORIA HEATH

www.victoriaheathmusic.com