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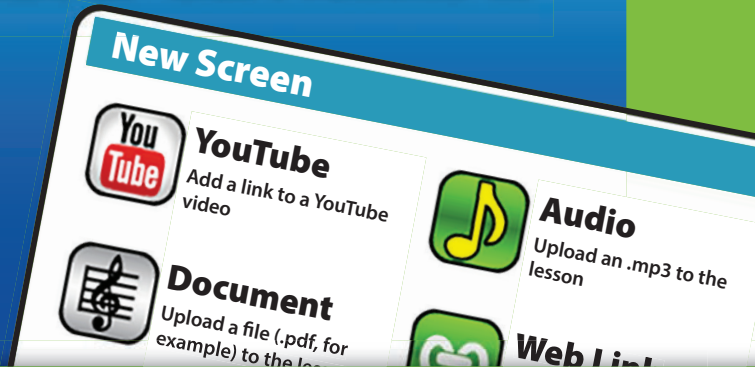

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Overcoming Anxiety

Thank you for a very good issue of *Teaching Music* for January. I would like to address the article on overcoming performance anxiety by Andrew S. Berman. My recommendation is to "accentuate the positive," as the popular song says. Trying to make music beautiful and performing music that one can be proud of are very important, as well as focusing on details of performance technique and musicality. We music teachers are very lucky to be able to deal daily with something beautiful, and we should emphasize this fact.

One of my percussion teachers said, "Was that a beautiful sound?" This is important to realize and to work toward in the schools.

—Geary H. Larrick, *retired music professor, the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, Geary.Larrick@uwsp.edu*

CLARIFICATION: On page 29 of the January 2015 issue of *Teaching Music*, the photo accompanying the Brass & Woodwinds Workshop ("Fixing Common Problems on the Oboe") included a reed with English scrape. Note that, as the caption for the photo cautions, this is the type of reed a struggling student should *not* use. A student should instead opt for a reed with American scrape. The caption was not meant to imply the opposite. *TM* apologizes for any confusion.

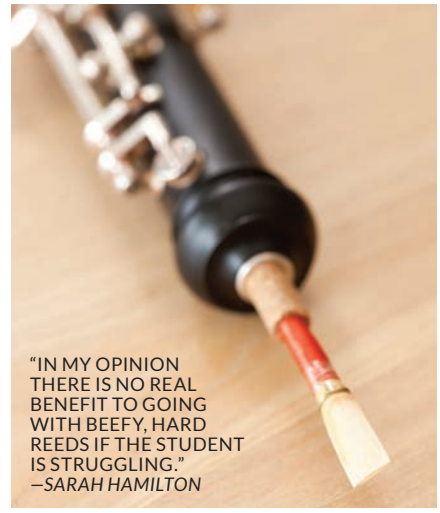

PHOTO RIGHT: ISTOCK

WRITE TO US Send your thoughts to *CarolineA@nafme.org*, or fax a letter to 888-275-6362. We appreciate hearing from you and sharing your thoughts with your fellow NAfME members. Letters are edited for style and to fit available space. Please include your full name, job title, your school's name, and the city and state where you teach.

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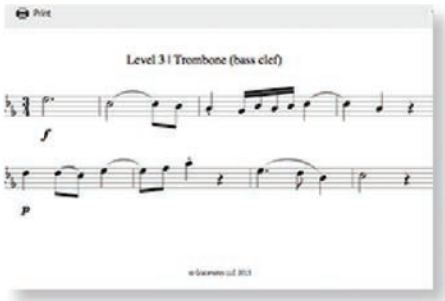

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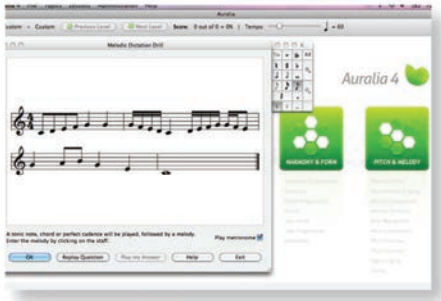

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upbeat

News and notes for today's music educator By Rosalind C. Fehr

NAfME Plus Jazz at Lincoln Center Equals Collaboration

PHOTO: FRANK STEWART/JALC

JAZZ IS the low moan of a saxophone, the growl of a trumpet, or the staccato notes of a snare drum. Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC) describes the art form as "a mingling of the musical expressions of all the people who came to the United States, by choice or by force; people from Africa, Europe, Latin America, as well as people who were already living in the U.S. Jazz was created by mixing together music from field chants and spirituals, to African rhythms and folk songs." Jazz is also defined by collaboration, and NAfME is collaborating with JALC.

In 2014, NAfME and Jazz at Lincoln Center formed a strategic partnership to provide members with education resources that can enhance their ability to teach jazz and to understand the importance of jazz as part of our collective history. Jazz at Lincoln Center produces a year-round schedule of performance, education, and broadcast events for audiences of all ages. Trumpeter Wynton Marsalis is the managing and artistic director.

For Black History Month, the JALC lesson plans—Jazz and Democracy, Jazz in the Civil Rights Era, and Jazz and the Harlem Renaissance—are examples of materials they are making available to NAfME members.

JALC educational programs include the Band Director Academy, JALC Youth Orchestra, Visiting Band Workshops, Family Concerts, Middle School Jazz Academy, and an early-childhood jazz program called WeBop.

A signature program of JALC education is "Essentially Ellington," a free jazz education program for high school jazz bands. Through this program, 15 bands are selected to travel to Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York and participate in the Essentially Ellington festival and awards program.

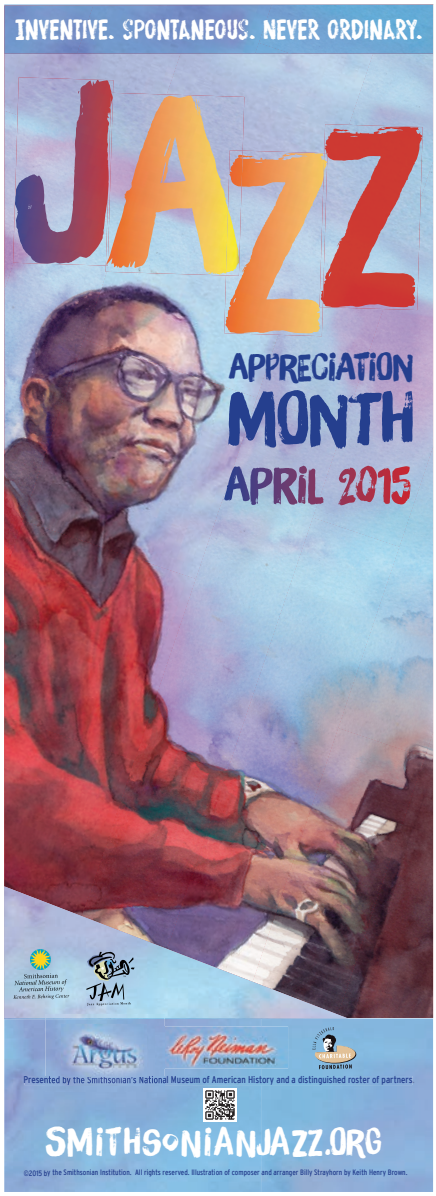
JALC will be selecting education resources for elementary through high school teachers that will be available through direct links and on the NAfME website. These will include lesson plans, suggested teaching strategies, and other educational materials. Look for additional JALC content during Jazz Appreciation Month in April.

NAfME is proud to recognize Jazz at Lincoln Center as its newest strategic partner, and will work with JALC to orchestrate success for students and music educators. For more JALC resources visit *nafme.org/my-classroom/black-history-month/.*

Speak Up! NAfME Seeks Blog Contributors

NAfME IS EXCITED to announce the launch it of its new blog, "Music in a Minuet." The blog is giving a voice to outside contributors such as music education experts and supporters, as well as NAfME staff. The aim is to offer an array of articles and resources to support music educators and those who advocate for them.

We are currently seeking individuals who are interested in contributing their personal experiences and insights. Interested members can email *KristenR@nafme.org* for more information.



Smithsonian's 2015 Jazz Appreciation Month Honors Composer Billy Strayhorn of "Take the A Train" Fame

EACH APRIL, JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH (JAM) shines a spotlight on jazz music as both an historical and a living treasure. The special month aims to draw greater public attention to the extraordinary heritage of jazz and its importance to American culture.

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History created JAM in 2002, and leads this initiative along with a distinguished roster of federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and broadcasting networks.

2015 JAM celebrates the 100th birthday of composer Billy Strayhorn. The 2015 poster is based on a portrait of Strayhorn by artist Keith Henry Brown and depicts Stayhorn at the piano. In addition, the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra will host a concert on April 11th called "Lush Life: Billy Strayhorn's Centennial." The Smithsonian will also present information about Strayhorn's remarkable career.

Billy Strayhorn's compositions include "Chelsea Bridge," "Day Dream," "Johnny Come Lately," "Rain Check" and "Clementine." The pieces most frequently played are Ellington's theme song, "Take the A Train," as well as Ellington's signatory, "Lotus Blossom." Strayhorn also collaborated with Ellington on a number of suites including "Deep South Suite," the "Shakespearean Suite" or "Such Sweet Thunder," an arrangement of the "The Nutcracker Suite," and the "Peer Gynt Suite." He and Ellington also composed the "Queen's Suite," and gave the only pressing made during Ellington's lifetime to Queen Elizabeth II of England. For more information on Billy Strayhorn visit *billystrayhorn.com*.

At press time the Smithsonian staff was finalizing its 2015 concert schedule; however, the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., will hold jazz concerts every Thursday in its Flag Hall featuring the U.S. Airmen of Note, the jazz band of the U.S. Air Force.

Visit Smithsonian Jazz's new Facebook page at *facebook.com/SmithsonianJazz* to request a copy of the 2015 poster and see other JAM news. Visit *smithsonianjazz.org* for more information on Strayhorn, jazz oral histories, a calendar of events, a variety of educational materials, and "This Day in Jazz."

It's Not Just in April: NAfME Offers Jazz Resources All Year

IN 2002, the Smithsonian Institution created Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM) to celebrate the extraordinary heritage and history of jazz, and acknowledge its importance as an American cultural heritage.

NAfME believes in the importance of the study of jazz, and its Council for Jazz Education supports NAfME members and the jazz community by serving as an important resource to improve the quality of teaching and research in jazz education at all levels.

On Tuesday April 14, 7–8pm, the Council will present a webinar, "Building your Jazz Program from the Ground Up" by David Kauffman, Fine Arts Coordinator for Allegany County Maryland.

The session will look at challenges associated with establishing or improving an instrumental jazz program in underserved areas.

Topics will include scheduling, setting realistic expectations and goals, equipment demands, music selection, listening, improvisation, skill development, working with your administration, and creating performance opportunities for your group.

The Council for Jazz Education is one of NAfME's two Societies and 14 Councils that serve various NAfME constituencies.

Richard Victor chairs the council. A high school band director and coordinator of music for the State College [Pennsylvania] Area School District, he began teaching at State College in 1975 and served as coordinator of music from 1988 until his retirement in 2011. Visit *nafme.org/community/societies-and-councils/council-for-jazz-education/* for more information about the Council.

PHOTOS FROM TOP: SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION ; ISTOCK

"ALMOST EVERYONE IN MY FAMILY IS IN EDUCATION. I THINK THIS FRAMED MY INTEREST IN WORKING IN SCHOOLS FROM THE BEGINNING" —JARED CASSEDY

2015 GRAMMY® Music Educator: His Students Take Ownership of Their Music Program

JARED CASSEDY of Windham, New Hampshire, received the prestigious 2015 GRAMMY Music Educator Award in February. In addition to his music classes, he conducts the New Hampshire Youth Wind Ensemble. He began his career as a band director at Windham Middle School in 2005, and while he was there he taught all grade level ensembles, honors concert band, jazz ensemble, and string ensemble.

In 2009, he became Windham High School's first director of bands when the new school opened. He oversees all instrumental ensembles and teaches a variety of music electives. In 2012, he was appointed as the dean of fine, living, and technical arts at Windham.

He was one of eight NAfME members who were among the 10 GRAMMY finalists. Four of the other seven discuss their music programs on page 14 of this issue of *Teaching Music*. Visit *nafme.org/category/news* for additional GRAMMY Educator content.

> I had a serious love and passion for making music and wanted to share it with the students

Jared took time out of his busy GRAMMY week in Los Angeles to answer some questions about his music-teaching career.

Q: WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A MUSIC TEACHER? This is a great question! Almost everyone in my family is in education. I think this framed my interest in working in schools from the beginning. Ironically, when I told my parents I wanted to become a music teacher, they were definitely concerned, mainly due to job security.

With that being said, I had a serious love and passion for making music and wanted to share it with the students that I would someday work with. As I worked through my undergrad, I think understanding music education's power and realizing how much we need to continue to support the significance of music education is what empowered me to go full-throttle into this profession.

Q: PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR MUSIC PROGRAM. WHAT ROLE DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR BAND PLAYS IN THE OVERALL FABRIC OF THE SCHOOL? The music program at Windham High School is still in its infancy. Our high school only opened back in 2009 with just freshmen and sophomore classes. Because there was no music program to speak of, it took a great deal of planning and preparation to get to where we are. I remember being so excited to be hired as the first director of bands, but soon realized that this came with a tremendous amount of responsibility—to lay a strong foundation for a comprehensive program.

I worked extremely closely with the students and administration to start laying that foundation out. It definitely was not me making all the decisions, but a collaboration really led by those first students in the program where we were very reflective and conscientious about what our goals and core values were going to be. Because of this, I think that's why there has been so much ownership from the students and the school about our program in general. This also extends far beyond just our band program.

SEE ANSWERS to other questions at *nafme.org*.

PHOTOS FROM TOP: SHARI MESULAM; ISTOCK

Music Education Supporters Take ESEA Fight to Capitol Hill

FOR SEVERAL years, the National Association for Music Education's Advocacy Team has lobbied Congress to strengthen support for the arts in federal education laws. Many of NAfME's requests focus around rewriting parts of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), a long-overdue task that Chairman Alexander of Tennessee signaled would be first on the agenda for 2015. Immediately after the December announcement, NAfME's team began working with key offices in both the US Senate and the House of Representatives to shape ESEA.

A few of NAfME's goals

for ESEA include: ensuring arts programs are considered core, protecting students' time in arts classes, and basing evaluations for all teachers on the subjects they teach. Congress received not only these requests but also a range of "Share Your Story" submissions from their constituents, more than 9,000 letters from Broader Minded™ activists, and a flood of social media messages supporting music education. These efforts were heard loud and clear by Congress, and both parties fulfilled NAfME's requests in their first drafts of ESEA.

Stay current on legislation in both the US Senate and the House of Representatives on NAfME's Advocacy Groundswell Blog: *nafme.org/category/advocacy-groundswell-blog*.

Deadline Nears for 2015 NAfME All-National Honor Ensembles


AUDREY BUCZKO

A PROGRAM of the National Association for Music Education, the NAfME All-National Honor Ensembles represent the top performing high school musicians in the United States. In October 2015, the ensembles will perform in Nashville, Tennessee, under the baton of leaders in the music education field.

The NAfME All-National Honor Ensembles include the following:
- **Concert Band**
- **Mixed Choir**
- **Symphony Orchestra**
- **Jazz Ensemble**

The 2015 NAfME All-National Honor Ensembles Audition Site is open! The application deadline is May 8, 2015. Here is what students and NAfME members need to know about the application process:

All applications MUST be completed online at *app.getacceptd.com/nafmeensembles*.

• All applications must be completed by midnight Pacific Time on May 8, 2015.

• The event will take place at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Conference Center October 25–28, 2015. The final performance venue has not been selected.

• The concert is scheduled for Wednesday, October 28. Students should plan to arrive on Sunday, October 25, 2015, between 2:00 and 7:00 p.m, Eastern Time, and should plan to depart on Wednesday, October 28, 2015.

• Applicants must receive endorsement from his or her ensemble director, who must be a current member of NAfME.

Audrey Buczko, a member of the 2014 ANHE Mixed Choir, remarked that her participation was a life-changing experience. "I truly mean that with all my heart. I have never felt the same way as I did during those rehearsals and during the performance at the Grand Ole Opry. I learned so much about myself both as a musician and as a person." Buczko attends the Waring School in Beverly, Massachusetts.

She adds, "I was surrounded by other musicians who had the same passion for creativity as I do. It was so easy to connect with people there; I have never experienced such a great sense of belonging. We all wanted to be there so badly, to make music—which is why I made friendships that will last forever."

All application requirements and other information regarding the application process can be found at *nafme.org/programs/all-national-honor-ensembles*.

For more information, visit *nafme.org* and search for "Honor Ensembles"

NAfME Offers New Membership Category

The National Association for Music Education presents an exciting, new, more inclusive membership category for:
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Become an Associate Member of NAfME today! By doing so, you

will be joining the only association that supports all aspects of music education. NAfME advocates at the local, state, and national levels; provides resources for teachers, parents, and administrators; hosts professional development events; and offers a variety of opportunities for students and teachers.

For more information and to join, visit *nafme.org/associate*.

Calling All Music Education Majors!

JOIN US for an unforgettable experience at the 2015 NAfME Collegiate Advocacy Summit, June 24–26, 2015! Share your passion for music education with the nation's leaders at our annual lobbying day on Capitol Hill, and take part in additional leadership and advocacy training tailored especially for the Association's Collegiate members.

The National Association for Music Education is the established national voice for music education, and we want YOU to be in Washington, D.C., this June for this exciting event. It's a chance of a lifetime to carry your passion for music education to the Hill!

Members of the Brooklyn-based band San Fermin will also pay visits to Capitol Hill. The band exemplifies excellence in music study, collaboration, and performance. Founded by talented composer and bandleader Ellis Ludwig-Leone, San Fermin's members are all students of their craft, with established educational backgrounds in music spanning from Yale to the University of Michigan. NAfME is pleased to name San Fermin as the recipient of its 2015 Stand 4 Music Award.

The 2015 Summit also offers NAfME Collegiate members the chance to meet NAfME state and national leaders.

Want more info? See videos from NAfME Collegiate members talking about their 2014 Summit experiences at *nafme.org/hillday*.

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Music Student, Baldwin High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.

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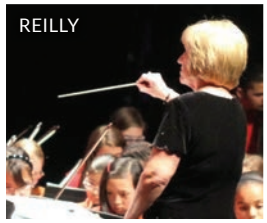
REILLY


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2015 GRAMMY® Music Educator Finalists Say NAfME Plays a Role in Their Success

IN FEBRUARY, the GRAMMY Foundation named Jared Cassedy of Windham, New Hampshire, the 2015 GRAMMY Music Educator (see the story on page 11). Cassedy was one of 10 finalists chosen from a pool of 7,000 nominations nationwide. Of the 10 music educators, eight are NAfME members. Each finalist received a $1,000 *honorarium*, and their schools each received a $1,000 grant from the GRAMMY Foundation.

Glenn Nierman, president of the National Association for Music Education, remarks that the teachers who were honored by the GRAMMY Foundation represent high-quality music educators everywhere. "It was my pleasure to represent NAfME in this year's 2015 Grammy Selection Process. It was very gratifying to hear the testimonials from school administrators, parents, and students about how much music educators were involved in orchestrating success in the lives of these young people."

WHAT ROLE DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR NAfME MEMBERSHIP HAS PLAYED IN YOUR CAREER DEVELOPMENT?

DANNY L. YANCEY, is the choral director/piano instructor at Martin Gifted and Talented. Magnet Middle School in Raleigh, North Carolina. Principal Diann Kearney told a reporter from television station WRAL in Raleigh that she often finds herself in Yancey's room at Martin Middle, and is excited to find energized students. He is also director of music at Monument of Faith Church.

Of his NAfME membership Yancey notes that, "I am the educator that I am because of NAfME. Most of the effective classroom strategies and the innovative ideas that I use either come from reading NAfME publications or from attending North Carolina Music Educators Association (NCMEA) conferences and events. My district's professional development mostly centers on math, reading or technology. To stay abreast of current trends in music education, a NAfME membership has proven to be an absolute necessity. It gives my students yet more unique experiences by participating in our state's Honors Chorus and All-State Choral Festivals. It gives me a chance to network with other music teachers across the state and country, and it gives all of us music educators a voice in the ear of lawmakers and the general public that music in our schools matters."

WILLIAM J. BENNETT, director of choirs at Cane Bay High School in Summerville, South Carolina, and College of Charleston adjunct professor of music, says he takes advantage of NAfME's professional development opportunities.

"My NAfME membership has been invaluable to my career! By attending various workshops, conferences, and clinics over the years I have been able to create a network of colleagues that I have learned an incredible amount from. I look forward to all of the NAfME events each year because I know I will come away from them energized and with new "tricks" to throw in my teaching bag."

DEB REILLY from Allentown, Pennsylvania, is a symphony violist and orchestra director who teaches at Springhouse and Orefield Middle Schools in the Parkland School District.

She believes that, "NAfME plays a vital role in the professional development aspects of every music educator's career by offering valuable insight to all areas of teaching. They developed the Core Music Standards, which are clear and precise. As a music educator, speaking out about the importance of music education is vital. With budget cuts, music is the often the first program that school boards consider cutting. NAfME has terrific resources that provide facts and useful tools for music educators to become knowledgeable and proactive about speaking out about maintaining success of music programs in the schools."

KRISTA FANNING of Cado Middle School in Cado Parrish, Louisiana, is a nationally board certified band director with 22 years of experience in teaching band, piano, and guitar.

Fanning notes that "What I appreciate most about my NAfME membership is the access to resources and materials. Even though I have taught for 25 years, I am always thinking about the changing landscape that is education and how I can best present the material to my students, so having ideas and research readily available is awesome!"

RICHARD MAXWELL created the Contemporary Music and Sound program (CMAS) at Arcadia High School in Scottsdale, Arizona. Run entirely by students, the program allows students to write, record, perform and produce their own music with professional-grade equipment.

Of his membership, he says, "NAfME creates a community. Creates a possibility of connections. Creates a chance to continue to grow and evolve. On a personal level I really value that. What I do is not extraordinary. It's unique. Being a member of NAfME means that I have the opportunity to help others take what I've been ridiculously lucky to create with CMAS and take it so much further. The prospect of [facilitating others's learning] is thrilling to me … and being part of NAfME helps to make that possible."

NAfME Seeks Designations for 2015 Lowell Mason Fellows

CONSIDER NOMINATING influential music educators, music education advocates, friends of music education, or industry professionals for the Lowell Mason Fellows honor.

This distinction is one of NAfME's most important honors, designed to recognize the accomplishments of those who have supported and contributed to music education in their unique way. Individuals may be named by anyone who feels a candidate deserves this important recognition, but a person may not submit a nomination on his or her own behalf.

Lowell Mason Fellow nominations also support the programs of the National Association for

Music Education with a $1,000 donation in the Fellow's name. This donation serves as a direct reflection of the importance of the candidate's contributions to music education, but it does not guarantee his or her selection as a Fellow. Individuals or groups may fund Fellow nominations.

Please contact Susan Lambert at *SusanL@nafme.org* for further information about nominating a prospective Lowell Mason Fellow.

For more information on Lowell Mason Fellows, visit *nafme.org/about/history/lowell-mason-fellows*.

PHOTOS TOP FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF DANNY L. YANCEY, WILLIAM J. BENNETT, DEB REILLY, KRISTA FANNING, RICHARD MAXWEL

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DULCIMERS CAN BE USED IN THE MUSIC CLASSROOM TO TEACH CONCEPTS SUCH AS ARRANGING AND HARMONY.

Making Sweet Music Together

A music educator in Connecticut uses dulcimers and more to teach and motivate.

SOME YEARS AGO, Laurel Schwartz's parents gave her a dulcimer to contribute to her collection of folk instruments. As she learned to play it, Schwartz—who was accustomed to teaching recorders in her classroom in Connecticut at the Middle School of Plainville—had a revelation. "I realized how accessible this instrument could be for general music students."

Schwartz advocated with her administration to use them in the classroom, reasoning that they were inexpensive and would give the students clear access to concepts from arranging to harmony. Further, she explains, "Dulcimers are cheaper than guitars, faster to tune since they only have three strings, and easier to play—the fretboard is facing up, so the students can easily see where to place their fingers."

Every other year for the past dozen, Schwartz has taught a dulcimer program in which students start by building their own instruments with the help of a local business. Then they get to work with learning scales, which can be played with simple fingerings, and basic harmonies, facilitated by the instrument's root–fifth–root tuning. "I use a solfège-based approach, building on skills taught in the previous year. My students build their own chord fingering charts, creating inversions quickly," says Schwartz. "Kids who find it hard to use multiple fingers on frets at the same time can play power chords [containing only the root and fifth] by pressing all three strings on the same fret simultaneously. This allows the harmonies to work as either major or minor, which adds flexibility when playing chord progressions."

This academic year, Schwartz has used a more technological approach with keyboards and computers in teaching some of the same concepts. Her students have responded well to this work with electronic learning tools. The scores that they have received have bolstered both their performance and their overall understanding of music. "We track performance data in multiple ways, which seems to motivate my sports-minded students. They seem to practice longer since we added a program called Synthesia [*synthesiagame.com*], which gives students a score every time they practice. I grade on progress, which has been encouraging practice efforts as well."

Whether she's teaching with dulcimers or the computer lab, Schwartz strives to make real-world connections on the instruments—a practice she refers to as "recycling and repurposing." For instance, she might point out that a particular chord sequence that they are playing on the dulcimer is in a number of popular songs with which they are already familiar. In the keyboard lab, she's been working extensively on the concept of theme and variation. "When students start seeing common playing patterns, they stop reading individual notes, which greatly increases musical fluency." ▮

> *"I realized how accessible this instrument could be for general music students."*

FACTS & FIGURES

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE
Plainville, Connecticut
GRADES 6–8

STUDENTS:
Approximately **574**

PERCENTAGE OF LOW-INCOME STUDENTS:
75%
(Title I School)

ETHNICITY OF STUDENT BODY:
81.36% White
54% Hispanic
39% African-American
14% Asian

NUMBER OF MUSIC TEACHERS:
3 Full-Time
1 Part-Time

ENSEMBLES/ CLASSES:
8
3 Bands
1 Jazz Band
3 Chorus Groups
1 Chamber Singers Ensemble

PHOTO: LYNN DAVIS

"We wanted to take a more deliberative role in bringing music into kids' lives."

GRAHAM PARKER OF NEW YORK CITY'S CLASSICAL MUSIC RADIO STATION, WQXR, SPEAKS.

An Instrumental Effort for Music Education

A New York City radio station's instrument drive has been a success for area schools.

A LITTLE GIRL in Queens saw a new cello that was delivered to her school and exclaimed, "Where have you been all my life?!" Those words perhaps best put into perspective the importance of the WQXR Musical Instrument Drive.

Last March, New York City's classical music station, WQXR, launched an instrument drive in partnership with the New York City Department of Education, Sam Ash Music Stores, and The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation. The initiative invited people throughout the area to donate used instruments for distribution to music programs at Title I New York City public schools and community music programs. Sam Ash assessed and refurbished the instruments, and The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation matched the donations with new instruments to qualifying school music programs.

Graham Parker, general manager of WQXR says, "We wanted to take a more deliberative role in bringing music into kids' lives, and we thought an instrument drive was a really unique thing we could do that no one else could. We have a powerful microphone, we have a very loyal engaged audience, so we launched the drive, and it really worked!"

While the original plan was to collect 1,000 instruments, they received 3,000 to be assessed, repaired, and coordinated; 2,000 were deemed repairable. According to Parker, there were about 128 initial inquiries, and 108 completed applications.

John Spano of P.S. 195 William Haberle School in Queens teaches the girl who was overwhelmed by the cello. "I put a lot of instruments on the list, hoping to get some. I asked for trumpets, violins, trombones, and more. I got seven cellos last week! The kids are now going to get a chance to play real instruments that work, and more students can be added to the program." Sarah Jacobs of P.S. 170 The Ralph A. Fabrizio School in Brooklyn remarks, "This year, I was able to start a handful of new kids right before our holiday concert. We received instruments we never had, like bass clarinets and a gong … it's amazing! Our school was vandalized and our trumpets damaged, but now we have some great refurbished ones." Jacqui Hunt of M.S. 324 Patria Mirabal Middle School in Manhattan notes that they have so far received flutes, clarinets, an oboe, alto and tenor saxophones, a French horn, trumpets, and an electric bass and electric guitar with amplifiers. "This is a really wonderful program! They have been so supportive through the application process, and the instruments are really wonderfully refurbished and/or new."

WQXR intends to hold another drive, possibly in 2016, and there's a thought that the program could spread nationwide and other radio stations could get involved.

SIMILAR FOUNDATIONS

HUNGRY FOR MUSIC (*hungryformusic.org*) in Washington, D.C. says that its most important service is "putting musical instruments into hungry hands." They serve children who demonstrate a desire to learn music as well as teachers who have students willing to learn. "We believe that by sharing instruments and musical experiences, children who would not normally have the opportunity can experience a kind of freedom and self-discovery that is often stifled in an atmosphere of economic hardship." They accept music instrument donations in any condition.

LITTLE KIDS ROCK (*littlekidsrock.org*) in Verona, New Jersey—a nonprofit provider of free music lessons, instruments, and teacher-training to public schools—and Ear Candy Charity, an Arizona-based nonprofit that also provides access to music education through online instrument drives, have joined forces. Donations can be made directly to Little Kids Rock's over 1,000 teachers, and those who donate can choose who they'd like to support.

VH1 SAVE THE MUSIC FOUNDATION (vh1savethemusic.org) provides new instruments to public elementary and middle schools to create long-lasting music programs. So far, they report that they've restored $51 million worth of instruments to 1,900 schools in 231 districts.

PHOTO: JANICE YI

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National In-Service CONFERENCE

> *"The results of this study were used to develop a psychological skills training program."*

The Music in Your Head

A study on in-performance thoughts may lead to a new pedagogy for musicians.

ANY MUSICIAN who has waited in the wings before going onstage has experienced that delicious, terrifying feeling that immediately precedes performance. For some, it motivates. For others, it results in paralyzing blankness.

But what really happens in the mind of a musician once onstage? Terry Clark, who is currently a lecturer at the Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London, England, has published a paper analyzing the in-performance psychology of more than two dozen musicians.

The study, published in the June 2014 issue of *Research Studies in Music Education*, is Clark's first attempt at describing the volatile mental mix at the moment of performance, and perhaps, through further studies, will create a complete pedagogy to help musicians channel all their energies into improved onstage behaviors. "The results of this study were used to develop a psychological skills training program." Clark did the research, which was published with coauthors Tânia Lisboa and Aaron Williamson, both from the Royal College of Music in London, while he was on the faculty of medicine at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada.

Twenty-nine student and professional musicians—string players, pianists, as well as vocalists—were the subjects. They were each interviewed post-performance, and asked to describe their experiences prior to taking the stage as well as during their performances, in addition to their subsequent perceptions of the success or failure of said performances.

It's probably no surprise that successful performances were linked to thorough preparation, goals that were challenging yet attainable, and an enjoyment of the performance itself. Vocalists often cited the suitability of the music to their instruments. Less successful performances were linked to inadequate rehearsal, but also to what Clark calls "facilitative versus debilitative perfectionism"—that is, the self-imposed standards of achievement that the musicians used to evaluate themselves.

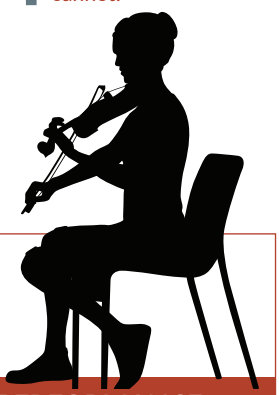
Although the anxiety of performing—for good or for ill—lies at the heart of Clark's study, he avoided the topic of beta-blockers, which some musicians use to quell their nerves before going onstage. "My idea was to provide students with performance-enhancement skills of the non-pharmaceutical variety," he notes.

Future work will focus on turning these findings and others into a practical teaching model. "My primary intention with this work was to see if it was possible to 'package' musicians' performance experiences," he says. "Is it possible, or must musicians come to these perceptions through accrued experience? I do think that by encouraging task mastery, as opposed to competition, teachers can support the well-being and performance quality of their students."

FIVE KEYS FOR SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE

Although this study is only the first along the way toward establishing a pedagogy, Terry Clark already has some simple tips for improving students' outlook toward performance. In general, he suggests that musicians view performances as part of the process, not the end goal—and, most importantly, that they enjoy the moment.

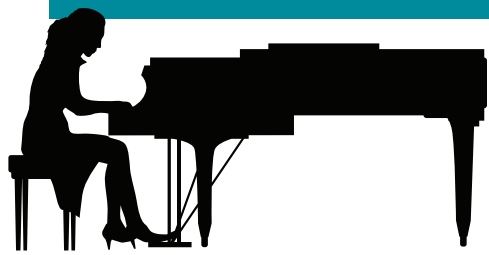
- View performing as an opportunity for learning, as opposed to a final statement on a piece of music.
- Strive to develop facilitative, healthy perceptions of the performance environment.
- Use your anxiety symptoms to elevate your performance.
- Try to focus on the intrinsic joy of performing, rather than the competitive or evaluative aspects.
- Focus on the elements you can control. Let go of those that you cannot.



EXPERIENCES DURING PERFORMANCE

Perceived Contributing Factors

SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE
- Felt thoroughly prepared
- Positive connection with music
- Facilitative views of performance
- Audience facilitative



LESS SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE
- Inappropriate preparation
- Negative connection with music
- Negative views of performance situation
- Audience debilitative
- Evaluative situation
- Conflict with other performers
- Poor quality piano
- Negative overall context

ILLUSTRATIONS: ISTOCK; SOURCE: "AN INVESTIGATION INTO MUSICIANS' THOUGHTS AND PERCEPTIONS DURING PERFORMANCE," *RESEARCH STUDIES IN MUSIC EDUCATION*, JUNE 2014, VOLUME 36, NUMBER 1, PGS. 19-37 (SEE *RSM.SAGEPUB.COM/CONTENT/36/1/19.ABSTRACT*)

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Motivating Band Students to Thrive

A student-centered approach and informed use of technology can aid in engagement.

"TO INCREASE INTEREST IN BAND, LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO INCREASE THEIR INTRINSIC MOTIVATIONS FOR PARTICIPATING." —DANNI GILBERT

DANNI GILBERT *is a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. She can be contacted at danni2784@hotmail.com.*

STUDENTS IN LATE ELEMENTARY and middle school are in the process of finding out who they are and what interests them. Because band is often an elective, it is up against sports and other activities as a time-use choice. If students opt in, they may end up opting out if their experiences don't match their expectations. When students drop out of band, common excuses include:

"Band is boring … it's just not what I thought it would be."

"I thought I would get to play music I like and play in more concerts."

"I would rather play sports or videogames."

How can we keep students interested in band during their first year and beyond?

Band directors can positively influence students and stakeholders by effectively informing, educating, and communicating the benefits of their programs. We know the importance of parental support in maintaining a high-quality music program. To increase interest in band, look for opportunities for students to increase their intrinsic motivations for participating. (Intrinsic motivation can be described as the enjoyment of the activity itself.) Here are some suggestions:

• Shift from a traditional teacher-centered classroom to a student-centered approach.

• Create informative, low-stakes performance situations.

• Incorporate more appropriate, relevant technology- and game-based activities in instruction and practice.

In many band classrooms, teachers are omnipotent. Allowing students to help in the decision-making may increase the likelihood that they will continue participating in band. This kind of leadership, in my experience, also promotes student independence.

Music itself is intrinsically motivating, but the more progress students make their first year, the more motivated they will be, say researchers Adreas Lehmann, John Sloboda, and Robert Woody (*Psychology for Musicians: Understanding and Acquiring the Skills*, 2007). When students can select, arrange, and compose material in the classroom, it creates more of a student-centered, creative learning environment. Here are a few ideas for developing a student-centered approach in band instruction, each of which is entirely consistent with the new National Standards approach to "music literacy."

1. Have students select, compose, and arrange musical material.

2. Provide opportunities for students to listen to and evaluate themselves.

3. Develop practice situations that provide authentic musical context. In other words, allow the practice to mimic the performance. Students may be more willing to practice if they can share and collaborate with each other or with an audience. Posting recordings of practice sessions on a sharable space such as a class website (see *dannigilbert-band.edublogs.org* for an example) can stimulate conversation and motivation for practice.

4. Charge students with the task of developing performance agendas/opportunities.

There are many resources available for fostering a student-centered approach (see sidebar). Customizable method books and online materials (including exercises, downloadable sheet music, and music software) can allow students to compose and arrange their own pieces. Students can also evaluate their own work by listening to their creations using digital playback equipment or assessment software.

Many elementary band directors may only schedule one concert at the end of the school year because they do not think that their students can perform at an "appropriate" level before then. However, students are eager to demonstrate what they've accomplished. It may prove valuable to increase the number of informal,

PHOTO: ISTOCK

low-stakes performances during the school year.

Especially for young people who see it as musical sharing, performing is intrinsically motivating. By performing early and often, we can capitalize on students' intrinsic motivation and use that enthusiasm to propel them forward. What if students who chose to participate in sports practiced all season long and were allowed to play only one game?

By using concerts as places to demonstrate what is happening in class, directors can better inform and enlighten stakeholders about how music is evolving as a 21st-century subject that belongs in the curriculum. Concert selections also do not have to involve the whole group every time. Perhaps students could showcase what they have been working on in small groups.

Teachers can alleviate some of the stress and pressure they feel about performances by putting them in students' hands. Allow students to perform selections that they have created or arranged for the concerts. Informances can incorporate technology by offering a recording or video as a podcast on the class's website or blog space. If we can shift our focus to demonstrate more of the process of what we are learning in class (including skills such as critical thinking and creativity) rather than the product (the formal concert performance), students are likely to be more engaged in band participation and able to acquire the independence necessary to maintain musicianship throughout their lives.

Incorporating technology in classroom instruction and at-home practice can help increase students' motivation to participate in band. Because students depend on technology to communicate, gather information, and extend social experiences, band directors need to adapt instructional practices to match these expectations. In a 2008 *Journal of Research on Technology Education* study titled "Having Our Say: Middle Grade Student Perspectives on School, Technologies, and Academic Engagement," researchers found that middle school students classified themselves as high users of the Internet (86%), digital music (83%), videogames (76%), and cell phones (71%). Young people in the study expressed the desire to have more technology available in school.

Band directors may also help students increase their intrinsic motivation for participation by providing opportunities for students to learn musical concepts through games. Students spend hours of their free time playing sports and videogames. In these contexts, they have the opportunity to achieve challenging but reachable goals.

The flow theory of psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi may explain students' attraction to games. When people experience the mental state of flow, they are enjoyably challenged and become fully immersed in the activity. Learning through participating in games can also provide the satisfaction of problem-solving and immediate feedback.

RESOURCES FOR INTEGRATING STUDENT-CENTERED TECHNOLOGY AND GAMES IN BAND CLASS

Composing, Arranging, Selecting Repertoire

- Noteflight (*noteflight.com*): Free online music-writing application. Create, view, print, and hear music.
- MuseScore (*musescore.org*): Free music composition and notation software. Files can be opened in Finale and Sibelius.
- Sound Innovations, Alfred Music Publishing (*alfred.com/SoundInnovations*): Customizable method books.

Alternatives to Paper Method Books

- The Habits of Musicianship (*cml.music.utexas.edu/online-resources/habits-of-musicianship*): Free online method book.
- PDF Band Music (*pdfbandmusic.com*): Downloadable music.

Opportunities for Students to Listen to Themselves

- SmartMusic (*smartmusic.com*): Interactive software for educators and students with playback and assessment features.
- GarageBand (*apple.com/ilife/garageband*): Record music and add loops. Also available for iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch.
- Audacity (*audacity.sourceforge.net*): Downloadable, free, open-source, cross-platform software for recording and editing sounds.

Learning through Games

- Theta Music Trainer (*trainer.thetamusic.com*): Online music and ear-training games.
- Music Tech Teacher (*musictechteacher.com*): Interactive lessons, quizzes, and games (rhythms, terms, and musicians).
- Dallas Symphony Orchestra Kids (*dsokids.com*): Music history, theory, and terminology games.
- Music Ace Maestro (*harmonicvision.com*): Assessment and curriculum-development software; interactive lessons and games.

The ways in which students learn are evolving, and our teaching should reflect these changes. By updating some of our instructional practices, we may begin to hear comments like:

"Band is awesome! It is better than I thought it would be!"

"I'm so glad I get to play music I like for friends and family."

"Band is as fun as sports or video games."

Above all else, we may instill in our students a lifelong love of learning music.

BY CHAD CRISWELL

Music Technology for Students with Visual Impairments

A variety of tools, programs, and more can help educators bring music to low-vision and blind students.

IMAGINE THE FIRST DAY of school with a new group of students in a classroom. For many teachers, the first task is often to get a student making music, either by singing or playing on an instrument, and then over time to teach them how to read music notation and relate the notes on the page to the instrument. But what happens when the student is visually impaired?

For many teachers, the idea of trying to teach the basics of music to a visually-impaired student may seem daunting. Throughout the blind community, there are horror stories of teachers trying their best but being misguided into using ineffective methods due to their own unconscious stereotypes about what a blind student can or cannot do. Bill McCann, founder and president of Dancing Dots (*dancingdots.com*), has a very poignant statement about his feelings on this subject: "I have heard of stories where directors have told the kid they can't be in the school band because the student wouldn't be able to read the music. With all of the tools available today, if a student is blind but still motivated enough to try then they deserves the same opportunity as anyone else. That's when it becomes the teacher's job to go out and get help for both the student and themselves as a teacher of that student."

Fortunately, there are many different tools and resources that a teacher can call upon to bring visually-impaired students into the world of creating music. When considering the various ways to help a visually-impaired student learn, a great deal depends on the degree of impairment. Those with partial vision may be able to use different tools than those who are totally blind.

David Pinto, founder and director of the Academy of Music for the Blind in Los Angeles, California, points out that "A blind individual in a regular ed classroom usually has an aide who can help him get materials in alternative formats." Some teachers may be averse to using rote repetition, but for the totally blind learner, the majority of musical learning, at least at first, will often be accomplished by listening to and copying the teacher. "The most basic way to get a student started is to teach by rote, often with the help of another student. If this is not practical, then another way is to record the part or even give another student extra credit to make the recording for the blind student to use."

McCann's recommendation to music educators is to "first find out if the student is a proficient braille reader and, if so, then you can go down the path of braille music." Braille music–teaching expertise, however, is rare. If this special level of knowledge is not readily available, McCann suggests using some

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DANCING DOTS

BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION BASICS

Braille letters consist of six raised dots arranged in different patterns. In braille music noation, the same six dots are used but are arranged in different ways to denote both pitch and duration. The notation is based on solfège. There are six dots, numbered 1–3 down the left side and 4–6 down on the right. The tones in the major scale are notated using dots 1, 2, 4, and 5.

The dots in the bottom row (#3 and #6) are not used to denote pitch: They instead indicate duration. Without any additional dots, a note is considered to be an eighth note. Adding dot 3 (bottom left dot) to the braille symbol changes the duration to a half note. Adding only dot 6 (bottom right dot) changes the duration to a quarter note. Adding dots 3 and 6 at the same time indicates a whole note.

(The images below are copyrighted by the American Foundation for the Blind and are used with permission. For more information, visit *braillebug.afb.org/music_braille.asp.)*

do	*re*	*mi*	*fa*	*sol*	*la*	*ti*
C	D	E	F	G	A	B

"NEVER TURN A KID AWAY FROM MUSIC JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE BLIND." —BILL McCANN

of the course materials from Dancing Dots or other sources as guided by an aide or braille teacher. Dancing Dots software can augment braille music or act as a substitute for it. "If the student doesn't read braille and isn't going to learn it, then look into products like Lime Aloud [a feature of Dancing Dots] that can speak the notes verbally to the student."

For students who are not completely blind, the LimeLighter software takes on a much more traditional role. With LimeLighter, music can be scanned into the system, converted into the Lime music notation format, and then magnified up to 10 times the original size. It is then presented in a single-line, side-scrolling format on a large computer monitor that can be controlled by the use of foot pedals while playing. The display of the notes can be switched from black-on-white to a reversed white-on-black, which is preferred by many low-vision readers. The use of the LimeLighter software requires it to be installed on a dedicated Windows PC, and Dancing Dots also provides several different, ready-built bundles that include the monitor, software, and pedal controller in one package.

"The most basic way to get a student started is to teach by rote, often with the help of another student. If this is not practical, then another way is to record the part or even give another student extra credit to make the recording for the blind student to use."

Two similar but less configurable alternatives come in the form of apps for the Apple iPad. The most recent version of forScore (*forscore.co*) includes a mode called Reflow, which converts multi-line music into single-line, side-scrolling notes that can be controlled with a foot pedal or by touching the sides of the screen. A sheet music reading app called Music Zoom (*musiczoomapp.com*), like ForScore, converts scanned music to side-scrolling notes that can be controlled by foot pedal. However, it requires some manual input to get the music into the system in a way that can be read easily.

To get up to speed and gain a better understanding of these and other tools that are available to help you teach visually-impaired learners, McCann suggests that teachers team up with a professional teacher of the visually impaired. "Those teachers will know about it, understand the challenges associated with teaching low-vision students, and know of things that can be of help. Never turn a kid away from music just because they are blind." ▮

OTHER SUGGESTED TOOLS AND RESOURCES

CakeTalking for SONAR
dancingdots.com/prodesc/CakeTalkingForSONAR.htm
Created by David Pinto, CakeTalking is a program that works with the JAWS screen-reading software, allowing low-vision users to create, edit, and produce music using the popular SONAR digital audio workstation software.

GOODFEEL
dancingdots.com/main/goodfeel.htm
This software program converts printed music scores into braille music notation.

MagneMusic
blennzmusicschool.wordpress.com/magnemusic
This is a tactile, magnetic resource used to help blind people realize what sighted people are talking about when they use common musical terms such as "clef" or "time signature."

***Introduction to Music for the Blind Student—Part III: Teacher Training* by Richard Taesch**
dancingdots.com/prodesc/currdetp3.htm
This book is dedicated to helping teachers learn how to instruct their blind students in acquiring the skills of reading and writing music.

***Who's Afraid of Braille Music?* by Richard Taesch and William McCann**
loc.gov/nls/music/WhosAfraid.pdf
This brief introduction to the concepts behind reading and understanding braille music includes simple lessons and assignments.

The Academy of Music For The Blind
ouramb.org
The AMB is also a resource for music educators who want to learn how to teach blind students. Teachers may send questions to *info@ouramb.org* or inquire about regional seminars that may be coming to their areas.

MUSIC PROGRAMS AND CAMPS INCLUDE:

Music Academy at Enchanted Hills Camp, Napa, California
lighthouse-sf.org/programs/enchanted-hills/

The Filomen M. D'Agostino Greenberg Music School at Lighthouse International, New York, NY
lighthouse.org/services-and-assistance/music-school/

Student-Produced Albums

A Project that Pays in Dollars and Sense

JONATHAN KURTZ *is the band director at Urbana Middle School in Ijamsville, Maryland. He may be contacted at jonathan_kurtz@hotmail.com.*

MUSIC EDUCATORS face enormous challenges in today's classrooms. In addition to teaching the basic music curricula established by their school systems, these professionals must also keep up with current trends such as composition, improvisation, technology, and cross-curricular activities. The new Standards emphasize our responsibility to reach students by encouraging significant experience in creating, responding, and performing. All of these trends are exciting and beneficial; however, many of us are asked to implement them without receiving proper training, funding, or support. With our attentions divided in so many directions, it can be easy for us to become overwhelmed and attack each challenge with only a portion of our abilities. To address these challenges effectively, we should look for ways to increase our efficiency. The student-produced album is one idea that narrows the focus of the music educator and students, and results in a variety of positive outcomes. A student-produced album is just that: an album of original recordings created by students. This may seem like a huge undertaking, and one may wonder where the time for it would come from, but the benefits it can bring to the classroom and the community can make it well worth the time and effort. A variety of approaches can be used when creating a student-produced album. Specific outcomes can touch on areas such as creativity, interdisciplinary teaching, funding, and advocacy.

Creativity

The first question to address when beginning a student-produced album is what to record. There are endless possibilities, but an easy way to get many recordings is to ask students to create their own individual or small-group compositions. To help stimulate creativity, a prompt is recommended, such as one of the following examples:

- "Create a short piece that represents an aspect of nature (e.g., storm, forest, animals)."
- "Create a short piece about things that come in groups of three (e.g., Musketeers, little pigs, rings in a circus)."
- "Create a short piece that could be used as a soundtrack to a historical event (e.g., Washington crossing the Delaware, the first flight by the Wright Brothers, the first moon landing)."

Once students have a guided focus,

PHOTO: COURTNEY BAKER

"LET THE STUDENTS DECIDE WHAT IS TO BE DONE AT EACH STEP, AND HONOR THEIR DECISIONS." — JONATHAN KURTZ

they should have an easier time generating ideas. After you assign the prompt, you should allow the students at least a week to create a melodic theme and submit it for feedback. Students who may be hesitant to compose can benefit from being allowed to work within a small group of two or three, where they may feel less pressure and get the experience of playing in a small ensemble.

After the students have received your feedback on their first drafts, you should encourage them to apply the comments given, edit their pieces, and then rehearse them until they are performance-ready. This process may take a few months, and some groups will need more time than others. Some class time should be used to allow the small groups to work together and give you the opportunity to offer guidance to those who may be struggling; careful planning of rehearsal time is crucial. When the pieces are performance-ready, students should sign up for a time during or after school in which to record them. Some students may have the capability to record their pieces at home and submit electronic versions. Once all of the recordings have been submitted to you, they should be transferred to CDs and distributed or sold at the concert.

The class composition is another type of recording that can be included on a student-produced album. Class compositions help build unity in the ensemble since the entire class pitches in to create one piece of music to perform in a concert. As with the individual compositions, the class should be given a prompt to guide their ideas, but each student should be required to create a short theme (four to eight measures) that matches the prompt. When all of the themes have been collected, you should select eight to ten outstanding themes, allow the class to hear them, and have the class vote to select the top two or three. The class should then discuss form. Before laying out the order of the themes, it is a good idea to study the forms of other pieces. When the class has a good grasp of form and structure, lead a discussion to determine in which order the themes will be played and whether any theme will be repeated.

When the form has been determined, students should be given a written copy of the themes and asked to select one and create a harmony part for it. If harmony is too advanced a subject for your ensemble, you can ask the students to create a percussion part for the theme and insert expressive markings. At this point, you can simply choose the ideas that work best with each theme or have the class vote on which ideas they think work best. Once the harmonies and percussion parts have been selected, you should create individual pieces for each instrument and have the class play through the piece. Playing a MIDI version using a notation software's playback feature can be extremely helpful at this point.

Once the students have played through the piece and have an idea of what it sounds like, they should be given the opportunity to make suggestions for improvement. The piece may need to go faster, be louder, have a more interesting second part, or use less percussion. Working in small groups or journaling a list of suggestions individually works well for students in large classes. It is very important to validate students' thought processes during this time, even if the ideas they present may not work. Many students are hesitant to compose or put their ideas in front of a class in the first place; therefore, giving them confidence through encouragement can help them be more at ease in the future.

When the piece is complete, rehearse it and, when it is performance-ready, record it. It is always a thrill for the parents to see a piece in the program that is original and written by their children. It is also a thrill for the students to be able to play that piece in public after all of the hard work that went into creating it. A CD with that song on it is a keepsake that most parents and students will want to have. If you have little experience with composition yourself, you may wonder how to pull off a project like this, but you can do it. It may take some extra effort, but students shouldn't be denied a valuable experience simply because the educator may be uncomfortable; the only way to be comfortable is to get some experience. There are a few things I've learned along the way that can help you as you begin composing with students.

A PROJUCT SUCH AS A STUDENT- PRODUCED ALBUM CAN OPEN THE DOOR TO INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES.

• *Students need space.* If they are working in a classroom, do not hover over them and offer unsolicited feedback. Experimentation is a valuable part of learning to compose, and it often does not sound good.

• *Always be positive.* Students are more likely to enjoy composing if they receive lots of positive feedback.

• *The composition belongs to the students, not you.* Let the students decide what is to be done at each step, and honor their decisions. They will lose ownership and enthusiasm if they feel that you have taken over their piece.

• *Students usually try to do too much.* They need the most guidance in editing.

• *You should write, too.* If you are not practicing your own composition skills, how can you help your students develop theirs? Students often love it when their teacher promises to add one of his or her own songs to the CD.

Interdisciplinary Focus

Processes and prompts used to create student-produced albums relate to many disciplines outside of music; this can make it easy for educators to link curricula. Interdisciplinary teaching not only helps students to transfer knowledge from one area to another and develop higher-level thinking skills: It can also make your curriculum very appealing to your administration. Below is a list of connections that can be made using this project.

GET ADVOCACY TOOLS!

To access a variety of advocacy resources, check out "Take Action" on the NAfME website at *nafme.org*.

It can take a lot of work to create a student-produced album, but the benefits can be myriad. Students can gain valuable experience expressing themselves through writing, and connect concepts from music to other disciplines. Funding may be generated to provide valuable teaching resources, and the final product can serve as an advocacy tool for your program. Rather than addressing each of these issues separately, we as music educators should look for ways to streamline efforts and increase effectiveness. The student-produced album is one great way to do this.

TECHNOLOGY

• Have students record drafts of their compositions at school or home using Audacity, a cell phone, a digital recorder, or SmartMusic.

• Use notation software such as Finale or Sibelius to create drafts, scores, and individual parts, and to play back MIDI recordings of the pieces.

• Use software such as Sonar or GarageBand along with a keyboard for electronic compositions.

• Use software such as Windows Media Player or RealPlayer to burn the CDs.

• Set up a Facebook, YouTube, TeacherTube, or Myspace fan page to feature the compositions and allow them to be shared with ease.

WRITING/LITERATURE

• Link the composition process to the writing process by using the stages of "brainstorm, organize, draft, edit, revise, and publish."

• Create lyrics to the songs, and relate this process to poetry, meter, and rhyme scheme.

• Write a soundtrack for an event in a book that is being studied in a language arts class. The final composition could be sent to the author of the book if he or she is still living.

VISUAL ARTS

• Have a contest for the design of the CD cover.

• Ask the students to create a piece based on a painting or style of art.

HISTORY

• Write a piece that represents a historical figure or event. If you use local history, ask a docent or ranger to come in and speak to the class, and

PHOTO: ISTOCK

Always be positive. Students are more likely to enjoy composing if they receive lots of positive feedback.

then give the historical organization or park a copy of the final recording.

MATH

- Write out musical ideas in standard notation. This forces students to manipulate rhythms and subdivide to record their ideas accurately.
- Transpose ideas from one instrument to another so students can grasp the tonal and mathematical relationships between keys.
- Examine sequences, patterns, and form to create a well-rounded piece.

Money

Funding can be a significant obstacle to music departments, with most having to raise their own money to accomplish their objectives. The student-produced album can be a project that literally pays off in the end. When all of the recordings have been collected, they should be burned to CDs so they can be distributed. The average cost of each CD and case plus ink and paper is about $0.50 per unit. If the base price is $5.00 per CD, then 100 CDs sold would bring in around $450.00 profit. If you think that the students' parents would pay $10.00 per CD, then they would bring in $900. It is essential to keep your administration apprised of this activity so that everything is above-board from a legal standpoint.

Advocacy

Advocacy is perhaps the biggest challenge now facing music educators. When the economy declines and learning expectations rise, music programs can be hit hard. The best protection from being cut is being understood and valued. The student-produced album is a tangible product that can be placed in the hands of parents, administrators, school board members, and government officials. They may not all listen to it, but it is solid proof of the valuable things that go on in your classroom each day. To generate interest in the CDs, have some of the more impressive compositions performed live or played electronically sometime during a concert.

When parents and members of the community hear what your ensemble has accomplished, they may want to show it to others, which usually works in the music educator's favor and results in positive community rapport, a call of appreciation to your administrator, and the desire to speak up at important meetings when your job may be on the line. Parents will often defend programs that have made a difference in their children's lives.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

SINGING (AND PLAYING AND STUDYING) THE BL

JONATHAN SCHWARTZ AND THESE STUDENTS AIN'T GOT NOTHING BUT THE BLUES.

UES

BILLIE HOLIDAY

MA RAINEY

This culturally rich tradition can serve as a basis for classroom music explorations, interdisciplinary studies, and much more for all grade levels.

BY CATHY APPLEFELD OLSON

TEACHERS LOOKING FOR a way to set their students down "the royal road to Americana," in the words of Jonathan Schwartz, might consider infusing their classroom with the blues. Schwartz is an educator and founder of the Rockademix nonprofit program (*rockademix.org*) that uses music and technology to help children learn academics.

RAY CHARLES

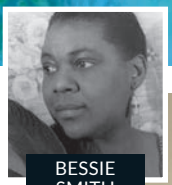
While both jazz and blues are both prominent in higher education, blues can be more accessible to younger students, beginning in the earliest elementary grades. "We need to dip as low as we possibly can in terms of age to get them interested, or at the least provide some stimulation so they can continue to explore not only the blues but other art forms," says Mark Malone, coordinator of music education for graduate and undergraduate studies at William Carey University in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Malone was the key architect of a six-part, blues-centric curriculum specifically for fourth graders in Mississippi, which he

CLASS PHOTOS: JONATHAN SCHWARTZ; (VAUGHAN & RAY) PD_US_NO_NOTICE; (RAINEY) PD-1923; (HOLIDAY) LOC/ WILLIAM P. GOTTLIEB COLLECTION

developed in 2012 after the state received a Folk Arts Infrastructure Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The goal is to teach students how blues music developed and how it continues to impact contemporary culture. Fourth grade is the "sweet spot" because it's the year social studies classes focus on state history. "It's about preserving the heritage of arts here in our state. There's such a large following for blues in Asia, South America, Europe … but we're losing the young people here in the States who don't have any knowledge of it," says Malone.

But there are many ways to engage students with the blues in classroom general music across the elementary, middle, and high school levels. And once teachers open their ears and minds to the music, they'll find the blues and its story cross a number of subject areas.

"With blues, there's something that seems almost to demand we pay attention to African-American cultural origins," says Adam Gussow, associate professor of English and Southern studies at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, and a blues harmonica artist and instructor. The blues story "begins on the slave ships of Africa, is born in the cotton fields of the deep South, moves up to Chicago, builds like a snowball, and now is a music everyone can play." So integrated are the blues and African-American history that Scholastic listed "listening to blues music and having students compose their own 12-bar blues music" as the third of 28 ways for teachers to integrate Black History Month into their classrooms in February.



BESSIE SMITH

JONATHAN SCHWARTZ WORKS WITH STUDENTS ON "THE CONSTITUTION SONG."

BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON

Indeed, while the art form emerged in the southern Delta, two significant migrations of African-Americans from the South to the Midwest—Chicago in particular—expanded both influences on the music, and its own influence. The first of these Great Migrations took place during World War I, and the second after World War II.

Integrating Blues History into the General Music Classroom

The first step to bringing the blues into the classroom is for teachers to realize that they don't have to be experts or aficionados to do so. The second step is to disavow any notion that the music is depressing and exists in a vacuum. "The biggest misconception of the blues is somehow blues are sadness," Gussow says. "Blues feeling may be sadness, but blues music has almost a magical way of transforming sadness into energy, into resistance. It remoralizes demoralized people. To me, that's the power."

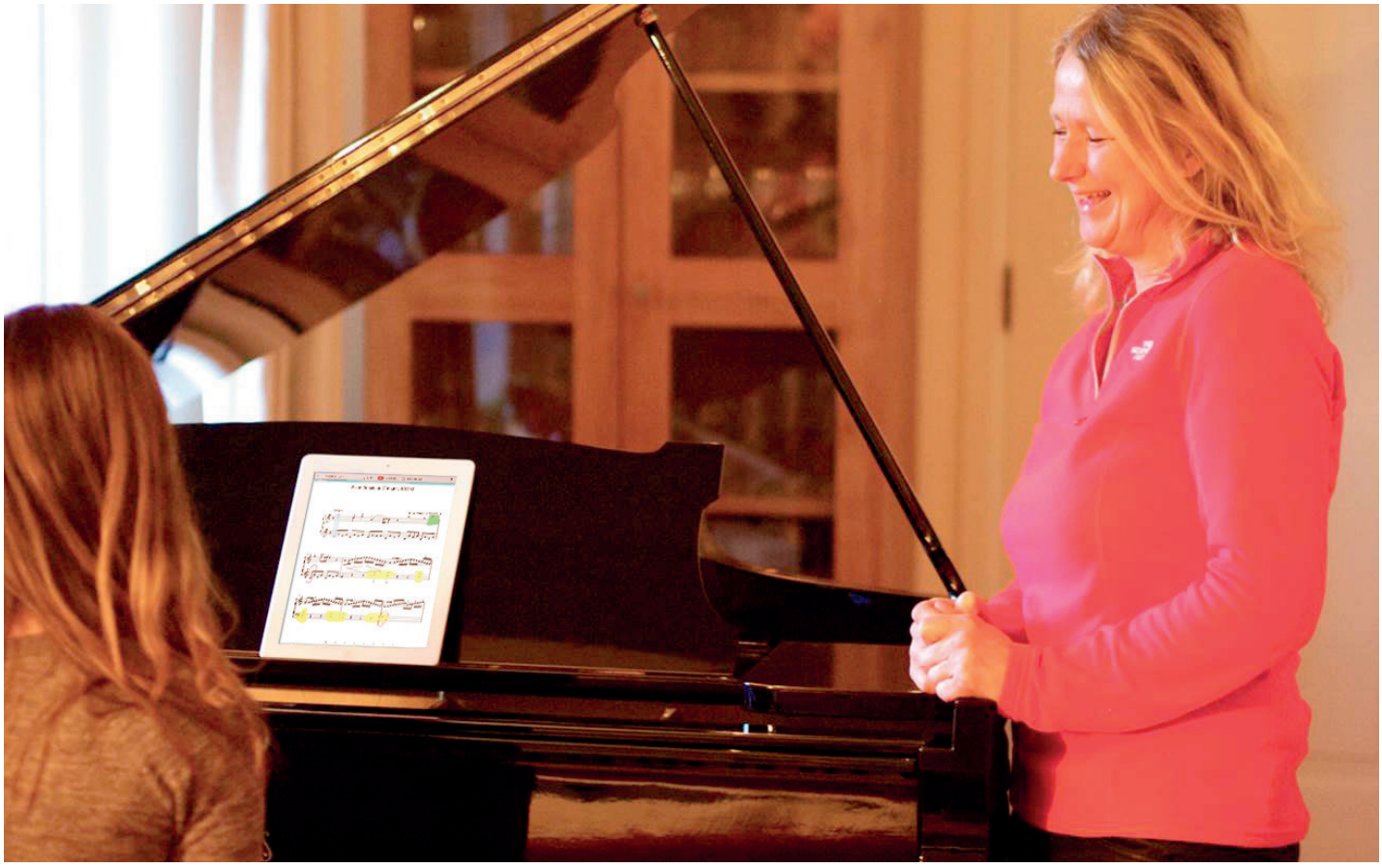
Schwartz notes that, "In my experience, when teachers are thinking about combining music and academics, blues isn't seen as a fountain of materials from which to launch interesting discussions. It's usually viewed as a dirge. But start by bringing in some Chuck Berry. It's unbelievable what you can mine from this music." After engaging his first- and second-grade classes at Garrison Elementary in Oceanside, California, in music by established blues artists and his own compositions, he developed the Kids Like Blues program (*kidslikeblues.org*) and formed a blues band with some of the students. The troupe gigged around southern California with their original songs and even landed on stage at Legoland.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

For students in middle and high school, deeper conversations about blues history can abound. Gussow suggests a deep dive into the migration of African-Americans to the north and suggests augmenting the discussion

"Blues feeling may be sadness, but blues music has almost a magical way of transforming sadness into energy, into resistance." —ADAM GUSSOW

PHOTOS: (SMITH) PD 1923; (JOHNSON) PD_US_NO_NOTICE; (ARMSTRONG) LOC/ HERMAHILLER



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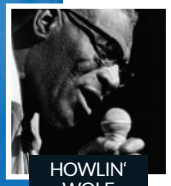
SCHWARTZ NOTES THAT TEACHERS CAN "START BY BRINGING IN SOME CHUCK BERRY."

"It's unbelievable what you can mine from this music."

—JONATHAN SCHWARTZ

with portions of the James N. Gregory book *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (2005, The University of North Carolina Press) as one launch point for conversation. "If you're talking about great blues musicians historically, the great majority of them are African-American. Do you bring in the Stevie Ray Vaughans? And since classrooms are not simply white and black, do you make any effort to talk about blues in an international context? What was it about the music that got so many people's attention, to get beyond racial dichotomies?" Gussow prompts.



HOWLIN' WOLF

Blues in Interdisciplinary Studies

Music teachers already know that art enhances other academic concentrations. No where is this more apparent than with the blues, which fit perfectly with the Whole School Initiative, Mississippi's first comprehensive, statewide arts education program that uses the arts as a vehicle for promoting high-quality instruction across core areas. "The thrust of it is to use arts to teach basic subject matters," Malone says. "The basic premise of our blues project is using blues music to teach social studies, geography, science, and English."

History and social studies are natural places to start interdisciplinary work. "A lot of history has been taken away from the academic curriculum because it's not on The Test," remarks Schwartz. "This music is the most amazing way of bringing it back in. The key is to figure out which [state] standards allow teachers to bring in the music, then finding the right song and getting involved in the meaning behind it."

An entire unit of the Mississippi curriculum is built around transportation. "The unit talks about water, the railroad, bus, and car," Malone says. "The water transportation portion is more local, but train transportation and bus stations are more universal and get to the idea of wanting to get away from your troubles quicker. Teachers can get kids brainstorming about the definition of transportation, and it brings blues into a whole new realm."

Another Mississippi segment focuses entirely on politics and civil rights. "This could spill more into middle school and high school for an in-depth look, and there are [prompts] for discussion about gender roles here too," Malone adds.

There's also a treasure trove of teachable blues literature, particularly in the study of poetry for high schoolers. "This is an

T-BONE WALKER

PHOTOS: (WOLF) DOUG FULTON/PD US NO NOTICE (WALKER) HEINRICH KLAFFS COLLECTION

ESSENTIAL RECORDINGS FOR THE CLASSROOM

Rich in musical legacy and cultural heritage, the blues songbook offers something for students of all ages and skill levels. Here are just a few of the best blues and blues-influenced songs that you can incorporate into your lessons.

- **"Downhearted Blues"** —*Bessie Smith*
- **"Jelly Bean Blues"** —*Ma Rainey and Louis Armstrong*
- **"Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground"** —*Blind Willie Johnson*
- **"Sitting on Top of the World"** —*Mississippi Sheiks*
- **"Smokestack Lightning"** —*Howlin' Wolf*
- **"Call It Stormy Monday (But Tuesday Is Just as Bad)"** —*T-Bone Walker*
- **"Messin' with the Kid"** —*Junior Wells*
- **"San Francisco Bay Blues"** —*Jesse Fuller*
- **"Big River"** —*Johnny Cash*
- **"Promised Land"** —*Chuck Berry*
- **"Pride and Joy"** —*Stevie Ray Vaughan*
- **"Georgia on My Mind"** —*Ray Charles*

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"THE CONSTITUTION SONG" GETS STUDENTS UP AND MOVING WITH CHOREOGRAPHY.

MUDDY WATERS

important place teachers can go with the blues," Gussow notes. Among them are Sterling Brown's "Ma Rainey," a poem about one of the first women to record a blues record, and a towering influence on female blues singers. Another is Langston Hughes' "The Weary Blues," the speaker of which describes, using heavy repetition and even blues lyrics, an evening of listening to a blues musician in Harlem. In more of a science-infused vein, Malone notes that one Tunica, Mississippi–based teacher shared in a recent workshop her success getting her fourth graders to come up with lyrics to their own "Weather Blues" songs using the 12-bar form.

Teaching Methods for the 12-Bar Format

Speaking of the 12-bar form—and it's impossible to talk about the blues without it—a classic such as Robert Johnson's "Sweet Home Chicago," with its accessible lyrics, is a great place to start. Teachers can then, for instance, introduce the concepts of repetition and variation, which eventually could lead to the students creating their own compositions. "It's really teachable, but the first thing you do before you go anywhere near a grid with 12-bars is start with the AAB form, and repeat it and the answering line that rhymes," says Gussow. "From there, you can listen to a piece of blues music to hear how the theme varies the second time through, how artists put their own little spin on that line."

Next, he suggests that the class listen to what happens between the verses, when it's just instrumental. "What's going on when there isn't anybody singing? You get what we call a 'fill'—maybe it's a guitar or piano." Teachers can ask students what they hear without telling them yet what instruments are being used. This can lead to a deeper dive into what makes a blues ensemble, he suggests.

Speaking of instruments, in a blues ensemble, teachers are encouraged to get creative with what they have, and embellish where budgets allow. While Orff instruments can be pricey, Malone suggests tone bells, bar instruments, and boomwackers. "These instruments are so visual, and there are so many activities you can do with them," he says.

And while it helps for teachers to know some of the big names in blues music—Billie Holiday, B.B. King, Buddy Guy, John Lee Hooker, Etta James, Muddy Waters, and Stevie Ray Vaughan among them—tapping into local musicians who could come share their art with a class or two is gold. "I urge educators to look in their local communities to seek out local blues societies and ask about elders—people who've been around—to come in and share little bit of knowledge," says Gussow. "It brings everything to life and makes it very real."

JUNIOR WELLS

Beyond the music room, as well as every other classroom, blues music is about seizing control of unpromising circumstances. As Gussow notes, "If part of what we're trying to do is help kids feel good about themselves, blues is a pretty good way into that element of ethical teaching. Blues says, 'I may be like this now, but I won't be like this forever.'" ▮

"Blues says, 'I may be like this now, but I won't be like this forever.'"
—ADAM GUSSOW

RESOURCES

Teachers looking to bring the blues into their classrooms can tap into various online resources. (Note: The "www" prefix must be included in selected URLs below to reach the correct websites.)

www.arts.ms.gov/special-projects/blues-trail.php
While two of the six units are specific to that state, the other four units of The Mississippi Blues Trail curriculum are lessons that teachers around the country can adapt.

edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/learning-blues
Preparation resources, classroom activities, and ways to extend the lesson beyond the classroom abound on this site by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

pbs.org/theblues/classroom.html
The Blues National Educational Outreach Campaign, developed by the Experience Music Project, provides resources for teachers to integrate blues music, culture, and history into classrooms. The emphasis here is on grades 9–12.

www.jazzinamerica.org
The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz has developed a curriculum to bring school-based jazz education programs to young people around the world. The site includes lesson plans, jazz resources, and a running tab of curriculum updates.

PHOTOS: (WATERS) JEAN-LUC (WELLS) MASAHIRO SUMORI

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Integrating iPads into the Elementary Music Classroom: A Course For Elementary Teachers Taught By An Elementary Teacher: **Amy Burns** (July 13-17)
Problem Solving in the Secondary General Music Classroom: **Deborah VanderLinde Blair** (July 13-17, a.m.)
Problem Solving in the Elementary General Music Classroom: **Deborah VanderLinde Blair** (July 13-17, p.m.)
Guitar for the Non-guitarist: **Michael Miles** (July 20-24)
Guitar Skills and Curriculum: **Michael Miles** (July 20-24, p.m.)

CHORAL MUSIC

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Conducting with Purpose, Process and Passion: **Janet Galvan** (July 6-10)
Composing and Arranging for Choirs: **Drew Collins** (July 20-24)
Voices in Harmony: Children's and Youth Choirs in the 21st Century: **Robyn Lana** (July 20-24)
Choral Pedagogy and Vocal Health: Strategies for Lifelong Singing: **Brenda Smith & Ron Burrichter** (July 27-31)

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental Directors' Symposium: **Lauren Reynolds** (July 6-10)
Improve your String Teaching and Playing: **Nola Campbell** (July 6-10)
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Teaching Improvisation with Technology: **Michael Fein** (July 27-31)

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Blended Learning in Music Education: **Scott Watson** (July 6-10)
Garageband Does It All!: **Scott Watson** (July 6-10)
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From Productivity to Creativity: iPads in the Music Classroom: **Stefani Langol** (July 20-24)
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iPad Video and Audio Recording to Enhance Assessment: **Tom Rudolph** (July 27-31)

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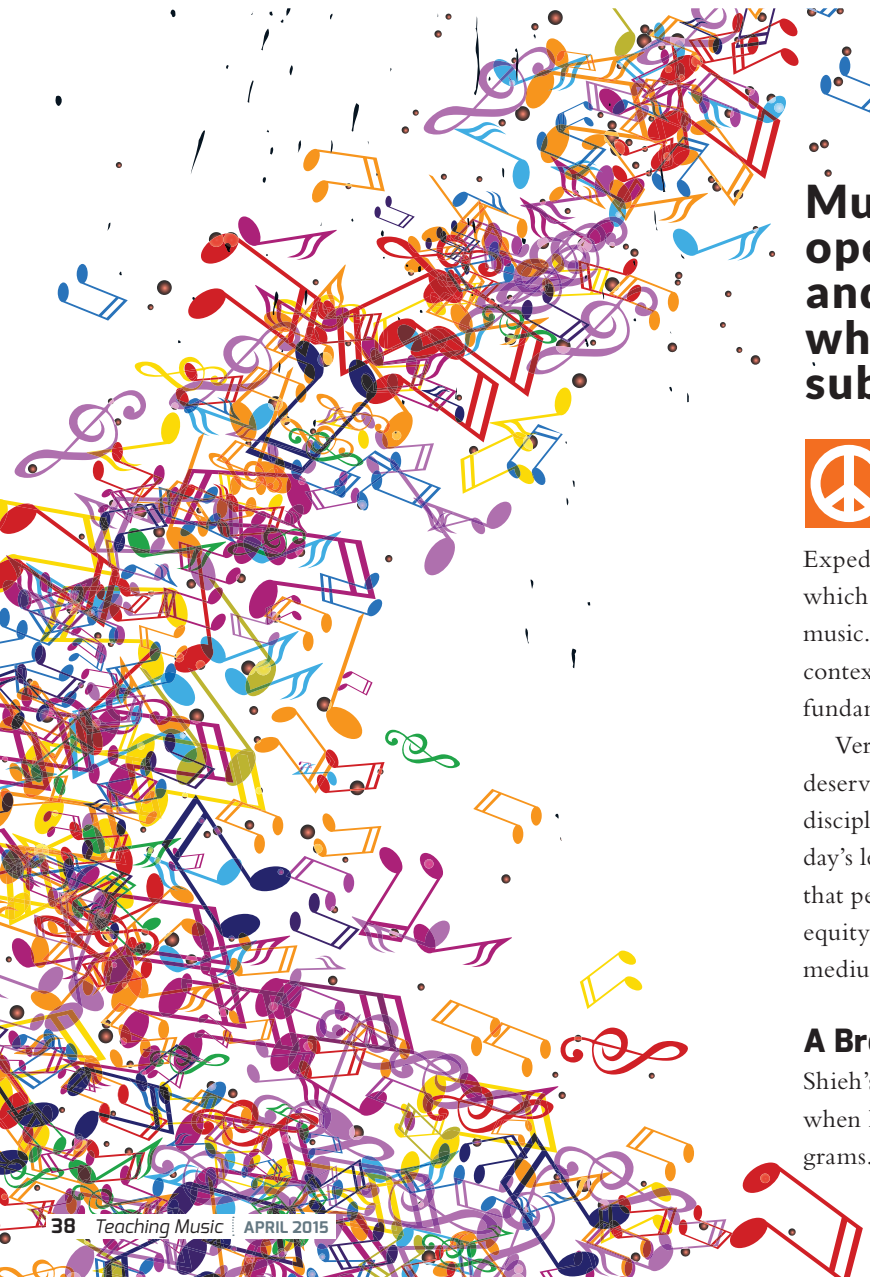
TEACHING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MUSIC CLASSROOM

BY ANDREW S. BERMAN



Music educators can open the door to dialogue and understanding of what can be difficult subjects to address.

"CURRICULUM COMES FROM and goes back to the world." That's a summary of Eric Shieh's teaching philosophy, which is fostered by the Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning School (MELS) in New York City, which he helped found and where he teaches instrumental music. It puts what happens in the classroom within the context of what's going on beyond the schoolyard, and it's fundamental to teaching social justice.

Very simply put, social justice is the view that all people deserve the same rights, opportunities, and advantages. A discipline in itself, social justice is more than just a topic in a day's lesson plan, but rather a frame of mind and a concept that permeates curricula in classrooms that are committed to equity for all. Music, being a universal language, is an ideal medium through which to teach social justice.

A Broad Approach

Shieh's music education career intersected with social justice when he was a new teacher working in prison music programs. His training was classical, with a background in

ILLUSTRATION: iSTOCK

strings and orchestra, but he quickly found that he had to move away from that training to get through to his students. There were no instruments, and "It didn't feel right to start with 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,'" he says. He improvised, encouraging students to use what was available: their voices and bodies, tables, chairs, and the floor. In prison, this music program became a space of freedom and creativity where students composed their own music, an example of which was writing songs about entering prison for the first time. This experience trained Shieh to listen and attend to students' needs. He brought with him to traditional music education jobs a focus on facilitation as opposed to instruction—a distinction that can allow understanding to flourish in the classroom.

Juliet Hess, assistant professor of music education at Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York, points out that social justice issues don't need to be brought into the classroom: They are already there. "The key is being able to recognize these issues in our classrooms," she says. Two ways to do this are to acknowledge the differing levels of privilege of the students in the classroom, and to place the music in its sociohistorical and sociopolitical context. Modeling that recognition promotes the work of social justice for those in our classrooms. From a music perspective, some students may have easier access to instruments and private lessons than others do. Similarly, certain kinds of music may get more classroom time than others. Western classical music, for example, can be perceived as having a position of privilege over other types of music. "That doesn't mean you avoid classical music with students," warns Hess. "It does mean that when you focus on classical music, you can take the opportunity to explore with the students why that music has come to be the dominant music in music education."

Shieh's approach to incorporating themes of social justice into music teaching is collaborative. At MELS, collaboration among faculty and across disciplines is common. He relates that projects often begin during casual conversations among teachers at social gatherings outside of school. In one instance, the vocal music teacher mentioned she had a set of music from the time of the colonization of South Africa. Other teachers expressed interest, and determined where in their curriculum they could fit the project.

Finding Social Justice in Music

Denise Levy and Daniel Byrd of Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, have written two articles on the use of music to teach social justice: "Exploring social justice through music" (*Association for Psychological Science Observer,* April 2013, Volume 26, Number 4) and "Why can't we be friends? Using music to teach social justice" (*The Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning,* April 2011, Volume 11, Number 2). As music is a medium of self-expression, many popular songs deal with the experiences of marginalized people and cultures. In the latter article, Levy and Byrd list 59 popular songs from 1940 to 2010 and catalog their themes (racism, poverty, homophobia, etc.). Bringing such music into the classroom can expose students to different points of view and start them thinking about the world around them in a new way. But it doesn't end there. As Byrd is quick to point out, "An instructor has to do more than just play the song." It's important to have preplanned discussion questions to stick to the topic.

Hess recommends an exercise developed by Lise C. Vaugeois of the University of Toronto called "musical life histories." In this exercise, the teacher and students explore music by looking at the practices by which it is produced, specifically examining who is included and excluded at each step of the process. Vaugeois describes this activity in detail in the book *Exploring Social Justice: How Music Education Might Matter* (2009, Canadian Music Educators Association; edited by Elizabeth Gould, June Countryman, Charlene Morton, and Leslie Stewart Rose).

"It's always important to consider what is not there," advises Hess. She

"An instructor has to do more than just play the song." —DANIEL BYRD

recalls an Ontario Music Educators Association conference 10 years ago from which she went home with some free posters for her classroom. After putting them up, she realized that all of the musicians photographed were white males—the posters did not reflect the diversity of her classroom. She was about to take them down when she realized leaving them up would offer the opportunity for a unique exercise. Students entered the classroom and first noticed the lack of women, then the lack of people of color. A teacher may brainstorm ways to incorporate issues of inequality and oppression into their lesson plans, but often the issues are there already, waiting to be acknowledged.

In New York, last year's events in, for instance, Ferguson, Missouri, were very real and close to home for Shieh's students and school community. "There's no way the day after that happened we weren't going to address it," remembers Shieh. He played John Coltrane's "Alabama" for the class and talked about how when things like this happen, sometimes he turns to music to make sense of the world. "It can begin from there, with spontaneous acts." Hess adds, "There are moments in class when the events of the world, both personally and globally, need to be the topic for the day."

"There are moments in class when the events of the world, both personally and globally, need to be the topic for the day." —ERIC SHIEH

A music teacher doesn't necessarily need to look far for a piece of music that addresses these issues. Beyond Byrd and Levy's well-categorized list of songs and the topics they address, there are also songs that themselves serve as examples of oppression and ignorance. These can serve as the foundations for classroom dialogue. Byrd counsels, "Teachers should not take a political stance, telling students what to think. There are ways that instructors can go about this in a way that welcomes all students' feelings and opinions in a safe place." These dialogues can develop students' conversational skills. They teach kids how to discuss difficult subjects, even with people who disagree with them, in a safe environment

Songs need not have words to communicate a message of social justice. Byrd cites traditional African drumming as an example. The teacher places the music in its context, and students can listen to a recording and then play the beats themselves. "You don't have to be an expert percus-

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ERIC SHIEH

"The key is being able to recognize these issues in our classrooms"
—JULIET HESS

sionist to participate in a drum circle," Byrd says. Discussion areas include why the piece was written, what message is hidden in the music, and how drumming together can form or bolster a community.

Finding Music in Social Justice

A music teacher needn't rely on what's already been published and recorded for classroom material. Social justice is about diverse points of view, so what better way to hear those points of view than to encourage students to put them into song? Levy advocates having students do a five-minute free write, circling words or phrases that capture the topic, and then getting into small groups and forming poems or songs out of the circled words. The result is a composite work of art—and a valuable dialogue. Shieh says that an activity involving student compositions doesn't require a topic, as kids will often write songs about social issues without prompts. Reflecting on doing this in his class, Shieh says, "All of a sudden, the world came in." Hess recommends Michele Kaschub's "Critical Pedagogy for Creative Artists" program, which focuses on student compositions as a study of social justice (this is described in detail in the aforementioned *Exploring Social Justice: How Music Education Might Matter*). Byrd thinks that compositions are a great way to address current events. "If the student leaves the class only understanding history, we've done them a disservice."

Social justice is to be handled with care. Not every topic is right for every classroom or age group. Shieh recalls assigning Gayl Jones's *Corregidora* to his 11th- and 12th-graders in St. Louis. It was his first year of teaching, and looking back now, he regards it as a "miscalculation." The book touches on LGBT issues, racism, and slavery, to name a few. There was backlash from parents and administrators, and incidents of student violence which resulted in some expulsions. "Sometimes I've made the wrong call; teachers do all the time," remarks Shieh.

Bringing It Back to the World

As a social worker, Levy is called to speak out against social injustice. "Showcasing music in class shows students there are a lot of different ways to be an advocate in their lives." Shieh agrees, "These days it's easy to feel powerless. [The students] are not powerless—they can speak up. Music is a huge tool for that." By presenting differing points of view, teachers can contribute to social change through their students. "In the classroom, we may have a slim possibility of doing work that levels the playing field within our classroom space. Modeling equity work for the next generation, however, could potentially have profound effects," predicts Hess.

Teaching social justice in the music classroom has rewards for the teacher as well. For Shieh, it's engaging his whole self in the classroom. "Many people come to the teaching profession because they want to make a difference. Teaching social justice allows you to hold onto your dreams." Byrd says the best thing that can come out of teaching social justice is a student understanding his or her own and others' basic human rights. "When you see the students become engaged, that's the reward."

A SAMPLE PROJECT BY ERIC SHIEH

Remix: Civil Rights Today

In this project designed for an eighth-grade music classroom, students explore and participate in civil rights struggles through the creation of a remix "soundscape" combining class recordings of freedom songs, audio clips from speeches and interviews, and original student improvisations. Several materials from this project, including musical scores (for string players), some audio clips, and an example assessment rubric, can be found online at *shieh.metropolitanels.com/civil-rights-remix-resources*

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Lesson Steps	Content
1	**Introduction to the Civil Rights Movement and Freedom Songs.** Rehearsing and recording a variety of Freedom Songs appropriate to student skill (e.g., "We Shall Overcome," "Lift Ev'ry Voice," "I Wish I Knew How It Felt to Be Free"). These can be used as assessments.
2	**Introduction to sampling as an advocacy tool.** Some questions for discussion include: 1) What examples of remixing have you heard or seen? 2) Why remix? Why not be "original" and create from scratch? 3) What is our responsibility when remixing other people's words? Skill-building workshops using audio editing programs (e.g., Logic, GarageBand, ProTools), particularly around cutting, sequencing, looping, and mixing. Students should practice editing a variety of civil rights speeches and interviews (i.e., samples for practice). Some possibilities include: Martin Luther King Jr.'s "We Shall Overcome" speech, Angela Davis's "Talking About Revolution" interview (1972), Robert F. Kennedy's eulogy of MLK, Barack Obama's "A More Perfect Union" speech, Cornel West's interview regarding Trayvon Martin, and any news reports related to #BlackLivesMatter struggles.
3	**Project days where students work to create remixes** using class recordings, audio clips, and any additional material (improvised or otherwise) they wish to add. Students develop a "Statement of Intent" that narrows their focus and provides opportunities for peer feedback.
4	**Presentations to class.** Select projects might be uploaded to public websites or shared through social media as part of relevant advocacy efforts.

HALL HIGH SCHOOL'S ANNUAL POPS 'N JAZZ PERFORMANCES HAVE BEEN A TRADITION IN WEST HARDFORD SINCE 1958.

Music "Hall"

THIS SPRING, Hall High School of West Hartford, Connecticut, gave its 57th annual Pops 'n Jazz performance. Perhaps nothing testifies to a program's enduring influence more than its years in existence, and this one goes all the way back to 1958. The endeavor results from the committed, collaborative faculty, engaged students, and a town focused on producing arts programming in schools that is second to none.

What is Pops 'n Jazz? This music show complete with dancers and sets is an enormous undertaking that immerses the performers as well as the audience in a feast for both eyes and ears. In addition to the top-notch musicianship, the setting is part of the show's appeal. Says the show's producer, former supervisor/consultant of fine and performing arts for the West Hartford Schools, Haig Shahverdian, "We do [the music] in a theatrical setting with an elaborate set and lighting that is designed for each part of the show." he notes that former Hall High band director Bill Stanley first conceptualized the show in 1958 when he was looking for something outside of the typical musical arrangement.

PHOTOS: EDWIN DeGROAT

A music program in Connecticut has an annual performance with a rich history in its school and the community.

BY CYNTHIA DARLING

Preparing for Pops 'n Jazz starts on day one of each school year. Haig Shahverdian notes that, "The planning is continuous and runs throughout the year. I look for and listen to pieces and file according to all the various categories." Final music choices depend upon student strengths. "One year you have a great sax soloist. Another year, it could be bass and so on. One year, you have a great vocal soloist that can scat and another one that might do a Michael Bublé tune." Shahverdian also keeps the requirements of the full performance in mind, "I am also searching for great dance vehicles." Just how does the department find its pieces? "When I first started, it was very difficult, but now with the web and a few great publishers, the choices are many. We also have a wonderful library with more than 2,500 charts." But for a program like Pops 'n Jazz, the planning is not just about the music. "The other major area of planning has to do with the set and any special production pieces. For instance, we have a costumer (a parent of a former performer) who may need to know the specifics about a piece. Or if we are doing a medley for *Hairspray,*

"WE MIGHT READ 100-PLUS CHARTS A YEAR AND WORK HALF THAT TO A REASONABLE LEVEL AND THEN SELECT FROM THERE FOR THE SHOW." *–HAIG SHAHVERDIAN*

and we need wigs," that costumer needs to be informed.

When Shahverdian describes the set list of a performance, he rattles off names of selections that show the diversity of pieces, most of which are custom fit for each smaller ensemble within the larger cast. "There are several components of music performed by the concert jazz band and jazz band, solo vocalists with concert jazz band, vocal quartet with concert jazz band, jazz dancers with concert jazz band, and production pieces that combine concert jazz band, dancers, and singers." The music fits the diverse performers. "For instance, we do Broadway medleys in arrangements that are written specifically for us. We might do the same for groups such as Earth, Wind & Fire or Michael Jackson. This year we are doing things that range from 'Opus One,' that features vibes for our guest performer to an arrangement written for the Terry Gibbs Dream Band to Count Basie's version of 'Strike Up the Band.' We will have 'A Mis Abuelos' that will feature the dancers, 'Angel Eyes' written for the Basie Orchestra, and 'Blue Bossa' arranged for the jazz singers with a special big band chart arranged specifically for the program."

With such a wide-ranging selection of music, student participants must possess a certain level of expertise. Says Shahverdian, "The instrumentalists have all started started in elementary school. Some might have added an instrument—for example, a clarinet player adding sax. Dancers usually have had previous training, but not all. And the singers, for the most part, have been in the choral program since elementary school." Students are called upon to prepare for Pops 'n Jazz both in school and outside the regular school day. "The prep starts right at the beginning of the school year. We might read 100-plus charts a year and work half that to a reasonable level and then select from there for the show. During the school year, we have our regular period during the day and one three-hour rehearsal a week. There is significantly more rehearsal time as we get closer to the performance dates."

There have been obvious changes in school life since 1958. Over the years, faculty members have had to make adjustments in the preparation for Pops 'n Jazz to fit the changing student schedules. "Students' lives have more stress and are more fragmented than ever. Everyone's calendar is filled, so time for rehearsing has to be carefully scheduled."

Pops 'n Jazz brings together faculty from many departments. Shahverdian and James Antonucci—Hall High's director of bands and jazz bands—produce the show. With a program that draws upon performances and teaching from so many departments—musical, dance, and theatrical—Shahverdian says, "Communication and respect are key elements to our success." Vocal director Lorri Cetto leads the jazz singers, and technical theatre and stagecraft students are responsible for set construction, as well as stage management, lighting, and audio. The choreographers are Tessa Grunwald and Bryan Smith. Shahverdian's wife, Leeny Shahverdian, "does just about everything including staging, costumes, and is the lighting director. We have been doing the show together since we started, and since our children are grown she has devoted more and more time to the show." Supervisor of the arts department, Andy Mayo, and the principal of Hall High, Dan Zitoun, are also profoundly responsible for the program's success since, as Shahverdian emphasizes, "Support from all levels of administration is crucial." An active parent population also plays a vital role.

While Pops 'n Jazz is a signature event at Hall High, it is also something of a household name in town. This familiarity and acclaim comes about through a creative approach to perfor-

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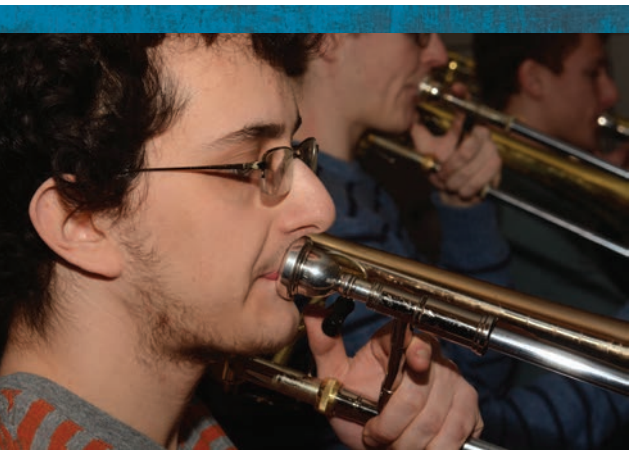
mance that allows Hall High to perform Pops 'n Jazz in various venues to fit different audiences and occasions. "We do a special, shorter version for seniors, and we program the music that will especially appeal to this particular audience," says Shahverdian. "They love it. They clap when we announce a tune. They know the lyrics. After the show, we have a reception that is a meet-and-greet with the performers. The kids love it and so do the seniors. A few years ago, we all sang 'Happy Birthday' to one of the seniors who was a grandparent of a cast member." Hall High's music department also keeps an eye on future incarnations of the production by tailoring special performances for younger musicians in the middle schools. This ensures that another generation of performers rises through the ranks. "We invite the principal feeder school to Hall High to participate in the show for one performance. It encourages those students to continue their pursuit of music and gives them the opportunity to see what it feels to be part of a large group working toward the same goals." And the buzz is palpable. Student musicians coming to Hall from the middle schools in West Hartford know about the unique performance experience awaiting them.



Bringing in musical luminaries is a special part of Pops 'n Jazz that provides the students with the opportunity to play with accomplished musicians. Says Shahverdian, "What makes attracting outside musicians all possible is the generosity of the Ellen Jeanne Goldfarb Memorial Charitable Trust. Ellen was a member of the concert jazz band and an extraordinary young woman who passed away. Her parents set up the Trust so that her good work as a young adult would continue." The rest of the funding for the show comes mainly from ticket sales. "We perform five shows over two weekends. Our auditorium seats 700 and we mostly fill it each night." Shahverdian admits, "We are very fortunate in this aspect to have had so many jazz greats and legends guest at the show. It is often through someone who knows someone else, but in general our guest performers want the idiom to continue to grow with young people so it is not as difficult to attract them to perform as it might seem." Additionally, alumni are a big part of Pops 'n Jazz. "We ask alumni to come back as guests almost every year. That is always great fun and terrific for the students to see and hear. It is inspirational."

It's no coincidence that this program exists in West Hartford, Connecticut, as it is a town that is committed to the arts in schools. Music proliferates in this place that is devoted to the best in arts education. "The West Hartford Schools' and community's historic commitment to music is the reason we are still doing Pops 'n Jazz. This community is unique in many ways, but in particular, the belief in the importance of the arts is simply amazing," notes Shahverdian. Add to that a "passion and commitment on the part of everyone involved" coupled with "a high level of performance and love of jazz," and the secret to Pops 'n Jazz's longevity is evident. "We know

we have a unique program and want to continue raising the quality of the experience for both the performer, the technicians, and the audience." And if the past 50 years is any indication, the Hall High community will continue taking delight in these performances for years to come. ▮

Q&A WITH HAIG SHAHVERDIAN

Q What do you know to be true about teaching music that you didn't know when you started? It is significantly harder than I ever imagined.

Q If I weren't a music teacher I'd ... I wanted to be a music teacher from the first time I conducted an ensemble in seventh grade.

Q What's the biggest lesson you want your students to learn during their time in your classroom? Work together, make a commitment, be respectful of each other, the music, and the process, and enjoy the success along the way to performance. Stretch and don't be afraid of mistakes. That is why we rehearse.

Q The music education profession would be better if ... There was a greater appreciation for the value of the arts in our lives, not just from local, state, and federal government, but also from the general public.

Q What have you learned about students and parents through your work over the past years? People love hearing and making music. To make it all work, we have to work together.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF HAIG SHAHVERDIAN

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ASHVILLE!

WHY NASHVILLE IS CALLED "MUSIC CITY"

The "Music City" supposedly got its name from England's Queen Victoria. A concert by the Fisk Jubilee Singers from the city's Fisk University, on tour to raise money to educate freed slaves, was held in London in 1873. The performance so moved the queen that she remarked of the singers, "they must come from the 'Music City.'"

Today, the city of Nashville features a symphony orchestra, many recording studios, the Grand Ole Opry, the Country Music Hall of Fame, several eminent universities with substantial music education and music performance programs, and daily performances by both buskers on the main downtown streets and in numerous performance venues. Also known as "The Athens of the South," Nashville boasts a full-scale model of the Parthenon in Athens, Greece. You may want to come early to the conference or stay a day or two later to enjoy more of these experiences.

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The amazing city of Dallas, Texas (known to locals as "Big D"), will be the location of NAfME's 2016 National Conference. Scheduled for November 10–13, this 2016 event will take place at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center. Mark your calendar now, and prepare for a relaxing visit to Dallas, wonderful adventures, and a wide range of professional development and networking opportunities.

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Rogerio Boccato

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Edward Bolkovac and Stuart Younse

World Percussion and Drum Set Survey for Music Educators
Ben Toth

Folk Dance around the World
Lillie Feierabend

SESSION 5: JULY 27–31

Percussion Know-How for Music Educators
Ben Toth

Body Mapping for Music Educators
Kay Hooper

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workshop

Dixieland bands, beginning double bass, elementary vocal jazz, and more.

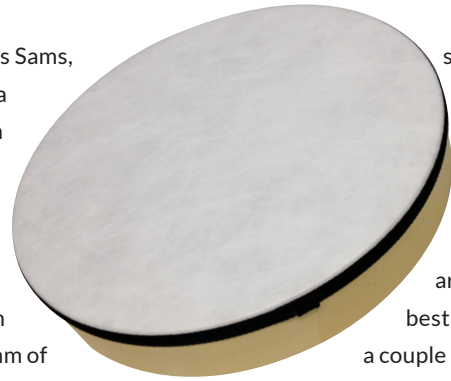
GENERAL MUSIC

Hand Drums and Rhythm Sticks

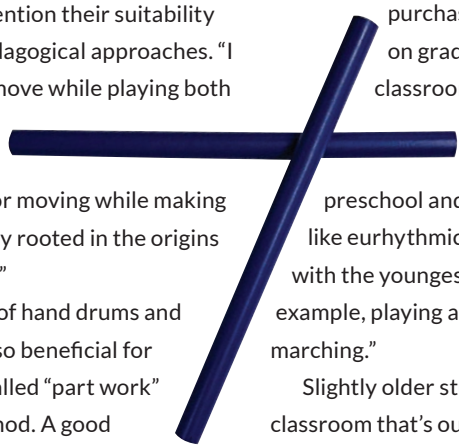
Both physically and conceptually, hand drums and rhythm sticks are among the easiest instruments to grasp—and this is what makes them excellent choices for teaching musical concepts in the classroom. We talked to Roger Sams, a retired teacher and currently director of publications and music education specialist at Music Is Elementary, based in Cleveland, Ohio, about how he has used these percussion instruments at the preschool and elementary levels.

Sams finds hand drums and rhythm sticks to be advantageous for their timbral contrast, not to mention their suitability for a variety of pedagogical approaches. "I love that you can move while playing both of these instruments. So there is a lot of potential for moving while making music, which is very rooted in the origins of Orff Schulwerk."

A combination of hand drums and rhythm sticks is also beneficial for teaching what is called "part work" in the Kodály Method. A good example of this, says Sams, would be "to teach a poem with a speech ostinato as an accompaniment. Transfer the rhythm of the poem to the rhythm sticks and the rhythm of the ostinato to the hand drums and you've got a two-part percussion piece."



Hand drums and rhythm sticks are generally inexpensive, but if a school is on an extremely limited budget, a classroom can be outfitted with enough hand drums for half of the class and rhythm sticks for the other half. Sams recommends purchasing equipment based on grade level. "In my classroom I had a laundry bag with enough eight-inch hand drums for preschool and kindergarten classes. I like eurhythmics with hand drums with the youngest students, for example, playing a steady beat while marching."



Slightly older students benefit from a classroom that's outfitted with assorted sizes of hand drums. "I like the timbre you get when you mix up different-sized hand drums. Ten-inch, 12-inch, and 14-inch are what generally work best, and I also like to have a couple of 16-inch drums around. The students find them heavy to hold for very long, but sometimes the low pitch is just perfect," says Sams, adding that he prefers the Lummi type of rhythm sticks, on account of their sturdiness.

When it comes to drums, it's also important to find instruments that sound good. He finds that while tunable drums tend to be too pricey and heavy for elementary students, they're excellent choices for teachers' drums. "You'll be modeling and accompanying movement with your drum, so you want a very beautiful sound. Coming to music class needs to be about experiencing beautiful sound and movement."—*Adam Perlmutter*

AN EXCERPT OF A SHORT COMPOSITION USED TO TEACH STUDENTS RHYTHMIC AND NOTATIONAL CONCEPTS ON HAND DRUMS AND RHYTHM STICKS

BRASS & WOODWINDS

Delving into Dixieland

When most people think of a high school jazz band, they immediately think of the traditional Basie-style, big band format, yet jazz as we know it today has its roots in

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF ROGER SAMS

"YOU'LL BE SURPRISED HOW MUCH DIXIELAND MUSIC CAN HELP YOUR STUDENTS IMPROVISE IN YOUR OTHER JAZZ ENSEMBLES."—CHRIS LEONARD

a very different place. Dixieland jazz is every bit as integral to the evolution of jazz, yet many schools tend to overlook its importance. In Poudre High School in Fort Collins, Colorado, band director Chris Leonard has broken from the big band mold and fields a dedicated Dixieland band as a part of his school's accredited music curriculum—with very impressive results.

Rather than fielding a large group, Leonard patterns his band after Louis Armstrong and His All Stars with trumpet, trombone, clarinet, and a rhythm section that can be a three-person combination of guitar, bass, tuba, piano, and/or drums. In recent years, Leonard has also tried to include a vocalist, and he adapts the group to the instrumentation that he has available: "If there is an alto or a tenor sax that wants in, that's great."

In regards to finding the right students to fill the parts, Leonard says that "we hold auditions if there are multiple people interested in one spot, but beyond that I'll already know their abilities since I know them from the other ensembles in the school. I will approach a student if I think it will be of benefit to them and the group. I mostly look for enthusiasm for the music. They don't have to have jazz experience. I'll usually look for upperclassmen, but I will take a freshman or sophomore that shows a lot of potential. I consider it an advanced group, so they have to have some fundamentals in place. They need to know more than just the B-flat scale, but they don't have to be our best players."

The group's repertoire stays close to the traditional Dixieland roots. They start with classics like "Struttin' with Some Barbeque," "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," "When the Saints Go Marching In," well known New Orleans street parade tunes, and other Dixieland staples, including the blues.

The group's performances try to build on the Dixieland atmosphere as well. While the group does performances on the school's jazz concert night, they also perform elsewhere whenever possible. "Our main performances are with the other jazz bands, but we also try to perform in the community at a coffee shop with a nice stage or something to that effect so that it has a nice jazz vibe to it. Sometimes we'll play for nursing homes or perform at school functions like promo nights for our beginning band classes."

In general, Leonard's attitude about Dixieland is rooted in the historical importance of the genre. "My philosophy is to encourage people to add this to their jazz programs. You'll be surprised how much Dixieland music can help your students improvise in your other jazz ensembles. You wouldn't teach Stravinsky before you teach Bach, so why learn Coltrane before Armstrong?" —*Chad Criswell*

PHOTOS FROM TOP: COURTESY OF CHRIS LEONARD; CHRIS RATHBUN

STRINGS

Little Musician, Big Instrument: Beginning Double Bass

Parents and students can sometimes shy away from the study of double bass for younger musicians, no doubt deterred by the large size of the instrument. But, contrary to popular belief, the double bass is not solely reserved for tall or older players. This month's String Workshop turns to double bass teacher and MIT-affiliated artist Chris Rathbun, a faculty member of South Shore Conservatory of Music in Hingham and Duxbury, Massachusetts, and New England Conservatory of Music Preparatory School in Boston.

Rathbun states, "Depending on the individual, I think six or seven is a great age to begin playing double bass." Just like other string instruments, the bass comes in smaller sizes for young players. "Double basses and bows (French or German), available in fractional sizes (1/10, 1/8, 1/4, 1/2), should be 'fitted' and upgraded as the student grows. A bass or bow that is too large can do more harm than good. Here is where renting works best."

Rathbun further notes, "Beginning students often try a few different instruments to find what feels right for them." But parents and teachers should know that the transition from these other string instruments to double bass is not

A YOUNG MUSICIAN PLAYING A 1/10-SIZE BASS

seamless; there are some marked differences. Says Rathbun, "It could be a little confusing to someone switching from a violin, viola, or cello (tuned in fifths) to the bass (tuned in fourths), but it happens all the time." It's up to the teacher and student to decide whether a student's first love is bass or whether the student wants to dabble in different instruments first.

Rathbun advocates, "For young beginners, the Suzuki method works great. There is a lot of crucial listening and parental support built into the system while the student develops good playing skills from the start. The books begin with simple, well known folk melodies (like 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' and 'Lightly Row') and progress to standard classical pieces often adapted from the cello repertoire."

The bass does carry its own set of particular challenges for the younger player. "Holding the bass is the first challenge, standing or sitting holding the bow (as with all strings), holding down the fat bass strings." Rathbun also notes that "extensive shifting from an early stage is an added challenge." Teaching with an awareness of these challenges can prepare students for the moments of struggle. "Teachers should insist that student instruments be set up to play easily with bridges that allow the strings to be close to the fingerboard (and still have a good sound) and bows that are not too long and heavy." All of these measures provide younger players with support that can allow them to gain comfort in their beginning stages while gradually acquiring the expertise that will make the challenges less daunting.

Rathbun offers advice to teachers who are considering their first concerts, "Don't put unprepared students into orchestra situations where they feel forced to resort to DIY playing habits that will be difficult to correct later." He has has worked with a range of students and notes, "I've had many students who made me apprehensive at first." But he advises teachers to stay confident when teaching beginners. "We try some different angles, something clicks, and off they go!" —*Cynthia Darling*

PERCUSSION

Physical Conditioning for High School Marching Percussionists

Most marching band directors and drill instructors realize the enormous physical demands placed on high school percussionists. The marching battery—consisting of snare drums, bass drums, quints, and cymbals—is unique because each member is expected to tote several pounds of equipment while marching and maneuvering with accuracy on the field.

Of course, we have the safety and well being of our students in mind at all times. With that said, are there precautionary measures that educators can implement that will help minimize or even eliminate injuries before they happen? "Nutrition is a major factor in our preparations," states Jay Webb, director of bands at Avon High School in Avon, Indiana. "It is a constant aspect of our teaching. For starters, we always preach proper hydration. This is vital for any athletic endeavor, and marching in a world-class drum line is certainly no exception! We suggest that the kids hydrate as much as possible the night before a practice. If a student waits until they are thirsty, it is often too late. Protein bars during a mid-rehearsal break are also a great nutritional energizer."

"WE SUGGEST THAT THE KIDS HYDRATE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE NIGHT BEFORE A PRACTICE."—JAY WEBB

In addition to drinking plenty of water and having snacks that are nutritious, Webb suggests that students have a light regiment of stretching and exercise to help them stay strong and limber. "The key is to develop a few quick stretches to help promote consistency of movement. Stretching is a vital element that many young people overlook because it is so easy for them to be athletic. However, this is of primary importance. The results will help you throughout the season and beyond. We target several muscle areas like the calf, thighs, groin, back, shoulders, and upper arms. We strive to develop strength in the same areas that we stretch. This allows us to move with confidence, have the power to handle the drums, and allow us to have simultaneous range in our programs."

Some of the exercises and activities that Webb and his staff incorporate include calf raises (with and without drums on, to help build power and explosiveness), squats (without drums on), push-ups (for strength), and planks to help build the core which helps support the lower back where most of a drum's weight pulls at a student.

"We have a strength and conditioning coach (Emily Jones)," says Webb, "who leads us in our stretches and conditioning exercise. She is an alumna of the Avon drum line and has just kept working with ideas. The objective is to slowly develop each student's endurance so they can perform at a high level for long periods of time without hurting themselves." Webb concludes with the following advice: "Don't substitute milk for water before coming to practice. Odds are you will experience this sooner rather than

PHOTO: iSTOCK

later. Don't skip the stretching—your back will thank you. Be sure each student has proper shoes and socks on while marching—it's vital to take care of your feet. Mix and match your stretching and exercise routines so they are fun for the kids."
—Steve Fidyk

CHORAL AND VOCAL

A Little Swing: Teaching Vocal Jazz to Elementary Students

The prospect of singing or teaching others how to sing jazz music for the first time can strike fear into the hearts of many. However, with the correct approach, the experience can be a valuable and enjoyable one for both music

"IF YOU LET A HARD-BOILED EGG ROLL DOWN A HILL, ITS MOVEMENT APPROXIMATES THE SOUND OF A SWING—'OO-VA, OO-VA, OO-VA.'" —VIJAY SINGH

educator and young elementary students alike. "Little kids are so musical, and jazz goes hand-in-hand with their intrinsic sense of rhythm," says Vijay Singh, vocal jazz program director and professor of music at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington. "If kids can learn folk and patriotic songs, they can learn jazz tunes. Different styles of music are just different dialects, but the elements of melody and rhythm remain the same."

Singh notes that students as young as those in first grade can be brought into the vocal jazz fold through the use of modeling and imitation. "Musicians hear music, they attempt to emulate it, and the more you listen and absorb, the more you become

PHOTO: iSTOCK

proficient at being able to speak the language." That said, he notes that young singers can be surprisingly fearless when introduced to strange intervals and tonalities. "They don't know how tough a tritone interval is, but they can imitate it accurately! Sometimes, the more educated we get, the more analytical and scared we get about being 'wrong.' Ask any music educator to sing a major scale and they can do it without hesitation; however, ask them to sing a whole tone scale and many will start analyzing and doubting. Kids don't have the same fears that more experienced musicians often carry as baggage!"

When you're ready to begin this jazz journey with your students, Singh notes that a combination of rhythm and singing is one of the best ways to start, and one beginning exercise he recommends involves walking. "A lot of jazz is in duple meter, and you can physicalize that: Step–snap–step–snap. Then we'll put the melody in there so they're physically involved." Another exercise involves a concept called the "jazz egg." Says Singh, "If you let a hard-boiled egg roll down a hill, its movement approximates the sound of a swing—'oo-VA, oo-VA, oo-VA.' You can then translate that to a jazz melody so the kids can hear the difference between the jazz egg and straight eighth notes."

When they're ready, Singh notes that young students can be introduced to the concept of jazz improvisation. "Start with simple call-and-response either over a drone pedal tone or certain chord instead of over a chord progression. When kids hear a triad, their innate musicianship will gravitate to the root or maybe the fifth; a few will go to the third. Improvising rhythmically is also important—it can be on one pitch, snapping, or clapping." When your students are ready for further adventures, you can teach them to be familiar with certain chord progressions. "The blues is a good form to use with beginners because it's very simple. Kids can learn when the chords change. It can be performed in any tempo, in any key, so it's one good starting point."

Recordings can also help train young ears to listen for chord changes and so forth, but excerpts should be kept short. "Their attention spans aren't long. One of the things I've observed in close to 30 years of teaching is that kids have lost the ability to listen actively because they live in a very visual world. We have to teach kids to listen actively: Get them to identify the beat, the walking bass line, the different instruments in a big band recording, or the timbre of a saxophone versus a trumpet."

Singh, himself a bass-baritone, has one additional recommendation, specifically for male music educators: "I do think its more challenging for male teachers to work with young kids due to the octave displacement. Kids can hear it, but their voices doubt whether they can match the pitch, so I'll often flip into falsetto."

—Susan Poliniak

ALTERNATIVES

Rock & Roll High School (Band)

"EVERY MUSICAL CONCEPT THAT YOU CAN IMAGINE TAKES EFFECT IN EVERY SONG." —*IRAN GARCIA*

Rock bands, once viewed scornfully by musical pedagogues, are becoming increasingly common in the classroom setting. To learn some basics on leading a student rock band, we reached out to Iran Garcia, director of the Miami Beach Senior High School Rock Ensemble in Florida.

One of the most important prerequisites to directing a classroom rock band is to have a working knowledge of electric, acoustic, and bass guitars; keyboards; drum sets and cymbals; and sound reinforcement equipment—not to mention all of their accessories. "I buy an average of 30 microphone cables, 10 instrument cables, 10 set of strings per guitar, numerous drum heads, and five pairs of drum sticks every year," says Garcia. "The more you play, the more you need to stay on top of equipment maintenance. That is where most of your expenses will come from."

It's important that students be enthusiastic about the repertoire they learn for their rock band, so Garcia usually has the first meeting of each ensemble dedicated to listening and deciding on a set list, with each student bringing in two potential songs to learn and discuss why they were chosen. The set list usually ends up being pretty diverse. "On average, every year we include '70s classics, some '90s alternative, a jazz/blues arrangement, Spanish tunes, reggae, and top-50 hits of today," says Garcia, adding that in performing the music he encourages the students to be creative with their arrangements while preserving the essence of each song.

The repertoire that the students learn—and the act of working together in rock bands—ties in neatly with concepts from traditional student ensembles and music in general. "Every musical concept that you can imagine takes effect in every song," says Garcia. "We're constantly using our ear-training skills. We pay very close attention to articulation, dynamics, timbre, velocity, harmony, balance, and emotional connection: all of the same factors and concepts used in a traditional music ensemble class."

Another benefit of a rock band is that its members can use the skills they acquire in that ensemble in other school groups, for example as part of the pit band for musical theater. Garcia says, "Many times, you'll have a guitarist working with the choir one day, musicals on another, and still be part of the rock ensemble."

Garcia often allows his rock groups to gig out, teaching them lessons about professionalism—such as how to interact with colleagues who are adult musicians—that are impossible to learn in the classroom setting. But most important, says Garcia, "You hope to accomplish something with the students that they can't get in any of their traditional music classes, and you show them that they all contribute to the same cause: the love of music." —*Adam Perlmutter*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF IRAN GARCIA

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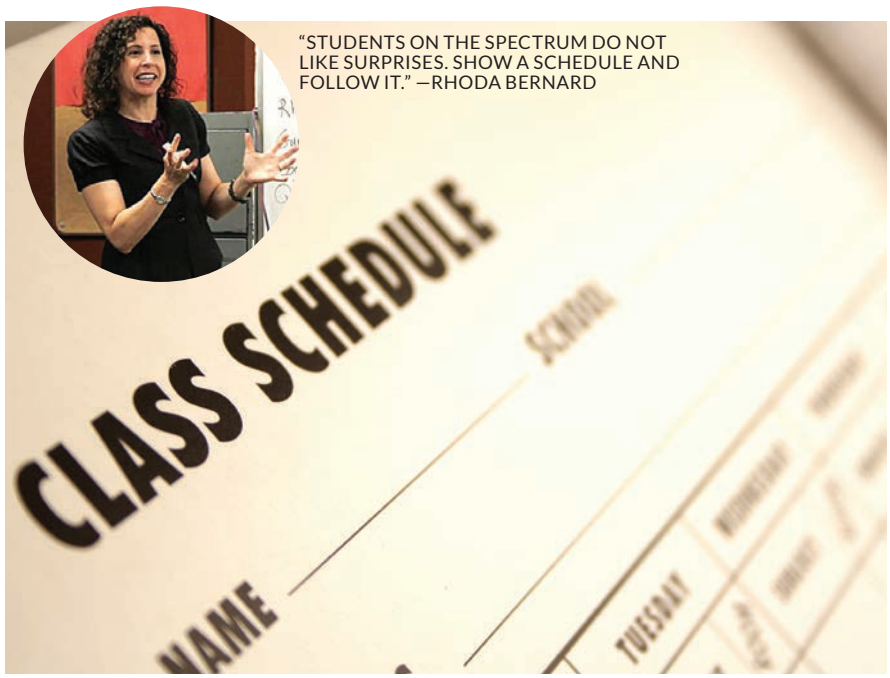

"STUDENTS ON THE SPECTRUM DO NOT LIKE SURPRISES. SHOW A SCHEDULE AND FOLLOW IT." —RHODA BERNARD

RHODA BERNARD, director of professional education and enrichment at The Boston Conservatory in Massachusetts, and founder of their Program for Students on the Autism Spectrum, is forging deeply into the satisfactions of teaching music to students on the autism spectrum. With the team at The Boston Conservatory, she has honed "principals" that allow for success in the music classroom. "Structure, structure, structure. Students on the spectrum do not like surprises. Show a schedule and follow it. Prepare students for anything unusual that might happen, like having to hold class in a different space. There are social stories, which offer text and visuals that walk the individual through the unusual situation and show that everything will be just fine." She also encourages the use of social stories (see *pbisworld.com/tier-2/social-stories* and *oneplaceforspecialneeds.com/main/library_social_stories.html* for more information).

For teaching, Bernard utilizes "concrete and specific instructional aids" such as enlarging font size, creating a page that includes only the section of music that will be worked on that day so that it is all that student sees, and color-coding (e.g., pitches for help with note names). For singers, the teacher can use melodic contour notation, and notation that combines melodic contour notation with solfège or note names. It can also be helpful to reorganize the music so that an entire piece is shown in the order that it is to be played—with no need to go forward or back to another section—and to use animals, movement, and other means to demonstrate and describe musical elements such as tempo and dynamics. To avoid audio over-stimulation, the student can have a signal to show the teacher when classroom volume is a problem; the remedy can be a place for the student to go or a sound barrier such as noise-canceling headphones.

> "We are dedicated to seeing the person, not the disability."
> —RHODA BERNARD

Most important, Bernard has found that fostering the relationship with the specific student is the best approach. "For a lot of people, it can be difficult to understand the person in front of them because they exhibit unusual behaviors due to their autism. We are dedicated to seeing the person, not the disability. Our instructors dig deeper and see the person behind the behaviors and work with that person—who loves music—to be a better musician."

For information on Bernard's private musical instrument lessons program, visit *bostonconservatory.edu/autism*; for the "Teaching Music to Children on the Autism Spectrum" conference, see *bostonconservatory.edu/teaching-music-students-autism-spectrum*. Other resources include:

- *cindysautisticsupport.com*
- *www.autismspeaks.org*
- *nationalautismresources.com/autism-school.html*
- *nea.org/home/15151.htm*
- *autismweb.com/materials.htm*

PHOTO: iSTOCK; INSET: MAX WAGENBLASS

BY DEBBIE GALANTE BLOCK

The Socially-Minded Music Classroom

The careful use of social media can engage students and parents.

ROBIN GIEBELHAUSEN, who specializes in both elementary and secondary general music at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, notes that social media can offer powerful tools in the music classroom and "allow for many new possibilities, including higher levels of engagement."

However, Giebelhausen first has some cautions—for instance, she advises music educators not to use their personal Facebook pages to connect with students. "You have a different relationship with your students, and 'friend' is not that relationship." However, teachers can use Facebook Pages or Groups. "When dealing with young kids, you have to be careful that those students do not take over, and that posts stay school-focused. Pages, rather than Groups, allow a little more administrative function for the teacher." She also notes that if teachers invite students to join a Group, they should consider inviting parents as well.

While Giebelhausen has been using sites such as Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest, and YouTube for years, she suggests taking things slowly and feeling comfortable with one platform before moving to the next. "Facebook has the most diverse membership and makes sense as the first stop. It's a great communication tool for your classroom. Other platforms have different uses, and it has more to do with the way the platform is structured."

SoundCloud and YouTube can be great tools for the music educator, Giebelhausen notes, as they allow virtual access to the music classroom. "These two websites allow streaming media, sound, and video, allowing students and parents to engage directly with the music you wish them to listen and respond to, practice, and perhaps even create." When she taught general music, she wanted to ensure that music was being made even when she was absent, so she created a series of YouTube videos. "In the videos, I sang through the music, played recorder and showed a visual aid, played mallet instruments, and played ukulele. I even sang a little two- and three-part harmony. This method of writing substitute plans certainly was not faster than traditional substitute plans, but I felt more comfortable knowing that the students' music class time would not be wasted." She further notes that YouTube can be a great way to showcase student compositions and arrangements as well, and that "SoundCloud is a wonderful way to show parents the creative work that students can achieve by sharing their work online."

> "Facebook has the most diverse membership and makes sense as the first stop."
>
> —ROBIN GIEBELHAUSEN

While social media is engaging, don't assume that students know everything about it. As a college professor now, Giebelhausen is "often surprised when they come to me as college freshmen and don't have the skills, or the skills are weak. Kids may not be as savvy as we think they are."

SITES SUCH AS TWITTER, FACEBOOK, YOUTUBE, AND OTHERS CAN BE OF GREAT BENEFIT TO THE MUSIC CLASSROOM.

PHOTO: iSTOCK

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BY ANDREW S. BERMAN

Building Your First Successful Pit Orchestra

Determination, strategy, and a variety of resources can help.

MANY GRADUATES of high school music programs reflect fondly on their time spent in pit orchestras for their school musicals. Music teachers have the opportunity to create these valuable experiences for their students, but directing a pit orchestra can come with its challenges.

James Ross has been directing the pit orchestra for 15 years at East Kentwood High School in Kentwood, Michigan, where he is director of bands. He recalls playing in his high school pit, performing musical theater repertoire in Indiana University's chamber orchestra, and directing his first pit at a summer stock company in Pennsylvania before doing so at East Kentwood. Paramount among all concerns, Ross feels, is making it fun for the students and establishing camaraderie among them. This is an extracurricular activity, so you must "balance the students' need for quality and quantity of rehearsals with their own busy lives."

Ross expanded the role of the music director for his school's shows by getting involved in the process from the beginning. Input from the music teacher is needed early to ensure that the show selected suits the needs of the pit as well as the cast. Ross sits in on cast auditions to weigh in on a singer's intonation and ability to adapt when the accompaniment moves from piano to orchestra. "There have been some tussles," he says, but in the end, "we always have a solid cast to do justice to the musical demands of the show."

> "I look at my role as a servant, trying to make the production flow as smoothly as possible."
> —JAMES ROSS

When you're the music director, you're not the only cook in the kitchen, but Ross says that the collaborative process with the other directors and choreographer is similar to that between teacher and students in an orchestra or band. "I look at my role as a servant, trying to make the production flow as smoothly as possible." He also looks to the other teachers for feedback on the pit. "I don't think there's time for ego in that."

With time being precious, planning begins early. For the March production, Ross tries to get the pit books in December so students can practice over the holiday. The condition of the books can be questionable, with scores and parts often handwritten. The music is written for adult musicians, and Ross notes that it's worth it to pay a rush fee to have the parts as early as possible to assess the difficulty of the music.

Moving from the shelter of a rehearsal room to an auditorium can present challenges, and that's only one aspect of the complexity. Ross likens it to directing a marching band field show. "You're dealing with so many variables." But in the end, the payoff is grand. At least once per production, Ross says, an audience member will come down to the pit and say, "Wow, there are real people down here! I thought it was a recording." He considers this high praise, and passes that along to the students. In a show, the pit musicians share the applause with the cast and crew, and it's this sense of accomplishment that the students take home with them.

JAMES ROSS DIRECTED THE PIT ORCHESTRA FOR KENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL'S PRODUCTION OF *SWEENEY TODD.*

PHOTO: JIM SWOBODA

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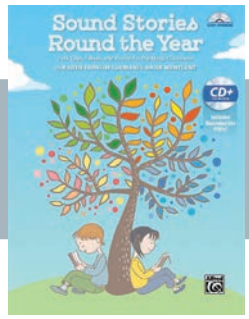

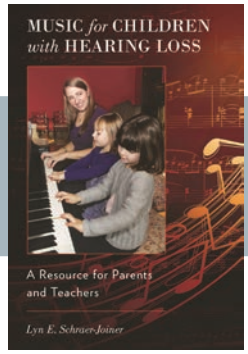

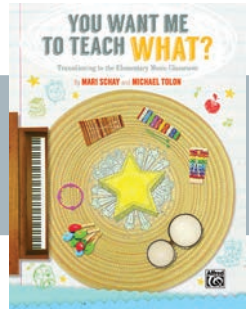

BOOKS ▶

Bird & Diz

By Gary Golio, Illustrated by Ed Young (2015, hardcover, 26 pgs., $19.99) Gary Golio and Ed Young improvise a playful tribute to the creators of bebop: Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. When sax player Charlie "Bird" Parker and trumpeter John "Dizzy" Gillespie make music together, they toss notes back and forth like a game of tag and chase each other with sounds. As Dizzy's cheeks puff out like a frog with glasses, the two friends beep and bop and push each other to create a new kind of music—a thrilling, fast jazz full of surprises. This fold-out book blends playful, rhythmic narration with expressive illustrations. **Candlewick Press,** *candlewick.com*

ACCESSORIES ▶

Mobile UA USB Audio Interface

By Roland Corporation The Mobile UA is an ultra-compact USB audio interface that features up to four channels of DSD and PCM audio playback in a small, bus-powered device. It delivers low-latency operation for on-the-go music production and live performance. Additionally, it provides up to four simultaneous channels of audio playback, supports both DSD and ASIO, and offers native playback of DSD audio sampled at 2.8 MHz; Roland's S1LKi audio engine also reproduces traditional PCM audio at rates of 44.1 kHz and above. The unit is equipped with TRS mini-jacks, providing two stereo audio outputs for monitoring with headphones or connecting to external sound systems. **Roland Corporation,** *rolandus.com*

Sound Stories Round the Year: Folk Tales, Fables, and Poems for the Music Classroom

By Karen Farnum Surmani and Anna Wentlent (2014, paperback with CD, 52 pgs., $24.99) This collection adds instrument-playing and sound exploration to well-known literature. The 16 sound stories have been thoughtfully organized by season, providing a choice for every month of the school year. Included are "The Spider and the Fly," "The Legend of the Poinsettia," "Babe, the Blue Ox," "The Tortoise and the Hare," and more. Each story is also included as a PDF on the accompanying data CD. Recommended for grades 1–5. **Alfred Music,** *alfred.com*

Music for Children with Hearing Loss: A Resource for Parents and Teachers

By Lyn E. Schraer-Joiner (2014, hardcover, 336 pgs., $99.00; also available as paperback and eBook) The author makes a case for offering music education to children with hearing loss before presenting a series of teaching strategies meant to inform their educational experiences. These resources provide a background for hands-on instructional materials such as lessons, supplemental activities, educational resources, discussion points, and journal samples for the classroom and home. **Oxford University Press,** *oup.com*

You Want Me to Teach What? Transitioning to the Elementary Music Classroom

By Mari Schay and Michael Tolon (2014, paperback, 108 pgs., $19.99) Say you're a secondary instrumental or choral specialist, newly assigned to the general music classroom. The authors, two experienced teachers who conquered this challenge themselves, offer practical advice. Chapters of this book, which covers PreK through sixth grade, address attitude, school environment, classroom management, curriculum and assessment, and student performance. In addition, concrete lesson plans are provided for each grade level. **Alfred Music,** *alfred.com*

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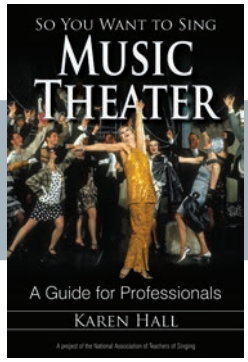
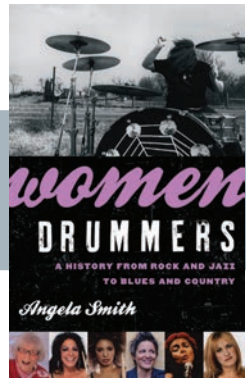




So You Want to Sing Music Theater:
A Guide for Professionals

By Karen Hall, Contributions by Scott McCoy and Wendy LeBorgne (2014, paperback, 180 pgs., $35.00; also available as eBook) Developed in coordination with the National Association for Teachers of Singing, this book draws on current research to advance the careers of singers seeking to make a foray into (or already deeply embedded in) the world of music theater. It includes a brief history of music theater, the basics of vocal science and anatomy, information on health and maintenance, advice on teaching music theater to others, and much more. **Rowman & Littlefield,** *rowman.com*

Women Drummers:
A History from Rock and Jazz to Blues and Country

By Angela Smith (2014, hardcover, 316 pgs., $40.00; also available as eBook) This is a comprehensive look at professional drumming and the women who had the courage and chops to break the barriers of this field. Combining archival research with personal interviews of female drummers representing more than eight decades in music history, the stories of these women who bucked tradition and societal norms are told against the backdrop of the times in which they performed and the genres they represent, from rock and jazz to blues and country. **Rowman & Littlefield,** *rowman.com*

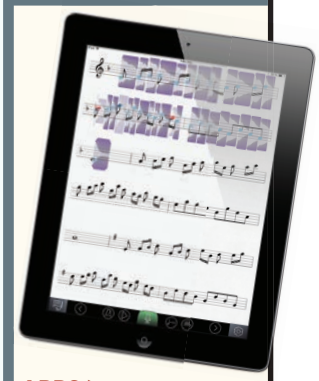
CDS ▶

The Perfect Quirk

By Secret Agent 23 Skidoo (2014, 10 tracks, $13.00; also available as digital download) Secret Agent 23 Skidoo's fourth album is a collection of positive, family-style hip-hop, with uplifting lyrics and funky, soulful beats. Songs including "Imaginary Friend," "Pillowfort Pillowfight," and "Nightlight" take listeners from the worlds of funk, Motown, and reggae to electrosynth and pirate shanty polka. Its live funk instrumentation and message of embracing diversity earned *The Perfect Quirk* a nomination in the Best Children's Album category for the 57th Annual GRAMMY® Awards. **Underground Playground Records,** *secretagent23skidoo.com*

Let's Boogie!

By Rock 'n' Rainbow (2015, 17 tracks, $14.99; also available as a digital download) Led by Parents' Choice Award–winning musician and music educator Mike Whitla, and produced by GRAMMY®-nominated children's producer Tor Hyams, *Let's Boogie!* is a family dance party of high energy tunes with catchy lyrics and funk-rock rhythms. Says Mike Whitla, "We've all seen technology overtaking our day-to-day lives, and, as a longtime music educator and a dad, I felt a need to respond to this. *Let's Boogie!* is designed to encourage healthy habits, active lifestyles, and lots of personal interaction within our family groups, while also having a barrel of fun." **Rainbow Songs Inc.,** *rainbowsongs.com*



APPS ▶

Sonoptic

By Bin Software ($6.99, available for iPhone and iPad via Apple's App Store) Sonoptic includes over 300 exercises, drills, and scales, all of which can be customized to your instrument and level. As you play, the app paints a picture of your pitch, rhythm, and dynamics. Playback and scrolling review of your recorded "takes" are also provided. Sonoptic works with the microphone in your iPad and can be used to sharpen your sight-reading skills, master unfamiliar keys, provide insight into your dynamics and phrasing, serve as a quick reference to the basics of scale and chord theory, and more. Supported instruments include violin, viola, cello, double bass, harp, piccolo, flute, oboe, English Horn, clarinets, bassoons, saxophones, French horn, trumpets, flugelhorn, trombones, tuba, baritone horn, euphonium, and various percussion instruments, as well as guitar and keyboard instruments (melodic lines). Bin Software Company, ***binsoftware.com***

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MORE APPS ▶

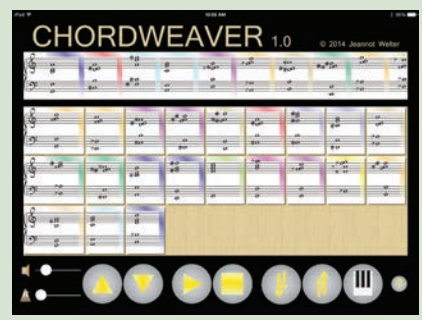
Music Maker Jam

By MAGIX Audio GmbH (Free; additional items available for in-app purchase) This loop-based composition app's new release has over 70 music styles (rock, jazz, movie score, etc.), an eight-channel mixer, access to thousands of loops, and more. In addition, its Harmony Editor and Arranger provide even more possibilities for

customizing your music. The iPhone version, which has been completely redesigned (the loop selector and harmony editor are now easier to use, the new home screen provides a better overview, etc.), includes four Lite Styles plus two more full packages for free; the iPad download includes four music styles. **MAGIX Audio GmbH,** *music-maker.com/us*

ChordWeaver

By Jeannot Welter ($19.99) This musical composition aid is based on modern five-part tonal harmony used extensively in symphonic music, film scores, jazz, contemporary songwriting, and game soundtracks. The app uses techniques such as altered chords, parallel ninths, tritone substitutions, bi-tonal ambiguity, and more. The way it works is that you choose your starting chord, and Chord-Weaver presents and lets you listen to multiple resolutions to that chord; with each subsequent chord choice, the process is repeated. The app also offers the option to transpose up or down, and allows you to save your final product as a .chords file or export it as a .mid file. Jeannot Welter, *www.chordweaver.com*



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SHARON ISBIN

CLASSICAL GUITAR VIRTUOSO and multiple GRAMMY® winner Sharon Isbin has garnered numerous accolades for her performances in concert and on over 25 recordings. Her upcoming projects include the premiere this spring of a concerto by Chris Brubeck with the Maryland Symphony, and in November a song cycle by Richard Danielpour to be performed with mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard at Carnegie Hall. The documentary *Sharon Isbin: Troubadour* has recently aired on nearly 200 PBS affiliates. For more information on its DVD release on Video Artists International and the Warner Classics five-CD box set release of her most popular albums, visit *sharonisbin.com* and *sharonisbintroubadour.com*.

What is your first musical memory? Hearing my mother sing to me. She had a beautiful voice and loved to sing lullabies. I definitely have very warm and comforting associations with music based on that experience.

You started studying music at a young age. I took piano lessons at the age of six, and at nine my family moved to Italy. My brother wanted to be the next Elvis, so my parents took him to a guitar teacher who had studied with Segovia. When he saw that this wasn't for him, I volunteered to take his place. At first it was just a hobby, and I practiced only 20 minutes a day. A year later back in Minneapolis, I got into science and my father would say I couldn't launch my rockets unless I put an hour in on the guitar, so that's how he bribed me. At 14, I won a competition and performed with the Minnesota Orchestra in front of 10,000 people. I thought it was more fun than launching my worms and grasshoppers into space, so I shifted gears and decided to become a guitarist.

What advice do you have for kids who want to be classical guitarists? It's important to have a good teacher at a young age. If they're really motivated and have the passion for it, that will give them the opportunity to become as good a player as they can be.

You're heavily involved in music education. Can you tell us more about that? I was thrilled when the Aspen Music Festival asked me to restart their guitar department in 1993. I was there as a student in the late 70s; the Rocky Mountains are paradise on earth. Juilliard asked me to create their first guitar department in 1989: an undergrad and grad program. I've worked with students from 20 different countries, and many have gone on to become the leading players in their own nations. I'm also excited about the new GRAMMY Music Educator Award. Their first recipient was a model of a teacher who galvanizes and inspires students. It showed what just one person can do, that everybody can make a difference, and that positive thinking, encouragement, and sharing skills can change the world. El Sistema in South America has saved so many people, brought them to the light, and transformed their lives in positive ways. It's important to share your knowledge with students—to let them benefit from the years of training you've experienced and to be proud when they take that to the next level.

> "Music is really the essence of creating beauty in our world."

Why do you think music education is important? Music is a valuable part of our culture. It's as important as studying math or literature, and it should be part of the process of education. Music is really the essence of creating beauty in our world.

PHOTO: J. HENRY FAIR

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