

A Review of the Play with a Pro, Emmanuel Pahud Series - Part 3 of 3: Masterclasses

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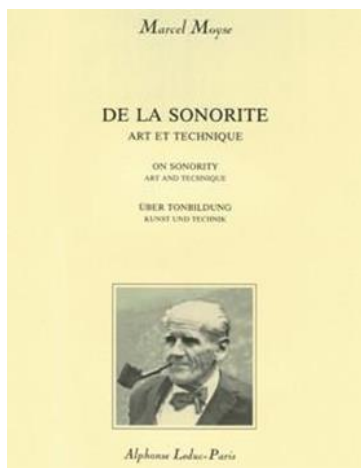
This resource costs a low \$99.99 for lifetime access, but is **available as a member benefit** from the [National Flute Association](#) at a 30% discount (access via your NFA account for this deal).

Fundamentals

Here we will finish our exploration of Emanuel Pahud’s “[Play with a Pro](#)” package. As a reminder, Pahud offers us more than 8 hours of HD-quality instructional videos which cover all vital aspects of flute playing. Broken into three main categories, this online resource is a priceless gem for students, teachers, or anyone curious about how Pahud thinks about basics, masterworks, and orchestral excerpts. It also includes (and I would highly recommend watching), an extensive interview with Pahud that clocks in at over an hour.

1. *Breathing and Blowing*
2. *Vibrato*
3. *Tonguing*
4. *Double and Triple Tonguing*
5. *Flute Position and Embouchure*
6. *Intonation*

In the last two articles, we looked at the Orchestral Studies and Masterclass portions. In this final section, we will look over Pahud’s Fundamentals videos. This section is broken into six chapters: Breathing & Blowing, Vibrato, Tonguing, Double and Triple Tonguing, Flute Position & Embouchure, and Intonation.



We start with Breathing and Blowing, the longest of this section’s videos at about 13 minutes. He immediately takes us into Marcel Moyse’s *De La Sonorite*, a well-known flute study book which emphasizes tone development and breathing, turning what is a simple exercise (long chromatic notes) into something truly musical. Pahud guides us to play for 8 beats but take a full 4 beats between, allowing us to fully breath.

And how do we breathe? We must breathe as deeply as possible, Pahud tells us. Diaphragm aside, he discusses the differing pressures between the octaves, breathing in like filling a balloon, and controlling how much air comes out.

The lower jaw becomes paramount in the initial inhale, and a little spot between the eyes is the focus when blowing.

A favorite quote? “This is not a lip instrument; this is a wind instrument.” How true!

Vibrato is one of the mysteries of flute playing, even Pahud admits as much. We must strive, he points out, to have vibrato where it makes sense. Is the part rhythmical, or melodic? Melodic phrases make vibrato ubiquitous. But rhythmic sections? Pahud tells us we can entirely go without! The trick, as always, is determining what is melodic and what is rhythmic, something I would only trust to a good teacher. In terms of production, he has several very good ideas about integrating the vibrato into the sound based on human physiology (tongue, mouth, throat). This section is both aurally inspiring and practically useful.

The next sections may seem to some to flip articulation almost on its head. In dealing with single, double, and triple tonguing, Pahud reminds us that only the air really determines the length of a note. The tongue surfs the air, providing sound and, more importantly, resonance. Where to tongue depends on the passage and the register. But before all else comes the air. Double and triple tonguing? Less about the tongue and more about the air. Extreme passages? It’s all about the...well, you get the idea.

Positioning the flute is, I think, one of the most important sections of the six. Pahud simplifies the process of positioning the flute and ensures that this process is the as natural as possible. As any teacher knows, having a natural balance of the instrument is essential, without undue tension or stress. Pahud’s focus on the stability of the embouchure is both refreshing and a good reminder.



Finally, intonation. Why do flutes play sharp up high and flat down low? Pahud tells us that undue tension is the culprit. Something high and exciting? We turn up the vibrato, increase the air, and maybe even increase the lip pressure. All this combines to give us some extremely sharp notes. Speed, pressure, and volume of air all have an effect on intonation.

Practice includes daily *De La Sonorite* and Taffanel & Gaubert’s EJ4 exercises. Learning and practicing arpeggios and scales helps us hear and understand the intervals that are accurate. Pahud reminds us (more than once) that these daily exercises are just that: exercises to be practiced every day.

Of all the 8 hours of video, these 6 videos are, for me, the most inspiring and informative of the entire package. Each video is less than 15 minutes, so the entire set is easily watched in an afternoon. Highly recommended.



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