

The Art and Science of Memorizing Music

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We have all had students experience memory problems during a performance in a piece that we thought was securely memorized. Memorizing music is a challenge for many of us, students and professionals alike, and fear of memory slips is often a major factor in performance anxiety.

Neuroscientists and cognitive psychologists have discovered a great deal in the past two decades about the brain mechanisms underlying memory, and it turns out that much of what we think we know about learning and memory is wrong. So what do we need to know to help our students - and ourselves - feel more secure about our memory and therefore more confident about performing?

This session will cover:

- How the brain wires itself and how it changes as we learn - *neuroplasticity*
- How learning and memory are related
- Why motor memory, contrary to what most of us have been taught, is extremely important – as are auditory and visual memory
- The impact of neuroplasticity on performance anxiety
- The best ways to practice to ensure reliable learning, memory, and performance

Why is memorizing a science and an art?

Neuroscientists have discovered how the brain wires itself as we learn. That's hard science. Cognitive psychologists have explored the best ways to study or practice to promote learning. That's behavioral science. But how we utilize those scientific discoveries – how we design creative ways to practice that will allow us freedom and security in performance to express what we want to say – that's art.

I blog about neuroscience and music at [The Musician's Brain](http://www.themusiciansbrain.com). Prior to this session, I will post an expanded handout on the blogsite with links to articles, books, websites, and videos. Please go to the site, click on **Links** in the menu, and scroll to **MTNA 2017**. The page that opens will be a more complete handout for this session. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, either through the blogsite or at svard@bucknell.edu

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