teaching music
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From Public School to Private School (AND VICE VERSA)

SAVING STRINGS IN SYRACUSE

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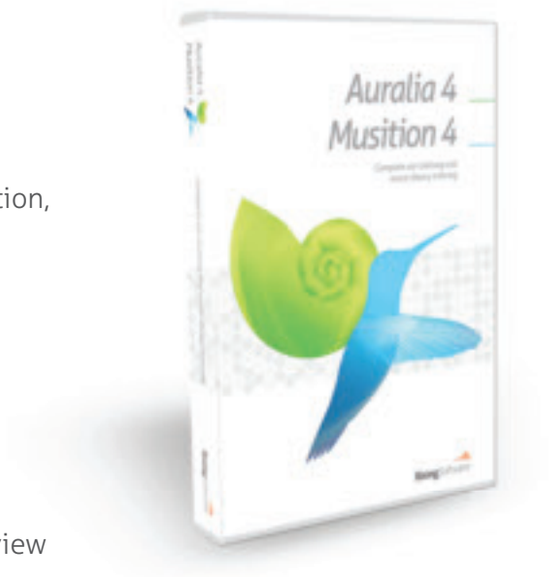

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Help your students enter the NSBA Student Electronic Music Composition Talent Search

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letters

No Deposit in California

I read with interest the article "No Deposit, No Ritornello" (Classrooms, November 2011). It led me to reminisce about the "good, old days" here in California. In 35 years of teaching, our district never charged a student to use an instrument. Currently, about 98% of my students use district-owned instruments. The district only pushes for reimbursement when an instrument is lost, stolen, or damaged beyond normal use—when, for example, a parent backs her car over the violin case or a father rips the lead pipe off a trumpet while trying to pull the mouthpiece. In this economic climate, new instruments are rare.

We used to charge a flat $20 lab fee for the year. Then about 2006, our new principal confronted me about the lab fees. Around the same time, the ramifications of the Williams Act, the settlement of the court case Williams v. California, went into effect. The California Department of Education's website explains the case this way: "The basis of the lawsuit was that the agencies failed to provide public school students with equal access to instructional materials, safe and decent school facilities, and qualified teachers."

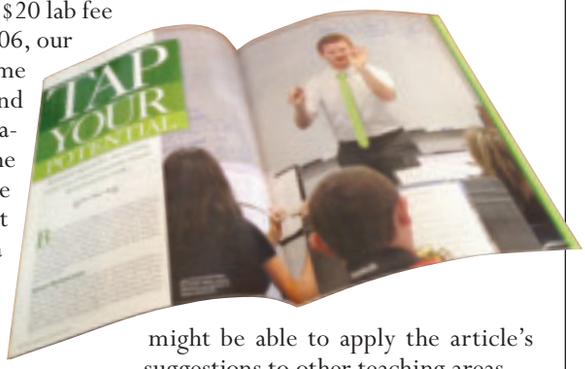
The results of the "equal access to instructional materials" clause are far-reaching. I can only charge for "consumables," e.g., reeds, valve oil, rosin, marching shoes, or food for competitions. I stretch the matter by stating that my orchestra and concert band students must buy an étude book, which they keep, to supplement their ensemble experience. Even then, some balk. Schools that charge for marching band, even claiming it's a donation, run the risk of lawsuit.

I applaud the rental program in Illinois. Just don't expect to see it anywhere in California anytime soon.

—Robin Wilmer, *bands and orchestra director, Rosemont High School, Sacramento, California*

New Potential

I took great joy in reading Susan Poliniak's "Tap Your Potential" (November 2011). While it was reaffirming to discover that the educators interviewed in the story find merit in some rehearsal practices I already employ (particularly the "silent rehearsal" strategy), I also appreciated how I might be able to apply the article's suggestions to other teaching areas.



Specifically, I found the correlation between student listening habits and tone quality to be particularly poignant. I think the concept can be applied to style as well. For me, this dilemma manifests itself most often in jazz band, where students are wont to take any sight-reading exercise and interpret it with a rock or hip-hop aesthetic. As a poll I took in rehearsal indicated, very few of my students were listening to jazz music with any regularity outside of school. I can readily see how both tone quality and stylistic interpretation can be positively affected by more varied listening experiences in rehearsal. Living and teaching in the age of YouTube, iTunes, and Spotify makes this mission seem all the more achievable.

—Adam M. Costa, *Briscoe Middle School, Beverly, Massachusetts*

@ Write to us

Send your thoughts to *lindab@nafme.org* or fax a letter to 703-860-9027. Letters are edited for style and to fit available space.

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For a listing of the NAfME National Executive Board, please see our website: nafme.org.

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By Rosalind C. Fehr, Rozf@nafme.org

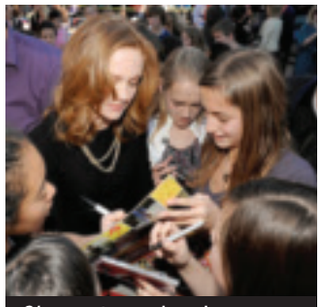
Students from Culver City Middle School in Culver City, California, celebrate their *Glee* Give a Note prize.

Glee Give a Note Campaign Awards $1 Million to At-Risk Schools

After a three-month campaign and more than one million votes cast online, Twentieth Century Fox Television, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, and the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) announced the winners for the "*Glee* Give a Note" campaign. Seventy-three schools received grants totaling $1,000,000.

The three grand-prize winning schools are: P.S. 48 Joseph R. Drake in the Bronx, New York; Clark Montessori Junior and High School in Cincinnati, Ohio; and Phil Campbell High School in Phil Campbell, Alabama. Each school was awarded $50,000 for its music and arts program.

Also, 10 first-place prize grants of $25,000 and 60 second-place prize grants of $10,000 were awarded to 70 other schools nationwide to help save struggling music programs.



Glee cast member Jayma Mays signs autographs at the Culver City presentation.

As the economy continues to stumble, school music and fine arts classes are the first to feel the impact with drastic budget cuts and elimination of departments. The "*Glee* Give a Note" campaign aimed to soften the blow and reignite public passion for supporting student arts programs and the benefits they provide to students.

"*Glee* has always been about the importance of arts education, and [show co-creators] Brad [Falchuk], Ian [Brennan], and I have felt strongly from the beginning that the show has a responsibility to give back," commented *Glee* co-creator and executive producer Ryan Murphy.

"We congratulate the winners and want the thousands of students across the country who submitted to know how impressed we were with their passion and talent. Music programs were incredibly important to me growing up, and we hope that our show and initiatives like 'Give a Note' continue to demonstrate how much they mean to our kids," Murphy said.

Michael A. Butera, NAfME executive director, said, "Music education plays such a critical role in the development of our children, yet its place in our schools is not assured due to dire budget situations across the nation.

"Bold and generous acts, like Fox's '*Glee* Give a Note' campaign, validate its importance and bring a sense of hope to thousands of educators and students. We are deeply grateful for the funding and awareness this campaign has created," Butera added.

Schools entered the contest through online videos demonstrating need for their music programs and then conducted grassroots campaigns through Facebook, Twitter, and local newspapers to drum up votes from their families, friends, and communities. More than one million votes were cast to help choose the finalists. A panel composed of NAfME members conducted a final round of judging and, together with the public vote, determined the winning programs.

For more information and to view the submissions, visit gleegiveanote.com. For a complete list of winners and other news of the contest, visit nafme.org/news.

PHOTOS: AP

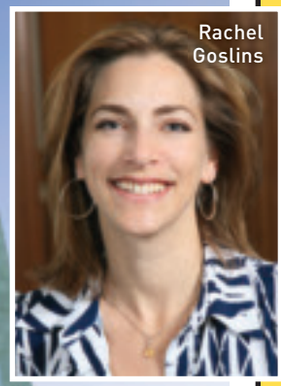
2012 Biennial Conference Focuses on Research, Music Teacher Education

The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) holds its Biennial Music Educators National Conference in St. Louis on March 28-31, 2012. This conference has a special focus on research and music teacher education. It will also explore cutting-edge research and pedagogical innovations that will shape the future of the profession.

The conference is aimed at music education researchers, music teacher educators, music administrators, supervisors, and curriculum specialists. PreK-12 music educators interested in research and NAfME Collegiate members and pre-service teachers also will find invaluable sessions and materials.

Rachel Goslins, executive director of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, will present a keynote address at the opening session on Tuesday, March 29. She will discuss the recent report of the PCAH and the status of music and arts education today.

Biennial activities will be held at the St. Louis Union Station Marriott. The conference hotel rate is $107 plus tax and includes complimentary guestroom Internet. To receive this rate, make hotel reservations by February 29.


Rachel Goslins

Visit nafme.org/events/view/2012-biennial-music-educators-national-conference for a schedule, to register, reserve your hotel, and find other travel information.

Composition Academy Offers Tools and Tips for All

During Music Education Week in Baltimore, Maryland, June 22-25, 2012, the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) will present the Composition Academy: June 23–24. Daniel Deutsch, chair of the NAfME Council for Music Composition, says, "The academy is designed to take the mystery out of teaching composition."

"NAfME's Composition Academy is an intensive two-day professional development program that will help teachers jump confidently into the world of composition," said Deutsch. "Whether you teach elementary, middle school, high school, or college—general music, band, orchestra, chorus, theory, or technology—the academy will have something for you." He also said the academy will be particularly useful for NAfME Collegiate members.

He added, "Teachers know how important composition is: teaching music without composition is like teaching language arts without writing, but many of us are unsure how to begin. The Composition Academy will provide accessible tools and techniques that you can use the first day back in your classroom."


Daniel Deutsch


Philip Lasser

Among the session topics:

- ***Invitation to Composition: Strategies for the Elementary and Middle School Lesson Group***
- ***Composing 101 for Music Teachers***
- ***Nurturing Young Composers: Enabling Creativity in Elementary Classes***
- ***Multimedia and Digital Culture: Creating Music in 21st-Century Classrooms***
- ***Composition in the High School Theory Class***
- ***Using Pop and Rock Composition to Reach the "Other" 85%***

The academy will culminate in a Composers Meet Composers session, in which the winners of the NAfME Student Composers Competition will discuss their works with distinguished composer Philip Lasser, followed by the Student Composers Concert at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC.

To register for this academy and to receive updated information, including clinician information, visit nafme.org/events/view/music-education-week-2012-composition-academy.

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: COMSTOCK/THINKSTOCK (2); COURTESY OF RACHEL GOSLINS; COURTESY OF DANIEL DEUTSCH; COURTESY OF PHILIP LASSER

Rachel Sawyer rehearses one of her choral groups

North Carolina Choral Group Gets Involved in MIOSM® Concert

In March, the Concert for Music In Our Schools Month® will replace the National Association for Music Education's longstanding World's Largest Concert®. The 2012 event will evolve in another way: More secondary school choral groups will take part in the concert along with those from the lower grades.

Rachel Sawyer, who teaches chorus at Patton High School in Morganton, North Carolina, will direct her students in the video. Now in her fifth year as a music educator, Sawyer has been Patton High's choral director since it opened in August 2007. She discusses her reasons for getting involved in the 2012 concert.

Have you participated in the concert before? If not, what led you to participate this year? This is the first year that Patton High School has participated. However, I am familiar with the production because I watched it as an elementary music student in my school, and our county airs the concert annually in several schools as well. I was drawn to apply for a few reasons. I read that NAfME was particularly interested in encouraging a wider variety of ages to participate this year. I am proud to be a part of this organization, and have greatly benefited from its articles, advice, and networks. It felt like the right decision to be a part of the advocacy that now more than ever is necessary in our public schools. Secondly, this performance is an opportunity to expose our singers, school, and community to the enrichment behind Music In Our Schools Month.

How many choral groups do you work with? When Patton High School opened, we had two choral ensembles and roughly 40 students. Five years later, we have doubled in number and now have three ensembles: Mixed Ensemble, for freshmen or anyone interested in singing with no prior experience; Concert Choir, open by audition for students with prior experience in chorus; and Chamber Singers, the most advanced group, a small ensemble of primarily juniors and seniors with at least one year of experience in Mixed Ensemble or Concert Choir.

Why did you select "Everlasting Melody" as your concert song? Did you use it as a teaching moment for your students? "Everlasting Melody" communicates a message of hope, and that message of hope is really what led us to become involved in the concert in the first place. The current economic climate in North Carolina is not ideal. Last year, most of the middle school music positions in our county were made itinerant positions, meaning that several music teachers, including some of my close colleagues and friends, were laid off. Our county has suffered through a terrible financial crisis that cost several great educators their jobs. Despite those great losses, music still lives on inside all of us.

Look for more comments from Sawyer and information about Patton High School at nafme.org/news.

March Concert Celebrates a Lifetime of Music

The Concert for Music In Our Schools Month® will give music educators and their students a chance to advocate for their music programs throughout the month of March. This year, in an effort to illustrate the theme, "Music Lasts a Lifetime," four hosts will announce various songs throughout the concert.

The hosts are

- **A conservatory-trained, professional musician, member of the U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own"**
- **A high school band percussionist who plans to attend a college music school and teach and perform music after graduation**
- **A high school student who sings in the concert choir and performs in the show choir. She will not major in music, but will continue to seek outlets for her vocal skills.**
- **A sixth-year high school math teacher and former *American Idol* finalist who was asked by his district to write a song on the dangers of texting and driving and perform it in a music video.**

The concert, formerly known as The World's Largest Concert®, aims to demonstrate that a musical gift or passion developed early can be maintained throughout life. For song information and suggestions on how to get involved with the Concert for Music In Our Schools Month®, visit nafme.org/events/view/the-concert-for-music-in-our-schools-month.

PHOTO: COURTEST OF RACHEL SAWYER

Music Theory Academy Will Explore Literacy Skills

The College Board will present the Music Theory Academy on Saturday, June 23, 2012, at Music Education Week in Baltimore, Maryland. Terry Eder, the academy's featured clinician, has planned an intensive day of instruction to include music theory, curriculum alignment, and aural skills. Attendees also will learn to use vertical team guides, textbooks, and other resources as templates to create lessons.

"My belief is that music theory in its truest sense is really about teaching 'music literacy,' which includes all of the areas that are a part of the Advanced Placement Music Theory course: visual and aural analysis, sight-singing, melodic and harmonic dictation, and composition," said Eder, a choral director and music teacher from Plano, Texas, with more than 30 years of experience at the secondary and college level.

For more information and to register for this academy, visit nafme.org/events/view/music-education-week-2012--music-theory-academy.

Still Time to Cast Ballots in National and Division Elections

The candidates for NAfME national President-Elect are
- Glenn E. Nierman (Nebraska)
- David Weatherred (Washington)

In 2012 members of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) have some national decisions to make—selecting the 2012–2014 President-Elect and voting on changes to the Association's Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and Bylaws. Online voting concludes on March 4, 2012. In addition, members in NAfME's North Central, Western, and Southern Divisions will choose a 2012–2014 president-elect. Find candidate biographies and other election information at nafme.org/gp/2012-nafme-national-and-division-elections.

The term for national president-elect and each division president-elect begins on July 1, 2012, and these individuals will succeed to the presidency on July 1, 2014.

In the past year NAfME has moved to be more effective in addressing the challenges of music education. The Association's National Executive Board voted to complete the name transition to "National Association for Music Education," abbreviated NAfME, and to simplify the structure by which we work with the Societies and Councils that act as focal points for select issues and groups within our Association. To fully implement these decisions, the National Executive Board is calling for a membership vote on changes to the NAfME Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and Bylaws. Eligible voters can vote electronically on these changes now through March 4, 2012. Full copies of the relevant documents are now posted at nafme.org.

To vote electronically, make sure NAfME has your most current email address. Use the "Sign In" prompt at the top left of the website home page, or call Member Services at 800-336-3768. For election questions, contact Marlynn Likens at MarlynnL@nafme.org.

Music Advocacy Events in March

Throughout the month of March (Music In Our Schools Month®), NAfME is working with members to create and promote music education advocacy events. Among the activities planned for March:

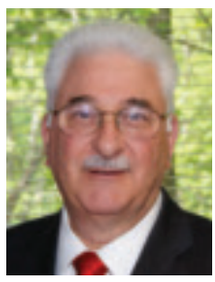
On March 10, the Camden County Band Boosters in Kingsland, Georgia, are supporting the Association and Give a Note Foundation by holding the first annual "Music Lasts a Lifetime 5K." Twenty-five percent of the race entry proceeds will be donated to Give a Note Foundation.

In March, NAfME will post 15 music "facts of the day" and 15 "composers of the day" on its Facebook page and Twitter feed. Schools and teachers also will be encouraged to sign an advocacy pledge, and those that do will be featured on the NAfME website.

For more details about MIOSM, visit nafme.org/events/view/music-in-our-schools-month or nafme.org/events/view/miosm-miosm-awareness-items.

NAfME Executive Director Finds Common Threads at Many Gatherings

For Michael A. Butera, executive director of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), 2011 began with a NAfME National Executive Board meeting held during rehearsal week for the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band in San Antonio, Texas. It ended with a delivery of the keynote address at the annual Urban Music Leadership Conference in Pittsburgh. In between, there were visits to state MEA conferences and NAfME division board meetings.



Butera said NAfME's goal is to help strengthen the state federated associations and give music educators the tools they need to advocate for school music programs nationwide. The key is a disciplined message, he added: "What does a high-quality, sequential music program look like? What do we want for all students? How do we make the case with policymakers at federal and state levels? We must work together to ensure the future of comprehensive music programs is strong from PreK to 12 and beyond."

With 2011 ended and travels for 2012 under way, Butera was asked for one thought that summarized the year past."It is the zeal members bring to their jobs," he replied. "They love sharing music with their students, watching them grow and perform. They realize music is actually a discipline they are giving students for the rest of their lives. That is why we want all students to have the opportunity to study and make music."

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ZOONAR/THINKSTOCK; ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK; BECKY SPRAY; COURTESY OF THE COLLEGE BOARD

NAfME Councils and Societies Find Support in Colleagues

Although the National Association for Music Education (NAFME) represents the music education profession as a whole, within NAfME there are subdivisions, known as councils and societies, that focus on specific areas in music education. NAfME restructured the groups recently, adding some new groups and giving others a new focus.

Four primary goals are common among the groups: advocacy, service to the profession and the music educator, research, and organizational vitality.

This new structure offers room for growth by music educators in their disciplines.

Daniel Deutsch, chair for the Council for Music Composition, said, "The establishment of the Council for Music Composition is an important validation of the vital role that composition should play in every student's music education."

He added, "The Composition Council will provide resources and opportunities for our nation's students and teachers, advise the NAfME president and National Executive Board on all matters pertaining to composition in music education, and provide professional development opportunities, such as the upcoming Composition Academy, 'Composition for All!,' during Music Education Week, June 22–25, 2012, in Baltimore, Maryland."

Deutsch said the Council will also develop a section of the NAfME website that will present lessons, articles, news, links, and podcasts of student compositions. "Drawing upon the innovative work being done in many states and divisions, the council will try to help all state MEAs to develop thriving composition programs," he explained.

Council for IN-Ovations Chair Marvelene Moore said that her council is developing creative ways to engage students in music performance and learning. "To meet this challenge," she said, "the Council developed a mission statement and goals to provide direction for its work. The mission statement reflects the charge from NAfME in its efforts to identify and nurture the expansion of innovative curriculum offerings in music, particularly at the secondary level. Attracting students not currently enrolled in traditional music classes and ensembles encourages the lifelong study and making of music."

To that end, Moore said IN-Ovations members also developed several Music Education Week academies designed to present innovative content, creative pedagogical practices, and professional resources. Visit nafme.org/events/view/ music-education-week-2012-preview for more information about academies at Music Education Week this June in Baltimore, Maryland.

The work of other councils and societies will be profiled in future *Teaching Music* news sections.

THE SOCIETIES AND COUNCILS ARE:

- Society for Music Teacher Education (SMTE)
- Society for Research in Music Education (SRME)
- Collegiate Advisory Council
- Council for Guitar Education
- Council for Band Education
- Council for Choral Education
- Council for General Music Education
- Council for IN-ovations
- Council for Jazz Education
- Council for Orchestral Education
- Council for Music Composition
- Council of Music Honor Society Chairpersons
- Council of Music Program Leaders
- Council of Past National Presidents
- Council of Retired Educators
- Council of State Editors
- Council of State Executive Directors

Last Chance for 2012 NAfME Student Composers Competition

The submission deadline for the 2012 NAfME Student Composers Competition is midnight on February 15, 2012. Compositions should be written for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon, or piano (no more than one instrument to a part), up to a quintet. Solo piano compositions will not be accepted. All compositions submitted will receive written evaluations.

As detailed in this issue's Partnerships column (page 22), the 2012 competition presents several unique opportunities for student composers. Philip Lasser, president of the European American Musical Alliance (EAMA) and composition faculty member at the Juilliard School, will conduct a mini-seminar for composers of the winning pieces and Music

Education Week Composition Academy attendees on Sunday, June 24.

The winning composition in each category—elementary/middle school, high school, and collegiate—will be performed in a Millennium Stage Concert at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, and their composers will each win $500.

For more information about the contest, visit nafme.org/gp/student-composers-competition.

PHOTOS FROM TOP: LIQUIDLIBRARY/THINKSTOCK; ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Capitol Hill Advocacy Efforts Gain Traction in 2011

The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) widened its advocacy footprint in 2011, making inroads with policy makers and arming state music education leaders with the tools they need to rally support for music education programs at home.

Anyone seeking to follow evidence of those developments can use an online resource launched in 2011. NAfME Advocacy Groundswell (http://advocacy.nafme.org) is an interactive community of music advocates. Association staffers post legislative updates, at times directly from committee hearings, and explore policy issues aimed at music educators. Questions are posed on the site, encouraging debate among visitors. Just as important, music educators and other supporters are posting their own information, from local and state news links to photos and videos.

Other music advocacy efforts:

- Oregon leaders created an advocacy task force
- Kansas leaders conducted a statewide survey of school district music education budgets
- Washington and Wisconsin leaders held advocacy summits during their state conferences
- Virginia leaders successfully lobbied their state legislature

Chris Woodside, NAfME assistant executive director for advocacy and public affairs, said that another major development in 2011 was working with the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) to formalize the Music Education Policy Roundtable. The Roundtable has strengthened advocacy credibility through coalition building, staff expertise, information services, unique opportunities, networking, and flexibility, on behalf of associated music groups.

For NAfME and its allies, the hot topic on Capitol Hill was the on-again, off-again movement to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA is a concern to the Association and other music advocates because, as currently written, it recognizes the arts as a core academic subject. NAfME advocacy staff also weighed in with policy makers on student assessment and the role of music education in developing 21st-century skills.

Mike Blakeslee, NAfME chief operating officer and deputy executive director, said that national education policy centered on what a well-rounded education should include; NAfME believes that a high-quality, sequential music education should play a central role. Whatever transpires in 2012, any action in Washington will impact states and local school districts as well. "We have to plan ahead to advocate for school music programs," Blakeslee said. "If we wait until threats to music programs materialize, it is likely too late to turn things around."

NAfME Seeks Electronic Music Compositions for Contest

Applications are being accepted for the 2012 NAfME Electronic Music Composition Contest. The contest is open to students of current members of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). Compositions from students at the following levels will be eligible: elementary, middle school, and high school. The deadline is April 15, 2012.

All compositions must be composed electronically and/or include electronic instruments. Voices or acoustic instruments may also be included. The compositions can be no longer than five minutes in duration.

Each composition should be accompanied by the student composer's written personal statement about the piece or an explanation of the compositional process. There is an entry fee of $15 per composition.

Compositions, student essays, and application forms are to be submitted by the teacher.

Please visit http://www.nafme.org/gp/nsba-student-electronic-music-composition-talent-search for more information.

Hooah! Audition Site for 2013 USAAAMB Opens

Marching musicians, take note: The audition website for the 2013 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band (USAAAMB) opens in February. Students who will be high school seniors in the 2012–2013 school year are eligible to participate. Sections include woodwinds, brass, battery percussion, front ensemble, and color guard. The U.S. Army partners with the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) to choose members for the USAAAMB. Audition materials submitted to NAfME are judged by a panel of NAfME members and U.S. Army All-American Marching Band instructional staff. Students selected exhibit exceptional musicianship, marching achievement, character, and leadership. Visit nafme.org/v/band/u-s-army-all-american-marching-band/ for updates. The audition submission deadline is May 1, 2012.

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Syracuse Music Teachers Heed the Call to Save Strings

Facing unprecedented budget cuts, educators learn new instruments for the good of their students ■ BY MATT ROBINSON

When budgets get cut, purse strings get tightened. But in Syracuse, New York, other kinds of strings have been affected too. Last year, about 20% of the school district's arts staff lost their jobs, and instrumental music—especially string programs—bore the brunt. District fine arts coordinator Kevin Mixon calls the cuts "unprecedented." Recent retirements had diminished the district's rolls still further. Fortunately, resourceful teachers, led by Mixon himself, were able to find a way to prevent string instruction from becoming invisible.

Mixon's proposal was daring and difficult: "Teachers would have to take on more music classes, more instrumental music students, travel to more schools, and … some band teachers would have to take over string programs. Though most [teachers] were uneasy because of their inexperience with strings," he admits, "they agreed in order to save our string program."

By reassigning roles and rearranging schedules, Mixon was able to accommodate all students with fewer teachers. He then called upon retired teacher Julie Carr to train seven band teachers in string technique. "All the teachers voluntarily took on the training in the summer and were not compensated," he notes, adding that some agreed to continue working with Carr even though she lives an hour away from most schools. Because he is reticent to ask others to do anything that he would not do himself, Mixon also spent the summer learning strings with Carr.

"As a music educator for over 35 years, I am committed to providing quality music instruction to all children," says Carr, who had been serving as a string specialist at Ithaca College. "The teachers were very receptive to my 'crash course' in string education."

With a talented colleague like Carr assisting, Mixon was able to keep the program going. "The key for us," he says, quoting self-help guru Steven Covey, "was to begin with the end in mind. Our end goal was to maintain the string program. To do this, we needed to add more students to our teaching loads and also learn how to teach strings. We've done both!"

Mixon will continue to provide professional development and support for his staff. "I know many colleagues that would have opted to discontinue string programs in order to ensure that band programs were maintained," he says. "But all of these teachers wanted kids in the district to have string instruction, even though that meant even more hectic schedules and significant training."

As Mixon and his colleagues plan the next city-wide instrumental music festival, they are pleased that it will still include an orchestra. And though logistics may be a bit "thorny," Mixon is confident that they will work it out.

"It's the resolve of the teachers," he says, "that has led to success so far."

String students in Syracuse have benefited from their teachers' extra work.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAMANTHA DARLING

FACTS & FIGURES

Syracuse City School District
Syracuse, New York
Grades PreK-12

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS: 35 (5 high schools, 6 middle schools, 6 K-8 schools, 14 elementary schools, 4 alternative schools)

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 19,961 in K-12, plus 1,336 in Pre-K programs

ETHNICITY OF STUDENT BODY: 53% Black, 28% White, 12% Hispanic, 6% Asian, 1% Native American/Alaskan

PERCENTAGE OF LOW-INCOME STUDENTS: 84%

NUMBER OF MUSIC TEACHERS: 46

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The NAfME All-National Honor Ensembles will also perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on Sunday, June 24 at 4:00 p.m.

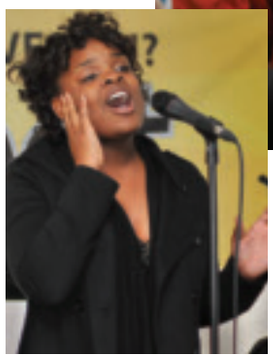
To register and receive updates and more information, visit www.nafme.org.

Celebrating the Arts—and Making a Point

Memphis' ArtsFest is drawing attention to the importance of arts education and getting the city involved ■ BY DEBBIE GALANTE BLOCK

For the third year in a row, the Memphis, Tennessee, City Schools are getting ready for ArtsFest. The annual festival, which takes place March 30 and 31 on the grounds of the Memphis City Schools (MCS) Board of Education, celebrates the power of arts education through performance and exhibition of visual arts, theatre, dance, and all forms of music. Five stage areas, as well as gallery space for visual art, allow the whole community to see what arts students are creating in school.

Scenes from the 2011 Memphis ArtsFest



In a time when school districts across the country are cutting the arts, Memphis' commitment to them remains strong, and MCS music and dance specialist Dru Davison believes that the development of ArtsFest has had a lot to do with that. "We were first asked to put this festival together by our superintendent, who wanted to show his commitment to arts education," he explains. The first festival was organized in a few months and attracted 2,500 people; last year, that attendance doubled. Now the commitment to ArtsFest is year-round, and the MCS is hoping for 8,000 attendees in 2012.

There are approximately 500 arts teachers in the MCS, many of whom are involved in the festival; the arts administration team organizes day-to-day logistics. "If you look at the program booklet, 25 different arts agencies were able to demonstrate what they do to contribute to public education," Davison says. "Their participation doesn't take the place of standards-based instruction by a licensed teacher, but we are painting the picture of what it is like to have comprehensive arts education."

Another component of ArtsFest is getting community members involved. They are asked to become "arts advocates" by providing feedback and encouragement to students and teachers. Several musicians from the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, for example, serve as mentors during the event. "ArtsFest demonstrates that the schools really believe the arts are intrinsic in educating children," says Susan Miville, director of musician engagement for the Memphis Symphony. "I love that kids here are being encouraged to explore who they are as creative beings."

> "I love that kids here are being encouraged to explore who they are as creative beings."

New this year is a culminating event at the Cannon Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Memphis, featuring an All-City Orchestra and Chorus. "Students from all over the city will come together to perform in this orchestra and choir, with a special premiere of a composition from a Memphis City Schools student," Davison says. "This is a big undertaking. However, our district has a cross-functional planning team that allows people in many different departments to be involved in the arts. In addition to district employees, many community leaders volunteer their time to celebrate our students and teachers."

PHOTOS: MORGAN MUKARRAM

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Music Career Choices: What's Your Motivation?

Survey results suggest that belief in the ability to succeed separates would-be performers from teachers ■ BY CATHY APPLEFELD OLSON

Motivations for music students who choose a career in performance versus those who choose a teaching career are fundamentally different, according to recent research conducted by Kelly Parkes and Brett Jones, respectively assistant professor of music education and associate professor of educational psychology at Virginia Tech. Their findings may suggest ways music educators can inform their students about the gamut of music careers.

Parkes and Jones' survey of music majors at seven universities (published in the May 2011 *UPDATE: Applications of Research in Music Education*) identified four principal reasons why participants were considering a career in music performance: 1) They enjoy playing music, 2) They have the ability to succeed at playing music, 3) They believe music performance is useful, and 4) They view themselves as musicians.

In a separate analysis to be published in 2012, Parkes and Jones found that the strongest predictor of students opting to pursue performance was a belief that they had the ability to succeed. Those planning to teach were driven more by a belief that teaching was personally important. "You'd think that belief in your ability to do something well would be the predictor for everything," Parkes says, "but it didn't matter as much whether they thought they had the ability to be good teachers."

The educational paths for performance education and teaching education diverge when college students declare a major. Before then, there are numerous ways that educators can help expose students to all types of music-related careers, and guide them toward what seems like the best fit.

"The question is, what can we do in higher education to train teachers in helping students understand why they might want to be a teacher or performer?" Parkes asks. "They don't usually declare a major until junior year, but maybe helping them make a decision earlier might be useful."

For the performance-driven, "help them get experiences that can cement their belief in their own abilities," Parkes says. "Often when they get to college, they've come from being very good in high school and are suddenly in a classroom where everyone is just as good, if not better. The more experience they have playing, and watching other people perform, will add to their successful experiences."

To help enlighten students about the teaching profession, Parkes suggests that teachers "show students that teaching is interesting and important, and find ways to help them step back and look at the profession from a teacher's perspective." One way is to encourage interested students to help lead portions of their class, and promote programs through which they teach music students in the lower grades.

"Particularly for students in grades 11-12, teaching younger students gives them that sense of leadership and connection to their community, as well as some experience in being a teacher," she says.

Selected Survey Responses in Four Categories that Describe Why Students Are Considering a Music Performance Career

Category	Number	Percentage*
THEME 1: ENJOYMENT I enjoy playing and/or performing music.	43	50.6
I enjoy the feeling I get from performing.	16	18.8
I enjoy communicating to the audience through performance.	26	30.6
THEME 2: ABILITY I have natural musical talent.	15	17.6
THEME 3: USEFULNESS I need to be a performer to teach performance.	5	5.9
THEME 4: IDENTITY I am a musician at heart.	10	11.8

* PERCENTAGE IS BASED ON THE 85 STUDENTS WHO PROVIDED RESPONSES THAT RESEARCHERS WERE ABLE TO CODE.

ILLUSTRATION: HEMERA/THINKSTOCK; GRAPH SOURCE: KELLY A. PARKES AND BRETT D. JONES, "STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONS FOR CONSIDERING A CAREER IN MUSIC PERFORMANCE," *UPDATE: APPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH IN MUSIC EDUCATION*, MAY 2011. ©2011 MENC, NOW NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSIC EDUCATION.

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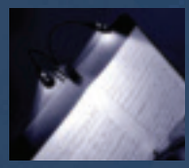
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Making a Competition More Educational

NAfME's partnership with the European American Musical Alliance adds value to annual young composer contest ■ BY KEITH POWERS

Young composers, listen up: There's a competition for you, and it's not just the winners who get rewarded—everyone does. A far-reaching collaboration with the European American Musical Alliance (EAMA) has helped to enhance NAfME's annual Student Composers Competition.

This year, winners in three categories—elementary/middle school, high school, and collegiate—will receive cash prizes and have their pieces performed by a professional ensemble at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, during Music Education Week in June. But in addition, every entrant will receive written feedback from a committee led by composer Philip Lasser, president of EAMA, making the process a truly educational experience.

Philip Lasser with students at the 2011 EAMA summer institute in Paris, France

"The cash prizes make it easier for the winners to attend the performances," says Daniel Deutsch, chair of the NAfME Council for Music Composition and one of the judges. "But the evaluations will provide insights not only to all the participating students but to their teachers as well."

"EAMA dreams about making composition relevant to American society," says Lasser, who teaches composition studies at the Juilliard School in addition to directing EAMA. "NAfME has such a broad reach across the U.S., and we feel like this will create a dialogue. For us, it is important that this not just be a competition. We want to validate the act of writing, with responsible people in the field reviewing all the music that these students create."

> "For us, it is important that this not just be a competition. We want to validate the act of writing."
> —*Philip Lasser*

"Just as a language arts program must entail reading, writing, and speaking, a complete music education must involve both performance and composition," Deutsch says. "We find that students' understanding of musical language increases dramatically when composition is involved.

"In the past, the competition winners at all three levels have been pretty dazzling," he adds. "Last year, one of the performers"—who are drawn from top-flight military ensembles—"said that he liked the elementary composition the best."

Susan Lambert, member engagement manager at NAfME, facilitates the competition. She points out that not only do the winners receive a $500 cash prize, courtesy of EAMA, "but there is a possibility of a $100 honorable mention in each category as well. And Daniel Deutsch and Philip Lasser will lead an educational session with the young composers before the public performance, which is streamed live and then put up on the Internet afterward."

The guidelines for the Student Composers Competition change each year; this year, students are required to write for any combination of woodwind quintet, with piano. Compositions should be no longer than five minutes, and entries—an MP3 file with a PDF of the score—must be submitted by February 15. The high school winners will be invited to submit a portfolio for consideration to EAMA's prestigious summer institute in Paris. Complete guidelines and forms are available at nafme.org/gp/student-composers-competition.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF PHILIP LASSER

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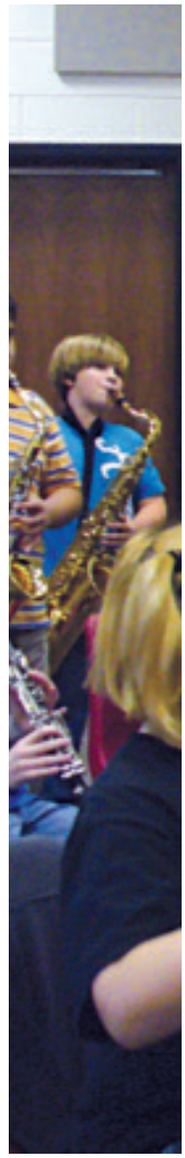


Solfège for Instrumentalists

BY ANN MARIE MUSCO

How singing can help students play

If you can sing it, you can play it! This is a time-honored belief, and many instrumental directors include singing in rehearsals. We might ask students to hum the tuning pitch, chant rhythms and scat articulations, or sing melodies from the repertoire to better understand musical inflection and nuance.

In addition, singing can develop skills in music reading and audiation (inner hearing). If our students sing out loud before playing a line of music, we know they are able to prehear the pitches rather than simply pressing the correct keys and accepting what comes out of the instrument. In my experience, brass students who prehear pitches are less likely to sound the wrong partial, and string students generally have more accurate finger placement for good intonation.

Often we select a passage of music and sing it aloud for the students, who then echo-sing. Or we have them play their parts on their instruments and sing back what they played. Typically, the singing is naturally musical and often more in tune than the playing. (Go to nytimes.com/2009/07/05/arts/music/05barb.html?_r=1 to see a wonderful teaching video of violinist Isaac Stern that illustrates this point.) These are fine approaches, but they don't necessarily result in the progressive development of music-reading skills. We need a sequential plan of instruction.

Many musicians have found solfège to be a valuable aid for developing a sense of relative pitch. I use movable-*do* solfège rather than scale degree numbers because students can become confused when we also use numbers for counting rhythms and describing fingerings. Also, movable-*do* solfège is the preferred syllable system of the Gordon, Kodály, and Orff pedagogical approaches, and it's easy to sing in any mode with minimal need for chromatic syllables: *Do* is tonic in major tonality, *re* in Dorian, *la* in Aeolian/minor, and so forth.

It's possible to drill solfège syllables with hand signs or by pointing to the notes of the scale on a whiteboard and asking students to sing, correcting pitch as problems arise. However, by incorporating principles of solfège training, we can be more effective, efficient, and musical in our teaching. The following sequence of instruction acknowledges the essential premises of Gordon's Music Learning Theory (see *Learning Sequences in Music* [GIA, 2007]), while also considering practical matters such as the culture of band and orchestra instruction.

PHOTOS: ANN MARIE MUSCO

STEP 1: Teach the Sounds and Syllables

To begin, the teacher models and the students imitate. Start by singing tonal patterns on a neutral syllable such as *bum* or *doo* and asking the students to echo-sing. By singing on a neutral syllable, students are focused fully on the relative pitches rather than the solfège names (see Table 1, Step 1a, on page 28). Later, sing on solfège and have the students echo-sing (Step 1b).

Three-note stepwise or chordal patterns work well. Try starting with tonic patterns in major (*do-mi-sol*) and then move to *do-re-mi*. Add *fa* and the leading tone below the tonic (*ti*); now you can sing scale patterns up through the fifth degree of the scale, or you can sing dominant patterns. Stepwise patterns assist learning the order of the scale syllables, while dominant patterns (combinations of *sol-fa-re-ti*) complement tonic patterns and explore harmonic function. Next add

Give students a chance to lead the class using hand signs.

la, *ti*, and the octave tonic and the singing of subdominant patterns.

Curwen hand signs facilitate group instruction and may assist kinesthetic learners. Teach tendency tones: *ti* points up to *do*, *fa* leads down to *mi*, and so forth. Again, teach the hand signs via modeling in a call-and-response format, just as you taught the sounds and syllables. Teach only a few hand signs each day. Students enjoy leading the class using hand signs.

STEP 2: Check for Aural Understanding

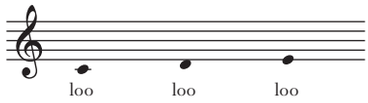
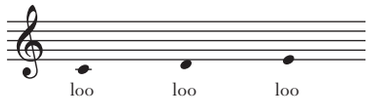
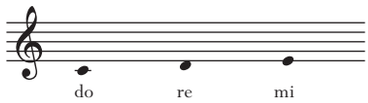
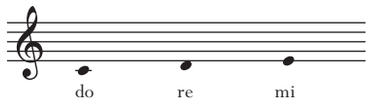
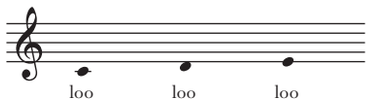
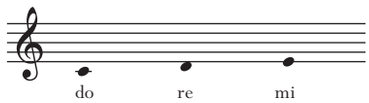
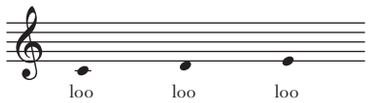
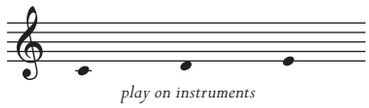
Here we want to learn whether our students are hearing differences in pitch, including up and down, higher and lower, and steps and skips. If you're working with young students, tell them outright that *do* is the lowest pitch of a tonic triad pattern, *mi* the middle pitch, and *sol* the highest pitch. With arms on laps, raised slightly, or raised to the shoulders, have students copy both your arm motions and your singing of *do-mi-sol* patterns on solfège syllables. Next, sing patterns on solfège syllables, but don't show students the arm motions, and ask them to echo-sing and move their arms. Finally, sing patterns on a neutral syllable without arm motions, and ask students to echo-sing and move their arms. At this point, students are using their ears to demonstrate the relative pitches in motion. Repeat this sequence of instruction with *do-re-mi*. You can also do these activities using patterns beyond low-middle-high. Simply have the students show you what they just heard by moving their arms relatively higher and lower.

Now get more specific by asking students to echo-sing on solfège patterns that you sing on a neutral syllable. As in Step 1, begin with easier patterns, such as those within a limited range, and move to more difficult patterns. During initial singing activities, give students a clue as to what you will sing. For example, tell them that you will sing only tonic patterns and therefore their choices of syllables are *do*, *mi*, and *sol*. Or tell them that all patterns will be stepwise. Or show them what type of pattern you will sing (tonic, dominant, or subdominant) by holding up the corresponding number of fingers. After students are successful echo-singing solfège patterns sung to them on a neutral syllable, make things more challenging by asking them to simply audiate the patterns in their minds. Rather than singing out loud, students sign each pattern back in silence.

STEP 3: Play by Rote

Now associate the singing with instrumental fingerings and tones. Select an initial key for practice: probably B-flat concert for band or D major for orchestra. Tell the students the solfège syllable for each pitch, or at least the first few notes of the scale. For example: B-flat is *do*, C is *re*, and so on. Sing patterns on solfège (or sign them) and ask students to play back those patterns. This is rote imitation because the students need not use their ears in playing back. You can also teach songs by rote. Familiar folk songs work nicely. Teach one phrase at a time,

Table 1. **PREREADING ACTIVITIES**

STEP	TEACHER	STUDENTS
1a		
1b		
2		
3		
4		

Using a variety of tonal patterns or song phrases, sequential instruction as shown will prepare students for sight-singing and reading music notation.

gradually playing longer phrases, and then the entire memorized song.

STEP 4: Play by Ear

Now sing patterns on a neutral syllable, and ask students to play them back. Or play patterns on an instrument, standing out of sight so students can't simply copy finger patterns. This is a great time for improvisation, with some students serving as leaders and the rest playing back the patterns. Also, have students play songs by ear—but before attempting to do this, ask them to demonstrate memorization of the song by singing it first on a neutral syllable.

STEP 5: Make the Visual Connection—Read

Help students connect what they have been singing and playing with music notation. Show students where the pitches *do-re-mi*, etc., are on the music staff. Begin with just a few pitches at a time. With young students, direct their attention to specifics such as line notes, space notes, and ledger lines. In band, include all of the various transpositions on printed music sheets, or show multiple staves on the whiteboard or a PowerPoint slide. In orchestra, we don't have the issue of transposition, but we still have the practical challenge of multiple clefs. Don't print the solfège words underneath the note heads!

Next, point to the note heads on the staff while you sing the solfège syllables and students echo-sing those patterns on solfège. Finally, point to the note heads on the staff while students sing those pitches on solfège, but without any hints from you. Remember to concentrate first on stepwise patterns and skips within the tonic triad, later adding skips within the dominant and subdominant triads.

At this point, it's fun to sing familiar songs from notation using solfège. Select an age-appropriate song, such as a children's folk song for younger students or a patriotic or popular song for older students. Begin with songs of a limited range: three notes, five notes, six notes, and then the full octave. Try "Mary Had a Little Lamb," "Lightly Row," "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," and "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Older students may enjoy "Lean on Me" and "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," which include ample stepwise motion. (See Table 2.)

Plan pattern-identification and error-detection exercises as well as written musical dictations. Using flashcards or a printed worksheet, have students select the pattern just heard. On a sheet of manuscript paper, students can notate patterns or short phrases you sing or play. Students can also notate songs they know from memory, hopefully in a variety of keys.

Ultimately, students are ready to sing an unfamiliar song or exercise on solfège, without teacher assistance. After sight-singing, students play what they just sang. This is true sight-reading, with the added assurance that students are prehearing the pitches on the page because they've just sung them. Begin with easy examples and work progressively to more challenging music.

Conclusion

This approach begins with rote imitation and moves students gradually to notational audiation (being able to prehear notated music). Note that students do not even see music notation until Step 5, giving them plenty of time to develop their audiation skills. You'll also notice that singing on a neutral syllable precedes singing on solfège. Although it may be tempting to start from notation and with the solfège syllables, please believe me when I tell you that whenever I try to save time this way, student learning is compromised, and I have to backtrack on the sequence. Even with these preliminary steps to solfège reading, just five minutes a day can make a world of difference in the musicianship of your ensembles!

Ann Marie Musco is the band director at Callaway Middle School in LaGrange, Georgia.

Table 2. **MAKING THE VISUAL CONNECTION**

STEP	DESCRIPTION
3	Teach students to sing and then play a *do-re-mi* song by rote, such as "Hot Cross Buns." The teacher sings on solfège and the students echo-play.
4	Teach students to sing and then play a *do-re-mi* song by ear, such as "Merrily We Roll Along." The teacher sings on a neutral syllable and the students echo-play.
5a	Teach the notation of a familiar song earlier played on instruments, such as "Hot Cross Buns." During all activities, the students are seeing the music notation. First, the teacher sings on solfège while pointing to the notes, and students listen and watch. Next, students sing on solfège. Finally, students play on instruments.
5b	Without teacher assistance and from music notation, students sing on solfège a familiar song earlier played on instruments, such as "Merrily We Roll Along." Next, students play on instruments while looking at the notation.
5c	Students sight-sing and then sight-play an unfamiliar *do-re-mi* song, such as "Au Clair de la Lune" or "I Have Lost My Closet Key."

Students will need more repetitions and repertoire than described above, but this is the basic sequence of instruction from playing by rote to sight-reading.

ILLUSTRATION: iSTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

COMMUNICATION BUILDUP

The rise of social media has affected all our lives. How can music educators ride the wave of change? BY CHAD CRISWELL

There was a time, not so long ago, when having a website for your music program was considered cutting-edge. But today, over 40 years after the birth of the Internet, we live in an age of instant information. Text messaging and sites like Twitter, Facebook, and others have changed the way we communicate. At the same time, our increased use of smartphones and other mobile devices means that people are beginning to expect more from an organization than a simple, static HTML web page. Perhaps scariest of all is the implication that we should now always be on call 24 hours a day and seven days a week. But the truth is that social networking can enhance your life without taking it over.

New online services and Internet technologies have changed more than just the interaction between teacher, student, and parent. They have also begun to change the way we communicate teacher to teacher; a good example of this is the growth in popularity of online forums and music-oriented professional learning networks. For tech-savvy teachers, getting the answer to a difficult classroom question or finding great ideas to add to your next unit is now only a few mouse clicks away.

The most complicated part in all this is knowing how to navigate the immense (and constantly growing) landscape of tools and services so you can communicate more easily without getting bogged down by even

more busy work. For that reason, we interviewed several noted music educators from across the country to find out what works online and what doesn't.

Websites and Email: The Bedrock

Today the most frequently used channels of teacher-student communication (apart from in-person contact, of course) are through a school's website and email address. Kristin Turcovski, a band and orchestra teacher in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, uses her website as the primary means of communication between herself and her students. She finds that simply having all the information she needs available in electronic form saves a lot of time and frustration over many of the more repetitive tasks that go along with running her ensembles.

"It's helpful to be able to get reminders out in a way that students and parents can quickly and conveniently access them," Turcovski says. "Deadlines are met more efficiently and more forms are returned with the use of our website and email lists." She also uses the website as a promotional tool: "It's nice to put 'brags' and photos of the achievements of the group on our site, as well as to send encouraging notes after competition trips, when I don't necessarily get to speak to all of the students on different buses."

Allison Friedman, general music and choral teacher at South Salem Elementary School in Port Washington, New York, uses her website for many of the same reasons, and more besides. "My school website offers a lot of information for both parents and students," she says. "Aside from sharing audio/video clips of what goes on in the classroom, I include all the important dates for the year, my basic curriculum (goals, etc.) for each grade level, my full schedule, bio, chorus practice tracks, and most recently a special beginner instrumental practice site."

If you're interested in creating a website for your music program, see the "Recommended Website Creation Services" sidebar on the opposite page.

The New Social Services

Human beings naturally prefer to communicate with each other in the format that's most convenient to use. For teachers before the World Wide Web, that format was the telephone call or a printed note sent home in a student's backpack. Although we still use the phone and paper notes, this basic method of communication is now being augmented with social networking tools. Parents and students are becoming increasingly comfortable with the almost ubiquitous use of portable devices together with services like text messaging, Twitter, and Facebook. How many times have you sent a text message because it's easier than making a phone call or sending an email? If our goal is to communicate with our constituents effectively, and if our constituents are using social media on a regular basis, then it stands to reason that we should also be on those social networks.

It should be recognized, however, that using social networks has both benefits and drawbacks. First, the benefits. When we print out a typed note and send it home, we often fill it with extra information because our brains have a subconscious need to fill the empty space with text—and when parents read such a long letter, their tendency is usually to skim it. More important, some notes never make it out of the backpack. In contrast, sending information in short bursts via text message, Facebook post, or Twitter is a more direct form of communication. When people see a concise message, they are more likely to make use of and remember it.

On the other hand, two of the biggest potential drawbacks to social networking are practical:

■ **Not every school allows it.** Always check with your principal and/or your technology director to see if the use of social or other web-based services is permitted and find out any rules that might be in place to govern their use. Most schools are beginning to embrace these new forms of communication, but some districts continue to ban them entirely.

■ **Even if social outlets are allowed, not everyone uses the same ones.** While some parents and students might favor Twitter, others will favor Facebook or some other social site. At the same time, fewer students use email on a regular basis; instead, they are relying more on text messaging for most day-to-day contact. In other words, a

6 TIPS FOR KEEPING SAFE AND PROTECTING PRIVACY ONLINE

1) Always get parental consent before posting student images or making any public use of online communications between yourself and your students.
2) Do not collect personal information from your students or their parents other than that which is absolutely necessary.
3) When sending mass emails, always use the Blind Carbon Copy line (BCC:) to input addresses. Using the To: line allows everyone receiving the message to see the email addresses of everyone else in the group. Some people may not want their email addresses published in this way, because it can encourage spamming.
4) If you choose to use a Facebook page or allow commenting on your group's website, be certain to monitor it closely and quickly remove any materials that might be posted inappropriately.
5) Never "friend" students from your personal Twitter or Facebook account. Teachers need to keep a professional distance from their students even in this online environment. Use a separate account for all professional communications.
6) Do not allow yourself to post something that you wouldn't normally say in a real-life conversation. Avoid sarcasm. Insist on mature discussions using proper etiquette and respect, even when on a social website or communicating through email.

good communications plan will need to include multiple channels in order to reach as many people as possible, but you'll still probably wind up having to send home a printed note from time to time.

Communicating with your students and their families has never been easier—and yet it has also never been more complicated. In the end, each teacher will need to determine what works best for his or her own school community and balance that with what makes the most sense to use.

Communicating With Multimedia

No discussion of communication methods and trends would be complete without mentioning the growing importance of video and photo sharing as both educational and promotional tools for music programs. Sites such as YouTube, Vimeo, SchoolTube, TeacherTube, Shutterfly, Picasa, and others offer free and easy ways for teachers to communicate visually with students and parents by sharing performance videos, trip photos, and educational videos for use as a part of the curriculum. For example, Allison Friedman uses Vimeo to post videos of her groups' rehearsals and performances, along with a blogging service called Tumblr that allows students to post reactions and constructive criticisms. "I also find that using these services is great for my own self-reflection on the direction of the program," she says. Each posting of copyrighted music presents issues of both federal statute and local policy. Check with your school district's legal advisor. See also "Got Permission to Upload that Video?" in the NAfME Copyright Center (nafme.org/resources/view/copyright-center).

Teacher to Teacher

Just as Twitter and Facebook have changed the way we communicate with each other on a personal level, other services are changing the face of professional communications between teachers. The continuing surge in popularity of online forums and professional learning networks has made it incredibly easy for educators to ask questions of peers and share their own knowledge with others.

Forums are the oldest of these types

RECOMMENDED WEBSITE CREATION SERVICES

■ **SHUTTERFLY**
goo.gl/loKlc
Although primarily a photo-sharing website, Shutterfly also provides for the creation of free teacher websites that let you share photos, blog posts, and other information. The service also offers an online forum and the ability to send announcements via email to all of your group's members.

■ **GOOGLE SITES**
sites.google.com
This free website service may already be available to you if your district uses Google Apps for its email and document services. It's easy to set up and has many different design templates to get you started.

■ **SQUARESPACE**
squarespace.com
A paid service with a monthly fee, this has very professional page templates and lots of customization options. It's a good choice for groups that want lots of flexibility and an easy way to expand their site content in the future.

■ **iSCHOOLBAND**
ischoolband.com
Another paid service, this one specializes in creating instrumental music sites. Different components allow you to set up a "backpack" area containing links to a metronome, sheet music, audio files, and other documents. It also provides group communication services, allowing users to be grouped by instrument, section, interest area, committee, etc.

■ **OUR MUSIC CLASS**
ourmusicclass.com
Available only for middle and high school subscribers to *In Tune Monthly* and *Music Alive!* magazines, this social media service designed for music classrooms gives teachers the ability to post assignments, schedules, news, photos, and videos on a dedicated, secure website; students can also upload materials and comment on postings.

of communication systems, and sites such as NAfME's (nafme.org/forums/) continue to be prominent places for posting questions and getting answers on just about any topic related to music education. The NAfME website has separate forums dedicated to many major music education areas—band, choir, orchestra, jazz, general music, future teachers, and higher education—and features well over 10,000 individual posts filled with information.

The sharing of information on music education topics never stops on Twitter, which is a two-way format, allowing people to send (or "tweet") and receive information instantly. Consider signing up to "follow" the many different prominent tweeting music educators by visiting http://mustech.net/go/metweeters and adding their names to your follow list, then join in on the discussion. At any given time, a number of music educators will be on Twitter, and you can home in on important information by doing a search for hash tags like #musiced. If you are online in the evenings, you can even get involved in the #MusEdChat (held every Monday night at 8 p.m. ET), which focuses on different topics each week.

ONE TOOL TO RULE THEM ALL

One of the main problems that today's communication technologies pose is that they add even more layers of stuff that we have to keep up to date; each one uses a different program or requires a different URL to access it. Luckily, there are some tools you can employ to make this balancing act a lot easier and stay on top of all your various communications. In closing, we'll look at three of the most popular ways to streamline your use of social media.

■ **HOOTSUITE**
hootsuite.com
This is a web-based service that allows you to manage several networks through one convenient interface. You can sign in to your Twitter, Facebook personal, Facebook Pages, LinkedIn, and many other networks all at once, while sending and receiving messages from a single location. You can also send the same message to all of your networks at one time or schedule messages to be sent at a specific time and date in the future.

■ **TWEETDECK**
tweetdeck.com
A stand-alone desktop software program for Windows, Mac, and mobile devices, TweetDeck provides many of the same features as Hootsuite but does not provide access to as many networks.

■ **CHARMS OFFICE**
charmsoffice.com
This web-based organization tool lets you manage many different aspects of your music program, including uniforms, music assignments, fundraisers, fees, etc., but it also has a very useful communications interface. Ensemble directors can use the system to send emails to individual students or groups of students. For example, with a couple of clicks you can send a message reminding all the flutes of their sectional practice tomorrow morning and only the members of the flute section will receive it. That same notice can also be sent via text message to student or parent cell phones. If you are going to be late coming back from a bus trip, you can use your cell phone to send out a quick mass email and text message to all group parents, informing them of the problem. Charms also offers some group planning tools, allowing you to set up calendars and have parents volunteer for events all on the same site.

SOUNDTREE INSTITUTE

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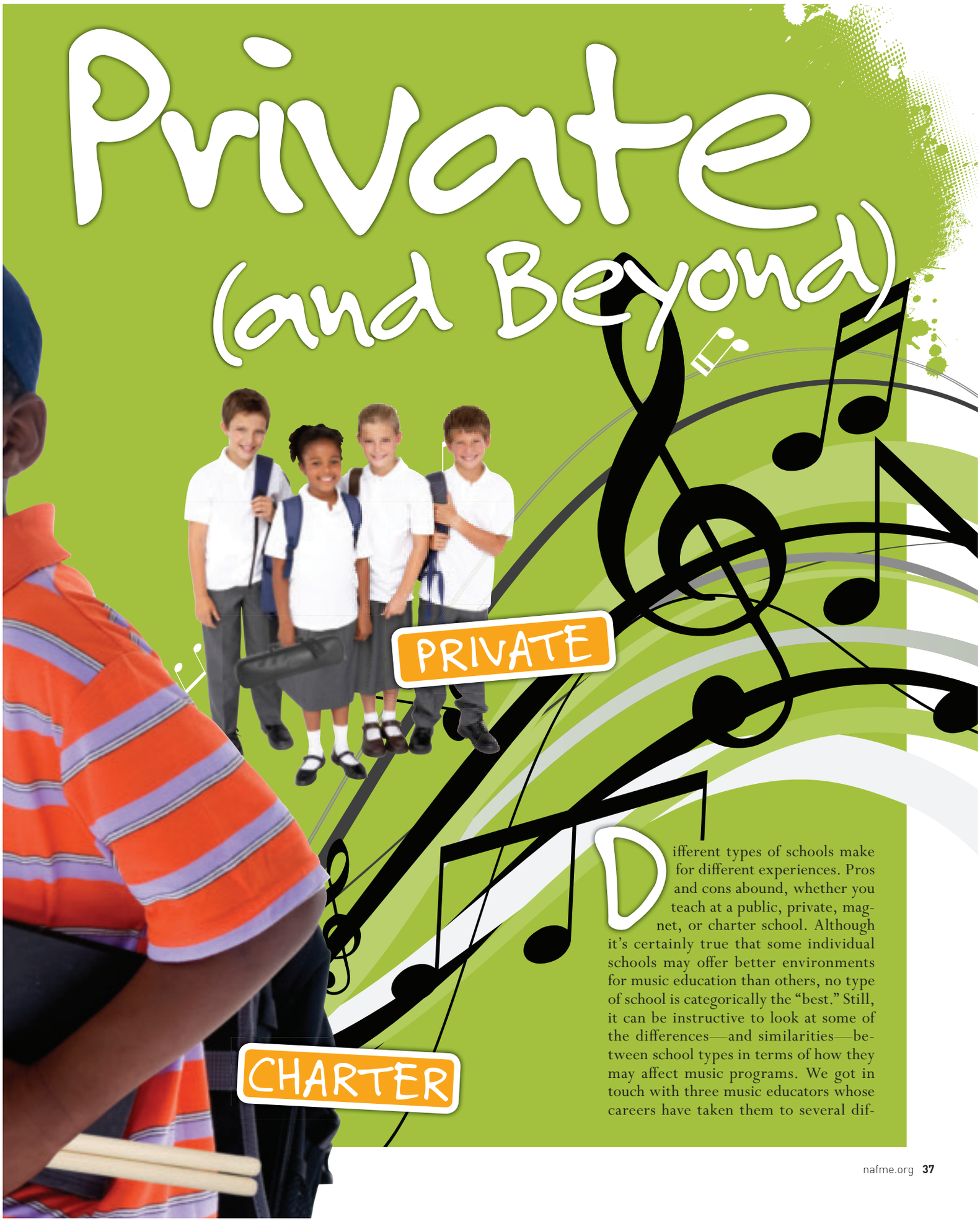
The **SoundTree Institute** Gives Back To School A Whole New Meaning

Public vs.

The type of school you teach at can often dictate the quality of your music program—but the differences between school types aren't always what you might expect.

BY SUSAN POLINIAK

Private (and Beyond)



Different types of schools make for different experiences. Pros and cons abound, whether you teach at a public, private, magnet, or charter school. Although it's certainly true that some individual schools may offer better environments for music education than others, no type of school is categorically the "best." Still, it can be instructive to look at some of the differences—and similarities—between school types in terms of how they may affect music programs. We got in touch with three music educators whose careers have taken them to several dif-

Do Private Schools Have *Fewer* Opportunities?

Recently, Philip Steinbacher's students at the Island School in Lihu'e, Hawaii, were shut out of a music competition—solely because they go to a private school. Such an experience, though disappointing, is far from uncommon; a large number of competitions, grant opportunities, and other resources for funds and equipment are open to public school programs only. There's no denying that many public school music programs are in at-risk schools, underfunded, and in dire need of additional financial resources in order to survive. However, there is a popular misconception that private schools—and, by extension, their music programs—are well funded across the board. This is simply not the case.

"We don't receive any federal or state funding," Steinbacher says of his school, "and we're ineligible for many things where we can find supplemental money. We *do* need it. About 40-50% of our students each year are on scholarships—for some kids, it's up to half of their tuition. We're nickel-and-diming everything, and I'm always applying for grants. There's one store on this island that gives out a $500 grant, which would buy me five ukuleles for my program, but I'm ineligible for the grants that would give me a piano lab. Why should a certain population of students be denied? As teachers, we're all trying to do our best. Parents here don't have any voucher or waiver, so they're still paying taxes, and whether funding for our programs comes from parents paying tuition or taxes, I don't think it should be different."

Should organizations that host competitions, bestow grants, donate instruments, etc., allow eligibility to all types of schools on the basis of financial need, and not solely on the status of a school as "public"? This is a weighty and fraught topic, but a case can certainly be made that *all* students, regardless of the school they attend, should have the opportunity for a wide-ranging, well-funded music education that is both academically challenging and personally fulfilling.

Philip Steinbacher leads choral students at the Island School in Lihu'e, Hawaii

ferent types of schools and asked them to compare and contrast.

A Little Background

Before we get into details, it's important to note that we are talking about very individual experiences, and yours may vary from those described below. For the sake of context, our interviewees and their general backgrounds are as follows.

■ **David DeStefano** is a music educator at Phillips Charter School in Napa, California, and has previously taught in public schools in Florida and California. He offers this clarification: "I think the term 'charter schools' is very misunderstood. There are many different kinds of charter schools and generalizing them is a tremendous mistake. Not all of them are like the ones in the movie *Waiting for 'Superman.'* There's a general assumption that charter schools are just like private schools—smaller class sizes, students have to apply for admission, no special needs students—but the reality is that my school is just the local public school, with the same obstacles as any other school. Any student in the neighborhood is welcome to attend and, if there's room, we welcome students from other areas of town and even other towns. What makes my school different is the structure of the academic day, the types of curriculum and programs offered, and an extended day."

> "It seems that parochial and home-school parents stick around a bit longer after the concert and talk."—Tom Miller

■ **Tom Miller** is a music educator at Johns Hill Magnet School in Decatur, Illinois. He notes that "the 'magnet' term is used loosely; while the school does draw students from across the district, it does not have a specific focus. Although the fine arts are strong in the school, we're not a 'fine arts school' as other magnet schools might be. I also teach in one of the local Catholic elementary schools and the Catholic high school. The Catholic school jobs incorporate students from the home-school community as well. We offer beginning-to-12th-grade instrumental instruction for a nominal participation fee. This allows the home-school students to play in a larger ensemble, while also complementing the parochial band program."

■ **Philip Steinbacher** is a music educator at Island School, a private school in Lihu'e, Hawaii, and has previously worked in public schools in Chicago and elsewhere. Although he was originally hired to teach English, his responsibilities

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expanded, and over the course of several years he has built a healthy and varied music program with strong participation among the student body. "When *Glee* first came on," he says, "there was a pilot one spring and then the show. I'm the pilot—I'm like the Spanish teacher who started the music program. This truly is my life—trying to make something out of nothing. If you build it, they will come."

Funding

As the song says, money changes everything. But the question of where it comes from and how much is available to the music program at any particular type of school is freighted with misconceptions. "I had the perception that, since parents of private school kids were paying tuition, that they were wealthy, and that the schools must have everything they need," Steinbacher says. "That may be true in some cases, but for the vast majority of private schools, that wouldn't be a valid statement. I think that I'm more aware of the budgeting issues at my school across the board, not just in my program. I know how much our electric bill is each month. I have to be really involved in the finances to a degree that I never was at my previous jobs in public schools. Anything I want to do at my current school, I have to find funding for. It's not that the administration isn't supportive—they're highly supportive, but there's no money for extracurricular activities."

"I'm not sure that funding at *any* school is all that great," Miller says (and many music educators would surely echo that statement). That said, his public school has a booster organization that holds a fundraiser each year: "This allows me to buy music, etc. Also, there is a very active PTO. The parochial elementary school's policy is 'Tell us what you need, and we can see about getting it,' so there's no real budget, although I do ask parents to help buy specific things like small instruments or new music." Whereas Steinbacher's private school has limited funds, Miller notes that his Catholic high school "has the most simple funding, and it is rather generous."

Funding may vary greatly within a single school type and is often highly dependent on location. "The biggest surprise regarding funding for music in the schools where I've taught had very little to do with public vs. charter and a whole lot to do with Florida vs. California," says DeStefano. "Having come from Florida, where the norm at the time was that each elementary school had its own music teacher and a modest annual budget, my current job seems more like what I was already used to rather than the exception to the norm that it is in California. Being a charter school, we are allowed to be more flexible with our scheduling and staffing. My school chooses to have two music teachers in a district that has cut elementary school general music. I do not have much of a budget—just whatever I can fundraise each year, about $300."

> "I'm more aware of the budgeting issues across the board at my private school. I know how much our electric bill is each month."
> —Philip Steinbacher

It should be noted that some public school music programs are very well-funded, including one at which Steinbacher worked: "I lived in Chicago and

taught in the northern suburbs, and the public school district had to give money back to the taxpayers because they had so much in their reserve funds. When I asked at the beginning of the school year for a budget to buy things, they said, 'When you hit the limit, we'll let you know.'"

Administrative Support and the Music Educator's Role

Private schools and others that do not receive public funding can offer a greater degree of autonomy to the music educator in developing a program. "Because we are an independent school, we don't have to follow state curriculums," Steinbacher notes. "We instead developed Expected School-Wide Learning Results. I did consult NAfME when we did the music ESLRs, but I have a lot of freedom. Another one of the benefits of a private school is that I have such an amazing administration that respects me as a professional and knows that I know best what I need to do. I get the go-ahead to create whatever I want, which is not an experience I had in public schools. I'm also not doing the same thing every year; I can change it midstream, or finish it and do something different next year. I feel musically that I've grown more as a musician in the past six years than the last 20 because I had the latitude."

Charter schools can offer a similar experience. "In a public school, there's much more emphasis on standards-based instruction and assessment in music classes," DeStefano remarks. "I still use standards-based instruction and assessment in my charter school setting, but I feel much less 'under the microscope' than I did in public schools. I feel like I have more freedom to develop a lesson over several class periods, versus the push to keep moving on to the next thing each week that I felt in a public school." He also acknowledges the support of his school administrators: "They appreciate the fact that our school has music and the other district schools don't, but they also realize the importance of publicly supporting the music program so that we can keep it when we renew our charter."

Although hardworking music educators can be found at any type of school, there may be more and/or different expectations placed upon those at certain types. "I think charter schools can put higher expectations on teachers because many of them serve student populations who need extra attention, whether they be inner-city students, low-income, or English-language learners," DeStefano says. "I can say that I work harder than ever, but it is a good kind of work. I wouldn't do it if I weren't driven to serve my students."

Steinbacher notes that at his private school, the role of each individual is not confined to one department or subject. "Every faculty member at my school wears many hats," he says. "Our administrators all teach classes, and I don't recall that in public school. Even our building

Band class with Tom Miller (center) at Johns Hill Magnet School in Decatur, Illinois

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TOM MILLER

and maintenance guy teaches a ballroom dancing class. We have no budget for supplemental people. Our pay is less than the public schools here, which is the standard, but what I found is that I'm willing to work for less money because I have so much freedom artistically and as a teacher. Everyone is there because they want to be."

Parental Involvement

The manner in which parents get involved in school music activities, and the extent of that involvement, also seems to shift from one school type to another (although this may have as much to do with other factors). Miller, for one, has noticed a difference between his magnet and Catholic school environments: "It's kind of simplistic, but it seems that parochial and homeschool parents stick around a bit longer after the concert and talk to each other and you. I end up knowing a lot more parents' names and faces at the parochial schools because they want to talk. Usually, this is good. Sometimes, they feel the need to correct a song selection or give their input on where students should sit, for example."

Students of David DeStefano at Phillips Charter School in Napa, California

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAVID DESTEFANO

One of the things Steinbacher prizes most at Island School is the parental support. "I've been here at Starbucks for an hour," he says [*Steinbacher was interviewed by phone—Ed.*], "and I've had three parents come up to me to ask if they can help with our concert. The manager has a daughter in chorus, and is donating things to sell out front. They know that we're taking the chorus to All-State on another island, and that we have to fly and it's not cheap. It's a $15K trip, and if it's going to happen, we have to raise the money—and they chip in. It feels like a family. We're coming together for a greater purpose." And that's a good sign no matter where you work.

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THE LIFE

WORK OF A TIME

From public school classrooms to university lecture halls, Joan Hillsman has helped generations of students find their way

BY CATHY APPLEFELD OLSON

ELIJAH GUSTUS

Joan Hillsman with musical friends

If there's one message that Joan Hillsman wants to get across to music educators, it's this: Teaching is a lifetime commitment.

"If you want to do it badly enough, you have to spend the time," says Hillsman, a longtime music educator, African-American music historian, author, consultant, music producer, clinician, radio show host, and current member of the Academic Board of the James Cleveland Gospel Music Workshop of America. "I've always tried to instill the value of hard work. I tell my teachers, 'Teach for life.'"

Hillsman—who began her distinguished career as a classroom teacher and worked her way up to become supervising director of the District of Columbia Public Schools in the 1990s—went on to teach music education at Bowie State University in Bowie, Maryland, where she also directed the school's gospel choir. Although she has since retired from teaching, through her various roles today she continues to emphasize the importance of students finding their place in the rich music arena.

"I want them to understand what they want to do in life, what they want to do in this field," she says. "I tell them, 'Find your place and your purpose. Maybe you want to be a music writer, or a music attorney. Find out what you want to do and find the resources to help.'"

Noted for training and developing fledgling talents in music and other areas, Hillsman has consistently helped to nurture programs through which students could find such resources. The Artist Speaks series, which she initiated in Washington, DC, brought music artists who were in town to perform or testify on Capitol Hill into local schools to talk about their careers. "Sometimes students don't think artists are real people, and this was a great way for them to make a connection," she says.

Of course, the field has changed quite a bit during Hillsman's career. Her doctoral dissertation was on the sequential measuring of classroom music lessons, a revolutionary concept at the time. "It was taboo then to look at music in that way," Hillsman says. "Music was not considered a subject of academic importance."

Today she is quick to tout the transfer value of music in a more holistic approach to lifelong learning. "You must develop the whole person, the whole mind," she says. "There was a time when people thought majoring in music was a free-for-all. What amazes me is, through the research that has developed, it's been proven that students involved in the arts do better on certain sections of their SATs and on other academic tests."

Hillsman at the piano (left) with the Syracuse Gospel Music Workshop of America choir

Hillsman, whose work has led her to Paris, Sweden, and Gambia, among other locales, also notes the all-encompassing nature of music and music education. Back when she was in school, "we all studied classical music. Now we need to embrace all genres of music. We do the standards, of course, but we need to look at the whole global concept of music, of other cultures."

The fact that Hillsman has become such an entrenched figure in music education is even more remarkable given that she headed to college fully prepared to embark on a completely different path. After participating in a French immersion program in high school, "I was going to major in foreign language and become a foreign correspondent," she says.

Fate intervened. When she arrived at Howard University in Washington, DC, the classes necessary to begin on the foreign language track were filled. Hillsman, who played clarinet through high school in Anderson, South Carolina, opted to start off with some music classes and transfer after the first semester. "But once I got into music and really felt it, I knew this was what I wanted to do," she says. She became a member of the Howard choir and marching band, and carved out a name for herself at community events.

"I've always been a community person," she says. "I tell my students, 'If by chance you don't major in music, continue to keep [up with] music.' In college I never went broke because someone always wants to have [live] music played. It gave me the strength in my community and helped me grow better as a performer."

Hillsman's higher education also encompasses a master's at Catholic University and a Ph.D. at the Union Institute in Cincinnati. In addition, she worked on a special Afro-American Music Project at Harvard with the late musicologist Eileen Southern.

A member of MENC (now NAfME) since she was a university student, Hillsman has always encouraged music education students to connect both with members of their professional organization and with others working in the same field. Currently living in Syracuse, New York, where she consults, performs, presents gospel music workshops, and assists the mayor's office on a program to support the city's artists, Hillsman says she is again reminded of the importance of these connections.

"Teachers need to know they have as-

PHOTOS: TAMARALEE SPADAFORE (LEFT), ELIJAH GUSTUS (RIGHT)

sistance through their professional organization. To me, knowing you have a place to go outside of your supervisors and school administrators and make personal connections in your field gives a tremendous amount of security," she says. "I knew there were people I could always call on as resources, who spoke the same language."

Q&A with Joan Hillsman

Q: What do you know to be true about music education that you didn't know when you started?

Music education is vital to the development of the whole person, sometimes referred to as a holistic approach to lifelong learning. Music, whether a profession or avocation, can contribute not only to society but to the well-being of the individual. As a professional music educator, I have taken advantage of the many opportunities in my career. A comprehensive music education allows me to connect across the curriculum with all disciplines, cultures, and resources that impact upon the global aspects of life.

Q: What is today's single greatest challenge to music teachers?

I feel that one of the greatest challenges is to embrace "diversity" and an awareness of current trends in music. To be diverse includes respect for all music cultures, from classical to global. As educators, we must maintain the aesthetic values in music, striving for the highest level of excellence, regardless of the stylistic trends, taking the students from where they are to where you want them to go.

Q: The music education profession would be better if....

We must continue to be advocates for funding and retention of support for the arts, so as not to lose prominent educators due to funding cuts. The research has shown positive benefits for youth on SATs, as well as healthy, positive lifelong learning for seniors and people in all walks of life. So let us all make a concerted effort to keep music education alive and well.

It's also smart to stay up to speed on the current political climate, she adds: "You need to plug into those initiatives and understand the politics, what's happening as far as developing standards, and where you can go to help."

Through her decades in the classroom—both as student and teacher—and her years of working on the administrative level, Hillsman has noted a variety of concerns facing music educators. The biggest one today? "They are worried about their financial livelihood," she says. "Parents have come to me and said, 'My child loves music but I told them they'd better choose a different field because there are going to be so many job cuts.' They're worried about not having such a bright future."

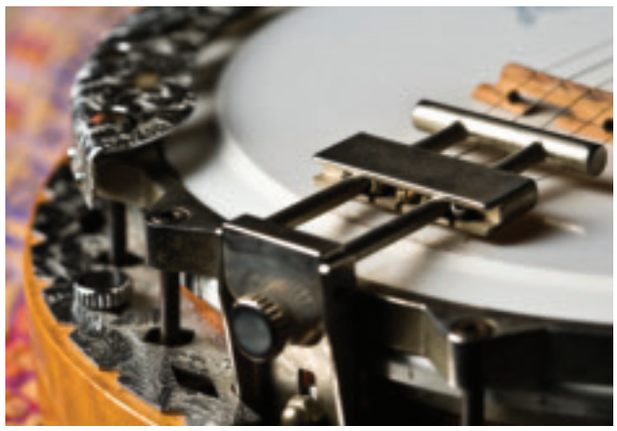
The climate of continued cuts is, of course, troubling to the veteran teacher. "I long to see the day the arts did not have to suffer from cuts," she says. "But the individual has to decide—how badly do I want it? It is very easy [for young and prospective musicians and music teachers] to jump ship and, hey, they're worried about paying their rent. But there's always a way. I tell them they don't have to be starving artists."

workshop

GENERAL MUSIC

Strumming on the Old Banjo

The banjo, a four- or five-stringed instrument with a circular resonator, was brought to America by West African slaves and found its way into idioms like country, folk, and bluegrass. Although it has not typically been featured in general music classrooms, its lively, ringing sound and significant cultural associations can



be used to great effect in this setting, according to Kenneth H. Smith, assistant professor of music education at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Smith—who, incidentally, has roots in West Virginia, a focal point for traditional banjo music—took up the instrument as a graduate student in Illinois. Not long after that, he introduced it to the classroom when he began teaching a methods course for music education majors. "At first I used it to accompany in the class, but each time I brought out the instrument several students expressed an interest in playing. We were able to acquire some beginner instruments, and I've incorporated banjo in classes and workshops since then," he says.

In preparation for incorporating the banjo in a general music setting, a teacher should obviously have a banjo, and a decent model of the most common type, the five-string, can be had for as little as $200. A teacher should also get a handle on the two basic approaches to the banjo, the Scruggs (or fingerpicking) style, and the frailing (or strumming) style. For this purpose, Smith recommends *Teach Yourself to Play Banjo* by Janet Davis. "This is the best resource I've come across so far for beginning banjoists," he says. "The book takes very small, incremental steps to learning to play songs on the banjo."

Because a banjo is tuned to an open-G chord, allowing most beginners to quickly learn simple songs, the instrument is ripe for teaching students technique in the general music classroom. In most schools, however, it would be impractical to actually teach a group of students to play banjo, since providing instruments for all of them could be prohibitively expensive. However, a teacher can use the instrument to demonstrate a variety of musical concepts. For example, it can be used to enliven aural and rhythmic training, more customarily taught with piano and voice.

But perhaps the best use for banjo in a general music setting is to teach the music with which it's most closely associated. For instance, it will be much more exciting for students to hear a bluegrass number played live in class than on a recording. And in teaching folk and old-timey songs, leading the class with an accompaniment on the banjo rather than the piano will lend authenticity to the proceedings while captivating the students' attention. To sum up, as Smith sees it, the banjo can forge a special connection with general music students on account of "its unique timbre and the mystique that it has."—*Adam Perlmutter*

BRASS AND WOODWINDS

Keys to Better Saxophone Articulation

As soon as a saxophone student has grasped the fundamentals of how to play his or her instrument, a teacher should begin to introduce more advanced techniques, such as how to achieve basic types of articulation. We spoke to Richard Bresowar, band director at Dutchtown Middle School in Geismar, Louisiana, to get some tips on how to start students off on the right foot.

According to Bresowar, working on articulation has to start near the very beginning of a student's instruction on the saxophone. "For me," he says, "the order of teaching is to first work on legato tonguing, followed by separated tonguing, slurring, and combinations of the above. I start by teaching repeated legato quarter notes, stressing a continuous air flow and the importance of using the tongue to interrupt that flow."

Getting the student to use the tongue

PHOTO: PHOTOS.COM/THINKSTOCK

in the correct way, with a "tu" or "du" attack on the reed, is imperative to developing good articulation skills. Students who use their diaphragms to start and stop notes will have difficulty starting notes cleanly and accurately. Teachers can use a variety of different tricks for getting the tongue to move correctly, such as attempting to imitate the action of a water valve by stopping and starting the flow of air in short bursts.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of teaching any type of articulation is helping students to tongue efficiently. Bresowar says there is no perfect method for this, but that "the thing to remember is—since you can't look inside their mouths to see what's going on easily, and everyone is a little different in what will work for them—you have to listen to what they're sounding like. I assume that if the sound and articulation are correct, then we are okay."

Since the ear plays such a vital role in learning proper articulation, a student's ability to listen and imitate the sounds demonstrated by the teacher is essential. "If a student is not getting it right," Bresowar says, "then I have the student listen and try to imitate the sound of the correct articulation. Kids are pretty good at getting the sound to match a model, if they have a good model to match."

Once students have managed to form a general understanding of what each articulation sounds like, they need to practice it in order to perfect it. One of Bresowar's favorite methods uses the Ed Sueta Rhythm Vocabulary Charts (available at edsueta.com), together with verbal instructions of what articulations to employ for each line: "The Sueta books are good rhythm practice and also contribute to good articulation and tone production if you watch for that."

Given a little time and practice, any student can learn the basics of playing with good articulation, as long as what the teacher is looking for is clearly understood. Be clear, be patient, and use good listening examples, and you will have no problems bringing out the best in your students' sound. —*Chad Criswell*

PHOTOS FROM TOP: BECKY SPRAY; DIGITAL VISION/THINKSTOCK

GUITAR AND KEYBOARD

Keeping Time + Making Space = Comping

Comping (short for accompanying) is a term used to describe the harmonic and rhythmic approach that a jazz pianist (or guitarist) takes when supporting a melody or solo. Like any element in jazz, comping is improvisatory in nature. But there tends to be a lesser degree of improvisation in comping than in soloing, making the former a safer place for students who are new to the idea of spontaneous composition to begin exploring it.

Without words, it's difficult to have a conversation; similarly, a jazz improviser must be acquainted with the appropriate vocabulary in order to make meaningful music. For comping, this vocabulary includes some basic harmonies. Geoffrey J. Haydon, keyboard studies coordinator at Georgia State University, says, "Students should be familiar with the ii7–V7–Imaj7 progression and be able to realize it with a basic three-note voicing, done in either the right or left hand, in every key. The three-note voicing should be one that always contains the third and seventh along with a third note that can be a fifth, ninth, or 13th. Most chords in jazz tunes are ii7 or V7 or Imaj7 chords; therefore, knowing this progression gives you a good foundation for working out the voicings used for comping a jazz tune."

In comping, rhythm is of equal importance to harmony and it is critical to have a feel for the rudimentary pulses found in jazz before using them as the basis of improvisation. "Rhythmically speaking, voicings are most often played on the offbeat using swing eighth notes, but they are sometimes played on the beat; usually they are short in duration," Haydon says. One good comping exercise is to plug jazz ii–V–I progressions into an established rhythmic pattern like the Latin clave.

Once a student has a grasp on the basics of comping, it's time to put the approach to use. With a simple setting like a looping ii–V–I (see Figure 1), a teacher or more advanced students can solo while others take turns adding harmonic support. This is where improvisation comes into play: The player who is comping will make rhythmic choices based on what the soloist is playing. "A good accompanying pianist reacts to the soloist when comping, filling holes when appropriate and giving support where needed," Haydon explains, adding that listening to strong players comp is essential when learning to do so yourself.

A final, key element to improvising

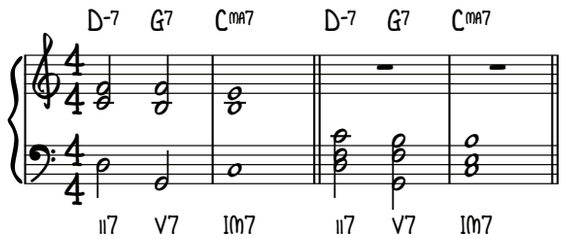


Figure 1. The ii–V–I progression is the most common structure in comping. Here are some basic voicings that include roots, thirds, and sevenths.

workshop
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accompaniment is learning when *not* to play. "Students coming from a rock or classical background are used to filling up every measure of music with notes and chords," says Haydon. "But comping is actually more about the space you create than the space you are filling up."
—*Adam Perlmutter*

STRINGS

The Pleasures of Going Electric

Many view the world of electric strings as limited to the guitar and bass. But resources abound for students and teachers who want to go electric for all string instruments. Scott Laird, fine arts coordinator and music instructor at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics in Durham, North Carolina, has years of experience teaching electric strings. His insights may prove helpful for string teachers who are looking to incorporate electric instruments, whether for only a few students or for an entire program.

Laird notes that "electric violins, violas, and cellos are gaining in popularity, with new models at lower price points and new developments leading to better sound quality." He sings the praises of teaching electric strings because it "can encourage different styles of playing. The opportunities for using effects processing—reverb, distortion, chorus, delay, wah-wah, etc.—and creating new sounds for bowed string players are really unique and refreshing."

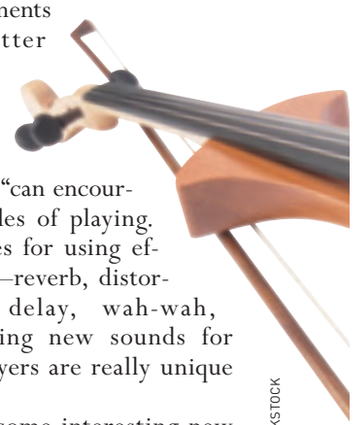


PHOTO: ABLESTOCK.COM/THINKSTOCK

Additionally, some interesting new types of collaboration can occur when strings go electric. "Electric strings are great for matching up with winds playing at volume: for example, the bass in jazz band, cellos in a wind ensemble playing bassoon parts, and vio-

lins in a rock band."

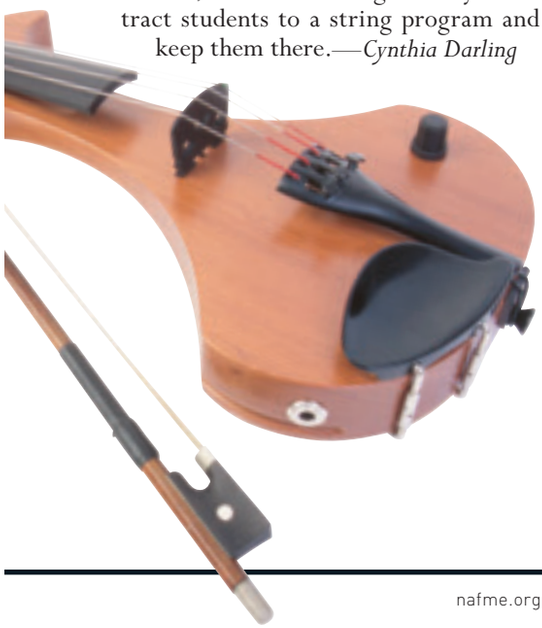
Of course, the approach to teaching and practicing on an electric instrument is necessarily different. "The biggest difference is getting used to the sound coming from an amp rather than the instrument. Depending on the environment, this can be a huge challenge," Laird says. "Also, kids must learn the basics of equalization and tone-quality adjustments for electric instruments, which is potentially frustrating. But when you have it right, it can be so good!"

Teaching dynamics to electric string players can present challenges as well: "For dynamics, it's important to be able to accurately hear your amp/instrument," Laird notes. "So often, kids just play louder in an effort to hear themselves. Proper amp placement and monitoring is key."

Due in part to the changes introduced by amplification, Laird warns that teachers don't need to use new music or arrangements. "I like to start with traditional literature that isn't too hard for the students. Too often, teachers try to introduce jazz at the same time they are introducing the new technology, and there are just too many variables to be successful."

Several online resources can help teachers approach electric strings. The electricstringed.com website is particularly informative. Laird also advises teachers to go to youtube.com/user/DaddarioBowed and search for "Scott Laird electric violin" under the uploads; there you will find several videos.

When you get right down to it, playing electric activates a lot of kids' "cool" sensors, and it can be a great way to attract students to a string program and keep them there.—*Cynthia Darling*



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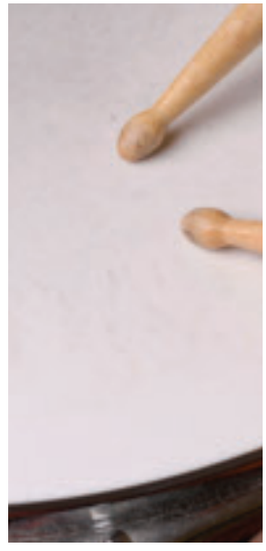
PERCUSSION

Building Balanced Technique on the Snare Drum

Developing snare drum control and independence can be very challenging, especially for an elementary or middle school student who lacks ensemble experience. "I find that the biggest obstacle students face is that snare drum parts usually have faster rhythmic subdivisions than any other section of instruments in the band or orchestra," says Rick Brimmer, director of bands at Lake Middle School in Millbury, Ohio. "Beginning band books introduce percussionists to 16th notes in the first semester of band, while the other instruments don't see 16ths until much later. What makes this such a challenge for snare drummers is that they often lack the technique to be able to play these complex rhythms at a steady pace. The cause is usually due to a reliance on their dominant hand."

To help instill balanced hand technique, try having your students practice in front of a mirror with a focus on proper wrist turns. For matched grip students, the wrist turn is a waving motion, and for traditional grip students, the motion is a rotation (like turning a doorknob). Working on these simple yet essential moves with a mirror can help students self-analyze their technique. The goal is to achieve consistent stick heights, which will help produce rhythms that are dynamically consistent and in time.

PHOTO: iSTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK



"One method that I use to help students strengthen their nondominant hand is to ask them to lead with their weaker hand at slow tempos and gradually increase the speed," Brimmer says. "But there are even simpler

things. Dribbling a basketball with the weaker hand only or throwing a tennis ball against the side of the garage, again with the weaker hand only, helps develop fluidity of motion. Anything that the student usually does with the dominant hand can be practiced with the weaker hand to increase strength."

You can aid your budding drummers' development by having them work with a metronome on a daily basis. Be insistent with this concept, and be sure they practice at a wide range of tempi from very slow to as fast as their technique will allow. Keeping an organized practice log with each exercise, étude, and metronome marking can also help increase a student's development pace.

Brimmer adds two snare-related recommendations specifically for teachers. The first has to do with the dangers of overtuning. "Due to tight budgets," he says, "most school directors look for an 'all-purpose' drum that can provide a sound for a variety of musical situations. I suggest you keep a careful eye on this drum, keeping it secure and under lock and key—and beware of the student who overtightens the top (batter) and bottom (snare) heads and treats the drum like an outdoor marching drum with Kevlar heads!"

Finally, in many situations, an elementary or middle school snare drummer plays too loudly compared to other sections within the ensemble. To fix this blending issue, request that the student listen "across" the ensemble. If he or she cannot hear a particular section (the strings or woodwinds, for example), then ask him or her politely to adjust the dynamics accordingly. —*Steve Fidyk*

CHORUS AND VOCAL
Singing with All Nine Senses

According to Robert Demaree, director of choral activities at the University of Wisconsin–Platteville, there are eight senses besides audition (hearing) that can help singers communicate with an audience. As Demaree explains below, attending to these senses can make singers aware of physical elements that may impact performance and help them bring out their musicality.

■ **Vision (Sight):** "One element of vision is color, to which musicians frequently tend to default. If you're singing in your midrange, and I say to you, 'I don't want a bright red, but could you sing a burgundy for me?' then I'm challenging your imagination to determine what that color sounds like. If I say 'burgundy,' you might think of wine, royalty, or velvet. In your mind, you make creative connections to your experience that may lead you to feel a certain sense, and then create a certain color in your voice that connects to that."

■ **Olfaction (Smell):** "Tell singers, 'When you take a breath, think of inhaling the beautiful aroma of a flower.'"

■ **Gustation (Taste):** "I'm a big food lover. It wouldn't be uncommon for me to say to my altos, 'I want you to sing a warm sound here. Think of warm chocolate.'"

■ **Tactition (Touch):** "With collegiate singers who are looking for a mature vocal production, I encourage changing vowels and timbral content. So I ask them if they can think of wearing burlap and fur in a Russian opera onstage at the Met. 'Can you sing furry for me?' became a joke with a women's choir I worked with years ago, but [after the request] they sang with a warmer, darker sound."

■ **Thermoception (Temperature):** "When I was going into rehearsal over the last week or so, I'd have to wear a

PHOTO: PHOTODISC/THINKSTOCK

jacket in rehearsal, and I could tell my singers were cold. The temperature had a real impact on how my singers acted. Also, barometric pressure changes really affect pitch in my choir. If it's a beautiful day and then a front comes through that night, the next day my singers will have a harder time maintaining pitch than the day before."

■ **Nociception (Pain):** "I've never asked a singer to feel pain, but in doing pieces about love, we've talked about the difference between the dull ache, the throbbing pain, and the sharp, penetrating, you've-been-skewered pain."

■ **Equilibrioception (Balance):** "Working with this sense involves being aware of whether your singers are standing or sitting. One thing that drives me crazy is when singers are crushed together on risers. I remember experiencing it myself and being irritated that I didn't have enough room. How and where we stand

has an effect on how efficient we can be in performance and rehearsal. When I was a young baritone at Indiana University, a teacher asked if I was right-handed or left-handed. He told me to throw a punch like a boxer and then to look at my feet. My left foot was in front of my right. I'm right-handed, and when I sang I stood with my right foot ahead. He had me put my left foot in front of my right, and it felt more normal for the rest of my life."

■ **Proprioception (Body Awareness):** "Have you ever done the trick where you say, 'Close your eyes, sing that phrase again, and feel where you are in the ensemble'? If the singers have a body awareness of those around them and how they breathe, they tend to make good music together." —*Susan Poliniak*

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PHOTOS: ALL AMERICAN GAMES and
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Pass the Apple, Assess the Student

A round of game playing can help measure elementary students' progress in music class ■ BY PATIENCE MOORE

Call it the Mary Poppins approach to elementary music education (as in "a spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down"): Using a variety of musical games in class not only helps students learn and practice new skills but also gives teachers many high-quality assessment opportunities. One proponent of this playful method is Sarah J. Bartolome, a professor of elementary general music methods at Louisiana State University, an elementary school general music teacher, and a children's choir director.

Bartolome swears by assessing basic skills through games, as they allow for a relaxed atmosphere. "Many singing games require a sung solo response, which allows teachers to assess pitch-matching and vocal confidence in a fun, low-pressure way," she notes. "The solo singing is embedded in a context of game play and can reduce the pressure associated with singing alone." Also, the group as a whole can be assessed concurrently.

Although she still uses some more formal assessing models, Bartolome finds that games work well for an ongoing class-to-class assessment style as she monitors "beat competency, pitch matching, control of the body, quality of movement, ability to play instruments appropriately and with control, improvisation, cooperation and following of directions.... It is an authentic way to assess. It doesn't feel contrived."

Of course, games aren't limited to singing: "Play-party games involving movement ask children to demonstrate gross and fine motor coordination, the ability to move to the beat, and the ability to control the body as they move through space." Meanwhile, the kids are just having fun.

Bartolome often uses passing games that can be integrated into almost any song. "I sometimes add a passing component to seasonal repertoire, passing an apple in September, a pumpkin in October, a baseball in the spring, etc. It's easy to see if the students are able to pass on the heartbeat. The child with the object at the end of the song can sing a solo response to 'Who has the apple?' and then go into the circle to improvise or play the heartbeat on classroom instruments during the next singing of the song."

The use of games complements other music teaching and learning activities nicely; it's time-efficient as well. "I can keep moving with my curriculum and monitor skill acquisition in an ongoing way without taking an entire class or two to complete more formal assessments," Bartolome says.

In the end, the most basic of reasons to assess with games prevails: "As much as I want to teach skills and concepts, cover the standards, meet district benchmarks, and provide students with the skills to participate in music across a lifetime, I also want students to love music."

Sarah Bartolome gets playful with her students.

PHOTO: IRENE KATO

TOP PLAYS

Here are some of Sarah Bartolome's favorite music games for grades K-5:

- **K: Lucy Locket, Witch Witch, Snail Snail**
- **1: Bow Wow Wow, Who Has the ____?**
- **2: Dinah, Sorida, Button You Must Wander, Naughty Kitty Cat**
- **3: Gypsy in the Moonlight, John Kanaka, Great Big House**
- **4: Dance Josey, Paw Paw Patch, Fire in the Mountain**
- **5: Black Snake, Weevily Wheat, Early in the Morning**

An Interdisciplinary Unit Teaches History and Empathy

To broaden his students' awareness, an Illinois music teacher offers lessons on the Holocaust ■ BY DEBBIE GALANTE BLOCK

The Illinois Holocaust Museum in Skokie, Illinois

Robert Convery's *Songs of Children* is a cantata based on poems written by children who were interned at the Theresienstadt concentration camp during the Holocaust. The piece also formed the core of a recent semester-long interdisciplinary unit at Rochelle Township High School in Illinois.

Music teacher John C. Hughes, who helped create the unit, recalls that he was approached by the district superintendent and asked to write down "what he called our 'hidden curriculum,' what we are trying to teach our students about life that isn't [standard class] content." This inspired Hughes to get his students—many of whom had never been outside of their small town—to think more broadly about issues affecting the world.

First, he asked his junior/senior choir to read Elie Wiesel's *Night*, a personal account of Wiesel's experience at the Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps. He was uncertain how they would react. "Obviously, students in choir aren't used to having to read a book," he notes. "I gave it to them and read the first chapter out loud. Most of the students came back the next day and said they had finished the book."

The program evolved from there; the theatre department produced Diane Samuels' play *Kindertransport*, based on stories about child refugees of the Holocaust, and the art department created visual responses to Convery's music and displayed them throughout the school. "It was a collaboration among teachers, and everyone learned from each other," Hughes says. "We don't combine our strengths as much as we could. It was like going on a road trip. You want to have a general idea of where you're going, but the most exciting part of collaboration is spontaneity."

> "It was like going on a road trip—you want to have a general idea of where you're going, but the most exciting part is spontaneity."

The choir also piggybacked on the AP European history class trip to the Illinois Holocaust Museum in nearby Skokie. There they saw some cattle cars that were used to transport people to the camps—the same types of cars Wiesel describes in *Night*. "One of the movements we sang [in *Songs of Children*] depicts the sound of the train," Hughes says. "They read a firsthand account of being on the cars, then they saw them at the museum, so when they sang that movement, the kids connected with it in a way that I couldn't have taught them. The empathy they felt enhanced the performance" at the concert marking the end of the unit, during which the singers performed behind a black scrim onto which images of the Holocaust were projected.

Hughes emphasizes that cross-curricular programs do not have to be as all-consuming as this one, but adds that they are good advocacy tools: "They offer something different. Our kids are reading books and working on many skills. When we put this program together, it was all over the town newspaper. It became bigger than the sum of its parts."

PHOTOS: EDDAU

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Can Future Teachers Be Better Prepared?

Alabama music educator suggests more emphasis on pedagogy and diversity

BY MAC RANDALL

A college music education curriculum is supposed to provide future teachers with the theoretical and practical tools they need to succeed in a music classroom. Given the speed at which our world is changing, it's fair to ask occasionally whether the tools students are being given are still the right ones, and whether extra ones may be required. That's just what Marvin E. Latimer Jr., assistant professor of choral music education at the University of Alabama, has done in a presentation given at the Alabama Music Educators Association conference in January 2012. The presentation was provocatively titled "Teacher Preparation Curricula: Do We Teach Them What They Need to Know?"

In a recent interview with *Teaching Music*, Latimer answered that question in the affirmative—mostly. "Obviously, we are teaching *much* of what they need to know," he says. "The University of Alabama's program, for example, requires that teacher candidates complete about 150 hours of study, significantly more than the average baccalaureate degree. So the question really becomes, what are we *not* teaching?"

> "Are we teaching our teachers to teach *all* students how to make music?"

According to Latimer, the typical music education curriculum breaks down in roughly this manner: 40 hours of professional studies (including one full semester of student teaching that adds up to 16-18 hours), 45 hours of general studies (writing, math, social sciences, etc.), and 65 hours of teaching-field content studies (from music history to instrumental and vocal methods). "If one were to remove the hours that are devoted to the student teaching process," he says, "one could argue that content—what we teach—seems to trump pedagogy—how we teach—in a typical teacher preparation curriculum."

The University of Alabama has helped address this imbalance by adding an Orientation to (Music) Teacher Education course in the spring of students' freshman year; its first Clinical Experience course occurs in the fall of the sophomore year. "We continue to encourage our teacher candidates to think of themselves as teachers as early in the program as possible," Latimer says.

Latimer also sees room for improvement in furthering the mission of NAfME. "We strongly support the notion that music making is something to be done by all," he observes. "So are we teaching our teachers to teach *all* students how to make music? Our traditional programs do not appear to be serving the diverse needs of our students. Consider the percentage of students who currently are—or, more important, are *not*—actively involved in school music programs, or the number of schools that do not offer a music program."

A possible solution to this problem is to create more teacher preparation courses that are not as tightly focused on a performance-oriented approach based in the Western classical tradition. "Perhaps," Latimer says, "we should consider whether some priority assessment and reorganization might begin to support our new teachers' ability to embrace diversity in education generally, and music making specifically, with an eye toward better fostering a 'music education for everyone' philosophy."

Marvin Latimer has studied music teacher preparation and believes that more can be done.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MARVIN LATIMER

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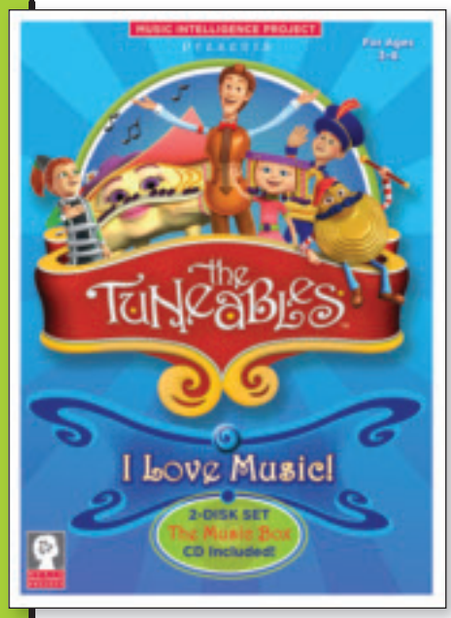


DVDs

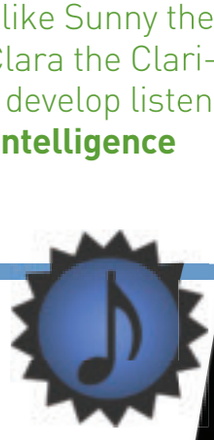
The Tuneables: I Love Music!

By the Music Intelligence Project (2011, two-disc set with CD $29.99, five-disc teacher edition $89.99). Designed for children between the ages of three and eight, this animated video begins with two kids preparing for their first music lesson. A magical music box opens to reveal an exciting new realm called Tuneville, populated by characters like Sunny the Cymbal, Mo the Violin, Pete the Trumpet, and Clara the Clarinet. Their subsequent adventures help viewers develop listening skills and rhythmic awareness. **The Music Intelligence Project,** musicintelligenceproject.com.

Apps

Scorecerer

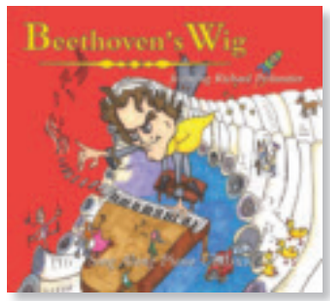
By Deskew Technologies ($9.99). With this app, users can load pieces of sheet music into an iPad as either scanned image files or PDFs and organize them however they choose. The app allows for creating new lead sheets from existing scores, adding notes and highlights, and turning pages automatically. Scorecerer is also designed to work with any type of digital audio workstation software, including Cubase, Pro Tools, and Logic. Deskew Technologies, deskew.com.



Audio CDs

Sing Along Piano Classics

By Beethoven's Wig featuring Richard Perlmutter (2011, 26 tracks, 46 minutes, $12.98). This album is the fifth in a series in which singer and lyricist Perlmutter adds his endearingly peculiar lyrics to various pieces from the classical canon. The focus this time is on piano music, including works by Chopin, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, Debussy, Mussorgsky, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Joplin, and



Cowell. Appropriately enough, a place of honor is reserved for that all-time favorite, "Chopsticks," which Perlmutter enhances with lyrics about a pecking chicken. The second half of the album contains the original, lyric-free compositions. Beethoven's Wig, beethovenswig.com.

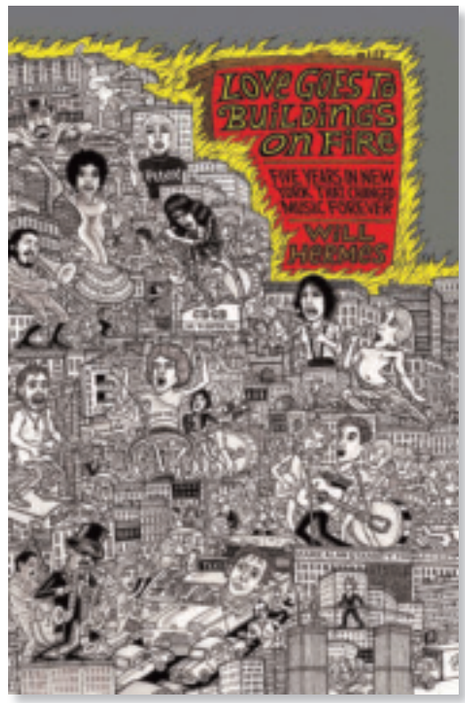
Send all media for consideration with photos to "Resources," 582 N. Broadway, White Plains, NY 10603.

Websites

ArtsEdge

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' educational website offers free, standards-based K-12 teaching materials for all the arts. Music is well represented in text, audio, and video. Visit artsedge.kennedy-center.org.

Books

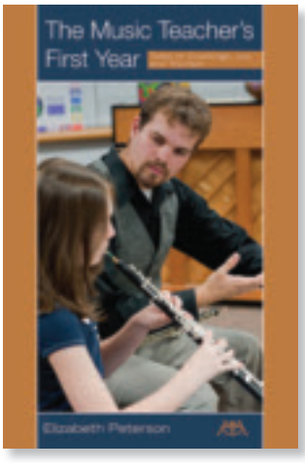


Love Goes to Buildings on Fire

By Will Hermes (2011, hardcover, 384 pp., $30). The mid-1970s were a time of great musical change in New York City, as several styles—including punk rock, hip-hop, disco, salsa, and minimalism—developed simultaneously. This book goes day by day through five years of the Big Apple's musical history (1973-1977), recounting what was happening in each genre and how it influenced the others. **Faber & Faber**, us.macmillan.com.

The Music Teacher's First Year

By Elizabeth Peterson (2011, paperback, 240 pp., $19.95). Part oral history, part career study guide, this book compiles the true stories of first-year music educators and includes discussion questions for teachers approaching their own freshman years. **Meredith Music Publications**, meredithmusic.com.

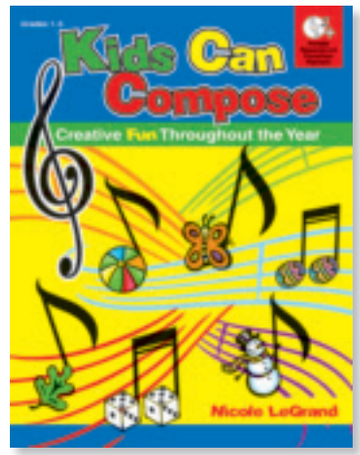


Theory for Busy Teens, Book 3

By Melody Bober, Gayle Kowalchyk, and E.L. Lancaster (2011, paperback, 40 pp., $7.99; also available in value pack with other books in series for $15.99). The latest installment of this continuing series takes a more advanced approach to scales, intervals, chord inversions, key signatures, and chord progressions, among other subjects. Like its predecessors, the book includes eight units, each containing a succinct introduction to the subject matter, short drills for five days of the week, and extra credit examples with further challenges. Study guides and two review sections (a midterm and a final) can help teachers monitor and assess student progress. Alfred Publishing, alfred.com.

Kids Can Compose

By Nicole LeGrand (2011, paperback with CD-ROM, 32 pp., $19.95). This collection of lessons for students in grades 1-5 offers a hands-on approach to the development of original melodies. The compositional process comes to life through visual aids that can be created with easy-to-use templates. Several lessons feature flipcharts that are designed to be used with Promethean interactive whiteboards. The CD-ROM contains 30 data files, including color (for projection) and black-and-white (for printing) PDFs, as well as ActivInspire software to access the flipcharts. **Heritage Music Publications,** lorenz.com.



books, continued ...

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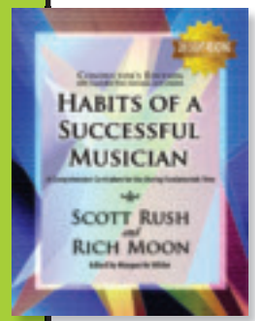
Sound Innovations for Guitar

By Aaron Stang and Bill Purse (2011, paperback with CD and DVD, 56 pp., $12.99). Simple patterns on one string—the low E—are the initial focal point of this method book. Later lessons focus on core skills like strumming and fingerpicking. The DVD contains over three hours of video lessons, while the CD includes audio recordings of every example; built-in software allows tracks to be slowed down and looped. **Alfred Publishing,** alfred.com.

Habits of a Successful Musician: Conductor's Edition

By Scott Rush and Rich Moon, edited by Marguerite Wilder (2011, paperback, 142 pp., $29.95). Band directors can use the sight-reading exercises that form the heart of this book as warm-ups for their ensembles and solo players or as the basis of a more detailed teaching method. More than 200 exercises are organized in a sequence that is meant to lead to the mastery of reading rhythms. The Conductor's Edition features expanded text, exercises, and lessons; the book is also available in brass, woodwind, and mallet percussion editions. GIA Publications, giamusic.com.



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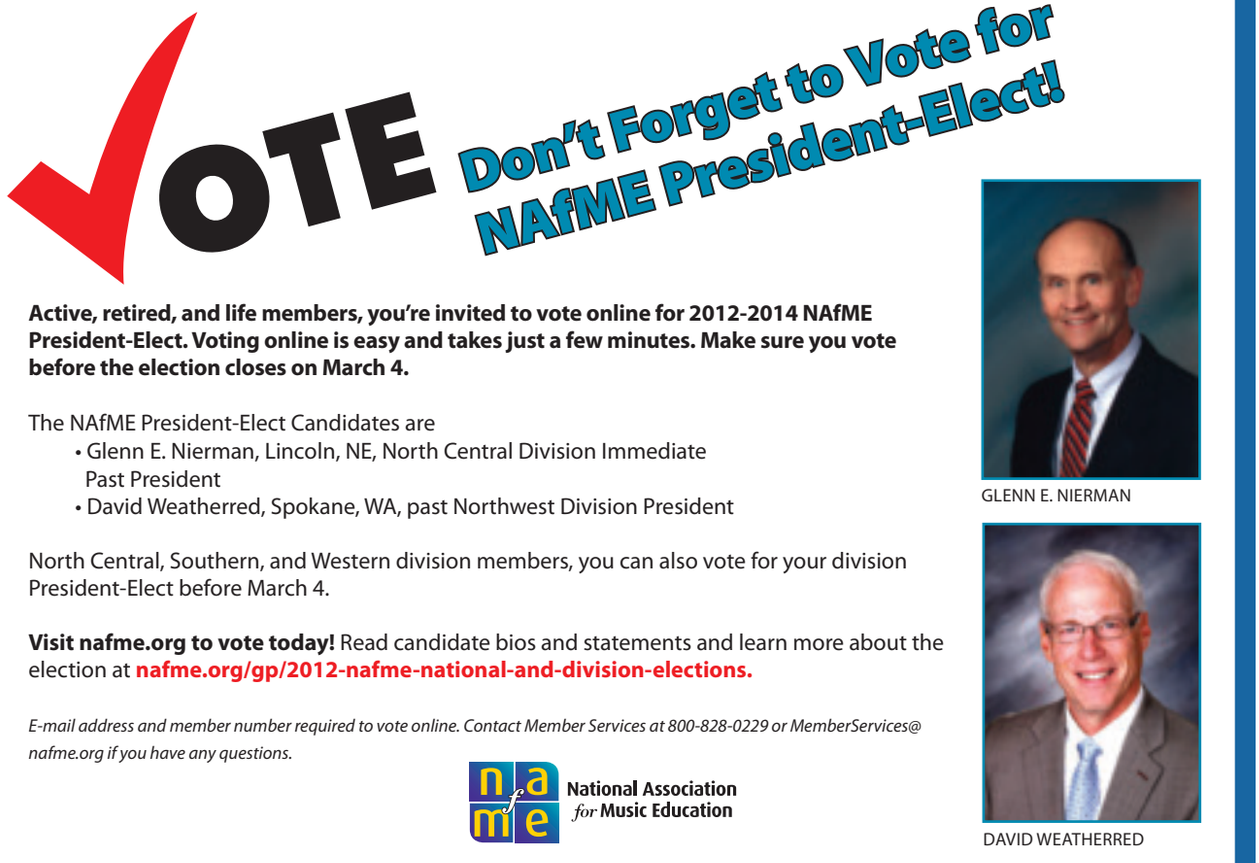

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GLENN E. NIERMAN

DAVID WEATHERRED

Ipswich High School students enter the yard of St. Swithun's Church in Bathford prior to their performance there.

From Ipswich to Ipswich

Massachusetts music students find a familiar name in England

Every four years, Gerry Dolan, fine arts director at Ipswich High School in Ipswich, Massachusetts, takes a group of his band, orchestra, and choral students to the United Kingdom, with the help of contacts that he first made there in 1992 as part of a Fulbright teacher exchange program. The itinerary of the group's latest journey, which ran from April 12 to April 21, 2011, included for the first time the quaint southeastern English town of … Ipswich. "It's not officially our sister city," Dolan explains, "but we had established a connection through the Rotary Clubs in both towns. First we helped raise money for an instrument fund at a high school in Ipswich, England, and then the Rotary Club there reciprocated by sponsoring our concert."

The trip was an enormous undertaking, including 155 students and 15 adults and requiring two planes and four motor coaches. Fundraising efforts were valiant; students raised $150,000 in a year. Much of that money came from a raffle, the grand prize being a trip to Paris provided by the school's longtime tour company, Encore Tours in Boston.

Once funds were in hand, it was time to, as Dolan puts it, "work out all the crazy details." A list of concert venues was compiled and repertoire was chosen, including a few works by Sir Edward Elgar. In Ipswich itself, the ensembles performed a specially commissioned piece by composer Robert Bradshaw called "Ipswich to Ipswich."

In addition to their namesake town, the Ipswich group visited Cambridge, Bath, and London, giving seven concerts in 11 days. Dolan singles out a performance at St. Swithun's Church in the village of Bathford, just outside Bath, as a highlight of the trip: "It's a tradition for us to go there, and this time it was a benefit concert for the church, which is so small that we barely fit into it. All the students ate at the local pub and then walked up a steep hill to the church. The entire community came out to see us, and there were American flags lining the churchyard."

For Dolan, cultural exchange is always the most rewarding aspect of these British trips. "Back when I was a Fulbrighter, our mission was mutual understanding among nations," he says. "Over the years, I believe that we've been able to fulfill that mission, one student at a time and note by note."

—*Mac Randall*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF GERRY DOLAN

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