

Noise Improvisation

Music doesn't always have to be notes. I believe the true definition of music is organized sound. This lesson teaches the students to deconstruct the idea of "music" and expand their conception of it by using their instruments in new and creative ways.

This lesson is influenced by two genres of music: one being free avant-garde jazz and the other being the art of the hip-hop DJ. I ask my students to create a new sound on their instrument by using to make noise without "playing" it in the traditional sense.

Some examples my students have come up with: a trumpet player flicking the end of his bell to make a 'ting' sound, or a saxophone player smacking at his keys to make a ticking sound.

As a conductor I act as a hip-hop DJ. Once the students have picked a sound, I have them to "loop" it (continue the sound in a consistent rhythm). I then signal different students to come in and out, creating a song. After we've gotten a song going, I have a student come up and conduct. I like to start with a simple rhythm and then slowly queue in the rest of the band.

Once everyone has entered it becomes a very avant-garde sound. The students love the freedom of this exercise, and it gives them a great opportunity to explore their instrument in another light.

