

Memorising Music

Music

Four kinds of memory, and why relying on only one fails on stage.

The fragile kinds

- Muscle memory — fast to build, first to fail
- Aural memory — you know how it goes
- Both work until something interrupts them
- Neither can restart from the middle

The robust kinds

- Visual — you can see the page
- Analytical — you know the harmony and structure
- Both survive a stumble
- Both let you restart from any section

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Test it by starting from bar 33, or from any rehearsal mark, cold. If you cannot, you have only muscle memory.

Memorise away from the instrument as well. If you can hear and name it in your head, it is genuinely learnt.