

Metaphor Your Music

By Tom Gibson
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I intend to share the Introduction and first 2 Chapters of this book with my Podcast viewers. The book, when published, will have quite a few more chapters. I have nearly completed it, and it will be sent for publication in the near future, I sincerely hope. Obviously, I would love for you to share these excerpts as freely as you wish. Thank you all. Trombone Love

INTRODUCTION

Sometime around my junior year of high school, my Mom gave me a book. I still have it. It's called "Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow". It's a great book and it changed my life. I don't believe I ever got deeper than 10 pages into it (kind of like your BlazeVich Clef Studies book, I bet). In this case, though, upon reading the Title page and Introductory remarks, the point was made. I got it. I didn't need layers of explanation or lengthy discussion. I got it. I believed it. I'd find a way to live it. The end. As I say, it's a great book and it changed my life. I recommend buying it...at least the outer cover.

I say that partially in jest and I certainly don't wish to disparage the author. I mention it in reference to this book right here. The one that you are now holding, or "app" ing, or iPad-ing. I'm not naïve enough to assume that everybody's gonna make it to the end of this book. Yet, if any value is to be had in reading it, I know that should come without layers of clarification and lengthy discussion. It should come very quickly, (if not on the Title page) on the heels of a few very brief introductory remarks.

To that end, my name is Tom Gibson. I am a trombone player (and teacher) by trade. I am originally from Pittsburgh, PA, which I love, and I presently live outside of Atlanta, GA, which I love.

Now, then:

If you allow your Music to assume more metaphorical properties, you are going to enjoy it more fully. Further, if you are a creator of music, and you learn to project metaphor through your instrument, you will prosper in every definable sense.

There it is. That's all I got. If your Mom bought you this book, give her a big hug and a kiss for me, please. You shouldn't feel obligated to read any further, but you'd be wise to ponder that last paragraph. It's not an original concept, bringing metaphor to music, just as "Do What You Want, The Money Will Follow" was nothing new, right? In that sense, this book isn't going to break new ground....it might simply be pulling some weeds; mowing the grass; preparing the soil; exposing some wild flowers. (Those are

metaphors. As Aristotle knew, metaphors are an excellent mode of communication, especially for musicians.)

I'm writing this for myself and my students, primarily. After many discussions and too many excuses, I'm finally getting around to codifying some of my pedagogical concepts. I'm finally going to spell out a few of my perspectives on performance. When it comes to pedagogy and performance, I've done quite a bit of both to good and ill effect. One thing's for sure: I have amassed, mostly in my head, a pile of empirical data. I'll do my best to lay it out here in a way that might benefit you if you're seeking a career as either a player or teacher (or, indeed, the hybrid existence I love so dearly).

As the title suggests, I'm going to talk quite a bit about bringing metaphor into your music, and in so doing improving nearly every aspect of your musical life. There are two other very fundamental principles to good music making that I need to illuminate before the majority of readers have tossed this book aside:

- GET VERY COMFORTABLE IN YOUR OWN SKIN AND FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR SOUND

- STAY FULLY PRESENT IN THE MOMENT

We have all probably seen many derivations of these ancient, and profoundly instructive, concepts. "Be in the NOW" is an oft-heard phrase. Often heard, but how often observed? It's really challenging to stay fully engaged in each and every moment. It cannot be denied, though, that happiness lives there. Regret, anxiety, worry....are all outside the NOW. All perceived stressors are, in fact. They simply dissolve in the moment. This begins to put the mind and body in the proper alignment for making good music. As I have come to experience it, music's rewards are vast for the welcoming spirit. That is, a spirit that remains fully open to experience. Not least among these rewards is the love shared and friendship felt in a collective musical performance. I don't take those occurrences for granted like I once did. Perhaps I'm getting wiser, I'm certainly getting older, but I like to believe that I'm developing more and more a talent for staying in the moment. At least that's my story and I'm sticking to it. And, I would like to thank my many colleagues, students, and mentors that have contributed to the shaping of these perspectives. I could not be more fortunate, nor more blessed.

So, that concludes our introductory remarks. If you care to read more, I'm about to add gratuitous layers of clarification and some lengthy discussions. If you've gotten what you came for, much like I did with Mom's book, I have certainly enjoyed our time together. Good luck with your music and all you choose to do with it!

Now, then, Chapter 1.....