

A NOTE ABOUT THE SAITO TECHNIQUE: Clarity in conducting motions

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Although a periodic motion, such as a circle made at an even speed, can show the tempo by the amount of time it takes for one revolution, no one place in the motion is sufficiently clear to create a beat-point (Point). The addition of acceleration into the Point (Tengo) and deceleration after it (Tenzen) defines the Point clearly. If we make the motion linear rather than circular, and use acceleration and deceleration we can create meter patterns with clear Points. Since the arm will fall naturally if we let it, we can use less exertion to show the Point if it is at the bottom of the motion. The notion of something falling to a place makes common sense and therefore is easily understood. The Point exists where the arm is moving fastest and the Secondary Point exists where the arm is moving slowest. The motion between one Point and the Secondary Point which follows, allows the players to anticipate the next Point. Conductors must remember that the players are reading printed music and have expectations about how it should be performed based upon the notation. Because the performers know the tempo, metre and subdivision of the music they expect the conductor to be in a particular place at a particular point in time if the tempo is to remain steady. The time-place relationship is essential to clarity in conducting motion.

1. Several factors affect the clarity of the Point. The Point can be shown by:
 - a) **DIRECTION CHANGE:** where and when the direction of the motion is changed.
 - b) **SPEED CHANGE:** when and where the deceleration follows the acceleration of the motion.
 - c) **STOP-GO:** a bursting motion from a complete stop at exactly the time or shortly after the players expect the Point to occur shows the Point.

NOTE: Although precise placement of Points in the field of beat is important, it alone will not make the Points sufficiently clear.

2. Using clear motions a conductor can indicate the:

- a) attack,
- b) envelope or sustaining quality of the pitch,
- c) release

and suggest the:

- d) timbre, character, mood, energy and intensity of the sound

3. The following chart shows the relationship of conducting motion to the pulse or beat of the music. (The items should be vertically aligned.)

PREP		BEAT		BEAT
MOTION	Secondary	ONE	Secondary	TWO
	point	Point	point	Point
	Tengo	Tenzen	Tengo	Tenzen
	(after point	(before point)	(after point)	(before point)
	motion)			(after point)

4. The conductor must indicate the desired attack before the Point. This is accomplished by the:

- a) rate of acceleration of the arm
- b) size of the motion
- c) direction of the motion
- d) timing of the motion (indicated by (a) and (b) above) relative to the anticipation of the players.

5. INTO-POINT motions are made by accelerating the arm to the Point and decelerating the arm after the Point. This motion resembles that of a pendulum or of someone beating a drum.

slow to fast	<Point>	fast to slow
accelerate		decelerate

6. FROM-POINT motions are made with a sudden burst of the arm from a complete stop. From-Point motion must be "prepared". The Point is prepared by stopping the arm exactly on the beat subdivision of the beat before the Point, i.e. in 2/4 time the arm would stop on the second half of the beat (the count "and") and then burst exactly on the next pulse. Similarly, in 6/8 time the arm stops and starts on the appropriate third of the beat. Like the archer who pulls his bow farther to shoot farther, the size and energy of the stopping motion indicates the weight of the attack to follow.

2	ONE	AND	TWO	AND
4	Burst, decelerate	stop:	Burst	stop:
		remain		remain
		motionless		motionless

7. Generally, if and when the arm stops, the sound stops.

8. Beat-points are easier to make and to read if they are placed on an imaginary line at waist level. Points placed elsewhere, by contrast, can have a special meaning.