

Art... Music ... Physics ... Acting ... and **GOLF?**

By Michael Hebron, PGA Master Professional

My goal as a golf instructor is simply to do my best to help people learn how to get more enjoyment from their golf. Over time, I came to realize that instruction information and suggestions can come in many forms, using many different methods.

Human beings have been around for a long time, and from the time of the caveman up to the present day computer sciences, the world has gone through many changes that have improved our quality of life.

Every idea, invention, and breakthrough that has led to modern day thinking and conveniences has used the exact same fundamental elements for its foundation. This article is going to suggest that what has made other disciplines (i.e. art, music, physics, acting) work, can also improve your golf.

At first glance, information from different disciplines may appear to have little in common with each other. So how in the

world could this kind of information help anyone's golf game and swing? I believe it can.

ART we all know has its origin in the artist's imagination and is meant to create emotion and illusions. *Art is the art of using space.*

MUSIC is the structure of sounds called notes, in a flow of time called rhythm. *Music is the art of managing time and sound.*

PHYSICS is an exact science that uses relationships between quantifiable properties to explain illusions and what happens. *Physics is the art of exact.*

ACTING is the physical and mental expression of someone else's thoughts and ideas to create and tell stories. *Acting is the art of recreation.*

GOLF has some of all four of these disciplines, and it's going to help your game to recognize the fundamental elements of each, along with the elements that are common in all of them. *Golf is the art of managing images, illusions, time, space, and sequencing.*

What's Common

In any sound approach to playing the game, golfers are using mental pictures, their imagination, depth perception, and the illusions the course presents (sounds like *art* to me).

In sound swings, the relationship of the parts to each other (body, arms, hands, club) are all quantifiable and organized to be exact and repeatable (sounds like *physics* to me).

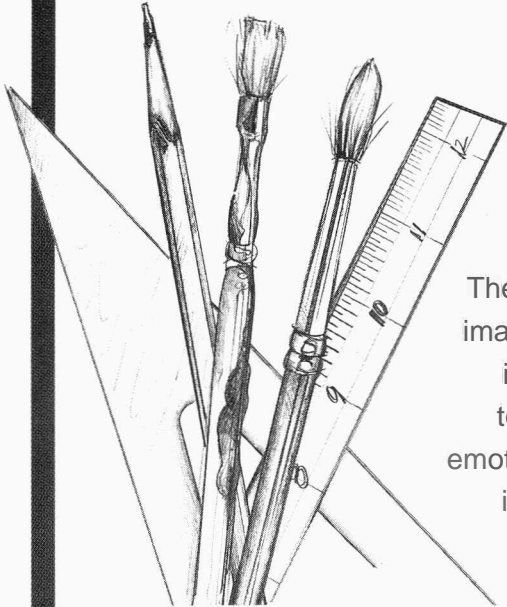
Sound swings have a rhythm and timing to them which unsound swings do not. It's also a fact that short and long putts, short and long iron swings, fairway woods and drive swings all take the same amount of time from take-away to impact (sounds like *music* to me).

Good players have the ability to take instructors' information and suggestions and then recreate the suggestions physically (sounds like *acting* to me).

Successful players with sound swings use their imagination, have repeatable swings, and

ART

The Art of Using Space



The artist's imagination is meant to create emotion and illusions.

PHYSICS

The Art of Exact

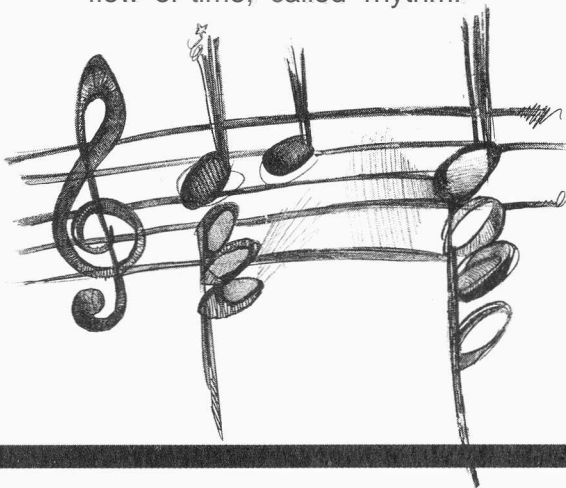
$$E=MC^2$$

An exact science that uses relationships between quantifiable properties to explain illusions and what happens.

MUSIC

The Art of Managing Time and Sound

The structure of sounds, called notes, in a flow of time, called rhythm.



ACTING

The Art of Recreation

The physical and mental expression of someone else's thoughts and ideas to create and tell stories.



have good timing and rhythm, based on recreating mental information physically (sounds like *art, music, physics, and acting* to me).

Space, Sequence, and Time

Earlier, I said that over time the ideas and breakthroughs that have led to modern day thinking and conveniences all had the same elements in their foundation, and therefore, the dimensions of space, sequence, and time.

As you can see, we can learn to improve our golf by doing what takes place in other disciplines. For something to work, it must take place in the proper amount of space, in the correct sequence, and, of course, in the proper time frame.

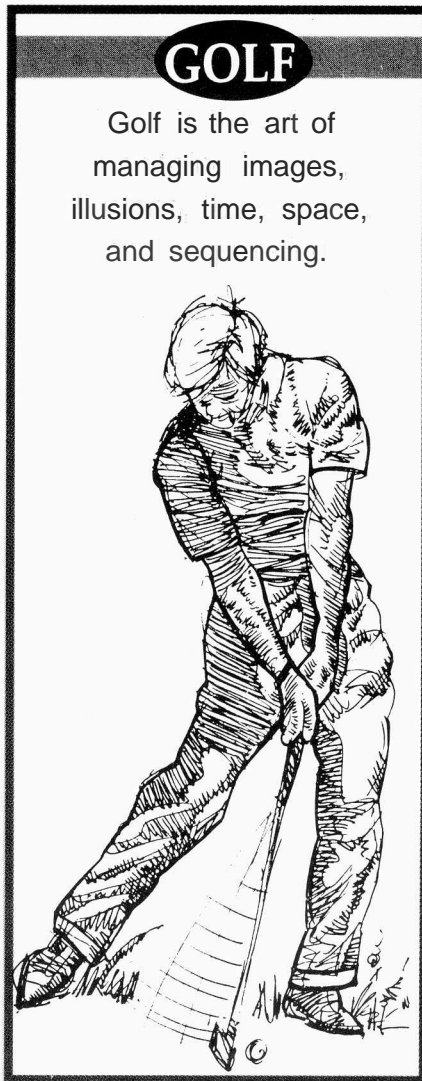
For your golf swing to reach its potential, it must take place in a space that does not cause you to lose your balance. It should use a sequence that keeps the body ahead of the arms, the arms ahead of the hands, and the hands ahead of the club, and at a speed which does not cause a loss of rhythm through impact.

Purpose of the Game

Why do people play golf? Someone's reasons for playing could be one or all of the following: to have fun; to get some exercise; to enjoy the great outdoors; to have companionship of others; to challenge the course and the game; and also to compete with ourselves and others.

Like all the disciplines mentioned earlier, fun, exercise, companionship, challenges, and competition are all related and partners in making golf what some believe to be the greatest game of all.

Golf can be both simple and difficult. No amount of ignor-



Golf is the art of managing images, illusions, time, space, and sequencing.

ance could stop someone from moving a ball from the first tee onto the green and into the hole; that is simple. But it becomes much more difficult to do this in three or four strokes, and on a regular basis.

To have "fun" and "difficult" on the same list would seem to make for strange partners, but in the game of golf, they are close relatives. Much like art, physics, music and acting, they are related in some way.

At times, our goals, and what we expect from our golf, are difficult challenges. But if the path or plan you are using to get to your golfing goals is not based on fun, you may never arrive or achieve those goals.

I've had the pleasure of being involved with golf and all levels of players (men and women touring professionals, to the high and low handicap club golfer) for a long time, and I have noticed that the successful player's real satisfaction comes from the journey and not the trophy.

If you are off your game, do your best to enjoy the great outdoors, the companionship of your fellow golfers, and just say to yourself you are out for some exercise, and take what the game gives you for awhile. Do not go out and try for a score. Just take what comes and you may see some improvement.

Any time and effort needed to see progress in golf, or any other discipline for that matter, must be fun, even when learning is difficult. If it is not fun, you must find a different approach.

While "fun" and "difficult" are often seen as polar opposites (as are art and physics), you will make progress a real possibility by finding a way to work on your game that is always fun for you. Play games on the putting green. Try to chip balls into the hole. Play your golf course on your range. Start by seeing yourself on the first tee; now hit your tee shot. Now picture what your next shot will be and use the appropriate club and swing. Take out your putter if you feel you are on the green, or chip up to the hole if you did not hit the green. Now do this for all eighteen holes and have some fun while you are making progress.

Acting

In closing, I would like to talk about the famous child star, and award-winning director, Ron Howard. He said, "Most child actors are not taught how to act, they are sort of taught how to perform, somewhat like trained animals are taught."

GOLF INSTRUCTION

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--He was elected a PGA Master Professional December 23, 1985, and is the 1991 National PGA Teacher of the Year.

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He went on to say he was fortunate to have a dad who was an actor and he taught him to think about what he was doing, so he was actually learning a craft. (How many golfers can say that about their approach to golf?)

"I understood what I was doing, and gained confidence," continued Howard. "I was not just performing like a trained animal. I was always working toward something. I was excellent and comfortable." (How many golfers can say that about their approach to golf?)

"Other kid actors may have resented what they were made to do, but I always enjoyed it. I understood, and I was growing.

"I saw passion and commitment in my dad's approach to his acting, his willingness to dig," concluded Howard. (How many golfers can say that about their game?) ()