



Introduction to Ensemble Analysis

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*This is the second release of this document, which was originally entitled **Ensemble Analysis for Cadet and Junior Class**. The content has not been changed significantly, other than to change the emphasis of the document to represent a broader view of the caption.*



The Basics of Ensemble Analysis

What is Ensemble Analysis?

- Analytical, structural and technical
- Examines the designers' **composition**...
- ...and the performers' **excellence** in executing that composition
- Concerned with **design**

Composition

- The process of planning the programme
- The arrangement of forms and other visual elements into a moving design
- The creation of the **artistic form** of the show
- Process produces the **design plan**

**Composition is the “blueprint” upon which
the programme is built...**

...the WHAT of the programme

The Design Plan

- The 30,000ft view of the programme
- Provides the framework for the **orchestration** process
- Decides when, where and what **planned events** occur
- Foundation of the link between the visual programme and the soundtrack

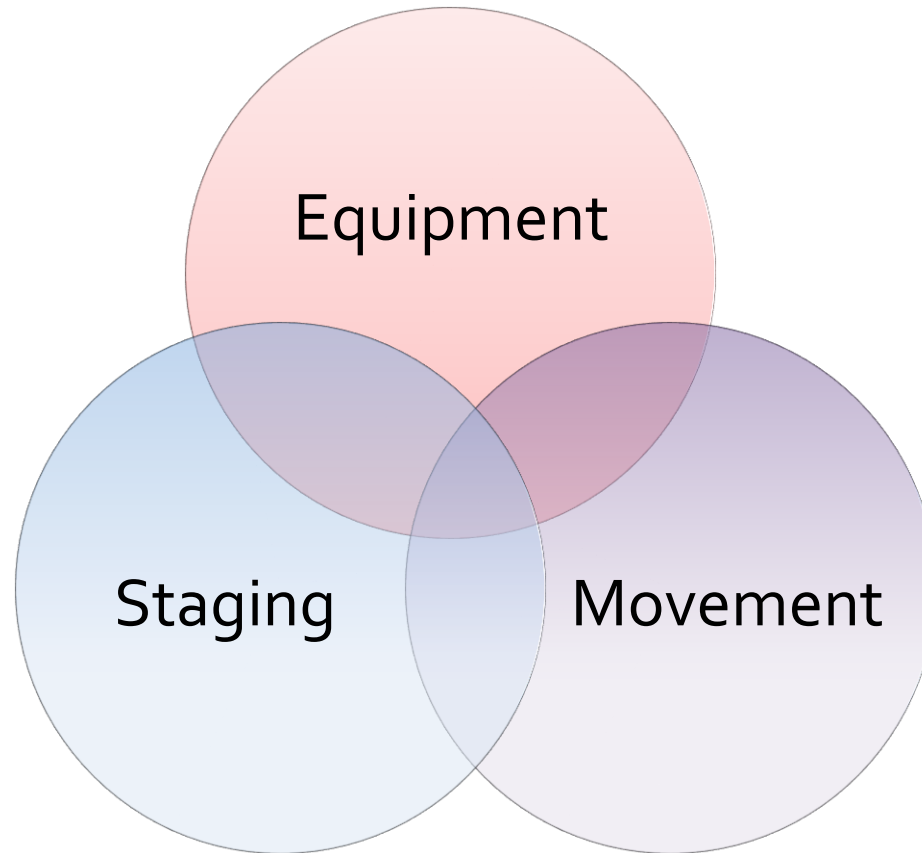
Orchestration

- The details of the programme
- The realisation of **planned events**
- The logical progression of ideas through the programme (**horizontal orchestration**)
- The layering and combination of design options at different points in the programme (**vertical orchestration**)

Planned events

- Key moments in the programme which feature recognizable effort in the **design triad**
- The content of the event (**vertical orchestration**)...
- ...should be in designed development as part of the programme (**horizontal orchestration**)

The Design Triad



Criteria and the Judging System

What is in scope for EA?

- The **mechanics** of the design:
 - The **triad** (Staging, Equipment, Movement)
 - The **visual soundtrack** and **unity** between visual and aural
 - Variety in the design
- Colour as a design tool (**mechanical colour**)
- Technical execution
 - Spacing, line, timing, orientation
 - Adherence to style
- Evidence of training, stamina and recovery skills

What is **not** in scope for EA?

- **General Effect** covers:
 - Theme, effect, emotion, entertainment, mood
 - Quality of evolutions (impact/resolution/climax)
 - Colour as an effect (aesthetic colour)
- **IA (downstairs)** covers:
 - Technical quality of movement/equipment
 - Training for movement/equipment

Assessment Issues for Cadet/Junior

- Early season, we are tolerant of:
 - Incompleteness
 - Slow starts, developing excellence
 - Lack of concentration, stamina
- We are open to the possibility of significant development as the season progresses

Assessment Issues for Cadet/Junior

- Assessing over-composition...

(is the book too difficult/intricate?)

- ...against poor excellence...

(are the performers untrained?)

- ...much harder for judges in these classes

Assessment Issues for Cadet/Junior

- New for 2010: Cadet Class has sub-captions
 - Use this new information wisely!
- Early season: *expect* **What >> How**
- **How > What**: judges will think very hard before making this call!
 - *Definitely* a point to raise in critique!

The Sheet

- Download your class's sheets from the WGUK website
 - These criteria are what we work to "on the day"
 - A lot of information on there!
- Let's walk through an example sheet...
 - We'll take Cadet as an example, but everything applies to Junior as well

Cadet Class

Ensemble Analysis

GUARD Your Cadet Guard
 JUDGE A. N. Other



Cadet Class guards are comprised of an initial level of design and excellence.

Consider who, what and why each event connects and unfolds within the composition.

Composition

Consider the depth and quality of:

Use of design elements in form, body and equipment

Design and orchestration both through time and in layered events

Logic and correctness of design

Reflection or enhancement of the audio including dynamic effort qualities

Characteristics, detail, nuance

Good clear plan!

Consider transitions

Excellence

How successful were the performers as they showed:

Achievement of spacing, line, timing and orientation

Achievement of beginning effort qualities

Adherence to style in equipment, movement or motion

Training, concentration, stamina and recovery

Forms come across well!

Eqp timing a struggle at times

SCORE

72

100

SCORE

65

100

Sub Caption Spreads

Very comparable 1 to 2 tenths	Minor Differences 3 to 4 tenths			Definitive Differences 5 to 9 tenths			Significant Difference 10 & higher					
0 to 6	7	14	22	30	41	51	60	71	81	90	94	97
Seldom Experiences (WEAK) 0 to 6	Rarely Discovers (FAIR) 7 to 29			Sometimes Knows (GOOD) 30 to 59			Frequently Understands (EXCELLENT) 60 to 89			Always Applies (SUPERIOR) 90 to 100		

Total

137

200

Cadet Class

GUARD Your Cadet Guard
 JUDGE A. N. Other



First off, let's take the scores:

What: 72

How: 65

Total: 137

Use the **Box Criteria** at the bottom to interpret

What: mid box 4; How: low box 4

A very adequate start for a mid-field Cadet guard

SCORE						SCORE						Total
72						65						
100						100						200
Sub Caption Spreads												
Very comparable 1 to 2 tenths			Minor Differences 3 to 4 tenths			Definitive Differences 5 to 9 tenths			Significant Difference 10 & higher			
0 to 6			7	14	22	30	41	51	60	71	81	90 94 97
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Eqp timing a struggle at times

- This judge has put some highlight comments on the sheet...
 - Worthy of particular note!
- Some judges will annotate the back of the sheet, some the front, some both, some neither...
- Pay particular attention to the questions the judges consider when ranking and rating

The Sheet – Caption Focus

- At the top of the sheet is the caption focus
 - This is what the judge is thinking about
- Consider **who**, **what** and **why** each **event connects** and **unfolds** within the **composition**.
- Reinforces that we are talking about design, *particularly* logic, motivation and development

The Sheet – Composition

Consider the depth and quality of...

- Use of design elements in form, body and equipment
 - Variety and motif, appropriateness
- Design and orchestration both through time and in layered events
 - Is the design plan sound? Orchestration, use of the triad

The Sheet – Composition

Consider the depth and quality of...

- Logic and correctness of design
 - Does the programme “flow”? Are there breaks? Do transitions work?
- Reflection or enhancement of the audio, including dynamic effort qualities
 - Is there unity between the visual and the aural? Is the sum more than its parts? Voicing, texture, rhythm, pulse...

The Sheet – Composition

Consider the depth and quality of...

- Characteristics, detail, nuance
 - Are there (*in Cadet/Junior: a limited amount of*) fine details? Breath, layering of triad, motif, pacing
 - Also: does the programme suggest character? Is that reflected in the design? (Think “textural words” over the whole programme: soft, hard, quiet, loud, flowing, staccato...)

The Sheet – Excellence

How successful were the performers as they showed:

- Achievement of spacing, line, timing and orientation
 - Form, ensemble responsibilities, intervals, route paths, facings
- Achievement of beginning effort qualities
 - Understanding of the programme, challenges of triad layering where offered

The Sheet – Excellence

How successful were the performers as they showed:

- Adherence to style in equipment, movement or motion
 - Does the ensemble look the same?
 - *EA doesn't concern technique – if they are all doing the same thing the same way, it's good!*
 - Some reference to visual musicality – does the way the programme is presented “make sense”, do performers understand the programme?

The Sheet – Excellence

How successful were the performers as they showed:

- Training, concentration, stamina and recovery
 - Technical responsibilities, timing, initiations, memorization, stability and centering
 - Stamina: is the achievement level through the entire programme constant, do performers lose precision later in the programme?
 - Recovery: if errors occur, how adept are performers at “getting back in” to the programme?

The Bottom Line...

- **Composition + Excellence = Achievement**
- In our ranking and rating decisions, the “bottom line” ranking and rating reflects:

WHO ACHIEVED MORE?

(You may also have heard this called **derived achievement**)

Expectations of Designers and Performers

Design Expectations

- Understand and apply the composing process
 - Counts, rhythm, pulse inform planned events
- Put across good design above all
 - Not necessarily looking for a masterpiece!
- Understand orchestration and unity
 - Simple voicings – soundtrack choice plays a part!
- Don't be too intricate in the younger classes
 - Looking for solid foundations, not ornate columns and gables

Design Expectations for Cadet & Junior Class

- Simple but effective staging
 - Complex staging not required for success
 - >3 simultaneous stages: probably unwise!
- Explore the triad
 - Set-move-set completely acceptable
 - Successful, convincing layering of 2 elems of triad
 - Multiple layering of 3 elems of triad: only rarely in Junior

Design Expectations for Cadet & Junior Class

- Explore dynamic effort
- One or two simultaneous ideas are good!
 - Leave the random-acts-of-colourguard to A and Open!
- Low risk is good!
 - No high risk tosses or complex interactions involving equipment in these classes!
 - Only thing this will get you is concern and potentially annoyance from the judge!

Key points

- Design smartly
 - Don't be "intricate" or "clever"
- Design achievably
 - Know your kids!
 - Set them up for success with a book they can achieve and potentially excel in performing
- Make it enjoyable!
 - Cadet and Junior shows in particular should be widely accessible
 - No high-minded concepts, make it something the performers understand!



Critique

Critique – What is it?

- *Critique will return at some competitions in 2010*
- Two-way discussion between judges and instructors after the performance
- A learning experience
 - Instructors get insight into the judging process
 - Judges get insight into the design, planning and rehearsal process

Critique – Ground Rules

- ***Above all: Be professional***
 - Critique is usually the end of a long day
 - Your judges may have had to judge 20 or so other guards as well as yours
 - You may be annoyed if you feel your guard got “the wrong result” – please don’t take out your frustrations on the judges. Use the time to find out why the judges decided the way they did, and how to make best use of their comments.
 - ***We all value and enjoy this activity, and that’s why we’re involved in it.***

Critique – Ground Rules

- Keep to time
 - There's never enough time, but there may well be 20 other instructors who want to see us before we (and they!) can go home too
 - If it is a "booked critique", please turn up on time
- We talk about *your* guard
 - We're not going to talk about other guards' strengths and weaknesses, so please don't ask

Critique – What to expect...

- Listen to your tapes before coming to critique
 - Sometimes the schedule doesn't allow – we understand
- Instructor-led dialogue
 - You've (hopefully) heard us talk – now it's your turn!
- Come with an open mind
 - Sometimes we lose the “wood for the trees” in the programme we've written and know intimately

