Part 4

Expressive gestures indicating changes in dynamics, changes in tempo, different kinds of articulation, indication of cues, and gestures which are used in the indication of fermata and the release of fermata.

Introduction

Steven Hart (1996) has indicated in his thesis, *Evolution of Thought and Recurrent Ideas in Choral Conducting Books and Secondary Music Education Texts Published in English from 1939 – 1995* Colorado: University of Colorado; that authors prior to 1949 indicated that “time-beating … was both acceptable and desirable”. (Hart, 1996:15) His study indicates that since 1959, “conductors were expected to go beyond time-beating”. (ibid, 16) The ability of the conductor to interpret music through a combination of time-beating and expression of the music has been identified by authors since 1959 as a vital additional conducting skill. The study pertaining to the indication of musical expression is thus not even 50 years old, and is therefore a relatively new phenomenon in the study of gestures.

The function of the conductor has certainly changed down the ages, from the cantor standing in the centre of the singers chanting during church services in medieval times, to someone who has to deal with the indication of change of dynamics, changes of tempo within a work, different kinds of articulation, indications of complicated cues, and the use of fermata. All these different aspects of gestures have become necessary as the writing of music has changed from the use of plainchant in the church with long rehearsal periods at hand, to the performance of complicated atonal polyrhythmic works where the rehearsal time is restricted. The demands made on the skills of the choral conductor have certainly changed dramatically in the last few centuries, and even within the gamut of a single composer’s work:
In the following two examples, both from the Norwegian composer Knut Nystedt, the different demands made on the conducting technique of the choral conductor can be illustrated. In the first example, Knut Nystedt uses the plainchant melody in the opening, quoting directly from the plainchant, “the” *Miserere*, in his own setting of Psalm 51:

![Opening bar, Miserere by Knut Nystedt, opus 140, Norsk Musikforlag]

The subsequent *stretto* entries create a textural change of dynamics, which is evident in the plainchant-like recitation in different voices resulting in harmonic clusters. In this work, the textural compilation results in a natural change of dynamics.

![Bars 2 – 5, Miserere by Knut Nystedt, opus 140, Norsk Musikforlag]

In the next work, *De Profundis*, also by Knut Nystedt, several aspects need to be indicated by the conductor’s gestures – the tone cluster is sung “within the approximate range of the metrical diagrams, with intonation on different pitches”: (footnote performance instruction at letter B of the work). Because the metrical rhythm is not precisely part of a traditional beating pattern, the crescendo and decrescendo must be indicated with an accented “me” in the second bar, and a *glissando* must be indicated within a *ritardando* gesture with a tied note, marked *a tempo*,

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Contemporary composers and 20th century composers make different demands on performers in terms of musical expression. This involves speech, whispering, speech singing, “sound music”, interpretation of graphic notation and choir improvisation, collage, movements of the choir, and several other expressions previously not demanded from an ensemble. (Ericson, 1974: 143 - 170) The conductor has to be able to use expressive gesture to convey these different musical aspects.

The texts of all 22 authors have been studied in detail, and trends have been identified which are commonly discussed by most of the authors in Chapters 15 – 19. Chapter 15 deals with gestures indicating change of dynamics; Chapter 16 deals with gestures indicating change of tempo; Chapter 17 deals with gestures indicating articulation; Chapter 18 deals with gestures indicating cues, Chapter 19 deals with gestures indicating fermata and the release of fermata. Chapter 20 forms the conclusion to Part 4.
Chapter 15

Gestures indicating change of dynamics

Music Example 15.1 Hvad est du dog skjøn, Edvard Grieg, bars 40 – 43 (Norsk Musikforlag)

The research question to be answered in this chapter is: “How are the recommended gestures described to indicate changes in dynamics, and how do these gestures relate to the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 3.1)

The skill to indicate these gestures is necessary for the practical conducting of all conductors who have to work with a choir, as most compositions contain some or all of these musical elements. The role of the change of dynamics has been traditionally given to the left hand, but when the music demands different changes of dynamics within the same work, it is impossible to stick to conventional ways of indicating dynamics. In this regard, the use of the hands independently from one another becomes far more important, especially in music of the last 150 years.
15.1 The role of the left and right hands in the indication of a *crescendo* and *decrescendo*

The first issue which is examined by most authors in the field is the role of the left and right hands in the indication of a *crescendo* and *decrescendo*. Eleven authors seem to agree that the left hand should indicate the *crescendo* and *decrescendo* on a vertical (up – down) level, while Ericson (1978: 82) advocates the independency of the left hand to show the change in dynamic level. He is the only author who does not specify whether the indication should be on a vertical or horizontal level.

However, when discussion arises on the degree of relaxation of the left hand, there emerge two different schools of thought: Busch and Labuta specifically mention the increased muscle activity (and therefore more muscle tension), and Ericson and Green warn that there should be no tension, as this will result in an uneven movement of the left hand.

Busch (1984: 73) suggests that “conductors need to show increased intensity by increased muscular tension.” Busch discusses in detail which muscles will become involved in the process, and indicates also that the palm should remain parallel to the floor, meaning that the muscles in the forearm will become tenser. He uses the idea of the hand moving through thick oil, against resistance. “Abdominal muscles contract; back, arm and shoulder muscles work harder. The process is very similar to isometric exercises in which certain muscles provide resistance to other muscles. The sensation of increased intensity may best be described as pulling the hand through thick oil. The more energy you apply to the motion, the more resistance the oil provides.”

He continues that all the gestures become slightly more exaggerated as muscles become more involved. In the conducting process, the hand, arm, and wrist thus tend to be pushing against an invisible resistance as intensity increases.
He warns, though, that this increased muscle activity should not reach grotesque levels, as it might influence the singers and they might react by tensing up their vocal chords.

Labuta (2000: 45) suggests that the palm up, with tension in the left hand, is optimal. He does not give a reason, but also cautions that “the left hand should rise smoothly, without jerking at each beat of the right hand”.

On the other side of this argument is Ericson (1978:82), who urges that “a relaxed left hand is important because it can indicate the dynamic flow and can work freely in relation to the pulse to show the melodic phrases of a crescendo or diminuendo.”

Green (2004: 81) also warns against tension in the indication of the gesture: “Later, the right hand can vary the intensity of its time-beating gestures to match the crescendo-decrescendo dynamic of the left, as long as it does not get tense.”

### 15.2 Use of the left hand on the vertical plane

Some authors go into detail about the height of the vertical plane indication of the left hand. While there seem to be different ideas about the maximum height of the level, it is interesting to note that some of the movement is suggested as going up to forehead level: Busch, Rudolf and Green seem to favour eye level. Busch suggests that one should start with the left hand approximately at belt level, and raise the arm and hand slowly to approximately eye level. Rudolf suggests (1993: 74) that the crescendo is indicated with the left hand, used palm facing upward from the “level of the hip to eye level”. Green indicates the peak of the upward motion as the forehead level.

Neuen describes the gesture as a little bit lower to the chin: “…the size of the gesture from high for pp to using the full upper body, from the waist upwards for an ff. Be as big as the music,” he says. “When reducing the size of your beat for softer dynamic levels, raise it up toward your chin for clearer visibility.”
McElherhan and Phillips indicate the height of the crescendo rising up to shoulder height. Phillips (1997: 28) is of the opinion that the height of the shoulders should be the maximum raised level, “unless the entire horizontal plane is raised, as in very soft and light conducting”.

The only author who does not specify the plane level of the indication of the crescendo is Ericson (1978: 82). He favours generally the indication of gestures by both hands, and since no mention is made of this gesture as a specific left hand function, different from the right hand, it might be correct to conclude that the size of both hands should simply be shown getting larger and smaller.

### 15.3 Summary

As far as gestures indicating a change in dynamics, all the authors who contributed to this chapter indicated that both the right hand and the left hand should be involved in a crescendo and decrescendo. All authors are in agreement that the right hand gesture should be beaten in a larger gesture in order to indicate the crescendo and that this gesture will become smaller as the decrescendo is indicated.

All the authors (except Ericson) specify that the left hand has a distinct function in indicating the crescendo in a vertical movement and that the reverse movement is used to indicate the decrescendo. The left hand is indicated with the palm up for a crescendo and palm down for a decrescendo.

The major disagreement between the authors is the idea that the left hand crescendo and decrescendo is indicated either with tension or relaxation. The issues here are that tension in the left hand might result in tension in the ensemble, as well as resulting in an uneven left hand movement. In addition to this, the actual movement of the left hand on the vertical plane will obscure the ensemble’s view of the beating right hand. This might become problematic if the right hand is indicating a change in tempo, whilst the left hand indicates a crescendo and decrescendo.
The issue of indicating the change of dynamics on the horizontal plane rather than the vertical will be taken further in the last part.

Whenever authors have given reasons for their advice, relating them either to anatomical, functional or musical issues, these have been mentioned in the text. For the most part, anatomical reasons are not given.
Chapter 16
Gestures indicating change of tempo

16.1 Introduction

In this chapter the research question to be answered is: “How are the recommended gestures described to indicate change of tempo in terms of the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 3.2)

Only 10 of the 22 authors make any reference to gestures indicating change of tempo. Not all authors discuss the same issues, but generally the following issues regarding changes in tempo are discussed: abrupt change of tempo (from fast to slow and slow to fast), the indication of ritardando and accelerando.

The ability of the conductor to indicate a gesture which requires the indication of a change in tempo (slow to fast - Knut Nystedt, Stabat Mater, for mixed choir and violoncello, bars 48 – 50; or from fast to slow - Knut Nystedt, Stabat Mater, for mixed choir and violoncello, bars 105 - 106) is extremely important, and is illustrated in the following two examples.

In the section before bar 50, the tempo indication was minim = 60, and from bar 50, the tempo changes abruptly to a much faster minim = 72.

In the next example, a change in tempo from fast to slow is required:

In the section before bar 106, the choir has several rests while a solo cellist (bottom stave) is playing the indicated tempo as crotchet = 92. The change of tempo from bar 106 is minim = 56, which is considerably slower than the previous section. The conductor needs to be able to indicate this abrupt change of tempo, as the choir, although they do not sing on the first note, needs to breathe in the new tempo in order to start on the second beat.

16.2 Suggestions for indicating change of tempo

Of all the 22 authors who were studied, only four authors, namely Busch, Kaplan Labuta and Green have suggestions for indicating these gestures:

Busch says that the conductor has to work with great clarity to indicate any change in tempo. He stresses that the accuracy of showing the ictus here is more important than maintaining the gesture. “Indicate to the ensemble that a change of tempo is about to occur by enlarging your gesture, changing your physical position, or bringing your left hand into play,” he advises. (Busch 1984: 212). He also says that conductors should be able to change abruptly, but he fails to indicate how these changes should be indicated, (ibid, 224)

Kaplan (1985: 147) suggests the following to indicate change of tempo: “When the conductor arrives at the last beat of the slow tempo to the faster one, this beat should be used as the preparatory beat for the faster tempo. The upbeat is shortened to the length of the beat for the faster tempo." (see Exercise 82).
Kaplan (1985: 147, Exercise 82)

The problem with shortening the upbeat of the last beat in Kaplan's method is that beat 4 will not be completed in the previously intended slower tempo, but will now become part of the new tempo. Invariably, this will become a problematic gesture, and is not recommended.

Kaplan suggests (in Exercise 83) when moving from fast to slow, that the conductor could create a time delay between the fast and slow tempos, or could work towards a smooth transition between the two tempos. However, he does not say how this can be achieved without compromising the first tempo indication.
The result of this gesture will be that the 4th beat (which was originally a fast beat) will now be slowed down and therefore this beat will not be completed in the tempo as required by the composer.

Labuta (2000: 55) suggests in principle a similar solution to the change of tempo: “You execute most *subito* tempo changes by swinging up with a half-count ‘and prep’ on the preceding rebound in the tempo of the change.” This quick motion has been called a wrist-snap, "paint-brush" gesture on the offbeat. The same result as in Kaplan’s suggestion will be evident: the result of this gesture will be that beat 4 will not be properly completed, and the ensemble will most likely not be together on the beginning on the new beat.

Green (2004: 68) indicates that in order to change from a slow to a fast tempo, the last ictus of the slow tempo should be placed low in space. “Bring the baton to the centre front. The baton will stop momentarily to permit the slower tempo to complete itself. Then make a sudden rhythmic preparatory beat in the faster tempo to establish the new tempo”. It must be borne in mind that Green normally indicates beat 4 very high. This change in ictus level serves two points. Firstly, it is a deviation of her "normal" gesture, which indicates to the singers that a

Kaplan (1985, 148 Exercise 83)
change is imminent. Secondly, the fact that the beat stops on beat 4 also communicates to the ensemble that there is imminent change. One would assume that the “sudden rhythmic preparatory beat” would be in the new tempo. The “stop” could also be construed by the ensemble as a cessation of singing.

Green (2004: 69 Figure 34)
Green does not give an example of the reverse, going from a fast to slow tempo.

16.3 Indication of *ritardando*
In the next section the *ritardando* gesture will be addressed. But first, an example:

Music Example 16.3 Egil Hovland, *How long, O Lord* bars 62 and 63 (Norsk Musikforlag)
Only six authors made suggestions about executing a *ritardando* gesture. Busch (1984: 215) suggests that before the conductor reaches a *ritardando* section, the beats should be mentally subdivided. This will assist in the process of becoming slower more accurately. The conductor might also have to physically subdivide the beat, depending on how slow the *ritardando* becomes.

Gordon (1977: 79) also suggests the employment of the subdivided beat, and additionally the use of the left hand. “The establishment of a new tempo within a musical work requires clarity, position, and psychological reinforcement for the performers. The first two ingredients are achieved with the right hand, the last one with the left hand by mimicking the beat gesture until the new tempo is established. *Ritardandos* and *allergandos* are controlled by employing subdivisions of the beat gesture.”

Garretson (1993:38) also makes reference to the first half of the beat that needs to change, but he does not explicitly state that the beat should be subdivided, rather that the rebound should be lengthened. Labuta (2000: 55) suggests that the size of the gesture can gradually be increased to bring about the *ritardando*. Effectively, the rebound of the rebounds will be slowed down. McElherhan (1989) suggests a similar gesture, adding that the broader gesture will be interpreted by the ensemble that something is about to happen before the beat gets subdivided. Willitts (1993: 67) suggests that the way this should be handled is to subdivide the beat. She does not indicate the manner in which the gesture will be indicated in order to subdivide it, however.

In the example from Hovland’s, *How long, O Lord*, the indication of “*poco a poco ritardando*” over three bars, ends with the last three bars of the work in a *molto lento*. In my opinion, immediate subdivision would not be the answer, as the time signature is compound quadruple and the *ritardando* is gradual. To make the rebound bigger might also have the effect of a *crescendo* rather than the required *sempre pp*. Two musical aspects should be taken care of here: firstly, the gradual change in tempo, and secondly, the constant indication of *pp*.
A small movement of the right hand reflected by the left hand in close proximity in front of the conductor will have reflected the triple meter in a *pp* feeling. Alternatively, as suggested, making the rebound movement bigger will have the effect of an *f*, and additionally, it will be impossible to indicate the *ritardando* in a controlled fashion. This example serves to illustrate that general rules are not always possible to apply, as other musical issues might also come into play, especially if the authors insist on not using the left hand in a mirroring fashion.

### 16.4 Indication of *accelerando*

Busch, Garretson and Labuta have some suggestions about the indication of the *accelerando* gesture. Busch (1984: 217) suggests that the ensemble can be warned of a forthcoming *accelerando* by making eye contact, changing stance, bringing the left hand into play, or changing the size of the gestures. He does not give any more practical advice than this.

Garretson (1993: 38) says that the speeding up of the gesture will not result in the desired effect, but that the modification of the gesture is essential in effecting it: “To express your desire for *accelerando*, the size of the overall conducting pattern should be lessened in size”. He urges the conductor to give particular attention to a gradual shortening of the rebound of each beat. Labuta (2000: 55) echoes this idea: “To accelerate the tempo, gradually increase the speed between beats for preparation and conduct a pattern of decreasing size.”

The next section deals with *accelerando*, with an example from Kverno’s *Ave Maris Stella*. 
In this example several dynamic aspects need to be taken care of. There is the obvious indication of *accelerando*, (which in bar 77 results in an *allargando*), the dynamic indication of which is *ff* with an added *fz*, as well as further indications of crescendi, going in an *fff* on bar 66. The general approach to the interpretation of this section as far as tempo change is concerned is an *accelerando*, but at the same time, the dynamic indication is very loud, and even growing louder.

Both Labuta and Garretson (above) suggest that the gesture should be made smaller. If this happens in this section, it will effect a *decrescendo* from the choir, and not a *crescendo*, as required.

One of the ways in which the music in this example can be indicated with gestures in both hands, is firstly to indicate the *crescendo* with the left hand on a vertical level, which will in turn obscure the view of half of the choir needing to see the change in tempo of the right hand. (One should bear in mind that the suggestion is that the gesture should remain small, as it is an *accelerando*. This will mean that even less of the right hand will be visible to the ensemble).
Another way is to indicate the crescendo with the right hand with a bigger gesture, as well as the accelerated movement. The problem here is that the bigger movements will work against the quicker indication of them, making the gesture very awkward to follow.

A third way of doing this is to indicate the gesture, mirrored with both hands, starting further away from each other in order to prepare the singers for the indication of $f$. This gesture in itself will already indicate that a bigger sound from the choir is required, even if the actual movement then remains relatively smaller to accommodate the change with the accelerando. As the crescendo gets bigger, the distance between the two hands is simply increased, but the control of the smaller movement in both hands executes the accelerando with more precision. This suggestion will be explained in more detail in Part 5, Chapter 24.

16.5 Summary

As far as the indication of change of tempo is concerned, three topics of interest emerged in the work of these authors. When it comes to the indication of an abrupt change in tempo, Kaplan and Labuta’s suggestion is that the penultimate beat has to be changed in order to accommodate the new tempo.

Green suggested the change from a slow to a fast tempo as a stopped gesture, in order to accommodate the new tempo change. However, none of the authors made any suggestions about executing a gesture which would indicate a change from a fast to a slow abrupt tempo change.

As far as gestures indicating ritardando are concerned, most of the six authors discussed indicated that a preparation to a subdivision beat should be indicated either by making the previous beat to the subdivision bigger, to lengthen the rebound beat; or to gradually increase the size of the gesture in order to have better control over the process of the ritardando.
As far as using a gesture to indicate an *accelerando*, the suggestion was made to shorten the rebounds and make the conducting gesture smaller.

Whenever authors have given reasons for their advice, relating it either to anatomical, functional or musical issues, these have been mentioned in the text.
Chapter 17
Gestures indicating articulation

17.1 Introduction

In this chapter the research question to be answered is: “How are the recommended gestures described to indicate legato, staccato and marcato articulation in terms of the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 3.3)

First an example from a psalm by Grieg which illustrates a legato line:

Music Example 17.1 Edvard Grieg, Guds Søn har gjort mig fri, bars 37,38 (Norsk Musikforlag)

The ability of the singers to use words in order to execute the indicated articulation is paramount. In the above example the two bars are sung on the same word. In other texts the demand for legato singing might be extended in a phrase, or even longer.
17.2 Legato gesture

Two different schools of thought become clearly evident when looking at the manner in which conductors describe the legato gesture.

Five authors give a description of the gesture in terms of the beat points, angularity of the movement and the rebound. In all these excerpts, authors make mention of the rebound of the gesture which is indicated in the same style as the approach to the ictus (or “point of beat”, the term used by some authors).

Decker and Kirk (1988: 13) point out that the legato line is indicated through the way the different beat points are connected. He is of the opinion that the ictus points should rather not be that obviously communicated, but the legato line must be communicated more clearly through the manner in which the line will be moving between the icti points. By the nature of the gesture, the legato line will be less angular.

Labuta (2000: 30) says that the legato gesture should convey a smooth and sustained line. “You conduct it with flowing, curved gestures that connect the points of beat. Move the baton slowly between beats with appropriate length and tension for the music being performed. Although the baton’s movements are connected and smooth, use a subtle flick of the wrist to define the exact point of beat.” Green (2004: 42) differentiates between the legato and a tenuto (or very heavy legato) gesture. In the legato-style the gestures are “smooth, flowing connections from ictus to ictus. The ictus itself is delivered gently through the baton as light tap at the tip.” She urges that there should be a distinction drawn between the functions of the forearm, hand, and wrist: “The arm moves the hand into position to indicate the exact location in time and space of the beat. The wrist remains fixable, allowing the hand, not the arm, to tap the beat.”

McElherhan (1989: 43) indicates that the legato articulation is “communicated by rounded rebound motions that flow in a curve-like fashion from beat to beat”. He
warns the conductor that the flow of the movement should not obscure the ictus points in such a way that the basic ictus point becomes unclear: “Even in very legato music, an ictus must be present.”

Jordan (1996: 118) indicates with reference to his figures that the legato gesture has a very rounded turning approach and rebound, with the ictus locations not as clearly defined as in the marcato gestures.

Rudolf (1993: 50) suggests several different gestures for a legato style, introducing alternative styles for each of the two-beat, three-beat and four-beat gestures. In the two-beat gesture, the second beat appears almost as a subdivided beat, but Rudolf claims that there is no rhythmic subdivision, saying: “The double curve gives you more space to execute the second beat smoothly and fluently”. Rudolf (1993: 21) identifies varying degrees of possibility in conducting an expressive-legato gesture. Generally though, he defines the expressive-legato gesture as follows: “The expressive-legato beat is a curved, continuous motion. It is done with a certain feeling of intensity in the forearm. The degree of intensity, as well as the shaping of the curves, varies with the emotional quality of the music. The size may be anywhere from fairly small to quite large”. This expressive-legato gesture is a development from the neutral – legato beat.

Two other authors give similar descriptions, but make clear analogies with other kinds of motion in order to convey the type of motion required. Metaphors like “singing”, ‘painting a wall’, or ‘bowing with long strokes’ are used by Ericson (1978: 27), who also emphasises the importance of the hand flowing from “one point of gravity to another”. Garretson (1993: 37) uses the analogy of moving the hand through a pool of water” in order to get the feeling of a controlled hand movement. He also points out that if the hand stops moving, the natural tendency of the singers will also be to stop singing, “or at least to lessen the flow of the breath”. One should imagine a definite resistance between the icti points in a slow legato line in order to maintain a controlled arm movement.
The *tenuto* gesture (Green 2004: 46) “may also be called the very heavy *legato* gesture”. It signifies cohesion in the musical line, as well as continuity and intensity. The motion is slow and controlled. It may occupy less space than the *legato* gesture. In terms of conducting this gesture with the baton, she says that the tip of the baton should feel heavier, and the hand should pull it away from the ictus rather the rebounding away from the ictus.

“One can acquire the feel of this gesture by pointing the baton straight down, and pulling upward with the hand while the left hand pulls downward at the tip. It is the same feeling as dragging your arm sideways in a swimming pool.” She also urges that the intensity should not be lost as the baton changes direction between the beats. “Each beat is placed, if carried through and sustained, into the following beat.”

### 17.3 Staccato gesture

When a composer requires the use of *staccato* in a text, the singers generally should be reminded that the articulation has specific implications for the manner in which the text itself should be approached, and not just sung in a detached fashion.

*Staccato* is present in many choir compositions, as illustrated in the next work by Bergh:
The description of the staccato gesture varies considerably. Most authors seem to view this gesture as devoid of any flow of movement between the beats. Only one author claims that this absence of flow will result in inaccuracies in the ensemble. There is also a difference of opinion with regard to the rebound: some indicate no rebound at all, while others indicate smaller rebounds between the beats. For some, the movement is merely a wrist movement, while others advocate even the use of the shoulder in a forte staccato!

In order to make the research on this chapter more meaningful, two schools of thought have been identified, each representing opposing ideas about the basic principles surrounding the execution of this gesture.

The first school of thought teaches that there should be continuous movement between the beats, with the ictus points remaining in place as for the legato gesture. McElherhan (1989: 43) is of the opinion that the gesture should be indicated by placing the beat “at sharp angles”. He urges that the conductor should not let the hand stand still, and warns that this stopping will result in the ensemble losing their sense of time. He is critical of conductors who stop their hands between beats, saying that it is “actually detrimental to precision.”
His indication of a *staccato* gesture is as follows:

McElherhan (1989: 43 Figure unnumbered)

He believes that this movement is mainly a wrist movement in combination with the forearm.

In terms of the shape of the gesture, he believes that all rebound motions continue in the same direction. “It is the character or shape of the rebound that determines the nature of the articulation, not the direction.” It is therefore the angularity of this gesture that pronounces the articulation, and not the stopping of the continuous motion. The very clear rebound pronounces the predictability of the beat, as well as the articulation at the same time.

Four authors represent a different school of thought, with the basic idea that there should be a halting action between the different beats, and that the icti points might be changed, with varying degrees of indication of icti points, in comparison with the *legato* gesture. Green (2004: 44) advocates the use of a momentary stop “of all motion in the stick, hand, and arm immediately after the reflex. You may get the feel of this in the wrist if you practise flicking imaginary drops of water off the end of the baton. The flick is performed by the sudden motion of the hand in the wrist joint, ending in an abrupt stop at the end of the rebound.” She says that when practising this gesture, the rigidity of the arm muscles must first relax before the next beat is indicated. The difficult part of the gesture is to control the stopping of the arm. She emphasises that there is no true *staccato* if motion continues in any part of the hand or arm. The stop must be as clean as the *staccato* sounds the conductor expects from the players. (See
Green (2004: 44, Figure 27)

She admits that the 4th beat, as the stop at the top of the last beat of any measure, will be particularly difficult to show. She also admits that “the difficult part of the gesture is to control the stopping of the arm.” In my opinion, the stopping might result altogether in a loss of the sense of timing by the ensemble.

Garretson (1993: 37) urges the movement for a staccato gesture to be conducted in a “crisp, detached manner to indicate the desired articulation of the music.” He hastens to add that a small beat should be used.

Labuta (2000: 30) indicates the method of flicking the baton quickly from beat to beat in relatively straight lines, stopping momentarily on each count: “The staccato beat is usually light in character. You can depict lightness by indicating a small gesture with the wrist only, without tension, with little rebound, and at a high level. Some staccato passages are heavier and fuller in quality. Conduct louder, more vigorous staccato music using larger gestures, with more weight and rebound, while separating each count”. In my opinion, the stopping might also here result in the loss of sense of timing by the ensemble.

Neuen (2002:223) suggests that only the wrist and hand should be used to indicate the light staccato gesture. “The light staccato click-beat has a very slight
“click”, or bounce, at the point of each beat”. In this drawing the gesture is devoid of any rebound. (see Figure 11.25)

Neuen (2002: 224 Figure 11.25)
He indicates a full staccato with a full bounce motion to each beat. “The louder the music, the more arm, and eventually, shoulder, is used.”

Neuen (2002: 224, Figure 11.26)
The light staccato will have the effect of no rebound, making the gesture very difficult to observe. In the full staccato gesture, the rebound is more pronounced.

Phillips (1997:51) indicates that the motion of the staccato gesture is angular. There is very little rebound in the gesture. “Most of the motion will come from snapping the wrist, but some forearm movement also is required.” This might also result in inaccuracies from the ensemble, as it remains vital for the ensemble to observe the rebound.
Rudolf (1995:13) is of the opinion that a light *staccato* can be indicated with a wrist movement only. There is no rebound in this movement. "The light-*staccato* beat is a quick, straight motion with a stop on each count. The gestures are small". He urges the conductor to avoid any tension, especially in the forearm. Rudolf describes the light *staccato* four-beat gesture as follows:

![Diagram of light staccato gesture]

**Fig. 2.1. 4-beat; light-staccato**

Note that there is no rebound in this gesture at all. Rudolf indicates that there is a difference between a light *staccato* gesture and a full *staccato* gesture. "The full – *staccato* beat is a quick, slightly curved motion with a stop on each count. It is snappy and energetic, with a characteristic ‘bouncing’ on the downbeat. The size may vary from small to large". (Rudolf 1993: 16)

The full *staccato* gesture is indicated by a special bouncing technique. This motion is specifically done by the wrist, which should be totally relaxed. "Lift the forearm slightly and jerk it downward, stopping abruptly at about the left-right plane. The wrist must be completely relaxed so that when the forearm stops, the hand continues downward and snaps up again immediately. This bouncing of the hand is a natural muscular reaction and must not be hindered by any tension in the wrist." (Rudolf 1993: 16). The problem here is that the bouncing and stopping of the hand is not a natural muscular reaction, and the accuracy of this gesture is highly questionable.
In this gesture the beat is slightly larger than for light *staccato*. There is a stop on every beat, with a slight wrist movement which will make the gesture snappier.

### 17.4 *Marcato* gesture

*Marcato* is the next expressive element to be addressed. An example is quoted here from Grieg’s *Second Psalm*:

Music Example 17.3 Edvard Grieg, Second Psalm, *Guds Søn har gjort mig fri*, bars 77 – 79 (Norsk Musikforlag)
The *marcato* gesture is discussed by the same group of authors. They all seem to view this gesture also as devoid of any flow of movement between the beats. There is at times a difference of opinion with regard to the rebound: some indicate no rebound at all, while others indicate smaller rebounds between the beats. For some, the movement is merely a wrist movement, while others advocate even the use of more muscles and greater tension in the lower arm.

McElherhan (1989:43) indicates that to achieve a more energetic, *marcato* quality, hit harder, with more angular turns. McElherhan (1989: 40) says *marcato* articulation is indicated “by deep angular rebound motions that move in decisive, accented fashion.” In contrast with the opinion of the next school, who states that the movement is mainly a wrist movement, McElherhan says that there is almost no wrist action, “as wrist and arm become unified”. But now McElherhan changes his mind about the continuous movement of the *staccato* gesture when it comes to the *marcato* indication: “A moment of complete stop follows the quick snap of the rebound before the gesture moves quickly to the next ictus. Showing *marcato* accents requires space between each ictus; this is accomplished by the momentary stop or pause of the rebound action between beats.”

In order to stop movement between the beats, with the ictus points remaining in place as for the *staccato* gesture, as suggested by Busch (1984: 18, 115), *marcato* beats are indicated by an angular gesture which comes to a stop after every rebound. It is also referred to as a “stopped beat” gesture. (ibid., 115). A *legato* gesture should be more rounded.

Decker and Kirk (1988:13,14) say, “If the desired musical result is to be *marcato*, the ictus must be clear (marked), and the rebound from the ictus moderately quick and deliberate. Control of the upward motion representing the second half of the beat is just as important as point clarity. “Decker and Kirk continue with suggested exercises to practise different approaches to the conducting; *marcato*, *staccato*, *legato*, *leggiero* and *portato*.  

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Labuta (2000: 30) says that marcato is also a separated style (literally, "marked"), but it is heavier, louder, and stressed more than staccato. A series of accent marks usually indicates marcato passages. He suggests that the conductor should beat a larger gesture on a lower plane, “with heaviness and tension. Hammer weight into it without much rebound. The degree of separation will depend on the musical context.”

Neuen (2002: 223), however, suggests that the marcato gesture looks like the light staccato (which is much smaller), but that the basic movement is now much larger. “The marcato comes to an absolute stop on each beat and is for solidly marcato music. The conductor’s hand and arm are very intense, almost rigid, showing definite strength and power on each beat – with no bounce or recoiling. Thus there are two kinds of stop-beats, the light staccato and the marcato. They are too seldom used. Employ the hand, wrist and forearm for the light staccato, and the full arm for the marcato. Use them as often as the music calls for them – your musicians will be grateful.”

Phillips (1997:51) reminds the conductor that marcato articulation requires a “brief stopping of the motion following the rebound.” He also makes use of the full arm motion, instead of only the wrist, as in the staccato.

![Figure 6.6 Two Pattern: Staccato](image1)

![Figure 6.7 Two Pattern: Marcato](image2)

Phillips (1997: 51 Figure 6.6 and 6.7)

The two-beat gesture as shown in Figure 6.7 is very angular and works well for marcato articulation. Notice the deep V of the rebound. Rudolf (1993:185)
emphasises that the *marcato* beat “is a heavy motion with a stop on each count. It is forceful, sometimes aggressive in character, and medium to large in size. The gestures connecting the counts are slower than in *staccato*; they are either straight or curved.”

### 17.5 Summary

As far as articulation is concerned, three indications emerged through a study of these authors: the indication of the *legato*, *staccato* and *marcato*. For the *legato* gesture most of the authors are in agreement that the gesture should evoke a continuous flow of sound from the choir, but the manner in which the gesture is discussed differs slightly. The indication from most authors is that the slow movement should show energy and intensity, especially if it is given in a slow tempo. Differences of opinion occur about the importance of the indication of the ictus point versus the flow of the beat.

Most of the authors seem to think that the *staccato* gesture should be indicated with stops between each gesture. It is only McElerhan who differs in this regard, insisting that the stopping of the gesture will result in inaccuracies and that it might influence the idea of the continuous flow of air. However, McElerhan changes his mind and joins all the other authors in their descriptions of the *marcato* gesture as essentially a “stop” gesture, mostly indicated by the hand and forearm, with tension in the hand.

Whenever authors have given reasons for their advice, relating it either to anatomical, functional or musical issues, these have been mentioned in the text. For the most part, anatomical reasons are not mentioned.
Chapter 18  Gestures indicating cues

This example comes from the opening three bars of Kverndokk’s *Gloria*.

Music Example  18.1 Gisle Kverndokk, *Gloria*, first three opening bars. (Norsk Musikforlag)

This Music Example from Kverndokk starts in the first two bars with very difficult entrances. The question here is: how appropriate and effective will it be for the conductor to indicate entrances in these two bars? Will it be possible to do this with a gesture at the indicated tempo? Whilst some might argue that it is essential to indicate the entrances as cues, McElerhan (1966:48) most probably will argue that entrances, except solo entrances, are generally the responsibility of the performers, and not the responsibility of the conductor.

18.1 Introduction

This chapter’s research question to be answered is: “How is the recommended gesture described to indicate cues, and how do these gestures relate to the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 4.1)
The following ways of cueing are observed from the authors: cueing with the right hand, cueing with the left hand, cueing with the eyes, cueing with the head and with the eyebrows. Authors have different opinions about the function of the conductor as far as cueing is concerned. Ideally, the musicians would have the ability to know exactly when a musical entry should be made, and maybe the main function of the conductor should rather be to remind them about the manner in which the phrase should be sung, rather than reminding them to enter.

18.2 Motivation for cueing

Three authors provide a motivation for cueing, with McElerhan and Rudolf also providing reasons for when cueing will be inappropriate.

Green (2004: 80) suggests ten situations where the giving of cues are appropriate and necessary. Most of the situations pertain to instrumental conducting, although these reasons will also be applicable if the principles are applied to a choir situation. They are: “When an instrument, or a group of instruments, enters for the first time after a work has begun, when this happens after a long rest, when a single instrument begins an important solo or melodic line, when an entire section takes over a principal theme, when melodic figures are tossed from one instrument to another, for tricky or difficult entries, when the conductor wishes to control the precise moment of attack, when the instruments enter on ff, when infrequently appearing instruments enter, or where there are isolated pizzicato notes or chords.”

Labuta (2000: 42, 42) says that cueing will provide assurance for the singers or players and will achieve unity of entrances. He says that these cues should be prepared, and there should be a signal to the performers to get ready, followed by the signal to start. Cues should be given “in the tempo, dynamic level, and style of the oncoming passage. You can cue with the left hand, the baton, or the head. Determine the type of cue to use by the character of the music, the
location of the musicians being cued, and the number of instruments or parts entering. Eye contact is essential for all cues. Look at the entering performers before and during the cue.”

McElherhan (1966:48) advocates that “cueing will slightly increase the precision of an entry, remind the performer of the character of the entrance and could raise the performers’ morale, thereby improving many other musical qualities.”

He states that cueing solo entries are important. When a sequence of entries arrive it is better to simply give a good clear gesture. The cue is indicated on the beat before it happens. “As with interpretative qualities, try to show as much as you can with your right hand (without distorting the gesture). All musically important entrances should be cued if at all possible. Entrances which are difficult for some reason or other - high notes for singers, entrances where the players have had innumerable rests, or syncopated entrances should preferably be cued.”

Interestingly, McElherhan is adamant that cues should not be used to indicate to a performer when to come in. The responsibility for coming in should be the performers, and not the conductor's. He maintains that sometimes cues come too close together for the conductor to indicate. If more than one group has a simultaneous entry, usually only one of the instrumentalists can be cued and the others are ignored. Cues are hard to aim directionally, and groups or performers alongside the cued group could easily, mistakenly, enter: “When entrances come thick and fast in all directions it is best to stop all cueing and simply give a good clear beat pattern. The performers can find the beats, whereas if you try to cue everything, you look like a juggler and confuse everybody, including yourself.”

In the opening example from Kverndokk's Gloria, this point can be illustrated when, at the indicated tempo, it becomes impossible for the conductor to provide cues to enter, and McElherhan would almost certainly agree that the singers must take responsibility for these entrances themselves.
Rudolf (1993: 314) agrees that not all entrances should be cued, and even goes further than McElherhan, saying that in some cases, cueing could have a negative effect: “When the players know the music very well and you give an unnecessary cue, it may be interpreted as an invitation to play loudly”. On the other hand, cues should be given when appropriate, as this establishes contact with the players, “giving them a feeling of security, and co-operation.”

Rudolf (1993: 314) says there are three ways of giving a cue: with the eyes, with the baton, and with the left hand. Rudolf provides reasons for cueing for three purposes. The first reason could be to remind the players to enter after several rests, or when entrances are particularly difficult, or cues are expected to be given by the ensemble. Secondly, a cue may be given "to ensure precision of attack". Thirdly, the intention in the conductor’s interpretation of the music is conveyed by giving a cue.

18.3 Use of the right hand

Eight authors under consideration agree that the baton hand, the right hand, can give cues first and foremost. Most of them agree that cues are given on the beat before the specific entrance is expected, and convey the articulation, dynamics and tempo of the coming beat:

Busch (1984:40) introduces the strange concept of changing the height of the gesture: “Should the cue fall on the first beat of the bar, the downbeat is shortened in order to change the ictus at eye level. Once the cue is delivered, the normal conducting gesture is resumed.”
In my opinion, the problem with this manner of handling cues is that the predictability of the beat is compromised because of the change of the ictus level up to the face. Secondly, the large sweep to the next beat can be mistaken as a crescendo. Thirdly, no description of the actual cue itself is given. It is also highly questionable to change the ictus to the raised higher level as this might have a detrimental effect on the singing, since the effect might be that the choir could go sharp or tense up because of this sudden new height.

Gordon (1977: 19) also believes that right hand cues can be reinforced by turning the body in the direction of the pertinent performers and Labuta (2000:42) says that one can point the baton in the “direction of the group as you incorporate the preparatory gesture and entrance beat into the regular conducting gesture. You should keep the beat pattern intact while advancing the baton in the direction of the performers being cued. This cue is effective for most situations. Use it frequently for all entrances except for performers at your extreme left.” This kind of movement could become very distracting for other musicians who are not being cued, if the general beating practice disappears from their sight.

Seven authors acknowledge the use of the left hand as a cueing device. Busch (1984 44) says that left hand cues can be used once the independency of the hands is acquired by the conductor. Ericson (73) explains that the use of the left
hand for the indication of a cue takes place on the beat before the actual entrance.

Gordon (1977:78) says that the left hand cue “is necessary to ensure confident entry by your singers. The beginning of the musical work should always be queued by the left hand in conjunction with the right hand’s preparatory beat. Left hand cues must be prepared.” Then Gordon continues to describe the strange use of his left hand thumb and index finger, which is joined during the preparatory beat, but released “at the moment of entry by the performers.” This gesture as a cue is totally useless, as it happens a beat too late!

Gordon (1977:19) identified several left-hand cues: “finger in air, meaning warning of upcoming entry; fist - meaning an entry; legato beckoning gesture with hand – meaning gentle entry; thumb and forefinger moved together and released at a moment of entry – meaning pinpoint entry; slashing, angular motion with arm – meaning abrupt entry; continual circular movement – meaning consecutive entries on time.”

But then Gordon warns against the following: “Do not point when cueing: this action can be psychologically antagonistic to the performer. Because of its directness, the unspoken reaction of the musician may very well be: “Don’t point at me. I know when to come in.” In my opinion one should then wonder what can be said about the fist entry - the slashing and the angular motion with the arm, when compared with a single finger, if pointing can have such a detrimental effect.

Labuta (2000: 42), contrary to Gordon, instructs the conductor to use the pointing of the index finger: “You should signal the entering performers by pointing at them with the index finger of the left hand. However, merely pointing at performers at the moment of entrance is an inefficient and unnerving gesture. To achieve a unified entrance, you must look at them and prepare the cue with an upswing that indicates the kind of attack, dynamic level, style, and expression
you desire. Since finger pointing may become overused, you should employ variations of the basic left-hand gesture to fit the music - the clenched fist for force, the palm facing the musicians for softness or balance, the palm facing your chest for warmth or expression, the open hand outstretched with palm upward for free, open responses, or a wide, sweeping motion with the arm for large, full entrances. As a general rule, you should reserve left-hand cues for important entrances of many parts and for individuals located at your extreme left.”

McElherhan (1989:48) agrees that the left hand can be used to reinforce the entrance of the performer. “In this case, the information beat to the performer is extremely important, as it will not only give preciseness to the performance, but also indicate the character of the music which is to follow.”

Rudolf (1993: 314) recognises the use of the left hand as one of the three major ways to indicate a cue.

18.4 Use of the eyes

Five authors make mention of the use of the eyes as a method of cueing: Holden (in Bowen 2002: 12) quotes a number of conductors who use the eyes as a way of cueing, as well as conducting at eye level to emphasise eye contact with the ensemble: Spontini, Strauss, Stokowski, Walter and Nikisch all subscribe to this.

In contrast, Herbert von Karajan regularly conducted with his eyes closed, arguing that it helped him "concentrate on the inner content of the music." But, when performing choral music, he, too, performed with his eyes open because "sometimes it is a matter of establishing a direct human contact; and in choral music this must always be the case. With me the choirs never use music, which has the double effect: their eyes are not fixed on the page in front of them and they can communicate directly with me."

Rudolf (1993: 314) is of the opinion that “the best way of cuing in your players is to look at them. Turn your eyes toward the players one count in advance in
moderate tempo, and about two counts in fast tempo. Using your eyes is best for two reasons. First, you should not use more motion than you need in conducting; second, the expression of your eyes and your general facial expression can tell the players more about your intentions than fancy hand-waving,” he says.

18.5 Use of the head and eyebrows

Seven authors mention the possibility of using the head and eyebrows. Garretson (1993: 41) suggests that the conductor makes use of the head, when a multiplicity of entrances occurs in the music. Garretson (1993: 41) is convinced that the use of facial expressions is appropriate in dealing with more subtle and delicate entrances. He also suggests mouthing the words.

Gordon (1977: 78) agrees that “a simple head nod or eye contact is sufficient to indicate an entrance by an individual vocal section”. Green (2004: 80) also acknowledges the use of or the eyes and the lifting of eyebrows or a nod from the head as a manner in which a cue can be given.

Kohut and Grant (1990) suggest an addition to the left hand and right hand cues, and agree that the head can also be used to cue in softer passages, where the use of the left or right hand would be disruptive to the mood or character of the music. The head cue is given by lifting simultaneously the head and the eyebrows on the preparation beat and lowering them on the downbeat.

Labuta (2000: 42) says that in order to effect a head cue, the conductor should look at the players or singers, and give “an up-down, ready-go motion of the chin.”

McElherhan (1989: 48) makes use of the head as a cueing gesture look a little silly. He is adamant that cueing should not be used to bring a group in, as they should know their work well enough to enter without a specific gesture from the conductor. He is sarcastic in his remarks about cueing with the eyebrows, with good reason: “Cues on the first beat to people in front of you are easy - look at
them and put a little more emphasis on the beat, accompanied by possibly a rise and fall of head (and even eyebrows, but they are not really designed for cueing. Unless bushy, their range is small, and in a long work they can get very tired).” With his typically dry sense of humour he makes fun of the idea of cueing with the eyebrows as an appropriate gesture!

There is a good possibility that the head movement will distract from the hand gesture, as this is an additional movement to watch. The mouthing of words is not recommended, especially in fugal passages. The possibility of actually giving the incorrect word cues is also there, which could cause confusion in the ensemble.

18.6 Changing the conducting orientation during cueing

Busch (1984: 200) suggests the following when changing the conducting orientation of conducting:

“The feet should start to move on the pulse preceding the cue; the eyes should be fixed on the section to be cued, the ictus of the cue gesture moves to eye level, the hand not covering the eyes while making the cue. In this gesture the cue must be in the character of the music, the relationship between the various body parts; hand wrist, arm remains the same.” He suggests a slight finger movement to indicate the exact moment of the ictus. (Busch 1984: 210).

In Diagram 15-3, the movement to the left of the body is described:
Busch (1984: 44 Diagram 15-3)

It is obvious that this sort of change in direction and gesture will not only result in a section of the ensemble who will not be able to see what is going on, but also in undue crescendi for certain sections of the ensemble.

18.7 Summary

It becomes very clear that the authors do not indicate the same methods for cueing. Some authors deal with the motivation for cueing and when not to cue. Rudolf and McElerhan are adamant that cues are not there to bring musicians in, as the responsibility for this action lies with the musicians themselves, and not with the conductor.

The change of direction of the gesture up to the eye level, as suggested by Busch, (1984:40) could have severe effects for the continuation of the gesture on the ictus level. The change of plane could also have an effect as far as the dynamic levels are concerned – a sudden movement from a low beating plane to a higher plane could result in a *crescendo*.

The moving of the body to specific groups to indicate entries can be at the peril of losing the entire ensemble’s precision.
The right hand’s function should primarily be to indicate the beat. If the right hand is also be used to indicate cues constantly, its main function could be compromised. The left hand can be used extensively for cueing, and should be used.

The use of the head and eyebrows for indicating gestures can distract from the basic gestures indicated by the hands.

Whenever authors have given reasons for their advice, relating it either to anatomical, functional or musical issues, these have been mentioned in the text. For the most part, anatomical reasons are not mentioned.
Chapter 19
Gestures indicating *fermata* and release of *fermata*

19.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research question to be answered is: “How is the recommended gesture described to indicate *fermata* and release of *fermata*, and how do these gestures relate to the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 4.2)

The indication of the *fermata* gesture could be a very complicated one, as the conductor has firstly several choices to make in terms of how long the note should be kept, and secondly the manner in which the end of the fermata should be indicated. Thirdly, when *fermata* are indicated with a breath after the *fermata*, this might complicate the gesture, as the breath usually has to be indicated after the musical activity has seized. The shape of the indication of the *fermata*, the use of the horizontal plane to establish the ictus, and the indication of breath are all aspects which need to be taken care of.

Seventeen authors contributed to the topic of the indication and release of *fermata*. Authors treated this topic in very individualistic ways, each with an individualistic specific point of view. In order to make sense of this chapter, two aspects in particular have been studied in the work of these authors. Firstly, authors have indicated different kinds of *fermata*, and some have indicated how they differ from each other.

19.2 Kinds of *fermata*

Nine authors have identified different kinds of *fermata* as *fermata* with *caesura*, *fermata* with breath pause and *fermata* without release:

The following examples, illustrating these three different *fermata*, have been taken from *Natten* by the Norwegian composer Kjell Flem. In the first example, a
fermata without release is indicated, in the second fermata with breath pause is discussed and the last example illustrates fermata with caesura.

Music Example 19.1 Natten by Kjell Flem bars 15,16 (Norsk Musikforlag) – fermata without release.

In this example the music activity continues without a clear break, as the top two voices will end their phrase of the beginning of the third beat.
In the above example it is clear that all voices are involved in the singing of the same word, and the ending of the phrase is indicated for the entire ensemble, and not only for a section from the ensemble. There is also a change in dynamics, which will demand from the conductor the ability to indicate the end of the previous phrase, and then to start the next phrase marked piano, dolce.

In the following Music Example 19.3, the indication of the fermata is right at the end of the work, and no breath as preparation for a next phrase is demanded. This gesture will also be different in the sense that a decrescendo should be indicated while the ensemble performs this bar ppp.
As far as the indication of the fermata, some writers indicate the fermata at horizontal height, others higher than the horizontal plane but within the usual shape of the gesture, and one author, (Busch), indicates the fermata at eye level, irrespective of which beat is indicated.

Most of these authors agree that the fermata is indicated on the same level as in the normal gesture. In effect, use is therefore also made of the various icti levels, whether they were originally in the horizontal plane (Decker and Kirk, Ericson, Labuta, McElherhan, Neuen) or slightly higher within the gesture (Garretson, Green, Hansen, Jordan, Kaplan; Kohut and Grant and Phillips). Three exceptions to these methods were offered. Hylton indicates that the ictus level should be higher than the ictus in the beating plane, Rudolf indicates the fermata on the beating plane without any preparation for the ictus points (similar to his beating
gestures) and Roe uses the rebound level to indicate the *fermata* and not the ictus.

An interesting method is advocated by Busch (1984:130, Diagram 10 – 1a), where all *fermata* are indicated at eye level. This means effectively that the ictus point is not only completely changed for the *fermata*, but also that the movement continues higher up.

![Diagram 10-1a](image)

Busch (1984: 131  Diagram 10 – 1a)

### 19.3 *Fermata* with movement or without movement

Two distinctly opposing schools of thought have been identified with regard to movement or non-movement during the indication of the *fermata*.

Six authors indicate that there should be continuous movement during the indication of the *fermata*. All the others agree that there should be absolutely no movement, as any movement after the beginning of the *fermata* will be interpreted by the ensemble as either the beginning of the cut-off, or the cut-off itself.

Many authors make no mention of whether the right hand or left hand specifically should be involved. One could assume that the indication of *fermata* is implied as a function of the right hand only. (Decker and Kirk, Busch, Garretson, Gordon, Hylton, Kaplan, Kohut and Grant, Labuta)
Some authors make specific mention of the left hand to assist in the process of
the indication of the fermata: Green and Neuen specify that the left hand should
indicate the dynamic function during the execution of the fermata, and Roe and
Hansen make mention of the different voices within the same piece which might
have a fermata, which can be taken care of with the left hand, while the right
hand continues beating for the other voices.

As far as the indication of preparation for the fermata is concerned, some authors
mention the possibility that the fermata is usually preceded by a ritardando, and
therefore a bigger preparatory beat is indicated in order to signify to the
ensemble that something is about to happen. (Decker and Kirk, Garretson,
Gordon, Phillips and Roe). Green and Jordan make the point that the cut-off of
the fermata needs to be executed in such a manner that the hands are in position
to prepare for what happens after the fermata has taken place.

19.4 Fermata with breath

Of all the authors, Busch is the most explicit in mentioning that an audible breath
should be taken by the conductor if the fermata is followed by a rest. Jordan
makes mention that the end of the fermata can be indicated with the breath itself.
Other authors who link breath with the indication of the end of the fermata are
Labuta, McElherhan, Phillips, Roe and Rudolf.

Ericson (1978:23) is the only author who mentions that one can differentiate
between the size of the fermata through the hand position in order to indicate
whether the word ends on a vowel, or even different kinds of consonants.
Garretson (1993:18) warns the conductor against using too many confusing
movements during the execution of the fermata. Green (2004: 85) specifies that
the end of the fermata must be given in the tempo of the piece, especially if there
is a continuation of the piece. Hansen (1997: 60) makes mention that each
fermata should be given in its own right and context.
19.5 Summary

It can be said, after studying the various gestures of all these authors, that the style of the ordinary simple beating gesture has a determinable effect on the indication of many other gestures, include a very complex gesture such as the fermata. Nearly all authors indicated the fermata in the same style as ordinary gestures. Fermata indicating caesura, fermata followed by a breath, and fermata without release were indicated.

Some authors suggest the use of the horizontal beating plane for the indication of fermata, whilst others suggest the use of the beating plane with various icti. None of the authors indicated fermata on subdivided beats.

Authors agree that preparation for the fermata is important, as this might have an influence on the intake of air by the ensemble in order to be able to sustain the sound. Whenever authors have given reasons for their advice, relating it either to anatomical, functional or musical issues, these have been mentioned in the text. For the most part, anatomical reasons are not mentioned.
Chapter 20

Conclusion to Part 4

The research question for Chapter 15 was: “How are the recommended gestures described to indicate changes in dynamics, and how do these gestures relate to the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 3.1)

As far as gestures indicating changes of dynamic are concerned, there seems to be a general consensus among authors that both the left hand and right hand are involved with the indication of the crescendo and decrescendo. All authors are in agreement that the right-hand gesture should be made larger in order to indicate the crescendo, and that this gesture will become smaller as the decrescendo is indicated.

It might be possible to indicate the movement of the left hand with tension and to keep the right hand relaxed with a lot of practice from the conductor, but two further issues should also be pointed out here: if it is possible to perform this gesture without involving any tension from the conductor and yet get the same result from the ensemble, then surely that would be the first priority. It should also be borne in mind that from a visual point of view, the singers do not observe the tension in the arms, as the conductor usually works in a long-sleeved jacket or shirt. What is visible to the ensemble is the hand only. The possibility exists, however, that the tension could result in an uneven movement, which will result in inaccurate gestures.

Secondly, the movement of the left hand on a vertical level will most certainly obscure the view of those ensemble members placed on the conductor’s left, as they will be trying to watch the gesture indicated by the right hand of the conductor - especially when the right hand is indicating a change in tempo. If the change in dynamics is indicated on a horizontal plane by the left hand, this will ensure that the ensemble will be able to observe the conductor’s right hand’s
indication of change of tempo without any obstruction from the his left hand. This issue will be taken further in Part 5, Chapter 23.

In the opening example of Grieg’s first Psalm from “Fire Salmer” (Four Psalms), bars 40 – 43, at least two different musical aspects must be taken care of: the indication of change of tempo, as well as the change in dynamics. In terms of the tempo change, the indication of *poco a poco piu tranquilo* implies a slight *ritardando* in order to effect the sense of tranquillity, with a further *ritardando* indication specifically in the alto voice in bar 42. In terms of the change in dynamics, a *diminuendo* is indicated in bar 40 followed by a *crescendo* in bar 41, up to a *forte* level. If the left hand moves down and up, it will almost certainly obscure the right hand’s indication of the change in tempo. In addition, the cut-off after the *fermata* will take place on the furthest vertical plane, which will have the effect that the hands are not in position to start with the new phrase in a *piano*. If the *crescendo* was indicated on the horizontal level, the cut-off could have been indicated in the position where the new section will start in the dynamics of a *piano*. This issue of using the left hand on a horizontal plane to indicate the change of dynamics will be taken further in the final chapter.

In Chapter 16 the research question was: “How are the recommended gestures described to indicate change of tempo in terms of the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 3.2)

As far as the indication of change of tempo is concerned, three topics of interest emerged in the work of these authors.

When it comes to an indication of an abrupt change in tempo (from fast to slow, or slow to fast) it is obvious that the previous upbeat to the new tempo’s beat cannot be robbed of time, or time added either (as in Kaplan and Labuta’s suggestion). It is vital that the penultimate beat has to be executed in full time, before any change is made.
Green suggests a more sensible gesture to indicate the change from a slow to a fast tempo by stopping the hand during the penultimate beat. However, no authors made any suggestion about executing a gesture to indicate a change from a fast to a slow abrupt tempo change without either affecting the last beat’s duration, or without stopping the flow of the movement of the hand. Suggestions will be made in the last chapter on ways to execute this gesture.

As far as gestures indicating *ritardando* are concerned, most of the six authors indicated that a preparation for a subdivision beat should be indicated either by making the previous beat to the subdivision bigger, to lengthen the rebound beat, or to gradually increase the size of the gesture in order to have better control over the process of the *ritardando*.

As far as using a gesture to indicate an *accelerando*, the suggestion of shortening the rebounds and making the conducting gesture smaller will result in a clear indication of *accelerando*, but will also have an effect on the indication of the dynamic level. Suggestions in the final chapter will propose that it is possible to execute a tempo change as well as changes to the dynamic level, without compromising the clarity of intend, the predictability of the beat or the constant movement of the hand.

In Chapter 17 the research question was: “How are the recommended gestures described to indicate *legato, staccato* and *marcato* articulated in terms of the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 3.3)

As far as gestures indicating different articulation is concerned, most authors agreed that the continuous flow of the hand movement will ensure a *legato* style of singing. Only one author disagreed that a stopping gesture would result in the singers’ continuous flow of air seizing up when the *staccato* gesture was suggested. All authors indicate that the *marcato* gesture should be indicated by using a stopped movement between the icti.
In Chapter 18 the research question was: “How is the recommended gesture described to indicate cues, and how do these gestures relate to the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 4.1)

When cues are discussed, authors make mention of the use of the right hand, left hand, as well as the head and even the eyebrows for their indication. Not a single author explicitly suggests the conductor’s audible breath as a method for instilling precise cues. The only two authors who introduced “dead gestures” are Green and Hansen. But surely this gesture of the conductor’s audible breath is far more reliable than using eyes, chins and eyebrows? In Part 5, Chapter 23, suggestions will be made about the indication of cues using both hands to ensure a more predictable beat and greater clarity of intent which will be understood by all in the ensemble.

In Chapter 19, the research question was: “How is the recommended gesture described to indicate fermata and release of fermata, and how do these gestures relate to the functional requirements of gestures?” (Research question 4.2)

Many authors contributed to ideas on the indication of fermata and the release of fermata.

After studying the various gestures of all the authors, it can be observed that the beating style of the ordinary simple beating gesture has a determinable effect on the indication of many other gestures, including a very complex gesture such as the fermata. Nearly all of the authors indicated the fermata in the same style as ordinary gestures, and limitations in this gesture (such as Rudolf’s lack of ictus indication, or Kaplan’s varied icti points) will add to the confusion of the gesture. Fermata indicating caesura, fermata followed by a breath, and fermata without release were indicated. This chapter did not deal at all with different kinds of fermata where some voices are held whilst other voices move in time. A suggestion in Part 5, Chapter 24, will be made about this aspect, with examples given from choral literature.
The most successful indications of *fermata* are seen in those authors who make use of the horizontal beating plane to indicate the usual patterns. Authors using icti points other than the horizontal plane have very cluttered and complicated gestures, which will invariably result in confusion in the ensemble. It is important that the previously established ictus point is simply used to indicate the cut-off by moving away from the ictus, and back to it again. None of the authors indicated *fermata* on subdivided beats.

Authors agree that preparation for the *fermata* is important, as this might have an influence on the intake of air by the ensemble in order to be able to sustain the sound. The cut-off should be given in the same tempo and character as that which follows after the *fermata*. 
Part 5
Towards a theory of gesture in choral conducting

Introduction

It has been shown in Chapter 1 that the notion exists in textbooks about choral conducting gestures that gestures are generally seen as being “standard”. Work in subsequent chapters which dealt with various issues surrounding the concept of gestures has shown that the notion of a “standard” repertoire of gestures is simply not true, and that there are as many “styles of gestures” in use as there are authors who write about gestures, making the notion of “standard” gestures highly questionable.

Garretson, for example, speaks about gestures in the following manner: “Each conductor would have his own methods, but the fundamental patterns are the same.” Garretson (1993:5). I believe it has been shown in this study that these “fundamental patterns” are indeed not the same.

In Part 5 the research question is: “How can a descriptive and normative theory of conducting gestures be developed?” (Research question 5.1)

In Part 5 an attempt will be made to present a theory of conducting gestures on the basis of the literature study and the concepts and their definitions which have been discussed so far. Texts from several authors, as well as theses on related topics, have been studied, and issues have been identified and addressed in terms of the research questions posed.

The method of theory building which will be followed is based on the writings of Estelle Jorgensen.
Part of the approach of the theoretical research is the precise clarification of the meaning of words which are used. By defining the meaning of words, one is able to compare ideas because one is certain of what is being compared. “The philosopher’s function is to ensure that the house of ideas is tidy”. (Jorgensen 1992: 91) This process of defining the meaning of words will have the effect of focusing the meaning of terms: “Understandings become more widely shared, and justifications for positions held are better defended”. Terms have been clarified and comparisons have been made between the writings of different authors in order to develop a better understanding of the theories of conducting.

Jorgensen warns the researcher against borrowing terms from different fields without explaining their meaning exactly. In this respect it has been suggested that Koch’s theory of conducting motion makes use of terms he borrowed from physics, but unfortunately he applied his own subjective definition to these terms, making his theory ambiguous.

Jorgensen states that the theorist should expose implicit or unclear underlying assumptions by using critical and analytical thinking and reasoning from effect to cause: “Critical thinking involves the capacity to judge the relative worth of actions and ideas. Analytical thinking entails the ability to take a situation or an idea apart, much as a mechanic takes an engine apart.” (Jorgensen 1992: 93) Analytical thinking aids in the identification of different schools of thought about the same ideas. By identifying conflicting ideas, one is able to ascertain principles in order to make better judgements about theories of conducting. Analytical thinking was used in the process of identifying different ideas about the same topics, and in the process, critical questions about these topics were posed.

Implicit and explicit knowledge was identified, and this study has consistently asked for explicit motivation from authors in the field, at the same time searching for any implicit motivations for theories which authors did not provide explicitly.
This theory has made use of analytical thinking and reasoning in order to ascertain the worth of different authors’ ideas.

This theory aims to be both descriptive and normative. It is descriptive in the sense that the concepts and issues and relationships between the characteristic aspects of gestures are indicated; and it is normative in terms of the suggestions offered with regard to issues pertaining to gestures.

The definition, functional requirements and parameters of gestures will be presented as a foundation for the theory of gestures. The use of the functional requirements will provide a basis to evaluate the desirability of gestures, and the parameters of gesture will determine the practical implementation thereof in terms of the use of the horizontal and vertical planes, the link between the horizontal plane and the establishment of icti, the use and importance of preparatory beats, the use of the pendulum-type movement or inverted pendulum-type movement and the link between the use of gestures and breath.

The theory of gesture must relate to the physical aspects of the conductor. The concepts of the posture of the conductor will be introduced as crucial to the understanding of the anatomical position, bilateral symmetry, vertical alignment and the centre of gravity. The arms and hands, as well as the palm pronation of the conductor will be discussed. These issues are paramount in understanding why certain gestures are possible, and preferable to others.

Once an understanding of the definitions are in place and an awareness of the conductor’s posture has been established, a theory will be presented with regard to the indication of the building blocks of gesture: the upbeat, the downbeat, rebound, placing of the icti on the horizontal plane within the conducting patterns. A motivation for the indication of the simple time four-beat gesture and subdivision will be presented, as well as slow compound time gestures, fast irregular gestures, and the abrupt change of tempo and gradual change of tempo will be discussed.
It has been argued through Parts 1 – 4 that the traditional role of the hands are questionable when it comes to the indication of gesture for 20\textsuperscript{th} and 21\textsuperscript{st} century complicated patterns. The demands made by composers on conductors are very different, and the ambidextrous conductor will have added advantages compared to conductors using the traditional role of the right hand giving the tempo and the left hand indicating “everything else”. Gestures using both hands indicating musical expression such as dynamic change, the indication of the “Dead beat” or “passive beat” and \textit{fermata} will be discussed. Thereafter the important influence of the shape of the hand (be it only one hand or a mirrored right hand) on shaping of vowels, the indication of consonants, the change in articulation and the influence on pitch will be discussed.

Part 5 will be structured in the following manner: Chapter 21 will deal with issues surrounding the definition, the functional requirements and parameters of gestures.

Chapter 22 will deal with issues of the posture of the conductor. Chapter 23 will deal with gestures indicating the simple time four-beat gesture, the subdivision of the simple time four-beat gesture, slow compound time gestures, fast irregular gestures, abrupt change of tempo and gestures indicating a gradual change of tempo.

In Chapter 24 a theory will be presented for gestures using both hands indicating musical expression, dynamic changes, “Dead beat” or “passive beat” and the indication of \textit{fermata}.

Chapter 25 will deal with gestures influencing vowels, consonants, articulation and pitch, and Chapter 26 will be a conclusion to Part 5
Chapter 21
Definition, functional requirements and parameters of gestures

21.1 Definition of gesture

A conducting gesture can be defined as a movement executed by the arms and hands of a conductor which aims to give the ensemble unambiguous information with regard to the tempo and expressive aspects of the music.

21.2 Functional requirements of gesture

Gestures should be indicated to the ensemble in such a manner that they will fulfil certain basic functional requirements. They should be indicated in such a manner that they are visible to all members of the ensemble from any possible angle. Gestures should reveal unambiguous clarity of intent. These movements will thus be informative with regard to all musical aspects, be predictable, have constant movement and will be accompanied by breath from the conductor. They should be understood by all.

21.3 Parameter of gesture

In order to distinguish a gesture, a number of parameters should be identifiable. Gestures are spatially differentiated in terms of both the horizontal and vertical conducting planes. Gestures are mostly indicated as a pendulum-type or inverted pendulum-type movement, or combinations of the two. It is possible to use both hands for the indication of gestures, and therefore aspects of ambidexterity are important. Gestures are informative, and this aspect is contained in the preparatory beat. Usually the preparatory beat is accompanied by the breath of the conductor. The preparatory beat establishes the ictus as the point of
rebound. The ictus will indicate the placement of either the primary, secondary or tertiary beats.

21.3.1 Horizontal plane

The horizontal plane is established by bringing the arm from the anatomical position upwards until the forearm is horizontal. This level defines the horizontal plane. Muscles which are responsible for the movement on the horizontal plane are the axial and scapular muscles, which move the forearms inwards and outwards.

Gestures on a horizontal plane should be visible to the ensemble. If the plane is too low, the ensemble will not be able to see where the gesture is made. The conductor should be able to execute the gesture in such a way that the movement can make use of the natural gravity which the hand will experience when moving on the horizontal plane. The height of the horizontal plane is determined by the angle of the upper arm with the forearm. The elbow should not be more than 20cm forwards from the lateral midline of the body. (This suggested distance is based on calculations in physics - Kane & Sternheim 1988:93)

The positioning should be such that the centre of gravity of the conductor’s posture should not be affected, and that the movement of the hands should not be impaired, or the centre of gravity affected, if it happens to be too close to the body. The forearm and the hand should not move much further than the shoulder’s width. If this happens, the shoulder muscles become incorporated in the movement, and this will put stress on the muscles in the neck. From an anatomical point of view, most gestures do not originate from the shoulder. Secondly, the major movement of the arm in a gesture is the result of the biceps and triceps muscles, and not a ball and joint in the shoulder. (Thibodeau & Patton 1996: 330)

21.3.2 Vertical plane
The vertical plane is firstly determined by the function of two muscles – the biceps for lifting (flexion), and the forearm and the triceps for lowering (extension) of the forearm. These muscles are responsible for the vertical movement. Should any muscles in the shoulder be used to make a vertical movement, the conductor will work too high. The movement should be made with as little tension on the tendons as possible, as this will put strain on the movement in the gesture, which will ultimately be reflected by the choir.

21.3.3 The link between the horizontal plane and the establishment of icti

The horizontal plane of beating is usually the area where the different icti of all (or most) of the different beats will be established. Therefore the ictus should be placed on the same level as the horizontal plane - there is no reason to change the ictus level away from the horizontal plane for any of the beats, except to indicate a change of style, or in the case of irregular beating patterns.

Rudolf (1993: 38) Figure 5.2

In this example, Rudolf indicates the horizontal plane running through the second beat. In practice the second beat will only be observed at the bottom of the pendulum-type movement, which means effectively that none of the beats are indicated on the horizontal plane. This will compromise the predictability of the
gesture. The fact that the third beat is indicated higher, and has a different ictus, does not aid the situation.

If the third beat can be seen as the preparatory beat for the first downbeat, the ictus of the preparatory beat for the first downbeat is not only much higher than the actual first beat, but also the furthest away from the downbeat. This will result in the ensemble not entering together. The upbeat for the second beat (which is the rebound of beat one) starts on a much lower level than the actual ictus of the second beat. Once again, the ensemble will not be together. The rebound of the second beat gives information as to where the third beat will actually take place, but this is moved to a higher plane, compromising the accuracy of the third beat as well.

The direct link between the horizontal conducting plane and the placement of the icti is that the horizontal plane is established in effect by the placement of the ictus. The only way the horizontal plane is discernable to the ensemble is by looking at where the icti of the beats are indicated, as well as getting information from the upbeat preceding each beat.
In this example the ictus level is prepared and maintained by the constant positioning of the different beats on the same horizontal plane. This constant positioning in turn establishes the predictability of the beating patterns for the performers. Given this sense of predictability, the ensemble will experience a sense of musical trust for the conductor. The upbeat to the first downbeat (as the preparatory beat) is given through the ictus level of the previous beat. This establishes the horizontal plane and in turn enhances the predictability of the beat.

The fact that all four beats are indicated on the same horizontal plane establishes the clarity of intent and gives clear information to the ensemble, adding to the predictability of where the next beat will be indicated. Each rebound therefore acts as the preparation for the next beat. In this example, use is made of a mainly pendulum-type movement, which enhances the horizontal level.

Davison (1954: 15) Figure unnumbered.

In the above example the absence of the rebound has the implication that there is no preparatory beat for the next beat. If a beat has no rebound, no information is provided for the next beat. The rebound provides for the preparation and therefore information for the next beat. In this sense the conductor has to develop the idea that he constantly parts with information for every coming beat,
whether through the downbeat of a beat or the upbeat of a beat. He is thus not merely marking time.

21.3.4 Preparatory beats

The concept of "preparatory beats" has traditionally been equated only as "upbeats". Every beat consists of a preparation to the beat, as well as the beat itself. The preparation for the beat is part of the previous beat's rebound. Both the downbeats, as well as the rebounds, convey information to the ensemble. In this chapter the term "preparatory beats" will be used to portray aspects of information in terms of downbeats as well as upbeats. Both aspects of the beating gesture contain information, and therefore prepare the ensemble for what is to follow.

Preparatory beats firstly prepare the ensemble to breathe in the tempo and character of the beat, secondly it establishes the ictus point (as the point of rebound from the downbeat) of the beat, and thirdly, it gives information with regard to the nature of the beat in terms of dynamics, articulation and style.

Music Example 21.1: Knut Nystedt, If You Receive My Words, opening bar (Norsk Musikforlag)
This is the first bar of the work. The full choir starts on the same note in an ff, but only one voice (T2) sings p. In this section the gesture should be indicated in such a way that it will evoke a focused fortissimo sound from the choir. A big preparatory beat is needed, establishing the horizontal level, with a big breath which will complement the big upbeat. In this case both hands should be used, not less than a shoulder’s width from each other.

The preparatory beat establishes the horizontal level of the ictus, and therefore the height of the horizontal plane is established before the vertical plane. If the preparatory beat establishes the vertical level before the horizontal level, the ensemble will most probably not be together on the next beat, as the rebound level of the horizontal plane will not have been established as part of the preparatory beat.

Music Example 21.2: Sverre Bergh And death shall have no dominion, bar 20 (Norsk Musikforlag)

At the start of this chapter the point was made that the preparatory beat portrays the nature of the next beat (or sections of it) in terms of dynamics, articulation
and style. In practice, not only the upbeat fulfils the function of a preparatory beat, but also the downbeat needs to give information to prepare the singers.

In this extract from Bergh both rebounds of beats one and two have been indicated as accents. In order to achieve this, the downbeats of beats one and two will have to contain information about the manner in which they will be performed. This could be achieved by indicating the downbeat with a sharpness of breath, as well as a preciseness of gesture, preferably with the palms facing each other. This gesture will indicate the “edge” of the hand to the ensemble, which will have a cutting or biting effect, resulting in the accents on the rebound.

The traditional concept of preparatory beats has mostly been equated as “upbeats” giving information, but it is clearly seen in this extract from Bergh that the downbeat must contain information about what is to happen on the rebound. The concept of preparatory beats must also allow for the inclusion of downbeats as well as rebounds. Both aspects of the beat are informative aspects for the ensemble.

Preparatory beats may indicate aspects of music which should be performed in a historically correct style. This is specially true in the case of Baroque works, where the use of hemiola in triple meters often occur, as this example taken from the opening second part of Buxtehude’s Membra Jesu Nostri illustrates. (Publishers Merseburger)

In this section the words *blandientur vobis* are performed as a *hemiola*, where the first two bars are not conducted in three crotchet beats per bar, but rather seen as two bars forming a total of three minim beats. The natural word accent falls here on the three minims of *“blandi-centur vo-“*. It follows therefore that “-tur” will not be accented although it falls on the first beat of the second bar. The syllable “vo-“ will be accented. In this section the preparatory beat for the third minim beat is important, as it will have to be indicated to the ensemble that “vo-“ will have the natural word accent. The rebound of the second minim beat will prepare the weight on *vobis* by extending the second beat, thus making the ensemble aware of the change of meter. Here the preparation of this beat was crucial for the indication of the *hemiola*, which is a cornerstone of the style of performance of Baroque music in a triple meter. The change from bar 38 as three crotchet beats to bars 39 and 40 as three minim beats will also have to be indicated with a preparation at the end of bar 38. The rebound of this third beat will have to be made as a bigger gesture in order to prepare for the change of meter which will take place from the beginning of bar 39.

Several musical aspects are indicated using either the downbeat or rebound of the beat in order to give information to the ensemble. It is the manipulation of these two aspects of the beat which enables the conductor to induce accents, regulate the placement of the ictus, and effect changes in meter signifying stylistic characteristics such as *hemiola* in Baroque music.
21.3.5 Pendulum-type movement or inverted pendulum-type movement

In this excerpt from Ericson, the majority of beats are of the pendulum-type movement. The pendulum pattern enhances horizontal movement, rather than vertical movement.

In the above example from Kaplan, the majority of beats are indicated in an inverted pendulum-type movement. The tendency of the direction of the beats is vertical rather than horizontal.
Gestures should be more of the pendulum-type movement than inverted pendulum-type movement for the sake of discerning the downbeat from the other beats. The downbeat and upbeat are the vertical movements of the gesture. If the tendency of the movement is mostly vertical, it will become very difficult to discern between the first downbeat and any other beat. At times, members of the ensemble will request the conductor to indicate a more discernable downbeat. The reason for this might be that all the other beats also look like downbeats, and the question is which one of the vertical movements is the actual downbeat.

Movement consisting of a pendulum-type movement has more discernable horizontal aspects, because the pendulum-type movement is responsible for the indication of the horizontal plane. Yet, the downbeat as well as the upbeat is clearly vertical, and thus is easy to tell from the other beats. This will result in a clearer gesture for the ensemble. The movement on the horizontal plane will also evoke better breathing from the singers, as this movement emulates the outwards movement of the chest. Singers are taught never to lift shoulders during inhalation, but the constant vertical movement will enhance this breathing direction and shallow breathing, and in turn create tension in the vocal chords. This could negatively affect the intonation of the ensemble.

21.3.6 Gestures and breath

In this section the link between the indication of gestures and the breath of the conductor will be explained.

As per the definition, the conductor’s gesture conveys a number of musically understood messages to the ensemble. In terms of choral music, the ensemble use their bodies as instruments. One of the most important aspects of organisational effects that gestures have on the ensemble in this context is not only to convey the regulation of breath in order to evoke the constant required sound from the ensemble, but also to maintain the vocalisation for the duration of a performance.
Several musical aspects will determine how and when breath is taken. This includes when to prepare to breathe, how deeply to breathe depending on the required sound, as well as when to exhale during rests. One of the primary functions of the conductor is to indicate gesture in such a manner that it will assist the choir with regulated breathing and vocalisation.

Regulated breathing can be reflected by a gesture from the conductor when using both hands working mainly on the horizontal conducting plane: The traditional concept of indicating time only with the right hand has implications for the concept of gestures evoking breath. Breathing is a bilateral activity, and does not take place only in the right-hand side of the body. The use of the horizontal bilateral movement (the indication of the beat by both left hand and right hand) simulates the plane on which breathing takes place and will evoke the depth of breath required for vocalisation. The use of both hands to simulate the bilateral activity is essential. During inhalation, the diaphragm moves downwards, the chest moves outwards and forwards. During exhalation, the opposite happens to decrease the chest cavity. (Thibodeau and Patton 1996:809) It is important for the conducting gesture to simulate this inhalation using both hands. The conductor’s breathing will assist to evoke the depth of breath which is needed in passages which require well controlled sound, whether sung in pp or ff.

In the following example, all members of the ensemble are required to sing an ff for an extended number of bars in the upper tessitura of their voices. If the gesture is indicated from a high level with no indicated supported breath from the conductor, it will be very difficult for the ensemble to execute this successfully. By breathing with the ensemble, and indicating by gesture the anatomical level from which the ensemble will inhale, the conductor conveys his vocal involvement with the ensemble, as well as encouraging optimal breathing from them.
Breathing as a bilateral activity is therefore an essential aspect for the singer. If better breathing will be evoked by simulating the breathing action with both hands, then the right and left hands should be used to indicate basic concepts of conducting.

In the next section the musical aspects which are indicated by different gestures will be discussed. Ambidexterity of the conductor is the key which opens up the possibilities of indicating not only adequate deep breathing from the ensemble, but also complex rhythms more accurately; dynamics more visibly; the change of tempo with greater intent and passive (dead) beats which add to the predictability of the gesture. This section will challenge traditional concepts of the exclusive functions of the left and right hands, and by using examples, will argue that both hands are essential to indicate meaningful gestures to the ensemble. The use of both hands is also essential in the indication of three types of fermata.
Chapter 22

The posture of the conductor

22.1 Anatomical position and bilateral symmetry

The conductor of a choir has to adhere to certain requirements in order to be able to indicate gestures.

The most important aspect of the conductor’s posture is that he should be mindful that his stance is always balanced. In order to achieve a balanced posture, the conductor must adhere to a set anatomical position and secondly, must always be mindful of the basic bilateral symmetry of the human body.

“In an anatomical position, the body is in an erect, or standing, posture with the arms at the sides and palms forward. The head and feet are also pointing forward. To say that humans are bilaterally symmetrical simply means that the right-hand and left-hand sides of the body are mirror images of each other. One of the most important features of bilateral symmetry is balanced proportions”. (Thibodeau and Patton 1996: 21)

22.2 Vertical alignment and the centre of gravity

The basic foundation of the conductor’s posture is therefore the vertical positioning of the torso. This is achieved by alignment of the shoulders, hips and ankles, which are positioned in a straight vertical downward line seen from the side, forming the centre of gravity while maintaining and restoring balance. The conductor’s body weight will thus be evenly distributed when the conductor stands with his feet flat on the floor and aligned.

The width of the shoulders determines the placement of the feet. The implication of this is that each person has an individual anatomical predisposition in terms of shoulder width, and this distance, which the feet placed apart, will vary
considerably in different individuals. By standing up straight, with the feet away from each other in direct relation to the width of the shoulders, the body will be vertically aligned with the hips and the shoulders, causing the body to be in balance. The feet should be aligned. If one foot is placed in front of the other, the centre of gravity of the conductor will shift and the body’s balance will be affected.

When the shoulders, hips and knees are aligned, the knees should be in a relaxed state and not locked. When the knees, elbows, wrists or hips are locked, the conductor will not be able to maintain his sense of balance, with the result that tension in the muscles will occur during conducting.

22.3 Golgi type reflex

Excessive tension in the muscles could trigger a Golgi-type tendon reflex. This reflex protects the muscles from tearing internally or pulling from their tendonous point of attachment to bone because of excessive contractile force caused by the muscles over-relaxing. (Thibodeau and Patton 1996: 50) This over-relaxation will mean the muscles do not move in the way the conductor intends, and therefore inaccurate gestures could result.

22.4 The arms and hands and palm pronation of the conductor

In order to indicate a gesture, the arms are moved from the anatomical position upwards to a horizontal position. The palms may be facing each other, as this position will not only project a welcoming gesture to the ensemble, but may also portray a clearer beating pattern than palms down. Palms facing the ensemble in a “stop” position will have exactly that effect, and the breathing of the ensemble will be negatively affected.

The arms are positioned horizontally to the ground. The hands are curved as though they have just greeted someone, or are holding a ball. Should the palms
of the hands be higher than the elbow, the ensemble will see the elbow as well as the hands. When in this position the gesture will indicate two conflicting preparatory beats – one indicated by the hand movement and the other by the elbow movement. This double gesture will result in confusion for the ensemble. Should the palms of the hands be lower than the elbow, the gesture will be indicated very low, and the lack of visibility of the gesture will compromise the contact between conductor and ensemble.

The conducting gesture should be indicated in such a position from the body that the hands can move comfortably and without tension. It is possible to use simple physics to indicate that when gestures occur further away from the body, the result will be greater stress on the elbow tendons. This in turn will cause the Golgi tendon organ to be activated, and the muscles will be forced to over-relax, which will result in inaccurate gestures. Apart from tension in the elbow tendons, the conductor’s balance will also become compromised if the movement occurs too far from the body. Simple calculations from physics can be used to calculate this aspect.

While adhering to these elements of posture, the conductor is standing well balanced and will therefore be able to use his body in such a manner that gestures will be indicated clearly. The conductor will be a positive role model on which the choir can base a reflective posture, conducive for good breathing and singing.

Now that the conductor can stand properly and has knowledge about why he should maintain a balanced posture, one can proceed to talk about the function of executing gestures.
Chapter 23

Gestures indicating tempo: the simple time four-beat gesture

Numerous simple time four-beat gestures have been observed in this study. In most cases no, or very little, theoretical explanation for the appearance of the beating gesture was offered. The following parameters of the gesture are suggested when the simple time four-beat gesture is indicated.

23.1 Downbeat

The first downbeat is preceded by a preparatory upbeat which starts from the level of the horizontal plane, where the ictus for all the beats will occur. The starting point goes through the ictus, establishing the horizontal plane in doing so. When the preparatory beat fails to indicate where the ictus of the next beat will lie, the horizontal plane of the next beat cannot be established. This in turn, will result in inaccuracies from the ensemble. When the 4th beat is conducted moving into the rebound, this rebound will naturally be seen as the upbeat to the next downbeat. In reality, therefore, each rebound of the previous beat is the next beat’s preparatory beat.

23.2 Rebound

Every beat should have a clear rebound, which under normal circumstances is not more than half of the full beat. If the rebound appears bigger than this, the rebound will not be discernable from the main beat. The 4th beat’s rebound is an exception, where it will rebound from the horizontal plane straight up to the vertical point, from where the next downbeat will start. The upbeat of the 4th beat should be indicated on the right-hand side of the vertical axis, or could even be on the same plane as the vertical axis. Ideally, it should be moving as close as possible to the vertical axis with the ascending rebound.
The first main beat should always move 90° down along the vertical axis towards the horizontal axis. This first beat establishes the vertical plane. If this movement is not 90°, the predictability of the downbeat becomes questionable. Beat 2 is indicated on the left-hand side of the horizontal axis. Beats 3 and 4 are given on the right-hand side of the vertical axis, with beat 3 further to the right on the horizontal plane than beat 4, which is closest to the vertical axis.

In order for all the beats to be discernible, the rebound of the main beats on 1, 2 and 3 should always move in the opposite direction of the previous main beat, with the rebound of beat 4 moving vertically up, as close as possible to the vertical axis. The principle with regard to the placing of the beats is that there should be equidistance on either side of the vertical plane. This equidistance provides for the hand to move easily without undue tension on the horizontal plane. Ideally, the horizontal plane should not be used outside of the shoulder's width.

23.3 Use of the horizontal plane

In a regular simple time four-beat gesture (unlike an irregular gesture, which will be dealt with later) there is no reason why all four beats should not be placed on the same horizontal plane. Firstly, this principle will establish the predictability of the gesture, which will have the effect that the ensemble will make music exactly together on all beats. Secondly, it will have the direct effect that any member of the ensemble will be able to discern exactly which beat is being beaten, as the placement of the icti in relation to the vertical axis is sufficient information to recognise place in time.

The following is an attempt to indicate the simple time four-beat gesture.
Conducting pattern example 23.1: Simple time four-beat gesture

Neither the horizontal nor the vertical axis has been drawn. The horizontal axis is established by the icti on beats 1, 2, 3 and 4 and the vertical downbeat of beat 1 establishes the vertical axis.

All the preparatory upbeats, which start from the level of the horizontal plane, are indicated as a detached line. The starting point establishes the ictus, also establishing the horizontal plane in doing so. The horizontal plane of the first downbeat is therefore so established. When the 4th beat is conducted moving into the rebound, this rebound will naturally be seen as the upbeat to the next downbeat.

Every beat has a clear rebound, which is normally not bigger than half of the first downbeat. The 4th beat’s rebound is an exception where it rebounds from the horizontal axis straight up to the vertical point from where the next downbeat will
start. The upbeat of the 4th beat has been indicated on the right side of the vertical axis, as close as possible to the vertical axis.

Beat 2 is indicated on the left-hand side of the horizontal axis. Beats 3 and 4 are given on the right-hand side of the vertical axis, with beat 3 further away on the horizontal plane than beat 4, which is closer to the vertical axis. In order for all the beats to be discernible, the rebound of the main beats on 1, 2 and 3 move in the opposite direction of the previous beat, with the rebound of beat 4 moving vertically up, as close as possible to the vertical axis.

A pendulum-type movement is used, which makes for a clear rebound and therefore, better predictability. This movement also emphasises the horizontal aspect of the beating plane, making it discernible from beats 1 and 4, which are indicated on the vertical axis.

23.4 The subdivision of the simple time four-beat gesture

Subdivided beats must be constantly indicated as smaller than the main beats. If the subdivisions are not smaller than the main beats, the subdivided beats could be construed as the main beats.

When the subdivision of beat 1 is in the same direction as the next main beat, it will be difficult to discern between the subdivision of beat 1 and the main beat of beat 2. The first beat’s subdivision should therefore be in the opposite direction to the second main beat. Ideally, there should be continual movement in the indication of the main beat and the subdivided beat, as the stopping between the main beat and the subdivision can have a very negative effect on the flow of breath for the singers. The hand should always move in order to evoke a continuous flow of air.
Conducting pattern example 23.2: Subdivision of the simple time four-beat gesture.

The easiest manner in which beats and subdivisions of beats are visible is if they are all indicated on the same horizontal plane. If a member of the ensemble can have a clear idea of where the vertical plane is and where the horizontal plane is, it is easy to follow any of the beats and their subdivisions. When beating gestures change the horizontal aspects on every beat, it becomes very difficult to discern even major beats from one another, let alone major beats as well as their subdivisions.

The problem also lies with the indication of the preparatory beat from any of these levels. If the preparatory beat is given on a different plane from the first downbeat's horizontal plane, it becomes very difficult to know what beat the conductor is beating. The problem lies with the indication of the beating figure. It looks cluttered when represented as a two-dimensional drawing, and there is a
major difference in the way the drawing appears compared with the actual three-dimensional gesture.

The indication of a subdivided beat as an inverted pendulum-type movement will result in the tendency of the beat to appear more vertical than horizontal. This in turn will result in the downbeat being difficult to discern from other beats.

Conductors should avoid huge movements from one subdivision to another major beat, as these might be construed by the ensemble as a crescendo.

In this drawing the primary rebounds are indicated with a solid line, and the secondary rebounds with a detached line. The primary rebound indicates the first half of the beat, with the detached line indicating the “and” part of the beat. The hand moves back to the original indication point of the main beat, in order to emphasise the basic gesture, rather than adding additional beating places, which will add the to clutter of an already complicated gesture.

23.5 Slow compound time gestures

In this section dealing with compound time gestures, the focus falls on the manner of indicating slow compound time gestures. The most commonly used compound time beating gesture is the compound duple gesture. After a description of this gesture, reference to the compound triple and quadruple time signature gestures will be made.

When a fast compound duple is beaten, a two-beat pattern is used. When the tempo changes to a slow gesture, and all six beats should be indicated in order to keep control over the gesture, then the conductor should revert to the six-beat gesture.

Reference will be made to the shape of the beating pattern in terms of pendulum or inverted pendulum, (or a combination of the two patterns); mention will also be
made to the relation that this pattern has to the horizontal and vertical axes, as well as the direction of the subdivision in relation with the main beats.

In order to discern between the main beats in a compound pattern as beats 1, 4, 7 and 10, it is important that beats 2 and 3; 5 and 6; 8 and 9; 11 and 12 should be beaten as smaller gestures than the main beats.

When conducting gestures are taught, they are usually taught by emulating a practical gesture three-dimensionally rather than reading about gestures from a conducting text. The gesture is a three-dimensional movement executed by the conductor, while the drawing of the conducting gesture is drawn in a one-dimensional representation. But the presentation of the gesture and the actual gesture might be very different in practice.

As with any gesture, the eye can follow the different icti and discern movements which can be executed on the same side of the beating plane, which, when drawn as a two-dimensional picture, might appear as being executed indiscernibly and even seem to be on top of each other.

One should be able to differentiate between the way gestures appear in a three-dimensional movement compared with a two-dimensional drawing.

What follows is a series of principles which should be adhered to when the subdivision of any compound meter is indicated by the conductor. This series of principles is in turn followed by a visual two-dimensional drawing, illustrating how these visual representations will look when drawn, rather than beaten. It is clear from these drawings that the visual two-dimensional representation is completely unclear and cluttered as a drawing of the compound quadruple gesture, but it raises the question whether the description of this gesture alone should not suffice.

The following principles should be adhered to when the subdivision of any compound meter is beaten: the first beat is preceded by an upbeat which is given
from the ictus level of the gesture. The first main beat should always move 90° down along the vertical axis. The last subdivided beat (the 6th beat in a six-beat gesture, the 9th in a nine-beat gesture or the 12th in a twelve-beat gesture) should be indicated on the right-hand side of the vertical axis, moving from the right to the left as close as possible to the vertical axis, with the rebound ascending. This position as close as possible to the vertical axis will provide for a precise entry on the first beat.

The last group, consisting of the main beat and the two subdivisions, will always be given on the right-hand side of the vertical axis. This will follow the convention of all other simple beating gestures and will be discernible to the ensemble. In order for all the beats to be discernible, the main beats with their subdivisions should always move in the opposite direction of the previous beat. If more than one group is indicated on the same side of the vertical plane, it will become less discernible to the ensemble.

In the compound duple and compound triple pattern the last three beats will move on the right-hand side of the vertical axis as follows: right - right – left and up with the rebound. The last beat will always be as close as possible to the vertical axis line. In the compound quadruple beating pattern the last three beats will move on the right-hand side of the vertical axis as follows: left – left – left and up with the rebound.

In the compound duple the first group of subdivisions will start from the left of the vertical axis, then the next group will move across the right of the vertical axis, with the last beat moving from the right to the left as close as possible and ascending to the right of the vertical downbeat.

In the compound triple the first group of subdivisions will appear on the left, then the second beat with subdivisions to the right, then the last beat on the right with the last subdivided beat moving to the left as close as possible, before ascending
to the right of the vertical downbeat. This grouping emulates the basic main beats of the ordinary simple triple gesture.

In the twelve-beat gesture, the first beat with subdivisions will appear to the right of the vertical axis, then the second beat will move across to the left, in the opposite direction, and the third beat will cross the vertical axis with the last group moving in the opposite direction from right to left before the very last beat ascends as close as possible to the vertical axis. This grouping emulates the basic main beats of the ordinary simple quadruple gesture.

The principle in the placing of the beats is that there should be equidistance between the left-hand and right-hand sides of the vertical axis. This equidistance provides for the hand to move easily without tension on the horizontal plane. The conductor’s beating plane moves very seldom outside of the shoulder’s width. All these aspects will contribute to the predictability of the beat.

Drawings of these gestures might not aid the conductor, as they are merely a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional movement. The problem with learning a three-dimensional movement from a two-dimensional drawing is that some of the beats will overlap on paper, but are not so perceived in practice. Authors have indicated positions of the beating patterns neatly in order for beats not to overlap, but in the process, could be distorting the reality of the gesture when it is beaten eventually. This is especially true of the last three subdivided beats in the nine-beat gesture and twelve-beat gesture, where the last two subdivisions are usually indicated in an ascending line.

Usually the subdivisions are then much bigger than the other subdivided beats, too. In the following drawing, an effort is made to indicate the overlapping beats by indicating them with a detached line.
23.5.1 Compound duple

In this drawing of the compound duple pattern there is relatively little overlapping between the different beats, and the drawing appears to be simple to emulate in a practical manner. The first beat of each group (beat 1, beat 4) are bigger than the smaller subdivisions. There is equidistance between the right and left beating planes and the gesture is made with a pendulum-type movement, which indicates a clear rebound and preparation for the next beat, emphasising the horizontal aspect of the gesture.

23.5.2 Compound triple

In the following representation of the compound triple gesture, two drawings are needed to represent this gesture. In the first drawing beats 1 - 6 is made, and in
the second drawing beats 7 - 9 are shown. Note the legend indicating the beat indication.

Conducting pattern example 23.4: the first six beats of compound triple
Conducting pattern example 23.5: Second stage of the compound triple. These two drawings show the two stages involved in indicating compound triple

In this drawing of the compound triple gesture (nine-beat gesture) there is some overlapping between the different beats on the right-hand side of the beating plane. The first beat of each group (beat 1, beat 4 and beat 7) are bigger than the smaller subdivisions, there is equidistance between the right-hand and left-hand beating planes and the gesture is done with a pendulum-type movement, which indicates a clear rebound and preparation for the next beat. The drawing appears more congested than the six-beat gesture, but the gesture becomes “clearer” in the mind of the conductor when the two stages of the gesture are executed as a continuous flow.
Should both stages be combined in the same drawing, the visual effect becomes very cluttered on the right-hand side and it is difficult to distinguish the first and the last groups from one another:

Conducting pattern example 23.6: Compound triple pattern – the use of this combined visual representation is not recommended

23.5.3 Compound quadruple

In the twelve-beat gesture the indication of the four main beats with subdivisions are indicated in two drawings. The first drawing represents beats 1 – 6, and the second drawing represents beats 7 – 12.
Conducting pattern example 23.7: these two drawings show the two stages involved in indicating compound quadruple.
The third main group (beats 7 – 9) is discernible from the first group (beats 1 -3) because it has been approached from the left side of the vertical axis. The 4th main group moves in the opposite direction from the third group, which makes it discernible in that manner. Once the first group has been beaten on the right-hand side, the visual impact of the placement of the beats does not “linger”, and the indication of the last group will not be perceived as a “piling up” of beats when the next group is indicated on the same levels. The first beat of each group (beat 1, beat 4, beat 7 and beat 10) are bigger than the smaller subdivisions, there is equidistance between the right-hand and left-hand beating planes and the gesture is consistently executed with a pendulum-type movement, which indicates a clear preparation and rebound for the next beat. Should all the stages be combined, the diagram of the gesture will be become extremely cluttered. It becomes very difficult to understand how the gesture should be executed, despite using different colours, and this drawing is not recommended.
23.6 Fast irregular gestures

In the next Music Example 11: Duruflé’s *Missa cum Jubilo*, published by Durand, the first few bars of the *Gloria* section are reproduced. This example illustrates the use of irregular patterns in combination with regular patterns very well, and the composer has meticulously indicated how many beats each bar should be conducted with. In the first section up to bars 27, only two bars of the same time signature occur successively.

This section, containing different combinations of time-patterns changing between regular and irregular patterns, needs to be conducted with a *continuous movement*. In order to achieve this, the gesture needs to be shown in such a way that the basic pulse is clearly indicated as groupings of either two or three quavers per beat in the bar. One can vary the level of the ictus for the first group of three quavers and move the hand to a higher ictus level for the second beat containing only two quavers, as illustrated in Gesture Figure 9.

![Conducting pattern example 23.9: fast irregular gesture: 3 + 2 (bar 5)](image-url)
The first beat, although starting below the ictus level of the second beat, is still prepared on the same level where it will be indicated. Under no circumstances should the gesture be executed in such a manner that the hand “hangs” or stops moving, waiting for time to pass. This will result in inaccuracies from the ensemble, and the feeling of a non-*legato* line will develop which will inhibit the flow of the air for the singers. The conductor will also lose control over the gesture by waiting for the ensemble to continue to sing the irregular beat without being actively involved in the indication of the gesture.

**Conducting pattern example 23.10: Irregular nine-beat (2+2+2+3)**

In bar 12, for example, the 9/8 bar is conducted in four beats, with the first three beats containing two quavers each, but the 4th beat containing three quavers. The conductor will make use of the regularly shaped simple time four-beat
gesture, and will beat the first three beats accommodating two quavers per beat. The 4th beat contains three quavers, and to accommodate this group the conductor will move the ictus of the 4th beat lower compared with the other beats on the horizontal plane. This lowering will not only accommodate the augmented beat, but will also allow the hand to continuously move. The hand will be in position for the next bar’s downbeat. If the hand moved upwards to accommodate the three quaver gesture, the control over the gesture will become very difficult.

Conducting pattern example 23.11: Irregular seven-beat gesture (2+3+2) (bar 22)

In bar 22 of the example, this seven quaver bar is a combination of 2 + 3 +2. In order to accommodate the augmented 2nd beat, the ictus point is moved lower than the other two points. This will have the effect that the hand will continuously move and the last group of two quavers will be delivered again on the horizontal level.
23.7 Abrupt change of tempo

The basic principle which is involved in the indication of the abrupt change of tempo is that the change should be indicated in such a manner that the last beat in the previous tempo should be fully executed, and not robbed or prolonged in order to accommodate the changeover to the new tempo. This means that on the one hand the beat should not be “hanging” and waiting for time to pass before the new tempo is indicated, but on the other hand the upbeat to the new tempo should not be robbed of time or prolonged so that it will affect the completion of the previous first tempo, as previously suggested by Kaplan, Labuta and Green. If this is done, the principle of constant flow, explained as the prerequisite of a gesture, will be violated.

The initial tempo’s last beat should be completed in the initial first tempo (with the rebound still in the time of the first tempo) and the new tempo should be indicated with the ictus on the same horizontal plane as the previous tempo.

The conductor’s ability to indicate a gesture which will result in an abrupt change in tempo (from fast to slow or slow to fast) is extremely important, and is illustrated in the following two examples.

Music Example 12: Knut Nystedt, *Stabat Mater* illustrates the abrupt change from a slow to a fast tempo. A gesture is suggested in Gesture Figure 12 which will accommodate this change of tempo.
In this section before bar 50, the tempo indication was minim $= 60$, and from bar 50 the tempo changes abruptly to a much faster minim $= 72$. If the ictus level of the penultimate beat to the new tempo is altered by lowering it, it will mean effectively that the next downbeat is now shorter and in position to indicate the new tempo without affecting the initial tempo. All the icti are indicated on the same horizontal plane, except for the very last ictus in the first tempo.
Conducting pattern example 23.12: Abrupt change from slow to fast tempo

When changing from a slow beat to a faster beat, the ictus of the last beat in the slow tempo is placed lower than the first tempo’s ictus level. The downbeat to the new faster beat will now be shorter than the previous beat’s downbeat, but on the same ictus level as the previous beats, except of course for the last beat placed lower. In the above example, the first three beats in the original slow tempo is indicated in grey scale, with the 4th beat’s ictus taken lower than the horizontal plane. The 4th beat is executed in the slow tempo. By lowering the ictus level, the upbeat to the next, faster beat is lowered, and is now in position to indicate the new fast tempo. Only the first two beats in the new fast tempo are indicated here.
In the next example, a change in tempo from fast to slow is required:


In this section before bar 106, the choir has several rests whilst a solo cellist (bottom stave) is playing the indicated tempo as minim $= 92$. The change of tempo from bar 106 is minim $= 56$, which is considerably slower than the previous section. The conductor needs to be able to indicate this abrupt change of tempo, as the choir, although they do not sing on the first note, needs to breathe in the new tempo in order to start on the second beat.
Conducting pattern example 23.13: abrupt change from fast to slow tempo.

In this section, the original fast tempo is indicated in grey scale. The first three beats have the same ictus level, but the 4th beat is indicated on a higher level than the third beat, but still maintaining the original fast tempo. By changing the ictus level of the 4th beat, the new tempo’s preparation beat is placed higher in order to indicate the preparation for the slower tempo starting on the first beat of the next simple time four-beat gesture. The height of the 4th beat can be changed in order to accommodate the new tempo. If the height is not changed, it will become very difficult to change the tempo from fast to slow, as more space is needed to indicate the slower tempo. The last beat of the fast tempo is placed higher than the usual ictus level in order to prepare for the new tempo. The downbeat to the new slower beat will now be longer than the previous beat's downbeat, but on the same ictus level as the previous beats, except of course for the last beat, which was placed higher.
When this is done, the last beat of the initial tempo is fully completed and the preparatory beat to the secondary tempo is also changed to indicate the new tempo.

23.8 Gestures indicating a gradual change of tempo

In this section, changes of tempo as well as changes of dynamics must be indicated. In the traditional manner the size of the gesture will be deemed to be contradictory, and a choice of one of the two will have to be made. There is, however, another way of indicating a gesture which will accommodate both musical aspects required.
In this case the use of both hands is needed; with the gesture indicated by both hands on the same horizontal level further away from one another in order to evoke the sense of an ff sound. The distance between the hands will therefore have an implication for the change of dynamic level. It will be possible to indicate the accelerando in smaller movements now, without having to compromise the required ff effect, while still having full control over the process of the indication of the accelerando. The crescendo in bar 65 results in an fff indication on bar 66, after which the dynamic level is a decrescendo, but still with an accelerando. The change of tempo only occurs in the next bar, bar 67, not here reproduced. The decrescendo can be affected by beating the time with both hands on the same plane, but now moving towards the centre of the body, indicating a smaller sound. The use of the space on the horizontal plane between both hands has thus implications for the dynamic indication.

The traditional use of the raised and lowered left hand will totally obscure the right-hand tempo indication, which in this case is changing on every beat. This will not only affect the visibility for a section of the ensemble, but will also obscure the clarity of intent in the process. Most importantly, if the indication of
crescendo is indicated on the vertical plane rather than the horizontal, this movement will work directly against the mechanics of breathing, which is downwards and outwards. The predictability of the gesture will also be compromised, as the rebound of each beat, giving information to the next beat, will be unclear.

These examples from musical repertoires challenge the convention that the right-hand function is primarily time beating, and the left hand primarily indicative of cues and dynamics. It is clear that the traditional concepts of using the left hand on a vertical axis to indicate a change of dynamics and the right hand to indicate tempo will not work in this case, and that the roles of the hands must be thought of as dependent on what the music requires from the ensemble. If this means that the hands should mirror each other - and that the distance between the hands on a horizontal level has implications for the dynamic level, in order to convey the gestures successfully - then the traditional concepts of indicating changes of dynamics and tempo must surely be revisited.
Chapter 24
Gestures using both hands indicating musical expression

In Chapter 24 gestures will be described which indicates dynamic changes, passive beats, and fermata in terms of the use of both hands.

It is crucial that the conductor is not only able to work with his left and right hands independently in order to indicate different musical aspects to different voices in the ensemble, but also to work together when necessary. In the preceding example from Nystedt’s O Crux, the four-part entrance from the female voices requires deep breathing preparation for the entrance in bar 47, as well as the answering phrase from the male voices on the second beat of bar 48, both of which start on an extended ff phrase. In this section the independence of the hands is vital, as the breath of the female voices should be well prepared by the right hand, followed by the men’s entrance, now given specifically to them by the left hand. A crescendo is also indicated in this section.

24.1 Gestures indicating dynamic change

This dynamic change can be affected by indicating the beating pattern, still with both hands, but moving the pattern away from one another on the horizontal plane, while still maintaining the depth of movement required to support the ff sound. When the next entry in bar 49 occurs, all eight voices start at the same time, and here both hands should indicate the entry together. If the right hand only is used as the time-beating hand, the men’s voices, which have had a period of independency before bar 50, will not be properly taken care of. This section illustrates the need for the conductor to regulate different voice groups independently from each other by using different hands at times.
If this section was indicated by the traditional method of using the left hand higher on the vertical plane, the right-hand movement would be obscured as well as the support needed for the singer’s difficult ff passage compromised. In this manner, clarity of intent will be shown to the different groups within the ensemble, and the gestures will become more predictable, resulting in better understanding for the ensemble.

Traditionally the change of dynamics is reserved for the left hand and the time beating for the right hand. In the following example, Knut Nystedt’s *Piece I leave with you* (bars 18 – 21) (Norsk Musikforlag), it is necessary for the conductor to allocate from bar 19, beat 3, the functions of the right hand to regulate the female voices and the left hand to work with the male voices. Not only are the entries indicated by the use of the left and right hands separately, but also the dynamics with a crescendo and decrescendo in the upper voices in bar 20 and the same with the men’s voices three beats later. The dynamics will have to be indicated here by using the two hands independently: The change of dynamics with a slightly bigger and smaller pattern, with both hands working independently, will be more effective and informative than indicating it in the traditional manner:

Music Example 24.1: Knut Nystedt’s *Piece I leave with you* (bars 18 – 21) (Norsk Musikforlag)
If the function is indicated in the traditional way, the entire ensemble will respond to this indication on bar 20, therefore confusing the information given to the two groups within the ensemble.

In the next example, taken from Tront Kverno’s Ave Maris Stella, an accelerando is indicated for the section from bars 62 – 66, as well as an ff with a crescendo and decrescendo in bar 65. Traditionally the advice is not only that an ff gesture should be indicated with a bigger time pattern, but also that an accelerando is indicated with smaller movements.

24.2 “Dead beat” or “passive beat”

In Chapter 12 the musical example is the Gloria, which is taken from Duruflé’s Missa Cum Jubilo, published by Durand. In bars 25 and 26, the irregular seven-beat pattern (bar 25) and irregular five-beat pattern (bar 26) are tied over to the next simple time four-beat pattern (bar 27). In this section the use of the “dead beat” or “passive beat” with the left hand can assist in maintaining the line, as the right hand will be indicating the irregular 7 + 5 followed by the common time bar. The left hand can be used at the beginning of bar 25 to show the beginning of this bar as a sustained note. The left hand indicates the downbeat, and then does not move again, until the upbeat to bar 28 is given, indicating the end of the phrase. The right hand will continue beating the combined irregular patterns followed by the common time pattern, before ending the phrase with the left hand, giving a warning “upbeat”, followed by a downbeat at the exact time when the singing ends.

In the following example, by Edvard Grieg, Hvad est du dog skjøn, a number of musical expressions need to be conveyed:

Firstly, a *fermata* must be indicated on bar 42. The *fermata* has been indicated on the 4th quaver, but effectively starts already at the beginning of the bar because of the tied dotted crotchets of the Soprano, Tenor and Bass. The only voice which is now still moving is the Alto.

In order to execute this bar effectively, it will be possible to simply sustain both the right and left hands, as there is still movement in the Alto. The one hand will be used to indicate the *fermata* for the Soprano, Tenor and Bass, by coming to a standstill on the first beat of bar 42. The other hand will indicate the *ritardando* in the Alto voice. Once this has been done on the first three quavers, both hands will be able to be involved in the indication of the *crescendo* by moving outwards on the horizontal plane. This movement will signify a *crescendo* with better control than using the left hand in an ascending movement.

In terms of the dynamic level, the beginning of bar 40 requires a *diminuendo* and 41 a *crescendo*, with the second half indicated as *molto crescendo*. In addition,
the indication of *poco a poco piu tranquillo* implies a gradual slower tempo. If the change in dynamics are indicated on the vertical plane by moving the left hand down (in bar 40) and up (in bar 41), the right-hand indication of change of tempo would be obscured. This traditional use of the left hand and right hand will be compromising the visibility and clarity of intent of the gesture, and the ensemble will fail to have a full understanding of what they are to do.

In order to indicate the dynamics and tempo indication more successfully, both hands should be involved as follows: not only will the size of the gesture give an indication of the dynamic level but also the distance between the right and left hands. The closer the distance between the two hands, the softer the required sound; and the further the distance between the hands, the bigger the sound (and breath) that will have to be evoked from the singers. Thus the dynamic level should take place here on the horizontal level with both hands. The change of tempo can now also be indicated by using both hands, without the left hand obscuring the right hand.

### 24.3 Gestures indicating *fermata*

The following three examples illustrate three different kinds of *fermata* which occur in a work entitled *Natten* by the Norwegian composer Kjell Flem. In the first example a *fermata* without release with a *decrescendo* is indicated. In the second example there is a *fermata* with breath pause followed by continued singing, and the last example illustrates *fermata* with *caesura*.

*Fermata* without release
Music example 24.3: *Natten* by Kjell Flem, bars 15,16 (Norsk Musikforlag) – fermata without release.

In this example the lower five voices do not take a breath but continue straight after the fermata. (The first two voices will come off on the indication of the third beat, and the third voice will start on the third beat).

If the left hand is used in the traditional manner on the vertical plane in a descending gesture, the right hand will be obscured for at least half of the choir. Therefore in this fermata gesture, both hands will be needed, as there is not only the fermata which needs to be taken care off, but also the *decrescendo* indication, preferably on the horizontal level.

The left hand can be used in a “dead beat” gesture to assist with the sustained sound on the first minim beat. If the right hand stops beating at the beginning of the fermata, the choir will sustain the sound. The right hand can now indicate the second beat passively as a small inactive beat in the fermata, thereby not evoking movement towards the second pulse. Alternatively, the second beat
does not need to be beaten at all, and the hands do not indicate the second beat. Both hands can be involved in the indication of the *decreasing* by moving the hands inwards on the horizontal plane. The left hand is kept in the dead beat indication on the second beat, with the right hand indicating the upbeat to the third beat, where the left hand will move on the third beat. Both hands need to be placed on the third beat to indicate the required *p* sound in the choir, before the upbeat is given. If this is not done, the upbeat will not be in the character of what follows.

*Fermata* with breath pause followed by continued singing

Music example 24.4: *Natten* by Kjell Flem bars 97,98 (Norsk Musikforlag) – *fermata* with breath pause followed by continued singing.

In this second example, (bars 97,98) all the notes on the third beat are tied over to the next minim beat, which have the indication of a *fermata* and are indicated in the word text with a full stop. This implies a breath pause with continued singing after the minim *fermata*. Both hands should be involved here again, as the preparation for the singing after the breath is *p*, and therefore the end of the
fermata will have to be in position to prepare the continuation in the character of the new dynamics.

The beating has to seize on the first beat on the indicated fermata. With this non-movement of the hands the ensemble will sustain the first note for as long as the hands are not moving actively. The hands are simply lifted to indicate the preparation for the end of the phrase. When the hands are lifted and taken back to the ictus level on the horizontal plane from where they were lifted, the ensemble will stop singing. Should there have been a caesura of musical activity between the breath and the third beat, the conductor can keep his hands dead still, and only indicate the preparation for the breath of the third beat’s continuation after the caesura. If the breathing has to take place directly with the cut-off in order to continue with the third beat, the cut-off can be given in a larger motion, indicating the breath and character of the continuation of the singing.

In the third example (bars 124, 125) fermata with caesura is indicated. Firstly, both hands should be used to indicate the last bar at least. Both hands should seize bearing, and simply remain dead still on the first beat. As this bar requires a decrescendo, the hands can slowly be moved inwards on the horizontal plane, implying the required dynamics. To end this fermata in a very soft dynamic, the hands can go now below the ictus level in the rhythm of the cut-off, and come back up to the ictus. The effect will be a cut-off in the character of the music. Should the cut-off be indicated on a higher level than the ictus, this might imply a crescendo, or at least a small fp to the ensemble.
Music example 24.5: *Natten* by Kjell Flem, bars 124,125 (Norsk Musikforlag) – *fermata* with *caesura*

Preparation for the *fermata* is important, as this might have an influence on the intake of air by the ensemble in order to be able to sustain the sound. The cut-off should be given in the same tempo and character as what follows after the *fermata*. It is vital that the conductor is mindful that he should move at the end of the *fermata* in such a way that he is in position for what follows straight afterwards.

Making use of the horizontal plane to indicate the dynamic level of the sound will be more effective than using the vertical level: in doing so, a whole range of dynamic levels can be indicated without having to leave the ictus level at the same time, in the process obscuring the vision of the ensemble.
The use of both the left and right hands is very useful, especially if a dead beat indication is involved, as illustrated above. There should be absolutely no movement during the *fermata* with *caesura*, as this movement will be interpreted by the ensemble as the beginning of the cut-off, or even the cut-off itself. As long as there is no movement, the choir will not venture, therefore, to the next note.

In this section the traditional roles of the left hand and right hand were challenged through practical music examples, where it was argued that the indication of cues, change of dynamics, change of tempo, the indication of dead beats and *fermata* would benefit and serve the music through the use of both hands on the horizontal plane.
Chapter 25

Gestures influencing vowels, consonants, articulation and pitch

The ensemble has an awareness of the space in which the conductor is indicating the gesture in relation to his body. The conductor may make use of this distance in order to indicate the placement of vowels.

Music Example 25.4: Edvard Grieg, *Jesus Kristus er opfaren*, bars 1 and 2 (Norsk Musikforlag)

25.1 Gestures influencing vowels

In this Music Example 14: Edvard Grieg, *Jesus Kristus er opfaren*, bars 1 and 2, the ‘a’ vowel on the word *opfaren* (has risen) could be vocalized differently by the singers depending on the placing of the vowels in different positions – either in the front of the mouth, or in any other position up to right at the back of the mouth. The change of the vowel sound (depending of course also on the
requirements of the language) could result in either a darker or a lighter sound. If the word, such as this one, has emotional connotations, and the conductor requires a darker sound, the 'a' could be placed more towards the back of the mouth. If a lighter sound is required, the vowel could be placed more in the front of the mouth.

It is possible to influence the placing of the vowel in the mouth by changing the distance of the body of the conductor from which the gesture is indicated. By placing the first beat of bar 2 further from the body than the opening bar, the conductor might influence the choir to place the 'a' more in front of the mouth. By moving the first beat of bar 2 closer to the body, the 'a' might be placed further to the back of the mouth. The conductor can develop an awareness in the ensemble of the effect which the placement of gestures will have on the shape of vowels.

Music Example 25.5: Edvard Grieg, Jesus Kristus er opfaren, bars 22 and 23 (Norsk Musikforlag)
25.2 Gestures influencing consonants

In this extract from the same work, the very sombre atmosphere is changed to one of pleading with the Greek words “Kyrie eleison” (Lord, have mercy). The dynamic indication on the ‘Ky’ of ‘Kyrie’ is a fp. If the conductor requires a very clearly defined ‘k’ sound, this consonant can be well prepared in terms of a gesture. The hand can be used at a 90° position (palms facing each other) in order to show a very clear edge of the hand, rather than palms down, which does not have the same visual effect. The first beat of bar 22 could be prepared in such a way that a distinctive sharp downbeat is given with the ‘sharp end’ of the hand, which will evoke a crisp consonant from the choir.

Music Example 25.3: Edvard Grieg, Jesus Kristus er opfaren, bars 25 and 26 (Norsk Musikforlag)

Conversely, the end of the same phrase (Kyrie eleison) demands here a softer sound, going back to the same atmosphere as in the beginning. The consonant “s” of eleison is indicated as piano. A rounder hand will not only effect the softer “s”, but also shape the vowel of the “o”. The placement of this gesture further or closer to the conductor will have an effect on the brighter or darker vowel sound as well.
25.3 Gestures influencing pitch

The change of pitch (flatter or sharper) can be effected when the hands indicating the basic beating gestures either move higher than the usual ictus level (effecting sharper singing) or lower than usual ictus level, (causing flatter singing). This influence which the conductor has on the pitch of the choir can be observed when the left hand is used in the “traditional” setup of indicating a crescendo with a gesture from low to high, and a decrescendo from high to low. Invariably, this “traditional” change of dynamics also has an effect on the pitch of singers. If need be, this knowledge can be used by changing the beating plane to effect a change in pitch, but is not recommended, as this action will invariably also have an effect on the tension on the vocal chords, especially if a gesture is moved from reasonably low to a much higher plane. This is simply mentioned as part of the theory that the conductor should be mindful of the implication of this gesture.

25.4 Gestures indicating articulation

Gestures indicating different articulation are important in order to differentiate between legato, staccato and marcato styles. This example from a psalm by Grieg requires a legato line:
In order to indicate articulation of the gesture, the angularity of the preparatory beat to the ictus and from the ictus in turn to the rebound can be used to differentiate the articulation of a gesture as legato, staccato or marcato. Should a simple time four-beat gesture have to be indicated with a legato articulation, the following gesture would be useful.

In this gesture the movement is mainly a flowing hand movement, without any “stops” between the different icti. Use is made here of the natural gravity of the constant pendulum-type movement of the hand. All the icti indicate the horizontal level.

In the next example from a work by Sverre Bergh, *And death shall have no dominion*, bars 28 – 31, staccato articulation needs to be indicated:
Music Example 25.2: Sverre Bergh, *And death shall have no dominion*, bars 28 – 31 (Norsk Musikforlag).

It is important to regulate the angularity of the beats, and the simple time four-beat gesture indicating *staccato* could appear like this:
In this example, the beats are indicated as more angular, and the rebounds from the icti are more pronounced than in the previous *legato* example.

A *marcato* gesture is required in the next example, as quoted from Grieg’s *Second Psalm*:


In this example (Gesture Example 3) the articulation becomes very angular and is far more pronounced. This is attained by indicating the rebound as more angular and taking the rebound further up from the ictus than in a *legato* articulation. There is no “stop” movement in the hand, as this might affect the flow of air for the singers. The distance between the icti of the beats become closer, as the rebound goes higher. More importantly, however, is the fact that the conductor should insist that the articulation of the words should become more pronounced. This will effect *marcato* singing more effectively than the gesture indication itself.
What follows is an example of a simple time four-beat gesture executed in *marcato* style:

![Conducting pattern example 25.3: Simple time four-beat gesture in *marcato* style](image)

In this example the gesture becomes even more angular, with the indication of the beats closer to each other, and with virtually no roundness to the beat.
Chapter 26
Conclusion to Part 5

It is an oversimplification to look only at the manner in which a two-dimensional drawing suggests a three-dimensional movement in order to study conducting. It must be recognised that there is a myriad of tacit aspects of knowledge surrounding conducting gestures.

The conductor has to make decisions with regard to the indication of tempo, breathing, articulation, pronunciation and diction of words. These might all be influenced by knowledge surrounding the writing of the text and the music itself. Several musical, historical and other innumerable factors might contribute to the manner in which gestures are indicated by the conductor.

The gestures of the conductor might also be influenced by the ability of the ensemble, the social interaction between the choirmaster and the ensemble, the interaction between different voice groups in the ensemble and even among members of the same voice group.

As far as the actual performance is concerned, the emotional context of the words and music might have a significant personal influence on the singers and conductor. The occasion where a performance takes place, the acoustics of the venue, the temperature and humidity might all be factors which have an influence on a performance. The choir’s own critical reaction to their performance, as well as the reaction of the audience, must have an influence.

These aspects of tacit knowledge might be the reason why the teaching of conducting is done in a continuous practicum, where the apprentice learns from the master, because in the practical situation the novice learns not only explicit knowledge, but also tacit knowledge.
On the other hand, the process of learning will become very exclusive if it can only take place on a one-to-one basis in a master and apprentice situation. It is vital that the process of categorising and theorising about gestures continues in order to at least gain better explicit knowledge of the process.

This explicit knowledge should contain at least information with regard to the anatomy of the conductor: Just as a singer needs to have knowledge with regard to the basic concepts of the mechanics of breathing and vocalization, so the conductor must have a working knowledge of anatomical issues: a basic understanding of a balanced posture, bilateral symmetry and vertical alignment is essential in order to have an understanding of posture. A basic knowledge which will help to understand which main muscles groups are responsible for which basic movements is essential, as this knowledge will aid the conductor in understanding the limitations and possibilities of the physical aspects of gestures.

It needs to be said outright that two-dimensional graphic illustrations of conducting patterns alone will not aid the conductor in making good choices in terms of conducting gestures. One cannot rely on illustrations of gestures alone, as was shown in the incomprehensible attempt to indicate the compound quadruple gesture. These complicated gestures should be taught and learnt in stages, always mindful that if this is not done, the two-dimensional representation might add to the confusion, rather than clarifying the gesture.

Hart (1996) has indicated in his thesis that many aspects surrounding gestures have only been studied from a theoretical point of view in the last five decades. The demands which 20th and 21st century composers make on conductors should question the traditional approaches of the functions of the left and right hands. It has become essential that a conductor develops ambidexterity as a skill in order to evoke music effectively from the ensemble in the limited time during rehearsals as preparations for performances.
Despite the notion by some authors that choral conducting gestures employ “standard” gestures, it has been shown in this study that this is simply not the case.

A theory of conducting gestures was presented through the basis of a literature study. Concepts and their definitions have been selected and explained through the answering of research questions.

The method of theory building based on the writings of Estelle Jorgensen was followed. The clarification of the meaning of words; an awareness of the dangers of borrowing terms from different fields without clarifying their meaning exactly; and the exposure of implicit or unclear assumptions by using critical and analytical thinking was employed. Implicit and explicit knowledge was identified, and systematic reasoning was used to ascertain the worth of different authors’ ideas.

This theory aimed to be both descriptive and normative. It is descriptive in the sense that the concepts, issues and relationships around the characteristic aspects of gestures are indicated. It is normative in terms of the suggestions that are offered with regard to issues pertaining to gestures.

The balanced posture of the conductor was pointed out in terms of an explanation of the anatomical position and the concept of the bilateral symmetry of the human body. The importance of the alignment of the shoulders, hips and ankles was mentioned. The importance of the centre of gravity of the conductor’s posture was explained. From an anatomical point of view, the indication of gestures is derived from the anatomical position upwards to a horizontal plane. The palms may be facing each other, with the arms positioned horizontally to the ground. The hands are curved as though they have just greeted someone. When adhering to these elements of posture, the conductor is standing well-balanced and will therefore be able to use his body in such a manner that gestures will be
indicated clearly. A well-balanced conducting posture will reflect a positive stance to the ensemble, conducive for good breathing and singing.

A conducting gesture is defined as a movement executed mainly by the arms and hands of a conductor, aimed at giving the ensemble unambiguous information with regard to the tempo and expressive aspects of the music. A gesture should be indicated in such a manner that it is visible to all members of the ensemble from any possible angle. It should reveal unambiguous clarity of intent; the movement must be informative with regard to all musical aspects. It will be predictable, have constant movement, will be accompanied by breath from the conductor and should be understood by the ensemble.

A number of parameters should be identifiable in order to distinguish a gesture. Gestures are spatially differentiated in terms of both the horizontal and vertical conducting planes. Gestures are mostly indicated as a pendulum-type or inverted pendulum-type movements or combinations of the two. It is possible to use both hands for the indication of gestures, and therefore aspects of ambidexterity are important. Gestures are informative, and this aspect is contained in the preparatory beat. Usually the preparatory beat is accompanied by the breath of the conductor. Preparatory beats mostly establish the ictus as the point of approach and rebound. The ictus will indicate the placement of either the primary, secondary or tertiary beats.

A theoretical explanation of the horizontal and vertical planes was offered in terms of the functions of muscles. The link between the horizontal plane and the establishment of icti was made, and the idea mooted that the horizontal plane is usually the area where the different icti of most of the different beats will be established.

The concept of the “preparatory beats” as “upbeats” as well as “downbeats” was explained. The horizontal level of the ictus is firstly established by the preparatory beat. The establishment of the height of the horizontal plane before the vertical
plane was stressed. With this aspect well understood, one can indicate accents in text by using the preparation for the affected beats.

Pendulum-type movement or inverted pendulum-type movement was described, and reasons were given that the pendulum movement could enhance the horizontal movement, rather than vertical movement of gestures.

The link was explained between the indication of gestures and the breath of the conductor in terms of the conductor’s use of gestures to indicate the level and depth of breathing. The concept of breathing as a bilateral activity was linked to the use of both hands of the conductor.

The importance of gestures with regard to the indication of cues, dynamic changes, passive beats, gradual changes of tempo, fermata and different articulation through the use of both left and right hands was demonstrated. These concepts were explained using the basic prerequisites for the indication of gestures, as well as the parameters earlier identified for the identification of successful gestures shown.

Descriptive and normative aspects surrounding the indication of the simple time four-beat gesture, division of the simple four-beat gesture, the indication of gestures in slow compound time, as well as fast irregular gestures, were all presented. A brief section referring to the use of gestures assisting with the indication of vowels and different consonants was demonstrated. The difficulty of indicating complex three-dimensional gestures with two-dimensional drawings was highlighted.

This thesis, then, sets out to contribute to the formulation of theoretical aspects of choral conducting gestures in an effort to codify and structure knowledge often stored in composer’s minds and experience, in an effort to pass down this knowledge to other “apprentices” in the field.
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Appendix A

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