

## Julie Landsman: On Getting into the Zone and Developing Trust in Your Playing

### Description

I think most string players would have to admit that at some point in their lives, they showed up for an orchestra rehearsal less prepared than they'd like to be.

At least, I certainly remember the week during my first big summer festival when I felt overwhelmed by the part to [Bartók's Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta](#), and "hid" in the section a bit during rehearsals (and ok, part of the concert too).

Not one of my prouder weeks, but something a string player can get away with at times. But if you play an instrument like the french horn, it's not so easy to hide! People notice if you come in late, crack a note, rush, or hesitate at the wrong time.

So I imagine it takes more than a little courage to sit in the wind/brass/percussion section of an orchestra and know that right or wrong, you're just going to have to go for it.

Which of course is easier said than done! So...are these folks just naturally more courageous than the rest of us? Or is this kind of fearlessness a skill? Something that one can develop with the right kind of practice?

### Meet Julie Landsman

Julie Landsman played principal horn in the Met Opera Orchestra for 25 years (BTW, the story of her winning audition was featured in Malcolm Gladwell's book [Blink](#)), and has been an influential teacher to a generation of horn players.

In this ~32-minute chat, we'll explore:

- Why she subdivides 100% of the time – and how this relates to more accurate and effortless playing( 1:26)
- How Julie works on developing trust on stage (8:06)
- The importance of musical thinking vs. physical thinking (12:27)
- How Julie learned to overcome her difficulties with entrances, using a “countdown” (13:50)
- Practice mode vs. performance mode, and the things Julie focuses on in the practice room and on stage (20:29)
- The way in which audiences are “mind readers” (25:57)
- Visualization, and how this fits into playing in such a way that it can bring an audience to tears (27:23 )
- How talent and hard work fit into achieving success (30:55)

## Notes

[1] The very first thing in this chat was a reference to the videos Julie produced on the Caruso method. ( 1:07) For more about this, check out Julie’s instructional video series:

- [The Caruso Method](#) @Julie Landsman

### Date Created

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