

Strategies for memorization (by Williamon 2004)

One important aspect of learning something by heart is the ability to translate visual information into imaginary sound. This is exactly what all imagery exercises train. This process is called visualization and it is recommended when learning something by heart, the musician uses the score and using his *inner ear* before playing it on the instrument.

Effective memorization strategies are based on the following:

- Analyzing the music you are to memorize in order to understand and organize it, using conceptual memory as an overarching framework.
- Chunk the music and practice it in small sections, from one structural boundary to the next, increasing the size of the chunks as you become more familiar with the music.
- Use rote, kinesthetic memory in conjunction with either visual or aural memory or both

Two general suggestions:

1. Little and often is a better strategy than trying to memorize in just one or two extended sessions
2. There are strategies that can be used in the final stages of preparing to give a performance from memory:
 - a. *State-dependence*: learning to control your frame of mind so that you can conjure up the same sense of exhilaration when you are practicing as when you are actually performing
 - b. *Context-dependent learning*: practicing in the room or on the stage where the performance is to take place