



## **You've Studied the Score... Now What?**

**Practical strategies to connect conducting gestures with musical elements found in the score to promote musical communication between the conductor and ensemble**

**California All State Music Education Conference**

**Saturday February 3, 2024**

**12:00 – 1:00 pm**

**Sacramento Convention Center, Room A11**

**Andy Collinsworth**

Sonoma State University

[racworth@sonoma.edu](mailto:racworth@sonoma.edu)

### **OUTLINE OF SESSION**

- Review of Conducting Position and Stance and Conducting Planes
- The Importance of the Breath
- Overview of Laban Movement Theory, including descriptions and demonstrations of Movement Variables and Movement Efforts
- Stylistic Articulations, Articulation Consonants, and correlation with Laban movement efforts
- Review of various Types of Cues and correlation with Laban movement variables
- Practical Applications in Chosen Repertoire

## **BASIC SET POSITION**

**STANCE:** Tall with head and spine aligned. Shoulders relaxed. Place the feet at shoulder's width. Balance your weight equally in both feet.

**ELBOWS:** Place elbows slightly in front of torso, on same plane as wrists.

**HANDS:** The type of entrance typically dictates the space between hands. If the sound begins on a downbeat, the hands may be near shoulder-width (preparatory gesture moves upward). For pick-up entrances, place the hands closer together (preparatory gesture moves outward).

**TIP & GRIP:** The tip of the baton should start on the same plane as the wrist and the elbow of the baton hand. This establishes where the initiation of sound will be. The fingertips of the non-baton hand placed at same height as tip of baton.

**COMING TO SET POSITION:** The conductor tells the story/ sets the mood before the music begins. Match the movement to your set position with the tempo and mood of the music.

## **THE THREE PLANES**

**Horizontal:** Imaginary plane about the height of the solar plexus (just below the tip of the sternum). Width of this plane is typically 12"-16" on either side of the torso (but can be extended). Sound, legato phrasing are shown in the horizontal plane.

**Vertical:** Imaginary plane aligned with the spine. Typical dimensions of this plane is from just above the head to the waist (but can be extended). Silence/space, qualities of articulation are shown in the vertical plane.

**Sagittal:** Imaginary plane from the torso outward to extent of arm length (in and out space).

Dynamic power and energy live in this space.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BREATH**

The breath is vital to performing on all instruments (winds, voices, strings, percussion). The breath must be synchronized throughout the ensemble in order to produce a successful entrance of sound.

- Breathe in with lips apart (as if saying the letter "O").
- Exhale on the syllable "too" (lips apart).

Be mindful that the inhalation/exhalation is not overly vocalized/sounded.

The conductor's job is to ensure that the performers' intake of air matches the tempo and the style of the music.

A primary cause of inappropriate entrances results when the performers do not breathe together as an ensemble.

## O2 BREATHING ETUDE

### Teacher Demonstration:

1. Position left hand slightly above and in front of the head.
2. While inhaling forming the "O," move the hand backward toward the ear. Make sure the speed of the breath matches the hands.
3. Using a pendulum-like motion (don't stop), move the hand toward the original forward position while exhaling on the syllable "too."

### Student Demonstration:

1. Ask students to replicate the etude.
2. Note any variances in the speed of the hand movements.
3. Note that the speed of the hands is inextricably linked to the speed of the breath! When the breath is too fast, the epiglottis tends to close off, stopping the air.
4. Repeat the model as needed.
5. Once students are capable, ask them to do the etude on a unison note or chord.

## BREATHING ETUDE CHALLENGE

A synchronized breath throughout the ensemble helps to ensure a quality start

### Can they do the O2 Etude with their eyes closed?

1. Ask students to close their eyes. Tell them "Based on the sound and speed of your collective breath, we will play (the note or chord). When you hear two claps, that's our cue to stop."
2. "Instruments are up, eyes are closed, get the sound of the room (wait 5"), you're on your own." The last phrase is the cue to breathe.

**LET'S TRY IT!**

They may not get this the first (or second or third) time with eyes closed. If this happens, simply have them open their eyes and repeat the O2 Breath with the hand gestures, then try again.

It is a revelation when they demonstrate it accurately!

\* They are now empowered to play a chorale or a passage without conductor!

## RUDOLF VON LABAN AND MOVEMENT

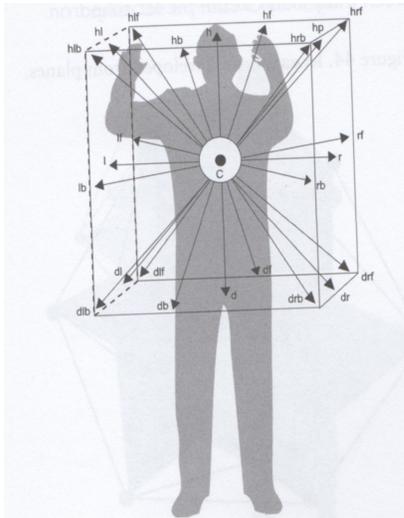


Rudolf von Laban (1879 - 1958) was a dance artist, choreographer and dance theorist. Considered to be the "Father of Expressionist Dance" in early 20th century Germany, his theories on body movement have had profound influence in the field of dance. In recent years, his theories have been applied to the instruction of instrumental and choral conducting.

# MOVEMENT IS MULTIDIMENSIONAL

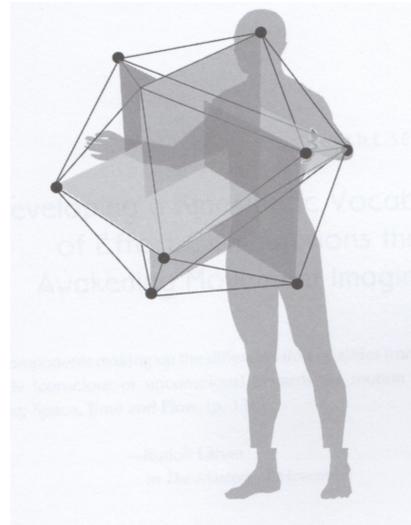
**Figure 1. Diagonal paths**

Possible directional paths of movement.



**Figure 2. Laban's Icosahedron**

20-faced, 3-dimensional spherical cube. Note the three different planes within the figure.



## EXPRESSIVE VARIABLES OF MOVEMENT

- Space** The manner in which energy is focused in action.  
Direct movements that are channeled in a singular direction from one point to another  
Indirect movements can vary direction along the path of movement
- Weight** The amount of energy and sensation of force exerted in a movement.  
Heavy movements use body weight and gravity to communicate strength  
Light movements are achieved with delicate, soft movements that defy gravity
- Time** The duration of time it takes to complete a movement.  
Sustained time is characterized by stretching, prolonging, decelerating movement  
Suddenness is represented by quick, instantaneous motion
- Flow** Variations in the quality of body tension that underlie other effort movements.  
Free flow allows movements to travel beyond the body boundaries  
Bound flow forces the mover to contain movements within the body

## MOVEMENT EFFORTS CONTINUA

- SPACE** Direct, channeled path ----- Indirect, flexible path
- WEIGHT** Heavy, Strong, Impact ----- Light, Floating, Effortless
- TIME** Slow, Sustained, Stretched ----- Sudden, Quick, Instantaneous
- FLOW** Free movements ----- Bound movements

## LABAN MOVEMENT EFFORTS

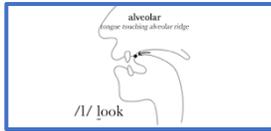
<b>Effort:</b>	<b>GLIDE</b>	<b>FLOAT</b>	<b>PRESS</b>	<b>WRING</b>
<b>Space:</b>	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
<b>Weight:</b>	Light	Light	Heavy	Heavy (Strong)
<b>Time:</b>	Sustained	Sustained	Sustained	Sustained

<b>Effort:</b>	<b>DAB</b>	<b>FLICK</b>	<b>SLASH</b>	<b>PUNCH</b>
<b>Space:</b>	Direct	Indirect	Direct/Indirect	Direct
<b>Weight:</b>	Light	Light	Heavy	Strong-Heavy
<b>Time:</b>	Quick	Quick	Quick	Quick

## MOVEMENT EFFORT DESCRIPTIONS

<b>GLIDE</b>	<b>(S) direct</b>	<b>(W) light</b>	<b>(T) sustained</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	touching velvet; ironing clothing; petting a kitten; tread water		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	ironing clothing; conduct flat-shaped figure 8's		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	legato, flowing music, showing sustained breath/bow		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	minimal ictus; maintain horizontal plane; continuous, fluid movement		
<b>FLOAT</b>	<b>(S) indirect</b>	<b>(W) light</b>	<b>(T) sustained</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	a floating feather; graceful hands; trace a rainbow		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	feather/air resistance; using a bubble wand		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	whole notes; floating chords; transparent music; sustained phrase; <i>cresc. - dim.</i>		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	minimal or nonexistent beat pattern; patient, arc-shaped movements		
<b>PRESS</b>	<b>(S) direct</b>	<b>(W) heavy</b>	<b>(T) sustained</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	push a door; bicycle pump   opposite: raising a stuck window; lifting heavy object		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	stirring a large pot; conducting in molasses; wrist leads tip of baton		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	intensely dramatic music; moments of stretch; crescendo/decrescendo		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	large and heavy prep beat; use a lower conducting plane; move in-out of sagittal space; slow into ictus & slow rebound		
<b>WRING</b>	<b>(S) indirect</b>	<b>(W) heavy (strong)</b>	<b>(T) sustained</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	turning a doorknob; squeezing an orange; twisting motion into sagittal plane		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	conducting in molasses; stiffer wrist with intensity		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	dramatic moment; dissonant chord or a suspension; stress followed by relaxation		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	intense prep; move into sagittal space; can be high or low		
<b>DAB</b>	<b>(S) direct</b>	<b>(W) light</b>	<b>(T) quick</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	tapping window; testing hot water; bouncing a ping pong ball		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	light tapping motion with compact rebound		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	light staccato; rhythmic music; need for sense of clear pulse		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	small & clear beat pattern; light, quick rebound; precise ictus		
<b>FLICK</b>	<b>(S) indirect</b>	<b>(W) light</b>	<b>(T) quick</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	brushing lint of clothing; shooing a fly; popping a balloon w/dart		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	dotting an "i"; quick, light motion with stopped rebound		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	ultra-light staccato; lifted articulations; textures requiring lightness		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	movements from wrist or fingertips; make the tip of baton dance		
<b>SLASH</b>	<b>(S) direct/indirect</b>	<b>(W) strong</b>	<b>(T) quick</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	karate chop; slamming a door; using a flyswatter		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	cracking a whip; forceful movement with abrupt stop		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	extreme accent ( <i>sfz</i> ); heavy, syncopated rhythm		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	movement into and out of gesture is heavy, with minimal rebound		
<b>PUNCH</b>	<b>(S) direct</b>	<b>(W) strong-heavy</b>	<b>(T) quick</b>
<b>LH Movement Examples:</b>	punching a bag; gut punch		
<b>RH Movement Examples:</b>	hammering a nail (low plane); "victory fists" (both hands, high plane)		
<b>Musical Applications:</b>	heavy accent with impact; Bass Drum "canon" shot; accent in basses		
<b>Suggestions:</b>	forceful sagittal movement with heavy weight; movement is quick with minimal rebound		

## STYLISTIC ARTICULATION



The **alveolar ridge** is where the hard and soft palates connect behind the top teeth.

The consonants T, D, N, L are enunciated by touching the tip of the tongue to the alveolar ridge. This is the same area where articulations occur on all wind instruments. Thus, we have a vocabulary that we can impart for varying the style of articulations required for musical interpretation.

## ARTICULATIONS AS CONSONANTS

**d e n t a l**

The four dental consonants (hardest to softest) are: t d n l

**weighted-----light**

**t d n l**

**T:** articulations requiring strength at the front side of the note (ta, tu, toh, tuh, tut)

**D:** articulations requiring clarity, but not as strong (da, dah, doh, du, dit)

**N:** articulation requiring sensitivity, legato character, notes that must appear w/o attack (na, nu, noh)

**L:** articulation requiring greatest sensitivity; inconspicuous entrance (la, loo, low)

## COMBINING LABAN MOVEMENTS WITH ARTICULATIONS

Glide: N light weight; very smooth connection with horizontal plane

Dab: D light weight; gentle tapping, with subtle lift for clarity and lifted spacing; or, with smoother connection for legato (Glide/Dab)

Float: N, L very light weight; inconspicuous entrance with as little articulation as possible

Press: T, D heavy weight; change weight/intensity in motion for desired articulation

Wring: N, D change weight/intensity in motion; conduct through the gesture for N

Flick: D, T light weight; quick rebounds

Slash: T heavy, quick motion for impact at front of sound; quick rebound for abrupt release

Punch: T heavy, downward motion for impact

# CUES

## LEFT HAND

- **Finger point (direct, various weight, quick).** Look at the performer(s) a couple of beats ahead of the cue. Prepare cue by bringing the fingers of the left hand together in a loose fist, then on cue extend the index finger toward the performer(s) you are cuing. Works best at faster tempos or for aggressive entrances.
- **Tap in (direct, light, quick).** Prepare cue with left hand, palm down, fingers together. On cue, gently tap the air in the direction of the performer. This cue is usually given in a higher plane, because it is usually used for a soft entrance.
- **Bubble Pop (indirect, light, quick).** Prepare cue by bringing the thumb and index finger of the left hand together, as if picking up a dart (or forming the "OK" sign). On cue, bring the left hand up toward the face and release the fingers in a delicate manner. Light cue for a delicate entrance (triangle, pizzicato).
- **Scoop and serve (indirect, light, sustained).** This cue works well for a legato cue to performers who are seated in the first or second rows. Prepare cue with left-hand, palm down. Move the left hand as if you were scooping ice cream. On cue, turn the hand palm facing up, as if serving it to someone ("here you go"). Keep the fingers of the left hand together at all times.
- **Gut punch (direct, heavy, quick).** This cue works great for a huge bass drum cue or for an accented entrance in the low brass. Prepare cue with left hand toward your sternum into a fist. On the cue, thrust the fist in a short jab (don't overextend the arms).
- **Door Slam (direct, heavy, quick).** Great for showing subito *f*, *ff* and large, loud cues, (cymbal crash). Prepare cue with open palm and move hand in a slashing motion.
- **Whack-a-Mole (direct, heavy, quick).** Great for showing *sfz and fp*. Similar to door slam, except move palm downward. For *fp*, move into sagittal space and retract hand quickly.

## OTHER TYPES OF CUES

- **Baton Cue (direct/indirect, various weight, quick).** Prepare cue by looking at the player(s) you wish to cue, then point the baton in their direction as you incorporate the preparatory gesture and entrance beat into the regular conducting pattern. Keep the beat pattern small just until advancing the baton in the direction of the performers being cued. This cue works best for player seated directly in front of you and to your right.
- **Head Nod (direct, medium weight, quick).** Prepare cue by looking directly at the performer(s) you wish to cue, and make an up-and-down gesture with your chin. Effective cueing for an entrance immediately following another cue, or for a soloist.
- **General Cue.** When many parts enter in close succession, do not attempt to cue every entrance. You may choose to:
  - give a non-directional cue to them all
  - cue the largest incoming group
  - cue the group who is the least secure (younger performers)

## A QUICK NOTE ABOUT SCORE STUDY & PRACTICE

In order to be an effective communicator, we must invest time into score study (to internalize the score) and conducting practice.

### Some ways to internalize music:

- Listening to recordings. *\*Listen to the music without the score. Study the music without the recording.*
- Playing parts on piano/ instrument
- Singing/Verbalizing (sizzling) rhythms with air
- Audiation
- Devote practice time just for you, even if only 30 minutes a day
- Mark the score so that notations “jump off the page” (I use red and black drawing pencils)
- Internalize tonal material through singing and stylistic articulations through vocalizing (sizzling) rhythms using appropriate consonant vocabulary (t, d, n, l)
- Practice in front of a mirror
- Use your cell phone to video record a rehearsal segment

# A FEW PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

## Ex. 1 The Red Balloon, McGinty

Laban **Glide-Float** pattern: small space, with little weight

**Float** left hand to encourage airstream (no break)

Stay connected to horizontal plane until measure 4, beat 3

Note various styles of cues (other options possible!)

The last cue in percussion could use Floating variation of the "scoop and serve" cue.

QUEENWOOD DEVELOPING BAND SERIES

### THE RED BALLOON

By ANNE MCGINTY

Conductor  
Duration - 2:30

Floatingly (♩ = 112)

*Slide-Float*  
*Horizontal plane*  
*Vertical space beneath*

Flute  
Oboe

B♭ Clarinets 1/2

E♭ Alto Saxophone

Cornets / Trumpets 1/2

(Opt.) F Horn (Tenor Sax.)

Low Brass & Woodwinds

Bells

Percussion - Triangle, Snare Drum, Susp. Cymbal, Claves, Tambourine, Bass Drum

*Tap-in*  
*Bubble Pop*  
*Hand Nod*

Fl  
Ob.

Cls. 1/2

A. Sax.

Cors. / Tpts. 1/2

(Opt.) F Hn. (T. Sax.)

L. Brass & Wws.

Bells

Perc.

*Tap-in*  
*Bubble*  
*Scoop-Serve*  
*Poco*

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Susp. Cym. *z*

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# Ex. 2 Horkstow Grange, Grainger

FF: "A haunting requiem in the major mode"

Text of folk song influences interpretation:

*In Horkstow Grange there lived an old miser,*

*Y'all do know him as I've heard say...*

FF: "A Haunting Requiem in a Major Mode"

14  
Playing time: 2.15 min.

## 2. "Horkstow Grange"

(The Miser and his Man: a local tragedy)

Slowly flowing, singingly (about 76)

1st Note Mxt  
APPEAL

Float-Trough

Slide

Float-Hornmouth

1 1 Δ → Δ 1 1 Δ

In Horkstow Grange there lived an old mi-ser. You all do know him as I've heard say... him and his Man...

Press-Upward

50100300

First note must appear w/o attack. Note text begins with a vowel.

Laban: First note **Float** and conduct through the ictus of first note. Then, **Glide**.

5/4 measures: texts "lives an old mi-ser" and "I've heard say" requires 2 + 3 pattern. A slight press into sagittal space to emphasize "mi-ser."

Use left hand to **Glide-Press** motion from left to right to encourage no break of airstream. In m. 5, use upward **Press-Float** stretch beat 5 going into m. 6.

# Ex. 3 March of the Belgian Paratroopers, arr. Swearingen

- Light/playful, European march tempo.
- Articulations: "D" ("dit" and "doh")
- Laban: Alternation of **Dab-Press** (accent stress); **Flick** (light after notes)
- M.4: accent on beat 2 **Press-Slash**
- m. 9: **Press-Glide**  
to show melodic note leading.  
2nd X: direct attention to saxes/euphonium

*Lightly, Giocoso*

## MARCH OF THE BELGIAN PARATROOPERS

(Marche Des Parachutistes Belges) PIERRE LEEEMANS  
Arranged by JAMES SWEARINGEN

March (♩ = 118) 28-100  
Flute/Piccolo: *Fl. first (2nd on rest)*

Oboe: *One player*

Bassoon: *One player*

B♭ Clarinet 1: *One player*

B♭ Clarinet 2,3: *2. One player*

E♭ Alto Clarinet: *One player*

B♭ Bass Clarinet: *One player*

E♭ Alto Sax. 1,2: *1. One player*

B♭ Tenor Sax.: *1. One player*

E♭ Bari. Sax.: *1. One player*

B♭ Trumpet 1: *March (♩ = 112)*

B♭ Trumpet 2,3: *1. One player*

F Horn 1,2: *1. One player*

Trumbone 1: *2. Two players div.*

Trumbone 2,3: *One player*

Baritone: *One player per part*

Tuba (String Bass): *Play 2nd time only*

Percussion 1: *Panels Drum (Cyc. Concert Snare)*

Percussion 2: *Snare (Flute Mallets)*

Mallet Perc.: *1. One player*

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0400276  
March of the Belgian Paratroopers - 3

9

Fl/Pic. *Glide Press*

Oboe *Glide Press*

Bsn. *Glide Press*

Cl. 1 *LS*

Cl. 2,3 *All. r.f.*

A. Cl. *Play 2nd time only*

Bc. Cl. *Play 2nd time only*

A. Sax. 1,2 *2x - Glide / Float - Expand / Contract*

T. Sax. *Poco*

B. Sax. *Sax, Euph - 2x*

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2,3 *1. One player*

Horn 1,2 *2. Two players div.*

Thu. 1 *One player*

Thu. 2,3 *One player per part*

Bar. *Play 2nd time only*

Tuba *(See Bc.)*

Perc. 1 *Concert Snare*

Perc. 2 *Poco*

Mlt. Perc. *1. One player*

0400276  
March of the Belgian Paratroopers - 4

# Ex. 4 Dance from Four Shaker Songs, Ticheli

- Laban: Light **Flicks** for subito piano
- Start small, increase space and change to **Dabs** for cresc.
- **Punch (or Punch-Wring)** for BD (LH- gut punch; or RH hammer the nail)
- In last bar: 1st note **Flick (RH)** | 2nd note **Punch (LH)**  
 -or- 1st note **Flick (LH)** | 2nd note **Slash (RH)**

II. DANCE FROM FOUR SHAKER SONGS, TICHELI

Handwritten annotations on the score include:

- WWS** (circled in black) above the Flute staff.
- Loud** and **More Space** (circled in blue) above the Bassoon staff.
- Tpt** and **Dab** (circled in blue) above the Trumpet staff.
- Subp** (circled in blue) above the Trumpet staff.
- Light Flick** (circled in blue) above the Trumpet staff.
- Time** (circled in black) above the Timpani staff.
- Punch** (circled in blue) above the Percussion staff.
- Flick** (circled in blue) above the Percussion staff.
- Punch** (circled in blue) above the Percussion staff.
- BD Solo** (circled in black) above the Percussion staff.
- ff** (circled in red) below the Percussion staff.

25

# Ex. 5 O Magnum Mysterium, arr. Reynolds

LARSEN, REYNOLDS "O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM" 5

The score is for a full orchestra and includes handwritten annotations in blue and red ink. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), and Bass Saxophone (B. Sax.). The second system includes Trumpet (Tpt.), Horn (Hn.), Trombone (Tbn.), Euphonium (Euph.), Tuba (Tba.), and Timp. The score features tempo markings: 'rit.', 'A tempo', 'poco rit.', and 'A tempo'. Handwritten annotations include 'Glide to stretch', 'Horizontal strokes going to Flat', 'Wing - Dissonance Float Resolution', and 'Scoop & Serve'. A red vertical line is drawn through the score, and a box highlights a specific measure in the Tuba part.

Bar before F, **Glide** to stretch length of quarter notes while decreasing space to show **dim.**

3/2 patterns at F and F4 could be conducted (2 + 4)

Use "scoop and serve" cue for quarter note in ASax at end of F

**Wring** the dissonant half note (F#) and relax into **Float** on resolution (E).

# Ex. 6 March from First Suite in E-Flat

mm. 1-2: heavy Slash-Flicks on beat 1 of each bar. Rely on gesture of syncopation- no need to show beat 2.

m. 4: heavy Punch for Bass Dr cue followed by a RH "close the Door" Slash

m. 5: light Flicks for stylistic short articulation

m. 8: Slash (with LH or RH) accent on beat 2

32 **HOLST, FIRST SUITE IN Eb** **3. MARCH**  
Tempo di Marcia

C Flute & Piccolo  
1st & 2nd Oboe  
Eb Clarinet  
Solo Bb Clarinet  
1st Bb Clarinet  
2nd Bb Clarinet  
3rd Bb Clarinet  
Bb Bass Clarinet  
1st & 2nd Bassoon  
Eb Alto Saxophone  
Bb Tenor Saxophone  
Eb Baritone Saxophone  
Bb Bass Saxophone

1st Bb Cornet  
2nd Bb Cornet  
1st & 2nd Bb Trumpet  
1st & 2nd Horns in F  
3rd & 4th  
1st Trombone  
2nd Trombone  
3rd Trombone  
Euphonium  
Basses  
String Bass  
Timpani  
Percussion  
Cymbal  
Side Drum  
Bass Drum Solo

Handwritten annotations:  
- Blue circle around measures 1-2: "Gesture of Syncopation"  
- Blue circle around measure 4: "Close Door"  
- Blue circle around measure 5: "Then Flick-Light"  
- Red circle around measure 8: "Slash"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Flick"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Heavy Dibs"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Solo (ad lib.)"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Cymbal"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Side Drum"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Bass Drum Solo"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "RH Slash"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Slash"  
- Blue circle around measure 8: "Flick"