Memory Technique:

I've had great opportunities to work with legendary musicians in my lifetime. Here's a technique many of them use for memorization. Use a timing device to be efficient with your time and drive the goal. Learning in a heightened state helps the brain produce the best possible conditions for learning.

a. Take your score away from your instrument and put it on a surface nearby where you can study it. Do not do this technique while seated at the piano or while holding your instrument.
b. Take a chunk such as one or more bars of a work and divide it off visually from the rest of the score (use blank paper to do this). This creates a window of focus for the brain.
c. Give yourself a time unit from of thirty seconds to two minutes to study this score. While you study it:
    1. Close your eyes and try to see the printed score. Open your eyes and do this three times more. Take at least 15-30 seconds each time; don't rush!
    2. Next close your eyes and try to hear the chunk. Repeat this three times.
    3. Next close your eyes and imagine yourself playing this music. See your body in motion including your hands and try to hear the music at the same time.
d. Go to your instrument and try to play this "chunk" by memory.
e. If you have difficulty, try this whole process again for a maximum of three times. If you are not accomplishing your goal, try this technique in the next practice session. The images and your "internal ear" will get stronger as you repeat this process.

Have a strong memory requires discipline and repetition. It is like exercising a muscle. Be patient. Don't jump to the conclusion that this "just doesn't work for you". Give it some weeks and months. You will learn and memorize music much quicker than you could have imagined. Log your progress in your practice journal. (If you don't have one of these on your piano, get one!).

Many musicians rely heavily on their visual memory in combination with their inner aural memory. Remember, tactile/kinethetic memory is also important but tends to be the least reliable if not reinforced with other types of memory.